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Editor's Note

In this volume of our peer-reviewed *Journal of Living Together*, we provide a collection of articles that reflect various aspects of peace studies. The contributions from across the disciplines and grounded by relevant philosophical traditions and theoretical and methodological approaches systematically broach topics dealing with symbolic sectarianism, ethnoreligious and transgenerational conflicts, intercommunal violence, metaphorical awareness, soul-force, wish-actualization, gender and sustainable development, conflict mediation, culture and conflict resolution, identity politics, terrorism and intra-faith dialogue, law enforcement, and religious fundamentalism. Also significant is that a positive or broader conceptualization of peace is embraced; in a world of positive peace, not only is war absent, but human rights are also promoted.

The coverage in this volume reminds me of one of the stories my former Dean of the School for Summer and Continuing Education and Professor of English at Georgetown University, Dr. Michael J. Collins, used to tell in his messages in the summer course catalogues. The one on Brian Friel's play titled *Wonderful Tennessee* is so fitting to this volume of our journal that it behooves me to retell it here verbatim as follows:

> In Brian Friel's recent play, *Wonderful Tennessee*, two men stand on a beach in Ireland and look at the Atlantic Ocean to an island where, in the middle ages, the monks of Saint Conall had a monastery. One of them suggests that "to spend their lives out there in the Atlantic," the monks as he puts it, "must have been on something." (Collins 1998, p. ii)

Collins adds:

> His friend replies, "And even if they were in touch, even if they actually did see, they couldn't have told us, could they, unless they had the speech of angels? Because there is no vocabulary for the experience. Because language stands baffled before all that and says of what it has attempted to say, 'No, no! That's not at it at all!' No, not at all! Or maybe they did write it all down—without benefit of words! That's the only way it could be written, isn't it? A book without words!" (Colline 1998, p. ii)

Collins concludes:

> The absolute answers we seek forever elude us, the book we would most hope to read has no words, and for all that we learn and know, we must finally move through our lives doing the best we can, without final answers, relying on the words and images, the metaphors that from time to time offer a glimpse of what we most desire to know…[We must therefore] offer men and women the opportunity to recapture the joy of learning, in so doing, continue their lifelong search for answers. (Collins 1998, p. ii)

To effectively respond to this desideratum so very well-enunciated by Collins, we encourage future submissions to take into consideration my following humble maxim: Seeing is natural, looking spontaneous, and noticing can be incidental to both. Paying attention must be voluntary, examining requires attention, and analysis demands sustained attention. While earlier peace scholars set standards, we must extend insights to problems they did not discuss. The extent to which we can agree, disagree, or be puzzled by any contemporary work on peace should be a measure of its achievement.

I also must end with the note that the views expressed in the contributions are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the journal or the International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation (ICERM). Contributors can consult this volume for the journal's style or send a request to the ICERM at the following URL: <https://www.icermediation.org/contact/>. The journal will appear annually. Its frequency of appearance will increase as it becomes necessary. I pray that you will find what appears in these pages not only intellectually stimulating but also useful for promoting peace in the world. I look forward to your feedback and contributions.

Reference

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In Peace Always
Abdul Karim Bangura
Editor-in-Chief

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Islamic Identity Conflict: The Symbiotic Sectarianism of Sunni and Shia as Seen through Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

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Abstract

The divide between Sunni and Shia Muslims is rooted in divergent opinions about the succession of Islamic leadership, how some parts of the Qur'an are to be interpreted, and different understandings of how to be a Muslim. These differences are magnified in a long-standing and intense struggle among nations and ethnic groups for political power in the Middle East and beyond. Although most Muslims reject sectarianism, some have debased Sunni and Shia identities to justify their pursuit of power and influence. This article employs four of Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions to better understand the social and political aspects of the sectarian divide between Sunni and Shia Muslims: (1) exclusion in an inclusive culture; (2) uncertainty avoidance; (3) short-term orientation; and (4) power distance.

Keywords: Islam, Sunni, Shia, sectarian, identity, Middle East, cultural dimensions, Hofstede

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Introduction

Despite regular news reports that suggest the contrary, Sunni and Shia Muslims have lived together in the Middle East for many centuries (Pew, 2012; Pew, 2013). Although religious differences exist between them, Sunnis and Shias maintain core beliefs in Islam, perform similar prayers, live side by side, and some intermarry (Council on Foreign Relations, 2014). Sadly, Sunni and Shia identity has become increasingly politicized over the last few decades (Trofimov, 2015). Differences between them are magnified with rhetoric, destruction, and violence aimed less at theology and more at political and territorial rewards for the countries they inhabit, the ethnicities they represent, and the histories they remember (Trofimov, 2015).

Sectarianism highlights religious differences between Sunni and Shia in order to create an enemy, an evil "other" (Black, 2015), which works well to divide people, recruit fighters, and attract resources (Council on Foreign Relations, 2014). Attacking one's religion and sanctity generates a reaction more powerful than asking people to "fight for [mere] regional or international influence" (Trofimov, 2015). As George Bernard Shaw (1922) observed, "Man . . . will fight for an idea like a hero. He may be abject as a citizen; but he is dangerous as a fanatic" (p. 111). The sectarian divide between Sunni-Shia Islam is a fanatical struggle for social identity and political power.

This paper will compare and contrast a number of Sunni and Shia cultural attributes in order to understand why and how Islamic sectarianism persists. The analysis focuses on sectarianism in the Middle East, primarily between Iran and Saudi Arabia, and Persians and Arabs, to highlight the roles that nationality and ethnicity play in the dynamic. Featured throughout this article is the work of Geert Hofstede, who analyzed employee personnel survey data when he was employed by IBM and wrote a popular book entitled *Culture's Consequences* (Hofstede, 2001). Hofstede is considered a pioneer in the field of cross-cultural understanding (Lewis, 2006). He developed a paradigm, or cultural dimensions, through which one can understand and distinguish world cultures (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 29-32). This paper will analyze Sunni-Shia sectarianism through the four dimensions developed by Hofstede: group inclusion, uncertainty avoidance, temporal orientation, and power distance.

Basic Differences Between Sunni and Shia

The split between Sunni and Shia Muslims started when the Prophet Muhammad died in 632 A.D. and disagreements developed over who should lead the faith (National Public Radio, 2007). This disagreement has deeply and irrevocably divided Muslims (Madelung, 1997, p.1). Some wanted to choose a new leader by consensus, but others wanted to limit leadership to the Prophet's descendants (Harney, 2016). The advocates for consensus prevailed, elevating Abu Bakr, a trusted aid to the Prophet Muhammad, but not without objection from the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law Ali and his supporters (Madelung, 1997, p. 43). After Bakr's two successors were killed – an unfortunate early sign of violence - Ali eventually became caliph, or successor and the first imam for Shias (BBC News, 2016). But by then, Islam deepened its internal division with an early civil war (Madelung, 1997, p. 135).

Ali was assassinated, as were Ali's sons, Hassan and Hussein (Hilal, 2012). Hassan is thought to have been poisoned, perhaps by the caliph of the Umayyad dynasty (BBC News, 2016). Hussein and a number of his relatives were executed in Karbala, Iraq, in 680 when he refused to pledge allegiance

to Yazid, son of Muawiya, a Umayyad caliph (Battle of Karbala). Hussein's death became an important religious and political event to Shia Muslims, since they believe Ali should have been the first to succeed the Prophet, with either or both his sons, Hassan and Hussein, following thereafter (Harney, 2016). Others, who believe Bakr and his two successors are the true adherents to the Prophet's tradition, became the Sunnis (Harney, 2016). More than 85 percent of the world's Muslims are Sunni and comprise majority populations in Middle-Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt (BBC News, 2016).

Theologically speaking, Sunni and Shia agree on many aspects of the Islamic faith. Both have a wide spectrum of believers from liberal to conservative, secular to fundamentalist (Harney, 2016). Both believe in one God, Allah, whose final Prophet is Muhammad, and whose final book is the Qur'an (Council on Foreign Relations, 2014). Most Shia believe in a line of 12 Imams (spiritual successors or leaders) connecting back to Ali (Harney, 2016). The Imams are afforded an amount of "spiritual significance" that may blur the line between human and divine, sin and salvation (National Public Radio, 2007).

The succession rift has led to theological and legal differences within Islam. For instance, Sunni and Shia disagree over which source of authority to consult when the Qur'an is unclear (Council on Foreign Relations, 2014). Legitimate interpretative and practice differences exist between competing legal schools of Islamic thought (Crow & Mousssavi, 2005, p.31). The split between Sunni and Shia has endured and intensified because it is a struggle for political power not just between Sunni and Shia, but between Arabs and Persians, and superpowers such as the United States and Russia over influence in the region and the world (National Public Radio, 2007). The cultural attributes of Sunni and Shia presented in this paper are analyzed against this wider political power-struggle.

Exclusion in a Collective Culture

Cultures that value group affiliation define themselves by excluding "outsiders from the circle" (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 98). Collective roots run deep in the Middle East region (Hofstede, et al., 2010, pp. 94-95). Since the early developments of Islam, Muslims have fought themselves in the pursuit of "purity and truth" in the name of the Qur'an and the succession of the Prophet Muhammad (Marechal and Zemni, 2013, p. 227). Those who betray the faith, or the tribe, are "apostates" (a popular term in the sectarian arsenal (Council on Foreign Relations, 2014)), and are worse than outsiders (Rubin, 2014). But political divisions produce the sectarian divisions (Marechal and Zemni, 2013, p. 227). Although sectarians may focus on a name, residence location, or how one prays, etc., the rhetoric aims for political manipulation (Cholov, 2015).

For centuries, Sunni and Shia have tolerated each other's differences without resorting to violence (Pew, 2012). The "confessional identity" of Arabs and individual Muslims was a private concern (Black, 2015). Tolerance and acceptance of ethnic and religious outsiders allowed Arabs to see themselves as part of a larger homogeneous collection (Black, 2015), although opinions vary as to whether Arab countries can be treated as one unit (Obeidat et al., 2012, pp. 512-522). Ironically, according to Hofstede's findings on group orientation, only individuals (i.e., those at the in-group "negative pole") tolerate and respect everyone, including outsiders (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 98). Those at the "positive pole" of in-group identification, who try to appeal to strong in-group preference through sectarianism are themselves outsiders of Islam's mainstream (Kirdar, 2011). Forces that divide Sunni and Shia do not act for all

Sunni or Shia (Cole, 2015). What religious orators proclaim is not what the "flock" believes (Sen, 2006, p. 77). Sunni and Shia are often grouped into Arab and Persian ethnic bands, respectively. As Arabs, Sunnis often distrust (in some cases despise) Shias on account of their Persian ethnicity (Luomi, 2008, p. 10, 17). Iran, a Persian country that is mostly Shia, does not identify with Arab culture (Lewis, 2006, p. 396). Since Iraq is the only Arab state with majority Shia population, and now that Sunni leader Saddam Hussein is out of power, Iraqi Shias look to Iran to support their efforts to lead the country, while Iraqi Sunnis get support from Saudi Arabia to regain control (Lewis, 2006, p. 425).

As the sectarian divisions deepen and intensify, the distinctions between Arab-Persian, even Sunni-Shia narrow, splinter and swell in number. Numerous divisions exist within ethnic and sectarian groups in Iraq, for example (Blaydes and Crenshaw, 2015). Before its civil war, Syria was home to diverse ethnic and religious groups (Polk, 2013). Now, the fighting in Syria has grown to include so many "mutually hostile" groups that prospects for a negotiated solution or military victory seem next to impossible (Polk, 2013; al-Assisl, 2017).

A Shia revival – the rising power of Iran, the prominence of Shia politicians in Iraq, and other Shia responses to Sunni scrutiny of Shia political pursuits - is one rationale posited for the increase in sectarianism (Haddad, 2013, p. 2; Vali, 2007). According to this view, sectarian rhetoric is employed to contain Iranian political objectives (Luomi, 2008, p. 28). According to Marechal and Zemni (2013), however, this explanation does not account for long periods of relatively peaceful cohabitation and interaction between Sunni and Shia (pp. 226-227). Instead of Shias reacting to Sunni opposition, perhaps, as Marechal and Zemni (2013) state, the tension is "between a dream of unity and the reality of internal divisions" where a complex, historical narrative denotes different understandings of how to be a Muslim. (pp. 226-227).

Anxieties and Opportunities in Uncertainty

Cultures are fashioned, in part, to create the illusion that events and outcomes can be controlled (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 188-198). Laws are created, in part, to inject stability and predictability in human affairs. Religion relieves anxieties about unknowable outcomes in this life and beyond (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 188-198).

The Middle East is a region of high uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 193-194). When it comes to ideas and religion, high uncertainty avoidance cultures are likely to "harbor extremist minorities," have "more native terrorists," believe in "only one truth," exert lethal penalties against those they deem wrong, and maintain intolerant political ideologies (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 221, 227, 229). As Hofstede points out, within Islam there is a "visible conflict between more and less uncertainty-avoiding factions" where both sides can be "dogmatic, intolerant, fanatical, and fundamentalist" (2010, p. 229).

The arch-rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran is a good example of Sunni – Shia conflict in the context of a region of high uncertainty avoidance. The two countries share a history of hostilities and accusations of supporting extremists (BBC News, 2016). Iran is more tolerant of uncertainty than Saudi Arabia (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 193-194). With its revolution still fairly fresh, Iran sees a measure of opportunity in instability and expresses less anxiety about unknown future events (Black, 2015). Saudi

Arabia, which is more conservative, prefers the status quo (Terrill, 2011, p. ix.). This reinforces Iran's reputation as an aggressor who meddles in the region, stoking Saudi suspicion and fear about what it will do next (BBC News, 2016).

Saudi Arabia and Iran are involved in many, if not most of the regions' conflicts (Sen, 2006, p. 72). No less than six different Arab countries are "proxy battlefields" for the Iranian-Saudi conflict, including battles in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, and elsewhere (Khouri, 2016). As long as Iranian Shias and Saudi Sunnis harbor deep mistrust of each other as they compete for political influence, the region will remain unstable. The use of religion as a political weapon may delude extremists on both sides into thinking that they are avoiding uncertainty but, ironically, they are creating it.

Short-Term Orientation

When the past is highly valued, attention is diverted from the future. Short-term orientation is evident when traditions become "sacrosanct" and important events occur now or in the past (Hofstede, 2011, p. 15). According to Hofstede (2010), Sunni and Shia both place great value on tradition (p. 270). As explained earlier, Sunni and Shia identity came into being centuries ago as each one claimed it was more pure and true than the other. Moral foundations such as authority/respect and purity/sanctity generally support religious beliefs but fundamentalists and sectarians twist Islam's mandates for "purity" to fit their own purposes (Graham and Haidt, 2010, p. 144).

Intense short-term orientation supports a fundamentalist perspective and justifies acts of terrorism and violence as it places the future "in the hands of God" (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 275-276). When Sunni-Shia or Islamic identity is attacked, it can radicalize the person who has a short-term fixation, perhaps due to humiliation and poor economic prospects (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 269-270). Thus, access to power and resources is a key factor that can deescalate radicalization and terrorism-related violence.

Power Distance: Might Makes Right

Hofstede (2010) defines power distance as the degree to which less powerful members of society "expect and accept" power to be "distributed unequally" (p. 61). He defines this dimension from the perspective of the less powerful because leaders need followers; authority needs obedience (Hofstede, 2010, pp. 61-62). High power distance societies tend to value authority, tradition, religion, and military force where "might makes right" (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 77). Leaders are expected to look as powerful as possible; political opinions and parties, if allowed, are extreme and disputes turn violent (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 77). Societal change usually comes through revolution, and new leaders revert back to the same violent governing tactics practiced by their authoritarian predecessors. Paradoxically, citizens of high power distance societies find some security in the arrangement (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 77).

Saudi Arabia is a high power distance country and Sunnis tend to experience greater high power distance than Shia (Hofstede et al., 2010, pp. 57-58). Saudi Arabia is a monarchy and a strict Islamic state (Aftandilian, 2015, p. 22). As for Shia power distance, Iranian democracy reduces power distance to some degree despite ultimate authority residing in an unelected supreme leader, the ayatollah (Fisher, 2013). Iran experiences cycles of high and low power distance. The Iranian Revolution in 1979 was a low

power distance backlash against the Shah's totalitarian rule, followed by a high power distance struggle with Iraq and clerics who had assumed control (Wood, 2011, pp. 405, 408). Low power distance returned after the war with Iraq when public opposition to authoritative clerics led to the election of moderate President Khatami who warmed relations with Sunnis in Saudi Arabia and others followed by high power distance when conservative President Ahmadinejad "crushed" a 2009 movement protesting his "re-election" (BBC News, 2016). Low power distance returned again when voters gave current President Hassan Rouhani a decisive victory for a second term (Dehghan, 2017). For Rouhani, democracy is not a "gift" from the west; rather it is heritage to Ali, "who became caliph only when people showed him support" (Dehghan, 2017). Uncertainty over succession of Ayatollah Khamenei is also a factor that contributes to the variability of power distance in Iran (Dehghan, 2017).

For Middle Eastern Sunni and Shia, power distance is a cultural dimension that can extend far beyond localized or regionalized conflict. The ever-present forces of Iran and Saudi Arabia and their global allies, including the United States and Russia, are sources of power distances in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere (Aftandilian, 2015, p. 10). Efforts to control oil and gas resources in Iran and Iraq have escalated power distance (and uncertainty avoidance) to global levels. Large Shia populations reside in oil rich zones located in strategically important Persian Gulf coastal areas where access by sea is critical (Luomi, 2008, p. 27). All other oil resources in the Persian Gulf region are controlled by Arab governments that are allied with the United States (Luomi, 2008, p. 27). Understandably, some Muslims do not trust the United States (Rashid, 2012). Perhaps this issue – power distance and uncertainty over oil – is the central driver of conflict between Sunni and Shia as "economic uncertainty and humiliation" trigger an intense level of sectarian destruction (Kirdar, 2011, p. 7).

Whether Power Sharing Can Reduce Sectarianism and Violence

Power-sharing among Sunni and Shia seems to be a direct, obvious, and reasonable response to sectarian violence. In theory, power-sharing agreements intend to provide warring groups representation in government (Lavinder, 2016). Adjustments to the economic interests of Sunni and Shia could have the beneficial effect of shortening power distances and balancing power. Aftandilian (2015) suggests sharing national power with some Sunnis or at least "an equitable share of national wealth from oil revenues, to address . . . concerns about living under a Shia-dominated regime" (pp. 41-42).

The primary problem, in this author's opinion, is leverage. Often, there is no compelling interest that will motivate a tribe or governing authority to share power or resources. In Syria, for example, UN member states could not agree on preconditions to the negotiation and its objective – regime-change or a power-sharing arrangement (Mancini & Vericat, 2016, pp. 8-9). Syrian opposition forces were not strong enough to force the Assad regime to make concessions (Mancini & Vericat, 2016, p. 10). No one represented the Syrian citizens, so humanitarian appeals were ignored (Mancini & Vericat, 2016, p. 10).

Had UN mediators focused their efforts on making deals at the local level, the result may have been different (Mancini & Vericat, 2016, pp. 10, 16). Tribes and militias tend to be opportunistic and entrepreneurial, and therefore, their loyalties can be manipulated. State functions such as crime prevention, "economic development, and infrastructure maintenance" can be, and sometimes are transferred to "community-based militias" (Rosiny, 2013). If some degree of normalcy and predictability can be established within smaller communities to improve everyday quality-of-life, while empowering local

tribes that are organized under a federal or territorially-based governmental structure, perhaps a measure of security can take hold so that radical views would not find fertile ground. For example, following the first Gulf War with Iraq, Saddam Hussein granted wider autonomy to Sunni clerics in exchange for fewer challenges to his regime (Kirdar, 2011, pp. 12-13). The Shia-led government in Iraq must find a way to include the Kurdistan Regional Government and Iraq's Arab Sunnis in an equitable, long-range power-sharing agreement to prevent further instability and sectarian violence (Alaaldin, 2017).

In this author's opinion, effective power-sharing initiatives must be sensitive to historical narratives and encompass all interests fairly. To be durable, power-sharing agreements have to transcend preferential treatment that governing authorities give to allies (Blaydes & Crenshaw, 2015). Governments need to form inclusively as in Kuwait, where Sunni – Shia "polarization" does not exist to the same degree compared to kingdoms born from conquest such as Bahrain and Saudi Arabia (Louer, 2012).

Conclusion

A strong, symbiotic interrelationship exists between Sunnis and Shias. Both sides have developed deep attachments to the identity they find in comparing themselves to each other. Cultural forces such as security within groups, controlling the future, and access to resources can be strong and influential in the struggle for legitimacy and meaning for Muslims and people of all religious and ethnic identities. Unfortunately, in the midst of the struggle, appeals to our baser instincts are common and motivational.

By sowing seeds of sectarian divide and religious hate, destabilization grows faster and larger than anticipated (Polk, 2013). The territorial and political aims behind sectarianism are diverted into never ending cycles of tit-for-tat violence that extend the historical memory of all concerned and inhibit the creation of a secure and prosperous future.

Moderate Muslims are making their voices heard in Western countries, Europe, and Indonesia (Muslim Reform Movement). Among other things, moderate Muslims renounce violence, support human rights and the separation of Mosque and state. A world-wide publicity campaign makes the case for original "in-group" and that radical Islam is not Islam (Boston Globe, 2015).

Even though most Muslims reject extremism and violence from the wider Islamic culture, the opposite perception persists among many Westerners and non-Muslims. Whether negative stereotypes can change on a regional or global level may depend on future generations who are raised to value moderation and peace. When enough Muslims develop the will to change, sectarianism will no longer be relevant. As Irish politician David Trimble observes: "The dark shadow we seem to see in the distance is not really a mountain ahead, but the shadow of a mountain behind – a shadow from the past thrown forward into our future. It is the dark sludge of historical sectarianism. We can leave it behind us if we wish" (as cited in Shakdam, 2015).

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A Historical Diagnosis of Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: Toward a Model for Peaceful Coexistence

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Abstract

Ethno-religious conflicts have remained a permanent feature in the socio-political landscape of Nigeria from colonial times to date. These ethno-religious conflicts have, over time, posed insurmountable national security challenges and have constantly threatened the corporeality of the Nigerian state. This worrisome situation has, no doubt, elicited some fundamental questions in contemporary times. One of such questions is: *What can be done to achieve peaceful coexistence and ethno-religious harmony in contemporary Nigeria?* It is in an attempt to answer this question that this paper undertakes a historical diagnosis of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. This will then enhance an adequate appreciation of the dynamics of ethnic and religious factors that have, more often than not, dimensioned the nature of interactions between the relevant groups in Nigeria. A proper understanding of these dynamics is expected to extenuate ethno-religious disharmony and inspire a workable model for harmonious coexistence among the ethno-religious divides in the country. The methodology is interdisciplinary and analytical. It uses both the primary and secondary sources of data to interrogate the forces that exacerbate the mechanics of ethno-religious factional wrangles in the country. Evidently, colonial factors, resource competition, socio-political dynamics, among other things, are identified as key elements in Nigeria's ethno-religious conflicts. It is discovered that various efforts have been made to address ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria, and that these efforts have often resulted in quick remedies without tangible and long-lasting effects. In the main, such remedies have usually lacked the basic analytical basis needed for addressing an all-time social phenomenon like ethno-religious conflict. This paper, therefore, recommends that mere palliatives should give way for more practical, realistic and long-lasting remedies – remedies that are scientific and holistic in content and context.

Keywords: ethnicity, religion, conflicts, colonialism, resource competition, political dynamics

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ICERM International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation

Introduction

The search for peace and, by extension, peaceful coexistence has remained one of the main tasks of humanity at all levels since human beings began to commune and coexist. The Treaty of Westphalia (1648), the Congress of Vienna (1814-15), the League of Nations (1918-1939) and the emergence of the United Nations from the debris of World War II since 1945 are some of the major historical landmarks that adequately illustrate the elaborate efforts and consciousness of humanity towards the attainment of lasting peace and peaceful coexistence. Despite these concerted efforts, the quest for peace and peaceful coexistence among individuals, groups, states and nations has remained only a potential aspect of human expectations. Several factors that bother on conflict of ideology and contestation over territorialities have served to explain the general lack of sustainable peace at both the continental and global milieus. While this assumption enjoys some level of general applicability in explaining the conflict phenomenon and general disharmony among human societies, it is also important to note that there are environment-specific and context-specific issues that stand out in explaining the inhibition of peace and peaceful coexistence in particular societies. Thus, there are some historical and socio-cultural peculiarities that are prevalent in driving the forces that inhibit peace and peaceful coexistence in distinctively peculiar environments and contexts.

For us in Africa, the stark reality that readily explains the continent's developmental disabilities, abject poverty and lack of harmony among the various ethnic groups that make up the continent derives from colonialism. For instance, in an elaborate disquisition on the multilevel challenge for Africa, W. Maathai (2009, pp. 25-47) describes the complex leadership problematic of the continent as a legacy of woes – the colonial legacy theory. It is from this theoretical perspective that the prevalence of conflicts in post-colonial Africa is placed on the doorsteps of colonialism. While this theoretical assumption subsists in some conversational quarters, the substance of its argument does not sound quite convincing in modern academic discourses, even though it is difficult to divorce the past from the present. But the fact that the demise of colonialism after several decades has not taken Africa to the threshold of peaceful coexistence and sustainable growth and development readily provokes the need for a continuous historical interrogation of the conflict trajectories and peculiarities of the continent. To be able to establish an intellectually manageable domain for the purpose of interrogating Africa's experience in the context of conflict trajectories and the polemics of peaceful coexistence on the continent, the Nigerian experience is deliberately singled out in this discourse as our main unit of analysis.

With an estimated population figure of 185,887,930 (NDP, 2017), Nigeria is, incontestably, the most populous nation in Africa. This population figure is distributed among the nation's 371 ethnic groups (Vanguard, May 10, 2017) with their different languages and cultural affiliations. The differentials in the size, ethnic composition and cultural affiliation of the numerous ethnic groups readily present the fertile grounds for fierce competition over scarce resources and political gains. The resultant effects of this reality constantly manifest conflicts and readily inhibit peaceful coexistence between and among the people of the country.

A number of interlaced factors account for Nigeria's conflict problematic. Factors that derive from politics, economy, chieftaincy matters, resource control, and marginalization, among others, have severally prompted major disagreements between groups in the country that, more often than not, lead to violent clashes. Out of this litany of factors, ethnicity and religion have arguably remained the most potent

triggers and drivers of recurrent conflicts in the country. This is the assumption that has prompted this conversational engagement. The task here is to understand the connection between ethnicity and religion in Nigeria's conflict problematic; to understand the consequences of ethnic and religious conflicts for peaceful coexistence in Nigeria; and to attempt a pontification for peaceful coexistence among the ethnic and religious divides of the country.

Ethno-Religious Conflicts: A Conceptual Architecture

The analytical thrust of this work hinges on the tripartite conceptual architecture of ethnicity, religion and conflicts. To that extent, these three concepts are, first and foremost, given their separate explanations to enable a proper understanding of their distinct conceptual properties. Thus, the task in this section dwells on the definitional and analytical explication of these concepts – ethnicity, religion and conflicts. It is from the separate explanations of the three distinct concepts that the logic of their nexus is convincingly established.

There is always the general tendency for using the concepts of ethnicity and tribalism interchangeably. Yet, there is a thin distinction between the two, which arises from the dynamics of a global social order – the dynamics of social history. For instance, tribalism has been fondly used by Eurocentric scholars with reference to backwardness of sub-groups in African societies (Orngu, 2014, p. 324). Again, it has been argued that the concept of tribalism was popularized by colonial anthropologists who sought to interpret pre-colonial and later colonial African politics (Orngu, 2014, p. 323). Subsequently, as Nnoli (1978, p. 1) suggests, the concept became gradually internalized by Africans themselves to the extent that they began to see the changing nature of their societies as predominantly a function of tribalism. Curiously, tribalism has persistently remained visible in explaining and understanding the divisive nature of modern African societies, especially when it serves as a motivator in the pursuit of separatist agendas among pluralist groups. But, in the main, tribalism can be interpreted as a social phenomenon that functions in similar ways as ethnicity.

Ethnicity derives from the Greek word 'tribe' (Onwuejeogwu, n.d., p. 1). Thus, both the etymological and epistemological interpretations of ethnicity and tribalism clearly suggest a profound conceptual similarity. Arguing further, Onwuejeogwu notes that an

> … Ethnic group is defined as a section of population, which by virtue of sharing a common cultural characteristic separate them from others within that population.

In the words of Nnoli (1978, p. 5), ethnicity is described as

> … a social phenomenon associated with interactions among members of different ethnic groups. Ethnic groups are social formations distinguished by the communal character of their boundaries. The relevant communal factor may be language, culture, or both. In Africa, language has been the most crucial variable.

From the above, it is clear that both tribalism and ethnicity are social phenomena that define the communal and cultural boundaries of groups within a defined geopolitical context. We shift our attention to the concept of 'religion' to enable us to establish the nexus in the compound elements of ethno-religion.

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Simplistically, a religion is a belief system and practice relating to a designated divine sanction that unites its adherents. The idea of religion is believed to have received its modern shape in the 17th century from when the concept – religion – was invented in the English language as an abstraction that entails distinct sets of beliefs or doctrines. It was during the 17th century that the usage of the concept began following the splitting of Christendom during the Protestant Revolution alongside the globalization of the exploration age that facilitated contact with a variety of cultures that were alien to European traditions (Harrison, 1990; Harrison, 2015).

'Religion' has continuously engaged the conceptual concern of scholars beyond mere linguistic expressions. This reality throws up the temptation to conclude that the concept has no final definition. However, Antoine Vergotte (1996), a renowned Theologian, provides the vent for a clearer understanding of what religion entails when he emphasizes its cultural reality. Strengthening his argument on the cultural dimension to the understanding of religion, Vergotte (1996) insists that:

> Almost every known culture has a depth dimension in cultural experiences … toward some sort of ultimacy and transcendence that will provide norms and power for the rest of life. When more or less distinct patterns of behavior are built around this depth dimension in culture, this structure constitutes religion in its historically recognizable form. Religion is the organization of life around the depth dimensions of experience – varied in form, completeness, and clarity in accordance with the environing culture.

What comes out clearly from the above is that religion is inextricably related to culture in the same way that ethnicity and culture have a great measure of interlacing relationship. Clearly, therefore, ethnicity and religion are the two sides of culture.

A conflict situation derives from a contestation over values and goals, or a clash of interest. It manifests in many forms and assumes different dimensions depending on a multiplicity of factors, which may include the character of the parties involved and the nature of the contestable values or goals at stake. Put differently, a conflict is a conscious act that involves personal or group contestation over scarce resources with the occurrence of incompatible activities particularly in complex societies (M. Deutsch, 1973, p. 156; O. Otite, 1999, p. 1). The fact that individuals or groups are bound to interact and contest over values in the context of conflicting interests sufficiently explains the inevitability of conflicts in human societies. Ethno-religious conflicts will, therefore, mean the contestation over values or the clash of interest that assumes a combination of both the ethnic and religious elements. In this way, both ethnic and religious elements take a central stage in determining the nature and character of ethno-religious conflict, and the parties involved in the conflict situation. The dimension of an ethno-religious conflict is, therefore, influenced by the manipulation of the ethnic and religious variables and defined by cultural affinity.

Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: A Geo-Historical Foundation

Nigeria's ethno-religious configuration is defined by the geopolitical composition of the country. In the northern part of the country, where the Hausa/Fulani constitute the dominant population, Islam is the most practiced religion. In the southern part of the country, the population of the Christian faithful arguably outweighs the population of the Muslims. This claim is made with reference to a 2001 report

from the World Factbook by CIA that about 50% of Nigeria's population is Muslim, 40% Christians, while 10% are adherents of African Traditional Religions. Therefore, apart from the adherents of the two orthodox religions, there is a significant population across the country that adheres to several African Traditional Religions. This scenario makes Nigeria a country of complex religious composition.

A geo-historical analysis of the ethno-religious scenario of Nigeria must take cognizance of the fact that the two orthodox religions – Christianity and Islam – penetrated the country from two geographical axes. Islam was introduced into the country through the northern axis during the 14th century by Fulani missionaries from Mali. Christianity, on the other hand, was first introduced in the country through the southern axis by the Portuguese Christian missionaries in the 15th century. This historical reality accounts for the dominance of Islam in the northern part of the country in the same way that Christianity is dominant in the southern part of the country.

The history of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria can be traced back to the pre-colonial period, specifically during the early years of the 19th century when Usman Dan Fodio campaigned to conquer and forcefully convert all 'pagans' into Islam and to further the expansion of the Sokoto Caliphate. Precisely, in 1804, Usman Dan Fodio, the leader of the 19th century Jihads in northern Nigeria, began the campaign to establish the emirate system over the expansive area that later became known as Nigeria. By 1805, Mallam Yakubu Bauche, a former student of Usman Dan Fodio, had successfully established the Bauchi emirate system in his domain through an elaborate Jihad movement that conquered and brought various villages and ethnic groups under Islam.

Although it was in the 14th century that Fulani missionaries from Mali commenced the serious Islamization of the northern part of pre-colonial Nigeria, it was the 19th century Jihad movement that firmly established the gigantic Sokoto caliphate. This development soon transformed the larger part of pre-colonial northern Nigeria into a theocratic socio-political system that was governed by Islamic law during the 19th century.

As noted earlier, previous efforts had been made to establish Christianity in pre-colonial Nigeria beginning from the 15th century. However, it may be argued that the Christianization efforts in pre-colonial Nigeria during the latter part of the 19th century partly assumed the consciousness to counter the influence of Islam in the areas that had been largely Islamized. This notion readily comes to the fore when one considers the following statement by Rotberg (1970) credited to Gerhard Rohlfs, a German explorer to the Benue Plateau in 1886:

> May one of the Christian powers, using these advantages offered by nature, take possession of the Bauchi Plateau and colonize it with settlers from Europe under the protection of arms! Here in the territory of Hausa and Bolo Negroes, a great majority of whom are still pagans, and who despise the rule of Mohammedan Fulanis, a strong barrier should be established against the continued spread of Islam. Islam fills its confessors with heartless contempt of the infidel heathen, with fanatical hatred of Christians. It is Islam which causes the outrageous man-hunts among the Negroes; it is Islam which makes it difficult for European travelers to penetrate into the interior. (p. 194)

Perhaps, Ayandele (1980) adds current to the validity of this notion when he states that by wishing the triumph of Christianity over Islam and by wishing for the death of Islam, the European explorers inadvertently prepared the way for Christianity to assume the status of a counter-religion to Islam in

pre-colonial Nigeria (See p. 370). Thus, the Christian Missionaries arrived pre-colonial Nigeria with a pre-conceived mission to entrench Christian values throughout the area including the highly Islamized Sokoto Caliphate; and to dislodge all other forms of African Traditional Religious practices and replace Islam. Between 1842 and 1892, eight Christian missions had established their presence in a sizeable part of pre-colonial southern Nigeria (Ayandele, 1966; Orngu, 2014, p. 75).

The problem of religious dichotomy in Nigeria can be traced back to the nature of colonial policy on religion in the country. For instance, there was an official colonial policy that barred the Christian missionaries from penetrating the emirates in the north (Ubah, 1988, p. 108). Similarly, there was the resistance to the Jihad movement by some sections of the central and southern Nigeria and the outright rejection of Christianity in some parts of the country, especially in some parts of the northern and central regions. This reality clearly indicated some level of religious rivalry, which began to manifest clearly in the nature and character of inter-group relations in the country soon after its creation through the final phase of amalgamation in 1914. Thus, the persistence of religious dichotomy, along with its interlaced variable of ethnicity, has remained central to the fragile unity of Nigeria since its amalgamation as a corporate geopolitical entity. This prevalent scenario plays out most fiercely in the political socialization process with profound implications for the corporeality of modern Nigeria. For instance, the country's political leadership structure has, more often than not, flowed from this ethno-religious factor within the framework of geo-strategic calculation.

A chronology of leadership succession in Nigeria from 1967 to the Present

S/N	Duration	Head of State/President	Section of the Country/Religion	Deputy/Vice	Section of the Country/Religion
1.	1967-1975	Yakubu Gowon	North/Christian	David Ejoor	South/Christian
2.	1975-1976	M. Mohammed	North/Muslim	O. Obasanjo	South/Christian
3.	1976-1979	Olusegun Obasanjo	South/Christian	S. Yar'Adua	North/Muslim
4.	1979-1983	Shehu Shagari	North/Muslim	A. Ekwueme	South/Christian
5.	1983-1985	Muhammadu Buhari	North/Muslim	T. Idiagbon	South/Muslim
6.	1985-1993	Ibrahim Babangida	North/Muslim	Ukiwe/Aikhomu	South/Christian
7.	1993-1998	Sani Abacha	North/Muslim	O. Diya	South/Christian
8.	1998-1999	Abdulsalami Abubakar	North/Muslim	M. Akhigbe	South/Christian
9.	1999-2007	Olusegun Obasanjo	South/Christian	Atiku	North/Muslim
10.	2007-2010	U. M. Yar'Adua	North/Muslim	J. Goodluck	South/Christian
11.	2010-2015	Jonathan Goodluck	South/Christian	Sambo	North/Muslim
12.	2015-Date	M. Buhari	North/Muslim	Osinbajo	South/Christian

The above table graphically illustrates the persistence of the ethno-religious factor in the structure of political leadership in Nigeria. Thus, given the centrality of politics in the authoritative allocation of values, it is apparent that ethnicity and religion are the key denominators in the gamut of Nigeria's geopolitics.

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Sources and Causes of Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Contemporary Nigeria

Generally, the most conspicuous source and cause of conflict in human societies is injustice. The manifestation of injustice assumes various forms and dimensions and can be readily deciphered in the realms of political marginalization, inequality in resource allocation and the absence of fairness and equity in the dispensation of social justice. However, in the context-specific experience of contemporary Nigeria, factors like colonialism, ethnic nationalism/patriotism, religious intolerance, and the nature of the country's political economy readily account for ethno-religious conflicts. As will be seen in the course of this discussion, ethnicity and religion provide the platform for and serve as instruments of manipulation for the articulation of group interests in the course of fierce contestation over scarce resources and other divergent goals. Let us take a closer look at the factors that cause and exacerbate ethno-religious conflicts in contemporary Nigeria.

The first is the factor of colonialism. Some scholars have argued that colonialism, which thrived on the principle of divide-and-rule, has had lasting implications for inter-group relations in contemporary Nigeria (Afigbo, 1987; Ballard, 1972; Okpeh, Jr., 2006; Olaniyi, 2006; Mamdani, 1996). For instance, as Filaba (2006, p. 425) argues, the British agents were very careful in the selection of groups – the Jihadists and emirate rulers with large network of commerce and trade interest in European good – with whom they collaborated during the period between the 1820s and 1890s. Similarly, during the establishment of colonial rule in the Keffi, Nasarawa and Suleja areas, the British gave preference to Muslims in their interaction with the people (Filaba, 2006, p. 425). Reinforcing the notion of divide-and-rule during colonialism in Nigeria, Olaniyi (2006) insists that British rule was premised on the logic of dualism, stereotyping and conscious fragmentation of the colonized (See p. 387). The emphasis of this dualism was on the ethnic and religious dichotomization of the colonized. Mamdani (1996) gives credence to this line of argument when he notes that the colonial state was an extremely bifurcated institution with a highly decentralized despotism in the context of dual citizenship. This fact was clearly illustrated during the colonial period where Yoruba migrants who had a commercial history in Kano dating back to the 15th century, were treated by the British as strangers in the area (Olaniyi, 2006, p. 387). Clearly, as Goshit (2006) further argues, the colonial rulers adopted policies that divided the colonized along racial, ethnic and religious lines (See p. 471). The implication is that the British colonizers were not necessarily committed to inventing conscious measures to integrate the colonized into a united geopolitical entity.

In buttressing the colonial factor as a major source and cause of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria, reference can be made to a situation where in the northern parts of Nigeria, separate quarters as well as residential areas were set aside for Muslims and Christians by the colonial administrators. In the 1940s and 1950s, the non-Muslim migrants into the northern parts of the country were denied residency in the main Muslim cities and were provided settlement lands where satellite non-Muslim towns known as Sabongari (stranger towns) were developed. This dichotomized settlement pattern that was premised on ethnic and religious segregation actually created a sense of resentment among the adherents of the two orthodox religions and further gravitated to the indigene/settler phenomenon in the northern part of Nigeria – a phenomenon that has persistently taken different forms and dimensions with cumulative and grievous consequences for the country's unity and internal security.

The second is the factor of ethnic patriotism, which is encouraged by the undisguised allegiance to ethnic loyalty. Ethnic consciousness that arises from the colonial legacy of divide-and-rule has remained

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an important variable that characterizes inter-group relations in contemporary Nigeria. Joseph (1999) argues that:

> Ethnicity remains a vital social force for several reasons: the borders and cultural content of ethnic groups can be fluid or rigid according to the circumstances; it is an emotionally satisfying mode of self- and group-assertion; and its salience increases rather than being "over-ridden" by division according to social class during the struggle for survival and material advantage in the modern sectors of the [Nigerian] society and economy. (p.48)

Himmelstrand (1969) alludes to the above when he concisely submits that ethnicity in Nigeria is mainly political and that it stems not only from primordial ethnic loyalties but also from politically exploited and reinforced reactions to contemporary African societies (See p. 81). But it is important to understand that the nature of ethnic phenomenon in Nigeria is not merely as a result of the agglomeration of disparate linguistic and cultural groups (Nnoli, 1980, p. 97). During the colonial times, the phenomenon of rural-urban migration created the room for socio-economic competition in the midst of scarcity in colonial urban settings. As a response to this socio-economic competition, ethnicity emerged during the 1920s as a platform for the pursuit of group interests. The resultant effect of this reality began to manifest kinship and communal associations in Nigeria's urban settings such as Ngwa Clan Union, Owerri Divisional Union, Calabar Improvement League, Ebira Progressive Union, and Urhobo Renascent Convention, among several others (Nnoli, 1980, p. 97). These platforms were established to serve as bastions of hope for members in the wake of severe scarcity, social inequalities and socio-economic insecurity that was occasioned by the great economic depressions of the 1920s and 1930s. The communal character of these platforms has sustained their relevance over time in prosecuting the narrow interests of their members above the larger goal of pursuing the agenda of national unity and integration in Nigeria. It is the desperation to sustain this ethnic loyalty for the promise that it holds for ethnic loyalists in a pluralistic and multicultural Nigerian state that strengthens the relevance of ethnicity and xenophobic disposition in contemporary Nigeria – the result of which is recurrent ethno-religious conflicts.

The third is the factor of religious intolerance. In most cases, it is feared that religion readily generates the proclivity for inter-group conflicts in human societies (Orngu, 2014, see p. 127). Although Seul (1999) has argued that not all expressions of religious identity can lead to conflict (See p. 553), it is feared that Nigeria's experience has proved otherwise. This is because, a religious group that is confronted with social and material difficulties is likely to resort to the promotion of group cohesion and the mobilization of members towards improved material conditions. In the course of promoting group cohesion and mobilizing members for self-seeking goals, the possibility of conflicts cannot be easily wished away. This is exactly the picture of religion that the Nigerian situation portrays. So, religion serves, first and foremost, as a source of security and functions as a source of insecurity (Droogers, 2010, p. 148).

The coexistence of Christianity and Islam in Nigeria presents an irreconcilable scenario of dialectical dualism that arises out of the outright rejection of polytheism. Thus, while the campaign of Islam in the country consistently canvasses theocracy, Christianity has continued to advance the advocacy for secularism. This places contemporary Nigeria on a precarious pendulum as the state continues to grapple with the futile efforts of reconciling the contending perspectives and worldviews

of the two orthodox religions – Christianity and Islam. But more worrisome is the fact that the two orthodox religions are split along micro-sectional lines with both Christianity and Islam all constantly trying to create their own agreed political platforms as substitutes for an ever-elusive theology of unity (Ibrahim, 1991). The religious consciousness of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Nigeria in the 1960s, the growing influence of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs on the worldview of Muslims in Nigeria during the period, and the subsequent creation of the Christian Association of Nigeria in 1976 serve to illustrate the extent to which the micro-units of the two orthodox religions came to serve as political platforms and rallying points for the pursuit of sectional goals. But in the main, religion serves as an instrument of manipulation for amplifying and instigating differences in ethno-religious contexts as a wider strategy for political power acquisition and for facilitating the pecuniary benefits of groups engaged in the process of power brokerage in Nigeria (Orngu, 2014, see p. 132). This is exactly the situation that has engendered the phenomenon of religious fundamentalism in Nigeria with its concomitant implications for the corporeality of contemporary Nigeria.

The fourth is the nature of Nigeria's political economy. In this context, political economy concerns are viewed from the perspective of livelihood analysis, which takes into account the totality of the socio-political and economic relationships and processes within a society. This provides a clearer picture for understanding the extent to which political and socio-economic issues affect inter-group relations within Nigeria's heterogeneous milieu and its intertwined conflict phenomenon that readily arises from fierce competition over political gains and scarce resources. Understandably, the dynamics of political and economic relations among groups in a socio-political environment that is marked by profound political problems and economic inequalities tend to gravitate towards conflicts. The centrality of the state in the creation and distribution of national wealth and in the dispensation of political patronage affords a vivid illustration of an overpowering *statism*, which monopolizes the political and economic levers of the state. The inability of the Nigerian state to accommodate the various groups that make up the country on equal terms in the distribution of national wealth and in the dispensation of political patronage has always created resentments and feelings of marginalization among the excluded. This situation is prone to conflict and those groups that feel excluded have always resorted to the manipulation of ethnicity and religion as instruments for confronting what they contextualize as injustice. A closer look at some of the ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria such as the age-long ethno-religious conflicts in Kano (particularly the Reinhard Boonke crisis of 1991); Tafawa Balewa Crisis (1995); and the Mango-Bokkos conflicts on the Plateau in the 1990s, among others, reveals the deployment of ethnicity and religion by groups in pursuit of self-determination.

Consequences of Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Contemporary Nigeria

Conflicts, in whatever shape and dimension, are ready-made threats to peace and peaceful coexistence. The frequent occurrences of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria have had serious consequences that cut across a broad spectrum of the country's socio-political and economic terrains. Threat to national security, destruction of lives and property, negative impact on social cohesion and national integration and disarticulated development agenda are the most conspicuous consequences of ethno-religious conflicts in contemporary Nigeria.

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Ethno-religious conflicts are fundamental to the national security problematic of contemporary Nigeria. Their frequency has, over time, threatened the territorial integrity of the Nigerian state. The threat arises from the orchestrated porosity of the country's domestic environment that originates from internal crises – ethno-religious conflicts. The point is that any nation that is confronted with internal crises is potentially vulnerable to the break-down of law and order, which in turn threatens its national security. The Nigerian state has suffered instances of threatened national security arising from ethno-religious conflicts and their concomitant break-down of law and order. The resultant effects of this reality, as experience of the 1991 ethno-religious conflict of Kano has shown, is that local and foreign investment profile of the country is adversely affected.

Another consequence of ethno-religious conflicts in contemporary Nigeria derives from horrendous threats to and destructions of lives and property. This unfortunate reality has constantly heightened tension and dissipated the personal security of citizens of the country, through the imposition of perpetual fear and feeling of insecurity. Those who were affected during the ethno-religious conflicts in Kano abandoned their means of livelihood and relocated to other parts of the country for safety. Okechukwu Madu, who was a trader in Kano prior to the outbreak of the 1991 ethno-religious conflicts, was compelled to abandon his trade and flee to the central part of the country for safety. The Kano crises witnessed a high-profile exodus of domestic diasporas population. Again, several lives and property have been engulfed in ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria with severe manifestations in demographic and infrastructural deficits. Goodluck Okwente, who had lived in Kano for over twenty years, lost two of his family members and property to the Akaluka incident during the 1994 ethno-religious conflicts in Kano. Similarly, Oguta Okefe, a resident of Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi State, experienced severe losses in both human and material terms during the 1995 Tafawa Balewa crisis.

Furthermore, ethno-religious conflicts have aggravated the lack of social cohesion and national integration in contemporary Nigeria. The polarization of the Nigerian citizenry along ethnic and religious sympathies is a function of ethno-religious hostilities in the country. This has inadvertently intensified divisive tendencies that, more often than not, tend to undermine social cohesion, unity of purpose and national integration among a sizeable population of the country.

Again, ethno-religious conflicts have exacerbated Nigeria's social problems such as vulnerability of women and children to social insecurity arising from refugee crises, threat to child education, health crises, and the general lack of access to quality life. This painful reality adequately explains, in part, the apparent frustration of the Nigerian state in its efforts to effectively cater for the educational and health needs of the girl child in the country. Finally, conflicts are generally averse to development. The frequency of ethno-religious conflicts in contemporary Nigeria translates to a rowdy atmosphere that inhibits the country's development efforts.

Towards a Model for Peaceful Coexistence

Undeniably, there are destructive and divisive elements that are hemmed in ethno-religious conflicts in contemporary Nigeria. Given this reality, it is proper to advance some workable remedies that can check the prevalence of ethno-religious conflicts and hopefully diminish their destructive and divisive elements so that peaceful and harmonious coexistence can be tenable in the country. The following tips will, therefore, serve as models for engendering a harmonious and peaceful coexistence among Nigerians.

First and foremost, it is injustice that brings about conflict. Once injustice is checked in the country, there will be no conflicts of such horrendous magnitudes as accentuated by ethno-religious disharmony. The Nigerian state is, therefore, required to strengthen its institutions for speedy dispensation of justice at all times. Once the institutional mechanism for justice administration and dispensation is strengthened and re-oriented in the direction of speedy and unbiased justice delivery, the citizenry will have an undiluted confidence in the system and an assured sense of belongingness and protection within the country.

Again, there is the need for the Nigerian state to practically institutionalize the secularist principle beyond mere theoretical postulations and political sloganeering. The framework of the secularist principle is already in existence in the country; but has always been heatedly contested by the proponents of theocracy who have consistently canvassed the Sharia law system in some parts of the country. This has whittled down the supremacy and superiority of the Nigerian Constitution and the effects of this irreconcilable dualism are antithetical to the quest for peaceful coexistence in contemporary Nigeria. There is, therefore, the need to irrevocably emphasize the absolute adherence to the secularist principle in the country.

Next is the need to emphasize national unity and denounce ethnic patriotism in Nigeria. Since religion is essentially tied to ethnicity in Nigeria, as experience shows, it is possible that the denouncement of ethnic patriotism will evaporate the emotions and passions with which ethno-religious contestations are pursued. The pursuit of national unity will then generate the spirit of nationalistic patriotism and create the atmosphere of solidarity over and above ethno-religious affiliations. This is a sure way to attaining peaceful coexistence in contemporary Nigeria.

Again, economic and political reforms are required to address the nagging issues of political marginalization and fierce competition over scarce resources. This is achievable through transparency and accountability in governance, eradication of nepotism and corruption, development of critical infrastructure and the encouragement of industrialization through the enhancement of the country's rich indigenous knowledge systems.

Finally, and very importantly, there is a need for a continuous inter-religious dialogue and harmony between Christians and Muslims to reconcile their goals through a working relationship between the leaders of the two religions. Equally, a constant dialogue between youths of the two religions will galvanize a proper appreciation of their contending goals, which will ultimately lead to a harmonizing position on critical issues of vital interest at stake.

Conclusion

Ethno-religious conflicts in contemporary Nigeria are traced to the advent of the two orthodox regions – Christianity and Islam – that penetrated the country from the two geographical axes of north and south. The drive for the expansion of the two religions across the nation and the dialectical dualism that underpin their theological principles have been fundamental to their irreconcilability. Since the adherents of the two religions are distributed according to ethnic and geo-historical configurations, the irreconcilability has almost permanently assumed the dimensions of mutual antagonism that has frequently escalated ethnic and religious related conflicts in the country.

In most cases, the consequences of these ethno-religious motivated conflagrations have always

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manifested high-profile destruction in human and material contexts. Nigeria's fragile unity and absence of national integration are some of the consequences of this unfortunate social phenomenon, the persistence of which is fueled by socio-economic and political factors.

Ethnicity and religion have remained a combined binding force that serves to feather the articulation of the socio-economic and political interests of the mutual antagonists in the scenarios of ethno-religious conflagration in the Nigerian state over time. This is the situation that is central to the understanding of the ethno-religious conflict problematic in contemporary Nigeria.

Understanding the history of this problematic, therefore, is a necessary step in the direction of engendering harmonious and peaceful co-existence in Nigeria.

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Sins of the Father: The Danger and Futility of Trans-Generational Conflicts in Nigeria

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Abstract

Many of Nigeria's conflicts are recurrent and trans-generational. The youth often inherit conflicts without truly understanding the root causes or any other perspectives. They are often overly sensitive when dealing with people from certain ethnic groups because of perceived or real wrongs that their ancestors committed and passed down prejudices. As a result, conflicts often continue without any of the active participants really remembering what they are fighting for, and minor misunderstandings that would ordinarily have been resolved amicably sometimes escalate into major violent conflicts because of perceived sensitivities. Some examples include the Ife/Modakeke; Aguleri/Umuleri; and the Tiv/Jukun conflicts. This paper examines some of the most serious communal conflicts that have occurred in Nigeria's recent history as well as the Nigerian civil war. It attempts to identify the root causes of the conflicts. It then attempts to deduce the attitude of young people from the opposing communities as well as opposing sides in the civil war to the conflicts and to each other. The paper highlights the root causes of these conflicts in a bid to assess their relevance in the 21st century Nigeria. An examination of current sentiments reveals whether or not the particular conflicts are accorded due or undue attention. The effect of the attitude of the youth to these conflicts is also examined. Finally, new dynamics to these "old" conflicts are assessed as well as implications for conflict resolution efforts.

Keywords: Nigeria, trans-generational, communal, recurrent, root causes, ethnic, resolution

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Introduction

Nigeria has been described as an "…amalgamation of ethnic groups pitched against each other in a jostle for power and resources…" (Agbigboa, 2013, p. 10). This description is in a bid to explain the reason for many protracted communal conflicts in the country. Postulations such as the ones that point to colonial manipulations assert that the frequency of conflict in Nigeria may be attributable to the fact that the country was an *artificial creation*. Similar *artificially created* states like Cameroon and Mali also suffer from protracted conflicts along the pre-colonial ethnic lines. The Tuaregs have fought for years since the colonial division of their people across five countries. They continue to fight, most notably in Mali, for recognition (Lecocq & Klute, 2013). In Cameroon, the Anglophones continue to protest their perceived suppression in the current state with Ambazonia (Anglophone Cameroon) even declaring independence in October 2017 (Okereke, 2018). These studies often highlight aspects of perceived mal-treatment of the aggrieved without necessarily assessing transgenerational dynamics.

Horizontal inequalities, the unequitable distribution of economic and political resources at the state and local level based on cultural orientation has been identified as the main reason for protracted conflicts such the Aguleri/Umuleri and the Ife/Modakeke conflicts. However, some of the proponents of this theory admit that there are contextual variables as well such as memories of previous violent conflicts and perceptions as to personality that each party has about the other (Onwuzuruigbo, 2011). The *horizontal inequalities* argument does not also explain why there are cases where such inequalities exist but where there is relative peace.

Many of Nigeria's conflicts are recurrent and trans-generational in nature. Studies of the causes of conflict in Nigeria list factors such as resource scarcity/control; revenue allocation; indigene/settler issues; farmer/herder conflicts; ethnicity; religion and land tussles as major sources of conflict in the country. Few, if any, address these causes from the perspective of how the dynamics have changed over the years or how much of a role the sentiments from possibly earliest manifestations play in more recent manifestations. Thus, the transgenerational nature and transmission of perceptions is often downplayed.

The youth often continue in conflict because they are taught never to trust people because of history however perceived even by the *teacher*. Many of these conflicts, some of which have pre-colonial influences, are rooted in the pursuit of physiological and security level needs by people that live in circumstances that should be different from those existing in Nigeria today. However, because of transferred sentiments, the youth are trying to hold on to perceptions that they never personally formed. As a result, they are vulnerable to manipulations and propaganda. Unless this trend is arrested, there is little hope for sustained peace especially in communities with fractured histories. This piece attempts an examination of circumstances that existed at the earliest manifestations of old conflicts, the root causes as well as how they were resolved in some cases. It then attempts a discussion of the effects of these conflicts on perceptions of young people today. It concludes that there is a need for concerted efforts towards reforming perceptions for there to be sustainable peace.

The Nigerian Civil War

Perhaps the military coup of January 1966 could be identified as a convenient "root cause" of the Nigerian civil war even though the coup itself had its own root causes. The main aim of the coup was "…

to establish a strong, united, and prosperous nation, free from corruption and strife…" (Nzeogwu, 2003, p. 126; Obasanjo, 1987, p. 97) and Nigeria's enemies were identified to include "political profiteers, ...[men]that seek bribes, …those that seek to keep the country divided permanently, …the tribalists, the nepotists…" (Nzeogwu, 2003, p. 127; Obasanjo, 1987, p. 99).

While the coup was considered to have failed substantially, the overthrow of the erstwhile government had been applauded by most Nigerians at first. By July of the same year however, the coup had been dubbed the *Ibo Coup* and continues to be referred to as such and the plotters were reduced to mere criminals. The perception of northern Nigerians was that the aim of the coup plotters had been to eliminate the northern elite. Interestingly, it has been suggested that the first insinuations of tribal motives for the coup were made by the British press and that they had their own motives for doing this (Nzeogwu, 2003; Ezeigbo, 1991). In any case, in May of the same year, riots preceded other ugly incidents including the counter-coup of July and the subsequent massacre of eastern Nigerians in the north and other parts of the country.

The federal government was unable to curtail the massacre of easterners in the north (Gould, 2012). This fact, and their placing an economic embargo on the east aroused feelings of oppression in eastern Nigeria and gave rise to agitations for secession led by the government of eastern Nigeria. On January 4-5, 1967, the military leaders of the regions met at Aburi, Ghana to agree on a way forward. It appeared that they had reached an agreement, but they failed to follow through due to disparities in interpretation by the parties (Gould, 2012). The federal government reneged on several aspects of the Aburi Agreement. As a result, on May 30, 1967, the eastern region (Biafra) seceded from Nigeria. On July 6, 1967, the federal government declared war on Biafra and thus began the Civil War.

Biafra alienated itself from the rest of Nigeria and even invaded the mid-west in August 1967. Propaganda promulgated by the two sides served to deepen the tribal infused wedge between the two factions (Ezeigbo, 1991). By the time the war ended in 1970, seemingly irreversible damage had been done to the relationship between the eastern region (Biafra) and the rest of Nigeria even as the region was re-integrated into Nigeria.

The Umuleri and Aguleri Conflict

This conflict between two neighboring communities of the same tribe in Anambra state of Nigeria could be traced back to the 1920s. The subject of the conflict is Otuocha, land that lies on the left bank of the Anambra River. It is connected to the north-east by the Emu Stream, Aguleri and in the south-west by the Akor River, Umuleri (Nwabisi & Umuleri v. Idigo; Another on behalf of Aguleri, 1959). Both communities acknowledged the other's lineage from Eri. The issue, as regards cultural history, was that each claimed direct, and therefore, stronger heritage over the other (Obiakor, 2016).

Otuocha's geographical advantage made it a preferred choice for trade and settlement of colonial missionaries and businesses. The land had allegedly been bought by the Royal Niger Company from Umuleri in 1898 and transferred to the Crown in 1916. At the same time, Aguleri claimed to have sold a part of the land to the Catholic Mission in 1894 (Nwabisi & Ors v. Idigo; Ors, 1959).

The British sought to control land ownership in the community, and this caused a shift from communal towards individual land ownership. This resulted in a tussle for Otuocha land between the British and other settlers as well as the Aguleri and Umuleri communities (Onwuzurigbo, 2011).

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Of the two communities, Aguleri accepted Christianity first and so its citizens began to profit from access to education and other amenities. This formed the basis for what some have described as horizontal inequalities which served to heighten conflict. The Aguleri people were able to take employment within the colonial native administration and in 1910, Idigo, an Aguleri man, was appointed Warrant Chief. His area of jurisdiction included Aguleri, Umuleri and Otuocha. By the 1920s, when colonial authorities started to revert back to quasi-communal ownership of land (quasi, because control vested in Warrant Chiefs and other colonial-administration created leaders rather than the communities), Idigo became very powerful and was able to use his influence to accord advantage to his kinsmen in Otuocha land transactions. The Umuleri people took legal action against him in 1933 over Otuocha land transactions but were not successful. The same year also recorded one of the first serious incidents of violent conflict between the two communities (Onwuzuruigbo, 2011).

In 1950, the Crown abandoned all rights and title to Otuocha and this triggered conflict between the two communities as to which community the title would revert to. The Umuleri people instituted an action originally in the Native Court and later in the Supreme Court (the Privy Council), over ownership of the land. The action failed, even on appeal. In 1964, Chinwuba, an Aguleri man who represented both communities at the eastern region house of assembly, officially changed the name from "Otuocha" to "Otuocha Aguleri" (Onwuzurigbo, 2011). Violent conflict ensued and the people of Umuleri instituted legal action against the act. The government withdrew the gazette that made the announcement (Obiakor, 2016). It is important to note that there were several court actions involving the two parties, mostly instituted by the Umuleri people and while the courts mostly found that the land did not belong to them, they did not assert that it belonged to the Aguleri people either (Nwabisi & Ors v. Idigo; Ors, 1959).

For a long time, Aguleri people enjoyed dominance in the region and were able to effectively exclude Umuleri from political processes. Their moves sometimes led to violent protests by the Umuleri people. Thus, the two communities were in conflict from the 1920s with isolated incidents giving rise to major conflicts because of historical sentiments. In 1995, in the wake of already existing conflicts regarding an attempt by Aguleri to carry out development projects on land that was subject to dispute between the two communities, an Umuleri man sought to develop land that he had bought from a fellow Umuleri man, but who had, in turn, bought it from an Aguleri man. Aguleri youths attacked the builders and Umuleri. This resulted in major violent conflict. Security agencies had to wade in to control the situation. The state government mandated a judicial commission of enquiry to investigate the conflict. Their report indicted, Edozie, an Aguleri man with family ties to Umuleri and then chairman of the Anambra local government Caretaker Commission. He was blamed for the mismanagement of the fallout. When he died in 1999, Umuleri youth saw a chance to revenge and they did so by attacking during a vigil that was held in his honor (Onwuzurigbo, 2011; Obiakor, 2016). The ensuing conflict raised the scale of the conflict to a full-blown war.

The 1999 conflict was so serious that even the then President Olusegun Obasanjo visited the region and urged the communities to settle peacefully. Toward the end of 1999, the Aguleri Representative Council and Umuleri General Assembly reached an agreement to end the violent conflict (Aguleri-Umuleri Peace Accord). They agreed, inter alia, to divide Otuocha between the two communities (Oseremen & Majekodunmi, 2017). In 2004, a Peace Committee was inaugurated that consisted of members from both communities and they proceeded to divide the land. Even though, Umuleri pulled out of the Committee in 2010, relative peace returned to the region (Okafor, 2016).

The Ife and Modakeke Conflict

This is one of the oldest communal conflicts in Nigeria. Ile-Ife and Modakeke are neighboring communities in Osun state of Nigeria. There had been mass migration to Ile Ife from all over the Yoruba kingdom, especially Ibadan, Oyo state, after the Yoruba inter-tribal wars and the fall of the Oyo kingdom in the 19th century (Olayiwola, 2010; Asiyanbola, 2010). The then Ooni of Ife, Odunlabiojo created Modakeke to accommodate these displaced persons. At first, the relationship between the two communities was good and more people moved to the area and even entered into a different settlement arrangement with another Ooni (traditional ruler of Ife), Abeweila. The people of Ife started to feel their political power might be threatened by these new settlers. It is alleged that this led them to attack the Modakekes between 1835 and 1849 after the death of Abeweila (Olayinwola & Okorie, 2010; Asiyanbola, 2010).

In 1835, an Ife man, Chief Okunade who had become very influential in Ibadan was expelled from Ibadan and later killed because the locals were beginning to see him as a threat. The Oyo people took over Ibadan and excluded the Ifes. This annoyed them and in retaliation, they attacked the Modakekes. In the Ibadan/Ekitiparapos conflict, the Ifes and Modakekes fought with opposing sides. The Ifes were defeated in both conflicts (Olayinwola & Okorie, 2010; Asiyanbola, 2010). This did not help already fragile relations with their Modakeke neighbors.

In 1980, the Modakekes held a ceremony to raise money for the community. The then Ooni posited that as Modakeke was part of Ife, they had no right to raise funds separately. The Modakakes started at this point to ask for a separate local government council. The Ifes felt that as immigrants, the Modakekes should not get their own council. New local government councils were created in 1981 and again in 1996 but each time, the Modakekes were placed under Ife. This led to violent conflicts between the two communities. The most recent serious escalation of this conflict occurred in 2000.

The Ijaw, Itsekiri and Urhobo (South-South Region of Nigeria) Conflict

The Ijaws are one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria. However, today, because they are spread across six states, they are minorities in all the states. In colonial times, Ijaws from the west were notorious pirates and this made them unpopular with their Itsekiri neighbors (Ikime, 1967; Ukiwo, 2007). The Itsekiri also had geographical and economic advantage over the western Ijaw and this made their region more susceptible to colonial presence (Ikime, 1967; Ukiwo, 2007). In 1927, both the Ijaw and the Urhobo rioted against the Itsekiri dominance of colonial native administration. It did not help that the then paramount ruler of Warri, Chief Numa referred to himself as the paramount ruler of the Isekiri, Urhobo and Ijaw as did his successor Chief Ginuwa II. In 1932, western Ijaw became fully absorbed into the colony (Ikime, 1967; Ukiwo, 2007).

From the 1920s, the Ijaws made several pleas for separation from the Itsekiris. The colonial administration did not think it would be practicable for various reasons: economical, geographical, and historical. They admitted that the Ijaws were marginalized and underdeveloped (Ikime, p. 75) but refused to grant their request for separation. In 1951, when the then governor of the western region, Awolowo, allowed the Itsekiri to change the title of "Olu of Itsekiri" to "Olu of Warri", the Ijaws felt insulted and worried about possible implications for their status in the community. Even the Urhobos were offended and attacked Itsekiris as well as refused to trade with them, and rejected their legal processes (Ikime,

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1967). The arrival of the international oil companies in the 1960s made the tussle over Warri even more intense. The Itsekiris dominated the political space in Warri at all levels amidst protests from the Ijaw up till independence in 1960 and after. They dominated in the local government chairmanship of Warri local government after its creation in 1976 (Ukiwo, 2007).

The Ijaws continued to ask to be separated from the Itsekiris but administration after administration refused. At some point, they were transferred to other local government areas but seeing this as abandonment of the fight over Warri and fearing that they would again be marginalized and cut off from social development, they asked to be returned to Warri local government area and they were (Ukiwo, 2007).

In 1991, new local government areas were created but the government again refused to give Ijaws a separate local government area. In 1995, the then Delta state governor created a new Warri south local government area with headquarters in Ogbe-Ijoh, an Ijaw community but months after, in 1996, the federal government issued a decree stating that the new local government area was Warri south-west and that the headquarters would be in Ogidigben, an Itsekiri community. The Ijaws saw this as a further manifestation of their marginalization, and conflict erupted between them and the Itsekiri. This caused general unrest amongst Warri's three ethnic groups: Ijaw, Itsekiri and Urhobo and insecurity in the region. The unrest and insecurity resulted in the disruption of petroleum activities which in turn had negative effect on the country's economy. The military were deployed to the region (Ukiwo, 2007; Edevbie, 200).

The Tiv and Jukun Conflict

Before Nigeria was created, the Tiv, Jukun, Idoma, Bassa, Gbagyi and other ethnic groups of north central Nigeria already had relations and as a result had somewhat, each, been influenced by the other in terms of culture and even language (Maiyaki, 2014). They lived together in relative peace. Some of these ethnic groups had a centralized structure such as the Jukun while others had a de-centralized structure such as the Tiv (Awe, 1999). Both ethnic groups are predominantly farmers (Aluaigba, 2009).

The conflict between the Tiv and the Jukun is one of the oldest and most violent ethnic conflicts in Nigeria. The series of violent clashes have allegedly been caused by: land disputes, politics, and indigene/settler issues with land being a major factor. The Tiv moved constantly in search of fertile land and there was mass migration of Tivs into the Wukari area of Taraba State. This was a problem for the native Jukun especially as yam, a major crop for the Tiv had negative effects on soil where it is grown and renders it useless for many years. The Tiv, therefore, moved to new land, often to the annoyance of their "accommodating" neighbors (Aluaigba, 2009).

The earliest sign of political trouble was in 1956 when a Tiv man, Tangur Gaza, defeated a Jukun man, Mallam Ibrahim Sangari in the house of representatives' elections for Wukari. The Jukun became apprehensive of the fact that Tiv, whom they considered foreigners, might constitute a political threat. The first manifestation of the conflict was in 1959 in Wukari before the national elections. Beneath the political motive of this conflict appeared to lie, pent-up frustrations of the Tiv against the colonial authority structure - its oppression of the Tiv during colonial rule and the complicity of the Jukun. Also, in the first republic, the Tiv and Jukun supported opposing parties (Aluaigba, 2009).

In 1990, violent conflict erupted between these ethnic groups and while some were of the opinion

that land disputes were the cause, others also feel that the Jukun used the opportunity to attempt to address Wukari local government area politics. In 2001, violence erupted again between the two groups. The immediate cause of the conflict was a fight between a Tiv farmer and Fulani cattle herdsmen. The military were deployed to Taraba and Benue States to restore peace.

The Danger and Futility of Trans-Generational Conflicts in Nigeria

The communal conflicts discussed above all have roots in pre-colonial times. They are all rooted in tussles over land, political relevance, and indigene/settler status. While some of these issues remain relevant today in the relevant communities, their level of relevance and, more importantly, youth consciousness of the issues are largely affected by the narratives they have heard about the root cause and historic manifestations. As is evident from the discussion above, there are often conflicting "facts" to each conflict and people could be influenced based on what version they believe which is often the version that is more sympathetic to their particular tribe.

In a 2009 study, Asiyanbola (2009) attempted an answer to the question: *How is past violent crisis recollected and passed on to the next generation?* He concentrated on the Ife-Modakeke crisis and found that while most of those questioned (90.3%) had witnessed at least one episode of the crisis personally, more than 79% had heard about the conflict before they became adults. Asiyanbola's study also revealed that while the communities are at relative peace, as they were at the time of the study, significant sections of the population still harbored resentment or distrust towards the other community. This was based on their reaction to questions about inter-marriage. Going by reactions to online news items, similar results would be obtained if the study was conducted on any of the other communities from the communal conflicts discussed above. This is unfortunate, Chief E. K. Clark, a prominent Ijaw leader, declares saying that: "…a majority of the Ijaw, Urhobo and Itsekiri, who are suffering today, do not understand why we are fighting and what we are fighting for…Enough is enough (Ofogbor, 2004).

Nigerian youth often take advantage of ethnic and communal conflicts as an opportunity to "revenge" on a society that excludes them from effective political participation; does not provide them with social amenities; and "refuses" to address their employment and source of livelihood concerns. In the same vein, politicians often take advantage of inter-communal sentiments to incite youth to participate in violent conflict for their political gains. The informal passing on of "history" of communal conflicts makes this easier.

As regards the Civil War, the situation is further complicated by the intensity of the propaganda on both sides before, during and after the war. The fact that specifics of the civil war do not form part of the history curriculum in either primary or secondary schools is dangerous. Most people have heard snippets of accounts of the events leading up to the civil war and the war itself. These snippets are often what makes youth more susceptible to narratives such as those of secessionist movements such as MASSOB and IPOB on the one hand, and other anti-Igbo groups on the other. While this is not an attempt to discuss the merit or otherwise of the position of either group, it is dangerous that the youth are not armed with factual and non-partisan narratives that would enable them to make more informed decisions. This makes them extremely vulnerable to manipulations by those who may distort or "alter" facts to suit their purposes.

Conclusion

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Most of the communities discussed above are not currently in active conflict. However, there are flare-ups occasionally. The role of trans-generational narratives in how quickly simple "conflict" situations escalate should not be ignored. While the government should continue to strive to provide amenities and employment for the youth, it is also necessary that narratives are "corrected" or, at least, "formalized" so that when the inevitable conflicts occur, they can be managed better. The government should also look into recommendations of committees and other bodies that have been mandated with resolving particular conflicts in the past, assess their practicability and implement them where possible or commission new enquiries. It is imperative that conflict management processes are transparent. It is also important that the youth know their history so that they do not rely on information that may be manipulated. It is important that history is taught to young ones to give them stronger foundation of Nigerian and communal history and make them less vulnerable to propaganda.

There is need to address all Nigeria's protracted conflicts in detail and conduct studies as to transmission of history to future generations and the formative influence of these transmissions on them. An attempt should be made to extract honest accounts of all conflicts. Apologies might need to be made and wounds and memories need to be healed for Nigeria to move on.

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Intercommunal Violence Incarnated: The Persecution of Rohingya Ethnicity in Rakhine, Myanmar

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Abstract

The Rohingya refugee crises in Bangladesh and recent UN Security Council's debate on whether to prosecute Burmese military general for genocide once again brought the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict to public attention. As this research aims to inspect the Rakhine-Rohingya relation, I will be analyzing the series of riots that occurred in 2012 and ended as the 2016 crackdown started. This incident epitomizes the resurgence of the persecution of Rohingya Muslims. It marks a new turning point of the conflict between the Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims residing in the Rakhine state of Myanmar. A case study approach will be taken to develop a comprehensive understanding of the issues, and thus provide adequate facts and evidences for making recommendations.

Keywords: Myanmar, Rohingya refugees, interethnic conflict, interreligious conflict, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, sustainable peace

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Introduction

Multiculturalism in Myanmar is headlined by the intercommunal violence between Buddhists and Muslims in the Rakhine state, southwest of Myanmar. The country is predominantly Buddhist with a growing Muslim population. A long-history of Muslim enslavement by Burma-Buddhists and perceived religious superiority of being Buddhist have caused ongoing quarrels interfering the peaceful coexistence of the two religious groups (Royal Historical Commission of Burma, 1960; World Bank, 2014). In Rakhine, Buddhists named Rakhine and Muslims named Rohingya are experiencing such a challenge on a regular basis. Rohingyas are among the most discriminated Muslim population in Myanmar (Crisis Group, 2013).

This paper will focus on one of the most infamous Muslim persecution incidents in the modern era – the 2012 Rakhine state riots. Although the military crackdown from late 2016 to early 2017 is more recent, its aftermath and repercussion are ongoing as the number of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh is splurging and the UN Security Council recently addressed the prosecution of Burmese military generals. Therefore, the 2012 riots, which officially ended when the 2016 crackdown started, may allow us to dissect the Rakhine-Rohingya tension more comprehensively rather than focusing on post-catastrophe management.

The 2012 Rakhine Riots

On May 28, 2012, Muslim men, allegedly, sexually assaulted and murdered a Buddhist woman in the Rakhine state (Crisis Group, 2013). The subsequent murder of ten non-Rohingya Muslim pilgrims in Toungup township of Rakhine transformed the clash into an interethnic and interreligious matter (Crisis Group, 2013). Antagonism was casted as Buddhists versus Muslims in Rakhine state, rather than retained within the initially conflicted parties. The military, consisting mainly of ethnic Rakhine, sided with its own identity group and took a lead in the 'ethnic-cleansing' of the Rohingya. More than a-month-long of violence resulted in the death and severe injury of hundreds of Rakhines and Rohingyas. Thousands of homes were destroyed, and many residents were displaced. Whether planted politically or inevitable, these confrontations elicited a larger scale of violence in the Rakhine state. Ceasefire was urged by the central government and the United Nations few months later but new waves of violence kept emerging. Essentially, the 2012 Rakhine riots exhibited how nationalist sentiments easily manipulated the distrust between the Rakhines and Rohingyas.

The rising Burma-Buddhist radical nationalism in Myanmar significantly contributed to the escalation of tension between Muslims and Buddhists in the Rakhine state. Radical nationalism promoted the ethnocentrism of Rakhine Buddhists and degraded Rohingya Muslims through hate speech, violence, and crimes against humanity. The 969 anti-Muslim movement, commenced by Burmese monks, boycotted Muslim owned businesses and further impaired the financially marginalized Muslims in Rakhine state (Burke, 2016). A previous research pointed out that the Rakhine community and Rohingyas shared a common belief that the government and military were responsible for the 2012 riots (Lee, 2016). Some speculate that the central government directed the whole tragedy in Rakhine, even though the government insisted that the military has absolute independence over authoritative power. Extreme nationalism prompted and deteriorated the violence; however, the primary drivers were something more deeply rooted.

The Ongoing Rohingya Crisis

The perceived incompatibility and disaccord between Muslims and Buddhists in the Rakhine state encompassed many elements. Dispute derived from religious differences is only the shallow layer that we witness (Wolf, 2015; Blomquist, 2016). The core of this conflict is about ethnocentrism and racial superiority. Myanmar is a culturally diverse country consisting of more than 100 ethnicities, in which Rohingya is not an officially recognized ethnic group. In addition, within the Rakhine state where resources are scarce and poverty rate is the highest in the nation, residents are influenced by authoritative power imposed by the local and federal governments. They are also impacted by land and resource competitions and restrained by the lack of economic development. Externally, undocumented Muslims fleeing Rakhine state and making treacherous journeys through the Bay of Bengal have raised human rights concerns and received criticism from the United Nations and INGOs. With Burmese Buddhists being killed in Malaysia, a state-declared Muslim country, the Burmese government is thus threatened by a potential jihad terrorist attack on its homeland. Therefore, the Buddhist coalition, from the central government to Rakhine community, use segregation and discrimination as a self-protection scheme to secure their social and religious supremacy.

Aung San Suu Kyi's administration promised to manage the interreligious conflict more proactively. However, no constructive actions have been taken and a new round of riots broke out in October 2016. The central government has ineffectively intervened in the ongoing inter-communal conflicts happening in the Rakhine state and discouraging radical nationalism. The government's inaction to prosecute the perpetrators signals a reluctance to mediate Rakhine-Rohingya tensions and favoritism towards the Rakhine ethnic group.

Despite continuous efforts of the United Nations and other international NGOs, refugee management remains extremely inadequate in Rakhine state. As of April 11, 2017, an Advisory Commission on resolving Rohingya issues, headed by Kofi Annan, decided to shut down three displacement camps in strife-torn Rakhine state including the one holding thousands of Rohingya IDPs (AFP, 2017). A headcount of Rohingya refugees fleeing the Rakhine state has reached 655,000 by late 2017 whereas the sum of affected populations that requires humanitarian assistance increased to 1.2 million (UNICEF, 2018). While reintegration and resettlement plan are undetermined, new ferocity could arise again since the fundamental disputes between Rakhines and Rohingyas remain unsettled.

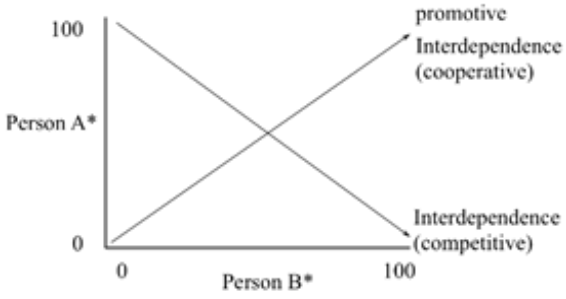
Literature Review

Theme 1: Competition

Competition is a common characteristic of intercommunal or intergroup conflicts. It involves two parties or more, and establishes some type of linkages between the parties. Such relationship insinuates interdependence where one party's goals and power can affect that of another party. Parties' goals could be incompatible or interfering when they try to dominate the situation.

Morton Deutsch (2014) describes the relevance of interdependence and conflict. According to him, "if they are completely independent of one another, no conflict arises" (See pp. 23-40). Deutsch (1973) claimed in the crude law of social relations that the characteristic processes and effects elicited by a given type of social relationship tend to elicit that type of social relationship – whether competitive or cooperative. The sense of competition is usually exhibited through attitudes and emotions that are mostly

negative, for example, hostility and eagerness to win. An action of rivalry implies that the parties may have needs requiring the use of same resources, but those needs are addressed differently.



probability (and amount) of goal attainment

Competitive interdependence implies a negative correlation between two parties' goal attainments. "Bungling actions" with shared similarities with destruction and competition, worsen the chances of obtaining a goal (Deutsch, 2014).

Interdependence and action together affect three basic social psychological processes – substitutability, attitudes and inducibility (Deutsch, 2014). Substitutability examines whether one party's actions can satisfy another's intentions. This process allows the parties to accept the activities of others in order to fulfill their own needs, through either cooperation or competition. Attitudes, here, refer to like or dislike towards one's environment or self. The tendency to embrace the beneficial and expel the harmful is innate (Deutsch, 2014). This mentality explains human perceptions towards cooperation and competition. Inducibility, the complement of substitutability, determines one party's readiness to accept another's influence. Negative inducibility usually connotes destruction or competition. All three elements can signal a party's intention for competition.

The nature of distinguishing the human factors, such as intentions and manners of actors, from escalation or cultural context incentivizes the crude law to be used for unraveling the chaotic relationship between Rakhines and Rohingyas as well as cross-hierarchical or cross-sectional relationships. The crude law model also illustrates the competitive-destructive dynamic, or the "malignant social process" that high-intensity intergroup conflicts are increasingly dangerous and costly (Deutsch, 2014). It provides reasoning to social tensions in the Rakhine state due to protracted intercommunal conflict.

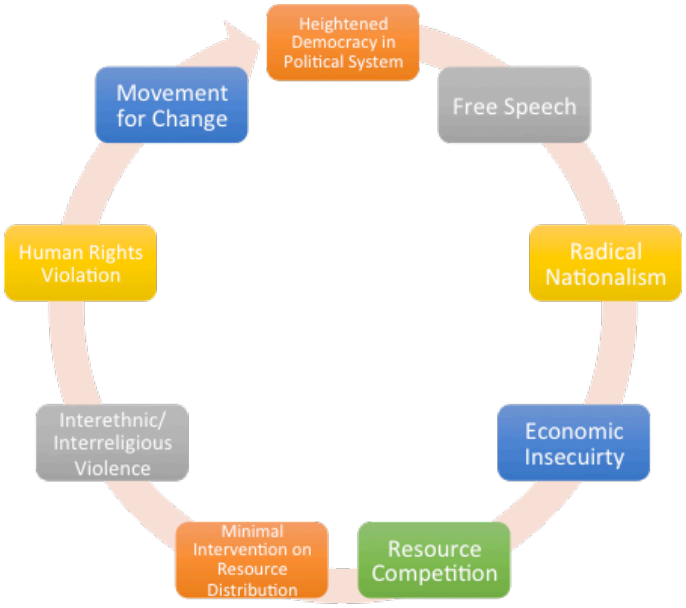
Theme 2: Escalation

Escalation is inseparable from any types of conflict, whether latent or manifest, whether hot or cold. Escalation and de-escalation are associated with changes in conflict dynamics. It shows the movement of a conflict – ups and downs. The magnitude of tension tends to increase with escalation. Robert Jervis (1997) argues that the causes of a conflict are complex, intertwined, and situationally dependent. Conflict escalation is tied to these causes or dynamics of conflicts; it is either a component or a consequence of the causes. Securing the ability to dominate one's enemy could be the motive or incentive for conflict escalation.

The dynamical system theory (DST) understands complex conflict systems in terms of attractors. It dissects strong and coherent patterns that can draw parties in and resist change. By translating non-mathematical insights into a mathematical form (Liebovitch et al., 2010), the theory conceptualizes how cooperation and competition dynamics escalate or deescalate conflicts. One actor's response to another actor can be understood through this process. Two actors are situated in a neutral state when the strength of that feedback is less than the absolute value of their own resistance to change (Liebovitch et al., 2010). This applies to both positive (cooperation) and

negative (competition) feedbacks. When the strength of the positive or negative feedback exceeds the threshold, a distinctive change in behavior can be observed (Liebovitch et al., 2010). A conflict can be de-escalated to at least a neutral state if one actor unilaterally shifts behavior to cooperation. Then, the loser can temporarily reverse feedback from negative to positive for a limited time to become the winner. The introduction of negative feedback loops deescalates the conflict after the thresholds, promoting alternative peaceful attractors to emerge and disassembling strong negative attractors (Coleman et al, 2006).

The dynamical system theory addresses the complexity of the 2012 Rakhine riots where value differences, radical nationalism, economy, and politics are intertwined. The dynamics and linkages between components quantified by DST suggest that within the controlled parameter of the Rakhine riots, the system's behavior is attracted by the politics of Myanmar. Resource competition, economic insecurity, political instability and human rights violations all evolve around this attractor.



Theme 3: Culture

Culture is a broad term that emphasizes on the collectiveness of human intellect. It is part of individual's social identity, as it creates belongingness, group mobilization, and, frequently, segregation. In-group similarity makes members feel attached to and understood by the group they belong to. The cohesion culture creates sometimes drives members to put group interests ahead of their own. However, strong group identity – ethnic, racial, religious, political, and so on - alienates out-group members that are believed to be beneath certain standards or screening criteria to enter the group. Objectively speaking, this condition shall simply create difference between people, which may not elevate one group and impair another. What can really instigate conflicts to emerge is inner-group identity protection. Members of a group strive to preserve that group's pride by blindly undermining or even sabotaging another group, and therefore, make themselves more superior. These actions may not necessarily align with the real interest of the group.

The realist group conflict theory by Campbell (1965) explores groups in reaction to the psychodynamic view of ethnocentrism in authoritarianism. It suggests that scarce resources, power and value differences, unmet needs and physical threat can cause a perception of threat. This perception of threat, thus, causes hostility to the source of threat, in-group solidarity and awareness of in-group identity, and increases ethnocentrism. Glorifying in-group thinking and denigrating out-groups is the principal characteristic of "ethnocentrism" (Fisher,

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2014). Attitudes and behaviors become ethnically centered under such circumstances, meaning that individual reaction to an issue is prompted by on that person's ethnic identity rather than intuition. This ideology results from a conflict of interest and intergroup competition to attain their goals. Moreover, when there is a history of antagonism between groups, the chances of engendering hostility toward the threatened outgroup surge (Levine & Campbell, 1972).

As the realistic group conflict explains intergroup reaction to psychodynamics of ethnocentrism in authoritarianism (Campbell, 1965), it rationalizes Rakhine ethnic group's urge to take power. A history of undermining Muslim populations in Myanmar and the ethnocentric presumption of privileging Buddhists are rooted in the decision-making of contemporary politicians, militants and monks. Both ethnic groups showed strong unity when their oppositions used the 2012 riots as an act of retaliation.

Underlying Issues

During and after the 2012 Rakhine riots, Rohingyas held a hostile attitude against Rakhines and the central government that empowered negative interdependence and competition. The appearance of coercion, threat, deception, and Rakhine's attempts to enhance the power differences witnessed prior to and during the riots fundamentally induced competition between the Rohingya and its counterparts (Deutsch, 2014). The lack of communications after the Rakhines accused Muslim men of sexually assaulting Rakhine women exacerbated the competition. The central government's delayed intervention also worsened the relationship. Gradually, their awareness of similarities in values which was already minimal was replaced by increased sensitivity to opposed interests. These parties took a rigid stance on cracking the fundamental issues between them, and thus they have no intention to resolve the conflict constructively. The violence also exacerbated the impoverishment in Rakhine state.

Rakhines and Rohingyas share a common objective to boost economy of the Rakhine state but the incompetence to address each other's ethnic and religious differences tend to thwart their peaceful negotiation on the fair distribution of resources. Therefore, resource competition in industries such as agriculture and fishing has encumbered job creation and rising wages. In two of Burke's interviews with rice entrepreneur and fishermen (Burke, 2016), both reflected that mismanagement of common resources has led to loss of profits for both the Rakhines and Rohingyas that conduct businesses in these industries. Rakhine accuse Rohingya of infringing industry standards and agreements. More social-emotional and less instrumental conflicts tend to induce more socially rational and less economically efficient orientations (Coleman et al., 2012). Disputes on resources often transitioned into the Rakhines suppressing the Rohingyas via forceful means and failed to benefit both parties economically. The long-hauled impoverishment of the Rakhine state makes conflict resolution even more challenging. National politics have impeded the economic development of the Rakhine state, leaving it with a poverty rate of 78% and almost twice of Myanmar's national average (Lee, 2016; UNDP, 2017). Self-identity crises along with radicalistic movements against Rohingyas in recent years escalated the tensions. Benign relationships were mainly broken down. The accumulation of rage and mutual mistrust between Buddhists and Muslims in Rakhine activated the 2012 riots.

How the Conflict Escalated?

Escalation of tensions can be witnessed in many intercommunal violence situations including the Rakhine riots. Ethnic and religious differences are at the core causing the 2012 Rakhine riots. Centralized governmental power, political turmoil, protection of cultural identities, lack of trust and injustice constituted the escalation components. Each fragment of the Rakhine communal conflict can be matched with one stage of the escalation model.

President Thein Sein's political regime in 2011, after the stepdown of a former decades-long opaque military junta (Burke, 2016), brought changes to the political environment in Myanmar. This rapid political change is marked by an increase in democratic space in Rakhine state and across Myanmar, enabling new political movements to emerge (Burke, 2016). The initial discussion stage, therefore, was expected to help the Rakhines and Rohingyas discuss and resolve pre-existing issues including unemployment, citizenship and ethnic segregation. Since state parliaments established under the new administration had limited administrative capacity or control to take concrete actions over public affairs, negotiation between Rakhine and Rohingya ethnic groups was never arranged.

Trivial disputes between Rakhine and Rohingya were unmanaged on the micro-level. Human Rights Watch (2013) pointed out that the local police, ethnic Rakhine themselves, showed limited interest to reset social order and in some cases participated in the violence against Muslims in 2012 and 2013. The gesture of the local police and government siding with their ethnically identical group empowered the Rakhines to be more aggressive in 'self-defense' while oppressing the Rohingyas with unlawful force. The local police's participation in fueling violence, which both the Rakhines and Rohingyas interpreted as ordered by the local government, pushed the conflict to its polarization stage.

Ignorance of the governments, anti-Muslim propaganda, social fear and insecurity led to the rigorous alienation of the Rohingyas from ethnic Rakhines. Freedom of expression and the internet became tools to spread hate speech (Holland, 2014). Politicians had no intention or action to intervene, or to mitigate the tensions between the Rakhine and Rohingya communities. The stage of segregation contains high levels of mistrust and disrespect, limited direct communication, and the use of threats (Fisher, 1990). Without effective arbitration or power mediation to moderate Rakhine-Rohingya tensions, consequently, the growing radical patriotism against Muslims in Myanmar escalated the conflict to segregation.

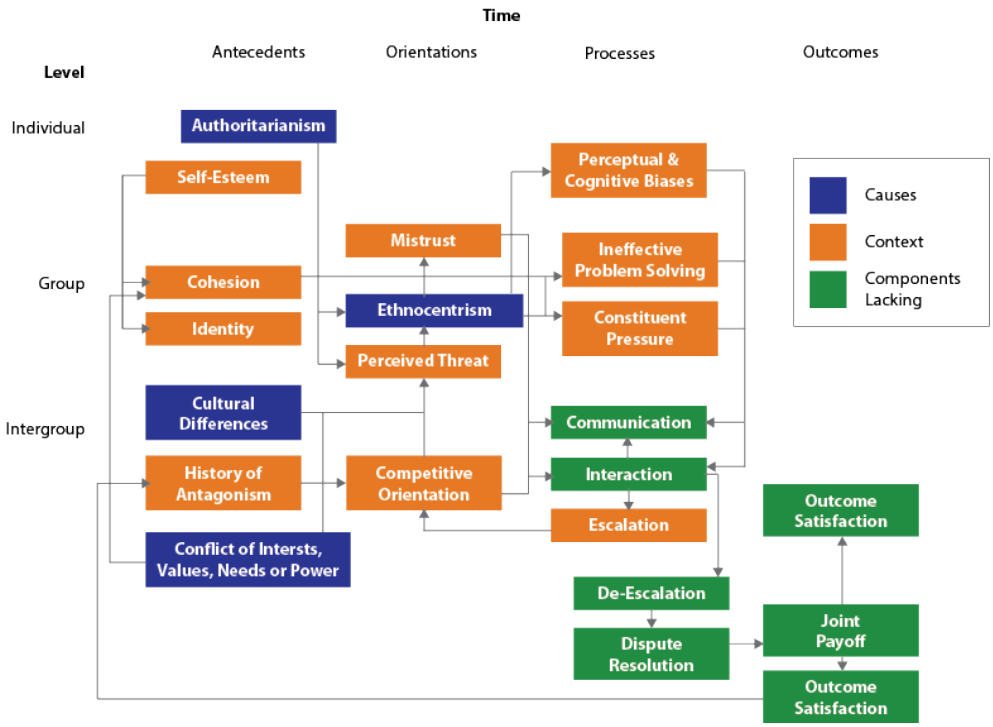
Destruction was portrayed by the 2012 riots itself. Disputed parties view each other as "subhuman" and prejudicially attempt annihilation of an identity group as in genocide for their own survival (Fisher, 1990). Ethnic cleansing was widely witnessed during the riots. Not only that Buddhist militants viciously

burned Muslim villages and massacred the Rohingyas, officials from both the Rakhine and Burmese governments denied any human rights violations. They first argued that the violence was purely a civilian action, and that the governments should not be held accountable for property damages and human casualty. Then, after satellite image verified militants' participation in the riots, the governments again disputed that monitoring the military is out of their scope under Myanmar's 2008 Constitution (Amnesty International, 2016). The irritating denial is another form of destruction on the psychological level for the Rohingyas – losing hope in their governments.

These four stages altogether build a vicious circle that continues to cause new rounds of conflict since the root issues or needs remain unaddressed and unresolved.

Ethnocentrism and Intergroup Conflict

Intergroup conflict arises from fundamental cross-group differences in social power, access to resources, important life values, or other significant incompatibilities (Fisher, 2014). Moreover, desires for power - to control another group - ignite the fire and de-balance the social relations of polarized groups (Fisher, 2014). The 2012 Rakhine riot was driven by Rakhines' dominance over Muslim populations, their competition over limited natural and economic resources, and religious differences. Biases and subjection over their counterpart exacerbated the conflict.



While incompatible cultures or religions can coexist peacefully with a prerequisite of harmoniously respecting and supporting outside cultures (Fisher, 2014), ethnocentrism increases the level of difficulty to sustain interreligious harmony or congruence. Both the Rakhines and Rohingyas are ethnically centered that they are inclined to accept those who share their religion, and to denigrate those who belong to

outgroups. Fisher (2014) suggests that at base, it is a struggle for dominance, and often results in a tense stalemate and deadlock. Ethnic Rakhines have a history of battling with colonial authorities and national leaders after Myanmar's independence (Smith, 1999). Its insurgency has gradually become a concern for Muslim minority living in their territory. Increasing immigration and birth rates of Muslims are deterring Rakhines' majority status (ICG, 2014). Inclusion of self-group and exclusion of ethnic aliens helped redefine the Rakhine identity, and thus obtain power to govern their own affairs. Similarly, Muslim leaders in Rakhine are also successful in collaging the group. When Muslim communities advocated their interests and expressed their needs through human rights campaigning and diploma, they have used the term Rohingya universally (Burke, 2016). The Rakhines and governments have rejected to address them as 'Rohingya' but rather 'Bengali'. Constructing a 'Rohingya' reputation internationally retains the pride of the group and puts pressure on their opponents.

The 2012 Rakhine riots justified for the defensive and hostile counteraction that the Rakhines and Rohingyas showed through smaller disputes. Political and religious leaders of Myanmar showed their overcommitment and entrapment in the conflict, which Fisher (2014) articulates to be hindering the de-escalation of intercommunal violence. A tool of authoritarianism, which refers to expensing personal freedom in return for the enforcement of strict obedience to authority, was used by leaders to ensure the Rakhine communities were obeying their scheme. According to the Rohingyas stranded in the quarantined area, monks came to Rakhine villages and beat the residents who were secretly giving the Rohingyas food (HRW, 2013). This was the first step that the leaders took towards overcommitment and entrapment. A month after the violence, President Thein Sein suggested publicly to expel the Rohingyas to third countries (HRW, 2013). Simultaneously, when some monks of the Rakhine sangha interviewed with international media, they referred to the expulsion of the Rohingyas from Myanmar as a change to the demographic composition of Rakhine state (HRW, 2013). Overcommitment to defend radical nationalism and religious pride as Buddhists continued to invoke decision-makers in Rakhine state to view that 'deporting' the Rohingyas from Myanmar is an appropriate political solution. Therefore, the Rakhine coalition entrapped themselves into continuous destruction of their erroneous adversary – the Rohingyas and all other Muslim people in Rakhine. They have wasted resources – both material and financial - in pursuit of victory, of which the 2012 Rakhine riots is an example.

Intervention Strategies

One goal of my intervention strategies is to strengthen government policies and inter-communal dialogues to mitigate the tensions between Rohingya (Muslims) and Rakhine (Buddhists). Some useful means of reducing the complexity in this scenario would be policy making and capacity building on the central government level, and less resistance towards the equal treatment of the Rohingyas in Rakhine state.

Based on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, needs from the physiological, safety and belonging levels shall be addressed in the post communal violence environment in Rakhine state of Myanmar. On the physiological level, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) are necessary to support the basic daily activities of the Rohingyas, Rakhines and other Muslim groups living in the displacement camps. Economic safety becomes a major concern when IDPs seek to reintegrate to their local communities and attempt to revive livelihood. Islamophobia across the globe and governmental policies segregating Muslims in Myanmar threaten the Rohingyas' sense of belonging to Rakhine and to the country. Many of these needs are either not in existence or have not been advocated sufficiently. The overall goal of my

intervention strategies is to strengthen government policies and intercommunal dialogues to mitigate the tensions between Rohingya Muslims and Rakhine Buddhists.

Proposed intervention strategies are designed to examine deeper information regarding each need, and to foster a safe space for creative problem solving. *Consensus Decision-Making* shall be implemented to require governments and residents to come to an agreement on how more WASH facilities can be constructed and how such resources can be distributed fairly among those who have the need (Bressen, 2007). *Collaborative Work Systems Design* is recommended to address issues associated with economic security and impoverishment, and to create a framework for successfully changing the organization to support collaboration and improve results (Tekell et al., 2007). *Future Search*, which emphasizes on the power of voluntary commitments made on common ground, allows stakeholders to discover and use common agendas and shared ideals in order to determine solutions on the Rohingya's legal and religious identities (Weisbord & Janoff, 2007). Although key actors and stakeholders are likely to encounter many challenges and threats in the planning or implementation stage, these interventions also incubate more opportunities for changes and, maybe, innovation.

Revisiting the 2012 Rakhine Riots

Intercommunal violence continued to deteriorate in Rakhine state even after the Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Aung San Suu Kyi, became the de facto leader of the Burmese new administration and her attempts to intervene in the Rakhine-Rohingya crisis are minimal. The most recent military and political crackdown against the Rohingyas in October 2016 marks an ineffective post-conflict management campaign after the 2012 Rakhine riots, and a shortfall to address and resolve underlying issues associated with the conflict (The Guardian, 2016).

Recent debate on the prosecution of Burmese military generals at the UN Security Council may shed lights on how the international communities would like to engage in the Rakhine-Rohingya conflict resolution process. However, post-conflict management requires more attention on government taking accountability for intercommunal violence, the prevention of future violence, as well as IDP reintegration.

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Metaphor Awareness for Multidimensional Practice: A Proposal for Enriching Narrative Mediation with Expanded Metaphor Techniques

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Abstract

Rooted in her worldview research, Goldberg proposes an addition to the powerful model of narrative mediation with more explicit metaphoric techniques. Narrative mediation with the addition of metaphoric work may thus be able to engage the entire, multidimensional conflict narrative more consciously. Goldberg builds on her work with Blancke in *multidimensional conflict resolution* and Winslade and Monk's *narrative mediation* and her own research on *worldview* to add metaphor analysis and skills more explicitly to narrative mediation than has been done thus far. This addition to the narrative model responds to the practice need described in her research with Blancke and others for multidimensional practice, work that effectively engages cognitive, emotional, somatic and spiritual intelligences of both practitioner and clients. Although narrative mediation is already more complex and nuanced in this regard than many other models, this article theorizes that the addition of more explicit work with metaphors might expand its range. The article grounds the reader in key elements of narrative and metaphor analysis and the practice of narrative mediation. It then reviews the discussion of metaphors and their use in conflict resolution practice before proposing ways in which the metaphoric analysis and skills could be expanded or made more explicit in narrative mediation in ways that would expand its ability to engage multiple dimensions of conflict. The author concludes with the results of preliminary work on metaphor use in public policy conflicts gathered as a participant observer and proposes theoretical and practical enhancements to narrative practice that could be developed in the future.

Keywords: conflict resolution, narrative mediation, metaphor, multidimensional conflict resolution, change, empowerment, conflict transformation, alternative dispute management, narrative analysis, metaphor analysis, mediation

Introduction and Overview

All change is essentially an act of imagination. Anyone negotiating with parties stuck in their old limiting worldviews and attempting to help them shift knows this is true. Metaphors could be a key discursive lever for a shift and help in *imagining* and *bridging* from the old to the new. Some preliminary observations seem to point to an association between metaphor and shift that suggests that future research and work should develop this connection. However, it is already known that metaphor's powerful indicators and tools for transforming conflicts, and in this article I propose that the important work done on metaphors in mediation (most notably by Smith, 2005a; 2005b; 2005c, but see also Gelfland & McCusker, 2001; Schön, 1993; Cohen 2003) should be engaged actively in narrative mediation, and vice versa, and that both narrative and metaphoric skills and techniques may have a great deal of insight and power to offer many conflicts, including environmental-public policy and other large-scale, multiparty work in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. In terms of my own research on *multidimensional conflict resolution* (Goldberg, 2016), I am particularly interested in joining these two approaches as both are multidimensional and more so, together.

I will begin by grounding the reader in key elements of narrative and metaphor analysis and the practice of narrative mediation, and multidimensional conflict resolution. We will then review the discussion of metaphors and their use in conflict resolution practice before proposing ways in which the metaphoric analysis and skills could be expanded or made more explicit in narrative mediation in ways that would expand its ability to engage multiple dimensions of conflict and key shifts.

Background: Narrative, Metaphor Analysis, Mediation, and Multidimensional Conflict Resolution

This article builds on previous work by Goldberg and Blancke (Goldberg & Blancke, 2011; 2012; Goldberg 2016) proposing a need for practice that engages multiple intelligences and ways of being so that our work responds to the complex way humans experience conflict and its transformation, and brings the intelligence of the whole practitioner to bear, for instance, explicitly making an attempt to engage somatic, emotional, spiritual, as well as cognitive intelligences.

That work, in turn, is an outgrowth of a number of multidimensional trends in thinking. New work on effective conflict and leadership (Strozzi-Heckler, 2007a; 2007b; 2014; Palmer & Crawford, 2013) and psychological change and trauma healing (Levine, 1997; Hanson & Grand, 1998; Yoder 2005; Haines 2007) are increasingly showing that the way we experience conflict, and the way we heal from it, are somatic. *Somatics* comes from the Greek: "the living body in its wholeness" (Hines, 2007, xx) and includes a series of practices that treat "the body as an essential place of change, learning, and transformation" (Hines, 2007, xx). Similarly, new research on leadership and success point to the critical importance of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995; 2011). At the same time, recent developments in conflict resolution, psychology and law are responding to the key role a sense of transcendence, or spiritual intelligence, plays in many human lives (Hall 2005; Aten & Lech, 2009; Goldberg & Blancke, 2011; 2012). Goldberg and Blancke have developed emergent language and a framework for *multidimensional conflict resolution* or practice that acknowledges and engages multiple levels of human understanding and existence.

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Narratives are already multidimensional in many ways. Stories are central to all conflict, and all conflict resolution. Weed (2004), summarizing Sternberg's groundbreaking theory of hate (2003), commented: "Think of someone you dislike, and the story of what he did to you leaps to your mind. We cannot hate without a tale to tell" (p. 45). Narratives inherently link, for instance, emotions and cognitive frames. They open space for spiritual frames to resonate and recall visceral and embodied insights about the conflict. This has been especially well developed in the *Environmental Dispute Resolution* (EDR) subfield in the work of Lewicki, Gray, and Elliott (2003) on frames and how they shape conflicts. Sternberg also notes the transformative power of narrative to shift that hate. This power has been developed in the conflict resolution field through the practice of narrative mediation.

Winslade and Monk are the originators of narrative mediation, which is a form of mediation that deliberately tracks and responds to the narrative construction of the conflict. Winslade and Monk (2000) describe narrative mediation as work where the mediator works to deconstruct "the discourses that are helping to produce the conflict" (p. 106). This means that intervention into the narratives changes the conflict. The narrative focus and therapeutic roots (Winslade and Monk are narrative therapists and used their knowledge of that work to translate it into mediation) mean that narrative mediation is already designed to engage, at different times, cognitive, emotional, and somatic intelligence, although the last is implied, not developed, in the literature. There is little attention to spiritual intelligence, although the reflective and respectful aspects of the approach would make it more likely that a narrative therapist would reflect back and respect the spiritual or transcendent needs of parties, than, say, an evaluative mediator. Could the process be more responsive to multiple dimensions, if, for instance, metaphoric skills and analysis were more emphasized? I theorize that, at least, metaphor analysis like the kind proposed here might make it more likely that the mediator would attend to things not normally prescribed by her or his own worldview, as the effort to track and reflect on the embedded meanings in metaphors as well as narratives necessarily involves thinking in multiple frames.

Narrative and Metaphor

It is important to first explain the power of narrative and metaphor in some more depth before proceeding to connect narrative mediation and metaphoric practices. Metaphors usually reflect incoherent, often unconscious ways of framing knowledge that can shed light on mediator and party worldviews, values, and ways of making sense of their worlds. Narratives reflect the conscious way we order our own worldview. I will start with metaphors, as they are the key focus of this paper.

Originally dismissed as merely descriptive aspects of language, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson revolutionized the understanding of metaphors as important frameworks for conceptual meaning in their book, *Metaphors We Live By* (1980). From this beginning a larger set of theories have grown, now known as conceptual metaphor theory or cognitive metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Kövecses, 2002; 2005; Evans & Green, 2006). Work in this area has shown that metaphoric thought is central to the normal way we reason. In fact, Lakoff and Johnson (1999) say:

> If we consciously make the enormous effort to separate out metaphorical from nonmetaphorical thought, we probably can do some very minimal and unsophisticated nonmetaphorical reasoning. But almost no one ever does this, and such reasoning would never capture the full inferential capacity of complex metaphorical thought. (p. 59)

Smith (2005a; 2005b) notes that this centrality to reasoning, and the fact that metaphors are an outwardly accessible reflection of inner norms and beliefs, makes them powerful tools for insight for mediators and negotiators. Metaphors also have power because they draw, not just on cognitive structures, but also poetic, imaginative, intuitive ways of meaning making, and in fact, are inherently multidimensional in their impact. LeBaron (2002) says eloquently: "We need creative tools because they have currency in the places where meaning is made and where expression is symbolic—levels not easily accessible through analysis….Metaphor, ritual, and story are tools to access this level" (p. 181). Ortony (2001) refers to this kind of impact when he notes that metaphors make meaning in a way that bridges the flowing continuity of consciousness with the limits of our tools for communicating, i.e., language (See p. 11). He also explains three ways that metaphors are particularly important in conveying this multidimensional meaning: compactness, vividness, and inexpressibility. Metaphors convey a great deal in a few words by presenting vivid, imaginative signposts that indicate elements of a journey. The hearer fills in the gaps with their experience and imagination in a way that conveys a great deal of information that is not necessarily spelled out. They also, through their poetic nature, allow the expression of the inexpressible. My mother, Mimi Goldberg (1961), a poet, said that a poem was a way of saying something, through the juxtaposition of words, that could not be said with words alone. Metaphors convey things we can't say directly, through image and implication. Consider attempting to explain literally "the thought slipped my mind like a squirrel behind a tree" (Ortony, 2001). The attempt would, inevitably, rob the communication of its very evocative meaning. As Ortony (2001) puts it, referring to the vividness of metaphors, "that metaphor lies much closer to perceived experience than a non-metaphorical equivalent because of their proximity to, and parasitic utilization of perceived experience" (p. 16). Because they use our own experience of reality to make sense of what is implied, "the emotive as well as the sensory and cognitive aspects are more available, for they have been left intact, in the transferred chunk [of meaning]" (Ortony, 2001, p. 17). Ortony (2001) goes on to say:

> These features of metaphor give it its great educational utility. It has been amply demonstrated that *imagibility* correlates very highly with *learnability*. Richness of detail in communicative potential provides a powerful means of moving from the known to the lesser well-known or unknown…The vividness of metaphor is not restricted to visual aspects alone: it extends to all sensory modalities as well as to emotive power. (p. 17)

This power is what I believe I began to see in the *Environmental Dispute Resolution* (EDR) processes where I did preliminary observations about metaphor and shift in conflict.

At its most basic, a metaphor is: an image or concept we are more familiar with, used to explain one we are less familiar with. Conceptual metaphor theorists differentiate the target and the source: the thing you want to explain is the target and the source is the metaphor, the more familiar thing used to describe the lesser known object. Of key interest to interveners is what these theorists call "correspondence mappings," "inference patterns," (Smith, 2005b, p. 11) and what Schön (1993) calls "generative metaphor."

Schön (1993) differentiates conceptual metaphors from what he calls "generative metaphor." This is key to him because he feels that for *Environmental Dispute Resolution* (EDR), "the essential difficulties in social policy have more to do with the problem setting [than] problem solving" (p. 138).

He believes that problem setting is shaped and framed by the "framing of problems" which he has found "often depends on the metaphors underlying the stories which generate problem setting and set the direction for problem solving" (p. 138). Both *correspondence mapping* and *generative metaphor* refer to the way the concepts associated with the source may influence how we see the target; a "carrying over of frames or perspectives from one domain of experience to another" (Schön, 1993, p. 137). Schön (1993) connects this with "how we come to see things in new ways" (p. 138), a central concept, of course, for this field. One of the most telling examples from our field, that both illustrates the importance of understanding metaphors, and bolsters Schön's and my argument that metaphor analysis could be key for *Environmental Dispute Resolution* (EDR) cases, comes from Blechman et al.'s (1998) worldview research on the Northern Forest Lands Council Dialogue which discussed how metaphors have informed forest management practices.

Early metaphors for the forest included the 'forest as a wilderness', and the 'forest as a mine' from which resources are extracted. Gifford Pinchot, head of the (American) Forest Service at the end of the 19th century, introduced the metaphor of the 'forest as a farm'. The idea that trees are something to be grown and harvested became the norm for forest management. However, along with the farm metaphor came the idea of selecting one species of tree as a chosen 'crop' and seeing others as 'weed trees'. This has since been questioned by those who define healthy forests as including the maintenance of an entire ecosystem. Imagine planted rows of white pine, waiting to be harvested, compared to a diverse ecosystem supporting a forest of interdependent animals, insects, and plants, and you can see how powerfully metaphor and the "correspondence mapping" or baggage carried from source to target, can shape reality.

> Each metaphor for the forest, during the period of dominance, became reality. Instead of seeing each metaphor as one possible way to explain objects and relationships, those who accepted the metaphor believed that the stories related to the metaphor described the real world. These stories, in turn, prescribed certain roles, and those roles encouraged actions consistent with the 'characters.' To those who believed the story, the roles seemed natural and inevitable products of the 'way the world works'. (Blechman et al. 1998, p. 8)

Having worked with the Worldview Analysis Group (See Nudler 1990; Carstarphen et al., 1995; Docherty 1996; Blechman et al., 1998), and having created my own version of their metaphor analysis form to analyze Hungarian and Slovak orientations to the conflict surrounding the Gabcíkovo Dam (Goldberg, 1995), I built on their experience, and mine, when designing new worldview analysis methods using narrative and metaphor tools for my dissertation. The early work showed that although metaphors reveal much about speakers' unconscious beliefs, they also respond so much to context and reflect so much of what Angus and Korman (2002) refer to as "frozen or cliché metaphors" in our language that they were limited in their ability to reveal or situate respondent values or beliefs. "Frozen or cliché metaphors" are those that are in common use in our language, so much so that they have a collective, rather than an individual, meaning. In my subsequent work (2009) mapping the values that framed the work of the field and testing if different values-of-practice were correlated with different work on the ground, I found that using metaphor and narrative analysis together overcame these weaknesses, and exposed strong, useful patterns that revealed both the conscious and unconscious value patterns and beliefs of respondents. This

made me strongly question why, apparently, metaphor mediation and narrative mediation techniques were not being used together. Could the attention to metaphors help narrative mediators see what their worldview would not normally attune them to? Would noting key metaphors for parties and how they are connected to shifts in the conflict bring real insight to narrative mediators?

My dissertation premise was that narratives, the way people tell their stories, reveal how they consciously organize and construct their understandings, what they value, what they exclude, and the larger constructing discourses of their society that they build on. Hidden in these narratives are many collected, culturally and experientially influenced sets of understandings and assumptions packaged as metaphors. Metaphor analysis reveals unconscious structures, and underlying assumptions about the world. Metaphors are a distilled method through which human beings carry and communicate a tremendous number of beliefs and frameworks. Because narratives are a constructed recounting of understood reality, narrative analysis reveals how the speaker thinks the world is constructed and organized, how they relate to the world and the subject at hand, what they think is real or good information and the analyst can gain insight into their moral and ethical values.

These particular aspects are listed as they correspond to the components of a worldview. Oscar Nudler (1993) defines worldviews as containing: "…various closely interrelated elements, namely an ontology, or a theory about the basic elements that populate the universe (for example, you can assume that only material entities are real or, else, you can believe in the separate existence of ideas, numbers, souls, etc.), a theory of world order, in other words, a theory about the ways in which those elements relate to each other (for instance, whether they are ordered in hierarchies or in networks or they are in a basically disordered state), an axiology or a value theory (which part or state of the universe, if any, you think is more valuable than others), an epistemology (how do you know, to what extent do you know, etc.)" (p. 4). Blechman et al. (1998) built on Nudler's conception, adding 'ethics' which includes statements about how one should act (p. 4). Both together can reveal a great deal about the respondent's worldview, meaning making, orientation, values, and beliefs and how they enact them through how they 'story' their life.

Narrative, Metaphor and Conflict

We gain access to this understanding through narrative and metaphor analysis when we engage how they work in conflict. Narrative analysis is powerful because, in the words of Catherine Kohler Riessman, a well-known narrative analyst, narratives are a "primary way individuals make sense of experience" (Riessman, 1993, p. 4). This is obviously key to understanding and responding to conflict. Winslade and Monk (2000) say:

> From a narrative perspective, people who present their problems to a mediator do so within an epistemological framework. They speak their problems into existence through the narratives they tell about them. They construct their stories out of the discourse that circulates in the conversational contexts of their lives and they construct their disputes out of the elements of these stories…If something is a problem within the dominant narratives with which the parties to a dispute are making sense of things, the challenge becomes to deconstruct the narrative itself, to see it as a framework of meaning rather than as an essential and enduring truth, and to open space for a different story to be told and for the performance of different meanings. (pp. 124-5)

Walter Fisher, who is known for his contributions to narrative theory in the field of communication states that humans' natural capacity is "an inherent awareness of narrative probability, what constitutes a coherent story, and their constant habit of testing narrative fidelity, whether or not the stories they experience ring true with the stories they know to be true in their lives" (Fisher, 1987, p. 5). Sara Cobb (1993) extended this argument to the conflict resolution field, explaining that conflicts involve competing or conflicting stories, which play out in negotiations.

Most people engaged in conflict, according to Cobb (1993), start with very rigid stories that cast their opponents in a negative light. Conflict narratives are, however, dynamic and change over time, allowing participants to change their perceptions of each other and transform conflicts. Cobb (1993) describes two variables that "make some narratives more potent than others" (p. 252). The two variables are *completeness* and *cultural resonance*. She sees the job of a mediator as to empower parties through supporting their ability to tell relatively powerful narratives (relative to one another).

Narrative Mediation as a Practice

How does this work in mediation practice? I will review key elements of Narrative Mediation, noting how it is currently multidimensional and implicitly engages metaphors. As mentioned earlier, narrative mediation, like conceptual metaphor theory, takes language as creative of, rather than reactive to, our social reality. Winslade and Monk (2000) say that parties "…tend to organize their experiences in story form…They act both out of and into these stories, shaping the direction of the ongoing plot as they do so" (p. 3). They see conflict parties as narrating what they call "totalizing descriptions" into what Cobb (1993) would call 'rigid' narratives casting their opponents into negative discursive positions. Totalizing, they say, gives one a rigid and total explanation for the situation. Essentializing, according to Winsalde and Monk (2008), explains actions as resulting from the essential nature of parties. In other words, parties tend to tell rigid narratives about each other that frame the situation as stuck, hopeless, and the result of the actions of their counterpart, who is essentially bad. These tend to be a series of stories about everything that went wrong, what Winslade and Monk (2000) call *conflict saturated stories*. Cobb, and Winslade and Monk see the job of the mediator as to "destabilize" these rigid narratives. Using Cobb's (2013) language, and in Monk and Winslade's (2000) language, the mediator supports the development of *counter stories* or *unique outcomes* – alternatives to the dominant conflict narrative which can support positive outcomes that the parties want. As such the job of the mediator is to strengthen those *counter stories* enough to hold real power during and after the mediation.

Since the underlying premise of narrative mediation is that individuals have creative power over their shared social reality, ethically, narrative mediators through their practice enact their beliefs that we are not driven by immutable essential inner faults, but that we write ourselves into and out of problems. "The spirit of the narrative mediation style is embodied in always speaking to people as if they are… creators of meaning rather than just recipients or objects of it" (Winslade & Monk, 2000, p. 158). They do this by using, to the extent possible, the parties' own key phrases of narrative description, not the mediator's. Winslade and Monk (2000) also say that narrative mediators need reflexive self-awareness about how their own cultural narratives might be shaping their responses and judgments and to "avoid attributing the conflict to any kind of essential deficit in either party" (p. 11). Further, they need to constantly check with parties to make sure they are allowing them to write their own stories to the extent possible (Microtraining, n.d., 1 and 2). In their words: "Relational practices that are not generated by

the parties themselves may have a poor ecological fit in the living context of the persons effected by them, and the skills to implement them may not exist in the parties' repertoires" (Winslade & Monk, 2008, p. 33). Key to this tailoring work is cultivating curiosity enabling the mediator to stay aware of the possibility of constructions of reality counter to their own and listening for the multiple narratives echoing in any seemingly rigid and total story (Winslade & Monk, 2000). This, I feel, is essential work for any multidimensional mediator. The meaning of spiritual, somatic, emotional, and cognitive aspects of a conflict are inevitably shaped by the community and cultural contexts of the parties. The only way we can responsibly work with others in a way that respects their complexity is to do so knowing that they are complex in ways that are shaped by their community and culture, and they, in turn, shape the world they are making around them. Acute self-awareness and openness and curiosity of the sort Winslade and Monk recommend are essential for respectful, responsive, and effective work.

The philosophical and theoretical roots of narrative mediation lead to real differences in practice with classic mediation. Narrative mediation starts in individual sessions, so the mediator can build relationship and trust with the parties, hear things they might never reveal in front of the other party, and as a way to counter the "power of the first speaker" (Cobb, 1994). Winslade and Monk (2000) summarize this as "…the first speaker's utterance calls the other person into position in response…Sara Cobb is concerned about the possible limitation on what the second speaker can say if the first speaker has already laid out the ground." They go on, however, to say that although this is very important, they expand it to see "each speech act [as calling] the other person into position in some way" (p. 138). So, although the first speech can set the conversational frame, every rejoinder and response thereafter, from both parties, attempts to do the same. Another key difference comes from their commitment to social constructivism. If our reality is socially constructed, and as Cobb (2003) puts it, some stories are more coherent and culturally resonant than others, as mentioned earlier, and it is implied that a sense of privilege and dominance can saturate that social construction process. Some storytellers and stories are empowered by their connection to larger social narratives that support a sense of entitlement (Winslade & Monk, 2000). If, following Cobb (2003), our job is to empower parties through supporting them to tell stories that are powerful, relative to one another, then we need to engage the reality that some stories are privileged, and others are not. This means that for narrative mediators a stance of neutrality is problematic. Winslade and Monk (2000) say that in situations where "these degrees of variance over relational influence are present, mediators could be called unethical if they did not find some way of attending to power discrepancies" (p. 49). From their standpoint, the story that one group is more entitled than another can be made visible and challenged by parties in ways that empower the parties to recognize the stories constraining them and begin to create counter-narratives that resist them (Winslade & Monk, 2000). In their words, "discourses effect the extent to which a person's voice can be heard by another person" (Winslade & Monk, 2000, p. 60).

Our job, then, is to assist voices to be heard and stories told in relative balance. The goal of mediation is different here than in classic mediation. It is to "…[unearth] the competencies and resources of the participants in a respectful manner" (Winslade & Monk, 2000, p. 69). This can be surprisingly direct, to the eyes of a classic mediator. To show an example from Winslade and Monk's (2000) work involving an abusive relationship rooted in patriarchal entitlement:

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> We have found it useful for the mediator to help the person who is captured by exaggerated entitlement to imagine that he is someone who, in his own better judgment, would not want to abuse or hurt another person (p. 108). [They ask questions like] …Do you want a marriage within which you can respect each other? How important is it for you to have a marriage based on genuine respect and trust? (p. 111). If Mary were doing as she is told, would she be more likely to give out of love and desire, or out of duty? (p. 113)

These approaches seem to me to reveal the therapeutic origins of the work. Although classic mediators might balk at questions like these, if they flow directly from the needs and stated goals of parties, they are quite in keeping with mediation's goal of supporting the self-determination of parties. For me, this is also a clear connection between cognitive and transcendent intelligence. In fact, Winslade and Monk's (2000) book explicit ways a mediator can follow parties for whom spiritual meaning is key (p. 222). These kinds of questions ask the party to consider their higher values and goals, while connecting emotional needs with cognitive shifts. The multidimensional nature of the work means that it is understood and internalized on many levels, eliciting more profound transformation of a conflict. In the words of Winslade and Monk (2000):

> …it is our belief that an emphasis on discursive repositioning enables something far more potent than satisfying interests or meeting needs to take place. Discursive repositioning includes the conscious shaping, albeit in some small way, of the discourses out of which needs and interests are produced. (p. 62)

Implied here is that we have both the capability and the responsibility to challenge structural violence in our work.

Narrative Skills: Practical Components

Key skills and processes to achieve this include "double listening," "externalizing conversations," "mapping the effects," "accessing the story of hope and building a counter story," "sustaining change," and "documenting progress" (Winslade & Monk, 2008). I will not cover all of these but will enlarge on the idea of "sustaining change" and "externalizing conversations" as they are relevant here.

Sustaining change requires "…a story that can serve as an exit strategy" out of a conflict, that is "well formed [enough] to be able to carry the necessary weight of both the disputing parties' hopes for something different" (Winslade & Monk, 2000, p. 181). In order to do that, mediators need to help parties strengthen their alternative story so that it has a strong plot line with a coherent series of steps, a plausible rationale or motivation, and they have the ability to live in the story as new characters whose roles and personalities are congruent with their sense of self and their histories (Winslade & Monk, 2000). This could imply, following their discussion on entitlement and Cobb's insights about coherence and cultural resonance, an attempt to subvert larger social master narratives, like ones stating that women should obey men.

I want to note that although not discussed explicitly by either White, one of the leaders of narrative therapy, or Winslade and Monk, narrative mediation already uses metaphors in some ways. The concept of positioning (Winslade & Monk, 2000, p. 121), for instance, in terms of how a party is positioned, located and defined discursively, is described as a metaphor. *Externalizing conversations* are inherently

metaphoric. They involve, for instance, talking about a conflict as if the conflict itself was an actor driving people in ways they do not want (thus externalizing the blameworthy aspects into something that can be challenged and engaged). Also, many of the examples in the books and the videos on narrative mediation show mediators using the metaphoric language of parties (Winslade & Monk, 2000; 2008; Monk & Winslade, 2013; Microtraining, n.d.1 and 2). Also, some of the techniques can be seen as inherently metaphoric, like externalizing conversations or "internalized other questioning" (Winslade & Monk, 2000, p. 177) which uses role reversal, asking one party to respond as if they were the other. The next section considers metaphors and how they are already being used by mediators.

Current Literature on Metaphors and Mediation

There is already a developing literature on metaphors and mediation, which, surprisingly, is not being connected to the literature on narrative mediation. The earliest work was largely about how conflicts are framed based on the source domain of their metaphors (Hocker & Wilmot, 1995; Haynes, n.d.; Mayer, 2000; Cohen, 2003; Haynes et al., 2004). This includes conflict metaphors like *conflict is war*, *conflict is a trial*, and so on. Haynes also started to look at the way interveners can help parties work with their metaphors, saying, "one task for the mediator is to help the clients use the metaphors that most closely express their view of the conflict and/or develop an organizing metaphor that is more conducive to cooperation and productive negotiations" (Haynes, n.d., p. 5). So, for instance, if working with a divorcing couple who are using war metaphors about their relationship, it may help to point that out and assist them to explore other metaphors that are more helpful for them. The most extensive and rigorous work on metaphors and mediation, particularly the use of conceptual metaphors or those that shape how we conceive of things, however, has been done by Martin Gannon (2001) and Thomas Smith (2005a; 2005b; 2005c). Smith (Belfast Presentation, n.d.) proposes that mediators can use a knowledge of how conceptual metaphors work in language to:

1) clarify each disputant's views so that each knows better what the other is saying;
2) find mutually familiar and acceptable terminology;
3) test the acceptability to each of using the metaphorical frame of the other; and
4) prepare to extend each disputant's metaphors so as to reveal common features.

These are, of course, in line with narrative mediation's goals of helping parties create robust counter narratives to live into.

Storrow and Georgakopoulos' (2014) work is interesting in that it examined how mediators see the systems of which they are a part through framing metaphors, which, of course, also shapes what happens in the session. Consider if the mediator sees him or herself as part of a relational "family" or as working with fellow staff with a shared purpose - steering a "ship" (Storrow & Georgakopoulos, 2014), and how those frames might shape their work. Storrow and Georgakopoulos' work also examined what metaphors reveal about how mediators see themselves and their role, which could be used in the critical self-awareness work of any reflective practitioner.

This sense of direct intervention through either expanding on the parties' metaphors or introducing new ones to shift the frame of the narrative, could be extremely useful to narrative mediators. I suspect that, in fact, many already do so to some extent, although possibly not deliberately. In fact, one of the

key tools of narrative mediation, the *externalizing conversation*, works through making the conflict into an external object, a metaphor for their experience, as mentioned previously.

Schön's (1993) article was particularly interesting for its direct connection to *Environmental Dispute Resolution* (EDR) and multiparty cases, and to how metaphors can be used by intervenors. He argues that in these cases he has seen the power of naming and framing (metaphors) that make what he calls the "normative leap from data to recommendations, from fact to values, from 'is' to 'ought'" (p. 147). Schön (1993) contends that in order to use metaphors in a way that leads to real and not shallow, although potentially attractive, insight, (which is often the temptation), is to develop a complex understanding of the source and how it shapes our understanding of the domain - in fact to use metaphors consciously and intentionally. The challenge is that generative metaphors are usually tacit and that environmental conflicts are characterized by multiple stories. So, we need to "read" the metaphors we use to frame deeply, explore the insights revealed consciously, and be willing to see what is ruled out through this framing exercise as well as what is ruled in. He says that once we find a metaphor that seems to really explain and make sense of a situation the resulting clarity is powerful.

> This sense of obviousness of what is wrong and what needs fixing is the hallmark of generative metaphors in the field of social policy…In order to dissolve the obviousness of diagnosis and prescription in the field of social policy, we need to become aware of, and focus attention upon, the generative metaphors which underlie our problem-setting stories. (Schön, 1993, p. 148)

[He explores the example of the profound difference between an urban renewal project rooted in the metaphor of "urban blight" versus one focused on supporting a "natural community".] His solution is *frame restructuring* where the policy maker attempts to construct a "new problem-setting story, one in which we attempt to integrate conflicting frames" (Schön, 1993, p. 152) similar to Cobb's creation of a co-joint story as a successful outcome.

Finally, although not part of the literature on metaphor and mediation, I do want to mention the newer work of Sara Cobb (2013) on narrative and conflict resolution. Cobb's work examining the larger societal narratives that shape conflict and the power of rewriting framing narratives could add a great deal to Winslade and Monk's (2000) early conversation on dominant narratives of entitlement. In particular, narrative mediators may benefit from her insights in three areas: conversation as a *struggle over meaning*, *radicalized narratives*, and the *concept of destabilizing narratives* jointly as a way to legitimize both sides (Cobb, 2013). The concept of conflict conversation as a *struggle over meaning* highlights the way entitlement can operate and why it is used (to control meaning for the benefit of one side) which goes well with Winslade and Monk's (2000) concept of "totalizing descriptions" (pp. 5-6) but on a larger, societal scale. The 'all or nothing' thinking of individuals can, in fact, be bolstered similarly by "all against one" (Cobb, 2013, p. 116) discourses in the larger society. So, for instance, in my classroom, I found students much more resistant to nuanced, complex thinking in their own papers about their own conflicts in the immediate aftermath of 9-11 when the country as a whole was captured by 'all against one' thinking, although subsequent years found them again more nuanced and tolerant of ambiguity. In these polarized times, however, the ability to "destabilize" "rigid" narratives connected with larger, dominant, or this case 'fight for dominance', narratives, could point to an area of narrative intervention that has not been fully explored. Certainly, our larger social frames seem to be terrifyingly

dominated by these dangerous narratives at this time. My hope is that the work of Schön and others can show how dangerous these mindsets are and those in our field can work to 'destabilize' narratives in a way that supports the real complexity of democracy again.

Results of Preliminary Observations

Although highly preliminary, I attempted to inductively track how metaphors work in conflicts, specifically public policy conflicts as a participant observer at five *Environmental Dispute Resolution* (EDR) multiparty, multi-stakeholder processes. Knowing I would be working on this article, I actively listened for metaphoric moments in the discussions I observed and noted their effect on the flow of the conversation. This included 28 hours of participant observation. I attempted to note metaphors whenever they came up but felt early on that something like simply counting metaphors would not be very useful, for, as mentioned above, many are 'frozen' or idiomatic ones and they did not seem to me to reveal a great deal or offer real moments of potential for interveners. So, what, then, was I looking for?

I started tracking the effect of metaphors when used deliberately by a speaker. I was stuck by a number of repeating dynamics I observed. I must, however, mention here a number of limitations to this very preliminary observational data. One is the highly self-selected nature of my attention, especially as I was a participant observer and had more to do than simply track metaphors. Second, I was the only person tracking metaphors, which leads to observer bias. Third, this was hardly a large sample size and so any conclusions drawn are highly speculative. However, granting all that, I was struck that the deliberate use of metaphors by parties seemed often to accompany a moment of shift. There were moments when one party was working to explain their thinking to another party, often associated with intense emotion, a need to have the other side understand, and using metaphors seemed to work as a way to communicate across a gap in understanding. The use of a more familiar source sometimes reached across the gap and caused a moment of real understanding, in fact, destabilizing the previous narrative and allowing the overall discourse to take a new turn. I was also struck by the way people often used metaphors to move from the language of debate, or attempts to convince, to the language of engagement, for instance shifting from technical or abstract to homey or inviting language. The effect was often to get people laughing and created a sense of connection, in fact humanizing and opening the conversation. It was also used to make the point more strongly and be more convincing, which sometimes brought conversation to a momentary pause, as people absorbed a new idea or really grasped the seriousness of the issue for the speaker. For me it harkened especially to Schön's (1993) ideas of how critical problem setting can be and how the metaphor shifts the focus and understanding of a public policy initiative. I felt I saw this happen on several occasions, as parties used metaphors to bridge gaps and shift discourses and thinking.

Deliberate metaphoric language tended to be associated with a very compelling argument, one that drew on both heart and mind, which a story can often do as well, or one communicated with a sense of real sincerity. This shows the multidimensional power of engaging the complexity of parties and mediators. The feeling often was that the speaker was departing from a practiced argument or a set of facts to make a deeper, more human plea or demand or connection. Often metaphors were used when the speaker wanted to communicate something of their emotions like a feeling: *this matters to me*.

For me this pointed to the possibility that enhanced metaphor awareness skills, as well as metaphor intervention abilities, might be highly useful to narrative mediators, and in fact, both narrative and metaphor techniques could be of great use to mediators who work in complex, value-laden cases such as *Environmental Dispute Resolution* (EDR) cases.

Here are some specific examples I noted:

- Citizen stakeholders using metaphors constantly to find ways to bridge their understanding of multiple aspects of their situation with that of the agency with whom they were negotiating when their ideas were imperfectly understood.
- Using metaphors to build community by literally using the other's words in a public agency/ private business negotiation around regulations.
- A group changing the narrative and the metaphors for a region, very deliberately, to try and change the perceptions of that region. They were literally re-writing the story of that place and are changing how it is seen and felt and somatically experienced.

Some things I noted also point to limitations in the use of focusing on metaphors. So, for instance, I saw some processes where metaphors were not used often in a deliberate way and did not seem correlated with major decisions. Of note, those two meetings seemed to be more routine and less 'fraught' occasions, however. Also, I noticed that some people are naturally expressive, metaphoric speakers, and others are not. And some local cultures are marked by more metaphoric language than others. Often when trying to persuade or speak powerfully, I saw people using metaphors. However, it was not at all universal. For instance, in one case the engineers involved in a case often chose to persuade through clarity and fact.

From my own work in the classroom teaching how to use metaphors as an assessment tool, it is a normal occurrence that in any given classroom a few people take to metaphoric language naturally. A reasonable number can do so if they think about it, and a minority struggle desperately to come up with metaphors because they are so alien to them. Because of this, in the intake forms for multidimensional practice that I've developed, I have created a series of cards with images on them that show different classic metaphors for conflicts (a broken bridge, a garden, tug or war, armed combat, negotiation sessions, etc.) and hope they help some people access those hidden meanings stored in their unconscious. I don't think this variability at all decreases the import of the tool – it merely is a useful reminder that any given set of skills will be more or less useful, and need to be tailored, to the specific needs in the room.

Expanding Use of Metaphoric Components in Narrative Mediation: Practical Suggestions

Although there have been developments in using metaphors in therapy, for instance Ferrara (1994), and even work looking at how to use metaphors in narrative therapy (Lyness & Thomas, 1995; Legowski & Brownlee, 2001), there seems to have been little done to connect metaphor practices in mediation to narrative mediation. Although narrative mediators already use the metaphoric language of clients in naming the issues ('this whole mess' for instance, using the client's words), they don't necessarily expand or work with the metaphor, or if they do, it has not been well documented. In this section, I note some of the ways that metaphor engagement could support and deepen narrative practice

and be useful in general to mediators. To recap some of the key points mentioned above, metaphors reveal unconscious values and beliefs, so working with them explicitly can help a narrative mediator, for instance, make visible patterns of assumed entitlement or support the goal of 'historicizing' a conflict: making visible the degree to which it is a product of time, happening right now this way, but perhaps differently in the past, which means it could be different in the future (See Winsalde & Monk, 2000, p. 149). Working with metaphors helps reveal hidden, unconscious assumptions and shows how parties' pictures of the world are clashing. It helps people understand the pieces of something that feels like a monolithic whole and get a handle on which pieces matter, and which can move or shift, changing 'essentializing' or 'conflict-saturated' narratives. As Schön (1993) notes, problem-setting shapes how problems are resolved and understood, so working with the complexity and richness of those frames and metaphors can be crucial to solving real problems with complexity and depth – extremely useful in *Environmental Dispute Resolution* (EDR) cases, and, again, something our country desperately needs at this time. Consciously working with the worlds of meaning embedded in metaphors, and transmitted by them, could help mediators make visible the 'correspondence mapping' or metaphor baggage being absorbed and acted upon. My observations seem to also imply that metaphors can be sites of transformation as well as tools of shift, and working with them can open powerful shifts in conflicts.

I believe this means that narrative mediators need to understand what metaphors do and how to listen for them; and know that they can elicit and enlarge on metaphors to make space to de-stabilize rigid or dominant or 'conflict-saturated' narratives to support creative, transformative, co-joint conflict stories that parties can live alternatives futures into. Similarly, mediators who are now using metaphors (who are few in number, but they exist) could elicit narratives from the metaphors being used. Even as simply as using the narrative technique of mapping the conflict: "Your description of this marriage uses a lot of war metaphors – taking the high ground, living in a minefield, etc. What has the impact been of living in this battleground, as you called it?" Such a question is what Winslade and Monk (2000) would call an 'externalizing question' and would enrich metaphor mediation, as the active use of metaphoric elements might enrich narrative mediation. Similarly, metaphors could be explicitly engaged during intake. I have designed an intake form for multidimensional mediators that would include working with parties to identify a metaphor for their conflict during intake, which could be used by the mediator as noted here, and at the end of their mediation the mediator could check to see what shifts might be indicated by changes in the metaphors used.

As well as a summary of the overall rationale, I want this section to include concrete tools mediators can use to work with and intervene in metaphors. Even simply listening for metaphors can give one a great deal of insight. One thing I've learned working with metaphors in trainings and classrooms is that most of us are not accustomed to listening for metaphors. So, for instance, parties do "correspondence mapping" - carrying 'baggage' from source to target - just as the members of the Forest Service did. Making this visible can reveal contradictions, stuck places, assumptions, and open space for new understandings and decisions. Much of the content in this section comes from Thomas Smith, who has trained many mediators in metaphoric techniques. I was able to look at a number of his resources when we collaborated for a workshop at the Association for Conflict Resolution in 2015. Smith often asks participants in his workshops to work on listening for the source, as a first step. Let's say you hear parties say, "We're just stuck" and "There's nowhere to go from here." What is the source here?

What is implied? These are such common metaphors that are used so often we are hardly aware of them (possibly 'frozen' ones but they can still be useful). But they carry 'baggage' and can be transformative as well. So, Smith says, the mediator might simply ask, "If you could go somewhere else, where would it be?" Because metaphors are whole, visual, and symbolic, working with them can be an invaluable way to do an end-run around stuck cognitive frameworks and allow parties to see beyond their immediate constructs to the underlying frames supporting them, and then, question and shift those frames once they become visible. This would go beautifully with the goals of narrative mediation to work with parties own construction of their story, and enable them to shift it.

In essence, Smith says we have four possible ways to do this as we work with parties' metaphors. He says we can:

- join a party's metaphors and reflect them back, thus helping the parties become more aware of the underlying structures of their worldviews, values, and assumptions;
- expand on it, as in the example above, with similar results;
- co-develop it to open and expand the narrative, for instance in the search for new co-joint narratives;
- or we can question it, as Monk and Winsalde do with issues of entitlement in the earlier section.

Here are examples from Smith on how to do these things. He feels that by sustaining a metaphor, you sustain a familiar cognitive structure in a way that helps people feel heard and validated. If you hear, "I feel like there's no way out anymore," and say, "So you feel trapped?" you are entering into their worldview in a way that respects it. This, by itself, can allow people to 'see' their own frames and question or reframe them.

We can also use a metaphor to unify and synthesize by, for instance, showing or making connections between different parties' metaphors and frames. Smith gives this example from the "There's nowhere to go from here" scenario above: He might ask, "Are you both going to the same place? Is there a way to go there together? What would that look like?" As you see, this is a way to start building the co-joint narrative.

In the same vein, a mediator could elicit preferred futures by asking, "Would you rather be in a conflict that made you use different metaphors? What might they be if they were connected to your goals? What might that lead to?"

Smith recommends the following questions to help unpack assumptions about causation, show what is missing, and reveal unseen layers:

- What tells you that the problem comes from something he/she/they did?
- What indicates for you the impact you have on this particular situation?
- What tells you the degree to which you effect this situation?
- What strategy did you decide on as a response?

Other questions that can get at somatic aspects of unpacked knowledge are particularly relevant for multidimensional work:

- What did you feel when you first noticed this problem?
- What is the first response you felt inside?

Similarly, you can ask: "How do you feel now?" when shifts occur in the mediation. Many of the responses to these questions are metaphors that you can then work with like:
"I felt pressure building up until I knew I was going to explode."

Another idea comes from my colleague Brian Blancke who adapted three or four column note taking from Senge as used by Vantage Partners in many of their trainings (Senge, 2006). He feels there are a few ways to do this, for instance, having each co-mediator track one party's metaphors or having one track metaphors while the other tracks issues and agreement points. The different foci are tracked on a piece of paper with however many columns are needed. This can help mediators track and analyze metaphors. As an example:

- Column one might list: what is being said.
- Column two might list: metaphors you note.
- Column three might list: what is implied – the deeper level of meaning here.

You can then reflect back to the party something like: you used these metaphors when talking about this – is there a pattern here, do you think, that could help us see something that is important to you? This is similar to my dissertation research with metaphors and narratives that allowed me greater insight into what values shaped the worldview of a practitioner and guided their practice, but here those skills empower parties to understand themselves and their conflicts. In both cases, triangulating and tracking metaphors and the narratives they create and are embedded in, lead to greater insight.

Narrative (and other) mediators can, in short:

- Do an intake that elicits metaphoric understandings in ways that allow parties to begin to understand the way their own unconscious 'storying' shapes their conflict;
- Learn to listen for metaphors as sites for transformation and shift, which three column note taking could assist with;
- Using Smith's tools and processes, engage consciously with parties' metaphors and the metaphors framing a case to create spaces for shift and expansion.

To Conclude

Lederach's Moral Imagination (2005) implies that the core of what we do is support "the capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist" (p. ix). Michael White says, "We enter into stories, we are entered into stories by others, and we live our lives through stories" (Winslade & Monk, 2000, p. 52). Narratives and metaphors are key tools that allow us to re-imagine our lives and retell our stories. They are central to our lives, and central to our conflicts. They are also key to our ability to 'live' into new stories and change our conflicts and our lives.

My preliminary observations point to the potential of metaphors as cites and tools of transformation which reinforces my contention that metaphor work may add real potential to narrative mediation, including enhancing its multidimensional potential. While narratives reveal a tremendous amount about how we consciously 'story' and 're-story' our lives, metaphors reveal unconscious frameworks and assumptions that can derail our attempts to re-write our conflicts. Working consciously with both could

create much more powerful, transformative, and multidimensional practice for parties and narrative (and metaphor) mediators.

My hope is that mediators can work with greater art, insight, and impact by using both narrative and metaphoric tools. I also hope that future research will reveal more about how the powerful discursive and worldview shift work of the combination of narratives and metaphors can support richer and more multidimensional conflict resolution practice.

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Peacebuilding from the Inside Out: The "Work of the Soul" as a Key to Working with Others

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Abstract

Fields that deal with human conflict focus mainly on relations *among* people. Their results can be enhanced with a supplemental focus on the domain *within* people: the identity and values held within the deepest self, often considered the realm of spirituality and faith. Words attributed to Jesus of Nazareth summarize the connection: "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34)—i.e., the domain within us shapes our behavior in the world among us. In this *within,* contemplative spirituality—as practiced by monastics and mystics in several faith traditions for centuries—has a substantial contribution to make. Its central purpose is the "encounter with Oneness" (named in various traditions as God, the Universe, Brahman, emptiness, and so forth). Over time, asserts contemplative thought, this encounter transforms people at their very core, embedding in them the values that, according to many traditions, live at the heart of Oneness, especially compassion, gentleness, and peace. Energized by the encounter, deeply reoriented toward these values, individuals are empowered to bring them into the world. While making the points above, this paper examines the encounter with Oneness as detailed in several faith traditions, especially Christianity and Buddhism. Two areas are discussed in detail. First, the text describes a selection of widespread spiritual practices used by contemplatives to facilitate this encounter, including silent prayer, meditation (particularly zazen), and encounters with "sacred texts." Second, the paper presents the idea of living in harmony with other traditions not just by respecting them, but by practicing them ourselves. Included are the experiences of both the author and a monastic organization dedicated to this approach. Throughout, the paper makes the connection between venerable spiritual practices and the enhanced capacity to make peace across divides. It also, wherever possible, rearticulates spiritual practice for a broader audience, rendering it more inclusive and accessible across belief systems.

Keywords: contemplation, spirituality, Christianity, Buddhism, peacebuilding, dialogue

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ICERM International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.
—Matthew 12:34

By definition, fields that deal with human conflict and reconciliation focus mainly on relations among people. In dialogue and deliberation, for instance, most models seek to promote the interpersonal in nearly every phase of the process: creating environments conducive to mutual exchange (Living Room Conversations, n.d.), establishing ground rules for interpersonal communication (Center for Courage & Renewal, n.d.), or developing models for brainstorming and collaboration (Stadler, n.d.; Brown & Isaacs, 2005).

There is good reason for all this. Among is foundational to our nature as social beings. But it is not our whole nature as human beings. We are also within—possessors of rich inner lives that include some of the most cherished facets of the human experience, such as ideas, values, beliefs, and above all identity. This is often referred to as the domain of mind and heart, the realm of spirituality and faith.

The dynamic between *among* and *within* can have profound reverberations in the fields of human conflict and reconciliation, as illustrated in the pithy words attributed to Jesus of Nazareth above. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks* is the text's way of saying that the domain *within* us shapes our behavior in the world *among* us. Anyone with even a passing knowledge of psychology would surely resonate with this ancient aphorism.

Those of us concerned with peacebuilding can use that observation to great advantage. We can supplement our interpersonal efforts with practices designed to reorient the *within*—to turn people's deepest selves away from hostility and defensiveness toward inner traits that build peace: compassion, curiosity, empathy, a clear sense of self and one's own limitations, a willingness to risk, and a hunger for reconciliation. Long before conflict resolution efforts even begin, the cultivation of such character traits can enable individuals to approach any interpersonal dialogue with a clear mind and open heart. Without such character traits, participants find it too easy to revert to their instinct toward defensiveness and self-protection, and the effort is more likely to stall.

What is the nature of this reorienting? Where do we find the practices to foster it? One model comes from the realm of contemplative spirituality—often called "the work of the soul"—which includes the world's most venerable practices of prayer, meditation, and study. Before examining this work, however, we must understand a bit more about its objective: what, or who, practitioners are reorienting to.

The Encounter that Transforms

By its very nature, such an objective is difficult to describe with scientific precision. The experience of reorientation happens in the deepest recesses of mind and heart, and therefore is subjective. Moreover, because it involves the transcendent, it takes place largely beyond the boundaries of language. For evidence we are left with the testimony of numerous sages, mystics, and devotees throughout history. Fortunately, much of that evidence converges on a theme that runs through major swaths of humanity's spiritual tradition. It can be described as the encounter with Oneness. As with so many terms in the realm of spirituality, *One* and *Oneness* are mere approximations of an existential state, and they are not without controversy. W. Haylett (video conversation, February 7, 2018) has noted a debate within Buddhism

over these terms: given the Buddhist idea of impermanence—that nothing possesses a fixed, substantive essence—it may be more accurate to assert that "we are not all *one;* we are all *none."* Moreover, like many spiritual ideas, the concept of Oneness has been seriously diluted by its simplistic use in popular culture. Nonetheless, it appears at the heart of many world faith traditions, and the common themes shared by this Oneness and the "Noneness" of Buddhism (e.g., that everything springs from what might be called a unity) makes *One* and *Oneness,* in the author's view, the closest we can get to a single word that covers as many traditions as possible. As we shall see, the striving toward this encounter not only crosses spiritual traditions but crops up even in the sciences.

One of Judaism's fundamental prayers, the shema—the centerpiece of the morning and evening prayer services (Chabad-Lubavitch, n.d.b, para. 1)—begins by asserting that "G-d is our L-rd, G-d is one." Some Judaic traditions omit the vowel from the divine name as a sign of respect and reverence. The website of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement unpacks the meaning of this core assertion:

> We inhabit a cosmic mirage. We perceive myriad creations, all seemingly self-sufficient and independent beings. But, as Jews, we believe that in fact there is only one true entity. One Gd who is the essence of everything. One Gd manifest in an infinite amount of creations. Engraving this counterintuitive idea into our psyches is our greatest challenge, but key to developing a true appreciation for, and a relationship with, our Creator. (Chabad-Lubavitch, n.d.a, para. 1-2)

The concept of Oneness is hardly exclusive to Judaism. Islam similarly insists on the Oneness of God: indeed, it is built into the first of the Five Pillars, which guide all Islamic faith and practice (WhyIslam, n.d., introduction). Even the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, as polytheistic as it seems to some adherents of other traditions, insists that the essence of God is still one, albeit expressed in three persons. Buddhism takes Oneness in a different direction with the idea that everything springs from a common source, and thus each being is interdependent with all other beings.

Does the encounter with Oneness merge the seeker with the Sought? Traditions differ on this point. Traditional Islam and Christianity have asserted that the seeker always remains distinct from the Divine. Christian mystics such as Meister Eckhart take a more panentheistic approach—God as inextricably interwoven with every created being (Fox, 1980). Buddhism would question the existence of the seeker as an independent entity at all; the Oneness of seeker and Sought has been the reality all along, and enlightenment simply awakens the seeker to this truth. Whatever the specific nature of the encounter, it is clear that the yearning for Oneness expresses itself in many, if not most, points on the religious spectrum.

This yearning may have a foundation in the natural world. In physics, the ongoing search for a Theory of Everything seeks "one complete and consistent set of fundamental laws of nature that explain every aspect of reality" (Hawking & Mlodinow, 2013, para. 2). In cosmology, most explanations of the Big Bang place its origins in a single point of infinite density (known as a singularity; Hawking, n.d., para. 5).

Yet perhaps even the natural world is not the ultimate "proof" of our desire for Oneness. Hawking and Mlodinow (2013) describe the "worldview" of a goldfish in its fishbowl to illustrate that "one's concept of reality can depend on the mind of the perceiver…. According to [this idea], the world we know is constructed by the human mind employing sensory data as its raw material and is shaped by the

interpretive structure of our brain…. There is no way to remove the observer—us—from our perception of the world" (para. 4). Therefore, whether or not all physical reality is "objectively" one, does our drive to find it so—or at least to settle the question—reflect a yearning for Oneness in the deepest recesses of the human heart?

In short, the encounter with Oneness appears embedded in the essence of our individual selves and our species as a whole. Just as important is the effects of this encounter: when practiced over time, it reorients the practitioner to reflect the values at the heart of Oneness—values that are remarkably consistent across spiritual traditions. For Buddhists, the awakening to our interdependence naturally sparks compassion for all beings. For Christians, union with God bends our hearts to what one biblical letter calls the "fruit of the Spirit": love, joy, peace, kindness, and gentleness, among others (Galatians 5:22-23). These are, of course, the very values that fuel approaches to peacebuilding. Energized by the encounter with Oneness, deeply reoriented toward the values of peace, individuals are empowered to bring them into the world.

If this encounter with Oneness carries so much power to effect peacebuilding, it behooves us to discover how to foster this encounter. The same traditions that revere Oneness have spawned myriad ways to do just that: to "till the soil of our souls." While the practices described in the next section are cornerstones of two faith traditions—Zen and Christian monasticism—their application readily crosses the lines of faith and spirit.

Practices for the Encounter

Silence in Prayer

The word prayer, like so many others, has accumulated a wide range of meanings. Adherents of various traditions might think of prayer as "saying grace" before meals, supplications for help, or expressions of thanksgiving. They might think of set prayers in an order of public worship, such as the Jummah (Friday) prayer in Islam or the Catholic Mass, or words to be said while visiting a holy site. All of these have the potential to connect practitioners with their God.

On another level, however, is prayer of few or no words—prayer whose main characteristic is silence. In centering prayer, for instance, practitioners simply sit in the presence of the Divine and use a single word, like God or love, to focus. To quote Contemplative Outreach (n.d.), the organization whose founders developed the method, "Centering Prayer emphasizes prayer as a personal relationship with God and as a movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with Him" (para. 2).

Much older is the Jesus prayer: the simple repetition of (in some variation) "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." With its origins in the earliest centuries of Christianity, the prayer "helps us to focus our mind exclusively on God with 'no other thought' [emphasis original] occupying our mind but the thought of God. At this moment when our mind is totally concentrated on God, we discover a very personal and direct relationship with Him" (Orthodox Prayer, n.d., para. 2).

Notice the outcomes of these prayers, as mentioned in the quotations above. Communion. A very personal and direct relationship. They are none other than synonyms for the encounter with Oneness discussed in the previous section—the encounter that gives birth to the reorientation of heart that fosters compassion and peace. In these and other forms of contemplative prayer, including total silence, practitioners open their hearts to God, and (in their belief) God opens God's heart to them.

On another level, in Christian practice, this encounter with Oneness forms a "surpassing attachment" to God that naturally relaxes our attachment to other phenomena, for instance the accumulation of wealth, the quest for prestige, and our deepest convictions (Backman, 2017b, para. 16-17). It is important to note that these phenomena are not bad in themselves. Few, for instance, would dispute the value of convictions: in many cases, they represent the contributions each individual can make to ongoing dialogue about humanity's pressing concerns. But the attachment to such convictions often prevents the conviction holder from truly listening to others, particularly those with opposing perspectives, and thereby crossing divides to reach out to them. When ongoing encounters with Oneness relax that attachment, practitioners become less invested in their own views and more openhearted in their approach to others. They are better able to build peace with others because of the peace fostered in their inmost selves.

Meditation to Let Go

While the practice of meditation spans many traditions, perhaps none has elaborated on it as extensively as Buddhism. Put simply, meditation is one means by which many Buddhists strive for enlightenment: an awakening to reality as it is, including such central characteristics as impermanence and (key for our purposes) non-attachment.

Like most things in Buddhism, meditation comes in many variations: insight meditation, wisdom meditation, meditation on death, heart rhythm meditation, mindfulness meditation, and so on. Many of them incorporate attention to the breath, or a focal point (like a chant or sound), or one's immediate surroundings at that moment.

This is certainly true of one of meditation's most widespread versions. Zazen—literally "seated meditation," the foundation for the Soto branch of Zen Buddhism—consists of sitting in silence, using a prescribed posture, and paying complete attention to the breath. When thoughts or sensations arise, the practitioner notes them as one would note a passing boat on the horizon, and then returns attention to the breath. Many sages have elaborated on the details of zazen—instructions on the proper posture, how to breathe deeply, the necessity of studying with a Zen teacher—and they are important. But the essence is deceptively simple: sit, breathe, focus. (The word deceptively is key: zazen is much more difficult than it sounds!)

The reality to which one awakens in enlightenment includes several characteristics central to peacebuilding in the inner self. The most fundamental characteristic of this reality—in the words of Bodhidharma, the first patriarch of what became widely known as Zen—is "vast emptiness" (Wick, 2005, p. 13). Far from a nihilistic concept, emptiness in the Buddhist tradition is the ground of infinite potentiality, realized through the innumerable causes and conditions that shape all life. Since all things come about via these changing causes and conditions, it follows that all things are impermanent, continuously in flux—so continuously that it is impossible to assert the permanent existence of anything. Bodhidharma knew this impermanence even of himself: after his declaration of "vast emptiness," he was asked (in essence), "Who are you, telling us this?" and was compelled to say, "I don't know" (Wick, 2005, p. 13). This impermanence, in turn, recommends non-attachment as a key to the cessation of suffering which is the goal of the Buddha's Four Noble Truths. It is folly to attach oneself obsessively to things that undergo continuous change.

That includes the convictions, opinions, fervor, and conflict that often impede mediation and peacebuilding. By embedding the truths of Buddhism into the practitioner on a visceral level—to move its wisdom from head to heart, as it were—the pursuit of enlightenment relaxes the practitioner's attachment to all that is impermanent. The more non-attachment becomes a part of practitioners, the more they can let go the impediments to crossing divides, and the more effectively they can build peace with their adversaries.

One other effect of meditation brings another virtue into the equation. By seeing the causes and conditions that effect everything in the universe, the practitioner is awakened to the interdependence of all things. Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese monk, has said that a single piece of paper illustrates the vast web of interdependence: it contains the trees from which it was made, the sunlight and earth that helped the trees to grow, the human effort to manufacture the paper, the ideas written on it, and so forth (Hanh, 2009, p. 2). This interdependence inevitably inspires the compassion of those who live in the web and are awakened to its presence—compassion that fuels their desire for the peace and wellness of all beings.

The Sacred Words

By their very nature, prayer and meditation are grounded in one specific locus: the mind and heart of the practitioner. Other practices for encountering Oneness expand the circle, incorporating communities of people present and past, via their physical presence or their written words. Included in the latter is the encounter with sacred texts.

This encounter can take several forms. Christian monasteries, for instance, make a daily practice of praying sacred texts. Because a fixed schedule prescribes the texts for any given day, monastics sometimes pray a passage that does not resonate with them or that clashes with their own perspectives. This forces the practitioner's deepest self to encounter wisdom outside that self, day after day, instilling the awareness that one's personal view is not the only view—and that, quite possibly, one's view may be wrong.

Certain prayed texts shed penetrating light on what it means to be human. Since the Psalms as a whole display the full range of human emotion, their use in prayer helps adherents identify and empathize with the inner lives of others, which gives birth to empathy and compassion. This daily encounter with the other—whether God or one's companion human beings—helps to reorient the inner self toward the other.

The study of sacred texts engenders a similar expansion of viewpoint. Here a wide array of practices come into play: theological study, linguistic analysis, Ignatian visualization, "read the Bible in a year" programs, and lectio divina, the slow, contemplative reading of the scriptures to hear the voice of God (Order of Carmelites, n.d.).

In study as in prayer, the sheer "otherness" of sacred texts can reorient the deepest self. Many of these texts were written in vastly different times and contexts, most of them strange to today's readers. The literary forms, hyperbole, and symbolism are difficult to understand. The texts' ancient assumptions often run counter to postmodern beliefs. If readers engage the texts with any spirit of curiosity and exploration, the difference between what they read and who they are can expand their worldviews exponentially. This, like meditation and the praying of sacred texts, relaxes the practitioner's attachment

to her convictions, opinions, and fervor, because the texts expose them for what they are: one person's worldview among billions, in a universe that dwarfs any opinion, no matter how dearly held. As with praying the texts, continual exposure to vastly different perspectives retrains the heart and mind to approach the perspectives of others more openheartedly.

One final point must be made, and it concerns the phrase sacred texts. While presenting on this topic several years ago, the author was challenged by a humanist scholar who noted that "what you describe as the benefits of sacred text, I get from reading Wordsworth." A subsequent reading of Wordsworth supported his claim. Particularly in a multicultural, multireligious world, where reverence for everyone's tradition is a requirement for peacebuilding, it is imperative that we broaden the definition of sacred texts as far as possible—perhaps even to include all texts, the poems of Wordsworth and prose of Ulysses as well as the Bible and Bhagavad Gita.

"I Accept Everything...from Within My Everything"

Every day, people engage in the diverse forms of cooperation we call interfaith: one-on-one conversations, story circles, interfaith alliances, organizations such as the International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation and the North American Interfaith Network, massive events like the Parliament of the World's Religions, and so on. They provide a model for making peace interpersonally—for crossing chasms between faith traditions through dialogue, learning, and mutual understanding. The contemplative spirit provides a complementary model: delving into other traditions not only through communication, but via active participation—not just learning about other traditions but plunging into them ourselves.

This is hardly a new idea. To cite just one example, the nuns and monks of DIMMID (Dialogue Interreligious Monastique/Monastic Interreligious Dialogue) can be seen practicing it with Zen practitioners, Muslims, and others in the documentary Strangers No More (Helburg, Lemoine, & Hellot, 2015). Pierre-François de Béthune, a Benedictine monk who has held leadership positions in DIMMID, believes that:

> if you are deeply rooted in your tradition…you don't have to be afraid of immersing yourself in another religion. It's not a question of compromise, saying I'll accept this, but not that. No. I accept everything! But I accept it from [within] my everything. It's a meeting from faith to faith. (W. Skudlarek, 2017, email correspondence to translate outtake from Helburg, Lemoine, & Hellot, 2015)

The author's recent experience with zazen has yielded several insights into the ways interfaith immersion can promote interfaith harmony (Backman, 2017a, p. 71). First, even a small amount of practice opens one's eyes to the beauty and truth inherent in the "adopted tradition." Practitioners can intellectually appreciate the value of mindfulness, for instance, but not experience the sheer aliveness of the present moment until they immerse themselves in mindfulness meditation. It is very difficult to hate a faith tradition that one has experienced firsthand as beautiful.

Second, as a corollary to this insight, the intimate experience of another faith tradition destroys the fears and stereotypes that often surround the "other." By entering in, practitioners come to know the practice personally, discover its strengths and nuances, and find common ground with their own traditions.

It is analogous to the convening of diverse groups, such as white people and African Americans, gay and straight people, or conservatives and progressives. Stereotypes about a group tend to fall away when one is face-to-face with the uniqueness of individuals within that group. Similarly, misapprehensions of another tradition can hardly stand up under the discoveries made when one enters that tradition.

Third, it is difficult to hate a tradition when it produces transformative change. Nearly every spiritual tradition orients itself—and, via practice, its adherents—toward goodness, truth, and compassion. Entering deeply into another tradition, therefore, exposes the seeker to the transformative power therein. Backman (2017b, pp. 71-72) has noted how the practice of zazen, with the deep grasp of impermanence it instills, equipped him to successfully grieve the loss of a loved one in a way his own tradition could not do.

Suggestions for Further Research

To date, the author's work in this area has drawn on several principal sources: his twenty-five years' firsthand experience with monastic practices, the biographies of saints and sages, and immersion in monastic and mystical literature, both ancient and modern. Scholars could expand the scope of this work in at least two directions. First, there is a need for gathering the stories of contemporary seekers who have encountered Oneness, experienced the resulting inner transformation, and lived out of it to build peace in the world. Such an investigation might naturally start with monastics from several traditions, whose entire lives are dedicated to this dynamic. A cornerstone of Benedictine monasticism, for instance, is the very "conversion of life" that this paper calls "inner transformation," so the stories of Benedictine nuns and monks could prove fertile ground for further research.

Second, work on this topic needs expansion into other spiritual traditions. Scholars could investigate the expression of the encounter-transformation dynamic in Hinduism, Judaism, and Islam, among other faiths. Such research would make the dynamic accessible to many more practitioners by pointing toward a way that is consistent with their home traditions.

The stories of transformation accumulated to date justify the investment of time and effort that further investigation would entail. All by itself, the life of St. Francis of Assisi—whose "conversion of life" to radical monastic discipleship ultimately led him to seek peace across faith traditions with the Sultan of Egypt during the Fifth Crusade (Moses, 2009)—stands as a model for what is possible when inner transformation fuels outward peacebuilding. The existence of many such stories, whether the author's own experience or that of everyday monks, nuns, and laypeople, holds a glimmer of promise for a way forward in building peace across divides.

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Ultra-Religious Theory of Wish-Actualization as a Comprehensive Solution for Promotion of Global Peace

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Abstract

A region that was the origin of many religions in the past is the center of wickedness, war and bloodshed at present and has frightened the world by promoting extremist thoughts. Most strategies of peace and stability dictated by other countries to the Middle East have failed and they had no result other than firing the houses in these countries. Extremist approaches of fundamentalists and religious followers have created modern crises such as attack to helpless humans as cruel rites of Jihad and imposed propaganda and export of beliefs not only in this region but also in the whole world, extending immorality and anti-conscience in the world besides violating human rights. Violence arising from totalitarianism of inherited religions is rooted in individual thoughts and is an intellectual content issue. Hence, taking theoretical research actions is vital to fight terror and violence. In this era, a universal dynamic doctrine is arisen in the period of war and violence in the Middle East that is known as *wish actualization* and integrates all thoughts effectively and has had hopeful results among its followers by relying on exploratory researches and can be an effective solution for peace development. *Wish actualization* doctrine focuses on the similarities by promoting moral teachings and discovering and removing moral conflicts, removing religious boundaries common in the present era and presenting long term practical solutions and removing any biases in religions and thoughts. The final goal of this doctrine is to promote human rights, global peace, social justice and solidarity with all peaceful real and legal persons. In this article, foundations of the doctrine and practical solutions are described.

Keywords: wish actualization, global peace, ultra-religious, human rights

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ICERM International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation

Introduction

The intellectuals and philosophers have long spoken in their works of creating societies which are rich in order, beauty and justice, and called it utopia or heaven on earth. Also, the realization of this great dream has been promised by heavenly messengers. A promise of the day is that love, compassion, tolerance, and justice will spread among all individuals, nations and races of the world the day when the kingdom of God will be deployed on earth.

Since 1901, when the first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to a Swiss, Jean-Henri Dunant, the founder of the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross, so far, there has been a lot of government-level actions and efforts to bring lasting peace to the world's people to live in comfort under its shadow. The question remains: it is a pity that even with all the solutions that past and present thinkers have put in place to make peace, the "era of terror and panic" is the most appropriate name for the current era. The era that began with the most terrible terrorist act on September 11, 2001, coincided with the "war on terrorism" and the spread of terror in the Middle East, and continues to spread across the globe with the phenomenon of "religious terrorism."

Many of the wars and violence throughout history have been due to religious discrepancies and conflicts between religions. The Thirty Years War in Central Europe between 1618 and 1648 between the Catholic and Protestant religions although lasted for thirty years the conflict of that period continued three hundred years, and its origins caused the long-standing hostility of Germany and France and later became one of the main causes of the two *World Wars*. Religious prejudices caused inspecting beliefs and violence, and many anti-human and terrorist acts. The root of these discrepancies even with the worship of a single God is in the conflict that exists in the instance of surrender to God among these religions, and each of them based on their instances follow some branches. In many cases, the contradiction in these contradictions leads to conflict between religions. Meanwhile, perhaps the most problematic schools are monopolistic schools, which consider other religions to be a total misunderstanding, and know their path as the only way to reach God, which basically causes conflict with followers of other schools.

One of the reasons for the violence is the conflict between monotheistic religions and other rituals and materialists and this historic difference causes constant conflict and violence between the followers of these ideologies. The conflict between Buddhists and Muslims in Myanmar is a prominent example of contemporary period. The Crusades, French religious wars, and ISIS terrorist acts stem from the monopoly of religions.

Many thinkers have come up with solutions to this problem that, in the end, not only did not create a change in the existing situation, but in some cases, they themselves were the source of contradiction and conflict.

Another category of schools are exclusivists who believe that their school is the only correct school, but other schools also have streaks of truth.

Ultimately, there are pluralists who consider all schools to be effective to reach God. In the eyes of Hans Kung, we need more and more than ever a comprehensive mechanism for dealing with global problems. He states that within the teachings of all religions in the world, there are common moral principles that can provide a moral basis for protecting human beings from despair, disappointment and emptiness and preserving humanity from falling into the abyss of distress and incoherence. Nevertheless, the peace situation in the international community is indicative of the ineffectiveness of these strategies.

Today's experience has shown that inclusive and pluralist approaches are not enough to achieve unity among religions and create peace, and the increasing trend of violence throughout the world, especially in the Middle East, is an evidence for this claim. In the meantime, there is need for a new school of thought that can open a new path for peace among religions.

Research Methodology

Undermining false doctrines of religiosity

The *wish actualization* school tries to find the causes of the differences and consider the cause as contradictory branches in different religions in the sense that the main cause of the contradiction among the followers of different religions is not belief in God and Deism, but in the instance of surrender to God. In this sense, for example, Abrahamic religions do not differ in the worship of a single god, but there are differences in the instances of God's obedience and surrender to him, and it has taken place many times that an action in one of religions is an example of approaching God and in other religions, it is an example of polytheism and distancing from God. In this area, friction has taken place among different religions and caused catastrophic wars. These violent beliefs and conventions in some religions, in comparison with other schools, have blocked the path to continuous peace. The *wish actualization* doctrine has led to an efficient and ultra-religious alignment with other ideas and, based on exploratory research, has had promising results among its followers and can be considered as an effective solution to the development of peace and tranquility.

By emphasizing commonalities in religions, this school puts the instances of surrender to God under rational questions and, based on the historical flaws of these examples, tries to reduce violence and disagreement inspired by religions. Due to historical dating and long intervals up to modernity era, religion has undergone many distortions and changes, and in most cases, these changes have contradicted the philosophy of religion, which is the elimination of the anxiety of the community. The passing of time and the occurrence of many distortions resulted in the lack of a high confidence in the authenticity of the orders. Therefore, absolute and unconditional adherence to the implementation of orders and rules is not reasonable. The founder of this school states that:

> religion itself is the agent of chaos; how can we protect the conscience, honor and dignity of the human being when we read the history of the past; as a religious, we are ashamed that in the name of God, there were terrible battles and the blood of innocent people has been shed; perhaps, the best reason for the separation of religion from politics is the consolidation of peace, because the religious people, in the name of Jihad and the issuance of religious beliefs, took violent and lethal attacks and abuse the vital tools of religion on the path to the conquest. All heavenly religions had a duty to restore and maintain peace, and if the divine religions, themselves, have caused insecurity in the community, so they have lost their spirituality and legitimacy. The people of the world were victims of lack of peace, metaphysical schools have been instrumental in creating peace in human societies because the creator of the universe is kind to creatures, and never willing to burn humanity in the fire of wars and conflicts. (Boroujerdi, 2014)

The emphasis on neglecting the execution of orders and that God does not have the will to rigor

to the creatures, which is one of the principles of the theory of *wish actualization* based on peaceful ideas of eliminating tension between religions.

Humanity precedes religion

Friendship without belief boundaries between people and peaceful coexistence between religions is a prerequisite for lasting peace.

> Make friend, if he is not your coreligionist; comrade means someone who does not intend to hurt, harass and exploit you. He is consistent with wisdom and conscience, such person, if infidel, is not important, humanity is prior to Islamism. (Boroujerdi, 2015)

Future generation education with emphasis on peace

Affection and friendship among the creatures must be learned and friendship is the cause of peace.

> Transfer friendship to the children, loving is the practice of being a human. Institutionalize the passionate interests in the existence of children in order to have a calm and tolerable society. (Boroujerdi, 2017)

Redefining religious identity as part of a larger unit and changing identity goals

Creating a new religious identity can remove religious boundaries in such a way as to accommodate all the religious in a larger religious community. For example, the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam can be accommodated in the larger society, which is the religion of Abraham, in such a way that they are believed to be one single belief and the new identity can be created to represent all the Abrahamic religions for the followers of these religions. The new religious identity will help reduce ideological dissent and violence.

The theory of *wish actualization* is desirable in a wider context, in the sense that it considers all rituals, including the Abrahamic religions, and even idol worshipers in the circle of monotheism, and considers that all of them seek to reach God. "The idol worshiper is in fact seeking God. However, he has come up with some branches for himself to understand monotheism better." In this regard, emphasizing on the common goal and avoiding prejudice to the branches and the conventions will result in proximity and harmony among all human beings and rituals.

Human Fallibility

One of the commonalities that is emphasized in this theory is that humans are fallible, and God forgives mistakes and consequently the punishment of others on the pretext of failure to execute God's command is wrong. The extension of this view to individuals and the creation of a forgiveness culture is another element of the theory. "Getting good with someone who has annoyed you is the best case of virtue"(Boroujerdi, 2016). "If someone insulted you in one ear and excused in the other ear, accept it. If anyone did not find a reason to justify his deed and apologize, make a reason for him and forgive him"(Boroujerdi, 2014).

The false view of the duality of good versus evil

The *wish actualization* point of view, by undermining the belief that there is only one absolute good in the world that makes human salvation, reduces tensions and also at this stage, with emphasis on the relativeness of good, due to the numerous deliberate and unintentional distortions in this concept, reduces the prejudice of the followers of religions to their legitimacy and attacks the root of the disagreements. In the perspective of the *wish actualization*, there is no bad natures, and in fact, the meaning of bad comes from the perspective of person and culture. Basically, the view of duality is rejected in this theory.

Redefining the attributes of God and rejecting God as tormentor

The ritual based on the fear of the punishing God and that if you do not properly execute God's commands, you will suffer severe punishment and fire, which subsequently has resulted in the prescription of relevant laws in this regard for religious followers, is not effective in order to consolidate peace and prevent violence. The need to introduce a merciful and gracious god in a way that forgives his followers is very important. "Allah never provided the monotheistic religions with harassment of followers - the legislation of the laws was first mild and peaceful, but in the subsequent periods, it has gained violent face due to political issues"(Boroujerdi, 2016).

Fighting institutionalized religious violence in the framework of the jurisprudential rules

Another function of religion is to regulate and direct violence whenever religion is in the government's structure. The government has been helped by religious scholars in the area of structured violence, and the scholars have documented this structural violence in the form of jurisprudence. "When religious scholars were beside the rulers, leave them because such a scholar is causing harm to others, and giving the excuse to dictators for violence. This green light was later formulated as a constitution in the Islamic countries, which caused the spread of persecution and harassment of people, because of being helped by a religious scholar, and answered any objection with the condemned to apostasy" (Boroujerdi, 2017). It is clear that some governments will easily commit acts of violence in the name of religion and will obtain the power to enforce it from the rulers.

Ignorance of the fabricated and stereotypical differences of religions

In the circle of monotheism, the boundaries of time and place are removed, and humanity is dominated by a single word:

> Jesus, Moses, Muhammad, Zoroaster are the same one. Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Zoroastrianism are no different. Whichever you call, you will reach God, i.e. from every dimension in this land of creation you call God, and it is answered. Whatever religions are official, or unofficial. The only connection is to the conscience, whose other name is the God-seeking nature, is continually right, you are forgiven. (Boroujerdi, 2016)

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Attention to Interpersonal Relationships as the Infrastructure of Peace in Society

Exploration

One of the reasons for the loss of calm in the society is the investigation of the work of others, which can be generalized in terms of individual, group and belief. "Avoid the defects of others that the investigation is a destructive factor, and officiousness in lives of others can disturb their tranquility" (Boroujerdi, 2016).

Gender discrimination

Violence against women is also one of the issues that has always involved a human being. According to Amnesty International, domestic violence causes death or physical disability more than cancer or road accidents in ages 16 to 44 in the European women.

The World Health Organization reports that a woman is being attacked or mistreated every 18 seconds. According to official statistics, 35% of women in the world have been subjected to a physical or sexual violence (WHO, 2017).

Gender discrimination causes inflammation in half of the population, namely women. This tension affects the entire community, and inflammation in the family and violence against women has consequences. The theory of *wish actualization* values women.

Judgment

Another factor involved in the creation of violence is judgment. In this view, the prohibition of people from judging others and refraining from commenting on the actions and behaviors of others discourages the path to optimism.

Suspicion

One of the causes of violence is suspicion. It causes tension in society and violence. "We have to base our lives on science, and suspicion is anti-science. Suspicion does not have any foundation and documents and is something induced by others" (Boroujerdi, 2016).

"Suspicion leads to addiction, divorces and conflicts, and collapses of the family, to bombing, causes assassination, little by little the suspect becomes big, as a volcano, for example ISIS"(Boroujerdi,2016).

One thing that should be taken into consideration in respecting and accepting other rituals is that it must be understood that there are some orders and laws in all religions that promote violence. In this theory, the emphasis on the lowness of the orders and the lack of prejudice to the implementation of these important issues is possible.

Conclusion

Now, after thousands of years of the emergence of religions, the issue that needs to be addressed is the change in the culture and level of knowledge, awareness and expectation of the people. The

advancement of technology, the availability of information and the breadth of communication has led to the removal of a superficial attitude to the problems, and also the new human needs to require new solutions. Therefore, the laws and judgments made thousands of years ago do not meet today's needs and a new perspective on religions is necessary. The proposed and executive approach of this theory emphasizes the existing and common moral and human principles of all religions in such a way as to bring about a complete alignment among religions.

Emphasizing the need to follow a single god in prayer and public prayer sessions regardless of the specific religion is the effective way of this theory and with the emphasis on the common goal, it creates solidarity and unity among the general public and the emphasis on these commonalities creates friendship in society. Now, after many years, teaching this school in Iran as a country with a great variety of religious and cultural backgrounds has had promising results among followers, and two other articles, which, using this school have brought about tremendous results in peace, have been presented at this conference, and enthusiasts can also refer to them.

This school is the result of forty years of research on various religious texts, and its impact has been observed objectively in society. Nowadays, that most of the world are on the edge of the cliff of violence and distrust in fear of falling into the abyss of bloody and unprecedented wars, the opportunity has emerged for scholars and policy makers to take advantage of the potential of this school to restore peace and reconciliation to the international community and save future generations from falling into the abyss of violence and religious assassination.

This school, as a school that originates from a Muslim country and a Muslim person, can be very helpful in eradicating the rules and laws of cruelty such as jihad and violent religious punishments.

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Note that the wish actualization school is introduced for the first time in the scientific community and is dedicated to Mr. Hossein Boroujerdi. The references in the text are from his book. Therefore, what is contained in the text or in the sources are only from his book.

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Gender Studies and Sustainable Development in Morocco

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Abstract

The paper explores the need for the continuity of gender studies in Morocco and discusses some of its dimensions. It also argues that the study of gender is in conformity with the goals of liberal education in several fundamental ways: by its interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature, synthesizing approach, its emphasis on deconstruction/reconstruction, its examination of the role of value judgment in the creation of knowledge, and its problem-solving stance. It seeks to demonstrate that promoting gender courses and women's rights is crucial for women's empowerment, stressing the ways in which Moroccan women try to reappraise traditional spaces and boundaries by raising their voices, telling their tales and making their own cases known. The paper also seeks to examine the breaking of the taboos related to the sanctity of some discourses by women and the use they have made of the freedom to explore some areas of women's experiences especially after the 2011 Moroccan Constitution. It concludes with an analysis of the future challenges in Morocco: to show the continued necessity of gender awareness and peace studies for those who would believe that we are in a post-feminist age and to fill in the gaps related to sustainable, equitable and democratic growth.

Keywords: gender studies, sustainable development, peace education, justice, Morocco

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Some Preliminary Remarks

The concept of gender is different from that of sex in the sense that sex is a purely biological description, while gender connotes socially and culturally constructed categories. It can be defined as the social differences and relations between men and women which are learned, and which vary widely among societies and cultures. It is worthy to point out that gender roles are affected by age, class, race, ethnicity and religion, and by the geographical, economic and political environment. It is becoming increasingly evident that we cannot make sense of women's lives if we attend only to gender because nationality, place of residence and work, marital status and membership of particular cultural groups all interact and constitute women's lives.

Gender studies refer to important strategies for change that have come out of the women's movement. By their very scope gender studies are an integral part of a broad process of critical evaluation of the nature of human and socials sciences. They are meant to expand the territory of questions and answers by exploring the invisible or silenced perspectives of women. An insurrection of 'subjugated knowledge', to use M. Foucault's (1969; 1971) terms, aptly describes the categories of knowledge that have sprung out of the women's movement.

Foucault (1969; 1971) conveys the idea that the status of the term "knowledge" has been profoundly altered. The privilege once bestowed upon universal, hierarchical, and essentialist knowledge claims is now disrupted by what Foucault (1969; 1971) calls an eruption of "subjugated knowledges." According to him, *subjugated knowledge* is knowledge under the signs of the repressed, the marginal, the fragmented, and above all, the local. He goes on to add that subjugated knowledges are those voices or traditions that were silenced by the discourses of modernity. Foucault implies that such repressed or degraded knowledge has already begun to sprout through the cracks in the once-shining façade of the Age of Reason. However, he also argues the need for critical, erudite researchers and students who will burrow deep beneath the foundations of historiography to uncover the irrational, the discontinuous, and the uncanny.

Now, any discourse that is oblivious of gender is but one among an array of social practices that may all be understood as matrices of domination and power.

Until recently, gender was ignored as an analytic category, as a subject matter and as the defining human construct. It is now included in the Human and Social Sciences in Morocco. In this context, Moroccan scholars believe that all sorts of theorising and research prior to that which takes account of gender, race and class in their intricate intertwining must be seen as partial, erroneous and fallacious in so far as they claim generality, let alone universality. Moreover, a particular emphasis is put on the fact that knowledge is a human construct and carries with it the assumptions that its authors and teachers frequently teach what they do not even know are assumptions.

For Moroccan feminists, the international conferences on women have brought a wealth of international data and cross-cultural contacts. These United Nations conferences on the status of women mark the official birth of global feminism, bringing women together from around the globe to discuss their common ground. Stated baldly, the United Nations Conferences on women brought dynamism and direction to the Moroccan feminist movement and to gender studies.

Offering gender studies courses both challenges the definition of "excellent" "best", "high", "major", peaceful, and asks who defines what is best and what is peaceful and whom the definitions

benefit most. Implicit in this enterprise is conviction that hierarchies and canon-making in the academy are corollary to hierarchies and canon-making in social life.

Demonstrating by its very existence that women and their rights are important, gender studies challenges both women and men to use the power of knowledge to change themselves and their world in order to achieve sustainable development.

Sustainable development is our present best hope and gender studies are an important way of achieving it. This implies meaningful education of women as well as men for it is an important area of the curriculum in which women's existence is fully registered and methodological awareness is encouraged. The transformation of the curriculum to include women is more than a question of human rights. It is essential to fulfilment of the university's commitment to the search for « truth », to the education of all students and to the university itself.

Some of the aims mentioned may seem down to earth *ad* basic, but they remain nonetheless crucial for determining the objectives of sustainable development. In other words, humanities and social science are definitely not a luxury for the simple reason that they help us understand human beings and empathise with them. A point that cannot be possibly overemphasised is that understanding human beings is a determining factor that binds human communities at the level of a neighbourhood, family or a nation or a group of people coming together.

It is worthy of note that development concerns human beings. For that development to take place, society, women and men, have to be prepared and ready for it. Moreover, they have to be motivated and willing to accept it. In this respect, the role of university is crucial: it has to enhance the production, the teaching and the study of humanities and social science. This is one of the important ways for societies to know themselves, to know what they want and what they do not want. This is exactly what development specialists and experts have stressed as the cultural factor of peace. Interestingly, Amartya Sen (2001) invites us to conceptualize human development as freedom because he wants the goal to be wider than, say, a numerical measure of Gross National Product (GNP). This means that he supports real, lived-in freedoms, or what are often called "capabilities": freedoms of sustainable development and not just of theoretical rights.

Still remaining on the agenda of higher education are ways to recognize and counter subtle teachings of the damaging inferiority lesson, ways less amenable to straight forward legal and administrative solutions, obstacles that, in fact, are in the process of being defined and researched.

One of the important steps in gender courses may have to do precisely with freeing Moroccan women's minds from the status of 'the second sex,' and developing a positive self-image.

Another related point is that the relationship between gender studies and the University depends very much on whether one believes feminist discourse can expand one's knowledge of one's blunders, blindness and weakness. If it can, then our duty is to learn from this new scholarship how to improve the study of knowledge. Without the experience of educational jolts to the ego, the existing sexism will remain, and changes will be purely cosmetic. Fundamentally, when facing feminist discourses for the first time, most Moroccan university teachers, men and women, continue to receive blows to the ego. As Moroccan teachers, most of us had learned to think of ourselves as fairly intelligent, competent in our teaching, and on guard against being culturally/politically manipulated. However, the knowledge of the now impressive scholarship on women implies that we are obliged to be creative about what we should continue to teach and how, and about ways of thinking and learning.

Nowadays, emphasis is placed on the ways in which we take on ideas about gender, and the ways in which those ideas affect us. When we are no longer trapped in old definitions and standards, we are able to think much more effectively about what ought to be considered important enough to include in courses such as peace, history, sociology, psychology, psychiatry, international relations, economics and literature.

To help fulfil the ultimate goal of transforming the traditional curriculum, gender studies are now devoted to challenge male hegemony over not only culture and society, but also over the structure of educational instructions and the content of knowledge about peace itself. Proponents of gender courses have argued convincingly that these studies are an integral part of peace studies and of the liberal arts curriculum.

It is said that the most effective way to learn a subject is to have to teach it. The story behind the construction of *Les cahiers du genre* – that is, gender manuals - attest to this axiom. Almost ten years ago, in September 2009, The UNESCO Chair members set out to convince colleagues at both Mohamed V and Ibn-Tofail universities that looking at sustainable development through a gender lens significantly contributes to their understanding of men's and women's roles and responsibilities. The workshops organized included different types of brainstorming sessions. Male and female participants were divided into different groups and participants were asked to share their experiences as a 'man' or a 'woman' (Jacket & Rhissassi, 2008).

This first experience was crucial to the university since it forced us to acknowledge that to date there had been little work conducted in laying out a methodology for teaching gender that made visible the linkages between gender and sustainable development. Ultimately, we came to grips with the fact that regardless of how we felt about our capacity and knowledge, we ourselves had to design and implement the training of trainers' programmes.

As a result, students began raising questions and having expectations that are unprecedented. Refusal to entertain the possibility of such questions and such knowledge distorts, to use Sandra Harding's (1994) words, "women's and men's understanding of ourselves and our lives, as well as our understandings of the rest of the world" (p. 111).

To understand gender studies fully, it is necessary to point out that Moroccan feminists address gender-blind citizenship theorists, argue the need to make gender visible and develop feminist analyses of state and citizenship. The meanings given to citizenship are on the top of the research agenda of Moroccan feminist scholars who ask how women experience citizenship and what strategies and struggles are effective in renegotiating Moroccan women's relationships with citizenship. The growing interest in citizenship among feminist scholars reveals some grounds on which denial of rights and belonging could generate conflicts and multiple forms of violence (Rhissassi, 2005).

Nowadays the publications on women are astonishing in their volume. One exciting new development in the area of publication is the creation of the *Feminist Press* in Morocco (1987). Indeed, *les editions Le Fennec* is a powerful tool for disseminating information on key gender issues and contributing to the richness and issues of equality, peace and gender identity, with authors as various as Fatema Mernissi, Souâd Bahéchar, Siham Abdellaoui, Leïla Ghandi, Laïla Lalami, etc. This Moroccan feminist press publishes classic and new books by Moroccan women academics and elevates silenced and marginalized voices in order to support personal transformation, social justice and peace for all people.

Besides the various governmental and nongovernmental programmes, new visibility exists in research and academic instructions. Gender studies groups and research centers exist at several Moroccan universities and have an impressive record. The interesting proliferation of courses and programs, the development and dissemination of feminist scholarship and its gradual but sure encompassing of the field of differences among women show the growing recognition of the link between gender studies and peace.

Clearly, gender and peace are closely linked: peace is vital to promote gender equality, while gender inequality can also undermine peace and drive conflict and violence. One of the main thrusts of peacebuilding commitment is inextricably bound up with a gender perspective. One can say without error that gender studies contribute toward peace, particularly when relevant discriminatory attitudes, forms of violence and social norms continue to be addressed. It is clearly true that a course on gender analysis of conflict can contribute to understanding prospects for peace (El Bushra & Lopez, 2004).

Gender and peace imply that those two fields of interest are connected. In fact, to understand the relationship between gender and peace is essential for an examination of gender dynamics as well as peace dynamics.

There is strong evidence that the gender norms that underpin inequality can cause domination and control. A number of studies have found a strong correlation between levels of conflict and gender inequality, but the nature of this relationship is not always clear. Does violence fuel gender inequality, or gender inequality fuel violence, or both? In some cases, women advance their strategic interests during times of conflict, but this is often followed by the restoration of more unequal gender roles afterwards. A case in point, the Arab spring, increased opportunities for women's political activism, but has been coupled with a violent backlash against women trying to claim their rights. Indeed, conflict and violence have to date been the most important factors obstructing progress and peace. Indeed, conflicts in Africa and elsewhere cause death, injury, displacement, destroy infrastructure, disrupt markets and social ties, and divert vital resources away from development.

The implications of gender on peace education are many and diverse. Generally speaking, Morocco recognizes the potential of women as peace-builders, and actively promotes their inclusion in peace-making processes. It is in that context that in 2012 Morocco launched, in partnership with Spain, an initiative on the promotion of the role of women in the mediation process in the Mediterranean. That initiative has enabled us to give mediation training to a number of Mediterranean women so as to ensure that they are available to the United Nations and regional and sub regional organizations.

Morocco continues to position itself as a leading institution that actively seeks to advance gender analysis as a peace and security tool. Our students and partners in academia are learning what we hope will be a self-evident truth before the close of the decade: that beyond equality, women's meaningful participation simply makes peace more effective. Some examples show that women are essential makers and markers of peace. A case in point is Assia Bensalah Alaoui, Professor of International Law at Mohammed V University, who co-chairs the High Level Panel of the European Union on Dialogue between Peoples and Cultures in the Euro-Mediterranean Area, and is Ambassador-at-Large for King Mohammed VI. She is an exceptional woman peacebuilder. Studying these women leaders' paths and strategies is an approach to understanding gendered dynamics within conflict and peacebuilding and to advocate for women's participation at all levels of peace processes.

In addition, in September 2000, Morocco organized an international conference on the topic of

women and peace and security in Marrakech. The conference contributed to the international debate on the role of women in peace processes and the implementation of national plans of action to promote collective action on implementing resolution 1325. It was an occasion to reaffirm the international community's consensus on the need to strengthen the participation of women in negotiations and agreements concerning the settlement of conflicts and peacebuilding, as well as to renew the commitment of the United Nations to the question of the inclusion of women and gender equality in all strategies aimed at restoring peace and preventing conflict. A number of questions were debated at the conference, including the role of women in mediation and conflict-prevention processes, the lessons learned and best practices in the prevention of sexual violence in conflict.

At this same conference, Morocco announced the creation in Rabat of an independent regional center dedicated to studying the role of women in peacekeeping operations and their contribution to the achievement of sustainable development. The *Mohammedia Centre* serves as a space for reflection, a reservoir of ideas and a source of independent thought regarding the role and place of women in peacekeeping operations, as well as peacebuilding in conflict zones.

Of equal importance was the organization of an international conference on «Women, Religions and Peace» by The UNESCO Chair: Woman and her Rights of Ibn Tofail University, Kénitra, the Institute of African Studies of Mohamed V University, Souissi, Rabat on 27-28 April, 2009 (Al Farah et al. 2011).

The motivation for organizing this conference is thus grounded in the concern for peace in the world which is today the primary worry of the whole humanity. It also lies within the scope of the international decade for the promotion of a culture of non-violence and peace to the benefit of the world children (2001-2010) decreed by the United Nations.

At Moroccan universities, peace studies are enormously strengthened by the focus on the complex role of gender in patterns of war and peace. Emphasis is placed on understanding gender's explanatory value in relation to participation in war; the differential patterns of suffering and violence; and the consequences for men and women in conflict resolution, peacekeeping, transitional justice and peacebuilding. Some modules examine what gender analysis reveals about the causes and dynamics of war and peace and go on to criticize some basic gendered assumptions - such as that war is the business of men and peace that of women. Instead we challenge these dichotomies by examining issues such as the complicated relationship between the social construction of masculinity and soldiering and the challenge posed to militaries by the inclusion of women in their ranks. We ask why peace processes have generally excluded women and what the consequences of that are for the sustainability of peace, while at the same time examining the assumption that 'women' as an essentialized group have particular skills to bring to the peace table. Through these debates we examine the ways in which war and peace are gendered experiences which also shape our understanding of what it is to be a gendered person. The more we know about the circumstances, worldviews and religions we all hold, the better we are prepared to find the solutions that can defuse polarized positions and put an end to conflicts and violence.

Violence against women, one of the most common forms of violence worldwide, must be eliminated, with women's rights to education as the first step towards this goal. In many respects, this violence both causes inequality and is caused by inequality.

It is vital to recognize and believe in the importance of overcoming conflict and violence and in the fact that women's rights and peace building communities can work together to demonstrate the links between their aims in an attempt to secure strong commitments in both areas.

Indeed, gender and conflict should be studied together because ignoring the gender dimension makes it impossible to address crucial elements of conflict resolution. It will also lead to missing opportunities like failing to use the contributions that women can make in resolving conflicts and reconstructing their countries after the war.

The change in the peace concept from the 1980 to the 1985 conferences reflects the worthy efforts of feminist peace researchers all over the world to redefine and revisit the peace concept to include the absence of violence at the micro-level, especially against women.

Undeniably, gender is an important consideration in the context of peace education for a number of reasons. The most fundamental of these reasons is that women's empowerment and equality in all spheres is absolutely necessary in order to achieve a sustainable peace. As affirmed by the United Nations Beijing Declaration, "local, national, regional and global peace is attainable and is inextricably linked with the advancement of women, who are a fundamental force for leadership, conflict resolution and the promotion of lasting peace at all levels" (United Nations, 1995).

There is considerable evidence that violence against women and girls undermines global peace and security and prevents countries from achieving social stability and sustainable development. Morocco's parliament has approved legislation on violence against women. It took a very long time for members of parliament to approve law 103-1. The legislation obtained its second and final approval on Valentine's Day with 168 yes votes and 55 nays and is considered a step forward to promote gender equality. The law's first vote dates back to June 2006, when 83 lawmakers voted in favour and 22 against. This law does not meet all the aspirations of Moroccan women. This means that the combat for equality will continue.

The last decades have seen a plentiful harvest of literature on women, violence, war and peace and women's human rights conferences that brought a number of scholars together as participants in international civil society, further internationalizing the field, strengthening its global perspective and enriching courses in peace studies with research and theorizing around the long-neglected sphere of gender and peace. They also offered particularly fruitful substance for pedagogical developments in peace education, especially among those practitioners who perceived human rights as essential and integral to the field.

There are interesting developments in peace education which is a wide field, entailing a considerable diversity of approaches, ranging from human rights education to education for democracy, and from education for nonviolence to conflict resolutions. The common denominator of these programs is to foster changes that will make the world a more human place. Betty Reardon (2000) rightly points out that peace education is "a guided learning that attempts to comprehend and reduce the multiple forms of violence (physical, structural, institutional and cultural)." She goes on to add that peace educators strive to provide insights into how to transform a culture of violence into a peaceful culture.

Gender-based violence is the most brutal and overt form of the inequality that is present in all spheres of society. Thus, a crucial part of peace education must be the dissemination of information about the widespread occurrence of such violence and its negative impacts on women and on progress toward creating a culture of peace and harmony.

There are many ways in which teachers can incorporate gender-informed peace education into their classrooms. A feminist peace educator tries to do away with rigid sex role socialization and the training into femininity or masculinity. A mention should be made of Françoise Héritier, a radiant

scholar, who was both a great teacher and a passionate peace lover. She was also one of the godmothers of Zeromacho, whose evolution she followed with benevolent attention. Her luminous sentence about prostitution summarizes her commitment to equality and peace: "Saying that women have the right to sell themselves hides the fact that men have the right to buy them" (Legardinier, 2017).

Even though many of the questions that feminist peace educators ask today already were asked more than sixty years ago by Virginia Woolf (1966), they were not made part of the agenda of peace education and research before the last two decades. In my opinion, the teaching of feminist writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft and V. Woolf contributed to an explosion of feminist consciousness in the English department and has left its mark on several students. The new questions posed by these women writers created an extraordinary climate for research. In fact, the intervention of peace-oriented gender studies strikes me as being incontestably an important moment in the history of English studies. In "Three Guineas," V. Woolf (1966) wonders how women can help men achieve peace when they are so oppressed themselves and when the education they get is not of the holistic kind enabling them really to understand peace issues.

However, Woolf (1966) always countered violence with the possibilities of peace, harmony, and beauty. Elucidating these patterns as they emerge in Woolf's (1966) treatments of war and history, the essay gives a view of Woolf as fundamentally motivated by the call to formalize in her writing the effects of war and violence, but also to create alternatives to the brutal violence that, as she never forgot, has characterized western history from the beginning.

Yet, even after the publication of this book, the field of peace education continued to be looked at as a gender-neutral field where sexism was a non-issue. It was only when feminist scholars started to combine peace education with their knowledge of sexism and with the domain of gender role socialization that certain gender-specific questions were asked within the academic fields of peace research and peace education.

In striving to educate for peace, we must take all societal norms into account and actively try to counteract them. Even something as basic as a history book tends to place the focus on battles rather than resolutions. As noted earlier, it is difficult to educate for peace when textbooks are mostly about war. Thus, Moroccan teachers as peacebuilders must make an active effort to draw students' attention to achievements of peace rather than of war.

Peace education can have a positive impact on eradicating inequalities by raising awareness of the existence of discrimination in everyday life, and by inspiring action to eliminate these inequalities. Moreover, the capacity of women as peacemakers must be recognized and promoted in governments, in non-profit organizations, and in international relations, as well as in the classroom. The United Nations has stated its support for the active engagement of women in the peace process in numerous official resolutions and declarations, and now it remains for the world to follow through.

Teachers can further this goal in their classrooms by discussing the peace processes throughout history and not just the role of wars. Moreover, they should make sure that the role of Arab, Amazigh, Muslim and Jewish Moroccan women throughout history is not omitted. In Morocco, many exercises for students consist of researching women's perspectives from certain historical periods when they do not figure in history textbooks.

Acceptance of this approach depends upon accepting that courses called 'the history of Morocco' that omit the ethnic and religious diversity would have to change their names. It is high time Moroccan

historians answer questions such as what it is like to be a woman being in a variety of positions, statuses, and cultural contexts. The simple answer involves getting the multi-ethnic and multi religious sphere added to the subject matter of the discipline. It is clear that the discipline itself is not simply enlarged and enriched, but also challenged in its terminology and epistemology.

Unlike many Arab countries with once sizable Jewish communities, Morocco has taken wide-ranging steps to preserve its Jewish history. The Casablanca Jewish museum was restored, the small but colorful 17th century synagogue in Fez was renovated, and dozens of former Jewish schools and more than 100 synagogues were rehabilitated with funding from the crown.

In 2011, in a move that is unprecedented in the modern Middle East, the Moroccan constitution was changed to note that the country has been nourished and enriched by Hebraic influences among others. This effort is the concrete manifestation of a consensus in a society that is partly built on Jewish culture, a culture deeply rooted in three millennia of history.

To my knowledge, Morocco is a noble exception when it comes to familiarize students with the Holocaust. In line with the objectives adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO, the Aladdin Project set up important and decisive initiatives in order to introduce courses and research on the Holocaust. Teaching the Holocaust at Moroccan Universities does not mean supporting Zionism since the main objective goal is to introduce into the curriculum of Moroccan academic institutions a study about crimes against humanity, and crimes of war and violence.

The term "violence against women" refers to "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm of suffering to women" (United Nations, 1994). The continuing worldwide prevalence of such violence remains a significant obstacle to building a lasting peace, as women living in fear of gender-based violence cannot achieve true equality.

Not only is violence against women an unacceptable act in itself, but according to the United Nations (1994), it is also a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.

An important consideration when thinking about violence against women is the effect of the media on social and cultural perceptions of women. The media as a whole tend to perpetuate negative stereotypes of women, and an important step in gender-informed peace education is to recognize this trend and develop awareness about it by incorporating media studies in the syllabus. Kempadoo, Maxwell, and Smith (2001) describe this media bias as follows: "There is a link between media images and incidences of violence against women… Negative media images are harmful in a society where violence against women is increasing."

In the classroom, there are many ways in which a teacher can work to further this goal. For instance, the teacher should choose pieces of literature, film, and media carefully and in consideration of how these sources might portray women in a negative way. If use of a biased source proves necessary, this provides an opportunity for a lesson on gender stereotypes, war, violence and raise students' awareness of their own, often unconscious, behaviors that enable the status quo to continue.

The first step for teachers wanting to counteract this trend of unequal socialization is to become aware of the gender stereotypes that they (perhaps unconsciously) perpetuate. If teachers are conscious of their own perceptions of gender, they will be able to make an active effort not to recreate them in the

classroom. Similarly, in the context of any class assignment or discussion, the teacher can challenge students' ideas about gender roles and inspire them to think critically about the origins of these inequalities.

I fervently believe that education has a transformative capacity when it inculcates Enlightenment ideals that promote equal treatment for women and men. The more educated human beings are the more open they are to being tolerant of others regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation and other location. Education is a powerful mechanism that teaches individuals to be more accepting of others by giving them the experience of learning and interacting with people different than themselves.

Over the past two decades, women's activism has taken creative new forms across the Muslim world. Working within the frame of Islamic piety and engaging fully with the Muslim tradition, many women have been distancing themselves from the largely secular feminist projects of social reform, legal rights, or empowerment-through-development that had dominated the social field of women's activism across the Muslim world. Indeed, reformers and feminists like F. Mernissi, may peace be on her, and A. Lamrabet repeatedly try to affirm with remarkable tenacity that the reforms they seek involve no disloyalty to Islam that they are in conformity with, and if not in conformity with the letter, then, in conformity with the spirit of the Qur'an. A case in point is the work achieved by Musawah in partnership with the UNESCO Chair /Woman and her Rights in Morocco. Since its launch in 2009, Musawah has sought to produce new knowledge to support local and national movements as they develop and advocate for peace. The contributors are academics and activists from varied disciplines and backgrounds who are together with Musawah. They are: Ziba Mir-Hosseini, Omaima Abou-Bakr, Asma Lamrabet, Fouzia Rhissassi, Ayesha S. Chaudhry, Sa'diyya Shaikh, Lynn Welchman, Marwa Sharafeldin, Lena Larsen, Mulki Al-Sharmani, Jana Rumminger and AminaWadud (Mir-Hosseini, 2015).

Conclusion

There can be no doubt that gender studies serve sustainable development and that they produce knowledge that supports peace.

As peace educators, we believe that the linkages of gender and peace in all their forms constitute one field from which multiple forms of learning relevant to the tasks of educating and acting for peace can be gleaned. We have drawn upon the fruits of peace research, the substance of university peace studies, the methodologies of peace education and practical peace action in the development of the pedagogies we practise. We adhere to educational methods consistent with the values of justice, nonviolence and sustainable development that inform the pursuit of peace knowledge.

Gender issues are neither a territory nor a passing fashion that one can wear and discard in order to dress for success. Instead, they are a movement that requires of its participants considerable awareness of the subtleties of their positioning in discourses of all kinds and especially the conservative ones.

This commitment to gender equality was reaffirmed in the 2011 constitutional reform, which established the principle of parity between women and men, providing for the establishment of an Authority for Parity and Combating All Forms of Discrimination (APALD).

Finally, societal consciousness of gender inequalities and discrimination against women in all spheres must continue to be addressed. The differences in the socialization of boys versus girls and gender equality in education are highly relevant topics for the achievements of peace. A fundamental aspect of campaigns to foster a worldwide culture of peace and harmony is to ensure equality between women and men, thus affirming that gender is an important consideration with regards to peace education.

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Effectiveness of Treatment based on Wish-Actualization Doctrine and its Comparison with Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy in Couples with Marital Problems Due to Differences of Beliefs and Religious Conflicts

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Abstract

Undoubtedly, the basis of a healthy society is healthy families and solving marital problems helps the development of peace in the society remarkably. Today, many problems of those couples seeking help from therapists are due to differences of beliefs and religious cognitive conflicts. On the other hand, religious issues and their application in families are welcomed by therapists. However, there is a need for a theory that can teach the therapists to interpret and respond to religious differences of the couples. The purpose of the present research is to use a treatment protocol based on ultra-religious *wish actualization* view and compare its results with cognitive-behavioral view. Effectiveness of the view is confirmed in exploratory qualitative studies. In a clinical trial in Tehran, 30 couples confirmed through clinical interviews to have problems due to beliefs were chosen by convenience sampling and classified randomly into three equal groups. The first group received 8 sessions of classical cognitive-behavioral therapy, the second group received 8 sessions of treatment based on *wish actualization* and the third group did not receive any intervention. Inventory of Enrich marital satisfaction and general health questionnaire were completed at the beginning and end of intervention and all groups were measured again in the follow up study one month later. The scores of the test were analyzed using *ANCOVA*. Findings show that differences between scores of three groups were significant ($P<0.01$). Post hoc test showed that although both groups being treated (cognitive-behavioral and *wish actualization* treatments) showed significant improvement compared to the control group ($P<0.01$), significant differences were not observed between both groups with different treatments ($p>0.05$). However, in a one-month follow up, *wish actualization* doctrine had more stable results than classical cognitive-behavioral therapy significantly. The results of the study showed that treatment based on *wish actualization* not only has an effect similar to classical cognitive-behavioral treatment, but it is also more stable in long term and couples treated by this technique reported more marital satisfaction after one month

Keywords: wish-actualization, cognitive-behavioral therapy, marital problems, religious conflicts

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ICERM International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation

Introduction

One of the issues that couples may face after marriage is religious differences. Although religious beliefs are a matter for which two people discuss it before marriage, the two sides think that nothing can overcome their love for each other, but when the life shows its real face and families have to decide what religion to raise their children, or which religious ceremonies to celebrate and which they will not observe, religious differences become a big problem. While marrying a person from different cultures and religions can bring specific challenges, at the same time, it can be a great opportunity for growth and development. Couples, while learning how to live together every year, have to adjust themselves in many ways. When these changes involve cultural and religious discussions, new dimensions will be added to their process of trying to strengthen their marital relationship. According to Paula (2008), cultural differences play a very important role in marital relations, and cultural tensions are a factor of instability among families.

Today in America, most people marry people from different religions and races. According to the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, nearly 37% of Americans are married to a person with different religious beliefs. In addition, the 2010 US Census estimates that 10% of Americans are married even with people of different nationalities and backgrounds (Toelle & Harris, 2017).

Research shows that couples who are more similar in beliefs are generally more satisfied with their marriage. In fact, scientific findings show that divorce rates are lower among couples with the same religion. So, it is predicted that as much as the couple have different religious beliefs, they are more likely to face conflicts and problems and are likely to experience divorce (Larson & Elson, 2004). It is very interesting that there is more incompatibility even among very religious couples but with different religious beliefs.

Generally, religiosity and religious prejudice are used as indicators to predict the degree of satisfaction in couples. For example, a common presence in religious ceremonies for couples with the same religion leads to much more satisfaction and increases the compatibility between them (Fies & Tamcho, 2001). With regard to gender differences, if a husband attends more religious ceremonies, marital conflicts are less likely and, as already mentioned, this increases the level of compatibility. This is true of both conditions - the first marriage and the subsequent marriages. But for women, the level of religiousness in their second marriage will not affect their adaptation in marital life. In fact, religious beliefs for both men and women in their second marriages are not a strong indicator of predicting adaptation in marital life. Studies show that the risk of divorce increases in the first marriage if the husband participates more than once in a religious ceremony. Although theories suggest that the presence of both husbands and wives in the church strengthens marital relations.

These findings suggest that as much religious and behavioral relationships are higher in a couple, their marital relationships will also be happier and religious commonalities will lead to more satisfaction, adoption and acceptance of the culture of the opposite, although not easy. These factors also make the parties very sensitive to their differences, but at the same time extend their worldviews.

In sum, intercultural and interpersonal marriages can become tense at different levels, and these complexities can be treated by providing an ultra-religious based treatment approach. However, there is no theory that can teach the therapist how to interpret and correct the religious and ideological differences between couples. The purpose of this study is to use a therapeutic protocol based on the *wish*

actualization approach and compare its results with cognitive-behavioral therapy. The effectiveness of this view has been confirmed in qualitative studies.

Methodology

In a clinical trial in Tehran, 30 couples confirmed through clinical interviews to have problems due to beliefs were chosen by convenience sampling and classified randomly into three equal groups. The first group received 8 sessions of classical cognitive-behavioral therapy, the second group received 8 sessions of treatment based on *wish actualization* and the third group did not receive any intervention. Inventory of Enrich marital satisfaction and general health questionnaire were completed at the beginning and end of intervention and all groups were measured again in the follow up study one month later. The scores of the test were analyzed using *ANCOVA*.

Instruments

1. GHQ

The GHQ is among the most thoroughly tested of all health measures. It is a self-administered screening instrument designed to detect current diagnosable mental disturbances and disorders. It is used in surveys or in clinical settings to identify potential cases, leaving the task of diagnosing actual disorder to a psychiatric interview. It is also widely used internationally and locally to measure mental health status especially in detection of emotional disturbances such as distress. Ever since Goldberg introduced the GHQ in 1978, it has been translated into 38 different languages, testimony to validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Reliability coefficients of the questionnaire ranged from 0.78 to 0.95 in various studies. Goldberg reported that the average area under the ROC curve was 0.88, range from 0.83 to 0.95, which reflects its validity.

2. Enrich Marital Satisfaction Scale

This questionnaire was introduced to the world of science about 31 years ago and has 125 questions. The version used in Iranian studies has 44 questions, which is based on original Enrich questionnaire, and has been used in many studies in Iran. This questionnaire, EMS (ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale) 21 years ago, was evaluated and approved by the inventor of the original version of the questionnaire for validity and reliability (Fowers & Olson,1993).

Findings

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed via SPSS-22 software. Mean and variance were used to express the descriptive statistics and the relevant hypothesis were analyzed through Box's M test and Levene's test. In addition, univariate analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses.

Findings of the Study

Data collected were analyzed via SPSS software as shown in the tables below.

Table 1 Average and standard deviation of test scores and posttest control group of public health

Type of intervention	group	Average	The standard deviation	Moderated average	Modified standard deviation
Wish actualization	Control	45.10	6.03	44.95	1.20
	the experiment	55.35	7.29	55.23	1.20
Cognitive behavioral therapy	Control	45.10	6.03	44.95	1.20
	the experiment	54.55	6.32	54.81	1.20

Table 2 shows results of analysis of covariance

Source of change	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Average squares	F	Significance level	Effect size
pre-test	844.366	1	844.366	29.24	0.001	0.34
group	1353.98	2	676.99	23.44	0.001	0.45
Error	1616.93	56	28.87			

As seen from the table, the effect of pre-test scores on post-test scores is significant [F (1, 56) = 29.24, p <0/001] The effect of the group's post-test scores is significant with effect sizes 45/0 [F (2.56) = 23.44, p <0/001] so you can ¬ be concluded between at least one pair of means

Table 3 shows the post hoc test results

Intervention	Interventions	difference in averages	The significance level
Wish actualization	Cognitive Behavioral therapy	0.41	1
	Control	10.28	0.001
Cognitive Behavioral therapy	**Wish actualization**	0.41-	1
	Control	9.86	0.001

As can be seen from the table of general health scores are significantly higher in the treatment group *Wish actualization* in comparison with control (P <0/05). So, it can be concluded that treatment would significantly enhance the general health in the post.

As can be seen from the table of general health scores on cognitive behavioral group therapy are significantly higher than the average of the control group (P <0/05). So, it can be concluded that cognitive-behavioral therapy significantly enhances general health in the post-test.

As can be seen from the table of general health scores on cognitive behavioral group therapy and treatment prosperity would not be significantly different (P> 0/05). So, it can be concluded that no difference between two therapies.

Table 4 shows the mean and standard deviation scores of experimental and control groups after marital satisfaction test

Type of intervention	group	Average	The standard deviation	Moderated average	Modified standard deviation
Wish actualization	Control	39	3.06	38.70	0.788
	the experiment	45.85	4.32	46.08	0.785
Cognitive behavioral therapy	Control	39	3.06	38.70	0.788
	the experiment	46.85	3.48	46.90	0.780

Table 17-4 Test results of analysis of covariance

Source of change	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Average squares	F	Significance level	Effect size
pretest	82.46	1	82.46	6.78	0.01	0.10
group	792.80	2	396.40	32.614	0.001	0.53
Error	680.639	56	12.15			

As seen from the table, the effect of pre-test scores on post-test scores is significant [F (1, 56) = 6.78, p <0/01] Also, the effect of the group on post-test scores is significant [F (2.56) = 32.614, p <0/001]

And the effect size is 0.53.

As seen from the table, there is a significant difference at least in one pair of means.

Table 5 shows the post hoc test results compare test scores marital satisfaction in two groups

Intervention	Interventions	difference in averages	The significance level
Wish actualization	Cognitive behavioral therapy	0.82 -	1
	Control	7.37	0.001
Cognitive Behavioral therapy	**Wish actualization**	0.82	1
	Control	8.20	0.001

As can be seen from the table, marital satisfaction scores are significantly higher in the treatment group *wish actualization* in comparison to control group (P <0/05). So, it can be concluded that treatment significantly increased marital satisfaction.

Apparently differences between scores of three groups were significant (P<0.01). Post hoc test showed that although both groups being treated (cognitive-behavioral and wish actualization treatments) showed significant improvement compared to the control group (P<0.01), significant differences were not observed between both groups with different treatments (p>0.05). However, in a one-month follow up, *wish actualization* doctrine had more stable results than classical cognitive-behavioral therapy significantly.

Conclusions: The results showed that treatment based on *wish actualization* not only has an effect similar to classical cognitive-behavioral treatment, but it is also more stable in long term and couples treated by this technique reported more marital satisfaction after one month.

Discussion

While marrying a person of different cultural and religious backgrounds may have unique challenges, it can also provide an opportunity for growth and improvement in the lives of the parties. One of the factors that has a lot of effect on tensions in the family and causes many conflicts in life is the difference in taste and difference of interest. So, if a couple learn how to behave in dealing with these religious issues, undoubtedly many of their problems will be solved and they will have a good family atmosphere.

Post hoc test showed that although both groups being treated (cognitive-behavioral and wish actualization treatments) showed significant improvement compared to the control group (P<0.01), significant differences were not observed between both groups with different treatments (p>0.05). However, in a one-month follow up, *wish actualization* doctrine had more stable results than classical cognitive-behavioral therapy significantly

The results of this research on cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) are in consistent with Sa'ami (2005). These results not only illustrate the effectiveness of the therapy, but also reflect the flexibility of families who are struggling to solve their problems in spite of severe conflicts. The lack of positive changes in the control group reveals a crisis in some families and the need for specialized intervention.

In explaining the findings of the research on the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral family therapy in increasing marital satisfaction, two points can be noted. In the family therapy system, on the one hand, by providing practical assignments in the sessions, and on the other hand by teaching effective methods for solving marital conflicts, is provided the bases of increasing the satisfaction of marital relationships. In this study, couples were helped to simultaneously reveal existing religious conflicts and to resolve existing contradictions.

The efficacy of *wish actualization* treatment has already been confirmed in qualitative research. The present research is the first quantitative research that studied this school and its impact on the religious problems of couples. According to the results of this study, therapists can use this method to treat religious problems.

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Mediation of Conflicts with Ethnic Component: Why Russia Needs It

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Abstract

Russia has always been a multinational country. This is the reason why the questions of interethnic conflicts are of big importance there. Mediative approach developed by Prof. Shamlikashvili appears to be one of the most significant instruments for establishing dialogue and facilitating mutual understanding. At the time when this article was written, mediative approach had just started to be promoted. The paper deals with the questions of interpersonal (intercultural), interethnic (group) and ethnopolitical conflicts, as well as ways of their resolution, role of mediative approach in such cases, and perspectives of its implementation.

Keywords: mediation. intercultural conflict, interethnic conflict, ethnopolitical conflict, Russia

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ICERM
International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation

Introduction

Conflicts with ethnic components are becoming a part of everyday life in many parts of the world, including Russia with its astonishing variety of ethnic groups. According to the 2010 Census, there are at least 194 officially recognized ethnic groups in Russia, apart from many minor subgroups which could not be reflected in the results of the census due to the methodology employed in it (The All-Russian Census, 2010)

A variety of cultures and ethnic groups does not necessarily mean a lot of conflicts between them. It should not be disregarded that most communities have much longer experience of peaceful co-existence than that of violent conflicts, and of mutually beneficial relationships than mutual hatred. However, violent escalated ethno-political conflicts, such as the Chechen Wars, have long lasting negative impact on interethnic relations, which can manifest itself both as lack of trust in everyday life and as occasional outbursts of violence.

One thing to mention about interethnic conflicts is that they may equally arise in socially disadvantaged and economically backward areas, where people face both serious economic hardships and lack of social guarantees. Likewise, affluent bustling cities such as Moscow or St. Petersburg attract crowds of labor migrants with diverse cultural backgrounds and contradictive economic interests.

In the Russian context, most recent episodes included the unrest in Pugachev, Saratov region (July 2013), Biryulevo, Moscow (October 2013) and the mayhem in Volgograd following the terrorist attacks (December 2013). All of these have gained wide media coverage at the national level and provoked public discussion on social media and beyond them. Apart from that, minor episodes of ethnic violence are registered on a daily basis and have indeed become a part of everyday life in Russia. We understand contemporary ethnic conflicts in Russia as spontaneous outbursts in the context of longtime tensions. These outbursts are often provoked by news in the media, but the role of social networks and horizontal connections is even more important.

The most notorious episodes have much in common in their structure and all followed a murder of one or more persons, in which a murderer presumably belonged to one or another ethnic minority originating from Caucasian region. At the same time, occasional murders of labor migrants from Central Asia committed by ultra-right radicals have become quite a routine in the criminal news feeds.

The prevention of ethnic violence is traditionally seen in Russia as the responsibility of security services. Surveillance of "suspicious" personalities, identifying "extremists" and imposing pressure on them, i.e., demonstrative punishment of "illegal migrants," are part of the multi-directional attempts to maintain control over the situation. However, the strategy of tightening control, suppression of conflict and crackdown often not only prove to be inefficient and inadequate, but also inevitably lead to violations of civil rights and create in the society an atmosphere of fear and witch hunting. In this situation civil society concentrates its efforts on propaganda of tolerance and respect to people with different social and cultural background. However, these efforts often remain futile, since the people engaged in conflict and overwhelmed with strong emotions – righteous anger, sense of injustice, fear for the future of their children – perceive the old sermon of tolerance and multiculturalism as irrelevant and annoying.

We suggest that in the current situation there should be developed a working mediation-based solution for dealing with interethnic conflicts in the context of the present-day Russia. Demand for such

a solution is very high, even though one can expect resistance to it from the conservative part of Russian establishment.

Mediation is a dispute resolution tool in which a professional neutral is not engaged in decision-making and has a great potential for social transformation in many spheres of life (Shamlikashvili, 2014, p. 6). The main reason for its potential is the method of having a commitment to the deep interests of the participating parties. The interests of the parties are often discovered by all involved only in the mediation process after becoming empowered and capable of a more-sincere and accepting communication with each other. "Empowering parties themselves for developing and making decisions, the mediator assists them in a joint search for a viable and mutually satisfying solution. Empowerment of the parties is one of the key qualities and advantages of mediation as a modern instrument of dispute resolution, which accounts for its popularity" (Shamlikashvili, 2014, p. 18).

Mediation has been intensively developing in Russia for the last ten years as a private confidential form of dispute resolution with the participation of a professional/neutral mediator, whose role is to support self-determination of the parties and help them to achieve a mutually acceptable agreement. In 2005, the oldest provider of mediation services in Russia, the Center for Mediation and Law, was established. Since that time, the Center has conducted a lot of educational work, including translating books and articles in various fields of mediation, organizing trainings for mediators and exchanging experience between practicing mediators. It has trained up to 300 mediators, a large part of whom practice in the field of family and commercial mediation. Several other centers have been established, some of which were opened by the Center's former students. Another strong incentive for the growth of mediation in Russia was the adoption of the Law on Mediation, i.e., "On Alternative Procedure of Dispute Resolution with Participation of a Mediator (Mediation Procedure)," which came into effect on January 1, 2011. In 2013, the Federal Institute of Mediation was established under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Science. As a budgetary organization, it sees its role in facilitating quickest and most effective implementation of mediation in the state-controlled spheres. In this atmosphere, mediation is especially needed, and many expectations are placed upon it, such as the work of the courts, educational and healthcare systems, etc.

However, despite all this success, mediation-based technology for dealing with interethnic conflicts is still missing in Russia and its development as a practical tool is still in process. Some of preliminary work has been done during a joint four-day seminar with experts from the Assembly of Russian Peoples on the subject of *Ethnomediation*, which was held in the Center for Mediation and Law in July 2014 and which is planned to be the only one of the first in a series of similar seminars.

To better define the subject of mediation in interethnic conflicts and articulate recommendations for a mediator on how to organize the process of dealing with it, it is necessary to introduce at least basic distinctions in terms of conflict types. The classification we use for practical needs at our Center includes three types of conflicts with an ethnic component, which can also be seen as stages of escalation.

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Interpersonal (Intercultural) Conflict

Interpersonal (intercultural) conflict is aggravated by serious ethnocultural differences between the people involved. Such conflicts are private and occur in a mediator's practice in any field, often including family, labor and community disputes. The following is an example from the practice in family mediation.

In a divorce case between Mikhail (Russian) and Adilya (Tatar) the intercultural component was apparently higher than actually realized by the parties involved. The story of their romantic love more than 10 years before included an episode of bride-stealing from the house of her Muslim parents, who vehemently opposed to their daughter marrying a *giaour* (non-Muslim). After several years of marriage, Mikhail had several love affairs outside his marriage and ended it with leaving his wife and two children. Adilya called her parents and brothers for support in resolving the issues between her and her husband. And it was, in fact, her parents who suggested mediation.

In this case, which by the way, had high potential for escalation beyond the legal frames into *group interethnic conflict,* parties had very different ideas on the role of husband and wife in marriage, many of which were determined by their respective ethnic cultures. Furthermore, the parties apparently had different expectations regarding decision-making portion in the process. Adilya strongly preferred to take part in mediation together with her parents, whom she saw as protectors of her rights and interests and had a tendency to share the responsibility of decision-making with them, while Mikhail was quite reluctant to the idea that her parents should somehow be involved in the dispute "between the two."

In such a dispute staying neutral may be more challenging for a mediator than in a case, where the ethnocultural component is absent. Some aspects of the parties' behavior, which may seem to be contradicting "plain sense" or the mediator's perception of "natural rights," may turn to be socially and culturally constructed by the respective social backgrounds of the parties involved, particularly, by their ethnocultural background. In addition, the mediator should, on one hand, stay vigilant that his own neutrality is not affected by the different cultures of the party or parties and, on another hand, keep trying to facilitate the parties' understanding and acceptance of each other's cultural differences. The second part may be quite challenging, given that parties who have lived together for several years as partners, often may feel that they know each other better than they actually do and interpret each other's behavior as personal "peculiarities," often in negative terms, where it can actually be predetermined by their cultural background. This happens quite often in the contexts of family mediation because components such as attitudes to children and the spouse, relationships with parents, manner of running the house etc., often varying greatly from one culture to another, are not perceived by culture-bearers as socially constructed but only as "natural," while remaining quite "hidden" from a stranger's point of view as a part of family life; unfortunately, there is little chance to learn of these matters until one actually becomes a member of the family.

At the same time, it is very important for a mediator to realize that in this type of conflict the core of it is interpersonal and it manifests itself on the level of family identities, not on the level of ethnic identities. In the aforementioned case, it was a conflict between a husband and a wife, not between a Russian and a Tatar (though aggravated by mutual misinterpretations of culturally determined behavior). However, unless such conflict receives attention and timely treatment, it is most likely to escalate into a group conflict when interpreted by parties involved in terms of group ethnic identities.

Interethnic (Group) Conflict

Interethnic (group) conflict is often an escalated interpersonal conflict where group ethnic identities fuel this escalation. It is noteworthy that if initial family or professional identities may prevail on the former stage of conflict, at this point, they are superseded by ethnic ones. Here is an example of a typical youngster skirmish which has grown into an interethnic confrontation in one of the Moscow institutes.

A fight between two groups of Armenian and Azeri teenagers took place in one of the Moscow night clubs. Seven people were engaged in it, all of them Russian citizens. Fortunately, club security managed to separate the youngsters before they did serious harm to each other. However, the incident has received public reaction because among its witnesses was a popular blogger, who took pictures of the fight and posted them on social networks with ironic commentaries that were rather offensive for Caucasian diasporas in Russia in general. Afterwards, this small incident had media coverage at several online news sites. As it turned out, all the youngsters involved in the fight were students (freshmen and sophomores) of the same Moscow institute, whose administration was very concerned about the possibility for escalation of interethnic violence in the institute and negative impact on its reputation. So, it was the Vice Principal for administration affairs who invited a private mediator to help students resolve the issues and apply some pressure on them to make them participate in the "voluntary" mediation process.

At the mediation, it was revealed that initial conflict emerged between two teenagers – Sarkis and Alikber, competing for the attention of their peer Natasha. When the two started to fight, their friends, Armenian and Azeri youngsters respectively, tried to "break up" the fight, but resulted in the appearance that one either was "helping" or "took sides." It was impressive that at the moment the mediation started, parties were talking of themselves almost exclusively in terms of their conflicting ethnic identities, as if the whole range of their identities suddenly narrowed to one. It was also apparent that the story of long-time violent ethnopolitical conflict between Armenian and Azeri nations (Nagorno-Karabakh War) was present in the room as a silent background, which none of the parties would like to touch.

In such a case it was important for the mediator to not only let the parties talk to each other and moderate the level of aggression between them, but to also facilitate the shift from conflicting identities to shared identities of both groups (students of the same institute, Caucasians in Moscow). This resulted in the realization by the participants of the deeply shared interests, of the need for preserving "normal" relationships between the two groups and being cooperative with the institute's administration. It was also very important to avoid stigmatization and punitive reaction toward the "fighters," since their behavior, in fact, was very much in line with the moral codes of men in their native cultures, who would rather see it in a positive way, as an expression of masculinity and bravery. Mediation helped to restore the relationships between the two groups, which came to a kind of "gentlemen's agreement."

Luckily, there were no acts of violence committed in this given conflict. In all the most recent resonant cases, outbursts of interethnic violence and attempts of "pogroms" followed a murder of an ethnic Russian, presumably committed by a representative of one of the Caucasian ethnic groups. Such was the case in the Biryulevo district of Moscow in October 2013, when a group of Russian nationalists, supported by the citizens of the community, demanded for the "urgent investigation" of a murder, presumably committed by an Azeri national. The situation, apparently originating from an interpersonal

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conflict, was interpreted in national terms and fast escalated into a potentially violent interethnic conflict in Russia's capital with thousands of people involved. In order to confine the growing conflict, the Russian government took urgent measures to identify the murderer. This task was done within several days and an Azeri national, Orkhan Zeynalov, was consequently sentenced to 17 years in prison, despite the serious doubts of human rights activists that he was not just a scapegoat sacrificed to appease public opinion (Kommersant, 2014).

While in an early phase of escalation in a non-violent interethnic conflict, regular mediation process may be sufficient to resolve the dispute. It would be recommended to initiate a group dialogue facilitation process if a larger number of people are getting involved in conflict.

Ethnopolitical Conflict

Ethnopolitical conflict in our understanding is a highly escalated violent conflict in which political institutions in the broad sense of this term are widely involved. Its difference from a simple interethnic conflict is the emergence (or engagement) of political leaders from each side of the conflict, acting in their own interests, which is not necessarily equivalent to the interests of ordinary people involved in the conflict. In such conflicts, political elites often manipulate the public opinion by means of media; thus, they more directly achieve their obedience through hierarchical power-structures, obliging people to act to the contrary of their own beliefs and feelings. As a result, large numbers of people get involved in conflicts contrary to their own will and this makes the process of peace dialogue more complicated.

All the examples of escalated ethnopolitical conflicts are too notorious to quote and too complicated to be rendered in a form of short case study. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, civil war in Kosovo-Metohija and all wars in general can be included into this category. However, the recent uprising in Eastern Ukraine, for instance, in our opinion is a more political than ethnopolitical crisis and wouldn't count under this category. The long lasting afterward effect of such conflicts is interethnic tensions, in which any occasional conflict may be interpreted in terms of ethnicity and lead to fast escalation of violence, breaking social ties and regular structures of everyday life. Thus, such conflicts are not just the results of escalation, but also a fuel for future conflicts.

The process of peacemaking in a complex ethnopolitical conflict would include several levels of mediated/facilitated negotiations. The work with political leaders in this context will be similar to classical problem-solving mediation, oriented on reaching settlement of the dispute. At the same time, it is necessary to involve as many people as possible into peace dialogue and for this reason it is recommended to also work with large groups of up to 20 people. These people may not necessarily be decision-makers, but may just be influential members of civil society or potential leaders who can influence the public opinion through horizontal vectors of communication and social networks, etc. The main goal of this work in larger groups is not reaching any particular agreements (though such agreements may be reached by members of the divided community during such sessions), but rather restoring communication and encouraging empowerment of participants in this process.

While it is difficult to identify (or create) leaders or representatives that are able to negotiate on behalf of conflicting parties, mediation on the grassroots level of protest can yield better results if it can involve as much politically active people as possible. At the same time particular decisions and settlement of dispute are less probable and less important in ethnic conflict than normalizing relations

in the divided community and reconnecting people for continuing peaceful everyday life. Under these conditions we see less structured and less directive approaches to mediation (such as transformative and narrative) as more suitable for the needs of this process.

In this sense, we understand the whole peace-building process driven by mediation as conflict transformation rather than conflict settlement or conflict resolution. The difference between the three, as explained by Cordulla Reimann (Reimann, 2004), is that conflict settlement usually refers to "outcome oriented strategies for achieving sustainable win-win solutions and/or putting an end to direct violence, without necessarily addressing the underlying conflict causes." By conflict resolution it is commonly understood that this approach is "process-oriented" and "aims to address the underlying causes of direct, cultural and structural violence." While conflict transformation "refers to outcome, process and structure oriented long-term peacebuilding efforts, which aim to truly overcome revealed forms of direct, cultural and structural violence" (Austin, Fischer and Ropers, 2004). Though it is difficult to separate clearly these three approaches, the involvement of people at the grassroots level for participation in deep transformation of conflict suggests that this practice can be placed in the third group of approaches.

While it is probably not fully correct to name such a process as proper mediation, since it is public, and the meaning of such mediation basic principles as confidentiality or neutrality is likely to shift in it, the spirit of mediation fuels the whole process and supports the dynamics of change. So, we would prefer to call it a "mediation-like process," based on the "mediation approach." This process can also be referred to as "multiparty mediation."

The above scheme only represents quite roughly Weber's "ideal types" of conflict and real-life conflicts which often combine features of all three types, but in our opinion, it has some value for a mediator on the stage of developing action plan for the resolution process.

At the present moment in Russia, mediators already have a lot of practical experience in dealing with interpersonal conflicts with ethnic component (type 1) and limited experience in dealing with escalated group interethnic conflicts (type 2). However, Russian mediators still lack practical experience of work in the context of ethnopolitical conflicts (type 3), organizing the process and evaluating its outcomes and impact. For organizing a system of prevention, it is very important to deal with conflicts which are potentially liable to escalating into ethnic conflicts as early as possible in order to effectively prevent this escalation and limit the number of people involved. However, this would require a system of monitoring and early conflict resolution even for interpersonal disputes where ethnic component may be involved – its elements should be present at schools and colleges, in the system of social services dealing with migrants and among the diasporas.

Cultural, religious, linguistic and ethnic diversity appear to be an inherent attribute of developed modern societies. The preservation of cultural heterogeneity should be seen as an important part of protecting the society, in its richness and variety of forms of human existence. Since constructing differences of absolute and imperative character, building impassable barriers and creating "psychological distance" from the other, usually serves as a basis for violence and exploitation; in our understanding mediation should become an ongoing process that creates "psychological proximity" between people in the society, and one of the tools which makes existence of true diversity possible, at least to some extent, without violence and exploitation. For us, mediation is a tool which makes the co-existence of different ethnicities and cultures not only possible, but also enjoyable and desirable.

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Culture and Conflict Resolution: When a Low-Context Culture and a High-Context Culture Collide, What Happens?

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Abstract

The goal of this essay is to critically and deeply reflect on the most important themes, insights and questions on approaches to culture, conflict and conflict resolution. To achieve this goal, the essay explores answers to four relevant questions: What is the place of culture in conflict and conflict resolution? What are the various notions of culture in the conflict resolution literature, and how are they different or similar? What happens when a low-context culture and a high-context culture collide? In other words, how could the lessons learned from John Kerry's August 23, 2016 diplomatic visit to Nigeria shape our understanding of culture, conflict and conflict resolution? In the end, the essay recommends practical lessons for intercultural or cross-cultural negotiation, mediation and other forms of conflict resolution.

Keywords: culture, conflict, conflict resolution, diplomacy, mediation, negotiation, low-context culture, high-context culture, Nigeria

Introduction

On September 14, 2016, Melinda Burrell, Mariya Mironova (my colleagues at the Nova Southeastern University's Department of Conflict Resolution Studies) and I, Basil Ugorji, facilitated the culture and conflict class discussion on *Approaches to Culture and Conflict Resolution*. Drawing on chapters 3-5 of Augsburger's (1992) book, *Conflict Mediation across Cultures*, as well as Moore and Woodrow's (2004) article, *Mapping Cultures: Strategies for Effective Intercultural Negotiations*, our joint presentation explored and examined important aspects of culture and conflict resolution, particularly, the role that culture plays in conflict and conflict resolution, similarities and differences of the readings, literature review of the previous weeks' readings, and Brexit as a real life conflict. The presentation ended with an analysis of the readings, and a reflection on the lessons learned from John Kerry's August 23, 2016 diplomatic visit to Nigeria.

This essay, however, does not seek to repeat the above-mentioned aspects of our class presentation *ad verbum*, that is, word for word. Instead, the goal of the essay is to critically and deeply reflect on and analyze the most relevant themes, insights and questions that emerged from the readings and class discussions, and to re-examine one of the real-life conflict situations that was discussed during the presentation. In doing so, the essay seeks to explore the answers to the following four questions: What is the place of culture in conflict and conflict resolution? What are the various notions of culture in the conflict resolution literature, and how are they different or similar? What happens when a low-context culture and a high-context culture collide? In other words, how could the lessons learned from John Kerry's visit to Nigeria shape our understanding of culture, conflict and conflict resolution?

Finally, the essay concludes with a critical evaluation and a reflection on the lessons that conflict interveners could learn to enhance their intercultural competencies and communication.

First Consideration: On the Place of Culture in Conflict and Conflict Resolution

The understanding of culture and the role it plays in conflict and conflict resolution are the main preoccupations of Augsburger's (1992) book, *Conflict Mediation across Cultures*, as well as Moore and Woodrow's (2004) article, *Mapping Cultures: Strategies for Effective Intercultural Negotiations*. Personally, and most importantly, the understanding of culture and its relationship with identity, conflict, and conflict resolution are also at the heart and soul of my conflict analysis and resolution studies. During my studies in philosophy, unlike most of my colleagues, I debuted a critical analysis of "hermeneutics and interpretation of symbols in Igbo culture" (Ugorji, 2005) through the lenses of Paul Ricoeur's theory of hermeneutics. This study was conducted in the southeastern part of Nigeria where the Igbo people are located. At that time, I was fascinated by Ricoeur's philosophical writings on the science and art of interpretation and understanding of cultural elements, particularly cultural symbols. For this reason, I became his ardent and staunch disciple. I had the privilege of reading *The Symbolism of Evil* (Ricoeur, 1967), *Hermeneutics and Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation* (Ricoeur, 1981), *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics* (Ricoeur, 1974), *Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary* (Ricoeur, 1966), *History and Truth (*Ricoeur,1965), *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-Disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language* (Ricoeur, 1977), and *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Ricoeur, 1976).

In addition to Paul Ricoeur's works, I developed interest in Ernst Cassirer's (1979) *Symbol, Myth and Culture* as well as the bestselling and widely read *Things Fall Apart*, a novel written by Chinua Achebe (1959) which narrates two seemingly distinct but interrelated stories about culture and conflict. The one is a conflict between a powerful individual named Okonkwo and his society. The other is a collision or clash of cultures between the European-western systems and practices and the Igbo-Nigerian traditional systems and practices. Put differently, and in the words of David Augsburger (1992), it is a clash between a low-context (individualistic) culture and a high-context (collectivistic) culture. As it is described in *Things Fall Apart*, and most importantly, in Augsburger's (1992) *Conflict Mediation Across Cultures*, this clash of culture is due to various reasons, ranging from ignorance of the "other", prejudices and biases, false assumptions, misinterpretations and misunderstandings resulting from a "conflict of interpretation" (Ricoeur, 1974), and most often attitudes and behaviors related to power, domination, and honor. These factors will be examined in the subsequent sections of this essay.

The underlying question that stands out for me is: how can conflicts that are due to cultural misunderstandings be resolved? What could have been done to mitigate for example the disastrous effects of the clash of culture that Achebe (1959) narrates in his *Things Fall Apart*? At a time, I was satisfied with two concepts that hermeneutic philosophers propose: *interpretation* and *understanding*. For Ricoeur (1974) and his followers, it is only through a careful, reflective interpretation that the hidden meaning of cultural elements, symbols, words, and practices could be uncovered, brought to light, deciphered, and understood. And for this reason, Ricoeur (as cited in Itao, 2010) defines interpretation "as the work of thought which consists in deciphering the hidden meaning in the apparent meaning, in unfolding the levels of meaning implied in the literal meaning (p. 4). In addition to Ricoeur, other scholars within the field of hermeneutics place emphasis on "understanding other cultures" (Brown, 1963) as they are, which means to see the other's cultural systems and practices through their own eyes and not through our own eyes. This is because, many conflicts begin with a feeling of misunderstanding.

Although these texts on the hermeneutics of cultural symbols and elements provide theoretical framework to understanding culture and conflict, they fall short of practical steps to resolving culture-based conflicts. It is a good thing to postulate cultural arguments, especially from the hermeneutic perspective. Moreover, it is better to show both the cultural arguments and the practical steps through which conflicts with cultural elements could be resolved. Augsburger's (1992) *Conflict Mediation Across Cultures* and Moore and Woodrow's (2004) article, *Mapping Cultures: Strategies for Effective Intercultural Negotiations*, are very handy, relevant and important in that they not only lay out the theoretical principles underlying culture, they also outline practical ideas for resolving and mediating culture-based conflicts. These theories, and conflict resolution approaches to culture-based conflicts, will be carefully analyzed in the next section of this essay.

Rereading Achebe's (1959) *Things Fall Apart* through the lenses of Augsburger's (1992) distinction between a low-context (individualistic) culture and a high-context (collectivistic) culture sheds light on the symbolism, significance and signification of the personality of the powerful Okonkwo, as well as the Igbo traditional cultural system and the culture of the European colonizers. In *Things Fall Apart*, Augsburger's (1992) idea of a collectivistic culture could be denoted by the characteristics of the Igbo traditional cultural system while an individualistic culture could be generally interpreted as designating the cultural systems, practices and beliefs of the Western colonial countries. However, there is a third dimension: the individual culture of Okonkwo, a powerful man who was in conflict with his

own cultural group because of differences in viewpoints between him and the entire group. This factor raises a red flag on Augsburger's (1992) binary generalization and categorization of cultures in different regions of the world. As it shall be explained in the critical evaluation part of this essay, "every culture includes outliers - people who vary significantly from the norm. While still contained within the range for their culture, their views and behaviors differ significantly from that of their peers and may even look similar to other cultures" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, Para. 7). The differences in viewpoints or worldviews and the disparities in patterns of behaviors within a group or between and among groups are caused by differences in interpretations and understanding of cultural realities and not necessarily because of institutional, structural or historical differences.

To be able to understand the various arguments associated with the development of a culture – that is, whether a culture is static and immutable, or whether cultural realities are mutable, that is, could be revised based on the individual members' interpretation and emerging understanding of the world around them, or even whether cultural understanding could be adaptive and situational, as well as the implications of these cultural orientations, conflict styles and resolution –, it is important to review and compare the various definitions of culture as they are proposed by selected authors under our review.

Second Consideration: On the Definitions of Culture

A careful reading of the social science literature on culture shows some recurrent themes utilized by different authors to define what culture is and distinguish it from what it is not. In most literature, the following themes are commonly employed: individual or personal, collective or group, value, system, tradition, institution, belief, cultivation, history, inheritance, structure, identity, rigidity, evolution, attitude, behavior, uniqueness, difference, society, etc. These themes have been used by many scholars in different ways and at different times and places to explain what culture is. To achieve the purpose of this essay, three definitions of culture will be examined and compared. The first is from Augsburger (1992); the second is a definition of culture by Moore and Woodrow (2004); and the third is a working definition of culture by Theodore Scharwtz (1992) which is adopted by Avruch (1998; 2013).

As I read Augsburger's (1992) *Conflict Mediation Across Cultures*, I wanted to discover not only the definition of culture, but most importantly, why culture matters in conflict and conflict resolution. It is revealed by Augsburger (1992) that:

> cultures embody the authenticity and unique purposes of each community. Each culture seeks to express a people's values, sensitivity, and spirituality … Continuity and congruence with their cultural history connect persons and groups to their own peculiar depths, their own unique wisdom, and their own particular configuration of human archetypes, religious symbols, and central values. (p. 7)

This definition shows how the individual is dependent on and derives meaning from the collective culture. In this situation, the codes of behavior and interaction are largely dependent on the meaning derived from one's affiliation to a community or group. To explain this dynamic, Augsburger (1992) argues that cultures:

> create a 'pool of habits' for a society … that induces the society's members into complementary, reciprocal habits. As these interlock, they create mutually fulfilling relationships. Each culture

> invites a wide range of habits, personality styles, and behavioral patterns for use in times of calm or in situations of conflict; and each culture also prohibits and seeks to limit the exercise of what it considers undesirable or unacceptable behavior. (p. 22)

In a relatively similar way, and in agreement with Samovar and Porter (1972), Moore and Woodrow (2004) defines culture as:

> the cumulative result of experience, values, religion, beliefs, attitudes, meanings, knowledge, social organizations, procedures, timing, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe and material objects and possessions acquired or created by groups of people, in the course of generations, through individual and group effort and interactions. Culture manifests itself in patterns of language, behavior and activities and provides models and norms for acceptable day-to-day interactions and styles of communication. Culture enables people to live together in a society within a given geographic environment, at a given state of technical development and at a particular moment in time. (para. 5)

Finally, and most importantly, culture is defined by Theodore Scharwtz (1992, as cited in Avruch, 2013) as consisting of "the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by individuals of a population, including those images or encodements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves" (p. 10).

From a conceptual perspective, these three definitions of culture represent the various notions of culture in the conflict resolution literature. Although each definition is unique, it is easy to discover similarities and differences. Augsburger's (1992) definition presents a static and immutable view of culture. Culture, according to this view, is not flexible. It defines a people, determines their way of life, and dictates their conflict and conflict resolution styles. Based on this, any attempt to revise cultural systems, values, beliefs and practices will be confronted by unwavering opposition from the custodians of that culture. Augsburger's (1992) static view of culture is probably what led the author to postulate a categorization and generalization of people in different parts of the world as belonging either to a collectivistic, *high-context culture* or to an individualistic, *low-context culture* (pp. 8; 83-87). On the contrary, we see in Moore and Woodrow (2004) and Theodore Scharwtz (1992, as cited in Avruch, 2013) a view of culture that places emphasis not only on the collective experience and realities of a people transmitted from generation to generation, but also, on the personal creations, experiences, interpretations and meanings of individuals within the collectivity. This view of culture is fluid, not rigid, and shows that some aspects of a people's culture could be immutable while some aspects could be mutable - that is, revisable - depending on the situation and people involved.

The three definitions combined share an important and common truth about individual and group identities and the way these identities are constructed and shaped. Whether cultures are inherited or created, they determine patterns of behaviors and interactions within the social sphere of a society. They provide the first hermeneutic schemas for making judgements about others, and serve as a mirror through which we see and attribute value to our place in the world. Because we are judging others based on our cultural schemas, we expect others to see what we are seeing, feel what we are feeling, know what we know, experience what we are experiencing and understand our realities the way we understand them. Any divergence from these expectations opens a long road to conflict, and the effects of the resulting

conflict may be more devastating in those societies with a static view of culture, that is, in "collectivistic, high-context cultures" (Augsburger, 1992, pp. 8; 83-87).

Third Consideration: On Collectivistic, High-Context Culture

In the conflict resolution literature that addresses culture, conflict and conflict resolution methods, the reader is confronted time and time again with a binary distinction between Westernized, North American methods of conflict resolution and traditional, non-Western methods of conflict resolution (Augsburger, 1992; Avruch, 2013; Lederach, 1997; 1995; Salem, 2007; Brenman, 2014). In addition, and as this essay reveals, there is a sharp categorization or distinction between individualistic, low-context culture generally ascribed to the West and collectivistic, high-context culture which characterizes most of the non-Western countries and traditional societies (Augsburger, 1992; Moore & Woodrow, 2004). One of the questions that this essay seeks to address is: what happens when a low-context culture and a high-context culture collide? To answer this question, the essay proposes to reflect on John Kerry's August 23, 2016 visit to Nigeria, an official visit aimed at mitigating the violent religious conflict in the north of Nigeria. Unfortunately, Kerry's West-inspired diplomatic and conflict resolution mission to Nigeria, a country with diverse collectivistic, high-context cultures, was flawed because of his display of intercultural incompetence. In order to understand this real-life conflict situation in a collectivistic, high-context culture, and the role of the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, in reawakening old memories of division, hatred, mutual hostility and conflict between the Christians and Muslims in Nigeria, the essay proposes to examine the notion of collectivistic culture and the conflict dynamics that it is susceptible of generating.

The term *collectivistic culture* is used to characterize a society or group that attributes high importance to group identity and affiliation than to individual identity and autonomy. This means that the group members' actions, behaviors, interactions, and attitudes are based on their collective identity and history, instead of their individual identities and choices. "Whereas *individualistic* culture has a dimension of development, evaluation, and therefore by definition evolutionary, *collectivistic* culture is rigid and tied to a history that could sometimes be opposed to the development of *individualistic* cultures" (Ugorji, 2012, p. 11).

The question that comes to mind at this point is: how then is conflict fermented within collectivistic cultures? There are different ways in which conflicts could manifest, and even escalate in collectivistic cultures. Among the various causes of conflict postulated in cross-cultural studies literature, the following three key areas are worth highlighting in this essay. Conflict is prone to manifest in collectivistic societies when the following conditions are present: internal revision, sideways threat, and external intervention.

Internal Revision

In collectivistic cultures – a concept often described by some scholars as "mono-culturalism" (Ugorji, 2012) –, efforts are constantly made to preserve and ensure the continuity of cultural systems, values, and practices, and to protect them not only from external influence but also from "internal dissidence" (Ugorji, 2012, p. 57). Conflict occurs in this situation when one or more individuals begin to revise or change that which is communally accepted and practiced as a norm – the status quo. Devoted group members and their leadership will radically oppose to any attempts by fellow members to modify their cultural values or their way of life which was handed over to them by their ancestors and which defines who they are. Committed group members will fight to safeguard the purity of their cultural

inheritance and identity against any internal revision. Often this conflict manifests as an intergenerational conflict between the young and the old, or as a conflict between the Western educated and non-Western educated.

The case of Brexit, a real-life conflict that Melinda Burrell (my colleague at the Nova Southeastern University's Department of Conflict Resolution Studies) discussed during our Culture and Conflict class presentation (on September 14, 2016) is a good example of an intergenerational conflict within a collectivistic, high-context culture. The UK vote on June 23, 2016 reveals an intergenerational disparity between the older people and the younger people in their desires to either leave the European Union (as voted by the older people) or remain in the European Union (as voted by the younger people). The decision to withdraw from the European Union was not only made because of the economic situation in Europe. Underneath the conversations and decision to leave was a fundamental desire to safeguard the British culture and identity. While identifying the English as a collectivistic, high-context culture, Augsburger (1992) affirms that "the Englishman, expressing the high-cultural demand and high-cultural restraint characteristics of his more hierarchical setting plays out the conflict by cultural scripts mastered long before" (p. 94). Remaining in Europe will be for most British people especially the older ones a continuation of the loss of the British culture – values, identity, language, and ways of life. To prevent this from continuing, or as Kymlicka (1995) argues in his landmark studies on multiculturalism, to place «internal restrictions… [on] the freedom of [group] members in the name of group solidarity» (pp. 35-36), the British leveraged on the power of their vote to leave Europe as a symbolic way of revitalizing the British consciousness and ending internal revision of their cultural values and norms.

In some collectivistic, high-context cultures, conflict could also manifest when those who have received or are receiving Western education attempt to internally revise or change certain practices and beliefs within their own cultures. Most often, such changes are confronted with strong and violent opposition from the conservatives or non-Western educated elites within the group. The Boko Haram case in the northeastern part of Nigeria is a vivid example of this form of conflict. Many people came to learn about Boko Haram for the first time on September 14, 2013 when the United States government through the office of the U.S. Secretary of State designated Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). Unfortunately, only a small number of people know the historical development of the activities of Boko Haram, and that during its early beginnings, Boko Haram was not a violent religious sect. "Founded in 2002 in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, by Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf" (Ugorji, 2012, p. 134), Boko Haram began its operation as an Islamic religious sect just as any other religious sect, for example, the Branch Davidians, the Christian sect that developed in Waco, Texas, which was led by David Koresh (Docherty, 2001). From 2002 to 2009, the charismatic efforts of Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf were directed against internal revision of the Islamic religious values and practices as well as opposed any attempt to modify the Hausa-Fulani culture. During this time, Boko Haram's agenda was to preserve the purity of the cultural values and religious practices of the northern part of Nigeria by restricting the Muslims from adopting other ways of life. Like the Branch Davidians in the United States whose worldviews led them to reject a man-made constitution and earthly government to believing only in the Bible and God through their prophet, David Koresh, Boko Haram rejects everything that is imported from the West, especially the West-inspired democracy, constitution, education, dressing, and other Western values and practices, and enforces strict observance of the Sharia law, which, according to them, is revealed by Allah, as well as advocates for only the Islamic form of education.

What led to the escalation of the Boko Haram conflict is not only because it strictly restricts the

members of its cultural and religious group from modifying certain aspects of their inherited practices – for example, girls' education, dressing, Sharia, and so on. What moved the conflict from its latent stage to the use of violence and terrorism is the violent confrontation that occurred between the Nigerian law enforcement and the Boko Haram movement "on July 30, 2009, [which] resulted in over 700 dead, including at least 300 Islamist militants" (Ugorji, 2012, p. 134) in addition to the killing of Mohamed Yusuf, the leader of Boko Haram.

The failure to recognize worldview differences between the Boko Haram sect and the law enforcement is the reason why this conflict became protractible and intractable. In the next section, the practical steps by which an intervener - whether the law enforcement, a negotiator or a mediator - could recognize cultural differences and resolve culture-based conflicts will be examined through the lenses of Augsburger's (1992) *Conflict Mediation Across Cultures* and Moore and Woodrow's (2004) article, *Mapping Cultures: Strategies for Effective Intercultural Negotiations*. But before we get there, it is important to note that conflicts emerging from internal revision of a group's culture could escalate and develop into an intergroup conflict just as Boko Haram graduated from internal restriction of Muslims to attacking Christians, bombing their churches, and becoming a threat to all the ethno-religious groups in Nigeria and neigboring countries.

Sideways Threat

The term "sideways" is commonly used to refer to something in a "lateral direction," meaning "of, at, toward, or from the side or sides" (Learner's definition of sideways, n.d. In Merriam-Webster's online learner's dictionary). Synonymously, sidelong, a similar word which means "directed to or from one side" could be used to describe something or somebody in a sideways position. Multi-ethnic, multi-religious and by implication multicultural societies or countries are said to be highly diverse not just because they are made up of multiple ethnicities, religions and cultures, but because people from these different ethnicities and religions live side by side and sometimes in close proximity to one another while competing for scarce political, economic, or social benefits and resources at the center.

Pluralism or diversity in itself is not a sufficient condition for interethnic or interreligious hostility, conflict or violence. Many diverse societies have multiple ethnic and religious groups that live side by side in peace with one another. This was the case in Nigeria during the pre-amalgamation era, that is, before the "forced amalgamation" (Ugorji, 2016, p. 9-12) of 1914 by the British colonial government which coerced "the two Nigerian regions - the northern region with Islam as its main religion and the southern region with Christianity being its dominant religion" (Ugorji, 2016, p. 3) to unite under one nation. Before these different cultural groups were coerced to unite, the northerners and southerners, Muslims and Christians, as well as the traditional worshippers lived side by side in peace and tranquility, and during the times of dispute, they leveraged on their traditional systems of dispute resolution to mitigate their differences. Probably they enjoyed peace and security because they were remotely separated from one another, and were not constantly engaged in national politics and the distribution of economic resources.

Paradoxically, when people are remotely separated from one another, they think that the "others" think and behave like them. However, when they are in close proximity to one another, they begin to see their differences. With the advent of "forced amalgamation" [and the] "conquering tactic – divide and rule – by which the British colonial rulers ruled Nigeria during this period, in-group self-consciousness (or

self-awareness) and bonding, and out-group hostility and competition [were] awakened and reinforced" (Ugorji, 2016, pp. 9-12; p. 16). This marked the beginning of *sideways threat* in Nigeria, a threat that is being experienced by each ethnic and religious group regarding their territorial integrity, identity, values, religion, customs, traditions, language, survival, economic and political opportunity, and above all, inclusion in the decision-making process.

As I explained in my previous studies on *Ethno-Religious Conflict in Nigeria* (Ugorji, 2016), it is important to note that in addition to the manifest *sideways threat* that were experienced by different ethnic groups in Nigeria during the amalgamation era and shortly after, history shows that:

> From 1967 to 1970, Nigeria was completely ravaged by a bloody civil war that occurred mainly between the Muslim north (commonly identified as the Hausa–Fulani people) and the Christian southeast (known as the Igbo people), causing the death of more than one million people including children and women (Ugorji, 2012, p. 102). The subsequent violent clashes that occurred in the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s between these ethno-religious groups both in the north and south of the country, and the recent surge of the Boko Haram terrorist attacks have continued to reignite the old debate on what it means for Muslims and Christians, Igbos, Hausa/Fulanis, Yorubas and the ethnic minorities in the different regions to coexist and live together in harmony. (p. 3)

Even though Boko Haram's goal at its early beginnings was primarily to prevent Muslims in the northern Nigeria from internally revising the tenets of Islamic beliefs and the core values within the Hausa-Fulani culture as well as to protect Muslims from external, Western influence, however, as the conflict intensified and escalated, Christians became their main targets in addition to the Muslims who openly oppose to the Boko Haram ideology.

As these feelings of threat persist, and even heighten, each ethno-religious group in Nigeria resorts to the conflict or communication styles inherent in their culture as an attempt to respond to, manage or resolve the conflict. Some authors within the field of conflict resolution have written about the *Two-dimensional model of conflict* (Blake & Mouton, 1971, as cited in Katz et al., 2011, pp. 83-84). Rahim (2011, as cited in Hocker & Wilmot, 2014) identifies different conflict styles. Put together, these conflict styles are: avoiding (which takes a leave-lose/win posture and is utilized when there are low goal and relationship orientations); accommodating or obliging (which takes a yield-lose/win posture and is employed when there is a low goal orientation and a high relationship orientation); dominating, competing or controlling (which takes a win/lose direction and is utilized when there is a high goal orientation and a low relationship orientation); compromising (which is a mini-win/mini-lose and is employed when the goal is negotiated and there is a relationship orientation); integrating or collaborating (which takes a win/win posture and is utilized when there are high goal and relationship orientations.

Given that all the ethno-religious groups in Nigeria have expressed high goals that should not be ignored but that ought to be carefully accorded equal consideration in order to ensure peace and harmony, and because these ethno-religious groups are all bound together under one nation through the 1914 amalgamation of the north and south as well as through the principles inscribed in the Nigerian Constitution, the integrating conflict and conflict resolution style also known as the "neither-nor approach" (Augsburger, 1992) is more appropriate to achieving the "final good desired" (Foster, 1967, as cited in Augsburger, 1992, p. 101) by all the groups. An example of the integrating conflict resolution style in Nigeria is "the Nigeria National Conference - a National Dialogue convened and inaugurated on March

17, 2014 by the past president of Nigeria, President Goodluck Jonathan - with a mandate to deliberate on all matters that militate against Nigerian's national unity and progress (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, as cited in Ugorji, 2016, p. 3). The "498 delegates" that participated in this National Dialogue "unanimously agreed that the new wave of religious violence and terrorism pose a serious threat to the 'secular character of the state, and the idea of one nation bound in freedom, peace and unity" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, as cited in Ugorji, 2016, p. 4).

Unlike in individualistic, low-context cultures where conflict resolution often focuses "on the individual issues and assumes personal and private ownership, [or where there is] direct, one-to-one encounter between the disputants, and the litigation process prevails, and mediation is used in extreme cases" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 8), conflict and conflict resolution in collectivistic, high-context cultures are communal in nature, and "conflict resolution [is] achieved in indirect, lateral, and systematic ways" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 8) often by a third party mediation that involves "the use of go-betweens" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 101), and above all, the integrating, *neither-nor* approach. As the Nigerian National Dialogue indicates, the *neither-nor* approach provides a platform and an opportunity "to achieve workable compromise that neither alienates one side nor excludes the other" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 100).

An important characteristic of the *neither-nor* approach is inclusion in the process, that is, a feeling of belonging and not of rejection. The best quotation that could be used to explain this process is the one from Darmaputera (1982, as cited in Augsburger, 1992) which states that:

> A wise neither-nor decision is formulated in such a way that nobody will feel totally rejected, although nobody will feel that his/her idea is fully accepted either. But that is good enough to get a unanimous consensus. The wiser the leader, the more his/her decision will be characterized by the 'neither-nor' approach, which seeks what is 'suitable' for the immediate situation or condition. Not what is objectively good or right, but what is contextually or situationally or subjectively fitting. (p. 100)

External Intervention

It is in Augsburger's (1992) view that a wise and competent mediator or leader will use the *neither-nor* approach to manage or resolve conflicts in collectivistic, high-context cultures to avoid the exclusion of one group and the feeling of rejection in the process. This is because conflict styles in collectivistic cultures are based on each group's understanding of those cultural realities inherent in their cultures such as "power", "honor", "facework", "shame" or "humiliation" (Augsburger, 1992). These cultural realities highlight the important role culture plays in the escalation or suppression of conflicts.

A culturally incompetent mediator, diplomat or negotiator, who fails to adopt the integrating or *neither-nor* approach during his or her intervention in collectivistic cultures stands the risk of pouring fuel to the already inflamed fire burning in those societies. This describes exactly what happens when interveners from a low-context culture intervene in a high-context culture. An important example is John Kerry's August 23, 2016 visit to Nigeria, an official visit aimed at mitigating the violent religious conflict in the north of Nigeria, as well as the Boko Haram terrorism. Unfortunately, Kerry's West-inspired diplomatic and conflict resolution mission to Nigeria, a country with diverse collectivistic, high-context cultures, was flawed because of his display of intercultural incompetence leading to the reawakening of old memories of division, hatred, mutual hostility and conflict between the Christian south and Muslim north of Nigeria.

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Fourth Consideration: When a Low-Context Culture and a High-Context Culture Collide, What Happens? The Case of John Kerry's Diplomatic Mission to Nigeria

On August 23, 2016, the United States Secretary of State, John Kerry, made an official diplomatic visit to the Palace of the Sultan of Sokoto where he had an official meeting with Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, the Sultan of Sokoto and president-general of the Nigerian National Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs. The following day, Secretary of State John Kerry traveled to the Presidential Villa in Abuja for a state meeting with President Muhummadu Buhari (who is also from the north of Nigeria and a Muslim). More disturbing in the eyes of many critics, Secretary of State John Kerry had a meeting with the northern Nigerian states' governors and excluded the southern governors from participating in the meeting. Also, Kerry did not visit the prominent kings or traditional rulers in the southern part of Nigeria and the leadership of the Christian community. Because of this exclusionary and divisive diplomacy, Kerry's diplomatic mission to Nigeria which was aimed at discussing and finding a lasting solution to the Boko Haram terrorism was met with serious criticisms from the southern Nigeria and the Christian community.

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) "accused the United States government of stoking ethnic and religious divisions in Nigeria" (Thisday, August 26, 2016). To stoke means to add coal or other solid fuel to a fire, furnace, or boiler. According to the Christian community, "Mr. Kerry's visit was discriminatory, personal and divisive, [and] it heightened fear and tension among Christians in Nigeria" (Premium Times, August 25, 2016). As reported in the news, the president of the Christian Association of Nigeria, Rev. Supo Ayokunle, believes that Secretary of State John Kerry "lacks … respect for the heterogeneous nature of Nigeria [and] favors the northern Nigeria and Muslims to the detriment of the Christian community" (Thisday, August 26, 2016). For this reason, the Christian critics argue that "Kerry should stop interfering in the internal affairs of the country. If they cannot bring us together, they should not interfere in our affairs" (Premium Times, August 25, 2016).

Critical Reflection

I began this essay by discussing my study on the "hermeneutics and interpretation of symbols in Igbo culture" (Ugorji, 2005) through the lenses of Paul Ricoeur's theory of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics - the science and art of interpretation and understanding of cultural elements, particularly cultural symbols – is very relevant in understanding John Kerry's failed diplomatic mission to Nigeria and why he was furiously criticized by the southern leaders and the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). Kerry's foreign policy failure in Nigeria and the criticisms it generated are due to a conflict of interpretation and cultural misunderstanding. This is what happens when diplomats or negotiators from a low-context, individualistic culture intervenes in a high-context, collectivistic culture. "The high-context culture is more prone to misunderstandings and conflicts when the culturally normative expectations of appropriate behavior are violated" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 94).

The arguments of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) could be understood from two perspectives: common sense perspective and cultural perspective. From a common-sense perspective, it should be noted that since Nigeria is made up of different ethno-religious groups who were amalgamated in 1914 to form one nation, and since both Christians and Muslims are equally victims of Boko Haram, efforts to find solutions to the Boko Haram terrorism and similar religious conflicts in Nigeria must

recognize the views of, and include, both Christians and Muslims as well as all Nigerians. From a cultural perspective, if the Christians and southern leaders feel publicly excluded, rejected, disrespected, disapproved, dishonored, and insulted by John Kerry's exclusionary meeting with only the northern leaders and Islamic community, then it means that the underlying issue is beyond the common *modus operandi* that characterizes the U.S. foreign policy and conflict intervention. The issue is cultural, and could be found within the customs and practices of collectivistic, high-context cultures of Nigeria, especially as they shape their understanding of "face" and "honor." Let us briefly explain how the notions of *face* and *honor* are inseparably linked to this conflict.

By honor, it means "one's worth, one's claim to pride …and the acknowledgement of that claim [or] one's value in one's own eyes ...[and] in the eyes of one's society" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 102). What is salient in the concept of honor is that it is not just one's claim or value, the validation or acknowledgement of these values are more important. Augsburger (1992) captures this very well by saying that "honor is one's persona, one's social mask, and the mask is what is valued, what is real" (p. 107). In some high-context, collectivistic cultures like Nigeria, "the community exists within an all-embracing system of honor with particular obligations… Honor is the possession of idealized norms and a legitimization of defending those norms in retaliation" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 107). Dishonor, on the other hand, "is a loss of face in the community, a loss of self before the ideal of being human" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 107). By implication, the exclusion of the Christians and southern leaders by the Secretary of State John Kerry during his diplomatic meeting in Nigeria with the northern and Muslim leaders could be interpreted as an attempt to deprive the southerners and Christians "honor, reputation, and political status in the community" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 106). By this, the worth, importance and reputation of the southern and Christian leaders will be questioned not only by the northern and Muslim leaders, but also by the southern group members. Because the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) felt disapproved, excluded and humiliated in the eyes of the public by John Kerry's insensitivity to their sense of honor, they furiously affirmed that "Mr. Kerry's visit was discriminatory, personal and divisive, [and that] it heightened fear and tension among Christians in Nigeria" (Premium Times, August 25, 2016). Groups whose honor has been threatened or violated usually fight to restore it, and this makes an ethnic or religious conflict intractable.

Connected to the notion of honor is the concept of face. *By face*, it means "the public self-image that each person wants to claim for herself or himself" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 87). In other words, it is a state of being "understood, liked, included, and approved" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 88). No ethno-religious group in Nigeria would like to be excluded from an official diplomatic meeting about peace, security and development that is led by a foreign ally like the United States. This is why all the regions, states, ethnicities, and religions are represented at the Nigerian House of Assembly. If the United States wants to learn how it could support the security, peace and development efforts in Nigeria, then such information should be comprehensive, balanced and representative of all parties because the Boko Haram terrorism is not a threat to northern Nigeria or Muslims alone; it is a threat to all Nigerians both the south and the north, as well as Christians and Muslims alike. So, the isolation and exclusion of the southern and Christian leaders from John Kerry's diplomatic meeting with the northern and Muslim leaders is an attack on the public self-image of the Christians and the southern Nigeria. In other words, it is a threat to face which results in a loss of face. "When a conflict breaks out for a person in a more collectivistic setting, the threat to face comes from the possible loss of inclusion, approval, and association by others" (Augsburger,

1992, p. 93). Also, a loss of face could be defined as a threat to a group's "sense of competence or pride" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 84).

Unlike in individualistic, low-context cultures where *i-identity*, individual dignity and human rights are emphasized, and mechanical, formal and statist diplomacy could work without any group feeling excluded or disapproved, in collectivistic, high-context cultures where the emphasis is on *we-identity*, honor, and face, mechanical and statist diplomacy could heighten a sense of exclusion, public disapproval and loss of face as John Kerry's visit to Nigeria has shown. "The awareness of disapproval or rejection by the social context of significant peers can shape behavior, control choices, ...and conceal conflicts" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 82). Also, "a complete loss of face" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 95) could lead to an escalation and make the conflict intractable. A total avoidance of the conflict in order to save face could also make the conflict intractable and violent when it escalates. Therefore, speaking up against the exclusionary, "either-or" conflict intervention approach of the Secretary of State John Kerry is important to create an opportunity for a public discussion on the subject matter, help everyone know that "face must be honored, respected, preserved, and enhanced in all human relationships" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 84), and above all show that the integrating, *neither-nor* approach to conflict intervention is more appropriate in collectivistic, high-context cultures than the exclusionary, *either-or* approach.

Conclusion: Lessons Learned

This essay, the reader will agree, has succeeded in discussing the place of culture in conflict and conflict resolution, various notions of culture in the conflict resolution literature with their differences and similarities, and important issues about collectivistic cultures. The essay reveals that there are three ways by which conflict is fermented in collectivistic, high-context cultures. These are internal revision, sideways threat, and external intervention. In addition, the essay provides an answer to the question: what happens when a low-context culture and a high-context culture collide? It is revealed through the case of John Kerry's diplomatic mission to Nigeria that an intervener from an individualistic, low-context culture is highly susceptible to violate "the culturally normative expectations of appropriate behavior" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 94) in collectivistic, high-context cultures, and this violation could result in the loss of *face* and *honor,* making the conflict more intractable and protractible. To prevent such a negative outcome from occurring, the reader is hereby provided with three practical lessons for intercultural or cross-cultural negotiation, mediation or conflict resolution. These are bias awareness, intercultural education, and intercultural competency building.

Bias Awareness

In the term, *bias awareness*, we are presented with two familiar words, bias and awareness. While bias denotes our prejudices or intolerance tendencies against individuals or groups holding different views, values or beliefs from ours which often lead to bigotry, awareness is the knowledge, consciousness, recognition or realization of our own views and actions or the views and actions of others. Put together, bias awareness is a process by which we know, recognize, realize or become conscious of our biases. Often we may not know that our words, actions or policies are biased against people from other groups. To successfully intervene in other people's culture, it is important that the intervener (whether a mediator, negotiator, or diplomat) re-evaluates his or her own worldviews and biases by

undergoing a serious *desensitization* procedure. As Augsburger (1992) opines, "the desensitization of our common sense (cultural pool of assumptions) about conflict is necessary if we are to understand another culture's process … that is, if we are to perceive and experience another culture's content and context from within while coming from without" (p. 8).

Intercultural Education

Another step to a successful intercultural conflict resolution is through education. The kind of education that is proposed here is not the formal education that is often associated with the term education. Well, if a conflict resolution intervener could receive intercultural education in the formal school system, then this will be highly recommended. However, by intercultural education, it means that "the sensitization of our 'uncommon senses' about conflict invites us to learn from another culture as well as respect it… Every culture can be our teacher in some respect, offering some new perspective from the surprising and amazing disequilibrium that occurs on the boundary" (Augsburger, 1992, p. 9). Learning or educating ourselves about other cultures could be achieved through different ways including, traveling, interactions with the diaspora or immigrant communities, reading novels or books or watching movies from other cultures, learning other languages and the meanings of folktales, proverbs, metaphors and symbols, as well as interacting with people from other cultures on social media. Whatever form of intercultural education that is possible, it is recommended that the intervener engages in a "detailed research and exploration regarding the other culture and its members; [and] gain greater understanding about the other culture and … prepare for direct interactions" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, para. 33).

Intercultural Competency Building

In addition to identifying appropriate medium for intercultural education, it is suggested that the intervener understands the content of intercultural education, that is, what to learn and which cross-cultural conflict resolution competencies are mostly needed. Studies on cultural competency suggest two sets of competencies that interveners working in the field of intercultural or cross-cultural conflict resolution should possess. The first is *cultural fluency* defined as "…familiarity and facility with cultural dynamics as they shape ways of seeing and behaving [and] an awareness of our own and others' culturally shaped worldviews" (LeBaron 2014, pp. 582-587). The second is *cultural intelligence (CQ)* understood as "a person's capability for successful adaptation to new cultural settings" (Earley & Ang, 2003, as cited in LeBaron 2014, p. 587). In addition to *cultural fluency* and *cultural intelligence*, this essay proposes seven practical skills that an intervener in intercultural conflict environment should acquire. These skills are inspired by the *Wheel of Culture Map* (Moore & Woodrow, 2004) which "identifies cultural factors that shape the ways members of societies bargain for their interests and respond to disputes" (para. 14).

1) Understand cultural orientations:

As this essay has emphasized, it is important that the intervener understands the cultural orientations of the parties, that is, whether they are from a low-context, individualistic culture or from a high-context, collectivistic culture. Individualistic cultures "value individual autonomy, initiative, creativity and authority in decision making" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, para. 16). On the contrary, collectivistic cultures "value and emphasize group cohesion, harmony and decision making that involves either consultation with group members before deciding, or consideration of the well-being of the group

over that of the individual" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, para. 16). Understanding the parties' cultural orientations will help the intervener to "develop an awareness of how cultural differences influence problem solving and negotiation" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, para. 14).

2) *Identify cultural similarities:*

Even though different cultural orientations exist as this essay has shown, there are similarities and outliers. The intervener should not be solely focused on a binary categorization of cultures. Instead, there is need to cautiously "learn how to identify cultural similarities, build upon them and develop strategies that will help to bridge the important differences" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, para. 13).

3) *Parties' definition of conflict situation and issues:*

According to Moore and Woodrow (2004), "an important element of preparation for any negotiation is to develop a clear understanding of how the other party defines the situation and the issues to be discussed" (para. 18). Providing an inclusive and equal opportunity for, and asking, each of the parties concerned to tell their story about what happened will allay fears of exclusion, favoritism and injustice.

4) *Assessment of core identity interests:*

Before any intervention in cross-cultural situations, it is important that the intervener assesses and understands what the parties' core identity interests are. This is because when a "group feels that basic survival is threatened or fundamental identity is at risk, they may make rigid demands or intimidating statements" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, para. 19).

5) *Identify Parties' forms of power and levels of influence:*

In intercultural conflict resolution, the understanding of power dynamics and the ability to navigate through power imbalance are very important for a resolution to happen. As Mayer (2000, as cited in Moore & Woodrow, 2004) says, power is «the ability to act, to influence an outcome, to get something to happen (not to happen), or to overcome resistance" (para. 21). The task of the intervener in intercultural or cross-cultural conflict will be to "identify what forms of power and influence are most likely to be used by whom and in which situations" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, para. 21).

6) *Understand the symbolism of external factors such as meeting points (place), history of the parties and the conflict,* as well as the meaning of specific events within the context of the conflict, and various structures and people that have contributed in shaping "the development of a specific group's cultural approach to negotiations and conflict resolution" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, para. 22). This essay recommends that interveners should ensure that the chosen meeting point (i.e., the place where the negotiation, mediation, or meeting will occur) is a neutral location and is decorated with common or shared symbols that each party or group will identify with.

7) *Develop a negotiation plan appropriate to the situation and build cross-cultural relationships:*

Lastly, and before the start of an official meeting in cross-cultural setting, the intervener should first and foremost develop an intervention plan that is suitable for the conflict, and this plan should

be developed in consultation with group representatives. Essential to this plan is a road map on "how you might initiate negotiations, and then respond as the situation evolves" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, para. 38). Developing the intervention or negotiation plan in consultation with the group representatives will not only help in building cross-cultural relationship and alliance; it will also help in confidence building and making sure that the interveners "comply with their negotiation protocols in a way that is comfortable for all parties" (Moore & Woodrow, 2004, para. 39).

If the above seven practical areas of consideration and skills acquisition are implemented, I believe that the conflict resolution work of an intervener in cross-cultural conflict setting will yield fruits – fruits that will endure through time.

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Ethnic and Religious Identities Shaping Contestation for Land Based Resources: The Tiv-Farmers and Pastoralists Conflicts in Central Nigeria until 2014

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Abstract

The Tiv of central Nigeria are predominantly peasant farmers with a dispersed settlement intended to guarantee access to farm lands. The Fulani of arid northern Nigeria are nomadic pastoralists that move with the annual wet and dry seasons in search of pastures for the herds. Central Nigeria attracts the nomads due to available water and foliage on the banks of Rivers Benue and Niger; and the absence of tsetse fly within the central region. Over the years these groups have lived peacefully until in early 2000s when violent armed conflict erupted between them over access to farm land and grazing areas. The analysis of documentary evidence, interviews and focus group discussions and participant observation reveals that the conflict is due largely to population explosion, the shrinking economy, climate change, non-modernization of agricultural practice and the rise of Islamization tendency. The modernization of agriculture and the restructuring of governance hold the promise to improve inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations.

Keywords: modernization, pastoralist, ethnic, religious

Introduction

Modernization's ubiquitous postulations in the 1950s that nations would naturally secularize as they become modernized has come under severe re-examination in light of the experiences of many developing countries with material progress especially since the later part of the 20th century. Modernizers had premised their assumptions on the fact of the spread of education and industrialization which would spur urbanization with associated improvements in material conditions of the mass of the citizens (Eisendaht, 1966; Haynes, 1995). With massive transformation of material livelihood of many citizens, the value for religious beliefs and ethnic separatist consciousness as platforms of mobilization in contestation for access to resources modernizers had hoped would peter out. Suffice to note that ethnicity and religious affiliations have rather emerged and remained as strong identity platforms for competing with other groups to access societal resources especially those controlled by the state (Nnoli, 1978). Since most of the developing countries have a complex social plurality and their ethnic and religious identities were amplified by colonialism, contestation in the political sphere has continued to be fiercely fueled by these forces to satisfy the accompanying social and economic needs of various groups. Most of these, especially in Africa, were at the very basic level of modernization in the 1950s through the 1960s. However, after several decades of modernizing, ethnic and religious consciousness has rather been reinforced and the 21st century has seen them on the rise.

The centrality of ethnic and religious identities in politics and national discourse in Nigeria has remained conspicuous at every stage in the country's history. The near success of the democratization process in the early1990s following the 1993 presidential election represents the highest point of low-level reference to religion and ethnic identity in national political discourse. The moment of unification of Nigeria's plurality evaporated with the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election in which Chief M. K. O. Abiola, a Yoruba from the south western Nigeria won. The annulment threw the country into a state of anarchy that soon took the religious-ethnic trajectories (Osaghae, 1998).

Though religious and ethnic identities have received a predominant share of responsibility for politically instigated conflicts, inter-group relations have indeed generally been guided by these two factors. Since the return of democracy in 1999, inter-group relations in Nigeria have been largely influenced by ethnic and religious identity consideration. In this context, therefore, is situated the contestation for land-based resources between the Tiv farmers and the Fulani pastoralists. Historically, the two groups had relatively enjoyed peaceful relations, although they also experienced some clashes here and there. With the aid of traditional methods of conflict resolution, peace was often achieved. The emergence of wide spread hostilities between the two groups began in the 1990s in Taraba state over grazing areas where farming activities by the Tiv farmers began to limit grazing spaces. The north-central part of Nigeria would become a theatre of armed conflict since the mid-2000s when attacks by the Fulani herdsmen on Tiv farmers and their homes and crops became a constant feature of inter-group relations within the zone. These armed clashes escalated from 2011 to 2014.

This article seeks to shed light on the relationship between the Tiv farmers and Fulani pastoralists shaped by ethnic and religious identity coloration. With an in-depth understanding of this issue, the article proposes ways to mitigate the dynamics of the conflict over competition for access to grazing areas and water resources.

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Methodology

The article adopted a survey research approach and a qualitative methodology. Using primary and secondary sources, data was generated for descriptive analysis. Primary data was generated from selected informants with practical and in-depth knowledge of the armed conflict between the two groups. Focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with victims of the conflict in the focus study area. Analytical presentation followed a thematic model of themes and sub-themes selected to highlight the underlying causes and the identifiable trends in engagement with the nomadic Fulani and sedentary farmers in Benue State.

Benue State as a Locus of the Study

Benue state is one of the six states in north central Nigeria coterminous with the middle Belt. These states include Kogi, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Taraba, and Benue. The other states that constitute the middle Belt region are Adamawa, Kaduna (southern) and Kwara. In contemporary Nigeria, this region coincides with the Middle Belt but not exactly identical with it (Ayih, 2003; Atelhe & Chukwuma, 2014).

Benue state has 23 local government areas that count as counties in other countries. Created in 1976, the state is associated with agricultural activities as the greater proportion of her over four million people draw their livelihood from peasant cultivation. Mechanized agriculture is at a very low level. The state has a very unique geographical feature, including the River Benue, the second largest river in Nigeria. With many relatively big tributaries to River Benue, the state has access to water all year round. The availability of water from natural courses, an expansive plain dotted with few high lands and a clement weather coupled with two major weather seasons of wet and dry periods, the state is suitable for agricultural practice including livestock production. When the tsetse fly-free element is factored into the transhumance process, then Benue state more than any other within the central region provides suitable environment for sedentary and pastoralist production systems. Crops that are widely cultivated in the state include yam, maize, guinea corn, rice, beans, soya beans, groundnuts, and a variety of tree crops and vegetables.

Benue state registers a strong presence of ethnic plurality and cultural diversity as well as religious heterogeneity. The dominant ethnic groups in the state include the Tiv who are the obvious majority spread across 14 local government areas. The other groups are the Idoma and the Igede. The Idoma occupy 7 and the Igede 2 local government areas respectively. Six of the Tiv dominant local government areas have large river bank areas. These include Logo, Buruku, Katsina-Ala, Makurdi, Guma and Gwer-West. In the Idoma speaking areas, Agatu local government area shares an expansive area along the bank of River Benue.

Defining the Contours of the Conflict: Identity Characterization

Central Nigeria consists of six states namely: Kogi, Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Niger and Kwara. This region is variously termed Middle Belt (Anyadike, 1987) or the constitutionally recognized 'north-central geo-political zone'. The area consists of a complex heterogeneity of people and cultures. Central

Nigeria is particularly home to a complex plurality of ethnic minorities considered indigenous while other groups such as the Fulani, Hausa and Kanuri are considered migrant settlers in the area. Prominent minority groups include Tiv, Idoma, Eggon, Nupe, Birom, Jukun, Chamba, Pyem, Goemai, Kofyar, Igala, Gwari, Bassa, and so on. The area is unique for its plethora of minority ethnic groups having the largest concentration compared to other zones in the country.

Central Nigeria is also characterized by religious diversity: Christianity, Islam and African traditional religion. The numerical proportion may be indeterminate, but Christianity appears to be predominant followed by the considerable presence of Muslims among the Fulani and Hausa migrants. The indeterminacy of the Christian-Muslim population is due to the sensitive nature of religion in Nigeria which restrains census count from asking citizens for such identities. Central Nigeria displays this diversity that is a mirror of Nigeria's complex plurality. The region also covers part of Kaduna and Bauchi states (James, 2000).

Central Nigeria represents a transition from the savanna of northern to the southern part of Nigeria's forest region. It therefore contains geographical elements of both climatic zones. The area is heavily suited for sedentary life and hence agriculture is the dominant occupation. Root crops like potato, yam and cassava are widely cultivated across the region. Cereals like rice, guinea corn, millet, maize, *benniseed* and soybeans are also widely cultivated and constitute the primary commodities for cash incomes. The cultivation of these crops requires wide plains to guarantee sustained cultivation and high possible yield. Sedentary agricultural practice is supported by 7 months of rainfall (April - October) and 5 months of dry season (November - March) suitable for harvest of a wide variety of cereals and tuber crops. The region is supplied natural water through smaller river courses that cut across the region emptying into River Benue and Niger, the two largest rivers in Nigeria. Major tributaries in the region include rivers Galma, Kaduna, Gurara and Katsina-Ala, (James, 2000).

The Tiv and the Pastoralist Fulani in Central Nigeria

It is important to establish the context of intergroup contact and interaction between the Tiv, a sedentary group and the Fulani, a nomadic pastoralist group in central Nigeria (Wegh & Moti, 2001). The Tiv, the largest ethnic group in the central part of Nigeria, has a population size of about four million with concentration in Benue state. However, they also live in considerable numbers in Nasarawa, Taraba, and Plateau states (NPC, 2006). They are believed to have migrated from the Congo, Central Africa, and have been settled in the central part of Nigeria way back in history (Rubingh, 1969; Bohannans 1953; East, 1965; Moti and Wegh, 2001). The current Tiv population is significantly high, and the number increased from 800,000 in 1953. The impact of this on agricultural practice is varied but critical to inter-group relations.

The Tiv are predominantly peasant farmers who live on the land and find sustenance from it through its cultivation for food and income. Peasant agricultural practice is a common occupation of the typical Tiv people until the failure of crop yields caused by inadequate rains, declining soil fertility and population expansion forced Tiv farmers to embrace non-farm activities such as petty trading. When the population of the Tiv was relatively small compared to the available land for cultivation in the 1950s and 1960s, expansion of cultivation activities was rampart leaving earlier portions of the land to fallow. Shifting cultivation and crop rotation were common agricultural practices, because cultivable land was

available. With the steady expansion of Tiv population coupled with their customary scattered-sparse settlement meant to access more land and control its use, cultivable spaces shrunk rapidly. However, since many Tiv people have remained peasant farmers, they have maintained the cultivation of stretches of land available for food and income covering a wide variety of crops.

The Fulani population in Nigeria is estimated at seven million (Ebiseni, 2010) who are predominantly Muslims, are also a nomadic pastoralist group who are by occupation traditional cattle herders. Their search for favorable conditions for raising their herds keeps them on the move from one place to another. In doing this, pasture and water availability must co-exist with tsetse fly non-infested areas (Iro, 1991). The Fulani are known by several names including Fulbe, peut, Fula and Felaata (Iro, 1991, de st. Croix, 1945). The Fulani are said to have originated from the Arabian Peninsula and migrated into West Africa. According to Iro (1991), the Fulani use mobility as a production strategy to access water and pasture and possibly markets. This movement takes the pastoralists to as much as 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, making the Fulani the most diffuse ethno-cultural group. The group is believed to have been touched but only slightly by modernity in their preponderant dominance of the pastoralist's economic activity. The pastoralist Fulani with their cattle move southwards from northern Nigeria into the Benue valley for pasture and water beginning from the onset of the dry season (November to April). The Benue valley has two major attractive factors; water from River Benue and their tributaries such as River Katsina-Ala along the river lines. With the tsetse fly - free environment, the Benue valley is hugely attractive to the pastoralists. The return movement begins with the onset of rains in April and continues through June. Once the valley is saturated with heavy rain and movement is hampered by muddy areas threatening the very survival of the herds, coupled with shrinking space for passage due to farming activities, movement out of the valley becomes inevitable.

Contemporary Contestation for Land Based Resources

The contest for access to and utilization of land-based resources which are principally water and pasture between the Tiv farmers and pastoralists Fulani is situated within the peasant and nomadic contexts of economic production systems adopted by both groups. The Tiv are a sedentary people whose livelihood is rooted in agricultural practices that prime land. Population expansion puts pressure on available land accessibility even among the farmers. Declining soil fertility, erosion, climate change and modernity verses tradition all conspire to moderate agricultural practices that challenge the very livelihood of farmers (Tyubee, 2006).

The Fulani pastoralists are a nomadic stock whose system of production revolves around cattle rearing. They use mobility as a strategy of production as well as consumption (Iro, 1991). To sustain this, a number of factors have conspired to challenge the Fulani's economic livelihood. These factors include the clash of modernism with traditionalism. The Fulani have resisted modernity and hence their system of production and consumption remained largely unaltered in the face of ineluctable influences such as population expansion as well as modernization itself. Environmental factors constitute a major set of issues affecting the Fulani economy. These include the pattern of rainfall, its distribution and seasonality and the extent to which these affect the utilization of land. Closely related to this is the pattern of vegetation which is compartmentalized into semi-arid and forest areas. This vegetation pattern determines pasture availability, inaccessibility and insects' predation (Iro, 1991; Water-Bayer

and Taylor-Powell, 1985). Vegetation pattern therefore explains pastoral migration. The disappearance of grazing routes and reserves due to farming activities thus set the tone for contemporary conflicts between nomadic pastoralist Fulani's and their host Tiv farmers. But until 2001, when full scale Tiv farmers and Fulani pastoralists conflict erupted on 8th September, and lasted for several days in Taraba, both ethnic groups have lived peacefully. Earlier in 2000, herdsmen had clashed with Yoruba farmers in Kwara on 17th October. In Nasarawa state, Fulani Pastoralists also clashed with farmers of different ethnic groups on 25 June 2001 (Olabode and Ajibade, 2014). It should be noted that these months of June, September and October are within the rainy season period in which crops are planted and nurtured to be harvested beginning from late October. Grazing on cultivated farmlands would incur the wrath of farmers whose livelihood would be threatened by the act of destruction by the herds. Any response from farmers in protection of their crops would result into conflicts leading to widespread destruction of farmers homesteads. Prior to these more coordinated and sustained armed attacks that began in the early 2000s, conflicts between these groups over farmlands were usually muted. Pastoralist Fulani would arrive and formally request for permission to camp and graze which was usually granted. Any infringement on farmers' crops would be amicably settled using traditional conflict resolution mechanisms. These mechanisms appear to have collapsed due to the structure of new arrival of pastoralist Fulani. Suffice to also state that across the central part of Nigeria were pockets of large Fulani settlements permitted to settle in their host communities.

With the onset of the new conditions since 2000, the Fulani pastoralist began to arrive without their families and only male adults with their herds strapped with sophisticated weapons under their belly including AK 47 rifles. Armed conflict between these groups then began to assume a dramatic dimension since 2011 with preponderance instances in Taraba, Plateau, Nasarawa, and Benue states. On June 30, 2011 the House of Representatives opened a debate on the sustained armed conflict between the Tiv farmers and their Fulani counterpart in the central region of Nigeria. The House noted that over 40,000 people including women and children were displaced and cramped in five designated temporary camps at Daudu, Ortese and Igyungu-Adze, in Guma local government area of Benue state. Some of the camps included primary schools closed down during the conflict that were turned into camps (HR, 2010, p. 33). The House had also established that over 50 Tiv men, women and children had been killed including two soldiers at a Catholic Secondary School, Udei also in Benue state. In May 2011, another attack by the Fulani on Tiv farmers occurred that claimed more than 30 lives and displaced over 5000 persons (Alimba, 2014, p. 192). Earlier, between 8 and 10 February 2011, when the massive degree of attacks by Fulani herdsmen actually begun, Tiv farmers along the coast of River Benue in Gwer west local government area of Benue state came under attacks by hordes of herdsmen killing 19 farmers while 33 villages were burnt down. The armed attackers returned again on 4 March 2011 to kill 46 people including women and children and ransacked an entire district (Azahan, et al., 2014, p. 16). The ferocity of the attacks reflected in the rising tide of casualties and level of destruction, a consequence of the high quality of arms involved. Between December 2010 and June 2011, more than 15 attacks were recorded resulting in the loss of over 100 lives and over 300 homesteads destroyed all in Gwer west local government area. The government response was the deployment of soldiers and mobile police to the affected areas and continued exploration of peace initiatives such as the setting up of the committee on the crisis co-chaired by the Sultan of Sokoto and the paramount ruler of the Tiv, the *TorTiv* IV.

Hostilities between the groups entered a lull in 2012 due to sustained peace initiatives and military

surveillance but returned with renewed intensity and expansion in area coverage in 2013 affecting Gwer-West, Guma, Agatu, Makurdi, and Logo local government areas of Benue state. On separate occasions, Rukubi and Medagba villages in Doma were attacked by the Fulani armed with Ak 47 rifles, leaving in their trail death of over 60 persons and 80 houses burnt in the neighboring Nasarawa state (Adeyeye, 2013). Again, on 5 July 2013, armed pastoralist Fulani attacked Tiv farmers at Nzorov in Guma, killing over 20 residents and burnt down the entire settlement. These settlements are those in the local council areas that are found along the river banks of the Rivers Benue and Katsina-Ala. The contestation for pasture and water became intense and could shed off into armed confrontation easily.

Table 1: *Selected Incidences of Armed Attacks between Farmers and Herdsmen in 2013 and 2014 in the Central Region of Nigeria*

Date (DD/MM/YY)	Place of Incident	Estimated Death
1/1/13	Jukun/Fulani clash in Taraba state	5
15/1/13	Farmers/Fulani clash in Nasarawa state	10
20/1/13	Farmer/Fulani clash in Nasarawa state	25
24/1/13	Fulani/Farmers clash in Plateau state	9
1/2/13	Fulani Eggon clash in Nasarawa State	30
20/3/13	Fulani/Farmers clash at Tarok, Jos	18
28/3/13	Fulani/Farmers clash at Riyom, Plateau state	28
29/3/13	Fulani/Farmers clash at Bokkos, Plateau state	18
30/3/13	Fulani/Farmers clash/police clash	6
3/4/13	Fulani/Farmers clash in Guma, Benue state	3
10/4/13	Fulani/Farmers clash in Gwer-west, Benue state	28
23/4/13	Fulani/Egbe Farmers clash in Kogi state	5
4/5/13	Fulani/Farmers clash in Plateau state	13
4/5/13	Jukun/Fulani clash in wukari, Taraba state	39
13/5/13	Fulani/Farmers clash in Agatu, Benue state	50
20/5/13	Fulani/Farmers clash in Nasarawa-Benue border	23
5/7/13	Fulani attacks on Tiv villages in Nzorov, Guma	20
9/11/13	Fulani Invasion of Agatu, Benue State	36
7/11/13	Fulani/Farmers clash at Ikpele, okpopolo	7
20/2/14	Fulani/Farmers clash, Plateau state	13
20/2/14	Fulani/Farmers clash, Plateau state	13
21/2/14	Fulani/Farmers clash in Wase, Plateau state	20
25/2/14	Fulani/Farmers clash in Riyom, Plateau state	30
July 2014	Fulani attacked residents in Barkin Ladi	40

March 2014	Fulani attack on Gbajimba, Benue state	36
13/3/14	Fulani attack on Farmers in Guma	22
13/3/14	Fulani attack on Farmers in Makurdi	32
11/3/14	Fulani attack on Farmers in Logo	25

Source: (Chukuma & Atuche, 2014; Sun newspaper, 2014)

These attacks intensified from the middle of 2013 when the major road from Makurdi to Naka, the headquarters of Gwer west local government, was blocked by Fulani armed men after ransacking more than 6 districts along the high way. For more than a year the road remained closed as armed Fulani herdsmen held sway. From 5-9 November 2013, heavily armed Fulani herdsmen attacked Ikpele, Okpopolo and other settlements in Agatu, another local government area, killing over 40 residents and ransacking entire villages. The attackers destroyed homesteads and farm lands displacing over 6,000 inhabitants (Duru, 2013). What was obvious was the absence of state protection for the farmers while the attacks lasted. The state security personnel arrived long after the attacks had stopped - when the aggressors had disappeared.

From January to May 2014, scores of settlements in Guma, Gwer West, Makurdi, Gwer East, Agatu and Logo local government areas of Benue were overwhelmed by horrendous attacks by Fulani armed herdsmen. The killing spree hit Ekwo-Okpanchenyi in Agatu on 13 May 2014 when about 230 armed Fulani herdsmen in a pre-dawn attack killed 47 people and razed down nearly 200 houses (Uja, 2014). Imande Jem village in Guma was visited on 11 April killing 4 peasant farmers while Owukpa, in Ogbadibo local government area as well as Ikpayongo, Agena, Mbatsada villages in Mbalom council ward in Gwer East local government area in Benue state were attacked on different dates in May 2014, killing over 20 residents (Isine and Ugonna, 2014; Adoyi and Ameh, 2014). The climax of the Fulani invasion and attacks on Benue farmers was witnessed at Uikpam, Tse-Akenyi Torkula village, the Tiv paramount ruler's ancestral home in Guma and the ransacking of Ayilamo semi urban settlement in Logo local government area. The attacks on Uikpam village left more than 30 people dead while the entire village was burnt down. The Fulani invaders had retreated and camped after the attacks near Gbajimba, along the coast of River Katsina-Ala ready to resume attacks on the remaining residents. On 18 March 2014, the reality of the conflict finally hit the government at state and federal levels when the Governor of Benue state ran into the herders' ambush in an unforgettable manner. This attack confirmed the extent to which the nomadic pastoralists Fulani were well armed and prepared to engage the Tiv farmers in the contestation for land-based resources.

The competition for access to pasture and water resources is problematic because herds strove for foliage destroying crops in the process and their use of water also contaminates it beyond use by the local communities. Changing resource access rights and the inadequacy of grazing resources as a result of increasing crop cultivation therefore set the stage for conflict (Iro, 1994; Adisa, 2012; Ingawa, Ega and Erhabor, 1999). Since the early 2000, pastoralists' contact with farmers has become increasingly violent, and the year 2000 was deadly and extensively destructive for the civilian population in the central region of Nigeria.

Sharp contrasts exist between these phases. For instance, movement by nomadic Fulani in the earlier phase involved whole households. Their arrival was calculated to effect formal engagement with

the host communities with permission sought before settlement. While in host communities, relationship was regulated by traditional mechanisms and where disagreements arose, they were amicably resolved. Grazing and use of water sources were allowed with respect to local values and custom. Grazing was done on marked routes and permitted fields. This perceived order appears to have been upset by three factors: changing population dynamics, inadequate governmental attention to pastoralist-farmers issues, environment exigencies, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

Inadequate Government Attention to Pastoralist Issues

Iro (1994) argues that various governments in Nigeria have neglected and marginalized the Fulani ethnic group and treated pastoral issues with official pretense. And this is in spite of their immense contributions to the country's economy (Abbas, 2011). For instance, eighty percent of Nigerians depend on pastoral Fulani for meat, milk, cheese, hair, honey, butter, manure, incense, animal blood, poultry products, and hides and skin (Iro, 1994, p. 27). While Fulani cattle provide carting, plowing and hauling, thousands of Nigerians earn their living from "selling, milking and butchering or transporting herds" (Iro, 1994, p. 27). Government also earns revenue from cattle trade. However, government welfare policies in terms of provision of water, hospitals, schools and pasturage have marginalized the pastoral Fulani.

The efforts of the government in providing sinking boreholes, control of pest and diseases, creation of more grazing areas and reactivation of grazing routes (Iro, 1994; Ingawa, et al., 1999) should be acknowledged, although they are too little and untimely. The first tangible national efforts towards addressing pastoralist challenges emerged in 1965 with the passage of the Grazing Reserve Law. This was to protect herders against intimidation and deprivation of access to pasture by farmers, cattle ranchers and intruders (Uzondu, 2013). However, this piece of legislation was not enforced hence stock routes were subsequently blocked and disappeared under the hoe. The government again surveyed land in the country earlier marked for grazing in 1976. Years later in 1980, 2.3 million hectares were officially established as grazing areas representing a mere 2 percent of earmarked area. The intention of the government was to further create 28 million hectares as grazing reserve out of 300 areas surveyed. Out of these only 600,000 hectares were gazetted covering only 45 areas. Over all 225,000 hectares covering eight reserves were fully established by the government as reserved areas for grazing (Uzondu, 2013; Iro, 1994). Many of these reserved areas have been encroached by farmers due largely to governmental inability to further enhance their development for pastoralist use. Therefore, the government's lack of a systematic development of a grazing reserve system accounts for the fertile ground for festering conflict between the Fulani herders and the farmers.

Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWS)

By 2011, it was estimated that there were 640 million small arms circulating around the world of which 100 million were in Africa, 30 million in Sub-Saharan Africa, and 8 million were in West Africa. Most intriguing is that 59% of these were in the hands of civilians (Oji and Okeke 2014; Nte, 2011). The Arab Spring, especially with regard to the Libyan uprising in 2012, seems to have exacerbated the proliferation quagmire. This period has also coincided with the globalization of Islamic fundamentalism,

an example of which is Nigeria's Boko Haram insurgency in the north eastern Nigeria and Mali's Tuareg rebels' desire to establish an Islamic state in Mali. SALWs are easy to conceal, maintain, cheaper to procure and use (UNDP, 2008) but very lethal. An important dimension to contemporary conflicts between pastoralists Fulani and farmers in Nigeria, particularly in central Nigeria, is the fact that the Fulani herders are fully armed on arrival either in anticipation of crisis or with the intention to ignite one or to defend themselves in the event of an attack. Since 2000, nomadic herdsmen are conspicuously accompanied by AK 47 guns and other light weapons dangling under their arms. In this condition, their herds are often deliberately driven into farms and attempts by farmers to push them out would be met with fierce resistance including attacks on their farms and home stead. These reprisal attacks could occur several hours or days after initial encounters and at odd hours of the day or night. Attacks had often been orchestrated when farmers were on their farms or when residents were observing a funeral or burial right that record heavy attendance at night during *wake keeps* and when residents were asleep (Odufowokan, 2014). In addition to being heavily armed, there were indications that deadly chemical (weapons) were used in the attacks against the farmers and residents in Anyiin and Ayilamo in Logo local government in March 2014. Indicators were that dead bodies had no single injury or gunshot wounds (Vande-Acka, 2014).

The attacks also bore resemblance to the activation of religious bias. The Fulani are predominantly Muslims. Their attacks on predominantly Christian communities in southern Kaduna, Plateau state, Nasarawa, Taraba and Benue have raised very fundamental concerns. The attacks on the residence of Riyom in Plateau state and Agatu in Benue state were areas that were overwhelmingly inhabited by Christians and hence attacks on them by predominantly Fulani Muslims raised questions about the religious neutrality of the attackers. Besides, armed herdsmen occupy attacked areas after farmers had flown and continue to harass the residents in their attempts to return to their ancestral home that have already been destroyed. These developments are evidenced in Guma and Gwer-West, in Benue state and some areas in Plateau and southern Kaduna (John, 2014). The preponderance of small arms and light weapons could be explained by weak governance, insecurity and poverty (RP, 2008). Other factors relate to organized crime, terrorism, insurrection, electoral politics, religious crisis, communal conflicts, and militancy (Sunday, 2011; RP, 2008; Vines, 2005). Given the way in which the nomadic Fulanis have become well-armed during their transhumance process, the viciousness with which they attack farmers, their homesteads, crops and settlements of internally displaced victims and survivors suggest a new dimension of intergroup relations between the two groups contesting for land-based resources. This requires new thinking and public policy direction.

Environmental Limitations

Pastoral production is heavily animated by the environment in which production occurs. The inevitable natural dynamics of the environment determines the content of pastoral transhumance production process. For example, nomadic pastoralists Fulani work live and reproduce in an environment challenged by deforestation, desert encroachment, the decline in water supply and the nearly unpredictable vagaries of weather and climate (Iro, 1994: John, 2014). This challenge fits the eco-violence approach theses on conflicts which thrust is the conspiracy of decline in quantity and quality of renewable resources such as water. Other environmental conditions include population growth, lack of access to land or its decrease.

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Water shortage and disappearance of forests which singularly or in combination induce movement of groups and migrant groups in particular often trigger ethnic conflicts when they advance to new areas - a movement that likely upsets an existing order with induced deprivation (Homer-Dixon, 1999).

The scarcity of pasture and water resources in northern Nigeria during the dry season and the attendant southwards movement to the central region of Nigeria have always reinforced ecological scarcity and involved competition between groups; hence the contemporary armed conflict between the farmers and the Fulani herders (Blench, 2004; Atelhe and Chukwuma, 2014). The reduction in land due to the construction of roads, irrigation dams and other private and public works, the search for herbage and available water for cattle use accelerate the chances for competition and conflict.

Empirical Explanation of the Immediate Causes of the Conflict

One of the primary causes of the conflict is the trespass on farmlands by herds. This involves two things: the cramping of the soil which makes cultivation using traditional means of tilling (hoe) extremely difficult. Then the destruction of the crops and farm produce. The intensification of the conflict during the planting season was to prevent the farmers from cultivation and where it was already done to clear the area and allow for unrestricted grazing. Crops such as yams, cassava and maize are widely consumed as herbage/pasture by herds. Once the Fulani herders have forced their way to settle and occupy a farmland, they can successfully secure grazing especially with the use of arms and then reduce farming activities. Those interviewed were unanimous on the trespass on farmlands as an immediate cause of the sustained conflict between the groups. Nyiga Gogo in Merkyen village (Gwer west LGA), Terseer Tyondon (Uvir village, Guma LGA) and Emmanuel Nyambo (Mbadwen village, Guma LGA) lamented the loss of their farms to incessant herds trampling and grazing. Attempts by farmers to resist this was repelled forcing them to flee and subsequently move to temporary camps at Daudu, St. Mary's church, north bank and Community Secondary Schools in Makurdi.

Another immediate cause of the conflict is the question of water use. Benue farmers live in rural settlements with little or no access to pipe borne water and or even a borehole. Rural inhabitants get water from the streams, rivers or ponds for drinking and other domestic use. The Fulani cattle contaminate these sources of water by the way they use them. By drinking directly from the sources of water, walking through and excreting in the water, the Fulani herds contaminate the water, and this poses health related risks for the residents in the area.

In addition, sexual harassment of Tiv women by Fulani herdsmen exacerbate the conflict situation. Rape cases seem to abound when herdsmen find lone women on their farms or at the river, streams or ponds fetching water away from their homes and forcefully have sex with them. Mrs. Mkurem Igbawua died after being raped by an unidentified Fulani man. The information was disclosed by her mother, Tabitha Suemo, during an interview at Baa village on August 15, 2014. There are cases of rape reported by women in the camps and returnees to destroyed homes in Gwer West and Guma, and unwanted pregnancies are there as evidence.

Another dimension to the persistence of crisis between these groups is the criminality of the activities of local vigilante groups in their attempts to arrest the Fulani herders who deliberately allowed their herds to destroy crops. The Fulani herders are persistently harassed by vigilante groups upon receipt of reports, and in the process, they are extorted by unscrupulous vigilante personnel. Weary of monetary

extortion, the Fulani would resort to attacking their tormentors who would hide under the guise of being farmers in order to rally community support.

Closely related to this extortion dimension by the vigilante is the extortion by local chiefs who collect money from the Fulani as payment for permission to settle and graze within the chief's domain. To the herdsmen, the monetary exchange with traditional rulers is interpreted as payment for the right to pasture and graze which makes no distinction between crops and grass. Once this monetary exchange is effected, the herdsmen assume the right to graze and to defend same right when accused of destroying crops. A kindred head, Ulekaa Bee in an interview described this as the fundamental cause of contemporary conflicts with the Fulanis. The counter attack by the Fulani on residents of Agasha settlement was in response to the killings of five Fulani herdsmen from whom traditional rulers had received money to grant grazing right. To the Fulani, the right to graze is tantamount to the right to land ownership (interview with leadership of herders).

The socio-economic effect of the conflicts on the Benue economy is enormous. These include food shortage given that farmers from four local government areas (Logo, Guma, Makurdi, and Gwer West) were forced to abandon their homes and farms during the peak of the planting season. Other socio-economic effects include the destruction of schools, churches, homes, governmental institutions like police stations and loss of lives. Many residents lost other material valuables, including motor cycles.

Two symbols of authority destroyed by the rampaging Fulani herdsmen include the police station and the Guma local government secretariat. The challenge was in a way directed at the state which could not provide basic security and protection to the farmers. And standing in the way of the Fulani was the police which was once eliminated through attacks on their stations. Also, the intention for attacking the farmers was to kill them and force survivors to flee their ancestral homes and farms for the Fulani occupation. And this was what the armed Fulanis did. In all these, the Fulani have nothing to lose or that can be attacked except their herds which are often moved to safety before launching attacks on farmers.

Resolving the crisis, the farmer-victims and the leadership of herders had suggested the creation of cattle ranches, establishment of grazing reserves and determination of grazing routes. Pilakyaa Moses in Guma, Solomon Tyohemba in Makurdi, Jonathan Chaver of Tyoughatee in Gwer West local government area and Miyelti Allah Cattle Breeders Association's leadership, have all argued that these options would meet the yearnings of both groups and promote modernized systems of pastoral and sedentary production.

Conclusion

The conflict between the sedentary Tiv farmers and nomadic pastoralist Fulani is rooted in the contestation for land-based resources of pasture and water. The politics of this contestation is captured by the arguments and activities of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association representing nomadic Fulanis and livestock breeders as well as the interpretation of the armed confrontation with the sedentary farmers that bears resemblance to ethnic and religious agenda. Natural factors of environmental limitations such as desert encroachment, population explosion, climatic conspiracy and climate change have combined to give effect to the conflicts.

Amplifying the contest are factors that provide immediate impetus to the contemporary conflagration such as land ownership and use, and the provocation that is generated by grazing and water contamination. The Fulani resistance to the influence of modernization is another element that needs

consideration. In light of the preceding factors, the Fulanis must be persuaded and supported to embrace modernized forms of livestock production.

Criminal acts of cattle rustling and monetary extortion by local authorities compromise the neutrality they needed to mediate inter-group conflict of this kind.

Modernization of the productive system of both groups promises to eliminate the seemingly inherent factors underpinning contemporary contestation for land-based resources. Demographic dynamics and environmental exigencies have mapped modernization as a more promising compromise in the interest of peaceful coexistence in the context of constitutional and collective citizenship.

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Ethno-Religious Conflicts and the Dilemma of Democratic Sustainability in Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria in the last decade has been characterized by crisis of ethnic and religious dimensions. The nature of the Nigerian state seems to be not only responsible for the regrettably deepening ethno-religious crisis that have become endemic, pervasive and unfortunate, but also is increasingly proving incapable of evolving credible and competent strategies that should address this ugly trend. Indeed since 1966, the Nigerian state has embarked on structural reforms aimed largely at addressing inter-ethnic relations. While reforms like federalism and state creation have transformed the Nigerian state on one hand, they have not been able to fundamentally address the problem of ethnic mobilization and conflict. The inability of successive governments to demonstrate capacity to handle the country's multifaceted socio-economic and political challenges has exacerbated the ethnic and religious identity conflicts made worse by several years of bad governance. The pertinent questions to ask therefore are: To what extent can ethnic and religious conflicts be said to be expressions of cultural and religious differences? And how has ethnic and religious conflict impacted on the sustenance of democratic governance in Nigeria? This paper adopts the instrumentalist model as an analytical tool in understanding the contingent situational and circumstantial use of ethnicity and religion in the pursuit of material advantage. Among other recommendations, Nigerian democracy should strengthen its institutional frameworks and structures to a broad based popular and participatory brand that will give the people a sense of belonging. It requires a reorientation of the elite towards production rather than consumption, as this will reduce tension, acrimony and conditions that predispose Nigerians to the vulnerability of ethnic and religious manipulations. Thus, the promotion of democratic principles of representation of all nationalities and interests in the governance process can enhance the sustainability of democracy.

Keywords: ethnicity, religion, conflict, democracy, governance, democratic sustainability, Nigeria

Introduction

This work begins with the premise that the guarantee of the primacy of the general good of a group largely constitutes the main task liberalism assigns to the leadership of any socio-political group. Thus, the nature and constitution of the state are very important and central in the realization of this general good. It therefore implies that if the state itself is unstable, hegemonic and illegitimate, there is often the tendency of instability and crisis arising from the unhealthy rivalry often associated with such a state. Obviously, the stability of a system is guaranteed when it evolved from the platform of consensus and fair play. We quickly make the point here that the Nigerian reality is one that boycotted the due course of legitimization at its formation and this has portended serious consequences for its stability and the sustainability of democratic practice.

Democracy and the democratic practice in Nigeria have been at the crossroads, and national development, manifested in the inscrutable imagination of Nigeria's national development planners, has not radically been achieved. Subsequently, political instability, ethno-religious tensions, abject poverty, acute youth unemployment, heightened crime rate, poor health prospects, widespread national insecurity, and so on, have become the main features of Nigeria's political economy. It is within this prism that the country has continued to experience a great deal of ethnic and religious conflicts since the inception of its nationhood. Some analysts have explained these conflicts in the context of the differences in traditional values, political attitudes and perspectives on authority. Others have concluded that the groups in Nigeria are irreconcilably predetermined not only to competition but conflict and crises and therefore Nigeria's contemporary problems are inevitable consequences of primordial loyalties and attachments. Although the potency of these propositions in affecting the political system and nation building cannot be underestimated, it must be stated immediately that in themselves alone, they are not sufficient prerequisites for intergroup conflicts and the emergence of ethnic and religious conflicts.

It is on this note that the paper examines the phenomenon of ethnic and religious conflicts in Nigeria and takes the stand that though conflicts are a perennial feature of all human societies, their persistence has affected the institutionalization and sustenance of democratic practice especially as increasingly as the failure to manage them effectively and precisely is attributable to the state's inability to handle political and economic governance and the absence of a democratic culture at the leadership level. The central thesis of this paper therefore is that the absence of effective and efficient governance in Nigeria is responsible for ethno-religious conflict and this has affected democratic practice and sustainability.

Conceptual Clarifications

Ethnicity

A cursory look at the social composition and organization of nearly all extant nation-states suggest that they are rarely modern societies, culturally homogenous (Rabushka & Shepsle, 1992). According to Osaghae (1992), ethnicity refers to a social formation resting upon culturally specific practices and a unique set of symbols and cosmology. It denotes a group of individuals who consider themselves or are considered by others to share common characteristics which differentiate them from other collectivities within a society. Despres (1975) has earlier stated that ethnicity is a largely subjective process of status

identification. Ethnic groups are formed to the extent that the actors use ethnic identities to categorize themselves and others for the purpose of interaction and competition for social resources. Aleyomi (2012) has opined that ethnic groups are fluid in composition and subject to changes in definition and they tend to have myths of common origin, and ideologies. It is a pattern of relationship which tends to develop among members of a distinct group when they coexist and interact on the basis of their ethnic groups. Ethnicity can be seen as an interaction or relationship that exists among people of different ethnic groups who decide to base their relationship on difference, which normally brings about competition on issues like power and wealth (Fawole and Bello, 2011).

It therefore follows that ethnicity is the contextual discrimination by members of one ethnic group against the others in the competition or struggle for resources within a nation-state and this often results in conflict.

Nnoli (1998) had put this rather succinctly:

> Ethnicity and ethnic conflicts have acquired a bad reputation of the potential inherent in ethnic conflict to split society into different states. The need to preserve the territorial integrity of the state against secession and irredentism inevitably involves the state in a war. The attendant loss of lives, destruction of property and dislocation of populations and development projects are usually unacceptable to local and international opinion. (p. 26)

Ethnicity is often interchangeably used with tribe and tribalism but scholars such as Wallerstein Cohen and others associate ethnicity with the modern, urban setting leaving tribe and tribalism to relate to primitive or traditional setting. Though it appears that ethnicity in Nigeria originated in the colonial era, the contention also is that inter-ethnic competition for the crumbs from colonial production in the urban centers was the major motivating factor for the emergence of ethnicity.

Religion

Religion, much more than ethnicity, is a difficult concept to define and conceptualize. Egwu (2001) notes that this is not only because of the problem of objectivity encountered by the scholar because of the emotion-laden nature of the concept but also because of the difficulty of penetrating the inner essence of religion. Aleyomi (2002) has argued that there is a belief that there is an unseen order and that our supreme good lies harmoniously and we are adjusting ourselves to this being. Connelly (1946) had earlier opined that religion should be seen in terms of the sacred and spiritual. He asserts further that religion originates in an attempt to represent an order, beliefs, feelings, imaginings and actions that arise in response to direct experience of the sacred and the spiritual. As this attempt expands in its formulation and elaboration, it becomes a process that creates meaning for itself on a sustaining basis, in terms of both its originating experiences and its own continuing responses.

Yinger (1994) refers to religion as a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggle with the ultimate problem of human life-suffering, injustice and meaninglessness. Apam (2011) has posited that both conservative and revolutionary strands can be found within one particular religion as it is well exemplified by the two dominant religions in Nigeria – Islam and Christianity. Religion has provided the vehicle for mobilizing discontents of the oppressed and marginalized even

though sometimes this occurs in a rather sporadic and restrained manner. Religion has largely provided a sense of community pervading all known cleavages and can thus be constituted as an ideological space for all social classes, ethnicities and gender for purposes of negotiation (Egwu, 2001).

There is thus a close affinity or interface between ethnicity and religious violence, hence the coinage ethno-religious conflict. One huge explanation for this close affinity between ethnically and religiously induced violence, Apam (2011) notes, is the congruence in several respects between ethnic and religious identities such that the two forms of identities are mutually re-enforcing. Egwu (2001) notes that:

> The integration of ethnicity and religion into a system of common identity is most relevant in the Nigerian situation where the boundary of ethnic identity and religious allegiance tends to overlap. (p. 24)

When religious identity becomes a part of an ethnic identity based on the narrative of an ethnic myth of a common descent, a volatile social mixture emerges. For an illustration, among the many minority groups in the former northern Nigeria, Christianity is not just a component of the definition of ethnic identity but a cultural weapon in the struggle against what is perceived as Hausa-Fulani hegemony and for self-determination. The Hausa-Fulani are largely Muslims. Islam provides a primary element in the definition of Hausa ethnicity. While those who are Hausa by descent but have lost the ability to speak the language can claim the identity, it can also be conferred on other Nigerians who are not Hausa through ties of blood but have embraced Islamic religion.

Democratic Sustainability

Democracy as a form of government has fascinated philosophers since the first democracies appeared in ancient Greece close to 2,500 years ago (Fleck and Hanssen, 2002). Demokratia means impirimis, the power of the people: the publicly manifested power of the demos to make things happen. It is the authority or dominance of the demos in the polis (Ober, 2007, p. 99).

Ober (2008) further states that the original meaning of democracy is the capacity to do things, not majority rule. Chukwudi (2014) states that this is instructive within our context of democracy, its sustainability and national development in Nigeria where there is an apparent Nigerian orthodoxy that equates democracy to majority rule. However, a basic assumption of democracy is that it should guarantee the welfare of the citizens. In Nigeria, however, Ojakorotu and Allen (2009) have demonstrated that democracy neglects the welfare of the citizens, and any system of government that fails to guarantee the welfare of the citizens will be difficult to market as democracy. It may be more germane to call such a system ceremonial democracy (Chukwudi, 2014). It does appear however as if the underpinnings of Nigeria's brand of democracy fully express the unfortunate realities of the inability to address these requirements of the populace. Thus, by extension it offers explanation as to why democratic practice has suffered a continuum both in terms of democratization process and the development of democratic institutions and structures that should sustain the system. This is the dilemma of democracy in Nigeria, and ethno-religious conflicts arising largely from the inability to address the aspirations of the people have gravely affected the capacity of the Nigerian state to ensure that democracy grows and is sustained. In the next subsection, we will examine ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria.

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Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: Trends and Manifestations

Ethno-religious conflicts have become a recurring decimal in Nigeria's socio-political development. While Nigerian federalism has long attempted to find ways to appease ethno-religious relations and unify the people of Nigeria, many of the structures and institutions in the system perpetuate the tensions and do not effectively address the root causes. Successive administrations have struggled to create institutions which create an imagined political community that will foster peace and unity, thereby creating a state or multiethnic nation. But unfortunately, many of the government's policies and programs designed to consolidate the diverse ethnic and religious groups have often been poorly conceived, are counter-productive, ineffective or misunderstood (Huber, 2013).

There are a number of analytical models that seek to explain ethnicity and other identities. Primordialism for instance emphasizes the archaic cultural basis of ethnic identities and plays out the traditional versus modern dichotomy of the modernization theory, as well as the earlier colonial and anthropological stereotypes of stagnant and unchanging tribal societies in the less developed societies such as Nigeria. That means in this case that ethnicity is as a result of the absence of modernism. This model insists on the non-instrumentalist, deeply affective and emotional character of ethnicity and its origin in real cultural experiences that differentiate it from other bases of political identity and mobilization (Apam, 2011).

The instrumentalist model on the other hand lays emphasis on the contingent, situational and circumstantial use of ethnicity and other identities in the pursuit of material benefits. The focus is on the manipulation of such identities and loyalties for political and economic gains. This model is based on the understanding of the tenets of the social contract theory. The collapse of the social contract comes about when the rules agreed upon in the distribution of both political power and economic benefits in a society are grossly overlooked by the state. This is exacerbated when the state fails to protect lives and property across the various segments of the society such that citizens consider violence or armed struggle as legitimate alternative to either showing their grievances or protecting themselves against usurpers.

Collier (2000) posits that potential sources of such grievances may include distance from economic opportunities, proxied by lack of government presence, general social, economic resources and repression, historic ethno-linguistic and religious hatred or intolerance. These issues are cast within the instrumentalist explanatory model and so it is rather preferred in the analysis of the conflicts in this study.

We note here that since 1966, the efforts to address inter-ethnic and religious tensions in Nigeria have had very limited successes. The structural reforms like federalism and associated state creation exercises have transformed the Nigerian state but without correspondingly resolving the problem of ethnic mobilization and conflict. Unfortunately, successive governments have not demonstrated enough capacity to handle the country's multifaceted socio-economic and political problems created first by the nature of the Nigerian state and the many years of bad leadership and bad governance. Opinions have converged that democracy as it is currently practiced in Nigeria has produced negative consequences, one of which is the heightened tensions amongst the ethnic nationalities (Toyo 1994, Nwigwe 2003, Ogundiya 2010). Toyo and Nwigwe agree on the outcome of democratic practice in Nigeria, believing that our democracy has been violence ridden, characterized by wanton destruction of lives and properties, and the peoples' vote seems not to count in determining who governs, as elections are rigged or election outcomes determined before the poll. Indeed, Toyo (1994) has argued that Nigeria has not really

experienced democratic rule but rather a return to civil rule, as all we have do not approximate the trappings of democratic practice. Procedurally, therefore, democracy in Nigeria is lamed, and in terms of its conceptual outcome, it has failed to meet the expectations of the people.

Ogundiya (2010) refers to this line of argument by stating that the outcome of such governmental practice such as ours has promoted great inequality rather than equality. There can be no genuine democracy in a country where citizens are grossly unequal in wealth and the poor who are invariably in the majority are dependent on the wealthy. Since wealth is power, where such a cleavage and dependency exist, political power is inevitably in the hands of the rich and thus democracy finds it difficult to exist and be sustained. In reality what may be available might just be plutocracy. This forms the broad compass in which ethnic and religious conflicts and other governance crises have expressed themselves in Nigeria.

Gwamna (2011) stated that the genesis and manifestation of ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria began with the 1987 Kafanchan riot, and that this introduced a dangerous dimension of religious crisis between Christians and Muslims. Opeloye (2001) however traced the history of Muslim-Christian conflicts in Nigeria to the 1979 controversy over the status of Sharia in the nation's legal system. According to him, this development has caused mutual suspicion, rivalry, acrimony, discord and hostility amongst the religious adherents. Tilde's (2011) comprehensive documentation however dates ethnic and religious conflicts to 1945. The May 1966 riots for instance consumed over 100,000 Igbo Christians and other southerners in northern Nigeria. Ethno-religious conflicts have littered the political landscape in Nigeria. Examples of these conflicts include:

1. The Maitatsine sectarian crisis in 1981.
2. The Kaduna and Bulunkutu (Maiduguri) in 1982.
3. The Ilorin Muslim-Christian riot during Christian Easter procession of March 1986.
4. Zaria and Funtua religious riots of March 1987.
5. In October 1990, there was a clash between Christian and Muslims in Kano. The Christians had invited a German Christian preacher, Reinhard Bonke but the Muslims felt cheated for the fact that Ahmed Deedat, a Muslim preacher was previously denied to preach in South Africa. In retaliation, crisis erupted and left behind a casualty of over 500 lives and property worth millions (Adebayo, 2010). There were also the Kano civil disturbance of December 1991 and Jos crisis of April 1994 (Bagaji, 2012).
6. The March 13, 2001 communal clashes at Owo, Ondo state.
7. The April 13, 2001 religious riot in Kano.
8. The May 12, 2001 communal clashes between the Ijaws and the Itsekiri in Delta state.
9. The July 2, 2001 communal clashes between the Odimodu and Ogulagba communities of Delta state.
10. The September 7, 2001 religious clash in Jos, Plateau state.
11. The September 16, 2001 religious riot in Kano.
12. The September 18, 2001 religious riot in Benue state.
13. On February 2, 2002, the Oodua People's Congress (OPC) and Hausa people clashed at Idi-Araba, Lagos state.
14. The February 26, 2002 communal clashes between Apprapum and Osatura communities of Cross Rivers state.
15. The August 31, 2002 communal class at Ado-Ekiti.

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16. The September 3, 2002 renewed communal clashes at Owo, Ondo state.
17. The November 21, 2002 religious riots in Kaduna and Abuja.
18. The December 26, 2002 religious crisis in Bauchi state.
19. The February 2003 religious riot in Ibadan, Oyo state.
20. The March 2003 religious killings at Kardako village in Wase, Plateau state.
21. The 2006 riots in northern Nigeria in the cities such as Katsina, Bauchi, Kano, Minna, Potiskum, and so on over the alleged depiction of Prophet Mohammed's cartoon in Denmark.
22. The 2007 religious riot in Tugor, Adamawa state.
23. The July 26, 2009 religious riots in Maiduguri, Yobe, Bauchi and Kano states.
24. The December 30, 2009 religious riot in Bauchi.
25. The January 11, 2010 renewed religious crisis in Bauchi.
26. The January 19, 2010 renewed religious crisis in Jos.
27. The May 16, 2011 post-election violence that turned religious all-over northern Nigeria, and this left hundreds dead and enormous property destroyed (Tilde, 2011, pp. 1-7).

By far the most worrisome of these crises is the recent large number of unimaginable bomb attacks by the Boko Haram movement which continue on a daily basis. The group's modus operandi is related with the Maitatsine sectarian group in terms of philosophy and objectives coupled with its organizational planning and armed resistance. Despite the Bill passed on anti-terrorism by the Nigerian National Assembly on February 17, 2011 as well as the negotiation efforts made by former President Jonathan, cease-fire has proved abortive and Boko Haram activities are spreading to other parts of the country. With the abduction of the Chibok girls at Federal Government Girls College in Chibok, Borno state, the federal government has deployed the Joint Military Task Force to not only rescue the girls but to restore sanity in the area. This is in addition to the two-year State of Emergency that was declared by the federal government in four states within the north-eastern axis of the country. The implication is that the taxonomy of 'One Nigeria' is being questioned due to the fall-out of Boko Haram chronicle and this accounted for the convocation of the National Conference that ended at the Federal Capital, Abuja in August 2014.

It should be noted that the increase in the wave of ethno-religious bigotry in Nigeria can be linked to the birth of the Fourth Republic (Aleyomi, 2012). With the establishment of democratic rule on May 29, 1999, and with the freedom provided therefrom, ethno-religious conflicts have been on the increase. For instance, during the Oro Cult Ceremony in Sagamu, Ogun state (in July 1999), a Hausa woman was accused of intruding into the procession of the occult with their gnome. This generated a lot of trouble which eventually led to a full-blown crisis and many Hausa and Yoruba innocent people were killed and a lot of property were destroyed. As a mark of vengeance for the massive killing of the Yoruba ethnic group in Kano following the reprisal that earlier erupted, another crisis sprang up in Lagos. The O'dua Peoples Congress (OPC) moved against the Hausa traders in Mile 12 market and turned the place into a battle field for two consecutive days (Adebayo, 2010).

The Introduction of the Islamic Legal Code (popularly known as the Sharia Law) by Ahmed Yerima, a former governor of Zamfara state in October 1999 caused protests which later escalated to violence when Governor Mohammed Makarfi attempted to introduce same in Kaduna state in February 2000 – a state where the population of the two religions is at par. Lives and properties were lost.

All the crises that occurred before and since the coming of democracy in 1999, most especially the insurgence of Boko Haram with its devastating effects on the sustainability of Nigeria's democracy, remind us that the conflict time bombs around the country are always steaming and ready to explode at the slightest provocation. It can also be noticed that there is hardly any sharp distinction between ethnic and religious conflicts. What this means is that a conflict that begins as an ethnic conflict may end up as a religious crisis and vice versa. Their effects undoubtedly are always quite devastating.

Implications of Ethno-Religious Conflicts on the Sustenance of Democracy in Nigeria

Nigeria's democracy is based on a federal arrangement. Federalism as we know it involves the organization of the state in such a manner as to promote unity while at the same time preserving existing diversities within an over-throbbing national entity (Aleyomi, 2012). Essentially, federalism should mediate the potential and actual conflicts that arise from the heterogeneity within a political entity. This has been difficult because of problems of ethnicity, resource control, ethno-religious crisis, electoral crisis, legitimacy crisis, poverty, and so on. This is the context in which the dilemma of democratic practice and its sustainability can be viewed.

Ethno-religious conflicts present grave challenges to security and pose serious threat to the corporate existence of the country. The Boko-Haram insurgency for instance has caused great insecurity not only in the region it predominantly operates but has caused fear and dissent in the entire country. In Borno state, there have been killings and displacement of people. The Nigerian media was awash with the takeover of Bama, the second largest town in Borno by Boko Haram militants, despite the presence of the Joint Military Task Force deployed in the region (Daily Trust, September 3, 2014, p. 4). The United Nations High Commission for Refugees on September 2, 2014 alleged that more than 10,000 people fled from fresh Boko Haram attacks in north-eastern Nigeria to Cameroon and Niger seeking refuge.

> UNHCR is very concerned that even when they have crossed into Cameroon, they are still being pursued by insurgents and we have already started to relocate some of the refugees to a refugee camp where they can enjoy safer conditions. (UNHCR Spokesman, Adrian Edwards, in Geneva)

The disturbing news is that the sect is now forcing the youths to carry arms against the military or they will be killed. This has made many to flee the village (Miringa, 2014). The Nation Newspaper on September 4, 2014 had also reported how towns in Borno and Yobe states have been overrun by the insurgents thus causing great anxiety to the people. Many people have been displaced from their families. Daily Trust Newspaper in September 2014 reported how one man displaced from Bama town can't trace his wife and six children. 7 emirs have fled their homes in both Borno and Yobe as a result of this crisis.

In such circumstances, the people have lost their means of livelihood and living becomes precarious. There is hardly any trust and belief in the political system. In a situation where ethnic and religious bigotry have resulted into conflicts, civil stress, lack of cordiality and underdevelopment are vividly noticed. These certainly are not good recipes for democratic stability. It is a known fact that conflicts (ethno-religious inclusive) exist when deprived groups and individuals experience oppression, domination, exploitation, discrimination, marginalization, and so on. The marginalized will usually seek to increase their share of power and wealth or to modify the dominant values, norms, beliefs or ideology.

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The overall consequences of these have rendered the polity insecure, and development becomes quite illusive. Democracy cannot be sustained where the process of development is crisis-ridden.

The threat to democratic sustainability in Nigeria by ethno-religious conflicts has a high impact on nation-building and sustainable development. The insecurity caused by these conflicts does not provide the right environment for economic development. No serious investor whether foreign or local would put resources in a climate of insecurity, and no economy can grow without savings and investments.

Increasingly, ethno-religious cleavages have impacted on public life in areas of elections, governance and the public services. This has largely defined leadership recruitment and appointments that are hardly based on merit, specialization and due process. This has also affected government public policies which hardly approximate the aspirations of the people, and so the legitimacy of the government and the states is generally questioned by the people. The government does not command acceptability from the people and there is palpable discontent and disillusionment. This is the dilemma of Nigeria's democratic practice.

Huber (2013) has argued that instead of constitutional provisions encouraging homogenization of the nation through programs and measures, they have accentuated ethnic and religious tensions by labeling and officially recognizing ethno-religious groups. Such provisions have encouraged the use of both ethnicity and indigeneity and so engendered socio-political crisis which have affected the process of national integration. The development of a national identity and the unifying of distinct and strong ethnic and religious groups are important for a cohesive nation. This, in turn, is necessary for the promotion of democratic norms and values.

Conclusion

Nigeria needs to sustain its democracy and development. This will further translate into economic security that is person-centered. Democracy devoid of economic security for the people is simply an economic abstraction. Nigeria is perceived to be running the costliest democracy in the world and Ejurbekpokpo (2012) has abundantly demonstrated that excessive cost of governance has hampered economic development.

Indeed, Onyisi and Eme (2013) have also shown that under the Jonathan presidency in Nigeria, the cost of governance was rather outrageous. The same applies to the administration of president Buhari. According to Enwegbara (2013) and Chukwwudi (2014), government after government in Nigeria, since the return to democracy in 1999, has talked about reducing the country's high cost of governance, but ironically each successive government appears worse off than the previous one. This has sadly affected job creation and increased inequalities. Economic growth and development have remained stagnated with a largely impoverished population. In the midst of this, the government has not done much. As a result, the people are easily swayed to identity politics for survival and protection.

The legislative arm of government would have to provide adequate checks on abuses of power by the executive and recklessness of the opportunistic elite that is inefficient and ineffective. Effective legislature contributes to good governance and this is done by the performance of legislative oversight over the finances of the government and it serves as a catalyst for the sustainability of democratic governance. The legislature should not just make laws for the safety and general wellbeing of the people but must also manage resources in order to promote good life for the entire citizenry.

The institutional frameworks for tackling corruption must work to stamp out corruption, which is endemic and persistent. When corruption is endemic, as witnessed in the last decade, institutions of governance are abused by illicit and self-serving behaviors of the political leadership. The consequence is that poverty becomes inevitable, which in turn will cripple basic health and education services as well as the building of infrastructure. Most Nigerians are unable to have a minimally acceptable standard of living. This is compounded by acute youth unemployment put variously at between 20% and 50% (Asemota, 2005). And the consequence is general insecurity and high crime rate.

Nigeria needs to tackle the governance crisis that manifest in corruption, injustices, inequality, integration crisis, ethno-religious feuds, and so on, in order to achieve democratic sustainability. The government must be open and accountable in its processes and priority in terms of public policy and must invest in areas that address the needs of the people.

Such openness must allow for popular participation by the people. The production and development of the economy can bring about greater life opportunities for the people. This will reduce the vulnerability of the people to ethnic and religious manipulations. In this way the state will be seen as meeting up its expectations of providing for all the people irrespective of where they come from or what their religious persuasions are.

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Ethno-Religious Conflict in Nigeria: Analysis and Resolution

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Abstract

Since the 1914 amalgamation of the northern and southern regions of Nigeria by the British colonial government, Nigerians have continued to debate the issues of peaceful coexistence among their various ethnic groups on the one hand, and between Christians and Muslims on the other. The question about living together in peace emerged in the Nigerian national debate as a result of the violent confrontation that has been occurring among "ethnic groups in conflict" (Horowitz, 2000), including the 1967-1970 civil war – a three-year bloody war that was fought primarily by the Igbo people from the southeast, representing the Christian population, and the Hausa–Fulani people from the north, representing the Muslim population -, the post-civil war ethno-religious massacres, and the recent Boko Haram terrorism which has resulted in the death of thousands of people including Muslims and Christians and led to the destruction of property, valuable infrastructure and developmental projects. Above all, Boko Haram poses a serious threat to national security, causes humanitarian disaster, psychological trauma, disruption of school activities, unemployment, and an increase in poverty, resulting in a weak economy. The Boko Haram terrorist attacks have indeed reignited the old debate on what it means for Muslims and Christians, Igbos, Hausa-Fulanis, Yorubas and the ethnic minorities to coexist and live together in peace and harmony. Drawing on postcolonial criticism (Tyson, 2015) and other relevant social conflict theories from the field of conflict resolution, this paper seeks to analyze, through the *medico-diagnostic method of inquiry*, the drivers, dynamics and sources of ethno- religious conflict in Nigeria. The paper lays out various ways by which this type of conflict could be resolved.

Keywords: ethnic conflict, religious conflict, ethno-religious conflict, conflict analysis, conflict resolution, Nigeria

Introduction

Since the 1914 amalgamation of the two Nigerian regions - the northern region with Islam as its main religion and the southern region with Christianity being its dominant religion - by the British colonial government (Michael Crowther, 1968), Nigerians have continued to debate and discuss the issues bordering on the peaceful coexistence of their various ethnic groups on the one hand, and between Christians and Muslims on the other. The question about living together in peace emerged early in the Nigerian national debate as a result of the numerous violent confrontations between, among and within some ethnic groups in the north and some in the south, and between some Muslims and some Christians.

From 1967 to 1970, Nigeria was completely ravaged by a bloody civil war that occurred mainly between the Muslim north (commonly identified as the Hausa–Fulani people) and the Christian southeast (known as the Igbo people), causing the death of more than one million people including children and women (Ugorji, 2012). The subsequent violent clashes that occurred in the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s between these ethno-religious groups both in the north and south of the country, and the recent surge of the Boko Haram terrorist attacks have continued to reignite the old debate on what it means for Muslims and Christians, Igbos, Hausa- Fulanis, Yorubas and the ethnic minorities in the different regions to coexist and live together in peace and harmony.

The 498 delegates to the Nigeria National Conference - a National Dialogue convened and inaugurated on March 17, 2014 by a former president of Nigeria, President Goodluck Jonathan - mandated to deliberate on all matters that militate against Nigerian's national unity and progress (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014) discussed and acknowledged the incessant hostility and violent confrontations that currently exist between, among and within ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria. The delegates unanimously agreed that the new wave of religious violence and terrorism pose a serious threat to the "secular character of the state, and the idea of one nation bound in freedom, peace and unity" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 47). Connected to this hostility and religious terrorism are the questions related to religious freedom, a sense of collective identity – both in religious or ethnic affiliation and national belonging - and the need to prevent further violence, strengthen north-south and Muslim-Christian relationships, and construct a better way to live together in peace and harmony.

Like the delegates to the Nigeria National Conference, many academics – theorists, scholars, researchers – and policy makers have been engaged in serious reflective, hermeneutic inquiry on the probable causes and exploration of possible solutions to the conflict. There is a growing number of scholars who are passionately conducting research and studying the question of religious freedom, identity and national belonging, and also exploring the effect the institutionalization of Sharia law in northern Nigeria has on north-south, Muslim-Christian relationships (Kenny, 1996; Casey, 2008; Adamolekun, 2013; Sampson, 2014; Bolaji, 2013). A reasonable volume of literature is also available on ethno-religious violence prevention and the promotion of Muslim-Christian relationship through interfaith dialogue (Salawu, 2010). Recently, many scholars have narrowed their research on the terrorist activities of Boko Haram, its implication for national security, and sectarian group relations within the Islamic religion (Agbiboa, 2013; Adesoji, 2010).

This paper offers a different perspective to the existing body of literature by analyzing the drivers, dynamics and sources of ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria. Drawing on postcolonial criticism (Tyson,

2015) and other relevant social conflict theories, the paper seeks to analyze ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria through the *medico-diagnostic method of inquiry*. To achieve this goal, the proposed analysis will be guided by Sandole's (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) stages of conflict manifestation, namely: "pre-manifest conflict processes (pre- MCPs), manifest conflict processes (MCPs), and aggressive manifest conflict processes (AMCPs)" (p. 43). These three stages of conflict manifestation will be helpful in revealing the developmental stages of ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria, starting from the amalgamation period of 1914, through the era of decolonization and independence, to the challenging years of military rule and the advent of democracy.

Since Nigeria was colonized by the British and given that the amalgamation of the north and south, including the different indigenous ethnic nationalities, was orchestrated and engineered by the British colonial administration, this paper proposes to analyze the drivers, dynamics and sources of ethno-religious conflict in each of these three stages of conflict manifestation using the postcolonial criticism (Tyson, 2015). As an important critical theory that emerged as a result of "colonial subjugation of indigenous populations" (Tyson, 2015, p. 405), postcolonial criticism is very relevant to this study since it is based on a theoretical framework that seeks to analyze "the ideological forces that, on the one hand, pressed the colonized to internalize the colonizers' values and, on the other hand, promoted the resistance of colonized peoples against their oppressors, a resistance that is as old as colonialism itself" (p. 399). As it will be discussed in the subsequent sections, the constant struggle between these two ideologies
– the British (colonialist) ideology and the ideologies of the indigenous peoples of Nigeria –especially during the amalgamation period, the era of decolonization and independence, and the challenging years of military rule and the advent of democracy, is at the core of the numerous ethno-religious conflicts this paper seeks to analyze.

Due to the complex nature of the conflict issues this paper addresses, and in order to reveal how the events that took place during the formative years of the new nation called Nigeria prepared the ground for the numerous ethno-religious conflicts that have tormented Nigeria, the paper seeks to focus on five main objectives: First, to analyze the drivers, dynamics and sources of ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria; Second, to examine the amalgamation period which is termed in this paper as the *pre-manifest conflict processes (pre-MCPs)* period in Nigeria (1914 - 1945); Third, to analyze the *manifest conflict processes (MCPs)* in Nigeria (1945 – 1966), an era of decolonization, agitation for independence and the early years of independence; Fourth, to critically reflect on the post-independence period, beginning from 1966 to 2016 which I refer to as the period of *aggressive manifest conflict processes (AMCPs)*; Fifth, to explore the various ways by which ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria could be resolved.

Analysis of the Drivers, Dynamics and Sources of Ethno-Religious Conflict in Nigeria

To avoid one of the commonly committed fallacies of the century – that is, jumping to a conclusion or making a hasty decision -, this paper adopts an analytical approach. It seeks to follow the medico-diagnostic method of inquiry. When a patient feels a symptom of an illness in his or her body system, the first and best thing to do is to visit a doctor's office. Before drugs are prescribed and administered, doctors are usually bound by medical ethics to first diagnose the patient by examining the symptom either through tests or other medical procedures in order to identify the nature of the illness and the patient's

medical condition and history. It is only after the results of the test or diagnosis are released that the doctors provide drug prescriptions to the patient(s). A doctor cannot prescribe a drug to a patient without knowing the nature and history of the illness, the particular area the illness is located in the body system, and the level of danger it poses to the life of the patient. These elements and many others are revealed through the diagnostic process. In a similar manner, "efforts to ameliorate" ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria "must be preceded by an understanding" of the drivers, dynamics and sources of that conflict. "Altogether too many policy prescriptions for ethnic harmony have been dispensed without benefit of careful diagnosis" (Horowitz, 2000).

The analysis of ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria that this paper proposes is guided by a general distinction made by Sandole (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) about the progressive manifestation of conflict. Conflict, according to Sandole is "a process characterized by stages of initiation, escalation, controlled maintenance, de-escalation and some kind of termination (e.g., settlement, resolution)" (p. 42–43). The transition from the stage of initiation to escalation and then to controlled maintenance is explained through the following processes: "latent conflicts or pre-manifest conflict processes (pre-MCPs), manifest conflict processes (MCPs), and finally aggressive manifest conflict processes (AMCPs)" (Cheldelin et al., 2008, p. 43). From this lens, and based on the historical and political perspectives, ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria could be analyzed and categorized into three phases. Each phase corresponds to one of Sandole's stages of conflict manifestation. The first phase is from 1914 to 1945 commonly known as the period of "amalgamation and the problem of nationhood" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 4). The second phase took place between 1945 and 1966, a period marked by the struggle for "decolonization, the agitation for constitutional reform, and the early years of independence" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 4). Finally, the third phase started from "the collapse of the First Republic following a bloody military coup that ushered in the first military regime and sparked up a movement for democratization" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 4) and continues until the current democratic era (from 1966 to 2016).

By categorizing the manifestations of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria into three politico-historical phases, this paper does not claim that some forms of conflicts discussed in phase one did not occur in phase two and phase three; or that phase three conflict types did not occur in phase two and one, and so on. The three categories are established to facilitate a conceptual analysis of the levels of intensity of ethno-religious conflicts within a historical and political entity called Nigeria. As our analysis will reveal, phase one corresponds to the *pre- manifest conflict processes (pre-MCPs)*; phase two could be classified as a time of *manifest conflict processes (MCPs)*; and phase three meets the characteristics of *aggressive manifest conflict processes (AMCPs)* (Cheldelin et al., 2008, p. 43).

In each of the conflict phases, an attempt will be made to identify the elements, causes (sources or drivers) or conditions that encourage ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria, the dynamics or patterns of the conflict and the intervention mechanisms or de-escalation techniques previously employed to resolve these kinds of conflict. Let us now examine the amalgamation period which is termed in this paper as the *pre-manifest conflict processes (pre-MCPs)* period in Nigeria (1914 - 1945).

Pre-Manifest Conflict Processes (pre-MCPs) in Nigeria (1914 - 1945)

To fully understand the continuous animosity and overt conflict that exist between the north and

south, or between Muslims and Christians, and to propose proactive and holistic solutions, it is advisable that researchers return to the formative years of Nigeria, between 1914 and 1945, a historic period commonly known as the amalgamation period characterized by the "problem of nationhood" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 4). Amalgamation in this context could be understood from different perspectives, including political, geographical, sociological, historical, anthropological, religious, psychological, and so on. These perspectives also constitute the primary preoccupation of postcolonial critics. For these theorists, postcolonial criticism provides us the lens through which we can see connections "among all the domains of our experience - the psychological, ideological, social, political, intellectual, and aesthetic" (Tyson, 2015, p. 398). Postcolonial criticism also helps us learn how "cultural difference: the ways in which race, […], religion, cultural beliefs, and customs combine to form individual identity" (Tyson, 2015, p. 398). Analyzing the amalgamation of the different ethnicities into two regions – the north and south - on the one hand, and the amalgamation of the north and south into one nation called Nigeria on the other hand, is important to understand the "dynamic psychological and social interplay between what ex-colonial populations consider their native, indigenous, precolonial cultures and the British culture that was imposed on them" (Tyson, 2015, p. 400).

In each of these perspectives (perspectives that I intend to explore and deeply reflect upon in another research project) therefore, and in the context of this paper's inquiry, the term amalgamation could be understood as a uniting or combining action by somebody or an agency on two or more separate, dissimilar entities or groups. In other words, it is the action, process, or result of merging, combining or uniting two or more separate, autonomous groups, entities, ethnicities, regions, or nations into one "Nation" (with the uppercase "N"). Amalgamation could occur in two forms: *consented amalgamation* and *forced amalgamation*.

By *consented amalgamation*, it means that the amalgamated groups, regions or nations were given an opportunity to decide whether or not they would like to merge with other(s) in a united nation. This form of amalgamation places emphasis on the ethical principle of respect for persons or groups and treats these groups as autonomous entities with certain inalienable rights, for example, the rights to self-determination, territorial autonomy and integrity, and preservation of cultural identity and heritage (Kymlicka, 1995). Respect for these group rights presupposes that before an amalgamation is executed and implemented, the groups ought to have clarity and full understanding of the terms, expectations, implications, risks and opportunities that are associated with amalgamation. The groups' consent to be a part of a new nation should be a well-informed decision based on complete availability of needed "information," their full understanding or "comprehension" of the information provided, and a condition or situation that encourages free "voluntariness" and discourages coercion or influence of power (The Belmont Report, 1979).

By *forced amalgamation*, however, I refer to a situation where the different groups, entities, regions, ethnicities or nationalities are coerced or compelled to unite as one nation without prior information, contact with each other, and against their will. The question that comes to mind is: was "the 1914 amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates that created the Nigerian nation" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 4) a *consented amalgamation* or a *forced amalgamation*? Did the British colonial administrators who initiated, engineered and orchestrated the amalgamation provide an opportunity for the representatives of the different groups to choose whether or not to form one nation? Or did they by use of force impose it on the groups against their will? The historical narratives of

the 1914 amalgamation in Nigeria and the agitation that followed it as well as available literature confirm that the amalgamation of the north and south was not by choice but by force (See Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 4). The idea of "force" or "coercion" here means that the different ethnicities or groups were not consulted before the British colonial administrators decided to merge the two separate entities together. The use of force by the colonialists eliminated the possibility of choice, and institutionalized a denial of freedom, of autonomy, of self-determination, and of territorial integrity.

The effects of colonization, especially its destructive strategy – *forced amalgamation* –, constitute the main preoccupation of Aime Cesaire's (1955, as cited in Lemert, 2013) *Between Colonizer and Colonized*, a selection from his famous *Discourse on Colonialism* representing "the early thinking of social theorists in the late-colonial world … with a distinctive view of the colonial subject in the colonialist's language" (p. 261). For Cesaire (as cited in Lemert, 2013), colonization destroyed "the wonderful Indian civilizations" (p. 262). Some civilizations were "condemned to perish at a future date" by the colonization process that introduced "a principle of ruin" in some countries, an example of which is Nigeria where the British-led and -orchestrated 1914 amalgamation of the north and south was executed by force without the consent of the indigenous peoples. Against the argument that colonization introduced "progress" in the colonized societies, and that it improved health conditions and "standards of living," Cesaire (as cited in Lemert, 2013) strongly believes that "societies were drained of their essence, cultures trampled underfoot, institutions undermined, lands confiscated, religions smashed, magnificent artistic creations destroyed, extraordinary possibilities wiped out" (p. 262). All these negative effects of colonization occurred mainly because the indigenous peoples and their lands were uprooted, divided and coerced to unite without their consent. Cesaire (as cited in Lemert, 2013) clearly describes the impact of *forced amalgamation* when he talks about "millions of men in whom fear has been cunningly instilled, who have been taught to have an inferiority complex, to tremble, kneel, despair, and behave like flunkeys" (p. 262), as well as indigenous peoples "torn from their gods, their land, their habits, their life – from life, from the dance, from wisdom" (p. 262). The existent indigenous cultural values and religious practices appeared valueless to the European colonizers and missionaries as well as to their newly indoctrinated local elites.

As it will be explained later in this paper, both the negative effects of colonization and the impact of *forced amalgamation* stem from the colonialist ideology against which the postcolonial critics are combating "by understanding the ways in which it operates to form the identity – the psychology – of both the colonizer and the colonized" (Tyson, 2015, p. 428). The colonialist ideology is based on a practice of judging known as "othering" which "divides the world between "us" (the "civilized") and "them" (the "others," the "savages") (Tyson, 2015, p. 401). With such a divisive ideology that labels a group of people as superior, civilized, of high culture, and the people of God, and another group as inferior, backward, of primitive culture, heathen or primitive "other" too close to nature, the British introduced a perpetual division, competition and bigotry between the Muslim dominated north and the Christian dominated south of Nigeria – two protectorates that were coercively amalgamated in 1914.

These reasons and many others like them have been articulated and presented by many scholars to serve as evidence and justification for the blame that has generally been attributed to the British colonial rule for the manifestations of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria, especially those that occurred between some ethnic groups from the north and some from the south, and between Muslims and Christians (Adamolekun, 2013). The preoccupation of this paper is not to join others in laying out a litany of blame

against colonialism and the colonialists, but to understand how and why latent hostility and conflict developed during the time of amalgamation between the north and south of Nigeria. Sandole (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) defines latent conflicts as "conflicts that are developing but have not yet expressed themselves in an observable manner, even for the parties themselves" (p. 43). But the question that needs to be answered is: what causes and drives these dormant conflicts? In other words, what are their sources?

From a general perspective, the latent conflicts that occurred in Nigeria between 1914 and 1945 were caused by a number of factors which are highlighted by the Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report (2014):

> First, in spite of the amalgamation, colonial administration recognized the two areas as autonomous parts and administered the territories separately. Second, the educated elites were excluded from colonial administration. Early Nigerian nationalists began to advocate for a national dialogue to discuss the future political development of the amalgamated territories as a single and unified Nigerian nation. They also demanded for participation in the management of their own affairs. (p. 4-5)

The conquering tactic – divide and rule – by which the British colonial rulers ruled Nigeria during this period awakened and reinforced in-group self-consciousness (or self-awareness) and bonding, and out-group hostility and competition, especially since the ethno-religious groups that make up the two regions had no prior formal contact with each other as a result of their geographical locations, differences in language, culture, religion, values, and other belief systems and factors.

From a theoretical perspective, the correlation between in-group self-consciousness and bonding and out-group hostility and competition could be explained through the "Robbers Cave Experiment" (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 27–28). This experiment, conducted by Muzafer Sherif and his colleagues in the summer of 1954 at the state park in the Sans Bois mountains of Oklahoma, is regarded as "the best-known field studies on intergroup conflict" (as cited in Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 28). *Intergroup conflict* here suggests that there are two groups involved in the conflict, and because of its dynamics, intergroup conflict is generally categorized as a social conflict.

What then is social conflict? How is a group defined from a social conflict perspective? In the preface of his book, *The Functions of Social Conflict*, Coser (1956) sets forth his research agenda: "An effort to clarify the concept of social conflict, and in so doing to examine the use of this concept in empirical sociological research" (p. 7). Coser (1956) defines social conflict as "a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals" (p. 8). And a group according to Pruitt & Kim (2004) "can be defined as two or more people who have a common identity and a capacity for coordinated action" (p. 27). With this background knowledge, Muzafer Sherif and the other researchers of the "Robbers Cave Experiment" (Pruitt & Kim, 2004):

> carefully selected twelve-year-old boys who were similar in virtually all ways. They were divided into two groups of twelve each and brought separately to the campsite, so that for several days they were unaware of the presence of another group. The boys did typical summer camp activities – canoeing, swimming, making meals, setting up tents, playing baseball at a nearby baseball field, and the like. As expected, group bonding – "we" feelings – emerged quickly. Both groups adopted

> a group name: the "Rattlers" and the "Eagles." After several days, the groups discovered one another's presence and were eager to compete with each other in team sports. Even before actual contact took place, competitive, often hostile emotions erupted. And both groups were confident that they would crush the other in competition. (p. 27–28)

The remaining part of this experiment will be narrated later to explain how *manifest conflict processes (MCPs)* in Nigeria (1945 – 1966) created a vacuum for *aggressive manifest conflict processes (AMCPs)* (1966 - 2016). But for the purpose of this paper, it is of great importance to know the relevance of the early stage of *Robbers Cave Experiment* to the understanding of the latent conflicts that occurred in the early years of Nigeria – the amalgamation period characterized by the "problem of nationhood" - between 1914 and 1945.

Like in the *Robbers Cave Experiment*, the latent conflict perceived in the early years of the Nigerian experiment has many elements. The elements of conflict are the distinguishing characteristics of any particular conflict (Cheldelin et al., 2008). This means that to have a deeper understanding of a conflict, one has to decipher what its elements are. To this end, Sandole (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) identifies six elements of conflict, namely:

> parties (the very actors or agents in conflict), issues (the reasons parties claim they are waging conflict with each other), objectives (the status-quo-changing and status-quo- maintaining options), means (the method used by parties to achieve their objectives, including violent and non-violent forms of conflict), conflict-handling orientations (different approaches used by parties to a conflict), and the conflict environments within which conflicts occur (the conflict setting which includes, endogenous and exogenous environments. (p. 44-50)

For a deeper understanding of the latent conflicts that occurred during the amalgamation period, it is instructive to quickly identify the parties involved and the issues in conflict while making reference to the other elements of conflict outlined above.

Parties Involved

The various parties involved in the amalgamation problem and the question of nationhood are: 1) the British colonial government; 2) the northern region including its dominant ethnic group – the Hausa-Fulani who are mainly Muslims – and its minority ethnic groups as well as the old Middle Belt populations; and 3) the southern region which was later divided into two: the southwest where the Yoruba ethnic group is located having a high Christian population and a small Muslim population, and the southeast occupied by the Igbo ethnic group and other minority ethnic and tribal groups who are mainly Christians. These three parties and their representatives or spokespersons are the very actors or agents in the latent conflict that accompanied the amalgamation and formation of Nigeria. What makes the amalgamation period very important in understanding the gradual manifestation and escalation of ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria is not just because of the fact that these three groups have different identities and ideologies. As it will be briefly explained below and thoroughly analyzed in the stages of manifest and aggressive manifest conflicts in Nigeria, what is remarkable during this period is that the representatives of each of these groups had an unyielding mandate to execute based on their group ideological beliefs. And for this

reason, they were not fighting for themselves, but for the entire group.

In his proposition twelve, "ideology and conflict," Coser (1956) explains how group ideologies could contribute to the intractability of existing conflicts between or among different groups while revealing the complex nature of the relationship between ideology and conflict.

According to Coser (1956), it is highly important to understand that:

> The parties' consciousness of being mere representatives of supra-individual claims, of fighting not for themselves but only for a cause, can give the conflict a radicalism and mercilessness which find their analogy in the general behavior of certain very selfless and very idealistically inclined persons. […] Such a conflict which is fought out with the strength of the whole personality while the victory benefits the cause alone, has a noble character […] Here any yielding [. . .] any peace prior to the wholly decisive victory would be treason against that objectivity for the sake of which the personal character has been eliminated from the fight. (p. 111)

Coser's (1956) argument explains why the British (colonialist) administrators were so adamant in the execution of the colonialist agenda which is rooted in the ideological premises of "othering" (Tyson, 2015, p. 401) and "eurocentrism," involving "the use of European culture as the standard to which all other cultures are negatively contrasted" (Tyson, 2015, p. 401), and with which the colonizers divided the indigenous peoples of Nigeria, who were not only fighting to reject the "colonialist ideology, which defined them as inferior" (Tyson, 2015, p. 403), but were themselves in perpetual struggle over national power and control of economic resources and opportunities.

Issues in Conflict

For the purpose of this paper, seven concealed, hidden, underlying or pre-manifest conflict issues during the period of amalgamation have been carefully selected and presented as follows: exclusion from the decision-making processes; autonomy of the various ethnic nationalities within the two regions as well as autonomy of the regions; self-determination; territorial integrity; the British colonial tactic of divide and rule; economic opportunities; and lastly, political representation.

1) *Exclusion from the decision-making processes*.

As stated earlier in this paper, and as the Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report (2014) reveals:

> the 1914 amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates that created the Nigerian nation was a British colonial initiative. This provoked bitter controversy at the time, arousing the resentment of educated elite and of some British administrators […] Educated elites were excluded from colonial administration […] they advocated for an appointment and deposition of chiefs by their own people and greater participation in government. (p. 4)

The exclusion of the educated elite within the indigenous populations of Nigeria by the British colonial administrators was an ongoing discriminatory practice based on the notions of racism, racialism, and white privilege, concepts used by the African American critical theorists to describe the domination and

racial discrimination of the European (self-named white) people against the Africans (named blacks by the European self-named white supremacists) (See Tyson, 2015, pp. 343 – 397).

While white privilege, according to Delgado & Stefancic (2001, as cited in Tyson, 2015) could be defined as "the myriad of social advantages, benefits, and courtesies that come with being a member of the dominant race" (p. 361), racism is defined as "the unequal power relations that grow from the sociopolitical domination of one race by another and that result in systematic discriminatory practices (for example, segregation, domination, and persecution)" (Tyson, 2015, p. 344). Racialism is "the belief in racial superiority, inferiority, and purity based on the conviction that moral and intellectual characteristics, just like physical characteristics, are biological properties that differentiate the races" (Tyson, 2015, p. 344). A racialist is therefore anyone who holds such beliefs in racial superiority, inferiority, and purity. And a racist is anyone who is in "a position of power as a member of the politically dominant group" who indulges in systematic discriminatory practices, "for example, denying qualified persons of color employment, housing, education, or anything else to which they're entitled" (Tyson, 2015, p. 344). From these conceptual definitions, it follows that if the educated elites within the indigenous populations of Nigeria were excluded from colonial administration and discriminated against in their own country by the British colonial administrators in favor of their own kind, it then means that the British colonial administrators were overt, staunch and proud racists.

2) Autonomy of the various ethnic nationalities within the two regions as well as autonomy of the regions.

Going back to the distinction between *consented amalgamation* and *forced amalgamation*, it becomes evident and easy to understand how *forced amalgamation* can serve as a catalyst for an autonomy-based conflict. The fact that the various ethnic groups within each region were coerced to unite - first within one broader region, and second to form a united, one nation - against their will and without informed consent is by itself a violation of the autonomy of the indigenous peoples of Nigeria, and by implication a violation of their basic human rights.

3) Self-determination.

Connected to autonomy is the issue of self-determination. Self- determination here means a process by which a group or an ethnic nationality freely controls or determines to the full extent possible its own affairs and future without any external influences. With the sudden advent of the British initiated and engineered amalgamation, however, the pre-1914 ethnic nationalities in Nigeria lost their right to self-determination. In order to explain how they sought to regain this right, an appeal is made to the works of Franz Fanon, the author of *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wreched of the Earth* (1961) of which *Decolonizing, National Culture, and the Negro Intellectual* is a chapter.

Fanon's (1961, as cited in Lemert, 2013) preoccupation in this chapter is to address the issue of decolonization - "a violent event" according to the author – whose aim is "the substitution of one species of mankind by another" (p. 273). Decolonization is a change longed for by the colonized but detested by the colonialist. This is because "The colonist derives his validity, i.e., his wealth, from the colonial system" (Lemert, 2013, p. 274). And so, to be able to achieve total freedom, Fanon (1961, as cited in Lemert, 2013) believes that decolonization "can only succeed by resorting to every means, including of course, violence" (p. 274). Fanon (1961, as cited in Lemert, 2013) draws an important analogy between the blacks in North, Central, Latin America and the colonized Africans in Africa. For the author:

> The problems the blacks who lived in the United States, Central, and Latin America, were faced with was not basically any different from that of the Africans. The whites in America had not behaved any differently to them than the white colonizers had to the Africans. (p. 274 – 275)

Both "the blacks from Chicago and the Nigerians," Fanon (1961, as cited in Lemert, 2013) believes, "defined themselves in relation to the whites" (p. 275). In my analysis of the manifest conflict processes in Nigeria, the colonizer-colonized relationship during the time of decolonization, agitation for independence and self-determination will be examined.

4) Territorial integrity.

Integrity in this context does not mean an action of being honest or upholding everyday moral principles. By territorial integrity, it means wholeness and undivided. Each of the pre-amalgamation ethnic groups was whole and undivided, and to some extent, enjoyed territorial autonomy with limited contact with other ethnic nationalities in the other regions. However, colonization in West Africa - and its premier outcome, amalgamation - *devirginized* the purity, integrity and sovereignty of the ethno-national territories. Aime Cesaire (as cited in Lemert, 2013) clearly describes this situation by saying that:

> Every day that passes, every denial of justice, every beating by the police, every demand of the workers that is drowned in blood, every scandal that is hushed up, every punitive expedition, every police van, every gendarme and every militiamen, brings home to us the value of our old societies. They were communal societies, never societies of the many for the few. They were societies that were not only ante-capitalist, as has been said, but also anti-capitalist. They were democratic societies, always. They were cooperative societies, fraternal societies. I make a systematic defense of the societies destroyed by imperialism. (p. 262)

Some of the indigenous peoples' lands were forcefully taken away from them and their borders modified without their consent. As a result, these changes divided a people who were initially bound together by tradition, culture, language, religious liturgy and practices, and so on, into two or more territories where they joined outsiders to form what is considered today as a nation-state. Two examples will suffice. The Yoruba people are divided across different countries in West Africa: Nigeria, Republic of Benin, Togo and even Ghana. The ancient kingdom of Biafra included some parts of the present-day Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, and Gabon (Government of IPOB, 2014). The two questions that need to be answered are: is the "imposition by force of a border change" considered in international law as "an act of aggression" (El Ouali, 2012)? If yes, will the colonialists, for example, the British government, who forcibly modified the borders of the indigenous peoples and violated their right to territorial integrity be held accountable for their crime? The scope of this paper will not allow a probe into the various international laws about this subject. These questions will be left for future research by experts or students of international law on territorial integrity and sovereignty. Our goal here is to highlight territorial integrity as a latent conflict issue during the amalgamation period in Nigeria.

5) The British colonial tactic of divide and rule.

As the term "divide and rule" suggests, the British colonial masters used a cunning tactic called indirect rule to govern the peoples of Nigeria to their own detriment and to the advantage of the British

power. By indirect rule, the British further deepened the existing division in the country and ruled through the existing traditional and customary structures in order to maintain their hegemony and power influence on the people. What this means is that the traditional and customary leaders through whom the British governed the ethnic groups and peoples, and the regions, were working for the colonial government. They were merely instruments - a means to an end and were never an end in themselves. Simply put it this way: they were exploited and used to suppress, oppress and subdue their own people, especially those within and outside, who were against the colonial throne. As the human factor issues could come to play, especially within the northern region, the minority ethnic groups, and most visibly the Christian population, were separated and discriminated against which in turn sharpened the existing differences and made the fracture more visibly felt.

6) Economic opportunities.

Among the most important underlying conflict issues during the period of amalgamation are questions related to economic opportunities both in the new nation and within the regions and ethnic territories. The *mélange* of the peoples of Nigeria provoked some forms of hostile behaviors and competition between in-group and out-group members, as well as between the indigenous peoples and the foreign expatriates. Within the northern region that was administered through the indirect rule system, the minorities were greatly discriminated against in the civil service, and the same occurred in the other regions. The British administrators also discriminated against the indigenous peoples in high paying jobs as the latter were reserved for the white expatriate masters. This is the reason why the pro-nationalist movement in Nigeria at this time advocated for the "abolition of racial discrimination in the civil service" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 5).

7) Political representation.

Linked to economic opportunities is the issue of political representation in the new Nigerian nation. For the amalgamation of the north and south to withstand the test of the time, there were cogent reasons for pushing for a representative government through the legislative council that will consider the needs and interests of the various ethnic nationalities and their regions. But at first, the British colonial administrators were reluctant to form a representative government; rather they were more interested in an exploitative indirect rule tactic.

The bubbles of this latent conflict were first released in a demand made by the pro-nationalist movement advocates. They demanded that a "Legislative Council" be established, "half of whose members should be elected Africans" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 5). But the colonial authority did not listen to the demands of the indigenous peoples because of an inherent fear "that their aspiration to greater participation in government had the ultimate aim of displacing the British administration" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 5). Unfortunately, the bubbles of this latent conflict exploded during the struggle for decolonization and early years of independence between 1945 and 1966.

Phase Two: *Manifest Conflict Processes* (MCPs) in Nigeria (1945 – 1966)

What then led to the manifestation of conflicts between 1945 and 1966, a period in the history of

Nigeria characterized by the struggle for "decolonization, the agitation for constitutional reform, and the early years of independence" (p. 4)? Having presented in a detailed manner the issues in conflict in the preceding phase, our analysis of the manifest conflict processes in Nigeria will be condensed into four key issues: self-government, constitution, independence, and recognition of the minorities. These will be analyzed and discussed later in details. To aid our understanding of these issues, an explanation of manifest conflict processes is presented below.

Sandole (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) defines manifest conflict processes (MCPs) as "conflicts that have developed to the extent that they are observable, but have not been expressed in a violent manner" (p. 43). As our analysis will show, some of the latent issues during the amalgamation period later developed as manifest conflicts, and as such, are going to be discussed in this phase. Similarly, the intergroup conflict that occurred during the "Robbers Cave Experiment" (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, pp. 27–28) by which this paper explained the correlation between in-group self-consciousness and bonding, and out-group hostility and competition at the beginning of the last phase also shifted to a manifest conflict. By way of analogy, the second part of the *Robbers Cave Experiment* will help us understand the second phase of conflict in Nigeria – the manifestation of conflicts between 1945 and 1966. The *Robbers Cave Experiment* (Pruitt & Kim, 2004) story says that:

> When the first day of the competitions arrived, the researchers displayed the tournament prizes in the cafeteria – a shiny trophy, splendid-looking medals, and four - bladed knives – prizes that would be given only to the winning team. As expected, these prizes heightened competitive and hostile feelings even further. As soon as the competitions began, so did the name-calling. Although both groups initially tried hard to be good sports, this soon ceased and insults became the norm. (p. 28)

This story reveals seven elements that are worth acknowledging and similar to the underlying issues in the manifest conflict that occurred during the struggle for decolonization and independence in Nigeria. These seven elements are: tournament (competition), prizes (shiny trophy, splendid-looking medals, and knives), judgment, winning team and losing team, heightened hostility, name-calling, and lastly, insults. Among all these elements, three could be seen as the main drivers of the conflict. What heightened the "competitive and hostile feelings" was not just simply the fact that "the researchers displayed the tournament prizes to the view of all the players" (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 28); but what caused the hostile feelings as well as the name-calling and insults that followed is the fact that there was a judge who was observing the two teams and, on the basis of this observation and judgment, was going to decide which team emerged as the winner and which as the loser. In addition, the fact that the winner will ceremoniously receive the tournament prize – "a shiny trophy, splendid-looking medals, and four-bladed knives" (Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 28) also contributed to the obvious manifestation of the conflict.

The same elements, except an external judge who decided the winning team, were completely present in Nigeria from 1945 to 1966 during the struggle for "decolonization, the agitation for constitutional reform, and the early years of independence." While the British colonial administrators served both as an external judge and a mediator - judging and mediating between the various ethnic groups in Nigeria -, such an external third party possessing the constitutional power, military might, and mediation skills, as well as economic influence was absent after the independence of Nigeria on October 1, 1960. From 1960

to 1966, Nigeria was able to manage and prevent its manifest conflict processes from escalating to the aggressive manifest conflict processes because the warmth and influence of the powerful external arbiter and mediator, and the mastermind of the amalgamation architectural experiment – the British colonial administrators - were still felt. But this did not last long. What happened from 1966 until the year, 2016, is an indication that a house built on a weak foundation cannot stand. No matter how much the builders try to prevent it from falling, it will surely collapse.

Before we begin to analyze the last phase (phase three: aggressive manifest conflict processes (AMCPs) in Nigeria (1966 - 2016), there is a need to understand how the following four issues: self-government, constitution, independence, and recognition of the minorities, contributed to the emergence of manifest conflicts in Nigeria from 1945 to 1966.

1) Self-government.

The period prior to the Nigerian independence, from 1945 to 1960, was characterized by the struggle for self-government. The indigenous peoples of Nigeria wanted to take over governance from the colonial masters. They wanted the new Nigerian nation to be ruled and governed by indigenous Nigerian peoples. But the problem is not found in the common consensus and desire for self-government. What led to the manifest conflicts among the different ethno-national regions was the hidden interest and goal of each region regarding the question about which ethnic group will emerge as the new national leader with power, influence and control over the wealth of the new nation. To buttress this point, "Sir Arthur Richards who was the Governor of Nigeria, on the 6th of December 1944, had in a dispatch to London, stated clearly that the problem of Nigeria was how to create a political system that would advance political development in line with the interests being pursued by various Nigerian groups" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 6). By various "Nigerian groups," Mr. Richards was referring to the various ethno-national regions – the north (Hausa-Fulanis), southwest (Yorubas), and southeast (Igbos) – including the minority ethnic groups within these regions.

Each of these groups, although and at last united with a common aspiration to self- government, was pursuing their private, political, economic and religious interests. Before achieving their group related goals, they needed to be united in their overt agitation for self- government against the British colonial power. And for that reason, the manifest conflicts that occurred between 1945 and 1960 were mostly between the indigenous peoples of Nigeria and the British colonial power. These conflicts were expressed either through "a storm of criticism in the nationalist press over the demand for self-government" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 7) or by "questioning, in action and as well as in words, the constitutional, administrative and economic assumptions of the British authority" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 7) as well as by boycotting official Legislative Council meetings.

One example of these manifest conflicts suffices here: "In 1947, the three elected representatives in the Legislative Council from Lagos boycotted the first session of the Council, and when they resumed sitting in 1948, they began to demand for quicker constitutional changes" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 7) that will recognize the governance of Nigeria by the Nigerian people. To achieve their self-government objective, therefore, the British government needed to agree to a constitutional amendment.

2) Constitution.

Another issue that led to the manifest conflict processes is the constitution. As it was explained in the first phase of this analysis - the pre-manifest conflict phase in the history of Nigeria (from 1914 to 1945) -, the Nigerian elites were excluded from the decision making processes, including in the drafting of the constitution used to rule Nigeria. And so, the first part of the manifest conflict period (1945–1960) witnessed the evaporation of the hidden, suppressed, bottled animosities over the exclusionary measures of the British. The Richards Constitution serves as an example of these exclusionary measures. "Sir Arthur Richards made the mistake of not consulting the opinion of Nigerians over his constitutional proposals and found himself faced with a spate of bitter criticism from the nationalists" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 7). Even the 1951 Macpherson Constitution that "offered a measure of responsible government" failed to accord the self-government status to the Nigerian peoples, and as a result, it led to an increase in the precipitation of the indignation of the Nigerian nationalists.

The refusal of the demand for self-government by the British colonial power caused some confusion between the various ethno-national regions in Nigeria. Some leaders began to think that perhaps, the demand for a constitutional amendment that would grant self-government to the indigenous peoples of Nigeria should be dropped. Championing this idea were the northern legislators who were not opposed to the demand for self-government; but felt that the demand was too early (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 8). This change of view by the northern leaders on the issue of self-government led to a change in the conflict dynamics, which caused an increase in its intensity both against the British colonial power and among the different ethno-national regions. The outward signs of this disagreement include heated debates, walk out from the parliament sessions, resignation from ministerial positions, "constitutional crisis and the threats of disintegration of the country" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 8).

3) Independence.

Nigeria was not alone in the struggle for self-government, constitutional amendment and independence. The outcome of the pursuit of similar goals within other West African countries had a great influence on Nigeria. The Ghanaian independence on March 6, 1957 reenergized the indigenous peoples of Nigeria and reignited the struggle for, and a bolder, heroic fight for independence. Although this struggle was not violent, to some degree it was more or less a constitutional and ideological fight which, of course, led to visible confrontations and outward manifestations of animosities. The struggle for independence was the last phase of conflict manifestation that involved the British colonial power as a direct party to the conflict. And the fact that a nearby country like Ghana had started to reap the fruit of independence, prepared the ground for all the ethno-national regions in Nigeria to unite once again. "Nigerian leaders were at last united on an issue which for six years had not only plagued all internal relationships but had also threatened the very existence of Nigeria as an emergent national entity" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 9). The idea of an independent national entity was finally realized during the Nigerian Constitutional Conference that took place in London from September 29 to October 27, 1958. At this conference, internal self-government that started in 1959, Independence Constitution of 1960, and full independence starting from October 1, 1960 were granted and ratified.

The question that comes to mind at this point is: did the granting of independence bring an end to the manifest conflict processes in Nigeria? The answer is no. The attainment of independence was

an end (an end in the sense of a goal) that led to a new beginning of, and serves as a precursor for, new forms of conflict with different layers and levels of intensity, issues, and parties. Some months after the October 1, 1960 independence, "Nigeria moved from one crisis to another" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 11) resulting, at some point, in the "declaration of an emergency in the Region by the Federal Government and the consequent takeover of the Government of the region" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014).

In the next phase of this politico-historical analysis of ethnic conflict in Nigeria, the transition from the manifest conflict processes to aggressive manifest conflict processes will be examined. In the meantime, it is important to realize the goal we set at the beginning of our analysis of the manifest conflict phase by concluding with an examination of the agitation of the minority ethnic groups in Nigeria.

4) Recognition of the minorities.

The independence constitution of 1960 did not take into consideration the agitations and fears of the minority ethnic groups in Nigeria. And so, the attainment of independence opened a new wave of manifest conflict both within the regions and at the federal center. Within the regions, the minority ethnic groups feared the domination of the three dominant ethnic groups, the Hausa-Fulani in the northern region, the Yoruba in the southwestern region, and the Igbo in the southeastern region. The reason is because each of these regions was granted "extensive powers" by the 1960 Constitution, "making them effectively autonomous entities with […] revenue arrangements which ensured that the regions had the resources to carry out the immense responsibilities" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 11). And so, to be able to have equal participation in the new government and access to the economic and political opportunities it brings, the minority ethnic groups within the three regions demanded for the creation of new states, states that will convert their status within the region to a majority. Unfortunately, the federal government did not honor their demand for the creation of states at this time, but instead, "on august 9, 1963, the Mid-West Region was created by constitutional means through a referendum and this led to a stronger agitation for minority rights" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 11).

In the next phase, we shall briefly and schematically reflect on how the latent conflict issues during the amalgamation period and the manifest conflicts that occurred during the struggle for decolonization, self-government and independence escalated into the aggressive manifest conflict processes of the post-independence era, from 1966 to 2016.

Phase Three: *Aggressive Manifest Conflict Processes* (AMCPs) in Nigeria (1966 - 2016)

The historical era that this essay seeks to reflect on under phase three of this analysis is the post-independence period that begins from 1966 to 2016. This period is characterized by series of deadly violence - violence that manifested in various forms including coup d'état, military dictatorship and autocratic rule, civil war, ethno-religious massacre, interreligious and interethnic violent attacks, and religious extremism that finally gave birth to the notorious Boko Haram terrorist movement. The nature of these forms of violence, their intensity, and the destructive impact they have on the entire country stand as a justification for categorizing the post-independence era as a period of "aggressive manifest conflict processes" (Cheldelin et al., 2008).

What then is aggressive manifest conflict? Sandole (1993, 1999b, as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) defines aggressive manifest conflict processes as "conflicts that have escalated from manifest conflict processes to a violent level of expression: they are not merely capable of being noticed and experienced, but are also destructive to parties, resources, and others as well" (p. 43). This definition points to three important elements that constitute the central message that this part of our analysis seeks to reveal. They are escalation from, violence, and destruction (or impact).

To illustrate how a manifest conflict can escalate to an aggressive manifest conflict within the confines of intergroup relationships, it is useful to return to the last part of the "Robbers Cave Experiment" (Pruitt & Kim, 2004). As the two groups of boys in this experiment continued their tournament, Pruitt & Kim (2004) note:

> Hostile actions rapidly escalated. Both groups engaged in tit-for-tat attacks and counterattacks. They tore down each other's flags, trashed one another's cabins, and so on. Also, they secretly amassed weapons – bats, sticks, socks filled with rocks. By the end of the tournament period, the groups were sworn enemies. (p. 28)

Interestingly, the three important elements - escalation from, violence, and destruction – that are recognizable from Sandole's (1993, 1999b, as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) definition of aggressive manifest conflict processes are also discernible from the last part of the "Robbers Cave Experiment" (Pruitt & Kim, 2004) that is stated above. The experiment reveals the step by step processes of aggressive manifest conflicts that occurred and continue to occur in the post-independent Nigeria, especially from 1966 to 2016. Both the experiment and Sandole's definition begin with the escalation of hostile behaviors or actions.

The term escalation presupposes the existence of an issue or action "A" that has in itself the potentiality of exploding and taking another, more visible form "B". Escalation in this sense does not happen in a vacuum; it takes place in a continuum with a starting point and ending point. Within the starting point "A" is found the source or cause of that which escalates. And within the ending point "B" is found the visible outcome or effect of the escalation. In- between the two points lies escalation itself. The mistake that is commonly made by many analysts of violent conflict is to look for the cause of escalation somewhere in-between the two points. This paper posits that that which is found in-between the two points of escalation - point "A" and point "B" - is nothing but escalation itself with its chain of drivers. The original source of the escalated conflict is found within point "A"; and in the context of this paper, point "A" relates to the conflict issues highlighted during the amalgamation period, which in turn were driven into the post-independence era by the issues that were discussed in the second phase - the period of decolonization, self-government and independence. The question that comes to mind is: how can a conflict issue escalate from point "A" to point "B"? What are the drivers? Or, what or who is the mover? What objectives do the movers seek to achieve? And by what means do they achieve these objectives? While the questions about objectives and means will be answered later with a presentation on specific, instances of violent ethno-religious conflicts in the post- independence Nigeria, the question about the mover(s) is to be explained using Rubenstein's analogy of Cain and Abel (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008, p. 59).

Rubenstein (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) believes that conflict occurs when "individuals or

groups pursue incompatible goals" (p. 58). Conflict could either be "beneficial or destructive" - beneficial because conflict will help to improve human conditions, and destructive because its effects could be very harmful or detrimental to our existence (See Cheldelin et al., 2008, p. 58). Therefore, it is important for conflict analysis and resolution scholars to identify the sources of destructive conflict for a timey intervention and impact reduction. For this reason, Rubenstein (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) narrows his inquiry to identifying and distinguishing two general sources of destructive conflict: human nature (personal factors) and social situations or structures (situational factors).

To illustrate and expatiate on the two sources of conflict, Rubenstein (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) makes reference to the narrative of Cain and Abel and explains how a destructive conflict can manifest when "aggressive feelings are turned into aggressive action" (Cheldelin et al., 2008, p. 59). This illustration is related to the distance between "potency and act" as instructed by Aristotle in his philosophy of nature. To bring something from a state of potency to actuality requires a mover who, through the free exercise of freedom, sets that which is in potency in motion in order to attain the state of actuality. For example, and from a positive, non-conflict perspective, an undergraduate student studying early childhood education has the potency of becoming a teacher (its actuality). This student could be referred to as a potential teacher. But in reality, the student is not yet a teacher. What will make the student a teacher is the ability and diligent effort to study well, successfully pass exams, and get hired. The process by which the student teacher (potency) finally becomes a real teacher (actuality) is determined by both personal and external factors. By personal factor, it means the student's personal decision or determination to study hard, follow the rules, pass exams and apply for teaching jobs. By external factor, it means the impact or influence of teachers, parents, friends, and employees on the student. This illustration adds more flavor to the biblical tale of Cain. It shows that for a destructive conflict to manifest there must be an agent who will freely choose to "move" or "bring" a potential violence to actual violence.

I believe that every "AMCP" (aggressive manifest conflict process as noted by Sandole (Cheldelin et al., 2008, p. 43) was once an "MCP" (manifest conflict process); and for an "MCP" to become an "AMCP," it requires personal freedom and will on the one hand, and external factors on the other. My idea of personal freedom and will aligns with Rubenstein's (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) notion of "human nature" or "personal factors" as the first source of conflict. And my notion of external factors refers to Rubenstein's (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) concept of "social situations or structures," or "situational factors" as the second source of conflict. Taking this further to its logical conclusion, Rubenstein (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) believes that "the most destructive social conflicts seem to occur when multiple sources are in play, especially when there are oppressive class relationships, threatened group identities, and clashing worldviews" (p. 66).

The various violent and destructive conflicts that manifested in post-independence Nigeria were caused by a mixture of what could be referred to as personal freedom or will (similar to Rubenstein's idea of "human nature") and external factors (designating Rubenstein's concept of "social situations or structures," or "situational factors"). Personal freedom or will here means that the various parties (the groups and their representatives) by their free exercise of choice and will decided to play the role of a "mover," turning potential violence (or aggressive feelings) (Cheldelin et al., 2008, p. 59) to actual violence (or aggressive action). But their choice of action was greatly influenced by the chains of undercurrent of triggering, prevalent issues that this paper discussed in the first and second phases of conflict manifestation in Nigeria. In the first phase, seven concealed, hidden, underlying or pre-manifest conflict issues during the period of amalgamation were carefully presented including exclusion from the

decision-making processes, autonomy of the various ethnic nationalities within the two regions as well as autonomy of the regions, self-determination, territorial integrity, the British colonial tactic of divide and rule, economic opportunities, and lastly, political representation. And in the second phase, we saw how these four issues: self-government, constitution, independence, and recognition of the minorities, contributed to the emergence of manifest conflicts in Nigeria from 1945 to 1966.

But the question that could be asked at this point is: are personal will and situational factors enough reasons to resort to the use of violence and cause devastating destruction of life and property? This essay contends that in addition to human nature or personal will and situational factors, parties to a conflict do have well defined and articulated objectives and strategies or thought out means through which these objectives could be accomplished. A quick summary of a few instances of the post-independence violent conflicts will help us understand the interplay between the four elements: personal will, situational factors, objectives and means. These elements will not be discussed separately but will be referred to in the context of the specific examples of destructive, violent conflicts that follow.

It is believed that the post-independence Nigeria (as cited in the Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014):

> has over 350 ethno-cultural groupings. This multi-ethnicity has been compounded by pronounced religious differences, exploited usually for political considerations by avid political classes in contexts of extreme poverty and very low educational development among the mass of the populace. Whereas Nigeria is supposed to be a secular state, "one nation bound in freedom, peace and unity," the prevalence of religiosity and its related nepotism at all levels, has effectively undermined the objectivity which secularity would have ordinarily imbued in national politics. (p. 47)

The post-independence era is characterized by many milestones of which the two that will be mentioned in this essay are the military dictatorship era and democratic era. For the military dictatorship era, we refer to the ethno-religious violent conflicts that occurred from 1966 to 1999, although there were pockets of civilian rule experiments within this period. For the democratic era, we refer to the instances of ethno-religious violent conflicts and terrorism that occurred from 1999 to 2016. To achieve the goal of this paper, only four examples of violent, aggressive conflict are selected, two from the military dictatorship era and two from the democratic era.

Examples of Aggressive Conflict during the Military Dictatorship Era

The Nigeria – Biafra Civil War.

> The Civil War in Nigeria, also known as the Nigeria-Biafra war, lasted almost three years, from 1967 to 1970. It was a bloody conflict with a very high number of deaths of more than one million people. Seven years after Nigeria's independence from Great Britain, the war began because of the attempted secession of the southeastern Nigeria on May 30, 1967, when it declared itself the independent Republic of Biafra. The battles that followed and which largely revealed human suffering aroused the indignation and the intervention of the international community. (Ugorji, 2012, p. 97)

The main parties to this war were mainly the northerners (Hausa-Fulani, majority of whom are

Muslims) together with some south-westerners that led the Nigerian government troops on the one hand, and the southeastern (the Igbo alongside some minority ethnic groups/Christian/Biafran) troops. Shortly before this war, there were instances of ethnic violence in Nigeria. Prominent among these are the first military coup d'état in Nigeria (after this, there were many other coups d'état) and the ethno-religious massacres in the north and the retaliatory killings that followed in the south.

> Military intervention following the bloody coup of January 15, 1966 led by Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and a group of Majors, overthrew the government of the Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and ushered in the military regime of General Johnson Thomas Umunnakwe Aguiyi-Ironsi. In July of the same year, a counter-coup ushered in the military regime of Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon. (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 12)

These events were the first set of events in a series of what was going to become an era of human suffering.

The Crusade of Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke and the Massacres in Kano.

Prior to the institutionalization of Sharia law in some northern states from 1999, many religious violent conflicts occurred. Among these is the violence that erupted in 1991 over a Christian led convention in Kano. A Christian community invited a German evangelist, Reinhard Bunnke and his colleagues, to Nigeria to be a guest speaker at the convention. Being that the majority of Kano residents are Muslims, they protested against the convention and the coming of the German Pastor. Also, against the refusal of the Nigerian government to give visa to a Muslim preacher from South Africa who the Muslims had previously invited to Nigeria for a program, the Muslims were angry and argued that it "is injustice to allow a German Christian evangelist" (Ugorji, 2012) to preach in Kano. For the Muslims, it was not just seen as a provocation, but an attempt to Christianize the Islamic city or present it to the outside world as a Christian city. This conflict led to the death of hundreds of people, internally displaced persons, and destruction of property.

Examples of Aggressive Conflict during the Democratic Era

Kaduna – Enugu Riots.

The civil war did not bring an end to ethno-religious violent attacks. In 1999 and 2000, at the dawn of the democratic era, there was violent manifestation of conflict in Zamfara state and Kaduna state as a result of the institutionalization of Sharia law to which Christians were obliged to obey. The protests that followed and the refusal to comply with the Sharia law led to the escalation of violence which resulted in thousands of deaths. In retaliation against the massacre of Christians, some Muslims in the south of the country were attacked.

The Fight against Western Education by the Boko Haram Movement.

The last example that this paper intends to give is the notorious violence and terrorist attacks of the Boko Haram movement in the northeastern region of Nigeria. While the activities of this group have drawn both national and international condemnation, nobody knows with certainty how and when terrorist attacks will stop. Founded in 2002 in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, by Ustaz Mohammed

Yusuf, Boko Haram emerged with an ideology that rejects modernity and Western education, and an objective of establishing Sharia law in all the Nigerian states (Ugorji, 2012). Although nobody within the international community knew Boko Haram prior to 2009, the group was carrying out its small-scale activities in Borno state. The first pronounced violent attack orchestrated by Boko Haram was in 2009 when it launched "a simultaneous attack in four northern states of Nigeria, known as Bauchi, Borno, Yobe and Kano. These combats were between government troops and members of Boko Haram movement" (Ugorji, 2012). From 2009 to 2016, thousands of people were killed; property worth millions of dollars destroyed, trauma and pain inflicted, and tens of thousands of people have been internally and externally displaced. The victims of Boko Haram terrorism are both Christians and Muslims which, to a certain extent, characterize this conflict as both an intra-religious and inter-religious conflict.

But the question that is being asked is how this conflict could be resolved and prevented from reoccurring. The section that follows will provide insights on possible solutions to the Boko Haram conflict as well as to the other ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria.

Resolving Ethno-Religious Conflict in Nigeria

Until now, the analysis made in this paper has been guided by the medico-diagnostic method of inquiry, an analytical approach that seeks to avoid one of the commonly committed fallacies of the century - jumping to a conclusion or making a hasty decision. This approach was adopted because of the belief that "efforts to ameliorate" ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria "must be preceded by an understanding" of the drivers, dynamics and sources of that conflict. "Altogether too many policy prescriptions for ethnic harmony have been dispensed without benefit of careful diagnosis" (Horowitz, 2000). In the first phase of our diagnosis which focuses on the amalgamation period (from 1914 to 1945), seven concealed, hidden, underlying or pre- manifest conflict issues were discovered and they include exclusion from the decision making processes, autonomy of the various ethnic nationalities within the two regions as well as autonomy of the regions, self-determination, territorial integrity, the British colonial tactic of divide and rule, economic opportunities, and lastly, political representation. And in the second phase, four issues were diagnosed and analyzed: self-government, constitution, independence, and recognition of the minorities. These contributed to the emergence of manifest conflicts in Nigeria from 1945 to 1966. The third phase conflict issues (that occurred between 1966 and 2016) are a spillover from the conflict issues of the first and the second phases, for which an example is the separatist, self-government claims of the Boko Haram movement through the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the north of Nigeria that should be governed not by the constitution but by the Sharia Law.

To resolve these conflict issues, many scholars, researchers and policy makers have put forward different kinds of proposals. These resolution proposals are summarized as follows: constitutional review; devolution of powers; fiscal federalism with revenue sharing; resource control and sharing formula; reforms of the public service; inclusive and participatory democracy; accountability and transparency; political parties and electoral systems reforms; coercive measures in the form of peacekeeping operations; the use of the judicial system in the prosecution and sentencing of perpetrators of violence; political will to fight terrorism and rehabilitate the victims of terrorist attacks; and finally, the creation of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) (See Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, pp. 47-59; Ugorji, 2012).

The understanding of the rate of success or failure of these conflict resolution strategies is very crucial to realizing the goal of this research. If the success rate is high, then the outcome of this paper will be a litany of suggestions on how these policies could be strengthened, just as many writers have enumerated. However, statistical evidence and the reality on the ground tend to show that government policies to ameliorate interethnic and interreligious relations in Nigeria have had little or no results. Based on this fact, this paper proposes a paradigm shift in the development of policies that are aimed at managing, resolving and preventing conflicts with ethno-religious issues and components. This paradigm shift could be explained from two perspectives: first, from retributive policy to restorative justice, and second, from coercive policy to mediation and dialogue. I hold that:

> ethnic and religious identities now blamed for much of the unrest in Nigeria can actually be tapped as valuable assets in support of stabilization and peaceful coexistence. Those who are responsible for such bloodshed and those suffering at their hands, including all the members of the society, need a safe space within which to hear one another's stories and to learn, with guidance, to see each other as human once again. (Ugorji, 2014)

A unique form of this "safe space" was provided in 2014 in Nigeria during the Nigeria National Conference - a National Dialogue that brought together 498 delegates representing the different ethno-national, religious and tribal groups in Nigeria, who, in order "to encourage inclusiveness and the need to build a fully integrated nation, drafted and recommended, among other proposals, the adoption of *The Nigerian Charter for National Reconciliation and Integration*" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, pp. 288-294). Drafting and adopting a charter for national reconciliation and integration is necessary but not sufficient for the restoration of peace in Nigeria.

There is a need for systematic, engaging, sustainable and result-oriented set of models. If multiple groups are fighting and killing each other, there are preliminary things that should be done before asking them to forgive one another and reconcile for future collaborative engagement. First, the fighters need to be separated by stronger interveners. Second, the immediate issues, that is, the reason why they are fighting, will be addressed and solutions proposed to the parties or the parties offer solutions to their problem. Third, additional ongoing opportunities will be provided to the parties to help rebuild and improve their relationship.

Fourth, and with time, they will let go and forgive one another in order to move on. Based on these conflict resolution conditions and the results of the conflict diagnosis presented above, three models of conflict resolution with practical applications are prescribed to help cure the ethno-religious maladies in Nigeria as well as heal the wounds they have inflicted on their victims. These are responsible peacekeeping, peacemaking, and lastly continuous peacebuilding.

Responsible peacekeeping.

The current conflict climate in the northeastern part of Nigeria, especially the Boko Haram terrorism, requires a higher, concerted and more coordinated intervention mechanisms led by responsible peacekeeping operations teams. According to Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall (2011), "peacekeeping is appropriate at three points on the escalation scale: to contain violence and prevent it from escalating to war; to limit the intensity, geographical spread and duration of war once it has broken out; and to

consolidate a ceasefire and create space for reconstruction after the end of a war" (p. 147). In order to create space for the other forms of conflict resolution – mediation and dialogue for example-, there is a need to contain, reduce or minimize the intensity and impact of violence on the ground through responsible peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.

The peacekeepers' role should be to separate the fighters, contain its intensity and protect the civilians. In addition to this role, this paper lays emphasis on ethical responsibility. By this, it is expected that the peacekeepers should be well trained and guided by ethical deontological codes so as to neither do harm to the population they are expected to protect nor become a part of the problem they have been sent to manage.

Peacemaking.

Many forms of peacemaking initiatives – negotiation, mediation, settlement, and tracks of diplomacy (Cheldelin et al., 2008, p. 43; Ramsbotham et al., 2011, p. 171; Pruitt & Kim, 2004, p. 178) have emerged over the years and have been used to resolve different kinds of conflict. For ethno-religious violent conflict in Nigeria, this paper proposes two levels of peacemaking processes. The first level is a conflict settlement between the Nigerian government and the Boko Haram movement using a combination of track 1 and track two diplomacy, or multi-track diplomacy. The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) provides a summary of these forms of peacemaking initiatives.

> Track 1 diplomacy designates official discussions typically involving high-level political and military leaders and focusing on cease-fires, peace talks, and treaties and other agreements. Track 2 diplomacy has to do with unofficial dialogue and problem- solving activities aimed at building relationships and encouraging new thinking that can inform the official process. Track 2 activities typically involve influential academic, religious, and NGO leaders and other civil society actors who can interact more freely than high-ranking officials. Some analysts use the term track 1.5 to denote a situation in which official and non-official actors work together to resolve conflicts. Multitrack diplomacy is a term for operating on several tracks simultaneously, including official and unofficial conflict resolution efforts, citizen and scientific exchanges, international business negotiations, international cultural and athletic activities, and other cooperative efforts. These efforts could be led by governments, professional organizations, businesses, churches, media, private citizens, training and educational institutes, activists, and funders. (The Endowment of the United States Institute of Peace, 2011)

The second level of peacemaking processes that this paper proposes is multi-group or intergroup mediation programs organized for specific individuals, communities, businesses, organizations, ethnic or tribal group associations, religious groups (represented by religious leaders) who are involved in, connected to, or have fallen victim of, ethno-religious conflicts in the northeastern region of Nigeria and in the other regions of the country. These mediation programs should be facilitated by a reputable civil society organization (CSO) with expertise in ethno-religious conflict resolution in general and multi-group mediation in particular.

Continuous peacebuilding.

The underlying assumption of this paper is that using military might and the judicial system alone

to resolve conflicts with ethnic and religious components, especially in Nigeria, will rather lead to further escalation of the conflict. The reason is because military intervention and the retributive justice that follows neither have within themselves the tools to uncover the hidden animosities that fuel the conflict nor the skills, know-how and patience required to transform the "deep-rooted conflict by eliminating structural violence and other underlying causes and conditions of deep-rooted conflict" (Mitchell & Banks, 1996; Lederach, 1997, as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008, p. 53). For this reason, a paradigm shift from retributive policy to restorative justice and from coercive policy to mediation and dialogue is needed. To accomplish this, more resources should be invested in peacebuilding initiatives, and they should be led by civil society organizations at the grassroots levels. A variant of these kinds of initiatives could be Track 3 diplomacy which has to do with:

> people-to-people diplomacy undertaken by individuals and private groups to encourage interaction and understanding between hostile communities and involving awareness-raising and empowerment within these communities. Normally focused at the grassroots level, this type of diplomacy often involves organizing meetings and conferences, generating media exposure, and political and legal advocacy for marginalized people and communities. (The Endowment of the United States Institute of Peace, 2011)

The Track 3 diplomacy as described here is not practical. The urgency and need for peacebuilding initiatives in Nigeria require more practical methods than theoretical descriptions. For this reason, this paper hereby recommends the following four projects that the author developed at the International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation (ICERM), a New York based nonprofit organization in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and founded by Basil Ugorji (the author of this paper). As an emerging center of excellence for ethnic and religious conflict resolution and peacebuilding, ICERM identifies ethnic and religious conflict prevention and resolution needs, and brings together a wealth of resources, including mediation and dialogue programs to support sustainable peace in countries around the world (see www.icermediation.org for more information about ICERM). The four projects are: living together movement, pray for peace initiative, peace journalism, and national elders forum.

Living Together Movement:

At the beginning of phase one analysis, this paper distinguished and defined two kinds of amalgamation: *consented amalgamation* (ethno-religious groups formed a union based on free choice and will) and *forced amalgamation* (ethno-religious groups were coerced or compelled to unite as one nation). Since the union of the north and south as well as the union of all the ethnic and religious groups into one united nation was based on *forced amalgamation*, it is important that any prescriptions to heal this wound and cure the very first symptomatic malady that is engraved in the heart of all the conflict issues in Nigeria should recognize the people's freedom, validate their autonomy and create spaces that will encourage and promote inclusion in the decision making processes, and respect their diverse cultures, group related rights, including the rights of the minorities and freedom of religion.

To achieve this long-term goal, this paper proposes the establishment of the Living Together Movement in schools, communities, government and private institutions, and so on. Not only will

the Living Together Movement help "prevent and resolve ethnic and religious conflicts and engender harmony through dialogue, open-hearted discussions, compassionate & empathic listening, and diversity celebration" (ICERM, 2014); through mutual discussions on common heritage and shared values which are evident in the "country's history, founding fathers, constitution and national symbols," the project will promote patriotic attitudes - "a shared sense of belonging to the same country or fatherland, feeling that reinforces its unity on the basis of shared common values" (Ugorji, 2014). In schools, the project could be established as clubs and in the communities and other institutions as a civic association with a centralized body at the national capital and chapters in all the states and at the local, grassroots levels.

Pray for Peace Initiative:

In order to strengthen, coordinate and give structure to the interfaith dialogue initiatives in the country, this paper recommends the establishment of a multi-faith, multi-ethnic and global peace prayer called *Pray for Peace*. The resolution of an inter-religious conflict should make use of common, shared religious values in order to be successful and sustainable. Two of the shared, common values in both Islam and Christianity are prayer and peace. Prayer and peace are fundamental values that are inscribed in the Quran and Bible, and unanimously accepted by both Muslims and Christians. In Nigeria, they are used daily in greeting exchanges. And so, Muslims and Christians coming together once a week or month to pray for peace will be a symbolic way to celebrate the two shared values, help bridge tribal, ethnic, religious, sectarian, cultural, ideological, philosophical and political divides, and foster a culture of peace in Nigeria.

Peace Journalism:

The media has an ethical duty and a moral responsibility to promote peace through journalistic activities. Unfortunately, many media outlets create the conditions that lead to violence instead of peace. In the spirit of a comprehensive peacebuilding effort, this paper recommends that the Nigerian journalists be trained in peace journalism so as to promote positive interaction among people of different tribes, ethnicities and religious persuasions, help to increase tolerance and acceptance, and support sustainable peace in the most vulnerable and conflict regions of the country "through programming that informs, educates, engages, mediates, and heals" (ICERM, 2014).

National Elders Forum:

Peacebuilding in Nigeria will not be complete without a project uniquely designed for the traditional rulers or leaders of indigenous groups. The reason is because "elite attitudes toward ethnic and religious differences are the major factors in interethnic and interreligious accommodation and moderation. If leaders are more temperate than those they lead, they will seek ways of putting a break on ethnic and religious conflicts" (Horowitz, 2000). Too often, temperateness or moderation is a virtue that is gradually developed and improved over a long period of time. To help acquire this important virtue, especially as it relates to ethnic and religious conflict resolution, this essay proposes that a *National Elders Forum* be established.

Members of the *National Elders Forum* will be traditional rulers or leaders of indigenous groups from all the ethnic groups in the country. These traditional rulers or leaders will be involved in peace initiatives periodically, including conflict resolution training that will include the most productive way to

use customary laws and traditions in peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and mediation, dialogue, and other nonviolent methods of conflict resolution. This training will help each of them promote a culture of peace in their respective communities and at the grassroots levels.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this paper, we set out to analyze the drivers, dynamics and sources of ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria as well as lay out various ways by which this conflict could be resolved. Anybody who is familiar with Nigeria will know that this is not an easy task. It requires much time and strenuous scrutiny to be able to achieve the expected results. For this reason, this paper, through the lens of postcolonial criticism (Tyson, 2015) and other relevant social conflict theories, analyzed this conflict using a medico-diagnostic method of inquiry which was useful in avoiding rushing to the conclusion or making hasty prescriptions as many people have done in the past.

Ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria are diagnosed in this paper following Sandole's (as cited in Cheldelin et al., 2008) three stages of conflict manifestation, namely, "latent conflicts or pre-manifest conflict processes (pre-MCPs), manifest conflict processes (MCPs), and finally aggressive manifest conflict processes (AMCPs)" (p. 43). From this lens, and based on the historical and political perspectives, we set out to analyze and categorize ethno-religious conflict in Nigeria into three phases, each phase corresponding to one of Sandole's stages of conflict manifestation. The first phase is from 1914 to 1945 commonly known as the period of "amalgamation and the problem of nationhood" (Final Draft of Nigeria National Conference Report, 2014, p. 4). The second phase took place between 1945 and 1966, a period marked by the struggle for "decolonization, the agitation for constitutional reform, and the early years of independence" (p. 4). And finally, the third phase started from "the collapse of the First Republic following a bloody military coup that ushered in the first military regime and sparked up a movement for democratization" (p. 4) and continues until the current democratic era (from 1966 to 2016).

The paper analyzed the amalgamation period (from 1914 to 1945) and identified seven concealed, hidden, underlying or pre-manifest conflict issues that characterize this era - exclusion from the decision making processes; autonomy of the various ethnic nationalities within the two regions as well as autonomy of the regions; self-determination; territorial integrity; the British colonial tactic of divide and rule; economic opportunities; and lastly, political representation. In the second phase, four issues were diagnosed and analyzed, and they are self-government, constitution, independence, and recognition of the minorities. These contributed to the emergence of manifest conflicts in Nigeria from 1945 to 1966. Since the amalgamation of the north and south of Nigeria was based on a fragile foundation, the bubbles of the latent conflicts of the amalgamation era exploded during the struggle for decolonization and early years of independence between 1945 and 1966. The third phase conflict issues (that occurred between 1966 and 2016), however, are a spillover from the conflict issues of the first and second phases, for which an example is the separatist, self-government claims of the Boko Haram movement through the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in the north of Nigeria that should be governed not by the constitution but by the Sharia law.

This paper argues that if ethno-religious violence in Nigeria has transitioned into one of its most dangerous forms – terrorism or genocide – then it means that the existing conflict management, settlement and resolution strategies are weak and ineffective. Based on this fact, a paradigm shift in the development

of policies that are aimed at managing, resolving and preventing conflicts with ethno-religious issues and components is proposed. This paradigm shift is explained from two perspectives: first, from retributive policy to restorative justice, and second, from coercive policy to mediation and dialogue.

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Contemporary Identity Politics in Nepal: Madhesh Uprising and their Rise as One of the Major Players in National Politics

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Abstract

Within the last two decades, Nepal experienced some violent political uprisings. Madhesh (also known as the "Terai" region of Nepal) launched a violent political movement called Madhesh Uprising in 2007. The silence of the interim constitution of 2007 on federalism, representation and an inequitable electoral system made Madhesh unhappy. Madhesh demanded complete regional autonomy, rights of self-determination, and a single Madhesh province. The Uprising was considered as the representative voice of entire Madhesh/Terai region due to the active participation of millions of Madheshis (the inhabitants of Madhesh). As a result, political parties registered from Madhesh during 2008 constituent assembly election won majority of seats. Political parties of Madhesh became the fourth and fifth largest political parties in Nepal's first constituent assembly. They changed the political landscape of the country. Due to their majority, the mainstream political parties were forced to choose Madheshi candidates in the presidential election. What happened next became the history in Nepalese politics. Analyzing the historical, socio-economic development, and the contemporary politics of Nepal, this paper argues that Madhesh Uprising was an inevitable outcome of deep-rooted discrimination based on identity, ethnicity and decades' long political marginalization. Moreover, the paper shows how deep-rooted discrimination and political marginalization generates violence and they can be used for political motive.

Keywords: Madhesh uprising, identity conflict, ethnic resistance, political violence

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ICERM International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation

Introduction: Emergence of Madhesh Uprising

What do you do when you are told repeatedly since decades that you are insignificant and inferior? How do you feel when your citizenship is denied, and you are prohibited from serving in security forces in a country where your neighbor has everything just because of his different identity? What do you do when you are treated in your own country as a second-class citizen and your identity has been questioned? What will you do when you spent your whole life in misery and extreme poverty without being recognized as if you do not exist and you realize your children will have the same fate?

Nepal, one of the underdeveloped countries of South Asia sandwiched between two influential countries - India and China -, is a multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-lingual country. This country is home to 125 castes and ethnic groups, 123 lingual groups, 10 different religious groups, and 17 official languages (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012). Geographically, Nepal is divided into three different regions: 1) Mountain, 2) Hill, and 3) Terai. Terai is the flat lowland expanded from the eastern to the western region of Nepal, which is also called Madhesh. The Madhesh touches the boarder of India from all the parts of Nepal except north. The Madhesh covers 20 out of 75 districts of Nepal and holds almost half of the country's total population (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012).

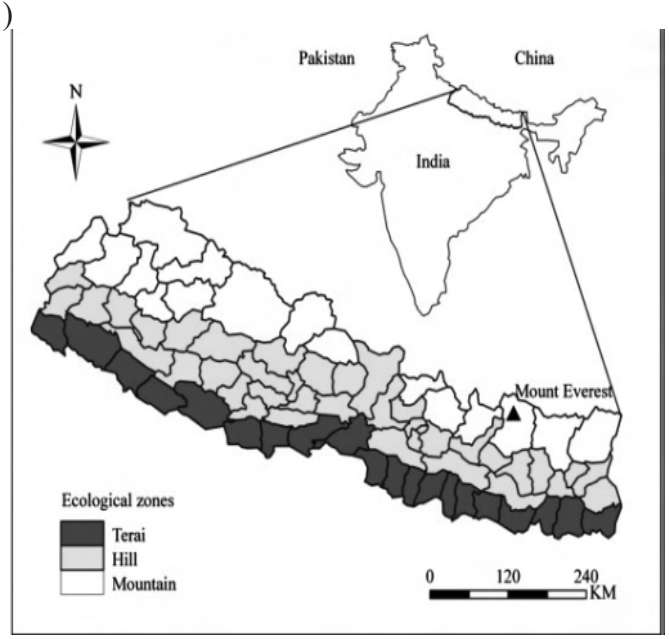
Madheshis, the inhabitants of Terai or Madhesh, are the Maithali and Bhojpuri speaking populations (Hachhethu, 2007, p. 4). Moreover, the Madhesh (with 20 Tarai districts) also includes a hill territory (32%) and the Pahadis (people of hill origin) constitute 36% of the total population of Tarai (Hachhethu, 2007, p. 4). The terms, both Madhesh and Madheshis, are relatively recent socio-political discourse in Nepal (Pathak & Upreti, 2009, p. 2). However, the question remains: what is Madhesh and who are Madheshis? The answer to this question is not as simple as it may seem. These words refer to much more than just a geographical composition. These words have taken a political connotation, which refers to the history, culture and language of a people (Hazen et al., 2011, p. 9). Cheah (2008) also points out that the term Madhesh includes cultural and lingual space as a basis of identity (See p. 4).

The identity of Madhesh and Madheshis is the convergence of geographical and political factors, which makes it a dynamic and contested issue in Nepalese politics. This fits Brubaker and Cooper's (2000) point that the formation of national identity is a dynamic and fluid cultural-political process in which external identification and 'internal' self-definitions mutually constitute each other. Hence, the terms Madhesh and Madheshis are not only representing certain region, caste, language and culture, instead, they are symbolizing a distinct race and ethnicity in contemporary Nepal, which is complex and political.

There is no doubt, Madheshis are very distinct from the rest of the population of the country in terms of language, rituals, lifestyle, food habits and attire. These attributes have shaped their unique collective identity in Nepal. As Aronoff and Kubik (2013) argue about collective identity, the identity of Madheshis is also constructed through symbols, myths, and rituals where people share collective historical memories, common culture, connection with a homeland, and a sense of harmony as well as unity. This unique collective geo-political identity has produced a very strong Madheshi nationalist feeling among Madheshis resulting in a violent political rebellion against the government. The Madhesh Uprising shocked national as well as international actors who had been working for Nepal's peace process after the Maoist insurgency. It was different from the Maoists insurgency and happened after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Maoist and the government of Nepal. The Maoist insurgency was more a class struggle and was for socio-economic change, while the Madhesh Uprising

was clearly an ethnic and racial rebellion (Hatlebakk, 2007).

Figure 1: Madhesh (Terai, the dark highlighted area) in Nepal and Nepal's position in South Asia (Source: Kabir, 2013, p.11)



The Madhesh Uprising of 2007 showed the dissatisfaction to the government (Deshar, 2006, p. 3), the Maoist, mainstream political parties and the interim constitution. Madheshi Front and Nepal as a state were the two major opposing parties in this conflict. Madheshi People's Rights Forum (MPRF or Madheshi Janaadhikar Forum) burned the interim constitution on January 16, 2007, saying that the constitution did not address the needs of the Madhesh. The police arrested 28 protesters from Kathmandu in that incident. Madheshi People's Rights Forum (MPRF) called for an indefinite general strike (bandh) in Madhesh on January 18, 2007, collaborating with Tarai Jantantrik Mukti Morcha (TJMM) and the Nepal Sadbhavana Party (NSP). They established a joint alliance called the United Democratic Madheshi Front (UDMF).

The mainstream political parties, especially the Maoist's party led the anti-Madhesh movement campaign to suppress the Madhesh movement. Maoist's cadres killed a Madheshi student in a fight with Madheshi People's Rights Forum on January 19, 2007. Over time, the protest became more violent. Below is an extract from a report prepared by a researcher of Hachhethu's study team, Mr. Lal Babu Yadav:

> The number of demonstrators increased almost double in every next day. Schools along with shops were closed; the movement of all forms of transportation was disallowed and those attempting to defy the ban were destroyed or burnt. Demonstrators carried out the sticks and organized masal (torch) rally every evening. Tire burning took place at every corner of the city. The protesters defied the curfew and burnt government offices, banks and some private properties. A copy of the Interim Constitution was burnt every day. (Yadav, 2007, as cited in Hachhethu, 2007, p. 4)

By the end of the first week of February, 24 people were killed. The protesters damaged and burnt down local government offices, blocked all the highways, and attacked many Pahade (hill dwellers) people. Their main slogan during the protest was 'Ek Madhes and Ek Pradesh' meaning, 'One Madhesh, One Province'. The protestors of Madhesi People's Rights Forum and the Maoists clashed on March 21, 2007 in Gaur, Rautahat district where 27 Maoists were killed (Hachhethu et al., 2008, p. 56). After Gaur massacre, the meaning of Madhes shifted from a geographical origin to racial and ethnic identity. Agitating groups demanded for autonomous single Madheshi province, right to self-determination and other demands related to inclusiveness and identity.

Causes of and the Identity Dynamics in the Madhesh Uprising

If we study the history of Nepal then we can see that it was a feudal, autocratic, and centralized nation since centuries (Karki & Seddon, 2003; Kumar, 2004; Misra, 2004; Sharma et al., 2014; Upreti, 2006; Upreti, 2007). Nepal's governance system and mechanisms in the entire history were carried out with repression and the use of coercive power by the state (Hutt, 2004; Kumar, 2004). Ultimately, these practices and characteristics excluded the vast majority of Nepalese from the mainstream development (Raj, 2004; Upreti, 2005). Moreover, extreme poverty, unbalanced distribution of resources, systematic and deliberate exclusion, severe caste, gender, and ethnic discrimination, and larger structural injustice have been identified by many researchers and analysts (Karki & Seddon, 2003; Misra, 2004; Raj, 2004; Rana & Sharma, 2004) as the major causes of the conflicts in Nepal.

Lawoti (2003) agrees that many of Nepal's ethnic groups have no real access to the state and the numbers of Dalit, indigenous nationalities, women, and Madheshi in the influential institutions are negligible (p. 52). Especially, if we deeply analyze the history of development of Madhesh, as Pathak & Niraula (2007) point out, the problems of Madhesh are a fusion of political, socio-cultural and economic complications. The Madheshis were generally treated as excluded groups (Hachhethu et al., 2009) and their exclusion from Nepali public life and socio-economic settings was systemic (Hachhethu, 2007, p. 9). For a long time, the Madheshis were not allowed to serve in the Military. During the Rana regime (1846-1951), they had to receive written permission to enter the Kathmandu valley (NTTP Research Paper, 2007). The Madheshis were forced to use Nepali as an official language and were not allowed to use their native language for official communication. Moreover, hundreds of thousands of Madheshis were deprived of citizenship certificate until 2007 (Cheah, 2008; Deshar, 2006; Hachhethu, 2007). This systemic structural violence against the Madheshis had been going on since decades.

As Galtung (1969) points out in his theory of structural violence, the notion of structural violence is meant to encompass different forms of domination, exploitation, deprivation, and humiliation that originate from societal structures. Galtung (1969) defines the term 'structural violence' as injustice, suppression, and exploitation, which are built into the fundamental structures of society. He further says that in such a society, people are damaged due to uneven access to resources within a social system. Shakya (2008) argues that this affects people's development, mental health, their self-esteem, when they are told repeatedly that they are inferior, both directly and systematically.

In terms of the Madhesh uprising, decades long structural violence became one of the major causes. At the extent of their misery caused by the structural violence, Madheshis had nothing in their hand except to revolt against the system in order to live. It is clear that the Madheshis were treated as a second-class citizen within their own country. This was making Madhesh and Madheshis the marginalized

and vulnerable *other* in a plural society of Nepal. For the rest of the nation, they were Madheshis, an inferior race and ethnic group and for Madheshis the rest of the people were non-Madheshis. The effect of this *othering* created a clear divide between Madheshis and non-Madheshis regardless of the place where they were living because *othering* is not a cause but the result of unequal power distributio

The very effect of the *othering* links to the fact that power and identity are intertwined concepts. An aspect of one's identity always empowers or contributes to the feeling of powerlessness or powerfulness within a cultural setting in a society based on accessible and approachable privileges. This shapes the power relation within and among the individuals as well as groups. The very effect of this is that it creates clear divides such as majority vs. minority and superior vs. inferior. Like in Cannibal Tours, the difference emerges as civilized and primitive (O'Rourke, 1998). These divides differ in both depth and intensity making it profoundly sensitive and difficult to examine. Consequently, this division constructs a disparity among groups and generates distrust and threats to one another.

Moreover, these perceptions and effects deepen the difference with greater isolation from each other in a plural society like Nepal. As the theory of social and cultural pluralism says, plural societies are characterized by sharply divided race, ethnicity and religion, which are directly linked with a distinct identity of an individual and a group within and across a society (Furnivall, as cited in Aronoff & Kubík, 2013, pp. 136-137). This social identity describes the dynamics of power position and privileges available. In the case of Madhesh, their distinct social identity was used against them, which kept them isolated from the mainstream development for decades due to the country's flawed policies.

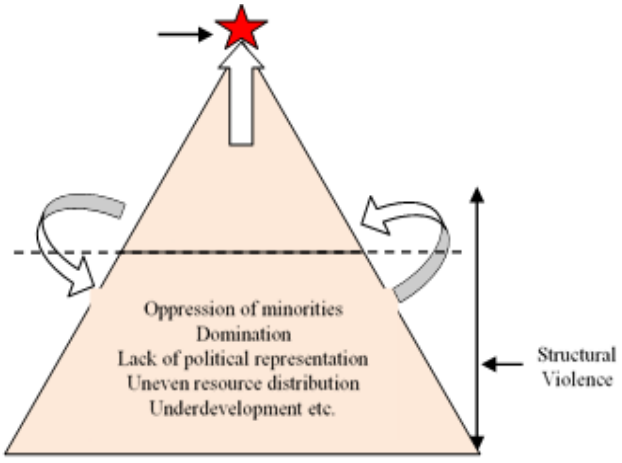


Figure 2: Relationship between structural violence and conflict (Source: Shakya, 2008, p.22)

The situation of Madhesh and Madheshis compels me to think which automatically generates a series of questions in my mind. What do you do when you are told repeatedly since decades that you are insignificant and inferior? How do you feel when you are denied citizenship and prohibited to serve in security forces in a country where your neighbor has everything just because of his different identity? What do you do when you are treated in your own country as a second-class citizen and your identity has been questioned? What will you do when you spent your whole life in misery and extreme poverty without being recognized as if you never existed and you see your children will have the same fate? Suffice to say that the Madhesh Uprising was the answer to these questions. In addition, rampant corruption, weak state presence in bordering areas to India, heavy economic dependency on India, weak governance, impunity and lack of political commitment are some of the proximate causes, which became supplemental to structural causes of Madhesh Uprising.

There is no doubt that the Madhesh uprising established Madheshi nationalism as a significant part of the emerging ethnic and political landscape of Nepal (Hachhethu, 2007, p. 4). However, Madhesh did not revolt until the Maoist insurgency. The violence in Madhesh started right after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the government and the Maoist. The interesting and surprising fact for local

and international observers in Nepal was that the violence was not initiated by either party to the decade long insurgency, but by the group raising the issues of Madhesh and Madheshis (Miklian, 2008, p. 3). Madhesh supported the Maoist during the decade long Maoists insurgency hoping that they will also put their issues on the forefront.

The Maoist's front organization Madhesh National Liberation Front (MNLF) was formed in 2000, which was active during the insurgency advocating for the inclusion, federalism with right to self-determination, culture rights, and reservation (Hachheth et al., 2009, p. 93). After the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, Madheshi People's Rights Forum was separated from the Maoist party due to their inability to obtain their promised stipulations, especially full proportional representation for the elections and one Madhesh province (Pathak & Uprety, 2009, p. 4). Then, all the small and big fractions of Madhesh came together with a violent uprising against all for a common Madhesh cause.

After witnessing what Maoist did, Madheshi activists and leaders learned how people could be mobilized for political reason because Madheshi were fighting with the Maoists during the insurgency against the government. Miklian (2008) points out that the political leaders of Madhesh had recognized and learned from the Maoists to use ethnic divisions to mobilize supporters and began to build a Madheshi identity movement along similar lines. The concept strategic essentialism can describe the phenomenon best here. The issue of identity can be strategically lifted up in power politics. This has been seen in many ethnic movements. Like in the case of Tibetans, Anand's (2007) illustration of *Exotica Tibet* is another excellent example of it. Tibetans in exile have shaped their identity in such a way that still today, the international community expresses solidarity for their cause. Their way of representing themselves has nurtured the Tibetan question as an international dispute in world politics like the 'Palestinian question' or the 'Irish question'. For instance, Tibetans used the connection between prisoners of Shangri-la and the victimization of Tibetans embraced by westerners in order to mobilize many non-Tibetans for the *Save Tibet* cause.

The Madhesh uprising totally changed the political settings of the country. Historically, Madhesh was the vote bank for mainstream political parties. This movement shook the nation since it was the first ethnic violent movement that was surfaced in contemporary Nepal. Since decades, major political parties were using Madheshis for their purposes in national politics. The immediate achievements from the Madhesh movement were: 1) the amendment in the interim constitution by defining the future model of the government as federal; 2) creating a commission to redraw electoral constituencies; and 3) proportional share for minorities and marginalized groups in all state mechanisms (Hattlebakk, 2007, p. 13). Madheshis became more aware and united. As a result, the Madhesh alliance secured majority votes from Madhesh and became the fourth and fifth largest political parties in the first constituent assembly. Mainstream political parties were forced to choose Madheshi candidates in the presidential election of Nepal. Consequently, Nepal got its first president and vice-president from Madhesh. Moreover, Madheshi parties have been exhibiting the strong stand on the future federal structure of Nepal. Hence, Madhesh Uprising has become the invaluable lessons for other players in Nepalese politics and showed as Lawoti (2010a) points out that the rise in the identity politics in Nepal has to do with the country's own contexts, such as the struggle for social justice, recognition and self-esteem among various communities. Eventually, people will realize that they are being used. In this case, the collective identity of all the Madheshis and their shared struggle of years brought them together for a common cause.

Many scholars agree that the ethnicity-based identity is the foundation for most of the ethnic tensions (Hangen, 2010; Lawoti, 2010b; Sapkota, 2014) in Nepal. This makes it clear that Madheshi identity politics is also based on ethnicity. This ethnic tie has bound all the Madheshis together. The shared

exclusion, misery, and extreme poverty, along with their search of common rights, and self-determination brought all Madheshis together and formed a common Madheshi identity. Hence, the issues of Madhesh are complex yet protracted because they are related with a history of structural violence, their unique culture, ethnic identity, their struggle and rampant poverty. Furthermore, the Madhesh (Terai) region itself is of vital importance because this is the food reserve of Nepal, which also links to India from the eastern, western and southern part of the country. Due to the cultural similarities having open border with India, Madhesh is a strategically most important region for both countries. Conflict on this side of the region, for obvious reasons, will be a major concern on the other side. This makes the issues of Madhesh even more sensitive for both countries. Hence, Madhesh plays a vital role not only in national politics, but also in the bilateral relationship between Nepal and India.

The Way Forward: Challenges and the Future Prospect of Madhesh Identity Politics

Most of the ethnic conflicts are caused due to the deep-rooted socio-economic discrimination and mal-practices. Conflict like the Madhesh Uprising requires dynamic multi-stakeholder approach to resolve. Hence, policy reforms, development and meaningful participation and representation of marginalized sections of population is necessary to address the root causes of the conflict.

> Reducing overt conflict requires reduction in levels of underdevelopment. Groups that seek to satisfy their identity and security needs through conflict are in effect seeking change in the structure of their society. Conflict resolution can truly occur and last if satisfactory amelioration of underdevelopment occurs as well. (Azar as cited in Ramsbotham et al., 2011)

Structural violence and injustice exclude certain groups systematically from mainstream development. Hence, a conflict management approach should focus on the issues of needs and identity of the conflicting parties, especially in the case like Madhesh Uprising.

The socio-political and economic policies of that particular country powerfully shape inter-group dynamics and relations. The policy reforms might bring long-term sustainable peace because it is imperative that those unequal policies should be reformed first. Then after, we can talk about building trust and relationship for a better society. Developing a meaningful relationship between different groups for conflict resolution is inconceivable in the presence of unequal and asymmetrical power distribution between groups. This is inconceivable and injustice to expect and ask for similar actions and behaviors from that particular group which is under injustice, structural violence and pervasive legalized mistreatment from another group or state. Hence, for Madhesh and Madheshis, inclusive government and policy reforms are the topmost priority to avoid violence.

The Madhesh Uprising was a kind of a revelation for Nepal. After the Madhesh Uprising, the issues of ethnicity and regionalism are no longer the subjects of academic discourse only, instead, political parties and the government have taken these issues for a broader mission of restructuring the Nepali state (Hachhethu et al., 2009, p. 104). Since Nepal is in the phase of implementing the Constitution, transitioning from a unitary state to federal state, complex issues will be the distribution of resources and tax-income between the states among other numerous issues (Hattlebakk, 2007). It is going to be a complex process for the state and Madheshi parties to address and ensure the problems and needs of the Madhesh and Madheshis in the days to come. As Hachhethu (2007, p. 12) points out, it will be

critical for them to translate demands and promises into the political structure. Moreover, managing small underground-armed groups and their demands will be another challenge for Madheshi parties and government.

Conclusion

By its nature and with the actors involved, the Madhesh conflict is one unique example of contemporary identity conflict. Decades long structural violence, inequality, injustice, exploitation and isolation from mainstream development are the major causes of Madhesh movement. It was a landmark incident in contemporary Nepal, which surfaced the very first time in a violent way the issue of ethnicity, race and identity. It came as a total surprise for everyone and changed the political landscape of the country with few milestone changes. The biggest change in contemporary Nepal since 2006 is the emergence of the Madhesh as a major political force. However, there are big challenges ahead for all since the implementation of the constitution is yet to finish which is a daunting task.

All the political parties and leadership should come together to address the major issues which are obstructing the inclusive development of Nepal. Socio-economic policy reforms are necessary at this moment to avoid relapse into conflict. Any delay and hesitation in these reforms will invite another political violence. Since Nepal is a landlocked country with difficult geographical terrains, the debated issue should be dealt with wisely. The new constitution of Nepal and the Nepali state should address the issues raised by the Madheshis and by all the minorities. All the agreements signed with Madheshi parties should be implemented. There should be no other options than to end social injustice in order to create a society for all.

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A World of Terror: An Intra-Faith Dialogue Crisis

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Editor's Note:
Certain aspects of this essay are not definitive, but they serve as didactics for us to ponder and for those interested to continue the investigation.

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Abstract

This study about *a world of terror* and *intra-faith dialogue crisis* investigates the impact of modern religious terrorism and establishes how intra-faith dialogue can be employed in managing this crisis before a political solution could be explored. The study identifies many terrorist groups formed under the umbrella of freedom fighters that escalate violence, causing innocent religious followers to become victims of circumstances. The study also discovers that, in a number of faith-based organizations, little or no efforts have been put in place to conduct dialogue concerning contentious issues that drive certain religious groups to embrace terrorism driven activities. In many cases the religious role of bridging gaps between human beings has been turned upside-down as some faith-based leaders are at the forefront in fueling violence in the name of religion. The study concludes that the level at which terrorism is justified in the name of religion is alarming. Boko Haram in northern Nigeria and Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army from northern Uganda to the Great Lakes region of Africa are known examples. Faith-based organizations are therefore encouraged to stand up in favor of peace by facilitating intra-faith dialogue. The study recommends that, since terrorist acts are committed by a few individuals with selfish interests, the entire community members should not be criminalized. The world of terror can be transformed into a world of peace through dialogue. Intra-faith transformation provides an indispensable foundation on which interfaith dialogue and transformation could be achieved.

Keywords: state, violence, conflict, Islam, Christianity, religious leaders, negotiation

Introduction

Religion is a synthesis of beliefs and practices with a guiding body of literature (or oral tradition), places of worship, doctrine, and leaders. Religion plays a pivotal role in constructing individuals' spiritual awareness and social values from which a society can work toward peaceful co-existence. In addition to the social harmony promoted through religion, state actors often employ coercive pressure in order to promote stability. The effects of this state coercion are evident in some nations like Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, and South Sudan. Instead of stability, these states are experiencing internal violence and crippling damage. Used alongside secular security functions, religious engagement and leadership can amplify harmony and values-based cooperation, resulting in a more holistic religious and secular stability within a state. Cultural and religious leaders understand that harmony and peaceful co-existence are possible where religious values are adhered to through embracing a spiritual doctrine of peace, forgiveness, and love for one another.

Even with the violence of the past, a peaceful future is possible in many troubled nations. Yet one question remains: who is to take over responsibility for implementing a successful peace process where the state is the source of instability, terrorizing its own people? Iraq experienced this problem during the 1980s when hundreds of thousands of men, women and children associated with a Sunni political movement suffered imprisonment, torture, chemical weapons attacks, and mass execution at the hands of the Sadam Hussein's regime (Roukes, 2006). As seen in Iraq, when religious institutions fail to speak out in opposition to political coercion that runs counter to social peace and cooperative stability, the likelihood of internally-directed state violence may increase.

In addition to providing a necessary counterbalance to state-sponsored internal violence, religious institutions, through cross-cutting social values and cooperative messages, can play a key role in countering terrorism within and across state borders, especially when terrorist organizations claim a religious justification for their violent actions. When, as happened in Iraq, religious institutions remain silent in the face of state-sponsored or terrorist violence, religious leaders must engage in a frank dialogue to confirm the critical role of their institutions in promoting peace and stability. Often, this effort comes in the form of inter-faith dialogue whereby religious leaders address the points of contention and cooperation among religions in conflict. This intra-faith effort is often seen among institutions of the Abrahamic religions (Gopin, 2002). In cases where terrorist groups are claiming religious legitimacy for their violence, however, religious institutions must conduct intra-faith dialogue to reclaim the fundamental values of their faith, after which inter-faith dialogues will be more effective in producing workable solutions to counter terrorism. Intra-faith effort is necessary in the context of domestic terror groups hiding under the umbrella of religious freedom fighters. Conventional wisdom reminds us that it is not easy to respond to the neighbors' call to stop fire when your house is burning at the same time.

Problem Statement

The world has become a permanent home for terrorists who claim they are fighting for freedom in the name of religion. While many of these groups are dedicated to liberating the oppressed or reclaiming fundamental social values, they too often perpetuate (or at least convey the image of) religious violence, of which their own innocent followers, communities, and even states are often victims. In these cases,

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servants of terror have co-opted the message of faith while driving religion towards the ever-escalating violence. In many cases, this happens with the total silence of the faith-based institutional leaders who concentrate on resolving external conflicts and forget the internal violence within their area of control. This can create a long-term crisis within a society and relinquish the responsibility for conflict resolution in the hands of external stakeholders or secular leaders who may not embrace the cooperative power of religious messaging in their attempt to force peace. By focusing on inter-faith issues at the expense of intra-faith issues, religious leaders risk excluding themselves from the pursuit of peace in the communities and societies where they serve. Such an exclusion can have disastrous and violent consequences.

Religious leaders and institutions have assumed the role of promoting cohesion, fellowship, and peaceful co-existence within and among societies. As an extension of this social role, Faith-Based Organizations (to be abbreviated as FBOs in this paper) are naturally more inclined to providing safe homes and hospitable centers for conflict negotiation, mediation, and arbitration for both perpetrators and victims in the pursuit of reconciliation and peace. However, the vast number of terrorist groups claiming religious foundations, coupled with the speed at which religious armed conflicts escalate among religious organizations, complicates the degree to which FBOs play active roles. Instead, FBOs are too often relegated to the role of observer, cataloguing religious conflict and focusing on reactive efforts to mitigate suffering. High risk of violence and sometimes direct threats often impede FBO effectiveness in intervening to prevent or stop violence once it starts.

The decreasing effectiveness of religious institutions in responding to violent conflict creates a large gap between religious and political efforts to secure peace and stability. As a result of this gap, coercive state security and stability measures have produced millions of refugees whose return to their ancestral homes is next to impossible. As terrorist violence increases in response to state coercion, people are too traumatized to speak out, or even reach-out to their neighbors in acts of fellowship and community, especially when the perpetrators of violence have power over the victims and at times occupy political offices. This paper, therefore, investigates the impact of modern religious terrorism on the ability or inability of religious institutions to play a proactive role in intervening and ending violent conflict alongside secular state institutions, and further explores the role of intra-faith dialogue in managing the dialogue crisis within religious institutions and setting the conditions for these institutions to counter terrorist violence that hides behind religious messaging.

Methodology

This study employs descriptive and qualitative research methods. Descriptive methods provide information on characteristics of particular individuals or groups, their contextual situation, and their methods of operation (Dulock, 1993). Qualitative research draws conclusions from data not in the form of numbers, but in words (Punch, 1998; Wangusa, 2007; Amin, 2005). To this end, the study focuses primarily on in-depth interviews and group discussions. When primary sources were not possible due to lack of access to data or security constraints, the study utilized secondary data sources. The author interviewed a number of people from areas experiencing faith-based armed conflicts who were interested in providing information. Some key subjects at one time worked in security organizations, were eye witnesses, or were employees and/or volunteers in international organizations providing humanitarian services in areas experiencing religious conflict. These sources made it possible to collect information

from some countries, including Kenya and Somalia where Al-Shabab has been active, Uganda's western and northern districts impacted by the Allied Democratic Forces, Lord's Resistance Army, West Nile Bank Front, and Nigeria where Boko Haram is an active sectarian group. Data on Seleke and Anti-Balaka rebels in Central African Republic, Southern Sudan, Mali, Syria, and the ISIS/Al-Qaida dominated regions come from secondary sources.

To some extent, FBOs were also given special opportunities to participate in this study through interviews in order to expand the religious perspectives on these conflicts (Cauvery, Nayak, Girija, and Meenakshi, 2000). Religious leaders from Christianity and Islam presented a variety of views and increased the level of detail in understanding the issues examined in this study.

To avoid bias, the study employs an inter-disciplinary approach. Respondents were selected based on their social status, commitment to faith, maturity, and experience in problem solving. Christian and Muslim volunteers helped to identify and vet study participants. As a result, the research study discovered exhaustive information that provides a clear background to the study of terrorism, its causes, impact, and challenges to faith-based organizations, as well as points to the way forward.

Theoretical Perspective

Religious institutions (including FBOs) have a role to play in a broader state effort to counter international and domestic violent terrorism. These institutions can reinforce larger efforts in terms of negotiation, mediation, and arbitration where religious skills can be employed hand in hand with political solutions. This study was guided by Campbell's modern realist theory (Campbell, 1960) which asserts that intergroup conflicts can arise due to competing goals and limited resources. Modern realist theory also offers an explanation for the feelings of prejudice and discrimination towards the out-group that accompany intergroup hostility, and finally calls for diversity of conflict mitigating efforts. This theoretical call for diversity asserts that international law, morality, and international organizations, rather than state power alone can influence international relations and work together to overcome communal problems.

Campbell's theory emphasizes that leaders must adopt moral standards different from those of an individual in order to ensure peace, especially in cases of conflict over limited resources. This is important with regard to the way leaders at all levels require the capacity to deal with disputes internal to their institution(s) in order to reduce expenses and stress of mitigating broader disputes after they have escalated. However, the modern realist theory requires political environments where secular leaders can create opportunities for religious leaders to participate in solutions to political matters.

Literature Review

To guide the application of descriptive and qualitative research findings, this study also draws from published secular and religious sources covering several topic areas.

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ICERM International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

While the international community monitors acts of violence around the world, relatively little effort has been made to encourage the top leadership of FBOs to forgive perpetrators of violent terrorism within their institutions. Forgiveness is one of the most common components shared by religions around the world. In Judaism, forgiveness is both a religious and moral value. The Qur-an talks about forgiveness in a number of areas: Al-baqarah, 2:157, 163, 173, 175, 178, 182, 192, 199, 218, 225, 226, 235, 263, 268, 271, 284., & Al-nisaa'I, 4:99, 149, and so many other areas of the Qur-an. In a similar vein, the Bible stresses forgiveness in the following verses: Revelation 2:15; Mathew 5:222-24, 6:15, 7:12; and John 20: 23-25.

Forgiveness is a complex factor in addressing conflict. In some cases, forgiveness has supported solutions to end violence in a number of countries. In other cases, however, efforts to promote forgiveness have created disaster. In the case of the Republic of Rwanda, the Tutsis had historically suffered at the hands of the Hutus from 1959, culminating in the cataclysmic genocide of 1994. Post-genocide reconciliation efforts sponsored by religions institutions and FBOs lacked effectiveness due to the inherent use of churches and religious institutions by Hutu genocidaires in organizing and carrying out the genocide. Faith-guided principles of forgiveness failed in Rwanda due to lack of trust.

In some post-conflict contexts, people are leaving peacefully together in spite of unresolved issues stemming from the conflict (Johnson, 2000); while in other areas, institutionalized efforts at reconciliation have produced positive results. In South Africa, for example, whites reconciled with the blacks and now live in comparative peace and stability. Reconciliation in post-apartheid South Africa provides a potential model for other states to follow. However, what about cases involving terrorism? It has become more common to see marginalized populations and/or organizations resort to terrorism in the pursuit of political, religious, social, economic, and cultural objectives. Religious institutions should try to understand how this increasing likelihood of violent terrorism and/or intimidation impacts the potential for efforts at forgiveness and reconciliation in transforming conflict to stability and peace. Religious leaders must understand that silence in the face of internal religious terrorism erodes the foundations of religious institutions' ability to promote healing and peace.

Delay of Justice

Although justice plays a vital role in conflict management processes (Lyons, 2009), peacebuilding, peacekeeping, peacemaking, and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms can lead to peace. These have not yet been well implemented within the intra-faith communities. In the event that intra-religious dialogue, mediation, arbitration, and litigation are not given room to exist, the conflicting parties will fail to move towards a common goal. Instead, they will retreat further into the social isolation contexts from which they terrorize (often their own) communities.

Failure to realize opportunities for dialogue can delay or deny justice. Lack of institutional justice provides a vacuum into which interested parties may insert other mechanisms to seek relief. Often these mechanisms can be violent. In many cases where a judicial authority is absent, communities present their grievances to ethnic leaders for solutions, which may develop or strengthen ethnic hatred. Religious leaders and/or institutions may play a key role in addressing denied or delayed justice in cases where a state's justice mechanism is absent (UNDP, 2009).

The international community also has a potential role to play in mitigating delayed or denied justice through diplomatic missions and good offices to make sure that terrorist acts all over the world are managed through peaceful means, thereby avoiding loss of innocent lives. This role requires goodwill from all stakeholders including faith-based organizations. International involvement could also address the issue of safe havens in conflict areas such as between India and Jamu Kashmir or Israel and Palestine where terrorist organizations can grow and thrive.

State Resources and Terrorism

In some contexts, a state's development is tied to the equitable distribution of revenue from extracted natural resources. It is therefore very important to say that revenue from resources in certain nations have also given birth to a number of terrorist activities around the world. In most cases, this comes as a result of inequitable distribution of revenues in support of development programs, and people end up suffering in poverty (Shrivastava and Mirof, 2017). A case in point is that of West African countries and the Great Lakes region where terrorists compete aggressively for natural resources, as opposed to nations such as South Africa and Botswana where economic policies support sustainable development and revenue distribution. Governments, therefore, need to develop economic policies that manage the distribution of state resources in such a manner that reduces violence and denies terrorist organizations the ability to use resource inequity as a recruiting tool.

Faith-Based Terrorism vs. World Peace

Messengers of God traditionally called people towards a right course. In some situations where the actions of some rulers and people perhaps threatened violence against innocent populations, prophets invited powerful leaders and their people to the faiths. As an apostle, Paul wrote to the Romans, Colossians, Galatians, and Philippians. Also, the prophet Muhammad wrote letters to the kings of Egypt (Jurayj bin Mat'ta-Muqawqis), Rome (Har'qal-Qaysar), Ethiopia (As'hamat bin Al-Abjar), Yemen (Hudha), Oman (Jayfar Abd Inay Al'julandiy), Syria (Al'harith bin Abi Shamr), Bahrayn (Al'mundhir bin Saawi), and Italy (Sha hansha'a-Kisraa) (Swafiyyu, 2013).

The laws presented by the prophets differed from one another. The laws of prophet Easa (Jesus) are different from those of prophet Moosa (Moses) in some respects. Similarly, the laws of the last prophet Muhammad (pbuh) are different from the laws of Moosa (Moses) and Easa (Jesus) (Al-Ashqar, 2005). This is further testified in the Holy Qur-an: "…To each among you, we have prescribed a law and a clear way…" (Qur-an 5:48). These differences may be seen in contemporary religious conflict. Muslims express dissatisfaction with inequitable treatment and injustice in Christian dominated nations. Christians do the same in Muslim majority countries. Absurdly, members of the same religion also take up arms to fight their fellow brothers internally, though with no justifiable reason other than radicalism. Yet, the Almighty emphasizes peace amongst his servants and that violence against others should be avoided (Holy Qur-an Albaqara 2, Yunus: 10).

This trend of intra-religious violence has been increasingly evident since the end of world war two, when the world started experiencing intra-religious misunderstandings that spill over to violent religious conflicts, in many cases with little understanding of the root causes of the conflict. Within this

context of national and sub-national religious conflict, asymmetrical techniques used by terrorists run directly counter to the message of the prophets, increasing the breadth and depth of the divisions and trauma among and between states, religions, communities, and individuals.

With extreme violence and crimes ranging from permanent displacement of people, abduction and training of young children into the armed insurgencies, and suicide activities, the terrorists' goals and methods cannot be accepted by any Abrahamic faith. Violent acts by radical religious groups have greatly affected the infrastructures in many nations and communities where they operate. Damages caused by terrorism are very difficult and costly to repair, demonstrating the danger that juxtaposing religious ideology and violent extremism carries for any state or community.

In the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo's Goma province, the Hema fought the Lendu. Despite the fact that the majority of these two tribes were Protestants and the church was well-informed, people developed hatred along religious lines. Similarly, in Rwanda's 1994 genocide, acts of terrorism were committed in the places of prayer in Kibeho and Kibungo provinces where the faith-based leaders were very influential in supporting and coordinating the genocide. Many of these leaders remain in positions of authority today. Accordingly, some survivors find themselves depending on those who murdered their families. This poses significant challenges to reconciliation because people cannot forget what happened to them despite the social reconstruction initiatives undertaken by the government (Clark and Kaufman, 2008).

It is therefore clear that intra-religious people must endeavor to create unity among themselves through religious teachings, thus creating a future generation free from terrorism. This endeavor must include the support of secular leaders and institutions in order to create lasting change. In most cases this has not been possible especially in countries where the rule of law is not given a chance to prevail. In addition to the absence of secular support for religious efforts for reconciliation and stability, religion has been excluded from peace efforts which have, in turn, given terrorist organizations an opportunity to utilize religion to expand and consolidate influence.

Discussion of Findings

The study identified many terrorist groups in the world that are based on religion and are strongly supported by the total silence of their respective faith leaders. These have created a negative image of the role religion plays in local, regional, intra-state, and inter-state conflict.

The Impact of Terror Acts

The presence of so many terrorist groups in the world has increased religious marginalization, unemployment and poverty among the youths; yet there are fruitful jobs and resources in several nations. The youths in terrorist zones are among the worlds' least privileged, most unhappy, and poorest communities. Residents of these communities are often inaccurately assumed to be actively or passively complicit in terrorist activity and are often unjustly targeted by the authorities. This situation is a vicious circle that promotes the hopelessness and despair that support the expansion of terrorist organizations.

In the world today, many religious institutions accuse one another of backing terrorism-related violence. As the killings intensify, hundreds of thousands of people are made physically disabled beyond

repair. Basic human needs such as social centers, transport, and shelter are terrifically diminished; and academic institutions are forced to close as children become targets. Economic activities come to a standstill for a good number of years while looting is also the order of the day. These acts of terror put everyone including humanitarian workers in a catastrophic situation. It is difficult to identify the culprits, their intentions, and the next possible attacks.

A significant number of people die daily as a direct or indirect result of violence caused by terror acts. This makes it a silent world war because of the intervention of religion on one side and secular governments on the other. It is difficult to know whether religion is in support or against the wars that are fought under its name. As a result, the world appears to be a worst place for human beings to stay (Segujja, 2016). This therefore calls for the need to create a terrorist free generation - a generation free from terrorism crimes and crimes against humanity dominating the society's cultural, political, social, economic and other aspects of life. On the other side, the states will not blame societies for collaborating with terrorism. This is because terrorist activities are a result of dissatisfaction in the social, economic, religious and political services.

The international community has not been able to exercise its role in preventing the transfer of arms and training of terrorists. In most cases, those who are trained are minors.

It is also important to mention that the degree to which states engage in and support inter-faith dialogue is quite high as compared to their participation in intra-faith dialogue. Creating a balanced intra-faith dialogue on pertinent issues regarding human security has become an issue left to, if anyone, non-stakeholders from the international community. By leaving this function to an uninterested outsider, states are failing to support their own economic interests as tied to the conflict while at the same time compromising the effectiveness of religious leaders and institutions in addressing the religious roots of certain terrorist activities and applying religious doctrine to counter these activities.

In support of states' efforts to counter terrorism and promote peace and stability, FBOs can work together to develop guidelines on how intra-faith dialogue can advance collective security, arbitration treaties, disarmament conventions, and the growth of democracy. Religious organizations are an important partner in any coalition against aggression, and they recognize the role of economic and social development if accompanied by the good will of good governance. The degree to which a government supports intra-faith dialogue will influence the efforts made in peacebuilding and achieving stability and may determine the state of the nation that the future generation will inherit. All too often, though, secular leaders exclude religious leaders until it is too late for the latter to influence the factors of inequity and disharmony that lead to increased instability, conflict, and terrorist violence.

In some isolated cases, states have implemented initiatives within faith-based schools right from the lowest levels to teach tolerance, respect, democratic values and patriotism in conjunction with academic programs. Unfortunately, the lack of evaluation and reinforcement often lead to students leaving these lessons behind. Also, nobody monitors whether and how these pedagogical initiatives will be practiced. Education officials could design peace education curricula incorporating resources such as peace-related programs, conflict resolution, and violence prevention. This would increase popular knowledge and competence in ways of conflict resolution and peacebuilding without violence (Veeraphadrappa, 2007). Such programs thrive in liberal democracies, but often fail in undemocratic states, where they are most needed.

International Response to Terrorist Activities

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It is worth noting that in the wake of World War II, the international community paid little or no attention to the issue of terrorism. Institutional leaders in government and the private sector focused on building and strengthening relations and improving development. By focusing primarily on growth, the international community ignored the potential for groups marginalized by modernization and development to organize asymmetrical violent responses to perceived inequity and threats to cultural identity (fundamentalism). This unrealized danger in the wake of global conflict allowed martial competence and military techniques to spread from former combatants into marginalized violent organizations (terrorists) determined to fight under the umbrella of faith. The disastrous effects of this transfer of martial capability was evident in Rwanda and DRC's genocide, characterized by rape, defilement and other types of violence that are described as the worst in the world.

Today, nations and faiths need a holistic long-term plan that goes far beyond military and security concerns to address terrorism. The sources, types, and actors of terror for which the military has to plan for have become less predictable and the environments in which they must operate have become more chaotic and complex. Today's asymmetric conflict zones are far more deadly than any seen before and require significant investment in manpower and treasure to address the asymmetrical threat of terrorism. This growing threat of terror is felt keenly by societies across the world in ever-increasing numbers, and countering that threat requires a society-wide effort that transcends military and security considerations. Religious institutions must play a key role in this holistic approach, but must first address their own internal issues posed by faith-based terrorism. Thus, these future problems urgently require religious leaders to invest in intra-faith dialogues aimed at removing their religions from the toolkit of the terrorist.

The nature of security requirements changes based on military constraints (Zalmay, 1998). The more a state invests in military infrastructure, the more limited that state becomes in applying non-military solutions to reduce the threat of terrorism. Zalmay (1998) proposes that the key security concern for a country is not military preparedness, but the degree to which it is prepared to keep and maintain peace and security among its people and its closest neighbors. Commitment to maintaining regional stability highlights the importance of avoiding unnecessary wars and re-investing excess military spending in peacebuilding mechanisms and other war preventive means. Committing resources to support intra-faith and inter-faith organizations and dialogue efforts can produce a solid return-on-investment with regard to maintaining regional stability within and among religious populations.

Towards a Terror Free World

Limiting the effort to reduce the threat of terrorism to military capabilities creates a global paradigm that validates terrorists' reliance on asymmetric violence. Similarly, any state facing an asymmetric military threat will characterize that threat as terrorism, creating a self-sustaining cycle of violence. There are a number of ways through which states can meet human needs without violence. Governments can guarantee the rights of people, thereby empowering individuals to challenge all cases that lead to terrorism, including ethnic discrimination, religious radicalism, and political enslavement. With the power of public opinion released to support counter terror efforts, states have more nonviolent tools at their disposal to reduce the risk of violence through religious terrorism and ethnic cleansing. In the absence of an overwhelming military response and, more importantly, overwhelming military investment on the part of the state, the asymmetric violence of the terrorist model loses much of its

potential to affect change in the behavior of the state. Thus, an empowered and engaged population is a key element in the reduction process of the threat of terrorism.

In order to create a terror free world, regional stakeholders, including politicians, religious leaders, and local and traditional leaders, need to come together to work for the betterment of their nations rather than individual interests. Countering terrorism requires the applications of all instruments of power. An important factor in gathering and employing such state-wide power comes from collective networking and religious support. Once religious institutions have de-coupled their message from that of terrorists through intra-religious dialogue, religious leaders can mobilize their faithful to conduct inter-faith dialogues. These dialogues provide a valuable mechanism that supports a state's anti-terror efforts through a permanent and constant process to reduce misunderstanding and promote mutual understanding among regional religious traditions. Unlike the more rigid, result-focused diplomatic efforts of the state, this process of religious dialogue is fluid and mutable, with efforts surging and ebbing as necessary to improve understanding. This process can help inform a world-wide effort to develop a clear road-map to peacebuilding. The mutual understanding promoted by this process can increase the level of tolerance around the world in such a way that people can close their eyes to the imperfections of others, respect others' ideas, and forgive everything that is forgivable (Gulen, 2011).

A World of Firearms: A Great Terrorist Motivator

The global availability of firearms presents a threat to developing an empowered and engaged population. Most states are militarized and spend disproportionately more of their budgets on defense as opposed to education and health. This imbalance demonstrates that states are aware of and primarily concerned with the threat of armed conflict from its neighbors or within itself (Segujja, 2012). This focus on arms drives a massive global market in weapon manufacturing and trade. While the African continent has never participated in the field of arms manufacturing, a number of countries have arms that are acquired by civilians who could bear arms in support of goals ranging from political, to economic, to religious given the opportunity.

According to the African demilitarization conference of Arusha held late July 1998, it was observed that every year, millions of automatic assault rifles and small weapons are written off as lost or destroyed by manufacturers and dealers in eastern and western Europe, only to re-emerge in the African conflict zones due to high demand and low production cost. An AK-47 type of rifle costs only $200-$250 apiece when purchased in large quantities from international weapons dealers. Further, in some parts of Africa, like southern Sudan and Karamoja which is located in north eastern Uganda, an AK-47 can be traded for a chicken or a bag of maize depending on the demand and the season of transaction.

Global Terrorism and Post-Election Violence

Terrorism during elections present another threat to an empowered and engaged population. At times, the parties in the elections end up terrorizing their opposition or rivals, often without any accountability for their actions. This sort of partisan violence marred the 2007 Kenyan presidential election when the electoral commission declared the incumbent, Mwai Kibaki, the winner in a very

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close race. Violence started in Kenya in a number of religious institutions from the day the president was announced, as if this was part of the agenda of elections. It took the United Nations close to a month to establish power sharing negotiations in Kenya following the violence and almost 3 years for the International Criminal Court (ICC) to issue indictments to those accused of initiating violence and murder following the election.

Global Anti-Terrorist Movements

As leaders around the world explore and invest in military solutions to the problem of terror, they will do well to pursue non-military options just as vigorously. Efforts supporting reconciliation may yield less tangible results at first, but in the long run non-military solutions support lasting change instead of protracted conflict. We need to change our attitude from zero tolerance to reconciliation as the situation was before 9/11. We have the capacity to teach our people how to live in the world instead of occupying or conquering it (Mamdan, 2004).

The message of Christ is one of peace. The world has a large number of soldiers of Christ who strive to maintain the nonviolent philosophies of Jesus. In doing so, they, like Christ, lead by example; refusing to give burdens on others they would never carry themselves (Harr and Herr, 1998). We make our voices sound bold and clear, creating a church message in the Mosque and a Mosque message in the church. Muhammad (pbuh), like Jesus (as), was never violent, even in the face of violence. Their messages all encouraged peace, and it is our generation that has encouraged its absence. It is upon this background that our message to the world should call for the intra-faith peace before we come for inter-faith dialogue. If religious leaders can set their own houses in order by denying sanctuary to violent philosophies, then the next step would be working together between faiths to find common understanding and cooperative coexistence.

Terrorism and Politics in Africa

On the African continent, the term terrorism has become a socially acceptable term that is always spoken about without fear. To some extent, acts of terror are becoming such a commonplace and an integral part of life that people are inured to the point of complacency and resignation. This familiarity with terrorism leads people to abandon hope of improvement.

In Kenya, some people reported the details of their torture during the 2007 election and, in coordination with certain human rights activists, challenged the government to address election violence. The ICC prosecutor, Luis Morino Ocampo, confirmed that all the terror attacks occurred in a uniform and coordinated fashion among perpetrators targeting civilians who supported Orange Democratic Movement (ODM).

Such violence can escalate quickly, especially in the case of retaliation when people feel that their ethnic values are under attack. According to a member of the national Security Council, the likelihood and severity of violence increases significantly in this environment.

However, even with the gravity of such terrorist offenses, justice is elusive, and suspects are most likely to walk free from their cells because it is difficult to get evidence. Corruption and lack of justice encourage other actors to engage in continued violence, often with help from authorities, and can put the goal of reconciliation out of reach.

When Faith-Based Leaders Become Terrorists

As a result of the soft touch sometimes given to terrorist criminals due to lack of evidence, people have opted to train for terrorism with the view that, they can use minimum means and create a bigger impact in their efforts to achieve their goals. This situation has been repeated for so many times in different countries, but with minimum response from the religious institutions where terrorists originate.

As a result of silence in the Abrahamic religions, a number of fake cults have risen. The best example is Pastor Joseph Kibwetere who founded his African Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments in 1980 and burned over 1000 of his followers in his church on 17 March 2000. The followers of Kibwetere thought that they were gaining religious and political freedom and ended up in the hands of a religious terrorist under the umbrella of a faith-based leadership.

When Terrorists Become Freedom Fighters and Freedom Fighters Become Terrorists

Muslim, Christian, and Jewish communities have all spawned terrorist groups from efforts to defend their interests as marginalized populations, quite often with minimal awareness on the part of community leaders. These types of terrorists include: Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) with Jamil Mukulu (Stephen Kyagulanyi as his name before conversion to Islam) in Uganda who used religion more as a unifying factor than the cultural aspect; The Holy Spirit Movement; Lord's Resistance Army (LRA); The Army of God that was responsible for killing homosexuals in U.S.A (in the 1980s); Eastern Lighting or Church of the Almighty; Ant Balaka group in Central African Republic that practices cannibalism on the Moslem dead bodies; and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army whose political rallying point was religion.

Some Muslim groups and individuals that have been active in the work of terror across the African continent and the world include Al-Qaida that was formed by Abdullah Azam and Usama bin Laden in 1989. This movement has given birth to a number of terrorist groups including: Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (Mali); Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula; ISIS; ISIL (Syria, Iraq and Lebanon); and Alshabab. These are also related with other groups like the Taliban in Afghanistan, Ansar Al-Sharia in Libya, Jamatul Islamiah in Tunisia, Abu Sayaaf, Ansar Baytu Almaqdis, Hizbul Islami, Hizbu llah in Lebanon, Jayshu Muhammad, Boko Haram in Nigeria, Seleke in Central African Republic, and many others.

In response to the spread of violence caused by terrorists in the name of faiths, and terrorism growing as an international threat to world peace, the United Nations' Security Council passed resolution 2249 in 2015, unanimously adopting measures to reject and prevent terrorism. As a result of terrorist attacks in Sinai Peninsula, Lebanon, France, Turkey, Russian Federation, Tunisia and other states, the resolution declares that those who commit, or are otherwise responsible for terrorist attacks or violations of human rights may be held accountable. This has had the effect of moving some terrorist centers of activity into rural or wilderness areas, which remain fertile safe havens for rebellions and insurgencies that rely on terrorist violence to pursue their goals.

Associating terrorist organizations with a particular faith complicates efforts by religious leaders to deny the same linkage. Terms like, Muslim terrorists, Islamists, religious groups, and even fundamentalists perpetuate the linkage whether or not that association is deliberate on the part of the

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terrorist organization. Much as religion is used as an identity marker by organizations such as Alshabab, Boko Haram, ISIS, ADF, LRA, and West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), there is a global need to understand that the majority of the followers of any given faith do not support terrorism in the name of that faith.

Terrorists without Genuine Reasons

In some cases, terrorism seems to lack any rational motivation. One example of this phenomenon is Alice Auma Lakwana, a young Ugandan woman who was said to heal individuals, soldiers, and barren women, and founded the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSMF) in 1986. Her objectives were to wage war against witches and improve soldiers, to which ends she created complex initiation and purification rituals for her followers. Her intent in these rituals was to free the HSMF soldiers from witchcraft and evil spirits. Invoking supernatural powers, Auma promised her armed men protection against the enemy's bullets. If one of her followers was wounded or killed, he or she was assumed to have had a back slide from the state of purity. In these cases, death appeared as a punishment of one's own misdeed (Behrend and Cerry, 1986-1997).

The HSMF prohibited theft, looting, lying, killing, sex, smoking cigarettes, and drinking alcohol. When Alice Auma became possessed by a spirit called Lakwana, she believed that everybody in her occupied territory must believe and abide by the above-mentioned prohibitions.

Auma had grander objectives to purify the world of sins and bring up a new world in which humans and nature would be reconciled. Her HSMF prospered in the chaos following the defeat of the Acholi-dominated Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) at the hands of the National Resistance Army in 1986. When Auma was defeated, her father Severino Lukoya took over the HSMF which afterwards changed into the LRA's bloodiest armed group and Africa's oldest rebel group, fighting without any political agenda other than killing Africans and destabilizing the great lakes region.

The two-decade long war in the northern Uganda also negatively affected the northern Ugandan population. It is therefore true to say that the HSMF, LRA, and ADF which are all in Uganda acted under religious cover and committed all sorts of crimes against their fellow countrymen. The LRA, especially, is accused of committing war crimes and atrocities in four African countries. Since Uganda's independence in 1962, the country has experienced tyranny, violations of human rights, genocide, state terrorism, and civil wars that contributed to internal conflicts as a result of power struggle (Kumar, 1998; Okot, 2012; UNHCHR/UHRC 2007-2011).

It should be noted that the LRA leadership was invited to participate in mediation led by former Mozambique president, Joachem Chissano, and other members from the Sudan and Ugandan government. The LRA representative, Joseph Kony, ignored the invitation and the LRA did not sign the peace agreement. The LRA continues to commit atrocities throughout the region.

As much or more so than political terrorists, religious cults that subscribe to no discernable rational agenda demonstrate the need for religious institutions to sever all connections to terror, whether cultivated or perceived, and pursue internal reconciliation through intra-faith dialogue.

Conclusion

The results of our interviews and examination of secondary sources support the conclusion that the world is continuously producing terrorist groups under the umbrella of religious freedom fighters. These groups destroy communities, damage the environment, and kill indiscriminately. Their victims include innocent children, women, elderly people, and any others as they deem necessary in the name of religion. The connection between religion and terrorism places members of that religion under triple threat from religious terrorists, the government fighting against religious terrorists, and the general population who may persecute religious civilians in an effort to counter religious terror.

Faith-based organizations have for a long time acted swiftly on matters of inter-faith dialogue, while paying very little attention to intra-faith dialogue, thus causing an international crisis within the human society. Worse, in some areas of the world custodians of faith, assisted by political leaders, have betrayed their followers as they take part in fueling intractable conflicts and so end up forcing conflict resolution responsibilities to outside stakeholders who may not support the best interests of any parties of the conflict.

The study also discovered that, given an opportunity, religious institutions are still safe homes for conflict negotiation, mediation, and arbitration for both perpetrators and victims. Religious leaders can utilize these spaces to facilitate intra-faith dialogue and, where possible, encourage forgiveness and reconciliation to manage conflicts before they escalate into terrorism.

Recommendations

As Pope Francis declared in Poland in 2016, terrorism is the product of individuals with selfish interests and should not be attached to any faith. Members of all faiths are all complex individuals leading their lives along the spectrum between virtue and wickedness. Our concern is not to kill the bad; it is rather to try to make them be good as well since they are our children, relatives and neighbors. Our faith can help us all practice to be our best selves.

Terrorism has no military solution as it is conducted in isolation. It is better to join hands together in order to manage it out of our communities through equity and cooperation today and forever.

We should believe that the peoples of the world, all faiths and states and ethnicities can coexist peacefully together. This global cooperation requires political, economic, social, and religious good will and commitment to succeed. Peace and stability are everybody's concern; all individuals, communities, states, and institutions must participate in their safekeeping.

Peace processes fail when negotiated by politicians who lack moral authority to address the grievances of traumatized communities, especially in cases of civil or intra-communal warfare where fighting and killing among family members are possible. Religious leaders should always contribute to policy formulation, United Nations meetings, parliaments, and so on.

Leaders and members of the Abrahamic faiths should engage with one another in dialogue, perhaps facilitated, especially in countries where intractable conflicts are taking place. This dialogue should occur annually or seasonally depending on the subject matter and the magnitude of the problem.

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Understanding Worldview Differences between the Law Enforcement and Religious Fundamentalists: Lessons from the Waco Standoff Case

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Abstract

This essay provides a new perspective on the Waco standoff case. Exploring the most important themes in Docherty's (2001) and Randolph's (2016) books, as well as using relevant concepts from external sources, the essay seeks to achieve the following three goals: 1) Explain why the expected outcomes of the practice theory of change in the Waco standoff case differ from the actual outcomes; 2) Reflect on the lessons learned and explain how Docherty's (2001) four proactive intervention techniques in worldview oriented conflicts would have helped to prevent the regrettably violent end of the Waco siege; 3) Propose a new theory of change that incorporates the essential mediation or negotiation elements described by Randolph's (2016) *The psychology of conflict: mediating in a diverse world*.

Keywords: worldview differences, law enforcement, religious fundamentalism, waco standoff, negotiation, mediation

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ICERM International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation

Introduction

This essay is a scholarly response to a doctoral seminar discussion on *Change in Interpersonal and Organizational Relations* held in summer 2016 at the Nova Southeastern University's Department of Conflict Resolution Studies, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Analyzing this topic from the perspective of the Waco standoff case, Richard Queeney and Jane Walsh with Kathleen Watkins-Richardson (my colleagues at the Department of Conflict Resolution Studies' Ph.D. Program, Nova Southeastern University) examined two important aspects of the practice theory of change in the Waco standoff case through the lenses of Docherty's (2001) book, *Learning lessons from Waco: When the parties bring their Gods to the negotiation table*, and Randolph's (2016) *The psychology of conflict: Mediating in a diverse world*. The first aspect, which was presented by Richard Queeney, focuses on the interpersonal dimension of the intervention of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (to be called ATF in this essay) and the FBI along with other government and law enforcement agencies at the Branch Davidians' Mount Carmel in Waco, Texas, from February 28 to April 19, 1993, and the unexpected resistance and confrontation this militarized intervention encountered from the sectarian group, the Branch Davidians. Given that the parties in this conflict negotiation represent two distinct organizations – the government represented by the Attorney General's Office, ATF, FBI and state law enforcement agencies on the one hand, and the Branch Davidians on the other -, the second aspect of this case which is presented by Jane Walsh and Kathleen Watkins-Richardson explores the organizational dimension of the intervention and how the change that occurred within these organizations could be understood.

Without dwelling on the pre-Waco intervention history and sociological analysis, and without describing or reporting from a chronological perspective the entire "critical incident" (for the definition of "critical incident" see CIAG, 2000, as cited in Docherty, 2001, p. 2) that occurred at Waco beginning from the first intervention, the actions of the Attorney General's Office, ATF, to the intervention of the FBI, and then the violent confrontation and fire incident that "resulted in the deaths of almost ninety people, including twenty-three children" (Docherty, 2001, p. 9), or the legal proceedings that followed, including questions about who is right or wrong, as well as the numerous investigations that were conducted thereafter, my response essay is aimed at leveraging on the presentations of Richard, Jane and Kathleen and exploring the most important themes in Docherty's (2001) and Randolph's (2016) books as well as using relevant concepts from external sources to achieve the following three goals:

1) Explain why the expected outcomes of the practice theory of change in the Waco standoff case differ from the actual outcomes;

2) Reflect on the lessons learned and explain how Docherty's (2001) four proactive intervention processes for conflicts embedded in worldview differences would have helped to prevent the regrettably violent end of the Waco siege, had the Attorney General's office, ATF, FBI and other state law enforcement agencies known how to use them in their intervention at Mount Carmel and during the negotiations with the Branch Davidians;

3) Propose a new theory of change that incorporates the essential mediation or negotiation elements described by Randolph's (2016) *The psychology of conflict: mediating in a diverse world.*

Disparity between the Expected Outcomes and Actual Outcomes of the Practice Theory of Change in the Waco Standoff Case

The set of questions that comes to mind after a careful reading and analysis of the intervention at the Branch Davidians' compound – or Mount Carmel - near Waco is: why were the plans and goals of the Attorney General, ATF, FBI, and other law enforcement personnel, who participated in the Branch Davidians raid and siege not achieved as anticipated? What exactly did the law enforcement interveners experience or encounter that led them to adjust their strategies and practice theory of change and yet could not prevent the violent confrontation that resulted in many fatalities and destruction of property, as well as individual and community trauma? And why is David Koresh, the spiritual leader and prophet of the Branch Davidians, blamed by the government for the negotiation impasse or deadlock that occurred and the violent end of the siege? To be able to show how the four intervention processes proposed by Docherty (2001) would have helped in preventing the violent end of the standoff, and before recommending a new theory of change for this and similar cases, it is important to explain why the expected outcomes of the practice theory of change in the Waco standoff case differs from the actual outcomes by answering the above set of questions.

On Unachieved Anticipated Goals:

The answer to the first question – why the anticipated goals were not achieved – is that the law enforcement agents failed in their *diagnosis* or *framing* of the problem. They failed to understand the difference(s) between a conventional institution like the state and an unconventional religious (sectarian) institution like the Branch Davidians. As Docherty (2001) opines, "The Waco tragedy grew out of many federal agents using standard operating procedures in good faith, but in a situation where those procedures were doomed to fail" (p. 13). Because of this *diagnosis failure*, the law enforcement authorities, empowered by the orders or mandate given to them by the state through the Attorney General's Office, used conventional, militarized intervention strategies and methods to manage and resolve conflict in an unconventional religious environment where a different set of rules apply; where the members of the sect obey and give allegiance to a supernatural, unearthly, invisible supreme being and to their revealed holy book, and not to the state and man-made constitution; where the sect members first and foremost see themselves as citizens of a supernatural world, and not *citizens of America*; and where the only orders they adhered to come from the *presumed* last prophet of God, David Koresh, and not from the Attorney General's office or the law enforcement agents.

On the Law Enforcement's Experience and Strategy Adjustment:

After reflecting on the question about what exactly the law enforcement interveners experienced or encountered that led them to make frequent adjustments in their strategies and practice theory of change and yet could not prevent the violent end of the standoff, I discovered one concept that seems to summarize the various perspectives that emerged during the discussion on this topic. The *concept of hermeneutics* – the science and art of interpretation and understanding (Ricœur, 1967; 1970; 1974; 1991) - is very relevant here. The ATF, FBI and other law enforcement agents, even with all their expertise and training as well as past intervention experiences in *critical incident* situations, had incomparable difficulty in making good judgement of, and understanding, three important elements that constitute

the recurrent themes in Docherty's (2001) book. The elements are the two distinct and opposing 1) *worldviews*; 2) *languages*; and 3) *realities*. These opposing elements – the worldview, language, and reality of the law enforcement on the one hand, and the worldview, language, and reality of the Branch Davidians on the other hand – confronted each other on Mount Carmel at Waco, leaving the parties on both sides of the aisle with a high level of confusion and mutual suspicion, which led to an impasse or deadlock in the negotiations.

On the Attribution of Blame and Responsibility for Negotiation Deadlock and Resultant Violence:

Whenever a conflict occurs or violence erupts, parties in the conflict usually *blame* one another and argue over who should be held accountable. The same thing also happens when an attempt to resolve the conflict either through negotiation or mediation fails as a result of an impasse or deadlock. The Waco standoff case is no different. The *attribution of blame* to the Branch Davidians is an important factor that motivated Docherty's (2001) research and informed her research question: "Does the responsibility for the ultimate failure of the negotiations (i.e. the 'talking' portion of the FBI activities) rest with the Branch Davidians alone, as has been assumed in all of the official investigations conducted thus far?" (p. 10). My concern in this response essay is not to dwell on the entire members of the Branch Davidians, but to examine the symbolism of David Koresh as their spiritual leader and prophet. Therefore, to respond to the question of why David Koresh, the spiritual leader and prophet of the Branch Davidians, is blamed by the law enforcement for the impasse or deadlock they experienced during the negotiation process, two themes are worth examining. The one is *order*, the other is *power,* and the two fall within the *sphere of legitimacy*.

The law enforcement made efforts to persuade David Koresh to surrender and come out with an increased military operation or as Jane Walsh and Kathleen Watkins-Richardson put it in their presentation's theory of change, "militarized assault on compound building will cause collapse and damage forcing occupants out." However, what the law enforcement failed to realize is that David Koresh's notion of *order* and *power* was not the same as theirs. Contrary to the human and state's chain of command and power, Mr. Koresh received his *orders* directly from God and only God has the *power* to give him *orders*. This means that in his worldview, Mr. Koresh was obliged to obey only God, and not man or the state. Since he believed he was the last prophet of God to whom God has given power over his flock, he thought of himself higher and more elevated in status of power than the law enforcement. With an apocalyptic and "fundamentalist mindset" (Strozier, 2014), David Koresh and his followers (those who see him as the only access or connection to the divine) seem to have been preparing for what Strozier (2014) calls "endism – the location of self in some future narrative" (para. 2). This "future narrative" refers to a return to the creator, and the Waco standoff presumably was for them the fulfillment of this apocalyptic prophecy.

Unfortunately, the law enforcement's diagnosis of the Branch Davidians did not see this unconventional religious (sectarian) apocalyptic and endism-orientated perspectives to the conflict. From a hermeneutic point of view, the law enforcement's interpretations and understanding of the Davidians' worldview, language and reality were highly erroneous. And most importantly, their assumption of David Koresh's power status, and the belief that he will surrender when confronted with the sophisticated might of the state were proven wrong by Mr. Koresh's resistance until death. The misunderstanding of the Branch Davidians on the one hand, and David Koresh's miscomprehension of the law enforcement

during the negotiations on the other hand, are key factors that exacerbated the conflict.

The remaining sections of this essay will examine ways in which the law enforcement could have improved their intervention at the individual and organizational levels and avoided a violent end.

Four Possible Interventions for Change

This section is aimed at explaining how Docherty's (2001) four proactive intervention techniques in worldview-oriented conflicts would have helped to prevent the regrettably violent end of the Waco siege, had the FBI negotiators and other state law enforcement agencies known how to use them during their negotiations with the Branch Davidians. The four intervention processes are: "Symmetrical attention to worldviewing; learning to listen for indicators of world viewing differences; developing a practice of worldview translation; and constructing negotiation processes that accommodate worldview divergence" (Docherty, 2001, pp. 274 - 307).

The violent end of the Waco standoff, the death of "almost ninety people, including twenty-three children" (Docherty, 2001, p. 9), and the destruction of property and infliction of generational pain and trauma in the survived Davidians would have been prevented through unbiased, prejudice-free diagnosis or framing of the problem. Docherty's (2001) notion of *worldview* "symmetry" falls within the diagnosis or framing arena as I explained above. My recommendations to the FBI negotiators in this unconventional and religious case are summarized below.

1) *Develop an open mind to learn and understand the worldview of the Branch Davidians as they expressed it through their unique way of speaking in a scriptural, apocalyptic language.*

This means that the negotiators need to be mindful of their own biases and predetermined script. Active and reflective listening that includes "paraphrasing (reflecting back for clarity and understanding), inquiry (asking non-judgmental, open-ended questions), and acknowledgement (of the underlying emotions and meaning hidden in the speaker's words and reflecting them back to the speaker as accurately as possible)" (Rogers et al., 2013, pp. 360-362) would help to discern and understand the nature of reality the Davidians were communicating through their "static language (worldview)" as opposed to the FBI negotiators' "dynamic language (worldviewing or worldmaking)" (Docherty, 2001, p. 16).

2) *Refrain from using blaming language during the negotiations.*

During the negotiations, the FBI tried to bargain with the Branch Davidians by promising to play David Koresh's sermon on the radio for any child they send out. According to Docherty (2003), about 20 children were freed by their parents. However, David Koresh insisted on phone along with other community members that they were not going to let more children out because they were "special children with a special destiny, the children of the New Light Doctrine, [and] that they were supposed to play a special role during the End Time, during the Apocalypse" (Docherty, 2003, para. 10). Blaming David Koresh for this impasse or deadlock was a mistake. Saying that "David Koresh is untrustworthy. He doesn't keep his word. He's now telling us he won't send us these children" (Docherty, 2003, para. 10) was probably humiliating to the Davidians.

3) Acknowledge and validate the Davidians' reality and the status of their leader, David Koresh.

In my opinion, the FBI negotiators would have seen these apocalyptic messaging as indicators of a different static worldview that requires a different negotiation/intervention strategy. What was needed was the acknowledgement and validation of the Davidians' reality and the symbolism of David Koresh as the link between this reality and the community members who put their unreserved trust in him.

4) Stop the scripted bargaining process.

At this point of impasse or deadlock, I would recommend that the FBI stop the bargaining process because the Davidians will not play to the FBI script of trading the children as commodities. In the worldview of the Davidians, these children are part of the chosen people of God.

5) Initiate a ceasefire and create a space for change.

The FBI should also initiate a ceasefire because this is an unconventional, religious and spiritual matter with an apocalyptic belief. A ceasefire will send a counter message to the Davidians that the end is not yet here. Backing off from or stopping the militarized operation would create a psychological and physical space for the Davidians and the FBI negotiators to re-examine their worldviews and each other's massages (or interests). As Docherty (2003) argued in an interview, since the FBI negotiators "can't speak their (the Davidians') reality enough to persuade them to do anything. The only thing you (the FBI) can do is create the space and the environment in which they can persuade themselves to do something that will save their lives, to get them out of the situation" (para. 14).

6) Design and implement worldview-sensitive and integrative dispute resolution system and processes.

The last recommendation I will give to the FBI which I believe is the most crucial is to design and implement integrative dispute resolution system and processes that "accommodate worldview divergence" (Docherty, 2001). To do this, the FBI should engage external third parties or *worldview translators* who, either through their training or research on worldview sensitivity and apocalyptic and fundamentalist mindset, or through their leadership position in religious institutions, could reinject and rebuild trust on the part of the Davidians as well as translate their reality in a language that the FBI, ATF, other law enforcement agents, and the Attorney General would understand. This approach applies not only to the Waco standoff case, but also to the on-going religiously motivated and extremist violent confrontations and terrorism around the world. I strongly believe that given the divergent, static, worldviews and realities underlying these conflicts, mechanical or military intervention alone cannot resolve them. Many governments and intergovernmental bodies fighting violent extremism and terrorism have always neglected the importance of religious and faith-based leaders, scholars and theologians. I think it is high time they included faith-based leaders in countering and preventing violent extremism and terrorism in countries around the world. Conflicts involving religion are of different species and category. To resolve them, we need the help of experts in religious matters as well as negotiators or mediators who are worldview sensitive.

According to Docherty (2003), the Branch Davidians had requested that the FBI send two scholars who had previously done some research with them on the *Book of Revelation*, to come and mediate as third-party translators. But "the FBI said no" (para. 15). My recommendation is that the government and its law enforcement should designate specialized negotiators or mediators who will be trusted by

groups like the Branch Davidians to speak with them in a manner they will understand, play the role of *worldview translators*, and prepare the ground for the Davidians or other groups like them to persuade themselves to come out as they are, without throwing away their belief and god. This would have helped the Branch Davidians realize that, perhaps, it was not yet the end time, or that apocalypse was not yet here. Had the integrative and worldview sensitive negotiations by *worldview translators* been used, the "almost ninety people, including twenty-three children" (Docherty, 2001, p. 9) that perished at Waco would have been saved at least for a natural, individual future apocalypse.

Recommended Theory of Change

This response essay has succeeded in providing a new perspective to the Waco standoff case. The reader is presented with three important explanations as to why the expected outcomes of the practice theory of change in the Waco standoff case differ from the actual outcomes. First, there was a *diagnosis or framing failure* – the unconventional religious (sectarian) conflict was framed as if it occurred in a conventional, normal institution. Second, there was a *hermeneutic problem* – the interveners did not make good judgement of, and understand, the *worldviews*, *language*, and *reality* of the Branch Davidians. Third, the interveners *blamed* David Koresh and questioned his *legitimacy* as well as the Davidians' notions of *order, power and endism.*

Based on the lessons learned and leveraging on the four intervention processes proposed by Docherty (2001), six recommendations are proposed to help the FBI negotiators in their interventions in similar settings. These include: 1) openness, bias awareness and learning to understand own biases and the other's worldviews; 2) refraining from using blaming language during negotiations; 3) acknowledging and validating the reality and the leader of the Davidians; 4) abandoning scripted bargaining process; 5) initiating a ceasefire and creating a space for change; and 6) engaging in a worldview-sensitive and integrative negotiation process through the help of external third party intermediaries or *worldview translators*. To conclude this response essay, therefore, the reader is provided in the table below a new theory of change that incorporates the essential mediation or negotiation elements described by Randolph's (2016) *The psychology of conflict: Mediating in a diverse world*.

The table below summarizes the step by step practice theory of change that this essay recommends. In line with Randolph (2016), the recommended practice theory of change recognizes the psychological perspective of worldview conflict and argues that the feelings and values of the Davidians need to be acknowledged and validated, and issues concerning trust or self-esteem should be addressed. Also, there is need to create a psychological and safe physical space through a ceasefire; followed by a worldview intermediary-led negotiation that incorporates the practice of active and reflective listening.

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Recommended Practice Theory of Change for the Waco Standoff Case

Diagnosis/Problem Framing	Intervention Framing & Goals	Methods	How Change Happens	Intended Effects
Unconventional religious / sectarian conflict situation. Conflict environment and stakeholders have a different set of laws and constitution, worldviews, language and reality that are based on the apocalyptic, and oriented toward endism, beliefs. Group feelings of rejection, persecution, and humiliation by the kingdom of the world leading to the belief in the fulfillment of the apocalypse. Branch Davidians and their prophet feeling misunderstood and disrespected.	Use unconventional and non-militarized intervention and negotiation. Develop an open mind to learn and understand the worldview and reality of the Branch Davidians. Create a psychological and safe & trusting physical space. Reinject and rebuild trust on the part of the Davidians as well as translate their reality.	Engage in a worldview-sensitive and integrative negotiation process. Active and reflective listening. Initiate a ceasefire. Acknowledge and validate the Davidians' reality and the status of their leader, David Koresh.	Third party intermediaries or worldview translators translate the Davidians worldview/reality as well as communicate the FBI worldviewing and reality to the Davidians in the language that each group understands. Paraphrasing leads to clarity and understanding. Inquiry or open-ended questions leads to non-judgmental conversation. Acknowledgement helps in validating the underlying emotions and restoring self-esteem and trust.	Branch Davidians remain who they are and come out with their gods to the mediation table. Negotiation impasse or deadlock is overcome and unstuck. Lives are saved and properties are not destroyed.

In conclusion, I invite the law enforcement and their higher authorities to pay attention to Horowitz's (2000) assertion that "efforts to ameliorate conflict 'must be preceded by an understanding' of the drivers, dynamics and sources of that conflict. 'Altogether too many policy prescriptions for ethnic harmony have been dispensed without benefit of careful diagnosis" (as cited in Ugorji, 2016, para. 9). For this reason, and as I have stated before in another paper, this response essay recommends "a *paradigm shift* in the development of policies that are aimed at managing, resolving and preventing conflicts with ethno-religious issues and components.

This *paradigm shift* could be explained from two perspectives: first, *from retributive policy to restorative justice,* and second, *from coercive policy to mediation and dialogue"* (Ugorji, 2016, para. 76). The Waco standoff case confirms that using militarized intervention and tactics to manage religiously motivated or faith-based conflict will rather exacerbate the conflict and cause unnecessary deaths, destruction of property and generational pain, trauma and enmity. There is need for a worldview-sensitive dispute resolution system, and integrative negotiation and mediation processes.

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Effect of Treatment based on Wish Actualization View on Reduction Symptoms of Antisocial Personality Disorder as an Effective Step to Prevent these Individuals from Joining Terrorist Groups (Case Study)

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Abstract

Today, extremist thoughts have been successful in attracting many individuals all around the world by relying on religious beliefs. One of its factors is the fact that these groups suffer from *antisocial personality disorder*. Damaging behaviors, including violation of rules, social order, violence of rights, aggression, rebellion against authorities, dispute, irresponsibility and absence of regret, are factors encouraging these individuals to join terrorist groups. Hence, treatment of these individuals can remove the process of recruitment and training. The purpose of the present research is to examine the effect of treatment based on *wish actualization* on *antisocial personality disorder*. Method of the research is case study and data are collected by *structured clinical interview* (SCID) and interventions in therapy sessions. In this research, a 27-year-old male suffering from *antisocial personality disorder* was treated based on *wish actualization*. The main hypothesis of the research was that this approach improves and reduces symptoms of *antisocial personality disorder*. Treatment process was performed in 20 sessions. Findings showed that after therapy sessions, a significant decrease was observed in the symptoms of *antisocial personality disorder* in terms of DSM 5. The results supported all hypotheses of the research. It seems that ultra-religious views can be considered as a new approach to treat this disorder such as *wish actualization* view, and future researches with larger samples can present more valid results. Finally, comparison of these findings with those of other researches and the employed treatment protocol are discussed.

Keywords: wish actualization, antisocial, ultra-religious, extremist

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ICERM International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation

Introduction

Antisocial personality disorder is a type of personality disorder. A person who suffers from this disorder cannot adapt to social standards and has no feelings of guilt and anxiety in relation to his or her behavior. The term *anti-social* character has always been used as a synonym for psychopaths. This label or term describes this behavior outside of the community's common ethical standards and considers it one of the most serious psychiatric disorders.

Patients with personality disorder have abnormal mental, emotional, and behavioral patterns that go back to adolescence or early adulthood. These people are mentally or functionally defective, because their interactive methods to others are invulnerable and maladaptive. Most people are not aware of their disorder, and therefore immediate treatment for these disorders is not possible (Sadock & Sadock, 2015).

This diagnosis is usually more common in adults, although it is sometimes prescribed in children. Untreated personality disorders remain constant over time and are thus highly resistant to treatment. *Antisocial personality disorder* is characterized by persistent *anti-social* and criminal acts, but not equivalent to crime. It is also an inability to adapt to social standards, which includes many aspects of the growth of adolescents and childhood. Anti-socialists want to get rid of the existing system at any cost. They are looking for legendary values and do not feel the need for braking due to their impulses (Sadock & Sadock, 2015).

Because of the search for pleasures and the weakness of will, they are easily caught up in drugs and alcohol. Sexual deviations are seen in abundance and they commit crimes without feeling the slightest regret. They break into criminality and rule. When they fall into law, their repentances are so affirmative that they are exempted from punishment and given another opportunity; however, they rarely fulfill their promise, and their sayings do not have any relation with their feelings and actions.

The prevalence of *antisocial personality disorder* is 3% in men and 1% in women. This disorder is most prevalent in the poor urban population. This disorder has a family pattern, so that the prevalence of this disorder among male relatives is five times more than control group (Sadock & Sadock, 2015).

A person with *antisocial personality* has a different behavior since childhood, less cautious and therefore more at risk and more susceptible to crime. *Antisocial personality disorder* often has a natural, even warm and loving appearance. But in their history, there are disruptions to many areas of their life's functions. Patients with *antisocial personality disorder* do not show any depression or anxiety.

Usually, the observer is influenced by the good verbal intelligence they have. People known as crooks are good examples of patients with *antisocial personality disorder*. Sexual abortion, spouse abuse, child abuse, and driving while drunk are common occurrences in the lives of these patients.

The causes that are involved in the development of *antisocial behavior* include: 1. Family and social background; 2. Learning impairments; and 3. Probably the hereditary factors because many antisocial people have abnormalities in abnormal brain waves.

Some factors seem to increase the risk of *antisocial personality disorder*. Factors like: detection of conduct disorder in childhood; family history of *antisocial personality disorder* or other personality disorders or mental illness; exposure to childhood abortion or neglect; unstable family life; and violent or disrupted childhood. In this regard, men are more likely at risk to develop *antisocial personality disorder* than women. Girls find signs of a disorder before they reach puberty, and boys sooner than that.

Among prisoners, the prevalence of the disorder may reach up to 75%. The disorder has a family pattern because its prevalence in relatives of a patient is 5 times higher in comparison with the control group.

Treatment

Psychotherapy is sometimes effective in the treatment of *antisocial personality disorder*. Treatment may include management of anger and violence, treatment of addiction and the other mental health problems.

There is no definite drug that has been approved as standard drug for *anti-social disorder* treatment. In fact, the doctor ordinarily prescribes medication for side effects of *antisocial personality disorder*, such as anxiety or depression or aggression symptoms.

Causes of Absorption by Terrorist Groups

The lack of emotion in the presence of these terrorists will not make them feel embarrassed and unhappy about the hard times they bring to the victims. In terrorists, there may be a series of mental illnesses and personality disorders.

In the aftermath of acts of terrorism, like any other behavior, there are motives that indicate a defect in the unfulfilled needs that eventually occurs day by day in the form of violence, destruction and assassination.

Terrorist acts can be the result of a lack of satisfaction of needs. Some studies have shown a positive correlation between oppressed sexuality and terrorism; the need for sexual satisfaction is a major physiological need. Unsatisfying this need for men and women will make them more willing to engage in acts that are more suited to suicide.

The motive of terrorists is mainly the need for belonging, the need for gaining identity, the desire for social status, and so on. Searching for identity may push individuals to terrorist organizations or extremism in a variety of ways.

Field research has shown that the presence of mental illness has the greatest impact on terrorists in creating terrorist attacks. Preventing terrorism requires mental health of the community. Therefore, the policies of prevention of terrorism should include the treatment of the state of mental and psychological injuries and restoration of mental and psychological health within the community. And terrorism cannot be prevented just by punishing terrorists. Hence, treatment of these individuals can remove the process of recruitment and training of individuals.

The purpose of the present research is to examine the effect of treatment based on wish actualization on *antisocial personality disorder*. Method of the research is case study and data are collected by *structured clinical interview* (SCID) and interventions in therapy sessions. In this research, a 27-year-old male suffering from *antisocial personality disorder* was treated based on *wish actualization*. The main hypothesis of the research was that this approach improves and reduces symptoms of *antisocial personality disorder*. Treatment process was performed in 20 sessions. Findings showed that after therapy sessions, a significant decrease was observed in the symptoms of *antisocial personality disorder* in terms of DSM 5.

In the present study, an adult was studied and treated based on clinical interview results, MCMI test, psychiatrist's opinion and diagnostic criteria of DSM 5. The patient was studied and treated using the *wish actualization* method. During the treatment sessions, the MCMI test was performed and interpreted for the subject twice, one time before treatment and one after treatment. MMPI test was used to diagnose abnormalities with personality disorder.

Therapy Sessions Based on the Wish Actualization Method

The treatment process was performed in twenty sessions. The findings indicated that after the treatment sessions, there was a significant reduction in the symptoms of *antisocial personality disorder* according to the diagnostic criteria of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM). The treatment of this patient was done with the *wish actualization* method, emphasizing the following two areas: redefining patient identity and emphasis on creating a common identity
learning to control anger and impulsivity using the *wish actualization* method.

Those patients who fail because of society rejection and who are likely to join the terrorist groups to have a place there are openly embraced without discrimination. In this view, only human beings are sufficient to bring value and respect and it makes the lost identity of people redefined, while creating a feeling of belonging. The need for belonging, feeling safe, accepting others, feeling the control and personal success, and feeling secure in interacting with others to create a sense of self-awareness, are the important needs of these patients. Group solidarity makes it possible to respond to many of these needs over time. Group solidarity does not just mean attracting others and feeling interested in other group members. Solidarity refers to the feeling of a relationship among members of the group, which includes mutual trust, interest in other members of the group, and acceptance of other members' positive perceptions. The feeling of belonging to the group is essential to change. Acceptance of yourself and other members of the group, even accepting those who differ from us, is necessary in solidarity. The members of the group who are in solidarity must accept each other and the patient will feel a new identity. Group correlations lead to positive changes in the patient. Therefore, accepting each other, despite all the differences, respecting these differences and working with the group, creates a group belonging and solidarity, and eventually cause changes to occur in these individuals.

It seems that ultra-religious views, such as *wish actualization*, can be considered as a new way of treating this disorder, and future research with larger samples can bring more credible results.

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An International Forum for Traditional Rulers and Indigenous Leaders
In accordance with its mission of fostering a culture of peace among, between and within ethnic and religious groups in countries around the world, ICERM established the World Elders Forum (WEF) strictly for traditional rulers and leaders of indigenous groups.

Members of the World Elders Forum are legitimate and recognized traditional rulers and leaders of indigenous groups from many countries around the world. They see gains in the use of customary laws and traditional systems and processes of conflict resolution for peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention & mediation, dialogue, and other nonviolent methods of conflict resolution, and are strongly committed to improving their skills in order to continue to promote a culture of peace in their respective communities, kingdoms, states, regions, and countries.

Nomination Criteria
To join the World Elders Forum, prospective members must meet the following criteria:

- Be a legitimate and recognized traditional ruler and / or leader of an indigenous group in any country around the world.
- Have strong interest in the use of customary laws and traditional systems and processes

of conflict resolution for peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention & mediation, dialogue, and other nonviolent methods of conflict resolution.

- Demonstrate a longing for and strong commitment to ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) skills acquisition and improvement in order to continue to promote a culture of peace locally and globally.
- Be willing to attend the World Elders Forum held annually at the ICERM headquarters in New York, United States of America, and organized by the International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation (ICERM) in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
- Have financial and material resources to pay the annual membership dues ($120 USD for individual membership or $600 for executive membership), and sponsor travel and related expenses to New York and back to home country at the end of the event.

If you are interested in joining the World Elders Forum or you would like to nominate a legitimate and recognized traditional ruler and / or leader of an indigenous group from your country, please download and complete the World Elders Forum Membership Nomination Form at https://www.icermediation.org/about-us/main-organs/world-elders-forum/

Call for Papers and Guidelines for Paper Submission

Abstract and / or full paper submissions to the Journal of Living Together are accepted at any time, year-round.

Scope

Papers sought are those written within the last decade and shall focus on any of the following locations: Anywhere.

The Journal of Living Together will publish articles that bridge theory and practice. Qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods research studies are accepted. Case studies, lessons learned, success stories and best practices from academics, practitioners, and policymakers are also accepted. Successful articles shall include findings & recommendations designed to further understanding & inform practical application.

Topics of Interest

To be considered for the Journal of Living Together, papers/articles must focus on any of the following fields or related areas: ethnic conflict; religious/faith-based conflict; community conflict; religiously or ethnically motivated terrorism; theories of ethnic and faith-based conflicts; ethnic relations and affiliations; religious relations and affiliations; multiculturalism; civil-military relations in ethnically divided societies; police-community relations in ethnically, racially, and religiously divided societies; role of political parties in ethno-religious conflict; the military and ethno-religious conflict; ethnic and religious organizations/associations and the militarization of ethnic and religious conflicts; role of ethnic group representatives, community and religious leaders in ethno-religious conflict; causes, nature, effects/impact/consequences of ethno-religious conflict; inter-generational pilots / models for

ethno-religious conflict resolution; strategies or techniques for reducing ethnic and religious conflicts; the United Nations' response to ethnic and religious conflicts; interfaith dialogue; conflict monitoring, prediction, prevention, analysis, mediation and other forms of conflict resolution applicable to ethno-religious conflict; case studies; personal or group stories; reports, narratives/stories or experiences of conflict resolution practitioners; role of music, sports, education, media, arts, and celebrities in fostering a culture of peace among ethnic and religious groups; and related topics and areas.

Benefits

Publication in Living Together is a notable way to promote a culture of peace and mutual understanding. It is also an opportunity to gain exposure for you, your organization, institution, association, or society.

The Journal of Living Together will be included in the most comprehensive and widely used databases of journals in the fields of social sciences and peace studies. The published articles will be available to a global audience: libraries, governments, policy makers, media, universities and colleges, organizations, associations, institutions and millions of potential individual readers.

Guidelines for Submission

- Articles/papers must be between 3,500 and 4,000 words, submitted with 300-350 word abstracts, and a biography of no more than 50 words. Authors can also send their 300-350 word abstracts before submitting the full articles.
- If English is not your native language, please have a native English speaker review your paper before submission.
- All submissions to the Journal of Living Together must be typed double-spaced in MS Word using Times New Roman, 12 pt.
- Please use the APA Style for your citations and references.
- Please identify a minimum of 4, and a maximum of 7 keywords reflecting the title of your article/paper.
- Authors should include their names on the cover sheet only for purposes of blind review.
- Authors should also include the title of the paper on each page, as well as page numbers for ease of organization and identification.
- Email graphic materials: photo images, diagrams, figures, maps and others as attachment in a jpeg format and indicate by use of numbers preferred placement areas in the manuscript.
- All articles, abstracts, graphic materials and inquiries should be sent by email to: icerm@icermediation.org. Please indicate "Journal of Living Together" in the subject line.

Selection Process

All papers/articles submitted to the Journal of Living Together will be carefully reviewed by a blind Peer Review Panel and Editorial Board made up of renowned scholars, specialists and practitioners in the fields of ethno-religious conflict and conflict resolution. Each author shall then be notified by email about the outcome of the review process.


ICERM
International Center for
Ethno-Religious Mediation
THE 6th ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
on Ethnic and Religious Conflict
Resolution and Peacebuilding
We recognize this century to be a crucial moment in history, a time to ensure that our children and grandchildren do not have to suffer through the horrors of war, terrorism, nuclear weapon, or genocide. It falls upon all of us to open the doors to dialogue, to come to truly know one another, and to take the first steps towards a more peaceful world.
The International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation (ICERM) invites you to participate in the Annual International Conference on Ethnic and Religious Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding held every October in New York, USA. To learn more, visit our website: www.icermediation.org


MEDIATION ACADEMY
Become a Certified Mediator of Ethnic and Religious Conflicts
The International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation (ICERM) trains new mediators to resolve ethnic and religious conflicts in countries around the world.
Visit www.icermediation.org to register for upcoming training in New York or online.
Register today and get certified as a mediator of ethnic and religious conflicts.

The International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation (ICERM) is located at:
11 W. Prospect Avenue, 3rd Floor, Mount Vernon, New York 10550, United States