

# THE MANAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN WEST AFRICA: THE EXCEPTIONALISM OF THE WOLOF AND YORUBA IN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD.

Irene N. Osemeka<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D., University of Lagos, Nigeria.

Email: airen6031@yahoo.com

Recibido: 21 Marzo 2013 / Revisado: 12 Mayo 2013 / Aceptado: 9 Septiembre 2013 / Publicación Online: 15 Febrero 2014

**Resumen:** La prevalencia del pluralismo religioso entre los yoruba y wolof ha atraído la atención de los estudiosos, con énfasis en el sostenimiento de la convivencia pacífica en medio de la diversidad religiosa. En este trabajo se compara la gestión de la diversidad religiosa entre los wolof y Yoruba destacando los diferentes contextos sociales en que se gestiona. El wolof y Yoruba adoptó un enfoque sincretista de la religión de la época pre-colonial y la norma persiste a pesar de la introducción y la difusión del Islam y el cristianismo. Sin embargo, hay una necesidad de mantener la tendencia en el oeste de África, en vista de la creciente incidencia de conflictos violentos con connotaciones religiosas de la región.

**Palabras clave:** Religión, diversidad religiosa, el pluralismo religioso, wolof, Yoruba

## Introduction.

The significance of religion in human interaction is such that many aspects of human society is linked to religion. Besides, religion features prominently in issues on conflict management for several reasons. To begin with, there is a high population of people Worldwide who claim membership of at least one religion and religious institutions and leaders tend to promote actions that support peace. Nevertheless, experience has shown that religion is both an integrative and a disintegrative force. As religion provides the moral order and support for individuals and

groups, which is compatible with the morality desired in society, so are there religious traditions, tenets and teachings that legitimize uncooperative relations and violence. Uncooperative relations and violence between adherents of religious faiths emanate mainly from differences in doctrines, patterns of worship and conflicting interpretations of the holy books. As an example, although Christians share a common belief in Jesus Christ, issues such as *speaking in tongues* and baptism at birth rather than at adult age, are some of the reasons for the rift between the Pentecostal and the orthodox Christian denominations such as the Catholics, Methodists, Baptists and Anglicans. Similarly, relations between the Sunni and Shiites Muslims has been characterised by violence owing partly to issues of leadership and differences in patterns of worship.

Apart from conflicts between religious groups, economic and political conflicts often have religious connotations as demonstrated in some West African states. The Touareg conflict in Mali and Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria are some examples. Clearly, Islamic militant groups are involved in both conflicts and they desire to establish Islamic Republics within secular states, which is an indication of their fundamentalist inclinations. Nevertheless, other factors outside religion have been equally important. The Touareg rebellion of 2012 began in the early 1960's with the demand for independence by Touareg. The Touareg justify their desire based on ethnic differences between them and the Bamabara groups who control the government

of Mali. Other reasons for the revolt include the remoteness of the northern region from Bamako, the capital city located in the southern region, the lack of developmental efforts in the northern region and the exclusion of the Touareg from the political process.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Boko Haram crisis has been explained as part of the ploy by the northern elite to control the Nigerian polity through sustained violence by capitalising on the Muslim-Christian dichotomy in that part of the country. Other reasons for militancy in the country include the proliferation of arms in the West Africa region as well as the presence of a large number of unemployed youth. Thus, religion is not sufficient, as a single factor to explain most contemporary conflicts either concluded or ongoing in West Africa.

Religious pluralism has gained a new significance with globalisation as boundaries between states and continents have become more permeable to distant influences so that the world's population is increasingly acquainted to diverse religious faiths. Nearly all the living world religions ranging from the Baha'i Faith, International Krishna Consciousness to Soka Gakkai International have some form of representation in West Africa. Chris Arthur emphasized the link between globalisation and religious diversity when he stressed "we are living in a moment in history in which access to the different religions of humankind is of unparalleled range and depth"<sup>2</sup> Thus, there is need to continually understand the dynamics of managing religiously diverse communities with a view to contributing to their peaceful coexistence.

The paper focuses on relations between adherents of the various religions among the Wolof and Yoruba from the pre-colonial period. It examines the effects of Islam and Christianity on group relations in the colonial and post-independence period and proffers solutions that can strengthen religious co-existence among both groups and other West African groups who are largely similar in terms of their management of religious diversity.

### **1. Definition of Terms and Conceptual Clarification**

Numerous definitions of the term religion, exists and are replete with contradictions but they convey a meaning of religion to be that, which is concerned with man's belief and relationship with a superior being. According to John Hicks,

religion is "an understanding of the universe, together with an appropriate way of living within it, which involves reference beyond the natural world to God or gods or the Absolute or to a transcendent order or process."<sup>3</sup> Beyond this, Arnold Toynbee asserts that religion is an intrinsic trait of human nature and this explains Mircea Eliade's conviction that human religiousness is inevitable.<sup>4</sup> To buttress the view, Chris Arthur notes, "humankind has a deep concern with the sacred which is expressed in a multiplicity of ways and through different mediums."<sup>5</sup>

Religious pluralism and diversity are often used inter-changeably to refer to the wide array of religious faiths that exists. On the one hand, religious diversity emphasizes the differences in religious faiths while on the other hand religious pluralism focuses on the relationship between devotees of diverse religious faiths. Religious pluralism is synonymous with freedom of worship and expression but it centres more on the notion of, 'live and let live'. Therefore, religious pluralism demands participation and the focus is on the relationship between devotees of diverse religious faiths. It is based on this understanding that Diana Eck stressed that religious pluralism requires, "an energetic engagement with diversities".<sup>6</sup> This entails that all religious faiths are recognized as valid and correct but beyond a mere recognition, the validity and correctness of every religion within a polity must be expressed in daily social life. The definition of religious pluralism as stated in a study by the United Agency for International Development (USAID) harps on the factor of relationship because it is at the relational level that the validity of religious faiths can be better expressed. Religious pluralism is thus defined, "as respect for distinct religious and non-religious identities, active and positive relationships between different religious and non-religious communities and commitment across religious lines to building a healthy, diverse and shared society"<sup>7</sup>

The relevance of religion has become more apparent given the rise in violence related to religion and to a large extent, some kind of bipolarity based on the Muslim-Christian dichotomy is discernible in international relations especially after the 9/11 incident that led to the bombing of the Twin Towers in the United States of America.<sup>8</sup> This has generated a worldwide clamour for religious pluralism and understandably, the rise in the efforts to promote

inter-faith dialogue globally. Much as religious pluralism is relevant and perceived as a panacea for the prevention of violence in multi-religious communities, there have been arguments to the contrary. For instance, Peter Berger opines that religious pluralism may reduce religious participation and vitality because adherents of a given religious faith are more open to a variety of beliefs, which is likely to weaken belief in their own religion. On the other hand, Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, advocates of the rational choice theory or the supply-side model of religious pluralism hold a different view. They state that competition between religious groups will lead to an increase in the quality and quantity of religious goods and the high consumption of religious goods will ultimately increase religious participation and vitality.<sup>9</sup>

Stark and Finke's postulation is applicable to the trend in West Africa's religious sphere particularly in the post-independence period. The region has witnessed an increase in religious activity especially with the emergence of Pentecostal churches. The Pentecostal churches have transformed church activities and Christians have adopted overt forms, in expressing their faith. The transformation has spread to the orthodox churches as they all compete for a larger share of the Christian population. Consequently, the Catholic, Methodist and Anglican churches have incorporated some worship patterns generally associated with the Pentecostal Christians. This is evident with the emergence of charismatic groups who have adopted similar patterns of worship as the Pentecostal Christians. At the same time, the Pentecostal churches have also introduced some patterns of worship that were associated with orthodox churches such as the administration of the Holy Communion and the singing of hymns. Crusades, revival, anointing, deliverance and healing services are regularly organised by Pentecostal churches and this attracts a large number of followers. There have also been an increase in adverts to promote religious programmes on television and radio while monthly and weekly church meetings have become the norm. In addition there is a widespread use of "Pentecostal parlance". A few of such expressions include, *It is well with you, Journey mercies, You are blessed*. Apart from the common use of such expressions, it has become fashionable to paste stickers on cars, in homes and offices containing quotations from the Bible, short lines of prayer or just simply the name of a Church.

Unarguably, the transformation that accompanied Pentecostalism boosted religious participation among the communities in many parts of West Africa but the increased religious vitality has had its drawbacks. The development is been cited as one of the factors for the rise in Islamic militancy and violence in parts of northern Nigeria, which was considered a Muslim enclave.<sup>10</sup> It implies that the supply-side model could be disruptive if applied to situations where one religion and its devotees had enjoyed prominence in a given region, so that religious vitality could arouse resentment of others outside that religious group and lead to conflicts.

A pluralist view of religion that has been widely criticized, yet acknowledged for its potential to harmonize the contradicting religious views, is the pluralist hypothesis propounded by John Hicks. Hicks asserted that although religions are distinct and convey conflicting truth-claims they are different human responses to one Divine or Ultimate Reality, which he also refers to as, 'Real'. Hicks, was profoundly influenced by Immanuel Kant who distinguished between an entity as is and what it is perceived to be. Inspired by the view, Hicks asserted that there is a distinction between the Real as it exists and what it is, in diverse religious traditions. By implication, different religious faiths are authentic manifestations of the Real.<sup>11</sup> The pluralist hypothesis by Hicks has generated contrary opinions and one of which is the probability that it may weaken the doctrines of exclusivity, which is central to the existence of many world religions such as Christianity and Islam. There is no doubt that Hicks desired some kind of uniformity for the world religions by stressing that the Divine Reality is one and is the ultimate source of all religious experience. However, as Gellar rightly pointed out, most world religions are exclusivist in orientation and each religious group is convinced of its own unique perception of salvation, which is irreconcilable with those of others. He notes, "Christianity and Islam have historically embraced doctrines of salvation that excludes non-believers, affirm the inferiority of other religions, and refer to sacred texts as the word of God and the source of religious authority."<sup>12</sup> Doctrines of this nature are likely to hinder peaceful relations between adherents of diverse religions and the emergence of fundamentalist religious groups in West Africa and their acts of intolerance are proof of the damaging effects of religious exclusivity. As much as it cannot be

denied that the region has experienced pockets of violence inclined to religious differences, it is safe to assert the existence of harmonious co-existence between diverse religious groups in West Africa. This is not what obtains elsewhere. In many countries, individuals and groups are not free to practice the religion of their choice. To cite a few examples, Islam is the only religion tolerated in Saudi Arabia. The Baha'i in Iran are persecuted, so are the Ahmadi in Pakistan, the Buddhists in Tibet and the Falun Gong in China owing to their religious faiths, which differ from those of the majority in their respective countries.

## 2. Religious Pluralism in West Africa

Religion like ethnicity, are core attributes of identity in West Africa. A majority of the population define themselves using ethnic group and religion as criteria. As such, religion has a great influence on practically all aspects of life. The predominant religious groups in the region are Muslims, Christians and worshippers of African Indigenous Religion (IAR). The other religious groups present in the region are the Bhudists, Sikhists and smaller religious faiths from Asia.

**The Table Below Shows the Percentage in Population Distribution of the Major Religious Groups in West Africa<sup>13</sup>**

Country	Christianity	Islam	African Traditional Religion
Benin	42.8	24.4	32.8
Burkina Faso	23	61	16
Cape Verde	99	0	1
Cote D'Ivoire	32.6	38.6	28.8
Gambia	9	90	1
Ghana	69	15.6	15.4
Guinea	10	85	5
Guinea Bissau	10	50	40
Liberia	85.5	12.2	2.2
Mali	5	90	5
Mauritania	0	100	0
Niger	4	90	5
Nigeria	48.2	50.4	1.4
Senegal	5	94	1
Sierra Leone	21	77	2
Togo	48	14	38

The table above shows the disparities in the distribution of religions in West Africa and this is closely related to the colonial history of each of the territories and the policies adopted by each colonial administration as it concerned religion. The analysis of the distribution of religious groups has been treated elsewhere and the table above serves to illustrate the diverse religions in West Africa.

The indigenous African Religion (IAR) or African Traditional Religion (ATR) is used here to refer to forms of religion that evolved among the indigenous communities before the introduction of Islam, Christianity and other religious genre that were alien to the indigenous people. Indigenous African Religion is based on the belief in a supernatural being or a Creator and in smaller gods, deities and spirits.

Ancestral worship is also an important aspect of indigenous religion as it is the belief that the dead continue to play a significant role in the life of the living. The IAR is generally assumed to be homogenous because of the similarities and affinities between different belief systems but as Adogame argued, indigenous religion has many variants that are localized and are "often shaped by particular ethnic groups, power structures and even the characteristics of natural phenomenon in each locality".<sup>14</sup>

Despite the diverse forms of indigenous African religion, Africans have always exhibited a syncretistic approach to religion and this trait is replicated among the West African communities. It is customary to worship several deities and identify with different ones other than those associated with one's family, clan or

community. The syncretistic approach is based on the belief that the worship of each deity or god is necessary for the good of the individual and the community and as such, all are equally important. Similarly, Parrinder agreed, “the African is accustomed to the sight of a variety of cults, to any of which he may go in time of need”.<sup>15</sup>

Islam was introduced to the West African people from North African Berbers and Arabs from about the 9<sup>th</sup> Century, through trade and conquest. Islam reached a majority of the population parts of northern West Africa from this period but spread southwards following the Jihads of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Despite the introduction of Islam, the syncretistic approach to religion continued and many aspects of indigenous religion were incorporated into Islam. This was possible, partly because indigenous religion and Islam share similar traditions. To buttress the assertion, Crowder asserted, Africans converted readily to Islam partly because, “Islam tolerated polygamy and was permissive about magic”.<sup>16</sup>

Just like Islam, Christianity was also an alien religion in West Africa. The religion reached the West Africa region from the 15<sup>th</sup> Century when European missionaries began to settle in the coastal areas. From this period, Christian missionaries began to proselytize among the coastal dwellers but it was from the 19<sup>th</sup> century that Christianity began to spread in earnest in the West African region. Although in many parts of West Africa, Christian missionaries worked closely with the colonial administration, in other areas such as Mali, Senegal, northern Ghana, northern Nigeria and northern Sierra Leone, Islam was rather encouraged as it had been well entrenched among the people prior to the arrival of Europeans. For instance, the French parleyed with Muslim leaders in Senegal and as a result, they played an important role in French colonial administration and economy. In particular the Mouride brotherhood which was founded by the Wolof, contributed to Senegal’s groundnut economy through the supply of labour for the peanut and cotton farms. Through this avenue, a majority of labourers converted to Islam especially as the Mourides emphasized that heaven is the reward for work done on earth. Moreover, because the French colonial government identified strongly with the Muslim leadership, Islam spread widely in many parts of the French West African territories including

Mali, Guinea and Gambia during the colonial period.<sup>17</sup>

The religious sphere in West Africa became more diverse with the introduction of Islam and Christianity and the diversity posed a threat to indigenous religion. There were efforts by Muslim and Christian missionaries to discourage adherence to IAR, which was considered the religion of heathens and dismissed as paganism. One major consequence of the condemnation of indigenous religion was the depletion of its devotees who converted in large numbers to either Islam or Christianity. As indigenous religion diminished in stature, so did Africans evolve ways to adapt to the new religions and this led to the retention of many of the indigenous religious traditions. Although it became fashionable to admit to be a Muslim or a Christian patronage of the cults, priests and worship of deities continued secretly. Another form of adaptation by Africans to Islam and Christianity was the incorporation of many elements of IAR into each of the new religions. The incorporation of IAR into Islam and Christianity was visible in the Native African churches where they combined traditions of European churches with African traditional religion. The Native African churches were built around Prophets, the interpretation of dreams, prophecies, African music and instruments such as drums and dance. Crowder cited the example of King Prempeh I’s funeral in Kumasi during which indigenous and Christian religious practices were observed simultaneously.<sup>18</sup>

The culture of mixing religious traditions has remained the norm in post-colonial West Africa. It is customary for a marriage ceremony to begin with the observance of some indigenous traditions in many parts of West Africa. Other aspects of such a ceremony will be celebrated in a Church or at a Mosque as well. As an illustration, the *Igbankwu* (*wine carrying*) among the Igbo of eastern Nigeria is part of the procedures observed during a marriage ceremony. It entails the presentation of assorted brands of drinks including palm wine, gin and Kola nut from the groom’s family to that of the bride. This is one in a series of activities observed before the exchange of marital vows takes place in a church. The *kalangu* is a traditional dance performed by friends and relations of a comparable age to a groom is part of the marriage procedures observed by the Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria who are predominantly Muslims.

Apart from marriages, the syncretistic approach to religion is expressed in other forms of social activity. Generally, there are activities that are observed during a funeral in Igbo land. Services are held in a church to pray for the deceased but the funeral of a Chief or a member of an indigenous religious cult entails the observance of some indigenous religious practices. Some of the practices include the sacrifice of animals, the offering of food, kolanut and libation to appease the relevant gods and deities. In some cases, the *Okanga*, (a form of dance exclusively performed male members of the community), is performed around the town to indicate the high status of the dead who is often a Christian. It is also the custom among the Igbo to perform a second burial rite, which enables a deceased connect with ancestors in the spirit world.

The *New Yam* festival is popular among many of the forest groups in West Africa. Again, the festival is celebrated to appreciate the goddess of the earth who is believed to be responsible for the fertility of the land. Animals such as goats and chickens are offered as sacrifice and special meals are prepared with prayers offered by the traditional rulers but it is also marked in churches with some tubers of yam presented to the Priest, or the Reverend. Among the Diola, who are mainly Catholics, initiation ceremonies are performed in the *Sacred Bush*, which are secluded forests reserved for such exercises.<sup>19</sup> In sum, religious pluralism has remained the norm in many parts of West Africa. Nevertheless, while there are fundamentalist leanings noticeable among religious groups, the region has not experienced religious violence of a significant scale except for some parts of northern Nigeria and Mali.

### 3. Origin of the Wolof and Yoruba

The Wolof makes up about one third of the Senegalese population, estimated to be about 11 million. They are the largest ethnic group in Senegal and dominate the government and economy of the country. According to traditions of origin, the Wolof migrated to their present location from the northern part of Africa and trace their origin to the Tokolor cleric N'dandan N'diaye. The Wolof inhabits the northwestern part of Senegal and are mainly concentrated in the northern parts of Dakar and Thies. Over 90% of the Wolof are Muslims. The Christians and worshippers of IAR, make up 10% of the population.<sup>20</sup>

The Yoruba inhabit the southwestern region of Nigeria and belong one of the three major groups in the country. There are many accounts of the origin of the Yoruba but Oduduwa is believed to be their mythical ancestor who migrated originally from Mecca. The Yoruba have many sub-groups such as the Ekiti, Ondo, Ibadan, Egba and Egbado, Ijebu and many other Yoruba sub-groups trace their ancestry Oduduwa. In terms of religion, the Yoruba are mainly Muslims and Christians and like the Wolof, they practice diverse forms of indigenous religion.<sup>21</sup>

### 4. Wolof and Yoruba: A Comparative Analysis of the Management of Religious Pluralism

The prevalence of religious pluralism among the Wolof and Yoruba in the post-independence period can be partly traced to the nature of indigenous African religion as was the practice from the pre-colonial period. The Yoruba and Wolof like other Africans had always exhibited a syncretistic approach to indigenous religion. Adherents of specific deities were distinct among the Yoruba but it was customary to consult several deities. Fadipe, confirmed the assertion when he stated, "there is hardly any family in whatever part of Yoruba land, who worships only one Orisa (deity)."<sup>22</sup>

There are contentions as to what period Islam was introduced to the Yoruba but the debate has been the subject of discourse elsewhere. Accounts by Falode, Peel and Gbadamosi place the period between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries but it was after the Jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio in 1804 that the religion became widespread particularly in northern Yoruba land.<sup>23</sup> Despite the conversion to Islam, the syncretistic attitude to religion remained. Yoruba Muslims incorporated indigenous religious traditions into the Islamic religion while worshippers of indigenous religion followed suit. The mutual borrowing from Islam and indigenous religion was possible partly because both religions share similar traditions such as divination and polygamy.

Similarly, Christian missionaries began to proselytize in Yoruba land from about the 16<sup>th</sup> Century but Christianity became widespread from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century following active evangelism by the Church Missionary Society (CMS), Methodist and Baptists.<sup>24</sup> Initially, the

British colonial administration did not encourage the growth of Islam in Yoruba towns. As an example, public call to prayer was not permitted in Lagos until the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Gbadamosi notes that Muslim festivals were not celebrated as public holidays until the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>25</sup> Much as this represented initial disregard for Muslims by the British colonial government, there were instances that portrayed their amity, which could be attributable to the steady growth of the Muslim population and their growing influence in Yoruba society.

The British began to consider the needs of the Muslim Yoruba in the developmental programmes and were willing to overlook their religious views, which opposed those of the colonial administration that was Christian in orientation. There was the Ordinance of 1887, which stated that no child in a public school could receive religious instructions to which the parents objected and the policy served as an inducement for Muslim parents who were wary of sending their children to British schools for fear of being Christianized.<sup>26</sup> Besides, three Government Muslim Schools were established in Lagos, Epe and Badagry between 1896 and 1898. The establishment of the schools was the initiative of C.A Maloney and S. G. Carter who were governors of the colony of Lagos at various times. These schools were models that retained Muslim religious education and expanded their curriculum to accommodate English Grammar and Arithmetic. Beyond the sphere of education, the British maintained good relations with the Muslim community. In 1894, the then governor of Lagos, Sir Gilbert Carter was one of the dignitaries at the opening ceremony of the Shitta-Bey Mosque in Lagos and to further express government's liberal stance, a dinner was held in the government house to mark this historic event.<sup>27</sup>

The British were also interested in the peaceful relations among the Muslims and as such, they were involved in the settlement of conflicts between the Muslim groups in Lagos, Epe and Ijebu at various times.<sup>28</sup> In all, the adoption of a tolerant attitude to Muslims indirectly fostered good relations between them and the Muslims on the one hand and between the Christians and their Muslim kiths and kin on the other hand. In any case, such official gesture only served to intensify the pattern of religious coexistence that had long been the tradition of the Yoruba. Again, continued adherence to many aspects of

indigenous religion by the Yoruba communities regardless of their new religious affiliations, provided a common ground for cooperative relations between them and this factor has remained an important source of Yoruba identity and intra-group cooperation.

The attitude of the Wolof to religion in pre-colonial times was similar to that of the Yoruba. The Wolof worshipped numerous deities, spirits and natural phenomena but in contrast, Islam permeated Wolof homeland extensively and the Islamic influence of Muslim Berber groups from North Africa with whom they share land and sea borders continued even during the colonial period. Clearly, the predominance of Islam among the Wolof undermined the efforts of Christian missionaries who began to proselytize in Senegal's coastal towns from about the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The efforts of the Christian missionaries was less than successful as a majority of the Wolof had long converted to Islam centuries preceding European contact and they resisted efforts at conversion to Christianity, which they felt was the religion of infidels. The Christian missionaries however gained a few converts among the Serer, Lebou and Diola people of Senegal rather than the Wolof.<sup>29</sup>

Unlike the Yoruba, the establishment of French colonial rule did not diversify religion in Wolof society significantly. Instead, Islam gained ascendancy during the colonial period. As the French encouraged western education, so were Madras (Arabic schools) established particularly in the four communes of St Louis, Dakar, Gore and Rufisque. Furthermore, Muslim religious leaders (Marabouts) gained prominence under the French colonial administration. They were used as agents of the colonial administration so that the Islamic religion featured prominently in an administration that was French and Christian in orientation.<sup>30</sup>

The important role that Muslim leaders played in the colonial administration led to an increase in the population of Muslims. More importantly, Marabouts-French alliance encouraged the evolution of a culture of accommodation between religious groups. The display of religious accommodation was exhibited in the cordial relations that existed between the French colonial administration and Muslim leaders and between African Muslims and Christians. For the most part, relations between the Wolof and their Serer and Lebou neighbors who converted

in large numbers to Christianity remained harmonious. Relations between the groups, was such that many non-Wolof speaking groups readily adopted Wolof as a language of communication.

The colonial contexts differed between the Wolof and Yoruba to some extent, but the outcomes were similar as it concerned religious co-existence. A major difference was that Christianity and Islam flourished simultaneously in Yoruba land while Islam was further entrenched among the Wolof and their Tokolor and Fula neighbors.

### 5. A Comparative Analysis of Religious Pluralism between the Yoruba and Wolof in the Post Independence Period

Many aspects of the social life of the Yoruba and Wolof exhibit the prevalence of religious pluralism after independence and this was partly because religious syncretism had long been the norm of the people and the favorable disposition of the colonial administration to religion. Although, the French and British were initially antagonistic to Islam and indigenous religion, they adopted a more tolerant disposition over time, for administrative convenience.

Some comparison can be made between the social structure of the Wolof and Yoruba and the effects of Islam and Christianity on indigenous institutions. A Wolof village is made up of related residential groups called, *Ker*, headed by, *Borom ker*. The divisional heads are known as, *Laman*. However, the *Mnqqaddan*, *Yeliman* (Imam) and *Serin e* (marabouts) are Muslims leaders who also serve exercise political authority. Besides, even the offices of the *Borom ker* and *Laman* that originated from traditional society have acquired an Islamic orientation.<sup>31</sup>

The social structure of the Yoruba does not differ from those of the Wolof in terms of the roles performed by the traditional rulers but rather, it reflects substantial elements of indigenous religion. Traditional rulers at all levels of leadership including the *Kabiyesi* (King) *Baale* (clan head/village chief) who have embraced Islam or Christian religion also play important roles in indigenous religion. For instance, a procession to the Kings palace is part of the ritual that marks the commencement of a festival. The practice is not merely a formality but it is observed to bestow the blessing of Orisa

(deity) upon the ruler who may claim to be a Christian or a Muslim. It is a common practice among the Yoruba to have representatives of the most important cults in the palace and there are many chiefs, who are both cult members and also Christians or Muslims. Isidore Nwanju observed, "such titles as Oba or Chief in different Yoruba towns were taken with little or no reference to the Muslim community".<sup>32</sup>

Prayer is a central feature of many religions and this is a key activity in Islam and Christianity. Most adherents often consult their religious leaders owing to their expertise and knowledge of the Holy books or in the case of IAR, expertise in the procedures for the worship of a given cult or deity. Again, an observation of the composition of prayer shows the flexibility with which adherents have borrowed from the religious faiths of each other. Among the Yoruba, the Ifa priest (Diviner) would offer prayers to a deity asking holy Michael, the archangel in the Bible for support. In same vein, Alufa's (Muslim clerics) have a long list of Christian clients and Christian Pastors are consulted for prayers by numerous Muslim clients.<sup>33</sup> Prayer among the Wolof also reveals an admixture of religious traditions. The Marabouts offer prayers as Muslim leader and acts as a diviner for Christians, Muslims and worshippers of indigenous religion.

Just as Christian and Muslim leaders offer their service to members outside their religious group, the priests of the IAR also do the same and often they have Muslim and Christian clients. The *Babalawo* (Diviner and traditional priest) among the Yoruba prepares charms for protection from harm. He also offers a wide range of services including divination and purification rituals. The *Jabarkat* can be compared to the Yoruba *Babalawo* (traditional religious priest). The *Jabarkat* prepares amulets containing roots and plants that are carried by individuals as a form of protection from evil spirits and witches. The amulet prepared by the *Jabarkat* serve as additional protection to the amulets prepared by the Marabouts that contain verses from the Quran.<sup>34</sup> Other indigenous practices that are still observed by the Wolof, is the placing of charms and amulets that contain Quranic verses, in homes and in business premises. The placing of the photograph of the founder of one's brother hood is a tradition among the Wolof. It is common to find the photograph of Muslim leaders such as Malick Sy or Ahmadou Bamba on commuter buses and in business places and

on walls in homes. However even with so much public display of their adherence to Islam and the traditions associated with it, some aspects of indigenous religion are observed by the Wolof. As an example, the rain dance by Wolof women is still practiced in some rural communities. The dance is performed if a prayer offered for rain at the Mosque fails. Another trend among the Wolof is their deep belief in spirits. Such beliefs are expressed in many practices. As an illustration, it is considered a taboo for a pregnant woman to work the field to avoid a poor harvest. The Wolof also believe that sacrificing a chicken will ward off the evil powers of a witch while there is a deep conviction that spirits and malevolent men control supernatural forces.<sup>35</sup>

Festivals are a common feature of both the Yoruba and Wolof communities. However, most festivals in Yoruba land revolve around indigenous African religion, Islam and Christianity while Muslim festivals are conspicuous among the Wolof. Apart from Christian and Muslim festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Eid Al Fitri, Eid Al Kabir and Eid Al Maulud, indigenous religious festivals are still an important aspect of Yoruba society. Some of the popular festivals are Eyo, Osun and Oro festival. The Eyo festival is celebrated annually among the Lagos Yoruba. The Osun Oshogbo is marked annually in Oshogbo and has traditionally been a major attraction of tourists from near and wide. All of these festivals involve the performance of rituals to deities and often, they are opportunities for devotees to nurture their link with the ancestors and to appease them for fertility, healing and the reversal of all manner of predicaments.<sup>36</sup> It is common to find dignitaries who have embraced either Islam or Christianity at such festivals. According to Fasheun, “the Yoruba have come to realize that adherence to Islam or Christianity does not prevent them from worshipping the gods of their fore fathers”.<sup>37</sup>

The most popular festivals among the Wolof are the Eid Al Fitri and Eid Al Kabir and Eid Al Maulud. Other festivals associated with Islam are those that are celebrated annually in remembrance of the founders of brotherhoods. As such, it is customary for a Wolof to be a member of a brotherhood and a large number of them belong to the Mouride Brotherhood. To the Mourides, the performance of an annual pilgrimage (Magal) to Touba, 48 days after the Islamic New year, is considered an important

event in one’s life. The Magal known as ‘Africa’s Mecca’, compliments the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina.<sup>38</sup>

Marriage is another aspect of social relations that can be used to evaluate the degree of religious tolerance between the Wolof and Yoruba. Marriages are considered important avenues for sustaining cooperative relations within and between groups. While marriage to members outside one’s ethnic group is a common practice, it is often restricted to members of the same religious group in many parts of the West Africa. Religious, class and ethnic differences are some of the reasons why marriages are not allowed between partners. For instance, many among the Christian community in Nigeria do not willingly accept a marriage between individuals who belong to different Christian denominations or between them and Muslims. The same is true for Muslims particularly in northern Nigeria where marriage between a Muslim girl and a Christian male is considered a sacrilege. Thus, for many of the groups in West Africa, including the Yoruba and Wolof, marriage within the religious group is often preferred. With regard to the Wolof, marriage between members of the same caste is further preferred. In the past, marriage was limited to members of the same caste among the Wolof but this has become less important especially among the urban dwellers. Inter-marriage between Wolof and other Senegalese groups is a common practice but there are more couples of the same religion and usually they are Muslims. On the other hand, marriage between Yoruba Christians and Muslims is common. There are several of such families among the Yoruba and this explains why there are many Yoruba families with Christian and Muslim members in comparable proportions.

A point of comparison between the Wolof and Yoruba is the high degree of religious admixture that has become the practice at occasions such as naming and wedding ceremonies. However, there are some striking differences between the two groups. It is common in Yoruba land to have Christians and Muslims of both sexes sit together at ceremonies such as marriages, funerals and the naming of a newborn child. Often, there is no delineation in the sitting arrangement between the sexes nor are their religious affiliations a cause for concern. Most importantly, aspects of indigenous religion are observed irrespective of one’s religious belief. Items such as honey, salt, red palm oil, kola nut,

alligator pepper and fruits are used in the course of prayer at such occasions. Such indigenous customs are observed by both Muslims and Christians and the presence of an Imam (Muslim cleric), a Pastor or Reverend often indicates the religious identity of the celebrants.

Just like the Yoruba, there are procedures that indicate the retention of indigenous practices particularly at occasions such as marriages, naming ceremonies and funerals. One example is the conduct of naming ceremony of a child, also referred to as *Nggentée* among the Wolof. This is performed according to Islamic traditions but rituals specialists are involved particularly among the rural Wolof. One aspect of indigenous religious tradition that has survived among the Wolof is the placing of a knife under the pillow of the new born to protect the newborn child from evil spirits and witches. Another aspect of indigenous religious practice that is still observed by rural Wolof dwellers is circumcision. The practice is also referred to as *Xaraf* or *Jongu* in Wolof language. Young boys who have attained the age of 12 are circumcised by blacksmiths and ritual specialists. Circumcision of young boys involves their exclusion from the other members of the family. The boys are kept in special rooms where they are taught the values of courage, patience, gratitude and decency among others. In the past, circumcised boys would also be initiated into some magical practices.<sup>39</sup> Traditional circumcision is fast giving way to western styled circumcision, which is performed in hospitals within a few days of a child's birth particularly among Wolof dwellers in urban communities.

The mode of dressing is one way of identifying the religion of an individual or a group of people but also, it influences social relations between members of diverse religious faiths. There is a tendency for individuals to be more acceptable to people of the same religion because of their attire, which is in conformity with that prescribed by that religion and therefore, it is in part a means of gauging one's piety. Similarly, the mode of dressing may indicate one's fundamentalist stance or liberality and may influence relations either positively or negatively between adherents of different religions. While these are important in daily social relations in some Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia, it has not deterred harmonious relations among the diverse religious groups in Wolof and Yoruba communities.

The Wolof are generally known to have a high dress sense and their women are considered among the most fashionable along the West African coast.<sup>40</sup> Likewise, Yoruba women have a high dress sense. They pay great attention to their apparel especially on social occasions. There is a deliberate effort to exhibit a colour scheme in their dressing. It was among the Yoruba that the use of a uniform fabric to make attires worn (*Aso-ebi*) by friends and relatives at social functions such as weddings and funerals, gained popularity in Nigeria.

Generally, the style of dressing among both groups have been influenced by their religious beliefs and it is common to find Christian Yoruba adorned in western styled suits with men in suits and women wearing hats and berets on Sundays. The Muslim women also can be identified with the *hijab* (hood) and the men with turbans. Nonetheless, the wearing of a veil by Yoruba women is not rigidly observed and veiled women tend to relate amicably with the unveiled women who may be Christians or Muslims. A similar trend was observed among the Wolof. Alexander Thurston in a related study observed, "it is common to find women in Dakar wearing western garb, praying alongside veiled women in the mosque without attracting a hostile glance while both the veiled and unveiled women interact amicably".<sup>41</sup> However, an observation of Wolof communities indicates the heavy influence of Islam on their dress styles. It is more common to find a majority of the women wearing the *Boubou* (long flowing dresses) with headscarves while men appear in long flowing gowns.

There are some norms among the Senegalese and the Wolof in particular which tend to foster peaceful coexistence between distinct religious groups. The Wolof, are an ethnically conscious people and would often speak Wolof language to non-Wolof speaking people. Notwithstanding, the Wolof relate amicably with people outside their religious fold. This is often traced to the concept of *Teranga*: a concept that places hospitality to strangers as an important aspect of human relations.<sup>42</sup> A visitor to Dakar would observe that the people are generally hospitable and ones religious belief does not count. To a reasonable extent, a Christian worshipper does not feel threatened nor treated in a manner that causes uneasiness. The importance attached to the concept of *Teranga* by the Wolof partly explains the adoption of Wolof by many non-speaking Senegalese (Wolofization). French is

Senegal's lingua franca but it is spoken by about 30% of the Senegalese population. Instead, Wolof language is spoken by at least 70% of the population and has become Senegal's indigenous lingua franca.<sup>43</sup>

The Wolofization phenomenon is also reflected in other aspects of acculturation. It is common to find Wolof names among their Serer and Lebou neighbors and vice versa. Besides, religious traditions that are associated with Wolof Muslims are readily adopted by others outside their ethnic group and religious denomination. This further demonstrates how religious pluralism operates in that society. A Christian Serer or Lebou living in Dakar would often relish a little cup of *Café Touba*, which is a local brew of herbs believed to have spiritual attributes. The café is sold in little glass cups on the streets of Dakar and served hot. The herbs originate from Touba: a town where thousands of Mouride Muslims, mainly Wolof, perform the holy pilgrimage.<sup>44</sup> Despite the air of religious freedom among the Wolof, churches are fewer in number than mosques and almost none may be found in many rural areas. The result is that a Christian worshipper is unlikely to find a place of worship whereas mosques are prominent features of the landscape in Wolof homeland.

The Yoruba have a concept similar to *Teranga*, which is one that encourages religious pluralism. Although the concept of *Omoluabi* (a cultured person) encourages good behavior and by extension good neighborliness, the belief that, *Olorun nikan lo mo eniti oon sin oun* (it is only God that knows those who truly worship him), gives an understanding of the liberal attitude of the Yoruba to religious diversity. It implies that the rightness of any religious faith is determined by God. Such a notion has contributed to a high degree of religious tolerance among the Yoruba since it evokes a sense of the validity of all religions.

The management of religious diversity has been continually exhibited by political leaders of both groups. One popular example that has often been cited to support the prevalence of religious pluralism among the Wolof was the election and administration of Leopold Sedar Senghor the first president of Senegal (1960-1981). The administration of Senghor, a Christian of Serer ethnic group was largely sustained by the Muslim leadership including Wolof Marabouts who were the major force in Senegalese politics since the colonial period. However, Senghor

appears to be the exception and not the norm. He is so far the only Christian president Senegal has had since independence until date. Senghor's successors were all Muslims but though their religious identity differed from his, they continued to enjoy the support of the Wolof Muslims during their administration.<sup>45</sup>

On the contrary, the succession of leaders of diverse religious faiths in political offices is the norm among the Yoruba. The leadership of the important town of Lagos is a clear example of religious pluralism among the Yoruba. The immediate past Oba (traditional ruler) of Lagos, Oyekan was a Christian while the present Oba, Rilwan Akiolu is a Muslim. In the more recent times, leadership among the Yoruba continues to exhibit strong elements of religious coexistence. The former governor of Lagos state Asiwaju Ahmed Tinubu (1999-2007) and the present Governor Babatunde Fashola (2007- until date), are Muslims who are married to Christian wives. Both men have been special guests at various Christian fora. They were guests at the Special Holy Ghost congress organized by the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG). The two governors accompanied by their wives attended the special prayer meeting held at the RCCG Camp Ground in March of 2012 to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of the General Overseer of the Church, Pastor Enoch Adeboye.<sup>46</sup>

The prevalence of religious pluralism in Yoruba land can partly be explained as the consequence of the parity in the ratio of the Muslim to the Christian population. Although Christians and Muslims are not evenly distributed in Yoruba land, the large presence of each group has not allowed for the dominance of the public sphere by either. The scenario is different in the case of the Wolof. The Muslim population is overwhelmingly high and Islam appears to be the religion of the state. Yet, in spite of the high population of Muslims in Senegal, Christians enjoy freedom of worship and expression.

One school of thought is of the view that the prevalence of religious pluralism among the Wolof can be partly attributable to the fact that the small population of Christians in their midst do not really constitute a threat to religious freedom. Another plausible explanation is that most Wolof, belong to the Sufi brotherhood who believe in peaceful Islam so that Christians are largely accommodated and enjoy considerable freedom of worship.

One of the proponents of Sufism in Senegal, who contributed to the pacifist inclination of Muslims was, Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba Mbackke. Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba also known as the Holy man of Touba (Serin e Toubaa). He founded the Mourride Brotherhood in 1883. While he resented French colonial administration, he taught his followers what he referred to as the “jih d al-’akba” or greater struggle<sup>47</sup> This was a jihad fought not through weapons but through learning and fear of God” Such teachings have contributed to the pacifism associated with the Sufi brotherhoods in Senegal.

Like the Wolof Muslims, a sizeable proportion of the Yoruba belong mainly to the Ahmadiyya and Ansar udeen Muslim Associations but unlike the Wolof, majority of the Yoruba are also members of numerous Christian associations.<sup>48</sup> This explains why there is an even distribution of churches and mosques in Yoruba towns. There is the Emmanuel Church and the Central Mosque located on opposite sides of the road at the center of Isoyin village, one of the Ijebu-speaking communities in Ogun State. This clearly exemplifies the harmonious religious co-existence of that community which is replicated in many Yoruba communities. Again, rather than exclusive religious communities, Christians and Muslims live side by side. The pattern of habitation in Yoruba land has contributed to a high level of religious literacy among them. In Yoruba communities, the knowledge of Christian and Islamic religious traditions is unconsciously acquired through daily interaction. Likewise, Christians and Muslims live side by side among the Wolof but this is more noticeable in the urban areas. In contrast, the pattern of habitation differs in rural Wolof communities since it is not common to find churches or Christians in any significant number among them. To a considerable extent, it will be difficult for a Christian to continue to live within a Wolof community, not because of prejudice but because Islam is deeply rooted in that society.

The close interaction between Yoruba Muslims and Christians partly explains the emergence of similar religious traditions among diverse religious faiths. One noticeable feature associated with religious groups in Nigeria, is the regular visit to *Prayer Camps*. Prayer camps are located in many parts of the country but there is a large concentration in the outskirts of Lagos and the adjoining communities in Ogun

State. It has become customary for Christians to visit the expansive prayer grounds located in the suburbs of Lagos, where special prayer sessions are held regularly. Some of the popular prayer grounds for Christians in Lagos are, *Prayer City*, built by the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministry and the *Redeem Camp*, of the Redeemed Christian Church of God. The Muslims also have a large prayer ground located within the same area. The largest is the, Nasrul Lahi-1 Fathi (NASFAT) ground located along the Lagos-Ibadan expressway and has become the venue for religious programmes. Apart from conferences, night vigils are held regularly at the venue by members of the association.<sup>49</sup> There are no large praying camps in cities like Dakar and Thies, for Christians except the Popenguine, located 70 miles south of Dakar on the Petit Cote. The Popenguine is a place of pilgrimage for Christians particularly Catholics from Senegal and surrounding countries.<sup>50</sup> Large prayer grounds for Christians of the same size as those in the suburbs of Lagos and Ogun states in Nigeria, are rare in Wolof speaking areas.

Another development that is evidence of the harmonious relations between Christian and Muslim Yoruba is the Chrislam ministry. The Chrislam ministry combines Christianity, Islam and African indigenous religion. One of the Chrislam ministries, Ife Oluwa was founded in the 1970’s by Tela Tella and another one, Mountain of Loosing Bondage Ministry also known as Oke Tude was established by Prophet Samsideen Saka in 1999. According to Saka, the Bible and the Quran will not have some similar stories if Christians and Muslims were meant to be enemies.<sup>51</sup>

In comparative terms, the management of religious pluralism between both groups differs in social context with the illustrations provided. However, the religious pluralism by the Wolof has a high Islamic flavor and in the case of the Yoruba, it is comparable to a buffet, there is a reasonable aspect of every religious faith that is practiced by members of distinct religions. Notwithstanding, the different social contexts, both groups have experienced incidents of religious related violence in the post-colonial period. The reference to the incidents of religious conflicts is to stress the need for deliberate actions that aim to foster a culture of religious pluralism among the West African communities in spite of the seeming prevalence of religious coexistence.

In 1985, Christians and Muslims clashed in Ilorin during the Palm Sunday procession and as a result, church buildings were damaged. Also in May 1986, the statue of the Risen Christ at the University of Ibadan Chapel was set on fire by unknown arsonists. Yoruba land also experienced the wave of protests in support of the adoption of Sharia law for Muslims.<sup>52</sup> In 2001, Muslim youths in Oshogbo vandalized about ten churches leaving one person dead in protest against the proposed three-day crusade by Reinhard Bonke, a German Christian evangelist. Altogether, these conflicts can be regarded as skirmishes considering that over 1000 lives were lost in the Maitatsine uprising of 1980 and the Sharia riots that began in 1999 and swept through many cities in northern Nigeria including Kaduna, Kebbi and Zaria.<sup>53</sup>

Similarly, there were incidents of violence in Wolof speaking areas in Senegal that exhibited the growing friction between Muslims and Christians. In 2004, violence broke out in Dakar between students of reformist movements including Association d'études Musulmanes de L'université de Dakar (AEMUD) and the Moustachidini.<sup>54</sup> In January 2010, Christian youths took to the streets of Dakar in protest of a comment made by President Abdoulaye Wade in which he referred to Jesus Christ, as a man whom the Christians worship as a God. In June of the same year, hundreds of Muslim youths burnt down a Jehovah's Witness Temple and a nearby bar in Dakar.<sup>55</sup>

### Summary

The analysis has demonstrated that the prevalence of religious pluralism among the Wolof and Yoruba is not merely a contemporary feature of both societies but was an inherent aspect of indigenous religion. The paper has also shown that the trend was retained after Islam and Christianity was introduced to their respective regions and that colonial administration helped to project a culture of religious coexistence among both groups which has contributed to religious pluralism in the post-independence period. It is important to stress that while religious pluralism is adorned in an Islamic garb among the Wolof, it is a blend of indigenous religion, Islam and Christianity in Yoruba society. To some extent, because religious pluralism as a phenomenon was an unconscious development as the history of both groups suggests, the management of religious diversity is yet to be accorded the attention it

deserves. However, globalization is influencing and transforming age-old attitudes and patterns and these changes tend to feed into local circumstances to produce frictions between distinct religious groups. For instance, Boko Haram and various factions of Touareg militia are linked to terrorist groups outside the region because of their shared religion which paves the way for initial contact and subsequent cooperation that although have economic connotations are also given legitimacy based on religious doctrines. Thus, there is need to pay greater attention to the management of religious diversity as a way of strengthening *harmonious relations between diverse religious groups in West Africa and even among communities that have long been models of religious coexistence such as the Wolof and the Yoruba*.

The analysis has revealed that cooperation between religious and political leaders is important to sustain a culture of religious pluralism as exemplified by both cases. While political leaders can use their offices to project religious tolerance by publicly identifying with various religious faiths, religious leaders have a greater role to play. This is because they command an enormous respect and loyalty of their followers and thus have the platform to project actions that support peace and non-violent approaches to relations between adherents of diverse religious faiths. It is also pertinent that government at all levels be involved in the promotion of inter-faith dialogue while the private sector should identify with religious groups as part of their contribution towards the peaceful coexistence in the communities where they operate. In the end, the collective effort from all sections of the community, will lead to religious pluralism that takes into account, the accommodation of religious and non-religious groups.

## Notes

- 1B? *TELL*, The Cost of Boko Haram, May 14, 2012, NO 19. Also see, *TELL*, Boko Haram and Security Collapse, May 21, 2012. See, The Fearsome Touareg Uprising in Mali. [www.time.com/time/world/article/08599,211067300.htm](http://www.time.com/time/world/article/08599,211067300.htm). Accessed 12/02/2013.
- 1C? Cited in Arthur Chris, *Religious Pluralism, A Metaphorical Approach*, (Colorado; Davies Group, 2000)
- 1D? John Hicks: <http://www.religioustolerance/rel-plural.htm>. Accessed 11/02/2013
- 1E? Cited in Arthur Chris, 2000, 67
- 1F? Arthur Chris, 2000, 68
- 1G? Eck L. Diana, What is Pluralism? [Http://www.academicroom.com/topic/religious](http://www.academicroom.com/topic/religious). Accessed 12/02/2013
- 1H? *Religion Conflict and Peace Building*, United States Agency for International, Development, *USAID Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation Bureau for Democracy Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance*. [Http://transition.usaid.gov/our-work/cross-cutting](http://transition.usaid.gov/our-work/cross-cutting). September, 2003. Accessed 18/02/2013. See, The Rev. Earl G. Purnell, Freedom of Religion and the Schools: Evolution, Crosses, Scarves and Prayers: Pluralism/ in a Secular World, *Oxford University Round Table*, Oxford, 2007. <http://oldstandrews.net/documents/Pluralism.pdf> 2. Accessed 15/03/12
- 1I? 1993 world trade center bombing-[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1993-world\\_trade\\_center\\_bombing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1993-world_trade_center_bombing). Accessed 18/02/2012
- 1J? Berger Peter, cited in Chaves Mark, Gorski Phillip, Religious Pluralism and Participation, *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol 27, 2001, 262, [www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1GI78901930Ibid](http://www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1GI78901930Ibid), Chaves, 2001, 263. Accessed 02/23/2013. Cited in Chaves and Gorski, 2001, 263
- 1BA? Eyene Okpanachi, Between Conflict and Compromise: Lessons on Sharia and Pluralism from Nigeria's Kaduna and Kebbi States Vol 25 897-201 *Emory International Law Review* [www.law.emory.edu/fileadm/25/25opkanachi](http://www.law.emory.edu/fileadm/25/25opkanachi) Accessed 11/12/2012
- 1BB? Hicks John, <http://www.religioustolerance/rel-plural.htm>. See, Hicks John, *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent*, New Haven, 1989.
- 1BC? Gellar Sheldon, Varieties of Religious Doctrines and Institutions in Africa and their impact on Democratization Processes, Paper presented at the International Conference on Religious Ideas and Institutions and Transitions to Democracy in Africa, Los Angeles, CA, May 18-19, 2007. [.dic.diib.indiana.edu/dic/ditstream/handl-1WO7-9-Gellar-Dicpd](http://dic.diib.indiana.edu/dic/ditstream/handl-1WO7-9-Gellar-Dicpd). Accessed 12/12/2012
- 1BD? [Http://www/en/Wikipedia.org/wiki/religion](http://www/en/Wikipedia.org/wiki/religion). *Africa*. Accessed 15/08/2012
- 1BE? Adogame, Afe., How God Became a Nigerian : Religious Impulse and the unfolding of a nation, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol.28, No.4,( October 2010), 480.
- 1BF? Parrinder Geoffrey, *Religion in an African City* (Oxford University Press, London, 1953), 106
- 1BG? Crowder Michael, *West Africa Under Colonial Rule*, 1968, 361. Also see, Halliet Robin, *Africa Since 1878*, (University of Michigan, Heinman,1974), 260
- 1BH? Crowder, 1968, 360
- 1BI? Crowder, 1968, 368
- 1BJ? Personal observation of the author
- 1CA? De-Jong Ferdinand, Revelation and Secrecy: Cultural Models of Performance in the Casamance Revolt, [sen.http://www.disastersstudies.wr.ni/NRIaniyres/E08690FD](http://www.disastersstudies.wr.ni/NRIaniyres/E08690FD). Accessed 04/07/07, 27
- 1CB? Nugent Paul, Cyclical History in the Gambia/Casamance Borderlands: Refugee, Settlement and Islam From 1800- to the Present, *Journal of African History*.48 (United kingdom; Cambridge University press, 2007), 235-237
- 1CC? Diouf, Mamadou, *Senegal Les Ethnies et l'nation*, Nouvelle Edition, Dakar, 1998, 22
- 1CD? Adogame Afe, How God Became a Nigerian, 2010, 480. Also see, Fadipe, N. A., *The Sociology of The Yoruba*, (University of Ibadan Press, 1970), 32-34
- 1CE? Fadipe, N.A., *The Sociology*, 264
- 1CF? Olukoju, Ayodeji, Christianity and the Development of the Nigerian State In, *Nigeria Peoples and Culture* eds. Osuntokun Akinjide et al (Ibadan; Davidson press, 1997),139
- 1CG? Gbadamosi T.G.O, *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba, 1841-1908*, 1978, (London; Longman Group, 1978), 138 & 10.
- 1CH? Gbadamosi T. G. O. Islamic Culture and Nigerian Society in, *Nigeria Peoples and Culture* ed. Osuntokun Akinjide et al, (Ibadan; David Press 1997), 66
- 1CI? Ibid, Gbadamosi, *The Growth*, 1978, 138
- 1CJ? Ibid, Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam*, 1978, 139
- 1DA? Ibid, Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam*, 1978,146
- 1DB? Diouf Mamadou, *Senegal les ethnies*, 1998, 28
- 1DC? Diaw Aminatou, Diouf Mamadou, (eds) "Ethnic Group Versus Nation: Identity Discourse, In Senegal" In Nnoli Okwudiba, *Ethnic Conflicts in Africa*, CODESRIA Book Series.1998,pp 259-285. Also see, Diouf, 1998, 24
- 1DD? Interview with Diop Ramatou, Dakar, 15/05/ 2008
- 1DE? Nwanju Isidore, *Christian-Muslim Relations*, Free Enterprise Publishers, Lagos, 2005, 118
- 1DF? Wolof: <http://lucy.uk.ac/ethno/hmar/cult/dir>. Also personal observation of author
- 1DG? Interview with Seydou Diop Cultural Attachee, Embassy du Senegal, Dakar, 10/08 2008
- 1DH? Diajuette, M., *Senegal/History/Politics*.<http://www.iss.a.coza/AF/profiles/Senegal/politics.html>. Accessed

- 12/5/2004. See, Bourba V., Traditions of Ndan Dan Ndiaye: The First Bourba of Djolof, *bulletin d'ifan* b 39, 1995, 11
- 1DI? Interview with Ajikobi Dimeji, Lecturer, Department of African and Asian Languages, University of Lagos, Akoka 19/02/13
- 1DJ? Fasheun, M.A, The Role of Traditional Rulers in the Celebration of Ogun Festival in Ondo kingdom in, Babawale T, Alao A., Adesoji B, *The Chieftaincy Institution in Nigeria*, Center for Black and African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC), Concept Publications, 2010, .112. Also see Ajayi Ade J. F, Promoting Religious Tolerance and Co-operation In The West African Region: The Example of Religious Pluralism And Tolerance Among The Yoruba, [www.dawodu.com/Ajayi.i1.html](http://www.dawodu.com/Ajayi.i1.html). Accessed 12/09/21012
- 1EA? World War 4 Report: Senegal: million pilgrims honor Sufi saint | World War 4 Report [www.ww4report.com/node/3318](http://www.ww4report.com/node/3318)(Magal) Accessed 15/08/2012
- 1EB? Religion and Expressive Culture- Wolof. [www.everculture.com/Africa/Middleeast/Wolof](http://www.everculture.com/Africa/Middleeast/Wolof). Also see, *African Traditional Religions and the Promotion of Community* [www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/community.htm](http://www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/community.htm). Accessed, 18/09/2011
- 1EC? Diajuette, M., *Senegal/History/Politics*. <http://www.iss.a.co.za/AF/profiles/Senegal/politics.html>. Accessed 12/5/2004
- 1ED? Thurston Alexander, Why is Militant Islam a Weak Phenomenon, *Institute for Islamic Thought in Africa*, ISITA, Working Papers.09-005, March, 2009.
- 1EE? Interview with Seydou Diop, Cultural Attachee, Embassy du Senegal, Dakar, 10/08 2008
- 1EF? Gellar Sheldon, Language, Communication and Group Identity in Senegal, [www.indiana.edu/workshop/seminar/paper/673-spring-2003.gellarpdf](http://www.indiana.edu/workshop/seminar/paper/673-spring-2003.gellarpdf), 12
- 1EG? The view is based on author's observation while on field research in Dakar. Café Touba is a local brew of herbs served as a hot liquid in small glass cups. It is sold on the streets of Dakar especially in markets areas. Also interview with Ramat Diop, retired Secretary ICDA, Dakar. 15/07/2008
- 1EH? Interview with Pastor Pius Isiekwene, Pastor in charge of Area, The Redeemed Christian Church of God, (RCCG) Winners Arena, 91 Ebute Metta, Lagos 21/09/2012.
- 1EI? Ahmadou Bamba of Senegal: Mourides, <http://www.bahaistudies.net/asma/mourides.pdf>. Accessed 14/02/2013
- 1EJ? PEEL J.D.Y, *Islam and Christianity through the Prism of Yoruba History*, no 2, Faculty of Arts, University of Lagos, Distinguished Lecture Series, April, 2009, 11. Also see, Nasfat- NASFAT-Narullahi L Fatih of Nigeria , [www.nasfat.org](http://www.nasfat.org). Accessed 18/09/2011
- 1FA? Personal Observation by author
- 1FB? The Faithful in the Archdiocese of Dakar prepare for a Pilgrimage to Popenguine to Pray for Peace. [www.radiovaticn.org/en3/articolo.asp?c=494943](http://www.radiovaticn.org/en3/articolo.asp?c=494943).
- 1FC? What is Chrislam? Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry. [carm.org/what-is-ISLAM](http://carm.org/what-is-ISLAM). Also see, *TELL*, March 18 2013, no11, 16
- 1FD? Odeh Lemuel Ekedegwa, Historical Analysis of Ethno-Religious Violence in Nigeria in, Raji R.A. et al, *The Review of Religion in Contemporary Society*, Nigerian Association for the Study of Religion (NASR).56. Also see, Eyene Okpanachi, Between Conflict and Compromise : Lessons on Sharia and Pluralism from Nigeria's Kaduna and Kebbi States Vol 25 897-201 *Emory International Law Review* [www.law.emory.edu/fileadm/25/25opkanachi](http://www.law.emory.edu/fileadm/25/25opkanachi)
- 1FE? Thurston.2009, 3
- 1FF? *Violence intensifies in Senegal Protest-islam* [www.islamweb.net/emailpage/index.php?page=articles&id](http://www.islamweb.net/emailpage/index.php?page=articles&id)