

**RELIGION IN A SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNOLOGICAL ERA: THE NIGERIAN
EXPERIENCE**

BY

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PG/Ph.D./08/48606**

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION AND CULTURAL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA.**

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TITLE PAGE

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A THESIS

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FEBRUARY, 2012.

CERTIFICATION

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The work embodied in this thesis is original and has not been submitted in part or full for another diploma or degree of this, or to any other University.

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To brothers Kevin and Celestine Ugwueze of the blessed memory.

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ABSTRACT

There is no known society the world over without religion. This shows that religion is an indispensable element in any human society. Throughout the ages religion has offered solutions to man's problems, and explanations to the mysteries of the world. The desire for man to know and conquer his environment led to the advancement of science and technology. Consequently man has always longed and had a human and environmental transition from one region of development to another through science and technology. The relationship between science and religion has been a thing of debate. This work therefore, addresses itself to the relationship between religion, science and technology, bringing into focus the relevance of science and technology to religious beliefs and practices. In doing this, we adopted analytical and descriptive method of approach. Collection of data was mainly through secondary sources. The data collected were critically analyzed and descriptively presented. Findings show that both are concerned with the desire to know; and improve the living conditions of man and his environment. The dividing wall between science and religion has always been on methodology; and the moral implications of scientific enquiries and discoveries. The advancement of science and technology has tremendously affected religious beliefs and practices ranging from man's better understanding of the universe to its contribution to the dissemination of religious doctrines and practices. Its negative effects such as threat to human life, dignity of human person and increase in moral decadence were also noted. The belief of the researcher, following his findings, is that this work will spur the theologians and scientists to explore and harness the complimentary roles of science and religion for the good of the two disciplines, and for mankind in general.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Man is notoriously a religious animal. There is no other phenomenon which moulds and controls man's life as much as religion. Wherever we find man, we find him with his religious beliefs and practices. This goes to show that religion is very vital in every organized human society. It has made recognizable impacts on the political, physical, social, moral, spiritual and economic life of the people. Thus, religion is one of the most popular institutions that has greatly influenced man and his environment, and cannot be done away with in human society.

In the course of human history, man's search for God has led to enormous diversity of religious expression found worldwide. Most religions teach the existence of one or more deities who created the universe (and continue to play major role in managing it sometimes bypassing the laws of nature to effect miracles), moral principles, mankind's relationship to the deity/ies, behaviour towards fellow humans, spiritual masters etc.

Science on the other hand, deals with the study of nature, its forces, processes and development. A realistic patrol down the memory lane through historic ages to our time, will bring us in contact with the fact that science and technology have a primordial undertone. *Ab initio*, after the creation of man (according to

1.5 Scope of Study

This work tries to study the place of religion in a scientific and technological era with special reference to Nigeria. Nigeria, it is noteworthy, is a pluralistic society with three dominant religious groups. In this work, attempts will be made at exploring the struggle and challenges these religions are facing in view of the current wave of technological and concomitant innovative waves. In any case, references will be made globally if the needed arises.

1.6 Research Methodology

The basic methods employed in this study were historical and descriptive. Collection of data was mainly secondary sources, which include text, journals, dailies, periodicals, unpublished documents and internet. The data collected through secondary sources were critically analyzed, interpreted and descriptively presented. The researcher applied as much objectivity as possible.

1.7 Definitions of Key Words:

Science: In the 13th century Europe, Christian theology was regarded as the queen of the science. "Science", in this sense, was a systematic expression of an area of knowledge which was ideally founded on self-evident or certain first principles. The first principle of Christian theology, it was thought, provide the most certain of all principles, since they were revealed by God. Thus, theology becomes the paradigm of science. Since that time the word "science" has changed its meaning so that now most people regard science as an experimental investigation into a physical phenomenon, where precise observations can be

made and measurements are repeatable and publicly testable, and where hypotheses need to be constantly tested and reassessed.

"Science" according to Eya (2007:20) comes from a Latin word *Scio*, meaning "to know". It is a term used in its broadest sense to denote systematized knowledge in any field, but usually applied to the organization of objectively verifiable sense experience". The pursuit of knowledge in this context, according to him, is known as pure science, to distinguish it from applied science, which is the search for practical uses for scientific knowledge, and from technology, through which applications are realized.

Science is about the application of theoretical reasoning and data analysis to natural phenomena and it exists in two broad perspectives as both a process and a body of knowledge – a product. Commenting on science as a process and a body of knowledge, Ezekwe (1990:1) explains that:

Science is a process because of its structured investigation through which verifiable knowledge is arrived at and in which nature is systematically studied. As a body of knowledge, science is based on verifiable or empirical evidence which other observers can see, measure, count or check for accuracy. The body of the scientific knowledge is commutative, it grows and each one leads to another.

Lending views to the nature and character of science, Garder (1975:3) posits that:

implications for the other discipline. Barth (www.iep/utm.edu/sci-rel) espoused this view when he said:

Has no one explained to you that one can as little compare the biblical creation story and a scientific theory like that of evolution as one can compare, shall we say, an organ and a vacuum-cleaner that there can be as little question of harmony between as of contradiction?

Bath's claim is that a gulf separates science and religion. This theory suffers defect because when science and religion are viewed in their own domain, both cannot be consistent and complete.

In another development, complementary theory has been advocated. It is now argued that when science and religion are properly used, they can be in perfect harmony. They support each other. Both work together to present a fuller understanding of the world by mutually enlightening each other. This propels us to the adoption of the complementary theory. This theory has a distinct way of looking and interpreting the relationship between science and religion. Writing on the relevance of this theory, Sandage in Dopamu (2003:xx) said "it was my science that drove me to the conclusion that the world is much more complicated than can be explained by science. It is only through the supernatural that I can understand the mystery of existence".

Actually science and religion are partners in progress. Science discovers a world of magnificent order, a universe that contains distinctive marks of intelligent design. Religion makes these discoveries meaningful by teaching that the mind of the creator lies behind the design manifest in the physical world.

goes by empiricism. Science, being empirical in approach, may be considered to mean human endeavour that seeks to describe with accuracy, the events and circumstances that occur or exist in our natural environment.

Science makes use of hypothesis, laws, principles or theories, which are continuously subjected to further empirical investigations. It is in line with this that Dye (1970:11) said that:

Science could be seen as a cumulative and endless series of empirical observations, which result in the formulation of concepts, laws and theories with both laws and theories being subject to further empirical observations.

Science had its beginning when man started asking questions about his environment. he wondered where the sun went at night and why the stars did not shine in the daytime. He questioned why the wind blew and the leaves fell. He sought answers to these and other questions. Not all answers were correct, but at least he did want to know (Compton's Encyclopedia, 2004:59).

Clayton (1982:5) is of the opinion that science started with early man who made use of crude reasoning to solve his environmental problems. He further stated that the first recorded achievement of man in science and technology dates back to about 4,000 years ago, before the Christian era, along the valleys of the Nile and Euphrates, and later in India and China. According to him, meaningful practice of science began in the East and spread to the West. The West received science, improved upon it and spread it back to East.

Conant (1989:4) noted that the Egyptians were one of the first set of people to advance scientifically in the East. He pointed out that:

As early as 300 B.C., the Egyptians studied the heavens to forecast the arrival of the seasons and to predict when the annual flooding of the Nile River would occur. The Egyptians used geometry to establish property lines and to make the measurements needed to build huge pyramids. They also learned some anatomy, physical and surgery through embalming their dead.

Other nations in the East worthy of mention in the field of science include Babylon, Chinese and India. The World Book Encyclopedia (2001:196 – 197) summarized the scientific achievements of the Babylonians, the Chinese and Indians thus:

In ancient Babylonia, the people used a system of counting in units of 60, which is the basis of the 360 degree circle and the 60 minute hour. They understood fractions, squares, and square roots. They also developed complicated mathematical models of motions of the planets and other heavenly bodies. Their detailed observations of the sky enabled them to predict solar and lunar eclipses and other astronomical events. The Chinese and Indian civilization developed a little later than the Egyptian and Babylonian cultures. By the 300s B.C., the Chinese had mapped the major stars in the heavens and, like the Babylonian succeeded in predicating eclipses. The ancient Chinese had their own system of mathematics. They also developed acupuncture and other medical practices that have been handed down almost unchanged to the present.

According to Udaya (2008:8), the Greeks were the first in the Western world to be acquainted with scientific principles and practices. Miletus, he said, was a city in Greece that the study of science in the name of philosophy began about 600 B.C. Conant (1989:6) writing about the Greece in the field of science said:

Science in the 1900s: Revolutionary in physics marked the beginning of the 1900s as scientists continued to challenge existing ideas. In 1900, Max, a German physicist, advanced his quantum theory to explain the spectrum of light emitted by certain heated objects. In 1905, another German physicist, Einstein, showed that light may be regarded as consisting of individual energy units. The same year, Einstein published his special theory of relativity. His theory revised many of the ideas of Newtonian physics and offered scientists new ways of thinking about space and time. Research into the structure of atom also expanded rapidly within this period.

Great progress was also made by social scientists of the 1900s, as they began to rely more heavily on statistical analysis and scientific research methods. In the biological sciences, a number of physician-scientists showed the importance of vitamins in the human diet. Their achievements helped conquer such nutritional diseases as beriberi and scurvy. In 1928, Fleming, a British bacteriologist, discovered penicillin, the first of many antibiotics. The work of numerous scientists began to establish the importance of genetics as a separate branch of Biology. About 1910, Morgan, an American biologist, and his associates proved that genes are the units of heredity and that genes are arranged in an exact order along the length of cell structures called chromosomes.

purely product of some investigator's imagination or conjecture. It is in line with this, that after many years of struggling with the issue (origin of religion), many have come to the conclusion that it is most unlikely that there will be any breakthrough in finding the answer to the question of how religion began. First of all, this is because bones and remains of ancient peoples do not tell us how they worshipped. Any conclusion drawn from the artifacts are educated guesses at best. Secondly, the religious practices of today's so-called "primitive" people, such as the Australian Aborigines, are not necessarily a reliable gauge for measuring what people of ancient time did nor thought. No one knows for sure if or how their culture changed over the centuries.

However, that the issues of definition and origin of religion remain unsettled, religion is found in all societies playing both functional and dysfunctional roles. Appreciating the importance of religion in society, Radcliff (1952:145) argued that:

Religions, which we think to be erroneous or even absurd and repulsive such as those of savage tribes, may be important and effective parts of the social machinery and that without these false religions, social evolution and the development of modern civilization would have been impossible.

Actually, in the course of human history, religion plays vital role in social evolution and civilization. However, in recent time, religion seems to be a product of ignorance and superstition to the developed nations especially Europe. It is on this note that Wambutuda (2003:387) said:

... the mind assumes that, that which is immediately tangible is more real than the immaterial. With this frame of mind, only the naturally

In support of Sprat's view, Longchamp (1993:148) opined that:

Science can answer all theoretical questions; resolve all practical difficulties, provided they are formulated in rational terms. It is right and proper to entrust to science specialists the direction of human affairs whether in politics, economic, morals etc.

Science as observed by Sprat and Longchamp, cannot pretend to explain everything about the nature of reality or being. Science is a human endeavour. Humans are creatures of limited perception and science is, therefore, bound by the cultural constructs of our limited human society.

In what appears to be a swift reaction to Sprat and Longchamp opinions, Rees-Mogg (2006:10) said:

Science can neither prove nor disprove the existence of God, any more or aesthetic proposition. There is no scientific reason to love one's neighbor or to respect human life... To argue that nothing exist which cannot be proved scientifically is the crudest of errors, which would eliminate almost everything we value in life, not only God or the human spirit, but love and poetry and music.

In the early days of Christianity, science was at best seen as a waste of time. This is evidenced from actions and statements of some Church fathers. The Church father, Athanasius, for example, celebrated the fact that the early Church leaders were "men of little intellect." Similarly John Chrysostom, instructed people to "empty your minds of secular knowledge", and in 448 A.D., Theodosius II ordered all non-Christian books to be burnt. Augustine of Hippo, on the other hand, had declared: "that good

attracted to their respective sides. Religion wants people on its side and so science.

Complementary role of religion and science can actually cause conflict between the two but it appears that these conflicts have developed because of false or unprovable assertions originating from both sides; eg. the case of Galileo.

Proven science and religion complement rather than contradict each other. Both are complementarily beneficial to human existence. It is on this note that Eric in Wambutuda (2003:389) wrote to say that:

It has already been said that history shows that in the earliest days of their development, religion and the beginning of science were one within the culture of the tribe or nation concerned and as for many centuries education was virtually the monopoly of the priestly castes... Even in the greatest days of Greece, science and philosophical religious speculations went together as in the brotherhood or colony founded by Pythagoras at Crotona.

A degree of concord between science and religion can be seen in religious belief and empirical science. The belief that God created the world and therefore humans, can led to the view that he arranged for humans to know the world. This is underwritten by the doctrine of *imago dei*. In the words of Aquinas, since human beings are said to be the image of God in virtue of their having a nature that includes an intellect, such a nature is most in the image of God in virtue of being most able to imitate God" (<http://en, Wikipedia.org/wiki>).

every field in all parts of the world. The Pope further pointed out that “through the internet people multiply their contacts in ways hitherto unthinkable which opens up wonderful possibilities for spreading the gospel”.

Lending credence to the Pope’s observation, Nwokolo (2009:8) said that:

Communication which is the *conditio sine qua non* for the preaching of the gospel is not left out of this quantum jump of technological development. The Gospel is proclaimed in the televisions, radios, internet etc. The Bible also has been down loaded into the C.D Rom. The Pope’s encyclical letters are all over there in the internet. By means of scientific oriented researches, a priest is made more confident and sure of the quality of what he says to the congregation.

Commenting on the impact of mass media in spreading the gospel, Achunike (2002:77) opined that:

The impact of televangelism is much on the viewers in that, many people who buy and own television sets or radio are often enchanted to view televangelists or listen to radio preachers. In such situations a considerable number of souls will be touched by the messages they listen to from the televisions and radios.

It is note worthy to point out that the positive influence of mass media on religion does not rule out its negative effects. In line with this, Achunike (2002:81) observes that “the internet offers extensive knowledge but it does not teach values, and when values are disregarded, our very humanity is demeaned and man easily loses sight of his transcendent dignity”. Achunike’s observation is apt especially when one calls to mind that the internet also has websites that introduce one into the world of gamblers, fraudsters and pornography.

Another area where science and technology are relevant to religion, is in the field of medicine. Medical science has enlightened man not to use religion as a panacea for everything. It is on this note that Ugwu (n.d 27 – 28) opined that:

In the past, certain diseases like stroke, sudden infant death, small-pox etc. were associated with witchcraft. Religious sacrifices, magical rites and charms were performed or used in an error to either cure or prevent the diseases. Today medical achievements have led to the understanding of many parasitic, viral and deficiency diseases. Natural drugs and processes are used to cure them, thus making unnecessary the magical rites used for their control. The superstitious ideas have also gone with the magical rites.

Nwokolo (2009:8) is of the view that the scientific advancement in the field of medicine equally helps in spreading the gospel. This he made known when he said that:

In the field of medicine, there is now better surgical techniques, and better understanding of the body's immune system. These have led to an increase in organ and tissue management. With these, both the preacher and faithful are saved from early or untimely death. Hence a continued, uninterrupted and efficient gospel dissemination.

On the other hand, Madu (2003:23) was concerned about the moral implication of scientific advance in the field of medicine. He asserts that:

The unrestricted technological maneuvering or interference with certain composite elements of the human person in such scientific and technological practices like human foetal experimentation, eugenics, cloning, abortion, sterilization, artificial insemination, invitro fertilization, surrogate motherhood and human modifications such as plastic surgery, are all outcome of scientific invention or discoveries. These are really morally

CHAPTER THREE
AN OVERVIEW OF THE THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF
RELIGION/WORLD RELIGIONS

3.1 Theories of the Origin of Religion

The mysteries of existence have compelled humanity to raise questions as to the meaning and relevance of existence. Questions of ultimate meanings, cosmic and religious origins have also been raised. In all, answers to these questions have been as many-faceted as there are people of different cosmological ideas. Ranging from the early Greek philosophers to the modern times, the answers have been different. The 19th century evolutionary epoch tried to interpret reality in an evolutionary spirit while the modern rationalists tried to explain the same reality in terms of rationalism. Even the idealists and the positivists are not left out.

When the views advanced by man about the universe are analysed, all can be reduced into two:

- (a) Either the interpretation wears an intellectual garb, or
- (b) It wears an emotional cum psychological apron.

The same is also true of discussions of the origin of religion. Since religion is a universal fact and it is found among all peoples in every age, the problem of its origin arises. How did religion originate?

When it comes to the question of origin of religion, people of different religions think of names such as Buddha, Confucius, Jesus, Mohammed etc. In almost every religion, we can find a central figure to whom credit is given for establishing the faith. Some of those were iconoclastic reformers. Others were moralist philosophers. Still others were selfless folk heroes. Many of them have left behind writings or sayings that formed the basis of a new religion. In time what they said and did were elaborated, embellished, and given a mystic aura. Some of these leaders were even deified.

Even though these individuals are considered founders of the major religions that we are familiar with, it must be noted that they did not actually originate religion. In most cases, their teachings grew out of existing religious ideas.

The study of the origin and development of religion is a comparatively new field. The theory of evolution swept through intellectual circles. That, along with the advent of scientific inquiry, caused many to question established system, including religion. Recognizing the limitations of looking for clues within existing religions, some scholars turned to remains of early civilizations or to the remote corners of the world where people still lived in primitive societies. They tried to apply the method of anthropology, psychology, sociology, and so forth, hoping to discover a clue as to how religion began and why. At this juncture, we turn to some of these theories of the origin of religion.

3.2 Mythological Theory

The attempt to discover the origin of religion has a long history. The early mythological approach to the question of the origin of religion was answered by identifying religion with the gods. According to Brandon (1969:4), "the priests of various gods taught their followers that their respective gods were the original creator of the world. Thus they ascribe the origin of religion to respective gods."

The mythological theory assumed the existence of a divine being who created the world, human being and their institutions. Such a mythological explanation of the origin of religion resulted into the building of shrines and temples for the gods and to feed them with offerings or sacrifices. Thus among the ancient peoples across the world, their various myths said their gods were the originators of religion.

3.3 Speculative Theory

Although the mythological explanation of origin of religion persisted, some people freed themselves from the traditional religious beliefs and practices. Many thinkers became skeptical about traditional religious beliefs and practices. The mythological explanations could no longer satisfy their free thinking. They engaged in a free enquiry in which they asked critical and challenging questions about the origin of religion. However, their enquiry was essentially of a speculative approach. They could only speculate, that is, to form opinions, because they did not have a sufficient knowledge about the origin of religion. (They could only guess about the origin of religion). They did not know effective

research methods and techniques. The only method they could use was logical reasoning which held untested opinions (Brandon, 1969:6).

3.4 Anthropological Theories

Tylor published a famous and influential book, "Primitive Culture", in which he advanced a theory which has been known as animism (Parrinder, 1971:9). According to him, religion is a belief in spiritual beings. He argued that primitive man got his first idea of spirit from his own experience of sleep, dreams, shadows, breath and death. The primitive man conceived that a spirit was an invisible principle or being which could be found animating, as a soul in natural objects such as trees, stones, the sun, the moon and water. Having observed the incomprehensible power of natural phenomena such as the sun, the moon, the stars, clouds, wind, rain, lightning, thunder and rivers, the primitive man believed that natural objects had souls. The fear, awe, and insecurity compelled the primitive man to worship the natural phenomena. Tylor argued that the idea of animistic souls led on to a belief in celestial gods and so formed the origin of religion (Parrinder, 1971: 9 – 23).

The animistic theory of Tylor was modified by Marett (1866 – 1943). His theory of the origin of religion is known as animatism (Madu, 1996:25). After studying the beliefs of primitive Melanesians of the Pacific Island and the natives of Africa and America, Marett concluded that instead of having the notion of a personal soul, primitive people believed that there was an impersonal force or supernatural powers that animated everything. Such forces or powers are expressed as special

attributes of things, much as the forces of gravity is related to objects that have masse. Marett calls these forces which objects have "Malanesia" (Madu, 1996:26). That belief, according to Marett, evoked emotion of awe and fear in men which became the basis for his primitive religion.

In his well-known book, "The Essence of Christianity", Feuerbach claims to have discovered the nature and origin of religion. According to him religion is the projection of man's highest aspirations. The God which the religious man worships is nothing other than the 'projected image of human nature'. When man thinks he is worshipping God, he is only worshipping himself, that is, his own nature which he projects outside himself as God. "Man – this is the mystery of religion – projects his being into objectivity" (Feuerbach, 1957:30). Thus all the divine attributes are in fact human attributes removed from man and projected into the idea of God. By removing from himself his best qualities in order to form the concept of God man thereby alienates himself and separates himself from himself. Hence religion, Feuerbach says, is man's self-alienation, it is the means by which man strips himself of his own essence, his best qualities, and reduces himself to nothing. God becomes everything that is good while man becomes nothing.

3.5 Psychological Theories

In his book, "Totem and Taboo", an Austrian, psychoanalyst, Freud (1856 – 1939) explained that the earliest religion grew out of what he called a father – figure neurosis. He theorized that, in the primitive society, the father dominated the clan. The sons, who both admired and hated the father, rebelled and killed the

father. To acquire the father's power, Freud claimed, these cannibalistic savages ate their victim. Later, out of remorse, they invented rites and rituals to atone for their action. In Freud's theory, the father-figure became God, the rites and ritual became the earliest religion, and the eating of the slain father became the tradition of communion practiced in many religions (Watch Tower, 1990:25).

Comte, A French Philosopher and founder of sociology, explained that human mind passes through three main stages in its process of development. The first of these three stages is the religious stage. This is the primitive or the earliest stage in the development of human mind. This is the stage which men invent god and give religious explanation to natural phenomena. It is the stage in at which man is still largely ignorant, primitive stage in development of his mind. As human mind becomes more developed, it passes on to the next stage, which Comte called metaphysical stage. This is the stage at which men ask metaphysical questions and give metaphysical explanations to the universe in their search for ultimate causes of things. Eventually the human mind also goes beyond this stage and comes to the positive stage, that is, the stage of positive science. This, according to Comte, is the highest stage in the development of the human mind. At this stage, the human mind is no longer preoccupied with religious or metaphysical questions. Thus, for Comte in Omoregbe (1993:9), religion owns its origin to the primitive mentality which belongs to the earliest phase in the development of human mind.

3.6 Sociological Theories

Durkheim (1858 – 1917), a French sociologist, saw the origin of religion in man's dependence on society. The rules and values of society exist for its members as something above and beyond them. Each member feels that the rules and values of the society have an independent existence which is more lasting than his own existence. So he sees society as having power to constrain and yet to uphold him. He therefore feels his dependence on society. So Durkheim defined religion "as an acknowledgement of man's dependence on a superior power" (Scharf, 1981:22). This acknowledgement is made by means of rituals which enable a worshipper to put himself in the right relationship to this power. As a result, he can receive benefits and avoid injuries from that power. Durkheim thinks that the sacred things of any religion are, in fact, the symbols of the society in which that religion is practiced. For Durkheim, society is the origin of religion (Scharf, 1981:22).

Karl Marx attributed the origin and continuing existence of religion to the economic exploitation of the masses in the capitalist system (Ugwueze, 2008:12). Marx saw the rich capitalists being richer and their workers getting poorer. Not only were workers being exploited, but in the process they were being further detached from the products they helped create. By simply selling their work for wages, workers simultaneously lose connection with the object of labour.

Karl Marx then agreed with Feuerbach that God is nothing other than a projection of best qualities in man to imaginary being called God. But Marx felt that

Feuerbach did not go to the root of the problem, he did not try to find out why men turn to religion and thereby alienate themselves. The questions as to what drives men into religion? What made them form the idea of the imaginary being called God? Marx said, is the exploitation; the economic exploitation and oppression of the masses in capitalistic system. The masses who were suffering under the oppressive and exploitative capitalist system look up to the sky for an imaginary saviour who will come and deliver them from the hands of their capitalist exploiters. They then invent the idea of God to who they pray and look forward to for deliverance. Thus religion is the product of exploitation, oppression and suffering. It is the sigh of the exploited. Thus Marx's saying that religion is the cry of the oppressed, the heart of a heartless world, the sense of senseless condition; the opium of the masses.

3.7 Theological Theories

Rossano, an Italian theologian, traces the origin of religion to human nature itself, which has a religious dimension. He asserts that:

At the basis of religion is the religious man; before objective religious formulations comes the personal and subjective dimension of religion... If therefore we go down into the depths of man, despite the variety of religious expression and structure, we reach the humus from which the religious questions proceed. Beyond the system and even the spiritual contrast between East and West and together with the differences between religion and religion, there is a historically constant disposition which orientates man in a specific way and tends to express itself in religious forms (Rossano, 1970:28).

This natural and irresistible search for God, says Rossano (1970:31), is not always clear and distinct,

it often remains in the confused state, like a question hidden in the mind. For many, it is no more than an indistinct feeling of uncertainty, insecurity, instability, an obscure desire for fullness, which is sometimes aroused under the impact of certain events or impressions, while for the most part it lies overwhelmed by the problems of daily living.

St. Augustine also traced the origin of religion to human nature. According to him man has within him, as part of his nature, an irresistible desire for the infinite which renders the human heart restless. "You have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they rest in you" (St. Augustine, 1961:31). This search of the finite spirit for the infinite spirit, its source, is what constitute religion. This is what St. Augustine means by the restlessness of the human heart, that is, the restless search of the human spirit for its source, God.

3.8 World Religions

In the course of human history, man's search for God has led to diversity of religious expression found worldwide – from the variety of Hinduism to the monotheism of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity and to the Oriental philosophies of Shinto, Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism and so on.

3.9 Hinduism

Hinduism is derived from the word "Hindu" which means Indian (Omeregbe, 1993:225). Hinduism is the religion as well as the philosophy of the Indian people. As a religion, Hinduism has no founder, for it grew out of the culture of the Indian people. Its origin dates back to the wave of migration that brought a pale-skinned, Aryan people from Eastern part of Europe (around the end of the

third millennium B.C.) into the Indus valley, now located mainly in Pakistan and India. There has been speculation that Indians prior to the invasion of the Aryans, had a form of religion centered on the worship of The Great Mother Goddess, some representations being pregnant female figurines, the majority being nude with high collars and headdresses, and The Male God, recognizable at once as a prototype of the historic *Siva* (god of fertility) seated and surrounded by animals (Watch Tower, 1990:98). The Aryans over run the civilization they found along the Indus valley, and settled down in the Land. They brought with them their religious beliefs, hymns, prayers and rituals. These formed the nucleus of the Veda, the Scriptures of Hinduism

Hinduism's Holy Writings

The oldest writings are the *Vedas*, a collection of prayers and hymns ranging from *Rig-Veda*, the *Sama-Veda*, the *Yajur-Veda*, and the *Atharva – Veda*. They were composed during several centuries and were completed about 900 B.C. The word *Veda* means revealed knowledge. The *Vedas* were later supplemented with other writings, including the *Brahmans* and *Upanishads* (Watch Tower, 1990:102).

The Brahmans

The *Brahmans* specify how ritual and sacrifices, both domestic and public, are to be performed. They were put into writing from about 300 B.C. or later. In *Brahmans*, according to Watch Tower (1990:95), it is the religious custom to bathe in a nearby river or at home if there is no nearby river or stream first thing in the morning. It is believed that it makes them holy. Then, still without having

eaten, they go to the local temple and make offerings of flowers and food to the local god. Some will wash the idol and decorate it with red and yellow powder. Nearly every home has a corner or even a room for worship of the family's favourite god. A popular god in some localities is *Ganesa*, the elephant god. People will especially pray to him for good fortune, as he is known as remover of obstacles. In other places, *Krishna*, *Rama*, *Siva*, *Durga*, or some other deities might take first place in devotion.

The Upanishads

The *Upanishads* (literally, "sitting near") also known as *Vedanta* (because they are the last part of the *Veda*) are treatises that set out the reason for all thought and action (Watch Tower, 1990:102). The *Upanishads* contain the core of Hindu philosophy and provide the metaphysical worldview of the Hindu religion. It is monistic and pantheistic (Omeregbe, 1993:226). It denies any duality in reality and affirms that there is only one reality, and this is *Brahman*. Everything else is a manifestation of *Brahman*. To think that anything else exists apart from *Brahman* is an illusion (*Maya*). For it is *Brahman* that is present in all things like the moon reflected in the waters. The *Upanishads* also compared *Brahman* to a great fire- "Here is the truth: just as from a blazing fire there issue thousands of like sparks, so are born from the immutable being all kinds of beings (The Upanishads, part 2, Ch.1.) The individual human being too is a manifestation of *Brahman*, for the soul is identical with *Brahman* and not separate individual entity. It is an illusion (*Maya*) for any man to consider himself as an individual entity, separate from *Brahman* (Omeregbe, 1993:226). This illusion leads man to attach himself to

illusory materials things and this is the cause of evil in the world. It is man therefore who brings evil to himself by his illusion about himself and about things in the world to which he attaches himself.

The only solution to the problem of evil is for man to seek liberation (*Moksha*). The first step towards achieving this goal is to acquire the right kind of knowledge about reality. Man must get rid of illusion of seeing himself as an entity distinct from *Brahman* and come to convince himself that he is only a manifestation of *Brahman*, that *Brahman* is the only reality. He must come to appreciate the fact that *atman* (the individual's soul) is identical with *Brahman*, for *atman* is *Brahman*. He must realize that all the things in this world are illusions, and he must learn to detach himself from them. The more man realizes these facts, and the more he detaches himself from the illusory things in this world, the less evil he experiences and the nearer he gets to liberation (*Moksha*) (Ugwueze, 2008:19).

Hinduism teaches metempsychosis as part of the evil that man experiences in this world. Every man comes back into this world several times, and he continues to come back again and again transmigrating from one body to another until he sufficiently purifies himself and finally achieves liberation. The amount of suffering a person experiences, and the number of times he comes into this world through reincarnation and as well as the circumstances in which he lives each time he comes to the world, are all decided by karma, the cosmic principal of justice. Karma ensures that everybody gets the appropriate rewards or punishment for his

deeds. It is the universal law of justice, the inexorable and unfailing law of cause and effect. It is karma that decides a person's lot in this world according to his deeds in his previous life. As long as a person remains caught in circle of rebirth (*Samsara*), he keeps coming back into the world and continues to suffer. But the moment he achieves liberation, after sufficiently purifying himself, he is free from evil and from rebirth. Such a person then goes back into *Brahman* and becomes one with the divine being as a river flows into the sea and becomes one with it (Omogbe, 1993: 143).

3.10 Buddhism

Buddhism is a religion founded by Siddhartha Gautama in India about 500 B.C.(Ugwu, 2000: 1). It is named after its founder, Buddha. Buddha simply means the enlightened one, and the founder of Buddhism was not called Buddha until after his enlightenment.

Buddha, born around 567 B.C, was a prince for his father was a ruler of the *Kshatriya* class. What is known of Buddha's life is based mainly on the evidence of the canonical texts, the most extensive and comprehensive of which are those written in Pali, a language of ancient India(Watch Tower, 1990: 130).

The Enlightenment

At the age of sixteen he married his cousin, Princess Yasodhara. For nearly thirteen years after his happy marriage he led a luxurious life, blissful ignorant of the vicissitudes of life outside the palace gates. With the march of time, truth

gradually dawned upon him. In his 29th year, which witnessed the turning point of his life, he saw for the first time in his life, a sick man; an old man, and a dead man. This experience caused him to agonize over the meaning of life- why were people born, only to suffer, grow old, and die? Then, it was said that he saw a holy man, one who had renounced the world in pursuit of truth. This impelled Gautama to give up his family, his possessions, and his princely name and spend the next six years seeking the answer from Hindu teachers and gurus, but without success. He then resorted to meditation, fasting, Yoga, and extreme self-denial, yet he found no spiritual peace or enlightenment. Eventually he came to realize that his extreme course of self-denial was as useless as the life of self-indulgence that he had led before. He now adopted what he called the middleway, avoiding the extremes of the life-styles that he had been following (Watch Tower, 1990: 36).

Deciding that the answer was to be found in his own consciousness, he sat in meditation under a pipal, or Indian fig tree. He continued steadfast in meditation for four weeks (some say seven weeks) until he supposedly transcended all knowledge and understanding, and reached enlightenment.

By this process, in Buddhist terminology, Gautama became the Buddha- the Enlightened One. He had attained the ultimate goal, *Nirvana*, the state of perfect peace and enlightenment, freed from desire and suffering. He has also become known as *Sakyamuni* (sage of the *Sakya* tribe), and he often address himself as *Tathagata* (one who came to teach) (Watch Tower, 1990: 36). However, different Buddhist sects hold different views on this subject. Some view him strictly as a human who found the path to enlightenment for himself and taught it to his

followers. Others view him as the final one of a series of Buddhas to have come into the world to preach or revive the way of Buddha. Still others view him as a *bodhisattva*, one who had attained enlightenment but postponed *Nirvana* in order to help others in their pursuit of enlightenment. Whatever it is, the "Enlightenment" is of central importance to all Schools of Buddhism (Ugwueze, 2008: 22).

Buddha, having attained enlightenment, set forth to teach his newfound truth, his *dharma*, to others. His first and probably most important sermon was given in the city of Benares, in a deer park, to five *bhikkus*- disciples or monks. In it, he taught that to be saved, one must avoid both the course of sensual indulgence and that of asceticism and follow the middle way (Watch Tower, 1990: 138). Then, one must understand and follow the Four Noble Truths, which can briefly be summarized as follows:

All existence is suffering

Suffering arises from desire or craving

Cessation of desire means the end of suffering

Cessation of desire is achieved by following the Eightfold Path, controlling one's conduct, thinking and belief.

The Eightfold Path, is summarized as

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| (1) Right understanding | (2) Right thought |
| (3) Right speech | (4) Right conduct |
| (5) Right occupation | (6) Right effort |
| (7) Right mindfulness | (8) Right meditation |

His sermon on the middle way and on the four noble truths embodies the essence of the Enlightenment and is considered the epitome of all the Buddha's teaching. It is not hard to see why this teaching was welcomed in the Indian society of the time. It condemned the greedy and corrupt religious practices of *Brahmans*, or priestly caste, on the one hand, and the austere asceticism of the *Jains* and other mystic cults on the other. It also did away with the sacrifices and rituals, the myriads of gods and goddesses, and the burdensome caste system that dominated and enslaved every aspect of the people's life. In short, it promised liberation to everyone who was willing to follow the Buddha's way(Uguweze, 2008: 23).

The Spread of Buddhism

When the five *bhikkus* (disciples) accepted the Buddha's teaching, they became the first to help people get on the way to enlightenment. Thus prepared, Gautama the Buddha went preaching through the length and breadth of the Ganges valleys. People from every social rank and status came to hear him, and they became his disciples. Before his death, at the age of 80, he had become well-known and well respected.

In the third century B.C, about 200 years after Buddha's death, appeared Buddhism's greatest champion, Empero Asoka, who brought most of India under his rules. Saddened by the slaughter and upheaval caused by his conquests, he embraced Buddhism and gave it state support. He erected religious monuments, convened councils, and exhorted the people to live by the precepts of Buddha. Asoka also sent Buddhist missionaries to all parts of India and to Sri Lanka, Syria,

Egypt and Greece. Principally by Asoka's efforts , Buddhism grew from being an Indian sect to a world religion. Justifiably, he has been regarded by some as the second founder of Buddhism(Watch Tower, 1990:143).

Buddhism's Diverse Ways

Although it is customary to speak of Buddhism as one religion, in reality it is divided into several Schools of thought. Based on different interpretations of the nature of Buddha and his teachings, each has its own doctrines, practices, and scriptures. These Schools are further divided into numerous groups and sects, many of which are heavily influenced by local cultures and traditions.

The Hinayana

Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle) flourishes in Sri Lanka, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Cambodia and Laos. Some consider this to be the conservative School. It emphasizes gaining wisdom and working out one's own salvation by renouncing the world and living the life of a monk, devoting oneself to meditation and study in a monastery (Watch Tower 1990: 144).

The Mahayana

The *Mahayana* (Greater Vehicle) is commonly found in China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. It is so named because it emphasize the Buddha's teaching that "truth and way of salvation is for everyone whether one lives in a cave, a monastery, or a house. It is not just for those who give up the world". The basic *Mahayana*

concept is that the love and compassion of Buddha are so great that he would not withhold salvation from anyone.

Among the many *Mahayana* sects that have developed in China and Japan are the *Pure Land* and *Zen* Schools of Buddhism. The former centers its belief around faith in the saving power of Amida Buddha, who promised his followers a rebirth in *Pure Land*, or *Western Paradise*, a land of joy and delight inhabited by gods and humans. From there, it is an easy step to *Nirvana*. By repeating the prayer "I place my faith in Amida Buddha," sometimes thousand of times a day, the devotee purifies himself in order to attain enlightenment or gain rebirth in the *Western Paradise*.

Zen Buddhism teaches that study, good works, and rituals are of little merit. One can attain enlightenment simply by contemplating such imponderable riddles as, "what is the sound of one hand clapping?" and "what do we find where there is nothing?" The mystical nature of *Zen* Buddhism has found expression in the refined arts of flower arrangement, calligraphy, ink painting, poetry and so on, and these have been favorably received in the West. Today, *Zen* meditation centres are found in many western countries (Watch Tower 1990: 146).

Tibetan

Finally, there is *Tibetan* Buddhism, or *Lamaism*. This form of Buddhism is sometimes called *Mantrayana* (*Mantra Vehicle*) because of the prominent use of *mantras*, a series of syllabus with or without meaning, in long recitals. Instead of

emphasizing wisdom or compassion, this form of Buddhism emphasizes the use of rituals, prayers, magic and spiritism in worship. Prayers are repeated thousands of times a day with the aid of prayer beads and prayer wheels (Watch Tower 1990: 148).

Buddhism Scriptures

Teachings attributed to Buddha were passed on by word of mouth and only began to be put down in writing centuries after he had passed on. Thus, at best, they represent what his followers in later generations thought he said and did. This is further complicated by the fact that, by then, Buddhism had already splintered into many Schools. Thus, different texts present quite different version of Buddhism.

However, it has been noted that the best Buddhist Scriptures are the Tripitakas (Three baskets), first written down in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in the pali language about 25B.C. A new, authoritative edition was prepared by the sixth Buddhist council at Rangoon, Burma, in 1954-56.

3.11 Taoism

Taoism is a Chinese philosophy (and religion), based on the concept of *Tao*. The essence of this philosophy is contained in the book *Tao Te Ching* which is traditionally believed to have been written by the Chinese philosopher, Leo-tzu, the founder of Taoism born around 604 B.C (Anyacho, 2005: 314).

Tao, literally, means “the way”. But in Taoism it means much more than that. *Tao* is superior to all things. Chang (1978: 74) speaks of *Tao* thus:

Tao is real, yet unnameable. It is original non-differentiation and invisible. The magnificent. *Tao* is all – pervading. It may penetrate to either this side or that side. All creatures abide with it and grow, none is excluded. The unnamed is the source of the universe and the originator of all things.

Taosim – A philosophical start

In its early stages, Taoism was more a philosophy than religion. Lao-tzu, was dissatisfied with the chaos and turmoil of the time and sought relief by shunning society and returning to nature. He was commonly called Lao-tzu, which means ‘Old Master’ or ‘Old One’, because as legend has it, his pregnant mother carried him for so long that when he was born, his hair had already turned white (Carmody and Carmody, 1984: 57) .

Lao-tzu resided in Chou most of his life. When he foresaw the decay of Chou, he departed and came to frontier. There, Lao-tzu wrote a book in which he discussed the concepts of the Way (Tao) and Power (Te). The book that was produced is known as *Tao Te Ching* (generally translated “The classical of the Way and Power”) and is considered the principal text of Taoism. In *Tao Te Ching*, Lao – tzu expounded on *Tao*, the ultimate way of nature, and applied it to every level of human activity. The objective of Taoism is to search out the *Tao*, leave behind the world, and become at one with nature (Carmody and Carmody, 1984: 52).

Taoism's Second Sage

The philosophy of Lao-tzu was carried on step further by Chuang Chou, or Chuang – tzu, meaning “ Master Chuang” (369- 286 B.C), who was considered the most eminent successor to Lou-tzu. In his book “Chuang Tzu” according to Chang (1978:80), he not only elaborated on *Tao* but also expounded on the ideas of *Yin* and *Yang*. In his view, nothing is really permanent or absolute, but everything is in a state of flux between two opposites.

Based on this philosophy of inertia, the Taoist view is that there is no point in anyone doing anything to interfere with what nature has set in motion. Sooner or later, everything will return to its opposite. No matter how unbearable a situation is, it will soon fade away (Chang, 1978: 80).

Taoism from Philosophy to Religion.

In their attempt to be at one with nature, Taoists became obsessed with its agelessness and resilience. They speculated that perhaps by living in harmony with *Tao*, or nature's way, one could somehow tap into the secrets of nature and become immune to physical harm, diseases, and even death. The Taoists started to experiment with meditation, dieting, and breathing exercises that supposedly could delay bodily decay and death. Soon legends began to circulate about immortals who could fly on clouds and appear and disappear at will, and who lived on sacred mountains or remote island for countless years, sustained by dew or magical fruits (Chang, 1978: 82).

During the Han dynasty (206 B.C – 220 A.D), the magical practices of Taoism reached a new peak. It was said that Emperor Wu Ti, though promoting Confucianism as the official state teaching , was much attracted to the Taoist idea of physical immortality. In the Taoist view, life results when the opposing *yin* and *yang* (female and male) forces combine. Thus, by fusing lead (dark, or *yin*) and mercury (bright , or *yang*), the alchemists were imitating the process of nature, and the product, they thought , would be an immortality pill. Taoists also developed yogalike exercises, breath-control techniques, dietary restrictions, and sexual practices that were believed to strengthen one's vital energy and prolong one's life (Chang, 1978: 83).

Their paraphernalia include magic, talisman that were said to render one invisible and invulnerable to weapons or enable one to walk on water or fly through space. They also had magic seals, usually containing the *yin-yang* symbol, affixed on buildings and over doorways to repel evil spirits and wild beast.

As time rolled by, Taoism slowly degenerated into a system of idolatry and superstition. Each person simply worshiped his favourite gods and goddesses at the local temples, petitioning them for protection against evil and for help in attaining earthly fortune. The priests were for hire to conduct funerals; select favourable sites for graves, houses and businesses; communicate with the dead; ward off evil spirits and ghost; celebrate festivals , and perform sundry other rituals. Thus, what started off as a school of mystic philosophy had transformed itself into a religion (Chang, 1978: 84).

3.12 Confucianism

While we have traced the rise and development of Taoism, we should recall that it was just one of the "hundred schools" that blossomed in China during the period of the Warring States. Another school that came eventually to prominence was Confucianism. Unlike Taoism, Confucianism is not based on any metaphysical. Confucianism is mainly on ethical system or a moral philosophy, named after its founder Confucius (K'ung-Fu-Tzu) who was born in about 551 B.C (Gaer, 1973: 82).

Confucianism is really the traditional philosophy of the Chinese people, the wisdom of their ancients re-interpreted and transmitted to posterities by Confucius. Confucius never aimed at teaching anything new or founding any system; his aim was simply to transmit to posterities the wisdom of ancients. He was a great lover of tradition` and had great reverence for the wisdom of the ancients. After devoting some time to the study of antiquity, and after a period of political career, Confucius became an itinerant teacher of moral philosophy. China of his time was going through a period of socio-political upheaval and moral degeneration (Gaer, 1973: 84).

Although Confucius excelled as a scholar and as a teacher, his influence was by no means limited to scholastic circles. In fact, the aim of Confucius was not just to teach rules of conduct or morals but also to restore peace and order in the society, which was, at the time, torn apart by constant warfare between the feudal lords. To achieve that goal, Confucius taught that everyone, from the emperor to the common folk, must learn what role he was expected to play in

the society and live accordingly. In Confucianism, this concept is known as *li* which means propriety, courtesy, the order of things, and, by extension, ritual, ceremony, and reverence. In his teaching, Confucius maintained that of all the things that people live by, *li* is the greatest for without *li*, people can not know how to conduct a proper worship of the spirits of the universe, or how to establish the proper status of the king and the minister; the ruler and the ruled; the elders and the juniors; or how to establish the moral relationships between the sexes, between parents and children. Hence, *li* is the rule of conduct by which a true gentleman (*Chun-tzu*, sometimes translated "superior man") carries out all his social relations. When everyone endeavours to do so, "everything becomes right in the family, the state and the world," said Confucius, and that is when *Tao*, or heaven's way, is done (Gaer, 1973: 85).

Confucianism - A State Cult

Confucianism rose to a state cult when Emperors of the Han dynasty found in the Confucian teaching of loyalty to the ruler just the formula they needed to solidify the power of the throne (Boa, 1981: 158). Only those versed in Confucian classics were selected as state officials, and anyone hoping to enter government service has to pass nation wide examinations based on the Confucian classics. Confucian rites and rituals became the religion of the royal house (Boa, 1981: 158).

This change of events did much to elevate the position of Confucius in Chinese society. The Han emperors started the tradition of offering sacrifices at the grave

of Confucius. Honorific titles were bestowed on him. Then, in 630 A.D., the Tang emperor, Tai Tsung ordered that a state temple to Confucius be erected in every province and country throughout the empire and that sacrifices be offered regularly. For all practical purposes, Confucius was elevated to the status of a god, and Confucianism became a religion hardly distinguished from Taoism or Buddhism (Boa, 1981: 160).

3.13 Shinto

Shinto is predominantly a Japanese religion. The formation of Shintoism is almost identical with the Japanese ethnic culture, and it is a religious culture that was never practiced apart from this ethnic society (Watch Tower, 1990: 187).

The designation "Shinto" sprang up in the eighth century A.D. to distinguish the local religion from Buddhism, which was introduced in Japan. Hence the religion of the Japanese existed before the introduction of Buddhism, but it was a subconscious religion, consisting of customs and mores. With the introduction of Buddhism, people became aware of the fact that those mores constituted a Japanese religion, different from Buddhism, which was a foreign religion (Hiari, 1981: 671).

Concerning the origin of Shinto, it is difficult to pinpoint a date when the original Shinto, or "Religion of the Japanese" emerged. The advent of the wetland cultivation of rice gave rise to well – organized and stable communities, and agricultural rites which later played an important role in Shinto. Those early people conceived and revered numerous gods of nature (The New World Encyclopedia, 1972: 578).

In addition to this reverence, fear of departed souls led to rites for appeasing them. This later developed into a worship of ancestral spirits. According to Shinto belief, a "departed" soul still has its personality and is stained with death pollution immediately after death. When the bereaved perform memorial rites, the soul is purified to the point of removing all malice, and it takes on a peaceful and benevolence character. With time, the ancestral spirit rises to the position of an ancestral, or guardian, deity (The New World Encyclopedia, 1972: 578).

Gods of nature and ancestral gods were considered to be spirits floating and filling the air. During festivals, people called upon the gods to descend to the specific sites sanctified for the occasion. Gods were said to take temporary residence in *shintai*, objects of worship such as trees, stones, mirrors, and swords. *Shamans*, or spirits mediums, presided over ritual to call down the gods.

Gradually, the "landing sites" of the gods which were temporarily purified for festivals, took on a more permanent form. People built shrines for benevolent gods, those who appeared to bless them. At first they did not carve images of the gods but worshiped the *shintai*, in which spirits of gods were said to reside. Even an entire mountain, such as Fuji, could serve as a *shintai*. In time there came to be so many gods that the Japanese developed the expression *yaoyorozu-no-kami*, which literally means "eight million gods" (*kami* means "gods" or "deities"). Now the expression is used to signify "countless gods", since the number of deities in the Shinto religion is ever increasing (Hiari, 1981: 674).

3.14 Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism is an ancient religion maintained by the modern Parsis of India and the Zoroastrians of Iran. It was named after the founder, Zoroaster or Zarathustra. He lived in Persia (Iran), probably between 10th and 6th centuries B.C (The New World Encyclopedia, 1972: 803).

The ancient Persians, practiced polytheistic religion similar to that of India before the development of Hinduism. The prominent gods included god of the sky called *Vivahvant*, *Vafu*, the god of wind, *Mithra*, the sun god, *Hauruatal*, god of water, *Atar*, god of fire etc. (The New World Encyclopedia, 1972: 803).

They had also innumerable good and bad spirits that were invoked and worshiped e.g. *Yima*, spirit of death, *Asha*, spirit of truth; *Ammeritat*, spirit of immortality and several other spirits.

The central form of ritual in ancient Persia consisted of three forms of sacrifices: animal sacrifice, libation sacrifice and fire sacrifice. During the ritual, a bull or an ox was slaughtered amidst dancing and shouting. The priest performed the libation using *hamoa* juice (a kind of wine). Then the sacrificial animal would be set on fire. The worshippers cover their faces in adoration of the sacred fire (Udaya, 2008:65).

The magi or priest claimed the ability to control and influence the benevolent and malevolent spirits through prayers and rituals. Through magic, they claim to influence divine powers in order to control everyday events.

They (priests) were also expert in occult science, thus they interpreted dreams, received and deliver omens, foretold future events, read signs through the movements of the stars or flight of birds, and practiced various kinds of divination. It was when this type of religion was in practices that Zarathustra (Greek Zoroaster) was born.

The man Zoroaster

Like in Hebrew Christian history, the mother of Zoroaster conceived by a heavenly shaft of light and gave virgin birth to a prophet. His infancy stories were full of miraculous events. It is said that the earth trembled at his birth, and a heavenly light shown around the house, while the universe thrilled with gladness. But the demons and the evil spirits did not share the joy, instead they made attempt to kill him. In each attempt to kill him, a miracle saved him, a cow stood by his side to prevent other cows from trampling him. When he was to be burnt at a temple fire, another miracle saved him (Udaya, 2008:66).

Zoroaster grew up and studied science and the religion of his time for seven years. At the age of fifteen, he put on the sacred shirt and sacred girdle as symbols of confirmation into the religion of his people. For fifteen years, he meditated on the issue of human suffering just as Buddha did. At the age of thirty, Zoroaster sat in front of his cave watching the sun sets when suddenly he reached Enlightenment. He identified the troubles and sufferings of the world that separated the day from the night, and light from darkness. From this experience, he saw the world as consisting of good and evil. As the day and night cannot

change their natural cause, so good cannot become evil nor can evil become good. It became clear to Zoroaster that the world was ruled by two forces-good and evil. He called the good force *Ahura Mazda*, that is God in Zoroastrianism, which means wise Lord; and the evil force he called *Angra Mainyu* i.e Lie demon. He maintained that *Ahura Mazda* was the creator of all good. *Angra Mainyu* was the source of evil. *Ahura Mazda* created man, but gave him freedom to choose between good and evil. Man in his choice, stores up for himself reward or punishment after death. Zoroaster condemned the religion of his people and said that their gods were agents of *Angra Mainyu*, and that a time will come when *Ahuru Mazda*, the supreme God of light and good, will vanquish *Angra Mainyu*. He proclaimed one God, *Ahuru Mazda* (Watch Tower, 1990:191).

After the death of Zoroaster, his followers adapted the religion to include the worship of other gods, notably *Ahura - Mithras*, along with *Ahuru - Mazda*. Zoroastrianism stresses much on morality than did other religions of its time. It later became the national religion of the ancient Persian Empire. When Alexander the great destroyed this empire in 330- 327 B.C, he introduced the Greek religion. In 641 A.D, Persia was conquered by the Moslem Arabs, and its old religion gradually lost ground to Islam. Moslem persecution of Zoroastrains caused many to flee to India where they were called Paris. Those who remained in Persia became known as Gabars (Ugwu, 2000:21).

3.15 Judaism

Judaism is a religion rooted in history of the Jewish people. Generally speaking, the Jewish people are descendants of an ancient, Hebrew- speaking branch of the semitic race (Gen. 10:1, 21-32, 1 Chronicles 1: 17 – 28 , 34; 2: 1,2). Nearly 4,000 years ago, their forefather Abram emigrated from the thriving metropolis of Ur of the Chaldeans in Sumeria to the land of Canaan, of which God had stated: "I will give this land to your offspring" (Gen.11:31-12:7). He is spoken of as " Abram the Hebrew" in Genesis 14:13, although his name was later changed to Abraham (Gen. 17:4-6). From him the Jews draw a line of descent that begins with his son Isaac and his grandson, Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel (Gen. 32:27-29). Israel had 12 sons, who became the founders of 12 tribes. One of those tribes was Judah, from which the name "Jew" was eventually derived. In time, the name "Jew" was applied to all Israelites, not just to a descendant of Judah (Esther 3:6; 9: 20).

Origin of Judaism

Judaism as a religion dates back to 1943 B.C when God chose Abram to be His servant (Watch Tower, 1990:207). God chose Abram to be his special servant and later made a solemn oath to him because of his faithfulness in being willing to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice, even though the sacrifice was never completed. In the oath God said:

By Myself I swear, the Lord declares: Because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your fevoured one, I will bestow my blessing upon you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven... All nations of the earth shall bless themselves because you have obeyed my command (Gen. 22:15-18).

This sworn oath was repeated to Abraham's son and his grandson, and then it continued in tribe of Judah and this line of David. The strictly monotheistic concept of a personal God dealing directly with humans was unique in that ancient world, and it came to form the basis of the Jewish religion (Gen. 22:15 – 18; 26 : 3-5; 28- 15).

To carry out His promise to Abraham, God laid the foundation for a nation by establishing a special covenant with Abraham's descendants. This covenant was instituted through Moses, the great Hebrew leader and mediator between God and Israel. The law which the Israelites accepted is referred to as the " Ten Commandment", from which the Israelites developed over 600 laws for directions and guidance for daily conduct. The law covenant, or religious constitution gave form and substance to the faith of the Jews. As a result, the descendants of Abraham became a nation dedicated to the service of God.

Judaism is a monotheistic religion in the strictest sense, and holds that God intervenes in human history, especially in relations to the Jews. Jewish worship involves several annual festivals and various customs. Although there are no creeds or dogmas accepted by all Jews, the confession of the oneness of God as expressed in the *Shema*, a prayer based on Deuteronomy 6:4 (Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one) forms a central part of synagogue worship. This belief in one God was passed on to Christianity and Islam.

3.16 Christianity

The first verse of the Christian Greek Scriptures, commonly known as the New Testament states: " The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David , the Son of Abraham" (Mtt 1:1). The following 15 verses spell out Abraham's line of descendants down to Jacob, who became father to Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. Therefore, Jesus was a descendant of Abraham, but he was divinely conceived (Lk.1:26-35).

Christian religion is based on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea. He grew up as a normal Jewish youth of his time, attending the local synagogue and the temple in Jerusalem (Lk. 2: 41-52).

At the age of 30, after being baptized by John in the river Jordan, Jesus started his public ministry. He went throughout Galilee and Judea preaching the message of the kingdom of God and performing miracles, such as healing the sick and raising the dead. In his dealings with his followers and with the public in general, Jesus manifested love and compassion. Thus, in the final hours of his life, he could say to his disciples: " I am giving you a new commandment , that you love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves" (John:13: 34f). Therefore the essence of Christianity in practice is self-sacrificing love.

In the year 33C.E., Jesus was arrested and tried by the Jewish religious authorities, accused of blasphemy for calling himself the Son of God, and saying that he himself was a king. After Jesus had been passed from one ruler to

another, the Roman governor , Pontius Pilate, on the insistence of the religiously inspired mob, sentenced Jesus to death. As a consequence, Jesus died in disgrace, on the cross and his body was placed in a tomb. But on the third day, an event took place that transformed the disconsolate disciples of Jesus into joyful believers and zealous evangelizers (He resurrected).

Before he finally ascended to heaven , the resurrected Jesus instructed his disciples:

All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo , I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Mtt. 28:18-20)

This is one reason why Christianity, from its very inception, was an active, proselytizing religion.

The original basic beliefs of Christianity are stated in the Apostles' Creed. It affirms that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that God sent him to earth to live as a man and to suffer and die for the redemption of mankind. It also states the belief that Jesus, after being crucified, arose from the dead and ascended into heaven from where he will return to earth to judge the living and the dead. Belief that Jesus was born of a virgin mother and that there is life for man after death are also essential parts of the Creed.

3.17 Islam

The name "Islam" is significant to a Moslem, for it means "submission", "surrender", or "commitment" to Allah. It expresses the innermost attitude of those who have hearkened to the preaching of Mohammed. 'Moslem' means one who submit to Allah (Carmody and Carmody, 1984:120).

Moslems believe that their faith is the culmination of the revelations given to the faithful Hebrews and Christians of old. However, their teachings diverge from the Bible on some points, even though they cite both the Hebrew and the Greek Scriptures in the Quran. To understand the Muslim faith better, we need to know how, where, and when this religion started.

The Birth & Childhood of Mohammed

Mohammed was born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, about 570 A.D. His father, Abd Allah, died before Mohammed's birth. His mother, Aminah, died when he was about six years old, and because of that he lived with his uncle Abutalib. Mohammed later entered the services of a widow, Khadijah, who was fifteen years older than him. Mohammed at the age of 25, married her. The marriage must have relieved Mohammed economic stress. At that time the Arabs practised a form of worship of Allah that was centered in the Mecca valley, at the sacred site of the Kabah, a simple cubelike building where a black meteorite was worshipped. According to Islamic tradition, the Kabah was originally built by Adam and after the deluge (flood) was rebuilt by Abraham and Ishmael. Kabah later

became a sanctuary for 360 idols, one for each day of the month of the year (Carmody and Carmody, 1984:122).

As Mohammed grew up, he questioned the religious practices of his day. He was dissatisfied with the Arabian polytheistic religion.

Mohammed's Call to Prophethood

Mohammed's call to be a prophet took place when he was about 40 years of age (Watch Tower 1990:36). He had the custom of going alone to a nearby mountain cave, called GharHira, for meditation, and it was on one of these occasions that he received the call to be a prophet. Moslem tradition relates that while he was there, an angel (Gabriel) commanded him to recite in the name of Allah. Mohammed failed to respond, so the angel caught him forcefully and pressed him so hard that he could not bear it anymore. Then the angel repeated the command. Again, Mohammed failed to recite, so the angel choked him again. This occurred three times before Mohammed started to recite what come to be viewed as the first of a series of revelations that constitute the Quran. The recitation reads:

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Read: In the name of thy Lord who created. Created man from clot.

Read: And thy Lord is the most Bounteous, who taught by the pen, Taught man that which he knew not (Watch Tower 1990:36).

Moslems generally have five religious obligations called "five pillars". The five pillars include:

The *Shahadah* (The Creed or profession of faith). This is the basic profession of Moslem belief. Every Moslem must accept and sincerely proclaim the belief in God's oneness and Mohameed's prophethood. They therefore proclaim the Creed thus: La ilaha illa Allah; Mohammed resul Allah; meaning There is no god but Allah; Mohammed is his prophet (Surah 33:40)

Salat (Prayer). Prayer is said five times daily facing Mecca (Surah 2:144). It is said at day break, at noon, mid-afternoon, after sun set, and before going to bed. During prayer, a worshiper undergoes stages of fixed ritual of recitation and prostration. All prayers are said in Arabic language. Prayer is said privately or at the Mosque. Friday is set aside for public prayer. This Friday noon prayer is called Jumat or Jumad.

Zakat (Almsgiving). This is the obligation to give a percentage of one's income and of the value of some property (Surah 24: 56). Many Moslems regard it as loan given to God which will be repaid manifold. Moslems, therefore are expected to contribute generously to a central treasury or common purse in support of the poor in the Islamic community. The money is also used in building and maintaining the Mosques and for the general administration of the *Ummah*-community. Moslems are, apart from the Zakat, expected to give alms to the poor and needy of the society. This could be private and dependant on individual's magnanimous spirits. This type is called Sadagah.

Sawm (Fasting). This is observed especially during the month of Ramadan (Surah 2: 183 – 185). It was during the month of Ramadan that the Quran was revealed to Mohammed. During this fasting period, all Moslems are expected to participate except the aged, sick, and travelers. No eating or drinking from dawn to sun set.

Hajj (pilgrimage). Once in a lifetime, every Moslem must make journey to Mecca. Only illness and poverty are licit excuses (Surah 3: 97).

3.18 African Traditional Religion

The first writers on African Traditional Religion were European missionaries and anthropologists. Each of them approached the study of this religion with the prejudiced mind and gave it various unacceptable and derogatory names such as paganism, idolatry, primitive religion, animism, fetishism etc.

African Traditional Religion, however, is the African religious belief system that has been handed down from one generation to another. It is a legacy received by the people from their forefathers. This religion has so dominated the thinking of the Africans that it has shaped their culture, their social life, their political organization and economic activities. It is a religion full of lives and activities through ceremonies, festivals etc.

Like Hinduism, African Traditional Religion has no founder, for it grew out of the culture of the African people. But unlike Hinduism, which has sacred scriptures, African Traditional Religion has no scriptures.

Basic Tenets of African Traditional Religion

Adherents of African Traditional Religion believe that there is only one God who is the absolute creator, owner and ruler of everything, and the Father of all mankind. There are two worlds, namely, the physical world of mortal men, and the world of the spirits. There is interaction between these two worlds; for those in the physical world (mortal men) pray to those in the world of the spirit for help and protection; while those in the world of spirits help and protect those in the physical world. The world of the spirits is inhabited by God, the gods (deities or divinities), the ancestors, and spirits. The gods, ancestors and spirits are messengers to God and subordinate to him. Each god is assigned a duty and an area of influence with delegated powers (Ugwueze, 2008:48).

3.19 Common Features of World Religions

The world religions in spite of their divergent views still have some features that cut across all of them. Such features include:

Highest Object of Loyalty

This is the most characteristic mark of all religions. In every case the highest or supreme object of worship is regarded as an actual being, the ultimate being, either a personal being or an impersonal being. In all the world religions, the loyalties of adherents are integrated and directed towards the supreme object of worship.

Faith

The religious life is one that is lived in and by faith. It is a man's faith that makes him religious. Some people claim that there is hardly any scientific and logical proof of religious beliefs. It is unattainable they assert. Religion finds positive value in the trust and confidence that is called faith. The exhibition of faith is common in all religions.

Ritual

Pattern of devotion is common to religions. Religion is concrete and therefore does not stop short with the acknowledgement of, the belief about, or even the faith in a supreme object of worship. Religions have ways and means of physical and mental response toward the supreme object which are regularly observed either in the public or private.

Sacred

In most religions, a distinction is made between the sacred and the profane. Well developed religions usually have sacred writings, such as Vedas, Tripitakes, Bible, Koran etc. Every religion also has sacred objects usually kept in well designated places for the worshippers to see and or make use of. Certain persons are equally considered sacred or holy, such as Mohammed for Moslems, Jesus for Christians, Buddha for the Buddhists, Dibia for the African traditionalists, etc.

Immortality of the Soul

Death is the last of rite of passage that a person has to go through on earth (after birth, puberty and marriage). Death is not the end of human existence. There is life beyond the grave, a belief shared by all religions.

This belief that life exists beyond the grave gave rise to the building of pyramids by the Egyptians to preserve the human bodies, believing that soul would one day come back to the body. These pyramids serve as tombs or burial places and were adorned with articles of great values meant to be used in the journey into the next world. Also the concept of reincarnation in some parts of Africa which upholds that the soul of the dead person returns to inhabit a new body attests to the immortality of soul.

There is the religious belief that when the breath of life leaves a person, the person is declared dead, but the essential person (the soul) survives death and returns to God. Before God, the soul has to render account of its stewardship on earth. According to the Islamic and Christian doctrines, the soul if lived well on the earth will be with God in heaven for eternity, but if not well-lived, will spend the eternity in hell. In African traditional religious belief, if the person lived worthy life on earth, will after the judgment of God, join the ancestors, but if not well-lived, will be banished or excluded from the fellowship of the good ones – the ancestors, to become wanderer, living an aimless, haunting existence.

Salvation

In nearly every religion, there is the belief that man must be saved from something (hell for example) or for something (such as heaven). This pronounces loudly the eschatological perspective from which these religions view life in the here and hereafter concepts.

Ethical Demands

Moral demands are integral part of religious claims. Religion is so pervasive in the lives of its adherents that it has relevance to their decisions in practical affairs. There are certain behavioural patterns that are due to religious persuasions. Every adherent regards ethical demands as part of their religion.

Announcement of Final Reward

Hardly does religion teach that the ultimate fruition or reward can be fully attained or realized in the present moment. Various religions teach that for one to be hopeful of the eschatological events, certain actions and events have to be accomplished.

Worship

This refers to adoration and reverence for God. Through worship, man acknowledges his dependence on God and seeks to do his will or to win God's favour. People of various religions do this in many ways such as by prayer, sacrifice, incantation, chants and rituals.

Priesthood

In the early stage of religion, there was no separate priestly class. Kings and heads of clans and families carried out sacrifices and other sacred activities. Later, a special class of priests developed to take charge of worship services.

Pilgrimage

The idea of moving from profane to holy or sacred places as a fulfillment of religious obligation, for prayers or for the acquisition of salvation is very prevalent among the world religions. Adherents of different religions perform this religious ritual as time or occasion demands.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WEB BETWEEN SCIENCE AND RELIGION

The history of relationship between science and religion is a long one. Theology was once called the Queen of Science. Indeed, many religions of the world have made great impact on science. Islam, for example, made great advances in algebra, geometry, optics and philosophy, but left the mysteries of physics to the power of Allah (Dopamu, 2003: xvii).

On the other hand, Biblical teachings fostered the development of science in the West. The early pioneers of science – Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Newton and Descartes were all brought up in the Christian tradition and they were all devoutly religious (Ted, 2000:9). Modern science, therefore, began not by doubting God's existence and active interaction with the world. At this juncture, an attempt will be made to discuss the web between science and religion.

4.1 Health Care

The two disciplines pay attention to human health. There are some cases in which some ailments that defies scientific approach were taken care of through religious approach and vice versa. These days, scientists, to a large extent, have come to accept the power of prayer or miracles. Adimora, a consultant physician with the University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, Enugu and senior lecturer in the Department of Paediatrics, College of Medicine, University of Nigeria, speaks to this effect: "Divine healing still takes place and I am a living witness that God still

heals a lot of people from diseases that have been referred to as incurable” (2010:2).

A cursory look at the hospital logo shows that the relationship between science and religion in the field of medicine has been an age long one. The hospital logo is a snake which has Biblical interpretation. It symbolize the fiery serpent which God told Moses to make in the wilderness and set it on pole, that everyone bitten by serpent, who sees it shall live (Numbers 21:6 – 9). In the New Testament (John 3:14f), Jesus took the position of the serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness so that whoever comes to him will be healed and also have eternal life. The analogy here is that hospitals are also places where people go for treatment and cure of different ailments.

In another development, science has helped in the advancement of surgical techniques, and provision of drugs for treatment of different ailments. This helps to save people from early or untimely death. As a corollary, religion preaches against envy, hatred, anger etc. which shorten the life-span of an individual. Avoidance of these vices helps to prolong one’s life.

In traditional bone-setting, in some parts of Igbo land, which is connected with traditional religion, the scientific method of experiment, observation and inference are brought to bare. Some of the bone-setters before applying medication to the victim who has dislocation or fracture, will first of all break one of the legs of a fowl, apply the medicine on that broken leg, invoke the powers of the gods, and

then watch the fowl. If the fowl leaps within some specific time, the bone-setter will be convinced that he can cure the victim and will then apply his medicine.

However, there are some health-related issues such as cloning, abortion, euthanasia, artificial methods of birth control, etc. which science supports but religion is against them.

4.2 Understanding the World

Science and religion respond to a felt need to understand the world. It is noteworthy to state that the attempt to understand the natural world started from the field of religion. Science came later, and it is in a bit to understand the world that many theories have been propounded from both science and religion. Even though scientific theories and religious theories conflict with one another, it is a clear evidence that both are in search of understanding the world. Taking the theories of the origin of the universe, as an example, some scientists had referred to religious theories as myths. This wrong notion had been corrected by Kealy (1987:28) as he wrote: "... Myth aims at the interpretation of what lies beyond observation and simple deduction. Using the powerful art of the story form, it aims at insight and is often more profound than scientific description or logical analysis."

The authors of Genesis accounts of creation used the "myths" to convey a religious truth. They are not scientific history and should not be interpreted literally. There are some scientists that are also theologians who have helped to

bring science and religion together with regard to creation story. Two scientists from the University of Illinois, in Odemuyiwa (2003: 213) claimed as follows:

Actually, biologists are still as far away as they were in their attempts to explain how the first protoplasm originated. The evidence of those who would explain life's origin on the basis of the accidental combination of suitable chemical elements is no tangible than that of those who place their faith in Divine creation as the explanation for their belief as do the former.

4.3 Control of Nature (Rainfall)

There is no gain denying the fact that rainfall can be controlled through religious means. In some occasions, Christians have prayed against rain that was about to fall and disrupt their activities and it will come to pass. In African Traditional Religion, there are specialists in rain-making who at the same time can stop rain from falling. Ekwunife (nd:7) has this to say about them:

We find rain-makers all over Africa. Many of them are deeply religious people who spend a lot of their time praying to God to give rain to their people. They have a crucial job to do, since rain is the source of life for all living things. In Sudan they are called 'keepers of rain' and 'those who pray for rain'; in Uganda they are called 'askers of rain', and 'those who cause rain to fall'; and in Kenya they are called 'seers or watchers of rain'. Their duty is to ask for rain from God... In few cases they may ask in prayer and ritual for the rain to stop, if too much of it is destroying crops and causing floods, or if there is an important event like a festival or wedding taking place on a particular day.

In the field of science, there is also scientific methods of making and dispersing rain. There are three stages involved in artificial rain-making (www.google.com). The first stage is agitation. That is using chemicals to stimulate the air mass upwind of the target area to rise and form rain clouds. The chemical used during this stage are calcium chloride, calcium carbide, calcium oxide, a compound of

salt and urea. These compounds are capable of absorbing water vapour from the air mass, thus stimulating the condensation process.

The second stage is called building-up stage. Here the cloud mass is built up using chemicals such as Kitchen salt, the T.I formular, urea, ammonium nitrate, dry ice, and calcium chloride to increase nuclei which also increase the density of the clouds.

In the third stage of bombardment, chemicals such as super-cool agents: silver iodide and dry ice are used to reach the most unbalanced status which builds up large beads of water (Nuclei) and makes them fall down as rain drops. This scientific method of rain-making occurred at Abudhabi in United Arab Emirate (UAE) on June, 2010 (www.google.com). In like manner, scientists have produced chemicals that are capable of dispersing or stopping rain when sprayed in the air.

4.4 Where Life Begins

Perhaps because of the sharp contrast between religious and scientific theories of evolution, many schools of thought assume that science and religion do not mix. This assumption is not valid in the case of the concept of life and where it begins. Biology gives a vivid account of where life of man begins. It states that conception takes place when the sperm and egg of man and woman respectively come together to form a fertilized zygote. At this point, an independent genetic make up is formed. The child's sex, future hair colour, bone structure, skin colour and traits are formed. Ayantayo (2003:402) points out that:

Two weeks after conception, the child already has a blood supply and blood type. By the end of this third week, the heart is beating and a body rhythm has been established that will sustain the child's life. The brain, arms, legs, kidneys, liver, and digestive tract have begun to take form at the fourth week. By the end of the fourth week, the embryo is already ten thousand times larger than it was at conception. Likewise by the end of the second month, the child has fingerprints. After the end of third month, the baby has fingernails, sucks his thumb, and resoles with pain. The growth continues rapidly till after the ninth month when the child could be born. At birth, the child becomes full-fledged member of his society.

Affirming that life begins at conception, a geneticist, in Echekwube (1984:197) argues that:

Life has a very, very long history but each individual has a very neat beginning, the moment of his conception... To accept the fact that after fertilization has taken place a new human has come into being is no longer a matter of taste or opinion. The human nature of the human being from conception to old age is not a metaphysical contention, it is plain experimental evidence.

The Bible, which is the reservoir of knowledge regarding Christian beliefs, does not only confirm, but also establishes the biological understanding of where life begins. The Bible affirms that life of man begins at conception, and it is for this reason that the Bible does not make distinction between the unborn child and children who are already born. Therefore the foetus is accorded the same importance with already born child. For example, the word babe used in Luke 1:44 where Elizabeth says of her unborn child, is the same word used in Luke 2:12 where the angel says to the shepherds "You will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger". Job also speaks about the night his mother conceived him (Job 3:3). We see similar reference in Isaiah 49:1 "The Lord called me from the womb". The same echoes in Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you." In view of the above, the Bible accords

legal protection to unborn child so that anybody who trespass with it, thus causing harm to it, will be severely punished accordingly (Ex. 21:22 – 25).

4.5 Environmental Issues

Environmental degradation is a matter of great concern to the scientists and theologians alike. For religion, it is the responsibility of human beings to maintain harmony with the cosmos. Human beings are thus expected to endeavour to create harmonious relationships with fellow human beings, fauna, flora and the supreme beings. The earth's environment would be much safer if scientists considered these values as they perform their duties. An approach that emphasizes the maintenance and sustenance of cosmic harmony would assure that issues of global warming and breakdown of Ozone layer, deforestation, extinction of certain species, degradation of habitats and ecosystems, among others would be reduced.

4.6 Science and Ethical Issues

Recent scientific innovative ideas are promising to change and improve human life and progress. Such positive aspects of science always have negative and dangerous effects. The case of nuclear energy as witnessed in the explosion at Hiroshima and Chernobyl disasters serves as an example of the dangers of badly controlled techniques. Religion speaks of checking the power of technical science so as to save humanity from self-destruction.

Human destruction is possible especially now that people have in many ways lost values. The emphasis is now on economic gains, military superiority and material adequacy, rather than human welfare, controlled and stabilized nations. There is therefore need for ethical regulations to prevent humanity's power from turning into a curse. Religion, whose organizing principle in life is human dignity, can supply a solid foundation for an ethic that will govern the relationship of science and humanity.

4.7 The use of Hypothesis

Hypothesis in the views of Onah and Ovute (1998:24), "is a proposition, intelligent guesses about the solution to a problem which has no validity until full investigation is carried out". In other words hypothesis is an intelligent guess that leads to verification. Religion and science make extensive use of hypothesis.

4.8 Scientific Character of Religious Studies

Science, according to Meehan in Osuala (1982:12), is the production of systematic explanations, based upon empirical data joined logically to form regular patterns". If, however, as Meehan puts it, it becomes clear that religious phenomena as observable phenomena are empirical and data can be systematically collected and logically joined to form regular patterns. They can aid the formulations of laws that will guide further observations and systematic explanations of religious phenomena. This serves the fundamental purpose of science, which Osuala (1982:12) says "is the accumulation and classification of experience and the systematization of such experience into a relatively small number of broad general

laws and principles..."Certain Religious phenomena are observable, their data could be systematically collected, organized and interpreted following specifically recognized procedure. In this sense, religious phenomena have scientific character. The scientific character calls for theoretical approach to religion which Yinger (1970:18) says would give a complete analysis of human action. He sees in religion the meeting point of the interest of the behavioural sciences (anthropology, psychology, social psychology, sociology and history) in the study of social culture and character facts in understanding human action.

4.9 Building of Places of Worship and Construction of Religious Objects

The magnificent building of places of worship such as churches, mosques, temples, and the construction of religious objects such as Crucifix, Crescent, Ikenga etc. are all products of science and technology. In our contemporary society, there are technologists who specialize in the construction of religious objects. This is purely technology manifesting itself in the field of religion.

4.10 Dividing Wall Between Religion, Science and Technology

The dividing wall between religion, science and technology has been on different methodologies. Religions rely on revelation while science relies on observable, repeated experiences. Both represent distinct ways of approaching experience. Science is closely tied to mathematics, while religion is more closely tied to ordinary experience of life. As interpretations of experience, science is descriptive while religion is prescriptive.

Science is a questioning enterprise. It starts with 'why' 'what', 'how' of things which religion might take for granted. Science only accepts a proposition or matter which clarity is understandable and granted while religion required little or no such clarification. Science deals with the measurable, religion deals with the immeasurable.

Science deals with the study of nature, its forces, processes and development. It is based on the analysis of evidence. It assumes, as a working hypothesis, that processes and events happen due to natural causes, not through divine intervention. It rarely intrudes in matters of morality, the existence and nature of deity, spirituality etc. Religion deals with matter of faith. Its main basis is often revelation from a deity either orally transmitted from generation to generation or recorded in a sacred text. Most religions teach moral principles, mankind's relationship to the deity(s) and spiritual matters.

Science generally welcomes change. Many false hypotheses are proposed and later rejected or modified as new data becomes available. This is the method by which science continually advances. It is ultimately self-correcting. All scientific beliefs are subject to being falsified if new evidence is uncovered. One example is the cause of stomach ulcers. Echekwube (1985:15) noted that:

For decades, physicians treated patients with ulcers by using long-term stress relief programs, permanent dietary changes and continuing medication to reduce stomach acid. They achieved only moderate success. Then an Australian doctor proved that many form of stomach ulcers were caused by a bacterium that could be eliminated with a single shot of antibiotics. He single-handedly triggered a revolution in patient treatment.

Religious beliefs, particularly those based on a sacred text, change much more slowly. Infact, many religions stress the unchangeable nature of their beliefs. There are two main methods by which religions modify their teachings. In Christianity, for example, some Biblical passages that were once considered to be literally true are now interpreted symbolically. Heaven, for example, is no longer considered to be somewhere "up there". Hell is no longer believed to exist inside the earth. Heaven is now viewed as a 'state' while hell is seen as being isolated from God. The second method is that some passages of the Bible are interpreted as perhaps being valid for the culture and age for which they were written, but not binding in a different society or era. Male control over women, restrictions on female ordination, prohibiting women from certain professions etc. have being largely rejected as sexist, at least by mainline and liberal protestants.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EFFECTS OF RELIGION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ON NIGERIAN SOCIETY

Perhaps, it will be note worthy to take a look at the Nigeria nation – state, and the advent of Christianity and Islam in Nigeria before discussing the effects of religion, science and technology on Nigerian society.

5.1 Nigeria Nation-State

Though this nation-state was formally created by the British only 107 years ago (1914), the land it embraces is as old as geological time i.e, millions of years old. There is convincing evidence that human beings have been inhabiting that land and interacting with its environment at least 11,000 years ago (Ozigboh, 1997:133). A good part of the story of Nigeria's past is "prehistory", since there are no written records or reliable oral traditions about it. Nonetheless, a good deal of useful information has emerged from archaeology. The main tool of the archaeologists are the material remains (bones, caves, buildings, garbage dumps, etc) left by primordial and former inhabitants of the country.

Nigeria, with a massive landmass of 575,237 square kilometers, is crowded with diverse people whose exact count no census has yet been able to determine, and had been practicing African Traditional Religion before the advent of Christianity and Islam. These ethnicities (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Ijaw, Efik, etc) are estimated as being little below 300 ethnic groups, and their aggregate population is put at about 140 million. It has the highest concentration of people than any other

country in Africa. Nigeria is very rich in natural resources-good farmland, abundant surface and underground waters, varied mineral deposits, etc.

In the last millennium, Nigerian people built up a number of historic kingdoms and empires, notable among which were Kanem-Borno, the Hausa States, Kwararafa, Benin, and Oyo. The export of Nigerians as slaves both across the Sahara and the Atlantic was part of the historic drama. The majority of Nigerian peoples placed premium interest on humane socio-political arrangements, which maximized human freedom, dignity and happiness. The glamorous example of this form of socio- political organization was that of the Igbo people before "things fell apart".

Britain stealthily and gradually grabbed this land of fortune and for a little over 100years (1851-1960), exploited its human and material resources for the benefit of her own citizens. Britain progressively yielded to nationalists' pressures through a number of constitutional arrangements (1922, 1946, 1953, 1954, 1957 and 1960) to finally settle for a highly remote-controlled exploitation that is popularly referred to as neo- colonialism. That is the Nigeria in which Christianity and Islam came, grew and flourished, and are still thriving.

5.2 Advent of Christianity in Nigeria.

The first Christian contact in Nigeria occurred in the fifteenth century when some Catholic missionaries from Portugal came to evangelize Benin. Benin was a large kingdom with great power. The *Oba* had many chiefs and petty rulers under his

authority. The missionaries did everything to convert the *Oba* on the premise that with his influence, the lives of his subjects would be affected.

The *Oba* Ozolua was interested in the strangers, and even applied for missionaries in 1485 by sending the chief of *Ughaton* to follow them to Lisbon. He showed interest in Christianity just because he requested the Portuguese to send him arms. The Portuguese King, Manoel, held back on the arms but encouraged the missionaries to use the opportunity to consolidate. He promised to comply to the request for arms only when he was sure that the *Oba* was a good and faithful Christian. As a sign of his acceptance of Christianity, the *Oba* sent one of his sons with the sons of some chiefs, in 1516, to be baptized by the missionaries. He also permitted them to construct a church in Benin City. However, there is no evidence to confirm that the church was built (Agha, 1997:34).

Christianity lost its influence in Benin with the death of *Oba* Ozolua. In 1517, every attempt was made in vain by Vicar of Sao Tome and three other priests on their arrival in Benin to see the new *Oba*. The purpose of this visit was to convert the new *Oba* to Christianity. Nevertheless, there were a handful of Christian remnants that were converted by the Portuguese.

In 1538, another party of missionaries was sent to Benin City by King Joao 111 of Portugal. The party consisted of two Franciscans and a member of the Order of Christ. On their arrival in Benin City, they found some missionaries and some Christians who were held captive by the new *Oba* who was baptized at his boyhood as stated above (i.e. in 1516). He was unfriendly to the new band of

Christians who arrived. He had forbidden the preaching and spreading of Christianity in and around his Palace. The Christians were not allowed to baptize those within and around his court. However, the Christians were allowed to expound their religion outside the *Oba's* court and this they did in a rather warlike manner. The *Oba* was not impressed and clearly told them that he was not going to change his religion. At any time the missionaries forced their way into the *Oba's* Palace, the doors were shut in their face. Nothing could surprise them more than such an attitude of a person that has been baptized at his boyhood.

The missionaries made every effort to destroy the native religion of the Benins. They even told the *Oba* how perilous his soul was. They condemned the practice of human sacrifice. They worked hard to mar the character of *Oba* before the Portuguese king. According to Agha (1997:35), the missionaries in their letter to the Portuguese king accused the *Oba* of "anointing himself with human blood, offering sacrifice to the devil, persisting in idolatries, diabolical invocations and many other superstitious, abominations and errors". As a result of non-cooperation of the *Oba*, trade with the Portuguese began to suffer. The Portuguese traders who were stranded in the kingdom did not receive any help from the *Oba*. An ambassador was sent from Lisbon before the detained missionaries were allowed to leave Benin. Christianity had no chance of success here then.

In 1570, some Augustinian missionaries who came from Sao Tome arrived at Warri and made some successful ventures (Achunike, 2002:41). The crown Prince

of the *Oba* of Warri was baptized Sebastian. The *Olu* further sent one of his sons, Domingos, to Portugal for education. Domingos got married to a Portuguese. But came back to Warri. Dom Antonio Domingos, the son by this marriage, maintained the relationship and for many years Christianity thrived but did not extend much beyond the *Olu's* Palace. Indeed, by the middle of the 17th century, crucifixes, statues of Christ and Blessed Virgin Mary, and some sacred vessels' were the only traces that Christianity was even preached or heard of in the country. This early attempt did not succeed.

However, in the 19th century, another attempt was made. This time it was successful. This was because the missionaries were mainly fellow Nigerians who were former slaves. The European traders had been taking many slaves from West Africa, especially Nigeria and Ghana to Europe and America, to work on plantations and as domestic servants. While the slave trade was going on, some Christians in Europe spoke strongly against it, and called for the abolition. One of them was William Wilberforce (1759-1833), a wealthy and very popular member of the parliament who had an encounter with Christ in 1784 through the preaching of Isaac Milner (Walker, 1970: 470). He began his ardent war against slavery, which led to the abolition of slave trade in 1807, and slavery throughout the British Dominions in 1833.

In order to enforce the law against slave trade, the British Government sent armed ships on the high seas to guard the coast of West Africa. The armed ships captured many slave ships on the high seas on their way to Europe and America.

The English soldiers took the slaves and the ships to Freetown in Sierra Leone, which had been founded for free slaves from West Africa. Many of the freed slaves had become Christians while overseas. They were desirous to Christianize their relations. This time also different denominations from Europe sent missionaries to Nigeria. Since, however, the 19th century's missionary attempt to establish Christianity in Nigeria was a bit too vast for the limited scope here, it became necessary to give an overview of the 19th century missionary work from the mainline churches to Nigeria in the order of their arrival.

The Methodist Mission

Methodist missionaries were first to arrive Nigeria in 19th century. In November 1839, 23 leading Yoruba merchants among the liberated Africans residing in Freetown, addressed a letter to the governor of Sierra Leone pleading that her majesty, Queen of England, be graciously disposed to assist them return to their home country, Nigeria, and establish for them a colony in Badagry. In that letter, they requested that her Royal Majesty should send missionaries with them and that by so doing, slave trade will be abolished. The reply, however, was not very enthusiastic. The Secretary of State in his reply said "we cannot send them without giving them security and protection which implies expense. But they can go if they wish" (Ofoegbu, 2004:25). Well, they wished to go. Some of them came back to Nigeria at their own expense. Badagry was their destination as they came home, though many of them later moved on to Abeokuta and Lagos. They came wearing English cloths, spoke Creole, and English, adopting English manners and practicing the English religion.

Just a year afterward (in 1840), the superintendent of Methodist mission in Sierra Leone received a letter from one of the ex-slaves by name Ferguson requesting that missionaries be sent to them urgently. The request was sent to the Methodist Home Committee in London and an energetic missionary, Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman was deployed from his station to proceed to Nigeria. Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman and his team arrived at Abeokuta on 24th September, 1842. From the mission stations established in Badagry and Abeokuta, the Methodist Church spread to various parts of the country west of the River Niger and parts of northern Nigeria.

In 1893, missionaries of the Primitive Methodist Church arrived from Fernando Po, an Island of the Southern coast of Nigeria. From there the Methodist church spread to other parts of the country, east of the River Niger and also to parts of the North. The church west of the River Niger and parts of the North was known as Western Niger District and East of the Niger and another parts of the North as the Eastern Niger District ([http://www. oikoumene.org](http://www.oikoumene.org)). Both existed independently of each other until 1962 when they constituted the conference of Methodist Church, Nigeria.

The Anglican Mission.

The penetration of Anglican missionaries into Nigeria began in 1844 when Henry Townsend, Andrew Wilhelm and John McCormack arrived Abeokuta from Freetown (Enebe; 2001:58). Later, Townsend returned to Sierra Leone and Ajayi Crowther was chosen to join these missionaries who had started work in Nigeria.

Andrew Wilhelm, John McCormack, and Ajayi Crowther were Yoruba .ex-slaves. This visit of the church missionary society, of the Anglican Church, seems to be a promise of success as they prepared the ground for positive reaction of the people to the good tidings. The first Christian baptism took place in Abeokuta in 1848 which Crowther's aged mother was one.

In 1852, Bishop Vidal was made Bishop for Sierra Leone with jurisdiction over the Anglican churches along the whole coast of West Africa. When he visited Nigeria in 1854, he confirmed 500 people and ordained to the Diaconates of the Anglican Church two Yoruba persons who were under training for ordination. His successor, Bishop Weeks, continued the same practice and ordained three Yoruba to the priesthood. Eventually, Abeokuta and Lagos became centers of their missionary activities.

The Anglicans occupied Onitsha in 1857, Brass in 1868, Okrika in 1884, and Abonnema or New Calabar in 1888. By 1892, they had settled in Bonny and Opobo (Udo, 1980:162). For many years the Niger Delta Pastorate of the Anglican Church was unable to explore more than a few kilometers from the banks of the Niger. But a year after the conquest of Aro Chukwu in 1902, the District Commissioner, Mr. Leslie Probyn, invited the Church Missionary Society to Owerri to begin work there. Bishop Tugwell sent Archdeacon T.J. Dennis to the town, which he found thickly populated with an estimated population of 3,000. But even more populous than Owerri, as he later found, was Egbu, 6 kilometres beyond, which had an estimated population of 21,000.

Finding himself in one of the most thickly populated parts of Eastern Nigeria, and knowing also that Aro Chukwu together with most of Eastern Nigeria had been conquered, Bishop Tugwell informed the United Free Church of his intention to establish a mission under the Niger Delta Pastorate of the Anglican Church in Igboland, with stations in Aro Chukwu and Bende. A conference of the two missions was held at Calabar on 20th September, 1904 to discuss the proposal. As the Berlin conference of 1884-5 accelerated the scramble for Africa, so the 1904 inter-mission conference set in motion the scramble for spheres of influence among the mission.

The Presbyterian Church.

The Presbyterian Church was not left out in the scramble to win converts. The Presbyterian missionary work in Nigeria started as a result of interest the people in Jamaica had for the people of West Africa. At the instance of a sea captain who had knowledge of old Calabar, and who encouraged the missionaries to go to Calabar, a special meeting of the Presbyterian was called in 1844. In that meeting, it was agreed that the new mission under H.M. Waddel should start in Calabar (Uchendu, 1980:34).

In 1846, a party which consisted of Hope Waddel, the leader, his wife, couple who were Scottish, and two West Indies men set out. Ironically, Waddel and his party found that king Eyo of Calabar and his son were already literate in English and that they were versed in reading, writing, and arithmetic. But the party faced

different kinds of dangers and difficulties including the opposition from the drunkards and believers in ritual practices. In 1864, a Christian was appointed chief of Creek town, and he tried to govern in accordance with Christian principles. In 1868, the whole of the Bible had been translated into Efik. In 1872, Esien Ukpabio, the first Christian convert there was ordained a priest and so the work of the Presbyterians continued to expand.

Before the C.M.S missionaries arrived Onitsha in 1857, the Presbyterian missionaries had in 1846 pushed into Aro Chukwu and expanded through Ututu, Ohafia, Abam, Abriba and Igbere towards Bende where the Primitive Methodists had already registered their presence. By 1880, the missionaries had penetrated far into the Cross River Igbo towns including Unwana, in present Ebonyi State.

A turn of events came when the British colonial government militarily destroyed the old Aro Oracle-the Ibinokpabi between 1901 and 1902. This Aro expedition was auspicious for the missionaries who pushed on into the interior behind the smoke of the gun. Some nationalist historians have argued that the Presbyterian missionaries in Calabar were party to the decision to deal militarily with the Aros and their nefarious long juju. Others, on the other hand, have argued that the missionaries neither participated nor initiated the moves to destroy the Aro oracle through sheer brute force, even though they benefited from the military expedition (Onunwa; 1986:63).

The Baptist Mission.

The presence of Baptist Mission was felt in Nigeria when Thomas J. Bowen and his group, from the USA arrived Badagry in August 1850 to explore the possibility of establishing a mission in the interior. This body came later than others, but did not sit to watch others scramble for spheres of influence. From Badagry, they proceeded further to Abeokuta where they helped the Egbas in their war with Dahomey (<http://books.google.com.ng>). Thomas J. Bowen later moved to Ogbomosho, in present Oyo state, where he founded Ogbomosho Baptist Mission in 1855.

The Baptists under William Hughes from an institution in North Wales arrived Port Harcourt in 1912 from where they expanded into Igbo heartland, with strong base at Obinze, near Owerri.

The Roman Catholic Church

The Roman Catholics as earlier noted, were the first to send missionaries to Nigeria as early as the 15th century. Despite the initial good reception, the mission in both Benin and Warri collapsed due partly to the cold feet, which the *Obas* and their people developed later. The military and political reasons for which the *Obas* received the missionaries were no longer coming forth, so they lost the patronage of the *Obas*. The unfriendly climatic conditions also contributed to the discontinuation of the missionary work. It finally collapsed, as there were no strong and convinced natives to carry on. It was in 1863 that Father Francis Borghero of Society of African Mission (SMA) visited Lagos from Port Novo in

Benin Republic. The SMA took up a permanent residence in Lagos in 1868, and thereby inaugurated the new Catholic era in Nigeria (Nweze, 2005:58).

For the first 18 years, the SMA sat tight in a bid to mount an ideal "European" Catholic parish. From the 1880s it began to contest Yoruba land with the Methodists, Anglicans and the Baptists who had started missionary work there long before its arrival. The SMA penetrated Yoruba land with impressive speed and determination. It entered Ijebuland through Ibonwon and Eshure. Fathers Jean-Baptist Chausse and Theodore Holley trekked and raked, and reconnoitered in search of most favourable towns and villages for evangelical conquest. The SMA was assisted by the Sisters of our Lady of Apostles (OLA).

As for the Eastern states of Nigeria, the Holy Ghost Fathers (C.S.S.P.) were dominant Catholic missionaries from 1885. They were assisted by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny (1889-1919) and Holy Rosary Sisters from 1928. They were relatively late-comers to the region seeing that the Presbyterians (1846) and Anglicans (1857) had long preceded them. In their first two decades, the Spiritans, like the SMA in Lagos, worked in and around Onitsha. By 1900, they had only two residential stations (Onitsha Waterside and Aguleri). It was the new British imperial ambition in the lower Niger and Eastern Igboland (1900-1903) that gingered them out of their cocoon. They began a spirited thrust into Igboland; moved down to Calabar and swung up the Benue river to Dekina in 1903. Their leader was Prefect Leon Lejeune (1900-1905), who handed the baton

to Joseph Shanahan. Under Prefect Joseph Shanahan (1905-1920), the drive to win Southeastern Nigeria for the Catholic Church was intensified.

In 1907, the SMA embarked on a renewed thrust into Northern Nigeria. The Colonial government, following the promise of assurance given to the leaders of Islam in the region, had restricted the Christian missionaries to the non-Muslim parts of Northern Nigeria. The Jos Plateau and Southern Zaria area were peopled by a large number of non-Muslims. These parts became very fertile grounds for the missionaries.

5.3 Islam in Nigeria.

Islam penetrated into Nigeria as far back as about the 11th century via North Africa across the trade routes of the Sahara desert. Those who were responsible for the spread of Islam during this early period in the country were individuals, most of whom were traders. This was the case because the spread was unplanned. Furthermore, there was no organized mission entrusted with the proselytization of the religion. The traders assumed the role of missionaries by encouraging people to embrace Islam (Quadri, 1985:219).

Over the subsequent centuries, waves of Islamic jihads swept through the dry semi-desert regions of West Africa, from what is now Senegal across to Nigeria; with great armies on horseback establishing powerful feudal empires, and firmly the religion of Islam. The most recent of these jihads was in the 19th century, with religious leaders like Uthman Dan Fodio reinforcing the great Islamic

Caliphates of Sokoto, Borno, and others in what is now known as northern Nigeria. The jihad, which Uthman Dan Fodio launched in 1804 to conquer larger tracts of northern Nigeria had religious motivation of purifying the society from its attitudes towards Islamic practice and its continued patronage of traditional religious practices. We can accept the fact that this was Uthman Dan Fodio's motive for jihad. Nevertheless, this does not exclude economic or social motivations, but rather presupposes them, since Islam is not only the way to God, but also the right formula for economic and social success (Kenny, 2007:7). The all-inclusiveness of Islam makes Muslims expect that its establishment will bring a better and more prosperous society and a great enjoyment of goods of this life as well as those of the next. We may draw a comparison with the hajj, where along with its spiritual benefits, a pilgrim can also legitimately aspire to come home richer, either by trading on the way or by God's special favour.

In the Sokoto federation, according to Lovejoy (1978:346), where slave raiding was important, slaves were used in much greater numbers to augment the population of emirates and thereby increase local production and revenue for the aristocracy. Export of slaves in the 19th century, nevertheless, was also important both across the Sahara and to the Atlantic up to the middle of 19th century when the Atlantic slave market ceased to function. The wars among the Hausa states, while contributing to the slave market, in reality prevented the development of this market to a considerable extent. This was because the fighting made the long-distance trade routes unsafe and prevented the tapping of richer slaving grounds further, especially in Bauchi and Adamawa, where pagans could be

enslaved without any religious scruple. Any slave dealer could see the advantage or necessity of uniting Hausa land and the surrounding areas into a single common wealth so that traders and slaves could move freely. We can assume that these traders would be prepared to support any jihad that promised to effect the desired political unification.

The jihad of Uthman Dan Fodio answered perfectly the aspirations of the slave dealers. Security for trade movement was assured throughout the emirates. Raids were systematically carried out against the middle belt pagan areas, which provided all the centers of Fulani rule with a rich supply of slaves. What was done with these slaves? Lovejoy (1978:338) observes that the bulk of the slaves seem to be absorbed locally, either in the cities for crafts or military service or in the farms, thereby increasing the population and prosperity of Hausa land. These slaves adopted the Hausa language and Islamic religion, and are estimated to have constituted the majority of the population of Sokoto and Kano. Exact statistics estimate of this high number is furnished by the literature written by the Fulani of the period, testimonies of European travelers, oral tradition and some studies of the city populations made at the beginning of the British period.

When the British arrived in Northern Nigeria towards the end of the 19th century, first as traders and then as colonial administrations, they established a system of indirect rule, allowing traditional Muslim rulers to continue to govern, reinforcing extremely powerful Muslim elite. This structure has proved immensely resilient through the later colonial period and then after independence in 1960, although

more recently, the traditional rulers have ceded much of their powers to the northern Muslim political power brokers. It is in this context that many of the recent political moves towards the strengthening of Islam in the north, such as the extension of Shaira laws, can be understood as a way of securing popular support by harnessing deep cultural and religious values developed over the century. Islam, even though its advent to Nigeria was not on sect's bases, is not a monolithic religion. As with Christianity, with different denominations, a multiplicity of sects has emerged within the Islamic faith. The prominent sects include the Qadriyya, the Tijaniyya, the Tariqa, the Malikiya, the Ahmadiya, and the Islamiya. Another group is the Daawa (some use the term to designate a separate sect, some use it as a synonym for hisbah-the group that enforces Sharia provisions, while others use it to denote the preaching arm of the hisbah (http://www.globalsecurity-org/military_world/War/nigeria-l)). Two main Islamic sects are practiced in Nigeria: Tijaniyya and Quadriyya, with Tijaniyya practiced more widely. The majority of northern Muslims especially the commoners (talakawa), embraced Tijaniyya in both the urban centers and rural areas. Quadriyya has more elitist adherents who are predominantly among the aristocratic Fulani ruling houses and the privileged members of their society (Uzoma, 2004: 4). Some other Islamic sects in Nigeria include the Izala, the Shiites Darika, AI-Masifu, Maitatsine sect etc.

5.4 The Effects of Religion, Science and Technology on Nigerian Society

5.5 The effects of religion

The effects of religions on Nigerian society are of outstanding significance. However, it has been observed that religions in Nigerian society play both positive as well as disruptive roles.

5.6 Positive effects of Religion

Education

The role of religions in educational development in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized. The missionaries that brought Christianity in Nigeria built schools, as one of their strategies to make converts. Before the coming of Christianity, Nigeria had no formal education. The missionaries came with their own system of education and this revolutionized the entire education of Nigeria, particularly the Southern and Eastern parts of Nigeria. The first school was built in Benin 1515 by the Catholic missionaries in the *Oba's* palace, but was short-lived due to slave trade (Nnadi, 2004: 112). Nevertheless, the missionaries' attempts to build schools from 19th century were successful. Most of our churchmen, top civil servants, statesmen and women are products of the mission schools. These schools include: St. Paul's College, Awka., Hope Waddel, Calabar; Lagos Grammar school; Trinity College, Umuahia; St. Theresa's College, Nsukka, etc. It is worth mentioning that before the civil war in this country, over ninety percent of the primary and post- primary institutions in Eastern Nigeria belonged to the churches and only ten percent belonged to the government, private proprietors, and local

communities. Presently, most parishes build schools as an adjunct to the missionary work.

Islamic religion is not left out in this educational development as Islamic schools were also built in Northern Nigeria to teach the converts how to read and write. The missionary schools were similar in content and method to the Islamic teachings. Today, the teaching of Christian and Islamic religions are embedded in the national curriculum of education. There are so many professors, doctors, and graduates in Christian and Islamic education who help to contribute positively to the development of the country.

Economic Development

In the course of introduction of Islamic religion in Nigeria, Muslim Arab traders brought Mediterranean goods such as Arab wears, beddings, designed rugs, camels and horses. The missionaries likewise introduced coconut, rice, cassava, mango, and many other cash crops and economic trees found in Nigeria today.

Added to the above, is the missionaries/British colonial rule that introduced money economy in place of trade by barter. This gave rise to a more objective and rational system and means of exchange in trade and commercial transactions. It equally directed the energies of Nigerians toward export-oriented production, particularly in agriculture, involving palm oil and kernels, rubber, cocoa, cotton, groundnuts, and timber. In return, they imported into Nigeria manufactured

goods such as clothing, foot wears, bicycles, and other manufactured goods as demonstrable evidence of the "wonders of European civilization"

Politics

Religions have contributed immensely to political development of this country. In traditional Nigerian society, prior to the advent of Christianity, Islam and colonialism, patriotism was extremely high. The essential elements that make up patriotism were present in every town, which constituted a homogenic entity. Men made great sacrifices for the welfare of their town. They defended their borders gallantly, to the point of paying the supreme sacrifice (death) for their towns. They maintained peace and order in the town, offered prayers in common for the welfare of the citizens, honoured their heroes with coveted title both in life and after death, worked zealously and free of charge, donated generously in cash and kind for the welfare of their town. The town or clan-head who often was a religious leader, enjoyed the esteem of the people and was a living symbol of the unity of the town. People so loved their fatherland and were so attached to it that even when death occurred outside the fatherland, every effort was made to bring the corpse home and bury with his fathers. This devotion to the fatherland was essentially linked with religion.

The inhabitants of any given area are together under the special custody of the local divinities to whom each and every member must show love, and loyalty, and under whose guardianship they are all united. In fact, to do anything against the welfare of the town is to incur the anger of the town's divinities and ancestors.

Ekwunife (2007: 124), opined that;

Another vital area where the traditional religious culture is still very relevant to the integral development of modern Nigeria is in the African Traditional concept of communal life which it inspired and nurtured. The individual in traditional society finds full meaning in his existence through the mirror of the community.

As applied to the modern Nigeria situation, a person with such an awareness and orientation of communal life cannot, for example, use public funds to develop him/her self at the expense of the masses. The traditional religious culture regards it as a social sin or offence for leaders to enrich themselves to the disadvantage of the governed. It abhors selfishness of any type. That is why, at the base of social interactions which it promotes is another basic concept-justice. Justice in African traditional religious concept implies "transparency in relationship with God and spiritual beings of the African world at the vertical plane as well as the same relationship with fellow human beings on the horizontal level" (Ekwunife, 2007: 126). African communal living demands fairness in communal life.

The emergence of Islam in Nigeria gave rise to new states or cities. New ideas, which were introduced, helped in the general development of the cities long before the advent of the Europeans. Islam is a unifying force which bound people together not only in faith but also in politics. With the formation of successive dynasties, the local governments became theocratic (under Emirs, Shehus, and Sultans). The citizens who were both disciples and subjects were all law-abiding for the local code was Islamic. In those days of constant warfare, cities were walled to keep off enemies and to offer fortresses during sieges. Bornu is a good

example of an Islamic state with developed efficient system of administration and it survived as a sovereign state until the 17th century (Conton, 1965:58). Diplomatic relation were also had with the outside world. .

For Christians, it is believed that government's laws are God-given and therefore, everybody must obey them.

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do good. But if you do. wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring on the wrong doer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience (Romans 13: 1-5).

In line with the above, religion (Christianity) provides norms for people's acceptance of government's laws and programmes. It equally serves as rebuking element to political leaders, and brings them to the right parts.

The contributions of different Christian bodies in time of political crises in Nigeria cannot be over-emphasized. During the Nigeria civil war which lasted about two and half years, the church made concerted effort to bring succour to embattled Biafran people. The Church embarked upon campaigns of mediation making several trips abroad to appeal to international humanitarian agencies to come to the rescue of the Biafrans. In order to alleviate the sufferings of the helpless civilians, on the Biafran side, the church got Caritas International, a humanitarian organization, to work. Food and medication were sent in by this agency in abundance. Among the Biafrans, the name Caritas suddenly became synonymous with life (Okwueze, 2003:113).

The involvement of religions in conflict resolutions is an expression of its concern for peace and stability of the country. In the midst of the Niger Delta crises, religious bodies have not been keeping quiet. In different occasions, the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, and Christian Association of Nigeria have vehemently condemned the activities of the Niger Delta militant groups, and have also urged the federal government to enforce the theory of political, economic and social liberation, emancipation, and transformation of an oppressed, poor and marginalized ethnic groups within a multi-cultural Nigerian society. They call for dialogue between the government and the Niger Delta people; in which if sincerely adhered to, will bring to an end the Niger Delta crises.

In our present democratic dispensation, our political leaders need the assistance of the religious leaders in order to perform very well. This calls to mind the statement made by the governor of Anambra state, his Excellency Peter Obi, on Sunday 25th November, 2007 on the occasion to mark the silver jubilee celebration of the Anglican Diocese of Awka. He said, "We need the clergies to come close to us and to give us advice. We are called his Excellency, while we are not excellent" (Live Radio Broadcast, Sunday 25th November, 2007). The governor's desire for the advice of religious leaders is commendable. This is because the religious leaders very often stand out to tell the political leaders the truth, whether they are doing well or not, unlike the appointment and contract seekers who shower praises on political leaders even when it is very clear that they are not performing well. The case of Rev. Fr. Ejike Mbaka, of Adoration Ministry, Enugu, Enugu State stand clear to attest to that. In his talk entitled "Wicked generation", released in the year 2000, he unequivocally condemned the past governor of Enugu state, Senator Chimaroke Nnamani, for siphoning the state fund, and his involvement in political motivated killings that were going on in the state that time.

Medical Care and Social Services:

The unorthodox medical system of the native doctors in Nigeria prior to the coming of the missionaries was not so efficacious as to minimize death rate in the society. The Christian agents came not only to save souls but also to provide health delivery services. That was why they set up dispensaries, maternity homes, and hospitals. Examples include: Bishop Shanahan, hospital Nsukka; Queen Elizabeth hospital, Umuahia; Iyi-Enu hospital, Ogidi; Eku Baptist hospital in Delta

state etc. Some diseases which had been conceived as incurable were cured e.g leprosy, small pox, and chicken pox. Prior to the advent of the missionaries, anybody who had any of these attacks was isolated from the society and left to die. The patient was regarded as evil person who had violated the law of the gods. At his/her death, he/she was not buried but thrown into the evil forest. But today, the reverse is the case.

On the side of Islamic religion, Muslim agents on coming to Nigeria introduced charms and amulets composed from the verses of Koran which helped in the treatment of different illnesses. It is pertinent to point out that Islam accommodates charms and amulets composed from the verses of the Koran (cf Onyeidu, nd.: 7).

Adding to the medical care was the social services rendered by the missionaries. Their compounds and residences thrived as social centers. Slaves were redeemed, orphans rehabilitated and twins and *Osu* (Outcast) catered for. It was the efforts of the missionaries combined with the colonial administration, that brought to an end human sacrifice, killing of twin babies, slavery and slave trade. Owing to that, twin babies are now accepted and no longer exposed to slaughter and destruction. The mother of twins is no longer a suspect and a taboo and ostracized. The victims of the *Osu* caste system were freed; and slavery and slave trade a thing of the past.

Moral values

Moral values refer to those things in human character, conduct and social relations which we judge as good or bad, right or wrong, noble and ignoble, etc. Morality, to a large extent, is influenced by religious creed. Man's life continues hereafter whose condition is determined by his present life. To gain that hereafter as a place of enjoyment, he must behave in ways consonant with the demands of the creator. The three major religions in Nigeria teach and encourage justice, love and peace, which are essential ingredients for national development. Man learns from religion that he has specific obligation to himself, to his fellow human beings and to the society at large. Remove this religious inclination from man, blot out of his mind the belief in his maker who rewards the good and punishes the wicked, and what is left is an animal who acts out of sheer material and egoistic motives and sheer convenience.

Employment/Job Opportunity

Religious beliefs and practices have been universal features of human society. Not only have men prayed, worshipped and sacrificed, they have pondered deeply on their own practices and in so doing have evolved the studies which we call theology, philosophy of religion and comparative religion (Scharf, 1981 :9).

In line with the above, there are many graduates in various fields of religious studies in Nigeria. Some of them are employed as religious teachers in school while others were trained or ordained as religious leaders. These categories of

people help to reduce the rate of unemployment in our society. More so, the society is going agog about religious music. These musicians have engaged themselves fully in religious music thereby reducing the number of unemployed in our society. Another group of people that religions have offered job opportunity in Nigeria are the artists who specialize in the production and sell of religious objects such as images and statues.

Non-Marginalization of Women

Prior to the advent of Christianity, women generally were marginalized especially the married ones. They were full house wives, kept in the kitchen, and had no right to argue with their husbands. But with Christianity and education, women do go to school, engage in government jobs, do farming and business. They sometimes travel outside the country, even without their husbands.

More so, in the past women were married prematurely and had no right to choose a person to marry. But with Christianity and western education, they can now choose men of their choice to marry. They are no longer so much regarded as mere chattels to be given to marriage according to the decision of the parents only.

5.7 Negative Effects of Religions

Although religions in Nigeria undoubtedly play positive roles in Nigeria, there are some negative roles of religions in Nigerian Society. Such negative roles include:

Religious Intolerance

One of the most negative effects of religions in Nigeria is religious intolerance. Religious intolerance in Nigeria has become an ill wind that blows no one any good. Looking at the 1980s, for example, one can identify numerous demonstrations and destruction of lives and property resulting from religious intolerance. One of the major religious crises ever witnessed in Nigeria on a large scale was the Maitatsine riot, which took place in Kano in 1980. The 1980 Kano Maitatsine massacre was said to have been ignited by a violent confrontation between the authorities and the AI-Masifu sect led by Mohammad Marwa Maitatsine. Maitatsine, an anti-materialist Islamic scholar, was born in Cameroon, but made Nigeria his home. The AI- Masifu members estimated between 3000 and 5000 denounced ostentatious display of wealth, such as owning of houses, wearing of wrist watches and other conveniences. They also denounced traditional Muslim customs, such as facing Mecca while praying, an act which an average Kano Muslim considered sacrilegious. The sect members, therefore, sought to purify the practice of Islam to conform to the teachings of their leader. Perceiving the security implication of Maitatsine's doctrine and disruptive behaviour, the security agents had swiftly swooped on him in his residence and hurriedly deported him and few of his lieutenants back to Cameroon. He managed to return to Nigeria toward the end of 1978.

After a two year period during which the sect members increasingly intimidated citizens living near their enclave in Kano and a month after which a policeman was killed by the sect members, the then Kano state governor, Mohammed

Abubakar Rimi, sent a letter to Maitatsine and his followers ordering them to leave Kano immediately. The sect leader received the order, but ignored it.

On December 18, 1980, the AI-Masifu sect members allegedly attacked orthodox Muslims praying outside Kano city grand Mosque. Police attempt to bring the situation under control was rebuffed by the sect members and the governor of the state was thus constrained to ask the Federal Government to send in the military. After some initial resistance that lasted about ten days, the army and air force went into action and dislodged the sect from its enclave in Kano city. At the same time, during the crisis, the orthodox Muslim residents of Kano sought out and killed anyone suspected of belonging to the sect. Realizing this, some of the sect members armed with bows and arrows and a number of modern weapons, mainly seized from the police and army, retreated to a nearby village, and the fighting continued until January 3, 1981. At the end of the confrontation and the military campaign against the sect, over 4, 177 people, including Maitatsine, some policemen and a reporter with Nigeria's *Daily Times* newspaper, were killed and about 8,712 sustained different levels of injuries. Property worth millions of naira were reportedly lost in the conflict (Shehu, 2007: 114).

Even though Maitatsine died during the 1980 riot, his followers continued with the disturbance. In 1982, they rioted in Bulumkutu on the outskirts of Maiduguri and in Kaduna. During this episode, about 400 lives were lost and property worth more than N3 million destroyed. In February 1984, the fanatics growing in number inflicted horror in Jemeta in former Gongola now Adamawa states were about 763

casualties were recorded and about 5, 913 people displaced. A year later (1985), in spite of the assertion of the then Gongola state police commissioner, Nuhu Aliyu, that his command had advanced intelligence report on the group, the same group struck at Gombe. Over 100 people lost their lives and to crown it all, some ammunition were captured from some law enforcement agents who presumably went to save the situation (Onah, 1996:54).

It was as if the Maitatsine riots were to act as a precursor for subsequent religious riots. The Maitatsine group attacked the Christians and the Muslims alike. But in 1986, the religious riots took a new dimension. This time it happened in Ilorin on a Christian Palm Sunday. It was an outright attack on Christians by Muslims. Christians, who were in a procession commemorating Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, were attacked by a group of Muslims who considered the procession, through a predominantly Muslim area, offensive. The clash left several people injured and churches burnt.

Again in April, 1991, Bauchi town witnessed one of the worst religious crises unleashed on this country. The trouble started over the use of the community abattoir. The Muslims, it was reportedly gathered, wanted to prevent the Christians from using the abattoir. A clash ensued leaving about a hundred people dead. Shops, houses, cars and churches were destroyed. So disturbing was the magnitude of this crises that Archbishop A. Okogie in Okwueze (2003: 146) fiercely asserted that "nobody is a third rate citizen in this country, it is either we wipe ourselves out for good or God saves whoever survives because it

is going to be religious war". This riot also led to an abrupt stop of the 9th National Sports Festival, which was, then in progress in Bauchi. Athletes and sport officials all fled for their lives.

In October, 1991, Kano had another share in religious violence. The Kano branch of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), had invited Rev. Bonnke, a German preacher to officiate at a 4-day crusade. The Association had sought the permission of the state government to use Race Course ground for the crusade. In the interim about 5,000 Muslim youths had marched to the Emir's palace to urge him to persuade the government to stop the crusade. The CAN, Kano branch, had even accepted St. Thomas church ground Sabongari as an alternative venue as suggested by the state government. But before anyone knew what was happening, the carnage had begun. The wanton destruction of lives and property was so unprecedented that the then governor, Col. Idris Garba, CLECK threatened to invite the army on the rioters (Adebayo, 1991: 14).

Nigeria's controversial membership of the organization of Islamic conference (OIC) is another source of religious conflict that has threatened the peace, unity and stability of Nigeria. The story of Nigeria's presence in the OIC meeting dates back to September 1969 when Arab countries met in Rabat, Morocco, to conclude arrangement on the Islamic conference. Nigerian Muslims showed interest to be part of this historic gathering. With the support and influence of the Sultan of Sokoto, Sadiq Abubaka III, a delegation led by Sadiq Abubakar Gumi was there to register Nigeria's presence. However, with the atmosphere of the Nigerian civil

war around him, the then head of states General Yakubu Gowon, felt uneasy and quickly sent an urgent message to king Hussan of Morocco stating that the said delegation did not represent Nigeria. This action by Gowon turned Nigerian delegation into observers.

In 1984, during Buhari's regime, the issue resurfaced. Brigadier Tunde Idiagbon, the then Chief of Supreme Headquarters, was said to have made incessant trips to Saudi Arabia in connection with this. On December 1985, the OIC sent an invitation to Nigeria to attend its ministerial conference slated for January 6-10, 1986 in Fez, Morocco. Without any consultation, the Babangida government surreptitiously sent an official delegation to represent Nigeria. At that meeting, Nigeria was formally admitted as a member (Olojed, in Obeta, nd.: 20). This secret deal by Babagida' s government threatened the very foundations of Nigeria as a nation, as there were lots of protests especially by the non- Muslims.

More recently, the Sharia crisis in Nigeria has done untold damage on the country. Sharia is the sacred law, which governs every aspects of a Muslim's life. The Muslims have insisted that this law, which is only applicable to Muslims, be incorporated into the nation's constitution. In addition, they have insisted that a Sharia Court of Appeal be set up at federal level. The Christians seriously opposed these moves due to the fact that Nigeria has no state religion since she is a secular state. This issue surfaces each time the nation's constitution is under review. In fact, during the Buhari's regime, the junta was alleged to have concluded arrangements for the incorporation of the Sharia law in the nation's

constitution, but before this materialized, the Babangida coup ousted him in August 1985.

In 1988, the same Sharia question nearly capsized the boat of the constituent Assembly headed by Justice Anthony Enahoro (Rtd). Following the disagreement, the Assembly members were at each others' throats, and this made the then Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) to declare Sharia issue a no-go-area.

Nevertheless, the Sharia question developed into a major political confrontation on 27th October, 1999 when Governor Ahmed Sani Yerima Bakura, of Zamfara state, inaugurated the adoption of Sharia legal system, which took effect from 27th January, 2000. Following the Zamfara example, eleven other Muslim dominated states in the North also adopted similar laws. The attempt by the Kaduna State House of Assembly to pass a Sharia bill led to series of demonstrations, first by the Muslim supporters and then by Christian opponents. Ibrahim (2002:9) affirmed that "The anti-Sharia demonstration by Christians on 21st February, 2000 led to a major conflict between the two religious groups resulting in massive killings of people on both sides, destruction of religious buildings, general arson and destruction of property". Indeed, many voices on both sides called for the partition of Nigeria rather than the adoption or abandonment of Sharia legal system. The Kaduna mayhem led to the retaliatory killings and burning of Mosques in Aba and Owerri in which Igbo youths targeted northerners, who they accused of killing their kith and kin in the north. The same thing happened in February, 2007 in Onitsha, where the Muslims were killed as a

result of the northern Muslim riots in Madugari, Borno state, in which Christians were killed over September, 2005 Denmark cartoon depicting prophet Mohammad as a terrorist. This Denmark cartoon problem occurred again in Kano on August 2007. In his speech, Bishop D.C Oko, Vice president of CAN, made it known during the inter-denominational service held on 30th August, 2007 in Abuja to mark the 47th Nigeria independent celebration, that some people have been killed in Kano, 8 Churches burnt, houses and shops belonging to Christians were also burnt, and 3 pastors were in police detention. What an irony? Nigerians killing themselves over Denmark cartoon.

In November 2008, crisis broke out over local government elections in Plateau state, and since then the northern part of Jos city has been on the spotlight for killings and human brutality and arson between the predominantly Christian Berom indigenes and Muslim Fulani settlers. This year alone (2008), there have been reported outbreaks of violence at least five times, in which hundreds of people were slaughtered, on one occasion, victims had their tongues and other organs cut in manners suggesting that the killers no longer have any regard for human lives (Etuk, 2011:44).

On December 24, 2010, the eve of Christmas, another devastating religious violence occurred in Jos, leaving some people dead and some part of Jos razed to the ground. Three bombs successfully went off in different parts of Jos, following

an earlier warning that Christians in Jos would not celebrate a peaceful Christmas (Etuk, 2011:44).

As we turn our attention to increase in crimes and joblessness, which is another negative effects of religions in Nigeria, suffice it to say that there are several other unrecorded instances of such reckless massacre in God's name, which has conferred on religion the role of the destroyer/enemy of life and peace in Nigeria.

Increase in Crimes and Joblessness

The adoption and practice of Islam and Christian religions in Nigeria society, which goes with civilization/development, has skyrocketed crimes/evils like robbery, abortion, prostitution, 419 syndrome, etc. Before the advent of these foreign religions, various communities organized themselves against such evils. They controlled crimes/evils by bounding themselves under powerful god(s), in which fear of the god(s) believed kills instantly, scared people from committing crimes. But with the adoption of Islam and Christianity, that preach merciful God and repentance, people engage themselves in those evil acts. They do so since they were not punished immediately, and that there is the possibility of their repentance before they die.

Added to the above, are those that have resorted to begging instead of working and earning a living. In our streets, markets and motor parks are lots of beggars. Religion appeals to people's conscience to help the needy. Some of these beggars, though physically challenged, can engage themselves in certain work,

which can earn them a living. But because of the religious appeal to help those that need help, many of them now decide to beg. They compose songs that propel people to give them money or material gifts. One of the popular songs is: *Onye nwere nyere nwanneya aka, Chineke Nna ga akwu gi ugwoya*, meaning if you have, give your neighbour God will reward you. Apart from the physically challenged, who can still work, there are people who are not even physically challenged but have resorted to begging thereby creating room for joblessness. This brings into focus the Almajiri of Islamic religion. The Almajiri are children who were assembled at the early stage of life by the Imams. The aim is to teach them Islamic injunctions. They stay with the Imams from morning till afternoon after which they were sent out to go and beg. The Muslims are obliged to give them money or other gifts. Some of these Almajiri continue in this practice. They graduate to Talakawa-the poor people or the commoners. They depend on the wealthy ones for their livelihood. Some of them stay in the compound of the Alhajis while some stay in the premises of mosques.

Violation of Human Rights

The enforcement of extreme Sharia laws violates human rights. Many of Nigeria's Muslims and non-Muslims face barbaric treatment from 'Hizbah' (religious enforcers). 'Hizbah' vigilantes often mete out harsh and on-the-spot extra-legal punishments for such 'un-Islamic' activities as violating dressing codes and questioning Islamic teaching. The following examples below show that the Nigeria's new Sharia undermines basic human rights:

1. Sharia is imposed on all Muslims even if they want to be tried in a constitutionally mandated court, thus subverting Nigeria's democratic order;
2. Sharia legitimizes the killing of Muslims who exercise their right to change to another religion;
3. Non-Muslims are barred from judges, prosecutors, and lawyers in the Sharia courts to which they can be subject, thus making them second-class citizens.

Destruction of Valuable Traditional Religious Objects

With the advent of Christianity and Islam in Nigeria, most of our valuable traditional religious objects are burnt from time to time. At times, the adherents of African Traditional Religion were persuaded to do so, while in some cases, Christians or Moslems burn their shrine and religious objects by force. Such objects, according to Ugwu (2000:57), are the rich arts and symbolic works of our forefathers which when burnt would be hard to recover and put in our museums. This makes meaningful and fruitful research practically impossible for scholars.

5.8 The Effects of Science and Technology

5.9 Positive effects

There is no doubt that science and technology have fostered great and marvelous development in our society today. This is evident in the agricultural, medical, information and communication technology (ICT), transportation, housing, social amenities and so on.

Agriculture

Traditional farming method which is only suitable for subsistence farming is no more adequate to meet the food demands of the nation. The use of tractors, mowers, harvesters, fertilizers, insecticides etc. have helped to increase food production greatly. Genetic modification has really helped in isolating, identifying and recombining genes for greater yield in both animals and crops. Moreover, chemical processes have been designed to preserve and store food for a long period. To fight malnutrition, many foods are now enriched by the addition of essential nutrients.

Medicine

The healthy life that many of us enjoy today is due to the variety of medicine that are available as a result of science and technology. Measles, malaria, small pox, polio etc. that earlier ravaged our society can now, to a large extent, be prevented or easily handled. Also, better surgical techniques, understanding of the body's immune system have led to an increase in organ and tissue management. The cutting edge technology of genetic engineering in vitro cultivation of human organs from stem cells has made the replacement of diseased organs a dream come true. Furthermore, the gene-induced therapy has revolutionized the sector in the sense that it has presented us with an overall new perception of reality whereby the conventional is almost on the verge of annihilation.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The advent of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has marked a turning point in the history of the science world and it is a major scientific breakthrough. Prior to the advancement in science and technology, during the time of our forefathers, there were nothing like computers, mobile phone, televisions and the host of them. But towards the end of the 20th century, there was a remarkable development in technology. Computer became a major tool for communication and information exchange by the networking of computers via information super highway (internet). Telephones and cells phones became also digitalized for this same function. These advancements gave birth to a new world connected by electronic system (global village), which has far-reaching effects in our society ranging from education, economy, social life, entertainment etc.

Education

The computer, internet, television, etc. have been proved indispensable in the educational sector due to the services they render. The internet serves as repository of information valuable in research works. The computer is used for typing and saving documents. Also the relevance of the public address system in lecture rooms cannot be neglected. Suffice it to mention that some programmes and advertisement on the media are educative, capable of shaping human minds positively and sound moral ethics can be imparted.

Economy

The globalization of the ICT is a bold move towards booming the economy of our country. With the use of the ICT, there is an increase in the level of global trading. The net income made from sales of some gadgets boosts the economy of a nation. With the help of the internet, several firms interact with each other just by a few clicks on the mouse of the computer. Generally, the ICT has therefore modified the socio-economic pattern of our people.

Social life

Man by nature is a social being (Aristotle) and he who does not need to communicate with his fellow must either be a god or a beast (Jean Paul Sartre). With the use of cell phones, the relationship among people has been accelerated. Cell phones therefore help people to chat with friends and loved ones. Some programme on the media which are educative sometimes require the sharing of ideas i.e. opinions among listeners and viewers. This promotes the feeling of concern and belonging in the society.

Entertainment

Loneliness is being wrestled when one is entertained by some programmes on the media or news from newspapers. It is said that an idle man's brain is the devil's workshop. This quotation becomes practically unrealistic when one is busy browsing the internet or listening to the radio.

Transportation

Modern transportation is an essential feature of today's world. In those days, our people used to exhaust a lot of energy in moving from one place to another. People moved about on land by trekking, carrying their goods on their heads. Some used animals like horses and camels in desert areas. Canoes were used to cross the rivers. These methods make movement boring, uncomfortable and time consuming. But with the invention of motor cars, lorries, ships, flying boats, aeroplanes etc. transportation has been made easier. This rapid development in transportation system was made possible through science and technology.

Housing

Man through science and technology has devised many ways of providing a magnificent shelter for himself. Also, many high-rise buildings are being constructed to overcome the present need for housing, especially in cities. Such buildings are built with materials like cement, steel, bricks, tiles etc. which are produced by industries.

Social Amenities

Social amenities such as electricity, roads, pipe borne water etc. that we enjoy in our society are products of science and technology.

5.10 The negative effects of science and technology

The fact that science and technology have improved the living condition of our people is not doubtful, yet its negative effects are at alarming degree.

Human lives are at stake and our nation stands at the threshold of destruction. Guns, missiles, armored tanks and other nuclear and sophisticated weapons of destruction (which are products of science and technology) produced daily for war give credence to this proposition. In recent time, our nation has experienced several cases of bomb blast leading to loss of lives and destruction of property worth millions of naira. The turn of events introduced by industrialization in our time forces the speculation that the coming generations may have no relics for which to identify our present world. Man has done great violence to nature as the grand engineer who uses science and technology to manipulate the ever malleable codes of life to suit his capricious desires. The craze to conquer the world and tame the wild nature has blinded us to the reality of the side effects of disturbing a well established ecosystem. The cause of polluted surface water is primarily the leaching of chemicals and heavy metals. Pollution of aquatic ecosystem is a signal that the self-purifying natural cycle has been strained and the same is applicable to air pollution. The level of green-house gases has succeeded in shifting the equilibrium to the far left. The ozone layer which is the air blanket that shields the ultra rays from harming man and other living organisms alike is fast depleting allowing the dangerous radiation a free thorough fare. This unauthorized passage has given rise to global warming which has implications for the drastic changes in the climatic condition globally.

Disruption of our environment by synthetic products such as pesticides, plastic materials, detergents, lead, radio active substances and so on are on increase.

These substances have harmful effects on the land, plants and animals. It goes to the extent of turning once fertile lands to deserts.

Despite the merits, of ICT, it is also important to note that ICT has its own unwholesome exposure to young minds. The society has realized with great shock that the internet is now a site where the youths feed their minds with steady diet of pornographic pictures and sexual promiscuity. It is not only the internet. The world has become so corrupt that it has lost its moral values. Cell phones are designed to have in-built. Some of these contained pornographic picture and movies. These things have great effects on the psyche of a person. Such immoral movies can make one unserious with studies.

The internet also has websites that introduce one into the world of gamblers and fraudsters; thereby increasing the level of corruption in our society. It is also noteworthy that most people who frequent the internet often become lazy and develop gross apathy towards hard work. This is because they get the information they need so easily and therefore, they see life as a bed of roses where hardworking and serious mindedness are never-to-do-affairs.

It is disheartening but the underlying fact is that the telephone discovered by Graham Bells in 1876 and the recent cell phones are used to escalate and promote examination malpractices in our society thereby leading to students or graduates with excellent and promising results yet basking in ignorance and illiteracy. Moreso, recent records show that some networks offer free night calls.

These offers make some students stay awake late in the night just to make and receive calls instead of reading their books. Worst of it all, there is this unguarded craze to acquire these commodities (handsets) at all cost among the youths. This poises them to dispossess other people of their handsets bought with their hard-earned money.

The effects of television, VCD/DVD, computers on human health cannot be neglected. Researches on the effects of these gadgets have been in progress for quite sometimes, and it shows that children who are addicts to the screens do not exercise their body system. This lack of exercise allows the storage of excessive fats in the body which gives rise to obesity.

Finally excessive participation in television programmes and computer screen cause deflection of the eyes such as short sightedness, long sightedness, astigmatism and colour blindness. It has also been proved that prolonged and unprotected exposure to the high electromagnetic radiation or waves which handsets emit are somewhat capable of causing skin cancer and other diseases like brain cancer, ear tumor, cancer of eyes, acne, Parkinson's disease (Maximilian, 2008:10).

CHAPTER SIX

RELEVANCE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Scientific and technological methods of solving man's problems appears to be one of the ways of responding to God's command to man to "... multiply, fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28). Even though man has done great violence to nature through science and technology, the relevance of science and technology to man, and to religious beliefs and practices in particular, cannot be overemphasized. The relevance of science and technology to religious beliefs and practices will be taken piece-meal and analysed below:

6.1 Mass Media

The mass media comprises the print and the electronic media. These include newspapers, magazines, tracts, radio, televisions, computers, the internet, cell phones, satellite communications and so on. Some world religions, like Christianity and Islam, from their inception were structured and mandated to propagate their faith to all nations. Achunike (2008:2) opined that "In today's fast developing world, media trends dictate the move and direction of evangelism. The electronic media (radio and television) provide the tools with which this is executed."

Globalization has also taken evangelism to a different direction. Globalization itself entails universalism whereby the object, practices or even values transcend geopolitical boundaries penetrating the hitherto sovereign nation states and impacting on the orientation and value system of the people. It embraces the

“cablenization” of the globe like CNN, BBC etc., through discoveries in micro-electronics, information processing and communication technology. For Okeke (2006:173),

The recent use of the world wide web (www) has increased the shrinking of time and space in global communication technology. Also, the invention of cellular and satellite phones is equally contributing its quota in the defiling of national boundaries in the area of communication.

Today, religion is faced with a historic opportunity, the cutting-edge technology of the day, which is the internet. The internet provides us with the means of communication to reach the entire world. The internet consisting primarily of the world-wide web (websites), e-mails, news groups, forum, blogs, digitracts, chat room (instant messaging) etc. have helped greatly in evangelism. Almost every religion now has a website in which they air their religious views, beliefs and practices. Religious groups can now use internet to reach out to other members in different parts of the world. According to Esomchi (2006:71):

On the internet today, people can read about religion, talk with others about religion, download religious texts and literatures, buy religious books, artifacts, take visual tour of galleries of religious arts or the interior of religious building, search scriptures using electronic indexes, locate church and religious centers, participates in mediation sessions, vote on church or group organizational propositions, see images of their religious leaders, watch video chips, listen to religious sermons, music, prayers, testimonies, discourses, live internet gospel, radio and even submit request.

He concludes by saying that marketing the sacred has become big business via the internet.

In Nigeria, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought advancement and improvements in religion generally. Some considerable number of youths and the literate can at least browse the internet to get information. Some can access the internet using their mobile phones. One can now listen to the gospel in the comfort of his room using digital televisions, can make contribution to television and radio discussion using telephones or mobile phones. Some people have also claimed to have gotten their healing by placing their hands on the screen of their television while the televangelist broadcasts healing on the television. Evangelist can preach or pray for someone in a very far distance place using mobile phone.

Adding to the above, most of the "new generation" churches like Christ Embassy has embraced and utilized ICT tools in the dissemination of the gospel message to the world. From the home page of the websites, one can lounge into other website of the church like Christ Embassy Web TV, Rhapsody of Realities websites, kiddies Love World Website, Atmosphere of Miracle Website or Christ Embassy Healing School etc. The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) also have their websites and their web TV station in which their monthly Holy Ghost service is being covered from the Redemption Camp and from this camp, the happenings in the service can be viewed in other churches through streaming video TV station that is connected to the internet. With satellite links, the gospel could be spread to the other branches in country and in the world, as long as they have the necessary gadget for them to receive the satellite signal. The Deeper Life Bible Church uses this medium especially during the Easter or Christmas

retreats to listen to their General Superintendent, Pastor W.F. Kumuyi from their local churches provided they have satellite and projector to view the scene instead of traveling to Lagos for the retreat. There are also internet – based churches, on-line ministries who thrive in cyber space, Bible colleges or seminaries.

6.2 Examination of Natural Causes and Effects

The ancient Greeks believed the volcanic eruptions occurred when Vulcan, the God of Fire, stoked his subterranean furnace beneath vulcano, a small volcanic island off Sicily, from which the present word volcano is derived (Areola, 2002:33). Of course people no longer believe this is true. Geologists and volcanists have ascertained that volcanic activity is closely connected with crustal disturbances, particularly where there are zones of weakness due to deep faulting or mounting folding.

There were also times when occurrences like lighting, thunder and earthquakes were associated with God's anger against the people. They were understood to be the expression of God's anger against people. They thus evoked religious feelings in men and women because they made people either fear God, repent of their sins, pray to God or make promises to God.

Today, lightning, thunder and earthquake are understood as natural occurrences. They are effects of God's creation but are not in any way expression of his anger. With the understanding of their causes and effects, their occurrences no longer

evoke religious feelings in man. Instead of praying to God to have mercy, people concern themselves with installing lightning conductors in their houses and making scientific study to predict and control earthquakes. People understand now that thunder is simply noise resulting from the lightning flash. This type of understanding has enlightened people to limit religion to the places where it should apply.

6.3 Medical Achievement

Prior to scientific advancement in the field of medicine, there was no illness in Africa, and Nigeria in particular, that has no religious undertone. In the past certain diseases like stroke, sudden infant death, small-pox, etc. were associated with witchcraft. Religious sacrifices, magical rites and charms were performed or used in an error to either cure or prevent the diseases. Ugwu (nd: 27 – 28) noted that:

visitors to small-pox victims were warned not to mention, at departure, that they were departing finally. They should say that they were going to bring something. Alternatively they could leave something behind and promise that they would come back to pick it up. If this was not done (it was believed) the disease would follow them home.

He equally pointed out that people who died with swollen limbs or protruding belly were supposed to have committed abominations. They were not given proper burial but were thrown into the evil forest.

However, scientific achievements in the field of medicine have led to the understanding of many parasitic, viral and deficiency diseases. Natural drugs and

processes are used to cure them, thus making unnecessary the magical rites used for their control. The superstitious ideas have also gone with the magical rites. Small-pox, for example, can be prevented by use of vaccines. The superstitious belief that the disease could follow someone home can be explained by the fact that the disease is infectious. People who die with swollen hands, feet and protruding stomach are now known to be suffering from dropsy. Dropsy is curable but if a person dies of it, the person has not committed an abomination.

Superstitious and magical rites have been eliminated in areas where medical science has triumphed. However they persist where medical science has failed. Nevertheless, issues like miracles and faith-healing are religious aspects of the healing process which are still among us. There is no gain denying the fact that in our contemporary society, there are still some illnesses that cannot be treated well through medical science. In such areas, religious methods comes in. On the whole, medical science has enlightened our people not to use religion as a panacea for every illness.

In another development, the advancement of science and technology in the field of medicine equally promotes religious beliefs and practices. This Nwokolo (2009:8) made known when he said that:

In the field of medicine, there is now better surgical techniques, and better understanding of the body's immune system. These have led to an increase in organ and tissue management. With these, both the preacher and faithful are saved from early or untimely death. Hence a continued, uninterrupted and efficient gospel dissemination.

6.4 Man in Space

Another usefulness of science and technology to religious beliefs and practices is the ability of man to go into space. Science and technology have made it possible for man to construct the spacecraft and other mechanical gadgets which have enabled man go into space. The space age began in 1957, when the Soviet Union launched the first artificial satellite to circle the earth. In 1969, two U.S. astronauts became the first human beings to walk on the moon (World Book Encyclopedia, 2001:200).

Before the space age, men generally regarded the earth as the domain of man and the sky or the heavens as the abode of God. The going of man into space has broken into the area traditionally believed to be reserved for God and his messengers. Even though God was defined as a spirit, in everyday life believers saw him more as an anthropomorphic being than a spiritual one. So when men went into space and expected to meet God they were disappointed. The disappointment shocked even the believers and reminded them that God is essentially a spiritual being, whom no one can see and live (Exodus 19: 21). Thus man in space has led to a purification of the concept of God.

This rethinking about God affected also the location of heaven and hell. If God could not be encountered physically, the location of his abode would be a wild goose chase. So the rethinking was extended to heaven and hell. It made people realize more clearly that heaven and hell have no geographical locations, but are states rather than places (Ugwu, nd.: 29).

6.5 Scientific Criticism and Demand for Proof

Science thrives on objectivity. It questions everything and demands proof for everything. It takes nothing for granted. The scientific approach has been applied even in the field of religion. Consequently ideas which had for centuries been taken for granted are today being questioned. Two good examples from the Bible (the conquest and the authorship of the Pentateuch) will be discussed in order to buttress this point.

The Conquest

The traditional account of the conquest pictures it as an immediate and total defeat of the Canaanites, followed by their swift extermination. Only when the Israelites are disobedient to Yahweh are they vulnerable; otherwise they are invincible, striking terror among the native who either join them by artifice, as in the case of Gibeonites (Josh. 9:3 – 15), or oppose them, sometimes in confederacy, as in the case of five Amorite cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon (Josh. 10:1 – 5).

Joshua's plan of attack is presented as a threefold strategy. Operating from Gilgal in the Jordan valley, he struck first at the central highlands, taking Ai and Gibeon. The second phase of the war of occupation was the defeat of the Amorite league. The final action was in the far north at Hazor, where a confederacy of northern kings was roundly defeated. The account breaks off with sweeping summary from the writer thus:

So Joshua took all that land, the hill country and the Negeb... and the hill country of Israel and its lowland from Mount Halak, that rises

towards Seir, as far as Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. And he took all their kings, and smote them, and put them to death (Josh. 11:16 – 17).

According to this record, the Canaanites were trounced, that the Israelites were able to apportion the land among the tribes.

Alongside the story above, the Bible presents another picture of the occupation of Palestine. In the book of the Judges, we have a long-drawn-out struggle that came to an end during the time of David. Here the struggle was not only military but also religious and cultural. Hence the story of total conquest fails to do justice to the many ways in which the Canaanites culturally subdued the Israelites. It also ignores the gradual merging of the two peoples (Judg. 1:29 – 33).

Infact, with the help of scientific criticism, one can deduce that on the Israelites' settlement in Canaan there were cases of infiltration (a gradual settlement) and also instances of serious fighting.

Authorship of the Pentateuch

In the early days of biblical study, it was easily presumed that Moses was the author of the first five books of the Old Testament, known as Pentateuch. The Bible itself (reversed Standard Version) at its beginning has the title "the first book of Moses commonly called Genesis". This impression runs through the four books after Genesis (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy).

Following the subjection of the Pentateuch to critical literary investigation, internal evidence such as chronological lapses, duplicate narratives, record of the death and burial of Moses (Deut. 34) etc. suggests that the books were not composed by any one person. It is on the basis of the above evidence that scholars have concluded that at least four different authors or groups of authors have had a part in writing the books (Pentateuch). These groups of authors are generally symbolized by what is known as JEDP source theory.

6.6 Relation Between the Planets

The knowledge about the relation between the planets was exposed to us by the scientists. From the earliest period to the middle ages, religion delved into both the religious and scientific fields. Okwueze (2003:131) observed that "Galileo, an Italian astronomer, became famous not necessarily for all his discoveries but particularly for those aspects of his discoveries which religion (Christianity) opposed". He went further to say that:

Galileo constructed the first astronomical telescope and with this he viewed the moon and discovered that the body was not a perfect sphere but wrinkled by mountains and valleys. This became a nail on the coffin of the medieval religious view of the world because it had always been supposed that the heavenly bodies must be perfect spheres for the same reason as their orbits must be perfect circles. The medieval religious worldview was that only the earth is made of crude matter while the heavenly bodies being nearer to the divine are composed of a special ethereal or semi divine substances.

Galileo also opposed the religious belief of the Middle Ages, which saw celestial motion as an effect of forces exerted by angels or spirits. Galileo's law states that no force is required to keep a body moving with a uniform velocity rather, a body

continues indefinitely in its state of rest or of uniform motion in a straight line unless some forces act upon it (Okwueze, 2003, 132).

Moreso, Galileo proved the Copernican theory that the sun is the centre of the universe, that it is fixed and that it is the earth that revolves round the sun, as against the Christian teaching and acceptance as conforming to the Bible the idea of the planets and the sun revolving round a stationary earth as in Genesis 1: 17-18 (Ugwu, nd.: 27).

The above views of Galileo and his other discoveries were considered heretical by the church. He was admonished to renounce his views. On refusal, he was tried by the inquisition in Rome, ordered to recant and forced to spend the last eight years of his life under house arrest (Ugwu, nd.:27).

When Galileo's views gained pre-eminence in the scientific field, the church was forced to accept that Biblical writers do not teach science. It realized that its action against Galileo was an unwise use of authority against scientific discoveries. As a result, at the 350th anniversary of the Dialogues, Pope John Paul 11 cited in Poupard (1987:48) said that:

Since then there has been a more accurate appreciation of the methods proper to the different orders of knowledge. The church is made up of individuals who are limited and who are closely bound up with culture of the time they live in.... It is only through humbly and assiduous study that she learns to dissociate the essentials of faith from the scientific system of a given age, especially when a culturally influenced reading of the Bible seemed to be linked to an obligatory cosmology... In 1984, a Vatican commission acknowledged that church officials had erred in condemning Galileo.

Thus, the Christian experience with Galileo has enlightened religion to occupy a more restricted area than before.

6.7 Theory of Evolution

The religious explanation of the origin of the species stated that the universe and all it contains, including man, were created by God. The Bible, for example, as contained in Genesis 1,2:1-25 is the Christian account of the creation. The word 'Genesis' means the beginning or origin.

Hence the account of creation in Genesis is the Biblical account of how the world and the creatures therein began to exist. Other religions have their own creation stories.

Science, in its efforts to explain the origin of the universe has come up with the theory of evolution. According to this theory the heavenly bodies were formed by concentration of cosmic matter, the origin of species is by development from earlier forms, not by special creation, the formation of the universe and the development of the species took place over millions of years.

The theory of evolution is yet a theory. It has not been prove as fact because there are still unexplained gaps in the evolutionary tree. But already conflicts can be established between the proposals of science and those of religion: evolution against creation; and millions of years against six days. Already the theory of

evolution has triggered off a rethinking in the field of religion. Eya (2007:16) asserts that:

Until two centuries ago the age of the earth was reckoned on the basis of biblical chronology at approximately four thousand years. In the nineteenth century, geologists and paleontologists produced alarming hints and then certainties to show that the earth has been in existence at least several million years. In the present century astronomers and astrophysicists have pushed these millions to billions. On November 22, 1951 Pius xii, speaking to the Pontifical Academy of Science, accepted tentatively an approximate birthday for the universe between five and ten billions years ago.

By this acceptance the church agrees that six days of the duration are not necessary six days of twenty-four hours each day, that each day would be a period, although the duration of the period is not specified. Earlier the church had taught and defended the concept of a twenty-four hour day.

6.8 Control of nature to satisfy human needs.

Traditionally, our people had ways of satisfying their needs. For example they depended on rain for the cultivation of their crops. If the rains failed they prayed to God or god's to come to their rescue. After planting the crops they offered sacrifices to the fertility gods to grant abundant harvest.

Today, modern science and technology have been harnessed to satisfy human needs in an unprecedented manner. Man still use natural rain for the cultivation of crops. But where this fails he can adopt various irrigation schemes to provide water for his crops. To ensure rich harvests, he can use various types of fertilizers which have been manufactured to suit various crops.

On the whole, modern science and technology have contributed a lot to religious beliefs and practices. It helps in the dissemination of religious doctrines and beliefs. It has also enlightened man in understanding of the universe. In fact, today man can achieve success to a large extent, through science and technology without the need to consult God or offer sacrifices to him. Instead of praying for rain man takes to irrigation; instead of praying for abundant harvest he applies fertilizers; instead of praying for good health he goes to the hospital. Science and technology have reduced a number of things which people pray for. It has made man not to depend on God in areas where God has given him enough to stand on his own.

However, science and technology have not solved all man's problems. There are still illnesses which defy scientific understanding and cure. When people suffer from such illness (such that has to do with spiritual problems), they still have to pray. In fact people even have to pray when they suffer from common ailments because what one person suffers from and recovers, another person can suffer and die from it.

In another development, science and technology have not been playing the above observed roles to religious beliefs and practices without flaws. Science and technology have led to production of weapons of mass destruction capable of destroying the entire world within minutes. It has also encouraged moral decadence in our society. The use of cell phones to tell lies, encourage

examination malpractices; fraudulent practices and pornographic acts which internet introduce one to, lend credence to that.

It is equally worth mentioning that some religious teachings or beliefs served as a base for the scientific enquiries. Notable among them is the church teaching that the planet and the sun revolve round a stationary earth. This teaching, to some extent, contributed to the birth of physic. It is also instrumental to Galileo's enquiries and better discoveries.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary

Religion is a binding relationship between man and supernatural forces which man feels dependent upon. It represents the coming together of a group which is bound by a common feeling of dependence on a particular supreme Being/ Beings. The question of the origin of religion still remains one of the insoluble mysteries confronting man. Men have attempted to solve this problem through scientific research, but the results are mere educated guesses. This is because there was never any historical evidence or proof that any of the theories is true.

Religion is one of the most popular institutions that has greatly influenced man and his society. The high regards given to religion has led to diversity of religious expressions found worldwide; from the endless variety of Hinduism to the monotheism of Judaism, Islam and Christianity and to the Oriental philosophies of Shinto, Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism.

Nigeria is a pluralistic society with three dominant religions – African Traditional Religion, Islam and Christianity. These religions contribute a lot to the development of the Nigerian society.

Science, on the other hand, "is the study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world and society, especially through observation and experiment" (Odumuyiwa, 2003:210). It is concerned with the material universe,

seeking to discover facts about it. Man through science and technology has made his environment more pleasurable and less precipitous. The effects of science and technology on our society and on religious beliefs and practices cannot be overemphasized. Scientific discoveries have revolutionized religious beliefs and practices. It has also contributed in no small measure to the dissemination of religious doctrines and practices; and has made man not to depend on God in areas where God has given him enough to stand on his own.

7.2 Way Forward

Religion and science are concerned with the welfare of mankind. Religion in a scientific and technological era is acutely calling for a thorough discussion. Its timing too is most desperate. This is because both realms have a critical bearing on human existence and the development of our society.

To correct the warped relationship between science and religion; and for both to compliment each other properly, the understanding of the following are necessary:

1. **Religion and science are partners in progress:** both in their noblest forms involve the search for truth. Science discovers a world of magnificent order, a universe that contains distinctive marks of intelligent design. Religion makes these discoveries meaningful by teaching that the mind of the creator lies behind the design manifest in the physical world.
2. **The limits of science:** It is fitting to have proper respect for scientific knowledge and achievements. However, many will agree that while science

involves a way of knowing, it is not the only source of knowledge. The purpose of science is to describe phenomena in the natural world and assist in answering how these phenomena occur. Science provides us with insights into the physical universe, but no matter how far scientific investigation goes, it can never answer the question of purpose – why the universe exists in the first place. There are some questions that scientists can never answer. It may be that the Big Bang happened 12 billion years ago. But why did it happen? How did the particles get there in the first place? It seems clearer than ever that science will never satisfy the human hunger for answers.

3. **Faith has reality:** If there is a creator behind the universe, we cannot expect to comprehend him or his purpose by using telescopes, microscopes, or other scientific instruments. No amount of examination of vase itself can give an answer to why it was made. For that, we must ask the potter himself.
4. **The need for theologians to integrate the insights of science into theology:** There is need for theologians to integrate the insights of science into theology. As we stress the need for theologians to integrate the insights of science into theology, we also need to add that the scientist can also benefit from the insights of theology. By so doing, theologians and scientists can channel our insatiable inquisitiveness to serve the common good.

5. **Need for dialogue:** There is need for dialogue between scientists and theologians. That dialogue will bring mutual benefits to the two disciplines and to mankind in general.

7.3 Conclusion

Religion and science are two phenomena which exist in every society; and both are very useful to human existence. Science responds to a felt need to understand the world, while religion responds to a felt need for the world to have meaning. Both, in the noblest forms, involve the search for truth. The dividing wall between religion, science and technology has been on different methodologies. Religion relies on revelation while science relies on observable, repeatable experiences.

The relationship between science and religion is characterized by different theories ranging from hostility theory, which consists in the conviction that religion and science are irreconcilable; independent theory, which claims that science and religion make declarations that are completely unrelated to each other; to complimentary theory, which sees the two as partners in progress.

The responsibility of conquering the world rests on man but not without numerous odds. The invention of science and technology was an obvious response to the human natural desire to know. Without this knowledge man is doomed, for as Francis Bacon already stated, knowledge is power. Indeed, science and technology have fostered great and marvelous development in our society; and

religion is not left out. Its impact on religious beliefs and practices has led to better understanding of the universe, causes and cure of some diseases, control of nature to satisfy human needs, dissemination of religious beliefs and practices and so forth.

The impact of science and technology on religious beliefs and practices does not mean that religion has been relegated to the background. Scientists with 'faith' often feel that science is a way to get closer to God, by studying the universe God made with the minds and curiosity God gave them. It is on this note that the writer concludes by saying that there is no conflict between science and religion because wisdom, health and technology came from God.

7.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

For further studies, the researcher recommends that other interested researchers should work on the following allied topics:

1. Contributions of religious beliefs and practices to the development of science and technology.
2. African traditional methods of healing in perspective of contemporary science.
3. Influence of Biblical world view on early modern science.
4. Science and Religion: From conflict to conversation.
5. Science in the service of theology.

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