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EDITORIAL

Bird flies across continents, islands and cultural areas spreading goodness and bringing a diversity of intellectual and cultural riches. In this seventh volume, BIRD maintains its character as an intercultural and interdisciplinary research Journal, as the articles reflect diverse areas of human life and culture. The interdisciplinary nature is also reflected in the diversity of styles, approaches and methods of presentation. This makes every reader to feel at home within the cultural and interdisciplinary tapestry which the Journal assembles. The eight articles in this volume address topical issues from diverse biblical, theological, interreligious, social and cultural perspectives. The first four entries present highly articulated researches from biblical and theological studies. The last four entries present scholarly researches on topical issues bordering on interreligious dialogue, social communication and social ethics.

In the first article, **Anthony Chinedu Osuji** exposes how the text of Jeremiah 27-28 through its narrative intricacies characterises God, His omnipotence, His sovereignty and the complex ways these play out in the ministry of the word (prophecy), both in the text and in our contemporary religious settings. The essay critiques the contemporary religious environment characterised by a confused competition of prophetic voices each of which claims to be the authentic voice.

In the second entry, **Rowland Onyenali** addresses the issue of incest as presented in the text of 1 Cor 5:5, where a member of the Christian community is accused of indulging in sexual union with his father's wife. Onyenali highlights the difficulties in the interpretation of the text while suggesting a preferable understanding of the text's meaning and

its relevance to many issues of incest, both overt and hidden, in the contemporary Nigerian society.

In the third article, **Luke Emehiele Ijezie** raises the issue of the idolatrous nature of contemporary society and the challenges it poses to the priestly ministry. The article makes an in-depth exposition of the meaning of idolatry from both cultural and theological perspectives, with references to a number of biblical texts and how they help the understanding of the contemporary approaches to issues of idolatry.

In the fourth article, **Chibuike Ogbonnaya Ukeh** reflects theologically on the dynamics of the musical culture as expressed in the Negro Spirituals and Jazz music among the Black American slaves and the lessons this poses for contemporary efforts at Inculturation theology. He analyses how these Africans, who were victims of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, employed music to express the richness of their African soul and cultural heritage.

In the fifth entry, **Ikechukwu Mike Nduka** analyses the Islamic understanding of the socio-ethical themes of peace and justice and their relevance to contemporary efforts at world peace. He goes at length to clarify the religious and theoretical framework undergirding Islamic approach to war and peace and the correct teachings of the use of war and Jihad in the promotion of Islamic religion.

In the sixth article, **Maurice Emelu** addresses the problematic of the social media as seen in the use of Facebook or Meta with emphasis on its influence on religious thought and practice. He makes an elaborate exposition of social technology and the ritual theory in communication together with their ideological underpinnings.

The last two entries (the seventh and the eighth) are similar in their orientation and approaches. Both are combined sociological studies by a team of mostly Nigerian scholars working in the United States. In the seventh entry, the scholars, **Edidiong Mendie, Emmanuel Ben-Edet, Ihekwoaba D. Onwudiwe** and **Noel Otu** undertake a detailed analysis of the Ogoni crisis in the Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta region, employing the anomie theory proposed by Emile Durkheim together with Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of "field", "habitus" and *doxa*. The research sees the killing of the nine Ogoni leaders as a consequence of the breakdown of law and order created in the corporate structural regime of Shell Oil Company in Nigeria together with the inappropriate government approaches. The study goes on to address the issue of the management of environmental justice in the region.

Similarly, in the eighth entry, the distinguished researchers, **Emmanuel Ben-Edet, Edidiong Mendie, Ihekwoaba D. Onwudiwe** and **Kashley L. Brown,** expose the menace of the militant Fulani herdsmen as a new form of terrorism in Nigeria. The authors explore some prevalent factors that lead to such homegrown violent extremism, applying the *doxa* theory of Pierre Bourdieu together with the anomie theory of Emile Durkheim, explaining how individuals behave in a society without the clear guidance of rules.

All the articles in this volume make very interesting reading as they address a wide range of topical social and cultural issues from interdisciplinary perspectives. The quality of the inputs reflects the professionalism of the contributors as they all speak from their fields of specialization and expertise.

Luke E. Ijezie

THE YOKE OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR OR THE POKE OFYAHWEH: CHARACTERISATION OF GOD AND THE SOCIO-THEOLOGICAL STAKES IN PROPHETIC MINISTRY IN JEREMIAH 27-28

Anthony Chinedu Osuji
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Abstract

The article points at the enduring dynamics and the theological contextual stakes in the question of biblical prophecy and prophetic ministry. The sample text for consideration, using narrative exegesis, is Jer. 27–28 which concentrates on the motif of the Yoke of Babylon – Jeremiah advises submission to Nebuchadnezzar as sovereign will of Yahweh amidst opposition from other prophets. The presupposition is that the narrative intricacies in this text showcase a lot about the narrator's characterisation of God, his omnipotence and his sovereignty over the relative (qualified) power of Babylon. Through a hermeneutic of appropriation, the article shows how these intricacies in the text play out in the ministry of the word (prophecy) even in our contemporary religious settings. The emerging socio-theological stakes from the text open up room for the contextual relevance in the preaching of the word which is the essence of prophetic ministry.

Keywords: Characterisation of God, contextual prophetic ministry, hermeneutic of appropriation, narrative criticism, yoke of Babylon.

INTRODUCTION

The Bible is an ensemble of ancient texts; one of the oldest extant literature. Yet it ranks as the most popular and most read book in history. It is not because the Bible enjoys the best literary elegance and finesse, or because its accuracy in historical details is unmatchable. It is

rather, inter alia, because it has continued to speak to every age, clime, race, ours inclusive, in a pointed and customised fashion that defies its age. Fokkelman thus picks up squabbles with those who see the ancientness of the Bible as alienation,[1] a fault he imputes highly to historical critical readers who according to him have discouraged many Bible readers, students of theology and preachers, with the mantra that the text is distant – comes from far away, dates from a long time ago, and is rooted in a radically different culture. These 'distances,' though not to be underestimated, are "only half-truths" and should not be treated as "unshakeable axioms" lest they "quietly turn into lies and optical illusions."[2] A greater, more important truth is that these texts are well written, and are products of a deliberate and meticulous designing intelligence. The text is a living text and in reading the biblical ancient text, we must pay attention to "the world it evokes and the values it embodies, and then, the confrontation, the interplay, the friction and sometimes the clash between all this and the reader's world and values."[3]

This article points at the enduring dynamics, the theological-contextual stakes, in the question of biblical prophecy and prophetic ministry today, revealed through a narrative glance at the text of Jer. 27–28 which concentrates on the motif of the Yoke of Babylon – Jeremiah advises submission to Nebuchadnezzar as sovereign will of Yahweh amidst opposition from other prophets. The presupposition is that the narrative intricacies in the text showcase a lot of how the narrator characterises God, his omnipotence, his sovereignty and how these play out in the ministry of the word (prophecy) even today in our contemporary religious settings. We begin with a brief hint on how a narrative glance on a text could open up avenues for theological

[1] J.P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Narrative: A Practical Guide* (Tools for Biblical Study, 1), Leiden, 1999, p. 21.
[2] J.P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Narrative*, p. 21.
[3] J.P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Narrative*, p. 23.

exercise and characterisation of personages, then cast a narrative glance on the text of Jer. 27–28, and finally consider the socio-theological stakes from the text which winds down to contextual relevance, through the principle of a hermeneutic of appreciation.[4]

1 NARRATOLOGY MEETS THEOLOGY AND CONTEXT

Hermeneutic of appropriation would then mean in fact: instead of attempting to reconstruct an ancient history, we read biblical narratives "as we might read modern novels or short stories, constructing a story world in which questions of human values and belief (and theology) find shape in relation to our own (and the readers') world(s). Emphasis, hitherto, laid on the historicity of the text will now be laid more on the historicity of the reader.[5] Biblical narratives can be irresistibly persuasive.[6] The prophetic language of persuasion in particular challenges the reader at the level of decision making so that an intimate dialogue or confrontation that cannot be ignored is established between text and reader[7] especially by the creation of character.[8] Human language has a variety of functions. Conveying information is only one of these; and reading the biblical text just for this purpose alone is tantamount to reading it partially. Reading literature does something to the reader by way of an effect of difference; this difference involves both an increase in information and an increase in new experience, new

[4] The phrase "A Hermeneutic of Appropriation" was coined by C.R. Romero, *A Hermeneutic of Appropriation: A Case Study of Method in the Prophet and Latin American Liberation Theology*, MI, 1982. This work focuses on the work of liberation theologians especially Jose P. Miranda and J. Severino Croatto. The book of Jeremiah was chosen from the prophetic corpus because of its similarity to the situation in Latin America. The "Hermeneutic of Appropriation" is therefore a dialectic between the text and the interpreter's own situation.

[5] S. Paas, *Creation and Judgement: Creation Texts in Some Eight-Century Prophets* (OTS 47), Leiden, 2003, p. 165.

[6] Y. Amit, *Reading Biblical Narratives: Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible*, Minneapolis, 2001, p. 2.

[7] See L. Boadt, *The Power of Prophetic Persuasion: Preserving the Prophet's Persona*, in *CBQ* 59 (1997) 1-20.

[8] R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, New York, 1981, p. 3-22.

feeling, and perhaps new life[9] and reading demands the participation of the reader in whose experience "the text comes to life."[10] Brueggemann writes: "Indeed the text has the powerful capacity to cause us to rediscern our own situation … including a risky invitation in our own time to practices of justice, risks of compassion, and sufferings for peace."[11] The conviction is that insistence on the narrative and artistic aspects of a discourse "stresses the rift between the narrative and the events to which it may refer"[12] and opens the text up to many other situations and contexts.

2 JER. 27–28 IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

The Book of Jeremiah, comprising 52 chapters, has been described as a two-part drama following scholars' identification of the two broad divisions of the Jeremiah (Masoretic) text into two almost equal halves; the first scroll (1–25) and the second scroll (26–52). The structural design of the whole book seems to be an elaboration of the divine program for the prophet in the introductory verses (especially Jer. 1:10) where Yahweh defines the ministry of the prophet in terms of uprooting and planting, destroying and rebuilding. The book therefore testifies to a God who 'uproots and overthrows' (1–25) in order to 'rebuild and to plant' (26–52). A book, which portrays a literary enactment of the death and dismantling of one world (Jer. 1–25) which leads to another (Jer. 26–52), claims that Judah's most venerable and sacral traditions – temple and system of worship, covenant and land, election and kingship

[9] P.W. Macky, *The Coming Revolution: The New Literary Approach to New Testament Interpretation*, in MCKIM, D.K. (ed.), *A Guide to Contemporary Hermeneutics: Major Trends in Biblical Interpretation*, Grand Rapids, 1986, p. 263-279, see p. 269.
[10] W. Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*, Baltimore, 1978, p. 19.
[11] W. Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile and Homecoming*, Cambridge, 1998, p. 18.
[12] A. Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Bible and Literature Series 9), Sheffield, 1983, p. 13-14.

(the sacred canopies) – are all targets of divine judgement and would be plucked and pulled down (1–25), to be rebuilt again (26–52).[12] Jer. 27–28 falls at the very beginning of the second scroll, and is part of four chapters (26–29) which dramatise the confrontation between true and false prophecy.

3 STRUCTURE AND BRIEF NARRATIVE GLANCE

Admittedly, there are reasons for considering these two chapters as separate units by some exegetes.[13] Yet, based on strong indices,[14] Jer. 27–28 has been rightly considered by many exegetes as an integral unit. Thematically, both deal with the programmatic decree of Yahweh that surprisingly suggests that the people must submit themselves to the yoke of Babylon. This startling sovereign will of Yahweh that goes as far as designating the pagan king Nebuchadnezzar as "my servant" seems to constitute a theological dissonance to people, even to the priests and prophets. The narrative goes further to exemplify a prophet, Hananiah, who challenges this prophecy of Jeremiah.

[12] A description of this phenomenon in the book from the narrative perspective has been given in A.C. Osuji, "As Gaps Overlap on the Map: Negotiating Jeremiah Landscape as *Narrato-logic* Blends with *Theo-logic*, in Ausloos, H. & Luciani, D. (eds.), *Temporalité et Intrigue: Hommage à André Wénin*. Leuven-Paris-Bristol, CT: Peeters, Belgium, 2018, pp. 107-116.

[13] They consider the introduction of chapter 28 with its peculiar date formula as making it the beginning of a separable unit. Again the two chapters have each different characters.

[14] The commentary of Keown *et al*. has it as "The Yoke of Nebuchadnezzar" (27:1-28:17 [LXX 34:1-35:17]), pp. 38-59. For them, "Chaps. 27–28 must be read together in order to be understood properly in their present shape […]. Four main features of the present shape of these chapters indicate they now form a unit (1) the story told or implied in the arrangement of the oracles and other materials; (2) the common formal pattern found in the oracles in both chapters; (3) intertextual connections by means of quotation, repetition, or allusion; (4) shared historical setting," G.L. Keown, P. Scalise & T.G. Smothers, *Jeremiah 26-52* (WBC 27), Dallas, 1995, p. 44. Brueggemann titled the two chapters: "The Yoke of Yahweh (27:1–28:17)," cf. Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah*, pp. 240-255. See also F.-L. Hossfeld & I. Meyer, *Prophet gegen Prophet, Eine Analyse der alttestamentlichen Texte zum Thema: wahre und false Propheten* (Biblische Beiträge 9), Freiburg, 1973, especially pp. 90-103; J.S. de Vries, *Prophet against Prophet*, Grand Rapids, 1978.

We, therefore, have a structure in the following divisions:

A. *Divine commissioning for a sign-act and oracle for the neighbouring kings* (27:1-11)
B. *Oracle for Zedekiah* (27:12-15)
C. *Oracle for the priests and people* (27:16-22)
D. *Hananiah's counter oracle and counter sign-act* (28:1-11)
E. *Yahweh's sovereign intervention* (28:12-17)

After Jeremiah's legitimisation as a true prophet of Yahweh, vindicated by Judah's highest court in chapter 26, it is logical to expect immediately afterwards Jeremiah's self affirmation and proper fulfilment of this role. We see Jeremiah confronting other prophets whether Judean or foreign, Jerusalem based or active in Babylon.[15] Cast in prose, Jer. 27 is mainly a record of oracles from Yahweh. There is an abundance of the *Legitmationsformel* indicating that Jeremiah is acting on a sure base of certainty that his words are Yahweh's (vv. 2, 4, 8, 11, 15, 16, 21, 22). Yahweh commands Jeremiah to fashion a yoke, which he would put round his neck. The prophet gains access to the envoys from neighbouring kingdoms, charges them to take the yokes to their masters who have sent them to Jerusalem. The summary of the message, which interprets the symbolic act, is: submit to the king of Babylon and stop listening to the various intermediaries who preach against this option (vv. 1-11). Oracles of similar nature are delivered to Zedekiah (vv. 12-15) and to the priests and the people (vv. 16-22). In summary, each of the three sections of this divine discourse contains a two-part exhortation: serve the king of Babylon and do not listen to the falsehood by the prophets. One notices a constant distinction between the true and the false, couched in an opposition between a programme of life in

[15] R. Carroll, *Jeremiah: A Commentary* (OTL), London, 1986, p. 523. See for example "Jeremiah against the prophets: An Independent Cycle 27-29" in R. Carroll, *Jeremiah* (OTL), pp. 523-568.

Babylon and a programme of death outside it. Brueggemann calls this a "frightened theological statement."[16]

A reader of the discourse of chapter 27 would appreciate how things were building to a climax. Jeremiah's words have been addressed to the envoys, the king, the priests and the people. When will it be spoken to the prophets, the ones most offended, because Jeremiah had been telling everyone not to listen to them (cf. 27:9, 14, 15, 16, 17). Hananiah would fill the vacuum. What comes in chapter 28 is a face-to-face confrontation between Jeremiah and Hananiah, the lead prophet of the opposition,[17] a meeting rated as one of the most dramatic encounters between true and false prophets in the Bible, comparable only with the meeting of Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel (cf. 1 Kings 18:16-45).

With the *Legitimationsformel* where Hananiah claims the divine origin of his prophecy ("thus says the Lord") and in the presence of the priests and all the people, he contradicts Jeremiah's prophecy, and prophesies the breaking of the Babylonian yoke, the return of the exiles within two years, the restoration of the temple vessels that had been looted and the reinstallation to power of the King (v. 2-4). The reader can sense the tense atmosphere. Jeremiah then addressed his compatriot personally.

Beginning his speech, Jeremiah retorted "Amen! May the Lord do so" (v. 6) regarding Hananiah's speech, which can be interpreted as a sarcastic wish that his prophecy be true. But immediately he adds a caveat: He invites Hananiah to listen (v. 7) and to consider the tradition of the prophets before both of them, a tradition which prophesies pestilence, war and disaster (v. 8) whereby true prophets normally prophesy warnings and danger to the people while false ones prophesy shalom or sugar-coat their message. It means that a new word that falls

[16] W. Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah*, p. 242.
[17] J.R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21-36: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 21B), New York-London, 2004, p. 342

outside this tradition must be subjected to the test of fulfilment (v. 9). The narrative is furthered by Hananiah who in a dramatic style took the yoke from Jeremiah's neck and broke it, repeating his prophecy of immediate return of the exiles, still claiming the divine origin of his message (vv. 10-11). While the text says that Jeremiah walked away, he was recalled by Yahweh with a stern message to Hananiah. Jeremiah should prophesy to Hananiah that his action would usher in a harder situation; and for himself will incur death in two months for the simple reason of leading people to falsity (vv. 15-16). Thus the words of Jeremiah are confirmed as the authentic prophet, as the text ends with the notice of the death of Hananiah (v. 17) who leaves behind him an image of a discredited prophet.

4 THE CHARACTERISATION OF GOD

4.1 The Judgement and the *ḥesed* (Loving Mercy) of Yahweh

Brueggemann, talking of the notion of imagination especially in the prophetic corpus, is of the conviction that alongside the theological intent which the biblical text carries, a revelation of the character of God is also in question.[18] Like many prophetic books, the book of Jeremiah could be understood in terms of various responses to issues that are both theological and political to the people. First of all, the book could be said to be a response to a wrong ideology. This ideology articulated by the Jerusalem establishment, fostered by the king and encouraged by temple priests, claimed that the God of Israel had made irrevocable promises to the temple and the monarchy, had taken up permanent abode in Jerusalem, and was for all time a patron and guarantor of the Jerusalem establishment. Jeremiah's work makes sense as an antithetical

[18] W. Brueggemann, *A Shape for Old Testament Theology, I: Structure Legitimation*, in Miller, P.D. (ed.), *Walter Brueggemann, Old Testament Theology: Essays on Structure, Theme, and Text*, Minneapolis, 1992, p. 1-21, see p. 4.

response to that ideology. In concrete terms, Jeremiah's tradition is that Jerusalem is not guaranteed at all costs, but its existence and shalom depend on the exigencies of the Torah and her resolve to keep it. Their present *kairos* stands under the 'wrath' and not the 'love of God.'

Again, like many other prophetic books, it is also a response to the question of exile. The theological dissonance engendered by the exile and the destruction of Jerusalem and its holy site needed a response. The Babylonian threat and hegemony is not only a political reality but a theological judgement on Jerusalem's recalcitrance. It is, therefore, not the yoke of Babylon; it is ultimately that of Yahweh. This is what is played out in Jer. 27–28. But this judgement, even though severe, is not definitive. The *ḥesed* (loving mercy) of God is supreme and will prime over his punishment: "serve the king of Babylon *and live*" (vv. 11, 12, 17). The ultimate that Yahweh gives is shalom, when "I shall establish a new covenant with you" which will be everlasting. Thus the God who destroys is the very God who builds and plants (cf. Jer. 1:10; 45:4). The God who judges trusted symbol systems and shatters sacred canopies is the One who transforms death into life by the power of love and mercy.

4.2 God's Sovereign Character: The Yoke of Babylon or the Poke of Yahweh?

Jer. 27–28 begins with the affirmation of Yahweh as Creator (cf. 27:5). Sanders argues that affirming Yahweh as God of all creation, which was part of the 'monotheising' process in ancient Israel, can be one of the signs of having come to awareness of the real nature of God.[19] In fact this affirmation in Jer. 27:5 is prolonged by a corollary: the universal mastery of Yahweh on men and beasts and over the earth, which he can give to the one he pleases (cf. 27:5-11). One of the major theological

[19] J.A. Sanders, "Hermeneutics in True and False Prophecy," in Coats, G.W. & Long, B.O. (eds.), *Canon and Authority: Essays in Old Testament Religion and Theology*, Philadelphia, 1977, p. 2141, see p. 37.

questions in the text of Jer. 27–28 is the status of the pagan king Nebuchadnezzar and his relationship with Yahweh. How would

Yahweh use a pagan figure as his "servant" [20] to punish his people? (cf. 27:6). Martin Kessler has a theological explanation that hinges on the dynamic relationship between 'doom' and 'salvation' in the prophetic books.[21] We normally see that doom oracles against Judah normally come first, followed by another series of doom oracles against the foreign nations.[23] We would then expect salvation or hopeful oracles,

"in view of the philosophy of history embedded within the Old Testament that, after Israel is punished for her alleged transgressions by nations chosen by YHWH for this purpose, these same nations and others will receive punishment as well, which leads to deliverance and hope for Israel."[22]

The reign of God, his directorship of history and destinies, would entail his overthrowing of every pretence and power arrangement that opposes his design, a dismantling of every "act of self-aggrandizement," in the words of Brueggemann,[23] found among the nations. Most importantly, the OAN (Oracles against the Nations 46–51) emphasises the overthrow of Babylon, a nation that is significant in the book of Jeremiah. Babylon, once empowered by Yahweh to accomplish his purposes and punish his people, will ultimately be disgraced and toppled. The concluding prose of the book in Jer. 51:59-64 highlights the severe

[20] The designation "Nebuchadnezzar my servant" is used again in Jer. 25:9 and 43:10.

[21] M. Kessler, *Jeremiah Chapters 26–45 Reconsidered*, in *JNES* 27 (1968), p. 81-88, see p. 82. [23] This statement is made basing primarily on the order of the materials in the LXX but can still be applicable to that in the MT.

[22] Cf. M. Kessler, *Jeremiah Chapters 26–45 Reconsidered*, p. 83, footnote 15. This pattern can also be illustrated from the book of Isaiah: while the doom motif pervades chapters 1–23 (Judah 1–12, foreign nations 13–23), the shalom motif gains significance after chapter 23, especially with chapter 40ff. Ezekiel has also the same pattern: The book divides almost neatly into three parts; chapters 1–24: oracles against Judah and Jerusalem; chapters 25–32: oracles against foreign nations; chapters 33–48: oracles of hope and restoration for Judah.

[23] W. Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah*, p. 420.

attack of Yahweh on Babylon: the scroll of the oracle should be read by Seraiah and cast into Euphrates to symbolise the drowning of Babylon.

With this last allusion and the first temporal allusion that places the OAN at the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar (cf. 46:2, 13), one can say that the "OAN are bracketed by the birth announcement and 'death certificate' of Babylon, the object of Yahweh's wrath." [24] If king Nebuchadnezzar is destined to be finally humiliated in favour of God's people, then the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar is therefore only a poke (a jab, a challenge, a pun, a fun, ridicule) of Yahweh on this pagan king and nation which is only an instrument in the hand of God. In the long run therefore, the text makes this fundamental characterisation of God:

Yahweh is absolute. "Why should the nations ask, 'Where is their God?' Our God is in the heavens, he does whatever he wills" (Psa. 115:1-3). The book of Jeremiah bears witness to the struggle of a prophet who needed to learn, albeit with difficulty, to understand the ways of a God who has not sold his right or freedom even to his faithful prophet; a God who is not helplessly tied to his promises to his people. The Hebrew Bible attests to the fact that through varied experiences in the course of history, Yahweh wished that his people understand that he (Yahweh) is not to be localised or appropriated. He is the Other, the Yahweh of the universe.

5 SOCIO-THEOLOGICAL STAKES AND CONTEXT

The prophetic pages are not simply meant to ginger academic analytical endeavours but texts written with the aim of providing a guide to a faith community, including the present audience which has received these texts. And so the Jeremiah-Hananiah duel remains a matter for reflection for the many Churches, ecclesial groups and religious personalities who stand before the communities of believers as official mouthpiece in the peoples' relation with their God. This text speaks

[24] L. Stulman, *Order amid Chaos: Jeremiah as a Symbolic Tapestry*, Sheffield, 1998, p. 95.

volumes to our Nigerian context where 'prophecy' seems to dominate the religious discourse and atmosphere. There are many out there who claim to gaze into the inscrutable eyes of God to see the future. Incidentally, in the context of poverty and insecurity many itch to hear and to be assured of the future. Many desperately want to hear 'shalom' pronounced unto them, and so are easily exploited by religious charlatans and the Hananiahs of today who generously pronounce it but not without some charges. There is a lot of social and theological dynamics about prophecy and the ministry of the word today in our context showcased in this narrative.

5.1 Prophetic Authenticity and its Criteria

Our text showcases the question of prophetic authenticity. What makes a prophet authentic? Message? Realization? Moral life? Claim to divine origin? Sincerity of the prophet? etc. How does the reader judge between Jeremiah and Hananiah in this narrative? Some authors on Jer. 27–28 have titled their commentaries "prophet against prophet/s."[25] Such titling bears from the fact that reading the narrative, one notices that the narrator subtly hides his prejudices against any of the prophets to allow the text itself provide the reader clues for judgement. In the narrative, both prophets have the *Legitmationsformel* put into their mouths (cf. 27: 2, 4, 8, 11, 15, 16, 21, 22; 28:2, 4, 11 and 16). Jeremiah's symbolic action in 27:2 receives a match in the symbolic action of Hananiah in 28:10. There is equality in attribution of the title 'prophet' to two of them.[26] However, the reader notices some list of criteria in ascending order given in the text about prophetic authenticity. Firstly, Jeremiah appeals to the prophetic tradition (v. 8), then to the

[25] See for example, F.-L. Hossfeld & I. Meyer, *Prophet gegen Prophet*: *Eine Analyse der alttestamentlichen Texte zum Thema: Wahre und false Propheten* (Biblische Beiträge 9), Freiburg, 1973.

[26] In chapter 28, the attribution of this title is made to Hananiah six times (v. 1, 5, 10, 12, 15, 17) and to Jeremiah equally six times (5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 15).

criterion of fulfilment (v. 9), and finally the text makes reference to the question of being sent by Yahweh (v. 12). The religious scene today demands a high level of discernment from people, a task which gets more complicated than ever in the course of time.

5.2 Man of God or God of Man?

A very big challenge for a minister of the word is to see himself as servant to this word and not its master. The minister is an instrument in the hands of God and not vice versa. The prophet is not in possession of the truth; only God possesses the truth. God is the Truth. The prophet is in search for the truth. The unit under consideration reflects two different attitudes towards the truth among the two prophets. Jeremiah's 'Amen' in v. 6 and the development that follows till v. 9, is not to suppose that one should adopt an attitude of indifference as regards the truth, but could be understood as an invitation to his fellow prophet to an inspection of historical past in order to arrive at the truth of the present. But the physical action of Hananiah afterwards – snatching and breaking the yoke – makes the reader sense a partner who does not wish to dialogue. Our religious atmosphere is filled with phenomena of religious ministers who speak in such a way that one doubts whether it is a question of man of God or God of man. There is this tendency of putting God at the service of man, and not vice versa. Many ministers of the word, especially those who run special ministries, are always faced with the temptation of presenting their words and their ministry posts as the final bus-stop to God. Is this not partly the reason for the very important long session that deals with 'testimonies' where the minister's power or the power in his location is advertised? The temptation for ministers of the word to exhibit absolutist pretensions is abundant; thinking of themselves as "appointed regents of a God who cannot act in history unless he acts through them, who will be defeated if they are,

and who will flourish if they do."[27] One of the distinctions between false and true prophets is that one confiscates the word of God by a selfaffirmation of infallibility.[28]

5.3 Truth and Fundamentalism: Timelessness or Timeliness

Israelite prophets were often faced with the problem of articulating in proper terms the changing nature of the theological expression of faith in their days. Take for example the major elements of Israelite faith: the theologies surrounding the popular themes around the election, the Patriarchs, the Exodus, the wilderness and conquest, Sinai, David, the ark, the temple, etc. These were the constitutive elements of Yahwism and at the same time constituted the major dangers to pure Yahwism. Since Yahweh is faithful, little thought is, therefore, given to the conditional nature of the covenant as if the special relationship with Yahweh is not dependent on the people's unconditional response to his love.

Interpretation of religious texts and appreciation of the details of Godman relationship have always been prone to some tendency towards fundamentalism; the inability to get holistic view of realities and interpret the word of God in the light of the signs of the times. It is simply in this problematic that the issue of religious fundamentalism in different quarters in Nigeria could be categorised. That the ancient texts of Scripture speak to us today does not imply timelessness. In other words, the correct interpretation of the holy writ should emphasise not the timelessness of Scripture but its timeliness. Following the presentation by the narrator, one sees that the words of Hananiah before and after the act of breaking the yoke are identical (compare v. 2-4 and

[27] J.C. Schroeder, *I Samuel: Text, Exegesis and Exposition*, in *The Interpreters Bible*, p. 876.
[28] D. Lys, *Jérémie 28 et le problème du faux prophète ou la circulation du sens dans le diagnostic prophétique*, in *RHPR* 59 (1979), p. 453-482, see p. 480.

v. 11). Read in a larger corpus, it appears like an out-of-contextrepetition of Isaiah a century earlier about the inviolability of Zion;[2930] a declaration which does not take into account the challenges and the risks of the current situation but which trusts in the veritable traditions of the past. Childs writes: "A false prophet was one who practised bad hermeneutics."[31] Assuring security and happiness in the nearest future,

Hananiah dodges the possibility of change and the call to conversion. He takes the yoke in the literal sense: object of oppression to be removed, and by breaking it, treats it like a magical object that acts by itself. But for Jeremiah, the yoke speaks of Yahweh; or better put is a language by Yahweh himself, a symbolic and open language. In the discharge of the prophetic ministry today, this calls for the dialogue between faith and context where the absoluteness of God's truth must be proclaimed in the contingencies and vagaries of human language and context"[32] for, using Brueggemann's phrasing, "if the present-tense reality of God cannot be discerned, then any prophetic discernment is likely ideology. Thus yesterday's certitude has become today's distorting ideology."[33] This is the same principle at the base of prosperity preaching that is rampart among many ministers of the word today. Prosperity evangelism concentrates in shalom promises and disregards God's call to conversion and his justice for offenders of his law.

5.4 Good News or Nice News for the Powers that Be

Jer. 27–28 witnesses to a parallel existence of two opposite streams of thought, one championed by the Jerusalem establishment – kings, temple, priests, official prophets – and the other represented singly by

[29] See amidst many other texts foundational to Zion theology in Isaiah, Isa. 8:5-10; Isa. 17:12-14;

[30] :6-12; 60–62 etc. See also J.H. Hayes, "The Tradition of Zion's Inviolability," in *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1963), pp. 419- 426.

[31] B.S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context*, London, 1985, p. 136.

[32] L. Boeve, *Bearing Witness to the Differend: A Model for Theologizing in the Postmodern Context*, in *LvSt* 20 (1995), p. 362-379, see p. 364.

[33] W. Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah*, p. 251.

the vision of Jeremiah. It is all about who and what to believe: Jeremiah who advises wilful submission to Babylon and envisions this as recipe for salvation, or Hananiah who proposes the contrary. The reader of the narratives notices a subtle reference to a system of normalisation on one side and that of destabilisation on the other; between a system with absolute claims and another that suggests an alternative vision. However it is very difficult in religious ministry to talk of change especially in a system or power structure that thinks that change would undermine its basic gains. This is the situation in the text and the situation in our context. As a lone voice, Jeremiah insists on the necessity for openness in a vicious circle and so is a voice that disturbs. As a model of prophetic activity, he becomes a "destabilising presence."[34]

In such context there is the tendency for ministers to align themselves with civil powers, the powers that be, and the financial stalwarts. Whenever a cult is sponsored by the royalty, the prophet is always expected to further the interests of the court and in certain occasions, failure to do so meant danger to the life of the prophet. The Elijah narratives show clearly the constant clash between the desires of the kings and those of the prophets. Examples of this in the Hebrew Bible are the story of the prophet Amos and Amaziah at Bethel (cf. Amos 7:10-17) and the story of Micaiah ben Imlah (cf. I Kings 22). This phenomenon is no less current today as ministers continually face the constant danger of compromising their messages either out of fear or favour.

[34] W. Brueggemann, *The Prophet as a Destabilising Presence*, in Miller, P.D. (ed.), *Walter Brueggemann: A Social Reading of the Old Testament: Prophetic Approaches to Israel's Communal Life*, Minneapolis, 1994, p. 221-244, see p. 223.

5.5 Crowd Expectation and Desire for Success

Failure of realization of a prophecy was the lot of many prophets in Israel and they found it difficult to understand this vis-à-vis their conviction of being sent. For example, Jeremiah's confessions were in most cases a voicing out of his anguished emotions prompted by a sense of disappointment in speaking for a God who seemed not always ready to vindicate him[35] (e.g. Jer. 20:7-13). In a country besieged by political and economic hardship, like Nigeria of today, it is only logical that many people turn to spiritual means as either the last resort or even the first resort for the solution to their problems, and therefore, many become clients or patients to whoever is believed to make more things happen. Logically crowd expectation could be a temptation for a minister of the word to desire for success at all times at all costs, and to legitimise his/her ways.

Religion cannot be totally divorced from human interest. Most often, in human religiosity, the deity is expected always to be there to attend to human expectations. Crowd expectation and populist theology go hand in hand. Between the expectations of the crowd, the society or epoch and the inner convictions of the minister, a choice must be made. It could not be out of place to assume that this factor played a role in Hananiah's theatrical act of snatching the yoke from Jeremiah's neck and breaking it. Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal has the presence of the crowd as a factor that encouraged him as well as boosted his ego. Elijah's prayer is for Yahweh to "let them know today that you are God in Israel, and *that I am your servant, that I have done all these things* at your command" (I Kings 18:36). Among the prophets in the Hebrew Bible one often reads a somewhat boastful utterance such as in

[35] Von Rad remarks that it was difficult for the prophet Jeremiah to transcend his situation and interpret his suffering in a redemptive way, and recognise that the prophetic office implied equally martyrdom. Cf. G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology II*: *The Theology of Israel's Prophetic Traditions*, Edinburgh, 1965, p. 206.

Ezekiel: "they shall know that a prophet has been among them" (Ezek. 2:5; 33:33).[36] The audience of the prophet also determines to a large extent the content of his preaching. To the rich, the bourgeois, the kings and the shapers of the current, the prophet could offer a religion that legitimates the status quo of his audience. To the poor, the down trodden and the marginalised, the prophet has the temptation of either painting the image of the suffering servant of Yahweh, in which case religion becomes the opium of the masses, or God becomes only the God of the poor and never that of the rich. Prosperity gospel is also handy in this situation. "Let the poor say I am rich…"! Some ministers pick and choose what to say in order not to offend their 'financial contributors.'

5.6 Deception and the Scourge of Fake Ministries

Authentic religious ministry is meant to be service to God and humanity. Prophecy is at the essence of the ministry of the word, as a prophet is essentially one who proclaims the word of God to the people. The ministry of the word, and therefore the ministry of the Church, is simply and essentially prophetic. It is fact that this ministry has also suffered among many false preachers, therefore false prophets. False prophecy, that is, false ministry of the word, even if it has existed in the history of religions, has become a scourge in the recent times. Today, unsuspecting worshipers are led astray, deceived, made to wander away from the path because of inauthentic and unreal service offered by some false ministers. This is seen today in religious deceit – whether wilful, mistaken or propelled by ignorance, the rise of false prophets, the menace of subjective interpretation, the danger of ignorance and the

[36] See A. Osuji, "They Will Know that a Prophet is among Them" (Ezek. 33:33): Hype of Prediction Prophecy in Nigeria. Authenticity and Missing Link," in Osuji A. and Ukeh C. (eds.), *Synod for Africa: 25 Years Later: Context and Pastoral Ministry in a Post-Synodal Local Church*, Enugu: Iykememo, 2019, pp. 1-28.

commercialization of religion.[37] Unscrupulous charlatans cash on people's existential predicament which leads them to the search for signs and wonders. Thus they fall prey to any religious fancy and theatrical manoeuvres. Religion is, thus, converted into money making venture, the ministers setting up religious *Small Scale Industries*[38] and becoming *Vendors of the Gospel*.[39]

5.7 Prophetic Listening

In religious setting all over the world today, there have emerged two distinct ways in which religion has shaped public life. One is priestly, the other prophetic, applying the distinctions by William Pape Wood.[40] Both appeal to transcendent faith and moral values, but each has a very different orientation. In the priestly tradition, religion is more or less institutional and serve institutional goals; used as a way to comfort people and to assure them of their institutions. Besides the priestly religious attitude stands the prophetic attitude. The prophetic religious tradition involves values, ideals, and faith that stand above the behaviour and practice of any one group or nation, any religion, institutional or independent. This is the religious tradition that calls into question all human institutions, no matter how pretentiously holy, and tests them against God's demands for justice and righteousness.[41]

Interestingly, in the same year 1996, there appeared two books in Nigeria's theological scene that have become reference books. George

[37] See Gerald Umoren, "Mediocre Biblical Interpretation: A Critical Evaluation," An unpublished paper delivered at the Catholic Biblical Instructor's Union Conference at Seat of Wisdom Seminary Owerri on October 21, 2015.
[38] Bishop Gregory Ochiagha, *Small Scale Industries* (Lenten Pastoral 2000).
[39] See M. Anyaegbu, *Vendors of the Gospel: Disfiguring the Face of Christianity,* Awka: Fab Anieh Nig. Ltd;, 2000.
[40] W.P. Wood, *John 2:13-22*, in *Interpretation* 45 (1991), p. 59-63, see p. 62.
[41] W.P. Wood, *John 2:13-22*, p. 62.

Ehusani[42] and Eugene Uzukwu[44] propose a prophetic character and a listening character respectively to the Church in Nigeria. With Jesus as [43]model, the prophets and in the modern time Martin Luther King Jr., Ehusani describes what should be the best attitude of those called into religious leadership in Nigeria, and not only that, the style of Christian witness by every baptised Christian. His summary is that we need a prophetic leadership, [44] a Church that is confrontational [45] with her message, "a prophetic Church that will discern the current situation in our country and give it a theological interpretation; that will tell some basic truths to the Nigerian people. We need a prophetic Church to tell Nigerians for example that the real problem militating against unity, national cohesion, and peace and prosperity is the selfishness of the elite." [46] Elochukwu Uzukwu suggests the "listening model" to the Church. For the Church in Nigeria to be an agent of social transformation, it must begin by listening and developing "large ears;" [47] "courageously changing her structures from the inside. In order to liberate the Spirit, to allow the Spirit initiative in the life of the churchcommunity, this structural change is imperative."[48]

These two models are not contradictory. They are complementary. Combining the two models, the minister of the word therefore is one

[42] G.O. Ehusani, *A Prophetic Church*, Ibadan, 1996.
[43] E.E. Uzukwu, *A Listening Church: Autonomy and Communion in African Churches*, New York, 1996.
[44] G.O. Ehusani, *A Prophetic Church*, p. 62.
[45] See B.O. Ukwuegbu, *Confrontational Evangelisation: Features, Prospects, and Challenges*, Onitsha: Effective Keys, 1995, p. 88.
[46] G.O. Ehusani, *A Prophetic Church*, p. 62-63.
[47] Uzukwu draws the idea of listening and "large ears" from an analogy of the 'Manja paradigm' – where among the Manja of the Central African Republic, the totem for the chief is the rabbit, an unobtrusive animal common in many parts of Africa known for its large ears. The analogy is thus neatly drawn: the 'large ears' of the chief "bring him close to God, ancestors, and divinities and close to the conversations taking place in the community. He has the last word because he speaks after having assimilated and digested the "Word" in the community, E.E. Uzukwu, *A Listening Church*, p. 127.
[48] E.E. Uzukwu, *A Listening Church*, p. 152.

who tells what Yahweh has said, who critiques the social situation, and also first and foremost one who listens to Yahweh, to others and society.

One of the dangers a religious institution can face is, considering only its 'holiness' and seeing just its role as the conscience of the society (which it truly is), it forgets the obligation to listen. Jeremiah is of the opinion that self-criticism begins with the minister of the word himself and that even the most holy institution should stand introspectively open before the mirror of God's impartial standards.

CONCLUSION

Though a microcosm of the universal Church (and like other particular Churches), Nigeria today is a typical scene of an arena where there are many competitive religious voices, each claiming to be the authentic voice. Just like many other societies of the twenty-first century, the Nigerian scene lives in an epoch of denominational and religious confusion. It is not deprived of clues, but rather faces the problem of many and at times confusing signals. Related to and fuelled necessarily by the myriads of political, social and economic problems, many voices have arisen to present themselves as the messiahs of the moment, analysing the crises, denouncing social ills and at least of course suggesting the ways out. As consequence, the avenue is made wide open to manipulation and falsity and this often saps the critical spirit of people, most of whom now have passed from credibility to gullibility. Jer. 27-28 provides a solid matrix for theological and contextual reflections on the character of the deity to which religious bodies (especially Christian) serve; a God who Himself orders the affairs of the world, who allows even adversities in pursuance of his ultimate purpose which is shalom for people. Texts like these remain foundational in as much as their narrative intricacies go a long way to provide clues for genuine God - man relationship.

"HAND HIM OVER TO SATAN…" (1 CORINTHIANS 5:5): REFLECTING ON THE PAULINE COMMAND AND ITS APPLICABILITY TO THE SCOURGE OF INCEST IN NIGERIA[1]

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Abstract

Incest is the sexual union or intimacy between people of close sanguinity. In some societies, sexual union between people of the same lineage or the same village is considered as incest and treated as taboo. The causes are many, ranging from psychological, social, and economic causes. The sanctions are also varied, depending on the religious or cultural rites guarding the particular place in which it occurred. It could lead to banishment of the offenders from the community. Paul handles this issue in the fifth chapter of his letter to the Corinthians. In recent times, cases of incest in many Nigerian societies have been on the increase. The paper looks at the Pauline solution for such an offense in the city of Corinth and considers its applicability to the scourge of incest in Nigeria. The major focus is to understand what Paul means by handing the man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh and the salvation of the spirit (1 Cor. 5:5).

Keywords: Corinth, excommunication, incest, marriage, Nigeria, Paul

[1] With this paper, I drastically review my position in Onyenali, R., "The Misuse of Excommunication in Church Discipline (A Reflection on Matthew 18 and 1 Corinthians 5," *Wounded in the Manger: Black Theological Essays on Church Hurt*, eds. Dr. DeWayne R. Stallworth, Ph.D, Mr. Kevaughn Mattis (forthcoming). In this paper written in 2021, I was vacillating between excommunication and ethical purification as the correct interpretation of 1 Cor. 5:5.

Introduction

Simply put, incest is the sexual relation between family members or close relatives that causes penetration through any part of the sexual organs. The *Webster Dictionary* defines incest as "sexual intercourse between persons so closely related that they are forbidden by law to marry." In section 19 of the Sexual Offences Bill, 2013 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, incest is an act of sexual intercourse by a male which causes penetration with a female person who is to that male's knowledge his daughter, grand-daughter, sister, mother, niece, aunt, or grandmother. From the angle of a female, incest is an act of sexual intercourse which causes penetration with a male person who is to her knowledge her son, father, grandson, grandfather, brother, nephew or uncle.[2] This means that the issue of incest is already foreseen in the laws of Nigeria.

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians takes up the issue of incest in its fifth chapter. It reports the case of a man living with the wife of his mother. This is understood to mean that he was having a sexual union with his stepmother. Paul condemns this union in the strongest of terms. In this chapter Paul recommended what some scholars have termed excommunication of the incestuous man from the Christian community so as to avoid a possible moral contamination of the entire church. This option of excommunication or banishment from the society is also practiced in some traditional societies.

The incestuous union was condemnable from the Jewish, Christian and Roman angles. Even though the Old Testament allows endogamous marriages (Gen 20:12) and even encourages it (Gen 24:1-4), yet it expressly condemns incestuous sexual unions (cf. Lev 18:7-18; Deut

[2] Sexual Offences Bill, 2013, file:///C:/Users/user%20pc/Downloads/267639198-Nigeria-SexualOffences-Bill-2015.pdf.

23:1; 27:20). Such prohibitions are focused on men and include a sexual union with one's mother, father's wife, sister, half-sister, granddaughter, aunt, daughter-in-law, brother's wife, a woman and her daughter, and a neighbour's wife. Such a union should be punished with the death sentence (cf. Lev 20:11-12). The Mishnah (*Sanhedrin* 7:4) rules death by stoning as the appropriate response to incest: "These are they that are to be stoned: he that has connection with his mother, his father's wife, his daughter-in-law, a male, or a beast.…"[3] In the story of *Via Cluenzio* Cicero notes: "The mother-in-law marries the son-in-law, no one looking favourably on the deed, no one approving it, all foreboding a dismal end to it."[4] In the Canon Law of the Catholic Church (CC 109) affinity is an impediment to the marriage of a couple, and is a relationship which "arises from a valid marriage, even if not consummated, and exists between a man and the blood relatives of the woman and between the woman and the blood relatives of the man."[5]

The question that I confront in this article is to articulate how the Pauline command in 1 Corinthians 5:5 concerning the incestuous union should be understood and how this understanding could be a valuable option to handling the case of incest in a typical traditional Nigerian society.

The Focus of Paul's first Letter to the Corinthians

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians ranks as one of the most widely read letters in the New Testament. The letter is a response to a wide range of questions and concerns about incest (chapter 5), lawsuits and sexual immorality in general (chapter 6), marriage (chapter 7), food offered to idols (chapters 8 and 10), the Lord's Supper (chapter 11), spiritual gifts

[3] H. Danby (trans.), *The Mishnah* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933).
[4] https://sites.google.com/site/vicoduomo/thestoryofviacluenzio.
[5] *Codex Juris Canonici* (1983), *New English Translation* (Washington DC: Canon Law Society of America, 1999), Can 109 #1.

(chapters 12, 13 and 14), and doctrinal error concerning the resurrection (chapter 15).[6] Perhaps Paul had to handle all these issues because the Corinthian Church was close to Paul's heart. This closeness is based on a couple of reasons. First, Paul lived in Corinth for about one and half years (see Acts 18:11). Second, Corinth was arguably the central place of his missionary work, second only to Ephesus.[7] Finally, the church in Corinth was the creation of Paul's. It was a child begotten by Paul (cf. 1 Cor. 4:15). Therefore, he seems to stand in a closer relationship with the church in Corinth than with any other church.[8] The ethical questions Paul addressed could be because Corinth was made up of people from different socio-cultural and religious strata. In this city "Greek culture and Greek sensuality stood in such close connection."[9] As a result of this cosmopolitan nature of Corinth, ethical questions were rife among the members of the Christian community of the city. Apparently, the Corinthian Christians were fast drifting away from what they learnt from Paul. According to Morris, Paul saw that in Corinth, "the Church was in the world, as it had to be, but the world was in the Church, as it ought not to be."[10] Perhaps, the shameless practice of incestuous life in the church is one of such worldly influence among the Corinthian Christians. Paul addressed the issue in the fifth chapter of his first letter to the saints in Corinth.

[6] For other segmentations of the letter see R. F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, SP 7 (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1999), 29-31.
[7] U. Schnelle, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 6. Auflage (Göttingen:Vandenhoeck& Ruprecht, 2007), 76.
[8] F. C. Baur, *Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ; His Life and Work, His Epistles and His Doctrine: A Contribution to the Critical History of Primitive Christianity*, two volumes in one (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2013), 268.
[9] F. C. Baur, *Paul*, 269.
[10] L. Morris, *I Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary* (London: Billing and Sons, 1971), 25.

Literary Context and linguistic Considerations in 1 Cor. 5

The fifth chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is related to the surrounding chapters. The first four chapters report the boasting of the Corinthian Christians. Paul shows this with the use of the verb *kauchaomai* (to boast) which he employs four times in chapters 1-4. In these places (1:29.31; 3:21; 4:7) *kauchaomai* refers to an attitude Paul considers inappropriate for the holy ones. Again, chapter four is related to chapter five by the application of the word *phusioó* (to puff or blow up) which is used three times in this chapter (4:6.18.19). In chapter four, *phusioó* refers to the arrogance of some members of the church. However, 5:2 broadens out this arrogance to include the entire body of the church of Corinth. Again in 5:6 Paul tells them in clear terms that their boast (*kauchēma*) is not good. There is also a connection between chapters five and six. While chapter five deals with the issue of incest and how to handle the evil doer so as not to contaminate the entire community, 6:8-20 shows that Christian life is incompatible with sins, especially sexual sins. Thus, sexual immorality (*porneia*) and related words appear in 5:1.9; 6:9.13.15.16.18.[11] These show a continuity between chapters five and six. This theme continues till the seventh chapter.

Despite these connections, the fifth chapter of the letter is marked off from the first four chapters in terms of content. While the first four chapters are devoted to addressing divisions in the church, in chapter five, Paul begins to address the issues reported to him. Perhaps, because of the seriousness of the subject matter, the issue of improper sexual relationship in the church of Corinth is the first issue to be addressed. Again chapter five constitutes a unit. First, the allusion to a widely circulated (oral) report (v.1)[12] marks the chapter out as a fresh unit.

[11] A. Y. Collins, "The Function of 'Excommunication' in Paul," *HTR* 73 (1980), 252.
[12] Notice the use of *holōs akouetai* in this verse.

Again, the reference to the removal of the evildoer at the beginning (v.2) and end (v.13) of the chapter shows that the chapter is a unified pericope. The case described in this chapter is that one of the (male) members of the Corinthian church is living with the wife of his father. In other words, this man is having a sexual relationship with his stepmother. As v.1 shows, this is a case of an enduring sexual relationship. This is the implication of the use of the aorist (*echein*) in this verse. Since Paul makes it clear that he is not interested in judging those outside (v.12) and since Paul's interest was only on the punishment to be meted out to the man living with his father's wife, it is likely that the woman involved was not a member of the Corinthian church.

Some other linguistic observations in the text show that the affair is not a secret one. This is shown by the use of the third person singular verb *akouetai* (it is heard) instead of the first person singular verb *akouō* (I have heard), in v.1.[13] The sin is not only injurious to the purity of the church, it also impinges negatively on her reputation. Second, the allusion to the arrogance (v.2) and boasting (v.6) of the Corinthians concerning this issue means that the incestuous relationship has become a source of inspiration for other members of the community. In other words, it has started enjoying the support of a good number of the Corinthian Christians.[14] Not only was sexual union between a man and his father's wife condemnable in the strongest of terms, the Corinthian Christians were puffed up instead. It means a communal glorification in the sin of a member of Christ's body which could lead to other members of the church emulating the act. In seeing this incestuous union as a case of sexual immorality among the Corinthians (*porneia en hymin*), Paul implies that the effect of this immoral union is not only on the two

[13] This is contrasted to 11:18 where Paul records another report that reached him with the simple *akouō* (I have heard). Cf. also 1:11.
[14] See Collins, "Excommunication," 253.

people concerned but on the community as a whole.[15] This underlines Paul's theology of the church as a building or a body. The unity of this body is an overarching theme in the letter (cf. 10:16f; 11:24.27.29; 12:12-27). The sanctity of this body requires the collective action of the community as a corporate entity.

Since this collective action has to be performed by the church in Corinth, Paul proposes a mourning (v2b) instead of the arrogant boasting of the Corinthians. He also proposes the removal of the leaven of incest from the community (v.2d and 13b). Even from a distance, Paul pronounces a verdict on the man who has been doing such a thing (v.3c and v.4a). The verdict is that this man should be delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh so that the spirit may be saved for the day of the Lord (1 Cor. 5:5). How are we to understand this command?

Understanding the Pauline Command (I Cor. 5:5)

I now come to the most important point of this article, namely, to understand the Pauline injunction concerning incest in Corinth. At face value, Paul seems to have recommended the expulsion of the incestuous man from the community as solution to the moral impurity he introduced into the church (v.2 and v.13). However, v.5 is the key to the understanding of the entire chapter. In this verse, Paul commands that the *sarx* (flesh) should be handed over to Satan for the salvation of the *pneuma* (spirit). The importance of this verse lies in the application of the *sarx-pneuma* contrast which is important in Pauline theology. The term *Sarx* (flesh) occurs about 91 times in the letters of Paul.[16] Sometimes Paul employs it as the material component of the human body, in the sense of physical flesh (cf. Rom 11:14; I Cor. 6:16, etc.). In

[15] A. May, *The Body for the Lord: Sex and Identity in I Corinthians 5-7* (London, New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 62.
[16] J. D.G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 1998), 62.

other places, *sarx* is the sinful element of human existence in opposition to God. A typical example of this application is Romans 8:2-9.[17] In I Cor. 5:5 Paul does not regard *sarx* as the material component of the body since it stands in opposition to *pneuma*. Since these two terms stand in opposition, it has to be accepted that the specific Pauline usage of *sarx* as the sinful condition of the "old man" is in view.[18] If the *sarx* of 1 Cor. 5:5 is interpreted from the spectrum of Romans 8:2-9 one arrives at the picture of the fleshly life that cannot please God. Since "the flesh person is wholly cut off from God, for that is the character of the flesh"[19] it means that Paul is referring to an attitude that stands in opposition to God. It could be said that "the *sarx* then takes on the aspect of being an anti-godly attitude in man and an enemy power of the Spirit."[20] This interpretation of *sarx* in 1 Cor. 5:5 seems to be fairly consistent with scholarly views on the Pauline application of the term as the whole person oriented away from God.[21]

In a similar ethical sense, *pneuma* refers to the whole person oriented towards God. It is the eschatological gift of God which the believer has received in baptism which lives in him, "determining his whole life under every aspect, especially ethically."[22] As such the *pneuma* becomes the norm for a new way of living, which results in corresponding actions (Gal. 5:22f). It is in this ethical sense that von Campenhausen sees the *pneuma* in 1 Cor. 5:5. For him, the *pneuma* is the divine power which must be taken from the sinner "in order that it may form part of the

[17] See also the contrast between the works of the flesh and the works of the spirit in Gal. 5:17-21.

[18] E. J. Cooper, "Sarx and Sin in Pauline Theology," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 29/3 (1973), 250.
[19] Dunn, *Theology*, 478.
[20] Copper, "*Sarx*," 251.
[21] Cooper, "*Sarx*," 244f.
[22] Copper, "*Sarx*," 251.

perfection and wholeness of the Body of Christ at the Last Day."[23] If we are correct in this ethical understanding of *sarx* and *pneuma,* it means that Paul was commanding the Corinthians "to cast off the works of the flesh and to return them to their proper authority, Satan, so that God's Spirit may continue to be present and thus preserve the congregation for the last day."[24] Hence, Paul is interested in the purity of the Christian community of Corinth. If the Corinthian church keeps tolerating the sexually immoral union, which results from the influence of the flesh and even keeps boasting over it, it would corrupt the life of the spirit among them. The implication is that the passage has an ecclesial interest. The aim is the purity of the congregation.

Perhaps the imagery of the leaven and the dough confirms the above interpretation of the passage. The leaven has an overwhelming negative interpretation in both the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament prohibits the offering of leaven on the altar (Lev 2:11; 6:17). Milgrom comments that the prohibition from offering leaven on the altar is probably because leaven has been seen as "the arch-symbol of fermentation, deterioration, and death, and hence, taboo on the altar of blessing and life."[25] In the words of Jesus, the leaven signifies that which makes impure. This made Jesus to warn his disciples to be wary of the leaven, that is, the false teachings of the Jewish authorities which could corrupt their faith (Mark 8:15; Matt 16:12). The rabbis saw the yeast in the dough as "the evil impulse, which causes a ferment in the

[23] Hans von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in Church of the First Three Centuries* (London: Black, 1969), 135, n, 50.
[24] K. P. Donfried, "Justification and Last Judgment in Paul," *Int.* 30 (April 1976), 150. While some scholars underscore the importance of the *sarx-pneuma* dichotomy, they go ahead to conclude that Paul was recommending the excommunication of the incestuous man from the Corinthian community. See P. C. Onwuka, "Sexual Immorality and Church's Discipline in 1 Cor 5:1-5: Implications for the Nigerian Church,"
https://www.cabanalive.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/01/Acts-12-11.
[25] J. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*: *A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible Series (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 189.

heart."[26] This explains why the traditional Passover involved searching out of all leaven in the home, and burning it. In the ritual of Sephardic Jews, this ritual is followed by a prayer which runs thus: "just as we did remove *chametz* [leaven] from our homes and burned it, so we pray that we should be able to remove evil inclinations from within us always."[27] If Paul had all this in mind in this chapter of the letter, then "throw out the old yeast" (5:7) is an epexegesis on "hand this man over to Satan."[28] Hence, the passage is not about banishing the incestuous man from the Corinthian community. It is about throwing out the evil that causes contamination in the community. To give his command a Christological ambient, Paul refers to the sacrificial act of Christ as an example to be emulated (I Cor. 5:7f).[29]

However, the above interpretation is questioned by v.11. In this verse, Paul goes on to argue that to be pure, the church has to avoid associating with anyone who calls himself a (Christian) brother and is sexually immoral, or greedy, or is an idolater, reveller, drunkard, or robber. All these are evidence of the works of *sarx* and such people controlled by the *sarx* should not be allowed association with the Christian assembly. This treatment does not concern those outside the community, otherwise, the Corinthians would have to leave the city (v.10) noted for its life of debauchery. As I said in the introduction, this has led some scholars to read excommunication into this passage. It is in this line that Tertullian interpreted the passage. For him, "that Spirit which is accounted to exist in the church must be presently 'saved,' that is,

[26] Berakoth, 17a.
[27] H. Guggenheimer, *The Scholar's Haggadah: Ashkenazic, Sephardic, and Oriental Versions* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1995), 6.
[28] B. Campbell, "Flesh and Spirit in 1 Cor. 5:5: An Exegesis in Rhetorical Criticism of the NT," *JETS* 36/3 (September 1993), 340.
[29] See also Rom 14:15; 15:1-3; I Cor. 8:11-12; Phil 2:5-11.

untainted by the contagion of impurities in the day of the Lord, by the ejection of the incestuous fornicator."[30] Brown is also of the same view. He notes that "in Paul's command appear the twin notions of separation and curse that underlie the Christian doctrine of excommunication."[31] For Collins, "the action involved the expulsion of the offender from the community, a procedure which was called "excommunication" later on in the history of the Church."[32]

I think that the key is the interpretation of *sunanamignumi* (vv.11). Does it mean "to associate with" or "to associate intimately with?" Judging from the context, I adopt "to associate intimately with" as the right translation.[33] Already in v.9 Paul had applied the same word to warn the Corinthian Christians not to associate intimately with the people of Corinth who exhibit immoral behaviours. Not associating at all with the citizens of Corinth would be an impossible imposition on the church at Corinth. In another place where *sunanamignumi* appears in the Pauline corpus (2 Thess. 3:14), it does not imply complete shunning of the offenders. The next verse (2 Thess. 3:15) advices that such people should not be treated as enemies. If I argue from the continuity of meaning in an author, Paul is neither advocating the destruction of the incestuous man nor his total exclusion from the society. It is the moral impurity associated with his continual presence in the community that should be excised. The removal of the moral impurity is to protect the community from the contamination of the old leaven. The image of the church as a building, where every member is part of this building (I Cor. 3:9-17) and the metaphor of the body of Christ as the definition of the nature of the church (I Cor. 12) seem to have the same aim in view. The fact that "if one member suffers, all suffer together and if one member is

[30] Quoted in Collins, "Excommunication," 260.
[31] David C. Brown, "The Keys of the Kingdom: Excommunication in Colonial Massachusetts" *The New England Quarterly* Vol. 67, No. 4 (1994), 533.
[32] Collins, "Excommunication," 254.
[33] Cf. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the NT, 601.

honoured, all rejoice together" makes the conclusion secure that Paul is concerned more with the corporate welfare of the community as the body of Christ.

In this connection, it becomes important to note that 1 Corinthians 5:5 lacks the pronominal genitive of possession relating to *sarx* (flesh) and *pneuma* (spirit). Paul did not say that the flesh of the incestuous man should be handed over to Satan for the preservation of his body. He rather says that the flesh should be handed over to Satan for the preservation of the body. The absence of the genitive of possession and the ethical interpretation of *sarx* and *pneuma* means that Paul was most likely demanding the destruction of the works of the flesh operative in the man.

Finally, there is no other place in the Pauline corpus where one gets the hint of excommunication or banishment from the community because of moral impropriety. In other words, it does not seem to agree with the Pauline approach to sins in general and sexual sins in particular. Even though Paul condemns sexual immorality in strong terms (cf. 1 Thess. 4:2; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5), he never employs the language of excommunication in any of them. Paul had told the Galatians that those who are strong should correct the erring ones in the spirit of gentleness (Gal. 6:1). However, 1 Cor. 5:5 stands out as carrying a stern warning.

Reasons for Paul's Severe Argument against Incest in the Corinthian Church

Perhaps, Paul's strong recommendation of handing the man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh and the salvation of the spirit could be based on a number of reasons. It could be because of the gross nature

of the sin of *porneia* between a man and his stepmother[34] and the fact that the Corinthian Christians should manifest the sort of life that is distinct from their non-Christian neighbours. This is to stress the moral differentiation which is the hallmark of Christian living among nonChristians. Again, there seems to be an arrogant camp leading the Corinthian church astray from what she had learned from Paul.[35] In the words of Fee, it could be the first of the "test cases of the crisis of authority" (5:1-6:20), where Paul deals with those puffed up against his authority.[36] If Fee is correct in his assessment, it appears then that Paul's aim is to ensure compliance to his teaching by attacking the pride of the congregation towards the incestuous union.[37]

Therefore, the reason for the Pauline severe recommendation in the pericope under consideration could be because of Paul's conscious effort to separate the Christians from their non-Christian neighbours. This separation is very necessary especially when it concerns sexual ethics.[38] Since the believers in Christ are the temple of God in whom the Spirit of God dwells (1 Cor. 3:16f), they have to be holy '*hagioi*' (cf. 1 Cor. 1:2). In the same stroke, they have to be distinguished from those outside this temple. This is particularly poignant in Corinth that harboured many heathen fertility temples and some important philosophical schools in antiquity. [38] Corinth was also a city that acquired a reputation for sin of various kinds. In the words of Brown, "Greek Corinth acquired an overblown reputation (partly through

[34] A. C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Community Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 386.
[35] See G. D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1987), 212.
[36] Fee, *Corinthians*, 194.
[37] May, *Body*, 59. [38]
May, *Body*, 58.
[38] Schnelle, *Einleitung*, 75. Archaeological discoveries reveal the presence of Greek and Egyptian deities. Under Augustus, it became the capital city of Achaia. See R. E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 513.

slander) for sexual license, so that Greek words for whoremongers, prostitution, and fornication were coined employing the city's name."[39] These make the dwellers in the city susceptible to the corrupting influences of the heathen world. As the holy people of God, the Christians of Corinth are supposed to manifest a kind of morality that is distinct from their heathen neighbours.

However, from every indication, the Corinthian Christians have not been able to manifest this difference because some of them were still living a carnal life (cf. I Cor. 3:1-4). The text of I Cor 5:1-13 sharpens this accusation of carnality by introducing the issue of the existence of an incestuous man in the church at Corinth. The fact that some members of the church were gloating over such an action that should be shameful (cf. 1 Cor. 5:2.6) seems to intensify the Pauline reaction to such a sinful union. This boasting over sin seems to be a principal theme Paul seeks to address in his first letter to the Corinthians.

Incest in the Nigerian Society

The problem of incest is not only encountered in Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Many stakeholders, including religious leaders, sociologists, lawyers and civil rights activists have identified the rise of incest in the Nigerian society. Some of the factors identified to be responsible for this increase is the increasing level of moral decadence in the Nigerian society, broken homes, decline in attention given to traditional family values, emotional imbalance, ignorance, economic hardship, and shift in family roles leading to the absence of both parents from homes. This absence of the parents from homes makes the children to be left alone with none of the parents around to take care of them. Sometimes they are left in the care of some close relatives who take

[39] R. E. Brown, *Introduction*, 513.

advantage of them.[40] Other factors which I would like to add as contributory for the surging menace of incest in the Nigerian society include poverty, ignorance, the culture of secrecy, occult practices, lack of self-control, drug abuse, psychological disorder, etc. It is no secret that some adults engage in incestuous practices with their wards as a way of gaining some reward for paying the bills of their wards. And when such issues are reported to the parents of the children involved, the parents sometimes command the children to secrecy so as to maintain the dignity of the family. It is also no secret that many people in Nigeria believe that such incestuous union could grant them longevity or fame. This is one of the areas where the rise of occultism in the Nigerian society rears its ugly head.

Perhaps, the most important contributory factor is easy access to pornography. The fact that majority of the teeming Nigerian population has access to pornography through the internet means that many of the youth who are mostly left alone seize the opportunity to exploit their sexual fantasies. When these factors are adequately addressed, it is my humble opinion that the rampant cases of incestuous unions in the Nigerian society would be greatly reduced.

The Nigerian Law and Incest

The Nigerian law is not silent on the issue of incest. Under the Matrimonial Causes Act, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN), 1990, marriage of people within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity or affinity is considered void. In the Matrimonial Causes Act, Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004 (as amended), marriage by incest

[40] https://guardian.ng/news/why-incest-is-becoming-rampant-in-nigeria-experts.

is also prohibited. Section 3 of the Acts mentions those who are prohibited from contracting marriage. They include the following:[41]

- A man with his:

wife's mother, wife's grandmother, sister, wife's daughter, father's sister, wife's son's daughter, mother's sister, wife's daughter's daughter, brother's daughter, father's wife, sister's daughter, grandfather's wife, son's wife, daughter's son's wife.

- A woman with her:

brother, father's brother, mother's brother, brother's son, sister's son, husband's father, husband's grandfather, husband's son, husband's son's son, husband's daughter's son, mother's husband, grandmother's husband, daughter's husband, son's daughter's husband and daughter's daughter's husband.

However, this prohibition does not imply criminalizing incestuous marriages as we shall see in the next section. Section 4 of the Acts makes provision for appeal to a judge for permission to contract such a marriage.

(1) Where two persons who are within the prohibited degrees of affinity wish to marry each other, they may apply, in writing, to a judge for permission to do so.

(2) If the judge is satisfied that the circumstances of the particular case are so exceptional as to justify the granting of the

[41] Hameed Ajibola Jimoh Esq, A Research into whether 'Incest' is an Offence in Nigeria: A Slight Amendment https://thenigerialawyer.com/re-a-research-into-whether-incest-is-an-offence-innigeria-a-slight-amendment-by-hameed-ajibola-jimoh-esq/.

permission sought and, may, by order, permit the applicants to marry one another.

(3) Where persons marry in pursuance of permission granted under this section, the validity of their marriage shall not be affected by the fact that they are within the prohibited degrees of affinity.

(4) The President may arrange with the Governor of a State for the performance by judges of the High Court of that State of functions under this section.

This shows that incestuous unions are permissible under this Act provided the couple obtained permission from the relevant authorities.

On the other hand, the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP Act) 2015 (section 25), recommends that "a person who knowingly and wilfully have (sic) carnal knowledge of another within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity and affinity contained in the Schedule to this Act with or without consent, commits incest and is liable on conviction to a minimum term of (a) 10 years of imprisonment without an option of fine, (b) where the two parties consent to commit incest, provided that the consent was not by fraud or threat, 5 years of imprisonment without an option of fine."[42] From resources available to me during the course of this research, this bill was signed as law by the former president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on 23rd May, 2015. Despite this provision, I cannot recall hearing or reading of any convictions on the grounds of incest in Nigeria. This is notwithstanding the increasing rate of incest in the Nigerian society.

42 https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/docs/ELECTRONIC/104156/126946/F1224509384/NGA104156.pdf.

Recommendations following the Pauline Model

We have learned from Paul that incest is a scourge that could contaminate the entire Christian community at Corinth. It is like yeast which leavens the entire dough of morality in the assembly. In Corinth, this evil became so attractive that some members of the community became proud of it. This explains why Paul recommended a very harsh treatment to eradicate the offence from the community. His recommendation is that the evil instinct, the *sarx*, should be removed from the community in order to preserve its *pneuma*. As I have already said, this has nothing to do with the physical destruction of the guilty member. Also it says more about the destruction of the evil instinct than disfellowshipping or excommunicating such a member.

In a similar fashion, having identified the underlining causes of incest in the Nigerian society, the important task would not be first and foremost the criminalizing of incest. There is no rational Nigerian who does not know that incest is condemned and seen as taboo even from a traditional Nigerian point of view. Again, the fact that the Nigerian law has criminalized the action has not abated is occurrence. Furthermore, ostracising offenders from the society would not effectively solve the problem. One has to first commit the offence before one is ostracised.

I therefore feel that the first major issue is to identify ways of eradicating the factors that give room to such a malaise.

1. There is the need for stake holders to spread knowledge of the rampant spread of the evil of incest in the Nigerian society and the harm this causes. In this connection, the words of Pope Francis that “the sexual abuse of children is all the more scandalous when it occurs in families, schools, communities

and Christian institutions."[43] This should form the basis of communal moral teaching.

2. There is the need to revive traditional moral values. The effects of incestuous relationships should be emphasized. Just like the Catechism of the Catholic Church underlines, incest imprints a perpetual harm to the physical and moral integrity of the victims.[45]
3. Parents should endeavour not to leave their children in the care of irresponsible elders.
4. There is the need of responsible sex education of the youth to help them read and understand the vital signs of potential sex invasion.
5. The negative impact of occultism should be imprinted in the minds of the youth.
6. Children and young adults should be taught the responsible use of the internet.

It is my strong belief that when these issues are taken into consideration the Nigerian society would breathe a new air of moral sanity devoid of incestuous relationships. This is particularly important in our era where many forms of sexual perversion are competing for acceptance. It is not weird to postulate that in the next few years a new movement "Relative Attracted Persons" (RAP) would be a global phenomenon asking for recognition. Ensuring a widespread knowledge of the danger this poses to the physical and moral integrity it portends for those involved, especially for children, would approximate the Pauline injunction of destruction of the flesh for the salvation of the spirit.

[43] Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia: Apostolic Exhortation on Love in the Family, 46.
[45] CCC no. 2398.

THE CATHOLIC PRIEST IN A NEW VICIOUS-IDOLATROUS CULTURE AND SOCIETY

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Abstract

This essay addresses the prevailing rate of idolatrous practices in the contemporary society and the challenges posed to priestly ministry. The African society has always been known for its notoriously religious character, but the form of religiosity one encounters in many contexts today is a clear departure from the known traditional religious heritage. The essay examines the meanings of idol and idolatry and how they are understood in some cultures and in the biblical text. It also exposes the different forms of idolatry in the contemporary culture, with particular focus on the Nigerian society and the challenges they pose for the priestly ministry.
Key words: culture, idol, idolatry, priestly ministry, shepherd.

1. INTRODUCTION

The title of this essay touches one of the troublesome issues in our contemporary religious experience. The essay was originally presented as a lead paper at Owerri on 8 June, 2022, during the Colloquium to mark the Priestly Golden Jubilee Celebration of Archbishop Anthony Obinna, the Emeritus Archbishop of Owerri. It was a tribute to Obinna's unchanging commitment to the integral development of the African Society and his love for an authentically incarnated Christianity in the local culture. The perception in many contexts is that the contemporary society has a very shallow approach to religion. The problem is most

evident in the Nigerian society, and particularly, the Igbo society, famed for being very religious. This is exemplified in the rampant cases of double allegiance in the practice of Christianity and the increasing attraction to materialism and what may be regarded as sheer Satanic worship. Coupled with these is the dangerous recourse from the Christian faith to the old traditional religion. This is expressed in newfound attractions to the abandoned local deities and their cult images. This fascination for the old religion is not very recent, but it has assumed new dimensions.

In one of his lectures with our class in Fundamental Theology in the late 1980s, the then Fr. Anthony Obinna introduced us to one of the poems of Christopher Okigbo, where this great Nigerian poet spoke of his ancestral goddess, called Idoto. The significant lines of the poem, titled "Heavensgate", run thus:

Before you, Mother Idoto
Naked I stand;
Before your watery presence,
A prodigal,

Leaning on an oilbean;
Lost in your legend
Under your power wait I on
barefoot,
Watchman for the watchword At
Heavensgate;

Out of the depths my cry:
Give ear and hearken.

In this poem, Christopher Okigbo, regarded as one of the greatest Nigerian poets of all times, laments his abandonment of his cultural heritage, and asked for forgiveness as a penitent. In the poem, Mother

Idoto stands for the water goddess of Ojoto, which is Okigbo's hometown. The oilbean tree is famous for providing one of the natural groves for the encounter with the goddess. The recourse to Idoto in this poem is like a libation to an abandoned deity, since Christopher Okigbo himself was a Christian. The poem exposes an ardent nostalgia for the past and a statement on cultural revival.

This form of revivalist attitude towards the traditional religion has today taken a new dimension. The younger generation has perfected it in a most perfidious manner, as the old symbols of the traditional religion are now turned into diabolical religious symbols. The same names are often used but the practices are more ambivalent. So, when one talks of a vicious idolatrous culture and society, one is talking of an ambivalent return to the traditional religion without the positive ethics and spirituality of that old religion. This idolatrous mindset is exhibited in the repertoire of many superstitious beliefs that still characterize the religious life of our people. It is evident in most of the new religious movements and even in some bizarre abuses of the older ones. The reality is that the society remains viciously idolatrous. This does not mean that every cultural expression of religiosity is idolatrous. There are many cultural practices which are neither Christian nor idolatrous. So, this essay does not tag everything that is not Christian as idolatrous. The challenge of inculturation is to employ those good symbols of the traditional culture in the propagation of the Christian faith.

This essay addresses challenges of priestly ministry in such an idolatrous state of affairs. The question is: What should the priest do in such a society? This implicates the biblical approach to such issues and their contemporary relevance. A number of biblical texts show how some significant religious leaders addressed similar idolatrous issues in their contexts. Such texts serve as important points of reference in

contemporary pastoral approaches. But, first, one needs to make a conceptual clarification of the term idolatry.

2. MEANING OF IDOLATRY

The term idolatry is a very complex one, and many definitions and descriptions abound. The word idolatry is a derivation of the New Testament Greek noun *eidōlolatria* meaning literally "worship of idols". Technically, idolatry refers to the worship directed to material objects or images as representatives of divinities. With time it became used to identify all forms of worship directed to foreign gods. But to understand its meaning more deeply, it is good to explain what the term idol really means.

Idols

The term idol connotes a number of things in contemporary usage. In one way or the other, all these senses are relevant to the argument of this essay. But basically, an idol is understood as a physical representation of a deity.[1] The term idol in English is derived from the Greek word *eidōlon*, meaning "image," "phantom" or "picture copy".[2]

In most cultures and religions of the world, deities are represented in visible forms. Even when they are not so represented, they are described in forms using physical imagery. This is the case in both the ancient religions of the world and in modern religious expressions.

In the Ancient Near East (ANE), images were very prominent in cult. The most common images were the statues of deities, and this was the case for both major and minor deities. One of the main functions of priests in these religions was the care of these statues. Gods and supernatural forces were depicted in diverse ways in the ANE. In Mesopotamia, they were

[1] See Edward M. Curtis, "Idol, Idolatry," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 3, 376.
[2] See Judith M. Hadley, "Idolatry: Theology," *NIDOTTE* 4, 715.

mostly depicted anthropomorphically, that is, in human forms, but in Egypt one finds a greater diversity in the artistic representations, as the gods appeared in both animal and human forms.

One controversial area in the notion of idols is on how they relate to the deities they represent. The biblical text makes a caricature of them in Psalm 135:15-18:

> The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak; they have eyes, but they do not see; they have ears, but they do not hear, and there is no breath in their mouths. Those who make them and all who trust them shall become like them.

This text is rather polemical (see also Psalm 115:4-8). But the influential scholarly opinion is that the images or idols were not intended to describe the exact appearance of the god but were meant to represent various ways of the god's self manifestation as well as the functions and attributes of the god.[3] The deity was believed to manifest his or her living presence in the image or statue. For instance, ancient Egyptians believed that the gods entered into the image made of them.[4] This explains the elaborate prescriptions involved in the erection of a particular image or statue and the rituals involved in the installation of such image.

The presence of the god is made alive in the image through a rite performed on the statue. This rite was called "the opening of the mouth", that is, the opening of the mouth of the image or statue.[5] The understanding was that without the mouth opening ritual, the statue would not be able to eat offerings and sacrifices. As a matter of fact, the

[3] Curtis, "Idol, Idolatry," 377.

[4] Curtis, "Idol, Idolatry," 377.

[5] See Curtis, "Idol, Idolatry," 377; T. Jacobsen, "the Graven Image," *AIR* (1987) 15-32.

presence of the deity in the statue was believed to be kept alive through the regular offerings and care. The need to maintain the living presence of the god in the statue led sometimes to the practice of repeating periodically the rite of the opening of the mouth.

3. IDOLS IN IGBO TRADITIONAL RELIGION

There is currently some controversy on the identity of the Supreme Being or Deity in Igbo traditional religion. While some disagree on the question of which of the known deities in the traditional Igbo context can be called the Supreme Deity (for instance Chukwu, Chi, Chineke),[6] some others contest the existence of a name for such Deity.[7] Given this controversy, it is very difficult to speak of an image of the supreme Deity in the Igbo context. However, there is a wide agreement on the polytheistic nature of the traditional religion within which many big and small gods abound, together with a number of messenger divinities. From this perspective, Igbo traditional religion is filled with idolatrous representations of the deity in forms of carved images and totemic animals that are believed to be messengers or representations of the deity.

While images of different deities abound, the most common Igbo word for these images or statues is the term *Arusi*, same as *Alusi* in some dialects. The *Arusi* is a wooden image of the deity that functions as the main representative of the deity's presence. For instance, the worshipper of *Ogwugwu* only sees the *Arusi* of *Ogwugwu* as the symbolic representation of the deity. All covenants and oaths with the deity are done before the *Arusi*. Another popular deity that is idolized with the image of *Arusi* is the divinatory deity *Agwu-nsi* or *Agwu-ishi*. What

[6] See A. E. Afigbo, "Ancestral Igbo Religion and Cosmos and the Idea of World Religion," in *Religion in a World of Change: African Ancestral Religion, Islam and Christianity* (ed. T. I. Okure; Owerri: Whelan Research Academy, 2003) 168-181.

[7] See R. Arazu, "Chukwu and Yahweh: The Problem of Naming God in Igbo Language," in *God, Bible and African Traditional Religion*: Acts of SIST International Symposium 2009 (ed. B. u. Ukwuije; Enugu, 2010) 16-30.

makes *Agwu-nsi* very popular is that it is a household deity like the ancient Hebrew Teraphim.

Igbo traditional religion is very particular in the area of idolatrous worship. Even though images of minor deities abound, these are not absolutized. There is the Igbo adage: *Agwu-nsi kpawa ike egosi ya osisi ejiri kpuo ya* – "If *Agwu-nsi* begins to misbehave, it is shown the wood from which it was carved". Whenever a deity ceases to be of good to the human community and human welfare it is abandoned together with its cult objects. This explains why conversion to Christianity was rapid among the Igbo people. It also explains why the Igbo find it difficult to pay a lasting allegiance to any human leader or cult figure.

Elochukwu Uzukwu demonstrates this with the image of the proud and inflexible Ezeulu, chief priest of *Ulu* deity, in Chinua Achebe's book, *Arrow of God*.[8] In the story, Ezeulu's stubborn refusal to modify the calendar of the New Yam ritual in accordance with the changing times brings calamity to the community. The consequence is that the people abandon him and his deity and join the Christian faith which offered hopes of a better life. As Uzukwu puts it, "*Arrow of God* concluded with what appears to be an intervention of the deity [*Ulu*] to save the people of Umuaro by making his priest insane. It was too late: the people had abandoned *Ulu* and carried their new yam to the Christian church, whose God, they hoped, would satisfy the needs of the community."[9] The lesson from the story is that the welfare of the community overrides every other consideration. The priest's arrogance or conservatism should not be allowed to endanger the welfare of the community.

[8] See Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, *God, Spirit and Human Wholeness. Appropriating faith and Culture in West African Style* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2012) 98-102.
[9] Uzukwu, *God, Spirit and Human Wholeness*, 102.

According to Uzukwu, "The priest's *refusal to adjust to change along with his stubborn pride is heresy and idolatry*."[10]

4. APPROACH TO IDOLS IN ISRAELITE RELIGION

The official Israelite religion prohibited the representation of the Deity with images. Nonetheless, images were still found among the people, as many texts testify, only that the official religion banned them. This ban is clear in Exod 20:4: "You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth." Here, the term idol is represented with the Hebrew words *pesel* (image) and *temuna* (likeness). There are many other terminologies for idols in the texts, each designating specific species of images. Most prominent were the images of the household gods called *Teraphim*.

It is, however, not certain when the religion of Israel officially banned the use of idols. Some scholars attribute the ban to the Classical prophets of the eighth century B.C., such as Isaiah, Amos, Hosea, Micah.[11] Some others point to a later stage, probably in the exilic and postexilic periods. The ban was mostly championed by the Deuteronomic Reform movement, whose agenda was a radical reform of the old religion and enforcement of a strict monotheism based on sole YHWH worship. This started from the last years of the monarchic period, extending to the exilic and post exilic periods. According to Rainer Albertz,

> "for the Deuteronomists the prohibitions against strange gods and images are almost identical; for them the use of cultic images even in connection with Yahweh is *ipso facto* the cult of strange gods. The intention is also to lay down clear guidelines for family religion, which was particularly difficult

[10] Uzukwu, *God, Spirit and Human Wholeness*, 100.
[11] Cf. Curtis, "Idol, Idolatry," 378.

> to control – one has only to think of the Astarte figures and the star cakes for Ishtar."[12]

The reform movement is responsible for the book of Deuteronomy and the redaction of many other books, particularly the historical books from Joshua through Second Kings. It is also argued that the Deuteronomists redacted some parts of the Pentateuch, from Genesis to Numbers. The Deuteronomic opposition to use of images is most radically expressed in Deut 12:2-4:

> "You must demolish completely all the places where the nations whom you are about to dispossess served their gods, on the mountain heights, on the hills, and under every leafy tree. Break down their altars, smash their pillars, burn their sacred poles with fire, and hew down the idols of their gods, and thus blot out their name from their places. You shall not worship the LORD your God in such ways."

The last part of the text admonishes Israel never to worship YHWH in such idolatrous ways. Deuteronomy bans the multiplication of worship centres for YHWH. Only one place is approved, but that place is not named anywhere in Deuteronomy. Later traditions identified Jerusalem as the place, but it is also probable that the place could have originally been Shiloh, as Jerusalem was conquered only in the time of David.[13] The centralisation of worship, which runs through the whole of Deut 12:1-28, was intended to avoid the corruption of the YHWH cult with the multiplication of local worship centres or sanctuaries. For

[12] R. Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*, Volume 1: From the Beginnings to the End of the Exile (London; SCM Press, 1994) 216.
[13] See J. H. Hunt, "Idols, Idolatry, Teraphim, Household Gods," *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch* (eds. T. Desmond Alexander & David W. Baker; Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2003) 438.

Deuteronomy, it is not only that YHWH alone should be worshipped in Israel but that the worship has to be uniform.

This is the essence of the Great Commandment, called the *Shema*, in Deut 6:4-5: "Hear, O Israel! YHWH is our God, YHWH is one! You shall love YHWH your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." The worship of YHWH alone was the greatest dogma of Israel's religion, and any departure from it was tagged idolatry. This dogma theoretically rules out any form of polytheism from Israel.[14] But the more important nuance of the formulation is that the YHWH cult was not open to any form of contextual adaptation. It was not open to inculturation. While the cult of Baal had many forms, that of YHWH was one and uniform and did not admit of local variations.[15] This was a real danger in the social environment where local sanctuaries multiplied and were at the service of diverse social and political interests.

A case in point is the religious reform of Jeroboam in 1 Kings 12.
Jeroboam, out of political expediency, shifted the religious capital of Israel from Jerusalem to the two centres, Bethel and Dan, and appointed new religious leaders contrary to existing practice (1 Kgs 12:26-32). His reasons were very plausible:

> And Jeroboam said in his heart, 'Now the kingdom will turn back to the house of David; if this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah' (1 Kgs 12:26-27).

[14] See Luke E. Ijezie, "The Love Commandment in Deut 6:4-9 and Its Centrality for Biblical Faith and Evangelisation," in *The Bible on faith and Evangelisation* (eds. A. Ewherido *et al*; Acts of CABAN 6; Port Harcourt: CABAN Publications, 2015) 1-16.
[15] See Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. 1: The History of Israel's Historical Traditions (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1975) 227.

As a matter of fact, Jerusalem was not the original religious centre of Israel, and Jerusalem was not even originally an Israelite city. It was a Jebusite city until David captured it and made it his capital city for the united kingdom of Israel and Judah. Solomon promoted the religious and political aura of the city by building the magnificent YHWH temple and royal palace there. It gradually became engrained in the consciousness of many political and religious observers that Jerusalem was now the undisputable eternal centre of Israel's religious and political life.

What Jeroboam did was to bring his own entity, Israel, back to the more ancient traditions. He did not, however, abolish the worship of YHWH and it is not clear if ever he did introduce the worship of any other deity. It is important to underline this point. What he did was to transfer the worship centre, most probably YHWH worship, to Bethel and Dan. Aberrations could have set in afterwards. Bethel and Dan were more ancient Israelite religious centres than Jerusalem. But, why was Jeroboam accused of leading Israel into sin? The reason is given in 1 Kgs 12:28-30:

> So the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold. He said to the people, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one at Bethel and before the other as far as Dan."

The sin of Jeroboam is fourfold: first, he made images of the Deity in form of two golden calves, which was a direct contravention of the Mosaic commandment (Exod 20:4; Deut 5:8), recalling the Golden calf of Aaron in Exodus 32; second, he established illegal sanctuaries and

altars; third, he appointed non Levites as priests; fourth, he established new religious feasts which he had no right to do. The whole sin of Jeroboam can be summed up as cultic apostasy.[16] Jeroboam's reforms were politically expedient, but he failed to understand that he was made a king over YHWH's people. He had no right to act on his own volition without the approval of YHWH. In the biblical evaluation, political expediency does not count. What matters is to act in accordance with the divine will.

The Deuteronomic reform movement fought against these pluralistic expressions of the YHWH cult, and the account of the Josiah reform in 2 Kings 22:1-23:28 shows the dismantling of the localized shrines and altars. The law on centralization of worship in Deut 12:1-28 stipulates only a single sanctuary for the worship of YHWH, and this eventually came to be the Jerusalem temple. But despite this centralisation which, of course, was a later development, Israelites continued to express their religious worship in diverse places and in diverse forms. Irrespective of the legal stipulations, the use of images was not completely absent from Israel's worship in the monarchic times and even later among some circles.

The Solomonic temple was adorned with many artistic representations of heavenly bodies and earthly things. The images of the Cherubim over the ark were representations of creatures. Some scholars also point out that the Asherah pole was used at a certain time in the worship of YHWH, though this was later condemned by the prophets.[17] The bronze snake mentioned in Num 21:8-9 was part of the images in the Jerusalem temple at a certain time. Scholars have traced the background of the story of the Bronze serpent to the ancient Near Eastern beliefs in snakes

[16] Cf. R. Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period*, Volume 2: From the Exile to the Maccabees (London; SCM Press, 1994) 396.
[17] See Hadley, "Idolatry: Theology," 716.

as protectors of the people.[18] In the Canaanite religion, the serpent is the iconographic representation of the god Baal. There is the opinion that some forms of YHWHism also represented the Israelite God YHWH in form of a serpent.[19] Images of snakes are often found in ancient temples. This was much practised in Egypt. It is also common in many forms of Igbo traditional religion, most prominent being the *eke Njaba* and the *eke Idemmili*.[20] The story of the Bronze serpent in Num 21:8-9 actually functions as an etiological story to explain the presence of the Bronze serpent image in the temple of Jerusalem. The aim is to trace it to YHWHistic origin rather than pagan origin. The later reformers of the YHWH religion were, however, embarrassed by the serpent image (called Nehushtan) as they did not consider it adequate for the YHWH cult. In fact, it was among the objects destroyed during the reforms of King Hezekiah of Judah (2 Kgs 18:4).

5. THEOLOGICAL REASONS FOR THE PROHIBITION OF IDOLS

Some theological reasons may be identified as the basis for the ban on the making of images of the Deity in the Bible

1. The first theological ground for the prohibition of images of God in Israel's cult is the understanding that human beings are made in the image (*selem*) of God. The Genesis account presents the human being as *imago Dei* (image of God), and this resemblance is not only in form but also in function, as God entrusts the continuation of the creative work to human beings. J. H. Hunt puts it succinctly: "God fashioned humans in

[18] Cf. Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion*, 180, 334-335. See also K. R. Joines, *Serpent Symbolism in the Old Testament* (Haddonfield, NJ: Haddonfield House, 1974); J. H. Walton, "Serpent," *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, 736-739.

[19] See the recent article of Nissim Amzallag, "The Serpent as a Symbol of Primeval Yahwism," *Semitica* 58 (2016) 207-236.

[20] See Luke E. Ijezie, *Hebrew YHWH and Igbo Njawa. Introducing Research on Igbo Connections with Hebrew and Related Semitic Languages* (Port Harcourt, 2013) 29.

the image of God. Humans, in contrast, may not fashion God in the image of humans or anything else. Potential potters of deity must realize that the fashioner was fashioned by the divine to evoke God. The equation, however, does not work in reverse; humans may not take it upon themselves to represent the deity by earthly fabrications."[21] It is, in fact, a travesty for human beings to turn around and start fashioning the Great Intelligence that created everything in the image of created things. No human creation can come near the divine reality without making a caricature of that reality.

2. A second theological ground may be seen in the Lucan presentation of the Areopagus speech of Paul in Acts 17:16-34. In this text, Luke, the writer of Acts, addresses the difficulties involved in the mission of Christianity to the Gentile world.[22] Here, the Apostle Paul is depicted as coming into direct confrontation with the Athenian idolatrous religion. He was fascinated by the preponderance of altars and religious idols all over the city. He was most attracted to an altar designated as altar To an Unknown God. He went on to identify the Unknown God with the God whom he now preaches. In his dialogue with the Stoic and Epicurean Philosophers of the city, Paul makes the following argument against the practice of idolatry: i. God, as creator and Lord of heaven and earth, does not need man-made shrines and carved idols; ii. human beings are made to live in limited time and space so that they may continue to search for the Deity who is not far to find since he is always present in created beings, and it is in him that we live and move and exist, meaning that the life we live comes from him; iii. we are God's children and thus the Deity cannot be in the form of anything carved from gold or silver or stone. Paul sums his argument by saying that all these were done in an age of ignorance.

[21] Hunt, "Idols, Idolatry," 438.

[22] See Richard J. Dillon, "Acts of the Apostles," NJBC, 754.

3. A third reason is the argument of Paul in Rom 1:21-31. According to Paul, idolatry emanates from human stubbornness expressed in transferring God's glory to created things. He argues that the problem of humanity is not ignorance of God but refusal to give due glory (*doxa*) and thanks to Him. The theme of glory (*doxa*) is very central to the whole discourse. The word *doxa* is often translated as glory or honour. It literally means brightness, brilliance, splendour. God's brightness is his glory. It shines everywhere. People knew God, but they transferred his *doxa* (glory) to images and created things. They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for an iconographic image (Rom 1:23). This is the basic problem of representing God in images. The danger is that one beholds the beauty of the image rather than the contemplation of God's true beauty. It happens with a statue or any picturesque representation of the deity. Often the pagans represented the deity in form of totemic animals or trees. All these come under the name of idolatry.

According to Paul, the punishment for idolatry is that God handed humanity over to the filthy practices of dishonouring their own bodies. Since the divine "body" is dishonoured by its representation in images, the adequate punishment is also the dishonouring of the human body. It is a negation of what God is and thus a perversion of the right order. Created things are absolutized as if they were divine, and no difference is made between the infinite and the transient or ephemeral. The consequence is God's wrath on humanity,[23] which has brought about the perversion of the whole created order (vv. 28-31). Creation has passed from order to chaos, and this is expressed in the reign of immorality and injustice. Paul articulates these in vv. 28-31:

[23] The idea of God's wrath is an anthropomorphic use of language, very common in the Old Testament, and so needs not be understood literally. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Letter to the Romans", *NJBC*, 835. See also J. A. T. Robinson, *Wrestling with Romans* (Phl, 1979) 18.

> In other words, since they would not consent to acknowledge God, God abandoned them to their unacceptable thoughts and indecent behaviour. And so now they are steeped in all sorts of injustice, rottenness, greed and malice; full of envy, murder, wrangling, treachery and spite, libellers, slanderers, enemies of God, rude, arrogant and boastful, enterprising in evil, rebellious to parents, without brains, honour, love or pity.

Because things are distorted, the human mind is darkened and human judgement is distorted, such that unjust structures are promoted and the good is no longer distinguished from the bad. It is in this state of chaos and moral stupor that suffering multiplies.

4. The fourth reason can be gleaned from 1 Cor 10:14-30. Here Paul admonishes the Corinthian Christians to flee from idolatry and never consciously eat what is sacrificed to idols. The interesting thing in this text is that Paul says it categorically that idols do not exist. But he regards the food sacrificed to them as food sacrificed to demons. In other words, what people actually worship as idols are demons. Because of this eating food or meat offered to idols is equivalent to having communion or fellowship with demons. For Paul, idolatry is particularly abhorrent because it is a *koinōnia* (fellowship, partnership) with demons.[24]

The identification of idols as demons is neither unique to Paul nor originated by him. Some sections of the Old Testament already refer to idols and the gods of the nations as demons. For instance, Deut 32:16-17 says of erring Israelites: "They made him jealous with strange gods, with abhorrent things they provoked him. They sacrificed to demons, not God, to deities they had never known, to new ones recently arrived, whom your ancestors had not feared." Here, the strange gods are referred to as "abhorrent things" (another name for idols), "deities", "new ones", and

[24] See Camillus R. Umoh, *Paul's Response to Idolatry in 1 Corinthians 10:14-22 and its Implications for the Annang Christian*; Unpublished Masters Thesis at CIWA Port Harcourt in Affiliation with the University of Calabar (1991) 39-40.

they are all qualified as demons (*shēdîm* in Hebrew). This is also the case in Psalm 106:37, where foreign gods are identified as demons (*shēdîm*).

6. **FORMS OF IDOLATRY IN THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY**

To appreciate the depth of Paul's thought on idolatry, one does not need to limit the idea of idol to a piece of wood or metal. Idolatry is basically a transfer of the honour and glory due to God to other things. From this perspective, idolatry expresses itself in diverse forms, in social structures, in ideological orientations and in cultic practices in which one finds a misplacement of values.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church qualifies the following practices as idolatry: false pagan worship, divinizing what is not God, honouring and revering a creature in place of God, and such could be gods or demons (as in satanism), power, pleasure, race, ancestors, the state.[25] Significantly, apart from the direct worship of other gods, excessive attachment to power, pleasure, racial issues, clan and ethnic issues, ancestral traditions and political matters can easily become idolatrous. Since God is the only absolute, whenever any of these things of entities is absolutized what results is idolatry. Since human beings are made in the image of God, any entity or system of ideas that is prioritized at the expense of the human welfare becomes a source of idolatry. In the same way, any exaltation of the individual to the detriment of the common good becomes idolatry. One can talk of idolatry of power, idolatry of status, idolatry of self, idolatry of ambition, idolatry of a system or ideology. Thus, idolatry is practiced in different forms in our contemporary society.

[25] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2113.

The idolatrous orientation brings about a three-fold alienation in the human condition, namely: a. alienation from the true God; b. alienation from the self, leading to inner disharmony; c. alienation in the social order, leading to distortion of social relationships. Alienation, as used in this context, expresses an excessive detachment of oneself from the normal web of relationship. It leaves the victim divided and incomplete. What it means is that idolatry brings about brokenness at all levels of relationship.

Francis Bacon identifies four categories of idols in the human mental process. By these he means bad habits of the mind that incline people to error. These include: Idols of the Tribe, Idols of the Cave, Idols of the Marketplace, and Idols of the Theatre.[26] The Idols of the Tribe refer to our natural instinct which inclines us to the false notion that our senses are the measure of all things. Sometimes, people expect too much order from natural things that is not possible to realise in the particular situation. But according to Bacon, the individual mind is limited in its perceptions.

The Idols of the Cave refer to our individual problems, passions, devotions and ideologies which can lead to the misunderstanding of the true nature of things. The Idols of the Marketplace refer to the words we form in political and interpersonal relations, tyranny of words, which can block the true reality of things and lead to empty controversies. The Idols of the Theatre refer to inherited ideas, philosophies and systems of thought which when held as unchanging dogmas can block the way to new progress.

7. PRIESTLY APOSTOLATE IN AN IDOLATROUS SOCIETY

The question of the priestly apostolate in an idolatrous society can be approached from diverse perspectives. As a matter of fact, the priests in the ancient Near Eastern Religions as well as the African Traditional

[26] Janet-panic.com – World History Portal – 5/6/2022

Religion were fully involved in the making of idols. Even in the Bible, it was Aaron, the high priest, who fabricated the Golden Calf for the people's idolatrous worship. An important aspect of the priest's function in these old religions was the care and maintenance of the idols. Of course, they saw their duty as that of service to their respective deities, whom they did not recognize as mere pieces of wood or molded things. The polemic against the foreign deities came with the reform of the Israelite Religion when the idea of the true God and true religion became diffused. The role of the priests and prophets now became that of teaching the people the dangers of idolatry.

In our Contemporary times, the phenomenon of idolatry has assumed many sophisticated dimensions. The role of the priest becomes more complex, as he has to confront the diverse genre of idolatry. However, in our Contemporary Christian context, the priestly apostolate in the idolatrous society is basically tied to mending the broken relationships caused by commitment to misplaced values. This can be approached on three levels: awareness of the issues involved; dialogue; and greater commitment to the apostolate.

i. Awareness of the Idolatrous Situation: The priest working in a particular context as a pastor of souls needs to get informed of the situation on ground. He has to understand the level of double allegiance among his flock. God sent Moses to go and see how his people had gone astray in the case of the idolatrous Golden Calf. As a matter of fact, many of those that frequent the Churches and Sacraments are involved in local superstitious and idolatrous practices which they find more relevant than the Christian systems. These practices involve all categories of the flock: Christian men, Christian women and youth. Many of our local Christian men and women settle their conflicts before shrines. They believe strongly in the workings of ancestral spirits and carry out the relevant traditional rituals as the need arises. They believe

strongly in reincarnation despite their avowed Christian faith. They believe in the workings of the earth goddess and Aquatic spirits and consult them from time to time. Many of our Christian men and women consult traditional oracles and fortune tellers in periods of crisis. Many Christian traders visit traditional medicine men for charms and other protective and success inducing rituals. Satanic worship abounds in most of our local rivers and rivulets. Our children we send to school are involved in many acts of cultism and satanic worship. It is a fact that many of our supposedly ardent Christians believe strongly in the efficacy of charms, and some even indulge in witchcraft and in the use of diabolical charms. These and many other beliefs and practices are rampant in our Christian oriented Communities. The increase in insecurity in the society has inclined many to resort to idolatrous means of self-defence and self-protection.

What is clear is that most Africans and most Igbos are converted to Christianity but their basic worldview remains with the traditional religion. Christopher Ejizu puts it well when he says: "The fact is that the indigenous religion, particularly the overarching cosmology that underpins its wide variety of beliefs, practices, values and norms, remains still a potent force on the present-day Igbo religious scene. Igbo Indigenous Religion may be down, but by no means out."[27] This means a lot for a priest working in our local context. He cannot afford to be ignorant of these facts on the ground. Situations may vary from community to community, but the reality remains. Many of our people are converted to Christianity but remain deeply attached to the worldview and practices of the traditional religion. The priestly pastor in the community needs to understand the basic African vision of life and how this interfaces with the Christian faith.

[27] Christopher Ejizu, "Down but not Out: Contemporary Forms of Igbo Indigenous Religion," in *Religion in a World of Change: African Ancestral Religion, Islam and Christianity* (ed. T. I. Okere; Owerri: Whelan Research Academy, 2003) 183.

ii. Dialogue at All Levels of the Community: Dialogue is a bridging of the gap in communication. It is a coming together and reasoning together on issues that bind us together and even on issues that threaten our lives and wellbeing. Through dialogue, the pastor comes to know the inner depths of the members of his community, their values, fears and motivations. The biblical text is full of instances of such coming together and reasoning together in difficult moments. The book of Joshua narrates how Joshua rallied the whole community of Israel to decide on their worship of YHWH. This became necessary as the people were confused in their religious orientations. The meeting provided the people with the adequate context to reason on why they should continue to worship YHWH, even though they had all along been worshipping Him. It became clear to them that no other Deity could do for them what YHWH had done for them in their history and continued to do. Joshua tried to explain to them the challenges and difficulties involved in worshipping YHWH, but they were decided, because they were now working with reasoned conviction. This is the power of dialogue. The Biblical text praises the Joshua generation more than any other generation in the history of Israel. According to Josh 24:31: "Israel served Yahweh throughout the lifetime of Joshua and throughout the lifetime of those elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the deeds which Yahweh had done for the sake of Israel."
The priest working in an idolatrous society has to engage his flock at different levels from time to time to feel their pulse and also to listen to them.

iii. Total Commitment to the Care of the Flock: Pastoral activity is a serious activity directed to the wellbeing of the flock of Christ, the people of God in a particular society or community. This is the primary duty of the priest in the community. Without the shepherding care, the flock goes astray. There is no doubt about it. A biblical text of great significance here is the story of the appearance of the risen Jesus in John

21:1-19. It is within this text that Jesus asks Peter the triple question, "Do you love me?" But why does Jesus engage Peter in these questions. To understand the text and what is going on in the story, one must start from the beginning of the story. Raymond Brown sees two scenes in the chapter, namely, 21:1-14 (involving fishing) and 21:15-23 (containing sayings of the risen Jesus to Simon Peter and the Beloved Disciple).[28] Brown considers the literary connection between the two scenes as questionable but affirms their theological relationship.[29] However, our reading of the text, here, considers the two scenes as forming a narrative whole, as the meaning of the second scene is better understood in the light of the first scene.

There were seven disciples in all in the story: Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, the sons of Zebedee and two other unnamed disciples. They had returned to Galilee where they came from. Peter told them he was going fishing and they all decided to join him. They got into the boat and went to their usual place of fishing, the Sea of Tiberias. What Peter has decided to do in this context is to go back to his profession as a fisherman.[29] He seems to have abandoned the ministry for which Jesus called him. The whole years of following Jesus were, probably, seen as wasted years. Now he decides to turn back to where he thought he belonged. But unfortunately he and his colleagues spend the whole night catching nothing until Jesus appears to them in the morning. Then he guides them to a great catch of fish and even from there gives them free breakfast.

In the first scene in 21:1-14, it is clear that Peter's decision to go back fishing is ill-conceived. He and his colleagues can no longer do without Jesus. Jesus already told them that very truth in the same Gospel of John: "Apart from me, you can do nothing" (John 15:5). In the second scene, after the free breakfast, Jesus interrogates Peter in 21:15-17: "Do

[28] R. E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1997) 361. [29] Brown, *An Introduction*, 361.

[29] Cf. R. A. Culpepper, *The Gospel and Letters of John* (IBT; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988) 246.

you love me more than these others?" And after each response he commands him to feed, tend and look after his sheep. What Jesus is telling Peter in clear and practical terms is that his job lies with the shepherding of the flock of Jesus and no longer with the catching of fish. According to R. Alan Culpepper,

> When Jesus asks Peter if he loves him 'more than these,' the point of the question is probably to see if Peter will claim that he loves Jesus more than the other disciples do [cf. 13:36-38], but it may be to ask if Peter loves Jesus more than he loves the boats and nets.[30]

The only way that Peter can demonstrate that he loves Jesus is to abandon the fishing profession and become the pastor (shepherd) of the flock of Jesus. Peter's job description is expressed clearly in 21:15-17: "Feed (*boske*) my lambs (*arnia*)"; "Tend (*poimaine*) my sheep (*probata*)"; "Feed (*boske*) my sheep (*probata*)". All these three repetitions are meant to let Peter know that his Apostolic ministry involves the wellbeing of the sheep, the people of God. It is only in caring for the people that Peter can demonstrate that he truly loves Jesus. Any other profession is a distraction. The beautiful story concludes in 21:22-23 with Jesus telling Peter: "Follow me!" What this means is that Jesus has brought Peter out from his attempted return to the fishing profession and brought him back into the Pastoral ministry.

One can learn a lot from this story for pastoral work. In the ancient Near East, priests functioned to maintain and care for the images or statues of the gods. But in the new dispensation with Jesus, his pastors have the function of caring for the people, the community. The welfare of the community must be their daily preoccupation. While cultic objects can be taken care of, this cannot be at the detriment of the more important

[30] Culpepper, *The Gospel*, 248.

function of caring for the people, which is *salus animarum*. Every action that de-emphasizes or de-prioritizes the care of the people becomes idolatrous.

Total commitment in caring for the flock is one of the ways the priest can function in an idolatrous society. It is through commitment that he can truly be salt and light to the society and to his community. It is through such commitment and dedication that he can nourish the flock, heal the sick, bandage the wounded and bring the erring members of the flock back on track. The human heart is inclined to going astray easily, and that is why God's people are called sheep. That is why a guide is always needed. As Prov 11:14 says, "Where there is no guidance, a people falls; but in an abundance of counselors there is safety."

8. CONCLUSION

This paper acknowledges the fact that we today live in a religiously complex society. The society appears religious from various perspectives, but deep down it is a very spiritually shallow society. In the face of many competing needs and mad rush to succeed at all costs, people easily manipulate the Deity for their selfish ends. Most of our younger generation are literally worshipping Satan and Mammon. In the face of such a situation, the Apostle Paul admonishes Timothy to be watchful:

> "You must understand this, that in the last days distressing times will come. For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, brutes, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to the outward form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid them" (2 Tim 3:1-5).

What the Apostle said over two thousand years ago is still very true and relevant in our context today. The same can be said to our priests as they minster daily to this idolatrous society. The great challenge is never to abandon the flock as the integral welfare of the flock is the primary purpose for mission. Any other consideration that takes undue precedence over the care of the flock can only be idolatrous.

DYNAMICS OF THE MUSIC CULTURE AMONG THE AMERICAN BLACK SLAVES: A LESSON FOR INCULTURATION TODAY

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Abstract

Paradoxically enough and in spite of all its negative consequences, the Trans-Atlantic slave trade seems to have gifted humanity with a particular positive legacy. This came in the form of the serendipitous cross-pollination of elements of African and Western musical cultures. The enduring results of these culture-contacts are with us today in the forms of the extant Negro Spirituals and Jazz Music; thanks to the ingenuity of those Black Slaves, then genuinely responding to their human natural urge and need for musical expression of their souls. In all these, there are certainly many lessons in acculturation as well as for practical inculturation in the Church today. Inculturation, for instance, is a natural response to a natural but religio-cultural stimuli, of the wish to contextualize, appropriate and adapt the Gospel of Christ to a given society, situation, age or culture.
Keywords: Acculturation, American history, black slaves, culture contact, dialectics, didactics, inculturation, Jazz, music, negro spiritual.

Introduction

The Trans-Atlantic slave trade remains a very dark page in the history of mankind. Its effects of deep-seated cultural dislodgement, racial discrimination, inferiority complex and abuse of fundamental human rights, etc, are clearly still with us today. However, just like war is an ill wind that blows no one no good yet challenges human ingenuity, and at

least at its end, affords people chances to start anew;[1] that trade ill-fated though it was, still gave the world nonetheless a few things to eternally appreciate.

Make no mistake about it; we are hereby neither talking about the unfortunate financial gains of those greedy stakeholders in this trade on both sides of the Atlantic. Nor are we referring to the structural developments and advancements in the West that resulted from the toils and labours of those exploited slaves. We are rather concentrating on a few seemingly good *legacies*; especially certain phenomena that sometimes notwithstanding the variation in times and climes, and while stubbornly building upon the steadfastness of human nature as well as simultaneously on the dynamism of culture, turned the ill-fate of the cultural dislodgement experienced by those suffering African slaves into some fruitful and enduring experiences and even discoveries, by virtue of acculturation.

In this vein, and very similar to the thematic plot of Dennis Vincent Brutus' poem, *The Sun on this Rubble*, this essay dares to *celebrate* the musical serendipities that metamorphosed into the twin historical developments known today as Negro Spirituals and Jazz music. In this poem, the poet comes across the uncomely heap of the remains of a destroyed African hut, made with walls of red mud. The sun had just risen and it was just after a heavy rainfall. Lo and behold, there in the midst of this muddy heap of wrecks was a tiny corn of sand which, having been washed by the rain, defiantly and brightly reflected the light from the sun. For Brutus, it was a symbol of pure optimism and not a utopia to see in that *Sun on this Rubble*, portent hope for the future. In fact, it could be said to be akin to the symbolism of those Ezekielian proverbial dry bones in the scriptures that shall definitely rise again.

[1] Ukeh, C. O., "Lessons in Resilience! Challenges to Ingenuity!! – Reminiscences of a Biafran Toddler Half a Century After" in *Oche-Amamihe – Wisdom Journal of Theology and Philosophy, Vol. 15, 2020, Biafra-Nigeria War. 50 Years After*, (156-161) 156.

It is partially in similar lines of thought that we hereby try to curry out some possible lessons from the cultural dynamics and dialectics involved in the historical development of both music genres – Negro Spirituals and Jazz; lessons that may be technically useful and encouraging for certain processes of the inculturation of the Gospel of Christ in a society. The point is that just as acculturation is a natural result of an encounter between the elements of two different cultures, inculturation is also the religious equivalent to acculturation. As a matter of fact, it is a natural consequence of any genuine encounter between Christianity and a given culture. On this background, therefore, we want to see jazz music but more especially the Negro spirituals as human cultural but natural responses that defied even the inhumanity of slavery, in order to defiantly manifest or come into existence. Call it euphemism or even utopia; the enduring truth is that we cannot deny that both musical genres have enriched human music culture and history, just like (or even more than most) any other genre of music may claim to have also done. Their emergence in the history of mankind's music culture is consequent on the dynamic dialectical nature of firsthand encounters between cultures or related elements of different cultures.

1. The Dialectic Dynamics within Culture-Contact

On one hand, never in human history have culture and cultural identity mattered a lot than as they do in the present world. As Huntington puts it, "In the post-Cold War world flags count and so do other symbols of cultural identity, including crosses, crescents, and even head coverings, because culture counts, and cultural identity is what is most meaningful to most people."[2] On the other hand, advancements in science and technology today have also made communications between individuals

[2] Huntington, S.P., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Simon & Schuster, UK, 1997, p. 20

and societies faster, easier and more possible. However, surprisingly enough, this increase in communication has not necessarily unified the world nor has it created a one-world culture. It has rather made people as much aware of their peculiar identities, even as they are mutually becoming more aware of each other's distinct identities too. Thus, one reads, "For it's our paradoxical situation that, at a moment when the world is becoming so obviously interdependent, every nation in it is seeking to assert its own independence. And religion and culture are the means by which independence is asserted."[3] The result *inter alia* is that people have also increasingly become even more aware of the things that differentiate them from others: as races, nations, societies and cultures. Yet people – both as individuals as well as on the societal level – are constantly and largely in contact today more than heretofore. In all this, however, that dynamism that founds, animates and characterizes the socio-anthropological process called culture-contact stubbornly remains and still generally influences people. This dynamism – which is actually innate to culture and all its elements – is a major hub around which this essay really revolves.

Furthermore, it is also pertinent to underscore the fact that from nature, human beings are generally related as well as relate to one another. Here, it is not only a question of blood relationships. Human life itself is lived out in, as well as through a concatenation of interactivity and relationships. This could be in the forms of friendships, business partnerships, marital relationships, to mention but a few. Summarily put, the human being is *ens socialis* – a social being. In other words, he or she is by nature never a loner or lone-ranger. He or she instinctively socializes and is always naturally trying to contact and stay in contact with the other. It is, therefore, almost unimaginable for a human being to willfully live and remain completely or permanently in isolation or

[3] Warren, M. A. C., "Foreword" in John V. Taylor, *Christian Presence amid African Religion*, Acton Publishers, Nairobi, 2001, p. vii.

incommunicado. This fact holds true not only between individuals but also between societies and cultures. In other words, human societies and cultures also interact and socialize with one another. This could be in terms of exchanges in areas like commerce, marriage, politics etc – whereby they usually influence and learn from each other. Such influences could be positive and beneficial or even negative and impoverishing, either mutually or unilaterally. Such an encounter between two or more cultures is technically described in social anthropology as culture-contact.

At this point, it is also necessary to clarify that *Dialectics* is a system of reasoning about reality, which although natural to the human being, is said to have been systematically identified and articulated by G.W.F Hegel. It is a thought-system that seems to partially build on, while simultaneously transcending, dualism.[4] It does this by positing that in reality, there is always a *thesis*, which in-turn necessarily implies or demands the existence of its counterpart, or even opposite called an *antithesis*. But the actual novelty in dialectical thinking – at which point it transcends dualism – is that both thesis and antithesis always necessarily go into a dialogue-encounter, thereby fusing – either partially or entirely – into a new reality or category technically called the *synthesis*. Furthermore, this new category (synthesis) automatically becomes a new thesis, which then necessarily implies and demands another antithesis, with which it again engages itself in order to produce yet another synthesis. This process tends to repeatedly continue out of compulsion *ad infinitum* – thesis-antithesis-synthesis, again and again and again.... An attempt to define Hegelian dialectics in everyday language sees it as "an interpretative method in which the contradiction

[4] Dualism, simply put, means that reality is necessarily in doublets: good and evil, up and down, black and white, strong and weak, etc. There are actually no grey zones. It is either this or that. Period.

between a proposition (thesis) and its antithesis is resolved at a higher level of truth (synthesis)."[5]

When thus applied to the socio-anthropological phenomenon of culturecontact, dialectics would also simply appeal to that dynamism characteristically native to culture itself. In a transferred sense, therefore, a culture or an element of a culture would then be a thesis, which necessarily encounters another culture or its element as an antithesis. The neo-culture or neo-cultural element consequent upon this meeting or culture-contact then becomes the synthesis. The corroborative point here is that this new culture or cultural element already necessarily assumes the identity and abilities of a new thesis. Out of compulsion of that natural dynamism in culture and its elements, the dialectics of culture-contact is quite unstoppable, as long as human beings, cultures and societies exist and interact with one another. It is within this dynamic dialectic of culture-contact that acculturation is actually born.

In a transferred sense, therefore, this essay understandably tries *inter alia* to look at the socio-anthropological phenomenon of acculturation and in the same vein the theological phenomenon of inculturation, through these same dynamic and dialectic optics of culture-contact. In other words, the theses and antitheses hereby would be respectively African music culture of the slaves and the Western musical instrumentculture of their masters; the syntheses would then be the neo-cultural elements that we now respectively know as Jazz music and Negro Spirituals. A major part of the mainstay of this whole contention then is that, although it is better that such cultural encounters be consciously initiated and directed, more often than not all these do normally happen in response to a sort of humanly natural stimuli.

[5] www.dictionary.com Collins English Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged, 2012 Digital Edition, William Collins Sons and Co. Ltd. Accessed 3.00pm Monday, 25.04.2022

2. Inculturation: A Natural Phenomenon and Process

Before we move on, there is the need to re-emphasize that this essay is also partially examining the fine intricacies of the afore-mentioned dialectical thought-ways in order to *inter alia* appreciate the Christian phenomenon theologically known as the inculturation of the Gospel. In doing this, it intends to thereby emphasize that although inculturation as a concept may be a neologism; it is however, a necessarily human and natural reality, which has always been there and operative – noticed or unnoticed. Inculturation is a natural phenomenon. It is not just a religious phenomenon but primarily and ineluctably a natural process. In other words, it occurs and stands – with or without human conscious intervention. However, considering its importance for a genuine appreciation of the Christian Gospel in any human society or culture, such an intervention should better be conscious and planned. To further explain this, let us now formally provide at least a working definition of it.

We would like to approach this, here, by firstly introducing the content of inculturation. In the words of Magesa, it consists of the answers to the questions, "How has the Christian faith been received and concretely lived by a given cultural entity? How have cultural groups appropriated and perceived it in relation to their own spirituality and practical expectations?"[6] In other words, it never pretends that the said cultural entity was religiously a *tabula rasa* or totally empty of religiosity beforehand. Furthermore, it is clearly a practical and therefore understandably contextual endeavour, which is as contextual as its major object – culture is. Our author had interviewed some African Catholic Church officials, who mostly agreed, "that, for Catholic

[6] Magesa, L., *Anatomy of Inculturation (Transforming the Church in Africa)*, Nairobi, Paulines Publications Africa, 2004, p. 20

Christianity in Africa, inculturation implies integrating Christian doctrines with 'useful' African traditional cultural values and a modern way of life."[7] It is thus very interesting to note that inculturation is not concerned just with the question of the static cultural values of a society only but also with the dynamic issue of considering the fluid exigencies necessitated modernity, for instance, in that same society too; all with particular reference to how it socially, doctrinally appropriates as well as practically appreciates Christianity. Bevans clearly thinks as much:

> If theology is really to be in context, therefore, it cannot simply deal with a culture that no longer really exists…. Sean Dwan cites a report by a Korean nun who was trying to make a Christmas crib relevant to the Korean context…. She designed a crib with Mary, Joseph, and the child in a traditional thatched Korean hut. But this seemed too comfortable, too romantic, too irrelevant to contemporary Korean life. The final design was a small cardboard shack against the background of tall hotels, apartment complexes and office buildings, complete with signs advertising cabarets, health clubs and bars. This scene was much more faithful to the contemporary Korean context, while being faithful as well to the original scene described in the gospels. Romanticism was avoided, and the real Korean culture was depicted.[8]

Furthermore, we would also underscore that it is not only a theoretical question of doctrines but also very importantly of the practical issue of faith-praxes. As a theological discipline, Inculturation is simply a scientific study of a Christian lived reality. In other words, the term

[7] Magesa, L., *Anatomy of Inculturation (Transforming the Church in Africa)*, p. 23
[8] Bevans S. B., *Models of Contextual Theology (Revised and Expanded Edition)*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll New York, 2002, p. 25

inculturation simultaneously refers to a lived reality as well as a theology – that is, the study of this said lived reality. However, this essay concentrates more on it as a lived socio-religious experience of cultural elements of a given society's first-hand encounters with Christianity, its doctrines and faith-praxes. Put in a nut-shell, therefore, inculturation is herein understood as a natural response to a natural but religio-cultural stimuli, of the wish to contextualize, appropriate, adopt and adapt the Gospel of Christ to a given society, situation, age or culture. In this particular case, however, the socio-religious cultural experience in discourse is the musical one.

3. Music – Element and Purveyor of Culture

Music is also a natural phenomenon. It is so much part of nature that not only human beings but also some animals appreciate or even make music. It is not just that a bear can learn to dance for instance, but that most birds also have the natural ability and urge to make music, at least by singing. Moreover, once a baby learns to sit properly and steadily, one of the next natural acts that it almost involuntarily carries out is to make music by beating anything it can lay its hands on; most often in a cacophony and yet sometimes with some observable level of rhythm. It even learns to sway its tiny supple body to the nursery rhymes and rhythm of the mother. In other words, it dances too. This last point becomes clearer, immediately it learns to stand up with some measurable balance and stability. Even the incoherent babblings of a child before ever it learns to speak properly, do sometimes have observable musical properties – timing, rhythm, key etc. Furthermore, not only does even a mentally deranged human being naturally respond to music; it is also axiomatic that music and music-making have very seriously therapeutic effects on such people in particular, and human beings in general. Music, the ability and propensity to make or appreciate it, are therefore natural human acts. These acts may thus also be used *inter alia* to confirm the humanity of a being.

Music is not only natural to the human being; it is a major phenomenon of human culture. Thus, in the history of human development, we are told that the attainment of *homo erectus* – erect standing man, simultaneously resulted in the attainment of *homo faber* – working man. By implication therefore, most – if not all – human activities experienced the effects of this very same developmental quantum leap. Thus, this leap was also evident in the development of the various branches of human culture: farming and feeding, singing and speaking, hunting and fighting, building and dressing, etc. Consequently, the human being as *homo faber* also developed technologies. The fabrication and use of tools, implements and instruments – including musical instruments, became part of human life. Understandably, therefore, most musical instruments are also culturally relative and often differ at least in their forms, origins and use, from society to society and from one cultural area to another. In other words, though most musical instruments are today globally known and in use, they variously originated from different cultures or continents. Thus, while the piano, trombone and guitar are Western, for instance, drums and gongs are African and Asian in origin, etc. Musical instruments also define and differentiate one type of music from the other. However, it is not just musical instruments that are culturally conditioned and determined, but music itself is both a sociological institution and cultural phenomenon. Thus, its various forms, genres or types are culturally determined, conditioned and definable.

Evidently, then, just like language and modes of dressing; music is a very prominent category in the cultural identity of any society. Little wonder then that David Crystal would then speak of "the value of languages as expressions of identity; as repositories of history; as part of human knowledge...."[9] Thus, whether at the continental level or the national, at the ethno-tribal level or even the clan level, at the city/town

[9] D. Crystal, *Language Death*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000

level or even the village level, music has always remained an effective societal identity-marker. Of course, one may also talk about ancient or traditional music; and that also clarifies the fact that music also culturally defines or distinguishes civilizations, ages or generations from one another. Therefore, one may also be able to differentiate between ages and stages of human civilization, with music as a basic barometer. To this effect, one would even differentiate between classical or conventional, mediaeval and modern, primitive and civilized music, etc.

As an element of culture, music can, thus, not only be used to identify and differentiate cultures, it is also a very strong human *language* with an immeasurably universal appeal. As such, it is a very efficient purveyor of culture. With its lyrics and wordings, music is a good repository of not only knowledge but also history. It is not only a strong, secure and very reliable medium of preserving certain cultural elements; it is also a veritable vehicle of transmitting these same elements from one generation to the next. In fact, it is a very easy and effective medium of introducing such elements to new members of the society by virtue of enculturation or socialization. It also facilitates the transmission of such elements from one society or culture to another by virtue of acculturation. Like sports, music is another strong universal language that the world, almost without exception, generally and easily understands, speaks and appreciates. It is thus a unifier that easily bonds human beings; differences of race, colour and levels of civility notwithstanding. Thus, music is almost always a very powerful player within most experiences of culture-contact. In summary, therefore, as a human cultural element, music is a universal language, a natural element of culture. Most importantly, it is ineluctably an effective purveyor of culture and consequently often a very essential instrument and player in most culture-contacts.

It is on such given backgrounds as these that we now consider the historical emergences of Negro Spirituals and Jazz music as cultural

elements, within the culture-contacts that the unfortunate trans-Atlantic slave trade occasioned.

4. Jazz Music: An Acculturative Discovery

Acculturation has been defined as, "any direct or indirect transmission of an element of culture from one … to another. (It) should not be looked upon as a specific process; it is rather a special contact situation involving a whole gamut of dynamic processes."[10] We would only add that it actually results from first-hand continuous contacts between persons or groups of persons of at least two different cultures that often subsequently lead to changes in the original cultural patterns of either one or both groups.[11] Thus, it is a matter of changes and exchanges within and between cultures respectively, as a result of first-hand contact between them. As a matter of fact, such changes and exchanges do not always necessarily occur to an entire culture. More often than not, it selectively affects only those elements within the culture that are directly involved in the particular encounter or culture-contact. Once more, it is therefore on such given backgrounds that we now consider the emergence of jazz music as a cultural element in human history.

Of course, jazz music is of different brands. Though there are forms of jazz music with words or lyrics, originally jazz music must have been mostly instrumental and wordless. Thus, in most jazz music, the sound of the saxophone and trumpet especially, or even any other jazz instruments may take up and replace the singing human voice or lyrics. Perhaps, the reason for this is not farfetched. Chinua Achebe partially gives a clue to the unravelling of this puzzle. He rhetorically queries,

[10] P. Mariatma, "Inculturation and Socio-cultural Change: The Case of Indonesia" in: Joachim G. Piepke (ed.) *Anthropology & Mission,* Nettetal, 1988, (82-98) 82

[11] E. E. Uzukwu, "Preface" in: E. E. Uzukwu (ed.), *Religion & African Culture, 1. Inculturation – A Nigerian Perspective,* 1988, p. 5

"...did not the black people in America, deprived of their own musical instruments, take the trumpet and the trombone and blow them as they were not designed to be blown? And the result; was it not jazz?"[12] The somewhat hidden but noteworthy point, here, is that these Africans were deprived of not only their own African musical instruments but also of their African native languages, which their masters did not allow them to speak. Moreso, the slaves were often drawn from different tribes and with different languages too. Though they might not have been able to communicate in a single common native African language, they must have soon discovered an affinity in their common African music heritage and culture. Thus, though they had lost their ancestral languages, they could still – even if unconsciously but naturally – pour out their African musical souls and spirits on and into those non-African (but however still, human) musical instruments. The naturally first results were wordless, instrumental jazz music. Thus, I dare to opine that worded jazz music was a later development. Of course, this remains a hypothesis and thus, still debatable.

All the same, the point to note here is that those African slaves might have been forcefully torn away and thus actually separated against their wills from their African homelands by those slave-drivers. But then their Africanness and native culture naturally innate in them, were still slumbering deep within their souls; waiting to be awakened as at and when due, by the requisite social or natural stimuli. The musical instinct was such a natural and cultural stimulus that needed only their encountering of those discarded musical instruments of their masters, most probably on moonlit nights after the year's harvest, to be awakened in the African slaves. As those discarded Western cultural musical instruments encountered the inborn African cultural musicality of those slaves, the natural result was what later became known as jazz music. It was a simple and natural appropriation of western musical

[12] C. Achebe, *Morning Yet on Creation Day (Essays)*, Ibadan, 1977, p.17

instruments by natural African musical ingenuity. It was pure acculturation! Even if one were to object that it was all serendipitous, the fact remains all the more so true, that it was all an issue of a natural consequence of a natural sequence.

5. Negro Spirituals: An Exercise in Inculturation

As a genre, Negro Spirituals are actually the precursor of most other American musical genres of today: Blues, Jazz, Rock n Roll, Rap, Gospel etc. Treating it at this point in this essay is therefore not a matter of historical sequence. It is rather in respect of our presumed thematic logic of that hypothetical progression from acculturation to inculturation, with respect to the *differential* relationships between these two cultural anthropological realities. Blues music for instance, developed from the slave work-songs in the fields.

Elsewhere, while once more identifying inculturation as the Christian equivalent to the socio-anthropological phenomenon called acculturation, we have dared to summarily define it *inter alia* as "...that factual adaptative appreciation of a foreign element to a culture or a people, which results freely and naturally at a culture-contact." [13] Expressed in an everyday language, inculturation is always circumstantial. In other words, it is outrightly and naturally contextual. It appeals to the naturally human categories or aspects in a particular culture. As it does so, it contemporaneously and invitingly beckons on them to engage themselves in usefully encountering Christianity, within some dialogues that are hopefully, mutually beneficial or at least benefits the culture or its society. Just as already fleetingly indicated, being contextual also implies that inculturation theology approaches culture not as a fossilized romanticism of values in the past but as a

[13] C. O. Ukeh, *Spirit – Between Man & God (An Igbo-African Christian Appreciation)*, IKOVerlag, Frankfurt, 2007, p.87

present and living institution; modern for instance, yet without forgetting its firm roots or identity and links within the past.

The natural human category here in question is music as a cultural element that hereby encounters the Gospel of Christ in the particular given circumstances of exploitation of the African slaves. The result was the then neo-religio-cultural musical element that has now become known as Negro Spirituals. The spirit and mien of these songs were definitely African. The lyrics and language of their expression were definitely English but not necessarily the normal English language. It was generally rather 'corrupt' English, as could only result from the slaves' non-formal learning of the Masters' language by speaking it the best way they only could. It was generally phonetic English. Funny though this may sound, one could imagine that the slaves must have had to teach their masters this 'new' brand of English, if these were ever to really appreciate the Negro Spirituals.

Without fear of equivocation, one can easily say that the popular hearty and often soulful Negro Spirituals enjoy a similar history of development with jazz music. Both of them indubitably manifest and witness to typically African spiritual responses in the peculiarly given circumstances of enslavement and exploitation of those slaves, as they toiled under the heavy yokes of the sugar-cane plantations of the West Indies for instance. But these songs are not just religious manifestations and factual expressions of hope and faith in Divine Providence and salvation. Most importantly for this essay, they eventually turned out to be expressions of faith in the liberating Judeo-Christian God in particular, which had forcefully replaced and obliterated their native African images of Divinity. Understandably, therefore, it has been noted that,

> …the lyrics of Negro spirituals were tightly linked with the lives of their authors: slaves. While work songs dealt only

> with their daily life, spirituals were inspired by the message of Jesus Christ and his Good News (Gospel) of the Bible, 'You can be saved'. They are different from hymns and psalms, because they were a way of sharing the hard condition of being a slave.[14]

Therefore, the Negro Spirituals are an embodiment of inculturation of the Christian Gospel message; an expression of human natural religiosity in the given peculiar circumstances of those oppressed slaves.

Africans generally have music that celebrate almost every type of human phenomenon or activity: birth, joy, sickness, death, sorrow, nature, war, peace, hope, trade, festivals, hunting, labour, games, protests, etc. Thus, while helplessly toiling and flailing under the heavy yokes of exploitation and enslavement, those heavily oppressed African souls found refuge in crying up to their Creator. Typically African, with time and practice, these cries for deliverance became musicalized with the rhythm of harmoniously swung matchets, spades, pickaxes, etc. The results were the so-called work songs. This was nothing short of acculturation. But these same feelings were also transferred into the plane of worship – the so-called Camp Meetings in tents. These were the only social gatherings that the slaves were allowed by their masters. They normally took place after normal Sunday services, as the slaves were allowed to stay back and worship God in their own African art and cultural hues. Sometimes, such gatherings of worship were done in the bushes in secret, with wandering preachers. These religious musical escapades resulted in what we today call the Negro Spirituals. It bears repeating, however, to underscore that these worship songs are African in tone, typology and nature, African in spirit but somewhat Western in language and expression – an unusual mixture and cross-pollination.

[14] Culled from www.negrospirituals.com/history.htm Accessed on 14.08.2023 by 12.50pm

While the language was understandably phonetic English, rhythmic clapping of hands and beating of thighs improvised the instrumentation.

The Christian liberative undertone of these songs becomes more evident in the fact that the Negro Spirituals later proved to be the precursors of what are known today as Gospel Songs. It is also evident in most of their lyrics. For,

> Many slaves in town and in plantations tried to run to a 'free country', that they called 'my home' or 'Sweet Canaan, the Promised Land'. This country was on the Northern side of Ohio River, that they called 'Jordan'. Some negro spirituals refer to the Underground Railroad, an organization for helping slaves to run away.[15]

Thus, one easily notices how vocabularies and expressions of hope and liberation were smartly borrowed from the Christian Message, *codedly* woven into and then celebrated in these Negro Spirituals. These same feelings are also to be found in most other Negro Spirituals like *Great Day*, *Mary had a Baby*, etc.

The historical importance of Negro Spirituals is further underscored by the fact that the first scholarly work ever to document the music culture of America was the collection of 136 Negro Spirituals with music and lyrics. This book first appeared in the year 1867 with the title *Slave Songs of the United States.* Published by A. Simpson & Co., it was compiled by three Slave Abolitionists: William Francis Allen, Charles Pickard Ware and Lucy Mckim Garrison. While the two men were Howard graduates, the lady was the only musician among them. She was a multi-instrumentalist.

[15] Culled from www.negrospirituals.com/history.htm Accessed on 14.08.2023 by 12.50pm

Conclusion

To begin this conclusion, we can ask ourselves, wherein lie the didactics for practical inculturation of the dynamic dialectics in any process of culture-contact as evidenced in the events leading up to the emergence of the musical genres of Negro Spirituals and Jazz in human history? To begin to answer this question, we can as well comfortably query with Chinua Achebe with particular reference with the historical emergence of Jazz, "Is any one going to say that this was a loss to the world or that those first Negro slaves who began to play around with the discarded instruments of their masters should have played waltzes and foxtrots and more Salvation Army hymn tunes?"[16]

Of course, the slaves' natural but African sense of music, when unleashed on those Western instruments discarded by their masters, produced jazz music. This is nothing short of acculturation. We can as well very comfortably attempt to answer and conclude with Achebe thus, "Let every people bring their gifts to the great festival of the world's cultural harvest and mankind will be all the richer for the variety and distinctiveness of the offerings."[17] The toiling African American slaves simply responded to that innate dynamism of cultural adaptive ingenuity native to all humans. In the process, they compulsively gave vent to those deep ruminations of their souls' longings for freedom, in lyrics and rhythms. This was how the Negro Spirituals were born. This, then, was also nothing short of inculturation; whereby it becomes an instance of African music culture encountering the Christian doctrine of Divine Providence, for instance. Even here, Achebe's questioning stance still stands relevant. That act of inculturation known today as Negro Spirituals surely enriched

[16] Achebe, C. *Morning Yet On Creation Day (Essays)*, Ibadan, 1977, p.17
[17] Achebe, C. *Morning Yet On Creation Day (Essays)*, Ibadan, 1977, p.17

Christianity as well as serviced the religious longing and refuge unto Divine Providence, for their composers and users then.

Of course, we cannot deny the fact that the discoveries of jazz music or the Negro Spirituals seem to have occurred out of sheer serendipity. But then, while most inculturation may occur likewise, we still maintain that inculturation is too serious a value to be simply left to the vagaries of chance. It should rather result from conscious efforts and studies or, at least, be subjected to these. It should result as well from conscious attempts to appreciate Christianity from the various given circumstances or cultural backgrounds of each given society that encounters it, its faith-praxes and doctrines. Yet these facts do not detract anything from the validity of the fact that inculturation remains also a natural process and fact; that would still occur even when it is not intentionally undertaken.

Finally, it really bears repetition to still underscore the fact that culture remains, of course, the object-matter of inculturation. But it is a living culture as it is in the present, while though not neglecting the kinship with its past. It is not a fossilized culture, but a culture that is alive. Therein lie the implications both of its contextuality and the consequent characteristic dynamism. Thus, we note that today there may not be any more newly composed Negro Spirituals understandably because the Trans-Atlantic slave trade has stopped. Yet these soulful renditions are still in use. However, various elements of Negro Spirituals have been incorporated into and survive today in Blues, Jazz, Rap and even Rockn-Roll music. However, jazz music is still current and developing daily.

THE CONCEPT OF PEACE AND JUSTICE IN ISLAM

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Introduction

And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace (Surah Al-Furqan, 25:63).

We are living in a world where there could obviously be more peace. Muslims do realize this fact more than most people, as the peace of many Muslim countries in various parts of the globe has been tragically disrupted: Palestine, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Kashmir, and other locales. Similarly, we are living in a world where there could be more justice. We read almost daily of kidnappings and assassinations in various parts of the world where terrorist groups, military forces, or intelligence services, oftentimes in summary fashion, declare victims guilty and then proceed to execute them. Unfortunately, such unprincipled political behavior has become increasingly common in both the foreign and domestic policies of notorious countries, causing untold damages to their images and credibility on international levels.

The two issues of this topic, peace and justice, are always joined in slogans we hear from many activists, "No Justice, No Peace!"[1] This linkage is logical, as justice must be considered one of the indispensable prerequisites of any lasting peace. This article, therefore, intends to briefly look at the ideas of peace and justice in Islam and attempt a synthesis of justice and peace through a detailed study of Islamic

[1] This slogan has been particularly popularized by the New York-based activist Rev. Al Sharpton and his followers.

(Quranic) theory of war and peace, while exploring their deeper significances in the life of a modern Muslim.

A.1. Peace

In the Arabic language, the word peace is derived from the radicals S-LM. There are four closely related terms that can be derived from this root (origin): *Salam, Salamah, Silm, and Salm*. Raghib al-Isfahani says in his lexicon of Qur'anic terms, "*As-Salm* and *as-Salamah* mean freedom from any external or internal ruination."[2] Based on that, true peace will only exist in Paradise, for only there will there be perpetuity with no end, complete satisfaction with no need, perfect honor with no humiliation, and perfect health with no disease. In this regard, God is known as As-Salam, because He alone is described as being totally free from any defects or flaws.[3] This understanding of true peace being a reality associated with a transformed world is also understood in both Jewish and Christian theology.[4]

At the international level and interstate relations, we can consider peaceful relations between nations as a condition where violence, a state inevitably involving both internal and external ruination, is absent. In this sense, war can be viewed as an aberrational state. The aberrational nature of war is made clearer if we consider that murder, the ultimate consequence of war, is considered an innovation that destroyed the peace formerly existing among the human family. Comparatively, within the prophetic traditions of the Jewish, Christian and Islamic religions, "No soul is killed unjustly, except that the elder son of Adam

[2] Raghib al-Isfahani, al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Qur'an (Beirut: Dar al Ma'rifa, no date), 239.
[3] Al-Isfahani, 239.
[4] See The Holy Bible, Isaiah, 9:6-7; and John 14:27.

(Cain) shares in the stain of the crime. That is because he was the first to innovate murder [in the human family]."[5]

At the individual level, Islam views peace as an absence of the ruinations of the heart. One free from such ruinations will succeed, when he/she meets his/her Lord. Therefore, he/ she will enter safely into the Abode of Peace (*Dar as-Salam*): [On] the day no amount of wealth or children will be of any benefit. [The only one benefited] will be one who comes before God with a sound (*salim*) heart. [Quran 26:89]. The expression derived from these meanings portrays Islam as "a religion of peace" since it provides a path for the human being to enter Paradise (Dar as-Salam), and there he/she will know true peace.

For Muslim scholars, peace has meanings wider than those mentioned above. One of the loftier objectives of Islamic religion is to introduce into the world an ethos that facilitates the spreading of peace at every level. Personal relations with fellow Muslims should begin with the implementation of the Prophetic order: "Spread peace between you all."[6] This order is so pressing that the Prophet Mohammed advised its indiscriminate implementation as he described to his followers one of the best forms of Islam, "Extend the greeting of peace, to those you know and those you know not."[7] In this regard, "You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another. Shall I indicate to you something that will surely lead to your mutual love? Spread the greeting and spirit of peace between yourselves."[8]

[5] Ibn Hajar al-,Asgalani, Fath al-Bari, 13:369, no. 7321.
[6] This Hadith is related by Muslim, Abu Dawud, and at-Tirmidhi in their collections. Quoted in anNawawi, Riyaz as-Salihin, 289-290. The full text of the Prophetic Tradition follows: A man asked the Prophet "Which Islam is best?" He replied, "That you provide food, and extend the greeting of peace, to those you know and those you know not."
[7] Op. cit., Ibn Hajar al-,Asgalani, Fath al-Bari, 11: 26-27.
[8] This is the full narration of the Prophetic tradition mentioned in note no.4 above.

Based on Quranic revelations, all relations in the family, community, with the state and country should also be characterized by peace…because *peace is best*. [Quran 4:128] Similarly, on international level, relations with nations must be based on God's command: If they (the enemies are) incline towards peace, then you should similarly incline, and place your trust in God [Quran 8:61], with the eschatological implication that Jesus „will return the world to a state of peace"(*Yurji' as-Salim*) after his appearance at the end of time.[9]

A.1.2. Justice

The theory of Quranic peace is intrinsically and absolutely interconnected with the concept of justice. Scholastic arrogance notwithstanding, one cannot explore the project of peace separately from the project of justice nor embrace and explore peace without ultimate justice in Islam either.

Islamic lexicographers define justice, variously, as „to rule based on that contained in the Book of God (*Quran*), and the tradition (*Sunna*) of His Messenger; and refraining from ruling based on empty opinion. "It is also defined as „extending inherent rights [to their possessors] equitably."[10] This latter definition emphasizes the importance of equity as an essential aspect of distributive justice.

The concept of justice is one of the essential pillars in the maintenance of both the natural and social orders. God has established the scale; therefore, do not transgress in the scale [of justice]. Undertake the measuring with justice and do not cheat concerning the scale [55:7-8].

[9] This meaning is narrated in prophetic traditions that are related by al-Bukhari, Muslim, and Ibn Majah. See for example, Fath al-Bari, 6:599-600. The above quote is the version of Ibn Majah. Al-Bukhari's version mentions that Jesus will "put an end to war."

[10] These and other definitions of justice are mentioned in Salih b. ‚Abdullah b. Humayd, Nadra anNa'im fi Makarim Akhlaq ar-Rasul al-Karim (Jeddah: Dar al-Wasila, 2000), 7: 2792.

Muslim scholars are of the view that justice is one of the underpinnings of the order that has been established by God of which reality is ipso facto a foundation of a healthy social order: O, You who believe! Be upright for God, witnesses to justice; and do not let your hatred of a people move you to a position where you are unjust. Be just, that is closer to piety. Be mindful of God! Verily God is well informed concerning all that you do. [Quran 4:135].

According to Imam al-Qurtubi, discussing the relationship between two words that are usually translated as justice (*al-,Adl*), and distributive justice (*al-Qist*), "Justice is the basis of all human relations and a foundation of Islamic rule." [11] This is illustrative of the meaning conveyed by Quran 57: Verily, we have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and we have revealed unto them the Scripture and the Balance in order that they lead people with justice… [Quran 57:25].

Imam al-Mawardi has summarized the social implications of distributive justice thus: One of the things that reforms worldly affairs is the principle of distributive justice. It facilitates amicable relations between people, engenders obedience to the Divine Law, and brings about the prosperity of countries. It is the basis of a thriving economy, strong families, and stable government. Nothing devastates the land nor corrupts the mind as quickly as tyranny. That is because there are no acceptable limits [to regulate tyranny].[12]

For this reason, Ibn Taymiyya sees the responsibilities of Islamic government emanating from a single verse in the Qur'an; God enjoins that you deliver the Trusts to their rightful possessors. And when you rule over [or judge between] people, that you do so with justice… [Quran 4:58][13] "Surely the most beloved of people with God and the closest to Him on the Day of Resurrection will be a just leader. And the

[11] Quoted in Ibn Humayd, Nadr al-Na'im, 8:3153.
[12] Quoted in Ibn Humayd, Nadr al-Na'im, 7:2793.
[13] See Ahmad b. Taymiyya, As-Siyasa Ash-Shar'iyya (Beirut: Dar al-Afaq alJadida, 1983), 4-5.

most hated of people and the furthest removed from Him will be a tyrannical leader."[14] A guided ruler (leader) should clear himself from even an inadvertent association with oppressive, unjust acts or tyrannical ruler. Prophet Mohammed is reported to have said: You bring your disputes to me for adjudication; perhaps one of you is less eloquent than another, and I rule against the wronged party on the basis of what I have heard. Therefore, if I inadvertently grant one of you something owed to his brother do not take it, for I am granting him something that constitutes a piece of Hellfire[15]: Verily, God sets forth parables for you, and He directs admonition towards you in order that hearts will be quickened. Surely, the hearts are dead until God quickens them. Justice has signs and portents. As for its signs, they are shyness, generosity, humility, and gentleness. As for its portents, they are embodied in mercy. He has [likewise] made for every affair a gate, and He has made that gate accessible by providing a key. The gate of justice is a deep consideration of consequences, and its key is otherworldliness. Consideration of consequences ultimately involves remembering death and preparing for it by freely parting from one's wealth. Otherworldliness involves dealing justly with everyone and being satisfied with what suffices. If one is not satisfied with what suffices him, no abundance will ever enrich him.[16]

Much of this discussion has focused on *distributive justice*. However, the Qur'an also places great emphasis on *commutative justice*: Do not be moved by partiality to discriminate in meting out divinely legislated punishments. [Quran 24:2] Prophet Mohammed mentioned that one of the reasons behind the ruination of a nation is a lack of commutative justice.[17] In this context according to a hadith, he mentioned that if his

[14] At-Tirmidhi, no. 1329.

[15] Ibn Hajar al-,Asgalani, Fath al-Bari, 5:354.

[16] Quoted in ibn Humayd, Nadra an-Na'im, 7:2811.

[17] This concept is mentioned at the beginning of the tradition where a lady from Bani Makhzum, one of the most aristocratic Arab tribes, stole something and the companions were moved to intervene for a lessening of her punishment. The Prophet responded, "O people! Those before you

very daughter were to steal, he would not hesitate to punish her to the full extent of the law.[18]

Concretely, can these notions of peace and justice be applied to some obvious contexts that enslaved efforts of modern Islamic scholars? Western scholars and their mass media are anxious to read explicit correlation and application of justice towards peace in the sensitive areas of the modern expectations: war, terror, Islamophobia, gender equity, etc.

B.1.1. Historico-Explanatory Approaches to Qur'anic Hermeneutics

Civilization is an allegorical interactive computer game series created by Sid Meier in 1991; a turn-based strategy game in which the player attempts to build an empire to stand the test of time. In this game, active research in technology and culture unlocks new potentials, to enable competing leaders pursue their own agendas based on their perceived (historical) traits by establishing civilization from Stone Age to the Information Age: wage war, conduct diplomacy, advance culture, and go head-to-head with history's greatest leaders as the player attempts to build the greatest civilization ever known. This analogy will help in understanding the clash between Christianity and Islam, between western and oriental civilization – the march of Civilization -.

From the conquest of Spain in the early 8th century to the siege of Vienna by the Ottoman Turks in 1683, Islam represented a strategic threat to the existence of Christendom. Islam's achievement in all scientific and intellectual fields during its heyday in the Middle Ages

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were ruined in that if a noble person among them stole something, they left him alone. On the other hand, if a lower class person stole something, they punished him!" See this narration in its entirety in Abi Zakariyya Yahya b. Sharaf an-Nawawi, al-minhaj: Sharh Sahih Muslim (Beirut: Dar atMa'rifa, 1419 AH/1998 CE), 11;186-187, no. 4386.

[18] An-Nawawi, Al-Minhaj, 11:186-187, no. 4386.

caused a reaction in the West that considered Islam as cruel, evil, and uncivilized. Although ("holy") war is defined most broadly as any religious justification for engaging in war, it does not necessarily presume a connection of military activity to religious purposes, though it is often the case. The particular expressions of holy war found in the Islamic world tend to be referred to in the West as jihād.

While there is no evidence to date that the indigenous inhabitants of Arabia knew of holy war prior to Islam, holy war ideas and behaviors appear already among Muslims during the first generation. It is therefore necessary to focus on why and how such a seemingly radical development took place. Basing the hypothesis on evidence from the Quran and early Islamic literary sources, it is important to locate the origin of Islamic holy war and trace its evolution as a response to the changes (challenges) affecting the new community of Muslims in its transition from ancient Arabian culture to the religious civilization of Islam.

B.1.2. Violence and Jihad in Islam: From the War of Words to the Clashes of Definitions

As already mentioned, the term *jihad* is based on the ideas of 'effort', 'striving', or 'exerting oneself'. Out of 6236 verses in the Qur'an, approximately 41 mention jihad and its derivatives, thus accentuating its polysemy and multiple uses. It should be pointed out that the most occurrences of the word jihad appear in Sura 9, which the jihadist movements largely use in support of their (violent) actions. However, the general sense of a lifelong discipline to be adopted was much more found in the 14 verses revealed according to Islamic tradition in Mecca.

In the Medina verses, however, the sense of fighting is more marked. The textual meanings of jihad in the Qur'an include various efforts that

Muslims are expected to perform throughout their lives, ranging from physical jihad, which aims to drive back an enemy when Muslims feel threatened, to the spread of the word of God in foreign territories. A closer reading of the verses reveals jihad as a vision that structures the world into categories of human beings: believers (the followers of God) and non-believers (the enemies of God and his messenger). In this way, jihad has been imposed on a community of Muslims whose religious affiliations are renewed through the various nuances and acts, thus jihad is named accordingly: 'The believers are only the ones who have believed in Allah and His Messenger and then doubt not but strive with their properties and their lives in the cause of Allah. It is those who are the truthful' (Qur'an, 49:15).

Although the term jihad does not dominate the Qur'anic text,[19] it has been the subject of several studies and research regarding its definitions and norms. Over the last twenty years, the notion has gained the attention of many researchers, mainly in the West, who have devoted a great deal of work to explaining its rules and sections and to clarifying its meanings and benefits, making it the most sensitive Islamic religious rite. However, in opposition to the Western-held discourse, a minority of Sunni scholars consider it to be the sixth pillar of Islam and one of the best works after the belief in God.[20] The majority of the verses of

[19] In comparison with the 181 verses where the words *sulh* (peace and reconciliation), *ṣalaḥ* (goodness), *al-salihin* (virtuous), and their derivatives appear.

[20] Ibn Baz (d. 1999) considered jihad as the sixth pillar of Islam. On his official website, we can read the following opinion: 'And the most beloved thing of God is to get close to Him through the obligatory prayers, zakat, fasting, Hajj and jihad'. Ibn Baz in his many Fatawa, which he fondly referred to as children, did consider itjihad as 6th pillar of Islam, whereby the conjunction AND in Hajj and jihad is important. Hajji has a positive impact on individuals and on the broader muslim community. "That they may witness benefits for themselves..." (Quran 22:28). Hajji wipes away all sins previous sins. The best and most beautiful jihad is Hajji (narration by al-Bukhaari 1762). The citation is correct in that sense. https://binbaz.org.sa/search?=fatwa&page=3&operator=OR&filters[=title&filters[=question&filters[]=description (accessed on 23 October 2019).

jihad are not clearly related to the issue of war and violence. The technical word used for fighting is *qital*.[21]

This observation contradicts the spreading and popular conception of jihad in the West, where the term has crystallized to mean military offenses against 'unbelievers' and is almost exclusively identified as such. The prevalence of this concept is not due to Western imagination. It is largely due to Islamist movements that proclaim jihad as a legitimate war against all who do not share their worldview, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The word itself appeared in the 1980s, during the Afghanistan War, and gained momentum at the turn of the 21st century, after the September 11 attacks, to denote various forms of Islamist acts of violence. In short, the term has become more of an identity vector than a value of self-discipline and rigor.

The warfare-related concept of jihad that has spread throughout the 20th century conflates political and religious issues, though the religious value of jihad is somewhat independent of its political weight.[22] These two, almost opposite, interpretations of jihad - the military approach and the self-building and discipline approach - are rooted in Islamic jurisprudential tradition. The approach to jihad of Shafii jurist, Sulayman ibn Muhammad al-Bujayrimi (d. 1221/1806), was qital fisabillillah (fighting in the path of God). On the other hand, the Hanafite, Abu Bakr 'Ala' al-Din al-Kasani (d. 587/1191), defined it as *jihad fi sabil allah* (striving in the way or path of God), emphasizing a more general notion of jihad rather than physical combat, but without explaining against whom and under what circumstances (al-Kasani 1972, p. 97).

[21] Qital does not incorporate the range of meanings found in jihad. Linguistically, it is less extensive as it is specifically reserved for war in the Qur'an. We counted 171 verses in which the word qital appears. We counted approximately 10 verses where the word harb means war. [22] Mirbagheri, S. M. Farid. 2012. War and Peace in Islam, a Critique of Islamic/its Political Discourses. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

For the proponents of militant jihadism, the ideological foundations (not necessarily justice or peace) lend legitimacy to jihad as a struggle. The Sunni theologian, Ibn Tahir al-Baghdadi (d. 429/1037), interpreted jihad as 'the struggle against the enemies of Islam until they convert to Islam' (Babadžanov 2007). This interpretation is widespread among Islamist militia groups who advocate military action against non-Muslims, and, occasionally, against some Muslims. It is ideologically built to promote a fanatically subjective weltanschauung. However, this article of writing is aimed, not to define religion in terms of what is believed by the religious, but in terms of how they believe. What is relevant is how some Muslims, their clerics and scholars interpret their representation of Islam and its teachings.

The concept of jihad, constructed over the last century, has been driven away from its original meaning to now be regarded as an arbitrary symbol of sacred actions to be performed against others. The way jihad functions nowadays reinforces, rather indiscriminately, a system of literal interpretation of those Quranic verses focused on war and qital. Nevertheless, for some Muslim scholars schooled in scape-goat mechanism, the idea that religion tends to promote violence is part of the conventional wisdom of Western societies (Cavanaugh 2009). Violence dispels justice and peace, and it functions in different contexts of power struggles, thus not belonging exclusively to religious fields. The myth of religious violence tends to construct the figure of the religious 'other' and to persistently contrast jihadism and the rational, peace-making subject (Cavanaugh 2009).

B.1.3. Jihad: From Polysemy to Semantic Indeterminacy and Over interpretation

The post-Islamic period of the *Nahdah* was dominated by an unprecedented confusion about the nature of some terms, particularly their meaning and their relationship to Islam. Again, a typical example

of such confusion is the term jihad, which has been closely associated to military actions for the past 20 years, needs to be reassessed in the light of an era marked by disenchantment and a crisis of values.

The multiplication of terms to ambiguously describe the Islamic subject (partly ascribed to interpretative meaning attached to Quranic terms) and its relation to violence spontaneously marks the end of the Islamic matrix as a meta-narrative for the rational believer. In this sense, metanarrative means Islamic norms, the set of values and feelings whose meanings are sensitive to contextual variations. They are, in fact, indeterminate or 'floating' meanings that the human mind helps to construct or reconstruct into significations that reflect processes of hybridization, interpretation, and adaptation.[22] Jihad is an example of these indeterminate concepts, and is now an obscure term at the heart of Arab-Muslim reality and tradition.

B.1.4. Jihad in the Qur'an and the Islamic Tradition

The term jihad holds an interesting place in the Qur'an, particularly in Medinan Suras. The creation of jihad as a concept implies the realization of the objectives of sharī'a in terms of the creation and preservation of emerging Islamic state. The term jihad is mentioned in 41 instances in the Qur'an. Most occurrences are linguistically related to the exercise of effort, *juhd* (al-Kasani 1972), and the deployment of energy (10 times), in relation to the path of God (13 times), or in the context of combat.

[22] In the Pakistani context, the former president of the republic, General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, promoted an increased Islamization of the army, which was expressed in the ideological training of officers, in the adoption of a new army motto: "Iman, Taqwa, Jihad-fi-Sabilillah: Faith, piety and fighting in the path of God". Zia foreworded the book written by brigadier general S. K. Malik, published in 1979 on The Quranic Concept of War. According to S.K. Malik, the Qur'an places the doctrine of war and ist theory on the side of God. In matters of fighting, the principles and commandments are directly dictated by God. See Malik ([1979] 1986).

Besides the four kinds of jihad (See DeLong-Bas 2004)[23] presented in the 41 verses, the general use of the term is divided into three categories: jihad by words, jihad by power, and jihad by good deeds. These categories have given way to various interpretations over the centuries as they have been extracted from the Qur'an and "distorted" into violent and legitimate acts. Furthermore, the Qur'an articulates the notions of jihad and patience (*ṣabr*) as the two values that build the believer's life on earth. In the Qur'an, ṣabr is, thus, inevitably tied to jihad, and this is broadly construed as the ongoing human struggle on earth (Afsaruddin 2013). In addition to the notion of *ṣabr, al-jihad* also articulates the notion of *islah*. The duty of al-jihad is to purify what has been made corrupt (*fasad*).

The conflicting notion between pure and the impure ideas of jihad is at the heart of radical Islamist thought. Its enactment does not allow for adaptability or coexistence, but rather a jihadist commitment that can end in death. The latter is even desired because the death of a jihadist would be made sacred (*shahid*). Death is the pendant to militant and warlike jihad. In his famous public law treatise, entitled al-Siyāsa alšar'iyya fī iṣlāḥ al-rā'ī wa-l-ra'iyya',[24] Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728/1328) as well, defined jihad as involving all kinds of cults, in all its internal and external forms. For him, the individual or community participating in jihad is caught between two pleasant consequences: either victory and triumph, or martyrdom and paradise. The death of the martyr is not considered a common death; it is instead a passage to eternal life where they remain 'alive with their Lord' (Qur'an, 3:169).

[23] Besides these four types of jihad, Natana J. Delong-Bas Jihad evoked, in her study, other types, including educational jihad (jihad al-tarbiyyah; educational jihad can be attributed in general terms to the actions of various movements of Islamic tendency whose action focuses on schools and education.

[24] The book of governance according to the shari'a.

Al-jihad, as a philosophy of action, a permanent and continuous struggle, at all levels -body, soul, mind -and as a behavior and discipline, can be seen as opposed to inertia, idleness and absence of energy. It is supposed to be a permanent battle that may result in a state of martyrdom. It is, according to Euben (2002), an action linked to death because the importance of continuing to exert oneself until the end is underlined. This conception of jihad contradicts the ideas of al-Hallâj (d. 309/922), Suhrawardî (d. 586/1191), ibn al-'Arabî (d. 638/1240), Jalâl al-Dîn al-Rûmî (d. 672/1273), and other Sufis who opted for the struggle against the ego to reach out (*fana'*), for the disappearance into God, to join the 'Supreme Being'. This spiritual or mystical interpretation of jihad (Sufism) is relatively new, only emerging after the period of great conquests and the stability of the empire, where the individual's effort to deepen their religion was required.

In the Qur'anic text, it is very clear that jihad has several distinct levels and qualities. The word is associated with the soul (jihad al-nafs), or to be purified with money (al-jihad bi al-mal), to fight one's desires (jihad al-shahwat) to better control them, etc. The words for war—harb and qital—are devoid of these meanings and their associations. Only the idea of confronting an enemy is put forward but again, under conditions that the Qur'an specifies in the verses concerned with the conflict with the enemy. Generally speaking, in the majority of the 41 verses where the word jihad appears, the meaning relates to lifestyle ethics, while the actual confrontation with the enemy, the techniques of fighting, bravery and courage are rather associated with the notion of war. The latter revives in the Arab imagination a daily life that they had always known in the pre-Islamic period. By reactivating this imagery, Islam displaces the meaning of the word harb to one that now goes beyond the selfish interests of one tribe or clan to the broad interest of (an Islamic) community.

Semantically, the primary meaning of the term in the Arabic language derives from the idea of the effort to be deployed to cope with internal and external difficulties or to resist something. Whether it is inner jihad, referring to the jihad of the soul, or outer jihad, referring to that of an enemy, this primary meaning emphasizes, above all, the deployment of an inner energy to guard against any harm or threat that could be apprehended as corrupting the body and the soul.

In Ibn Manz'ûr's dictionary, Lisân al-'Arab, jihad is defined as the use of one's power and strength, both verbally and physically, against the enemy and for God. While jihad is about saying and doing, al-Jurjānī saw in jihad 'the act of inviting the other to follow True Religion' (AlJurjani 1994, p. 159). As for A-Isfahani (2002), jihad falls into three categories: the fight against the external enemy, the fight against Satan, and the fight against oneself (p. 30). These three aspects of al-jihad form one meaning, as presented in verse 78 of surah al-haj and verse 41 of surah At-Tawbah.

In the Islamic tradition, all of these meanings relate to the idea of aljihad al-akbar - the great jihad - which, even though it appears in the Qur'an only once, opens up various possibilities of interpretation. The al-jihad al-Asghar (the lesser jihad), which some interpretations have described as the meaning of war against the unbelievers, is not reflected as such in the Qur'an. Indeed, the Qur'an does not use the term jihad for war, but instead uses qital or harb (Qur'an, 2:190). Meanwhile, the International Islamic Fiqh Academy highlighted the meaning of al-jihad in its general sense: to make every legitimate effort to uphold the word of God, to communicate the message of Islam by all means, and to spread justice, security, and mercy in human societies.

B.1.5. Jihad: From Manipulations to Instrumentalizations and Excessive Interpretations

Beyond the semantic shifts taking place in the discursive field related to the concept of al-jihad, the notion and its meanings are intertwined with the circumstances related to space and the development of Islamic predication. From Mecca to Medina, the notion of al-jihad did not have the same conceptions. From this point of view, Asma Afsaruddin's work highlighted the dynamic dimension of the notion to infer the meanings that the aforementioned periods specifically thrust upon it. Before permission to fight against the unbelievers was given (Qur'an, 22:39), the verses containing an injunction for al-jihad rather assumed the meaning of a spiritual jihad in which war and its violence against the other are not formally encouraged. While al-jihad at the time of the Prophet intensified self-connection for the purpose of spiritual and moral elevation, it later led to a counterbalance in the absence of the prophetic charisma, and the caliphs made al-jihad a legitimate principle of warfare motivation.

In the year AH 2, the Prophet and his companions were authorized to take up arms after being driven from their homes and having all their property confiscated. The divine authorization to fight the aggressors is expressed through the noun qit̲al (fighting). However, this verse marks a historical prerequisite and leaves the field open for possible instrumentalization of weapons through al-jihad. Thus, Islam allows war, but only under certain conditions and according to certain rules.

The verse 'Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress. Indeed. Allah does not like transgressors'[25] (Qur'an, 2:190) forms the basis of al-jihad, which binds the required ethical attitude and

[25] This verse was revealed as the circumstances of the 'Peace of Hudaibiyah' in 628, between the Prophet and Quraysh.

determination in the war action so as not to leave the aggressor the choice of winning the war. However, this verse is not a declaration of war against the unbelievers, but against the aggressors. It is a moral stance against the oppressors, whether Muslims, non-Muslims or unbelievers, and against injustice. From this perspective, the mechanism of al-jihad does not seem to involve the question of faith, hence the obligatory nature of al-jihad to repel oppression (*ẓulṃ*) by the means available to Muslims. Consequently, commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong (al-amr bi-l-maʻrūf wa-n-nahy ʿani-l-munkar) is both an individual (farḍ al-'ayn) and collective (farḍ kifāya) duty and is a form of al-jihad in Islamic jurisprudence.

The transformation of the notion of jihad into solely the instrument of war in the name of God has certainly required doctrinal efforts and political support. Although beyond its polysemy, its doctrinal content has always been subject to religio-political circumstances. The jurisprudential effort has been based on the conversion of so-called fighting verses (Qur'an, 9:5) into legal justifications for al-jihad, while political support has ensured that these jurisprudential choices have been transformed into legitimate violence to wage, far more often, intraMuslim community wars on the grounds that their faith would not be in conformity with the pseudo-Islamic sharia.

The historical dimension of the term jihad highlights the excessive interpretations, displacements, and manipulations that legal reasoning and political implication endeavored to use to shape the meaning of the notion according to low temporal and selfish wish fulfillment. Furthermore, since the disappearance of its great ideologists (See Maududi 2017; Qutb 2005), the concept has been an empty shell and no doctrinal renewal has been proposed. As theory, jihad has been in a state of permanent drift for past years, subject to dangerous and, often, extravagant manipulations.

B.1.6. Islam and Violence: A War of Words and Definitions

Several types of violence have been identified. Their definitions are often contradictory, elusive, and subject to different contexts and times. It is very difficult to measure violence, since its perception depends largely on the cultural, political, and economic contexts where it takes place. The link between Islam and violence, however, is nowadays seen in some Western circles as self-evident (See Lewis 2003). For the last 20 years, jihad in the Western imagination has represented the brutal nature of the morality of some Muslims, aimed at bloodshed. Some argue that there is a culture in Islam that permanently opposes democracy and the West (See Cousin and Vitale 2014). These perceptions are often established through swift readings of Qur'anic verses and Islamic tradition, which are perceived as incentives for a holy jihad against non-Muslims.

Among Muslims themselves, the opposition crystallizes an irremediable gap between a traditionalist view that considers the Qur'anic text a timeless reference for all Muslims, and a modernist vision that considers the Qur'anic phenomenon to be a historical event whose content corresponds to the political, social, and economic situations of the time. The war among Muslims belonging to each point of view is not expected to end, since, in terms of discourse, we are now witnessing the resurgence of words such as apostasy, expiation, and jihad, which stigmatize the modernist camp and dumps, brutally, most efforts undertaken by Muslims to inculcate justice and peace into the world polity.

B.1.7. Violence and Islam, What Does the Islamic Tradition Say?

Islam's real or supposed link to violence is a subject that is intertwined more than ever in ideological circles where two essentialist discourses

confront each other in a continuous and unproductive dialogue. For some, Islam is fundamentally violent, aggressive, or even totalitarian, and the proponents of this vision ground their arguments on the recent terrorist attacks targeted at both Muslim and non-Muslim citizens in various parts of the world. The proponents of the jihadist ideology advocate armed jihad to fight the polytheists until they say, 'there is no god but Allah'.[27] Armed jihad is to be carried out until all lands are liberated from unbelievers and when all unbelievers submit to the rule of Islam (Khadduri and Liebesny 1955, pp. 16–17, as cited in Simbar 2008, p. 58). By contrast, for others, it is a form of spirituality and a message of peace. From the latter perspective, the reasons for violence in Islam may be exogenous: political (e.g., the Israeli–Arab conflict), cultural (e.g., rebellion against Western cultural colonialism) (Hentsch 1988),[28] or even social (e.g., globalization, alienation, and poverty) (Bar 2004). However, the difficult question to be addressed is whether the Islamic tradition carries within it the seeds of violence and a narrative of extremism.

Whoever maintains that it is not Islam as such that justifies violence must know that he or she stands in direct opposition to the prevailing reading of the founding texts, a reading which objectively had its

[27] Abu Musab al-Suri's influential book, Call for Global Islamic Resistance, is nevertheless an exceptional example. In 1600 pages, the author analyzed his intellectual achievements and theories of jihad in the light of his personal experience and influences. The theory of jihad adopts the method of renewal in the work of jihadism and 'the ideology of the Islamic awakening movement' (p. 881). The book is widely disseminated in the jihadist milieu for its analytical value. Abu Musab al-Suri theorized the strategies of individual jihadism by developing, in page 1356, the three schools of jihadism:

- School of Movement Organizations.
- School of open confrontation.
- School of Individual Jihad and Small Cell Terrorism.

According to Brynjar Lia, Abu Musab al-Suri's work is the first to offer teachings on the noncentral global jihad. His is the best point of view among 'jihad' ideologues and strategists, as his work and analyses are both systematic and comprehensive. According to Brynjar Lia, his honesty and self-criticism are typical of jihadist circles. See Lia (2008).

[28] In L'Orient Imaginaire, Thierry Hentsch analyses the paradigmatic change that occurred 200 years before 2001, with Bonaparte's 1798 expedition to Egypt marking a major turning point in East–West relations in the Mediterranean. This expedition was an abrupt manifestation of a longterm process of change. It was a military and cultural shock, injecting Western history and science into the heart of Mediterranean Islam (Hentsch 1988).

> reasons in the first centuries of the history of Islam, but which continues to have followers until today, despite the radical changes and even upheavals in the position and impact of Muslims in the world. (Charfi 2003, p. 10)

The theme of violence in the Qur'an is an interesting case study since many studies raise this issue through lexicons that convey extremely wide, yet specific, semantic fields. The different situations that involve violence are specified in the Qur'anic text with precise terminology and refer to situations that imply violence as self-defense against acts of aggression (Qur'an, 22:39–40, 42:39–43, 5:2, 5:8). The latter are described in the Qur'an through words such as *ẓulm*, (injustice, tyranny), *tuğyan*, (outrage), *batsh* (physical violence), and *'tidā'* (legal abuse). They refer to illegitimate actions and provide very precise information on the nature and the degree of the act of violence that is committed. Those categories that refer to violence as *'unf*, whether in the meaning of qital, ḥarb, jihad, or nafar,[26] have been defined in the Qur'an and the ḥadīṯ[27] and conceptualized by theologians and Muslim philosophers from medieval times through to the present day. If harb and qital allude to what is commonly known as war, then jihad describes a much wider precept, only one component of which points in the direction of violence (Mirbagheri 2012). Verily, jihad generally involves

[26] These four words have appeared in the Qur'an in different proportions and in different contexts to refer to war situations, with linguistic nuances that we did not choose to include in this work exhaustively. Jihad appears in 41 verses, in the sense of jihad with weapons (Qur'an, 4:95), jihad with words (Qur'an, 25:52), and jihad in the sense of work and effort (Qur'an, 29:6). The word qital appears in 171 verses, in the sense of killing and war (Qur'an, 2:191) and swearing (Qur'an, 74:21). Harb appears in 10 verses, in the sense of war (Qur'an, 47:4), violation of Sariah and corruption, fasad, on earth (Qur'an, 5:33). Nafr, appears in 18 verses, with several meanings, including preparing for jihad (Qur'an, 9:38). The difference between these four terms also lies in the motivations, aims, means, and objectives of war.

[27] This is a collection of traditions containing sayings of the prophet Muhammad which, with accounts of his daily practice (the Sunna), constitute the major source of guidance for Muslims apart from the Qur'an.

all aspects of an individual's effort and life in society in its various aspects: intellectual, social, political, and economic.

From Al-Farabi (d. 339/950) to Averroes (d. 595/1198) and Ibn Khaldun (d. 808/1406), wars and conflicts have been distinguished from the phenomenon of violence, because they were considered to be political power struggles. In this context, jihad, which is often loosely used to translate all these nuances related to violence, has two meanings: the first is moral—equivalent to self-perfection. The second is physical, as it is related to a defensive action directed against the invader or the occupier. However, both meanings are based on the lifelong effort, energy, and self-discipline that Muslims must deploy, either to purify themselves or to defend their religion in the event of a threat. It is very important, however, to stress that the second meaning - whether directly or indirectly related to the notion of war - does not put forward the act of fighting or killing as much as self-discipline, with the aim of generating (through effort) the good deed. It is a perspective that clearly distinguishes jihad from war in the Arabic and the Qur'anic meanings of harb and qital, as Islam permits only jihad and not harb (Mohammad 1985, p. 4). An approach to warfare regulated by the Qur'an has been instituted through a variety of verses that impose rules and limitation to jihad.[28] As peace and *sulh* are regarded as the general rule, the Qur'an surrounds the action of war with a form of exceptionality. Specific laws and rules to safeguard against acts of indiscriminate violence and "war crimes" have progressively reinforced the exceptionality of war.[29] It is precisely in this sense that the notion of jihad in the Qur'an develops a meaning that would reflect the defensive action of Muslim fighters and their exemplary attitude during the war. Accordingly, jihad goes beyond the action of violent and material warfare; the notion also aims to completely change the purpose of war and its ultimate perspective.

[28] Though, according to Majid Khadduri, throughout the history of Islam, fighting between Muslim rulers and contending parties was as continuous as between Islam and its external enemies (Khadduri 1955, pp. 65–66. Cited by Mirbagheri 2012, p. 133).

[29] 'Fight in the cause of Allah ´only` against those who wage war against you, but do not exceed the limits. Allah does not like transgressors' (Qur'an, 2: 190); 'If you retaliate, then let it be equivalent to what you have suffered. But if you patiently endure, it is certainly best for those who are patient' (Qur'an, 16:126).

From this point of view, the war in the Qur'an is proclaimed for nonreligious reasons, meaning that it is not intended to impose conversions to Islam, 'Let there be no compulsion in religion, for the truth stands out clearly from falsehood' (Qur'an 2:256). Paradoxically, the verse 'Kill them where you arrest them, and drive them out from where they drove you out' (Qur'an 2:191) shifts the violent and gratuitous act of war on the defensive line to sustain the survival of the young Muslim community of the time.

In the Islamic context, Muslim theologians of the Middle Ages considered the issue of violence within a specific paradigm that interrelated a community spirituality, a political project, and a military strategy. The objective was to determine whether it was possible to organize the exercise of a central power in order to guarantee peaceful coexistence (ṣalaḥ) [30] within the Islamic community, without transforming power into illegitimate violence ('unf).[34] In this context, the concept of legitimate violence emerges out of rules and regulations.[31] The goals of the actions are directly linked to two dogmas: order and reconciliation (islah) in conformity with Islamic law.[32] In other words, an ethical framework must accompany an act of power to counter illegitimate violence and corruption (fasad). The Qur'anic vision is, thus, held between these two poles of tension - islah and fasad - and any exaggeration on one side can tip the life of the community on the other side to cause disorder or discord (fitna). Discord leads to strife and violence, from which Muslims must seek protection.

[30] ṣalaḥ means goodness and righteousness. Iṣ'laḥiha comes from the same root, meaning reformation and betterment, and it has also the meaning of restoration and improvement. 'So fulfill the measure and weight and do not deprive people of their due and cause not corruption upon the earth after its reformation. That is better for you, if you should be believers' (Qur'an 7:85). [34] Ikechukwu Mike Nduka. 1998. Al-'Asabiyya: A Conflicting Socio-religious Factor in the Modern Times? Altenberge Germany: Oros Verlag. pg 12ff.

[31] 'in Islam war is waged to establish supremacy of the Lord only when every other argument has failed to convince those who reject His will and work against the very purpose of the creation of mankind'.

[32] 'And cause not corruption (fasad) upon the earth after its reformation (iṣ'laḥiha). And invoke Him in fear and aspiration. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good' (Qur'an, 7:56).

B.1.8. Authority and Legitimate Violence

Obedience to authority is an act that establishes stability in society. The state can, therefore, exist only on the basis that those who are dominated must submit to the authority asserted by the rulers. Without detailing the nature of this obedience, Ibn Khaldun[33] found the legitimacy of the ruler's authority on political norms to be accepted by the masses, who will submit to these laws. A dynasty that does not establish its policy on such norms will not be able to successfully entrench its power (Ibn Khaldun 1958). The force of an army can be misdirected when a sovereign's authority is no longer respected.[34] This is a situation that reflects the fragile equilibrium between power, legitimate violence and order.

Al-Ghazâlî (d. 505/1111) proposed the idea that there must be a laudable hierarchy (tasalsul al-harami) (Al-Ghazâlî 1964) involving the king, his

[33] 'In relation to the catastrophe that the Arab and Islamic world is experiencing today, we discover that the analyses of the famous 14th century historian Ibn Khaldun are not entirely behind us. They cast light on our present. The medieval historian, certainly existentially pessimistic, tells us about states that last for a maximum of three human generations. Yet we see, before our eyes, the collapse of states built in the 1950s. Such is the case of Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya. The historian invents a notion of 'the sharp edge' to signal the tyrannical reign that must be avoided. He calls on the prince to reign in the right measure, to avoid excess, not to reign by brandishing the sharp sword. In short, Ibn Khaldun advises the prince to avoid tyranny because it is tyranny that generates irreparable evils leading to the destruction of states'. Abdelwahab Meddeb, Cultures d'Islam, https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/cultures-dislam/ibn-khaldoun-et-la-violence (accessed on 13 December 2020).

[34] 'Quoting Aristotle's Book on Politics, on the theme of authority, Ibn Khaldun comments that the author 'arranged his statement in a remarkable circle that he discussed at length. It runs as follows: "The world is a garden the fence of which is the dynasty. The dynasty is an authority through which life is given to proper behavior. Proper behavior is a policy directed by the ruler. The ruler is an institution supported by the soldiers. The soldiers are helpers who are maintained by money. Money is sustenance brought together by the subjects. The subjects are servants who are protected by justice. Justice is something familiar, and through it, the world persists. The world is a garden …", and then it begins again from the beginning. These are eight sentences of political wisdom. They are connected, the end of each one leading into the beginning of the next. They are held together in a circle with no definite beginning or end. (The author) was proud of what he had hit upon and made much of the significance of the sentences'. Ibn Khaldun, Abū Zayd 'Abd ar-Raḥmān. 1958. The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History, 2nd ed. Translated by Franz Rosenthal. Princeton: Princeton University Press, https://delong.typepad.com/files/muquaddimah.pdf (accessed on 2 March 2021).

army, and his subjects - a hierarchy in which the king is clearsighted and dominant, the army is strong and obedient, and the subjects are weak and docile. Should this hierarchy be disrupted - particularly in a case where the prince suffers the heaviest political defeats, voices of protest would use religious legitimacy to wage a war against the ruling power (Al-Jubūrī 2011, p. 220). Al-Ghazali's concept of *social stability* stemmed from his ultimate concern of worldly order (isalh) and security.[35] This concept is in line with the Khaldunian analysis of the strength shift from the prince to the rebels—mainly when the latter uses religious faith and the fasad argument[40] to unite and gain support among the population.[36] Violence, in Ibn Khaldun's analysis, is a reaction against the central power when 'laws are (enforced) by means of punishment, they completely destroy fortitude, because the use of punishment against someone who cannot defend himself generates in that person a feeling of humiliation that, no doubt, must break his fortitude'.[37]

Authority does not mean despotism. Through his analysis, Ibn Khaldun advised rulers to avoid excess and injustice, which are religious aspects of zulm and fasad that the Qur'an denounces in various verses. Furthermore, Ibn Khaldun considered tyranny to lead to the inexorable breakdown of the civilized world ('umran). The falling apart of 'umran—the stage that comes after the birth of the civilization and its consolidation—is a degeneration that, through a new da'wa, gives to the peripheral minority the opportunity to promote unity, discipline, equality, and justice. Ibn Khaldun was very much aware of the

[35] 'The imam is necessary because religious order is necessary, and because religious order involves worldly order, that is to say, security of life, livelihood, dwelling, and so on' (Hourani 1983). [40] The argument of fasad has gone through the epochs and centuries as a Qur'anic notion transformed into a political argument.

[36] In medieval Arab-Muslim thought, the term political Islam has no existence. Political reason, however, was considered and analyzed in order to establish the matrix of political power and its constituents.

[37] Ibn Khaldun, 1958, p. 29; Available online: https://delong.typepad.com/files/muquaddimah.pdf (accessed on 1 November 2021); Nduka 1998, p. 95.

influential role that religious personalities (wali) could play in rallying tribesmen around original Islamic values and qualities that would enable them eventually to establish a new state and kingship. This solidarity, which Ibn Khaldun named *'asabiyya*, is fundamentally based on religious ties, forcefully bringing about tribal cohesion, organization, and capacity to rule out the now old, central power (Nduka, I.M. (1998), Al-'Asabiyya. A Conflicting Socio-Religious Factor in the Modern Times? Oros Verlag Altenberge).

When people (who have a religious coloring) come to have the (right) insight into their affairs, nothing can withstand them, because their outlook is one and their objective one of common accord… (On the other hand,) the members of the dynasty they attack may be many times as numerous as they. But their purposes differ, in as much as they are false purposes, and (the people of the worldly dynasty) come to abandon each other, since they are afraid of death. Therefore, they do not offer resistance to (the people with a religious coloring), even if they themselves are more numerous. They are overpowered by them and quickly wiped out, as a result of the luxury and humbleness existing among them, as we have mentioned before (Ibn Khaldun 1958, p. 22). From a tyrannous and zealous group, the promoters of the new da'wa turn into legitimate conquerors and advocates of a new order, islah. Religious faith, which is the basis of the new da'wa, emerges as a potent factor, capable of stimulating the unification of a large group that may usher, through violence, the birth of a new civilization. From violence to politics but, this time, the illegitimate violence is transformed into legitimate force and justice.[38]

[38] In consideration with Hobbes' philosophy, the concept of da'wa is a form of justice that must be obeyed, as justice is defined by obedience. After the settlement of the state, those elements that constitute the da'wa turn to laws that need to be obeyed. 'It is once a Republic is established (and not before) that they are indeed laws, as they are then the commandments of the Republic, and that

B.1.9. X-Raying Ibn Khaldun. The Da'wa: From Proselytism to Coercion

Ibn Khaldun showed the politico-religious nexus as properly constitutive of the revolutionary founding act of a new sovereignty (mulk). The latter takes place at the crossroads, on the one hand, of the esprit de corps, of the organic solidarity of antagonistic groups ('asabiyya), and, on the other hand, of the religious call (da'wa), which designates and objectifies the 'internalized forms of belief' (Labica 1965, p. 199). When da'wa is deliberately constructed upon religious content and confused with military jihad and qital, it becomes a deadly and effective weapon. From 'upon you is only the [duty of] notification, and upon Us is the account' (Qur'an, 13:40), a peaceful invitation to join the path of God, the *da'wa* becomes a coercive force capable of structuring the spirit of solidarity *('asabiyya*) of the community receiving the invitation. In this respect, the instrumentalization of religion helps to shape, structure, and legitimize violence, even rendering it necessary. In other words, the encounter and interaction between religion and violence is a source of theocratic aberrations. Agreeably, the political pattern developed by Ibn Khaldun is inevitably limited to his place and time, however, the concept of the da'wa used by some groups in today's Arab-Muslim societies is an efficient means to bring forth the wrongdoings and immorality that characterize the 'urbanites'. People in these areas are depicted by the promoters of the new da'wa as having abandoned their faith to indulge in improper manners, pleasures which (in Ibn Khaldun's philosophy) are the result of reprehensible luxury. Luxury and the undeniable decline of morality in the highest social ranks call forth the revenge of history (Weber 1950). There is a paradox in the Khaldunian theory of the decline of

consequently they are also the civil laws: it is in effect the sovereign power that compels men to obey them' (Hobbes 1999).

civilizations that, as their peak is reached, they become more fragile and weakened.

When civilizations leave behind the violence that provided the basis for their establishment in the past, they break down to the point that they collapse into the hands of a marginalized minority (See Bozarslan 2014). The effectiveness of the power takeover lies in the success of a new da'wa that pleads for a just cause that becomes legitimate in the eyes of the majority. One explanation for this paradox lies in the fact that the 'asabiyya—the foundation on which power (mulk) rests and rises—withers away because, according to the cyclical vision of Ibn Khaldun, the luxurious lifestyle of the dominant tribes becomes more urbanized and, consequently, moves further away from natural life and faith. In this case, the da'wa stands as legitimate and lawful instrument.

The da'wa is undoubtedly the Khaldunian concept most closely linked to today's claim of some jihadist movements, when they justify their violent actions via religious legitimacy as a way to counter evil—which could, in this case, be luxury that weakens faith and drives a civilization to its decline. It would seem that Ibn Khaldun wanted to use the religious connotation of the term da'wa to turn it into an analytical tool for the various power legitimating mechanisms and conquests. Da'wa, which derives from the verb *da'a*, means 'to invite' and 'to join'. It is an Islamic concept and a Qur'anic term that literally means urging people to do good to eschew bad and warning of shari'a violations.[39]

Being an instrument of a power conquest, da'wa acts as a contract, a symbolic resource, and a central element in calling Muslims to the way of God, hence its misleading connection with the notion of jihad. In Islam, the concept of da'wa is based on good behavior and avoidance of violence, rudeness, and provocation: 'Invite to the way of your Lord

[39] Qur'an, 3:159, 41:33, 3:110, 3:104, 16:125.

with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best' (Qur'an, 16:125). Beyond the meaning of 'invitation', the Arabic word underlines the 'invitation to join the path of God or to spread the good word'.[40] In this perspective, the preacher, da'ia, is not a mujahid, as there is no requirement to achieve results. Islamic movements have confused the realization of da'wa's mission, by connecting its success to the achievement of a concrete result, which could be the establishment of a new dynasty.

When da'wa is deliberately constructed upon religious content and confused with military jihad and qital, it becomes a deadly and effective weapon. From 'upon you is only the [duty of] notification, and upon Us is the account' (Qur'an, 13:40), a peaceful invitation to join the path of God, the da'wa becomes a coercive force capable of structuring the spirit of solidarity ('asabiyya) of the community receiving the invitation. In this respect, the instrumentalization of religion helps to shape, structure, and legitimize violence, even rendering it necessary.

'Da'wa al wahhabiyya' is a historically recent example that illustrates the effectiveness of a pact sealed between a da'ya—Ibn 'Abd alWahhab—and Mohammed Ibn Saud, the forerunner of the Saudi dynasty between 1744 and 1745. Besides being a movement claiming to be part of the Sunni Hanbali Islam, the Wahhabi da'wa invites people to restore the real meaning of 'tawhid' (oneness of God or monotheism) and to disregard and deconstruct so-called traditional disciplines and practices that evolved in Islamic history, such as theology and jurisprudence, and the traditions of visiting tombs and shrines of venerated individuals. Though the da'wa claims to be non-political,[41] its

[40] See Al Banna (1974), Mudhakirat al-daw'a wa dayia (Memoirs of the Preaching and the Preacher), Beirut, Al-Maktab al-Islami, 3rd edition. This book is considered as the key to getting to the heart of Al Banna's sensibility, his message, and his movement. See Maréchal (2009).

[41] This type of jihad can be compared to the one explained by Natana J. Delong-Bas as missionary jihad (jihad al da'wah). Delong-Bas added, 'Rather than proclaiming the responsibility of Muslims

proponents could easily provide the foundation for political jihadi action when tawhid is violated (Moussalli 2009).

Several Qur'anic verses insist on the fact that the da'wa concerns the position of the one who invites without injunction or violence.[42]

However, the articulation of da'wa and jihad results in violence in the name of Islam for some criminal groups[43] that have made it the ideal goal for which to strive. As for those who receive the da'wa, we may say that a kind of coercion is cast upon them. The violence, in this case, is a soft violence: invisible, unrecognized as such, and chosen as much as it is subdued. It is the violence of trust, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality, gift, debt, gratitude, and piety—all the virtues in a word that dignifies the morality of honour (Bourdieu 1980).

As a symbolic power, the da'wa is at the heart of a disciplinary approach that establishes the intimate link between religious beliefs, political cause, and self-sacrifice. From this perspective, the violence that may result from this articulation can be measured in terms of the influence that the da'wa may have on the believers. When it is based purely on religious faith, it stands as a symbolic coercion, capable of hiding the face of violence since it stands as a legitimate call for a just— and, possibly, a holy—cause.

However, on the basis of his observations, Ibn Khaldun's analysis of power shifts the concept of da'wa from its usual illocutionary force

to fight permanently and continuously against ungodliness and evil in this world and consider all non-Wahhabis as unbelievers, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's writings reveal a worldview in which education and dialogue play a more important role in winning converts and establishing justice than does violence' (DeLong-Bas 2004).

[42] Qur'an, 88:22, 13:40, 2:172.

[43] The Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat or Islamic State's West Africa Province, formerly known as Jamā'at Ahl as-Sunnah lid-Da'wah wa'l-Jihad, have completely amalgamated da'wa and militant jihad in their constitution.

organized around a religious content to confer on it a symbolic load and a force endowed with an unprecedented utopian projection (Garrush 2017). The symbolic force of the da'wa consists of mobilizing the values and beliefs of people while urging them to appropriate the cause.

Da'wa turns into a powerful cause from which the believer cannot escape. However, its strength and its legitimacy need a universal cause that erects its proponents as sacrificial actors of a historical or divine mission (Bozarslan 2016, as cited in Garrush 2017). It is, without doubt, a symbolic violence, which consists of transforming an illusion into an effective mobilizing reality. Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, a contemporary theorist of the Salafist jihadist movement, positioned jihad alongside da'wa, and islah. In an idealistic, radical and ambiguous vision,[44] al-Maqdisi aimed at establishing a pure Islamic state whose laws can only be those set forth by God in the Qur'an. The author thus theorized a 'liberating' conception of jihad to free Muslims from the tyranny and oppression of some Arab political regimes.

Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) looked at the conceptual meanings of symbolic violence, which, according to him, is founded on the loyalty that the dominated concede to the dominant. The relationship of domination enforces a coercive basis which raises the loyalty of the dominated by transforming it into a faith (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

However, faith in this context does not necessarily have a religious foundation. Ibn Khaldun adopted the same approach to da'wa, from which he removed the religious rhetoric to emphasize the principle of legitimate symbolic coercion (Garrush 2017). Symbolic power, in

[44] See Al-Maqdissi (1970). Al-Maqdisi distanced himself from DAECH following the burning to death of the Jordanian soldier Muath al-Kasasbeh in 2015. He considers their legal jihad as being violent and murderous. See his interview given to the Roya channel on YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFh6gMKSGmA (accessed on 2 March 2021).

Bourdieu's analysis, has a form of violence "as it is accomplished in and through a defined relationship that creates belief in the legitimacy of words and the people who utter them, and it operates only to the extent that those who are subjected to it recognize those who exercise it"(Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 123). Being authentically rationalist, Ibn Khaldun defined da'wa as a secular concept, thus operating a displacement that clearly delineated the boundary between God and the human world. This clearly shows that there are other da'wa than religious ones and that the religious foundations are neither the only source of power nor of violence (Garrush 2017).

B.10. The Narrative of War in Islam

We have seen that the two terms harb and qital appeared in the Quran with nuances that make harb an aspect of fight closer to the one we find in war. Concentrating on qital, the idea of killing is overemphasized with the verb *qatala*, which clearly means killing and slaying. The phrase *'qotila fi al-harb'* means 'he was killed in a war'. In comparison with jihad, harb and qital do not necessarily put forward the idea of a war for God, as only the jihad is carried out in the path of God (fi sabil allah). To some extent, jihad carries out the idea of a legitimate war ordered by God under specific rules, restrictions, and responsibilities.

The paradigm of war in the Qur'an operates a break with the pre-Islamic practice of war. Other objectives are now established for the Muslim fighter, who now must fight for a different objective from the one to which he was accustomed. The war in the Qur'an is not about material benefits, it is a means to reach God. The transformation establishes, in the psychology of the mujaheddin, a discipline for self-edification, so that the word of God is propagated and heard by all humankind.

The word harb played an esteemed role in everyday Bedouin life, while Arab poetry followed the rhythm of wars to the extent that poets had a role in battles no less important than that of the knights and warriors of Muharibun.

Ayyâm al-ʿArab (Days of the Arabs) (Chams Eddin 2002), are narratives taken from classical works and Arabic poetry that account for wars and battles that were fought in the pre-Islamic period among Arabian tribes and that are remembered through oral tradition. The word al-harb appears in the narratives as a pre-Islamic term used by Bedouins in their daily lives and culture.

At the time, poetry could provoke and ignite war on many occasions, so much so that tribes that did not experience war cannot claim to have a true poetic tradition. Amr bin Ma'adi Yakrib (d. 40–41/642), Dorayd bin Al Summah (c. 6th), Abdullah ibn Rawaha ibn Tha'labah (d.8/629), Amir ibn al-Tufayl (d. 9/630), Hassan ibn Thabit (d. 35–40/660), and many others were knights and poets of war who lived in the pre-Islamic period, but some of them embraced Islam and became the poets who accompanied the Prophet and his companions to battles. The poetry of Antarah ibn Shaddad (d. 608 AD) was almost entirely turned towards the event of war, the value of courage, and chaste love (Sharf Addin 1997).[45]

[45] An example from a poem of Antarah ibn Shaddad: *'And surely I recollected you, even when the lances were drinking my blood, and bright swords of Indian make were dripping with my blood. I wished to kiss the swords, for verily they shone as bright as the flash of the foretooth of your smiling mouth. If you lower your veil over yourself in front of me, of what use will it be? For, verily, I am expert in capturing the mailed horseman. Praise me for the qualities which you know I possess, for, verily, when I am not ill-treated, I am gentle to associate with. And if I am ill-treated, then, verily, my tyranny is severe, very bitter is the taste of it, as the taste of the colocynth'.* (Sharf Addin 1997).

B.11. No War without Peace

The Arabs in pre-Islamic times had the habit and reputation of being warlike people. Before Islam, their battles were centered on the material and fleeting aspects of this world, sometimes waging wars over sheep and camel pastures or clashing over water resources and wells. Conflicts could easily arise between two members of rival tribes and last for several generations. Qur'anic verses focusing on the category of war brought about important transformations in the issue of war, both in terms of its objectives and means, as well as its strategies and tactics.

Far from thinking of the Qur'an as a book of war, the verses focusing on war in general (jihad, qital, etc.) institute a new and binding paradigm regarding the legitimacy of war and its necessity. Similarly, the Qur'an introduces the category of peace and reconciliation to end conflicts that were considered unnecessary. A single cause of war and struggle was established with universal values. War is made legitimate to support the word of God and of his messenger, to protect the weak, and to resist against those who drive Muslims out of their territories and homes. It is a new paradigm of warfare that Arabs did not know previously. Nevertheless, the paradigm of peace (sulh and ṣalaḥ), in all its aspects, plays a pivotal role in the Qur'anic text as they bring under tension the opposite axis, that of fasad.[46]

When the war intensified and the combatants became exhausted, the warring parties would aspire to a truce that could be transformed into peace. Again, the ancient Arabic narrative recorded sulh, or reconciliation between tribes, as a major event, as it sometimes brought an end to a long conflict that may have lasted many years. Tribal chiefs played a significant role in all steps involved in declaring war against another tribe or declaring peace and reconciliation. The Arabs had their

[46] 'and Allah knows the corrupter from the amender' (Qur'an, 2:220).

customs to signify and propose the truce to the other side. Likewise, poetry could play an essential role in terms of advice for peace and reconciliation. There were no poets, on the one hand, pushing for war, while those on the other side called for peace. The same poets would have an influence on both situations through very sophisticated poetic styles and compositions, such as madh, hija', nasab, and ritha'.[47] The mu'allaqa[48] of Zuhayr Ibn Abî Sulmâ (d. 609) is a praise addressed to the two chiefs of the Banû Murra, who paid blood money to the 'Abs to end the War of Dâhis and Ghabra between 'Abs and Dhubyân Tarafa (d. 569).

Ṣalaḥ and its derivatives, such as sulh (peace), salih (benevolence), and islah (reconciliation),[49] are notions that result in a war settlement between Muslims and non-believers and peace between Muslims and non-believers: 'There is no good in much of their private counsels, except for him who advocates charity, or kindness, or reconciliation between people. Whoever does that, seeking God's approval, We will give him a great compensation' (Qur'an, 4:114). The issue of reconciliation (Qur'an, 2:220; 2: 224; 2:277; 4:35; 49:9) is used in three contexts: reconciliation between two groups of believers (Qur'an, 41:9–10), reconciliation between two believers (Qur'an, 4:14; 4:128), and reconciliation between an individual and a group of believers (Qur'an, 24:28). Peace, reconciliation, and doing good in the Qur'an aim at a holistic state of order concerning all aspects of life and conduct. Holistic peace 'would be born out of a tranquil order that pervades all dimensions in life: social, economic, cultural and political, domestically as well as internationally' (Mirbagheri 2012, p. 87).

[47] Panegyric, invective, love elegy, and lamentation. See Meisami (2003).

[48] The suspended poems are odes where Arab life, before Muhammad, is portrayed with great charm and precision. The odes are said at the Ukaz fair, a literary and commercial gathering near Mecca, where poets from the various tribes would publicly perform their verses, and the most valuable were inscribed with gold letters and hung on the walls of the Ka'ba.

[49] The term 'peace' and its derivatives are mentioned in the Qur'an more than 200 times.

With the emergence of the legal tradition in the eighth century, and the intense activity of exegesis and interpretation, warfare was strongly codified and theorized (Abbès 2014). From this point of view, Islam manifests no moral reluctance to use weapons on behalf of the Muslim community, not to convert by force the unbelievers, but to extend the territory of 'dar al-Islam'.[50] The conception of the army that permeates the theoretical and narrative sources of the Arabs is first understood lexically as a gathering of warriors whose purpose is to wage war, a destructive phenomenon without equal that seeks to destroy the established corrupted order. It is, therefore, not surprising that the three main terms used by Arab authors to describe an army have negative connotations.[51]

Qur'anic verses advocating qital (war) become progressively more important as the da'wa progresses. Muhammad, as the leader of a community that had been chased from its original territory and home, must lead several battles under divine injunctions (Qur'an, 9:5, 2:216, 12:78). Obviously, unless Muslims are still under the threat of being chased from their homes, then these passages have no contemporary relevance and only take on meaning in the light of the particular context in which they were revealed.

Surah 2, verse 216: 'Fighting has been enjoined upon you while it is hateful to you. But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah knows, while you know not', imposes qital on Muslims in a tone that suggests the exceptional nature of the act of war. In addition, when a war does not take place,— as in the Battle of the Trench (627), which was not very bloody because the fighting did not take place, the Qur'an expresses a

[50] Dar al-Islam, the house/zone of Islam has been.

[51] In Arabic, Jund refers to the idea of harshness and doughtiness, while jayš refers to the idea of agitation and hurricane and 'askar' refers to violence. See Buresi and Zouache (2014).

form of satisfaction at the fact that the qital did not take place: ‘And Allah repelled those who disbelieved, in their rage, not having obtained any good. And sufficient was Allah for the believers in battle, and ever is Allah Powerful and Exalted in Might’ (Qur’an, 33:25).

B.1.12. Justification of War in Islam and Quranic Citations to War, Justice and Peace

Generally speaking, the conditions of warfare in the Qur’an are explained in verses that reveal three broad reasons to impose war on Muslims. The first reason is to fight back the aggression of those who attack them, and the Qur’an says, ‘Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress. Indeed. Allah does not like transgressors’ (2:190). For those who do not surrender, Surah 4, verse 91 states that it is the duty of Muslims to pursue the qital: You will find others who wish to obtain security from you and [to] obtain security from their people. Every time they are returned to [the influence of] disbelief, they fall back into it. So if they do not withdraw from you or offer you peace or restrain their hands, then seize them and kill them wherever you overtake them. And those–We have made for you against them a clear authorization.

(Qur’an, 4:91) The second reason is to protect the most vulnerable through qital; according to the Qur’an (4:75), fighting to save the life of the most vulnerable people is an obligation. And what is [the matter] with you that you fight not in the cause of Allah and [for] the oppressed among men, women, and children who say, ‘Our Lord, take us out of this city of oppressive people and appoint for us from Yourself a protector and appoint for us from Yourself a helper?’.

(Qur’an, 4:75) The third reason is to prevent sedition and discord (fitna): ‘And fight them until there is no fitnah and [until] the religion, all of it,

is for Allah. And if they cease–then indeed, Allah is Seeing of what they do' (Qur'an, 8:39).

Over the centuries, *fitna* and the need to preserve the unity of the Islamic religion and community has become even more important because the Muslim memory remains deeply marked by the schism between Sunnis and Shiites. At the very beginning of Islam, discord divided the al ummah al Islamiya (the Islamic community), provoking deep trauma that has led jurists to confirm the principle of the use of weapons to preserve the unity of Muslims as being just and authorized. It then became very easy to proclaim any war aimed at ending dissension in the Muslim community to be legitimate. Legal theory offers an absolutist vision of power and any form of rebellion and political opposition potentially opens the way to armed repression.

Jurists invoke a Qur'anic passage that condemns all forms of sedition: And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns, then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly (Qur'an, 49:9).

In the 10th and 11th centuries, when a change in the meaning of jihad was revealed to be concerned more with the struggle against one's ego, even if the criteria for a just war were met, war did not seem to be desirable. In the tradition of the Mirrors for Princes, war was described as a disease and it was emphasized that political means were preferable.[52] However, diplomacy did not prohibit the use of cunning

[52] The Islamic tradition, in both classical and contemporary manifestations, suggests that the idea of religion as a causus belli provides a way to limit the occasion and the damage of war. In short, the Islamic tradition suggests that 'holy war' is not the equivalent of 'total war', any more than 'just war' always means 'limited war' (Kelsay 2007).

and ploys—anything that contributes to the achievement of political goals without the use of violence is a positive thing.

This approach is based, in particular, on Kalila wa Dimna's tales, which were translated into Arabic huby Ibn Muqaffa' (d. 142/759) in the eighth century. The main principle is illustrated in the tale 'Owls and Crows', the moral of which is that the saving of human lives must always be targeted.[53] However, while in the Mirrors for Princes, war must, therefore, remain a state of exception in relation to peace and security, the legal tradition, on the other hand, is much less explicit on the subject and appears to have a much more straightforward relationship with the use of force. In this conception, just war is equally defensive and offensive. Founded during the glorious era of conquests, the legal framework of the jihad includes an assumed belligerent dimension.

Conclusion

In summary, the discussion so far is supposed to have made it clear that peace and justice are comprehensive concepts with deep implications and the Muslim have to be people committed to peace and justice. They must clearly illustrate to the world that Islam is indeed the religion of peace. However, such striving for peace must never allow being unjust, nor should it allow passive acceptance of injustices: Be you upright supporters of justice… [4:135]

Reflecting on Peace, justice and war (violence) - components, instruments, and faces -, allows one to examine its evolution from

[53] According to the philosopher Al-Fârâbî (872–950), who lived at a time when the central power, the caliphate, was divided into emirates and states that were claiming to be independent, armed violence must not be an end in itself—it is only justified as long as injustice and persecution continue. Maintaining war for war is the supreme vice according to the philosopher (Mahdi 2000, p. 193).

illegitimate to legitimate tools of power and authority. Liberal Islamic exegetes are convinced that groups in Islam like the al-Qaida and other terror groups also quote Qur'anic verses (components and instruments of peace and justice) very selectively and very cleverly to mislead young Muslim generations. There is great need to refute their point of view which is political and not at all religious, spiritual and moral as advocated by Qur'an. Young Islamic scholars and intellectuals should study the Qur'an and Sunna in totality and develop Islamic theory of war and peace.

Violence is a form of support that may allow some religious claims to take power before transforming themselves into institutionalized and sustainable regimes. The question is how to make this power permanent and legitimate. Ibn Khaldun's analysis of the cyclical life of governments suggests that peripheral movements can take over the centre of power and become legitimate authorities. They may even grant another actor the right to use violence without losing its monopoly. The monopoly on violence can also be jeopardized by peripheral movements, unless the established regime wields violence both legitimately and centrally. It would be too easy to deal with religion as a matrix to generate violence without dissecting the paradoxical links between power and violence.

The question of power is truly at the heart of the economy of violence. There is a primary violence that arises as a legitimate power, against which a counter-power organizes with the objective of taking the place of the established power. This cyclical dialectic condemns us to a life with and of violence. The Khaldunian model that we have insisted on does not separate the political and religious issues. In other words, the model establishes continuity between these two registers that are at the centre of the question of power and its takeover. For Ibn Khaldun, the institution of a state displaces violence from the peripheral sphere to the

centre, thus making violence legitimate. The mechanism of this displacement is not religious, but it relies on religious (moral) concepts – peace and justice -, to achieve entirely secular ends.

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META SOCIAL TECHNOLOGY AND RELIGION: A MEDIA RITUAL THEORY CRITICAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract

This paper explores the proposition that Meta social media and technology functions as a ritual platform and concludes affirmatively. It identifies and critically evaluates ritual elements on Meta's platform. Employing media ritual theory in the context of religion, it analyzes the *Meta for Faith* homepage. Consequently, the investigation delves into Meta's role in enhancing or diminishing the sacred rituals integral to religion, one of society's oldest cultural institutions. The discussion expands by considering the implications of *Meta for Faith* offerings in religious rituals. Thus, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the increasing social technology mediatization in the rapidly evolving digital media landscape. It provides a novel perspective on the power dynamics of social media platforms within the framework of media communication ritual theory and religion.

Keywords: Facebook, media ritual theory, media and religion, mediation, mediatization, Meta, social media, social technology

Meta and Religion: A Media Ritual Theory Critical Discourse

Introduction and the Context

In the past decade, more communication and media scholars have been concerned with new forms of emerging media and platforms shaping

social institutions (such as religious institutions) and culture. Among such studies are mediation or mediatization (Silverstone, 2002; Livingstone, 2009; Lunt & Livingstone, 2016; Couldry, 2003; 2008) or deep mediatization (Couldry & Hepp, 2017). Lunt and Livingstone (2016) propose mediatization as a possible new paradigm in studying the complex ways of mediated forms of communication. Magaudda and Solaroli (2020) suggest a shift from political economy to the artistic elements of music, journalism, and photography. Others argue that "social orders are continually changing in important ways to accommodate everchanging media" (Baran & Davis, 2020, p. 371). Ritual theory is an aspect of these proposed paths of new investigation in the burgeoning digital media platforms' shaping of social institutions. Though narrow in its scope, the ritual theory addresses a vital aspect of the hypothesized mediatization process.

Nick Couldry (2003; 2005; 2008), one of the leading scholars in mediatization, arrived at the broader issue of mediation/mediatization when grappling with this narrower aspect of the media's role in shaping established social institutions. Also, Couldry's inspiration—Silverstone (2002)—describes mediation as comparable to ritual analysis. Thus, revisiting the issue of the ritual elements of the mediation, media ritual, a theory in its own right, is worth a scholarly discussion of this kind.

Hence, this essay's objective is to make a relevant contribution to the ongoing conversation about the intricate evolution of social institutions and the mediatization process due to new forms of media. The study examines how social technology platforms are shaping routinized human interactions, partly due to the paradigm-shifting phase of emerging media. Therefore, this study focuses on one of the largest social technology platforms—Meta. The aim is to analyze Meta as a ritual platform for the mediatization of religion in virtual spaces. Similarly, the essay will thoroughly examine the implications of the Meta ritual to an institution whose ordinary language of interaction is lavishly framed in ritual terms, namely religious communities.

Thus, the analysis takes a critical look at the ritual elements of Meta in its partnership with religious communities (Dias, 2021). It critically examines the value Meta delivers regarding religious experiences—broadly speaking—as the experience of rituals and the engagements thereof in social media. In other words, a ritual view of the communication types of the technology deserves fair consideration, and Meta—the most prominent global social media platform that seeks active partnerships with religious communities—is a prime case study for such an investigation. Therefore, this research addresses whether Meta— Facebook, Instagram, and Messenger—is a ritual media platform and what that could imply in its mediation of religion. For clarification, this analysis is not a study of religion in Meta. Instead, it critically examines Meta's mediatization of religion in ritual terms. Thus, the exploration of religious terms of rituals is secondary if necessary.

Theoretical Framework and Method

This critical analysis paper addresses the question of the possibility of the distinct characteristics of Meta social technology as a ritual platform. It draws on Carey's (1989) and incorporates Couldry's (2003; 2008;) and Couldry and Hepp's (2017) ritual theory, a mediatization process.

Carey offers two archetypal ways to look at the capacities of mass communication, broadly speaking—the transmission and ritual models. The former, he argues, is a common approach and deals with terms such as sending, transmitting, delivering information, and imparting data. It is the natural home for media effects theorists. Despite the paucity of

Carey's view in this categorization because it excludes the transactional capacities of communication and does not address the mediatization processes of emerging media such as social technologies, his

appreciation of the transmission model deserves a revisiting and a closer examination. Nevertheless, this concern is not in the scope of this essay. On the other hand, drawing on Durkheim's study of rituals (1912, 1995), Carey argues that in the ritual model, "communication is linked to terms such as 'sharing,' 'participation,' 'association,' 'fellowship,' and 'the possession of a common faith'" (p. 18).

Carey is correct in acknowledging the pacesetting work of Durkheim, though he still needs to flesh out the rich anthropological aspects of Durkheim's theory. For Carey, "'commonness,' 'communion,' 'community' are essential elements of the ritual communication theory and connect communication to its ancient and common roots (Carey, 1989, p. 18). He asserts that "A ritual view of communication is directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs" (Carey, 1989, pp. 18–19). Carey (1975) believes that "communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed" (p. 177). He relates ritual theory to religion, asserting that "the archetypal case under a ritual view is a sacred ceremony that draws people together in fellowship and commonality" (Carey, 1989, p. 18). Nevertheless, Carey's view is more functional (functionalism) than grounded in anthropological roots by which the sense of community—as the defining element of his ritual typology—is shaped. Moreover, the theory's limits regarding the media's role in the ritual process are evident since it is silent on the function of rituals in naturalizing a dichotomized structure of reality between being in or out of a space of the interaction. Here, Couldry (2003) fits in this paper's schema and is a deeper theoretical underpinning to this investigation.

Couldry expanded Carey's view in the study of media and the Internet, with a depth fleshed out from sociology and anthropology deepened in the idea of media mediation, if not mediatization (2008). Couldry sees a more decentralized yet perversive media, as individuals participate in

ritual activities in various media while forming part of the community molded around communication and technological products' engagements. Contrary to the functionalist view of media communication and drawing on the works of Durkheim (1912), Bourdieu (1977; 1991), and Bloch (1989), Couldry deepens Carey's introduction of the idea of ritual in communication studies. Couldry's version of ritual theory could be more appropriately called mediation (2003), mediatization (2008), and later, deep mediatization (Couldry & Hepp, 2017). It takes from Meyrowitz's (1994) technological deterministic medium theory and Postman's (1993) Technopolis. However, it advances media ritual theory scholarship with nuanced and deepened anthropological grounds beyond functionalism.

Couldry was spot-on in acknowledging the vastness of Durkheim's contributions to the study of ritual, for which Durkheim's influence in sociology is self-evident, despite Durkheim's unclear anthropology to which Carey objects. Couldry was also right in re-rethinking the idea of ritual in media and pointing to the deepening that must occur if we reintroduced a richer anthropological framework to Carey's and embraced "social forms" as "media forms" also (Coudry, 2005, p. 11). However, rephrasing the ritual theory to meditation—a term that Livingstone (2009) initially favors, though later changes to mediatization (Livingstone & Lunt, 2014)—risks being generic, an argument many scholars make. Nevertheless, the concept's meaning suffices concerning the ritual elements of this investigation, in part, because of its naturalization of media rituals in a way comparable to everyday life. Therefore, the specific perspective here is recognizing how culture or cultural institutions are redefined or shaped in terms of media's ways of interaction and how users and producers of content are part of that mediatization process. It is to recognize that the *produsage* role (in the language of Axel, 2005; 2007) is symbolic of a higher value than simply sharing or commenting. Thus, the strength of Couldry's is in

providing a more complex framework for understanding the role of media in shaping current cultural forms, not necessarily in terms of a postpositivist media effects framework, but in terms of cultural change and meaning-making around media rituals.

Thus, the use of ritual theory in this analysis is a combination of Carey's for its emphasis on media structures around participatory culture and community, including identifiable features of ritualizing practices within media, and Couldry's for its rootedness in the idea of media as a naturalizing ritual of everyday interactions. It is much more like Couldry's mediatization, approached through a ritual element framework. This paper adds to these adaptations a third element implied in both, which goes back to the traditional, if not archaic, roots as found in Durkheim's (1995) distilled relationship of the sacred and the profane, but more in Bloch (1989)—distinguishing and bonding the sacred and the non-sacred; and the determination of power in the structuring or naturalizing process of the mediated and the non-mediated worlds.

Power, as used in this paper, needs clarification too. In part, it draws from

Couldry's (2005) "space of ritualization" (p. 5), wherein the experience of media power is demonstrated. Bloch's perspective is critical, also, for its insight into the view of ritual not simply as an explanatory form but as "an exercise of a particular kind of power" (p. 45), assuming the role of necessity in the mediated space of interactions. In this view, then, the question will be more like what Baran and Davis (2020) summarize as the problem of what kind of users and community "we are, we become, or we are becoming in our mass-mediated world" (p. 179), and what kind of power is being exercised and by whom in shaping the users and the communities we become in that space?

Key to the appreciation of this paper's interpretative point of view of power in the ritual theory is the idea that in the ritualization process, media are seen or believed to be indispensable, having become the naturalizing ecosystem for the particular ritual category. For example, community members begin to believe that unless they join Facebook, Instagram, or WhatsApp groups, they lose out entirely on the values of *being* in the community. The need to connect becomes the value of *belongingness,* without which social isolation is implied. In the process, rituals assume the role of something beyond the specific action, if not a transcendent value, the other-reality, separating those who are considered initiates and the non-initiates; those who belong to the specific group versus those who are seen as aliens, if not social outcasts.

Power in media ritual theory also deals with structuring the ritual of the mediated community in terms of access. It addresses who has access, who has not, and who sets the boundaries within which access is possible. It is also about agency in formalizing what is considered valued data and what is not. Most importantly, data takes on the value of ultimacy, and access to them becomes the highest pursuit of the initiates. Moreover, the data quality also takes on the value of ultimacy. In short, once necessity, in terms of what is valuable or accessible, weaves through the mediated experience, power is at play.

In summary, in the ritual theory's approach, the central framework of communication capacities is community-centered. Its goal or assumed values are shaped by a sense of building community, being in or out of it, and formalizing acceptable behavior in its terms. Meta frames its platform as social technology whose capacities are for building and expanding communities, not as a web application or a content management system, but as a social technology (Zuckerberg, 2021a). In other words, it is a social technology, a platform with much deeper

value than mere socialization or networking. Thus, it is an excellent platform for ritual analysis research.

The research uses religious rituals and communities as a point of reference because Meta explicitly targets religion to communicate its rituals' affordances. Although the analysis draws on religious metaphors, it does not do so to defend them. Instead, it shows the naturalization of the Meta ritualization in specific religious terms and, by so doing, foregrounds what religious groups and leaders should be aware of and must critically evaluate.

Therefore, in the critical examination of various elements of the Meta ritual experience, this author approaches the analysis by critically looking at the role of Meta's ritual forms as they take on the ritual role of the sacred with the power of blurring (or not blurring) the line of the sacred. Consequently, it examines how Meta's ritual naturalizes sacred ritual, resulting in, what Couldry claims happens in a ritual theory of media, a mediatization process, or what Livingstone and Lunt (2014) describe as a second and real scenario of high modernity, a complex reordering of institutions in media terms. Similarly, while the ritual perspective examines various aspects of the Meta offerings as ritual, it does so in the broader context of its implications to power. In addition, ritual theory, in the context of this inquiry, assumes the framework of the social technology affordances that are humanistic and digital versus the idea of ritualistic elements in the religious sphere. Decisive stand lies in the naturalization of the interactions in the sense that Meta blurs the line between what, in the language of Couldry (2005), is "'in' or not 'in' the media" (p. 8). The normalization of the interaction and the blurring of the sacred versus the technological are decisive points for Meta's ritual posture.

Hence, this study sits within a broad context of the ritual theory discussion. Therefore, how does Meta serve as a ritual platform? What evidence supports its characterization as such, and how does this challenge or enrich traditional conceptions of religious rituals? Answers

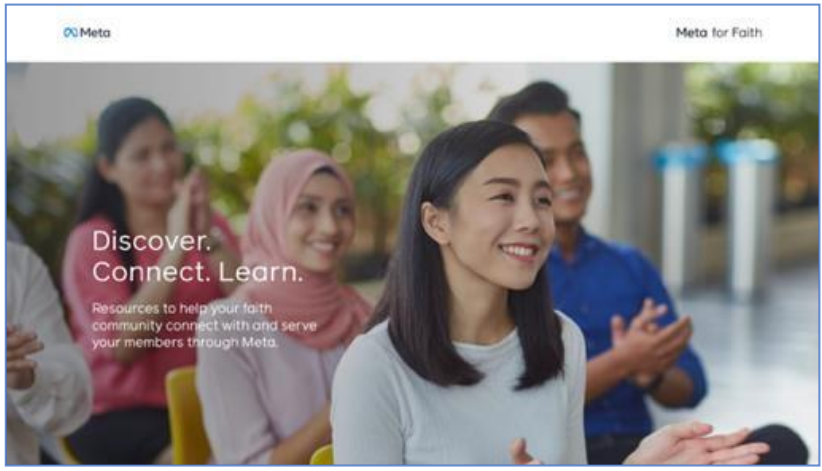
to these questions stem from analyzing *Meta for Faith* homepage design and images, its *Faith Resource Hub*, and its power dynamics.

Analyzing Meta's Homepage Design and Images

Meta's form of invitation to its rituals is the claim to make it easier for faith communities to do what they do best—worship, pray, fellowship, engage, participate, and belong (Zuckerberg, 2021; Culliford, 2021). The following data from Meta's homepage provide evidence.[1] The screenshots of the landing page of the *Meta for Faith* community (see *Images 1-9* below) show the well-thought-out user journey map of the partnership and demonstrate the ritual patterns of the platform.

Image 1

Meta for Faith homepage main header



[1] The data in the form of images are screenshots of the user frontend view of the *Meta for Faith* site, captured on January 2, 2021. As a result, this illustration should be confined to that specific time frame and cannot be used to apply to any future layout changes that Meta may have made. Accessed: https://faith.facebook.com/.

Image 1 and the subsequent images presented are not merely an ornamental element. Instead, it plays a crucial role in shaping the user experience and journey map within Meta's ritual metaphor designed explicitly for religious communities. Image 1 serves as an exemplar of visual cues embedded in Meta's design and branding strategy. These cues strategically utilize visual metaphors that evoke associations with religious experiences and rituals. “Connect with and serve your members through Meta” is a text invocation to religious leaders that reinforces the image metaphor. Meta presents itself as the bridge of that resource between the leadership and the membership to the courted community.

Meta’s bridge-building metaphor is subtle because its soft-selling language positions itself as a value beyond a tool but as a needed space of connection. Without this space, a *ritualization space* in the language of Couldry, the “connecting” and “serving” would not occur.

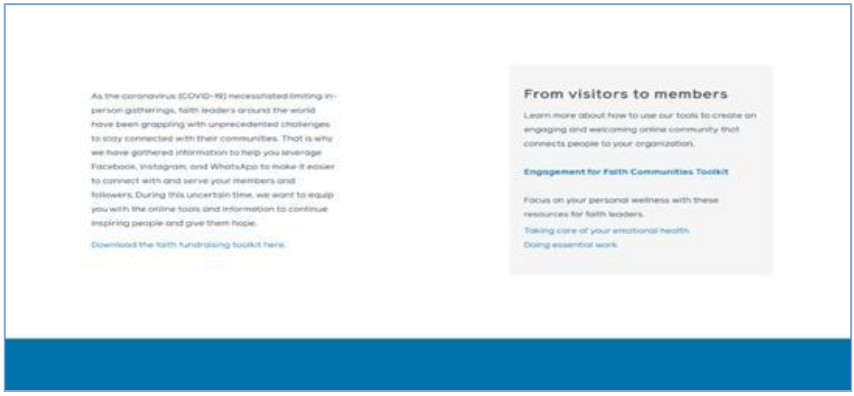
Furthermore, the image demonstrates an inclusive, if not inter-religious, typology that appeals to diverse religious traditions. For example, the portrayal of a woman wearing a hijab is juxtaposed with gestures traditionally associated with Christian evangelical faith practices, highlighting the interconnectedness of these religious expressions. However, by framing and composing the image around a communal ritual that meshes various ritual gestures, the distinctive features of the sampled religious gestures are distorted, emphasizing the shared humanistic experience across various faiths.

Furthermore, the youthful appearance of the individuals in the photos conveys a new and fresh way of worship. It showcases how the younger generation worships in a form that bridges religious variations, with a central focus on one direction. The medium shot, composed to draw proximity to the lead figure in the foreground while creating warm connectivity with the figures in the out-of-focus background, reinforces the community connection ritual. Thus, there is the naturalization process in which distinct traditions and the line between them are

blurred, and the new-found value beyond boundaries is presented as desirable.

Image 2

Meta for Faith's homepage, 2nd row



Upon analyzing Image 2, one can identify Meta's user journey story as an invitation or invocation for members to join the "Engagement for Faith Communities Toolkit." There is also the “Faith Fundraising Toolkit” and other resources for the mental health of faith leaders. These toolkits are symbolically integrated into Meta's invitation ritual, emphasizing their significance in facilitating engagement within faith communities. In other words, the messaging suggests that connecting in Meta's ritual is a primer to the higher values of fulfilling social needs for engagement online, financial sustainability, and overall mental health.

Image 3

Meta for Faith’s homepage, 3rd row

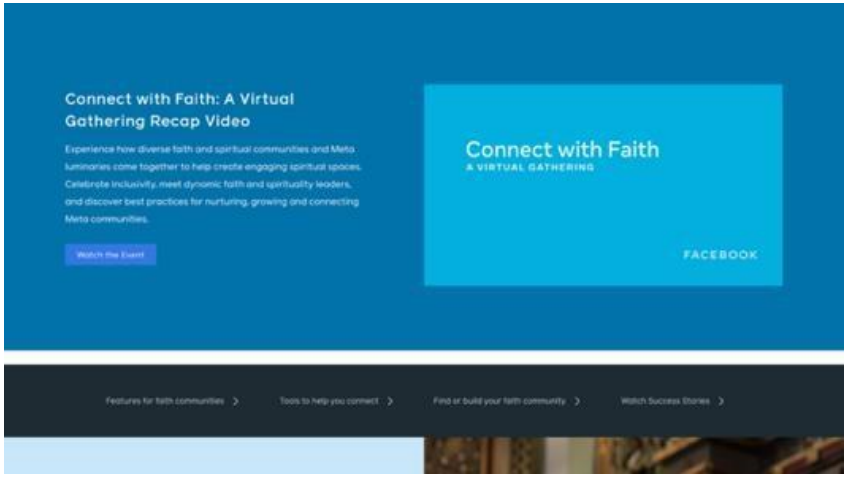
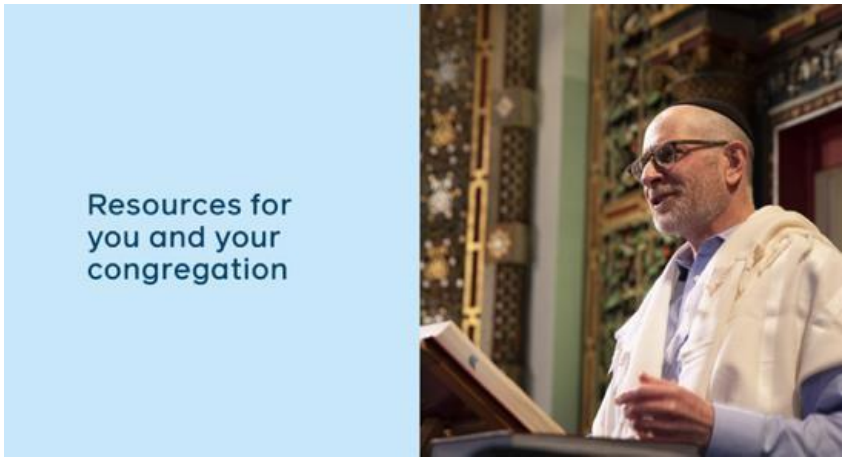


Image 3 represents an additional invitation to connect with Meta for faith-
based values. It highlights the virtual ritual value of communion/gathering, underscoring the significance of remote engagement within faith communities. What is offered in the Meta

interaction becomes a new experience in which technology is invisible. Instead, human values of connecting with faith in the virtual world are offered. This invisibility of technology is the ultimate goal of naturalization, which Meta seeks as social technology mediates religion online.

Image 4

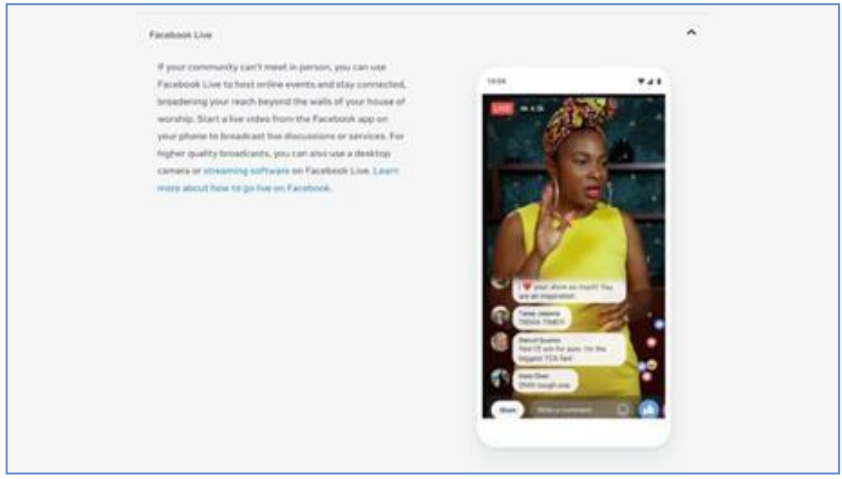
Meta for Faith's homepage, 4th row



An analysis of Image 4 indicates that it targets Jewish faith leaders and traditions. Just like in Images 1 and 2, the apparent target audience of the messaging is faith leaders. The absence of congregation or community members further emphasizes this motif in Meta's promotional imagery. In addition, the shoot-from-below composition of the image gives power to religious leaders, but this power is subtly presented as granted through the resources in the Meta's abundant storehouse for congregation members.

Image 5a

Meta for Faith homepage photo, 5 row



A thorough examination of Image 5a reveals Meta's promotion of live liturgical services and discussions, positioning the Facebook app as a viable substitute for face-to-face fellowships. This alternative is rooted in the circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The chat features highlight the interactive communication that unfolds as members engage in the virtual religious experience. Emojis are used as reactions, underlining this novel interaction ritual and demonstrating audience participation in worship. Furthermore, the 9:16 aspect ratio of the online video interaction implies its compatibility with mobile devices, Instagram feeds, and WhatsApp. It feels normal in the world of smartphones and the look is realistic.

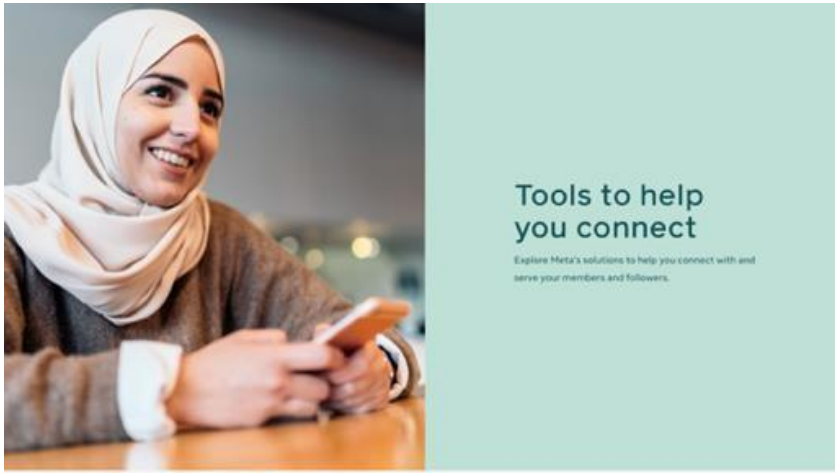
Image 5b

Meta for Faith homepage photo, 5 row, the second image

Also, an analysis of Image 5b showcases the five distinct User Interface (UI) elements employed by Meta. The UI elements are ritual components in Meta's live worship space. These elements include the live tab, live tab URL, host badges, featured link, and saved settings. Notably, the image depicts the visual form of this ritual, one that features a trendy reel design, complete with real-time chat features. Those elements form the pathways through which Meta offers to deliver other services in support of religious practices.

Image 6

Meta for Faith site's homepage, 6 row



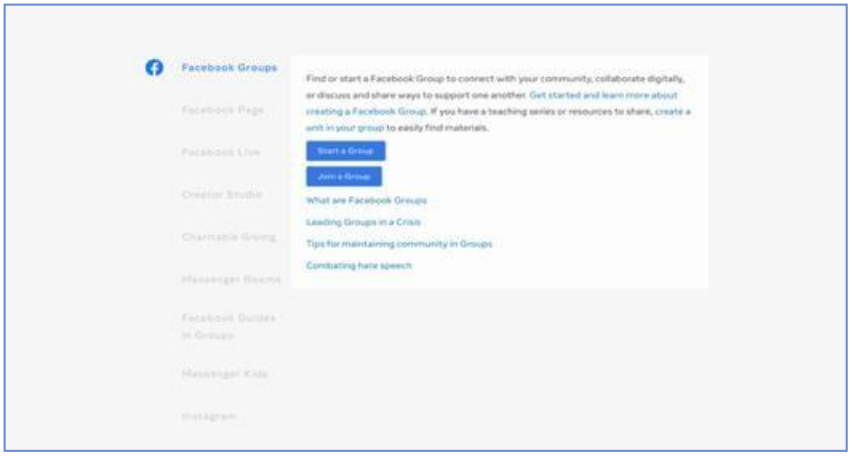
A detailed analysis of Image 6 reveals a distinct focus on Islamic traditions, particularly the visual depiction of community connection and service rituals. There is a subtle suggestion that smartphone devices facilitate these rituals of community and service. In addition, the presentation of a woman in conjunction with the concept of serving one's community may be interpreted as an effort to popularize the relatively infrequent instances in Islamic tradition where women take on the role of Imams. The close-up shot is an intentional design to show intimacy, while drawing out the delight symbolized in the facial expressions of a woman who has come to enjoy the experience of practicing her faith on Meta space.

However, the woman's seating position introduces a subtly different seating gesture, which is not popular in Islamic worship. Ultimately, it becomes clear that elements not typically associated with a specific

religious community are incorporated and normalized within Meta's ritual framework. This normalization process presents this new fellowship method as a practical alternative to traditional practices.

Image 7

Meta for Faith's homepage, 7th row



Upon analyzing Image 7, it becomes apparent that Meta promotes Facebook groups. Specifically, it highlights how faith communities can become Facebook groups; the group functions as an alternative to faith communities' ways of meeting. The banner utilizes a minimalist, clean design whose tabs emphasize the ritual pathways toward becoming a group member. The image features various tabs on the left-hand side and blue highlights within the content area. These are a strategic and userfriendly UX journey map for potential *Meta for Faith* group leaders or members.

Image 8

Meta for Faith's homepage, 8th row

Image 8 centers on religions originating from Eastern or Asian cultures alongside other spiritual beliefs. The image underscores the integration of various media types and highlights the necessity to broaden these communities through online networks. The image exemplifies the concept of ease and convenience through a woman casually drinking tea (or potentially coffee) in the foreground. At the same time, a man appears relaxed in the out-of-focus background. This scene illustrates the comfort and accessibility of engaging in such gatherings from home with the convenience of a computer.

Image 9

Meta for Faith's homepage, 9th row

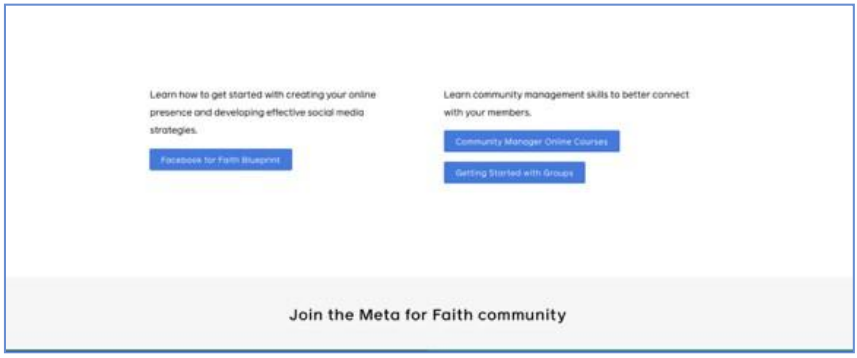


Image 9 invites users to join the Meta for Faith alternative to their gathering places while highlighting three additional ritual paths. These paths include the Facebook for Faith Blueprint, the Community Manager Online Course, and Getting Started with Groups. The value promoted as in the previous one (Image 8) is the alternate world of meeting, where physical barriers would be no more, and technology becomes the indispensable place (space) for faith activities.

In conclusion, analyzing the images on *Meta for Faith* 's landing page reveals a well-executed user journey map incorporating ritual patterns and visual metaphors. These images strategically utilize religious symbolism and inclusive typologies to appeal to diverse faith traditions. The ritualization process within Meta's platform blurs the boundaries between different (and distinct) religious practices and emphasizes a shared humanistic experience. The invitation to connect with Meta is presented as a means to facilitate worship, fellowship, and engagement for faith communities, offering resources such as toolkits, mental health

support, and virtual gathering spaces. The images showcase the seamless integration of technology into religious experiences, presenting online rituals as a desirable and accessible alternative to traditional practices. Meta positions itself as a bridge between faith leaders and their communities, providing a space for connection and service. Overall, these images highlight the platform's expressed commitment to faith communities and fostering faith communities' connections in digital spaces. All these relate to the following consideration: Meta provides its new product line—*Faith Resource Hub*—as an invitation to religious communities to tap of its abundant resources.

Meta Faith Resource Hub and an Invitation of Convenience

How can Meta *Faith Resource Hub* be examined as a ritual invitation? It is the task of this aspect of the current inquiry. Meta's *Faith Resource Hub* is a well-thought-out marketing strategy targeting religious communities. It is an invitation comparable to a sacred site, with its familiar language resembling invocations heard in the reverberating bells of cathedrals or the adhan resonating through the streets of Mecca. Since religious rituals already have a sense of community, it is an effortless union with the allure of new technology, which has taken on the cloak of the religious language and communicates to its subscribers and members in like terms. The power dynamics are subtle, and the sale is easy. Before long, entire communities find themselves integrated into the Meta platform.

Visualize over two and a half billion Christians, close to one billion eight hundred thousand Islamic participants, and nearly three billion individuals practicing Eastern religions and various spiritual movements, following Meta's logic and user interface in their ritual interactions. It requires little research and critical analysis to recognize the connection between the rituals of this form of media and the natural affinity with sacred rituals. Faith communities readily connect with their kind, once

labeled as "the opium of the people" (Marx, 1844, n.p.), because they share unique bonds. Meta understands this, and the easiest way to exert power and control is by delivering engagements reminiscent of religious rituals centered around community rituals, regardless of their true nature. Meta offers this, and its invitation becomes a ritual of mediatized power. One might even aptly describe Meta as the opium of religion in emerging media.

A compelling argument made by Meta in favor of religious communities is the concept of the *Faith Resource Hub*. One of its features, Meta Blueprint for Faith Communities, is illustrated through a collection of screenshots (Images 10-11). These screenshots depict the user frontend view of Meta for Faith site, captured on January 2, 2021.[1] A closer site analysis reveals meticulously planned ritual strategies for integrating religion. Images 10-11 showcase the homepage of Meta's Blueprint for Faith Communities, while Image 12 emphasizes an educational component consisting of lessons intended for the Meta Faith Community. One can interpret the images as a complete ritual of mediatization.

[1] It is important to note that this illustration is limited to the time of capture and does not apply to any potential layout changes Meta may have made subsequently. The accessed source for the screenshots is https://faith.facebook.com/.

Image 10

Meta's Blueprint for Faith Communities' site header

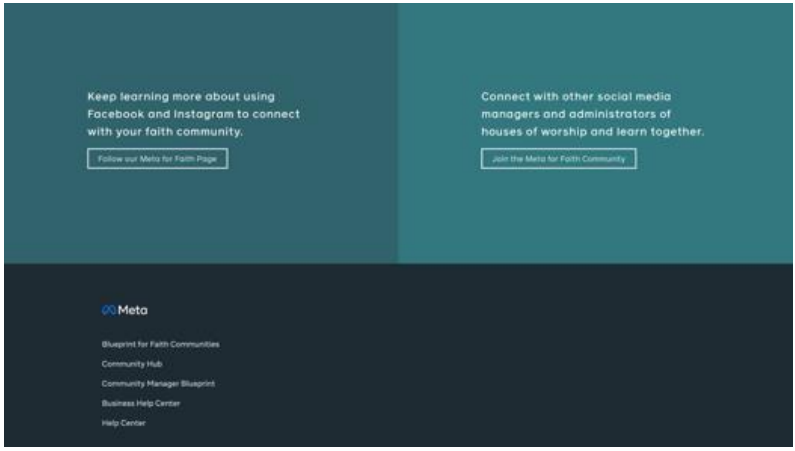


Image 11

Meta's Blueprint for Faith Communities site homepage

Image 12

The lower part of Meta's Blueprint for Faith Communities site homepage

Notably, Image 12 prominently features a lesson titled "Partnership with your followers and local community leaders," which can be considered a catechesis of Meta's religious mission. The design, religious symbolism of images and icons, and app user experience all provide evidence of religious-minded individuals embracing this initiative. The site evokes a sense of being in a sacred space, resembling the design and layout of pages typically associated with religious groups. This positive aspect of Meta's design allows it to continuously reinvent itself, addressing the perceived needs of diverse religious communities.

However, some individuals may raise valid objections, particularly those concerned with doctrinal formulations. Meta offers its brand of religion, promoting inclusivity and a non-doctrinal approach to religious experiences. Spiritual groups may find this appealing, while more traditional groups might object. Nevertheless, there is more to be said about this initiative that goes beyond the doctrinal argument hypothesis and directly engages with Meta's ritual typology. The Meta for Faith

Resource Hub is a strategic pitch to secure the buy-in of faith leaders and communities. Many comply, and many more may do so because it seems to resonate with their accustomed ways of interaction.

Nevertheless, there is a deeper layer to this initiative. While it may appear commendable and comparable to the religious rituals of everyday worship, it serves as the easiest way to rally faith communities around a company that has faced ethical issues and has been repeatedly called to account for its handling of user data. This paradoxical situation aligns with religion's history of self-inflicted ethical wounds, where reparative rituals serve as paths to redemption. In the proposed hub, redemption becomes a rhythm of Meta's rituals.

Considering that Meta's primary business revolves around selling ads, it is reasonable to question whether its partnership with faith communities aims to harvest more data to refine targeted advertisements. Access to congregations' mailing lists, digital footprints, encompassing their private lives, emotions, feelings, and relationships, holds power in a more intrusive, if not pervasive, manner. In a mediatized culture where technological rituals occur alongside immersive data, the entity that possesses access to and control over data wields the most power. Thus, Meta's journey toward dominant power and ultimate virtual absolutist epiphany in the virtual space is well underway.

Further Discussion and Conclusion

The meticulous crafting of Meta's landing page design and imagery reveals a calculated strategy to capitalize on faith communities. The integration of ritual patterns and visual metaphors tailored for these communities blurs the lines between distinct religious practices, potentially diluting the authenticity if not unique identities of these traditions. By presenting technology as a harmonious fusion of religious

experiences, Meta promotes itself as an appealing and easily accessible alternative to traditional practices.

This research paper has examined the distinct characteristics of Meta as a ritual platform, drawing on Carey's and Couldry's ritual theory. By combining elements of Carey's and Couldry's theories, this paper has explored the ritual aspects of Meta's social technology. It has highlighted how Meta's platform functions as a ritual space, blurring the line between the sacred and the technological. Meta's ritual forms facilitate community building and reframe religious rituals in specific terms, potentially reshaping the religious landscape.

While Meta's invocation of rituals may simplify routine rituals for faith communities and democratize access to sacred rituals, it is essential to examine these claims critically. The accessibility and ease of engaging with Meta's rituals depend highly on digital infrastructure and literacy, which may be lacking in remote paths of the world. Furthermore, Meta's unique rituals and community-building efforts may blur the line between *religion online* and *online religion*, creating its community brand with pseudo-religious language.

Analyzing Meta's homepage design and images has provided evidence of its characterization as a ritual platform. The visual cues and metaphors used in Meta's design evoke associations with religious experiences and rituals, appealing to diverse religious traditions. However, the composition of these images may distort the distinctive features of religious gestures, emphasizing a shared humanistic experience across faiths.

In light of these findings, there are recommendations for religious leaders and communities. Firstly, religious leaders should critically examine the implications of adopting Meta as a ritual platform for their

members. They should assess the accessibility and inclusivity of Meta's rituals for their communities, considering the digital divide and the potential loss of distinct religious practices. Secondly, religious communities should be mindful of the blurring of the sacred and the technological in Meta's rituals. They should reflect on the implications of participating in a platform that may reshape the religious landscape and consider how Meta's services align with their religious values. Proper discerning leadership in this matter is necessary.

It is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this research. The analysis is based on the available information and data up to September 2021, and Meta's platform and features may have evolved since then. Additionally, the research focuses on Meta's rituals in the context of religious communities and does not provide an analysis of all aspects of Meta's platform. Further research is needed to explore the long-term implications of Meta's ritualization and its impact on religious practices, community dynamics, and power structures. There are themes that emerged from this analysis that would be discussed in another paper. They include Meta's invocation as an online religion, examining the role of Meta as a facilitator of shared rituals and a platform for sacred interactions. Also, not covered in this piece are Meta's influence on traditional conceptions of religious rituals, the power dynamics inherent in Meta's ritualization, including access, agency, and the determination of valuable data. In addition is the role of advertising as a ritual and the centrality of data as the ultimate value in Meta's ritual typology.

In conclusion, this research paper highlights the ritual aspects of Meta's social technology platform. It considers Meta rituals' potential implications for religious communities. By critically examining Meta's ritual affordances, scholars gain insights into how Meta's rituals blur the line between the sacred and the technological. Hence, this paper raises an awareness that might inspire religious leaders and communities to engage in a thoughtful and reflective dialogue about a blanket adoption

of Meta as a ritual platform, considering accessibility, inclusivity, and the potential reshaping of religious practices. It would be timely for future inquiries to probe deeper into the dynamic metamorphosis of social technology platforms such as Meta, keeping an unwavering focus on their far-reaching impacts on multifaceted societal elements, with religion at the forefront. Therefore, this paper stands as a call to action for scholars and religious leaders, challenging them to grapple with the complexities of reflexive intertwining of traditional rituals with cutting-edge technologies. Optimistic engagement of media technology in religion— which this author advocates—does not need to be a wholesale immersion that blurs distinct lines.

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THE PRICE OF NINE: IMPACT OF AN ANOMIE CULTURE IN OGONI

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Abstract

The fight for social and environmental justice led to the execution of nine community leaders in Ogoni, Nigeria in 1995. The Nigerian press rose against the backdrop of peaceful protest by the sacrificial nine in highlighting these events. As a result, the marginalization of the Ogoni minority group attracted local and global attention. This research explores the relationship between corporate crimes and environmental pollution using the Ogoni incident as a case study. This paper analyzes the Ogoni killing and catastrophe utilizing the anomie theory proposed by Emile Durkheim, and Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of "field", "habitus" and *doxa*. It attributes the murder of the nine Ogoni leaders to the breakdown of law and order in the corporate structural regime of

Shell Oil Company in Nigeria. Furthermore, the political administration of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which allowed the execution of the community leaders, is also analyzed using secondary data. The question this study tries to solve is how to manage issues of environmental justice and maintain oil and gas production in Nigeria and globally. The goal of this research is to ensure compliance in the oil and gas industry, protect the industry's interest from payment of substantial debt and money as compensation from oil spills, and ensure that communities retain their livelihood. We recommend that the industry needs preemptive measures and adequate plans, which can be achieved through the early implementation of laws to handle likely environmental effluence.

Keywords:, Anomie, doxa, field, green criminology, habitus, Nigerian government, Ogoni, oil and gas, Shell.

INTRODUCTION

The impact of environmental pollution in Ogoni and its aftermath affects everyone in the community. Multinational organizations that were involved in the Ogoni disaster lost vast sums of money, and the Ogoni residents and their community were adversely affected by the oil spills. It goes without mention that the oil spills issue is essential to society.

Niger Delta is the oil-producing region of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Ogoni is a small community in the Niger Delta region with a population of 850,000 (The Unrepresented Nations and People Organization UNPO, 2017). However, this community has suffered from the fog of oil pollution and verse irreparable damage to its surrounding environment. The people of Ogoni asserted that the exploration of oil in their community was damaging their ecosystem while its members lacked social amenities, suffered poverty, and lived

in unemployment, etc. (Saro-Wiwa, 1995). Arising from this, Saro-Wiwa (1995) embarked on public awareness of the economic discrimination borne by indigenes. He staged a 300,000 man (women and children inclusive) peaceful protest against Shell (Saro-Wiwa, 1995).

Through this medium of expression in Ogoni, international communication served as a significant source of information sharing. The twentieth century experienced this form of social awareness with Nigeria's Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). Ken Saro-Wiwa: president of MOSOP, and eight other activists advocated for economic, and political control over environmental matters in their community (Ogoni Bill of Rights, 1990). However, this fight for economic justice was futile and flushed under the carpet. Instead, the Nigerian military junta executed Saro-Wiwa, and eight other activists were tried on treason charges (Sobomate, 2014). The grievance of Ogoni residents was because of the damage caused by oil and gas activities to their community. In light of this, there is a need to review oil and gas undertakings that result in degradation of the environment and possible deaths of citizens who oppose its application as seen in the Ogoni saga.

Oil and gas activities present a high risk of accidents, disasters, and deaths resulting from oil spills. The oil and gas industry ("Industry") over the years has experienced significant oil spills with adverse consequences. In the case of Ogoni, the Nigerian government by executing innocent lives failed its people. Likewise, this study explores the relationship between corporate actions and environmental pollution using Ogoni and Shell as a case study. This research will address these shortcomings and the real cause of the Ogoni saga. Importantly, it features the media's impact in Nigeria and outlines the reasons for the execution. To achieve this, we used Durkheim's anomie theory and

Bourdieu's concepts of "field", "habitus" and *doxa* to illustrate the breakdown in the political and corporate structural regime in Nigeria and Shell respectively. These systemic failures by these bodies are the cause of the disaster in Ogoni. Durkheim exemplified society using "social similitude" which is referred to as a social order where authoritarian law prevails. Similarly, Bourdieu (1977, 1990) used the concept of habitus to explain a prevailing set of structures that binds society and must be obeyed. The Nigerian society in the Ogoni situation is said to have played into these scholars' analogies and this paper seeks to address this assertion with the corresponding event.

The Ogoni incident requires proper examination to prevent it from occurring again. In this present work, its intended goal is to address the issue. Relying on Durkheim's anomie theory, we assert that most environmental contamination could be averted before it occurred given the appropriate mechanisms established in the socio-economic structure.

LITERATURE REVIEW

We apply the research of Émile Durkheim (1897) associated with the anomie theory and Pierre Bourdieu's (1977, 1990) field and habitus to this study. The personal background of Durkheim is essential to understanding how his thesis relates to the subject of the Ogoni community. Subsequently, the anomie theory will give an understanding of the incidents that led to the Ogoni execution.

DURKHEIM'S ANOMIE THEORY & OGONI EXECUTION

Durkheim was born in 1858 into a poor Jewish family in a little French town Épinal (Peyre, 2017; Jones, 1986). He lost his father in his teenage years (Peyre, 2017), which made him develop an interest in religious philosophies until he gained entrance into a prestigious institution of

higher learning. While at the university, his beliefs shifted to science and empirical studies to understand weak social norms in society. The laxity in social standards as espoused by Durkheim is still relevant as exemplified by the Ogoni executions.

Durkheim was influenced by Auguste Compte (Bernard, Snipes, & Gerould, 2016) who is known as the father of sociology (Mutchnick, Martin, & Austin, 2009). Before Durkheim was 40, he became an appointed Professor in Bordeaux, Paris. His move to the city is significant because he lived in an agrarian society while growing up and this exposure to the urban lifestyle in a big city was different.

Furthermore, his son's death in World War 1 impacted him significantly and caused him to withdraw from society (Jones, 1986), thus resulting in his death a year afterward. All these played some role in his social thinking, and his principles laid the groundwork for his theoretical propositions such as anomie theory.

During the nineteenth century in France, modernization increased, as well as the suicide rate. Durkheim argued that technological advancement threatened social organizations thus leading to a high rate of deaths. Durkheim attributed this to an anomic society; that is, a condition with less regulation. According to Durkheim (1897), anomie refers to a state where behavior is not regulated by modernity thereby leading to a breakdown of social norms and rules. Thus, anomie is a result of the failure of social models and order between an individual and society. One of the contributions in his research is about the typology of a community, and how living in a mechanical or organic society (Mutchnick et al., 2009) may influence suicide. The mechanical or primitive society refers to altruism and a simple lifestyle with the ability to sacrifice for another (Mutchnick et al., 2009). In Durkheim's analysis, a humane society involves a process whereby people share common goals and live a communal life with less division of labor. This

selfless way of life brings unity to the community and is prone to disengagement from suicidal encounters. On the other hand, the organic society relies on the high division of labor, egoism, apathy, and anomie (Mutchnick et al., 2009). High division of labor characterizes the organic society. Subsequently, the division of labor leads to the specialization of individual talents, which makes people disconnected from society (Durkheim, 1893). Division of labor further replaced the mechanical bond that once existed in a traditional environment.

As society evolves from the rural to the new phase, the government enforced laws to regulate social conduct. Crime results in the government's in-action to restrict organizations' excesses in communities. Durkheim, therefore, recommended the need for social control to fill the separation between individuals and the system. Social factors like religion, values, and culture play a key role in society because their early impact can have a profound outcome. For example, parents can train their children early to eliminate bias from their mindset. Likewise, the organic world is the current day stance of economic pursuit. Organizations have established a stringent standard wherein the corporate structure emphasizes individual skills and the goal of profit-making. It becomes a situation of "survival of the fittest" (Spencer, 1884). This pressure is not only placed on individuals but also reflected in an organization's performance and deliverables.

Indeed, the people of Ogoni made several demands to the operating oil companies in the region, i.e., Shell, Chevron, and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company of which Shell had the most significant share in the area (Global Nonviolent Action Database, 2018). These demands involved monetary damages of 10 billion dollars alongside royalties (Global Nonviolent Action Database, 2018). However, these companies ignored the requests of Ogoni, including Shell as the major operating

organization in the community. The interest of Shell during the Ogoni incident was profit from the city through their exploration activities.

Thus, this failure to address its corporate structure, which was interfering with political and social arrangements in Ogoni led to a worse result than would have been if Shell had addressed the local demands. Shell's anticlimax for social control from their corporate structure, like Durkheim argued, enabled this disengagement between enforcement of rules and production. Ogoni residents can claim that this detachment was the cause of the protest because Shell ignored their issues, and the dispute would not have occurred. Accordingly, the corporate organization of Shell by not checking these excesses encouraged its escalation. This breakdown, afterward, led to the current disaster that claimed the lives of nine civil-community activists. Anomie is not just the presence of broken norms and values but unchecked lawlessness, which eventually results in a breakdown of rules. Undeniably, this demonstration was what led to the execution of the leaders despite the involvement of the international community.

Shell is not alone in this responsibility. Leaders of Ogoniland presented a "Bill of Rights" to the Nigerian Government demanding political autonomy (Ogoni Bill of Rights, 1990). In this document, the Ogoni people narrated the suffering they experienced as a community. The Ogoni "Bill of Rights" ranged from the abandonment of their communities as illustrated in the lack of infrastructural development, oil exploration resulting in the demise of their agricultural products and individuals. In the face of all the injustices, the Nigerian government failed to take any remedial action aimed at ensuring that the affairs of the people needed attention. The attitude of the government further led to Ken Saro-Wiwa's 300,000 peaceful people protest to express their displeasure about environmental contamination in Ogoni land (Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, 2018). The Nigerian

military government construed the civil protest as an act of treason because it deemed all disruptions on oil production as such (Global Nonviolent Action Database, 2018). As a result, Ken Saro-Wiwa and other eight leaders were arrested and eventually executed with utter impunity (Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, 2018). The breakdown of law and order in Nigeria's political regime involving series of a military takeover at the time culminated in an anomic condition leading to the loss of lives. Following the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and other eight activists, the world was outraged at the actions of the Nigerian government.

APPLICATION OF PIERRE BOURDIEU *HABITUS* AND FIELD TO OGONI SAGA

Nigeria is heavily endowed with different natural resources, with oil being its most dominating source of income. The British colonization of Nigeria and the centralization of the Nigerian leadership under a central government has been argued as the major reason for the marginalization of the Niger Delta people. That is the amalgamation of northern and southern Nigeria as one, with political and economic control of the nation being bestowed on the Hausa-Fulani political elite (Okonofua, 2013). Scholars have further advocated that the core rationale of the British colonization in Nigeria can be traced to economic reasons (Falola & Heaton, 2008; Okonofua, 2011; Okonta & Douglas, 2003; Sagay, 2008). The implication of this is that managing the economic power of the affairs of Nigeria is something that its citizens were not familiar with during the period of colonialism. Thus, even after gaining its independence from Great Britain in 1960, Nigeria was not politically and economically developed to handle the new wave of social change. This development has made scholars opine that Africa remains economically, politically, and culturally dependent on the West (Okonofua, 2013). For Nigeria, it meant that the country had not fully

advanced in terms of creating and ensuring a fair distribution of wealth among its different ethnic groups. Had this been the case where each region can autonomously manage its resources, there will be a reduction in culture clash. Thus, Nigeria during the Ogoni saga was in a dilemma where making strategic economic decisions that affected the oil and gas sector created great controversy. On one hand, were the Ogoni people who expressed their displeasure of marginalization, and on the other, a government that needed to uphold order and peace in society, and a multinational corporation (Shell) expected to ensure its continuity as a world player.

The political play of power in Nigeria's politics reinforces Pierre Bourdieu's theory of "habitus" and "field." Bourdieu (1977, 1990) stated that society is comprised of spaces designated as "fields." That is, every societal structure consists of a field, which is a certain space and playing ground controlled by selected individuals, institutions, or groups. Furthermore, Bourdieu (1977, 1990) used the concept of 'habitus" to explain how these fields are controlled and the elements/people in that field are deemed to obey such rules or be in default. Habitus has been explained to be the tools and rituals that define how the social world should act (Ngarachu, 2014). Additionally, Bourdieu (1999) stated that such "fields" are guided by certain essential rules from the perspective of those who dominate and control a state known as *doxa*.

In the Ogoni saga, the Nigeria military junta under the leadership of Late General Sani Abacha once again proved the powerful effect that *doxa* had on the economy. At the time of the execution of the Ogoni nine, the political structure of the country was familiar with a certain field of how the Nigerian society should be governed. Thus any opposition to this accustomed *doxa* (rules) amounted to illicit conduct that required punishment, as was the case of the execution of the Ogoni

nine. Ken Saro-Wiwa spoke against the global corporate alliances of the then Nigerian military government and multinational bureaucracies such as Shell and Chevron (Okonofua, 2013). This alliance was criticized through advocacy efforts that addressed the appropriation of Ogoni lands by the then Nigerian military junta and subsequent allocation to major oil conglomerates such as Shell (Saro-Wiwa, 1992).

With the return of democracy to the nation, ongoing efforts must be pursued towards ensuring equitable distribution of economic resources to help drive nascent economies such as Nigeria into maintaining its status as a world player in oil and gas issues.

LIFE AFTER THE EXECUTION OF THE OGONI NINE

The Ogoni community amongst other disadvantaged communities suffered numerous setbacks in their communities due to environmental contamination by wealthy foreign oil and gas companies. To date, the Ogoni people still suffer from various ecological degradation issues. Watts (2004) indicated that the unemployment rate in Ogoni was 85%, with few households having access to electricity, and only one physician available to 100,000 per person. In 2008, Vidal (2012) reported that Bodo Creek in Ogoni was affected by two oil spills for a total of 103,000 and 311,000 barrels, leaked by the Shell Oil Company. This environmental contamination led to displacement, loss of livelihood and employment in farming activities to the Ogoni residents. Activists like Saro-Wiwa fought vehemently to prevent several major oil companies like Shell from exploiting Nigerian oil reserves, and they struggled to eradicate oil pollution (Michalowski, 1998). Today, as we write, the Ogoni community has failed to return to normalcy.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF SHELL AFTER OGONI NINE

Human rights violations as demonstrated in Ogoni land by the Nigerian government and Shell undermine the foundation of a democratic society. Not only does it affect the rights of citizens, but it also causes a strain on corporations. Oil establishments like Shell expend a lot of money as compensation or settlement during oil spill cases. For example, Shell paid about $15.5m as settlement of the lawsuit in the Ogoni killings (The Guardian, 2009). Shell's motive for doing so constitutes a progressive agenda towards focusing on the future of Ogoni (The Guardian, 2009).

Furthermore, according to the Polluter Pays Principle (PPP), the polluter bears the cost of pollution in the interest of the public (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2011). Hence, communities expect adequate compensations resulting from the polluter's actions that cause the degradation of the environment, which may serve as a deserved punishment for polluters. In this case, corporations may suffer monetary loss arising from such environmental degradation. There is also a need for such businesses to ensure compliance in their operations. The critical question for these companies is to weigh the cost of a disaster alongside conducting operations in a compliant manner.

Despite the tragedy that occurred in Ogoni, Shell has taken some practical measures to help the youths in the Ogoni community. Shell's effective measures include programs through training to help entrepreneurs in the community (Shell, 2015), sponsorship through grants of startups for young entrepreneurs (Shell, 2016), raising awareness to youths in the community as to risks associated with oil sabotage (Shell, 2015), among other initiatives. We must underscore

that monetary compensation, while necessary, cannot equal the ecological damage in Ogoni. However, we must accentuate that the efforts by Shell to ensure the community members are utilizing their best resources are worthy of our approbations. The remedial acts by Shell to help Ogoni residents indicate a change in its corporate social responsibility to build the community. The critical emphasis for healing should focus on reform efforts for both affected communities like Ogoni and oil corporations like Shell.

IMPACT OF ANOMIE CULTURE IN INDUSTRY TO CRIMINOLOGY AND SOCIETY

Criminal behavior extends beyond street violence, drugs, sexual assault, and so on. It encompasses unlawful acts committed in the workplace by a corporation. Thus, it is inadequate to discuss common criminality and ignore multinational crimes in oil spills and pollution cases. The presence of anomie in the industry is caused by corporate malfeasance, as evidenced by Shell's failure to remedy the initial demands of the Ogoni people. Issues like this have led to the development of green criminology.

Green criminology is a branch of criminology that considers the examination of corporate crimes against the environment (Lynch, Long, Stretesky, & Barrett, 2017; Potter, 2010). This unique field examines cases of environmental contamination caused by the neglect of corporate organizations. Ogoni's event is a classic example of this illustration. At the time of the incidents, Shell was more interested in its continuing operations; instead, it focused primarily on revenue accumulation. Governments and corporations must establish guidelines for the control and prevention of occupational conducts like oil spills, and responsible parties in violation of protocols should be held liable for their actions. Communities have the right to charge their governments

for flagrant disregard of responsible commercial deportment, as governments are accountable for maintaining the safety and security of their citizens.

The fight for environmental protection has led to the advancement of movements for environmental justice and environmental racism. Bullard and Johnson (2000) define environmental racism as "any environmental policy, practice or directive that differentially… affects individuals or communities based on race or color." Ecological racism occurs when victims of environmental damage are of different ethnicity from those causing the damage (Potter, 2010). These authors (Potter, 2010; Bullard & Johnson, 2000) had noted in their studies of the United States rural communities that environmental racism does not only affect "people of color" but extends to low-income communities because these groups have the least resources to fight such pollution (Sherman, 2016). Using this analysis, Shell is a multinational organization with various operations all over the world. Its practices in Ogoni land may be discriminatory given the high poverty level of the residents and the exploitation of its resources.

Social movements fighting for environmental protection led to the concept of environmental justice which extends to the fair treatment of people's rights in the environment regardless of age, race, or social status (the United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2017). There are economic benefits to be derived from an ecosystem (Baskin, 1997) before environmental incidents such as oil spills. These include agriculture, wildlife, tourism, fishing, subsistence living, etc. Oil spills have affected a lot of lives negatively, including both the companies and the victimized communities. The plague of pollution has destroyed the ecosystem of many communities like Ogoni. However, as stated earlier, the compensation is not enough, as destroyed neighborhoods cannot be placed back in the position they were before the environmental

contamination. Creating a safe environment from contamination and pollution is crucial. While it is true that oil and gas activities present a high risk of dangers, effective policies governing exigent circumstances must be adopted.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

The publicity from Ogoni's execution succeeded in keeping the world informed about the atrocities (military killing of civil activists) in that community. This work examined issues that led to the breakdown of law and order in Ogoni and the subsequent execution of nine leaders who were involved in the fight for environmental justice in their community. Using Durkheim's anomie theory and Bourdieu's concepts of "field," "habitus," and "doxa," this work analyzed the Ogoni execution in a criminological context. Importantly, the political framework of the Nigerian government and Shell's corporate social responsibility were considered using Durkheim and Bourdieu's theories. This work sought to create awareness of the issues of environmental contamination in the Ogoni community, Nigeria, and to advocate preventive measures in ecological contamination situations. Like Lentz and Felleman (2003) presented, the international community in implementing policies has focused on a reactive approach to oil spills. Responsive strategies are only adopted after the oil spill has done its damages to the population and ecosystem. Thus, there is a critical need for the adoption of a proactive approach, that is, "prevention of spills – not mitigation of damage once a spill occurs" (Lentz & Felleman, 2003).

Compensation is often the result of oil spills and pollution. Nonetheless, compensation is not adequate to make up for the harm done to the environment because benefits from oil spills are short-lived. It is our concerted dictum that the preservation of the ecosystem is a better policy direction for governments and communities in respective oil

generating economies and environments. If towns, such as Ogoni, are preserved, they will flourish economically, and corporations will produce with maximum efficiency without disruptions.

Thus, since oil and gas activities are conducted on a large scale worldwide, this article recommends that the international body establish a uniform law review process into oil spill investigations. The action of the international community is vital because oil spill issues cut across national waters and boundaries, thereby, making this problem a global concern. Once laws are in place as to how oil spill investigations should be conducted, the severity of punishment for breaches outlined, parties would be more cautious in leading oil and gas activities. The involvement of the international body in this issue will ensure the protection of the human rights of affected communities of pollution.

Additionally, for complicated cases (unpreventable cases), huge sanctions should be enacted to deter the likelihood of reoccurrence. Sanctions could involve loss of license to conduct oil and gas exploration activities or criminal liabilities in negligent cases. Severe deterrent measures like these would enable organizations to employ extreme care in their businesses and operations. These actions articulated above will ensure compliance in the industry and protect disadvantaged communities like Ogoni who are victims of environmental contamination. Subsequently, once laws are in place for breaches of oil spills, parties would be more cautious in conducting oil and gas activities.

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THE IMPUNITY OF FULANI HERDSMEN: AN EMERGING TERRORIST GROUP IN THE NIGERIAN HOMELAND

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Abstract

Nigeria, the most populous African nation, has witnessed a new wave of violent attacks. Some of these attacks emanate from the Boko haram terrorist group on Nigerian citizens and violent clashes between nomadic Fulani herdsmen and other citizens. These terrorist acts started predominantly in Northern Nigeria, wreaking havoc in states such as Benue, Jos, and Kaduna, with thousands of lost lives. In recent years, this violence seems to progress toward other parts of the country. The proposed Federal government grazing or cattle colony laws seemingly back these developments. Still, they have met resistance from different parts of the country that have witnessed this communal violence, raising some criminological concerns. This paper

reviews the prevalent factors that might lead to homegrown violent extremism, like the unrelenting deadly clashes between the Fulani herdsmen and their neighbors. This paper is the first to apply Pierre Bourdieu's "*Doxa*" and is primarily guided by Emile Durkheim's Anomie, which deals with a condition where individuals cannot find their place in society without clear rules to help guide them. Changing conditions as life adjustment lead to dissatisfaction, conflict, and deviance. It also explains violent disputes like the cases of the marauding herdsmen resulting in the loss of countless lives and properties in Nigeria. Finally, the paper will also provide some historical analysis of terrorism and elaborate on various definitions while reviewing these conflicts' economic, religious, political, and social impacts while proffering some solutions.

Keywords: Anomie, boko haram, doxa, extremism, herdsmen, religion, terrorism.

Introduction

The word terrorism is perhaps one of the most controversial words that often create thought-provoking research no matter where it is discussed (Ronczkowski, 2018). Terrorism constitutes an extreme form of aggression. The perpetrators use violence or threats to strike fear and intimidate citizens and the government into pursuing their religious, political, or ideological goals. Nigeria, the most populous African nation, has witnessed recurring forms of violence from diverse groups not limited to the Boko Haram terrorist group in the northeastern part of the country. In recent times, multiple communities have also witnessed violence from nomadic Fulani herdsmen, leading to the loss of lives and properties. These coordinated attacks that have left many communities desolate have continued in the face of multiple

security agencies that have not been able to deter these homegrown acts of violence.

Bello (2013) stated that the Fulani indisputably represent a significant component of the Nigerian economy. They constitute the principal breeders of cattle, the primary source of meat, and the most available and cheap source of animal proteins consumed by Nigerians. With their dominance in the Sahel region, the Fulani are the best-known and most numerous pastoral groups in Nigeria. According to Odoh and Chigozie (2012), the cattle-based pastoralism of the Fulani has been one of Nigeria's most significant focuses of deadly conflicts. For an extended period, the Fulani were constrained to the edge of the desert. During the twentieth century, Fulani herders began to migrate through and settle in whole zones previously inaccessible to pastoralists, bringing them into contact with previously unknown peoples, cultures, and production systems. The consequences were a raft of untested interactions between all parties and considerable space for misunderstandings and conflict. Unfortunately, these violent conflicts are often viewed through scarce resources like pastoral land for cattle grazing. While reviewing the Fulani herdsmen's security threat, Ajibefun (2018) stated that Nigeria is under a severe internal and security threat. The threat has political, economic, and environmental dimensions. Each of these dimensions has critically affected the nation's stability and can be traced to many factors in which the Fulani herdsmen appear significant. The most problematic in the current development is the pillaging, raping, killing, and kidnapping by the socalled Fulani herdsmen. Stories are found in the national dailies of how these shepherds strategically attack several communities and houses with sophisticated assault rifles. This paper seeks to provide some historical analysis of terrorism, focusing on the Nigerian security situation. The paper further illustrates various definitions of terrorism while reviewing these conflicts' economic, religious, political, and

social impacts from a criminological perspective with anticipated policy implications.

Terrorist: Meaning and Historical Background

According to Southers (2013, p. 13), *Homegrown Violent Extremism* (HVE) is a path through a complex and changing social and psychological landscape unique to every individual. There are no HVE checklists that can decide or identify someone during the radicalization process and determine whether they will turn violent. Most Fulani herdsmen often venture into local farmlands with the pretense of redirecting their straying cattle. Their response is often violent when met with any form of reproach for damaged crops. Many communities have experienced several losses of lives from these violent responses with little or no protection from the Nigerian government or security agencies. This radicalization process with prospective recruits (Boko Haram, Fulani herdsmen, or any terrorist group) often begins with a perceptive situation or experience that yields a personal grievance, making someone more inclined to accept an extremist ideology. The origin of the ideology is irrelevant in determining homegrown versus international terrorism; what matters is where it is embraced (Southers, 2013).

So, what is terrorism, and how do we handle it? What information should we gather, and how do we analyze it? What are we looking for (even at a formative stage like the Fulani herdsmen), and why are crime analysts investigating terrorism? (Ronczkowski, 2018). These are some of the questions surrounding the issue of terrorism. Three of the more commonly cited definitions of terrorism come from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), United States (U.S.) Department of State, and United States Department of Defense. According to the FBI, terrorism is the unlawful use of force and

violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof in furtherance of political or social objectives (United States Code of Federal Regulations). The United States Department of State defines terrorism as an activity directed against persons involving violent acts or acts dangerous to human life, which would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States, and is intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or to affect the conduct of a government by assassination or kidnapping (Ronczkowski, 2018). The second definition by the Department of Defense states that terrorism is the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to inculcate fear, intended to coerce or intimidate government or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological (Ronczkowski, 2018). The Fulani herdsmen tick all the definition boxes to be termed a terrorist group as a nexus of Boko Haram. Terrorism is about one thing: psychology. It is the psychology of fear (Phillip Zimbardo, cited in Bongar, 2007, p. 3). As Onwudiwe (2001) stated, nothing justifies the fog of terror that claims innocent lives.

It is essential to know the history behind the evolution of terrorism, which should provide insight into the growth of the term terrorism and how it became a modern-day obsession (Ronczkowski, 2018). The French are credited with coining the term terrorism. It originated in revolutionary France in the late 1700s period, known as the Reign of Terror, and it has its roots in the Enlightenment period of the eighteenth century. Reign of Terror was the name given to the bloody violence imposed on French citizens by their revolutionary leader, Maximilien Robespierre. The term changed by the mid-1800s to describe violent revolutionaries who revolted against governments. And in the early 1900s, the term was used in the United States to describe labor organizations and anarchists. According to

Ronczkowski (2018), after World War II, the term terrorism changed to be associated with nationalist groups revolting against European domination. In the 1940s-1950s, France and England were the hardest hit since they both had colonial settlements on various continents, especially in Africa. The French suffered greatly from terrorist attacks in Africa against colonialism in Algeria by the National Liberation Front (NLF), while the Mau Mau targeted the English colonies in Kenya. Also, in the 1940s, the State of Israel was formed in the Middle East. The replacement of the Ottoman by the British as governing colonial force over Palestine and Jews in Palestine became known as the Balfour Declaration of 1917, where the Jews were promised a home in Palestine (Ronczkowski, 2018, p. 20).

The unfulfilled promises by the British made the Jews turn to urban terrorism and established the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization) to remove the British. These terrorist activities continued until 1948 when Israel was recognized as a nation but did not end the conflicts in the Middle East for Israel. Notably, this is seen with the rise of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), which continued to fight against non-Arabs in the region. The Middle East conflict has not diminished, giving rise to left-wing groups that have brought a new meaning to terrorism. History also demonstrates that the Sicarii were tagged as a radical Jewish Zealot terrorist group that fought against the Roman Empire (66-70 A.D.) and employed various attacks using daggers on presumed enemies in broad daylight. Their targets were mainly Greek residents in Judea, Roman leaders, and moderate Jews suspected as Roman allies. Sicarii zealots had one goal: eliminating Roman control with the belief that this would create the way for the coming of their Messiah (Onwudiwe, 2007). The revelation from history also shows that nationalist movements or nationalism began a cause for latter-day terrorist converts, especially between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This period of

terrorism was described as one in which nationalists advocated for nationhood for citizens under colonial rule, using every means possible, including terrorist acts, to achieve their goals (Onwudiwe, 2001). In his description of terrorism, Onwudiwe (2007) alluded that criminology has not yet fully embraced historical issues like colonialism, imperialism, and neocolonialism as systems of economic, political, social, and cultural domination. These were fundamental issues in criminology's quest to provide explanations for terrorism and to articulate essential countermeasures against it. Terrorism, once characterized by changes in how intellectuals approached social issues and class-based revolutions like the Russian Revolution, is sure of one thing; the meaning and style employed by terrorist groups or terrorism have changed with society over time (Ronczkowski, 2018).

Today, terrorism is associated with large groups such as Hezbollah, Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, the Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL), and the Islamic State (I.S.). The last two are commonly known as ISIS by the media and many in public. And these groups can independently operate from any state with members who are violent religious extremists (Ronczkowski, 2018). The public might be blindsided by the emergence of a mirror group of Boko Haram, known as the Fulani herdsmen, who have carried out violent killings in the North and parts of the North Middle-Belt regions of Nigeria. They (herdsmen) have created a climate of fear or intimidation through their violent acts, encouraged by the inaction of the Nigerian government or any state or national security agencies. Gradually, communities are witnessing stranger elements alien (in the form of armed herdsmen). These herdsmen constantly encroach on their farmlands (Ajibefun, 2018) and demand protection fees from indigenous landowners, subject to becoming slaves in their own ancestral homes. At the same time, security forces supposed to protect their fellow citizens' properties and lives seem overwhelmed by the incessant attacks. If not

proactively monitored and curbed, these red flags, the emergence of the Fulani herdsmen, might lead to another calamity worse than Boko Haram's atrocities.

Review of Literature

This paper builds on and contributes to discussions on terrorist groups and African security, focusing on the most populous African nation (Nigeria). Although studies on African security have examined acts perpetuated by various terrorist groups like Al- Shabaab, Boko Haram, ISIL Libya, and the Lord's Resistance Army, there has not been extensive qualitative research on the Fulani herdsmen. They are fast becoming an emerging terrorist group operating from the North Eastern region of Nigeria and spreading rapidly to other parts of the country, even across the West African region. This study provides additional insight into the homegrown violent extremist acts of the Fulani herdsmen. This paper is essential because it will enable criminologists to be fully aware of emerging terrorist groups and help them research these issues further.

According to Onwudiwe (2007), scholars and social thinkers have awakened to focus on the issue of terrorism, especially after the 9/11twin tower attacks, because terrorism can no longer escape criminological inquiry. Depending on the mandate or cliché in vogue about who is or is not a terrorist, the actions of these (Fulani herdsmen) groups may be categorized under the domain of terrorism, revolutionary conduct, or freedom fighters. According to Orehek and Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis (2014), the incidence of terrorism continues to rise, as do the technological advances that facilitate attracting the attention and emotional impact terrorists seek. Therefore, it is pertinent to note that the Nigerian government faces a significant challenge as they respond responsibly to these acts of terrorism.

Nigerian policymakers must understand the sources of terrorism without being a-historical. Historical facts about terrorism are essential if there is any hope of countering the modern, brutal nature of terrorism (Onwudiwe, Tsado, Ejiogu, McGee-Cobbs, & Okoye, 2016). This problematic nature has cavorted in communal conflicts that the Fulani herdsmen engage in, with massive collateral damages.

According to Nte (2016), the violent incursion by the Fulani herdsmen is the second most significant security challenge confronting Nigeria. Much of the violent and heavy casualty communal conflicts triggered by Fulani herdsmen have been centered on Nigeria's Middle-Belt areas, specifically in Benue state. The state has experienced devastating communal clashes that have claimed several lives (with victims including women and children) and properties in the first half of 2014, sacking more than 100 communities with thousands of refugees in Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) camps located in other states like Makurdi. The herdsmen's combat readiness and complexity give them the courage to attack host communities, destroy cash crops and food crops, and the ability to confront and even attack constituted authorities that are protected with state-of-the-art military convoys (Nte, 2016, p. 27). The destruction of farmland by herds of cattle guarded by Fulani herdsmen, especially in Benue state, has significantly impacted the socio-economic livelihood of residents. Scholars have argued that the government has not adequately addressed these destructive incidents at the federal, state, and local levels (Marietu & Olarewaju, 2009). A salient thread in most related literature reveals the ineptness on the part of some government officials. This laxity creates room for conspiratorial theories of an Islamization plan in Nigeria, giving the impression that the security agencies do not adequately check these acts of terrorism. In that case, Nigerian society might just be experiencing the emergence of a group that might surpass the atrocities of Boko Haram. This terrorist group has bedeviled Nigerian socio-economic space. According to Orehek

and Vazeou-Nieuwenhuis (2014), raising terror awareness programs and, at the same time, increasing citizen vigilance of potential threats could foil attempted attacks. The awareness and vigilance might be the psychological effect terrorist groups desire since one of their goals involves striking fear into the hearts of potential victims.

Political actions surrounding the underpinnings of Fulani herdsmen include a National Grazing Bill sponsored by Senator Zainab Kure to establish a grazing reserve of lands owned by Nigerian citizens for Herdsmen to rear their cattle (Vanguard, 2016). The Nigerian government's endorsement strengthened this through the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Chief Audu Ogbeh, for the creation of cattle colonies (Vanguard, 2018). The cattle colonies will consist of a cumulative donation of lands by the Nigerian States for use by the herdsmen to feed livestock. The rationale behind this was to dissuade the violent takeover of agricultural lands of Nigerian citizens by Fulani herdsmen (Premium Times, 2018).

The creation of cattle colonies was met with great disdain and rejection from the Nigerian populace and community leaders. A crucial concern for the reluctance of cattle grazing laws is the deprivation of citizens of their lands (Okeke, 2014). The surrender of individual or communal lands to herdsmen raises the controversial question of whether a takeover is equivalent to colonization. This takeover situation implores whether history is about to repeat itself, as evidenced by the colonization of Nigeria by the British.

Application of Pierre Bourdieu's *Doxa* to Killings by Fulani Herdsmen

A proper understanding of the killings by the Fulani herdsmen originates back to Nigeria's colonialism and the ethnic patriotism of

different tribes. Great Britain colonized Nigeria. Subsequently, in 1914, the British "amalgamated northern and southern Nigeria into a centralized control under the Hausa-Fulani aristocracy" (Okonofua, 2013, p. 3). Nevertheless**,** Nigeria attained independence from Great Britain in 1960. It was not fully equipped and economically prepared to govern itself, thus resulting in the various ethnic clashes experienced by the current-day Fulani herdsmen killings. Postindependence has not been better either due to snail pace of infrastructural development that is stunting the growth of other sectors of the Nigerian economy. Thus, it has been stated that Africa remains economically, politically, and culturally dependent on the West (Okonofua, 2013). This reliance on external sustenance from the West establishes a gap in the Nigerian economy that needs to be addressed.

The idea of ethnicity also plays an essential role in building societies. That is, people hold a strong affinity to their ethnic groups. This is evident in Fulani herdsmen's various killings of other citizens to provide grazing ground for their cattle. Research has shown that the clash of the current-day Fulani herdsmen can be traced to the Fulani Islamic Jihad of the 19th Century fought by the Fulani in Northern Nigeria (Onwubiko, 1972). This ethnic patriotism bond is so strong that it would make people resort to the worst form of violence, including killing to protect their territory, as seen in the killings by Fulani herdsmen.

Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1990) advocated that society consisted of spaces as explained in the principle of "field" and that the concept of "habitus" directed how those fields are controlled and ought to act in the social world order. Each field is a playing ground with certain acceptable social norms and positions determined by a few players, such as individuals, institutions, or groups. Any person coming into that field must play by its rules. The application of Bourdieu's analogy

to Nigerian society is exhibited in how the political structure and power have constantly revolved around the Hausa-Fulani aristocracy. This field has become the playing ground, and the Nigerian people have not been groomed to handle any change not akin to its once familiar structure. In this regard, the concept of *Doxa* becomes essential. Bourdieu (1984, p. 471) explained *doxa* as an "adherence of order" wherein the perception of the social world order is not mechanical. Thus, *Doxa* is regarded as the fundamental rules of a particular field, essential rules from the few controlling a state (Bourdieu, 1999). The field occupied in Nigerian politics knows one rule: a continuation of leadership as it has been from the past generation, not considering societal changes and development. This power tussle is attributable to the familiarity of how these groups (Boko Haram and Fulani herdsmen) expect society to be governed based on past forms of leadership. While a strict reliance on Doxa may not be wrong, as globalization overtakes world economies, nations are expected to advance at a similar speed to ensure maximum growth of their gross domestic product. It is no wonder that Tilly (1977) likened the actions of Boko Haram to a "revolutionary situation" that made these groups and their political sponsors resort to conflict as a necessary tool to retain power in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The continuous attacks by the Fulani herdsmen on various Nigerian communities could be explained using several criminological theories. However, this paper adopts the anomie theory because of its strong connection with the atrocities caused by Fulani herdsmen. Thus, the theoretical framework for this study is Emile Durkheim's theory of anomie. Williams and McShane (2014) stated that anomie is a concept closely associated with two theorists, Emile Durkheim and Robert Merton. They claimed that Durkheim's theoretical framework referred

to anomie as the breakdown of social norms and conditions in which those norms no longer control societal members' activity. They saw it as a term that describes a state of deregulation within a society. In this situation, rules define how people should behave toward each other's breakdowns, creating an environment of normlessness where people no longer know what to expect. And when society becomes deregulated, it often leads to deviant societal behavior that creates an atmosphere of chaos. Williams and McShane further asserted that Merton's theoretical perspective on anomie theory was a theory of deviance where one conceives a society that emphasizes wellstructured goals for its citizens and places strenuously structured avenues to reach those goals.

Durkheim's theory of anomie was used to explain crime and varieties of deviant behaviors. In his view, Walsh (2000) states that anomic conditions serve as releasers of criminal behavior, which occurs at a lower threshold for some individuals than others. Durkheim (1951, p. 1086) rightly pointed this out when he stated that there could not be a society where individuals do not deviate to some extent from the collective type. Thus, it is inevitable that among these deviations, some will assume a criminal character. In suicide, Durkheim (1951), in his writing, was very unambiguous when he stated that man's insatiable appetite for resources (wealth, status, prestige) underlies crime and criminality. Thus, advocating that it is the moral norms of any society that function to hold this egoistic pursuit of self-interest in check through its laws.

Tibbetts and Hemmens (2009) asserted that Durkheim's theoretical framework was a vital influence on several other criminal justice theories like Robert Merton's strain theory which saw anomie as representing too much focus on the goals of wealth at the expense of conventional means. In contrast, Durkheim believed that anomie was

primarily caused by society's transitioning too fast to maintain regulatory control over its citizens. The incessant Nigerian herdsmen kidnapping and killings experience speak volumes to these theoretical postulations and the Nigerian government's stance towards controlling crime within society.

Methods (Data and Method)

A case study research (qualitative) method was used for this paper. Researcher Robert K. Yin (1984, 2014) states that a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context; when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are unclear, it also involves multiple sources of evidence. This case may be a concrete entity, such as an individual, a small group, an organization, or a partnership. This case study approach also emphasized reported cases of conflict and violent attacks by the Fulani herdsmen, leading to several losses of lives in Nigeria's Northeastern and Middle Belt areas.

Discussion

Many scholars are beginning to characterize terrorist acts in Africa as endemic. According to Bell (1975), endemic terrorism in Africa is rooted in the colonial partition of territories, negatively dividing tribes, families, and various ethnic groups for capitalist ventures. Others believe defining terrorism in Africa is difficult, especially when comparing it to other parts of the world (Onwudiwe, 2001). Bell's definition of Africa's experience with terrorism amalgamating the division of Africa and the wrecking of her economic resources can be used as research to understand the historical and contemporary forms of terrorism within the African continent (Onwudiwe, 2016, p. 15 cited in Izarali, Masakure, & Shizha, 2016).

The paper reviewed articles and literature on terrorism focusing on the African continent. The intention was to highlight terrorist acts committed by the Fulani herdsmen, which have spread beyond the Nigerian borders. The paper also gathered data and reports from originating independent non-government agencies to remove elements of bias or cover-up on government security agencies. Statistically, the relevant government agencies in Nigeria do not have the exact figures relating to the number of lives and properties that have been destroyed and lost from the actions of the Fulani herdsmen. Setting up an internally displaced person's camp (IDP) around the country reveals thousands of people internally displaced in their own country without an ongoing civil war. In several instances where government security agencies promise to act, the killing has continued unabated, with the rest of the world watching in silence. The world (especially security agencies worldwide) needs to pay closer attention to the Fulani herdsmen's criminality as they might transition from being homegrown violent extremists into full-blown terrorist groups.

According to Southers (2013), recognizing that there are always aberrations, homegrown violent extremism is often driven by vengeance or altruism. Fulani herdsmen, strongly viewed as a nexus of the Boko Haram terrorist group, place more value on their livestock than human lives. These powerful forces, armed bandits, or terrorist forces fit within the context of extremist ideology to propel individuals or groups into violent action (Southers, 2013, p. 7).

Directions for Future Study

In-depth interview methods should be adopted in future studies to fully identify the causes of conflict between the Fulani herdsmen and their neighbors. Also, studies should examine the intervention and responses put in place by government and non-governmental agencies

to curb homegrown violent extremism. Data (quantitative) collected should be analyzed to narrow down or eradicate biases and reveal implications of incessant violent acts to proffer sustainable resources to aid conflict resolution that would enhance the economic resuscitation of all affected communities. The quantitative data collected will help to understand the why, how, and what might be the reason behind the behavioral acts of the herdsmen.

Policy Implications

According to O'Connor (2009), terrorists' modes of operation are conceived in three pivotal phases: research, planning, and execution; these phases can be frustrated through early detection, discovery and observation. The community must be involved in these counter-attack collaborations for intelligence gathering and building trust between local security agencies and communities (Onwudiwe, Tsado, Ejiogu, McGee-Cobbs & Okoye, 2016). The inability to sustain grazing areas or zones (vegetal resources) for the herdsmen and their livestock, especially in the Northern region of Nigeria, has led to these frequent invasions of farmlands. The result is the destruction of agriculture (the mainstay of most communities). This has created economic difficulty, whose ripple effect has also impacted the financial lifestyle of other citizens in the Nigerian market space. The first thing would be establishing ranching zones in the Northern parts of the country for the Fulani herdsmen to resolve this. Secondly, community policing should be established and encouraged. A replica of the British mosaic model where security agencies encourage community engagement towards eradicating potential recruits should be reworked to fit the uniqueness of the Nigerian situation. This form of community-based strategy is referred to as mosaic engagement (Southers, 2013). Thirdly, infrastructural development that would create jobs for the many unemployed youths, especially in areas devastated by the Fulani

herdsmen killings, which are viewed as breeding grounds for the vulnerable populations, must be explored (Orehek & VazeousNieuwenhuis, 2014). Lastly, religious tolerance should be advocated by every tribe, region, state, and religious leaders sanctioned when they encourage intolerance through their teachings. The Nigerian government must take castigatory measures to deter others from committing these terrorist acts.

From a criminological perspective, the following policy implication, when followed efficiently, would help reduce the ability of Fulani herders to turn into a full-blown terrorist group like Boko haram.

Conclusion

It is essential to affirm that this paper, due to limited information, may not have identified all the issues related to acts of terrorism by Fulani herdsmen (a nexus of Boko Haram) as an emerging terrorist group in Nigeria. Similarly, no simple solution can end these acts of violence perpetrated by the Fulani herdsmen. But it is critical to emphasize that this paper's anticipated policy implication would prevent the issues that led to the 1967-1970 Nigerian civil war. If not adhered to, a situation would make the Rwanda/Somali crisis look like child's play. More importantly, a counter-terrorism multi-disciplinary force (made up of the military, police, and community leaders) should be established against these ongoing terrorist attacks by the Fulani herdsmen.

This paper proposes that Nigeria needs to re-educate itself on managing its resources peacefully amongst the different ethnic groups to succeed. This goal should focus on altruism and the benefit of the common good of society as advocated in the mechanical society structure (Durkheim, 1893). It will serve as a deviation from the

regularly operated *Doxa* of ethnic patriotism, whose focus is not on upholding a mechanical state of nature. This re-education project would require a collective effort from the government and Nigeria's citizens. To the current generation, it starts with education and promoting such values of altruism. It should be taught at the onset of their socialization process from family and society to the upcoming generation.

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