Abstract

Effective from 1977 northern Nigeria has, for the most part, perennially experienced some form of violent religious conflict between Muslims and Muslims or between Muslims and Christians, most of which have resulted in the loss of thousands of lives and billions of dollars worth of properties. This paper will briefly trace the history of northern Nigeria from the pre-colonial times, with the aim of giving insight into the root of the violent religious conflicts. It will also focus on exploring the mission and prophetic elements of dialogue from both Christian and Islamic theological resources. It will then proceed to propose effective implementation of the dialogue of life and the dialogue of action as the two forms of dialogue that have the propensity of mitigating the ongoing religious conflicts between Muslims and Muslims as well as between Muslims and Christians in northern Nigeria.

Introduction

The ongoing religious crises in northern Nigerian have benefitted neither the Christian nor the Islamic image in that country, not to mention its portrayal of both Christian and Islamic missions in bad taste, in the eyes of an objective and critical observer. This is because, despite the rhetoric of peace and love, each of the religions emphasize, the violent conflicts between and sometimes among followers of these religions dwarf all claims to virtue and values of peace. This article will focus on the prophetic and mission values of dialogue in the creedal activities of both Muslims
and Christians in northern Nigeria. Further, it will propose effective implementation of the dialogue of life and the dialogue of action as the two forms of dialogue that have the propensity of mitigating the ongoing religious conflicts between Muslims and Muslims as well as between Muslims and Christians in northern Nigeria.

**Brief History of Northern Nigeria**

In order to understand the current wave of violence in northern Nigeria it is imperative to comprehend the history of the region. The core Hausa-Fulani parts of northern Nigeria (which is the western part of the north) began to take shape during the sixth century with the establishment of the Hausa states. The eastern half of the north is dominated by the Kanuris, who established what later came to be known as the Kanem-Borno empire. These two ethnic groups, the Hausa-Fulani and Kanuri have been dominant players in the social political and historical development of what is today’s Northern Nigeria. Of the constituents of the modern Northern Nigeria, the Kanuris were the first to embrace Islam. The first Kanem King to convert to Islam was King Humai,¹ in the late 11th century. Subsequently, Islam was introduced into the Borno areas and through trade activities to the Hausa cities. In addition to the trade relationships that brought Islam from Kanem-Borno empire, the Hausas also had trade relationships with Arab merchants who effectively introduced Islam into the seven Hausa states by the 14th century.² Many Hausas, especially merchants and political leaders, converted to Islam by choice, practicing the religion simultaneously with their traditional religions.

In 1754, Uthman dan Fodio was born in the western Hausa state of Gobir. Dan Fodio was of Fulani descent, an ethnic nationality of nomadic herders and merchants that had migrated into the Hausa land from the plains of Futa Toro, in present day

² See Ibid.
Senegal. They intermarried with the Hausa people. Dan Fodio grew to be a respected Islamic scholar and Imam. He saw himself as a religious reformer but many of his followers regarded him as a Mahdi, the Islamic equivalent of a messiah. He preached and wrote extensively regarding his belief that the Islamic faith in Hausaland required purification. Uthman dan Fodio was disturbed by the widespread syncretism and paganism afflicting Islam in Hausaland. He travelled extensively, preaching a reform of Islam and gained many supporters. He declared a jihad that toppled the political leadership of cities, stretching from Gobir to present day Cameroon (except for cities of Kanem-Borno empire) and from Agades in present day Niger Republic to Ilorin (south-western Nigeria), setting up a strict Sunni Islamic leadership. The case of dan Fodio’s successful jihad is an exception to the rule of how Islam generally spread in many African societies. According to Lamin Sanneh, “in most places ... Muslims embraced local versions of pluralism and tolerance rather than committing themselves and others to inflexible compliance with the religious code.” It is therefore historically logical to consider the success of dan Fodio’s jihad as symptomatic of the religious intolerance and bigotry, which are at the heart of both Muslim-Muslim and Muslim-Christian conflicts in northern Nigeria until date.

After successfully sweeping the Hausa states and other cities covering most of today’s northern Nigeria and parts of northwestern Cameroon with his jihad and after establishing his brand of pristine Islamic social structures, dan Fodio installed mostly his Fulani kinsmen into the new power positions, thus, completely eliminating all the Hausa and minority ethnic leaders from leadership positions. This social political development with

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its attendant injustice is still at the heart of the political struggles and debates in many parts of northern Nigeria today. The Fulani reigned, in one form or another, until they were defeated by the British in 1903. Britain continued to use their leadership structure in the indirect rule system of the colonial administration.

The British colonial administration merged what used to be the Sokoto caliphate and the Borno Empire (in the north eastern part) into what it called the Northern Protectorate, eventually leading to an amalgamation of the Northern Protectorate with the Southern Protectorate in 1914. That was a political arrangement that gave birth to a country, which the colonial administration, led by Lord Lugard, chose to call Nigeria (a name coined by his wife from River Niger, a river which stretches from north to south of territories covered by the new country). The amalgamation, as the union of the north and south was called, held up until the country secured independence from colonial authorities on October 1 1960. After the national independence and establishment of a civil democratic society (which experienced several hiccups with military takeovers and civil war), some of the simmering social political and economic issues regarding the relationship of the Hausa-Fulani oligarchy and the previously dominated ethnic nationalities exacerbated into social and political upheavals and violent conflicts. Since the northern minorities did not have adequate political and economic clout to challenge the dominant Hausa-Fulani leadership, religion became the easiest instrument to address the social, political, and economic grudges. This is so because the ethnic minorities are predominantly Christian, while the Hausa-Fulani people are predominantly Muslim. Even among the Hausa-Fulani there is a significant portion of the population which considers itself the butt of the elitist Hausa-Fulani social structure. This group although Muslim by faith has axe to grind with the feudal structure of the Hausa-Fulani society and its oligarchy. A considerable percentage of this group of Muslims are the products of the Almajiri institution. The almajiris are young boys who from preteen age (sometimes as young as five or six) are
handed over by their parents to local Islamic teachers for Islamic education and training. Many of them remain with their teachers until their adult age. Their Islamic teachers usually house them and they are sent out daily by these teachers to solicit alms from the public. Therefore, they depend on the charity of the public for their daily sustenance. Many of these people over the years have found succor in Islamic sects like the Izala, Yan Tastine (the Maitatsine group), and recently Boko Haram. The Alamajiri institution has consistently bred a vast population of unemployed youth who have come quite handy for these sects in their need for army of loyalists who are willing to do the bidding of their masters, the sect leaders.

Therefore, the history of northern Nigeria since 1977 has been one of repeated violent conflicts among Muslims and between Muslims and Christians. In each of these conflicts, many lives are lost and properties worth millions of dollars are destroyed. These conflicts affect not only Northern Nigeria, but have also had the tendency of spreading to other parts of the country. During these violent conflicts, social life and commerce are seriously interrupted. The trickle down effects of these conflicts have global implications. Often the Muslim-Christian conflicts in the north have ended up with reprisal attacks of people of northern extraction working and living in different parts of southern Nigeria. In many


instances, crude oil supplies in the affected southern parts of Nigeria are disrupted and consequently the international crude oil business is impacted as well as the stock exchange market, as Nigeria is a leading member of OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) and crude oil is a significant item in the international stock trade. And as John Paden rightly says, “anything that looks like an Islamic uprising is certain to alarm the international press.”

Religion, in general, continues to suffer negative publicity and the conflict is fed by the agenda of people who have tended to negate the values of religion in society or exclusively used religion to address social, political, economic, and cultural problems. As long as these people are able to perpetuate the notion that the conflict is primarily the result of religious discord, the region will continue to suffer.

The continued conflict in Northern Nigeria between Muslims and Christians does more damage to the frayed global relationship between people of the two religions and perpetuates the raison d'etre for continued strife and distancing between Muslims and Christians in the world. There is therefore a need to evolve means for healthy collaborative co-existence between all the peoples of Northern Nigeria regardless of their religious, ethnic, ideological, and cultural differences. Interreligious dialogue certainly offers the much needed framework for making such healthy collaboration among Muslims and between Muslims and Christians a reality.

**Dialogue as Mission from Islamic and Christian Theological Perspectives**

To adequately address this sub-topic, I will reference Islamic and Christian sources. The ultimate goal here is to articulate the imperative mission of dialogue from both Christian and Islamic

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8 See ibid.
perspectives. There is going to be a preponderance of Christian insights because my thoughts and worldview are significantly shaped by my Catholic faith tradition. However, to articulate my points, objectively and constructively, I will refrain from delving into controversial hermeneutical analysis.

With a limited understanding of mission, associating it with dialogue sounds preposterous. The limited and anachronistic perception of mission presupposes conversion to the faith of an evangelizer or the extension of the territorial dominance and estate of a particular faith tradition. Charles Jones is right to ascribe such limited understanding of mission to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Mission in that era radiated negative understandings, given its complicity in the social evil of colonialism. Mission today has a more humane, humble, extensive and deeper application and meaning. The document of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians considers mission as “a single but complex and articulated reality,” hence indicating a more extended understanding of the term.

Mission from a Christian perspective must necessarily reflect the mission of Christ, epitomized in his sermon on the mount (Matt. 5-7), which encapsulates the right approach to the Kingdom of God announced by Christ. Jesus unequivocally identified his mission as primarily that of bringing the good news of God’s Kingdom to the world. He identified himself as one who brings good news to the poor, offering liberation to prisoners and captives, opening the eyes of the blind, giving relief to the downtrodden, and announcing the nearness of God’s Kingdom. It is

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a mission that was both existential and vocational for Christ (Lk. 4:18-19). He embodied and lived the mission. For Christians, who received “power when the Holy Spirit” came upon them, Jesus’ mission has a global outreach. They were Jesus’ “witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts. 1:8). Consequently, Christians are reminded, that by their choice to be followers of Christ, they are required to embody Christ’s universal mission.

Islam as proclaimed by the prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) is the continuation of the religion of Abraham: worship of the One God who created all that exists and to whom all creatures should be drawn. Therefore, from the purview of this vision of mission, Muslims are reminded that they have the honorable responsibility of continuing the original mission of Judaism and Christianity as worshippers of the One God, revealed to all the prophets of God from Adam, Noah, Moses, through Christ. Accordingly, the Qur’an affirms itself as the continuum of earlier scriptures by saying: “He [Allah] hath revealed unto thee (Muhammad) the Scripture with truth, confirming that which was (revealed) before it, even as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel” (Q. 3:3). Albeit, Islam considers Mohammed as the seal of all God’s prophet, and Islam, the most authentic adherence to the right religion (Q. 5: 14-15). The Qur’an serves as a reminder of the essence of that mission, which Christ embodied in these words:

O ye who believe! Be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal nut justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to your duty. Observe your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah ... Allah has promised those who believe and do good works: Theirs will be forgiveness and immense reward. And they who

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disbelieve and deny Our revelations, such are rightful owners of hell (Q. 5:8-10).12

Islamic Da’awah (mission) is about the spread of the message of the One God whom everyone should worship and to which the prophetic life of Mohammed is geared; calling people to the consciousness of what this belief entails. The five pillars of the Islamic faith (shahadah, salat, zakat, sawim, and hajj) represent doing God’s will on earth, which prepare every believer to be worthy enough to merit eternal life in paradise, a synonym for the ultimate kingdom of God. Muslims are invited to spread Islam, especially by their practical examples, hence the emphasis on public demonstration of their beliefs through prayer, alms giving, fasting, and search for peace. In the words of Mahmoud Ayoub:

The idea that the best way to obey God is through care for our fellow human beings is essential to all three monotheistic faiths. Caring for the wayfarer in Islam, for example, can be translated in modern times into caring for those who have no home, who are always on the move, either as refugees or as homeless in our big cities, helping those who are in dire poverty, or who are sick. Obeying God means to clothe the naked, to care for the children, to do social work, in short, to work together toward achieving a just society.

On this we can all agree. This is work in God’s cause, to which the Qur’an is calling Muslims, Jews, and Christians, and all human beings. It is a call to worship God alone and to realize that part of the worship of God is to do good to his His creatures.13

12 For further references to the reward of believers and punishment for unbelief see Q. 7:40ff.
Therefore, all Muslims are called to embody the spirit of the *Da’awah* by living out those social and public expressions of their faith.

Both Muslims and Christians therefore, will concede that at the heart of their mission, as revealed to them either through Jesus or the Qur’an, is the task to prepare all people for God’s Kingdom. The means of achieving this kingdom from the perspectives of the two religions are both parallel and divergent in different aspects. More importantly, both religions insist on active demonstration of their beliefs through empirical living examples. Early Christianity even had a common saying, *laborare est orare* (to work is to pray), which is indicative of the preference for empirical exemplary lives over clinging excessively to doctrines and theological statements.

It is important to state that with the advent of dialogue as a substantive means of effective communication among religions, the concept of mission has taken added meaning. As Jones rightly observed, “the way in which Christians go about missions has evolved along with the development of dialogue through the twentieth century.” Jones further highlights what is historically and methodologically true about the spread of Christianity, namely proclamation and witnessing as the fundamental mode. Therefore, since mission is often identified as evangelizing or proclaiming and witnessing, dialogue has fittingly become a significant aspect of mission. This is because dialogue is essentially an exercise of sharing the truth of one’s beliefs and values with the religious other. In support of the understanding of dialogue as witnessing, Lamin Sanneh said that “the view we have of God is not unconnected to the path by which we ascend to that view, so that dialogue must be about the path as well as about witness to the truth the path leads to. Dialogue and witness, therefore, belong together.”

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14 Ibid., pp.15-16
15 Jones, The View From Mars Hill: Christianity in the Landscape of World Religions, p. 177.
Both the document of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians (*Dialogue and Mission*, May 1984) and that of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (*Dialogue and Proclamation*, DP of 1991) consider dialogue as integral to the Church’s understanding of mission. DP specifically state: “Proclamation and dialogue are thus both viewed, each in its own place, as component elements and authentic forms of the one evangelizing mission of the Church.”

Therefore, in no uncertain terms the Catholic Church considers dialogue as an indispensable element of mission.

Muslims on their part have been reminded, from the inception of the religion, of the necessity for ongoing dialogue with peoples of the Book. Ayoub testifies to this fact: “for almost fourteen hundred years the Qur’an has been calling Muslims, Jews, and Christians to what we have still in vain been trying to achieve for the last half century or so, namely, interreligious ecumenism based on a sincere dialogue of faith.”

Having drawn attention to the mission value of dialogue and how dialogue is indispensable for the realization of mission in today’s society, I now focus on how the prophetic aspects of dialogue will further enhance the objectives of mission in northern Nigeria.

### The Prophetic Imperative of Dialogue in Northern Nigeria

The 1984 document of the Vatican Secretariat For Non-Christians (later known as the Pontifical Council for Interreligious dialogue)
Dialogue and Mission,\textsuperscript{19} identified four forms of interreligious dialogue. They are listed as dialogue of life, dialogue of action, dialogue of theological exchange, and dialogue of religious experience. DP echoes these four forms of dialogue.\textsuperscript{20} According to DP, dialogue of life refers to “where people strive to live in an open and neighborly spirit, sharing their joys and sorrow, their human problems and preoccupations.”\textsuperscript{21} DP defines dialogue of action as situations “in which Christians and others collaborate for the integral development and liberation of people.”\textsuperscript{22} Further, DP qualifies dialogue of theological exchange as conditions, “where specialists seek to deepen their understanding of the respective religious heritages, and to appreciate each other’s spiritual values.”\textsuperscript{23} Regarding the dialogue of religious experience, DP sees it as occasions, “where persons, rooted in their own religious traditions, share their spiritual riches, for instance with regard to prayer and contemplation, faith and ways of searching for God or the Absolute.”\textsuperscript{24} Since 1984 when the document Dialogue and Mission identified these four forms of dialogue, they have become generally accepted and in some instances added to but never rejected.

Therefore, it may be understandable to conclude that the popular broad division of dialogue into four forms goes to elaborate the extensive relevance and application of dialogue to faith and social matters. Every religion is intent on impacting both the spiritual and social dimensions of human life. Understandably, the

\textsuperscript{21} See ibid., p. 104.
\textsuperscript{22} See ibid.
\textsuperscript{23} See ibid.
\textsuperscript{24} See ibid.
four forms of dialogue influence both the social and spiritual dimensions of interreligious relationships. This author is of the opinion that given the perennial violent social and political relationship between Muslims and Christians in northern Nigeria, more energy needs to be focused on the social dimensions of dialogue. The two forms of dialogue that directly affect the social relationships of all religious people are dialogue of life and dialogue of action.

Going by the definition given above, dialogue of life refers to the informal dialogic activities that people are engaged in as a matter of everyday living experiences. This is the dialogue where people interact healthily with neighbors, friends, family, and co-workers of different religions. During such interactions, the partners in dialogue get to know each other better without any pressure, intimidation, or suspicion. The values of dialogue of life include knowledge and appreciation of the cultural and religious values of one’s neighbour, friend, family, co-worker and/or acquaintance.

The dialogue of action, on its part, requires a deliberately organized collaboration of peoples from different religious blocks. It may also entail community events sponsored by the collaboration of different religious groups in the society. It is through the auspices of such dialogue that Muslims and Christians can collaboratively protect, promote, and advocate for the common good in the society. Jones proposed what he called "leavening model", as a dialogic goal with the motive of spreading the mission of the gospel. In this model, a Christian seeks to impart values cherished and treasured in her or his faith to someone of a different faith tradition. An example will be teaching the value and dignity of every person by providing quality education, vocational training (trade and other skills) to unskilled workers so they can secure jobs that will earn them living wages. Other collaborative dialogue of action examples include, building health clinics, and

25 See Jones. The View From Mars Hills:, pp. 180f.
providing legal support to victims of different kinds of abuse. These values when inculcated demonstrate some of the highest levels of achieving the mission of God’s kingdom on earth entrusted to every Christian. In the same manner, significant Islamic values are passed on to the rest of society.

There is no doubt that these two forms of dialogue have empirical prophetic values and will produce desired result of social harmony and solidarity between Muslims and Christians in northern Nigeria or anywhere for that matter, where they are successfully implemented. Therefore, as prophetic tools, I propose that they be assiduously pursued and promoted among the peoples of northern Nigeria. Through these forms of dialogue, genuine interest and curiosity to learn about the other are established and developed. They are primarily essential to establish trust, true friendship, altruism, and understanding between Muslims and Christians in northern Nigeria.

Furthermore, steps must be taken to discourage public religious preaching, which is often a source of discord and discontent in communities and cities in northern Nigeria. Such public activities often involve local preachers or popular evangelists/imams setting up public address systems at street corners or public parks for open air preaching. These activities have led to several violent conflicts among Muslims and between Muslims and Christians. It was the content of the public preaching of a German evangelist, Reverend Reinhard Bonnke, which sparked off one of the worst Christian-Muslim clashes in the city of Kano in 1991. The Maitatsine religious riot in Kano 1980 with a death toll of over 1,400 people, which spread to Kaduna and Maiduguri in 1982 and other parts of the north in that decade, gathered steam from the public preaching of a sectarian Muslim cleric, Mohammadu Maruwa.26

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Equally, fundamentalism among both Christians and Muslims is at the heart of the religious bigotry, which continues to fuel the hate and anger harboured by the different religious groups in northern Nigeria. It is accurate to conclude that fundamentalism is one of the greatest obstacles to the success of any forms of dialogue, including the dialogues of life and action. It is therefore imperative for both Muslim and Christian educators and leaders to discourage fanatical and fundamentalist approaches to religion. But more importantly, it is incumbent on all Nigerians to seek to be better educated about both their religion and the religions of others in the society. It is a known fact, but sad that most Christians and Muslims in all parts of Nigeria have very limited or naïve understanding of both their own religion and the religions of their neighbours. In the absence of a comprehensive and balanced understanding of religion, fanaticism and fundamentalism feed off the ignorance and gullibility of religious adherents. This is one of the explanations for the spread and persistence of religious conflicts in both northern Nigeria and other parts of the country.

Healthy intra and interreligious dialogue advanced through dialogue of action and dialogue of life will significantly help to maintain and respect the multi-religious setting of Nigeria. Religiously motivated conflicts in northern Nigeria have often been as the result of one religion or a sect claiming superiority over others or denouncing the values of others. This phenomenon goes back to the 1979 Muslim-Christian students’ conflict at the College of Education in Kafanchan, Kaduna State to the series of violent conflicts either among Muslims or between Muslims and Christians. For instance, the Yan Izala, based in Zaria and Kaduna, instigated a number of conflicts in the 1980s against fellow Muslims in protest against what they called the rise of innovation (bid‘a) among Muslims or in opposition to the Sufi brotherhood movement.27

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27 The facts of incessant intra and interreligious conflicts have defined life in northern Nigeria especially since 1979. More facts and information of these conflicts can be found in much more details in the works of Anthony Akaeze,
Dialogue of life is a necessity for every society and it is effectively enhanced when all people in the society respect the values of dialogue as they engage in their regular life interactions. Although Muslims and Christians tenuously live and work together in many parts of northern Nigeria, issues of minimal social, political, and religious relevance like the planned hosting of Miss World beauty pageant in 2002 at Abuja was spun into huge religious and social controversy leading to one of the several vicious religious conflicts that have defined life in many northern Nigerian cities. For a healthy dialogue of life, Muslims and Christians should be encouraged as well as be free to live and work together. This is not the case in places like Zaria, Kano, Sokoto, and many other northern cities, where, from the colonial times, there have been a normative residential structure that separates Muslims from non-Muslims, hence setting up a suburb often referred to as *sabon gari* (new city)\(^{28}\). This structure notoriously separates Muslims and Christians and denies well meaning citizens the privilege of harmoniously living together and sharing life stories and experiences together. While some of the exclusive Muslim enclaves have today welcomed non-Muslims, they are often reminded that they are only tolerated and cannot really call such places home. Hence, Christians are almost never permitted to build churches or set up structures that will highlight any form of Christian symbol in such places. Moreover, Christians who live in such places become easy targets during any Muslim-Christian conflicts. If Muslims will sincerely welcome and accommodate dialogue of life and dialogue of action, then Christians and other

\(^{28}\) The idea of Sabon Gari is a euphemism for “city of infidels.” This is because, as a norm, the Sabon Garis are the places you can have bars, hotels, brothels, gambling, and churches and other Christian symbols. Therefore, literally Muslims consider Sabon Garis as the cities of sin and home of infidels.
non-Muslims should be encouraged to feel at home living in the former exclusively Muslim enclaves. Allowing the construction of churches and public display of Christian symbols will underscore the openness and commitment of the dominant Muslim societies of northern Nigeria to both the dialogues of action and life.

Therefore, dialogues of life and action provide acceptable conduits for promoting a society that reflects the desires and values of both Islam and Christianity as well as establishing a society where cherished values are promoted and supported. It is necessary to iterate that these values are not imposed on others but adapted and appreciated by the religious other. People emulate them because they are considered valuable and desirable. Through such dialogues, the religious other makes a moral and deliberate choice for those values but not coaxed or pressured in any way.

Dialogues of action and life are empirically prophetic. They are also the most subtle and friendly forms of the mission; they are socially friendly as well as friendly toward the religious other. They are certainly about the most effective means of dialogue in today’s pluralist societies. Therefore, a pluralist society like Nigeria will greatly benefit in the improvement of the relationship of Muslims and Christians if the dialogues of action and life are effectively implemented.

Conclusion

Interreligious dialogue is both prophetic and existential, especially based on the Christian and Islamic articulations of the idea. This is so because dialogue of action and dialogue of life seek the fullest realization of the mission of Christ as well as fulfill significantly the recommendations of the Qur’an. If these forms of dialogue are adequately maintained and persistently promoted in societies like northern Nigeria, the rancorous relationship among Muslims and between Muslims and Christians will be significantly minimized. The prophetic nature of both forms of dialogue stem from their goal of promoting and sustaining elements of God’s kingdom here
on earth by carrying out works of justice, peace, and charity.

The successful implementation of the dialogues of life and action will appropriately set the ball rolling for the exercise of the other two forms of dialogue: dialogue of theological exchange and the dialogue of religious experience. These two forms of dialogue are more advanced and sensitive. They are in the areas of faith traditions that present serious social problems and sources of irretraceable conflicts. Several instances of the violent conflicts between Muslims and Christians in northern Nigeria have developed from controversial and inflammatory doctrinal and theological issues. The Reinhard Bonnke riots of 1991 started as a reaction of Muslims’ to the inflammatory preaching of the German evangelist. The 2001 riots in Kano started as a result of Muslims’ reaction to the alleged desecration of some Quranic text. A number of riots from other parts of northern Nigeria including Zaria, Kaduna, Jos, etc are the products of inflammatory doctrinal teachings from both Muslims and Christians. Therefore, an overt and sustained focus on the dialogue of life and dialogue of action will certainly promote better neighborliness, collaboration, and cooperation between Muslims and Christians.

Judging from the forgoing conclusion of how dialogue of action and dialogue of life help to cement better social interaction and religious understanding between Muslims and Christians, it is valid to conclude that the success of such collaboration and cooperation will have global positive political and social ramifications. Such development will prompt the required social political mindset as well as the moral will for confronting any kind of religiously motivated violence (by either Christian or Muslim fundamentalists). Maintaining the momentum acquired from such political, social, and moral will is also indispensable for addressing existing social vices, especially those created by religious bigotry and misapplication of religion.

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