



# CODESRIA

**12th General Assembly**  
Governing the African Public Sphere

**12e Assemblée générale**  
Administrer l'espace public africain

**12a Assembleia Geral**  
Governar o Espaço Público Africano

ةي عم جلا ةي موم علا ةي ن اشل ا رشع  
حكم الفضاء العام الإفريقي

## **Prophetic and Pseudo-Active Contributions of Religious Entities to the Political Process in Nigeria**

**Dennis Onome Edewor**



07-11/12/2008  
Yaoundé, Cameroun

## **Introduction**

### **Religion in the Public Sphere**

Religion is a set of tenets and practices, often centered upon specific supernatural and moral claims about reality, the cosmos, and human nature, and often codified as prayer, ritual, or religious law. Religion also encompasses ancestral or cultural traditions, writings, history, and mythology, as well as personal faith and religious experience. The term "religion" refers to both the personal practices related to communal faith and to group rituals and communication stemming from shared conviction.

Religion is often described as a communal system for the coherence of belief focusing on a system of thought, unseen being, person, or object, that is considered to be supernatural, sacred, divine, or of the highest truth. Moral codes, practices, values, institutions, tradition, rituals, and scriptures are often traditionally associated with the core belief, and these may have some overlap with concepts in secular philosophy. Religion is also often described as a "way of life" or a life stance (Durkheim, 1976). In Lindbeck's *Nature of Doctrine*, religion does not refer to belief in "God" or a transcendent Absolute. Instead, Lindbeck defines religion as, "a kind of cultural and/or linguistic framework or medium that shapes the entirety of life and thought... it is similar to an idiom that makes possible the description of realities, the formulation of beliefs, and the experiencing of inner attitudes, feelings, and sentiments" Lindbeck (1984). According to this definition, religion refers to one's primary worldview and how this dictates one's thoughts and actions.

According to Karl Marx, religion was captioned as the "*opium of the masses*". This goes to show that religion is a factor that is both inevitable and indispensable to Homo sapiens because of its ability to fill the mind with hope and fear. Religion is practiced in many forms and exists under a myriad of appellations. Tags like Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Shintoism, Hinduism, African Traditional Religion, European Traditional Religion and a myriad of exotic labels abound all in the name of differentiation in the belief system of peoples around the world.

Religion in its entire ramification derived from the claims of various individuals who claimed a prophetic office that derived from direct or indirect contact with certain deities or gods who gave them instructions on how to live their lives and how to pay homage to such deities. As a result, since men began to live in groups, dating to the dawn of time and till date, the contribution of religion to the political process in all societies is evident in the religious literature of these religions, the oral traditions of those religions that lacked the written word

and also in the day to day experiences of the societies serving as the abode of the peoples professing these religions. The strength of each religion was based on the extent to which its adherent engaged in the gestalt of the religion which is termed religiosity. The religiosity expressed by adherents of different religion was controlled strictly by the guardians of such religion who in most cases were also the political leaders of the society. This gave a semblance of stability to the society.

### **Religiosity and the Public Sphere**

Religiosity, in its broadest sense, is a comprehensive sociological term used to refer to the numerous aspects of religious activity, dedication, and belief. Another term that would work equally well, though is less often used, is *religiousness*. In its narrowest sense, religiosity deals more with how religious a person is, and less with how a person is religious (in terms of practicing certain rituals, retelling certain myths, revering certain symbols, or accepting certain doctrines about deities and afterlife).

Numerous studies have explored the different components of human religiosity (Brink, 1993; Hill & Hood 1999). What most have found is that there are multiple dimensions. For instance, Cornwall, Albrecht, Cunningham and Pitcher (1986) identify six dimensions of religiosity based on the understanding that there are at least three components to religious behavior: knowing (cognition), feeling (affect), and doing (behavior). For each of these components of religiosity there were two cross classifications resulting in the six dimensions: **Cognition** consists of traditional orthodoxy and particularistic orthodoxy. **Affect** consists of spiritual commitment and physical commitment while **Behavior** consists of religious behavior and religious participation.

Some scholars discovered other dimensions, ranging from four to twelve components but agreed that some distinction exist between religious doctrine, religious practice, and spirituality. For example, one can accept the truthfulness of the Bible/Quran/Traditional myths and legends (belief dimension), but never attend a church/mosque/shrine or even belong to an organized/unorganised religion (practice dimension). Another example is an individual who does not hold orthodox Christian/Muslim/Traditional doctrines (belief dimension), but does attend worship service (practice dimension) in order to develop his/her sense of oneness with the divine (spirituality dimension).

An individual could disavow all doctrines associated with organized/unorganised religions (belief dimension), not be affiliated with organized/unorganised religion or attend religious services (practice dimension), and at the same time be strongly committed to a

higher power and feel that the connection with that higher power is ultimately relevant (spirituality dimension). These are explanatory examples of the broadest dimensions of religiosity and that they may not be reflected in specific religiosity measures. Most dimensions of religiosity are correlated, meaning people who often attend church services (practice dimension) are also likely to score highly on the belief and spirituality dimensions. But individuals do not have to score high on all dimensions or low on all dimensions; their scores can vary by dimension depending on their dynamism.

### **Religion and the Universal Sphere**

Since the days of yore the contribution of religion to the political process in all societies has been evident. The contribution is significant because, at that point in history, religiosity was embedded in how the polity was run. Important case histories include the wide ranging powers of the traditional cults in the monarchies and oligarchies of African societies. Every great kingdom or society had shamans, herbalists, witchdoctors, wizards, high priests of various cults who intervened and to a great extent, gave spiritual cum mystical guidance to the leaders and peoples of such societies.

This aspect of Africa has its equivalent in the activities of the Druids in Britain, the Scribes, Essenes, Sadducees and Pharisees in Israel, the Imams in the Middle East, High priests of the Inca in Peru, the Red Indians in America, the Aborigines in Australia and other tribes in the South Americas, the monks in China, Tibet, the Sunyassis in India etc. A more universal impact of religion in the politics of the public sphere is that of the **Universal Roman Catholic Church** which controlled a huge portion of the world's political affairs in the days of its powers.

### **Religion in the Nigerian Public Sphere**

Before the colonials came to the continent of Africa, the inhabitants had their own belief system which was closely tied to their culture and traditions and which guaranteed a generally acceptable way of life for inhabitants in these societies. In Nigeria, which is the case study of this research, the religions of the peoples were multifaceted in that most of them believed in a supreme being but served him through a pantheon of lesser gods fearing to approach him directly. They called the supreme being names like Olodumare, Osanobua, Chineke, Ubangiji, Osolobrugwe, e.t.c. They worshipped these supreme entities like Sango, Ogun, Oya, Osun, Obatala, Orunmila, Esu etc. Others had no belief in a supreme being but rather worshipped their dead ancestors (Ancestral worship), some believed in serving their

“chi” or “ori” (mystical mind-head). The said religions in some cases had high priests and other special purveyors of the ritualized systems of worship taking full control of the machinery of the belief system while others were personalized, i.e conducted by the adherents themselves.

Each of the religions had its own dances, worship operations, dress code, songs, incantations, chants, festivals and the inevitable taboos which served as checks and balances. Most of these religions also used the oracle to consult their deities for problem solution through the offices of witchdoctors or priests who specialized in the field of divination.

The face of religion in Nigeria changed gradually since the days of the Trans Saharan trade in which the northern parts of Nigeria were exposed to Islam (a religion practiced in the middle east), the subsequent battles of conversion in the north by Uthman Dan Fodio and the arrival of the British in Nigeria. While Islamic converts turned warriors eroded the traditional religions of the people in the northern part of Nigeria, the British colonials aided by a few native converts to Christianity also undermined and grossly eroded the traditional religions of the inhabitants of other parts of Nigeria. On the long run, because belonging to the two established religion of Islam and Christianity gave rise to economic and political rewards, a great number of Nigerians converted to them. Other citizens converted because of the fear of death (the Islamic solution then), fear of incarceration and fear of ridicule (the Christian gimmick then). This spiritual and psycho-religious brainwashing process went on for a long time until most people converted to the two established religion. Even people, who were not convinced, pretended to convert but still practiced their traditional religion secretly.

The present writer without really using the time worn phrase “**the good old days**” believed that the pre-foreign religion era was better for the people in terms of morals, ethics and etiquette. The level of honesty then was higher, things were done as and when due, the gods maintained a strong hold over the people and guaranteed their moral sanctity. Stealing was unheard of except if it petty (the penalty was always high) or was carried out by invading war parties. The marriage bed was always pure in that the brides were usually virgins (those who were not were disgraced, banished or destroyed). People who swore by the gods dared not lie or cheat (the gods destroyed them in a macabre manner). When things went wrong, the oracle gave the reasons and the solution (sacrifice (human or animal), personal restitution, banishment of people, reparations to offended parties etc). Anyone who felt shortchanged by another inhabitant or the society as a whole had recourse to the gods and he or she got justice. Things worked at least with regards to a uniform and standard way of living as accepted by

all. Adherence was not necessarily enforced by human agents; rather the gods themselves guaranteed that service to them continued with the demonstration of sign and portents.

The advent of Islam and Christianity in Nigeria however, constituted a psycho-mental paradigm shift which shunted the minds of the people into a psychic highway of hypocrisy, malaise, boredom and sanctimonious pretensions which motivates them to show a public facade of saintliness while harbouring a criminal mind and subsequently behaving like villains when push comes to shove. This mentality of transmutation was not common in the days of yore because traditional religion did not tolerate it and because it destroyed such mutants.

### **Religion and the Nigerian Polity**

Using the Nigerian context as a case study, the issue of religion mania is a big problematic afflicting the Nigerian populace. The huge majority of the membership of the public sphere are Muslims and Christians while only a minute few claim other religious and African traditional religion. The development of Christianity and Islam in Nigeria is a chimera in that Nigeria has the highest number of Churches and Islamic sects in the whole of Africa. This to a great extent has made it relevant within the African polity.

The modus operandi by which religion influenced the public polity were usually through the use of spiritual tools like prophesy, prayers, fasting, magical incantations, meditation , alms giving, sacrifices festivals etc. These modes of operation impacted the society in different ways and gave a stability of sorts to the society. Also some religions went as far as building schools to provide education with a bid to changing the minds of the people and channeling it towards a more morally sound direction. This was done to further enslave the people. How these religious modus operandi contributes to the political process in Nigeria are discussed below.

### **Religious sphere, Prophecy and the Nigerian political process**

Prophecy can be defined as the ability to foretell the future, see into the past, decipher the present and change destiny with the spoken word. As a psychological I can assert this is similar to being psychic and having the extrasensory perception skills of precognition, retrocognition and telepathy. One name that comes to the minds of all enlightened religious and non religious entities when prophecy is being discussed is NOSTRADAMUS. Most of this man's prophecies or should I say predictions have been fulfilled and the significance of his predictions were popularized because he made predictions concerning world affairs with

total accuracy. The very impressive issue is that most of his predictions came to pass after his death. Cases abound in the history of all religions about people having the gift of prophecy, who are then used as models by present adherents who want to have such a gift or those who already claim they have such gifts. A lot of Nigerian religious leaders such as Adeboye, Tunde Bakare, Oyedepo, T.B Joshua, Chris Oyakhilome etc claim to have this gift of prophesy.

The thriller like event of protestant Christian pastors prophesying about the present and future of the Nigeria public sphere is rife. The question that arises however is how salient the prophecies are in moving Nigeria forward. A few cases are cited below.

Pastor E.A. Adeboye of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) has been claimed by many to be the most respected man of God in Nigeria, and that his words have never fallen to the ground. This researcher feels that the reason for the respect is because the man is known as a purveyor of prophecies, miracles and signs and wonders. The respect could also be based on the size of the church he presides over and the fact that he hobnobs with some notable stakeholders in the political process in Nigeria. The label this religious leader attaches to himself is prophet and it is believed that politicians go to him for advice. His 2007 prophecies have led to spontaneous eruptions of religious and ethnic disinterest, apathy, and inability-to-give-a-damn all over the country.

His latest prophecies will be examined to decide how they affect the polity.

### **Transcript of Pastor Adeboye's 2007 Prophecy**

1. *"The Lord says that Nigeria will be the **giant of Africa** next year. During the year 2007, there is not going to be a single country throughout Africa with a population as great as ours. As long as we serve him faithfully and attend church regularly, the Lord says our children shall be as numerous as the sands on ten mountains. Crowd: "Amen!"*
2. *"Some fertile married women will **deliver babies** in 2007, while many children currently in primary six will gain admission into secondary schools. Many of you who are brilliant final year students in higher institutions will graduate with flying colors during 2007. Most engaged couples with weddings fixed for 2007 will get married!" Crowd: "Amen!"*
3. *"Daddy says that in the year 2007 there will be a **dry season** and a **rainy season**. For Christians, the dry season in January may dry up any puddles on their streets and the rainy season in August will bring them massive showers of water from heaven. Unbelievers will experience the scorching sun during the dry season and their children will be scared by thunder and lightening during the August rains." Crowd: "Amen!"*

4. *“Something very bad - **very very bad** - is going to happen sometime in 2007. I can’t tell you what it is now, but baba says we need to pray to avert this great tragedy from our nation. He says those who dodge their tithes and offerings may be the ones hardest hit by this looming maliase. Nigeria needs to be very very afraid in this next year 2007!”* Crowd: *“Jesus!”*

*“Note: You will need to attend the **Holy Ghost convention** every month till the end of 2007 so we can cry to God and ask him to spare Nigeria from the tragedy, which I will explain to you in 2008 after it has happened.”*

Is this prophecy or what? A close look at the prophecies presented above reveals it as nothing more than the commonsensical admonition and forecasting of an elderly clergy. What’s news? Uncharitably, the prophecies are the ranting of an individual with below average intelligence. The polity cannot be moved by such wimpish proclamations. If it had been moved before as claimed by the church members, then 2007 prophecy is a far cry from motivating.

### **Transcript of Pastor Adeboye’s 2008 Prophecy**

#### **Concerning Nigeria:**

1. In Nigeria, the Lord will do a new thing.
2. If we His children will pray, He will do a new thing, so that the hot spot in Nigeria will begin to cool.
3. All of us should pray for the president.

#### **Concerning International:**

1. There will be scientific breakthrough this year
2. There will be major medical breakthrough this year
3. We must pray against destructive hurricanes coming back this year

#### **Concerning Individual:**

1. For some people, there will be accelerated promotion this year
2. There will be deeper knowledge of the word of God for some people this year
3. For those that are committed to His service, the world will begin to see what a man and God working together can do this year.
4. Whatever you and God tackle together this year will be accomplished



5. Whatever you and God resist together this year shall crumble.
6. This year, "My wind shall be behind you pushing you forward and not in front of you.

### **Concerning Church:**

You will hear this later - not for public consumption. These prophecies sound like prayer points. A perusal of these prophecies shows that the blanket statements made above are not prophecies or even predictions. They are too general and can be manipulated to cover happenstances in the future to guarantee success.

**Tunde Bakare**, the fiery senior pastor of the Latter Rain Assembly is also another self-acclaimed prophet, albeit a very political minded one. This religious leader is notorious for making political predictions or giving politically oriented prophecies. This was the same man who prophesied on March 7, 1999 that the immediate Nigerian ex-president (General Olusegun Obasanjo) could not win the presidential election that year (every idiot on the street knew he would win) and that if he won, he would die before being sworn in. He was arrested for his utterance after the swearing in and was warned to keep his religious ranting to himself on the pains of incarceration.

This same Prophet Tunde Bakare; the self-acclaimed prophetic lead watchdog for Nigeria, made a shocking prediction in 2007 concerning the general elections. *"I don't see any election in May till October 1,"* he declared. In his message entitled, *"Creating and developing powerful impact in the local church,"* Bakare said of the elections: *"I don't see any yet, and if there is any, I don't see any election till October 1, and after that, it is the lame that will take the prey."*

According to the pastor, the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Alhaji Umar Musa Yar'Adua came into the race after General Ibrahim Babangida had been frustrated out. *"Unfortunately, he is not fit. He will eventually step down for another man and we will have a limping president from October 1,"* he said.

The funny aspect of this prophecy is that Yar Adua won the election and is still the incumbent President of Nigeria.

The prophecies of this man are characterized by clauses, peradventures, ifs, possibilities and probabilities which had a smack of permutations cum mathematical analysis. These prophecies were also couched in biblical language or were direct quotation of bible passages.

Pastor Tunde Bakare is a highly politicized religious leader because of his prophetic utterances (prophecies) which are usually aimed at condemning the activities of politicians in

Nigeria. At a time he had the attention of the populace because they believed his prophecies were accurate (according to his own interpretation) and the powers that be were frightened by his doomsday approach, but his galling use of forceful language and his lack of diplomacy (decency) in interpreting his prophecies to the key players constituted a security threat to the Obasanjo administration and they demystified him by totally disregarding his fearful and derogatory utterances.

The populace was not improved by his prophecies rather they were frightened, neither was the political process sanitized but was hardened. Other prophets also have a similar track record of mistaking commonsensical ruminations, psychological forecasting, political and economic analysis, and a religious lexicon for prophecy, thus the self defeating pattern of their so called predictions.

Of what use is prophecy to the political process in Nigeria? Very little I presume.

### **Religious sphere, Religious Pseudo Activities and the Nigerian political process**

#### **Prayer and Revival Programmes**

The deliberate acts of engaging in praying (words directed at a deity for problem solution), and organizing special revival programmes (gathering for prayer and exhortation to be morally sound) on the behalf of the Nigerian public sphere by the religious entities are also a common issue within the geopolitical terrain of the country. The introduction of the **“Nigeria Pray”** project by a former head of State **“Yakubu Gowon”** turned devout Christian is an example. The organization of prayer meetings and revival meetings by Christian leaders like Adeboye of RCCG. T.B Joshua of Synagogue, Oyedepo of Living faith and others, Muslim leaders like Alade Adura, Shafiudeen and others and the introduction of **“Tahjud”** a night vigil programme by the Muslim youth council in Nigeria is also geared at impacting on the Nigerian polity.

All the aforementioned seem good if they were carried out with sincerity, but the hypocritical mien of most religious entities negates the good this would have done. Prayer meetings and revival meetings are now organized for rating reasons. Most of these buffoons want to know the church or mosque that could attract the highest number of participants or members. The One million people gathered at Lekki under the auspices of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, the Stadium held crusades, revivals in mosques and series of meetings are also held as socializing programmes for people and as fund raising avenues for the sponsors of the programme. The issues of praying for the country and interceding on behalf of political office holders is a secondary issue or even a non issue in such gatherings.

The fact that these religious entities pay lip service to it does not mean it is done. Most religious organizations are out to get more members and to make money. The tenets of being their brothers' keeper have been thrown out of the window for a money grabbing mentality. In a bid to increase the number of their congregation some of these religious leaders engage in crowd gathering rituals and some use plants in their miracle services to prove that they can perform miracles. The “**Nigeria Pray**” project by a former head of State in Nigeria “Yakubu Gowon” seems to be a political attempt to gain political relevance by the pathetic entity who presides over its affairs in the name of praying for the nation. I wish he could tell me one thing the prayers of the body have achieved. This deceptive mentality does not augur well for the polity just as the prayers does not affect the polity in any tangible way.

Nigerians pray more than any nation in the world, and the country is backward in the field of science and technology as no nation in the world can grow scientifically and still maintain high religiosity as the two cannot go together. These prayers have not in any way protected our people from abject poverty, corruption and these prayers have never save them from bad leaders like an ex-governor who brought a wristwatch of 3 million pounds while his state (Bayelsa) is among the poorest in the country.

### **Fasting**

Fasting can be described as self denial with regards to food and water for a period of time in order to receive spiritual enlightenment or solutions to a problem from a deity. It is a mechanism built into most religions. Within Nigeria, Christianity and Islam have a fasting period call Lent and Ramadan respectively. This is usually a seasonal affair in that during this period the level of piety is expected to increase because the blessing of fasting can only received when combined with pious behaviours. It should be noted that some Muslims are usual more pious during Ramadan because they help themselves, share food during the breaking periods, are more honest in business and take pains to be their brothers' keeper. The reason for this could be that they are indoctrinated at an early age into the essence of their religion as such these actions become second nature. The issue of Sharia being adopted by some states in northern Nigeria could also be another explanation for the seeming piety of Nigerian Muslims in the Northern geopolitical terrain. The Christians who observe the Lent are Catholics with some of them taking it seriously while most see it as fun. Pentecostal and Spiritual Christians fast for problem solution or at the behest of the church. The impact this has on the polity is still not seen except that the ex-president of Nigeria (General Obasanjo) called for a national fast concerning the issue of third term.

## **Education**

Education is a crucial necessity in every polity because it is this process that provides the citizens with a sense of right, wrong, propriety, competence and focus that will help move their society forward. Nigeria is a secular country and education is provided by the government and other private entities. The in-thing now is that the religious entities in Nigeria have with government permission gone hog-wild in a bid to provide education at primary, secondary and Tertiary levels. A lot of schools have been built to provide secular knowledge and so called religious and moral knowledge for the citizenry. The crucial matter that arises from this pseudo activity is that the schools provided by these religious entities are exceptionally expensive and are not markedly different in the quality of education they give to the citizenry at all levels. Even the issue of morality is only given lip service. The whole issue of education provision by these religious entities seems to be to make money at all cost. Most of the members of the religious entities cannot even afford to attend these schools. The salient point which is hammered into most of the head of the students is that they are going to form the next crop of political stakeholders in the country. These schools demonize customary practices of a religious character as being of the devil, and names that reflect some families' historical association with religious-cum-legendary figures and institutions like Ogun, Sango, or Ifa, are denounced as accursed, and caused to be changed by ignorant fanatical "religious" who preside over these schools. From a psychological perspective this is a brainwashing process meant to justify membership of that religious organization to the students and give them a semblance of superiority over members of other religious spheres. What does the polity gain from this? Not much.

## **Direct Political Participation**

Most post colonial religious leaders did not actively dabble in Politics but in the Nigeria of today, cases of religious leaders dabbling in politics or of political leaders publicly flaunting their religious affiliation for the sake of winning public opinion or swaying the public votes are rife. These activities are quite disgraceful. Examples of cases of actual direct participation in politics include the case of Chris Okotie, a Pentecostal church pastor who asserted that God personally told him to contest the election and that he would win and be sworn in. The funny thing was that he came out of the election process with woeful results. Another prominent religious leader was Prophet Olopade Agoro who also contested for the presidency and came out with disgraceful results. Other cases like this are presently rife within the Nigerian context.

The romance of Nigerian religious leaders with politics was never as intense as in the fourth republic when men of religion came out openly in support of Olusegun Obasanjo, a so-called born-again Pentecostal Christian. All through the years of Obasanjo's misrule, the celebrated Pentecostal community could only muster whimpers of protest at the audacity of that dubious man who hid under the cloak of a condescending religion. Before the controversial landslide election victory of Obasanjo in 2003, the president of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria, Mike Okonkwo, urged all Nigerians to vote once more for Obasanjo, since he was one of the folds. In fact, around that time, Enoch Adeboye of the Redeemed Christian Church of God likened Obasanjo to the prophet Elisha whom God had "specially ordained". This was just one in the unguarded forays of Pastor Adeboye into the murky waters of politics. This pastor openly anointing Olusegun Osoba as the only one fit for the government house when Osoba was seeking for the second term which he eventually lost. While all Nigerians were aghast at the effrontery of Obasanjo during the infamous third term debacle, it took the boldness of Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor in May 2006 to declare that "third term in office is not a crime". If wishes were spiritual horses, it would not have been a crime, only that the constitution did not allow it and Nigerians never wanted it.

The issue of General Muhammadu Buhari's, one of the presidential candidates *faux pas* in asking Nigerian Muslims to vote only for their fellow Muslims during the 2003 elections smacked of religious authoritarianism. Given the secular nature of Nigeria, this utterance is pointedly wrong and politically incorrect. Only a religious zealot will appeal to religious sentiments in the political game.

The country, though officially secular, now features religious rituals in public offices, institutions and functions. Churches and chapels compete with mosques in government houses and students' college hostels. In western Nigeria, many traditional rulers, once famed custodians of indigenous culture, are now acquiring a new identity as "born-again" kings and chiefs (G. A Akinola, History Department, University of Ibadan). A former head of state spends his retirement organizing prayers across the country, while the immediate ex-president proclaimed his born-again Christian status at every opportunity. All these were geared at influencing the populace on religious grounds. These pseudo activities only succeed in building schisms in the society, alienating the citizenry and mocking the deities they claim to serve.

## **Conclusion**

A close analysis of these activities shows that they contribute little or no positive gains to the polity. The contribution of religion to the African polity is usually psychedelic and personally psychological and this is more so in Nigeria. These pseudo activities represent a footnote in the passage of time as indicated on the calendar of the Nigerian public sphere. The theoretical underpinnings that colours the furtive and blatant incursion of religion into politics are many but of interest is the theory of secularization whose foundational argument is that modernization leads to a decline in religious practice and erodes religious beliefs. The so called civilization of Nigeria and the subsequent modernization arising from it has eroded the practice of religion and a significant part of the belief angle also. The fact that we one is in a secular state does not mean cannot practice one's religion sincerely. This is exactly the case in Nigeria in that all the religious spheres are just playing a role. The activities are so embedded in the cerebral cortexes of the adherents that they just act it out automatically. They portray a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. Most of them even practice synergism as a result of the primordial and atavistic tendencies buries deep in their DNAs. It is a thing of pride and identity enhancement to be a Muslim or a Christian. Beyond the tag and the pseudo activities, the religious entities are no better than social groups and are usually as unreliable as a sprained ankle to the society and its political process. If religion played a part in politics, why rig elections? All Nigerians are adherents of one religion or the other and the fact that the society is corrupt portrays that religion is just a fad which needs serious overhauling.

## **Recommendations**

The researcher recommends that morally sound actions should be the focus of these religious groups. The use of religion for political gains, or to incite violence must be denounced in unspeakable terms. Nigerian leaders need to build on successes rather than create divisiveness. Religion should be the chosen personal belief among peoples, must be untampered with from the state angle, such that religious personnel take care of soul and the spirit based on religious persuasions, while elected civilians take care of the businesses of governance in an honest manner."

It should be noted that the incursion of religion into politics is guaranteed to produce problems rather than solutions merely "believing" without a reinforcing and pragmatic ethic, does not produce lasting results, especially in the tragic mess that pervades life in the country today. It is suggested that religion be practiced in all sincerity while the same should be done for politics. Religious education should build morals and a vision of working towards

building a great country as a citizen first rather than as a Christian or Muslim. Religious excercerbations (riots, demonstrations) should be discouraged at all cost by the secular powers of the state and the purveyors should be subject to severe punishment.

Finally, the principle of returning to the “**ANCIENT LANDMARK**” is uppermost on the mind of this writer because things worked then. The efficacy of earth and iron in guaranteeing honesty during the swearing of oaths in courts and in political offices cannot be matched by the Bible or Qumran, and its’ introduction as a tie to the primordial deities of the land should be encouraged to ensure honesty equity and fairness in the Nigerian political process.

## References

- Bouchard T.J Jr, McGue M, Lykken D, Tellegen A. (1999) Intrinsic and extrinsic religiousness: genetic and environmental influences and personality correlates. *Twin Res. Jun;2(2):88-98.*
- Brink, T.L. (1993). *Religiosity: measurement.* in *Survey of Social Science: Psychology*, Frank N. Magill, Ed., Pasadena, CA: Salem Press, 1993, pp. 2096-2102.
- Christian Association of Nigeria Publicity, Northern Zone, *Leadership in Nigeria* (Kaduna, c. 1989).
- Cornwall, M., Albrecht, S.L., Cunningham, P.H., and Pitcher, B.L. (1986). The dimensions of religiosity: A conceptual model with an empirical test. *Review of Religious Research*, 27:226-244.
- Cyril Smith, (2005) *Karl Marx and Religion, Marx Myths and Legends*, March.
- Durkheim, Emile (1976) *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. London: George Allen & Unwin (in French 1912, English translation 1915).
- George A. Lindbeck, (1984) *Nature of Doctrine* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press), , 33.
- Harold Berman, (1993) *Faith and Order: The Reconciliation of Law and Religion* (Atlanta: Emory, 1993)
- Hill, Peter C. and Hood, Ralph W. Jr. (1999). *Measures of Religiosity*. Birmingham, Alabama: Religious Education Press. ISBN 0-89135-106-X
- James T. Kloppenberg, (2000) ‘Built by Association: What Tocqueville saw in the ethic of Reciprocity’ in *Religion and Values in Public Life* (Cambridge, Harvard College, 2000), pp. 16-21.

- John Rawls, (1996) *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia, 1996); Robert Audi & Nicholas
- Kirk K.M, Eaves L.J, Martin N.G. (1999) Self-transcendence as a measure of spirituality in a sample of older Australian twins. *Twin Res.* Jun;2(2):81-7. PMID: 10480742
- Koenig L.B, McGue M, Krueger R.F, Bouchard T.J Jr. (2005) Genetic and environmental influences on religiousness: findings for retrospective and current religiousness ratings. *Journal of personality.* Apr;73(2):471-88.
- Marx, Karl; (1844)"Introduction to A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right", *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, (1844).
- Musa A. B. Gaiya, (2005) *The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria*, a paper presented at the Centre of African Studies, University of Compenhagen, July, 2002
- Rosalind Hackett [ed.] (1987) 'New Religious Movements in Nigeria' [Lewiston, NY, The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987]
- Ruth Marshall, (1995) "*God is Not a Democrat: Pentecostalism and Democratization in Nigeria*" in 'The Christian Churches and the Democratization of Africa', Paul Gifford [ed.] [Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1995]
- Saler, Benson; (1990)"Conceptualizing Religion: Immanent Anthropologists, Transcendent Natives, and Unbounded Categories" ), ISBN 1-57181-219-9
- The Guardian*, January 30, 1997, pp. 10 -11.
- The Holy Bible, King James Version; New American Library (1974).
- The Koran; Penguin (2000), ISBN 0-14-044558-7.
- Weekend Concord*, May 15, pp. 2-3 for a full text of the prophecy.
- Winter T. Kaprio J, Viken R.J, Karvonen S, Rose R.J. (1999) Individual differences in adolescent religiosity in Finland familial effects are modified by sex and region of residence. *Twin Res.* Jun;2(2):108-14. PMID: 10480745
- Wolterstorff, (1997) *Religion in the Public Square: The Place of Religious Convictions in Political Debates* (Lanham, MD.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997)