

Cultism and Islamism as Impediment to the Growth of Christianity in Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper "Cultism and Islamism as impediment to growth of Christianity" a look at how the continued effect of cultism and Islamism has impeded and is still impeding the growth of Christianity. Cultism has been treated under causes and effects on the youths, society and Christianity while Islamism is treated as the radical arm of Islam and its strategies of impeding Christianity. Suggestions have been made to encourage unity and peaceful existence of Nigerians.

Index terms— cultism, islamism and christianity.

1 Introduction

here is revealing truth in the statement that cultism and Islamism impede the growth of Christianity. The two human generated cultural impediments have been politically manipulated in Nigeria to create disunity, conflicts, violence and deaths. Birthed into a politically ill-conceived contraption called a country with ethno-trado-cult groups and Islam strongly entrenched, Christianity as an addition has become an unwanted stubborn thud. It therefore merits resistance by all means.

2 a) Cultism

Cultism to the common man is the devotion to the doctrine or practices of a cult group or secret cult or a religious zeal or willingness to serve God. It borders on fanaticism. Its concept implies any activities of secret cults when only participants know about methods and members of such organizations. Cultists declare their allegiance and follow all the orders that seniors give them.

Cultism can be defined as the practice or activities of a group of people who have extreme religious beliefs that are considered severe. It is a social crime which is rampant within the school system and in the larger society. At the very heart of cultism lies a violent repudiation of constituted authority and peace. Cultism always carries the experience of rituals. Cultists have common ideological ideas.

3 b) Islamism

Islam is a religion (a way of worship and belief) founded by Mohammed, the prophet in the 7th century. Believers of Islam (Muslims) form 23% of the world population of 1.57 billion. Muslims consider the Quran as their holy book. Islam, the religion is not dangerous.

Islamism, the political ideology (radical Islam) as opposed to the simple belief in Islam is the arm of trouble. Islamism is the political ideology that holds deeply or highly that wherever Islam is it must dominate. The parochial implementation of Islam is the reason for the world wide Islamic insurgency.

4 c) Christianity

This is Abrahamic monotheistic religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth and its practices. Its adherents known as Christians, believed that Jesus is the Christ, who's coming as the Messiah was prophesised

in the Hebrew Bible, called the Old Testament in Christianity and Chronicled in the New Testament. Nigeria's south is predominantly Christians of various denominations and doctrines.

II.

6 Reasons for Cultism a) Causal patronage of cultism

In Nigeria, many reasons ranging from the political, poor leadership, insecurity, poverty and weak parenting amongst others treated below have forced youths into cults.

i. The use of cultists by politicians to campaign during pre-voting period, during voting to snatch ballot boxes and materials and their wicked assignments to intimidate opponent and for their personal* security. ii. Young people searching for protection (physical and spiritual) often run to cultists, cult-groups and cultic altars for security and assumed invincibility. iii. In the quest for social identity and relevance young people run to cult-groups. This a times exposes them to unnecessary notoriety and danger. iv. Poor parental training: Youths that have been solidly socialized at home would scarcely betray their home training. They would not only respect their parents but would also fear God. The reverse could be the case. v. Peer Group Influence: Where parental socialization was weak, peer group influence would have the upper hand in winning the youth into cult group. vi. Revenge: A good number of youths join cult groups 'to revenge the treatment or death of a loved one in the hand of cultist (but in most cases, they too are taken in as well (killed)). vii. Emotional Instability: Parents have to properly bring up their wards to become emotionally stable T personalities. Abnormal behaviour is acceptable to cult groups. e.g. Bullies like cult alignment. viii. Drug Abuse: Especially the use of weeds, codeine, cocaine, etc, encourage youths into heroic adventures that cult groups give opening for display. ix. Poverty and financial hardship: Inability to pay fees, buy text books, meal vouchers, attend parties, etc, can force innocent and inexperienced youths in schools into the hands/groups of cultists that register them as members. x. Loneliness: Lack of friends expose youths to whoever comes up.

7 b) Effects of Cultism on Nigeria/Youths

In the late 90 s , when the Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria was serious about curbing the spread of cultism, it set up a panel on it that toured local governments, tertiary institutions and important occasions to speak against cultism. This quotation was made at Ikot Ekpene town hall by a member of the team, Sir Amos Etim; "Secret Cult is a monster that breeds anarchy and threat to life. It promotes proliferation of arms and destroys physical and spiritual lives. It promotes laziness, erodes manpower base, decreases manpower production. It frustrates and receives frustrated people to protect and finish them off. It is raised by a rotten society and holds freedom in trust for its members. One's background and socialization contribute greatly to people's vulnerability to joining cult".

The Exam Ethics Project lobby group has estimated that one hundred and fifteen students and teachers had been killed in cult related clashes between 1993 and 2003. and in 2002, more than 250 people were reported killed in campus cult related murders in the previous ten years.

8 c) Islamism

There are two distinct Schools of Thought on Nigeria's politico-religious altercations. One believes that Nigeria's problem is simply Islamism versus Christianity while the other maintains that it is Jihadism and conquest to the sea which of course goes with the land the Jihadists pass through. Gundu (2018) has openly observed that the Fulani want land by force. Since 1840, Muhammed had established the Guinea Caliphate that covered the whole of West Africa. This was even in pre-colonial time. In Guinea, the Fulani are not allowed to rule. They have no serious political root.

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In Nigeria, we have yet got three Fulani rulers in quick succession (Ibrahim Babangida, Musa Y'Ardua, and Muhammadu Buhari who have gradually through secret scheming encouraged Fulani migration in great numbers into Nigeria from Niger and Chad with all amount of excuses. They come in to fight for land having been displaced from their original home land. The British Amalgamation gave the Fulani privileges over the other groups, even the Hausas have been swallowed up by the more audacious Fulani. (Channel TV, 26 June 2018).

During the Constitutional Conference before Independence in 1960, ONE vital issue for discussion was a National Ideology. This should specify the character of the nation and its system of governance. An all-inclusive ideology would be the best as it would guarantee Justice, Equity and Fairness for all Nigerians since it is multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural in nature. Liberal Democracy was thought the best National Ideology. BUT the Muslim north wanted a system of governance with Islamic law as essential ingredient. SINCE then, the Muslim north has been busy scheming, covertly subverting Liberal Democracy, so that Sharia can become National Ideology.

In 1960, at Independence, the Sardauna of Sokoto, late Sir Ahmadu Bello was quoted (Parrot Newspaper ??ctober 12, 1960) as saying:

The new nation called Nigeria should be an estate of our great grandfather, Othman Dan Fodio.
 We must ruthlessly prevent a change of power. We must use the minorities in the north as willing tools and the south
 In 2012, Abubakar Shekau, the leader of Boko Haram in one of his audio releases said: as a conquered territory and never allow them to rule over us and never allow them to have control over their future. This war is not political. It is religious. It is between Muslims and unbelievers (arna) It will stop when Islamic religion is the determinant in governance in Nigeria or in the alternative when all fighters are annihilated and no one is left to continue the fight.
 Look at the semblance between this speech by Abubakar Shekau in 2012 and the one Sir Ahmadu Bello made in 1960, 52 years back. The mission statement is the same. The heat has increased. The Islamists are religiously following their blue print to subdue Christians and Christianity.
 In Turkey, Christianity had existed for about 1023 years and had taken roots. The seven churches Jesus referred to in Rev. 2 & 3 (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea) existed in Turkey. It was in Turkey (Antioch) that the disciples were first called Christians. Civil law and sharia jurisdiction, practiced by 14 nations.
 Common law and Sharia practiced by 5 nations.
 Nigeria used to belong to common law jurisdiction.

10 i. Strategies of Islamism

Military heads of state in Nigeria, most of whom were strategized to be Muslims from the north worked surreptitiously to turn Nigeria into an Islamic state.
 In 1986, General Ibrahim Babangida smuggled Nigeria into the Organization of Islamic countries (OIC). In 1996, Sultan Dasuki accepted before Pope John Paul II that Nigeria was a full member of OIC. In 1999, General Abdulsalam Abubakar smuggled Sharia Ideology into the country's constitution thereby creating A DUAL CONFLICTING IDEOLOGY in the constitution.
 The constitution of Nigeria is supreme. It guarantees freedom of worship. The same constitution stipulate death if you convert from Islam. This is the dual ideology. The past three Fulani rulers have, using their Hausa cohorts in the Nigeria Army carpentered a constitution that has been partially written to favour Muslims when Nigeria is a secular state.
 Apart from Nigeria's secrete registration in OIC, the rulers of Nigeria have since then been vigorously pursuing steps to turn Africa into an Islamic continent. Section 162 (2) of the Constitution on Public Revenue is skewed in favour of Muslim north -in the consideration of land mass (an asset that is even used to fetch the owners more revenue).

11 d) Illogicality of military decrees becoming the constitution.

Most recently employed strategies of Jihadism is revealed in this alert by Bishop Olaniyon Oyedepo, Founder of Living Faith Church in mid-2016 from God to warn Christians about modern Jihadism: Christianity in Nigeria is under siege, spiritually and physically. From revelation I had, local military groups have been formed and trained for forceful spread of fundamentalism in Nigeria. There is an army already recruited, trained armed and in position right now in different parts of Nigeria. This plan is not co-ordinated by Nigerians alone but by others outside. The plan is not just being carried out physically but so much spiritual (demonic sacrifices are involved and ongoing in many government seats. The aim of the spiritual angle is to keep flooding the minds of the people and leaders with evil clouds of worldliness in all its forms, prayerlessness, disunity, immorality and distractions through politics.
 In the past three years of President Muhammadu Buhari's regime, every key and sensitive position in National security is held by Muslims from the North (in trust for Islamists to use in championing their cause) in violation of Section 14(3) of the 1999 Constitution. The table above speaks volumes. There was no officer fit for retirement in the core North East and North West. President Muhammadu Buhari and his clan of advisers are not stupid. They are good foot soldiers.

12 III. Effect of Islamism on Christians and Christianity

Persecution of Christians is no more secretly done. Fulani terrorist herdsman are daily persecuting Christian farmers, students, Christian worshipers and even civil servants all over the north and even in the south. The states of Benue and Plateau have had no peace because Muslim activists want to take over these and other states that were predominantly Christians. Here are few examples: On 4 th February 2017, the United States Congress affirmed that the most dangerous nation on earth for anyone to be a Christian is Nigeria.
 The meaning is that Nigerian Christians have become an endangered species in a country where they constitute over 56% of the population.
 In a 154-page research project conducted by Anne Mulder in 2015, the researcher affirms that over 13,000 Christian places of worship (churches) had been destroyed in northern Nigeria as at December 2014. This number must have substantially increased by this year (2020) with the current upsurge in Fulani Herdsmen raids. It is only under Jihad that Muslim insurgents and terrorists' herdsman destroy churches. Jihad is ongoing.

The Daily Sun of April 9, 2012 page 16 carried a pathetic story by Seye Ojo of how a 12-year-old JS2 student slaughtered his teacher (a mother), Mrs Christiana Oluwatosin Oluwasesin, of Government Day Secondary School, Gundu, Gombe State and had her burnt with the spare tyre of her car. Funny enough, the principal, teachers and a team of policemen drafted to the school by the woman's husband, could not save her life. Only her ten-month-old son, Emmanuel was hid by a woman in her flowing hijab and smuggled to safety. Why? Christiana, a teacher sent to supervise SS One examination in Islamic Religions Knowledge, caught a female student, Fatsuma, copying answers from a book, carefully concealed in a newspaper. The teacher got the book and threw it outside, not knowing it was slips of the Hadith and Koran. Chants of Alahu Ahkbar filled the air and a student revolution had started.

On July 2, 2018, Amnesty International (Nigeria) issued a statement warning that between January and June 27, 2018 (6 months of the year) 378 (Benue), 340 (Plateau), and Zamfara (217) people have been killed by marauding herdsmen of no fixed addresses.

Leah Sheribu, a student of Government Girls Science and Technical College in Dapchi, Yobe State, was abducted on February 19, 2018 along with 112 others. A few weeks (March 21, 2018) after, 107 of the originally abducted 113 were released and taken back in a convoy to Dapchi. 5 students were said to have died of stress and heart attack. Leah Sheribu was kept back because she refused to denounce her Christian faith and convert to the Muslim faith. Muslim fundamentalists refused her freedom because she stuck to Christianity. There was a threat warning to kill her in September 2018. At its expiration in October 2018, Leah Sheribu was announced by the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) to become their slave for life. The United Nations earlier last summer released a report alleging that the Nigerian government paid a ransom for the release of the school girls but not for Leah Sheribu because she is not a Muslim.

Christians also experience horror murder of their members without any action taken by government (State/Federal). Marshall Okwong on 9 November, 2018 posted a warning on his face book page for Christians who have mistaken the uneasy calm in the state to mean that all is well with the following happenings. Eunice Olawale Elisha, a 42-year-old mother of seven and an assistant pastor with the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Divine Torch Parish, Old Nepa Road, Phase 4, Kubwa, Abuja, was beheaded around Gbazango-West Area of Kubwa in Bwan Area Council of the FCT, by Muslim youths. The female pastor was on morning trumpeting when she was surrounded and killed. Police labelled the killers "some boys who were mainly non-Nigerians who settled in the area building batchers as their hamlets". The attack was an act of hatred and religious sentiments.

Ifua, (2016) reported on a Redeemed female pastor murdered in Abuja, Mrs. Bridget Agbaine in Kano was killed by radical Muslim herdsmen for alleged blasphemy against Mohammed in mid-2017 and nobody was brought to book.

Eze Oruru (13) was on 12 th August, 2015, abducted from her mother's shop in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State and smuggled to the palace of the deposed Emir of Kano, Sanusi Lamido, renamed Aisha and forcefully married to a Fulani guard, Yunusa Dahiru, her abductor. Her parents (Charles and Rose Oruru) fought persistently to take back their daughter despite police delayance. The police, on February 28, 2016, after seven good months succeeded in freeing a pregnant Eze Oruru from the palace and on March 8, 2016, Yunusa Daline was finally arraigned in court in Yenogoa.

Ebun Adegboruwa (SAN), a human right lawyer called the abduction case child trafficking. On May 21, 2020, Yunusa Dahiru was sentenced to 26 years in prison.

In November 2018, Hauwa Dadi, a Christian girl was abducted, detained and forcefully converted to Islam in the palace of the Emir of Gashua. These ones are known because they were reported and protests organised. There are many unreported cases happening around that may not be known.

The strategies employed by Islamists to control the government of the country, ministries, states n and local governments have been so perfected in the years of President Muhammadu Buhari's regime that it seems that Christians have accepted defeat and inferiority.

Multidenominational interests, greed and avarice politics at Christian Association of Nigeria, political interest and selfish political alignment for money and or juicy political offices, disunity, lack of a radical Christian platform to react to Islamic attacks, persecution and brutal repression of rights and privileges, and a lot more, have made Christians vulnerable, divided and unable to react speedily to events happening around Christians, Christian families, Christian local governments, and Christian states. We have the facts from history, we know the strategies the Islamists use; we are suffering the effects of their Jihadist project-individually and collectively. It is time for action. CAN must wake up, and initiate actions.

IV. ¹

drugs and with time the danger of addiction manifests and takes complete control of the person's life. Drug addicts are pathetic individuals.

v. Behaviour Disorder: Many cultists prefer to be on their own (business men). At the highest level of commitment, the only serious things on their mind is maintaining their membership, rank, avoiding being killed or being arrested. They cannot perform jobs and therefore cannot be kept without disastrous effect on their jobs and on their organizations. Some cult men do not value human life. On September 5, 2018, a little village in Essien Udim Local Government of Akwa Ibom State woke up to a ritual horror. One of her youths manifested an unusual behaviour disorder-ritualism. He turned his ancestral home into ritual abattoir, laboratory and mortuary where innocent lives were terminated, bloodshed and body parts harvested for sale. Till today he has not been arrested.

vi. Unrealized Life Ambition: Very promising young men truncate their professional aspirations and end up as deranged intellectuals unfit for hiring or destitute because of their life and activities e.g. mad students, Newsmen, academics, etc.

vii. Mental illness: Drug addiction a times result in mental illnesses. Imagine a promising young man coming back mad to a family that had a lot of hope on him.

viii. Spiritual Problem: Cult group initiation is fetish; their means of protection also is. The use of blood in oath taking, tarry night at cemetery, use of charms, marks (tattoos) on the body; usher youths into satanic covenants they cannot easily get out off. Some because of the number of lives they have destroyed live in continuous trauma. Some have even killed their wives, girlfriends, family members or cause them to be killed, arrested tried in law courts and imprisoned. The guilt of these rests with them.

ix. Possible loss of family members: During revenge attacks on homes of cult hitmen, innocent neighbours and family members lose their lives while guilty cultists escape.

In a listed form, we have the following negative impacts on our youths.

i. Untimely death: Very few cult foot soldiers live

Figure 2:

The OIC Conference at Abuja in November 1989 empowered the Islam in Africa Organization (IAO) to:

- a. Eradicate in all its forms and ramifications all non-Muslim religions in member nations, such religions shall include Christianity.
- b. Ensure that only Muslims are elected to all political posts of member nations.
- c. Ensure the appointment of ONLY Muslims into strategic national and international post of members nations.
- d. ii. The Ethnic Nationalities of Nigeria

Nigeria is occupied by two races that are composed of 389 ethnic nationalities:

- a. The Negro race (native or indigenous African ethnic nationalities), are the Bachanas, Birams, Ebira, Efik, Gbagis, Ibibios, Ibos, Igala, Jukuns, Kalabari, Okrika, Nupe, Ogoni, Yoruba.etc.
- b. The Negroid (Fulani's, Hausa and Kanuri's) are of the Arab descent and different from indigenous African ethnic nationalities. They have tried and are still trying in every possible way to impose Arabian culture, lifestyle and religion on the remaining 386 indigenous African ethnic nationalities. Islam and Islamism are being used as a machinery to the process. Nigeria's numerous challenges can be traced to Islamism (political Islam or radical/activist Islam). This is practiced everywhere; there is no exclusivity.
- i. The doctrine of hate taught in the various Mosques, ii. Islamic madrasas in Northern Nigeria and iii. the Fulani supremacist ideology are continuous exercises. Moreover, Islamism demands that,

- a. Any existing structure must be reconstructed in line with the religious principles and ideals of Islam.
- b. The modern secular state must be replaced by Islamic state where religious principles and authority have super intendency of political principles and authority.
- c. The West and Western values are corrupt and corrupting, justifying the deployment of a Jihad against them. All the global Islamic Terrorists Organizations (Taliban, ISIS,

Figure 3:

See some list of appointment below: ii. Executive Management Team: The Southern and Middle Belt I
Year 1. The Chief of Staff (Nigerian Army) 2. The Inspector General of Police 3. The Chief of Air Force 4.

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preservation. They religiously ensure that their members are installed, protected and supported to survive irrespective of their deficiencies and excesses.

ii. Recruitment: Cult groups strategies, to forcefully enlist new members through organized fake parties,

Yearcarnivals, abduction, kidnappings, conditional gifts, favours, employment and political posts while fundamentalists would abduct forcefully, many minors and keep them as sex slaves, use them as explosive carriers or spies on/for target assignments if females while the males serve as child fighters to boost rebel groups. iii. Persecution: Many families have been persecuted; their businesses vandalized, their freedom breached and they have to live in fear of harassment because their wards have refused forced enlistment. V.

Recommendation/Suggested Solutions

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How
Cultism
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Cultism
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really
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growth of Christianity in the following ways:

i. Protection of self-interest: The practice of the Buhari administration since 2015 has been that of nepotism self-preservation. We have proven cases of lopsided appointment to ensure that all top security, economic and policy development and execution posts are occupied and controlled by Islamic patriots to enhance the cultivation and execution of secret and nefarious programmes meant to dominate and protect Islamic interests. In the same vein, cultists work hard to enshrine and protect members in government offices, political parties, traditional institutions for self and societal

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