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Table of Contents

	PAGES
A Critical Assessment of the Determination of the Dates of Eid-aladha Celebration in Nigeria. Kamal-deen Olawale Sulaiman, PhD.-----	1
The Colossian Heresy and its Implications for the 21 st Century Church in Nigeria M. O. Oyetade, PhD. -----	11
Converging The Divergencies of Muslim/Christian Interfaith Relations for Peaceful Co-existence in Nigeria: A Muslim Perspective. Rafiu Ibrahim Adebayo, PhD -----	18
Mystifying Gender, Gay "rights" and the Challenges for Christian Teachings on Marriage: A Call for African Resistance. Samson Elias Mijah, PhD. -----	29
Enhancing Da'wah and the Spread of Islamic Knowledge through the use of Information and Communication Technology. Aliyu Alhaji Rabiu, & Sani Rabiu-----	38
Isaiah's Concept of Salvation and its Relevance to African Christian Theology. Olumuyiwa Ajetomobi, & S.O David Awokoya-----	47
An Exposition of the Concept of <i>Khilafah</i> in Islamic Political Thought. Muhammad Dahiru Shuni -----	54
Nigerian Pentecostalism: Yesterday and Today, 1970-2015. Rimamsikwe Habila Kitause, PhD -----	63
Mutual Moderation as a Panacea for <i>Boko Haram</i> Insurrection. Abdulgafar O. Fahm, & Thani, Muhammad Taofeek -----	70
Christian-Muslim Relations: The Significance of Integrative and Inclusive Dialogue. Rev. Sekenwa Moses Briska PhD. -----	82
Islamic Da'wah and the Muslim Converts in Gombe: Challenges and Prospects. Muhammad Umar -----	89
Nature of Punishment and its Importance in Mambilla Traditional Religion. Rev. Karbon Philip Benjamin-----	94
An Overview of Responsibilities of Imams in Nigeria: Challenges and way Forward. Nasirudeen Abdulrahim-----	104
The Challenge of the Sonship of Jesus: Biblical and Theological Analyses. Oholiabs D. Tuduks-----	109
The Role of Islamic <i>Aqidah</i> and its Impact on the Lives of Muslims. Attahir Shehu Mainiyo-----	117
Assessment of Israel's Conquest and Settlement in Canaan in the Light of Biblical and Extra Biblical Sources.	

MUTUAL MODERATION AS A PANACEA FOR *BOKO HARAM* INSURRECTION.

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Abstract

Nigeria is a big, intricate, and for all intents and purposes complex country, with multifarious ethnic groups and devotees of various religious affiliations. While there have been stints of ethnic and religious violence among different groups in the country, none have posed the kind of threat that *Boko Haram* currently poses. A considerable amount of literature has been published on the development and sustaining factors, the modus operandi, networks, support base, motivations, goals, rivals, and militancy of *Boko Haram*. A much debated question, however, is what Nigerian government claims in relation to the situation and whether government provides a communal and just approach in dealing with the group. This study intends to examine the position of government in its confrontations against *Boko Haram*. It will also examine how moderate and balanced are the steps taking by the Nigerian government. Within the period of 10 years in which this problem began, has the government been able to mitigate activities of *Boko Haram*? Has the measures proposed by the government worked or not? The conclusion of this study shows that it is crucial for the Nigerian government to toll the path of moderation, justice and balance in dealing with the situation. It also provides the practical steps Nigerian government can take in resolving this impasse.

Keyword – Religion, Violence, Moderation, *Boko Haram*.

Introduction

Nigeria is a big, intricate, and for all intents and purposes complex country, with multifarious ethnic groups and devotees of various religious affiliations. Among the most prominent ethnic groups within the country are the Hausa-Fulani of the northern part, the majority of whom are Muslims; the Yoruba are based in the southwestern part, and are divided between Muslims and Christians; and the southeastern part comprises of the Igbo ethnic group, who are to a large extent Christians. Other ethnicities in the country that forms large or minorities are the Ijaw, Kanuri, Edo, Ibibio, Nupe, Igala, Berom, Kambari, Ekoi, and the Tiv. While there have been stints of ethnic and religious violence among different groups in the history of the country, suicide bombing was never adopted as a means of attack or violence.¹ Of late, the group popularly known as *Boko Haram* was reported to have carried out suicide attacks on government

installations, law enforcement agents, media houses, and innocent civilian populations. This is why they have been regarded as a national security threat to the continual and harmonious co-existence of the component nations that make up the Nigeria state. Although features of extremism can be observed in the group's agenda, scholars who have written on the group have also identified issues such as economic situations of the country (e.g. Nigeria as one of, if not, Africa's largest oil producer, still struggles with poverty due to widespread corruption) as well as socio-political problems aggravated by the country's ethno-religious divisions, which was often exploited by the country's leaders.²

The issue of *Boko Haram* has indeed added domestic terrorism to the country's already grave problems with ensconced corruption and mammoth theft of the country's oil wealth. The Nigerian government's response to *Boko Haram* has been just as brutish, with the law enforcement agents accused by human

rights groups of extrajudicial and indiscriminate killings and torture. In addition, the Federal Government refusal to negotiate with the group makes more violence unavoidable. One of Nigeria's reputable authors, now late, was once quoted as saying in 1984 that "The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership". Not much seem to have changed since then.³ Quite a number of works have reviewed the development and sustaining factors, the modus operandi, networks, support base, motivations, goals, rivals, and militancy of Boko Haram,⁴ this paper intends to examine the position of government in its confrontations against Boko Haram. The main focus of the paper, however, is on the government claims in relation to the situation and whether government provided a reasonable opportunity for Boko Haram to express their views.

Among the points that have been identified to have exacerbate the problem from government angle are "security deficiency, endemic elite corruption and military brutality, continued economic challenges, decrepit and underdeveloped infrastructures, and inadequate and deceptive reporting" to mention but few. Accordingly, this paper will examine how moderate and balanced are the steps taking by the Nigerian government. Within the period of 10 years in which this problem began, has the government been able to mitigate activities of Boko Haram? Has the measures proposed by the government worked or not? How reliable are the mainstream media about reporting on the situation? Are the media following government line or are they critical to the government as well as Boko Haram? All in all, has the government toll the path of moderation, justice and balance in dealing with the situation? What are the practical steps the Nigerian government can take in solving the problem?

Previous studies of Boko Haram crisis in the country have not dealt with how moderate and balanced are the steps taken by the Nigerian government. Among the works that have helped in explaining why it might be difficult for the government to be moderately balanced in approaching the crisis is Campbell (2012) chapter on Nigeria's battle with stability.⁵ Campbell who was a former United States ambassador to Nigeria succinctly describes the problem plaguing Nigeria during former president Jonathan's administration when he states:

Thus far, the Jonathan administration has been remarkably inept in addressing the challenges it faces. Its military is exercising more authority in

areas formerly under civilian purview. The president's heavy-handed, even brutalizing, security forces are exacerbating Muslim alienation in the North and have failed to control the Middle Belt's ethnic and religious strife. Concerns of impoverished Niger Delta residents have not been addressed, and there is anecdotal evidence that officials in the upper reaches of the federal and state governments participate actively in oil theft. More and more Nigerians are alienated from a state they regard as inept and corrupt.⁶

This shows that one of the main points exacerbating the country's problem is inefficient and effective leadership. Another problem that has been identified by the quotation above is corruption and a violent political system. These problems have also penetrated deeply into the country's defense institution. That is why quotes a former UK military attaché to Nigeria as saying:

The trouble with the Nigerian government is that they want a big red button, which you can press and it will fix everything. I was asked by a senior commander if we could sell them the machine that can tell if a car driving down the road contains a terrorist. I tried to tell them that such a machine doesn't exist, but then they just thought we were hiding it from them (n.p.).

This is a clear indication that the level of decay in the country military. It is quite shocking that the same military is expected by the country leadership to put a lasting end to the violence of Boko Haram. Furthermore due to the knee-jacking approach in handling the security situation of the country, getting information on Boko Haram has proven to be a daunting task, one work that has helped in covering the gap is edited work.⁷ It contain articles that showed significant fieldwork research that have been carried out by the contributors in the work at a time when it was still possible to do so and which are almost impossible to obtain at present. The work explains not only what Boko Haram is, but also what it stands for. Other ideas expressed in the book include; how the sect became radicalized, Muslim clerics and politician corruption link with the country's administrators, prejudices against the poorest elements (almajirai) and the claim that they are being used as foot soldiers by Boko Haram, Christian schools of thought on Muslim minority communities, various discourses and perceptions on Boko Haram among others.

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In her work she gave analyses of media reports of Boko Haram insurrection using discourse analysis methodology. She gave four competing perception based on media reports. They are: socio-economic discourse, political agency discourse, religious structural discourse, and religious agency discourse. A strong point of Roelofs's work is that by showing the different discourse analyses generated by Boko Haram insurrection, one can begin to understand that violence often have varieties of perpetrators.⁸ This idea was further expanded upon by when examined the dynamic risk factors that have aided in recruitment for the group as well as violence perpetrated by members of the group. Among the probable risk factors to Boko Haram insurrection are: poverty gap and social injustice, educational imbalance between the north and the south, culture of corruption and its inadvertent effect on leadership, low morale among police officers, lack of criminal database and effective intelligence gathering, north and south rotational power sharing, the hypocritical use of religion in the politics of the country, availability of weapons from within and without. Salaam's study shows that a considerable reduction of the risk factors will invariably affect the negative impact of Boko Haram insurrection in country.

It went beyond the popular socio-economic issues that is often said to be the main cause of Boko Haram uprising, but focused on the intellectual works written by the proponents of Boko Haram, specifically the Hausa language oral records in audio cassettes, CDs and DVD. These materials are now difficult to come by since the uprising due to the fact that anyone found with it may be suspected of being a Boko Haram member. One very significant contribution of the work is the positioning of Boko Haram intellectual genealogy within the anti-Western education attitude found in the northern part of the country as well as Salafi-Wahhabi trend in the north starting with Shaykh Abubakar Mahmud Gumi. It is however important to state here that the main point of divergence of Boko Haram members' ideology from their predecessors is in prohibiting modern Western education and employment in

government. Umar analysed the arguments put forward by the late leader of the Boko Haram Muhammad Yusuf and the intellectual counterarguments given by opponents such as Shaykh Ja'far Mahmud Adam. In his concluding remarks, he asserts:

Religious piety and mundane interests are both relevant in understanding radical and counter-radical trends. The reality of contemporary religious movements in Nigeria is that an individual religious entrepreneur stands to benefit materially by building mass followers who contribute donations for the upkeep of their religious leader; similarly, the larger the number of followers, the more influence and prestige the leader holds. Such religious influence can easily be converted into political influence and access to influential figures in government, which can in turn yield material rewards.

Boko Haram.

The name Boko Haram is widely used to refer to a Muslim group based in the northeastern part of Nigeria,⁹ but the name in which the group refers to itself is Jama'atu Ahlissunnah lidda' awati wal Jihad, meaning 'The Group of People of Sunnah for Propagation and Jihad'. The group was led by Mohammed Yusuf before his death in the custody of the Nigerian Police Force. The message of the group is to resist Western way of life in all ramifications. Members of the group hold on to the belief that moral and social decadence has serious effects on the lives of Nigerian society and therefore there is need to change the status quo. Those who do not support these views are considered as disbelievers, infidels and wrongdoers.

The Boko Haram insurgency became a centerpiece of Nigeria's security problem when it upped its violent activities in 2009. The demands of the group are, but not limited to, the establishment of unadulterated Shari'a law and prosecution of those responsible for the extrajudicial killings of their leaders in 2009 to the release of their detained members. However, the manner in which they went about their demands such as suicide bombings, shootings, and killings of ordinary citizens, is seen as whipping up ethno-religious violence in the country. The threat of Boko Haram is felt mostly by the Nigerian citizenry who have been subjected to extraordinary levels of trauma and anxiety. The indiscriminate targets of Boko Haram's attacks appear to create problems in rationalizing who they categorize as an enemy, but what can be immediately inferred from their approach is that they seek to undermine the sovereignty of Nigeria.

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Most attacks occurred in Maiduguri, the capital city of Borno state, other states that have witnessed attacks from the group are Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Niger, Plateau, Yobe and the federal capital territory, Abuja. Of recent, the group has been accused of kidnapping for a ransom in order to sustain its operations as well as to exchange members captured by government. Undeniably, the various attacks of Boko Haram can be seen as utter acts of terrorism against the country and its people. It has claimed responsibility for many terror activities in the northern part of the country and other terror activities have been credited to the group as well. Its operations have also grown in range and sophistication which enabled the group to gain enormous press attention within and outside the country.

Instances of such attacks are June 2011 Boko Haram bombing of the Nigeria police headquarters in Abuja with a car laden with explosives. In August 2011, a man also drove a car into the UN compound in Abuja and detonated a bomb which killed not less than twenty-three people and wounded many more. Later on sporadic attacks of public places, mosques and churches in the northeastern parts were reported and a professed leader of the group, Abubakar Shekau, began to post videos on YouTube. The group began to widen its targets to include setting fire to schools and attacking newspaper offices. Among the most daring attacks reportedly carried out by the group are: the Christmas Day bombing 2011 in three states, Niger, Plateau, and Yobe, killing forty-five people; January 2012 attacks on three government buildings in Kano, the

police headquarters, the office of the immigration service, and the State Security Service.

The Nigerian Government and Boko Haram

One thing that is quite clear to most Nigerians is that the government does not seem to know the demand of Boko Haram and a bit overwhelmed by their activities. This was why the Nigerian government is struggling to overcome what it views as terrorist attacks by a "faceless organization". For instance, following one of the deadliest attacks of the organization on 20 January 2012 in the northern city of Kano, which killed 186 persons, the former President Goodluck Jonathan was reported to have called on the organization to show its face and present their demands as a basis for dialogue.¹⁰ The government admits that Boko Haram is a serious security challenge to the country and called upon the international community to help combat the menace, since, it is not just about security, but also human rights and crimes against humanity are involved. The government is also willing to admit that this violence cannot be stopped through military means alone. President of the country once challenged Boko Haram to come out and state their grievance. He stated then that without a clear demand, the government cannot dialogue with the group. The government is also of the opinion that the group does not have a clear public figurehead. As they operate without a face or a clear identity, so it is difficult to interact with such a group.

The Federal Government also believes that Boko Haram is a military threat produced by global Islamic extremism since there are evidences that Boko Haram had links with other terrorist groups outside Nigeria. Evidences such as meetings are being held in North Africa; the movements of people in these places have been monitored and noticed. The government also admits that the level of involvement and probably in terms of funding and equipment is not accurately known.

The government is also not ruling out the idea that maybe some politicians are close to some members of Boko Haram and that Boko Haram is trying to destabilize the country because President Goodluck Jonathan is not a Northerner. But the government is not willing to admit that Boko Haram is a political group trying to undo Goodluck Jonathan

members of Boko Haram and that Boko Haram is trying to destabilize the country because President Goodluck Jonathan is not a Northerner. But the government is not willing to admit that Boko Haram is a political group trying to undo Goodluck Jonathan.

Government's claim of Equal Opportunity

It is often said that the Boko Haram violence within the country is a result of economic underdevelopment currently being experienced within the country, but the bulk does not stop there. This is because a community in the course of interaction between various elements and contending issues may fall into serious conflict. The problem, however, become exacerbated when governing institutions does not put in place effective policies for social cohesiveness. In such a state of affairs, democratic culture of toleration of social discrepancies and faiths is also likely to be absent or ignored. This sort of social context becomes a breeding ground which can be readily used by the political leadership to serves their interests, rather than that of the country.

It can be inferred that most of the violent conflicts that is currently being experienced in the country, are rooted in unfair structures of governance and power and in allocation of resources. This can be glint from the fact that politician at various occasion used citizen's ethnic and religious diversities for selfish gains. These kinds of politicians do not see the tremendous benefits in leading a multicultural, tolerant, and accommodating socio-cultural country. In a situation where violence is the only means of addressing problems, the result is not just the destruction of the social and economic life of the people, but also the governing institutions. Hence, the prevailing state of the country has been a serious nightmare, where neither rule of law nor institutions to protect and regulate the affairs of the vulnerable from the vicious circle of violence exist. This is why despite increasing the budget allocation of the country since the beginning of Boko Haram there seems not to be a major improvement. It is also worth mentioning that the quest for democratically motivated governance in Nigeria came basically as a result of military authoritarian rule which was often characterized by political subjugation, rebuff of fundamental human right, smothering civil society, absence of accountability and corruption.

Therefore any solutions to the Boko Haram crisis must take into consideration power

structures in the north as well as the citizens Islamic aspirations albeit within a political framework of the country. As Warner observes the country. ...cannot block young Muslims' ascension to regional power or attempt to co-opt them into the ruling networks of authority. If Boko Haram is to be defeated, a vehicle to allow economically disadvantaged young men to access governance structures needs to be devised, and the long-standing fractures within Islamic society resolved.

The Government attempt to Balance

The Nigerian government's response to the Boko Haram violence cannot be said to be balance or moderate. This is basically because the government often resorts to the use of military force to quell the insurgency. Although it must be stated that the Nigerian security forces have succeeded in reducing the effectiveness of Boko Haram through the destruction of key operational bases and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) making facilities in the northern part of the country. It is also seen as a plus for the security forces that Boko Haram has not been able to extend its violent activities beyond the north.

Another approach which the government has attempted to take is the use of dialogue as well as the involvement of international community. The dialogue means have not achieved much as a result of the 'faceless nature' as described by government of the group. The international community on their part pledge to support the government through intelligence gathering and other means possible.

However, Boko Haram almost daily attack of schools and communities does not seem to end, which has raised questions about whether Nigerian government's strategy is adequate to address the problem and what new strategies, could be adopted to defeat the insurgency and restore peace to the affected areas. One of the areas in which the government could mitigate the problem is to explore the diversification of the economy in order to reduce poverty and unemployment. This is a way of ensuring good governance and people's trust. Also perpetrators of violent conflict in the country must be dealt with appropriately. This is because by ensuring justice and moral virtues many violent conflicts would have been nipped in the bound.

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Critic of the Measures Proposed by the Government

Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah of Sokoto in northern Nigeria was once asked about the threat posed by Boko Haram violence. He responded that the media often place unnecessary emphasis on the sectarian aspect of the conflict. While at the same time, the Nigerian government is using the wrong approach in its push to resolve the confrontations with Boko Haram. He noted that the Nigerian leaders are trying to hide their incompetence by simply presenting the problem as an issue of law and order which he says, it's not. Also by calling often on the military, he says "the government diminishes the democratic principles in Nigeria and ignores the need for dialogue to end the conflict. The Bishop believes that ordinary Nigerians are in fact suffering more from the military than from Boko Haram. He says it is something close to an army of occupation".

The Nigerian government approach has not worked because it is basing its solutions on fighting a war on terrorism rather than socio-political reforms. The government seriously needs to work on mass illiteracy, poverty, corruption, socio-political ostracism, and excruciating unemployment. These are the issues that could motivate youths and move them away from insurgent activities.

Another approach that show the government is not getting its act right is the idea of sacking or relieving its staff and personnel at the helms of defence every time there is a major attack. In fact the former President Goodluck, for instance, was quoted as justifying this approach stating that "if you study the evolution of Boko Haram, they are changing their tactics every day, so you also have to change your staff and personnel to beat their styles".

The government is also muttering the idea of an amnesty since the approach seemed to work like

magic when dealing with the Niger Delta crisis. Nigerians it seems are not favourably disposed to this approach. According to some analysts the logic seems to be if it worked for the Niger Delta it must certainly work for Boko Haram insurgents.

The Mainstream Media and Boko Haram Report

As stated earlier several violence and destruction of houses, churches, mosques and government properties in the northern part of Nigeria has been attributed to the handiwork of Boko Haram. Different activities that are claimed to be carried out by the group have been reported by the mainstream media in Nigeria. The Nigerian Press has come under close scrutiny in terms of ethics and professionalism in carrying out their duties.¹¹ Examples of such accusations are that the Nigerian mainstream media was partially responsible for Nigeria's 1967-1970 civil war, the exacerbation of Sharia conflicts and tension in the country,¹² and the influence of Christianity on Nigerian Press.¹³

All the instances mentioned above shows the lack of balance in reporting socio-political issues in the country. Nigerian press have been accused of "incuriousness, credulity, and vacuity", few instances will suffice to prove this. In reporting the abduction of over 200 schoolgirls in Chibok, hardly can one find a Nigerian news organization that sent reporters to Chibok. Most information came from foreign news organization. Nigerians news media appeared to be more interested in the buck-passing statements between the Federal government and State government. Also in one of the coverage of the news on the abducted girls, an unverified news was published with the title "Chibok: American Marines locate abducted girls in Sambisa forest".¹⁴ It was reported that the US marines identified the exact location of the school girls and also arrested the mastermind of the abduction. The alleged picture that was published along the story was later discovered to be an old picture of a man arrested by French soldiers in Central African Republic. The newspaper that published the uncorroborated story is regarded restigious of the country.

as one of the most prestigious of the country.

Another fictitious story related to Boko Haramas reported by Nigerian news media, is the story of Borno State women who resorted to magical spell to overpower Boko Haram terrorists who came to attack them.¹⁵ This story like the one mentioned above started within Nigerian social media circle. The picture was from some gun-toting Malian women who were sent on revenging against the atrocities caused by Tuareg rebel group.¹⁶

Reporting news such as these shows the level Nigerian Press has sunk.¹⁷ All these stories makes one question the kind of Press that would report such obviously false stories. Moreover, there is need to question also the editor that would allow such stories which are clearly based on the secondhand narrativewith sources that cannot be traced to be published in their papers. Do they even make attempt to verify these stories before publication?

Conclusion

As a matter of fact, the security condition posed by the Boko Haram insurrection on Nigerian society has indeed led to many theories that aim at explaining the reason for the emergence of the violent group. Although the group has also not formally presented its cause, objectives and motivations apart from indications that it desires a serious implementation of Islamic Law in Nigeria, the confusion is also fueled by changes in the targets of the violent campaigns from security forces and institutions to Nigerian public as a whole.

In this article therefore, we attempt to proffer a more moderate and balance position in addressing the serious security issue faced by the country by focusing mainly on government approach. We are of the opinion that the government cannot gain a lasting peace by ignoring the fact that the problem is fueled by a socio-political situation of the country instead of an "outside force" trying to undermine the country. So the solution to the conflict will attain sustainable peace if it entails the reformation of social, economic, and political structures as well as bolstering governing institutions to make them supportive, beneficial, and favorable to economic and social development in an

equitable and just foundation, regardless of gender, ethnic, religious, cultural, racial and other social identities within the society. In other words, by enhancing good governance through: accountability, transparency, rational decisions, openness in governmental dealings, free flow of information, respect for the rule of law, protection of civil liberties, freedom of press and most importantly, decentralization of political power structure and decision-making, the government will be well placed to achieve meaningful result in its fight against Boko Haram insurgency.

Notes

[1] Adesoji quoted Suberu's as noting that gradual and steady growth of religious fundamentalism or extremism began around the 1980s. He (Adesoji) explains that the politicization of religion has already become a strong force in the late 1970s, as well as, religious fears and the use of religion for propaganda was already rearing their heads has important features that would characterize Nigeria". He went a bit further to give an example of the Sharia debate in the Constituent Assembly between 1977-1978 as "the first major conflict to polarize Nigeria along religious lines".

[2] Anyadike in her abstract observes that "...the introduction of party politics and politics of anxiety, the associated desperation of politicians for political power, and the ambivalence of some vocal Islamic leaders, who, though they did not actively embark on mutiny, but either did nothing to impede it from fomenting, or only feebly condemned it. These internal factors coupled with growing Islamic fundamentalism around the globe made a highly volatile Nigerian society prone to violence, as evidenced by the Boko Haram uprising". Others who support this line of thought are in his "Islamic Radicalisation and Violence in Nigeria: Country Report"; "Boko Haram's Persistent Threat in Nigeria"; and "On the trail of Boko Haram".

[3] Late Professor Chinua Achebe (d. 2013) was a foremost Nigerian novelist, poet, and critic. His most widely read work is *Things Fall Apart*, which is also considered his *Magnum opus*. Other novels from the author include; *No*

Longer at Ease, Arrow of God. A Man of the People and Anthills of the Savannah. He also wrote quite a number of essays, short stories and children books.

[4] Given the intensity and increased sophistication in Boko Haram's attacks on government installations, examines the rise of Boko Haram and its links with the promotion of Islamic revivalism and how this poses a challenge to the country. Also, examines the Nigerian government's responses to religious uprisings in general and illustrates matching similarities between the Maitatsine uprisings and the Boko Haram insurgency in northern parts of the country. explores the historical development of Boko Haram and draws our attention to its philosophy and ideologies, and how it shifted into a violent extremist movement. also elaborates the philosophy and objectives of Boko Haram, the group's strategies and networks, and their alleged links with international terrorist organizations.

[5] John Campbell is the Ralph Bunche Senior Fellow for Africa Policy Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. He served as U.S. ambassador to Nigeria from 2004 to 2007.

[6] Campbell went further to state that "indeed, Nigeria's fundamental problem is a system of institutionalized corruption that channels public money into the pockets of a few Nigerian 'big men.' The result is some of the greatest income inequality and worst social statistics in Africa. And the political class doesn't manifest any will to reform the system. Politics are intense and often violent because they are suffused with a winner take-all mentality. Patron-client networks control politicians and the political system, and those within the networks get access to the few available jobs and social services. Hence, the political economy favors personal relationships over institutions. Not surprisingly, national sentiment is declining in favor of religious and ethnic identity—and animosity".

[7] Among the argument found in the work is that "...despite its religious background, Boko Haram is political in nature because it contests Western values, challenges the secularity of the state, and reveals the corruption of a system that

relies on a predatory ruling elite. Yet its leaders have never actually proposed a political programme to establish a caliphate and govern Nigeria according to Shariah law. In this regard, Boko Haram is first and foremost a challenge to a divided ummah[community] that never succeeded in setting up a party to play the democratic game and contest elections with a religious programme instead of resorting to violence as an alternative channel for reform", p. 5.

[8] Roelofs also maintains that "there is a need for reliable and systematic analysis of who is saying what and why. As Boko Haram related violence emerges as a central political issue in Nigeria, and in Nigeria's relations with external states, this need becomes more pressing. In particular, I argue that the metaconflict over the meaning of the July 2009 Boko Haram uprising in Northern Nigeria is between competing discourses which are characterised by different conceptions of the state", p. 6.

[9] According to the epithet used to describe the group "captures all the stereotypes that have daily currency in islamophobic discourses", p. 38. Another interesting point was made by regarding the epithet. He observes that the translation of the epithet as "Western education is sin" is a wrong translation. This is because the idea of a sin is more of a Christian concept rather than Islam and that the haram is best translated as 'forbidden' with element of shame attached to it. a notable linguist, also draws our attention to the fact that Boko here does not mean 'book' as most often thought, but a kind of fraud, sham, in Western type of education. This is why the poem "Yan makarantan Boko/ Ba Karatu ba Sallah/ Sai yawan zagin Mallam" meaning "Oh you pupils of Western schools/ You neither read Qur'an nor pray/ Save continuous abuse of your teacher" is not uncommon in some madrasa schools in the northern area. Basically, the group got its name from the local residents of its base, Maiduguri, as a result of its avowed disgust for Western education which it sees as a way of corrupting Muslims. Many writers on the group are of the opinion that the ultimate aim of the group is to mic state with Shari'ah instead of the Constitution as the supreme law of the country.

overthrow the Nigerian government as presently composed under a Constitution and to establish an Islamic state with Shari'ah instead of the Constitution as the supreme law of the country.

[10] See '...Show your face, Jonathan urges sect members' *The Sun* (Lagos, 27 January 2012); <<http://www.sunnewsonline.com/webpages/news/national/2012/jan/27/national-27-01-2011-002.html>>, (accessed 6 April 2012).

[11] Suraj noted in his newspaper coverage of Boko Haram in Nigeria that Social responsibility and Agenda Setting theories have been used as a theoretical framework to carry out the information regarding to Boko Haram insurgence. The selected newspapers he observes analyzed the issue of Boko Haram crisis in different ways such as religious-political carries almost 82.5% while the ethno-religious issue takes about 43.3%. Social responsibility was shown with 73% publications of stories related to Boko Haram inside the pages of the papers and not on cover page, while both the cover and the central pages recorded the least with only 2% of reportage. The front page (22%) and the back page reported (1%) and most of the news of the activities reported in the newspapers could be found mostly in the half of the page with (60%) with very minimal editorial comments (2%) and the picture or photograph displayed on the crisis takes only (1%).

[12] Also, in the chapter four of his work title "Shari'ah and the Press" discussed extensively on the bias of the southern Nigeria Press against Muslims as well as the errors of the Press in the Shari'ah Affair.

[13] See Michael A. Ogunewu's "Interactions of Christianity with Media Technologies in Africa (With Particular Reference to Nigeria)" and Caleb A. Adeleye's "A Historical Assessment of the Roles of Print Media in the Propagation of Christianity in Africa", in Fatokun S.A (ed.) *Christianity and African Society*, a festschrift in honour of Pastor (Dr.) Gabriel Oladele Olutola at 80, 2013.

[14] notes that it was a rambling and badly

written cover story titled, "Chibok: American Marines locate abducted girls in Sambisa forest" <http://nairalandnews.com/4983/chibok-american-marines-locate-abducted-girls-sambisa-forest/>

[15] A nameless eyewitness was quoted as saying "attackers invaded the village yesterday on motorcycles but met some women, adding 'they wanted to hit the women with sticks but when they raised the sticks, their hands refused to descend'". <<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/05/women-demobilise-boko-haram-insurgents-borno/>> Another news media reported it with the title "Women arrest Boko Haram fighters in Borno" with an even more dramatic and confounding eyewitness account that said "The insurgents wanted to attack the women but their guns did not work. They tried hitting them with the boot of their guns but mysteriously, all the hands of the insurgents hung until youth and vigilantes in the area mobilized and killed them." <http://162.218.139.66/daily/top-stories/25136-women-arrest-boko-haram-fighters-in-borno>

[16] The picture used in the social media such as facebook can be found in *The Times of London website* <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/world/africa/article3608925.ece>

[17] Kperogi aptly noted that "When you add these to the countless stories in our newspapers about birds transmogrifying into witchy old women (another gem from Vanguard and other supposedly reputable newspapers), you know Nigeria's problem isn't just high-level corruption and incompetence in the highest reaches of government; it's also irresponsible and credulous journalism." <<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2014/05/bird-turns-old-woman-lagos/>> (Farooq Kperogi in his "Notes From Atlanta" Column, *Weekly Trust Nigeria Newspaper*, May 31, 2014 <http://162.218.139.66/weekly/index.php/notes-from-atlanta/16625-journalism-is-dying-a-slow-death-in-nigeria> accessed 2nd June, 2014)

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