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Islam and Christianity in Nigeria: Origins and Conflicts

(19ᵗʰ –20ᵗʰ Centuries)

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Dedication

Firstly, I acknowledge the people who mean a lot to me, my parents, for showing faith in me and giving me freedom to choose what I desire. I salute you all for the selfless love, care, pain and sacrifice you did to shape my life. You were willing to support any decision I made. I would never be able to pay back the love and affection showered upon by my parents. Also I express my thanks to my brothers and sisters for their support and valuable prayers.

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C.Wiam

Dedication

With all my love to:

- ❖ *The memory of my mother whom I missed so much, may Allah bless her soul.*

- ❖ *My dear father who has encouraged me all the way and whose encouragement has made sure that I give it all it takes to finish that which I have started.*

- ❖ *My lovely son who always asks God to finish my study as soon as possible so as to have enough time to play with me.*

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Abstract

Throughout its history, Nigeria witnessed many tragedies starting from the colonial period which was accompanied by the introduction of Christianity till the emergence of the religious conflicts. The period from the 19th to the 20th century in Nigeria held important and significant events. Before the introduction of Christianity during the 19th century, most Nigerians were Muslims while the rest of people were practicing the Nigerian traditional religions. The emergence of Christianity on the scene led to the eruption of numerous of religious conflicts between Muslims and Christians.

The present thesis examines the introduction of Islam and Christianity in Nigeria as well as the conflicts between the adherents of each religion from the 19th to the 20th century. It focuses on the origin of both Islam and Christianity in Nigeria and discusses the impact of both religions on Nigerians as well as the aim of each religion's leaders. This work aims to identify the causes of conflicts between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria, in addition to the impact of both Islam and Christianity on Nigerian's life. this thesis also shed light on the rule of missionaries and jihadists to win over one another which led to great tension between them. So, conflicts and clashes between the two religious groups led to significant material and human losses for both sides and led to instability and fragmentation.

This study provides a new prospective for understanding Christian-Muslim relations in Nigeria.

ملخص

لقد شهدت نيجيريا العديد من الماسي عبر التاريخ، بدء من الفترة الاستعمارية التي صاحبتها دخول الديانة المسيحية إلى المنطقة حتى ظهور الصراعات الدينية. الفترة ما بين القرنين 19 و العشرون تحمل أهمية كبيرة بالنسبة لنيجيريا. قبل دخول و تأسيس المسيحية في نيجيريا خلال القرن 20، كان الإسلام هو الديانة التي يدينونها معظم النيجيريون، أما الأقلية فكانوا يمارسون الديانات التقليدية الأخرى. إن ظهور المسيحية على الساحة أدى إلى تفجير نزاعات وصراعات عنيفة بين المسلمين والمسيحيين.

تتناول هذه الرسالة دخول كلا من الإسلام والمسيحية لنيجيريا، و كذا الصراعات بين أتباع كل دين من القرن 19 إلى القرن 20. فهي تشرح تفاصيل تأسيس كلا من الإسلام والمسيحية في نيجيريا و مناقشة تأثير الديانتين على النيجيريين، بالإضافة إلى هدف كل قادة كل دين. الهدف من هذا هو تحديد أسباب النزاعات بين كل المسلمين والمسيحيين في نيجيريا وذلك بإلقاء الضوء على عمل المنصرين و الجهاديين للفوز على بعضهم البعض، مما أدى إلى توتر كبير بينهم. أدت هذه الصراعات بين المجموعتين إلى خسائر مادية وبشرية في كلا الجانبين و إلى عدم الاستقرار والتجزؤ في المنطقة. تقدم هذه الرسالة وجهة نظر لفهم العلاقات بين المسيحيين والمسلمين في نيجيريا.

Résume

Le Nigeria est passé par beaucoup de tragédies à travers l'histoire. La période coloniale, période qui a permis l'intrusion du christianisme, et les différents conflits religieux et ethniques ont sont le parfait exemple. Ce pays africain a, surtout, vécu énormément de changements durant la période qui s'étale du 19ème au 20ème siècle. En effet, avant l'intrusion du christianisme au 19ème siècle, les Nigérians étaient majoritairement musulmans quand bien même il restait une minorité pratiquant d'anciennes religions. La venue du christianisme a, de ce fait, créait beaucoup de conflits entre la communauté musulmane et la communauté chrétienne.

Partant de ce constat historique, notre travail consistera à mettre la lumière sur l'avènement de ces deux grandes religions au Nigéria ainsi que les différents conflits qui opposèrent leurs adeptes entre le 19ème et le 20ème siècle. Nous aborderons de ce fait, l'impact de l'Islam et du Christianisme sur les Nigérians ainsi que la vision des dirigeants de ces deux communautés. Nous nous intéresserons aussi aux véritables causes de ces conflits religieux en mettant en évidence les méthodes respectives employées par les prédicateurs et les djihadistes.

A travers ce mémoire, nous espérons proposer un regard permettant de comprendre les causes opposant les Musulmans et les Chrétiens au Nigéria.

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General Introduction

The continent of Africa represents the world's most unstable continent which suffers from the spread of internal conflicts, civil wars, and tribalism. All of the conflicts in this continent are due to ethnic or religious causes. These conflicts also reflect the inability to coexist peacefully among the internal components of African countries, as in Nigeria.

In Nigeria, perhaps the historical cause of these tragedies is the European colonization of the African continent. Before the colonial powers left the continent, they divided their areas into heterogeneous states, each of which included different countries, tribes, and religions.

Before the 19th century, both Muslims and Christians had been relatively small minorities, and the majority of people in Nigeria had practiced traditional African religions which are mixed with paganism. But in the 19th century, the religious landscape in Nigeria changed. Both Islam and Christianity emerged to the scene, and they tried to overcome each other. This led to conflicts between Christians and Muslims and this is what this work is about.

This research is based on a descriptive and analytical approach to examine Muslims-Christian conflicts in Nigeria, tracing the origins and consequences. It is an attempt to sketch out and answer four main questions. First, how did both Islam and Christianity reach Nigeria?How did Nigerians live the dilemma of believing in Islam or converting to Christianity?What were the factors that contributed to the emergence of conflicts between Muslims and Christians?What were the consequences of these conflict?

To answer the aforementioned questions, a variety of resources were used to ensure the objectivity and authenticity of the research data. The motives behind choosing this topic are personal orientation in African studies, highlight and introduce one of the countries of Western

General Introduction

Africa which is Nigeria, in addition to the desire to study the conflicts and the remnants of colonialism in Nigeria.

This research includes three main chapters. Chapter one provides a background to Nigeria by giving a glimpse about the origin of the state of Nigeria, geographical location, ethnicities and lifestyle. Furthermore, this part depicts the arrival of Islam and its role over there. Chapter two examines the arrival of Christianity to Nigeria, the role of the missionaries to spread it, and the evaluation of the most influential missionaries in Nigeria. Chapter three dealt mainly with Origins and the factors that led to the conflict between the Muslims and the Christians and the consequences behind them. Lastly, in the conclusion, an analysis of the major findings and implications of the study is put forward.
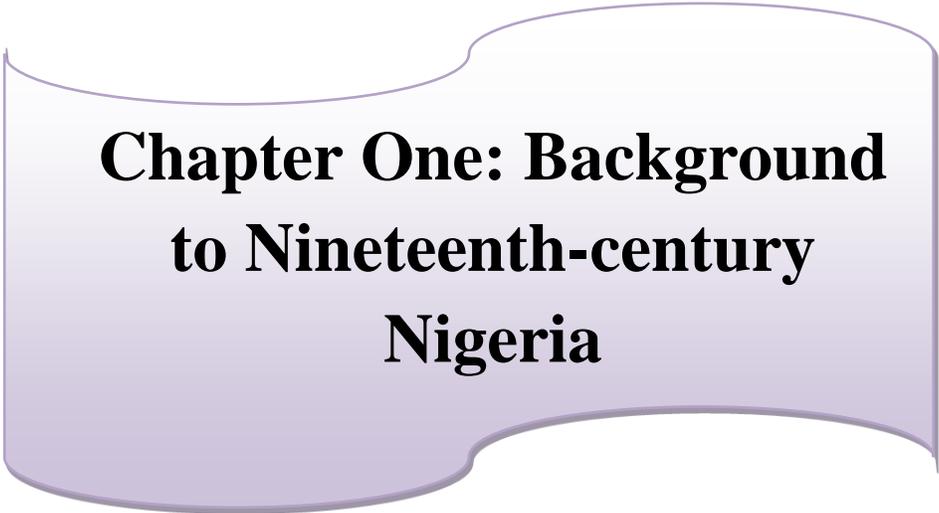
Chapter One: Background to Nineteenth-century Nigeria

The aim of this introductory chapter is to examine the foundation of the state of Nigeria by defining the historical and natural framework as well as the political reality that was prevalent in the period before the British colonization.

I.   Historical Profiles of Nigeria

In 1914, the British colonizers established the borders of modern-day Nigeria. Before the colonization, Nigeria consisted of different kingdoms, empires, caliphates, and chiefdoms on the banks of the Niger River (Alhaji Hassan and Musa 314; Taiye 59). Historically, this River has been the main artery of commerce and communication in the region. The Niger River is the third longest river in Africa which runs for 730 miles through Nigeria. The Niger enters the country in Kebbi State in the northwest and pours into the Gulf of Guinea through its many branches in the Niger Delta in southern Rivers and the Delta States. The Niger joins with its main tributary, the Benue, which flows from the northeast, at Lokoja, in the central state of Kogi. Other important rivers include the Sokoto, Kaduna, and Anambra, all of which are tributaries of the Niger, as well as the Donga, Katsina-Ala, and Gongola. Most general histories of Nigeria have been written since Nigeria gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1960 (Falola and Heaton 2).

II.   Geographical Location

Nigeria is a large country in the West African region, covering 356,668 square miles. It is an area between 3° and 15 ° E longitude and between 4° and 14°N latitude. The most populated country on the African continent, Nigeria shares land borders with four countries: Benin lies to the west, Niger to the north, Chad to the northeast, and Cameroon to the east and southeast. To the south lies the Gulf of Guinea and part of the South Atlantic Ocean (Falola and Heaton 2) (see map 1 page 7).

III.   Ethnicities in Nigeria

Nigeria is the largest country in Africa in terms of population. If we look at the demographic and geographical maps of Nigeria, we find three densely populated areas with three major tribes representing the majority of the Nigerian people.   In the north, we find the Hausa and Fulani tribes. In the west, we find the Yoruba tribes and in the south the Ibo tribes. Nigeria can be divided according to the tribal division as follows:

A. Northern Tribes: They represent 55% of the total population and they are :

1) **Hausa:** that name refers to people who have different cultural origins but share the Hausa language and, over time, share a common religion, Islam. The foundation of the Hausa land was laid down in the ninth or tenth century CE. Hausas' rulers adopted Islam in order to reinforce their power over their regions and for elaborating trading relations between societies that were already Muslim in the Sahara and North Africa (Falola and Heaton 28).The Hausa is the largest cohesive Muslim group in Northern Nigeria. Islam entered it in the 14th century through the travels of Muslim traders and scholars from other regions. Most of Hausa people were Muslims, especially traders and rulers whereas the rest of the population remained pagan. This remained the case until the emergence of the reform movement at the end of the 18th century, led by Othman Dan Fodio, the leader of Jihad in West Africa (see map 2 page 8).

2) **Fulani:** They are the largest Muslim group along with the Hausa. They settled in West Africa and they have been known throughout history as those who advocate Islam. Their language was called al-Fula, which was written in Arabic script before the advent of British colonization. In 1810, the Fulani consolidated their influence in the rest of the Hausa region in Northern Nigeria and in the late 19th century, their influence expanded including the northern provinces of Nigeria (Diyab 202) (see map 2 page 8).

B. **Western Tribe:** it represent 20% of Nigeria's population and it is:

   1) **Yoruba:** today it is one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria. Its birthplace and ancestral home is Ife. This latter claimed that it is founded by Oduduwa who came from the East. He conquered many lands and finally settled in Ile –Ife. According to archeological evidence, Ife has been a site of human settlement, since at least the 9th Century CE. It was not until around the 12th century that Ife was clearly a regional power (Falola and Heaton23) (see map 2 page 8).

C. **Eastern Tribes:** they represent roughly 25% of the population. Ibo is the largest tribe in this region, which represents about 19% of its population. Followed by the Ijou tribes (see map 2 page 8).

   1) **Igbo:** they were primitive tribes .they acquire western culture and converted to Christianity easily because of the British harassment

   2) **Ijaw:** they are relatively small tribes. Its members are generally located in the southern delta of Benin and in the south-west of the Owerri region (Falola and Heaton 4).

Map 1: Geographical location of Nigeria.

Source : Maps of Nigeria - Flags, Maps, Economy, Geography, Climate, Natural Resources, Current Issues, International Agreements, Population, Social Statistics, Political System, geographic.org/maps/nigeria_maps.html.:

Map 2: Ethnicities in Nigeria.

Source:

https://www.google.dz/search?q=ethnicities+in+nigeria&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&v

ed=0ahUKEwimuor7jK7aAhXLuBQKHTQPC8QQ_AUICigB#imgrc=MENv0Jx-

z6wNQM:

Map 3: The Sokoto caliphate and states in Nigeria.
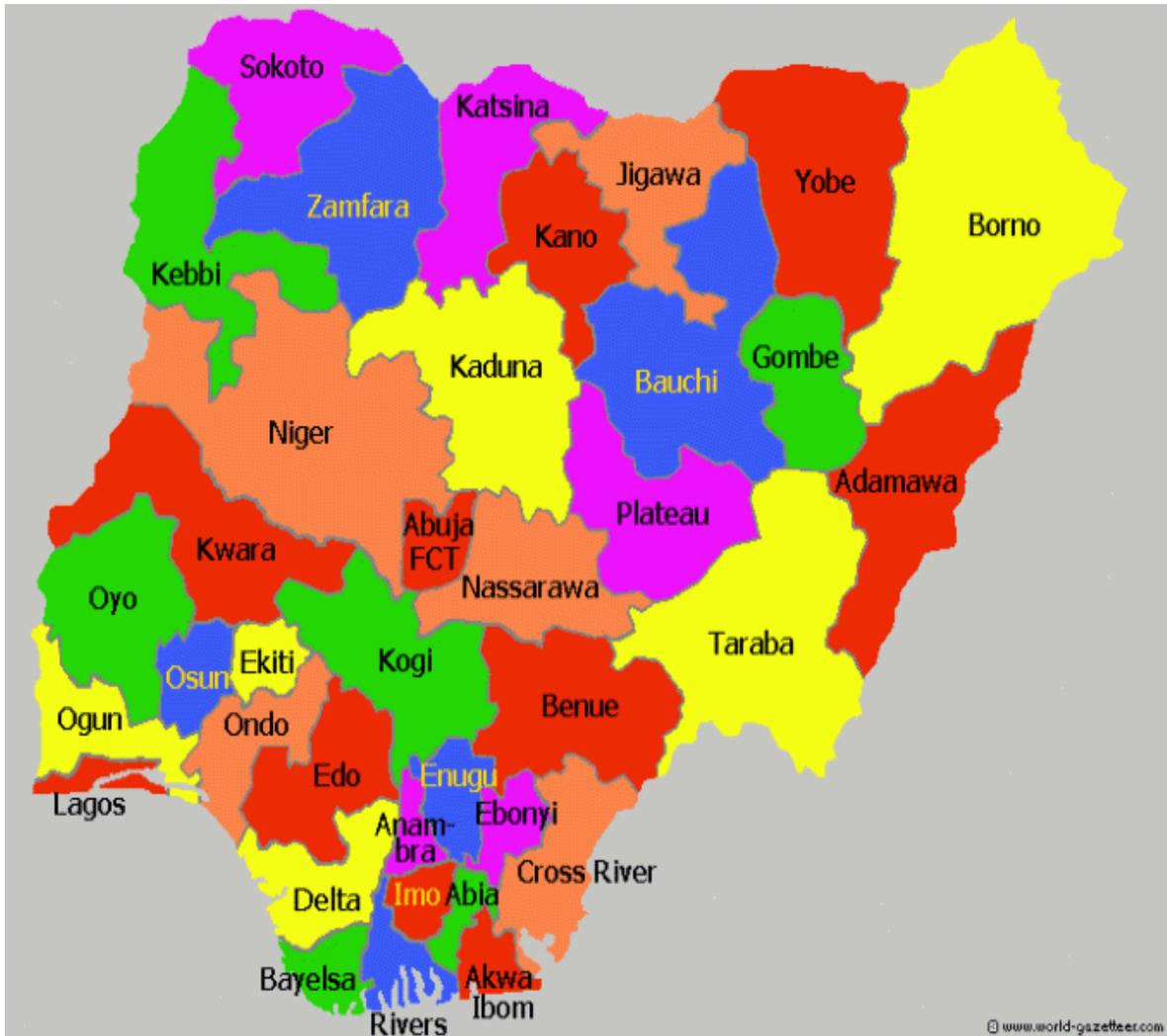
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skzStQW5a2hOM:
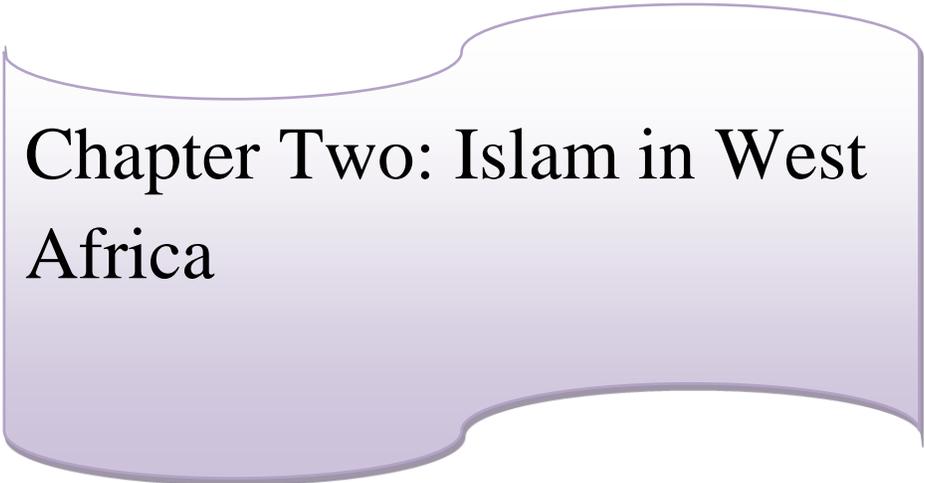
Chapter Two: Islam in West Africa

I.   The Entry of Islam to Nigeria

The emergence of Islam in West Africa, which is nowadays Senegal, Guinea, Mali, and Nigeria, dated back to the 8th century. The process of converting to Islam in Africa was a complex and hard process because there was a collision of views regarding the motives that led Africans to convert to Islam. It is evident that all that is related to the history of Africa comes from what is called medieval accounts. They were written by Arab historians and North African Geographers, some of whom related the African conversion to Islam to economic motives, while others tackled Islam's spiritual message as the main motive. The rest of them consider the influence of Arabic literacy and its prestige as the main one. However, the exact motives behind the early conversion to Islam in Africa are still debatable ("The Spread of Islam in West Africa"; Agai 68).

Islam in West Africa passed through three main stages which were containment, mixing, and reform. These stages led to the outbreak of the Jihadist movement in 19th century by Othman Dan Fodio and the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate in Hausa land in Nigeria. These stages took place in different states in Africa (The Spread of Islam in West Africa).

A. The Containment of Islam

According to Al Bakri's accounts written in the 11th century, Muslim merchant scholars had a great impact on the presence and spread of Islam in West Africa. At first, Islam was limited to northern communities only, but later and due to the increased number of Muslim merchant scholars in non-Muslim kingdoms (in West Africa) as well as their incredible skills in presenting Islam as a religion of peace led many of non-Muslims to accept Islam. Between 8th and 13th centuries, the precence of Muslim merchants grew in non-Muslims areas as many kings permitted them to integrate ("The Spread of Islam in West Africa").

In the 15th century, Islam reached the forest zones and remained in minority communities because of Suwarian tradition. It was a tradition reflected by Al-Hajj Salim Suwari who discouraged proselytizing and believed that God alone who would bring people to Islam ("The Spread of Islam in West Africa"). Despite the fact that Islam faced difficulties due to the refusal of some kings to allow it spread, Muslim traders had worked hard on the expansion and spread of the Islam.

B. The Mixing between Islam and Local Practices

This phase highlights the mixture of Islamic aspects with local African traditions. Since there was a variety of Africans faiths and cultures, many rulers could not impose Islam, but they adopted it accordingly i.e. Africans selected Islamic aspects that were appropriate to their faith.

Most of the population in Hausa land and Borno in the east converted to Islam in the 18th century, even though Islam reached it in the 9th century. By the 14th century, most leaders of such areas were Muslims, and they agreed on mixing the local practices and Islam. Besides they persecuted any Muslim scholar who was against or criticized pagan practices. In Songhay Empire (1430-1591), under the reign of Amir Sonni Ali, many Muslim scholars were killed and persecuted because of their reaction towards the idea of mixing Islam and pagan practices. However, under the Aksia Mohammed rule (1493-1529), things changed. More importance was given to Islam by building mosques and libraries ("The Spread of Islam in West Africa").

C. Reform and Implementation of Sharia

It is the main phase in the process of the spread of Islam in Hausa land particularly. It depicts the role of literates Muslim rulers in establishing the real aspects of Islam 'Shariaa. The phenomenon of mixing Islam with Africans faiths had bothered some West African Muslim rulers among them was Othman Dan Fodio who was convinced that Islam needed to be purified (Agai 68; "The Spread of Islam in West Africa").

So, the nineteenth century was characterized by the emergence of the powerful and successful jihad movements under the leadership of Othman Dan Fodio in Senegambia and Hausa land. He had managed to overthrow the old order and made some reforms on the level of ruling and landowning classes. Othman's movement was considered as the direct cause of the establishment of the Sokoto caliphate (the Spread of Islam in West Africa).

IV.   The Role of Islam in Nigerian Political System

Islam had a great influence in Nigeria during the 19th century, where most of Nigeria's populations were Muslims. Islam affected religious and political domains in both kingdoms of the Fulani and the Yoruba

A. Kingdom of the Fulani in Northern Nigeria (1808 - 1903)

The political situation in northern Nigeria in the late 18th century and the beginning of the 19th was characterized by the emergence of the Fulani Empire, which has been in place for a century in the Hausa region. The Fulani Empire lost its power to the British in 1903. This empire emerged on the basis of the idea of jihad to spread Islam, fighting against paganism and purifying the Islamic faith that was obscured by pagan rituals (Alhaji Hassan and Musa 314; Levtzion and Pouwels 210).This Empire was led by Sheikh Othman Dan Fodio, who was the founder of the Islamic state in West Africa. Sheikh Othman worked to spread the Islamic

awareness and eliminate the state of stagnation that Islam became in. He traveled to many Hausa states including Zamfara and Gobir (see map 3 Page 9) and remained there for five years. His main goal was to spread Islam over and over. In the 1880s, he contacted some sultans to spread his thoughts including king Bawa of Gobir to make him understand the Islamic doctrine. Bawa was not convinced but he agreed to the conditions of Othman because of the growth of Othman's supporters (Agai 69).

After the death of Bawa, Nafata succeeded him. Since 1795, the supporters of Othman have begun to arm themselves to form a strong army. The king Nafata of Gobir felt the gravity of the situation and worked to confront Othman's followers. After his death, his son Yunfa succeeded him and continued his hostility to Othman and forced him to migrate with his followers to the city of Gudu. Those followers considered this movement as a Hidjra similar to the migration of the Prophet Mohammed (Peace is Upon Him). The emigration to Godu was the beginning of founding the Fulani Empire which was taken from Sokoto as its capital or what is known by the Sokoto Caliphate (Levtzion and Pouwels 211) (see map 3 page 9).

Othman assumed the title of "Prince of the Believers", a title that continued with the Sokoto Caliphate until its end in 1903. This event was the beginning of jihad in which Dan Fodio asked his supporters to take up arms and wage war against infidels. Dan Fodio 's troops were able to predict the defeat of Yunfa the Prince of Gobir, in 1804 and later on, they captured several important cities like Katsina, Kano, and Duara in 1808(see map 3 P9). Whereas the Jihad continued throughout Zaria until about 1812, after which Gombie, Bauchi, Adamawa, Gwandu, Nupeland, kebbi, Niger Benue confluence and parts of Yoruba land (llorin) were captured but they could not succeed Kanem-Borno until later stages (Agai 69)(see map 3 page 9).

Furthermore, Othman's desire to correct the Islamic doctrine and spread Islam was due to religious reasons which were engraved in the Holy Quran: "fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress limit; for God loveth not transgressors. And slay them wherever ye catch them, and turn them out from where they have they have turned you out (The Holy Quran, chapter 2verses 190,191)" (Agai 69).

In 1808, Sheikh Dan Fodio took over the capital of Gobir and killed its ruler Yunfa. This incident had a great impact on the Fulani Empire. This latter became powerful and well known. In 1809 Kano fell and Dan Fodio moved towards Sokoto and succeeded in seizing the important center in Hausa. Then Sokoto was taken as the capital of his state.

In 1812, Dan Fodio divided the responsibility of the administration of his state into two parts: the eastern part, like the areas of Bauchi, Douara, Katsina, Znafra under the supervision of his son Mohammed Bello. The western part, which included the areas of Gombie, Bauchi, Adamawa, Gwandu, Nupeland, kebbi and Niger Benue in the south-east, were under the supervision of his brother Abdullah Dan Fodio (Al-Bili 50).

Sheikh Dan Fodio devoted the rest of his life to writing, preaching, and guidance until his death in 1817 after establishing the rules of his Islamic state which was known as the Sokoto Caliphate. His new Islamic state was marked by stability, social justice and individual and collective responsibility in accordance with Islamic law. His sons ruled for a century until the fall of this caliphate on March 14, 1903, by British colonization (Al-Bili 50).

B. Kingdom of Yoruba in Western Nigeria (18th -19th Centuries)

When the name of the Yoruba is mentioned, most readers turn to Nigeria, although the Yoruba extends to other countries such as Benin, Togo, and Ghana, however in Nigeria in particular, the Yoruba account for 26% of Nigeria's total population. It is located in the southwestern part of the country and some states of the North, such as Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Oshin, Andwa, Ekiti and a large part of the States of Quadra and Koghe, each with its own leader and own city(Soyinka 1).

These Yoruba kingdoms were probably founded in the 12th century (Polm 6). The Yoruba included both of Noby and Munchi tribes. Its people are considered as the most advanced West African people who security prevails over the lives and property there (Ajayi 786).

Historical accounts indicate that the city of Ife was a huge capital of the Yoruba Kingdom, a city that grew in the forest. The Yoruba tribes established this city in the 13th century as their capital in western Nigeria. The religious and cultural capital of all the Yoruba tribes, where there is an ancient sculpture school. Another city called Oyo in the Savannah region was the second capital of the Yoruba kingdoms (Adeyemi 180).

Since the late 18th century, the Yoruba had begun to fall when Islam arrived from the north. The delay of the Islamic influence in the Yoruba civilization was due first to the existence of a dense barrier of tropical forests that caused the cessation of Islamic movements coming from the north, and secondly it was due to the exposure of African Islamic countries to wars between each other because of internal strife and the princes fought for authority (polm 64).

In the late 19th century, the Portuguese took the city of Lagos as a center of the slave trade and soon became the largest commercial city in West Africa. During that period s the predominant religion of the Yoruba tribe was the Islam. Around 60% of them believed in Islam,

while less than 40% of them converted to Christianity and the rest remained in paganism (polm

64).
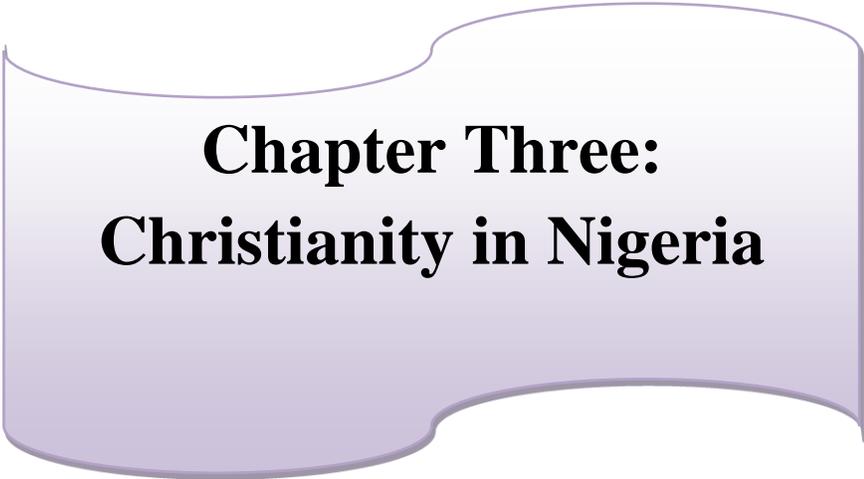
Chapter Three:
Christianity in Nigeria

Christianity is a religion based on the belief in one God and the teachings of Jesus Christ. It spread worldwide and has become the world largest religion with more than 2 million adherents.

In Nigeria, a lot of factors facilitated the entrance and the spread of Christianity all over the country regions. Over years, Nigeria which was a destination for several Christian missionaries, now it exports Christianity back to the globe. The number of Christians in Nigeria gradually increased till it was 21.4% Christians in 1953 (Deji).

This chapter examines how Christianity was introduced into Nigeria by the early Portuguese arrival to the country in the 15th century. Moreover, it evaluates the factors and steps that contributed to its spread in the region.

I. The Emergence of Christianity in Nigeria

Historically speaking, the first attempts to introduce Christianity into Nigeria were by Portuguese who were the first Europeans to reach the West African shores in the 15th century during the Age of Exploration.

Chiakwa argued that the period between 1500 and 1800 was characterized by the European expansion over the rest of the world. Portugal and Spain were the most powerful nations in Europe at that time. Therefore, and in order to avoid conflicts, Pop Nicola V issued a bull in 1454 by which he divided the world between Portugal and Spain. The latter had permission to occupy South America, whereas Portugal was given a free hand over Asia (3).

Later, other European countries appeared on the scene, such as France, Britain and the Dutch Republic, which felt strong enough to challenge Portugal and Spain in sharing the world wealth. So, a new era of the European struggle began for the mastery of the world, starting from the high seas, the Americas, the Far East, and lastly Africa ("The Age of Exploration" 407).

During the 15th century, a wave of European overseas journeys began so as to generate wealth, establish colonies as well as to spread Christianity. As previously mentioned, Africa was the last station that European colonized it. The Portuguese were the pioneers who had contact with Africa because they were strong and possessed a powerful navy. Before Africa, the Europeans had been attracted to the Far East as a land rich in precious products which reached them at high prices. So, to put their hands on the sources of such products, the Europeans had to establish a direct route to the Far East. The Ottoman conquest, in the 14th century, made it impossible for the Europeans to access Asia by land. Consequently, they decided to travel by sea. Although they knew the risks of sailing around Africa, their hopes of finding the route and expanding their trade made it possible ("The Age of Exploration" 408).

In the 15th century, and after several unsuccessful attempts, Portuguese were able to capture a small town in the North of Morocco called Ceuta. By the beginning of 1420, Henry the Navigator, Prince of Portugal and governor of Ceuta, started journeys of exploring the West Coast of Africa. In spite of the fact that the Portuguese brought Christianity with them, they failed to establish it as a faith supported by large segments of the population ("The Age of Exploration" 408).

The richness of the African land and the emergence of slave trade made Portuguese gave more interested in the economic side than the missionary goals and objectives. From the last third of the 16th century to the beginning of 19th century, transatlantic slave trade reached its summit. Europeans scored huge benefits from it. During the period of salve trade, Christianity did not spread well.However,its abolition served remarkably in converting most of the Nigerian people to Christianity.

II.   Christianity and the Abolition of Slave Trade

The transatlantic slave trade was developed and prospered between 1500 and 1800. It was based on the transportation of enslaved African people from Africa to the European colonies in the Americas. The slave trade followed the triangular trade route between Europe, Africa, and the New World. Goods, such as guns, ammunition and manufactured goods were shipped to Africa in order to be exchanged for enslaved African people. The latter were exported to the Americas to work in plantations. Correspondingly, goods from the Americas, such as cotton, tobacco, sugar, and rum, were taken to European markets (Eltis 1).

Portugal was the first European country engaged in transatlantic slave trade, then followed by Spain, France, Britain and the Dutch Empires. Most Africans who were enslaved and transported across the Atlantic Ocean were from central and western Africa. During the centuries of transatlantic slave trade, about 3.5 million slaves were shipped out of Nigeria alone ("The Age of Exploration" 415).

By the beginning of the 19th century, slave trade witnessed a remarkable change. Thanks to the efforts of the Clapham Sect, a bill of slavery abolition was passed in England in 1807. Clapham Sect was a group of Englishmen who were against the idea of slavery. As missionary activists, they totally saw that the principles of Christianity were contrary to slavery practices (Hanciles 205).

Even though the abolition of slavery was in 1807, it was definitely destroyed years later when Britain forced other European nations to stop such trade by imposing naval blockades. The humanitarian motive was not the only reason that led to the abolition of slave trade. The rise of the Industrial Revolution, as well as the reduction in plantation economies, led Britain to take the decision of abolishing the slave trade and legitimizing commerce instead, especially with the

discovery of palm oil which was extracted from African lands and was so needed in Europe

(Galadima and Turaki 93).

   Here Europeans realized that they needed African products more than African bodies, as

Fafunwa (1974) put it "The Bible and the plow" (Anaele 81). The need for African raw materials

and production was a salvation for Africans to be retained in at home instead of exporting them

overseas. Besides, the former slaves were returned back and rehabilitated in Sierra-Leone,

Liberia and many of them settled in Nigerian coastal towns of Logos and old Calabar. The

African ex-slaves were very useful in the spread of Christianity in Nigerian (Anaele 80-81).

   Unlike European missionaries, the freed slaves were able to access the hinterland. In 1842,

some Yoruba ex-slaves were granted a permit from England to leave Freetown and establish

their own colony in Badagry, now part of Lagos, to practice the missionary activities. In the

same year, a church was established for the emigrants. Two years later, the first school was built

in the Badagry. So, the freed slaves had the opportunity to acquire education and to practice

Christianity. The liberated slaved served as a model for other blacks in culture, religion and

social life (Anaele 81).

   Over time, a lot of liberated slaves became Christians and had the responsibility to preach the

gospel to their families and society in general. Among those former slaves, who played a brilliant

role in facilitating the spread of Christianity, was Samuel Ajayi Crowther (1809-1891) (figure1

page 22). At the age of 12, he was captured and sold to Portuguese slave traders. After many

years as a slave, Ajayi became free, and before returning back home, he had been educated and

ordained. He was the first African to act as the bishop of the Christian Missionary Society; in

addition, he contributed in translating the Bible into the Yoruba language (Deji).

Europeans saw the Christianization of freed slaves as a means of the success of their plans not just for the humanitarian purpose. The ex-slaves who converted to Christianity and acquired the education were used as an instrument both to ensure a congenial economic climate and to pave the way for the missionary work (Anaele 82).

Picture 1 : Samuel Ajayi Crowther (1809-1891).

Sources:https://www.google.dz/search?q=AJAYI+CROWTHER&source=lnms&tbm=isch

&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjLotbbxK_aAhUEaRQKHbJjDwIQ_AUICigB&biw=888&bih=54

8#imgrc=1LSgrtnWEXK9vM:

III.   Missionaries in Nigeria

The word missionary is derived from Latin "missioner" which means "act of sending". A missionary is a member of a religious group sent to preach and convert people to another religion. The missionary work was known to be peaceful through establishing ministries of services, such as education, healthcare, justice, economic development ("Missionary").

So, it is very important to seek for an analytic historical study of Christianity in Africa to acquire a good understanding of missionaries and socio-cultural conditions that surrounded the missionary work in African countries in general, and in Nigeria in particular

To missionaries, there was no other religion that reaches the level of being a threat to Christianity despite the fact that Islam was flourishing in Nigeria. They had a common belief that all the other religions were inferior to Christianity. This kind of thinking, in addition to the lack of contact with major world religions, made the missionaries quite confident of the ease of convincing Africans with the Gospel and easily converting them to Christianity once they felt the goodness of its message (Mbiti 3).

The evangelizing process in Nigeria, the most populous country in African and home of multiethnic groups, was characterized by hardness. It had attracted many protestant and Catholic missionaries who's aimed to preach locals and spread Christianity. Missionaries' primary method of proselytizing was the school. The latter was essential to teach locals how to read and write as a way to grasp the Bible (Rev et al.3).

The presence of Christian missionaries in Nigeria dated back to the general European invasion of the West Africa from Portuguese in the 15th century. Although the Christian missionaries had campaigned Portuguese trade trips to West Africa, i.e the idea of proselytizing Africans had already existed, but they failed to do so because they showed more interest to the

economic and commercial sides rather than to the religious one. So, Christian missionaries of 15th to 17th century were not effective as those of 19th century onwards (Okoye 6).

From 1841 till 1891, Nigeria had witnessed five Christian missionaries which were the Anglican Church Missionary Society, The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, The Foreign Mission Committee of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, The Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in the United States, and The Catholic Society of African Missions. Only three Nigerian regions received Christianization campaigns during that period. These were the coastal cities of Yomba, Ogbomosho and the Niger River Valley (Ajayi xiii-xiv).

The Church Missionary Society (CMS), initiated by Anglican Church in1799, came to Egba land in Nigeria in 1841. Four years later, the missionary established the mission station in Abeokuta and in 1847 the Mission spread to the other regions. The Mission built schools for both young and old people in Egba, and got involved in economic, commercial, social and political life. In 1862, the Mission established Ake Orphanage in Abeokuta as well as it founded a newspaper called "Iwe Ihorin" in 1859 (Rev et al. 6-7).

In 1841, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society entered to Nigeria. It was due to the Yoruba freed slaves who established a colony in Badagry and asked missionaries in Sierra-Leone to come and preach the Gospel in the colony. On 24 September 1842, mission house was built in Badagry by the clergymen named Thomas Birch Freeman and William de Graft. The Methodist's outreaches spread from Badagry to Lagos and Abeokuta and established mission stations and schools (Rev et al. 11).

In 1946, the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria arrived at Calabar and established the first Presbyterian station. It was founded by United Presbyterian Church of Scotland missionaries. In 1850, the church began to grow and established several stations over Nigerian territories, among

which was Biafra. The Presbyterian Church had built Waddell University in 1993 and Theological Training Institution in 1918 ("The Presbyterian Church").

In 1850, the American Baptist Missionary, Thomas Jefferson Bowen arrived at Badagry and established a mission station there and others in different Nigerian areas. Although of the difficulties and the danger of death that the previous missionaries faced in Nigeria, Bowen was able to access the hinterland and preach the locals. Bowen learned the Yoruba language and wrote a Yoruba grammar book and a dictionary. The establishment of the Nigerian Baptist Convention in 1912 helped to spread Christianity widely and made it access different Nigerian regions. Several Mission Stations were built in Kaduna, Zaria, Jos and other parts. Furthermore, Secondary Schools, training colleges, hospitals, and medical institutions were established in different areas in the country (Rev et al. 12).

The Society of the African Mission (SMA), formed by Roman Catholic Church, began its task in Lagos around 1860 with father Borghero. The Catholic faith spread from Lagos to other parts of Nigeria because of the Mission Catholic stations which were built in different areas in Nigeria. These stations enabled many Nigerians to receive the Bible instructions. In 1869, the Mission built the chapel in Lagos for the adherents. In the same year, a primary school was established in Lagos where Nigerians were taught the western education to be easily converted to the Catholic faith (Rev et al. 6-7).

Generally speaking, these Christian missionaries had the greatest part in planting Christianity in Nigeria and preaching the Gospel to the locals through their effective strategies and techniques. The foundation of mission stations, out-stations, churches, and institutions was a significant step to enhance the establishment of the missionaries' activities in the mission.

Besides of the establishment of education ministry facilitated missionaries' task of evangelizing Nigerians (Galadima and Turaki 97).

The western educational programs provided by missionaries in Nigeria included literacy programs; classes for religious instruction; Sunday school and Catechism programmes; elementary and primary education; teacher training and secondary education programmes; and theological education and training programmes (Okoye and Pongou 3). Education contributed to the development of people as well as a tool for transforming the Nigerian society. Without denying it was an effective instrument of evangelism. Most missionaries were against intellectual and modernity, and this affected the quality of educational programs offered to locals. Therefore, theological education was preferable than secular one (Okoye and Pongou 3).

Galadima and Turaki argued Missionaries pioneered in the foundation of medical ministry since neither Colonial Government nor Native Authority had medical services available to their subjects. They built hospitals, health clinics, dispensaries and maternity homes. As education, the medical ministry also was a means of evangelization. Providing medical services was a way that missionaries tackled to work on people's heart by presenting Christianity as a religion of love, brotherhood, peace, humanity, and forgiveness (98).

In the North where Islam existed, missionaries were not effective until the early 1930's when the ban, which the colonial administration imposed in order to avoid troubles between Muslims and Christians, was lifted. Besides Islam, the Muslim Emirates of the Far North were under the indirect British rule. This limited the planting of the Gospel in those areas because the Colonial Administration was controlling and regulating the Christian missionary work there. Lord Lugard, governor of Northern Nigeria Protectorate, ordered that Christianity could be permitted to enter the Hausa land unless of the chief's agreement (Okoye and Pongou 3).

Not only Muslims refused Christianity, but also Some Nigerians did not accept it because it was the direct reason that prevented them from practicing their traditions. Many traditional practices which were part of Nigerian heritage were banned and considered a taboo, such as polygamy, blood pacts, oath swearing, oracles, vows, divination, and secret societies among others. Consequently, many new Christian Africans separated from the European churches and built their own ones (Deji).

Even though Christianity was mainly introduced into Nigeria by Christian missionaries, colonialism had a vital role in its spread. The laws and regulations imposed by colonialism were the major reasons that led to the converting of many Nigerian people to Christianity.

IV. Colonialism and Christianity

It could not be denied that besides the Christian missionaries' enterprise, the colonial enterprise was one of the historical events that contributed to the spread of Christianity in Africa and in Nigeria in particular. Of course, it was well known that the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 played a role in formalizing the colonial presence in Africa. At that conference, the European countries struggled on getting a piece of the huge cake that was Africa (Chukwudi 219-220)

The British anti- slavery movement in 1807 was the direct cause of the British colonization of Lagos. In order to oblige the other European nations to ban the slave trade, Great Britain assumed jurisdiction over the Nigerian Coastal regions from 1853 to 1861. In 1861, Britain proclaimed Lagos as a crown colony. By the end of the 19th century, France and Germany competed with Britain in having a part of the region's treasure. However, in 1886, Britain frustrated France and Germany plans by granting the Royal Niger Company a charter to control commerce in the river, administer internal territories, and extract mineral wealth. This led to the

creation of the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1900. In the same year, there was also the creation of the protectorate of the Northern Nigeria (Okpalike 160).

From the 1860s onwards Christianity spread rapidly, and this was due to the colonial administration which encouraged conversion to Christianity, especially Anglicanism, as a part of their program to civilize Africa. The transformations in infrastructure which were brought by the colonial enterprise offered opportunities and facilitated the missionaries work. With the construction of roads and railways, missionaries were easily accessing the other Nigerian regions (Faosiy 54).

The European interest in Africa increased through time encouraged the Christian missionaries who carried large dreams and expectations to think about a long visit to Africa taking with them denominationalism[1] which was one of the worst divisive factors in modern Nigeria. The different denominations entered in racetrack of a crucial competition to gain the largest number of followers, leading to tension and conflicts between Muslims and Christians.

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[1] Denominationalism: The tendency to separate into religious denominations.
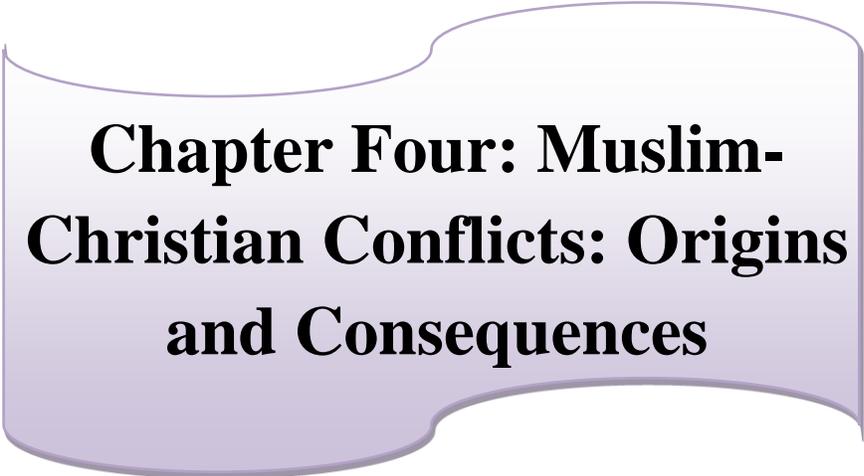
Chapter Four: Muslim-Christian Conflicts: Origins and Consequences

In many parts of the world, it is common that the relationship between Muslims and Christian is characterized by tension. In Nigeria, religion is considered as a cornerstone of the Nigerian social and political construction. It controls the Nigerians worldview and perception of an issue in their lives. Nigeria witnessed many tragedies and losses caused by a countless number of conflicts between the followers of Christianity and the believers in Islam that touched and affected both social and political life. Follower of both religions tried to overcome each other in order to dominate over the governance and impose their own values. Hence, one can understand that religion represents a way of life that is related to dominance and influence in Nigeria.

The aim of this chapter is to examine the conflict, factors, and consequences of Nigerian Muslim-Christian conflicts. This chapter traces the origins and the consequences of such conflicts.

I.   Origins of Conflicts

Conflicts represent a situation of disagreement between two (or more) groups of people adopting contrary opinions, feelings, and beliefs. They are interrelated because they occur between people whose interests are common. The conflict between the Muslims and the Christians in Nigeria was due to many reasons: religious, political and economic.

Religious factors are the historical and theological aspects that caused a conflict and tension between the two religious groups. Throughout ages, the two religions, Islam and Christianity, witnessed a constant rivalry and conflict not only in Nigeria, but in all territories that Islam reached in Africa. The hegemony between such groups, Muslims and Christians, in Nigeria was difficult to maintain.

One of the main causes behind The Muslim-Christian conflicts is the drive for membership and minds. Both religions' leaders were constantly involved in activities that

sought for winning hearts and minds. This was clearly reflected in gathering people around a

pastor or a Sheikh in order to listen to religious sermons which in turn led to physical combat

between Christians and Muslims. It is worth saying that both religions used different strategies

to win converts through using Western and Islamic education trying to give the best picture of

each religion (Awojobi 4).

Another factor that contributed way more in the increasing of religious conflict between

Christians and Muslims was the spread of the religious misconception among both groups which

constituted through time a complex that developed later on into a religious fanaticism. In other

words, Awojobi said that Christians carried in their minds wrong conceptions about Islam and

vice-versa. Muslims, for instance, think that Christians worship three Gods through believing in

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit while Christians believe in the Trinity- God as one God

manifesting himself in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (7). It means that Christianity is a

monotheistic religion in whose terms. On the other hand, the Muslim concept of slavery is

misinterpreted by Christians who consider themselves as children of God while Muslims believe

that they are his slaves. The real Muslim is meant to be submissive to God like slaves to their

master (Omotosho 2).

Lastly, the application of Sharia in certain areas in Nigeria has been considered as a reason

that has exacerbated the dispute between them because in Northern Nigeria, where Sharia is

practiced, people who converted back to Christianity were executed. Yet Christians were not

prevented from joining Islam if they wish so (Awojobi 5).

Besides the religious factors, political factors were also one of the main factors of Christian-

Muslim conflicts. The introduction of Christianity was linked directly to imperialism. During the

European scramble for Africa, the Christian missionaries spread in Africa reaching most tribes

and remote territories. The British territories were not an exception. The Nigerian ethnicities

became subject to those Christian missionaries. Various traditional and Muslim religions felt

threatened by the spread of Christianity at the cost of their religions. The European missionaries,

on the other hand, had a close relationship with the British army authorities. They relied on the

British authorities in Nigeria to subdue tribes' rebellions and resistances to facilitate their

activities (Ogunbado 54).

The colonial authorities also found the spread of Christianity and missionaries a crucial tool

to eliminate the hostile religious reactions because of Muslims and traditional tribes. So, the

collaboration between the colonial authorities and the Christian missionaries resulted in

numerous movements of resistances. The traditional tribes did not accept the imposed change

brought by the British especially after the introduction of a Western-based educational system

that conquered the traditional ones. The schools established by the British excluded any form of

traditional values and knowledge. Islamic and traditional teachings were replaced by

Westernized and Christian ones. Consequently, the religious and traditional tribes resisted

against the spreading Christianity that was equally accompanied with Western imperialism.

On the one hand, the constitutions of 1922 and 1946, imposed by colonists, brought new

methods of governing by giving Nigerians opportunities to participate in decision and law

making, as well as the administrative division that Britain did in 1947, which divided Nigeria

into three main regions; the North, the East and the West, were reasons in worsening the

situation between the Nigerian ethnic and religious groups and led to the emergence of

antagonistic regionalism (Deji 90).

The constitution of 1922, better known as the Clifford Constitution, introduced the elective

principle which was a cause in the formation of the political parties. It also offered the Lagos and

Calabar people opportunities to express themselves. However, unlike the Clifford Constitution which excluded the Northern Province, the Richard Constitution of 1946 aimed to unify the north and south under the same central legislative council. So, those constitutional divisions led to increasing the competition among those groups of who was the dominant power (Deji 90)

The Northern Nigerian Muslims believed that absolute authority should be given to the Muslims from Hausa-Fulani because they totally thought that they were born with the gift of ruling. This kind of thinking led to the marginalization of the Christians and the appearance of injustice and inequality in politics and education among those groups. As a result, a lot of quarrels and conflicts rose between Muslims and Christians (Gbonigi 19).

The poor economic situation can also be considered as a main factor for the religious conflict development. While Muslims were the politically dominant members, financing Islamic projects was an economic and political priority. The threat to such projects was the Christian acquisition of political power which created a serious problem for Islamic project sponsorship by the government. For this reason, most religious leaders from both sides attempted to improve their economic situation (Awojobi 5).

II.The Outbreak of Muslim-Christian Conflicts

Shortly after its independence in 1960, Nigeria confronted many inter-religious riots, uprisings, conflicts, and civil wars. As Nigerians gave more importance to religion, each group, Muslim or Christian, desired their religion to be the dominant one. This flamed hostility between them.

Illustrative examples of the conflict between Muslims and Christians can be represented in first, the Biafra civil war 1967-1970. The interpretations of the causes of the conflicts put forwards by experts vary between political and religious ones. However, the religious factor was

a strong influential element in the conflict. During the conflict, religious minorities in several regions were subject to several hate crimes due to their religious backgrounds. For instance, several churches and Christian religious groups were attacked in the Northern territories that are inhabited mostly by Muslims. The same incidents happened against Muslims in other territories (Omenka 370).

During the 20th century, Kano was the most famous state for riots led by Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. These violent actions were because Muslims were accusing Christians of intentional inconvenience by driving around Muslims neighborhoods using loudspeakers to invite people to attend an open-air religious revival to be held by a German preacher, the Rev. Reinhard Bonnke who carried unlimited hatred against Islam (Maier 29).

In December 1980, there was also Maitatsine revolts in Kano. It was led by the Islamic Cameroonian teacher who claimed to be a prophet. He was Muhammadu Marwa, better known as Maitatsine[2]. He and his followers preached people to boycott life's luxuries. As a result to their riots, the police intervened and tried to stop them. However, the clashes between them and the fanatics who used white weapons led to the burning and the destruction of many amenities and loss of lives among them Maitatsine himself. Some of his followers were jailed and others scattered to the neighbouring states (Isichei 197).

In October 1982, there were about three riots which took place in different places. The first was on 26 October, in Bulumkutu. It was for the same reason as Maitatsine revolts. Four days of fighting, there were more than 3.000 people killed in an ugly way. Their eyes, tongues, ears and noses were removed according to the Maitatsine sect traditions. The second took place on 29

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[2] Maitatsine*: is a Hausa word meaning "the one who damns"*

October in a state away of Kaduna of about one hundred miles. It was also held between the police members and fanatics who escaped there during Kano riots. However the clash of 30th October was for another reason. In this incident, Muslims attacked Christians and tried to destroy a church in Fegge because it was built near the mosque (Isichei 198).

In 1986, the conflict broke out because of the controversy upon Nigeria's joining of the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) during Babangida's regime. This step led to several disputes between Nigerian Christians and Muslims. The latter argued that since the Nigerian government had diplomatic relations with the Vatican, it was similarly permitted to be a member of the OIC (Ushe 120). The riots of 1987 in Kafanchan, Kaduna were clearly religiously motivated. They occurred in a college between Muslim students and Christian ones. The riots broke out when a Christian preacher purported derogatory remarks about the Prophet Mohamed (PBUH). The clashes spread to the town and to parts of the neighbouring states (Iruonagbe 157-58).

In 1991, new conflicts started in Zaraland Local Government Areas, when a Fulani Muslim costumer attacked a Christian butcher who refused to take the meat back. The costumer claimed that the meat was pork or beef slaughtered by non-Muslims. The fighting lasted for four days and resulted in the death of more than 200 people and many injuries. In the same year, riots erupted by Muslims in Fagge as a reaction to the construction of a new church in the city, causing a big loss of life and property (Wadam 106-07).

The riots of 1992, better known as market riots, took place in Zango-Kataf town, in southern Kaduna state. In this town, both Muslim Hausa-Fulanis and Christian Katafs (who were the dominant group there) had been living together. As a result of the governmental decision to

change the market location from a Hausa area to a Kataf dominated area, violent clashes between

Hausa Muslims and Christians broke out. The riots spread to the capital state Kaduna and led to

the destruction of lives and properties (Emenikeuwa 4-5).The table below summarizes the

Nigerian Muslim Christian conflicts from 19th century to the 20th (see table 1 on page 8).

0n October 27th, 1999, the question of the application of Sharia law and Islamic principles in

Northern state of Nigeria became a subject of controversy. For instance, the adaptation of Sharia

as a source of the state's law escalated the controversy. Furthermore, intellectuals and politicians

started questioning the true nature of the Nigerian state's secularity (Igboin 5). This fact led to

more disagreement even at the intellectual and ideological levels.

The religious diversity in Nigeria has been a source of conflicts since the first contact with

European missionaries. The radical change that Nigerians witnessed after the British arrival

resulted in numerous changes in the political and cultural aspects of their society. In addition to

the historical dimension of the conflict between the Christians and the Muslims, the situation

escalated due to other political reasons during the 20th century.

III. Consequences of Conflicts

The religious conflicts in Nigeria remained a source of controversy that reached political,

cultural, and economic aspects. The tension that occurred at the political level was the most

critical, due to the importance of the political institutions. It was difficult to establish political

stability in light of the constant religious tension. In 1986, General Ibrahim Babangida's regime

joined the OIC. This decision caused a heavy impact on the socio-political scene in Nigeria. The

controversy worsened due the fact that Nigeria had also strong and influential ties between the

Vatican and the Nigerian Christians. Riots and clashes between religious groups spread in some

Nigerian states, such as Kaduna that witnessed bloody clashes between Muslims and Christians due to religious issues (Ushe 120).

Religious tension in the Nigerian politics reached its climax after the eruption of the debate of the application of *Sharia* law as a source of legislation. This debate caused a heated and intense dispute among Nigerian politicians. Furthermore, its application in 1999 worsened the situation. In 1997, during a constitutional review, some politicians used the gaps in the Nigerian constitution to adopt a law that declared Islam as the official religion of Nigeria and the *Sharia* as a source of legislation. The law was implemented in several Nigerian states and generated a critical rupture between Christians and Muslims at several levels (Umaru 59).

The tension resulted from the parallel spread of Islam and Christianity constituted fertile conditions for religious based conflicts during the 21th century. The constant tension also caused a rupture within the Muslim community in Nigeria that was followed by the emergence of radical ideologies in the late 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. Those currents caused several political and ideological crises in Nigeria. For instance, the Group of Boko Haram emerged from a reformist movement that emerged during the late 20th century under the leadership of Muhammad Yusuf who used to be a teacher in a religious school (Voll 1189). Those groups and movements were the basis of armed religious groups that were created in the 21st century. Those activities were one of the main factors of instability in contemporary Nigeria.

The religious tension also caused a destructive effect on the sociological level of the Nigerian society. In addition to the political problems, tension between Christians and Muslims led to the lack of cohabitation between the two religious groups. The violence and disagreement caused a mutual suspicion between politicians, intellectuals, and the masses even during stable situations.

Also the distribution of population also changed dramatically in which people favoured living in territories that were dominated by their own religion. Such attitudes widened the gap between the two religions spreading a general feeling of hostility and mistrust among Nigerians from different religions.

Effects of the religious conflicts were complex and recurrent at several levels and different periods. The historical factor of the conflict between Muslims and Christians that dates back to the early age of imperialism was the triggering factor, especially after the arrival of the Christian missionaries under the colonial authorities. Since that period, a complex conflict had started and affected by other political and international factors later during the next centuries.

Conclusion

Conclusion

Like other African countries, Nigeria fell under European colonization which had great role in shaping its socio-political map. Prior to colonialism, the history of the country of Nigeria had recorded the existence of more than numerous distinct ethnic groups, distinct traditions, languages and religions. Although Islam was the religion of the most populous group, all were living in harmony.

The appearance of European imperialism in Africa, specifically in Nigeria by the end of the 19th century, was accompanied by the introduction of Christianity into the area through a wave of Christian missionaries. This new religion paved the way for several Nigerian social, political, educational and economic changes. Mainly, it introduced the concept of individualism and regionalism which caused a lot of problems and tension in the region. Christianity took years to be established in Nigeria as Muslims' strongly opposed it because they considered it as a direct threat to Islam. Over the years, the historically Nigerian traditional religions were gradually exterminated whereas Islam and Christianity became the two dominant religions in Nigeria and respectively they entered in religious and political competitiveness.

Religion which should promote unity, tolerance, love, forgiveness and peace, was a reason in erupting antagonism, hostility, quarrels and conflicts between the two religious groups in Nigeria. At first, the friction between them was superficial. Both religions tried to win more adherents by using different strategies to convince people and win their hearts. Later, the Muslims considered some Christian practices, such as loudspeakers inviting people to attend an open air religious revival, as an explicit attack to Islam. As a result, riots and clashes between the

Conclusion

two groups took place. Both of Muslims and Christians used white weapons.Christians burned mosques whereas Muslims throw churches with stones as a way of reaction.

The colonial changes on the political and administrative levels had transformed those simple religious quarrels and misunderstandings to stormy, violent, and bloody conflicts which resulted in great material and human losses. Besides religious motives, Muslims and Christians started competing for power. To be politically dominant group means that the religion of such group would be the predominant one. Therefore, after the independence in 1960, many military coups, conflicts and civil wars took place between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria, not just for the sake of leadership but to support and officialize each one's religion, too.

Such conflicts hinder economic progress and undermine social cohesion, i.e. they have bad consequences on the country in different walks of life.

Appendix: Nature of conflict in Nigeria (Kwashi 64).

localization	DATE	CONFLICTS
Kano,Kano state	18th-20th Dec.1980	Islamic revivalists (the Maitatsine group) attacked Christian and burnt churches. Over 4000 Christians were killed with property worth million of Naira lost.
Maiduguri Borno state	26th-29th Oct.1982	Maitatsine riots, over 100 Christians lost their life, properly belonging to Christian were also lost
Kaduna,Kaduna state	25th-30th Oct.1982	Another Maitastine riots, Over 50 Christians were estimated to have died.
Sabon Gari area municipality of kano,Kano State	30th Oct.1982	Two churches burnt to ashes with six other damaged
Jimeta-Yola then Gongola state	15th Feb-2nd March 1984	The Maitatsine group attacked Christians, over 500 people were killed.
Gombe,then in Bauchi state	23rd -28th March.1985	Maitatsine uprising more Christian lost their lives
Kafanchan,Kaduna,Zaria (all in Kaduna state and Kastina	6th -12th March 1987	Muslim students attacked Christian students at the college of education in Kafanchan and the Christians fought back, the fight later spread to other places as indicated here under location .More than 150 churches were burnt and over 25 Christians lost their lives
Kaduna polytechni Kaduna state	8th March 1988	The Kaduna state government destroyed a Christian chapel under construction at the Kaduna polytechnic. this led to religious uprising Benson Omenka, a final year Christian

		student in Ahmadu Bello University ,zaria was killed by Muslim students during the student election .some other Christians were stoned and maimed while female students were raped.
Bauchi, Gombe Bauchi state	1988	Religious riots in Bauchi states secondary schools. Muslim students attacked Christian teachers and students in GSS and Gombe,GTC , Gombe, and GSS Bauchi and other secondary schools in Bauchi state . Some of the Christian students were badly wonded.
Bauchi,Bauchi state	20th –23rd April 1991	Fighting between Muslims Christian more than 200 people lost their lives and 700 churches and mosques were burnt
Kano,Kano state	14th -16th Oct. 1991	The Reinhard Bonnke riots fighting between Muslims and Christians as Muslims activists rampaged and protested a planned revival meeting during wich a German evangelist Reinhard Bonnke was expected to be the guest preacher.
Jos Plateau state	Oct-91	A young man from Anaguta was beaten to death on a field opposite to University of Jos during election primaries of the defunct social Democratic party (SDP).
Zangon Kataf local government area,Kaduna stae	15th -16th April 1992	What began as a Communal riots turned into religious riots between Christians and Muslims and spread throughout Kaduna state .Hundred of people lost their lives and buildings were burnt.
Kaduna,Zaria Kaduna state	18th May 1992	Revd tacio Duniya of ECWA revd Musa Bakut and a host of other were murdered by Muslim fanatics.

Kano,Kano state	1992	Many Christian were massacred an churches destroyed
Jos Plateau state	Feb.1992	A young Christian married with one child , was beaten to death by Muslims as he was going home from an evening church meeting at Yan Taya , junction jos.
Jos Plateau state	12th-April 1994	Fighting between Muslims and Christians over the appointment of one Aminu Mato as Chairman of the caretaker committee for Jos local government area. 16 lives were lost and properly destroyed
Borno state	1999	Religious riots as Borno state government mooted the idea of not allowing the teaching of Christian religious knowledge in school .

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