



THE HISTORY OF SOME RELOGIO-ECONOMIC CRISES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This concrete paper is going to be giving a brief incidence of the crisis that involves religion, ethnic, Tribal, political or social-cultural, violence, riots of Religious and other related Crises in Nigeria after independence. History is the body of record that generations rely on, It is a document that normally tells what had happen in the past, and also is a light that brings into current situation, It is also. Like Literature that help to understanding the contemporary conditions of today and tomorrow or current and the future situation.

Keywords: *History, Relogio-Economic, Crises, Political, Social-cultural.*

Introduction:

The problem of the relationship between religion and politics is as old as man himself. Religion is here understood as man's response to his awareness of the existence of a supreme being who is his creator and how this response affects his relationship with other creatures. Politics is also understood as the art of acquiring power for the purpose of sharing resources. From the first moment of human consciousness and the subsequent awareness of the possibility of a Supreme Being, man has been saddled with the problem of having his actions determined and conditioned by the Supreme Being is real and that he orders the universe, and therefore human actions must be subject to divine command. Even those who accept the existence of this Supreme Being still have doubts as to whether all their actions. Would be rewarded The interesting things to note is that what started as a research for religious purification soon

become a search for a political kingdom. However, since religion was the basis for the establishment of the Caliphate, the hegemony of the ruling class (Hausa/Fulani) has been prefixed on the veneer of the Islamic religion. Significantly, Islam has remained the focal veneer for the legitimacy of the northern ruling class and consequently, its politicians have always prided themselves as soldiers for the defense of that faith. Thus since the Usman dan Fodio Jihad, claiming the fear of God, being a Bawan Allah (God servant) trust in Ikon Allah (the will of God), are prerequisites and major aspects of political and economic survival within the northern state have always been founded on the basis of religious commitment i.e. the Northern People's Congress (NPC) a conservative party which was led by the emirate ruling class, had Islam as its rallying points.

(Matthew Kukah), has noted when this Hausa-Fulani ruling class engage in political activities they do so within the limits of the concept of power in Hausa (Islamic) society, a concept guided by a hierarchically stratified society; with the emir at the top.

Post-Independence Crises (1960-1966)

What emerged on the political arena after independence was that most of the political leadership from the north was Muslims while those who were elected from the south were mostly Christians. Definitely, because of the diversity in work-views and operative value there occurred constant conflicts among the politicians as they competed for the achievement and protection of their interest The first major conflict arose on the issue of the Sharia Court for Nigeria let us begin first with the post-independence crises.

Religious crises in Nigeria both in the pre-independence period and between 1960-1966 were for the most part at the level of a cold war, characterized by external mutual respect but internal spite and disaffection. The mutual respect stemmed from the fact that none of the religious really knew the strength of the other. Thus the mutual tolerance was merely out of fear of the other and not any genuine respect. Each one respected the other from a distance and never dared to overstep its bounds. (Christian Muslim dialogue pp.196-197).

Kano riot (18th-19th December, 1980)

The December, 1980 Kano crises, because of its bloody nature and level of destruction has come to be referred to as the first religious and bloody riot in contemporary Nigeria. However, according to the report of the tribunal of enquiry setup after the 1980 riot, prior to the breakout in Kano, there had been over thirty violent incidents of religious riots in the northern states (Lagos F.G press report 1981 p.15) but these were nothing compared to the December, 1980 event. The central figure in the (1980 saga), Alhaji Muhammadu Marwa, who came to be known as Maitatsine, had a long history in Kano.

In response to the situation, President Shehu Shagari setup the justice Aniagolu commission to investigate the remote and immediate causes of the riot, apportion blame to the culprits, and proffer solutions to the problem of religious riots whatever were the findings and the solutions recommended, the implementation did not take immediate effect. (Journal of religious 1987, p.194) another uprising occurred at Bulunkutu in Maiduguri.

Bulunkutu Crises (26th October, 1982)

Two years after the Kano riot (Maitatsine), some of the members of the same group who had escaped to Maiduguri staged comeback in Bulunkutu. Their doctrine and methods of attack was quite similar to that of Kano in 1980. It started with intermittent skirmishes. The actual violent episode took place on 26th October; 1982 after a team of policemen had arrested some of the religious fanatics who were threatening the lives of the people in Bulunkutu. The fanatics perceived the arrest as a violation of the religious freedom of worship. In reaction, they attacked the police and members of the public (Yahaya, 2004), although the Bulunkutu riots is often classified among the intra religious riots. The truth is that the perpetrator's violence was against Muslim whom they consider unbelievers as well as against all non-Muslim whom they see as infidels and pagans.

The Military regime Crises of (1983-1985).

The Buhari military regime which overthrown the Shagari led civilian administration did not do much to allay the fears of non-Muslims,

especially given the peculiar nature of its composition and policies. Most of the members of the Supreme Military Council were either northern Muslims or Muslims from south. This structure made the regime scoffed of. The structure made Christian very uncomfortable. It was not only Christians that the regime offended. i.e by drastically reducing the number of intending pilgrims across religious crises. The religious riots that occurred during this period were for the most part political in nature. By 1984, the number of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca was reduced to 20,000 while this reduction was offensive to Muslims. On the other hand what made Christians unstable mine was the fact that the 20,000 Muslims pilgrims were each given eight hundred naira (#800.00) basic Travelling Allowance (B.T.A). (Chukwulozie, p.160).

While the Buhari regime was still contemplating ways of dealing with the dissatisfaction registered by the various groups in society against its administration, another face of the Maitatsine movement surfaced, this time in Jimeta, Yola.

The Jimeta Uprising (27th February, 1984)

After the Bulunkutu riot, those members of the Maitatsine Movement who survived the riot escaped to Jimeta, a ward in Yola, the capital of Gongola State (now Adamawa State). In Jimeta they stayed quietly while at the same time regrouping and learning new tactics. Two years after, an intelligence report suggested that they were becoming dangerous. The police were sent to arrest them, with well organized youths' team, the group gave the police tough time. The groups defense force was led by one Alhaji Musa Makanike, a mechanic from Gombe in Bauchi state. Many properties worth millions of naira was destroyed and over 50,000 inhabitants of Jimeta were rendered homeless. (the Journal of Religious, 1987, p.194).

The Maitatsine members who survived after Jimeta crises moved to Gombe in Bauchi state where they regrouped and in April, 1985 they launched an offensive, attack on the peaceful citizens.

Gombe Crises (29th April, 1985)

With the crushing of Jimeta riot, Musa Makanike who was in-charge of defence in the Jimeta uprising, moved to his hometown Gombe and settled

with a group of surviving members in Pantami ward. After a few months the neighbours and non members of the sect become apprehensive of the militant activities of the group. A report was made to the police who then moved into the fanatics to arrest them. Fighting ensued between the police and the group. (Journal of Religious, 1987).

From 1985 to the present, the Maitatsine riot has not re-occurred. However, while Maitatsine religious fanaticism conflicts seem to have been under control; other forms of religious crises were still rearing their ugly heads. One such conflict was that occasioned by the Organization of Islamic Conference membership questions:-

The Organization of Islamic Conference crises (January, 1986)

During the Babangida regime, information filtered out to the public that Nigeria had sought admission into the organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). This raised a lot of anxiety among Christians who now believed that the federal Government was systematically engaged in the progress of Islamizing the country.

A bitter controversy erupted between Christian and Muslims, the Christian based their arguments on the provision of the Nigerian Constitution which upholds the secular status of the nation and it could not and should not belong to such an organization. Muslims on the other hand argued that just as it is acceptable for Nigeria to maintain diplomatic relations with the Vatican, there was nothing wrong in it being a member of an organization that was essentially a cultural body with many economic advantages for the country. The Babangida administration was under pressure from both religious. Muslims were of the view that the administration was showing too much tolerance to Christian; and that backing out of the OIC would be a sign of weakness. Another problem from Muslim side was the appointment of the first time non-Muslim Managing Director of the powerful new Nigerian Newspaper Ltd of Col Yohanna Madaki as Governor of Gongola State and as if so added insult to injury. Col Madaki angered the Muslims by dismissing the powerful emir of Muri. The events shocked Muslim. As if all these were not enough in Kacia L.G.A in Kaduna state against the run of history. Brigadier Y. Y. Kure, a member of the armed forces ruling council from Kaduna South had for the first time removed the

dominance of traditional authority of Hausa Muslims by helping to install a non-Muslim as the new traditional ruler (Kukah, pp.185-186).

There was tension and suspicion between Christian and Muslims, Muslims saw Babangida as a weak Muslim and they were determined to fight the cause of Allah. Their immediate instrument of war was religious disturbance so in 1986 alone, there were four major interreligious conflicts crises and 1987 saw the emergence of what came to be known as the Kaduna crises, the first of the record.

Bauchi Religious riots (20-22 April, 1991), Of Tafawa Balewa

Indigenouship of Tafawa Balewa

With regard to the claim purported by Sayawa as being the original founders of Tafawa Balewa and not the Fulani, and their tagging of Hausa/Fulani as “settlers” going by history of the place which can never at all be changed or distorted by false claim or brute force.

It is a fact of Fulani claim being the original founders of Tafawa Balewa not further confirmed and reinforced by the fact that all the villages surrounding T/B from all directions are Fulani by indigene namely; Unguwar Rogo, Durum, Gandu, Tenam and Kocciyel Bululi from eastern part and Jakol, Yalwan Galadima Jaja, Yamgan, Gumel etc. from north part Hindi Unguwar Ruga, and Rafin Gimba by the west, Bulma Barangel, Panci pam and Nafada by the south Finally why was the town been named in Fulfulde and not in Sayawa dialect? Is there any written documents that reads the name of the town as “Pinji” as claim by Sayawa.?

The second authoritative history that claim the name of the area as Tafawa Balewa as settlers see (Memorandum to the secretary Northern province 1924) of which that contain the name of tribal groups existed in the area as **SNP/9/2485/1924** which is available in the National Archives, Kaduna.

The truth of the matter is that, the Muslim community in Tafawa Balewa has been witnessing incessant and intermittent attack from their southern neighbour (Sayawa) tribe who are predominantly Christians since 1958 (Shehu, S. 4). Despite the fact that Hausa Fulani dominated the land ownership upon which the Tafawa Balewa central primary School was built around 1918. Again it was the same people dominated the land within

which the Tafawa Balewa Local Government secretariat was built in 1978. (Shehu, 2001).

Another point was that the name Tafawa Balewa was derived from two corrupted Fulfulde (fulani) words Tafarri (Tafarre) meaning “rock” and Baleri (Baleji), spoken with an imploded “B” block. in the addition in the eighteenth century, a group of Fulani heard men had made their permanent settlement beside an impressive “Black rock” which was located seventy-four kilometer South-west of Bauchi town. (Shehu, S. 4)

On the other hand, report stated that, the sayawa i.e. ‘Zarr’ people are said to have settled in Tafawa Balewa in the 13th century, they settled at a place which they referred to as Puji derived from ‘Zarr’ word “Pus” meaning stone “ji” meaning Black, the two words put together “Pusji” meaning black stone, which later metamorphosed into Puji. James (2003:136).

Moreover (Musa, 1991:9) argued that the Hausa Fulani own Tafawa Balewa, that the Zarr (sayawa) come mainly from Bogoro district Bauchi emirate to claim Tafawa Balewa in 1969 and that they lack the majority in the town. Therefore the concept of ownership constitutes one of the long term causes of these crises, which later erupted in Tafawa Balewa.

The appointment of Yakubu as the first Emir and founder of Bauchi Emirate effect from the date Shehu’s letter of appointment reached him in 1807, the letter reads thus:-

“The reason for writing you this letter is to appoint you Emir over your people and upon all who wants to enter your community (Ummah). Then I order you to observe seven things:

- i. I order you to exert yourself in repairing Mosques
- ii. To acquire knowledge of Shari’a
- iii. and teach it to reform the markets by prohibiting that which is evil,
- iv. to wage the Jihad (NAK Edgar NOI, Saleh 2000:54).

It was the British rules therefore that salvaged the tottering Fulani clique which developed to become the northern oligarchy with acknowledged territorial areas of conquest and seemingly established region of political authority that was compounded by further jurisdictional claims of control in partially conquered and unconquered area in Bauchi Emirate which

extended their control to out laying areas. (Logans, 1984:48). This system was found best suited for the administration of the emirates because of their centralized, hierarchical political system. (Lugard, 1922:11).

This transformational process of the administrative structure brought about the creation of homologous districts with an emirate capital at Bauchi (TC, 1991:37).

According to Bukata (1991:6) the complete breakdown of law and order in Bauchi in April, 1991 was a response to the events in Tafawa Balewa which have remote and immediate causes. While according to Dauda (1999:55) it was a minor disagreement between a young Fulani and zarr (Sayawa) meat seller, as a result of bought some meat which the Fulani thought was beef from zarr (sayawa) meat seller only to be told by his friends that Zarr meat was pork, which Islam regard as haram (unlawful).

Another major crises that took place in June 1995 was as a political appointment given to Alhaji Ibrahim Musa Shamua of Hausa-fulani as a commissioner for Special duties in Bauchi State cabinet which was viewed by Zarr people as the highest point of insult and ridicule the zarr people after usurping their right. (Mike, 1995:12) .

To another source reported by Cannon (2001:2) < yet another civil disturbance engulfed Tafawa Balewa was on the concept of the “State religion” of Bauchi state launched “Shari’ah” state policy and Adabo (2001:16) was of the opinion that the arrival of Shariah judge who was posted to Tafawa Balewa June 4th 2001. Where on 15th June, 2001, the majority of Zarr felt displeased and were unsure of the situation.

The fundamental issue that brought about the crises in Tafawa-Balewa within two communities Hausa-Fulani and Sayawa into close resemblance is the dispute over ownership of the town. (Shehu S, 2001).

The above statement resemble what is currently happening in Palestine between Ismailias and Palestinians a number of houses, mosques and churches were put into ashes as it was the case in April, 1991.

As usual the time, the unfortunate and really sad incident took place the truth of the event has totally been kept away from the public (Shehu. S. 2001, p.11). In fact the only brief news items relayed in some of the foreign media organizations were strictly stage-managed and mischievously

distorted as for the local media nothing like that has featured except of course the (WEEKLY TRUST) coverage in its August 10-16, 2001 edition. On Friday 15th June, 2001 the same Sayawa Christian staged a violent demonstration in Tafawa-Balewa township chanting 'ba ma so' meaning we don't like Sharia (Shehu S. 2001, p.11).

Having chased the Muslims from the town they then set their houses ablaze. By Tuesday 19th June, 2001 (Shehu S. p.13), almost all Muslims houses and all Mosques both Juma'ah and non-Juma'ah were burnt down. With all these destruction, as if this was not enough, the militia advanced to the neighbouring Muslims villages east and north parts of the town, killed most of them and set those villages on fire. Prominent among the leaders were slaughtered more to say was on 25th June, 2001 (Monday) two Muslims brothers who went into the town to search for their aged grandparents were killed. These are Garba Abdu and Maiunguwa (Shehu S. pg.14).

The report shows that the years within which the crisis of Tafawa Balewa started and developed was 1958, 1970, 1977, 1995, 2001 and 2012 respectively.

The writer (Shehu-2000), says with sincerity that what usually pushes a person (a scholar or writer) into this kind of justices position is the ability to imbibe the Qur'anic principles of 'adl' and 'insaf' (fairness and objectivity in judgment and utterance). The Quran severally enjoins us to be just and fair in our dealing with people in whatever situation, and in any case, even if we differ with them in opinion or have some resentment toward them. Suratul al-Anaam (Q:6:152) and surah al-Ma'idah verse 8.

In 1977 without any provocation, Sayawa Christians in Tafawa-Balewa L.G.A, Bauchi State literally slaughtered the District head of Lere, Malam Abubakar Bawa.

Mr Kyauta (alias Kyankayso) who was released from prison after the 1977 mayhem was again the very person who spearheaded the 1991 Sayawa genocide against the Hausa/Fulani community in Tafawa balewa town. Over 160 Muslims were killed and the whole of the market (100%) was burnt down and over 20% of their houses, shops, mosques also razed to the ground (memo 2011 pg.14). Muslims community in Tafawa Balewa was displaced and their various families were forced to take refuge in

neighbouring towns and villages nearby i.e. Dass, Bununu, Liman Katagum and Bauchi town.

The Justice Babalakni Judicial Commission of Inquiry indicated the Sayawa Christians in three ways. First it States categorically that their attack on the Hausa Fulani community on 22 April in Tafawa Balewa “was confirmed to be premeditated” and that, “it thus appears to the commission that the Sayawa are a race of people who are always determined to use unorthodox means in solving their problems”, secondly the Commission identified nearly twenty persons that were found to be the champions and ringleaders of that genocide who are sayawa Christians and thirdly, it recommended the immediate dissolution of the Local Government Council which was then being headed by a Basayi Christian called Mr Habila Bako Lumana, because of his alleged superstition involvement and collaboration with his kinsmen. (Babalakin report pg.4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 22 and 24). Over the last two decades, the town has witnessed four (4) major ethno-religious crises in April 1991, July 1995, June 2001 and the latest on of January, 2011. (memo 2011/1432).

At the time of compiling the memorandum there is no single Muslim family living in Tafawa Balewa town and there is no single Muslim house that has not been burnt down. There is also no single Mosque in existence except the one in the Divisional Police Station.

Kafancon Disturbances

Whatever the ‘Justification’ the carnage in Kafanchan, Zaria and other parts of Kaduna State, is in-extensible in any civilized society. Nor is it permitted in Islam or Christianity. But then, all is fair in politics. Or so the organizers of the religious crises seem to think, they made abid for power, under the cover of religion. They lost the first and famous of the Kafanchan 1987 riot was as a result of uttered some uncomplimentary diatribes against the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) which as a result subsequently challenged by a lady in the congregation (1987) March 15th Sunday new Nigeria, which as a result several Mosques had been set on fire while Muslims residing in Kafanchan had been killed (1987, 8th March S.N.N).

The most surprising however was the coverage of these events in the media especially the Tribune and the Nigerian Standard by ignoring dead

bodies of Muslims and wounded ones. They reported only the attacks against Christians. They shut their eyes against burning Mosques, and houses of Muslims they saw only razed churches (1987) 17th March the New Nigerian Editorial.

Among the immediate causes of religious crises include the controversy over the Child Right Act, which fizzled out after the signing of the Bill into law by President Obasanjo in September, 2003. (2003, September, Weekly Trust).

One particular pattern of conflict however, kept recurring in Nigeria that is the ethno-religious type. In the initial stage may not necessarily be ethno-religious but in most cases, because of certain factors they assume that particular dimension. It may be purely economic at the initial cause, as in the case of simple relocation of a market (e.g. Zangon Kataf in 1992), or essentially protest against a social function (Memo, 2011/1432), like a reception organized for a newly appointed Commissioner by the Hausa/fulani community in Tafawa Balewa in 1995, or the election of a Local Government Chairman in Jos North in 2008. The same thing applies to the present post election violence under probe. Starting initially as a protest against perceived rigging of the presidential Election, later it degenerated into large-scale carnage indulging almost the whole of northern Nigeria 2011. In the southern part of Kaduna state it gave an opportunity and excuse to the so-called Christian indigenes for the execution of their long time sinister plan for the extermination of the Hausa/Fulani communities in that area. (Memo, 2011/1432).

This type of crisis, the ethno-religious, has been the most recurring decimal over the last three and quarter decades since it began in Kafanchan in 1987. It has also been the kind that usually precipitates reprisals across different regions in the country. The Massacre killing of Hausa/Fulani and other Muslims in Kafanchan in 1987 was precipitated in Kaduna metropolis, Zaria, Funtua and Katsina. The (R. B, 1991) Crisis in Kano for example generated reprisals across the South-East. The 2000 Anti-Shariah implementation Crisis in Kaduna South, and the reprisals in the south-south and the south-east especially in Oyo where a magnificent Jumu'ah Mosque was burn down in Afaha-oku. (Memo, 2011/1432) .

A similar attack on the Hausa /Fulani community in Shagamu in 2002 led to reprisals in Kano. Almost every region in the country has had its own share of ethno-religious crisis.

Since 1987 when the Christians first attacked their Muslims' neighbours in Kafanchan, there was hardly any year that came to pass without one or two skirmishes or disturbances in the region, where thousands exterminated communities, leaving behind thousands of orphans and widows. Imagine the situation in all these instances the Hausa/Fulani who are generally Muslims and other Muslims communities have not only been on the defensive but have been at the receiving end. (Memo, 2011/1432).

PROVOCATION OF MUSLIMS BY CHRISTIANS

It would appear from the records of the religious riots that, the Muslims were always on the offensive. But, it must be mentioned that Muslims are often provoked into violent action by offensive preaching by some Christians of evangelists. These brands of preachers are mainly from the new Christian Pentecostal Movements. It would be appropriate here to examine what the new Christian Pentecostal Movements are and what they stand for and why they are at the new Christian Pentecostal Movements. Coincided with the period when Muslim-Christian confrontation became fierce. This seems to suggest that there is a direct link between fundamentalism, Pentecostal, and evangelistic movement and Muslim-Christian Conflicts. The identify of the churches that were burnt by Muslims during the Kano October, 1982 Crisis seem to support this assumptions.

Institutional Religious Crises

Usman Danfodio University Sokoto Religious Crisis (3rd May, 1986). On 3rd May, 1986, the Students Union organized a gallant night to commemorate the achievements of Nana Asama, the daughter of Usman Danfodio. Among the events scheduled for the night was a Miss Nana Beauty Contest”.

For the Muslim Students Society (MSSN) it was absolute abomination to associate the name of Nana, a virtuous woman who was well clad in the time with the parallel of nude girls in the name of beauty contest. Therefore, a group of Muslims students stormed the scene of the festivities

in a bid to put an end to the abomination. They attempted to confiscate the stereo sets. As a result of the resistance from the organizers, fighting ensued. Finally, on 6th May, 1986, the Vice Chancellor, whose office was set ablaze by the fighting students, imposed dusk to-dawn curfew in the campus.

University of Ibadan Religious Crisis (5th May, 1988)

On the night of Monday 5th May, 1986, at the University of Ibadan, the statue of the risen Christ was burnt by an unknown arsonist. The statue was carved in 1954 by Ben Enwonwu and for years served as a reminder to Christians on campus that Christ who came and died for the sinful man has arisen.

There were speculations as to who the arsonists were. It was generally suspected that the Muslim students had done it. It was even being suspected that the vandalism was backed by some highly placed academics in the institution. However, whether the culprit will ever be known or not, one thing was certain, religious intolerance had reared its ugly head at the nation's premier centre of learning. The Christians protested to the federal Government but there was no positive response to that effect except the usual rhetoric of warning to "the disgruntled elements and enemies of peace who take the law into their own hands".

On 18th July, 1986, the Muslims Students Society demonstrated on Campus, leaving behind evidence of their march and destruction on the offices and halls of residence. Inscriptions such as "cross must be cancelled whole of the University. (Ibadan day star press 1986, p.27).

Ahmadu Bello University Religious Crisis (June, 1988)

In June, 1988 during the Students Union Elections in (ABU), violence erupted when it turned out that a Christian candidate would win the elections. Prior to the

Christian candidate, One Mr Stephen was quoted vote saying for Steve is a vote for Christ. In January, 1990 Christians in four northern towns protested against the marginalization of Christians in the country. Protestors carried Placards with inscriptions such as "we reject OIC"

“Islamization of the country is totally rejected”. (Concord, 13th January, 1990),

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