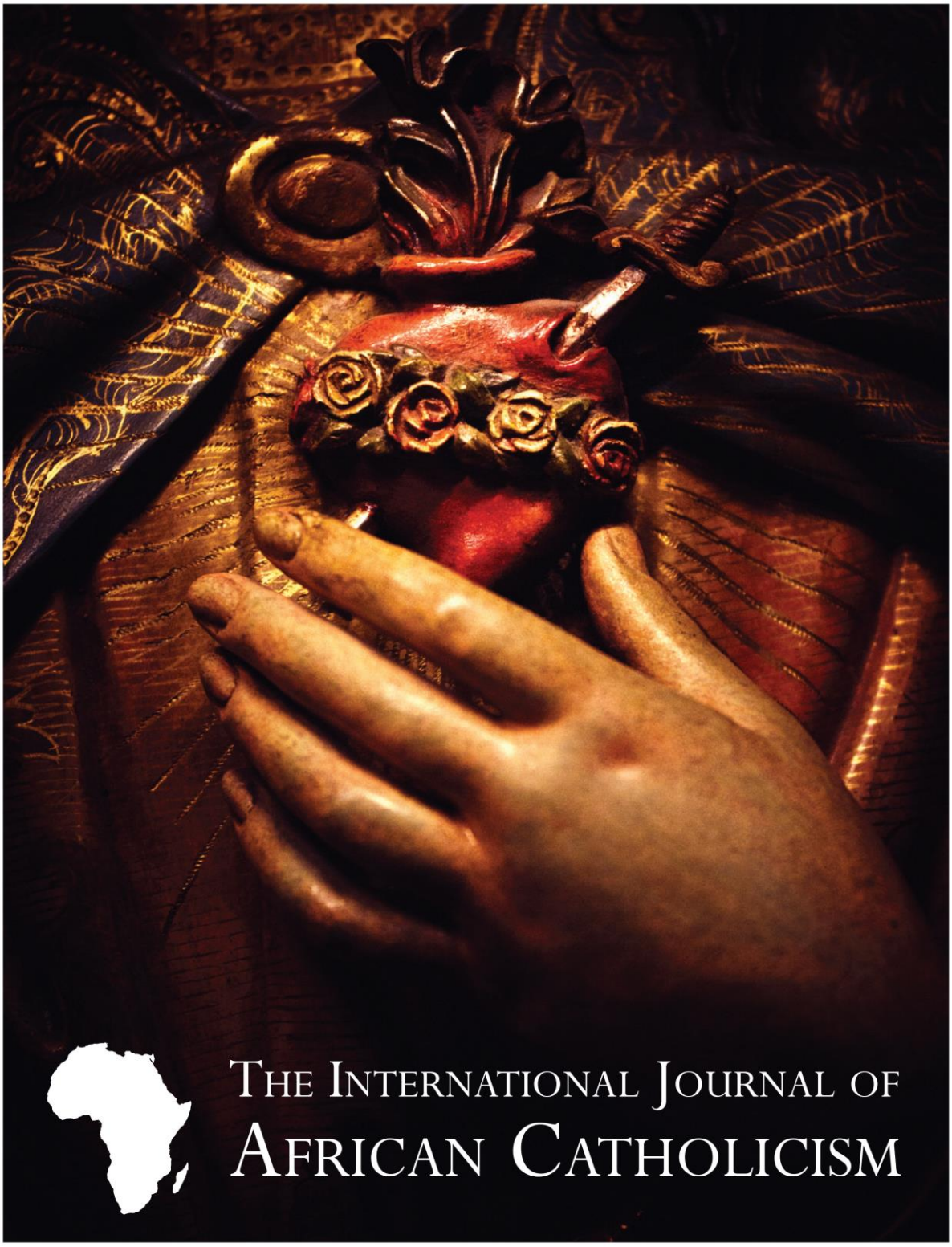

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A Semiotic Investigation of Mythic Relations between *Ifá*, *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholic Faith

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Abstract

Ifá is believed to be the foundation of Yorùbá culture. This means every aspect of Yorùbá life, including religion, philosophy, science, ideology, and so on has one link or another with *Ifá*. This study establishes a relationship in mythic code of *Ifá* with *Ìbejì* (twins) on one hand and Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism on another. Previous works on *Ifá, Ìbeji*, and Saints Cosmas and Damian have neither related *Ifá* with *Ìbejì* nor established any connections between *Ifá* and Saints Cosmas and Damian. Therefore, the relationship of *Ifá* with *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian is open to research. This gap is filled by this study. The work relies substantially on Yorùbá literary texts, especially *Ifá* literary corpus. Semiotics, which is the science of signs, is adopted for this study, because, *Ifá* communicates in signs with associated meaning. This study compares the mythic code of *Ifá* with *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian. It is found out that, there is synergy between the mythic code of *Ifá, Ìbejì,* and Saints Cosmas and Damian. The study concludes that mythic connections of *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian are derived from *Ifá*- the springboard of the Yorùbá culture. As a result of this, the religious impact, influence and values of *Ifá* are felt on *Ìbejì* in Yorùbá beliefs and on Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholic faith.

Keywords: *Ifá, Ìbejì*, Saints Cosmas and Damian, Catholicism, myth, code, semiotics

Introduction

This work examines the relationship between mythic code of *Ifá* in relation with *Ìbejì* (twins) and Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism. *Ifá* has been defined by scholars in different ways that establish the divergence scope of its knowledge, wisdom and values. Indeed, it is regarded as the bedrock of other aspects of Yorùbá life. Akíntọ́lá (1999, p. 1) sees *Ifá* as the philosophy or wisdom divinely revealed to the Yorùbá deity of *Ifá, Ọ̀rúnmìlà*. According to Farrow (1926, p. 36), *Ifá* is the greatest oracle of the Yorùbá that is "consulted on all important occasions." *Ifá* is regarded as the spokesperson not

only for the gods but also for the living. It is regarded as the living foundation of Yorùbá culture (Abímbọ́lá 1977a).

Munoz (2003, p. 179) sees *Ifá's* scope beyond the Yorùbá cultural society when he says "*Ifá* is the most universal divinity among the Yorùbá and other West African people." *Ifá* is known to different people by different names throughout the world. For example, *Ifá* is known as *Fá* among the Fon of Republic of Benin, *Eva* to Nupes, *Ifá* in Cuba, USA, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Surinam and Togo. *Ifá* is referred to by the Ewe as *Afa*, *Ephod* by Jews, *Geomancy* by Europeans and Margays (Ọdẹ́yẹmí 2013, p. 5). With these different realizations of *Ifá* nomenclature which cut across nations of the world, the spread of *Ifá* is not in doubt.

In 2005, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) proclaimed *Ifá* as one of the 86 religious traditions of the world to be recognized as masterpieces of oral and intangible heritage of humanity (Robinson 2008, p. 1). By this proclamation, *Ifá* joined the league of cultural and religious heritages and therefore requiring urgent preservation. *Ifá*, as a religion, science or literary text, has over time been of great interest to scholars in different areas of human endeavors, like medicine, philosophy, religion, art and culture.

The main objective of this study is to establish that, *Ìbejì,* in the Yorùbá religious belief and Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism are both related with *Ifá* in semiotic mythic code. Since, Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism have been found to have a strong links with *Ìbejì* by previous scholars, the present attempt of mythic connections of *Ifá* with *Ìbejì* will no doubt be relational with Saints Cosmas and Damian. In other words,

the study is aimed to demonstrate that *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian derive their mythic code or elements from *Ifá*.

Theoretical Framework

Semiotics, which is the study of signs, is adopted by this work because, *Ifá,* that is the central element in this work communicates in signs and symbols with the interactions of divination objects. Semiotics can be traced to the pioneering works of Charles Sanders Peirce, the American philosopher and Ferdinand de Saussure, the Swiss Linguist. According to Saussure, semiology is the study of signs as part of social life. He focuses on the functions of social and cultural phenomenon within semiotic system. Saussure (1974, p. 60) classifies signs into two entities: "signified and or sign-vehicle or meaning." He refers to the signified, mostly in form of materials (objects, images, sounds and so on). Saussure is credited with structuralism approach. To him, language is formed by signs which are related in multiple ways. A sign or a word consists of two parts: one part is its form; the other part is its meaning. The association between form and meaning of a sign is fixed by conventions of language use. The link between the form and meaning are inseparable.

According to Peirce, Semiotics is an abstract entity. Sign is something which stands to somebody or something in some respects or capacity. This relation of 'standing for" is mediated by an interpretant. According to Peirce (1931, p. 35), "a sign is anything which determines something else (its interpretant) to refer to an object to which itself refers (its object) in the same way the interpretant becoming in turn a sign." This means anything can be adopted as a sign.

Three modes of significations in addition to code are regarded to be sufficient to describe any form of sign. These are icon, symbol and index. In an iconic mode, the

signifier is perceived as resembling or imitating the signified in one way or the other. According to Peirce, one can perceive a direct resemblance between the signifier and the signified. For instance, a picture of an individual is an iconic symbol.

In symbol mode, there is no resemblance or connection between the signifier and the signified, that is, object and what it stands for. A symbol's connection with its object is a matter of convention, rule or agreement between the users. This may be in form of an animal. For instance, Yorùbá traditions forbid some families to eat, kill or harm some animals. It is forbidden for the *Alápà's* family to eat, kill or harm snakes, just as for the *Ìbejì* (twins) or their family to eat any species of monkey. This is because, these animals are believed by Yorùbá tradition to be the families' ancestors (Káyọ̀dé 1984). In Yorùbá tradition, symbol can also be realized in form of *Àrokò*, as such an object or something stands for something or somebody in real life. For instance, the Yorùbá believe that "fish" stands for negative and 'crab' for positive or to determine the 'yes' or 'no' of an interrogative statement such as 'ẹja n bákàn?' (fish or crab?). It is culturally accepted that 'fish' symbolizes (stand s for) no or negative and 'crab' symbolizes (stands for) yes or positive.

In an indexical mode, the connection between the signifier and the signified is not arbitrary but, is directly connected in some ways (physically or casually) to the signified. For instance, "odour" is an index for the presence of a he-goat around. This makes Yorùbá to say "òrúkọ dé òórùn dé" (a he-goat is around with odor) or in a statement such as "bíná bá jó lóko mọ̀jàlà ni yóó ṣòfófó" (*mọ̀jàlà* is the tell-tale of the bush burning) (Ṣótúndé 2009, p. 178). However, these semiotic elements- icon, symbol and index are interrelated. For instance, one can have iconic symbols or indexical symbols.

The link rule of signs and their meanings are made known by codes. A code is "a means of conveying messages, a vehicle of communication" (Geoffery and Short 1981, p. 124). Code, is the semiotic element employs for this study; because, "Semiology has so far concerned itself with codes" (Barthes 1964, p. 1). Linking a meaning to a sign is a vital role performed by code. This may be realized in a multi-level coding. Code helps to simplify phenomena in order to make it easier to communicate experience. "The coding takes place simultaneously on different levels, and many other factors, such as memory span and general extralinguistic knowledge, play a part" (Geoffery and Short 1981 p. 122). For instance, Òkéwándé (2017) establishes some links in codes of *Ifá* with *Ìbejì*; such as the links of *Odù* in *Ifá* with *Ìbejì*. He establishes that *Odù* connects *Ifá* with *Ìbejì.* The links in prorairesis code, which has to do with lineal arrangement, is established between *Ifá* and *Ìbejì*. With this code, he establishes that, both *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì* are from the same lineage among others. However, this study attempts to further demonstrate the links in mythic code between *Ifá, Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian.

All the cultural contents of *Ifá* have been codified. These codifications are in *Ifá* symbols in forms of *Odù Ifá* (medium within which *Ifá* corpuses are coded into chapters and verses). Karenga (2012) opines that:

> nowhere is the profundity and beauty of African spirituality more apparent than in the Odu Ifa, the sacred text of the spiritual and ethical tradition of Ifa, which is one of the greatest sacred texts of the world and a classic of African and world literature. Its central message revolves around the teachings of the Goodness of and in the world; the chosen status of humans in the world; the criteria of a good world; and the requirements for a good world.

These *Odù* corpuses are believed by the Yorùbá people in particular and *Ifá* worshippers in general to contain the capacity to solve all existential problems of man. *Ifá* epistles

have certain codes attached to them which form the basis of *Ifa* traditional spirituality accounting for the basis of all the Yoruba systems of worship. The relationship between culture and religion is discernible. “If you leave out the religion, you are left with deformed culture” (Ìṣọ̀lá 2010 p. 36).

A sign can create multiple meanings, depending on the culture in which it exists. The application of such cultural categories depends on the individual or personal knowledge. “But we are all some ways apart from commanding all cultural knowledge, as we all have little experience in many areas of everyday life” (Lobner 2002, p. 201). The distinction between the semantic knowledge and world knowledge (for example, cultural and personal knowledge) is a doctrine of cultural semiotics

Cultural knowledge is important to the study of semiotics. For example, Cyril (2015, pp. 297-8) advocates for the use of semiotics to the Theology of inculturation. The knowledge of semiotics is required because the church exist in cultural forms. Semiotics also removes impediments of Theological and conceptual in relation with the “practice of inculturation.” Likewise, semiotics mediates the role of language in relation to religions and culture. Cyril opines that emphasis should be placed on hermeneutics in analyzing some stories and the application of cultural interpretation of symbol as propounded by Charles Pierce and Susan Langer. From Cyril’s opinion, the adoption of semiotics to the Theology of inculturation cannot be overemphasized. It is discovered from his opinion that, culture including language and interpretation of discourse; which hermeneutics is concerned should break some barriers relating to Theological inculturation.

The knowledge of semiotics covers different aspects of human life, including human symbolization relating with cultural meanings and beliefs. This work adopts the

cultural semiotics, which is associated with the use of living organism, in this case, human organism. This is associated with "human semiosis." As "we have two meanings of 'semiotics': semiotics as a discipline or general science of signs and semiotics as specifically human semiosis" (Petrilli and Ponzio 2007, p. 3). Therefore, the human semiosis (bio/zoo semiotics), is what this study employs as it relates with human- *Ìbejì*, Saints Cosmas and Damian in relation with *Ọ̀rúnmìlà*/*Ifá.* .

An Overview of *Ifá, Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian

The knowledge of *Ifá* contains different aspects of Yorùbá life, as explained earlier. For example, medicine, which is of the connecting professions that relates *Ifá*, *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian together is a branch of *Ifá* that centers on magic, incantation and healing (Abímbọ́lá 1983). This aspect of *Ifá's* knowledge has been found to be relevant in this work, as it cut across the tripartite beliefs among *Ifá*, *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism. The divergence knowledge of *Ifá* has been addressed by different scholars. For instance, Ọdẹ́yẹmí (2013, p. 6), categorizes importance of *Ifá's* scope into eight:

(i) The Spiritual Essence: This relates to the place of human (as a spirit) in the Cosmos, powers of matter and all aspects of anthological evolution and development.

(ii) The Religious Essence: This relates to faith, Catechism and Ifagelism (preaching).

(iii) The Divine Essence: this relates to the methods of Divination and accessing of esoteric foundation, the mechanics of Divination and the systematic of Divine Message Collection, processing and interpretation.

(iv) The Worship and Sacrificial Essence: This relates to the basis and meaning of worship and sacrifice.

(v) The Medicinal Essence: This deals with both magical and material medicine.

(vi) The Historical Essence: This deals with the history of all creation of materialist, non-materialist and spirit world.

(vii) The Scientific Essence: This deals with the power of observation, axiomatic, astronomy, cosmology, cognitive, and pre-cognitive experience, astral science, physical and biological science, logic, philosophy, mathematics, statistics and Computer Science.

(viii) The Cultural Essence: This relates to rites, rituals, politics, socio-economics, language, dress and normative value systems.

From these *Ifá* scopes of knowledge, one can associate the relevance of the scopes of *Ifá* with *Ìbejì* on one hand and Saints Cosmas and Damian on another. Because of the divergence knowledge of *Ifá*, *Ifá* has been a great interest to scholars in different areas of human endeavors, like medicine, philosophy, religion, art and culture. As a result of this divergence in *Ifá* as earlier noted in this work that, *Ifá*, as the foundation on which the Yorùbá culture rests, is connected in one way or the other with the entire Yorùbá life. However, the scientific or literary theory that analyses the connections of *Ìbejì* on one hand and Saints Cosmas and Damian on the other hand with *Ifá,* is open to religious and cultural research. Yémitàn and Ògúndélé (1970, p. ix) assert about *Ifá* that, "ó jẹ́ ìmọ̀ ìjìnlẹ̀ lọ́tọ̀ ara rẹ̀, ohun tí a lè pè ní ẹ̀ka ìmọ̀ sáyẹ́nsì. Èkejì, ó jẹ́ oríṣìí ẹ̀sìn ìbílẹ̀ ilẹ̀ Yorùbá kan." (It is knowledge of science on its own. Secondly, it is a separate Yorùbá religion).

The implication of this statement is that, *Ifá's* knowledge can be better understood by scientific analysis or literary theory. This challenge is taken up in this study.

One of the reliable ways to establish the veracity of Yorùbá culture and/or beliefs is to reference its etymology from *Ifá;* and in addition to be able to describe the relationship with *Ifá*. According to Nobles and Goddard (1984, p. 75), "there are many different ways to discuss the… techniques for developing and/or documenting the lifestyles of Black people.… Black culture is a belief in and/or direct practice of traditional African cosmological, ontological and philosophical understanding of the universe." In this regards, the relationship of *Ifá* with *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian is open to religious scholarship. Therefore, this study attempts to demonstrate the religious influence of *Ifá* on other religions such as with *Ìbejì* divinity among the Yorùbá people and Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholic faith.

Ìbejì and Saints Cosmas and Damian both possess supernatural powers; the attributes that makes *Ìbejì* to be regarded as divinity and Saints Cosmas and Damian as Saints-the holy ones. **"**Yorùbá deities were preserved under the names of Catholic saints" (Abdias do Nascimento 1977, p. 74). These supernatural powers attributed with *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian are derived powers from *Ifá*. In other words, *Ifá* and *Ìbejì* divinities are preserved under the names of Catholic saints such as Saints Cosmas and Damian.

The associations of *Ìbejì* with *Ifá* have been established by Òkéwándé (2017). For instance, it is noted that *Odù* (channels of communication in Ifá epistles) connections is one of the codes that relates *Ifá* and *Ìbejì* together. The kinship of *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì* is also observed in the myth relating with *Odùs* to the earth. All Yorùbá divinities are

associated with one *Odù* or the other. It is reported that both *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* (Ifá progenitor) and *Ìbejì* descended with *ÈjìOgbè.* Adéoyè (1985, p. 346) reports that: "Ọ̀pọ̀lọpọ̀ babaláwo ni ó gbà pé odù Èjìogbè tí Ọ̀rúnmìlà bá rọ̀ náà ni ìbejì bá rọ̀, ṣùgbọ́n, odù tí àwọn àgbà babaláwo gbà bí odù ìbejì ni Èjìòkò." (Most of *Ifá* priest believed that *Ìbejì* descended with the same *ÈjìOgbè* that *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* came down with, but elderly *Ifá* priests believed that *Ìbejì* is associated with *Odù Èjìòkò*). It is noted that, both *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì* are kith and kin. The symbols of one are the symbols of the other. The symbol of *ÈjìOgbè* is the same with *ÈjìÒkò* (Odù symbol of Ìbejì). This similarity in *Odù* code of *Ifá* and *Ìbejì* is a form of connections (Òkéwándé 2017).

Mythical Connections between *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian

Myth, in Greek language means *muthos* that is "narrative". Eco (1976, p. 69) opines that "myths, legends, and popular or folk literature, in general, are of the greatest interest for semiology." Myths are sourced from stories in forms of folk-literature, legend, historical, traditional or oral poems that constitutes *Ifá* corpus. Myth is a means by which we resolve some ancient problems. Myth, "implicitly symbolize some profound truth about human or natural existence" (Kennedy and Gioia 2007, p. 254). This means that myths are associated with true stories that relate with human and the environment.

Myths can be classified into different forms; depending on the context of use. For instance, relating myths to literature, Ọ̀ṣúndáre asserts that myth and literature are inseparable and their meaning does different things to different writers and critics. Myth is associated with symbols and therefore relates to semiotics. Both language and myths enjoy an intricate relationship. "Apart from the fact that both belong to the larger semiotic construct we call culture, myth is the silent, enigmatic submarine in communal

depths … Myth has also always been a constant genre in literature. Nearly all literature is woven from myth" (Ọ̀ṣúndáre 2008, pp. 20-2). According to Ògúnlọ́lá (2014, pp. 70&1), myths can be classified into different types such as:

(i) Cosmic myths: This is associated with rituals and sacrifices, the stories concerning the creation (origin) and order of the universe, and the end of it.

(ii) Myth of Heroes: Heroes in this category can be fully mortal or divine. They possess attributes, values and endowment that are adored by human being in their societies.

(iii) The gods and pantheon myths: These focus on the activities of gods in their habitations. They are traditional myths. These exciting stories that usually reveal part of a culture's worldview. They often try to explain universal natural phenomena.

The gods and pantheon myths is relevant in this work as it is concerns with the Yorùbá traditional belief, supported, consolidated and verifiable through traditional stories, especially, from *Ifá* mythological stories or events. In semiotic signification, these mythic elements are further realized or appreciated as objects, totems and codes. The mythic code is realized through statements, stories and narratives affirming supernatural events or connections in the distant past.

Even though, myth does not answer all scientific and philosophical questions but, it has the capacity to resolve those critical problems that affect the welfare and destiny of the individual and his society. Holman (1960, p. 298), Wellek and Warren (1975, p. 5) both agree that myths manifest in the form of story telling. Wellek and Warren observe that, "such stories telling of origins and destinies, the explanations society offers its

young on why the world is and why we do as we do, its pedagogic images of the nature and the destiny of man." They see myths as superstitions. Finnegan (1970, pp. 361&2) observes that, "mythology" is something used erroneously to cover all kinds of narratives, including ordinary animal tales and stories about the people. She agrees with Bascom's opinion, which captures and accommodates the African essence, that:

> myths are prose narratives which, in the country in which they are told, are considered to be truthful account of what happened in the remote past … Myths are the embodiment of dogma; and they are often associated with theology and ritual. Their main characters are animals, deities or culture heroes, whose actions are set in an earlier world, when the world was different from what it is today, or in another world such as the sky or underworld.

It is noted that myths proffer solutions to some current or present mysteries. The notion of myths further informs us that, there is evolution relationship between human and animal world. The archetype myth stories were rendered in the form of objects, plants and animals (Adéẹ̀kọ́ 2010). Ilésanmí (2004, pp. 40-2) also asserts that, myths solve problems from the root or source and that, "mythical statements are fundamental principles which should be accepted by faith." Myths may take narrative, poems or dramatic forms. This means, myths are realized in various contexts. However, "the more emotional the mythological story the more captivating and influencial it is" (Cohen 2003, pp. 54 & 5). Every culture recognizes myths and its impact and influence are equally felt in human life. "One of the characteristics, signs and symbols of a specific cultural society is the fact that it makes no difference whether the myth in question is that of a story that actually took place. Whether it is the product of the imagination, or whether it was merely a work of literature or the lyrics of a poem" (Cohen p. 53). In any case, myths are used as a means of resolving some human problems-spiritual or social. Myths in a given culture serve as historical and cultural semiotics, since those myths relate to the activities of past events in

the remote time. The extent to which we can accept or reject myths is sometimes minimal, since the time is located to the "remote" period in a society.

Myths form a vital aspect of the basis of *Ifá* corpus. According to Abímbọ́lá (1977a, p. 15), *Ifá* corpus "has been so closely identified with the mythology, folklore, folk-medicine, history, religious and value system of that culture as to be about synonymous with it." *Ẹsẹ-Ifá* remains the main source of information about Yorùbá mythology (Abímbọ́lá 1977a). It is by these mythological documents in *Ifá* that we are able to solve some cultural problems. The archetype myth stories were rendered in the form of objects, plants and animals (Adéẹ̀kọ́ 2010). Ilésanmí (2004, pp. 40-2) also asserts that, myths provides explanation to problems from the root or source and that "mythical statements are fundamental principles which should be accepted by faith." However, some events of today are influenced by the past, and myths explain the origin of human existence and experience. *Ifá* mythologies are referenced to solve some cultural issues, including religious issue in Yorùbá beliefs.

The opinion that some events and stories believed to be unreal (as sometimes being used or canvassed against myths) in the present time have been addressed by scholars and theorists. For example, Valbuena (2005, p. 37) opines that, our limited knowledge about nature may account for our ignorance on some natural existence and events about things.

When something in nature seems ridiculous to us, absurd or bad, is because we just have a partial knowledge of things, because we generally ignore order and the coherence of nature all together, and because we need that everything are disposed according with the dictations of our own reason; although what our reason declares bad is

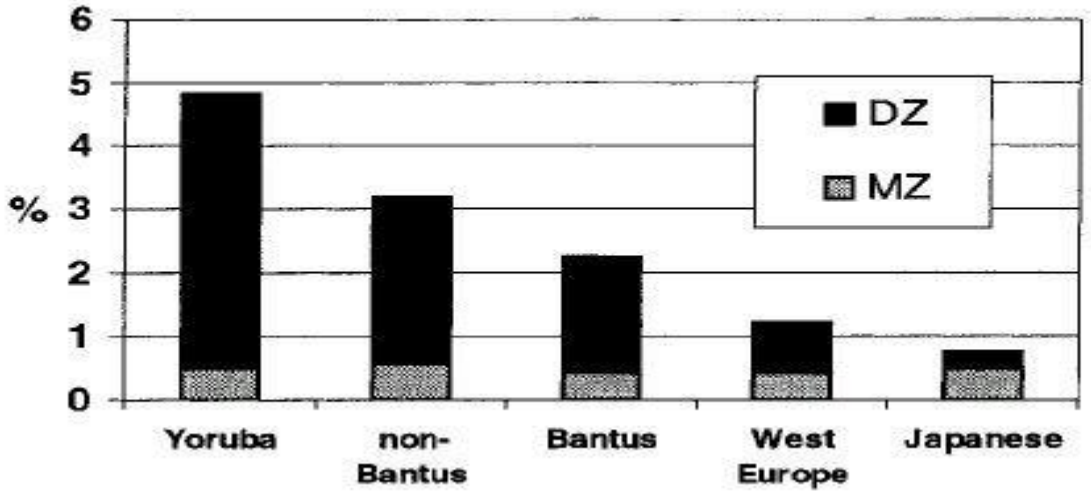
not bad according to the order and laws of universal nature but only according to the laws of our own nature separately considered.

The relationship and coexistence of animals and plants at the object world may presently look obscured to us, as we have limited knowledge, especially written document that accounts for such relationships. This limited knowledge is further complicated by the lack of written ecords that account for such historical coexistence; especially to the Africans generally and the Yorùbá in particular, but we have oral evidence to buttress this assertion, established in *Ifá.* However, without the past there is no present and there is limited knowledge to probe some past events.

As noted earlier, *Ifá* divination is seen as a major religion of the Yorùbá people. *Ifa* is a mouth-piece of the divinities and ancestors. It represents a special branch of Yorùbá religion (Abímbọ́lá 1977a). The interpretation of divination objects trancends into human life. McGee (1983, p. 109) opines that, "in contrast, the divination system based on astrology depends on the behaviour of celestial/bodies." To this effect, *Ifá* relationship with *Ìbejì* as well as Saints Cosmas and Damian is desirable.

The association of the Yorùbá people with *Ìbejì* is incontestable. For example, the Yorùbá presents the highest "dizygotic twinning" in the world. According to Leroy, Ọlálẹ́yẹ-Oruene, Gesina, Koeppen-Schomerus and Bryan (1995, p. 11), "The Yorùbá are an important ethnic group occupying Southwestern Nigeria. Mainly for genetic reasons, this very large tribe happens to present the highest dizygotic twinning rate in the world (4.4% of all maternities)."

The graph, showing the rate of dizygotic and monozygotic twins is shown below:



MZ and DZ twinning rates in Yoruba and other ethnic groups (see Leroy, 1995).

The graph above shows that the Yorùbá ethnic group has the highest rate of dizygotic twinning (shown by the black portion: DZ) in the world. The graph equally shows that the margin of monozygot twinning rate (shown by the white portion: MZ) is very close to one another among the ethnic groups. Till date, the global associations of *Ìbejì* with the Yorùbá cannot be questioned. For example, the association of the Yorùbá with the highest twining rate globally was linked with *Ifá*-the religion of the Yorùbá people (Òkéwándé 2017). This means the understanding of the mystery behind the associations of the Yorùbá people with the highest twin birth can only be explained and comprehended spiritually.

As explained earlier, zoo/bio-semiotics, which is based on the communication of information in living organisms, including human beings is used to establish the kinship between *Ọ̀rúnmìlà/Ifá* and *Ibejì* on one hand and that of Saints Cosmas and Damian on the other hand. The links between *Ibejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian has been addressed by previous scholars. For example, Peek (2009, p. 107) notes that:

Since Herskovits advanced the concept of syncretism (the blending of similar tradition from different cultures) in the myth of the Negro past (1958), many hypotheses have been advanced regarding the survival of the Yorùbá Oricha through syncretic practices. When it comes to the Ìbejì, there is some overlap with the Catholic Saints Cosmas and Damian,…following the lead from Brazil and Haiti, tend to identify the Ibejì with Saints Cosmas and Damian. There is a logical reason for finding this linkage, since, like Ibeji, Cosmas and Damian twins are healer in their own right.

Even though, *Ìbejì* and Saint Cosmas and Damian have been related as indicated in the above opinion of Peek, however, no connections has been provided to either relate *Ifá* with *Ìbejì* or *Ifá* with Saints Cosmas and Damian. Therefore, it is believed that the mythic connections of the Saints Cosmas and Damian with *Ibejì-Ifá* will unveil the derivation power of Saints Cosmas and Damian with *Ifá-Ìbejì.* The spread of relationship between *Ìbejì* with Saints Cosmas and Damien is not in doubt. These relationships have been observed in different areas within the Yorùbá community and beyond.

> The population of the West Indies and the Eastern coast South America largely originates from the previous African "Slaves Coast" corresponding to the present-day coast of Nigeria and Benin. It is therefore not surprising that traditional Yorùbá twin beliefs have been transposed in Latin America. Such is the case of Brazillian traditions of the Candoble and Macumba on the region of Salvador de Bahia and of the Umbanda in Rio de Jeniro and Sao Paulo. These traditions have maintained the Yorùbá Orishas including the sacred Ere Ibeji. In the Umbanda, the sacred twin Saint Cosmas and Damian… are celebrated at the end of September in a feast especially devoted to children (Leroy et al 1995, p. 136)

It is clear from the above opinion that, the influence or spread of the *Ibeji* on Christian beliefs such as that of Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism cannot be overemphasized. It is equally noted that, Saints Cosmas and Damian are celebrated along with the children who are twins just as in Yorùbá twin beliefs tradition. For instance, one of the myths about *Ìbejì* reveals that children who are twins with their family members gather in Badagry annually for the twin festivals. "Ìtàn sọ fún wa pé àwọn oníbejì máa nṣeìbẹ̀wò pàtàkì sí ìlú kan nítòsí Àgbádárìgì (Badagry) níbi tí nwọ́n gbà pé òrìṣà ìbejì ti

bẹ̀rẹ̀ tí ó sì tayọ ti àwọn ará ìlú yòókù ní orílẹ̀-èdè Yorùbá. Pẹ̀lú ijó àti ayọ̀ ni àwọn oníbejì máa nfiwọ ìlú yìí" (Dáramọ́lá and Jéjé 1967, p. 281). (Myth informs us that the relations of twins do gather in a town near Badagry, where it is believed that the ìbejì started and which is prominent than other towns of the Yorùbá nations. The relations of the twins enter this town with dance and joy). It is here noted that, *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian are celebrated from birth because of the religious beliefs associated with them.

Mythical Connections between *Ifá, Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian

Ifá's myths relating to monkeys are relevant to the explanation of the mythical connections of *Ifá*, *Ibejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism. Human being is believed to be the highest product of evolution with descended from non-human ancestors' (Roy 2000). In other words, monkeys are one of the animals connected with human evolution.

> In tracing the ancestry of man, physical anthropologists have concentrated in their attention on the primates, the foremost or highest order of animals. The word 'primate' means 'first in rank or order'. Primates form a distinctive and recognizable group among the mammals that are very close to man…The living primates of the modern time belong to four groups-prosimian, monkey, ape and Man. A comparative study of the physical features between living primates and the available remains of extinct primates (belonging to different groups and geological periods) reveal the relationship between two which in turn help in determining the exact line of evolution (Roy 2003, p. 62).

The Yorùbá people believe that animals can take off their skin and go about as human. For example, the change from human to animal (monkey) is expressed in *ÈjìOgbè* verse four contained in Abimbọla (1977b, p. 28):

> *…Àṣẹyìnwá, Àṣẹyìnbọ̀,*
> *Taraẹ̀mílójù wọ̀gbẹ́,*
> *Wọn ń ṣe bí ajáko kiri;*
> *Àfàìmọ̀, k'ó tóó mọ́ jẹ́ pé Taraẹ̀mílójù ni ìnàkí.*

Àfàìmọ̀, k'ó tóó mọ́ jẹ́ pé Taraẹ̀mílójù ni Ọ̀bọ

In the long run,
Taraẹ̀mílójù entered the bush,
He was behaving like an animal;
It is likely that Taraẹ̀mílójù is the Gorilla,
It is likely that Taraẹ̀mílójù is the Monkey.

Taraẹ̀mílójù was a human being before he became a monkey. This change from human to animal form is however believed to be as result of punishment. Noting that human being is a higher animal; and monkey as a lower animal. The change of *Taraẹ̀mílójù* from (human) higher animal to (monkey) lower animal is realized as demotion as expressed in the above *Ifá* corpus. In another related human-animal relationship, monkeys have existed in human form in the past. Abimbọ́lá (1977b, p. 116) clarifies this opinion further that, "Àwíìgbọ́ l'ó sọ Ọ̀bọ di ẹranko tí ń gbé inú igbó." (Disobedience makes Monkey to be living in the bush). Furthermore, the opinion that human and animal are related is also contained in Ilésanmí (1998, p. 30) that:

Ẹranko ń dènìyàn, ènìyàn ń dẹranko.
Ọ̀pọ̀ ẹ̀dá ló wà láàrinjà,
tí wọn ń ṣe bí adáríhunrun.

Animals do turn to human, human do turn to an animal.
Many creatures are in the market
that are behaving like human beings.

These opinions above show that there is no demarcating line between human nature and animals. In other words, human nature is not constant, rigid or restricted to human alone, but sometimes shared between animals and human beings. Human ancestors are linked to monkeys which; are said to be "wise in many things" (Stratton 1994, p. 5). The mythic code is realized through statements, stories and narratives affirming supernatural events or connections in the distance past. Relevant myths connect *Ifá/Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì*,

especially the species of monkeys- *Àáyá* and *Ẹdun.* This myth is however relevant to the understanding of mythical relationships of *Ifá* and Saints Cosmas and Damian on one hand and *Ifá*, *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian on the other hand.

According to archeologists and anthropologists, the evolutionary line of descent leading to *Homo sapiens* diverged from that leading to Chimpanzees. Strayer (2011, p. 6) reports that, "there are perhaps twenty or thirty different species that emerged." Krantz (2012, p. 23) listed ten but, reports that "there is also dispute concerning many overlapping species." For instance, there is overlap between *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus*. They exist as one and the same species. So also do *Homo sapiens* archaic and *Homo sapiens*.

Archeologist Schaecter (1989, p. 65) was able to trace the evolution of man and establish that, "our early ancestors, the hominids were primates that had characteristics of human beings." Human ancestors are linked to monkeys. Pickrell (2006, p. 4) reports further that, human relationship with monkeys is so cordial that they both share some biological characteristics. According to Pickrell "Human are really just peculiar African Ape. We share DNA 98% to our closest living relative."

Some features of animals are in this study found to be relational to *Ifá* and *Ìbejì.* The authoritative power of both *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì* cut across from animal to human world. The symbol shared by both *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì* is associated by the Yorùbá philosophical statement regarding a specie of monkey called "Ìjímèrè." "Àṣẹ ìjímèrè nií ṣe l'áwùjọ ẹranko." (The authority of 'Ìjímèrè' is sanctioned among the animals). The mythic ability of the changing nature of monkey to change into different forms of animals

including human beings makes its links within human evolution to be relevant or useful. In the same manner, *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì* are known for authoritative words. For example, relating this with *Ifá/Ọ̀rúnmìlà*, Fágbèmí, (1972, p. 31) asserts that, "Á-ṣẹ, kò ní ṣ'àìṣẹ, nítorí àwíṣẹ ni ti Ifá, àfọ̀ṣẹ ni t'Ọ̀rúnmìlà." (it will certainly come to pass, for is *Ifá* known with authoritative words, *Ọ̀rúnmìlà's* words come to pass). The attribute of authority or sanction is as well enforced on *Ìbejì.* According to Curry (2010, p. 26), the power of *Àṣẹ* (sanction, authority or implementation) resides in *Ìbejì.* The twins possess "Àṣẹ, the "life force," or "spirit" … Àṣẹ is defined as "that divine essence in which physical materials, metaphysical concepts."

The concept of "àṣẹ" (authority) is a connections between *Ifá*/*Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì*, which suggest a relationship between them. Before now, the concept of "àṣẹ" has been independently associated or mostly used with *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì*. Attempt is made here to relate and establish the concept of "àṣẹ" as a "connecting concept" between *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì*. The kinship of *Ìbejì* (Ẹdun) and *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* (Àáyá) is expressed in another context. For example, Abímbọ́lá (1977b) in *Èjì-Ogbè* verse one accounts for the relationship between *Àáyá* and *Ẹdun,* with which Ì*bejì* and *Ifá*/*Ọ̀rúnmìlà* have mythic connections.

By implication, *Ifá*/*Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì,* with which Saints Cosmas and Damian are related in this study are born of the same ancestors. Therefore, they are all of blood relations, family or descendants. This relationship is here traced to the past: from the evolution period to the present time. *Ifá* corpus (myth) reveals that both *Àáyá* and *Ẹdun* are from the same mother but different in complexion. *Ifá's* myth revealed that *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* symbolizes 'Àáyá', while *Ìbejì* symbolizes 'Ẹdun.' Furthermore, *Ẹdun (Ìbejì*) is the

senior, while *Àáyá (Ọ̀rúnmìlà*) is the junior. However, *Ifá* is silence on why and how *Ẹdun-Ìbejì* is senior while *Àáyá-Ọ̀rúnmìlà* is junior; since *Ifá* is a foundation of Yorùbá culture, including religion as explained earlier. Mythical connection with *Ìbejì* with *Ẹdun* is popular to the present time. For instance, among the Yorùbá people (till today), refer to *Ìbejì* as 'Ẹdun', Adéoyè (1979, p. 253). *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* (Ifá progenitor), ancestral species of monkey (Àáyá) is symbolized with *olúpè's* monkey- *àáyá olúpè* (Dáramọ́lá and Jéjé 1967, p. 257).

The kinship of both *Ẹdun* and *Àáyá (Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì*) is further consolidated by the animal (monkey) set aside to symbolize *Ìbejì* in Yorùbá mythologies. For instance, "àwọn Yorùbá ya Ẹdun dúdú tàbí Ẹdun Orí-òkun s'ọ́tọ̀ fún òrìṣà Ìbejì." (The Yorùbá set-aside Black Monkey or Sea Monkey for *Ìbejì* deity) (Dáramọ́lá and Jéjé 1967, p. 281). *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* denotes *Àáyá Olúpè*. In Yorùbá mythologies, all the species of monkeys have related characteristics as they all share the same general attributes as explained earlier. In another context, a specie of monkey: *Ìjímèrè* (refers to earlier) is in Yorùbá mythologies believed to possess supernatural power; which is believed to be the source of magical power possessed by *Ifá*, *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian. This beliefs makes monkey to be known or regarded as having the power to turn things around through the use of herbs among the Yorùbá people. This opinion is expressed by Johnson (1921, p. 37) about a species of monkey- *Ìjímèrè*. In describing the attributes of this monkey type, he says, it is "regarded with superstitious reverence, the power of walking erect and talking being ascribed to it is esteemed a clever physician. Some professed "medicines men" usually tame and keep one of these creatures, and pretend to receive instructions and inscriptions from it."

It is noted that all are species of monkeys possess these attributes described above and, all the species are tamed by human beings; especially among the Yorùbá people. As a result of this, both *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* (Ifá progenitor) and *Ìbejì* have monkeys' mythical connections. Eventhough, there has not been monkey's connections with Saints Cosmas Damian before now, it is noted in this study that, *Ìbejì,* which have previously been established to relate with Saints Cosmas Damian is connected with monkeys (as explained earlier). This means, Saints Cosmas Damian are indirectly related with the myths connecting *Ìbejì* with *Ifá.*

Before now, the mythical links of *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* (Ifa) and *Ìbejì* have not been related. With the connections being made here, it indicates that the concept of myth relates *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* to *Ìbejì*. The mythic connections suggest that both *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì* are from the same ancestors. This connection is equally enforced on Saints Cosmas and Damian. The magical power of the Catholic twins is indirectly derived from *Ifá* and directly from *Ibejì* that are related in myths with *Ifá*.

One of the supernatural powers of Saints Cosmas and Damian manifests in form of healing. Healing, which is associated with medicine is a branch of *Ifá* literature that is relevant in this context of this study. This is because; healing connects *Ìbejì*, Saints Cosmas and Damian with *Ifá*. *Àásán* is *Ifá* "literature dealing with magic, incantation and healing by the power of words; 'Ìwòsàn'…an important aspect of *Ifá* is healing…in traditional Yorùbá Society, *Ifá* priests were the physicians and chemists of their various communities" (Abímbọ́lá 1983, p. 1). In other words, *Ifá* practice makes *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* to be "therapist, physician, pharmacist and religious priest who knows all things and solve all

human problems" (Akínyẹmí 2015, p. 125). There is hardly any case of Yorùbá traditional medicine that is not connected with *Ifá.*

> In traditional Yorùbá society, Ifá priests were the physicians and chemists of their various communities…Healing is, however, such a profound field that only Ifá priests-specialists on healing are in a position to heal the more dangerous- disease like madness and epilepsy. Indeed, it is a well known fact that Ifá are very competent at healing some very terrible diseases such as certain kinds of nervous disease. A detailed study of the methods of Ifá priest healers…claim that they are able to heal such disease as leprosy, nervous diseases, epilepsy, tuberculoses and other dreadful diseases. Indeed Ifá priests even today still claim that their methods and medicines are more efficient in the cure of certain diseases which modern medicine has placed within the hopeless brackets of "incurable (Abimbọ́lá 1983, pp.1&2).

This opinion shows that, medicine is a basic or general knowledge that must be acquired by *Ifá* priest. All medical disciplines are encapsulated in *Ifá*.

> In the traditional Yorùbá society, Ifá priest were the physicians, psychiatrist,… of the communities to which they belonged…even before initiation, the would-be priest must learn something about medicine so that he could cure his clients of minor ailments. No Ifá priest can have a successful practice if he does not know anything about medicine since many people go to Ifá priest to seek help in curing their ailments (Abimbọ́lá 1977a p. 13).

These attributes known with *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian are derived from *Ifá*. The *Ifá* priest is trained on how to cure different illnesses among the Yorùbá people.

Furthermore, in *Ifá* ethnics, no *Ifá* priest must charge his client; *Ifá* supplicant must not be denied of *Ifá* divination on financial ground.

> In the ancient times in Yorùbáland, *Ifá* priests were usually very poor. This is because they were not paid directly for the services they rendered to the community. For their livelihood they had to depend entirely on certain parts o the offerings given to *Ifá* and sometimes on gifts from clients…No *babaláwo* should use his position to enrich himself in any way, he must not refuse anybody his service on account of money" (Abimbọ́lá 1976, p. 17).

The *Ifá* training and practice prohibits enriching oneself. No *Ifá* practitioner succeeds by charging the *Ifá* supplicant for the *Ifá* divination performed. It is believed that the *Ifá*

oracle forbids the *Ifá* diviner to charge *Ifá* client for the services rendered. The *Ifá* progenitor- *Ọ̀rúnmìlà*, established the ethical code of "free of charge" to the subsequent *Ifá* practitioners. In other words, the *Ifá* priest is initiated into the profession based on the "ethical oaths" sworn to as indicated above.

Likewise, during the ministry of Saints Cosmas and Damian, medical services were rendered free of charge. The free medical service gives the poor access to receiving healing without charges. In other words, money is not a limitation to receiving healing. This is believed to be spiritual gift (healing) which must not be turned to money making ventures or business. The spiritual (divine) gift of healing was given to Saints Cosmas and Damian free of charge; therefore, they must in turn render their services free. In other words, Saints Cosmas and Damian "accepted no pay for their services and were, therefore, called *anargroi*, "the silverless." Saints Cosmas and Damian are regarded as the patrons of physicians and surgeons and are sometimes represented with medical emblem" (Catholic Encyclopedia). The association of Saints Cosmas and Damian with medicine is here observed to be derived from *Ifá*.

It will be recalled that, it is unethical for *Ifá* priest to deny client(s) divination because of inability to fulfill the financial requirements. In other words, the poor people are protected and guaranteed the services of *Ifá* oracle. This belief is extended to the magical power of *Ìbejì*. "Twins are born with powerful *àṣẹ* that predisposes them to being powerful priests and magicians" (Fáladé 2011, p. 6). It will be recalled that the concept of *àṣẹ* (authority) has been associated with monkeys as well as *Ifá*. For instance, the magical power of *Ibejì* is actualized by *àṣẹ*. The poor are the beneficiaries of the magical power used for their blessings. This belief is connected with their (twins) birth circumstance.

Likewise, *Ìbejì* are rarely given birth to by the rich and wealthy people among the Yorùbá. *Ìbejì,* by their supernatural nature and power, use their influence to bless the poor in the Yorùbá society. This is expressed in panegyric code of *Ìbejì* that:

> *Èjìrẹ́ sọ alákíṣà di aláṣọ*
> *Ó sọ alágbe di olóunjẹ*
> *Ó sọ òtòsì di ọlọ́rọ̀* (Dáramólá and Jéjé, p. 282).
>
> Twins turn the rag users to users of two hundred cloths,
> turns the beggar to food owners.
> turns the poor to the rich.

Ìbejì are believed to be special advocators of the poor. This attribute is believed to have been derived from *Ifá* as explained earlier.

Even though, *Ifá/Ọ̀rúnmìlà, Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian receive no money or any pay for their spiritual services, they were blessed with riches. Their blessing is divine. They never lack. For example, in the Yorùbá traditional society, cowries serve as a means of exchange-currency. Cowry shells (currency) were introduced in the seventeenth century. "The cowry shell fulfilled to the local people practically all the requirements of money. It served as a medium of exchange, a standard of value, and a store value" (Fádípẹ̀ 1970, pp. 157 & 8). Cowry is a symbol of connections between *Ọ̀rúnmìlà* and *Ìbejì*. Cowry is a symbol of wealth and prosperity. This is why the two divinities (Ìbejì and Ifá) are associated with wealth (Òkéwándé 2017). For instance, *Ifá* is refers to as *Èrìgì àlọ̀*; which means one that has attribute of honour and values, that is referenced for prosperity. For instance, the relationship in symbol of cowry connections between *Ifá*, *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian is a relationship. In other words, *Ifá*, *Ìbejì* and Saints Comas and Damian are associated with wealth and prosperity. As a result of wealth and prosperity associated with Saints Cosmas and Damian, some churches were

built in their memory because of the work of healing-cure of different illness. For example, The Emperor Justinian 1 (529 – 568) honored them for the diseases they cured. "Having been cured of a dangerous illness by the intercession of Cosmas and Damian, Justinian, in gratitude for their aid, rebuilt and adorned their church at Constantinople, and it became a celebrated place of pilgrimage." This is the same with Pope Felix IV at Rome (526 – 530) (Catholic Encyclopedia). This is realized in form of "compensation" in their memory. On one hand, the Yorùbá people believe that to be honored is more valuable than to be rich. Honor last; while riches may be for a period of time. On the other hand, money is used to gain honor in Yorùbá society. In other words an individual with honor should no longer bother to look for money again. In short, prominence is given to honor, with which *Ifá/Ọ̀rúnmìlà*, *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian are known for than money or riches.

The internalization and universality of the beliefs on *Ìbejì* and Saint Cosmas and Damian are in this study demonstrated to have been connected with *Ifá.* According to Mikelle (2001, p. 114), in the Diaspora, especially, Brazil, Cosmas and Damian have three children born after them "demonstrate an iconographic Yorùbá influence on Luso-Brazillian depictions of Catholic saints." Peek (2009, p. 112) opines that, "a process I call the "Yorubanization" of Brazillian Roman Catholic celebration, hagiography, and iconography associated with Cosme/Cosmas and Damio/Damian occurred as a result of Ìbejì ritual and imagery brought by enslaved Yorubas to Brazil." As the relationship of *Ìbejì* has been established with Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism, one can notes the unchanging beliefs on *Ìbejì* in Africa and in the Diaspora. However, none of the previous findings has been able to establish that *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian of

African Catholicism derive their elements and values from *Ifá*, as it is established in mythic code in this work.

Conclusion

This study examines how *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian derived their mythic code from *Ifá* myths. The spread and influence *Ifá's,* which is the foundation on which the culture, including religion of the Yorùbá people rests, has no doubt been extended to *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian. *Ifá* is also the spokesperson for all other Yorùbá divinities. This study has established *Ìbejì* divinity with *Ifá*, especially in myth. Likewise, the relationship of *Ìbejì*, which have earlier been related with Saints Cosmas and Damian, is in this study discovered to be related and connected with *Ifá*. This work has equally established and account for the source of the magical or healing power, as well as other mysterious power associated with *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism as being connected, especially in mythic code with *Ifá.*

Ifá, the religion that encapsulates all stories of all the Yorùbá divinities and supernatural beings (as earlier explained in this work), is demonstrated to have a strong links, values and influence on *Ìbejì* on one hand and Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism on the other hand. The mythic code has been adopted in this study as trace element to establish the links between Saints Cosmas and Damian to *Ifá* and with other Yorùbá divinities and supernatural beings. To the Yorùbá belief system generally, no god works towards success in isolation *awo nií gbáwo nígbọ̀wọ́*. The dual, bilateral or corporate complementary power and roles of the Yorùbá divinities is here enforced on both *Ìbejì* and Saints Cosmas and Damian of Catholicism.

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NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN: ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND LESSONS FROM TRADITIONAL AFRICANS

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Abstract

In his encyclical letter on the environment and human ecology *Laudato si* pope Francis invites us to care for our common home. Nowadays, lots of arguments abound maintaining that humans should treat nature as part of humans and humans as part of nature. It is the thesis of this paper that these modern arguments have in fact been the view and way of life of Traditional Africans. The paper presents the environmental ethics of the Indigenous Africans and the lessons that could be drawn from it. By environmental ethics here, it means the way Traditional or Indigenous Africans care for their environment; how they avoid degrading it and how they restore it once it is degraded. To understand this better, one has to be conversant with the Traditional Africans' world view which of course informed their view of environmental ethics. Generally, Traditional African world-view is devoid of the polarity that characterizes the Graeco-Christian world-view. It reveals the interconnectedness that exists between humans and beings other than humans. Beings in Traditional African world-view engage in harmonious interaction for the maintenance of balance in the universe, hence, Indigenous Africans practice what I tag "maintenance and restorative environmental ethics" through the use of taboos and sacrifices. Learning from these indigenous people will help to curb the present environmental crises facing the world.

Keywords: Environmental ethics, Pollution, Interconnectedness, vital force, Common home, Protection, Taboo and sacrifice.

Introduction

The Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si* of the Holy Father Francis on Care for Our Common Home is a strong invitation to mankind to work harder in taking care of the earth our common home for our common good. The arguments on the need for humans to treat nature as part of humans and humans as part of nature have grown stronger since the release of this encyclical letter. This paper avers that these arguments have indeed been the view and way of life of Traditional Africans. It therefore, aims at exploring the

environmental ethics of Traditional Africans[1] that promoted a mutual and interconnected relationship with every member of the ecosystem. It examines the lessons that could be drawn from it by contemporary Africans and indeed all humanity in order to care for our common home as Pope Francis admonishes us. Doing this I hope, will help to curb ecological crises not only in Africa but in the world in general.

To realize this, the paper will first expose briefly the traditional Africans world view which of course informed their view of environmental ethics. This will be followed by a survey of the Traditional Africans' environmental ethics. It will then present some lessons that could be drawn from this ethics, which will help to curb world environmental crises. Some of the major categories that will be used here include: vital force, ethic of harmony and balance, non-separation between the visible and invisible, environmental ethics, interrelationship of beings, and Supreme Being. It may be probably wrong to assign gender to the Supreme Being since most African languages have no gender pronoun for the third person singular. For example, the Igbo third person singular pronoun "ọ" is used to refer to the English third person singular pronouns "he", "she", and "it". The same pronoun is therefore used to refer to the Supreme Being, the Deity, the Ancestor, male and female, river, mountain, plant, animal, and in fact all beings in the cosmos. So this paper will be using "It" with uppercase "I" to refer to the Supreme Being for lack of better English equivalent for "ọ".

[1]. Traditional Africans here refer to indigenous Africans with indigenous cultures and Religion.

Brief Survey of the Traditional African World-view

There are as many nuances of Traditional African world-view as there are different ethnic groups in Africa. What is presented here therefore are characteristic features of Traditional African world-view. In fact, Traditional African world-view is very encompassing. So, focus here is limited to what is relevant to this paper.

Generally, Traditional African world-view is devoid of the polarity that characterizes the Greco-Christian world-view. In other words, one cannot clearly distinguish or separate the visible from the invisible, the body from the soul or the material from the spiritual, the temporal from the non-temporal, or the sacred from the profane.[2] The universe is seen as a cosmic unity where beings engage in "a network of relationships".[3] J.V. Taylor captures this well when he says:

> Not only is there less separation between subject and object, between self and non-self, but fundamentally all things share the same nature and the same intention one upon another … the living, the dead and the first Ancestors, from the stone to the divinities a hierarchy of power but not of being, for all are one, all are here, all are now.[4]

Africans have a concept of being quite different from their Western counterparts. Unlike the Western view that sees being as static, African concept of being is dynamic. It is best understood as "force vital" or "vital-force" with which God endowed each creature human or non-human, according to its nature.[5] In African world-view therefore, no being exists or operates independent of the others. Whatever action or movement taken by any particular being or group of beings in the cosmos affects other beings either negatively or

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[2]. Ikenga-Metuh Emefie, *Comparative Studies of African Traditional Religions* (Onitsha, Nigeria: IMICO Publishers, 1987), 51
[3]. Emefie, (1987), 69
[4]. J. V. Taylor, *The Primal Vision* (London: SCM Press, 1963), 64
[5]. Placid Temples, *Bantu Philosophy* (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1969), 33

positively. Placid Temples puts it this way: "Nothing moves in the universe of forces without influencing others by its movement. The world of forces is held like spider's web of which no single thread can be caused to vibrate without shaking the whole network."[6] While this concept of being as "vital-forces" is the basis of magic in Africa since "those who have the knowledge and power" can tap the properties inherent in these beings, it is itself not magic. [7] Hence, one should not confuse the interaction among beings which is simply the interaction among creatures of God, with magic which is "an attempt to capture this knowledge and power".[8] For Traditional Africans, irrespective of the realm a being may belong – visible or invisible, temporal or spatial, material or spiritual, etc. – as long as it is in this universe, it is in constant interaction with other beings which explains why for the Africans, there is no sharp distinction or dichotomy between these realms. The interaction of beings in African world-view is not without a goal. Its aim is to maintain "the integration and balance of the beings in it."[9] This maintenance of harmony is of primary importance to Indigenous Africans who believe that the universe is like spider's web and whatever affects an individual being in this universe affects the whole. In Traditional African world-view therefore, there is always a sense of communalism in which all the beings in the cosmos engage in a harmonious mutual relationship. This interaction among beings could be deduced from Innocent Asouzu's complementary ontology of *ibuanyindanda*.[10] In this ontology, each individual being exists in

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[6]. Temples, 60

[7]. Cf. Emefie, (1987), 69. See also the document "Meeting African Religion" (Rome: Secratarius Pro Non-Christianis, 1969), 31

[8]. Emefie, (1987), 31

[9]. Emefie, (1987), 70

[10]. *Ibuanyindanda* is a Traditional Igbo African adage which simply means that no burden is insurmountable for group of ants. Just as the ants surmount all difficulties with

relationship with the others. Whatever affects him/her/it affects the whole community of beings. He/she/it lacks something within him/her/it that has to be complemented by others in his/her/its relationship with them. When he/she/it severs this relationship, it has to be restored in the spirit of oneness.[11] Hence, Indigenous Africans always strive to maintain a balanced relationship with the Supreme Being or God, the Deities, with fellow human beings both the dead (Ancestors) and the living, with animals, plants, rivers, mountains, "and other elements and phenomena in the universe."[12] Due to the importance of this harmony Indigenous Africans do all that is in their power to maintain it or to restore it when broken. Taylor captures this well when he says:

> A man's well-being consists rather, in keeping in harmony with the cosmic totality. When things go well with him he knows he is at peace and of a piece with the scheme of things and there can be no greater good than that. If things go wrong then somewhere he has fallen out of step …. The whole system of divination exists to help him discover the point at which the harmony has been broken and how it may be restored.[13]

Indigenous Africans believe in the use of taboos to checkmate the disintegration of the harmonious relationship among beings in the universe. In the same vein, rituals and sacrifices abound either to maintain the balance from disintegrating or to restore it when disintegrated. The question then is: how does this world-view shape the Traditional

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their complementary efforts when dragging their foods inside their holes so do the complementary interrelationships among beings help to maintain ecological balance in the universe.

[11]. Innocent Asouzu I, *Ibuanyidanda: New Complementary Ontology beyond World-immanentism, Ethnocentric Reduction and Impositions*, (Zweigniederlassung Zürich: LIT VERLAG GmbH & Co. KG Wien, 2007), 21

[12]. Asouzu, 71

I will return to this effort to maintain a balanced relationship with other beings in the universe in the next section when I will be discussing the environmental ethics of Traditional Africans.

[13]. Taylor, 67

Africans' environmental ethics? The answer to this question is the next focus of this paper.

Traditional Africans' Environmental Ethics

The world-view discussed above is indeed what shapes the environmental ethics of Traditional Africans. Based on the fact that beings in Traditional African world-view engage in harmonious interaction for the maintenance of balance in the universe, Indigenous Africans practice what this paper tags "maintenance and restorative environmental ethics". This ethics aims at maintaining the ontological or ecological order, or restoring it when disintegrated. The remaining of the section is devoted in fleshing out this ethics.

To maintain the ontological balance among beings in the universe, Indigenous Africans embarked on environmental ethical behaviors that were put on check with series of taboos. Let me emphasize here that it is not important whether these behaviors were originally meant to be environmental as we talk of environmental ethics today or not. What matters is that they are environmentally friendly and have a lot to teach contemporary Africans and indeed non-Africans who are concerned about the modern-day environmental degradations. I now return to taboos. Taboos are simply series of things one should not do. For example, due to the difficulties in managing the hygiene that associates with menstruation in those days it was taboo in most Traditional African societies for a woman to go to the river during her menstrual period.[14] This was in no way a discriminatory attitude towards women in this condition but rather a means to prevent the pollution of water and secure its life or "vital force" as a being and the lives or "vital

[14]. Onunwa Udobata R., *African Spirituality: An Anthology of Igbo Religious Myths*. (United Kingdom: arima Publishing, 2005), 117

forces" of other beings that depend on it. For the failure to do so would disintegrate the interaction among beings. It was also taboo to urinate in sources of water like river, stream, pond, and so forth or to fetch water from them with iron bucket or any container that has been used in cooking. While it was believed that the spirits would strike one who urinated in those water sources with a terrible disease in his or her private part or that the water sources would dry up in the case of fetching from them with the outlawed instruments,[15] the main reason for the taboo is the same one that bans a woman in menstrual period from going to the river.

To protect the harmonious interaction between beings and thereby maintain the ontological order, Indigenous Africans established taboos governing not only the behaviors of human beings with their fellow human beings but with the rest of the beings in the universe. For example, certain forests and mountains were designated as sacred and people were banned from entering or climbing them not to talk of cutting trees or plants, or killing animals or other beings living in them.[16] In the same way, certain trees could not be used as firewood in most Traditional African societies because they produced terrible smokes.[17] While this act protected this species of trees it also prevented air pollution that might have resulted from the smokes coming out from such firewood.

Again, different species of plants and animals were labeled as totems in different Traditional African tribes. As totems it was taboo to eat or destroy these plants and

[15]. Munamato Chemhuru, and Dennis Masaka. "Taboos as Sources of Shona People's Environmental Ethics", *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, (Vol. 12, No.7, 2010), pp. 125-128

[16]. Chemhuru and Masaka, 128-130

[17]. Chemhuru and Masaka, 129

animals.[18] While it was a common belief that the Ancestors would strike the culprit and the entire community with misfortunes, the fact is that toteism helped to preserve and strengthen the lives or "vital forces" of these beings thereby maintaining the desired harmony in the universe. Referring to these totems Benson Ohihon Igboin says: "Some animals are regarded as totems and therefore preserved. Some rivers are believed to be sacred and they are not polluted. The evil forests are held sacred and the games and trees there are safe from exploitative rapacity of humans."[19]

The worship of the Supreme Being and the veneration of the Deities and Ancestors as well as the ritual sacrifices that go with them were other manifestations of the environmental ethical behaviors of Indigenous Africans geared towards maintaining the ontological harmony through the interaction of beings. For example, there is this sacrifice to the Supreme Being known as '*Aja Eze Enu*' among the Igbos of Nigeria which takes place during the festivals that mark the beginning of the planting and harvesting seasons.[20] The prayer that accompanies this sacrifice says it all. It reads: "Eze Enu (the Supreme Being), receive these our gifts for the preservation of our families, our relatives, our friends. Increase our children and our crops, so that by this time next year we may have something to give thee."[21] From the world-view of the Indigenous Africans discussed above that emphasizes the interconnectedness among beings, one could aver without fear of contradiction that "our relatives" in the above prayer include not only human beings but also non-human beings like rivers, mountains, animals, trees, etc. In

[18]. Chemhuru and Masaka, 130
[19]. Benson Ohihon Igboin, "African Religion and Environmental Challenges in Post Colonial Africa", *Ilorin Journal of Religious Studies*, (Vol. 2, No. 1, 2012), 27
[20]. Emefie, (1987), 129
[21]. Ikenga-Metuh Emefie, *God and Man in African Religion*, (London: Geoffrey Champmans, 1981), 130

fact, George Tinker speaking from the perspective of the indigenous peoples of Indian Americans confirms this when he says: "Animals, birds, crops, and medicines are all living relatives and must be treated with respect if they are to be genuinely efficacious for people."[22] While this is explicit among indigenous peoples of Indian Americans as Tinker portrays it, it is implicit in the above prayer to *Eze Enu*.

The environmental ethical behaviors of Indigenous Africans could be vividly deduced from the Igbo myth of how Imo River came to live in one of the villages in Igboland[23] called *Umuopara*. This myth narrates how the first man sent by *Chukwu* the Supreme Being to live in this village had no access to water and had to trek long distances in search of water. During one of his numerous long treks he met the Supreme Being, who owns Imo River and pleaded with It to let the River settle in his town. Out of love and sympathy the Supreme Being agreed with the condition that the River would only pass through the man's house but would not end there. That the man and his people would worship and offer sacrifices in appreciation to the owner of the River. No woman in menstruation would enter the River. That the snakes in the River should not be killed as they are sons and daughters of the Supreme Being who owns the River. Everybody should be free to fetch water from the River. Finally there should be an understanding that the River belongs to the Supreme Being and not to the man and his children.[24] It should be noted here that since direct worship of the Supreme Being is rare among the Indigenous Africans It receives the worship and sacrifices stipulated in this myth through

[22]. George E Tinker, *American Indian Liberation: A Theology of Sovereignty*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2008), 70

[23]. Igboland is the geographical territory of the Igbo people or Igbos or Ndigbo as some authors would call them.

[24]. Udobata R., 116-117

Its intermediary, the water Deity. In fact, what is said of water in this myth is true of other basic needs of human and non-human creatures like the land and air, which are personal properties of the Supreme Being and not of human beings. Hence, they should not be polluted. Animals, trees, and other beings living in them should not be killed for they are sons and daughters of the Supreme Being who owns these elements. No one should be restricted from using them. Worship and sacrifices must be offered in appreciation to the Supreme Being who owns them through Its intermediary Deities. To illustrate how important these environmental ethical behaviors are, which are geared towards maintaining the ontological order, the Igbos have another myth that shows how a particular river moved from a particular town to another because elders of the original town where it was, failed to offer the necessary worship and sacrifices in appreciation to its owner even when they were reminded to do so. The elders of the neighboring town who got to know what was happening went and offered the sacrifice and the river moved to their own town.[25] Another Igbo myth shows how a river suddenly dried up because people who were living around it were polluting it by throwing dirty things in it. This act annoyed the Deity in charge of this river who caused the river to dry up after sending notes of warning that fell on deaf ears.[26]

While some of the sacrifices to the Supreme Being through Its intermediary Deities are meant to obtain permission for the use of other created beings or to show appreciation

[25]. Udobata R., 113-115
[26]. Udobata R., 120-121

like the ones that accompany the festivals of the planting and harvesting seasons respectively, others are meant to restore the ontological harmony when broken.[27] From the foregoing, it is obvious that Indigenous Africans exhibited environmental ethical behaviors that maintained a healthy relationship among beings in the universe. Where the relationship was disintegrated they did everything possible to restore it. However, there are some scholars who do not see these behaviors as intentionally geared towards maintaining a healthy ecological relationship. For example, Nisbert Taringa argues that "the ecological attitude of traditional African religion is more based on fear or respect of ancestral spirits than on respect for nature itself."[28] Even at that he avers that the designation of some species as totems leaves other species that are not regarded as totems vulnerable just as the designation of some places as sacred exposes others that are not to exploitation and degradation.[29] This is a genuine concern by Taringa. However, he doesn't seem to understand the wisdom of the Indigenous Africans in designating certain species as totems and certain places as sacred. I would like to disagree with Taringa based on the following reasons. First, Taringa cannot say with absolute certainty that "ecological attitude of traditional African religion is more based on fear or respect of ancestral spirits than on respect for nature itself" because Religion and culture of the Indigenous Africans are inseparable. That said, I still maintain that what matters is not whether Traditional Africans' attitudes to nature were based on respect for environment

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[27]. See Jomo Kenyatta, *Facing Mounting Kenya*, (London: Secker and Warburg, 1961), 232. See also Udobata R., 121. For more on Traditional African sacrifices see Francis Arinze, *Sacrifice in Igbo Religion*, (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1970)

[28]. Nisbert Taringa, "How Environmental is African Traditional Religion?" (Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 2006). http://enviro.lclark.edu/resources/EastAfrica/Hadzabe/How.pdf (accessed November 13, 2013)

[29]. Taringa, 191-213

itself or not, but that they were able to maintain a healthy environmental relationship with other beings in the cosmos. After all, some people keep away from murder in many countries of the world more because of the fear of being punished than respect for fellow human beings. Second, it is not true that designating some species of animals and plants as totems or some places as sacred the way the elders of Indigenous Africans made it would lead to the extinction of other species. The fact is that these elders in their wisdom knew that human beings need certain beings other than humans as food to protect and strengthen their own lives or "vital forces". Yet they knew they must not endanger these other beings in a manner that would lead to their extinction thereby disrupting the ontological or ecological harmony. Hence, they designed these means to realize this goal. That explains why each clan has a different species of animals and plants as its totems. This form of toteism ensured that what was eaten in one clan was protected in another as totems. In this manner, there was no way a particular species could have been extinct from Traditional African universe except by natural death. All the known recorded species of animals hunted to extinction in Africa happened only after the advent of the colonialists and their Christian missionary counterparts.[30]

It is not as if the elders of the Indigenous Africans who promulgated these taboos did not know that people were keeping them out of fear of being punished by the ancestral spirits who are the custodians of these laws. On the contrary that is what they intended doing. They knew too that the offerings they were making to the Supreme Being through Its intermediary Deities were eaten by other beings like humans and animals. Yet, they believed their offerings were spiritually received by the Supreme Being who has the right

[30]. "South Africa's Extinct Animals" http://unearthed2.wordpress.com/2013/09/27/south-africas-extinct-animals/ (accessed December 15, 2013)

to use them to feed Its other creatures. What I am saying here is that it doesn't really matter if "the ecological attitude of traditional African religion is more based on fear or respect of ancestral spirits than on respect for nature itself" as Taringa is worried about. What matters is that Indigenous Africans were able to maintain healthy environmental ethical behaviors through which they maintained a balanced relationship with other beings in the universe.

It was this attitude that Indigenous Africans were exhibiting when Christian missionaries and their colonial allies arrived in the continent of Africa. They saw the worship and sacrifices to the Supreme Being through Its intermediary Deities as devil worship. They vehemently condemned it and qualified African Traditional Religion with all sorts of names like "paganism", "animism", "fetishism", "idolatry", "heathenism", [31] etc. For them, the Supreme Being worshiped by Indigenous Africans was a withdrawn god, god of the primitive people.[32]

What is indeed disturbing is that indigenous missionaries have followed the footsteps of the expatriate missionaries. Most of the trees, forests, land, and animals designated sacred and protected with taboos are today being destroyed by exuberant young Christians who believed they are abodes and manifestations of Devil. For example, in the mid-1990s the Zanzibar leopards in Tanzania were seen as instruments of witches by the people and

[31]. Lawrence Ugwuanyi, "Advancing an Environmental Ethics through the African World-View" (Date is not given). http://www.hrmars.com/admin/pics/327.pdf (accessed November 15, 2013)

[32]. Ugwuanyi, http://www.hrmars.com/admin/pics/327.pdf (accessed November 15, 2013)

were brutally brought to extinction.[33] In fact, one only needs to watch most Nigerian Nollywood movies to have a taste of what is happening today. It is disheartening. However, one has to be optimistic for all hope is not lost yet. Something could still be done to remedy the situation. At least modern Indigenous Africans could still be made to understand that contrary to the suppositions of the expatriate Christian missionaries, their ancestors who were maintaining balanced environmental ethical relationships with other beings through their religion were neither nature nor Devil worshipers. When this awareness is created it will encourage contemporary Africans and indeed all people concerned with the present environmental crises facing the world to learn lessons from African Traditional Religionists' environmental attitudes. Creating this awareness is one thing this paper has achieved. This paper will now present some of the lessons humanity should learn from environmental ethics of Indigenous Africans.

Lessons from Environmental Ethics of Indigenous Africans

Every society or group of people has its own stories or narratives that tell about them not only to themselves but also to others.[34] As Robert Schreiter says, "Continuing attacks may cause us to doubt and even abandon the narratives that encode our senses of safety and selfhood, since they do not seem to offer the assurance we seek in the midst of these onslaughts."[35] He refers to this kind of attacks as "a narrative of the lie."[36]From the

[33]. "10 Animals that have been Hunted to Extinction" http://www.businessinsider.com/10-animals-that-have-been-hunted-to-extinction-2013- 1?op=1#ixzz2sJkMLeiM (accessed January 6, 2014)

[34]. Robert J. Schreiter, *Reconciliation: Mission and Ministry in a Changing Social Order*, *(*Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), 32

[35]. Schreiter, 33

forgoing, it is clear that the Traditional Africans' religious attitude that helps to maintain healthy environmental relationships as explored here is part of the narratives of Indigenous Africans that describe them to others and help them to understand themselves. However, continuous attacks by some misinformed Christians on this religious attitude have caused some Indigenous Africans to doubt and to abandon their narrative. In other words, the narrative of the lie of these Christians about the environmental ethical behaviors of Indigenous Africans has altered their original narrative. The present narrative can no longer match the old no matter how we try to amend it. Schreiter confirms this when he says: "Our own narratives lie in disarray and, even if reconstructed, cannot be the same again. We need to find other narratives that can pick up the fragments of our own and piece them back together."[37] It is based on this and on Pope Francis' invitation for us to care for our common home that this paper presents not only to modern Africans but to people of goodwill throughout the world the following lessons from Indigenous African environmental ethics for healthy environmental ethical relationships that will maintain the ecological order.

1. Indigenous Africans believe that humans are into interconnected relationship with creatures other than humans. Whatever affects these other creatures, affects humans as well. Hence, they work hard to maintain the ecological balance or to restore it when disturbed. Humanity should learn from the reality of this interconnectedness of created beings. It should learn that if it treats the environment well it will affect it positively but if it degrades it, it will adversely affect it. Thanks to God many modern arguments are emphasizing this now.

[36]. Schreiter, 34
[37]. Schreiter, 36

2. Indigenous peoples of Africa designate certain animals, trees, forests, rivers and streams as sacred and treat them with love and care in appreciation and praise of the Supreme Being their Creator. By so doing, they prevent these animals, trees, and forests from going into extinction. World leaders should learn a lesson from this for the sake of the common good and designate certain animals, trees, forests, rivers and streams as sacred and treat them with love and care in appreciation and praise of their Creator. This will help to keep these animals, trees, and forests from going into annihilation while helping to save the rivers and streams from pollutions. In fact, Christians should see this attitude of Indigenous Africans as being in line with St. Francis of Assisi who treated all God's creatures as brothers and sisters in praise of God their Creator.[38] They should see the water sources as sacramental symbols of Jesus, who, Himself, is the Living Water.[39] Doing this will help to protect our environment from degradation.
3. Taboos and sacrifices are used by Indigenous Africans to secure the protection of the designated sacred animals, trees, forests, rivers and streams. While taboos scare people away from destroying or polluting these sacred beings and places, sacrifices were made to the Supreme Being the Creator in appreciation and protection of the environment. This should be a lesson for world policy makers who should come out with policies that will help to safeguard our environments or restore them when degraded. Humans should learn how to sacrifice their

[38]. See John Hart, *Sacramental Commons: Christian Ecological Ethics*, (Lanham, Maryland: Rowland & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc., 2006), 23 - 40

[39]. See John 7: 37 – 39

greed in the use of created things in appreciation to God the Creator and for the protection of the environment.

4. Contemporary Indigenous peoples who still hold on to the environmental ethical behavior of their ancestors should realize that the advent of the colonialists and their Christian missionary counterparts has changed their narrative as a people. Hence, they should learn to love and care for the environment purely for what it is – the sacramental symbol of the Supreme Being. Where taboos are needed to help realize the goal, this paper recommends that the punishment for the culprits should be such that would promote the desired harmony first among humans, then, with creatures other than humans. In other words, any punishment recommended by the ancestors, which is not congruous with the modern age, should be replaced with more conventionally acceptable one.
5. Finally, God has been warning humanity through many signs of ecological crisis and the warnings have been falling on deaf ears. Humanity should learn from the Igbo myth of the dried-up river above and heed the warnings before we lose our common home.

Conclusion

This paper portrayed the environmental ethics of Indigenous Africans which is rooted in their world-view. It is an ethics, which is friendly to nature and protected with taboos and sacrifices springing from their religious belief of the interconnectedness of humans and beings other than humans. It also presented some lessons that could be learnt from this ethics, which is believed to help to curb ecological crises in the world in line with Pope

Francis' invitation for us to care for our common home. In fact, what many modern environmental scholars and lovers of our environment are advocating today has been the view and way of life of Indigenous Africans. Let us learn from them for the good of our common home. For, if we treat our environment well it will affect us positively but if we degrade it, it will adversely affect us.

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Portrayal of Catholic University Education in the Media: Purpose and Contributions to Education in the Twenty-first Century Zambia

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Abstract

This paper qualitatively explores the portrayal of Catholic university education in the media in contemporary Zambia, as a phenomenon that has characterised Zambia's university education. Document review and recorded interviews on Catholic university education in the media were the main methods of data collection. The data was thematically analysed and Geiger's assumptions on the roles of private universities in general informed the analysis. The portrayal reflected the expansion of Catholic provision of education at university level unlike its traditional involvement at the lower levels of education (primary, secondary, and college). The society's expectations and reactions to Catholic university education also mirrored the purpose of the church's involvement in university education through striving to provide 'more', 'different' and 'better' university education in a way that responds to the needs of the Zambian society.

Key words: Catholic university education, Private university, media, purpose and contribution.

Introduction

This paper investigates the portrayal of Catholic university education in the public sphere in Zambia as a new development in the history of the country's university education. Until after independence, there were neither public nor private universities in Zambia. The 1990s' changes in legislation created a new platform for university education as private providers were encouraged to come on board (Ministry of Education, 1996). Under a liberalised educational system, the right of private organisations, individuals, religious bodies, and local communities to establish and control their own educational institutions was recognised and welcomed (Ministry of Education, 1996).

Since then, Zambia has witnessed the growth of private higher education, with the

Catholic Bishops in Zambia establishing the first Catholic university in 2008, (Zambia Catholic University) which is located in Kalulushi. The university has subsequently expanded its programmes and has a new campus in Lusaka. Although the proliferation of private universities in general and Catholic university education in particular is a global phenomenon and of critical interest to scholars, studies on them are still relatively few especially in Zambia.

A survey of literature on Catholic education in Zambian scholarship reveals that studies have been pre-occupied mainly with other forms and levels of education. Studies on religion and education in Zambia have widely acknowledged the role the Roman Catholic Church has played in the history of the country's education since inception, throughout colonial as well as postcolonial period in Zambia. For example, Carmody (2001; 2004; 2007; 2015; 2016), a leading scholar on religion and education in Zambia has analysed the roles, contributions and dilemmas for Catholic education at the primary and secondary school levels in Zambia's history. However, the Church's current expansion into university education has not received attention in scholarship.

This investigation therefore arises out of the observable realities of the Church's expansion into university education in order to uncover the church's contributions in twenty-first century Zambia on the education landscape. It aims to document the purpose and contributions of the Catholic Church in university education in Zambia's twenty-first century using the media as a lens in order to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on catholic education from primary and secondary to university education.

The inquiry is limited to Catholic university education in the media and covers the period

after 1990 to the present because this is the period, which has recorded the emergence of private universities in Zambia. Geiger's assumptions on the roles of private higher education will aid the analysis. Geiger (1986) described three main functions of private higher education institutions which are, to provide 'more', better', and 'different' education. The 'more' function occurs when private higher education institutions exist to absorb an immense demand, which public institutions cannot fulfill while the 'different' function is played when the state allows private provision to respond to certain needs, which are not met by the public sector institutions. Levy (2011) has further categorized this type of institutions under the identity type and cites an example of the Catholic University of Korea, which serves a distinct minority group of people within the country with specific cultural and religious orientations. The third function aids to compensate for the low quality of education found in the public sector by providing 'better' education.

The focus is also only on Zambia Catholic University (ZCU) as the first catholic university education institution in Zambia's history. Consequently, the findings of this case study are not for purposes of generalisation, but may be used as steeping stones in understanding Catholic university education in contemporary Zambia.

Conceptualisation of Terms

Private university and Catholic university Education

The 2013 Higher Education Act categorises higher education institutions into universities and colleges, which can either be public or private. The concept of private universities is problematic and is here taken to refer to any type of university, which is outside the public university education system (non-public, non-government, or quasi-public)

(Kitaev, 1999). This definition of a private university is similar to the Higher Education Act. No. 4 of 2013, which states that private higher education institution means an institution which is not established or maintained by the Government or a local authority out of public funds, and that higher education is tertiary education leading to the qualification of a diploma, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree or Doctorate Degree. In this regard, a higher education institution is an institution that provides higher education on a full-time, part-time, or distance-learning basis. By focusing on Catholic university education, reference is made to private university education offered by the Catholic Church in Zambia.

Media

The term *Media*, the plural of medium is employed in a broad sense (mass media) and limited to its technological uses in which the media is a conduit for the transmission of ideas (in this case, Catholic university education in Zambia). Among the different forms of the media, television, radio, newspapers, and Internet media sources were sampled because these are the forms, which are widely used in Zambia. Suffice to note that the media in Zambia have their own agency and choose what to publish and how it should be framed. Catholic university education in the media is explored from the viewpoint that 'to understand [society] in the 21st century, we must also understand the media and the ways that phenomena are being remade through their interaction with modern media' (Hoover, 2012).

Origins of Catholic higher education in Zambia

The Catholic Church has been involved in Zambia's developmental agenda since its

inception (Hinfelaar, 2004). Thus from the first arrival in Zambia as represented by the White Fathers in 1891 who were later followed by other missionary congregations, the Church provided education to the people (Garvey, 1974). At almost every mission station, which was founded, a school was established (Snelson, 1974). Initially, these were simple schools, which successively transformed into primary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions. The people were also offered skills training in carpentry, brick making, agriculture and other skills which not only enriched their religious worldview, but the quality of life too (Carmody, 1992).

Catholic higher education in Zambia can therefore be traced to the colonial period when missionaries established schools and colleges for purposes of evangelisation (Snelson, 1974; Mwanakatwe, 1968; Kelly, 1996; Carmody, 2000). However, all these efforts excluded the provision of university education. At independence, Zambia had few university graduates and no university until the establishment of the country's public university, the University of Zambia in 1966, followed by Copperbelt University in 1987 and others.

By the 1990s, the increased demand for university education led the government among other factors to encourage the establishment and accreditation of private universities (Kelly, 1996). This led to the birth and recognition of many private higher education institutions. Currently, there are thirty-seven (37) universities in Zambia; five (5) public and thirty two (32) private while another three (3) are seeking registration (Masaiti and Mwale, 2015). This indicates that Catholic university education has grown in a context of other universities, and hence, the study of its purpose and contributions becomes imperative in the history of a country's university education.

Methodology

The investigation is situated in the interpretivist paradigm and employed qualitative methods (document reviews) to collect and analyse the data owing to the explorative nature of the subject (Creswell, 2007). Walsham (1993:5) notes that interpretive methods of research start from the position that our knowledge of reality, including the domain of human action, is a social construction by human actors.

Media features and other forms of documentary sources on Catholic university education were analysed in order to make meaning of the place of Catholic university education in Zambia. The central question that was addressed was centred on establishing the purpose and contributions of Catholic university education in Zambia. In using document review, it is acknowledged as Scott (1990:34) advises that documents 'must be studied as socially situated products.' Guidelines on quality control formulated for handling documentary sources by Scott (1990) were adhered to (authenticity, credibility, representativeness, and meaning). In a bid to utilize the rich data in documentary research, which has also transformed by technological advancements, both print and online forms of media were used, which were purposively sampled for analysis (Kothari, 2004).

All media houses that had reported on the phenomenon of Catholic university education from 2008 to the present were selected and scrutinised for details that were closely related to the subject under investigation. For purposes of triangulation and to overcome biases and limitations associated with media control and coverage, different forms of the media were consulted.

Unlike starting with a theory, patterns of meaning were generated from the emerging themes to interrogate how the media has portrayed the purpose and contribution of Catholic university education in Zambia.

Contributions of Catholic university education in Zambia

The portrayal of Catholic university education in the media is presented in the order of prominence. The portrayal of Catholic university education had representations from different members of the society such as government officials, church representatives, professional bodies, and individual members of the public. Therefore, the media only reported what these different members of the society had to say on Catholic university education. While one might expect the media's own analysis on the issue, the representation of Catholic university education in the media is nonetheless valuable for the media mirrors the people's understanding and expectations of the Catholic university education in the Zambian context.

Firstly, the media presents the contributions of the Catholic Church to university education through the growth and expansion of Catholic university education.

> The church in Zambia has embraced this noble cause of educating the society with distinction. They therefore deserve to be applauded. Through the Zambia Catholic University (ZCU), the Catholic Church with their neat organisational skills and high ethical and moral standards have given visitors to the little town of Kalulushi something to marvel about (Luo, Daily mail, May 30, 2016).

Therefore, Catholic presence in university education has been acknowledged and reported in the media (Konayuma, 2012; Luo, 2016).

> The Catholic Church in Zambia has now gone a step higher to provide university education, beyond its active participation in the provision of formal education at primary, secondary and college levels (Catholic information service for Africa,

16th March, 2005).

Since its establishment in 2008, the institution has grown over the years and as of 2011, degrees could be earned in education, development studies, business administration, economics, banking and finance, accountancy and business information technology. From an initial number of 49 students in 2008, student enrollment stood at 386 in 2011 (www.zcuniversity.edu.zm). The university currently has three faculties (business management, social sciences and education) and also offers professional studies.

The growth was thus not only linked to the numbers in student enrollments but also in programmes on offer as manifested in the adverts in the media.

> The Zambia Catholic University faculty of social sciences is introducing new programs commencing in January 2016 in the department of journalism and media studies (The Zambia Catholic University new programmes brochure).

In this way, the media was used to communicate their programmes on offer. As Varghese (2008) had argued that courses in business administration, computer sciences, accounting, marketing, and economics are very common, the advertised programmes reflected this trend for a university in its initial phase. The Zambia Catholic University also offered courses of a general variety other than religious epistemologies, including Business Studies, Accountancy, Developmental Studies, Pastoral Counselling, Education, and Media studies among others. Most importantly, the university's contributions on programmes offered demonstrated innovation tailored to meet local needs by introducing programmes that had never been offered in Zambia such as bachelor's degree in film and fine arts.

This growth in Catholic university education in Zambia also mirrors the global context which has recorded the growth of the sector (Ahunanya and Osakwe, 2012; Obasi, 2007). Most importantly, the growth of Catholic university education demonstrates the 'more' function advanced by Geiger. The 'more' function occurs when private higher education institutions exist to respond to an immense demand, which public institutions cannot meet (Geiger, 1986). This is because Zambia's public universities are unable to absorb the population requiring university education. For illustration sake, more than 50 000 pupils complete secondary school each year, while higher education institutions have a total intake of about 10 000, including some mature students (Mweemba and Hampwaye, 2012). As such, only about a quarter of the applicants to higher institutions are admitted each year, leading to access of higher education in the private sector. Catholic university education's contribution through the more function was therefore anchored on widening access to university education.

Commendation of Catholic University Education Contributions

The media has also portrayed words of commendation of the Catholic initiative and contribution to university education. This commendation has largely come from government officials.

> The Catholic Church has continued to join hands with government in the development of the country. Education Minister Dr. John Phiri says the continued contribution by the Catholic Church has been necessitated by its strong desire to serve mankind. Dr. Phiri was speaking at the first graduation ceremony of the Zambia Catholic University in Kalulushi on the Copperbelt in a speech read on his behalf by Education Ministry Permanent Secretary Dr. Patrick Nkaza (Muvi TV news, 17:00 CAT, 15th October, 2012).

The Church was also applauded by the Education minister, Dr. John Phiri for the remarkable contribution over the years before and after independence and that the schools

at secondary level were centres of excellence as depicted in the figure below (12th September, 2014,www.moe.gov.zm).

The commendations manifested the noticeable contributions of the Church in university education and can be closely associated with the 'better' function in Geiger's analysis. Precisely, the 'better' function of private universities, which helps to compensate for the low quality of education found in the public sector by providing 'better' education, was reflected by the accounts of students and former students who hinted that Zambia Catholic university was the perfect choice. The advertisement messages also relayed the 'better' function played by the institution, 'the Zambia Catholic University is growing and is definitely the place to be' (www.zcuniversity.edu.zm).

Purpose of Catholic university education

The media presented the mission proclaimed by Catholic university education and the mission assigned by the society. For example, the institution envisions itself as an institution of academic excellence, integrity and service subject to the norms of *Codex luris Canonici and ExCorde Ecclessiae* whose motto is 'The Truth Shall Set you free' (*Veritus Vos Liberabit*) John 8:32 (www.zcuniversity.edu.zm).

The establishment of Zambia Catholic University was premised on the understanding and belief that education was about giving people orientation, direction and true meaning for life (integral development).

> Catholic Universities are critical tools in evangelisation…. We do not only focus on training would be professionals but we also teach social teachings of the church so that Christ is communicated to change the world for better. We also focus on spiritual growth of our students so that they are helpful to society in future (Fr. Chilambwe, www.catholiczambia.org).

In this regard, university education needed to prepare the students for professional life and true development of their country. This is in tune with the universal virtues of Catholic university education (Lemmons, 2008).

Lemmons (2008) further argues that Catholic university education is assigned a prophetic role on behalf of social justice, peace and the marginalized in the society and that Catholic universities should be informed by the Catholic Social Teaching. By this, Catholic universities are expected to be nurseries for responsible future leaders, the voice for the voiceless and become living institutional witnesses to Christ and his message (John Paul II, 1999), and this must be done in the context of the very real problems of our societies and economies.

> Catholic universities world over are not only key in imparting skills and churning out graduates to work in various professional fields but are tools of evangelization….University education plays a pivotal role in social and economic development of any country but the Catholic Church goes further in humanisation of students through the social teaching of the church in order for them to communicate Christ….(Zambia Catholic University Vice Chancellor, 2017).

Zulu (2014) also noted that though in its infancy, Zambia Catholic University gives new opportunities for the formation of young Zambians, and provides skills, research and reflection and formation needed for a growing nation (South ward news, 1 October 2014).

The society expected the Church to provide quality education as it had done in the past. For example, the Minister of Education assigned the role of widening access to university education by noting that Government was aware of the lack of sufficient institutions to carter for the growing demand of tertiary education in the country (Phiri, 2014). Zambia Catholic University was filling this void in its own way. The role of widening access and

producing graduates with a difference was also a task shouldered on Catholic university education (Kaingu, 2015; Luo, 2016).

The recorded increase in enrollment at the institution over a short period of time testifies to the 'more' role assigned to the institution in contemporary Zambia as the enrollment indirectly challenges the Catholic institution to produce enough graduates in order to make a difference in the society. This expansion is thus a call for reflection, as it should not be seen in the light of survival but to deliver the people's expectations of Catholic university education in terms of quality and adherence to the mission of service of the Catholic University. This is because the Catholic Church has been a pace setter in quality education in the country at primary, secondary and college levels (Phiri, 2014; Zulu, 2014). Catholic Universities offer an opportunity to a university community to integrate religion and moral principles with their academic study (John Paul II, 1999). These principles are well captured in the vision and motto of Zambia Catholic University (www.zcuniversity.edu.zm).

This entails that the Catholic university education was playing the 'more' and 'different' function as reflected in the media. In this case, the Zambia Catholic University stood as an example, which offered 'different' education by providing religion oriented higher education not only for their own churches but also by opening their doors to others who may be interested in their diversified programmes. The openness is extended to other minority groups in society and the bias in favor of the underprivileged defines a Catholic University and differentiates it from other universities (Archbishop Mtega in Bandiho, 2003). Since Zambia's public universities are unable to take up all the responsibility of providing all forms of higher education to all who meet the requirements, it has been a

tradition and rightly so for Catholic institutions to open arms to the poor and the marginalised.

The contributions of Catholic university education through providing different and better education could not be detached from quality inputs in higher education. Most importantly, the portrayal of Catholic university education's roles points to the need to acknowledge that a single institution can play a combination of what Geiger calls the 'more', 'different' and 'better' functions of private universities and that these roles transform and overlap over time.

Conclusion

The paper explored the purpose and contributions of the Catholic Church in university education using the media as a lens to mirror Zambia Catholic University as the first institution of Catholic university education. The portrayal of Catholic university education was largely positive as success stories of the contributions were reflected (successful registration with of Higher education authority under the 2013 Higher Education Act, awards and prizes won, graduation moments and diversified programmes) among others. At the same time, people's expectations of providing quality education as the Church had done at the lower levels of education were expressed. The portrayal of Catholic university education in the media was therefore a reflection of what was obtaining in Zambia's education landscape. While the university had its own purpose, the society had their own expectations and these were all inclined to quality university education. The positive (excellence) image that has been associated with Catholic education in the country over time challenges the Church to live up to the society's

expectations at university level. While this paper only serves to extend the conversation of Catholic education to university education, it is hoped that more research can be done to establish how the church through the institution is empirically living up to its purpose and fulfilling the society's expectations.

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Proclamation and Liberation in a Post Synodal and Post Independent Church in Africa: Re-Imagining the Possibilities in the Light of Pope Francis' Evangelii Gaudium.

By John Segun Odeyemi, Ph.D.

Abstract: The global South is the new center for the numerical and most buoyant celebration of Christianity with a new focus on ecclesiology and theology of what the Christian Church means culturally and theologically. This demographic shift of Christianity from Western Europe to the Southern hemisphere is a phenomenon that bestrides a transition from political self-determination by the attainment of national independence from colonization and the rapid indigenization of Christianity. Yet, Africa is a continent scourged with corruption, violence and poverty. In the face of these narratives, which are almost all pervasive on the continent, how does the blossoming of the faith impact the socio-political life of her peoples? What 'theologies' are we creating in Africa to speak to these unjust structures? What exactly is the role of the Church in proclaiming a gospel of liberation to Africa?

Key Words: Colonial, Demography, Ecclesial, Liberation, Proclamation, Magisterial, Synod.

Introduction:

The global South is fast becoming the new center for the numerical and most buoyant celebration of Christianity with a renewed focus for a new ecclesiology and theology of what the Christian Church means culturally and theologically. The acknowledged growth of Christianity in Africa gives room for worry because of Africa's continuous and un-abating social history of violence, endemic corruption among the citizens. Evident in many governments in Africa is an overwhelming pauperization of Africans by Africans with the casualness with which African lives are wasted. The numerical growth of the Christian Church on a continent froth with so many problems forces a reflection that questions the role and participation of the Catholic Church in Africa's social history given the social, cultural, economic and political climate especially post-independence. Is it safe to assume that the Christian Church has been successful in evangelizing Africa, accounting for the numerical strength? Furthermore, to query if the

Church is happy with 'dispensing' of sacraments without any concrete action in alleviating many of the self-inflicted social and political problems of Africa?

In this paper, I intend to argue in support of the position that Christianity in contemporary Africa mostly encourages merely a pietistic and ritualistic form of religion which is often silent and dumb in the face of economic and political marginalization of her peoples. Therefore, to question, if this blossoming of faith in Africa is authentic or a fad that soothes the bruised egos of people long adjusted to misery and suffering? Within the scope of this essay, particular attention will be given to the emerging Christian faith in Africa with a focus on the Nigerian Catholic Church. Consideration is also given to a post synodal and post independent nations and the Christian Church in Africa which helps us to use this experience to speak to the universal mission of the Church to proclaim and liberate.

The Catholic Church post Vatican II and the Church in Africa:

Catholic magisterial tradition leaves a long trail of illustrious allusions to how and why the Church must also be involved in the temporal affairs of people of all nations and races open to the presence of Jesus in our world. More so, when it is a question of the oppression of peoples who are from the margins and forced to the peripheries of the social strata. *Gaudium et Spes*, boldly asserts,

> The joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community of people united in Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit in their pilgrimage towards the Father's kingdom, bearers of a message of salvation for all humanity. That is why they

> cherish a feeling of deep solidarity with the human race and its history.[1]

Having made this clarification, *GS* goes further to expound,

> … There is no human law so well fitted to safe guard the personal dignity and human freedom as is the gospel which Christ entrusted to the church; the gospel announces and proclaims the freedom of the daughters and sons of God…. Christ did not bequeath to the Church a mission in the political, economic, or social order: the purpose He assigned to it was religious. But this religious mission can be the source of commitment, direction and vigor to establish and consolidate the human community according to the law of God.[2]

In *Ad Gentes Divinitus*, the Church enunciates further,

> Having been sent by God to the nations to be 'the universal sacrament of salvation,' the church, in obedience to the command of her founder (Mt. 16:15) and because it is demanded by her own essential universality, strives to preach the gospel to all. The apostles, on whom the church was founded, following the footsteps of Christ 'preached the word of truth and brought churches to birth.' It is the duty of their successors to carry on this work so that 'the word of God may speed on and triumph' (2Th. 3:1), and the kingdom of God be proclaimed and renewed throughout the world.[3]

In the post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, John Paul II, reflecting on the evangelizing mission of the Church in Africa, and expounding on the thinking of the fathers of the synod, who are African bishops, reiterates that the synod represents "an ecclesial event of fundamental importance for Africa, *a Kairos*, a moment of grace, in which God manifests his salvation."[4] While acknowledging the many negative problems that characterizes many parts of Africa, John Paul II and the Synod fathers insist that "the Church has the duty to affirm vigorously that these difficulties can be overcome. She must strengthen in all Africans hope of a

genuine liberation…. This confidence is based on the Church's awareness of God's promise, which assures us that history is not closed in upon itself but is open to God's kingdom."[5] This confidence does not overlook the necessity for the African Church to clearly delineate what it is and what it must do for its evangelizing mission to be relevant, meaningful and credible to Africans. The credibility of the proclaimer of the message especially within the prism of the Church's social doctrine will gain "credibility more immediately from *witness of action* than as a result of its internal logic and consistency."[6] John Paull II, referencing documents from the Eight Plenary Assembly of SECAM held in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1987, restates the importance of witnessing by declaring that "the credibility of the Church in Africa depends upon bishops and priests who follow Christ's example…. upon truly faithful men and women religious, authentic witnesses by their way of living the evangelical counsels; upon a dynamic laity, with deeply believing parents, educators conscious of their responsibilities and political leaders animated by a profound sense of morality."[7]

Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI, in his Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Africae Munus*, draws on the theme that comes from *Ecclesia in Africa* which sees the Church as God's family. Benedict XVI sees this as appropriate for Africa since this term expresses solidarity and mutual care for each other especially on a continent "painfully scarred as a result of fratricidal conflicts between ethnic groups, the slave trade and colonization. Today too, the continent has to cope with rivalries and with new forms of enslavement and colonization."[8] However, all these problems notwithstanding, Benedict XVI, recalling the words of the Synod fathers is quick to add,

> …. The difficulties encountered by the countries and particular Churches in Africa are not so much insurmountable obstacles, but challenges, prompting us to

> draw upon the best of ourselves: our imagination, our intelligence, our vocation to follow without compromise in the footstep of Jesus Christ…. Together with all sectors of African society, the Church therefore feels called to respond these challenges. It is, in some sense, an imperative born of the gospel."9

The attempt at building a just social order may be part of the competence of the political sphere, and while not presuming to interfere, yet the Church has a commitment to the right formation in conscience towards the truth, men and women who will build this just social order. It is in this way that the Church remains a sentinel for society, and in the present situation of Africa, benedict XVI asserts,

> For the sake of Christ and in fidelity to the lesson of life which he taught us, she (the Church) feels the duty to be present wherever human suffering exists and to make heard the silent cry of the innocent who suffer persecution, or of peoples whose governments mortgage the present and the future for personal interests…. Only by rejecting people' dehumanization and every compromise prompted by fear of suffering or martyrdom can the cause of the gospel of truth be served.[10]

In *Africae Munus,* Benedict XVI constantly reiterates the role of the Church in Africa to be partners with government authorities, public and private institutions that are interested in helping to build the common good. The tone of these magisterial text all point to the integral connection between evangelization and liberation. This connection pre-exists the text I have referenced and goes back to Jesus himself in his programmatic declaration in the synagogue in Nazareth.

Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* sums up the position of the Church for contemporary times in very clear and precise terms,

> The Church's pastors… have the right to offer opinions on all that affects people's lives, since the task of evangelization implies and demands the integral promotion of each human being. It is no longer possible to claim that religion should be restricted to the private sphere and that it exists only to prepare souls for heaven… Consequently, no one can demand that religion be relegated to inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life, without concern for the soundness of civil institutions, without a right to offer an opinion on events affecting society.[11]

Jesus as the new Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." (Lk. 4:16-21)

The text in Lk. 4:16-21, as 'appropriated' by Jesus and borrowed from Is. 61.1-3 to designate his mission is said to be programmatic of his mission and ministry. The text speaks of proclamation *(kerygma)* and the setting of captives free. *(Liberatio).* These two aspects of his ministry will ultimately be given authoritatively to the apostolic fathers and the early Church as their own work of bearing witness to the risen Lord, to the ends of the earth. *(Kerygma)* (Mk. 16:17-18) All through history, the Church has always struggled with finding ways of responding and keeping to this command. Central to this essay's thesis is the question of whether or not, the Church has always and at all times followed the proclamation of the word with taking adequate care of liberating those who have come to receive the good news from unjust structures of oppression and subjugation.

The text from proto-Isaiah as appropriated by Jesus in the Lukan account is seen and agreed on by many New Testament scholars to be Jesus' self-introduction to the Jews, the Jewish temple authority and to the idea that the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled in himself, thereby

establishing the emergence of the 'kingdom of God' among the chosen people, a kingdom that is and still to come. Jesus' proclamation of his mission using words from one of the Jewish people's most inspiring prophet of old, in their synagogue, and in his own home town of Nazareth, he declares the dawning of the messianic age. Samuel Abogunrin in a journal article points out that "Jesus did not merely read the scripture as the king's messenger, instead he turned it to a royal proclamation… the king-messiah has come to announce… pardon, salvation, healing, restoration and liberation…"[12] By quoting Isaiah to lay claim to his prophetic ministry and messianic presence, especially in his own native town of Nazareth, among the people whom he had grown up and lived with for 30years, Isaiah words and prophetic figure was a perfect backdrop. The self-introduction of Jesus consists of proclaiming the Kingdom of God and the jubilee year of the lord; a message of hope and courage to the poor. Abogunrin expounds on this theme,

> In what, then, does the good news to the poor consist? First, it is in the release of the captives, to set forth the crushed in to freedom. The Greek word *aphesis* which among other things means 'release', 'discharge', 'let go', 'allow', 'to forgive', is used in the specialized sense of 'to forgive' here, since to forgive is to release one from his debts, guilt, obligations and deserved penalties. The word *aichmalotos* (captive) is used for someone imprisoned for a crime or for a political offence, which in the New Testament language would be *desmios.* The *anawim* of Jerusalem and Judah were no longer the Jewish exiles from Babylon, but the poor and oppressed ones of Jesus' day and in all subsequent generations and everywhere that the goodnews will be proclaimed. Because *eniauton* is qualified by *kuriou*, it is not an ordinary day but the whole of the period of salvation which God inaugurates with the advent of the messiah. According to Jesus, what God promised through Isaiah was being fulfilled that very day. Undoubtedly, most of Jesus' hearers would think of this in

> terms of the breaking of Roman power, and setting free once and for all the Jewish nation from all foreign domination and the inauguration of the messianic kingdom…. It is in this regard that John the Baptist and Jewish Zealots were disappointed in Jesus because he was not a revolutionary political leader, leading an armed revolt against Rome as they had expected (Mt. 11.1-16; Lk. 7.18-23, 19.11-27; Jn. 10.22-42; Acts 1.6)[13]

The self-proclamation of Jesus' ministry appropriating Isaiah established the unveiling of the kingdom of God and the Lordship of Jesus. In proclaiming the kingdom of God and the lordship of Jesus, the Christian churches of all times and cultures must continue to accentuate not just the spiritual aspect of its mandate but to act decisively on issues of social justice and political oppression. Abogunrin elaborates on what is the perceived state of affairs in Africa,

> The faith that is largely emphasized by the Church is the one that is mainly interested in the salvation of souls, while the concern for human history and society, as well as the problem of the poor and justice receive very little attention. Traditional theology does not regard poverty, justice and other similar social services as central to the mission of Jesus.[14]

Abogunrin goes on to add that, in the context of contemporary secularization, there is the ever present disenchantment against orthodoxy especially when it does not categorically denounce social evil as it threatens people's actual existence.

With reference to Jesus' re-reading of the text from Isaiah, Mercy Amba Oduyoye understands the use of the word 'liberation' to "presuppose the existence of an unjustifiable situation that has to be eliminated. All limitations to the fullness of life envisaged in the Christ-event ought to be completely uprooted." Jesus came that we may have life and have it more abundantly."[15] Oduyoye exploring the liberational aspect of the Christian gospel argue further

when she wrote that a common experience in Africa and in the universal Christian church is that churches only make statements after political crises, or act in place of engendering peace and reconciliation after civil strife and pogrom. The Church is also at the fore front of providing humanitarian services and aid after natural disasters, as such the Churches tend to be 'reaction' churches, rarely seen leading the lines and after a delayed arrival tends only to pick up the pieces. Oduyoye then contend that "In terms of being with the people in crises, the Church in Africa, with the significant exception of some clergy and lay leaders, has usually stood aloof and remained mute."[16] Notable exceptions include Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, the late Catholic bishop of Durban, Denis Hurley, the late Ugandan Anglican Archbishop of Kampala, martyred during the terror reign of Idi Amin Dada, Janani Luwun. And the courage of the current Anglican Archbishop of Kampala, Dr. Zac Nziringige, whose activism in challenging Museveni's attempts at self-perpetuation in office and life presidency has made him a target for a most likely untimely departure to the great beyond by State security forces.

Christianity in Africa: the impact of colonialism on a post-colonial/post-synodal Christian Church.

The sudden demographic shift of Christianity from Western Europe to the Southern hemisphere of Africa and as noticed in Latin America and Asia is a phenomenon that bestrides a transition from political self-determination by the attainment of national independence from colonization and the rapid handing over of indigenous Churches from missionary hands into the service of indigenous clergies. The Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa* notes,

> The fact that in the course of almost two centuries the number of African Catholics has grown quickly is an

> outstanding achievement by any standard. In particular, the building up of the Church on the continent is confirmed by facts such as the noteworthy and rapid increase in the number of ecclesiastical circumscription, the growth of a native clergy, of seminarians and candidates for Institutes of Consecrated life, and the steady increase in the network of catechists, whose contribution to the spread of the gospel among the African peoples is well known. Finally, of fundamental importance is the high percentage of indigenous bishops who now make up the hierarchy on the continent.[17]

Unfortunately, in Africa, while the continent blossoms in numbers, the reality of the various nation-states is one of conflict, genocide, corruption, nepotism, sit-tight democracies that benefits only the minority ruling class at the detriment of the majority of the impoverished populace. A few among the long list of despotic self-imposed presidents and heads of States in Africa include President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea, whose rule from 1979 up to date is said to be the 3rd longest in a non-royal government, dubbed as one of the most corrupt, ethnocentric, oppressive and undemocratic of all times on the continent. His colleague in Angola, President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos has been in power since 1979; the story is the same. Paul Biya of the Cameroons has been in power since the 6th of November 1982, while Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe has perpetuated himself in power since December 2nd, 1987. In 2013, he won his 7th term in office, apparently because there is no one else in the entire country who possess the acumen, wisdom or statesmanship to govern Zimbabwe. Mobutu Sese Seko ruled the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which he renamed Zaire from November 24, 1965 until he was forced out by a mass revolution on May 16th, 1997. He died of prostate cancer only a few months after fleeing into exile in Morocco. It is superfluous to even begin to try to tell the story of the erstwhile Ugandan self-appointed field marshal and "conqueror of the British Empire," Idi Amin Dada. Lastly, this role call will be incomplete without the towering and

larger than life Colonel Muamar al-Gaddafi of Libya. He ruled Libya from 1967 until 2011, and after 47 years in power, he was deposed in a popular uprising/coup in which he was murdered. These examples represent a common trend, they are archetypical of Africa's dictatorship and creation of political kleptocracy, always synonymous and notorious for human rights abuse on staggering levels beyond human comprehension. Most of these dictators amassed wealth for themselves, family members, clan members and political associates while the majority of their citizens survive and wallow in abject poverty.

John Paul II, in *EA* encapsulates this tragic trend thus, "One common situation, without any doubt, is that Africa is full of problems. In almost all our nations, there is abject poverty, tragic mismanagement of scarce resources, political instability and social disorientation. The results stare us in the face: misery, wars, despair. In a world controlled by rich and powerful nations, Africa has practically become an irrelevant appendix, often forgotten and neglected."[18] And I dare to add, remembered when her natural resources are available for plunder and gain. *EA* uses then a powerful parable as allegory from scripture, stating that "contemporary Africa can be compared to the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho; he fell among robbers who stripped him, beat him and departed, leaving him half dead."[19]

In the face of these narratives which are almost all pervasive on the continent, how does the blossoming of the faith impact the socio-political life of her peoples? What 'theologies' are we creating in Africa to speak to these unjust structures? Are they merely words that are theoretically thin and politically impotent? Or can we begin to build meta-narratives which is our own, about ourselves and which aims to reconstruct the future of our politics and the future of the continent? Emmanuel Katongole brilliantly captures these thoughts thus,

> …. The global South is the new center for the numerical and most buoyant celebration of Christianity with a new focus on ecclesiology and theology of what the Christian Church means culturally and theologically…. This demographic shift of Christianity from Western Europe to the Southern hemisphere is a phenomenon that bestrides a transition from political self-determination by the attainment of national independence from colonization and the rapid indigenization of Christianity…. What exactly is the role of the Church in proclaiming a gospel of liberation to Africa? Mobutu, and Mugabe – were but colonial actors… one cannot understand these actors without locating them in a social history. Thus it [becomes] clear that if Christian social ethics in Africa was to provide a way forward in Africa, it would have to engage the layers of memory through which the performance of the colonial imagination continues to live in the present… exploring the issues of social memory may not lie in public records, but in cultural patterns as well as other unofficial texts.[20]

Rosa De Jorio argues for a formation of political identity in Africa through a process of deconstructing 'politicized memory', where selective recollections of a nation's past becomes a tool for keeping people down and a veritable tool for unscrupulous politician, their allies and varied agendas. De Jorio states that "State-promoted memorialization of the past, both colonial and post-colonial, has long been recognized as a powerful strategy of state affirmation and legitimization… remembrance and memorialization represent arenas for confrontation of a variety of social and political forces, such as the state, political opposition, and minority groups."[21] How can Africa's Christian and theological response be a proclamation and truly a liberation for a disillusioned people?

The fundamental challenges faced by Africa includes ethnocentricism, urbanization at the detriment of rural communities and cultures, migration due to armed conflicts creating tens of thousands of refugees and displaced persons, the arms trade, wide spread violation of human

rights, international debts, the continuous spread of HIV/AIDs, the all-pervasive African face of poverty in a continent blessed with natural resources, problems of education, healthcare and unstable governments. In most of these situations, Africa and Africans are responsible for these self-inflicted wounds. The continent suffered from a past history of subjugation and oppression through the history of the slave trade and colonization. Orobator Agbonkhianmeghe, Nigerian Jesuit and African theologian notes,

> [The] insidious manifestations of external manipulation remain decisive for Africa's economic and political predicament, specifically in the sphere of resource extraction. Africa has become the theater of internecine conflict directly related to the extraction of its natural and mineral resources. Typical examples include the democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Chad and Nigeria. While these conflicts appear to be internal matters of nonviable feuding states, the larger picture shows the complicity of erstwhile ideological and geopolitical blocs in search of new energy sources to meet growing domestic demands.[22]

Having recognized and fingered external manipulations so succinctly that now remains only a past history. The sadness of Africa is that we have a neo-colonization of each other that is exhibited in "the continuous pauperization of the common people by a ruthless and greedy ruling elite and their international collaborators."[23] We therefore can no longer mouth the rhetoric of external oppression or injustice done on and to the continent. In our age and time, many unscrupulous African business moguls are in cahoots with their foreign multi-nationals and mega companies to loot many African nations. Above and beyond this is the very sad reminder of the genocide in Rwanda that clearly shows a level of moral perversity unthinkable of perpetration between kith and kin. The Rwanda massacre was an African 'event' devoid of external or colonial participation. The role of the Churches in the infamous blot on Rwanda history is also

not stellar. This is a new scourge, a self-colonization that only grace can speak to; this is where the Christian Church in Africa must emerge proclaiming God's kingdom and the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

According to Katongole, the real story that drives Africa is one of personal ambition and greed, operating always under the rule of plunder. While the actors may change either in what they wear, or ideology or even ways by which they come into office, the script usually remains the same. In this situation, Katongole argues that "one confronts the same story of the politics of greed, dispossession, and state brutality, with perhaps the only difference being the degree of sophistication."[24] Along the same line of thinking, Cyril Orji opines that the political ideologies of postcolonial African politicians were already doomed because "while corruption and nepotism were regular features of colonial life, the newly independent African office holders raised them to a high art."[25] In the face of violence, poverty and political pilfering, the masses have been so grinded into the matrix of oppression that their condition seem even abysmally normal to them. Africans have become the proverbial people who lived so long in the dark that they think it has gotten lighter. The Christian Church is complicit by its silence or rather, what Katongole refers to as 'the visible invisibility of Christianity' which has consigned itself to a narrow spiritual and pastoral concern, as if to say, endure your sufferings now and your gain is in heaven. Katongole disagrees and argues that if Christianity were to participate in the business of shaping a new future in Africa, "…. Even though a lot has changed in Africa, it is still trapped in the same triangle of modernity, violence and plunder… And even though there has been much allusion to the growth of Christianity in Africa… both the validity and the future prospects of African Christianity will depend greatly on its ability to provide Christians with concrete resources with

which to face Africa's social history."[26] In a real sense, the Church in Africa must play a leading role in the political emancipation of the various countries on the continent.

In the real and practical ways in which in many instances, across the continent, the Christian Church sometimes have not only become tools in the hands of politicians, they have also been complicit in propping up and supportive of unjust governments. Often times for economic gain, fear of reprisal or just to hover around the corridors of power. For instance, in Nigeria, the Episcopal conference are quick to issue strong worded communiques after their plenary sessions, and that is all about that. It has been mentioned at conversations that this same hierarchy are powerful lobbyists behind the scenes orchestrating peaceful resolutions to what could easily have morphed into civil strife and the possibility of the disintegration of the entire country. Whether this is true or not, the words of Katongole rings true as he asserts,

> …. The Church's role in Africa's social history helplessly swings between the posture of reticence, frantic activism, and total cooption. What all these posture reflect, however, is the particularly Western concept that Christianity as a religion is not a social vision, but only becomes socially relevant when it contributes to the social and material processes that are determined and controlled by the sphere of politics. This assumption must be set aside if Christianity is to recover its essential social vision. But this recovery is impossible when Christian social reflection is preoccupied with the prescriptive agenda of generating recommendations, strategies, and skills to help politics work.
>
> Therefore, Christian social ethics needs to resist the prescriptive temptation in order to recover the unique social contribution the church can make in the search for a new future in Africa. For the most determinative contribution Christianity can make in Africa is not in terms of advocacy

> for nation-state modalities, but instead fresh visions of what Africa is and can be.[27]

Elochukwu Uzukwu, in his work, *A Listening Church*, argues in support of a Church that goes into the African cultural matrix as a way of healing the economic, social, political and religious problems. Uzukwu states that "The Church [African Catholicism], aided by the reflection of her theologians, will become a more credible agent when the Christian life emerges from the realities of the African context and Christian theology responds to questions posed by the context and nourished by local resources"[28] One can safely conclude therefore that a prophetic role is assigned to the Church in Africa to be voice of the voiceless, to protect every instance where there is violation against the dignity of the human person. This is a very real and dynamic aspect of the proclamation of the good news about the kingdom of God and the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION:

Prescriptions for a new imagination for a way forward.

The distressing face of the continent when juxtaposed with its blossoming Christian face is a puzzle where the pieces does not fit. Therefore, the need arises to re-imagine how to put this puzzle together. There are various ways and approaches that can be used in achieving this. But from a theological perspective, and as a means of concluding this essay, I propose four models for our re-imagining some of the ways by which African Christianity/theology is not just proclamation but also liberation;

First, the Church must invest in the business of qualitative education including paying particular attention to moral instructions to re-introduce value for ethical living in the society.

Benedict VXI in *Africae Munus*, teaches that Catholic education in Africa must focus on how learning from childhood creates citizens who embody both African cultural values and Christian values of the gospel. While encouraging the local churches, he avers,

> Given the great ferment of people, cultures and religions which marks our age, Catholic universities and academic institutions play an essential role in the patient, rigorous and humble search for the light which comes from truth…. It would help [to] establish Catholic universities wherever these do not yet exist…. To shape the minds and hearts of the younger generation in the light of the gospel and, on the other, to help African societies better to understand the challenges confronting them today….[29]

Joseph Ogbonnaya in his work reflecting on the African synod, also pay attention to the question of the Catholic Church and education as part of the process of renewal in Africa. Using the texts of *AM*, Ogbonnaya notes that Catholic education must focus on the formation of African consciences politically, socially, judicially and respect for laws. Ogbonnaya states, that since education contributes to the integral development of people, African Catholicism must stake a claim in contributing to education that integrates faith and reason, especially in the light of moral decay on the continent. "It [the Church] is expected to establish schools and universities not only to obliterate illiteracy, but also to provide quality education that arms the people to seek independence. Of course, education here must incorporate human rights in accordance with social and moral teachings of the Church.[30] All these can be done through schools, pulpits, publications but most importantly, the witness of moral uprightness of religious leaders of the Church.

Second, men preparing for the priesthood must be re-oriented into accepting service as a core demand and dimension of priestly life and ministry. The booming numbers in vocation in

African seminaries may reflect the booming numbers in the growth of Christianity on the continent. However, studies point to not too stellar reasons for this upsurge in vocations. Ogbonnaya observes that "the lifestyle of the clergy in Africa hardly shows any commitment to the poor… characterized by pomp and pageantry. Under the influence of materialism and clientelism… Ordination to the priesthood appears to have become a status symbol and a sure guarantee of social standing and job security."[31] Ogbonnaya goes further to state that rectories are palatial residences compared to other buildings in the neighborhood. The clergy, in order to maintain this high standard of living tax the poor heavily through tithing and sometimes ridiculous levying. Ogbonnaya therefore concludes that "these priests' bourgeois lifestyle alienates people who see them as privileged, wealthy, and as a part of the greedy elites."[32] Pope Francis in *EG* warns, "Today and always, 'the poor are the privileged recipients of the gospel', and the fact that it is freely preached to them is a sign of the kingdom that Jesus came to establish. We have to state, without mincing words, that there is an inseparable bond between our faith and the poor. May we never abandon them."[33]

Third, Bishops, priests, men and women religious, especially in the Catholic Church must be at the fore front of the fight against the kind of corruption that breeds endemic poverty. This sort of corruption is the destruction of the spiritual, intellectual and moral fabric of a society. Jean Marc Ela, the Cameroonian theologian calls this 'anthropological poverty', which as I have argued before is not limited to Africa's colonial experience but which is conscious of Africans dominating, oppressing and subjugating each other. When the Church prophetically engages society in this form of egalitarianism, by the practical example of the lives of men and women in ministry, the Church does not simply fulfil her role as evangelizing for the kingdom of God but also as harbinger of social development, equality and the brotherhood and sisterhood of nations.

Ogbonnaya argues that sustainable social development should be the goal and the fight for the survival of a new Africa. Referencing the World Commission on Environment and Development, he posits, "Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable – to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[34]

Fourth and lastly, the task of critically finding a new hermeneutic of constructing a viable African theology of inculturation, which according to Orji is "one that is not only grounded in systematics of history, but that is also empirical, critical, normative, dialectic, and practical…"[35] Orji, acknowledges that inculturation is broad, extensive and complex, yet true inculturation must extend "to all areas of the Church's life – theological, liturgical, catechetical, pastoral, juridical, political, economic and familial."[36] This sort of inculturation must balance out what is authentically African and how it promotes the good news among Africans. It must also be able to sieve and weed out what may authentically be African yet not applicable to Christian religious faith. Orji articulates this thus, "… [in] the theology of inculturation there is a mutual dialogue by which the gospel is informed by culture and culture is informed by gospel – a synergy of unity-identity whole. We grasp the unity-whole (gospel + culture) only through the parts (signs and symbol informing the culture), which are at the same time determined in their meanings by which the whole and which each part partially reveals."[37]

The Christian Church in Africa is in the historical moment of growth with looming possibilities for greater growth still. African Christianity must be careful not to dwell on a triumphalistic assessment of the situation or become irrationally solely attached to ritual performances. For the Christian Church in Africa not to relapse into anachronism, there is a need to pay attention to the problems and frustrations of ordinary African Christians. We need

Katongole's three ecclesiological models; first, a pious Church whose competence lies in the deep, internal, spiritual realm from which she motivates Christians in their daily struggles. Second, a pastoral Church, a healer, provider of spiritual nourishment and servant of the poor. Third and lastly, a prophetic Church, a Church that cares for the coming reign of God and its obligation to bring it about now.[38] To authentically proclaim the good news of and about Jesus Christ to the teeming peoples of Africa, we need to fusion these ecclesiological models into one hermeneutical whole to put into being "a Church which rises above the spiritual and pious salvation of souls, and above the necessary but enabling service of a community struggling to remain faithful and to bear witness in a propitious and uncertain world."[39]

This essay, therefore, challenges the insidious external manipulations of global and mega industries and governments interested in the mineral and natural resources of Africa. Also it pays attention to the all-pervasive presence of religious faith in large numbers which breeds an inverse reality of widespread corruption, greed and the carnages of violence that claims millions of lives annually all over Africa. Extremist Islamic terrorism, pillage, and wanton destruction of civilian lives and properties coupled with self-appointed ministers, pastors, apostles and evangelists of mega Churches who preach the gospel of instant wealth, miraculous healings and protection from demonic forces, they also form this kind of inverse oppression of an already oppressed people. Religious fundamentalism and 'gospels' of prosperity are always, in Africa, inter-linked with propagating and keeping in power, corrupt politicians and their cronies, whose agenda include economic and political exploitation; these are the current political and religious rhetoric to be challenged by the liberating power of Jesus Christ on the continent. Why, in these situations are our Christian Churches unable to protest, speak and be prophetic against unjust social situations on the continent? Is the good news of Jesus preached on the continent devoid of

the power to literally liberate Africans from social, economic and political oppression? Hopefully, this essay has helped to explore the possibilities of how the Church in Africa can be a channel for bringing to life an imagined new horizon of the continent, not merely by providing abstract theological and spiritual guidance, but a Church that is pro-active in denouncing anything inimical to the integral development of Africa and Africans.

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Roman Catholic Missionaries and Converts at Daggers' Drawn with the Native Administration in the Early Years of Evangelisation in the Bamenda Western Grasslands of British Cameroons

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Abstract

The study discusses the frigid relations between the British Colonial authorities and Roman Catholic Missionaries in the Bamenda Western Grasslands of Cameroon. Contrary to the argument that colonial authorities and missionaries collaborated and aided each other in the accomplishment of their goals, it holds that the reverse was true as constant clashes between Christian Missionaries and their followers with the Native Administration brought colonial administrators on the side of the former. This was common in instances where missionaries and their adherents disregard the authority of traditional rulers who constituted the Native Administration and relied upon by the colonial authorities for the administration of indigenes. The contestation of the Native Administration's authority in administering justice through the Native Courts, tax collection role and right of using community labour in realising local or developmental projects by Christians and supported by the missionaries only led to open altercation between the European priests and colonial administrators as the former went in support of the Native Administration. Missionaries never took this lightly as they believed that colonial administrators were supposed to support them in all their endeavours especially in evangelisation and the civilisation of the African peoples. The study concludes that colonial authorities blended well with missionaries if and only if their interests or goals were synonymous.

Keywords: missionaries, colonial authorities, native administration, traditional rulers, Bamenda Western Grasslands and British Cameroon

Introduction

Some scholars are of the opinion that colonialism and missionaries' evangelisation were two sides of the same coin and aided each other in the accomplishment of their goals. This can be justified by Mbiti"s argument which holds that colonialism cannot be disassociated from missionary activities and the spread of Christianity in Africa when he posits that "... *Christianity is much colored by colonial rule and all that was involved in it. We are still too close to that period to dissociate one from the other*" (1969:231). This view has been buttressed further by Sanneh when he argues that missionaries were *'imperialists under a religious guise and … missions came to acquire the unsavory odor of collusion with the colonial power (1990: 88).* Christian Missions were thus looked upon as agents of imperialism (Rodney, 1972: 277).

However a contrary view has been presented by Kalu who argues that;

> *… But the two allies differed over attitudes towards 'pagan' cultures, the goals of education and the future of the colonies... The government aimed to use the traditional order as a basis for administrative restructuring while the missions wanted to pull down everything* (1980: 7).

It is because of this controversy among scholars and the constant clashes between Christian Missionaries and their followers with the Native Administration (NA) (that was used in the administration of the colonial people and supported by colonial administrators against the overzealousness of Catholics) in the Bamenda Western Grasslands of British Cameroons that this paper revisits the chilly relations between the missionaries and colonial administrators.

These conflicting relations were engineered by the disregard of African traditional rulers, who were used by the colonial authorities in the day to day administration of the area, by Christian Missionaries and their converts. Worthy to note is the fact that most of these leaders remained attached to their traditional African religions and this became a source of conflict with missionaries and converts who viewed the African traditional practiced as heathen and ungodly. They looked down on their adversaries and viewed them as uncivilised and would not take orders from them leading to conflicts.

In such cases, European administrators came to the support of the native administration and this was unacceptable to priests or missionaries. They believed that these administrators had to support them in all their endeavours because of the services they were rendering to the colonial peoples. To them, their mission of civilisation was the same like those of the British administrators in the area and it was unbelievable that a fellow European would go against them. With these conceptions, they made their followers think that they were different from the others and together challenged the status quo, an attitude that was frowned upon by the colonial administration, bringing to doubt the philosophy that Missions and Imperialists were two sides of the same coin and had common goals.

Setting

The area under study covers present day North West Region of Cameroon which became a Division under the British colonial administration in 1916. The ousting of the Germans from Cameroon during World War I by the combined efforts of the British and the French saw the division of the territory between the two victorious powers and the area

under study fell under the British sphere and was administered as part of the Nigerian Protectorate.

Meanwhile, the first Roman Catholic Missionaries in the territory can be traced to 1889 as the Pallotine Fathers established themselves at Bojongo in the coastal area of Cameroon. It was only in 1912, that the Sacred Heart of Jesus fathers established at Kumbo in the Western Grasslands of Cameroon and it is from here that moves were made to spread Catholicism throughout the region (Ndi, 1986). However, the outbreak of World War One saw the departure of almost all the priests that were found in the area as they were accused of supporting the German War efforts in Cameroon. Though this war negatively affected evangelisation in the area, by 1922, much effort had been made especially by the Mill Hill Missionary Society that dominated in this respect in the region leading to the conversion of many. Though authority in the area lied with the traditional rulers or fons, the creation of the Native Authority in the region between 1921 and 1927 engrained conflicts between the traditional rulers and their subjects. This was because these rulers had had to share power with their subjects especially converts who had disdain for their authority in these new institutions.[40]

[40] See Protus Mbeum Tem, Political Dissent and Autonomy in Wum Local Government, Southern (West) Cameroons, 1957 – 1968, *Lagos Historical Review*, Volume 12, 2012, pp. 83 – 102 and Protus Mbeum Tem, Flaws in the Native Administration System in Southern Cameroons: A Factor for the 1949 Creation of Local Government Units, Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences, Volume VII, No I, Quarter I 2016, pp. 1 – 24 for a detail description of the various institutions created in the region between 1921 and 1927, organisation and role in the colonial administration.

Foundations for Conflicting Relations

The use of traditional authorities or Native Administration in the British administration of their colonies cannot be overemphasized.[41] However, the presence and influence of Christian missionaries was a hindrance to the effective contribution of traditional rulers in the colonial administration. The essence of Native Authorities was to empower traditional rulers but the preaching and actions of Christians stood against the beliefs, traditions and customs of the people. Such had to be defended and preserved by traditional rulers who were the custodians of the cultures and traditions of their people. This meant that any disrespect or offence against these beliefs, customs and traditions was a direct attack on the institution of chieftaincy and consequently, the traditional rulers. With this, there was bound to be problems. This was common with the Roman Catholics.

In 1926, it was feared that adherents to African Religion and Christians under their leaders would take up arms to settle this old age problem in that community. The Fon of Kom was so autocratic and anti – Christianity and gave permission for a few churches to be constructed in his entire Kingdom. As a consequence, all Christians had to squeeze into the Fuanatui and Kom. The reason for this hatred was orchestrated by the attitude of some of his wives disserting the palace and marrying Christians. This was a heinous crime in the Bamenda Western Grasslands of Cameroon where the wives of kings or chiefs were regarded as sacrosanct (Tem, 2005, p.70)

[41] Protus Mbeum Tem, Flaws in the Native Administration System in Southern Cameroons: A Factor for the 1949 Creation of Local Government Units, *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences*, Volume VII, No I, Quarter I 2016, pp. 1 – 24 for a detail analyses of the role of traditional rulers in the colonial administration.

Such fears proved true as many Christians married off the wives of chiefs. This was evident in Fungom Village where a Christian convert moved in from Calabar. He was so disrespectful and married the wife of the chief of Munken. Meanwhile in Kom, a Christian native of Bayang, a carpenter employed by the Roman Catholic Mission, married one of the wives of the fon (Gc/b/1928, p.14). J S Smith, who served as a colonial administrator in British Cameroon, summarises the fears of the natural rulers when he reported that;

> *... their wives may become Christians and not only leave them but marry other men, ... Indignities may be committed on pagan institutions ... that their subjects who have become Christians may cease respecting their pagan elders* (Ad/1929/10/EP. 608, P.88).

These tense relations were bound to exist because these new forces, the Native Administration and Christianity were not healthy for any coexistence. Christianity preached superiority of Christ and his followers over all other forces and they (adherents) looked up to the authority of Christ and saw all other powers inferior and without any meanings to their lives. The reverse was also true for adherents of traditional African religions especially the elders and traditional rulers who firmly believed in the divine right of kings and would not entertain any challenge to the traditional rulers or contrary authority. Besides, the colonial set up had made them Native Authorities and the recognised powers that be. However, colonial masters put up dilly dally tactics when dealing with issues or problems between the traditional rulers, chiefs or fons and the Christian missionaries and their subjects. Where conflicts loomed between the two, the Christians were often favoured.

As a consequence, tension loomed and many of the natural rulers deterred Christianity and did every possible to reduce their influence. In Kom, many Christians were banished to Njinikom, the headquarters of Catholicism in the Lom Native Authority, from other localities of the Fondom (Cb/1926/1, p.4). Some of the Christians even went there on their own accord, fleeing away from persecution, and in this way, they avoided the authority of traditional rulers.

Rejection of Native Administrations

The creation of the Kom Native Authorities in the Bamenda Western Grasslands was seen as a positive step towards bringing unity and collaboration between Christians and pagans as they were expected to sit and deliberate in Native Authorities' Assemblies and Native Courts. However, the problems still lingered and suspicion between chiefs and Christians could not be avoided (Gc/b/1922/1, No. 747/22, p.2). The very idea that facilitated the creation of these Native Authorities was defeated as converts acted as if they were a state within a state.

In this direction, Christians refused acknowledging the authority of their traditional rulers or better still the Native Authorities and consequently the Native Courts. This is evident in the case of Njinikom and Fuanantui Christians who out rightly rejected the authority of the Native Administration over them. Such arrogance was also experienced in Esu, Mmen and Weh. In Esu and Mmen, the situation was more precarious as Catholic Christians set up separate quarters just like the case in Njinikom and Fuanantui, around the Mission compounds and out rightly defiled the authority of their Fons. They saw their

catechist and elders in these new dispensations as the recognised authorities (Cb/1931/3, No. 1789, p.23).

Christians were so intolerant to traditional practices and their custodians and felt that they were not only politically different but also superior to the pagans and outside the control of the Native Authorities (Cb/1927/1, No. 10/1928, p. 9). It was so severe in Kom so much so that Christians had to migrate to Njinikom. The intransigence of Fon Ngam was partly responsible and situation was minimised only after his dead in 1926. In 1927, the new Fon, Ndima, visited the Christians at Njinikom and called on all the squatters there to return to their original settlements or quarters. He and his council (Native Authority) promised that three new churches would be open up in Kom to accommodate them (Cb/1930/1, No. 157/1930, pp. 16 – 17).

Though Christians welcomed such moves, the order could not be carried out because they believed that such localities that had to host these churches were remote and had no Christian converts. Again, in spite of another promise that the Native Authority would provide land wherever the Christians choose to construct these churches, nothing was done.

According to L .L. Cantle, a colonial administrator in the Bamenda Division,

> *"It is not the full opportunity for the practice of Christianity that appeals to the squatters, but the life at Njinikom, where having broken away from family control, the only loyalty they show is to a European Priest and the only discipline is that of the Catholic Church"* (*Cb*/1930/1, No. 157/1930, p.16).

Therefore accepting to leave this settlement was one thing and doing so was another. Though the priests were of the opinion that they were doing everything possible to force the people back to their quarters, their claims were difficult to be accepted or believe. Cantle again noted that;

> *"... there seem to be no room for doubt that the priests are working to this end, the absolute antithesis of the Native Administration; and it seem that the situation cannot be improved until the priests understand the policy of government and loyally cooperate in carry it out* (*Cb*/1930/1, No. 157/1930, pp.18 - 19).

Complacency of Missionaries and Catechists Intensifying Conflicts

It is not surprising that the priests found it difficult to hold on to the policy of government which was not ideal for the spread of Christianity. If Christianity attacked all forms of African worship and denounced loyalty to its custodians, it would have been suicidal for them to go fully in support of the Native administration. The British colonial authorities knew too well that Christianity had fully worked in favour of the enhancement and enforcement of colonialism and they were cautious in their relations with missionaries. They were less severe on their pressure on them to respect the Native Administration. The less pressure on them made the Christians only to take orders from their priests, catechists and Christian elders. They denounced old ties and allegiances to their family heads and traditional elders and consequently the Native Administration as evident in the excerpt below;

> *In the two quarters there are a considerable number of these Christians/squatters who have come there from all over the Nkom area. Having broken away from*

> *their family ties, they are now averse to any form of control by the Native Authority. The situation is extremely unsatisfactory and a blot of the administration of an otherwise well ordered division"* (Cb/1928/1, p.15).

This is a vivid description of the scenario found in Kom in 1928. In order to have firm control over the people, the Native Authority mounted pressure on them to return to their quarters or family compounds. To facilitate their return, one church was built at Njejekem and another one between Ngwa and Mbu. Though delighted by the move of the Native administration, the Superiors in charge of Njinikom promised cooperation and passive resistance continued.

Catholic authorities in Njinikom and supported by Bishop Peters Rogan, Head of the Buea Diocese, encouraged the setting up of theocratic societies and this was the zenith of the disrespect for traditional authorities. He (the Bishop) had moved from East Africa where these societies were common (Sda/1930/2, No. C.12, p.10). These were present in Kom, Esu and Mmen. The arguments raised by the authorities was that, it was necessary to keep Christians away from pagan practices if their morals were to remain intact but also to avoid persecution and ensure the respect of religious freedom (Sda/1931/3, p.15). However, catechists paraded themselves as headmen or quarter heads and refused paying taxes directly to the fon or Native Administration.

Chiefs were barred from collecting taxes in the Mission compounds or Christian settlements. In a petition to the resident, Cameroons Province, the Esu traditional ruler deplored this and called for the eviction of these Christians on the land while assuring him that land just enough to contain the church and catechist houses will be guaranteed

(Sda/1931/3, p.15). Such attitudes were even supported by the Catholic leaders in Njinikom. They even despised the native administration courts and went as far as attacking colonial administrators for supporting traditional rulers when they came in to bring sanity. Catholic priests felt that the entertainment of complains from the natives or traditional rulers against them was to undermine what they termed their 'moral authority' and to render their work futile. They strongly believed that it was the duty of the colonial administrators or District Officers to support them in any way possible on the great benefits they were conferring on the country by introducing Christianity (Sda/1930/2, No. C.12, p.20).

This explains why priests continued to interfere with court proceedings and never followed the right procedure. There was hardly any native court order in which a Catholic convert was concerned that he/she did not discuss first with his priest and thought they were politically different from others. These behaviours from Catholic converts made the traditional rulers prefer the Protestants than the Catholics. This partly explains why Catholics were refused land for construction and the Protestants favoured in this direction. A case in point was in Weh where the Protestant Missionaries were invited to put up a church house there and the Catholics denied the same privilege. With the poor relations between the traditional authority and Catholic Church, Reverend Father Arnold of Njinikom was so furious and had to issue threats to the Weh Fon as seen in this except (a letter he wrote in pidgin English);

> *... so me I go ask you for the last time for build them (Catholics) church. No give ear for Basel people. The Catholics them get some rights like the Basels because them too be your people. If I come for your country nest time, we want look*

church. If me no look'm, me go ask D.O. for give me church for the Catholic people Wee (sic) win the chief deny them… . (Sda/1931/3, p.15).

By this, he warned that the Catholics had the same rights like the Basel Mission converts and called on the chief to assist them in constructing their own church. He cautioned that if this was not done, the assistance of the District Officer would be sought.

Contestation of the Authority of Native Courts, Tax Collection and Request of Community Labour

While the chiefs refused aiding Catholic converts in the construction of Churches, Christians in turn, with the support of Priests and their Catechists, refused participating in community labour initiated by the Native Administration. For instance, in Kom, they refused providing labour and their services in the construction of the Kom Native Court in 1928. They argued that demands in the building and maintenance of their churches made it impossible for them to perform or carry out public duties. Again, in 1929, the Catholic converts refused partaking in the digging of the Njinikom road. However, pressure from the colonial authorities and instructions from their Father superior made them to bulge.

To show their disgust for traditional authority, Catholic converts in Njinikom out rightly rejected the dash or gift offered by the administration in relation to labour supplied. Such a practice of offering small amounts of money or dash by the Native Authority was common. This was offered to the people after contributing to a major public work or construction. Though small, it was just a token to show appreciation for services offered by the people. However, such a move was viewed with suspicion by Catholics who were quick to deny under the pretext that theirs was small when compared to the amount

received by other quarters and not even commensurate to the work done. Even when the District Officer intervened and made it clear that the amount was justifiably the same like the other quarters, they insisted on their refusal. The District Officer was so furious and ordered that the money be paid into the Native Authority Fund. They later accepted it and the problem was arrested (Sda/1931/3, p.17).

Furthermore, Catholic converts could only receive messages from traditional authorities through their leaders and elders. They paid little attention to those from the *Nchindas (*messengers of traditional rulers) and most often than not, they were not heeded to. Even though the Native Authorities were there to bring sanity and unity among Christians and pagans, fanatism would not allow Catholic converts to reason and tolerance between them and pagans was nil and instead deteriorated. For instance, Christian fanatics whipped and flogged catechumens for attending non Christian funerals and festivities.

As aforementioned, Catholic converts despised the authority of the Native Courts as the cases of those from Njinikom and Fuanatui is glaring. They believed this court was far from governing them. Though a Christian member was appointed to the bench, his performance had to change from good in the early years of the court to worse. This was because his cooperation with the other members of the bench made him unpopular among his Catholic brethren warranting his change of conduct. It should be noted that this member formerly acted as *Nchinda* to the fon of Kom before being converted. Upon embracing Christianity and couple with his appointment as headman at Njinikom, he made things difficult for his former master as he became independent from his influence and turned against him (Cb/1927/1, No. 10/1928, p. 9).

The defiling of traditional rulers though the courts was so great that Christians rejected the Natives entirely and preferred taking their grievances and complains to District Officers directly. This was especially true in Kom, Weh, Esu, and Mmen. This was frowned upon by the chiefs and the colonial administration was kept in an uncomfortable situation. They could not accept such disrespect to the Native Administration and in equivocal terms called on the reverend priests to stop doing and at the same time calling on them to dissuade their Christians from such practices. They were thus urged to refer matters to the rightful quarters, that is, the Native Courts (Cb/1927/1, No. 10/1928, p. 25).

The complacencies from the priests and interference in judicial matters was so great in 1930, as evident in Stockman's (a priest in Njinikom) complaint to the administration that Christians in Fungom area were discriminated against in the Native Court. However, this was questionable because out of 301 cases heard in 1930 by the Fungom Native Court, only eighteen went on Appeal in which twelve judgements were upheld and only six nullified. Suspicion on cases brought by Christians was so rife as Stockman brought up another complain that there was a rumored conspiracy that the chiefs were ever ready to give adverse or unfair judgement against Christians in their courts. Such claim was unfounded and he was warned that such malign or slander may warrant prosecution in future it this could not be substantiated or proven true (Gc/b/1928/2, p.2).

It is normal that such had to come from priests and Christian Converts. Many of them feared that their denial or disregard for these institutions would have been detrimental to judgments passed by the people they disregarded. Since they detested the authority of the judges, it was but natural that anything that came from them was bad even if it was in

their favour. Such behaviours from Christian superiors only encouraged their Christians to think they were different. These leaders even attacked the administrators for supporting chiefs whenever they passed decisions in favour of the Native Authorities like the case of Stockman and the Fungom and Kom Native Courts complaints.

Complaints against missionaries from traditional rulers were neither welcome nor taken lightly. For instance, the complaint by the Fon of Esu to the Resident with a call for the eviction of Christians from the land forcefully occupied by them was not welcome by Missionaries. The Christians had illegally expanded on a piece of land more than what was offered to them for the construction of a church house. The entertainment of this complaint by administrators was not taken lightly by missionaries who felt that the District Officers were supposed to support them in all their endeavours especially in their duty of evangelisation or introducing Christianity to the people (Sda/1930/2, No. C.12, p.20).

Such problems between Christians and Native Authorities also extended to the collection of Taxes as this was made difficult by the intransigence of the former and their refusal in paying to traditional rulers or quarter heads. As a result, catechists and headmen became the tax collectors in these areas. However, this became a source of conflict and disagreement. A glaring example is the case of Kom whereby those living outside the Christian quarters of Njinikom were confused whether to pay their taxes to the Christian leaders or not. This resulted to many lapses in the collection and payment of taxes leading to outstanding arrears (Cb/1927/1, No. 10/1928, p.9).

In order to solve the problem of tax evasion caused by the confusion of many moving to Fuanatui and Njinikom, the Native Authority ordered that everybody, both Christians and Pagans, should pay their taxes through their family heads irrespective of their abodes. This was to have direct bearing on Christians like the case of Njinikom and Fuanantui as they were regarded strangers. This had little effect as the assessment was done at a time when Christians had already paid their taxes through their elders. Such experimentation was a great disaster as more evasions were discovered and the scheme died a natural death and the problem of taxation continued. This scheme failed because it was carried out by the Native Authority without the blessings and support of the District Officer who was ignorant of it. Though this was good and reminded the Christians that they were squatters in Njinikom and Fuanatui, it was bound to fail because the Christians disregarded the authority of the Fon over them and only the District Officer's interference would make them heed to any order passed by the Native Administration.

Conclusion

Though it is widely believed by some scholars that colonial authorities and missionaries collaborated and supported each other in the accomplishment of their goals, relations between the two were not all rosy as differences and conflicts were bound especially in situations where interests were at variance. This is true in the case of the Bamenda Western Grasslands of Cameroon were frosty relations existed between colonial administrators and missionaries. The source of these conflicting relations can be attributed to the disregard of African traditional rulers which were part and parcel of the colonial administration and used by the British colonial authorities in the day to day administration of her colonies following the adoption of the Indirect Rule principle. Even

though traditional rulers were cherished by the British colonial authorities with regards to governance, they and their governing structures were despised by Missionaries and converts who viewed them not only as uncivilised but stumbling blocks to the spread of Christianity and would not take orders from them. When these occurred, European administrators simply supported the traditional rulers against the wishes of their adversaries especially in cases where they disregarded the authority of the native courts, their role in the collection of taxes and the galvanisation of communal labour. However, where their interests were threatened by these chiefs, a synergy between them became the common characteristic.

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Zimbabwe and Politics: Questions of the Submission of Christians to Civil Authorities

Isabel and Penson David Palasida

Abstract

Zimbabwe, like many other African countries is facing a wave of civil unrest. There are demonstrations, street protests and violence in public spaces. Many a citizens are challenging their government and the issue of good governance, rule of law and legitimacy is at the fore. Zimbabwe considers itself as a Christian country and as such it is expected to follow precepts of Christianity. One of the major issue that has since surface is the concept that was pushed for by Peter and Paul on the subject of submission to civil authorities. 1 Peter 2:13 – 17 spells out what Christians should do when they are under a government, submit selves to the powers that be. This article seeks to interrogate this concept in light of the current situation of public strife. This therefore is an exposition of the concept behind Christians and the rest of citizens in submitting themselves to governments even in situations where life is unbearable and malcontent. The big question, therefore, is that when Christians question the status quo, are they going against what their bible teaches them or the teaching itself should not be followed literally, it should be contextualised so that it gives meaning to Christians?

Introduction and Context

The book of 1 Peter talks about submission not only to the authorities but to husbands and masters. The context from which this book was written is that Christians were being persecuted for what some scholars like Wiersbe (2010) and Williams (2012) contend was a smoke screen used by way of a fire by Emperor Nero. There have been debates as to who actually wrote this letter. The issue of the author is very important since coming up with the author might give us inferences in terms of the context why and when this letter was written. What is known from the letter however is that the writer is discreet in terms of his identity (Prasad 2000:8) In as much as it has been unanimously agreed, by scholars, that Peter is the writer of this book, there have been debates as to who the real writer is. Peter's demise was as a result of Neronian persecution (Lockyer 1972:257) and

that has let scholars to agree that indeed it was him who scribed the said letter since he was anticipating his horrendous death.

The reason of writing of the letter is equally important if we are to contextualise to see how the Zimbabwean context can grapple with this letter notwithstanding the turmoil that Africa finds herself in. There are so many reasons advanced by scholars as to why the said letter was written. The book was written as an exhortation letter in trying to encourage Christian Communities in Asia Minor to stand firm in adverse situations of persecution and also to be good Christians. The letter was written in the context of oppression. In the same vain, it was meant to pacify the civil authorities so that they would stop persecuting Christian minorities. In short it is an "apologetic tract offered to explain the readers' trials and so to hearten them" (Chester and Martin 1994:96). For Elliott (1981:33) the writing of this book was to "provide a solution to the sociological and religious tension which threatened its readers by presenting the Christian community as the household of God, a home for the homeless, and thus averting the inherent dangers of disintegrating and abandonment of faith". Vasquez (2012:136) avers that in writing the letter, the writer grounded his instructions to submit in the fear of civil punishment and in civil praise; it was for purposes of civil obedience. He was pointing out the function of civil authorities of maintaining civil order by punishing evil and praising good citizens. In order for Christians to silence potential slur and slander from the pagans it was quite important for Christians of that time to submit themselves to the civil authorities. In essence this letter was a survival skill manual.

Submission: Its Meaning

It is critical at this point in time to look at the word that 1 Peter uses in the instruction, "submission". The word "submit", according to McKnight (1996:143) is a complex verb derived from two Greek words namely *hypo* meaning under and *tasso* meaning to order, place or appoint. The *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Word Studies for Key English Bible Words Based on the Hebrew and Greek Texts* states that this word brings a sense of "subject to" "submit to", "bring into subjection," as well as related nuances (Renn, 2005:943), Therefore submission according to Goppelt (1993:51) in this context means, to order oneself under, or according to, or to live according to the government order. In order not to cross the path of the authorities, Christians had to live within the confines of the law, they had to live according to the government orders even if they saw that what they were forced to do and follow, was not necessarily the correct way and as per Christians dictates.

Zimbabwe Context

This letter is very relevant to us today, especially here in Zimbabwe in light of what is happening in the circle of politics. As was the case then when the first Christian Community was expected to follow and live out their faith in the hostile atmosphere and situation of pagan culture and religion, so us too today, that we live in an aggressive and intimidating situation where human rights are being violated by the leaders. In as much as the writer, Peter is encouraging the Christians to have a duty towards the state and conformity to the just and right codes of laws of the society. The issue is whether we also need to take the same stance as Christians today. What we need to be alive to in this

instance is that the element of just and right codes is very important. If we are to look at the current scenario, these are the elements that we need to look at in order to "submit ourselves to the civil authority", elements such as just laws, democratic society, legitimacy, human rights, transparency and accountability among other issues that need to be interrogated. These can therefore be used as the yardstick to see if Christians in particular and Zimbabweans in general can and should submit selves to the current leaders.

Common Good and Co-responsibilities

According to the Catholic Catechism, Christians have an obligation to contribute to the common good through active participation and voice should the need arise. Voicing what is wrong is good for the common good because Christians have a "co-responsibility for the common good" that "includes the right, and at times the duty, to voice (our) just criticisms of that which seems harmful to the dignity of persons and to the good of the community" (cited in Bordwell 1999:483) . The said Catechism, according to Keating (2011:63) goes further and incites Catholics and Christians in general by saying that one is not obliged, in conscience, to follow directives of civil authorities when they are contrary to the demands of the moral order, to the fundamental rights of persons or the teaching of the Gospel. Chamburuka (2012:208) in fact add his voice to this provocation when he posits that "[W]hen faced with tyranny, dictatorship and totalitarianism, the church… may need to support revolutions in order to deliver the masses from alienation, oppression and exploitation". Citizens should not be submissive if and when to civil authority "oversteps its boundaries" (Keating ibid). For Martin Luther King Jn, in as

much as there is an obligation to corporate with good, there is also a moral obligation "to not cooperate with evil" McElrath, 2008:41).

It is therefore imperative that Christians should participate in the everyday politics of their country and this include voicing when the need arise and revolting if need be. This is ably captured in the *Kairos document* (2010:288) when it states that;

> "As Christians, we must recognise our responsibility to promote leadership and moral vision within society. Politics affects every aspect of our daily life, along with economics. Today the two have become inseparable. Encouraging and challenging our leaders must be accepted as fundamental responsibility for all the people of Zimbabwe. Together, leaders and the people they serve must work in co-operation and harmony. Only in this way can we aspire to build a truly representative, democratic, pluralistic and just system of governance". (2010:288)

The Kairos documents bring to the fore the fact that it is unchristian not to challenge the status quo. It states the following; that;

> "Churches must enable and support people in gaining confidence necessary to hold leaders and decision-makers accountable for their actions. Individual ministers, priests, pastors and lay leaders must take issue of just, politics, and economics to their congregations in sermons, meetings, and Bible study sessions. Especially bishops and church leaders must lead by example and have the courage to challenge public authorities. They, more than anyone else, must uphold issues of justice and truth within their own structures that are at the heart of the Gospel message…" (290)

Christians should not condone injustice, discrimination, corruption, mismanagement, wanton killing, political antagonism among other social ill and as such when the church points that out to the civil authorities that amounts to assertive or resistant which is the exact opposite of submissive.

Unjust Laws and Policies

The other element is that which concern laws and policies. According to Alexander (2013:213) in his book *Black Fire Reader: A Documentary Resource on African American Pentecostalism*, Christians, when faced with unjust public policies based on unjust laws, should demand justice by working to change the law and the public policy. However, Alexander does not proffer the methodology of how Christians should demand justice. It is clearly stated that because God is just, the Church therefore is called, by the gospel, to "stand apart from the world and offer love, justice and reconciliation". This position was propelled by Reverend Martin Luther King when he was advocating for Christians to push for changes and demand freedom in situations where civil governments enact and or use unjust laws and policies to suppress its citizens. For Luther, nonviolent civil disobedience is a proper way to fight unjust laws. Justice, he argued, should be demanded since no unjust government can voluntarily give in to such demands. In order for justice to prevail, laws should be structured in such a way that they bring about equal justice (Andelson 2011). Unjust laws should be defied at all cost using civil disobedience (McElrath 2008:41)

Desmond Tutu observes that unjust laws should not be followed and as such governments that enact and or impose unjust laws should never be listened to. Christians should never submit to these governments. He went further and states that "It has been the traditional teaching of the Christian Church that there is no obligation on a man as a Christian to obey unjust laws". For him, "The corollary is that you must not submit yourself to a ruler who subverts your good" (Burridge 2007:188). Therefore, civil disobedience is a valid

expression of Christian Love and concern so says Kaufman (2010:60). Kaufman goes further and states that,

> "A Christian is by his acceptance of God's sovereignty required to resist every human authority except those that seem to be the proper instruments of God's will for him. Christians cannot equate obedience to the state with obedience to God".

Christians should obedient to societal structures and be able to abide rules that are in place. However, such "obedience at times may involve a justifiable disobedience that remain within that government structure". Christians must at times voice against government (McKnight, 1996:155).

Legitimacy and illegitimate Governments

MacArthur (2004) posits that for Christians, the element of being submissive to governments should be premised on legitimate institutions of human authority. They should not be detached from the world but should be balanced in terms of proper respect for and humble submission to all the legitimate institutions of human authority. This position is supported by Lagasse (2009:119) who postulates that one can only be subservient to civil authorities who are considered worthy or respect. Hiebert, 1984:154, is of the view that under normal circumstances believers should actively support civil government in its promotion of law and order. Therefore it is not about simply undermining the government of the day but weighing if that government is worth the respect.

About illegitimate governments, Tucker (58) advances the argument that if citizens were not to submit themselves to these governments, this action should not be considered

illegitimate because "the laws of the government in question are themselves illegitimate…, and the subjects of such a government are right to resist it". When citizens withdraw their consent and mandate to be ruled, the government therefore becomes illegitimate. Bernays (1930) cited in Winkler concurs when he wrote;

> "Governments, whether they are monarchical, constitutional, democratic or communist, depend upon acquiescent public opinion for the success of their efforts and, in fact, government is only government by virtue of public acquiescence." (2016:210)

Without citizens' consent and submissiveness, they are illegitimate. For McCorquodale and Orosz, (112), if a government is not legitimate, it automatically follows that the people to whom the government is illegitimate are entitled not to be subject to that government.

Before South Africa gained independence, the South African Council of Churches declared that the government of the day was illegitimate. It gave its full support to the liberation movements since it avowed that the apartheid government was illegal, it was an unjust ruler. It then was pushing for a legitimate government. It did discourage, after the declaration, citizens from being submissive to that particular government (Phiri 2001:122). It is therefore clear that the basis of submission to authorities in any given situation is premised on, among other things, legitimacy. In order for Christians to listen and follow governing authorities, there should be assumed legitimate. "These governmental authorities are assumed to be legitimate, for there are those who claim authority but are illegitimate" (Deffinbaugh 2004).

Democracy, Good Governance and Accountability

The basis of submissiveness also has its foundation on democracy. Democracy plays a part when we talk of legitimate and or illegitimate governments. According to Oguejiofor (2003:104), the word democracy is derived from two Greek words namely *demos* which means "the people" and *kratos* meaning "authority". Notwithstanding the meaning of the word democracy, even if a government is democratically elected, a law is not necessarily right or wrong simply because the majority says so. In the same vain, unjust, reckless and wrong laws can still be enacted by majority and democratically elected governments and that does not mean they are rights. As such, such laws should be disobeyed and their legitimacy challenged. McQuoid–Mason et al (1994) asserts that;

> "In a democracy, the citizens agree to be ruled by the government because they think it is best to do so. In other words they see the government, its laws and actions as the exercise of legitimate power. A government has legitimate powers when its citizens accept and respect it, and view the laws it passes as just and moral. Power is illegitimate when power is not recognised and accepted by the majority of those who are governed. An illegitimate government will usually lack popular support and often has its laws and actions challenged by the citizens in the form of riots, protests and other acts of civil disobedience. Legitimacy is therefore the cornerstone of power. Without legitimacy the government can lose support from its citizens." (1994:5).

If what McQuoid-Mason is saying is anything to go by and what is happening in Zimbabwe, that is riots, demonstrations, police brutality which is a form of suppression of people's voices, then we can earnestly infer that citizens are basically challenging the legitimacy of the state. In a newspaper article titled "*Churches can Change Zimbabwe says ThisFlag pastor Evan Mawarire",* Evan Mawarire is of the strong conviction that if a government becomes illegitimate,

Christians can and should undermine civil authority by any means, since "Churches are the 'game-changing voice' in the future of Zimbabwe".

Good governance is a kind of governance which gives room to stakeholders and citizen in the decision making and their participation. Citizens have the right to speak up and be heard. They should have the self-assurance and capacity and in some instances the audacity to voice their opinions, questions, concerns and needs. This, therefore, is the opposite of submission to authorities. The concept of good governance is not in tandem with unquestioning obedience and as such opines that it is an unbiblical principle. Conversely, Fayiah (2016) is of the understanding that "It is God's will to bless His chosen leaders with the opportunity of carrying out good governance in their nations"

Ruthless Treatment, Revolts and Absolute and Unqualified Obedience

There are others who are of a strong view that although civil authorities can treat its citizens ruthlessly, there is still need to be submissive. MacArthur (2004:147) in his commentary affirms this position when he wrote that in as much as Jesus lived under the unjust and wicked rule of the Jewish and Roman authorities; he never opposed their right to rule. All He did was to denounce their sins. He did not even issue out a single utterance where he sought to inverse their authority until his death. After all, according to Chapman (2007:28) humility is the hallmark of every true believer.

What is however clear from many a scholars and writers is that submission to secular authorities was never intended to be taken in an absolute or unqualified sense (Mounce 1982) but within a context of fair play as it were. Governments are supposed to serve its

citizens and if they fail, citizens have the right to disregard the said government. Submission to governments by citizens therefore should fall away. In essence, there is no absolute submission. Piper cited in Strom (2008:56) supports this assertion when he states that "The reason I say that submission means disposition to yield and an inclination to follow is that no submission of one human being to another is absolute". This position however is challenged by Nee cited in Brown (2012) who is of a different view. For him submission is absolute yet obedience should not. He affirms that some authorities must be obeyed whilst others should not be. He goes further and qualifies that submission and obedience are sometimes synonymous whereas "…at other times as inability to obey may still be submission". For Kroeger & Nason-Clark (2010:128), it is proper for a believer to be submissive but not obedient because "one can hardly construe a believer's submission to civil authorities as absolute obedience". A mere personal dislike or disagreement with civil authorities conversely should not prop disobedience of civil authorities so says Jurgensmeier (2012:372) because this "will not be accepted by God as a reason to dishonour them. And the Scripture … tells us to honour them, not simply grudgingly comply with their wishes". For some Christians who are propelling the submission agenda here in Zimbabwe, they are of the view that majority of those who are "anti-government" are simply doing it because they want to unsit the government of the day. They should follow, they add, literally what the bible commands them to do and that is being submissive to the civil authorities. They plainly follow it and they are of the persuasion that "the Bible says it, I believe it, and that settles it".

The Role of the Church

The church, as the body of Christians, is called upon to be the conscience of the society. It should point out, to the civil leaders or anyone else for that matter, the social ills bedevilling the people. On the other hand, as is ably said by Petersen (2010) that, the Church has a "role to conscientise the people so that they are aware of their political rights, so that they can speak out when they are denied those rights".

The church is divided when it comes to submission to civil authorities. There is polarity within the church. Majority of the Main Line Churches and the Catholic Church are of the view that for as long as the government of the day is not just and legitimate, there is no need to be submissive to it. On the other hand, some of the African Independent Churches (AICs) are of a different view. When we talk of AICs, these also include some of the new Pentecostal movements (Simon 2010:3). They are of the strong conviction that notwithstanding how the government of the day treats its citizens and performs in terms of deliverables, there is need to literally follow what 1 Peter 2:13-14 dictates, that "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right". The reason for this could be that, as Machoko (2013:48) puts it since its "… leaders were susceptible to co-optation because they deliberately disregarded social justice and human rights issues and opted for material and financial benefits from politicians". For Banda and Senokoane (2009:212) African Churches have a tendency "…to sacralise human authority and leadership resulting in self-aggrandisement and repression…"

Liberation Movements and their support for Disobedience to Colonial Governments by Christians

It is common cause that the church contributed immensely to the emancipation of the people of Africa. If the church had remained submissive to the colonial governments, it is possible that Africa could still be under the yoke of those foreign powers. The Church still has a mandate to speak out on behalf of the people who are being suppressed. Also the Church's mandate is to assist people to raise their voices as a sign of disgruntlement. The Church did not teach citizens to be submissive to the colonial governments and it should not teach them now. Democratisation in Africa is the Church's call as its second liberation struggle the first one having been political independence whilst the second one is for wider human rights … popular participation, governmental accountability, the open society, and social justice (A Mazrui cited in Kokole 1998:133).

Some of the Churches that promote submission to civil authorities are reflective of their own churches that hypnotise member in forcing them not to question and voice towards the injustices perpetuated by these church leaders. This position is supported by Kretzschmar (2002:48) in his article *Authentic Christian Leader and spiritual Formation in Africa*, through his assertion wherein he states that "…church members are already conditioned to be unquestioning and obedient rather than critical and creative". More often than not church members are afraid to hold their leaders to account since they will be afraid to be portrayed as wicked and antichrist since "the man of God" can never be questioned. The end result is acceptance of repression and abuse. This is then brought to the worldly or political "realm" where leaders are not questioned since they "come from God", they are God-ordained. These leaders are then imbued with or treated as having

sacred character or quality, they are sacralised. No one dares to question these "leaders appointed by God Himself" because "God and only God can remove these leaders". Because of this attitude, Christians becomes defeated and compliant and in the process they become passive even in situations where their rights are being disregarded, "The ability within the Christian church to be pro-active has been lost" (Banda & Senokoane 2009:225).

Conclusion

It is therefore incumbent upon all Christians in Africa to have a clear, better and new understating of "submission" by removing from politics, sacral overtones (Gesellschaft & Gesellschaft 2001:202). Christians should not follow what the scriptures say at face value without taking into account the context in which it was written. What is also clear from this discourse is that submissiveness is "not always given" in the absence of a number of other considerations and in any event, respect is earned and not demanded. In wanting to follow what the bible say with regards to 1 Peter 2 13:17 and any other writing by Paul with regards to Christians or citizens for that matter submitting themselves to civil authorities, we need to take into account issues like legitimacy (or lack thereof), good governance, human right and democracy, just laws and accountability. If we do not do that then we are following blindly the bible and it will not make sense to the 21st Century Christian.

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Articles

Zimbabwe Today, Churches can Change Zimbabwe says ThisFlag pastor Evan Mawarire, Article published on 23 August 2016, http://zimbabwe-today.com/2016/08/news/churches-can-change-zimbabwe-says-thisflag-pastor-evan-mawarire/ (Accessed on 7 September 2016)

Amongst the leaders who have said this include Presidents Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe (http://www.thezimbabwean.co/2008/07/only-god-can-remove-me-from-power/) and Yahya Jammeh of Gambia (http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Jammeh-Only-God-can-remove-me-from-power-20111121) and Ali Ndume the Senate leader about Senate President Bukola Saraki of Nigeria (http://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/04/dont-play-god-ndume-senate-leader/)

Appreciating Recent Scholarly Interpretations of 1 Corinthians 15:8

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Abstract

Paul's use of the rare metaphor *ektrōma* in 1 Cor 15:8 to describe the context of Jesus' appearance to him as an apostle has generated numerous interpretations among exegetes. It is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament and that which is certain about the text is the lack of unanimity among scholars as to its generally acceptable interpretation. In the period between 1996 to 2013, four authors have been faithful in insisting on the lack of consensus regarding the meaning and function of the metaphor. Using the descriptive method of study, this work discusses the view of these four authors with a view to highlighting the challenges of understanding Paul's use of the term. It concludes that no single interpretation has attracted a consensus.
Keywords: Apostleship of Paul, 1 Corinthians, Ektrōma.

Introduction

In his attempt to defend the orthodoxy and apostolic origin of his Gospel, Paul describes in his first letter to the Corinthians 15 the series of appearances by the risen Lord to the Apostles. He describes himself as the last in the order of appearances; he depicts his status using the rare Greek metaphor *hōsperei tō ektrōmati*. The Greek noun *ektrōma* often refers to a birth that is not consonant with the natural period of gestation. The birth can be the result of a natural premature birth or miscarriage; it can also be induced, in the form of abortion.[42]It also refers to foetus or child that is the outcome of such processes (*abortus*, *foetus immaturus*, *abortivus*; 'one born out of due time;' 'an

[42] Walter Baueret al., "ektrōma," *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000[3]), 311.

abortive' *foetus abortivus*; 'untimely birth') or to both.[43] These understandings are dominant in Classical Literature and in the Septuagint (subsequently LXX).

In Classical and Hellenistic literature, *ektrōma* and its related terms was used to refer to a miscarriage due especially to prematurity which often led to the death not only of the child but also of the mother. The ancient Greek physicians Hippocrates, Galenus, and Aretaeus often used the verb *ektitrōskein* in their references to the inducement of an abortion. They sometimes also used the words *ektrōsmos* and *ektrōsis*to imply miscarriage and the bringing forth of a stillborn child.[44] A similar event is narrated in Exod 21:22. The use of the word depicts especially an untimely birth in the event of which the child may be dead or alive. The emphasis is on the abnormal time of birth, unformed nature and the incompleteness of the one thus born. Hesychius, the Greek grammarian of Alessandria defines it as "a premature dead child thrown out of a woman".[45]

There have, in recent times been various scholarly interpretations and understandings of the term *ektrōma* in relation to Paul and the passage of 1 Cor 15:8. Authors are however, not in agreement regarding its use by Paul. This depicts the difficulty surrounding the phrase which is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament and constitutes a *crux interpretum* for the passage. This lack of consensus is reflected in the various versions of the English Bible:

[43] David S. Hasselbrook, *Studies in New Testament Lexicography* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 118.
[44] Hippocrates, *De milierumaffectibus* 1, 78, in E. Litré, *Oeuvres complètes d'Hippocrate*, vol. 8 (Paris: Baillière, 1839-1861), 186-188.
[45]David S. Hasselbrook, *Studies in New Testament Lexicography*, 121.

"…as to one untimely born" *New Revised Standard Version*

"…as of one born out of due time" *Authorized Version/King James Version*

"…as to one abnormally born" *New International Version*

"…as though I was a child born abnormally" *New Jerusalem Bible*

In the last seventeen year-period between 1996 and 2013, four authors have joined their efforts in the attempt to explain Paul's use of the metaphor. They include George W.E Nickelsburg 1986, Harm W. Hollander – Gijsbert E. Van der Hout 1996, Emmanuel O. Nwaoru 2011[46] and Andrzej Gieniusz 2013. The choice of these four authors is informed especially by the agreement that exists between George Nickelsburg, Hollander – Van der Hout and Andrzej Gieniusz on the inability of a single author to command a consensus. Nickelsburg sustains that in the context of the entire discussion in 1 Cor 15:8-10 *ektrōma* is about Paul's appointment as an apostle from the womb and his initial self-imposed obstacle to that call by his persecution of the Church. Hollander and Van der Hout on the other hand surmise that Paul uses the term to depict himself as one in the most deplorable situation, the most worthless and miserable man on earth who was no more than "a miscarriage". Emmanuel Nwaoru understands the metaphor as Paul's expression of the untimely nature of his apostolic calling in the vision of the risen Christ.

[46]George W.E. Nickelsburg, "An Ektrōma, Though Appointed from the Womb: Paul's Apostolic Self-Description in 1 Corinthians 15 and Galatian 1," *Harvard Theological Review* 79 (1986): 198-205; Harm W. Hollander and Gijsbert E. Van der Hout, "The Apostle Paul Calling Himself An Abortion: 1 Cor 15:8 Within the Context of 1 Cor 15:8-10," *Novum Testamentum* 38 (1996): 224-236; Andrzej Gieniusz, "'As a Miscarriage': The Meaning and Function of the Metaphor in 1 Cor. 15:1-11 in Light of Num 12:12 (LXX)," *Biblical Annals* 3 (2013): 93-107; Emmanuel O. Nwaoru, "'The Untimely born' (1 Cor 15:8): A Portrait of Paul among the Corinthians," *Koinonia* 5 (2011): 83-87.

Andrzej Gieniusz on the other hand, maintains that Paul's use of *ektrōma* was to capture not only the quality of being dead but also that of being lethal or deadly. So, from dead Paul became alive and from deadly he became a bearer of life as an apostle working harder than others in bringing the Gospel to many.

Peculiar to these four attempts at understanding Paul is an acknowledgment of the lack of final words on the passage. This work shares the same conclusion and maintains that the exact meaning of the Pauline metaphor in 1 Cor 15:8 is difficult to grasp. It underscores the challenges presented by some passages of the Bible to interpreters and readers.

G.W.E. Nickelsburg 1986

George Nickelsburg seeks to identify the sense in which Paul applies the metaphor *hōsperei tō ektrōmati* to himself. He identifies four categories of interpretations given to the text by authors and provides his assessments of each of the proposals. These interpretations are reflected in the various translations of the text found in the different versions of the English bible indicated above. Nickelsburg therefore concludes that none of the available interpretations and translations of the text can claim to be final; Paul's use of the metaphor remains a question begging to be answered.[47]

He uses Galatian 1 as an interpretive key to 1 Cor 15:8 and acknowledges the use made of the passage by Johannen Munck in relation to Paul's claim to have been called from his mother's womb. He takes his clue especially from Munck's 1954 study of Paul's

[47]George W. E. Nickelsburg, "An Ektrōma," Though Appointed from the Womb: Paul's Apostolic Self-Description in 1 Corinthians 15 and Galatian 1," *Harvard Theological Review* 79 (1986): 198-200.

call in Galatians 1 and Acts 9:22, 26. With language drawn from biblical texts about prophetic calls evident in Paul's letters, Munck emphasizes the parallels between Paul's call and prophetic calls like Jeremiah's and Isaiah's. A parallel reading of 1 Cor 15:1-10 and Gal 1:1-4; 11-17 reveals to Nickelsburg that both passages have an identical introductory formulas which are meant to remind the readers of the source of the Gospel preached by Paul. Paul received his Gospel through a revelation by the risen Christ who appeared to him. Both passages affirm that Paul was constituted an apostle by the revelation/vision of the risen One. His call as the 'last,' compared to that of the other apostles (especially Cephas and James) came, thanks to the grace of God, after he had persecuted the Church of God. Paul's description of himself as an *ektrōma* is equally reflected in his claim of being appointed (*aphorizō* lit. "separated") in Gal 1:15 by God as an apostle from his mother's womb.

A further parallel/relationship between 1 Cor 15 and Galatian 1 consists in their references to Isaiah 49. Isaiah 49:1,5,6 discuss a call/formation from a mother's womb to be servant and light of the nations. A reflection of this Isaianic message is evident in the reference in 1 Cor 15:10 to the efficacy of God's grace by which Paul labours more than other apostles. In Isaiah 49:4 the prophet laments of having laboured in vain and received an encouraging response from God who assured him of the imminent success of his mission (Isa 49:5-7). Paul's claim that the success of his apostolic labours are testimonies to the fact that the grace of God towards him has not been in vain reflects this Isaianic lament/God's intervention (see also Gal 2:2; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 2:1; 3:5). The verb "to be called" *kaleisthai* in 1 Cor 15:9 also reflects "he called my name" of Isa 49:1. It may have been used to denote Paul's right to the name 'apostle' as is often generally interpreted.

The parallels in Galatians 1 suggest a technical usage by Paul as is in Gal 1:15. Typical Pauline usage suggests that the verb and its related adjective *klētos* specifically refer to one's call to be a Christian or to the apostolic call.[48]

On the strength of these parallels between 1 Cor 15 and Galatian 1 and their agreements in relation to Isaiah 49 Nickelsburg proposes that Paul's self-description as an *ektrōma* is to be interpreted in the context of Paul's belief that God had intervened during his conception in the womb. Paul is therefore describing himself as having been, to a certain extent, embryonic or unformed as at the Damascus experience; a position shared by Munck and Boman. This Damascus experience is referred to in 1 Cor 15:9. Against Munck and Boman, parallel expression in Gal 1:15 suggests that God's choice of Paul from the womb and the gracious call by God depicted in 1 Cor 15:8-9 are one and the same. Thus 1 Cor 15:9-10 underscores God's grace at work in the call of one who by his decision to persecute the Church of God was unfit to be an apostle. Summarily put therefore, the two passages of Gal 1:15 and 1 Cor 15:8-10 present for Nickelsburg a thought pattern that runs thus:

> Paul was appointed to be an apostle from his mother's womb (as is common in most biblical prophetic calling).
>
> He jeopardized that appointment by his persecution of the Church.
>
> Therefore, in relation to the purpose of his appointment from birth as an apostle he was an *ektrōma*.

[48]Ibid., 203.

Notwithstanding this his anti-appointment stance God revealed the risen Christ to him and made him what he was intended to be from the womb.

Consequently, the metaphor *ektrōma* has a dual function; it revolves conceptually around two poles: one is retrospective and the other prospective. Retrospectively it has in view the positive fact of the promise (appointment from the womb). Prospectively it dwells on the negative fact of the non fulfilment or non realization of the promise as at Christ's appearance to Paul. Paul's persecution of the followers implied a miscarriage or an abortion of God's purpose in him as a prospective leader of the Church. This negative aspect is evident in 1 Cor 15:9 where Paul uses quantitative words that help him underscore the deficiency immanent in his chosen metaphor; namely *elachistos* and *ikanos.* Here Paul reflects on his apostleship in the light of his past persecution of the Church. In this apostleship, he is the least *elachistos* of the apostles, who is not sufficient *ikanos* to be an apostle because of his deficient, embryonic, unrealized *ektrōma*.[49]

To the extent one understands of Paul as describing himself as embryonic and deficient or unformed at the time of the Damascus experience, Nickelsburg follows and agrees with Munck and Boman. In relation however, to what is deficient and embryonic he differs. For Nickelsburg the *ektrōma* metaphor "alludes not to Paul's Judaism as embryonic of true religion, nor to his rudimentary faith prior to the Damascus experience."[50] The parallel use of conception language in Gal 1:15 and the argument related to that context suggest that the entire discussion in 1 Cor 15:8-10 is about Paul's

[49]Ibid., 204.
[50]Ibid.

appointment as an apostle from the womb and his initial self-imposed obstacle to that call by his persecution of the Church.

Harm W. Hollander and Gijsbert E. Van der Hout 1996

Hollander and Van der Hout acknowledge, in relation to the Pauline metaphor of *ektrōma*, the place of 1 Cor 15:8 as a *crux interpretum* in the history of exegesis. They state the various available exegetical options offered on the passage which number about six and offer their critique of them. Among these options, Holander and Van der Hout identify for discussions the then recent positions of George Nickelsburg and Markus Schaefer. They underscore the incomplete and not yet formed nature of an *ektrōma* as the basis for Nickelsburg's comparison between I Corinthians 15 and Galatians 1. They especially question the methodological correctness of relating so strongly two passages from Galatians and 1 Corinthians.[51]

Markus Schaefer is depicted as interpreting *ektrōma* to mean 'a dead embryo.'[52] He is said to have sustained that Paul's use of the term was influenced by Hosea 13:13. He therefore saw Hos 13:13 as the interpretive key to understanding 1 Cor 15:8. Ephraim is compared in Hosea to a foolish child whose refusal to leave the mother's womb exposes it to danger. The comparison underscores Ephraim's refusal to listen to God's call and become converted at the due time. Similarly, Paul regards himself as another Ephraim; given that he was "set apart from his mother's womb" to be an apostle of the Lord (Gal

[51] Hollander and Van der Hout, "The Apostle Paul Calling Himself An Abortion: 1 Cor 15:8 Within the Context of 1 Cor 15:8-10," *Novum Testamentum* 38 (1996): 226.
[52]Markus Schaefer, "Paulus, 'Fehlgeburt' oder 'unvernünftiges Kind'? Ein Interpretationsvorschlagzu 1 Kor. 15,8," *Zeitung für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 85 (1994): 207-217; cited in Hollander and Van der Hout, "The Apostle Paul Calling Himself An Abortion," 226.

1:15). He did not listen to God's call and acted against his appointment by persecuting the Church of God. He exposed himself to the deadly danger of losing his future eternal life and dying consequently before he was really born. His 'birth' therefore came, just in time and almost too late, from his encounter with the risen Christ. Against Markus Schaefer's position Hollander and Van der Hout opine that the term *ektrōma* does not occur in Hosea 13:13. In Hosea. Ephraim is compared to a child who at birth time refuses to leave the mother's womb. A 'miscarriage' on the other hand, usually refers to a child born dead in a premature birth. Thirdly, none of Paul's letters indicates that Paul did not listen to God's call prior to the Damascus experience. Thus, the opinion that he was exposing himself to a fatal danger before his conversion is unfounded. Hollander and Van der Hout conclude therefore, that the comparison with Hosea13:13 is far-fetched and unfounded.[53]

After assessing past literature on the use of the term *ektrōma* in 1 Cor 15:8, Hollander and Van der Hout sustain that the question still remains unsettled. They consequently attempt to identify the source of Paul's use of *ektrōma*, the point of comparison in the metaphor, and the reason Paul used the *hapax legomenon* in this context. They examine the use of the term *ektrōma* in Greek literature and discover that in non-Jewish or non-Christian environment the term and cognates are used exclusively in a literal sense to refer to the miscarriage of an embryo, usually due to premature birth. Paul's metaphorical use of *ektrōma* is therefore not derived from this environment. Their study of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, and early Jewish literature reveals that the term is used almost exclusively in a figurative sense, and the figures are similes. It is used

[53] Hollander and Van der Hout, "The Apostle Paul Calling Himself An Abortion," 226-227.

in these texts to refer to people whose lives were miserable and worthless and who were in deplorable position. They identify these features in the use made of the term by Paul in 1 Cor 15:8 and maintain that Paul adopted the term from these Jewish traditions and used it in the same sense. He is depicting his life before his conversion, when he persecuted the Church of God as indicative of a miserable and worthless person to be compared to 'a stillborn child.'[54] Their analysis of the use of the term in early Christian Patristic literature reveals that it is equally used primarily in a figurative sense. It is used either as an expression for human wretchedness and utmost humility or as a metaphor for an immature person or one who is not wholly formed. They however, identify the Patristic Fathers as dependent on 1 Cor 15:8 in their use of the term. This dependence reduces for Hollander and Van der Hout the value of patristic literature as the basis for explaining the exact meaning and use of the term by Paul. This, for Hollander and Van der Hout therefore leaves valid their discovery of Jewish literature as the source for Paul's usage.[55]

They seek to discover Paul's reason for using the term in the context of 1 Cor 15:8-10 by analysing 1 Cor 15:9-10. Paul describes himself in v. 9 as "the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle" because of his earlier persecution of the Church of God. His qualification as an apostle in spite of his self-depreciating description is therefore depicted in v. 10 as the result of the grace of God. Being "the least" and "unfit" for certain divine responsibilities are common in the Old Testament, in Jewish texts, and in early Christian texts. They express the astonishment and sometimes protest that often accompany divine appointments and commission in Jewish tradition. In this tradition, persons commissioned by God often underscore their insufficiency by insisting on their

[54] Ibid., 231-232.
[55] Ibid., 234.

unworthiness or ineptness for the task. These expressions of insufficiency which are depicted as obstacles to the appointment often attract God's intervention and empowerment of the appointee for the successful fulfilment of the said task (cf. Exod 3:11; 4:10,13; Judges 6:15; 1 Sam 9:21; Isa 6:5; Jer. 1:6; 2 Bar 54:9; Eph 3:8; 1 Tim 1:15-16; *Assumptio Mosis* 12, 6-7; the Letter of Ignatius to the Romans 9,2;). This exchange is therefore described by Hollander and Van der Hout as a recurrent element of prophetic calls and is said to be behind 1 Cor 15:8-10. In each of the models, the obstacle is not removed but is made insignificant by the act of God's grace or the promise of his assistance so that God is underscored as the one responsible for the fulfilment of the mission rather than the messenger.[56] The essence of the emphasis on the obstacle motif in vocation narratives is therefore apologetic; it is meant to depict the power of God at work in mere unworthy humans. On this motif, S.J. Hafemann notes: "The negative emphasis in the obstacle motif on the *insufficiency* of the prophet implies and underscores a *positive* emphasis on the *sufficiency* of the prophet as a result of God's grace."[57]

Paul's discussion in 1 Cor 15:9-10 therefore reflects this pattern of "sufficiency in spite of insufficiency." His persecution of the Church of God rendered him unworthy of God's call, therefore he was "the least of the apostles" and only an act of God's grace made him become an apostle. He is in this passage defending his apostleship; like many prophets before him, at the time of his call by God he was insufficient to become God's

[56] Ibid., 235.

[57] S.J. Hafemann, *Paul, Moses and the History of Israel: The Letter/Spirit Contrast and the Argument from Scripture in 2 Corinthians 3* (WUNT 81; Türbingen: Mohr, 1995), 60; see also S.J. Hafemann, *Suffering and the Spirit, An Exegetical Study of 2 Cor 2:14-3:3 within the Context of the Corinthian Correspondence* (WUNT 2, Reihe 19; Türbingen: Mohr, 1986), 89-101.

messenger, but God still found him worthy. This context according to Hollander and Van der Hout provides the grounds for Paul's introduction of the Jewish traditional figurative expression *ektrōma*to denote miscarriage. By this term Paul depicts himself as one in the most deplorable situation, the most worthless and miserable man on earth. As a former persecutor of the Church of God, Paul surmises that he was the most miserable and worthless person. But notwithstanding his insufficiency God still appointed him to be his apostle. By Paul's estimation, he was no more than "a miscarriage" he did not deserve the title and responsibility of an apostle.[58]

Emmanuel O. Nwaoru 2011

Emmanuel Nwaoru suggests that Paul's use of the term *ektrōma* is in relation to other apostles' earlier contact with the risen Lord and in response to demeaning attacks from his opponents in Corinth. While the use of the metaphor is limited to Paul and his text in the entire New Testament, Emmanuel Nwaoru opines that Paul may have depended on the LXX and his familiarity with secular Greek literature. He acknowledges the long history of interpretations associated with the text and the interest it has awakened among scholars. The author seeks to examine what he tags "some of the mainline issues involved in the interpretation of the imagery of the 'untimely born'" and to explain why Paul includes this metaphor among the list of terms he uses as his self-designation.[59] However, while the exact translation of the term remains debatable, Emmanuel Nwaoru in his work appears to settle for the translation 'untimely born.' He identifies the decisive feature of *ektrōma* as the abnormal time of birth and incomplete form of that which is

[58] Hollander and Van der Hout, "The Apostle Paul Calling Himself An Abortion," 236.
[59]Emmanuel Nwaoru, "'The Untimely born' (1 Cor 15:8): A Portrait of Paul among the Corinthians," *Koinonia* 5 (2011): 83.

born. His assessment of the history of interpretation of the text leads to the conclusion that determining the basis of Paul's use of the metaphor in relation to his person remains one of the unsolved problems relating to the text. While scholars like A. Harnack and F.F. Bruce among others suggest that Paul used a word of abuse that was directed against him by his adversaries in relation to his new birth as a Christian and as an apostle, other scholars suggest that it was used in relation to his old life before conversion. These include H. Windisch, Matthew Henry and M.W. Mitchell. H. Windisch suggests that it was used by Paul as a self-judgment of his pre-Christian attitude. Matthew Henry sustains that it was used by Paul to depict the suddenness of his new birth in the context of his not having been matured for the apostolic function in relation to the other apostles who had personal converse with the Lord. Paul in this sense was one born out of time for the mission as suggested by M.W. Mitchell.[60] From the point of view of his assessment of self-description as a common feature in Pauline writings, Emmanuel Nwaoru suggests in his turn that self-designation is a genre peculiar to biblical and secular literature of the time. It is used by Old Testament figures like Abraham and the prophets, and by the psalmists to depict a high sense of humility in the face of an overwhelming favour received or expected. Emmanuel Nwaoru therefore concludes that Paul, aware of this genre and overwhelmed by the grace of his conversion notwithstanding his persecution of the Church of God, employs the term *ektrōma* in humility to express and appreciate his nothingness before God.[61]

Emmanuel Nwaoru's interpretation of 1 Cor 15:8 in relation to Paul is evident in his translation of the term *ektrōma* in the title of his work as "the untimely born." He

[60]Ibid., 87-88.
[61]Ibid., 90-91.

understands the metaphor as Paul's expression of the untimely nature of his apostolic calling in the vision of the risen Christ. He is overwhelmed and humbled by the grace of conversion which came outside the normal time; after the cessation of the appearances. Emmanuel Nwaoru holds that the metaphor was used by Paul's detractors as a scornful reference to his lateness as an eyewitness of the risen Lord. It was used by his adversaries to question the nature of his apostleship. Paul however, appropriated the deprecating metaphor to express what God in his mercy has achieved in him in spite of his being represented as late, untimely and least. So, by softening the tone of his detractors Paul thus used *ektrōma* for himself to express the unique privilege given to him by God to witness the appearance of the risen Christ and be considered an apostle, notwithstanding his being the least.[62]

Andrzej Gieniusz, 2013

Andrzej Gieniusz seeks to explain the meaning of 1 Cor 15:8 using Num 12:12 (LXX) and Philo's figurative use of the Old Testament text. The LXX text of Num 12:12 employs the same metaphor of *ektrōma* to describe the condition of leprous Miriam. Andrzej Gieniusz analyses the text based on the figurative use made of it by Philo. The term *ektrōma* in this context is understood by Andrzej Gieniusz to mean meaning not only "born dead" or "incapable of living," but also "that which brings death," "something deadly" or "something lethal."[63] The LXX of Num 12:12 and Philo's use of the text tend to underscore mostly the second meaning. In Num 12:12 Miriam has become similar to death in the sense of a miscarriage *ektrōma* which devours. In Philo's paraphrase:

[62]Ibid., 94-95.

[63]Andrzej Gieniusz, "'As a Miscarriage': The Meaning and Function of the Metaphor in 1 Cor. 15:1-11 in Light of Num 12:12 (LXX)," *Biblical Annals* 3 (2013): 100-101.

amblōthridia kai ektrōmata of Num 12:12 the sense of the metaphor is that of a miscarriage which devours the flesh of its mother in addition to its own death.[64] The use of the metaphor in Num 12:12 as well as by Philo and in various Jewish revisions of the text allows Andrzej Gieniusz to propose that Paul was aware of the sense of *ektrōma* in the LXX and used it in the same sense to imply "a foetus not only deprived of life, but also deadly; one that is dead and, in addition, is a bearer of death."[65]

He identifies various interpretations given to the Pauline text in the history of exegesis of the text and offers his critique of each. Among these interpretations is one he considers as one of the most prevalent today. One which based on the genius of miscarriage as a being lacking life; applies the metaphor to the pre-Christian Paul as one spiritually dead before his encounter with the risen Christ. Thanks to this encounter which is the grace of God Paul has received new life.[66] He criticizes this hypothesis as defective because it has no answer to why Paul would prefer *ektrōma* to the more direct term *nekros* which, with its precise meaning is peculiar to his writings. Like other hypotheses, this solution according to Andrzej Gieniusz does not overcome the gap between the lexical meaning of *ektrōma* and the one called for by the Pauline text.[67]

In 1 Cor 15:8 Paul considers himself prior to the appearance of Christ as a miscarriage; *ektrōma*, a dead foetus, lacking life and incapable of living. This however applies to all Christians, who, prior to baptism were spiritually dead, but in baptism received new life. Paul's self-description as an *ektrōma* includes the above; but over and

[64]Ibid., 99-100.
[65]Ibid., 104-105.
[66]Ibid., 103.
[67]Ibid., 104.

against the above it specifically underscores its second characteristic as something lethal identified in Num 12:12 and in Philo. In comparison with others, Paul was not only dead but deadly; by persecuting the Church of God, he was a source of death and for both reason a miscarriage. His choice of *ektrōma* rather than *nekros* was to capture not only the quality of being dead but also that of being lethal or deadly. So, from dead Paul became alive and from deadly he became a bearer of life as an apostle working harder than others in bringing the Gospel to many.[68] In relation to the resurrection discourse of 1 Cor 15, Paul in vv. 8-10 presupposes the final resurrection of all believers. That the Lord has effected his (Paul) transition from death to life, and transformation from sower of death to bearer of life implies that he will equally make it possible for those who believe in him to resurrect on the last day.

Conclusion

George Nickelsburg, Hollander – Van der Hout, and Andrzej Gieniusz rightly identify Paul's use of the metaphor in relation to his past life as a persecutor of the Church of God. The term underscores for them Paul's death/unworthiness either before his second call (Nickelsburg) or his only call to the apostolate (Hollander – Van der Hout). Gieniusz particularly highlights in addition the deadly quality of *ektrōma* which marks Paul's pre-conversion activities as making him not only spiritually dead but also placing him in a position to cause the death of others. In these representations, the three schools of thought do not give preference to the term's notion of prematurity which the process of Paul's rebirth as an apostle may entail. This dimension is picked up by Emmanuel Nwaoru who underscores the term's depiction of the untimely nature of Paul's

[68]Ibid., 106.

apostolate. Emmanuel Nwaoru however, does this at the cost of almost ignoring the relationship between the metaphor and the pre-conversion activities of Paul.

Based on the polysemic nature of *ektrōma* as a word and in view of the Lord's appearance to Paul as 'last of all,' and the comparison between Paul and the rest of the disciples/apostles in v. 10, it is possible that the metaphor refers not only to the pre-conversion status of Paul but also to the post-conversion status of Paul as an apostle. This study has tried to expose the attempts of some scholars at understanding Paul's use of the *ektrōma* metaphor in 1 Cor. 15:8. That which has been discovered in the course of this study consists in the fact that there is no agreement among authors on the use Paul makes of the metaphor in the passage. This lack of consensus leaves open the possibility of further hypotheses and interpretations, and underscores the challenges posed by some passages of the bible to interpreters and readers. This does not however imply the absence of a spiritual sense to be deduced from the text by every reader in search of spiritual nourishment; it highlights instead the richness of the Scripture as a sacred text.

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HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ROOTS OF SUBSIDIARITY IN *QUADRAGESIMO ANNO*

Idara Otu

Abstract

The principle of subsidiarity relates to the responsibility of the state in working for the common good in a manner that strengthens both the higher and lower institutions of society. In his encyclical, entitled *Quadragesimo Anno* (After Forty Years), Pope Pius XI espoused subsidiarity as a normative principle for building a just social order. This essay delves into the historical roots and the formal theological expression of subsidiarity in the social magisterium with insights from Pope Francis and selected theologians.

Introduction

Since the issuance of *Rerum Novarum* (RN) in 1891 by Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903), the Roman Catholic Church has responded consistently to a plethora of social justice concerns. One fruit of the dialogue between the Church[69] and the temporal order is the delineation of appropriate Catholic social principles for social transformation. Among these is subsidiarity, which finds its first formal magisterial expression in the teaching of Pope Pius XI (1857–1939), in his 1913 encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (QA).[70] Presently, subsidiarity remains an integral principle for the promotion of social justice and fostering integral human development. This article presents the historical roots and theological basis of subsidiarity in light of QA. Examining these broader trajectories accentuates the appreciation of the notion of subsidiarity in Catholic social doctrine. The methodology adopted in this theological exposition is historical and analytical.

This essay is structured into five sections. Following this introduction, the second section presents an overview of the historical emergence and theological understanding of subsidiarity. The third explores the remote and immediate social context leading to the

[69] In this essay, the term "church" is used to designate the Roman Catholic communion.

[70] Pius XI, "Quadragesimo Anno," in *Catholic Social Thought: Encyclicals and Documents from Pope Leo XIII to Pope Francis*, eds. David J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2016). Subsequent citations of papal social encyclicals are taken from this edition.

publication of QA. The fourth highlights the appropriation of the principle of subsidiarity in QA, complemented by commentaries of selected theologians. The essay concludes with insights from Pope Francis.

1. Provenances of the Principle of Subsidiarity

The etymological roots of subsidiarity can be traced to the ancient Roman military. The word 'subsidiarity' is a derivative of the Latin '*subsidium*,' which can be translated as 'support,' and 'help.'[71] *Subsidium* referred to reserved troops, stationed to help the regular military soldiers in the front lines whenever there was need for reinforcement.[72] In this sense, subsidiarity points to a particular manner of organizing and ordering groups to help or support each other in the pursuit of common goals. This rudimentary notion of support has come to be closely associated with the principle of subsidiarity, especially as used in the fields of politics and theology.

In politics, Johannes Althusius (1557–1638) expounded on the principle of subsidiarity in relation to the theories of the secular federal state during the seventeen century. Althusius proposed a political system based on consociation, in which the state would be comprised of autonomous, but interconnected social groups such as families, guilds, cities and provinces. This vision is a constructive principle to provide support and help various groupings in society.[73] Subsequent echoes of this political thought are found

[71] R. E. Mulcahy, "Subsidiarity," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia vol. 13,* ed. William J. McDonald et al., (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1967), 762.

[72] See Daniel Wincott, "Subsidiarity," *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics*, ed. Iain Mclean (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 482.

[73] Althusius argued that, "Politics is the art of associating (*consociandi*) men and women for the purpose of establishing, cultivating, and conserving social life among them. The subject matter of politics is association (*consociation*), in which the 'symbiotes' pledge themselves to one another, by explicit agreement to mutual communication of whatever is useful and necessary for the common good of social life." See Ken Endo, "The Principle of Subsidiarity: From Johannes Althusius to Jacques Delors," *Hokkaido* 44 no. 6 (1994): 2043.

in the writings of John Locke (1632–1704), Baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755), and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865).[74] Within Roman Catholic theology, impulses of the concept of subsidiarity can be seen in the writings of Ambrose of Milan (340–397), John Chrysostom (347–407) and Augustine of Hippo (354–430). Franz Mueller observed that these Church Fathers wrote theological treatises that articulated the basic idea that "man [sic] is created and destined for social life; in human communities there is need for authority and differentiation; the 'members' must, as in the case of the natural body, have different functions, rights and duties; the equal and the unequal must join in God-intended harmony and order."[75] This analogy is developed by Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274). Drawing from Aristotle (384–322 CE), Aquinas argued that every created being has a teleological goal, for God guides all created beings toward their ultimate end with respect to their mode of being.[76] The specific goal of each being exists at different levels. Human beings, for example, share goals of varied scope: in common with other creatures – self-preservation; with animals – sex and food; and among rational beings – the search for truth and community.[77] These differing levels of goals exist in subsidiary relationship to one another, such that one social community includes another, and can be compared to a system of concentric circles.[78] Thus, the various units of society grow naturally from one another, with each

[74] Paolo G. Carozza, "Subsidiarity as a Structural Principle of International Human Rights Law," *The American Journal of International Law* 97 no. 38 (2003): 39.

[75] Franz H. Mueller, "The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Christian Tradition," *American Catholic Sociological Review* 4 (1943): 145.

[76] Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, I, q. 103, art. 1 in *A Tour of the Summa*, trans. Paul J. Glenn, (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co, 1960).

[77] Kent A. Van Til, "Subsidiarity and Sphere-Sovereignty: A Match made in…?" *Theological Studies* 69 (2008): 611–612.

[78] Mueller, "The Principle of Subsidiarity in the Christian Tradition," 147.

supporting the other.[79] Such ordering of society then enables every individual to fulfil his or her own goals at the appropriate level. The foregoing forms the foundational premise of Aquinas' understanding of subsidiarity:

> The best thing in any government is to provide for the things governed according to their own mode, for the justice of a regime consist in this. Therefore, as it would be contrary to the rational character of a human regime for men [sic] to be prevented by the governor from acting in accord with their own duties except, perhaps, on occasion, due to the need of the moment so, too, would it be contrary to the rational character of the divine regime to refuse permission for created things to act according to the mode of their nature.[80]

This meaning of subsidiarity is evident in the early writings of Catholic social reformers. For instance, Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler (1811–1877) advanced the idea of subsidiarity in his critique of liberal capitalism during the mid-nineteen century. Although Ketteler accepted capitalism, he equally advocated for self-help through labour unions, producers' cooperatives and other workers' associations, all supported by a limited program of social legislation. Pivotal to his proposition is the idea that "the state and all other associations exist for the individual. Societies should not assume what individuals can do, nor should larger societies undertake what smaller associations can accomplish. Conversely, the state has the responsibility to take up those tasks that neither individuals nor smaller societies can perform."[81] This notion of subsidiarity, which is seminally present in RN and explicitly expressed in QA, has continued to develop within Catholic social doctrine.

In social Catholicism, the principle of subsidiarity presupposes the fundamental tenets of the social magisterium: "the individual and family precedes the state; that is,

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[79] Til, "Subsidiarity and Sphere-Sovereignty," 612.

[80] *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 3, 71.

[81] Thomas C. Kohler "*Quadragesimo Anno*," in *A Century of Catholic Social Thought: Essays on 'Rerum Novarum' and Nine Other Key Documents*, eds. George Weigel and Robert Royal (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1991), 30.

individuals do not exist for the state but rather the state exists for the well-being of individuals and families entrusted to its care; individual rights including that of ownership are prior to the state."[82] Hence, the principle of subsidiarity is broadly concerned with the limits of the rights and duties of public authority to intervene in social, economic, political and other relevant affairs of the state.[83] The theological evolution of the meaning of subsidiarity, from the Roman military context to the early writings of Catholic social reformers, contributed to the emergence and formal expression of the concept in the social encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*.

2. Social Context of *Quadragesimo Anno*

The social context of Pius XI's publication of QA can be situated within a combination of socio-economic, political, and religious factors occurring in twentieth-century Europe. The societal upheavals included the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution, which has come to denote the process of change from an agrarian, handicraft economy to one dominated by industrialization.[84] The rapid increase in the European population between 1750 and 1850 fueled the Industrial Revolution and contributed to a surplus of workers. As a result, people migrated from suburban areas to cities, for work in factories that replaced the cottage industries. The surplus of factory workers in the cities led to decreased wages and increased working hours. This was chiefly attributed to the desperation of workers to be hired, and employers took advantage of the situation by paying low wages. With their dire need for employment, many workers accepted the low

[82] Michael E. Allsopp, "The Principle of Subsidiarity," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, eds. Judith A. Dwyer and Elizabeth L. Montgomery (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1994), 927.

[83] Mulcahy, "Subsidiarity," 762.

[84] The Industrial Revolution began in England in the eighteen century, and from there spread to other nations of the world. For an overview of the Industrial Revolution as presented in this section, see J. Milburn Thompson, *Introducing Catholic Social Thought* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2010), 5.

wages, but failed to challenge the unhealthy and unsafe working conditions. The influx of people, into the cities also created problems in terms of access to proper accommodation and other basic amenities.

As a response to the rapid changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution, two major economic ideologies were advanced: liberal capitalism and socialism. The former holds that "the State should mainly confine itself to 'political' matters such as defending society from external aggression and ensuring internal order and stability; accordingly, the government should not 'interfere' in the economic sphere but should rather allow private enterprise, open competition, and the forces of the market to operate freely."[85] Simply put, state agencies (such as the judiciary and security services) are to be neutral, and independent of economic conflicts in society. The state cannot interfere in the activities of the free market, which determines the wages and working conditions. Instead, the state's duty is to provide the conditions for viable economic activities.[86] Socialism grew in prominence with the 1848 publication of the *Communist Manifesto*by Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820–1895). Socialism holds that:

> The State is not neutral; political power is normally held by those with economic power – and, as one might expect, they use the apparatus of the State to further their own interests; the lower classes find that the laws and the security forces are being used to oppress them and to ensure that they cannot escape from the economic exploitation practiced by those who control the wealth.[87]

Socialism rejected any meaningful role for religion in resolving the social consequences of the Industrial Revolution. For Marx, religion was not only part of the problem; it was

[85] Donal Dorr, *Option for the Poor and for the Earth: Catholic Social Teaching* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2012), 24.

[86] Dorr, *Option for the Poor and for the Earth*, 24.

[87] Ibid.

the 'opium of the people.'[88] Marx viewed religion as a tool that supported the rich to keep the poor in their poverty, and distracted humans from their historical efforts to improve their social conditions.[89] Responding to this nineteenth-century social context, the Church emphasized the notion of social charity as a means of restoring harmony in society. Arising from this understanding, only church-based advocacy and private activity were able to respond adequately to the problems of the Industrial Revolution.[90] Moreover, there were social reformers 'from below' (in England, Belgium, Germany, France and Italy), who spoke against the impacts of industrialization, and responded to the prevailing social issues.[91] The work of these social reformers and movements differed according to their respective locales and contexts. In Germany, for example, Ketteler was a leading religious figure (as the bishop of Mainz) challenging the deplorable and unjust social conditions of workers. Often referred to as the 'founder of social Catholicism,' Ketteler made a connection between faith and social analysis, criticized the new industrial system and called for government intervention through legislation of labour laws. Ketteler argued that social action springs intrinsically from the Christian faith.[92]

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[88] Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert Tucker (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972), 12.

[89] Judith A. Merkle, *From the Heart of the Church: The Catholic Social Tradition* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2004), 89.

[90] Ibid., 90.

[91] Other early Catholic social reformers include Frederic Ozanam , Charles Perin of Belgium, Baron Von Vogelsang of Austria, Paul Hitze, and Giuseppe Toniolo of Torino. In addition, there was the Fribourg Union (1884 –1891), formed under the direction of Karl Von Lowenstein, Count Franz Kuefstein, René de la Tour du Pin, Louis Milcent and Bishop Mermillod of Fribourg.

[92] William Murphy, "*Rerum Novarum*," in *A Century of Catholic Social Thought*, eds. George Weigel and Robert Royal (Washington DC: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1991), 11.

The aforementioned social principles contributed to the insights of RN. Leo XIII referred to Ketteler as 'my great predecessor from whom I have learned.'[93] *Rerum Novarum* was thus a formal response of the Church to the socio-economic *cum* political situation that was bound up with class conflicts. Leo XIII strongly critiqued socialism, affirming the right of all people to private property, and defending the concept of a just wage and the rights of workers' associations as well as the need for limited state intervention.[94] Most importantly, Leo XIII described the principle of subsidiarity thus: "The State should watch over these societies of citizens banded together in accordance with their rights, but it should not thrust itself into their peculiar concerns and their organization, for things move and live by the spirit inspiring them, and may be killed by the rough grasp of a hand from without" (RN 55). Here, Leo XIII introduced subsidiarity as a principle of social organization capable of fostering a harmonious relationship and mutual dialogue among all the intermediary and lower units within the state.

By the early 1930s, social conditions worldwide had not changed significantly in the forty years since the publication of RN. Though workers' conditions in Europe had improved in some ways, large numbers of workers in the Far East and the Americas remained extremely poor.[95] Economically, this was the period of the Great Depression (1929–1931) that left millions of Europeans and Americans unemployed. The dominant political systems operative in Europe included fascism, communism and socialism. Another political feature of this period was state control of social welfare, with

[93] Ibid.

[94] For a summary of *Rerum Novarum* see Dorr, *Option for the Poor and for the Earth*, 18–81.

[95] Merkle, *From the Heart of the Church*, 99.

little opportunity for individuals and other social associations to make their own viable contributions.

In Italy, there was a strained relationship between the fascist regime and the Vatican. To resolve the situation, the Vatican State entered into the Lateran Treaty and Concordat of 1929 with the government of Benito Mussolini, in which the Vatican was recognized as a sovereign state. This pact granted protection for church ministries, the promotion of Catholicism as a state religion in Italy, and permission for ecclesial groups to freely exercise pastoral and educational concerns.[96] Nonetheless, Mussolini did not honour this treaty. In 1931, for instance, he ordered the closure of numerous Catholic action groups, based on the suspicion that they were political entities.[97] Pius XI objected that the Catholic action groups were not political, but rather had their influence in society through the training of individuals in Catholic social doctrine.[98]

There were religious persecutions in the Soviet Union, and an anti-clerical war against the Catholic Church in Mexico and Spain.[99] Amid these occurrences, the teachings of RN continued to reverberate in the Church. Two popes had served after RN and prior to the election of Pius XI: Pius X (1903–1914) and Benedict XV (1914–1922). Pius X is notable for responding to the prevalent social questions through a publication of a schematic summary of RN in a *motu proprio* entitled *Fin Dalla Prima.* Benedict XV is renowned for addressing the excesses of anti-modernism as well as initiating a

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[96] Christine Firer Hinze, "Commentary on *Quadragesimo Anno* (After Forty Years)," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, ed. Kenneth R. Himes (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press), 152.

[97] Marie J. Giblin, *"Quadragesimo Anno,"* in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, eds. Judith A. Dwyer and Elizabeth L. Montgomery (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1994), 802.

[98] See Hinze,"Commentary on Quadragesimo Anno," 152–153.

[99] Ibid., 153.

programmatic step toward dialogue between the Church and the temporal order. In 1914, Benedict XV issued an encyclical titled *Ad Beatissimi Apostolorum* focusing on social questions.[100] Following Benedict XV's death in 1922, Pius XI was elected, and offered his own response to the European social context. His teachings were in continuity with those of Leo XIII, and deepened the theological basis and social principles for the dialogue between the Church and society.

3. Subsidiarity in *Quadragesimo Anno*

Insight into the principle of subsidiarity had been present in the early social encyclicals.[101] A formal theological articulation of the meaning of subsidiarity is recorded in QA, the social encyclical of Pius XI issued on the fortieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* (RN). Pius XI viewed the anniversary as a suitable opportunity to restate, refine and reposition the teachings of RN.[102] In departure from the tradition of assigning the task of presenting a draft of the social encyclical to the Vatican Curia, Pius XI requested the Jesuit Superior General, Wlodimir Ledochowski (1866–1942), to oversee the preparation of RN. In turn, Ledochowski assigned the responsibility to the Jesuit theologian, Oswald von Nell-Breuning (1890–1991).[103]

Quadragesimo Anno contains an introduction, three principal parts and a conclusion.[104] The introduction (QA 1–15) describes the nineteen century socio-economic conditions that led to the writing of RN, and restates the insights of Leo XIII.

[100] Hinze, "Commentary on *Quadragesimo Anno*," 153.

[101] See Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*; Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005), no. 185.

[102] Kohler, "*Quadragesimo Anno*," 28.

[103] Ibid.; Hinze, "Commentary on *Quadragesimo Anno*," 154.

[104] Ibid., 151–152.

The first part (QA 16–40) highlights the impact RN brought to the Church, and to the world. The second part (QA 41–98) is a further development of Leo XIII's socio-economic vision against certain doubts and misunderstandings of RN that had since arisen. Further, Pius XI broadened the perspectives on themes of private property, just wages, capital and labour. Pius XI also presented proposals for the reconstruction of the social order based on corporate principles, and as an alternative to both capitalism and socialism. The third part (QA 99–148) re-evaluates the changes in socialism and capitalism since the issuance of RN. The concluding part emphasizes a return to the teaching of the gospel as an effective remedy and path toward social transformation.

The principle of subsidiarity, as articulated by Pius XI, affirms the importance of human society being imbued with justice as well as being characterized by the decentralization of wealth and power. He maintains that various institutions have an indispensable role in society, and thus no particular institution should suppress or usurp another. As Pius XI elaborately explained:

> It is indeed true, as history clearly shows, that owing to the change in social conditions, much that was formerly done by small bodies can nowadays be accomplished only by large organizations. Nevertheless, it is a fundamental principle of social philosophy, fixed and unchangeable, that one should not withdraw from individuals and commit to the community what they can accomplish by their own enterprise and industry. So, too, it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and a disturbance of right order to transfer to the larger and higher collectivity functions which can be performed and provided for by lesser and subordinate bodies. Inasmuch as every social activity should, by its very nature, prove a help to members of the body social, it should never destroy or absorb them (QA 79).

The basic unit of society that can perform a specific function adequately and with recourse to the common good should be allowed to do so, without the interference of the state. Otherwise, the usurpation of this role by the state constitutes a grave social injustice. As such, it is impossible to promote the dignity of the human person without

recognizing the indispensable role and function of the smaller units of society.[105] The primary role of the state is to support individuals to become agents of their self-determination, masters of their actions, and the architects of their progress. This would promote the active participation of humans and institutions at all levels in the life of a society.[106] To promote and sustain such a social order, Pius XI proposed subsidiarity:

> The State authorities should leave to other bodies the care and expediting of business and activities of lesser moment, which otherwise become for it a source of great distraction. It then will perform with greater freedom, vigor and effectiveness, the tasks belonging properly to it, and which it alone can accomplish, directing, supervising, encouraging, restraining, as circumstances suggest or necessity demands. Let those in power, therefore, be convinced that the more faithfully this principle of 'subsidiarity' is followed and a hierarchical order prevails among the various organizations, the more excellent will be the authority and efficiency of society, and the happier and more prosperous the condition of the commonwealth (QA 80).

The principle of subsidiarity enhances a just social order where individuals and the basic units of society are empowered and supported. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the functions of the individual and lower units of society have been assigned by God according to their respective capacities. It is therefore discordant with the divine plan that higher-levels of authority should absorb the legitimate roles and functions of the lower-levels of society. The principle of subsidiarity, therefore, seeks to establish the socio-economic role of government within the state, and promote the right relations between lower and higher units of society.

Accordingly, subsidiarity is not a form of collectivism. Instead, it harmonizes a balanced and mutual relationship between individuals and societies, and between lower-level

[105] Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 185.

[106] *Catechism of the Catholic Church* ((Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005), no. 1882.

social units and the state, which enhances a just social order.[107] Subsidiarity facilitates the right network of social relationships in a manner that the dignity of the human person is upheld and the roles of the smaller units of society are enhanced without unnecessary intervention. Thus, the state has an important role of providing *subsidium* (help and support) to the lower units of society rather than absorbing them.[108] Echoing Pius XI, Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Centesimus Annus* (CA) reiterated that "a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to coordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good."[109] The right application subsidiarity in society leads to the protection of people from abuses by the state as well as ensure that the higher-level authorities support the lower and intermediary units of society to full their roles. As a result, class conflicts (such as between the bourgeoisies and proletarians) can be averted, and harmony among the state, professions, labour and capital can be restored.[110] Appropriating the principle of subsidiarity into post-modern cultures requires corresponding societal values, including:

> respect and effective promotion of the human person and the family; ever greater appreciation of associations and intermediate organizations in their fundamental choices and in those that cannot be delegated to or exercised by others; the encouragement of private initiatives so that every social entity remains at the service of the common good, each with its own distinctive characteristics; the presence of pluralism in society and due representation of its vital components;

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[107] Ibid., no. 1885.

[108] Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 186.

[109] John Paul II, "Centesimus Annus," in *Catholic Social Thought: Encyclicals and Documents from Pope Leo XIII to Pope Francis*, eds. David J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2016), no. 48.

[110] Allsopp, "The Principle of Subsidiarity," 928.

> safeguarding human rights of minorities; bringing about bureaucratic and administrative decentralization; striking a balance between the public and private spheres, with the resulting recognition of the *social* function of the private spheres, appropriating methods for making citizens more responsible in actively "being a part" of the political and social reality of their country.[111]

These societal values are considered as the necessary conditions for the application of the principle of subsidiarity. These social conditions are geared toward fostering mutually enhancing relationships within society, especially between the individual and the state, and between the higher and lower institutions of society.

Across the eighty-six years since the issuance of QA, there have been varying theological expositions on the principle of subsidiarity. Worth mentioning are those of the theologians Nell-Breuning and Joseph Komonchak (1939–). For Nell-Breuning, harmony between the state and lower social units is based on principles of autonomy, intervention and hierarchy. The principle of autonomy emphasizes that interdependence is necessary for members of associations and for individuals in society. Such autonomy allows the intermediary and lower units, or the individual, to exercise freedom in their choices, and to function without external pressure. The principle of intervention provides limits to autonomy. The autonomy of the individual is not absolute, but rather is obliged to support the integral development of the society. Furthermore, Nell-Breuning affirmed that the principle of hierarchy articulates the diverse levels of participation among social groups, which promotes the values of the associations as well as the objectives of the larger society.[112] These three principles – autonomy, intervention and hierarchy – cohere in the application of subsidiarity in a given context. They promote mutual relationships

[111] Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 187.

[112] See Oswald von Nell-Breuning, *Reorganization of Social Economy: The Social Encyclical Developed and Explained*, trans. Bernard W. Dempsey (New York: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1936), 206–207.

between the individual and the state as well as between higher and lower social authorities.

Komonchak describes subsidiarity as consisting of fundamental elements, including: the human person is the origin and purpose of society; the human person is by nature social, with the capacity to achieve self-realization through relationships; social communities exist to provide *subsidium* to individuals in favor of their own self-actualization; larger communities exist to perform subsidiary roles towards smaller communities; the state should permit and encourage individuals to exercise their own self-responsibility, and the state should not deprive individuals and smaller units of society their right to exercise self-responsibility.[113] Komonchak contends that subsidiarity is a formal principle grounded in a Christian anthropology, and applies to the life of every society irrespective of contexts.[114] Drawing from Komonchak, it means that the application of the principle of subsidiarity in society is closely related to the preservation of human dignity, the promotion of the common good, and building a just social order.

The insights of Nell-Breuning and Komonchak show that subsidiarity can be a guiding principle for the relationship between the individual and the state, between smaller societal units and the state, and between lower levels of authority and higher levels of authority. Subsidiarity is geared toward cooperation, the pursuit of individual self-actualization, and the realization of the common good. It emphasizes support from the bottom up, not from the top down. Since each person has the freedom and potentiality to determine the manner of attaining his or her ultimate self-fulfillment, the state is not to interfere at this deeper level without consultation and assent by each person. Subsidiarity

[113] Joseph Komonchak, "Subsidiarity in the Church: The State of the Question," *The Jurist* 48 (1988): 301–302; Kohler "*Quadragesimo Anno*," 31–32.

[114] Komonchak, "Subsidiarity in the Church: The State of the Question," 302.

upholds the relevance of, and the need for, dialogue and relations at all levels, and among all units of society. This does not mean the individual is reduced to a single unit of the social whole, but that human self-fulfillment is better realized in community.[115] Furthermore, in the social encyclical *Mater et Magistra* (MM), Pope John XXIII asserted that the human person is the foundation, cause and end of all social functions and institutions (MM 51–58, 59–67).[116] Consequently, state intervention for the well-being of the individual and common good of society ought not to incapacitate the persons or smaller social units from exercising their legitimate rights in the affairs that pertain to their self-actualization.[117] Rather, the ultimate goal of state intervention ought to enable human self-actualization. The principle of subsidiarity offers autonomy to small units of society to mediate the common good, while promoting the rights of citizens and groups to exercise their legitimate roles. Equally, through state interventions it limits abuse of authority and privileges by lower and intermediary units of society.

Subsidiarity is interconnected with social justice. In QA, Pius XI considered social justice as an objective norm for human social relations leading to the common good. He espoused that social justice must be complemented by charity, which is the fundamental standard for the whole of social life. According to Pius XI, these loftier and nobler principles – social justice and social charity – are necessary if a just and humane social order is to be established (QA 88). Drawing from Thomas Aquinas, Pius XI

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[115] Simeon Tsetim Iber, *The Principle of Subsidiarity in Catholic Social Thought: Implications for Social Justice and Civil Society in Nigeria* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011), 183.

[116] In *Pacem in Terris*, John XXIII applied subsidiarity to the global situation calling for the establishment of an international authority to address the socio-economic and political problems of society. John XXIII, "Pacem in Terris," in *Catholic Social Thought: Encyclicals and Documents from Pope Leo XIII to Pope Francis*, eds. David J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2016), nos. 140–141.

[117] Thompson, *Introducing Catholic Social Thought*, 61.

maintained that "true and genuine social order demands various members of society, joined together by a common bond" (QA 84). Such a social bond for the common good involves all members of a given society.

The principle of subsidiarity can be described as ensuring that the state, the individual, and smaller and larger units of society are adequately supported in their respective roles and functions in working toward the good of the commonwealth. In the case of state intervention, the primary aim is to uphold the dignity of every person, protect the rights and privileges of the individual, foreclose inequalities, dismantle structural injustices, and promote the common good society. Social justice and subsidiarity are grounded on the inherent dignity and social nature of the human person created in the image of God (Gen 1:26–27).[118] This implies a recognition of the interrelationships that exists in society, and that individuals must work together for the common good and in establishing a just and humane social order. From the twin foundations of human dignity and social relations, the principle of subsidiarity remain complementarily ordered toward the service of humanity.

Conclusion

The overall focus of this article has been to present a historical and theological exposition of the principle of subsidiarity in light of *Quadragesimo Anno.* The essay drew from Catholic social doctrine and insights from selected scholars to explicate on the historical and theological roots of subsidiarity. Subsidiarity remains a significant Catholic social principle for integral human development and social transformation. It offers inestimable possibilities for preserving human dignity, social justice, and the common good in post-modern cultures.

[118] Thompson, *Introducing Catholic Social Thought*, 58.

In contemporary pluralistic societies, the principle of subsidiarity can serve to promote mutual dialogue in the exercise of political authority. Higher levels of state authority can be restrained from legislating on social and ethical issues that could competently be addressed at lower levels of authority, such as smaller communities, families and individuals. Subsidiarity guides the state to prioritize both the dignity of the individual and the common good of society. Implementing the principle of subsidiarity, as for any other Catholic social principle, demands commitment grounded in the virtue of humility. According to Pope Francis in his 2013 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG):

> It is the responsibility of the State to safeguard and promote the common good of society. Based on the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity, and fully committed to political dialogue and consensus building, it plays a fundamental role, one which cannot be relegated in working for the integral development of all. This role, at present, calls for profound social humility. (EG 240)

For state interventions in society, this humility demands a consultative process that empowers the individual and other smaller units to address legitimate concerns. Within the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Francis has signaled a new direction to apply the principle of subsidiarity in the ecclesial governing structures. He desires restoring the subsidiary roles of episcopal conferences "to contribute in many and fruitful ways to the concrete realization of the collegial spirit" (EG 32). Pope Francis' intends to redirect magisterial authority away from "excessive centralization" that "complicates the Church's life and her missionary outreach" (EG 32). The desire of Pope Francis to revitalize the subsidiary roles of bishops is discernable in his referencing from diverse documents of national and regional episcopal conferences (in Latin America and the Caribbean, the United States, South Africa France, Brazil, the Philippines, Congo and

India) in EG.[119] Another significant exercise of subsidiarity is Pope Francis' decision to permit newly appointed metropolitan archbishops to receive the pallium (the woolen, cross-embroidered yoke worn during liturgies around the neck and shoulders, as a symbol of the bishop's pastoral shepherding leadership) in their local churches rather than only in Rome.[120]

This direction of Pope Francis evokes the experience of the early Christians. In the Acts of the Apostles, when a concern arose in terms of the unjust distribution of food, the apostles did not usurp the role of the community. Instead, the apostles declared: "It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word" (Acts 6:3–5). The stance of the apostles is an expression of subsidiarity and the needed humility for it to flourish. Subsidiarity seeks to empower individuals and groups to participate in working for the common good and service of society, without diminishing the distinctive roles and functions of each of the constituents of the Church and society.

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[119] See Christopher Ruddy, "The Local and Universal Church," in *Go into the Streets: The Welcoming Church of Pope Francis* eds. Thomas P. Rausch and Richard R. Gaillardetz (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2016), 114.

[120] Ibid., 116.

Biblical Paradigms for the Sustainable Use and Management of Natural Resources in Nigeria: Interpreting John 6:1-15 from an Eco-Theological Perspective

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Abstract

When studied from an eco-theological perspective, John's Gospel 6:1-15 reveals Jesus' attentiveness to human needs as well as his judicious use, equitable distribution and conservation of resources. These principles constitute models for the contemporary world in its management and use of available resources. The ecosystem provides many services necessary for the survival and well-being of humanity. The proper use and management of its resources in turn guarantee the sustainability of these services. However, with the increasing rate of their depletion due to over-exploitation, overconsumption, environmental pollution and an entrenched culture of waste, the need to sustainably use and manage these natural resources has become very expedient. This paper employs the historical-critical method of exegesis to analyse the text of John 6:1-15 as the heuristic framework for a Christian eco-theology. It also uses the Integrated Natural Resource Management approach to apply the text to the Nigerian context. The paper argues that Nigeria is blessed with enough natural resources which when equitably distributed can meet the developmental needs of every Nigerian. It recommends: involvement of local communities, equity, justice, waste reduction and recycling and concern for future generation, in the management of the natural resources

Keywords: Eco-theology, Resource Management, Ecological Sustainability, Gospel of John

Introduction

Religion, especially from the comparative perspective, has shown itself capable of championing environmental cause.[121]Its attempt to articulate a systematic theory and praxis of human interaction with its environment is what is generally referred to as

[121]Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home,* May 24, 2015, art. 64.

ecological theology. From the perspective of Christian religion, ecological theology builds on the ecological presuppositions of the Christian faith and seeks to harmonize these with the discoveries of modern sciences about the environment. At the centre of this faith is the Bible seen as the record of God's self-revelation and intervention in human history. Biblical hermeneutics can help reveal the ecological insights in the Christian Bible. This paper is an attempt to present some Christian environmental wisdom contained in the biblical story of the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand in John 6:1-15. It uses the historical-critical method of biblical interpretation as aid to an eco-theological approach. The paper also employs the integrated natural resource management (INRM) approach as a theoretical framework for understanding and applying these Christian environmental principles especially in the Nigerian context. As this INRM approach demands the involvement of the local communities in the management program, appeal to Africa's environmental wisdom so long as they harmonize with the Christian perspective, would also serve to enrich this work. The work first looks at the ecosystem services humans derive from the environment as well as the integrated approach towards the sustainable use and management of these resources. This is followed by an exegesis of John 6:1-15 from an eco-theological perspective. The principles drawn from this text as well as those drawn from the traditional African environmental wisdom are applied to the Nigerian context.

Nature: Its Resources and Services

The earth's ecosystem comprises of all the organisms (biotic and abiotic) in their different spheres; the hydrosphere, the lithosphere, the atmosphere and biosphere make up the natural environment. These spheres mutually interact and influence each

other. At the centre of all these spheres is the human being around whom every other thing in the created world exists as an environment.[122]The earth's ecosystem provides four broad based services for human beings. Without these ecosystem services, human life as is known today would not be possible. It is within the framework of these ecosystem services that a meaningful discussion on natural resource use and management can take place.

The First include Provisioning Services: the natural environment provides human beings with resources from plants, animals and minerals such as food, fibre, genetic resources, bio-chemicals, natural medicines, pharmaceutical resources, ornamental resources, fresh water and all energy resources. They serve as the natural resources from which goods are produced for human use, consumption and general wellbeing. The Second is Regulating Services: the natural environment provides regulating services by making available sinks for the different waste produced from human activities. Most importantly the ecosystem purifies the air, water and soil against pollution. The sequestration of carbon is a good example of this purification process. Bio-degradation of waste through natural processes, the natural regulation of pests, natural buffer zones for erosion control and natural hazard control all come under the regulating services of the ecosystem. The third is Supporting Services: these are so called because they are foundational to all other services man derives from his natural environment. They include: soil formation, photosynthesis, primary production of energy, nutrient cycling and energy flow, water cycling and seed dispersal.

[122]Martino Reneto, "Statement to the United Nations' Conference on Environment and Development," Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 4, 1992.

The fourth is Cultural Services: these include all the non-material benefits obtained from the natural environment through spiritual enrichment, conjunctive development, reflection, recreation and aesthetic experiences.[123] These services can also be classified as Source Function Services and Sink Function Services of the natural environment. This classification emphasizes the capacity of the natural environment to respectively provide the resources for humans' use, as well as assimilative and storage services for the waste generated from human activities and use of the natural resources.[124]Technically, the concept is reserved for the non-human biotic and abiotic resources; it is used in this technical sense in this work. The term 'human resources' is on the other hand reserved for only the services rendered by human beings. Natural resources can be classified into raw and processed resources according to whether they have been altered or not by human creativity. They could also be renewable and non-renewable natural resources. The renewable ones could be further subdivided into 'quickly-renewable resources' and the 'slowly-renewable' ones. Non-renewable resources in turn could be both recyclable and non- recyclable. Environmental natural resources include air, water, soil, land while 'flow natural resources' include solar, wind and thermal energy.[125]

[123] United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP),"Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Framework," *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Synthesis* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2005), 49-70 http://www.millenniumassessment.org/documents/document.356.aspx.pdf. Accessed January 10, 2016

[124] European Commission-Directorate General, "Environmental Analysis of Selected Concepts on Resource Management," March2002,6-7.http://www.ec.europa.eu/environment/natres/pdf/cowlstudy.pdf. Accessed January 8, 2016

[125]Aart de Zeeuw, *Resource Management: Do We need Public Policy?*(2000), 4-8, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/waste/pdf/zeeuw.pdf. Accessed January 10, 2016.

The Use and Abuse of Natural Resources: An Appraisal of the Global Environmental Crises in Nigeria

The use of natural resources to meet various human needs and development has seriously depleted and degraded the resources and the natural environment as a whole. While depletion refers to the reduction in the overall stock of renewable and non-renewable natural resources beyond their carrying capacity, degradation on the other hand refers to the pollution of the quality of the natural environment and its resources beyond their assimilative capacity. Natural resources depletion and degradation form the basis of all modern environmental problems. Forestalling or mitigating them is the major thrust of all the initiatives and actions for the sustainable use and management of natural resources. In the last two hundred years, as a result of the industrial revolution and increasing human population, there has been an astronomical growth in the prevalence of these two factors.

The unsustainable use of natural resources is the major cause of their increasing depletion and degradation. This unsustainable use is as a result of interplay of multiple variables such as overarching human greed, the culture of materialism, selfish individualism and unbridled capitalism. Undue reliance on the Keynesian economic model of growth and development (where the GDP is the only index of growth and development) has also contributed significantly to the depletion and degradation of these resources. Inefficient production technologies and wasteful consumption patterns have equally given rise to the prevalence of a culture of dirt/ filth and "throwaway culture."[126] Underlying all these scientific, technological, demographic, institutional,

[11]Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, art. 20-22.

economic and socio-cultural dimensions of anthropogenic causes of environmental problem, is the question of a world which has lost its sense of the value of human life and its sense of morality. John Paul II rightly said therefore that, "the seriousness of the ecological issue lays bare the depth of man's moral crisis. If an appreciation of the value of the human person and of human life is lacking, we would lose interest in others and in the earth itself."[127] As a result of these the world is witnessing globally today myriad of serious environmental, socio-economic and health related problems. In the Nigerian context, the causes of the present ecological crises are complex and sometimes paradoxical. Both traditional and modern social structures have been responsible for the crises. Traditional structures include the predominantly rural nature of most Nigerian communities, the high level of poverty, the continuous use of wood fuel as the most common source of energy, the persistent reliance on bush burning as the common method of hunting, the continuous reliance on traditional farming methods and unimproved plant and animal varieties. The modern social and economic structures include the activities of extractive industries like the oil and gas industries in Nigeria, urbanization, population growth and globalization, corruption, social injustice and inequality.[128]

Among the most common environmental problems in Nigeria today are climate change, the persistent loss of biodiversity, deforestation, pollution of soil and land quality, desert encroachment, declining marine resources, water pollution and scarcity. According to a UN-REDD Report, Nigeria has lost more than 50 percent of its forest

[12] John Paul II,*Message for The World Day of Peace,* 1990, art. 13.

[13] Segun Ogungbemi, "An African Perspective on the Environmental Crisis, "in Louis J Pojman (ed.), *Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company 1997), 206;cf. also Kekong Bisong E., *Restorative Justice in Conflict Management*(Enugu: Snaap Press, 2008), 173.

cover since 1990 and currently less than 10 percent of the country is forested. The deforestation rate in Nigeria is estimated at 3.7 percent, one of the highest in the world.[129] The increasing number of oil prospecting companies, automobiles and power generating plants especially in the many urban centres, indiscriminate bush burning especially in villages, gas flares from the oil companies, gaseous emissions and toxic effluents from companies have led to the pollution of the atmosphere, streams, rivers and land. One would not fail to mention the uncontrolled poaching for wildlife otherwise called bush meat in Nigeria.

Cities have become big refuse dumps as un-recycled municipal and industrial wastes, both solid and effluent, are competing for space with people. The menace of erosion and terrible landslide especially in the eastern part of Nigeria are also part of these increasing environmental crises. Poor sanitation and the general absence of appropriate sewage disposal systems in the urban centres as well as unsafe drinking water sources in most of the local communities have contributed to the spread of many diseases like dysentery, cholera, diarrhoea. The mono-sector economy has created an over dependence on crude oil with its environmental consequences. The biting poverty in most local communities does not allow for a sustainable use of the environment, neither does the excessive materialism of the affluent and rich encourage a lifestyle that is eco-friendly. Over concentration of basic amenities and jobs in the urban centres, has brought rapid urbanization with its undue strain on the urban environments. The changing patterns of land use to provide food for and accommodate

[14] United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries: Readiness Preparation Proposal for Nigeria (UN- REDD+ R-PP), November, 2013,5. https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/sites/fcp/files/2013/Nov2013/Nigeria%20REDD%2B%20R-PP%20November_2013%5B1%5D_Final.pdf. Accessed January 10, 2016.

the infrastructural needs of an increasing population has also brought about significant changes in the land cover in many areas with various forms of ecological implications. In the Niger delta region for instance corruption and corporate irresponsibility on the part of government functionaries, community leaders and multinational companies have perpetually kept the region poor and their environment degraded. At the grassroots, there is a gradual erosion of the traditional sense of the sacredness of the earth.

Environmental degradation has made it impossible for many poor people who depend directly on the land, the forests and the rivers/streams for their livelihood to break out from their circle of poverty. In the bid to make ends meet, the poor also engage in unsustainable use of these resources that tend to worsen their degraded or depleted state. The debate on whether poverty is the cause or consequence of environmental degradation has gained scholarly attention in recent times. At the international scene, John Paul II however, calls attention to the fact that in order to develop new products for exports most heavily indebted countries are destroying their natural heritage in a way that irreparably damages the ecological balance in nature. He sustains that assigning blames to the poor alone for environmental degradation in situations like this is wrong. The earth is entrusted to the poor no less than the rich, so the poor ought to be helped to find their way out of poverty. To do this, courageous structural reforms need to be carried out as well as new ways of relating among peoples and states.[130]

In the Niger Delta region of Nigeria for instance environmental degradation has been compounded by the unethical explorative and productive activities of multinational oil

[130] John Paul II, *Message for The World Day of Peace*, 1990,art.11.

companies in collaboration with corrupt and influential Nigerians. In the past sixty years the region has witnessed many cases of oil spills and gas flares with untold consequences like loss of productive land, surface and groundwater pollution and soil contamination. The poor and dispossessed at times vandalize pipe lines in order to make ends meet, thereby leading to further environmental damage and more poverty. Eucheria Nwagbara et al rightly note particularly about the Niger Delta region that, there is no basis of comparison between meagre and recyclable waste generated by the poor and the huge amount of good consumed and ecologically debilitating wastes generated by the rich class. For instance, the gas flaring and oil spillage in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria that have wrecked untold havoc on land, water and air, were the results of the activities of the rich Nigerians and their multinational corporations' counterparts.[131]

Increasing population in some Nigerian communities means reduction in the number of arable land per capita. As farmers cultivate a parcel of land longer than necessary with little or no fertilizers or even alternative lands to farm, the soil fertility of the available farmland continues to dwindle thereby increasing their poverty level and degrading the land further. The same can be said of other natural resources like non-timber forest products, water quality and availability, air quality. The link between power, wealth, institutional and market failures working side by side have been shown to compound these environmental problems in Nigeria.

[131] Eucheria N. Nwagbara, Raphael P. Abia, Francis A. Uyang and Joy A. Ejeje, "Poverty, Environmental Degradation and Sustainable Development: A Discourse," *Global Journal of Human Social Science, Sociology, Economics and Political Science,* Vol. 12 No. 11 (2012), 6. https://www.globaljournals.org/GJHSS_Volume12/1-Poverty-Environmental-Degradation.pdf. Accessed January 11, 2016.

Sustainable Use and Management of Natural Resources: The Integrated Approach

Much more than merely acknowledging the presence, the causes and consequences of environmental crises, the proffering of solutions to these problems, is the overriding motif of global environmental consciousness. Today, there is a broad spectrum of initiatives, activities and advocacies in this regard which is collectively known as sustainable natural resource management. The sustainable use and management of natural resources therefore means the optimal use of these resources, especially through increased efficiency in exploration, extraction, production/ processing or manufacture, consumption, reuse, recycling and decrease in their demand.[132] The quest for the sustainable use and management of natural resources has been pursued from the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives of the physical and social sciences and the humanities. Even government policies and regulations bordering on the environment, as well as the activism of many NGOs devoted to the theme of the environment, all come under this initiative. Many approaches have been suggested proffered and used over the years for this purpose. Mention could be made of the regional/community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) approach, the Adaptive management approach, the ecosystem approach, the land management approach, the precautionary approach and the integrated natural resource management (INRM) approach.

In this paper, the INRM approach is adopted; it has been defined as

An approach to managing resources sustainably by helping resource users, managers, and other stakeholders accomplish their different goals by consciously taking into

[132]Daniel D. Chiras, *Environmental Science: A framework For Decision Making,* (Merlo Park: The Benjamin/Cumming Publishing Coys), 1995, 14-33.

account, and aiming to reconcile and synergize, their various interests, attitudes, and actions. These goals include increasing production, enhancing food security, creating value, maximizing profitability, minimizing risk, building up and maintaining various natural and other assets, and conserving the natural resource base.[133]

The INRM approach seeks to meet human needs for survival and development while at the same time maintaining environmental balance and sustainability. Human needs, their livelihoods and their rights, and how these needs interact with management of the natural resources lie at the heart of INRM. This approach emphasizes the finitude, the interrelation, the depletability and degradability of natural resources in the ecosystem. It also emphasizes the involvement of the interests of many stakeholders. These stakeholders include government, private sector, the individual prospector of these resources, the immediate communities where these resources are found as well as the global/international community. The local communities for instance must be made to feel a sense of ownership and responsibility in the management of the resource, and in the benefits that accrue from its use. Whatever management and control system is put in place is likely to face barriers in implementation, if it ignores the community role and benefit-sharing mechanisms. Oftentimes this creates conflict situations in the management of natural resources.[134]

Integrated Natural Resource Management also takes into account the need to reduce the rate of exploitation of these natural resources, the need to avoid wasting the

[133]Peter Frost, Bruce Campbell , Gabriel Medina and Leonard Usongo, "Landscape-Scale Approaches for Integrated Natural Resource Management in Tropical Forest Landscapes," *Ecology and Society* Vol. 11 No.2 (2006), 30.http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss2/art30/. AccessedJanuary26,2016.

[134]Kwesi Attah-Krah, **"**Integrated Natural Resources Management and Genetic Diversity: Two Sides of the Coin for Sustainable Livelihoods and Development."Tilahun Amede et. al, (eds.), *Integrated Natural Resource Management in Practice: Enabling Communities to Improve Mountain Livelihoods and Landscapes*, (Kampala: African Highlands Initiative, 2006), 6-9.

resource through efficient production and consumption patterns and the need for proper disposal of the final waste arising from the use of the resources. Consequently, there is need to manage these natural resources in a holistic and integrated manner. Such holistic management must pay attention to all dimensions of the ecological crises; bio-physical, socio-economic, philosophical, political, moral and religio/spiritual. The Integrated natural resource management shares conceptual affinities with the integral ecology approach proposed by Pope Francis.[135]

Exegesis of John 6:1-15

The feeding of the five thousand by Jesus in John 6:1-15 is recorded in the four Gospels; a feature which indicates Christian tradition's familiarity with the event. Peculiar to John's account however is Jesus' concern for the wellbeing of the crowd, his engagement of the disciples and the consequent introduction of the boy with five loaves and two fishes (5-9), and Jesus' caution against wasting the left over in v. 12 which pairs with Ex 16:19-20. The pericope is divided into two major sections: the introduction vv. 1-4 and the miracle vv. 5-15; notable challenges in the composition include the transition from v. 4 to v. 5 and the relationship between vv. 3 and 15. The geographical setting and the vagueness of the voyage has equally generated scholarly discussions. The section on the multiplication vv. 5-15 can be further divided into three subunits: first, acknowledgment of the problem of hunger and the quest for solution vv. 5-9; second, Solution vv. 10-13; third, Effect of the sign vv. 14-15.
In the context of the topic the passage is studied under the following headings: people-oriented leadership, efficient management of the resources of the earth, and avoidance

[135]Pope Francis *Laudato Si*, art.139-162.

of waste. The geographical setting which depicts a unique landscape in the introductory verses (1-4) underscores however, the role of the environment in the ministry of Jesus. The quest for space in nature as an enhancing element in the realization of humanity's goal is depicted in the crossing of the sea, the going up the mountain and the sitting on the mountain. This is capped by the invitation to sit on the green grass in v. 10. The verses therefore depict, in the context of the narrative, the quest for and interaction with nature.

a. Leadership with and for the Community

The rhetorical question of Jesus directed to Philip underscores Jesus' concern for those who followed him; the text depicts the capacity to detect problems through sensitivity towards the well being of others. It underscores the collaborative task of seeking a common solution to what was perceived by all as a problem to be solved. This display of co-responsible leadership quality is affirmed by the author's commentary in v. 6; Jesus knew the answer (v. 6b) but chose to involve Philip (v. 6a), and by testing him he made the problem the concern of both the members of his inner circle represented by Andrew (v. 8), and of the crowd represented by the young boy (v. 9). The dialogue between Jesus and his disciples over the problem of hunger leads to the discovery of two fishes and five loaves. By acting in communion with the community, community problems are detected and solved. This oneness with the community is alluded to in the introductory verses where Jesus is depicted as sitting with his disciples (vv. 1-4); a gesture which denotes solidarity and companionship. He is represented therefore "as

someone who shares with people, who 'sits with them,' and raises them to an awareness of something higher."[136]

The very objective assessment of Philip (v. 7) which recalls Moses' response to Yahweh in the desert (Num 11:13) and the reservation of Andrew (v. 9) underscores the enormity of the problem and the consequent miraculous and overwhelming nature of the solution. Like Elisha's servant (2 Kings 4:42), Philip's and Andrew's physical measuring terms assessment of the situation is exclusive of the divine as the spiritual source of human sustenance; a lack which Jesus, following the prophetic trail of Elisha in 2 Kings 4:43-44, recognizes and makes up for in the giving of thanks *eucharistein* (v. 11). Human attempts at resolving problems that are oblivious of the spiritual source will always objectively be challenged by the absurdity, enormity and apparent insurmountable nature of the problems.

b. John 6:1-15 and the Management of the Resources of the Earth

The bread and fish represent the resources of the earth and the work of human hands. Fish is directly a resource which nature produces but it arrives at the table as meal through humanity's use of its ingenuity. Bread is the product of processed raw materials from nature. The best bread is derived from wheat while the inferior is derived from barley and used especially by the poor and in time of scarcity. The one used here is of barley (v. 9) and in its inferiority it expands the horizon of insufficiency (proper to the limited available resources: two fishes and five loaves) which mark the setting of and amplify the extraordinary nature of the events. Bread is

[136] Thomas L., Brodie, *The Gospel according to John: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 260.

thus the result of human beings' use of the resource of nature barley or wheat for the production of food to satisfy hunger. The invitation to sit and the indication of the presence of much grass for the sitting (v. 10) expands the space between Jesus, the disciples and the crowd and gives a picture of a wider and accommodating landscape. It touches on the contributory role of grass or green and space for the wellbeing of the human person or the service it offers. It offers a ready atmosphere for picnic, recreation and thanksgiving and is a factor in the multiplication and distribution of the meals. It underscores the abundance of pasture which providence offers in the place of green in Psalm 22 (23):2. The giving of thanks *eucharistein* (v. 11) implies recognition of the source of the produce; it reflects the *berakha* (the Jewish prayer before meals), which consists of the praise of God, and the expression of thanks for the gifts. The multiplication is noted by the author as taking place in the thanksgiving; the thanksgiving makes the limited resources more than sufficient. The resources of nature are traced to God as their source (Psalms 8; 104:24) and in thanksgiving one recognizes God as their origin. The thanksgiving pairs up with the luxury of the green grass to underscore providence's shepherding and provision of abundance and security through nature re-echoed from Psalm 22 (23). Rudolf Schnackenburg maintains that this Psalm forms the background for the Johannine pericope.[137]

The transition clause in John6:4 links the episode to the Passover. The "Bread of Life" discourse after the episode links the miracle to Jesus' anticipated gift of himself as the bread of life on the day before he suffered. For John therefore there is close link between the miracle and the Christian Eucharist today. Christ's incarnation as man transforms the merely material and makes it the gateway to divinity. This gives an

[137] Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, Vol. 2, (London: Burns and Oates, 1980), 18.

added ecological impetus for the respect that humanity owes material nature which the son of God was not ashamed to identify with. Acknowledging God as the source of the resources of nature implies equally the responsibility of human beings in the use of the resources; they become the custodians to whom the resources are given on trust. Consciousness of God's ownership of them implies accountability, care and prudence in the use of them. they are not to be destroyed but to be used judiciously so that they may be available for future generation. It is in these contexts that the thanksgiving is made; thanksgiving therefore promotes and underscores the virtues of accountability, prudence and charity in the use of the resources and serves as the basis for the multiplication. Thanksgiving in this context is therefore an aspect in the management of the resources. When the resources of the earth are used with care in the consciousness of God as their origin, the miracle of abundance will take place for humanity's use because "the interaction between the divine and the human is capable of producing something that is of surpassing goodness."[138]The abundance of the event thus fulfils the promise of Psalm 23:1 in which the Lord by his interaction with the elements of the material world shepherds his own, and they in turn are never in need.[139]

c. John 6:1-5 and the Avoidance of Wastage

The caution against wastage (*hina mē ti apolētai* v. 12) provides the key to abundance and absence of scarcity. It touches on accountability which is equally emphasized by the knowledge of what was before consumption (two fishes and five barley loaves)

[138] Thomas L Brodie, The Gospel According To John, 261.
[139] Francis J Maloney, The Gospel of John, (Sacra Pagina Vol. 4, Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998), 198.

and what was left after consumption (twelve baskets of fragments from the barley loaves). It is an invitation to care for that which is available in preparation for the future, failure to care for it will in the reverse of Exod 16:19-20 give rise to wastage. While the guard against waste in the Exodus manna event was in the collection of only what was necessary, the caution against waste in Jesus' abundant meal is in the gathering up of what is left. Both constitute prevention of waste which as specified in Exod 16:20 would amount to breeding of worms and pollution; leading to the destruction of the environment. It expresses the Jewish regard for bread as a gift from God which must not be wasted and anticipates the imperishable bread which the miraculous feeding symbolizes.[140]Done in proximity to the celebration of the Passover which is the feast of the celebration of the manna it recalls providence at work who in providing food for the hungry out of the scarcity in the desert makes possible an abundance of food from the limited resources on the mountain across the sea and away from the village.

Eco-Theological Principles for Sustainable Natural Resource Management.

In order to respond adequately to the current environmental threats and injustice, Christianity has tried to retrieve the ecological wisdom latent in her tradition. She has also attempted to reinvestigate, rediscover and renew this tradition in the light of the challenges posed by these environmental crises. This double attempt at offering theological critique of the values, culture and habits underlying the destruction of the ecosystem by human activities is referred to as Ecological Theology (Eco-theology). It also includes a critique of the Christian tradition in the light of the contemporary

[140]Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel according to St. John*, Vol. 2, 18.

global environmental crises, awareness and consciousness. Beyond the reinterpretation of Christian theology, eco-theology seeks also to review every aspect of the Christian faith. It seeks to make the entire life of the church to include an ecological dimension and vision. It draws its general principles on environmental sustainability from the bible and Christian tradition and applies them to contextual situations of different environmental problems.[141]Eco-theology has become a viable option in the quests for answers to the contemporary environmental challenges for the following reasons: (i) it appeals to religious sentiments in the care for environment, (ii) it is an extended theology, (iii) it is interdisciplinary, (iv) it is pluralistic, (v) it is interreligious with a global perspective and (vi) it is revolutionary.[142]

Biblical hermeneutics is one area the contributions of eco-theology can very well be appreciated. Its specific Christian orientation makes it one out of the many religious perspectives informing eco-theology. As a science of biblical interpretation, it affords eco-theology the divine perspectives to conceptualize ecological issues even from a purely contextual point of view. An analysis of John 6:1-15 in the context of eco-theology makes this truth very clear. It reveals the following principles which Christian eco-theology can build on for the sustainable use and management of natural resources.

First, all natural resources come from the creative hands of God for human wellbeing. This is underscored in Jesus' giving of thanks (*eucharistein*) before the distribution of the five loaves and two fish. Precisely because it comes from God, creation as a whole

[141]Ernest M. Conradie, *Christianity and Ecological Theology: Resources for Further Research*, (Stellenbosch: SUN Press, 2006), 3-4 https://www.africansunmedia.co.za. Accessed December 20, 2016.
[142]Kekong E. Bisong,"Anthropocentric Castles and the Imperatives of Eco-Theology," Ugochukwu Njoku and Simon Anyanwu (eds),*Shepherd and Teacher* (Owerri: APT Publications, 2015),165-181.

does not intrinsically belong to the human person to be used and abused according to its selfish whims and dictatorial caprices. Human beings are mere custodians or stewards of creation. They are to apply the fruits of creation for the benefit of the common good. It is therefore the creator and rightful owner that must set the standard for the right use of these natural resources and not humans. To go against this divine standard constitutes "a grave sin against the natural environment, one which weighs on our consciences, and which calls for grave responsibility towards God the creator."[143] Indeed Human beings have turned their back on God's plan for creation and by so doing have provoked a "disorder which has inevitable repercussions on the rest of the created order. 'Therefore the land mourns and all who dwell in it languish, and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and even the fish of the sea are taken away' (Hosea 4:3)."[144]

Secondly, implicit in the concept of thanksgiving are three other important presuppositions. The first presupposition is humanity's total dependence on God for all its needs. Life comes from God who has in turn given humanity the earth's resources for its upkeep and well-being. The second presupposition is the objective existence and inherent goodness and integrity of the object of the thanksgiving (the earth's resources). Many scholars from the different religious traditions hold that the guiding principle behind all environmental concern rests on the notion of the "integrity of creation;" the notion of the intrinsic value of the natural world, including human

[143]John Paul II, Address at the Liturgy of the Word, Zamosc, June 12, 1999, art. 3.http://www.vatican.va>va>travels>documents. Accessed January 13, 2017.

[144]John Paul II, Message for the 23rd World Day of Tourism, June 24, 2002, art. 5 http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/tourism/documents/hf_jpii_mes_20020625. Accessed November 18, 2016.

beings, as the creation of God. This implies that natural things have value far beyond the mere satisfaction of short-term human interests.[145] The thanksgiving of Jesus underscores humanity's need for, and utter dependence on the resources of the earth. The Earth's ecosystem therefore needs to be cared for if humanity must continue to derive these much needed services. Thanksgiving is an acknowledgment of the experience of providence. The third presupposition is that of celebration. *Eucharistia* always carries this note of joyful celebration which humanity accords God through whose goodness it has received fish, bread and wine, resources of the earth and products of human hands.

Thirdly, the satisfaction of human needs lies at the heart of the use and management of natural resource. The realization of humanity's survival on earth and the consequent sustenance of humanity's larger needs require an interaction between the resources of nature and the ingenuity of the human person, and recognition in thanksgiving of divine providence as the source of both. For human ingenuity to be at its best there is need for collaboration among humans in every attempt at problem solving. this will turn scarcity into abundance through cooperate and effective management of that which is available in view of the many needs. The preoccupation of Philip and Andrew with the limitedness of the resources denotes a co-operation only between the resources of nature and the human person without the divine. The thanksgiving on the part of Jesus introduces the third aspect of the trio (the divine) and thus teaches that for a miracle of this kind to take place or for the needs of humanity to be effectively

[145]Charles J. Kibert, Leslie Thiele, Anna Peterson and Martha Monroe, *The Ethics of Sustainability*, 2011, 63-65,https://www.researchgate.net/file.PostFileLoader.html?idae=574ae7fadc332dae991230c. Accessed January 20, 2016.

met; human beings must always rise above the level of that which is space-bound and enter into the realm of the divine. A connection must be made between materiality and the immaterial or spiritual. Jesus in this event underscores thanksgiving to God (as a cultivation of a sense of the holy) as the link between the material and the immaterial and in turn establishes himself as the source of that link. Eco-theology consists therefore in this context, in the interaction in Christ between nature, humanity and God; interaction between humanity, nature and the divine. Recognition of God's blessing in the gift of nature and in the surplus of nature.

The fourth principle is that all resource management efforts must be human-centred or people oriented. This neither denies the intrinsic value of the things of nature nor place undue emphasis on their conservation at the expense of human needs. As a matter of fact, leadership as a whole and environmental governance in particular must be people-oriented. The satisfaction of human needs is at the heart of the integrated natural resource management. Moved with pity by the need of the people Jesus took the initiative to provide food for them; political leaders are challenged to take a cue from this. Leadership in the context of the environment consists in evolving green or eco-friendly policies, ensuring that the resources of the earth are justly and equitably directed to the common good while at the same time considering the needs of future generations.

Fifth the biblical pericope insists on co-responsibility and involvement of the community and other stakeholders in the management of the resources. A top-down management approach has proven to be ineffective as far as resource management in Nigeria is concerned. Getting the domicile-communities of a particular resource

involved in its management has become prominent as an alternative natural resource management. It is the main focus of the Community-Based Natural resource management approach. It however forms part of the emphasis of the integrated approach.

Sixth the need for a judicious use of resources is also emphasized by the pericope; 'so little was available yet so many people were fed.' When judiciously used, the resources of nature would be enough for everybody to have a fair share with no body having more or less than he/she reasonably needs. Such judicious use involves the wide spectrum of natural resource management options so far pointed out.

Seventh, the passage also emphasizes equitable distribution, accountability and concern for justice both intra-generational and inter-generational, 'they all ate as much as they wanted.' It was not only the left over that were accounted for (twelve baskets), the least, no less than the greatest, men as well as women, the young as well as the elderly were equally accounted for and catered for. Everybody's need, integrity and person was respected and catered for.

Eighth, order and discipline underscore the miracle of Jesus' feeding of so many with so little. These are emphasized especially by the instruction given to the disciples to make the people sit down. In Lukan and Markan versions of the episode, the people sat down in groups of fifty each (Lk 9:15), and in groups of hundred and groups of fifty (Mk 6:40-41). Environmental laws, governance and ethics for the maintenance of order, the regulation of human use of the resources of nature and effective management of these resources are implied here. The avoidance of waste both from the point of view of reusing and recycling of the left over and the prevention of

environmental pollution through indiscriminate and poor disposal of waste from used resources is also insisted upon by the pericope as the ninth principle. Conserving for future use readily comes to mind here too as the tenth principle. From the point of view of sustainable development this caution takes into account the needs of the future generation while providing for present needs.

Conclusion

From the face value, it can be argued that the New Testament offers very little or nothing at all for the ongoing environmental debate. This may be because the environmental issues of today were not there at the time of Christ and were not definitely the primary concerns of the New Testament writers. However, a closer look at some of these New Testament texts reveals truths that could be appropriated and applied to build convincing and practicable environmental values and principles. Some of these truths could be gleaned from the attitude, teachings and dispositions of Jesus about the things of nature. Anthony Asoanya draws attention to Jesus' reaffirmation of God's care for creatures, his distinctive role as agency of creation (through him all things were made; John 1:1-4), his incarnation, his gospel of "justice, sharing, caring, love, rendering service, solidarity, and living in harmony with all God's creation."[146] He identifies in each of these values, the ingredients which give ecological thrust to the Christ event in the New Testament. Against the background of this implicit ecological thrust the pericope of John 6:1-15 could be better appreciated. It is informative to note that these New Testament ecological values especially those drawn from the Johannine miracle of the feeding of the five thousand resonate with

[146] Anthony Asoanya, *The Ecological Crisis in Africa as a Challenge to Lasting Cultural and Sustainable Development: A Theological Approach* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011),187-195.

traditional African sensibilities towards the environment and its human and non-human content. Consequently, they could be re-emphasized and re-appropriated to address the contemporary environmental problems in Nigeria, other African nations and even globally.

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Mission for Diversity: Exploring Christian Mission in the Contemporary World. Edited by Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, Zürich: LIT Verlag GmbH Co. KG Wien, 2015, 246 pp., ISBN 978-3-643-90641-0, CDN $30.74 (paper).

The Second Vatican Council signaled a paradigmatic shift in the theology of mission for the Roman Catholic Church. A significant insight was the recognition of mission within diverse contexts. This meant that the Church could not ignore the contemporary contexts of culture, religious tradition and growing secularity. Fifty years after the council, the theology of mission, in a multicultural and multi-religious context, remains a significant trajectory for current theological discourse. This book evinces succinct theological dexterity and clarity, as fifteen scholars from varying cultural contexts and theological backgrounds reflect on mission in the contemporary world. Their essays originated at a colloquium on the Second Vatican Council and the Church in Africa, under the auspices of Father Pierre Schouver, who is the Endowed Chair in Mission at Duquesne University. The book is divided into four thematic parts, featuring selected dimensions of mission theology.

In an introductory essay, editor Elochukwu Uzukwu presents the underlining thrust of the symposium, recounting the mission commitment of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (the Spiritans), and the insights of Schouver as its former superior general. Schouver dreamt of a Spiritan order that would continuously reexamine its history and tradition, toward missiological transformation. Given this background, in a second essay Cardinal Peter Turkson situates Schouver's thesis in an African perspective, highlighting contemporary challenges germane for mission among churches and religions.

Part one focuses on hermeneutical and methodological questions in missiology, with reference to interculturality and coloniality. It features an essay by Robert Schreiter on the unique contributions of missiology to intercultural studies. Schreiter exposes how missiological understanding occurs across multiple cultural boundaries, and proposes a renewed missiology based on intercultural studies and hermeneutics. As it describes a relatively new approach to doing missiology, the essay has not fully accounted for how the function of power and the disposition of human agents [for example, theologians or missionaries] can mar the process of interculturation. However, the succeeding essays seem to highlights such constraints in different contexts. Using examples from the United

States, Victor Anderson analyzes the way in which the present technological empire, grounded on a neoliberal globalization of capitalism, mimics the prior Christian colonial ethos for sovereignty. Gerald Boodoo examines the past, present and future of Roman Catholic mission endeavors in the Caribbean, through the lens of coloniality. The essays in part one collectively serves to legitimize the relevancy of intercultural hermeneutics for contemporary mission engagements.

Part two examines the significance of Vatican II theology for the Church, and its mission in different contexts. While Laurenti Magesa reflects on the reception of Vatican II by the Church in Africa, Felix Wilfred examines the reception of Vatican II by the local churches in Asia. Although Magesa's article acknowledges a self-ministering Church in Africa, it does not expose the lingering straps of clericalism that still adorn ecclesial leadership five decades after Vatican II. Neither does he address the possibility of African missionaries exporting this same clericalism into the mission fields. Michael Driscoll reassesses the impact of Vatican II's renewal of liturgical instruction, and calls for active participation in liturgy in the Church. The final essay in this part is by Kenneth Himes, on the legacy and relevance for contemporary society of John XXIII's encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*. Himes' essay successfully demonstrates that *Pacem in Terris* remains a 'magna carta' for peace in the world.

Part three deals with Vatican II's teaching on dialogue as an aspect of the theology of mission. Peter Phan reflects on the hermeneutical question of the *where, why and wherefore* of mission from an Asian perspective. Michel Elias Andraos explores emerging trends in Eastern Catholicism, and how they could affect the future of Middle-Eastern churches. Michael McCabe highlights the significance, achievements and challenges arising from interreligious dialogue in the present-day Africa. The grafting of this essay with examples from Missionary Societies and pastoral experiences brings a rich perspective to the realities of interfaith dialogue in Africa. However, the essay prioritizes dialogue among three faith traditions [Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religion], without exploring incorporating dialogue with other religions in Africa, such as the Bahá'í and Hinduism. Although some of these latter faith traditions are minorities, the time is ripe for the Church in Africa to include them in their reach.

Part four offers essays on mission and pastoral ministry. Bénézet Bujo explores how Vatican II propelled an African insight into sacramental marriage that is somewhat different from the Western understanding of family and sexuality. In response to Bujo's presentation, David Ngong critiques the notion of fertility that defines certain aspects of African Christianity, calling for a pastoral theology that is responsive to marital concerns in the African context. James Chukwuma Okoye presents a synopsis of the mission priorities of the Second Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Africa, drawing from the Post-Synodal Exhortation, *Africae Munus.* Lastly, Maureen O'Brien focuses on the implications of 'relational theologies' of ministry for mission, from an American perspective. O'Brien discuses using relational theology to nourish a missiology grounded on the Trinity, objectivizing the communion that envelopes the source of Christian mission. This theological method has the potentiality of leading missional praxis to embody communion and dialogue amidst diversity.

This volume of essays is a significant contribution to the ongoing research on the impact of Vatican II theology of mission in diverse contexts and locales. The authors' diversity exposes the reader to wide-ranging methodology and theological perspective in reexamining the past, present and future of missiology after Vatican II. In particular, the articles on interculturality, coloniality and relational theologies are insightful for mission studies. Given that this book arose from a colloquium, a drawback is the seeming exclusion of the voices of female theologians (only one essay) and lay missionaries. Recognizing the broadness of those contexts and locales in pursuing missiology, the voices of women theologians and the laity must be incorporated, since they continue to shape and transform missiological discourse. In the same vein, an essay on the present-day ecological crisis vis-à-vis missiology would have benefited readers.

Overall, this volume offers new trajectories for further research on the emerging issues for Christian mission in the contemporary world. This collection of essays is most suitable for theological and seminary libraries.

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[5] *Ecclesia in Africa*, # 14
[6] Ibid., # 21
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[8] Benedict XVI. Africae Munus: Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Church in Africa. # 9
[9] Ibid., # 12
[10] Ibid., # 30
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[25] Cyril Orji, Ibid., P. 16
[26] Emmanuel Katongole, Ibid., P. 20
[27] Ibid., P. 50
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[31] Ibid., P. 95
[32] Ibid., P. 96
[33] Pope Francis, *EG*, # 48
[34] Joseph Ogbonnaya. *Lonergan, Social Transformation, and Sustainable Human development.* (Eugene, Oregon: PICKWICK Publishers, 2013), P. 25
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