

DEMYTHOLOGIZATION OF RELIGION: INTEGRITY AND THE ROLE OF PATRIOTIC CITIZENSHIP IN THE REALIZATION OF RESTRUCTURING AND RESOURCE CONTROL

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DOI: [10.13140/RG.2.2.36109.97768](https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.36109.97768)

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DOI: [10.13140/RG.2.2.36109.97768](https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.36109.97768)

Abstract

Employing mainly documentary methods of data collection and analysis with reflections on the Rudolf Bultmann theory of Demythologization, the paper seeks to interrogate integrity in Nigeria and the relevance of religion to the discourse on restructuring and resource control. Reflecting on Rudolf Bultmann theory, religion in modern times should not be employed in the restructuring drive of the nation Nigeria rather integrity should be at the core, so, to get at the true meaning of restructuring, religion must be demythologized. This agitation for restructuring and lack of integrity among Nigerians not merely illustrates but actually coincides with failure of government and systemic poverty and inequalities within the state. The less important role of religion in driving restructuring and the discourses around leadership and conscience restructuring towards National Cohesion is far from the concerns of students of Religion. This paper, therefore, seeks to interrogate the ways in which nationalist restructuring methods by leaders with integrity are mobilized and contribute to the growing and widespread recourse to restructuring and national cohesion as against the emphasis on religion. This paper also submits that Nigeria has never been a nationalist state, what has been is ethnic nationalism which is what needs to be restructured, not necessarily resource control. Religion has only been used as tool to foster ethnic nationalism depending on the side of

the divide. Religion has thus helped in producing these difference and confusion. We are particularly interested in unraveling how social and nationalist actors with moral standing can feed into national cohesion.

Keywords: Religion, Integrity, Restructuring, Demythologization, National Cohesion, Nationalism, Ethnicity

Introduction

Integrity is closely related to Patriotic citizenship, and Patriotic citizenship is a sine qua non for national cohesion and integration and the dependence on religion for national integration is a risky adventure in a country like Nigeria where religion is extremely tied to politics. No doubt, it is human beings that should practice religion and not irrational creatures or lower animals; but at the same time, religion has its role to play in the character formation of the individual and other moral characteristics that could be imbibed can foster peaceful co-existence in Nigeria. In fact, religion has influenced different forms human civilizations such as in art, architecture, music, poetry, dance, history, philosophy, politics, and so on¹. Unfortunately, the Nigeria of today is faced with multifaceted issues that borders on religion; and religion which is supposed to be a tool for national reconstruction has become an axe and have reduced patriotic citizenship to ethnic rivalry for political gains. This is the reason the call for restructuring and resource control cannot be the sole prerogative of religious inclinations and ethnicism; but the demythologization of religion can help in reducing the so much attachment to religious inclinations so as to reduce the fanatic dimension to what religion is in Nigeria; since religion itself is fast losing its sacredness and the much more commercialization by some religious entrepreneurs. According to Gwamna Dogara Je'adayibe in *Religion and National Transformation in Nigeria* asserts this fact thus:

With such enviable credential as the most religious nation, it is paradoxical one of the most corrupt nation in the world. The damning verdict on religion is that instead of serving as a resource for peace and stability, it has become a veritable resource for conflict and war and easy tool for manipulation by some politicians, elites and religious charlatans and bigots. ²

¹ Gwamna, Dogara J.E (2014) *Religion and National Transformation*. In a Journal of Christian Religious Studies (JOCRES) Vol.2 No.2, A Publication of The Nigerian Association for the Study of Religious Studies: Kaduna State University, Kaduna: 2014

²Ibid.

It is a fact that religion in itself has with it what it takes to make society better with its good intentions but as long as human beings are the instrumental users of religion then we can be rest assured of its manipulations for selfish gains and interest. Nonetheless, if politics is perceived to be for the common good of society, then religion is not the basis for this common good due to its misconceptions, misinterpretation and misapplication; but it is the aspirations for all citizens and the goal to live a happy life. Therefore, this paper adopts Rudolf Bultmann's theory of demythologization as the basis to strip religion of its mythological elements so as to enable its adherents purify themselves from the prejudice and sentiments of religion which has constitutes a nuisance to patriotic citizenship so as not to allow the superstitious belief that is characterize by religion to be the basis of restructuring and resource control in Nigeria.

Clarification of Terms

Religion

The universality of the acceptable fact that there is no generally accepted definition of religion does not mean this paper will not have a working definition that will suit the contextual application of this paper. According to Majimre referencing Silverstri and Fba in his functionalist approach to the definition of religion, and what religion does to people, such as providing them with sources of identity, morality, law and order, or by linking them together into communities (2019:184)³. It is this identity, morality, law and order that has brought about serious concerns where a particular religion tries to be dominant than the other and begin to use manipulative ideas as a means to issues pertaining to restructuring and resource control. This paper shall adopt Paul Tillich's definition of religion as reflected in the key note address of Anthony Akinwale who described religion as the ultimate concern of the human person⁴. It is this concern for the human person that brings about the functionalist approach of linking communities together through patriotic citizenship rather than through religion itself going by the manipulations and misinterpretations of religion by its adherents, which has become the basis of restructuring and

³ Majimre J.S (2019) The Church, Christian Religious studies and The Quest for Economic Diversification in Nigeria. In Benin Journal of Religions and Society; Vol. 2 No.2. A Publication of the Department of Religions, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State.

⁴ Akinwale A. (2019) *Religion and Societal Conscience Formation*. Jamahh U.V (ed) In His Key Note address delivered and reflected in the proceedings of the Second Theology Week of the Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kaduna.

resource control; and thus, created more problems in religio-ethnicism. Hence, for the sake of this paper, religion shall be defined as the creation of man's own imagination use for manipulating the common goods that is supposed to be a platform for the humanization of the society and not to be seen as an end to restructuring and resource control. This means that Paul Tillich's definition has an ingredient of demythologization that can enhance patriotic citizenship since it is concern with the human person which is the basis for national cohesion and integration.

Integrity

"Integrity" has become a concept and topic with more prominence in research on government and governance, as well as in actual policy making at all levels.⁵The main question here is concerned with the meaning of this intriguing concept, what is "integrity?" Everybody desires it, but what exactly is it and why is it being longed for and talked about? According to Ogbemudia Benedict Integrity epitomizes a person's content of character in relation to fairness, honesty, equity and justice. Persons of integrity do not just act consistently with their endorsements but stand for something: they stand up for their best judgment in a community of people trying to discover what in life is worth doing.⁶ In Ethics, integrity is regarded as the honesty and truthfulness or accuracy of one's actions. Integrity can stand in opposition to hypocrisy, in that judging with the standards of integrity involves regarding internal consistency as a virtue, and suggests that parties holding within themselves apparently conflicting values should account for the discrepancy or alter their beliefs. The word *integrity* evolved from the Latin adjective *integer*, meaning *whole* or *complete*.⁷ In this context, integrity is the inner sense of "wholeness" deriving from qualities such as honesty and consistency of character. As such, one may judge that others "have integrity" to the extent that they act according to the values, beliefs and principles they claim to hold.

Restructuring

⁵ L. W. J. C. Huberts, *Integrity: What it is and Why it is Important* Accessed on 21st of April, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10999922.2018.1477404>

⁶ Imhanrenialena, Ogbemudia Benedict. "RELIGION AND EMPLOYEES' WORKPLACE INTEGRITY IN SELECTED ESTABLISHMENTS IN ABUJA, NIGERIA." *European Journal of Business, Economics and Accountancy* Vol. 5, No. 5, 2017 ISSN 2056-6018 Progressive Academic Publishing, UK Page 21-37 www.idpublications.org

⁷ Op Cit p5

Ideobodo Nwafor-Orizu et al in their study on restructuring pointed that, Obiora Okonkwo, argued that to restructure is to change an existing status quo in order to make it more functional. Deductive from his assertion is that restructuring is a purpose-driven activity that hinges on replacement of an existing nature of a system with a new one that will be suitable to achieve the purpose of the system. In view of this, restructuring is operationally seen in this paper as a significant alteration, re-organization, reformation and re-arrangement of an existing structuring, form or status quo in a revolutionary or evolutionary manner, with the aim of making it more improved, effective, efficient and functionally competent.⁸ Political restructuring on the other hand: This has had different meanings as it has been a topic on the paper of most scholars with varying perspectives. it entails both political re-configuration of the country and devolution of powers to the constituent units as it is practiced in other climes.

Restructuring is a constitution review strategy aimed at bringing government as closely as possible to the people at the grass roots. The whole idea of restructuring is to achieve unity of objective, efficiency and effectiveness by creating and locating our significant political, economic, social technological, educational and legal units as near as possible to the people at the grass roots. To restructure an organization or system means to change the way it is organized, usually in order to make it work more effectively.⁹

Patriotic Citizenship

Patriotism is love of and loyalty to one's country. It also involves accepting the responsibilities of good citizenship. Patriotism can be defined as love of one's country, identification with it, and special concern for its well-being and that of compatriots. Patriotism or national pride is the feeling of love, devotion and sense of attachment to a homeland and alliance with other citizens who share the same sentiment. This attachment can be a combination of many different feelings relating to one's own homeland, including ethnic, cultural, political or historical aspects. Citizenship requires doing our share for our community and our country. Being a good citizen means caring about the good of society and

⁸ IdeobodoNwafor-Orizu et al., PoliticalRestructuring in Nigeria: the need, challenges andprospects:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328517752_POLITICAL_RESTRUCTURING_IN_NIGERIA_THE_NEED_CHALLENGES_AND_PROSPECTS

⁹ Ibid

participating actively to make things better. Patriotism is an important part of good citizenship. Patriotism is love of and loyalty to our country.¹⁰

Patriotism conveys a less localized and temporalized sense of particularist effect as it is conceptually more related to people's feelings and acts as consociates regardless of the type of political configuration (e.g. be it the city-state, the nation-state, a region, etc). Thus, although it may at times coincide with nationalist concerns, it does not always overlap with nationalism as it signifies a more broadly conceived allegiance than the allegiance towards a nation-state.¹¹ That patriotism is conceptually distinct from nationalism does not mean that it is not practically conflated with the latter. This often results in patriotism being blamed for pathologies usually associated with nationalist excesses. Within much philosophy of late modernity and post-modernity, and within the broader social milieu, any attachment to a nation or to a nation-state is rendered suspect, and this suspicion is then expanded to any attachment to a particular collectivity felt as patria.¹²

Citizenship on the other hand as defined by Eteete, is the connecting rod that appropriates or attaches a particular person to a defined sovereign political entity called a country or state. Citizenship may also be described as the identity of a person in accordance with his belonging to a sovereign state. In other words, citizenship may be used interchangeably with the concept of nationality. In this regard, it refers to a condition of being a full member of a defined community, country or group. Thus, a person is a citizen of a community or country if he is identified as a national of such a country, community or society.¹³ Nigeria is not the only country in Africa that is peopled with persons from different multi-cultural ethnic origins and background, yet Nigerians seem to have displayed

¹⁰ Griffin, Dustin (2005), *Patriotism and Poetry in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹¹ Isaiah Ngedu and Augustine Atabor, *Nationalism in Nigeria: A Case for Patriotic Citizenship* in *American Journal of Contemporary Research*, Vol 5. No. 3, June 2015. www.ajjernet.com

¹² Papastephanou, M. (2013). "Inward and Outward Patriotism", *Review of European Studies*; Vol. 5, No. 2; Department of Education, University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus, URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/res.v5n2p20>

¹³ Eteete, A. M, "*Ethnic Nationalism, Statism, Citizenship and the Right to Non-Discrimination Under the Nigerian Constitution*," (Department of International Law and Diplomacy, Babcock University, Illishan-Rem, 2013), 49

unpatriotic tendencies to a high degree among African nation-states. From the understanding of patriotism as a deep feeling of love for one's fatherland and a fundamental disposition of care for the common good, we hope to glean a conceptual understanding that could help revamp the falling and failing Nigerian state and this understanding should ultimately be guided by unity. Although the many diverging factors among Nigerians majorly anchored on tribe and religion; Nigeria can produce true Nigerian citizens that will remain patriotic not for gain or favour but who will believe in the country again.

Demythologization

Demythologization in everyday dictionary usage as seen in Cambridge English Dictionary simply means to provide an explanation of something, or to present something, in a way that removes any mystery¹⁴. Rudolf Bultmann introduced the term within the context of religious text and seeks to separate cosmological and historic claims from philosophical, ethical and theological teachings¹⁵. For the purpose of this paper, demythologization is the realization that religion should strip itself from the mysteries that shrouds its existence so as to make the adherents balanced in approaching life issues and make the human person the priority of one's advocacy, most especially when it has to do with the common good of the society. Demythologization of religion will enhance more of patriotic citizenship, than religion the basis of what constitutes national cohesion.

The Religious Landscape in Contemporary Nigeria

Nigeria is a pluralistic society and been a pluralistic society it is a multi-faith society; and this means that there are many religions in Nigeria such as Christianity and Islam, adherents of African Traditional Religion (ATR), New Agers and a few atheist¹⁶. Yet, despite the religious status of the Country, one would have expected a huge turnaround on the economic status of the Country; but according to Gwamna, he compared the current state of landscape of Nigeria like the biblical Israel saying thus:

¹⁴ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/demythologize> retrieved online 13th September, 2019.

¹⁵ <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/demythologization> retrieved online 13th September, 2019

¹⁶ Gwamna Dogara J.E (2014) *Religion and National Transformation*. In a Journal of Christian Religious Studies (JOCRES) Vol.2 No.2, A Publication of The Nigerian Association for the Study of Religious Studies: Kaduna State University, Kaduna.

Nigeria can be best compared to what Amos saw of Israel, as a people, who had “turned justice into bitterness and cast righteousness to the ground” (Amos 5:7). Isaiah says “So justice is driven back and righteousness stand at a distance, truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter¹⁷

The Nigeria of today has led to what Peter Cuncliffe-Jones reflects thus when he opined that since independence, tensions between Christians and Muslims have grown as Nigerians disillusioned with what the country has become, have turned more than ever to religion for their answers; and as an ever more important part of their identity, religion has become one of the great issues dividing the Country¹⁸. Nigeria is the sixth producer of oil in the world and after fifty-nine years (59) of independence, despite its great potentials still grapple with issues of enormous concern; and one of its greatest problem associated with the setback of Nigeria is religion that is more prevalent than ethnicism. According to Dickson and Kajom,

Religion has become a fundamental factor in contemporary Nigerian politics against the background of religious unrest, inter and intra-religious conflicts, and the complementary unjustifiable destruction of lives and property. Religious difference played a more noticeable role than ethnicity and has its root (class) in the political scheming¹⁹.

This unfortunately is also linked to the distribution and sharing of the “national cake” and fast becoming more and more a factor in both politics and policy-making, such that the consuming power of religion in Nigerian politics and society looms large²⁰. The romance between religion and politics is not a new development in Nigeria and most especially in the Northern part of Nigeria and various hypocritical attempts have been made to sever religion from politics but unfortunately it has even gotten worst in recent times and even affected the psyche of the electorates who vote base on religious sentiments than competence of meritocratic decision. No doubt, the inability of government to practically

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Cuncliffe-Jones P (2010) *My Nigeria: Five Decades of Independence*. Palmgrave Macmillan, New York: P.165

¹⁹ Dickson M. D & Kajom H.D (2014) *Religious Violence In Nigeria: Its Implication on Peace Initiatives For National Transformation*. In a Journal of Christian Religious Studies (JOCRES) Vol.2 No.2, A Publication of The Nigerian Association for the Study of Religious Studies: Kaduna State University, Kaduna. Pg. 19.

²⁰ Ibid.

enforce the Nigerian Constitution which guarantees that Nigeria is a secular state has failed in its commitment to ensure that policies are effected to checkmate the excessive dimensions to religious affiliations. As long as politics is viewed with the eyes of religion then our long standing problems will continue to linger. Moreso, this has even affected the dignity of human life were the value of human life is now an attitude that allows the destruction of human life for the sole reason that those been killed are from a different religion and ethnicity is the greatest form of structural injustice prevalent in the society²¹. This is exactly where we are as a country and hence the need for the demythologization of religion to enhance and enthrone patriotic citizenship in a country that the misgivings and misinterpretation of religion has devastated and brought about unmitigated disaster and national destruction.

Integrity, Resource Control and the Nigerian Nation

The concept of integrity and good governance are mutually intertwined. Integrity and good leadership are critical for the achievement of results. It is often said that no organization, nation or country can develop beyond the level of its leadership. The predicament of Nigeria in terms of underdevelopment and corruption can be adduced to the problem of leadership and lack of integrity by these leaders.²² Nigeria needs committed leaders who will govern with integrity and doggedly influence its human and natural resources toward the actualization of sustainable national development. When we take stock of where we are as a nation, we will agree what the lack of integrity is doing in Nigeria has rather dragged Nigeria backwards. In the book *The Servant of the People*, Muel Kaptein describes that integrity starts with that politicians should know what their position entails, because integrity is related to their position. Integrity also demands knowledge and compliance with both the letter and the spirit of the written and unwritten rules. Integrity is also acting consistently not only with what is generally accepted as moral, what others think, but primarily with what is ethical, what politicians should do based on reasonable arguments²³.

²¹ Bagobiri J (2018) *Liturgy and Social Justice*. Kaduna: Cywhite Ventures. Pg 51

²² Onwuejeogwu, Angulu M. *The Multi-Ethnic Nationalities of Nigeria and the Problems of Governance*. Institute of African studies, University of Ibadan Project. 1972.

²³ Kaptein, Muel "The Servant of the People: On the Power of Integrity in Politics and Government". *Social Science Research Network*, 2014. [SSRN 2498730](https://www.ssrn.com/abstract=2498730)

The history of the area now known as Nigeria is characterized by agitation for resource control. First, after the abolition of slave trade in 1807, local traders engaged in resource control struggles to participate actively in the trade of palm oil. Similarly, resource control was one of the highlights of the Ijaws' representation to the Willink Commission.²⁴ Thus, it should be emphasized from the outset that in Nigeria, States, majority as well as minority groups have on one occasion or the other in history agitated for resource control. However, the demand for resource control reached its crescendo as soon as the Military Government of General Yakubu Gowon created a twelve-State federal structure on May 27, 1967 from the former four regions. On the one hand, some of the States that were created e.g., the oil-rich Rivers and Eastern States as well as Lagos immediately demanded for the control of the natural resources located and extracted from their areas. On the other hand, major areas that were not granted statehood but were economically viable equally demanded for resource control out of frustration. Before this time, however, the struggles for the control of the nation's resources have also, to some extent, been based on the regional cleavages. This, entwined with political conflict, has sometimes led to political manipulations and delineations with the aim of influencing wealth allocation. The issue of resource control in Nigeria has posed different challenges to the nation as a whole. It has been harmoniously challenge by civil society groups and communities in the country.²⁵

Nigeria as a nation runs many miles to stay on the same spot. Virtually everyone agrees Nigeria needs leaders with integrity. There is a chance that if you asked one out of every two to three Nigerians their idea of the most crucial attribute our leaders should have, they would say incorruptibility. Everybody, regardless of party affiliation, believes that we need leaders with a moral compass whose actions consistently engender values that promote social well-being of Nigerians and by large, a sustainable development in Nigeria.²⁶ But why has it been virtually impossible for us to find persons of integrity to people our public institutions? How can a country with about a vast population be so ethically paralysed that we basically repeat the same crew who perpetrate habits of underdevelopment and corruption that frustrate meaningful progress in our country? Nigeria needs a leader who can withstand the temptation to give in to

²⁴ Buhaya, Noah "Ethnicity in Nigeria: Background Report". The PBS Online News Hour www.pbs.org/ethnhtml

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Onwuejeogwu Op Cit

being corrupt, leaders that are enthusiastic about integrity. Leaders that are focused, committed, dogged, selflessness, discipline, and enterprising personality in order to attain all round development. Ikubaje is of the opinion that the way out of poor governance and ineffective anti-corruption policies in Africa is a collective will of both the political leadership as well as the citizens to say no to corruption no matter the cost and embrace integrity. In the thoughts of Friedrich Nietzsche, Nigeria is in a dire need of a "SUPERMAN" who will rise out of the blues, full of integrity and patriotism in order to salvage the nation from chaos and anarchy.

Patriotic Citizenship and the Question of Resource Control and Restructuring In Nigeria

Restructuring and Resource Control are prevalent terms in the mouth of an average Nigerian as the best way out of our economic depression and political instability. This is where we raise the question as to who is restructuring what in Nigeria? Is the call to restructuring a call base on patriotic citizenship or a call to an expression of certain political misgivings? Who does the restructuring? How can resource control be done without the realization of the fact that citizens need to be patriotic? The foundation of any restructuring and resource control must be hinged on the quest for patriotic citizenship which originally and naturally will demythologize religion as the basis for any genuine policy making sugar coating presentation of policies not driven by patriotic citizenship. Hence, according Clifford Gbasha Terhide, how do we reconcile God and Politics in Nigeria when religious leaders have in themselves taken the place of God as they make members take decisive positions base of their personal sentiments; and as such the recent growing interest of Nigerian Pentecostals in politics is a reaction to the popular narrative of a Muslim agenda²⁷.

Patriotic citizenship is also known as national pride rather than religious pride. It is the feeling of love, devotion and sense of attachment to one's own country and in alliance with other citizens who share the same sentiment and not religion. This attachment can be a combination of many different feelings that leads to national cohesion and integration. Alasdair Macintyre, for example, argues that morality is rooted in the life of a specific real community - a village, a city, a

²⁷ Gbasha C.T (2019) The Role of Homilies in the Formation of Society: The Pentecostal Dimension. . Jamahh U.V (ed) In His Key Note address delivered and reflected in the proceedings of the Second Theology Week of the Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kaduna. Pg. 111

nation, with its idiosyncratic customs and history – and therefore, adherence to morality requires loyalty to such a community²⁸. Patriotic citizenship according to him (Alasdair Macintyre) is essential for living morally good life as given in his Lindley Lecture, *Is Patriotism a Virtue?* This provides the philosophical framework in establishing the foundations for patriotic citizenship which is the basis for resource control and restructuring. According to Negedu and Atabor patriotic citizenship:

Is the force of unity that holds a people together within a particular nation-state. Thus, it is implied that though there may be varieties in language, culture, religion and ethnicity, the shared common grounds of unity becomes the most cherished relational bond that runs through a people within a nation-state as Nigeria²⁹.

It is this relational bond that Anthony Akinwale calls “human trait of relationality”³⁰. Relationality is the desire and capacity for and the fact of human interaction in a life lived in common. It is manifest in the fact that the human being is conceived, lives and thrives in a habitat that is a network of relationships³¹. It is this network of relationships that is an antithesis to religion from the descriptive tendencies as it is today and when it synthesizes; it develops and forms a new thesis of patriotic citizenship devoid of geographical provenance, religious affiliation, ethnic attachment and other factors that are antithetical to national cohesion.

Conclusion

Living in a free society, we have the rights and responsibility to think for ourselves, to make choices, and are prepared to take ownership of consequences of our actions. Our personal choices, beliefs and the resulting behaviors will greatly influence the quality of life that we experience. To live authentically, we

²⁸ Macintyre A (1984) *Is Patriotism A Virtue?* (The Lindley Lecture), Lawrence: University of Kansas.

²⁹ Negedu I. & Atabor A (2015) *Nationalism in Nigeria: A Case for Patriotic Citizenship*. In an American Journal of Contemporary Research Vol.5 No.3 June 2015. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317913246_Nationalism_in_Nigeria_A_Case_for_Patriotic_Citizenship retrieved online 14th September, 2019.

³⁰ Akinwale A. (2019) *Religion and Societal Conscience Formation*. Jamahh U.V (ed) In His Key Note address delivered and reflected in the proceedings of the Second Theology Week of the Good Shepherd Major Seminary, Kaduna.

³¹ Ibid

must be willing to constantly examine and re-examine our beliefs which influence us in the choices we make. In today's world free societies exist and are challenging us to think for ourselves. Science and technologies are constantly showing us proof that contradict the ideas and short-comings of religious beliefs. Our personal sense of integrity, deeply ingrained in our very physiology, is guiding us to disgust when we are confronted with the evil being done by religious extremists in the name of their gods. As sciences dealing with the inner workings of our brains are giving us answers as to how we think, we are learning that superstitions are not responsible for outcomes in our lives. Let us as Nigerians be confident and optimistic that within a free society, human integrity can continue to emerge as the guiding force in our world. As people we are all imperfect. Yet we all possess the ability to think, and choose the pathway that we all know is aligned with human integrity. Historically we have overcome tremendous obstacles and have time after time defeated the forces of evil that have threatened our survival. The reason we have survived the challenges and continue to evolve is because it is written into our very genetic code to do so. We are yet in another challenging time of COVID-19 Pandemic which challenges Religion in different forms, only integrity, unity and oneness will save us.

Recommendations

1. Integrity should be given its proper place in Nigeria instead of relying on Religious sentiments. Religion should be demystified and leaders should be made accountable by publicly declaring what they have been able to achieve in terms of performance as well as how much was expended in every sector on a yearly basis and auditors with integrity should be made to verify the claims in order to ascertain the genuineness of the claims.
2. National cohesion refers to a sense of unity and oneness by citizens of a country to the extent that, despite their diversity, they see themselves as forming a nation. This has not been so for Nigeria, Nigeria lacks Nationalism in every sense of the word. This paper suggests that sense of solidarity encourages patriotic citizens to invest economically, socially, politically and emotionally in the wellbeing of the nation-country. National cohesion does not mean the absence of disagreements but those disagreements play out and are resolved within the parameters laid out by the country's laws and regulations and in a manner that preserves that sense of oneness and not the religious- ethnic-regional or class card

3. The judicial arm of government should be made or empowered to function effectively so as to ensure that corrupt leaders are brought to book and made to face necessary sanctions and penalties which would serve as deterrents to others.
4. Also, elections should be made to be free and fair and not rigged. When citizens are allowed to choose their leaders, the leaders should in turn have a sense of responsibility that they owe the people for good governance.
5. The ethicizing of corruption should be stopped and discouraged, corrupt persons no matter what background they come from should be judged based on the content of their character and according to law

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