
AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION AND THE QUEST FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship of religion and the culture of peace in Nigeria. It sees religion as an instrument for the establishment of peace and justice. The reason for this; is that, when one talks about justice it presupposes peace, and vis-à-vis, and these are the elements of evangelization inherent in all religions. With recent happenings, especially in the name of religious violence and intolerance, there demand the urgent needs for the understanding of the meaning, natures and the significance of religion by all humanities as they strive in challenging contemporary society of religious particularism and bigotry. Though, modernity and civilization are not expected to change the concept and the working of the divine as it relates the human development, but with the advancement of the human society it has been observed that man is losing the sense of his religiosity. So, there is need for humanities to re-trace their steps in bringing back his former religious consciousness which is accommodative and healthily sociable. The paper examines the proper placing of the meaning and views of religion, and taking the African traditional Religion as a considerable and possible paradigm for conscience re-engineering, that will initiate positive violence-free society, especially in Nigeria.

Introduction

Religion is about human's search for its true identity. And human's search for its dignity, identity, and meaning has been characterized by human conflict, divisions and wars as means of gaining or enforcing the recognition acceptance, respect, protection promotion and affirmation of the these innate and universal truths¹ - the institutions of peace, justice and social order. Human being is very difficult to ascertain, simply because it is more than "a nature nurtured being". This is because he possesses rationality, exercises freedom and domesticates the gift of intelligibility. And the misplacement of these possessions has been opposing its existence, and may be leading human species into extinction if not properly managed. This brought us the existence of eluding peace which humanity is greatly experiencing. Humanity must be taught of cooperate and communal togetherness, the seat of peace and justice. It is a method to eliminate the impending culture of war and other forms of conflict that humanity has mostly accustomed with. It is about learning in and learning out of values, a replacement of cultures with more humanistic cultures, replacement of values with more accommodating values. But the same humanity believes that it can obtain this condition, that is, the attainment of global peace. She ascertains that peace is possible, "because, as John Paul II puts it;

It is in the human hearts that war or reconciliation begins, a peaceful future is built on the basis of a 'new heart' a heart able to recognise in every individual person a brother or sister with equal dignity to respect, with fundamental rights to promote, with legitimate expectations to satisfy.¹

The same notion can be held about contemporary conception and consideration of religion that is part of humanity. Every atom of development is now associated with human religion because of its placement in the designing purpose and interests of human advancements. So humanity has greatly become religion and religion has become humanity without positive restraints in most cases of valuing and explication of objectivity of existence. With the growth of human intelligibility and sense of self – reliance, many thoughts have becoming cultures of religion, in which scientism, relativism and atheism are dominantly imposing. The contemporary humanity seeks the consideration of new heart of development and spirituality where the consciousness of the divinity is debased, but, upheld to achieve meaningful development and champion the culture of true salvation and liberation. This ‘new heart’ seems to be very far-reaching because humanity is preventing the flow of godly achievements and replacing things in disorderly manner. In the words of Ayo Fasuyi and Philip Isanbor;

The central message of any religion is on peace, love and the avoidance of conflicts among humans which the founder of any religion had taught his/ her followers for the attainment for happy end. The ultimate goal of humanistic living is naturally ordered. This central message is on the moral principle on which the value of the life of man is weighted, through the culture which makes him to enjoy the natural rights. This arrangement has been challenged by the reign of insecurity of human lives that possess these rights, especially the right to live, as religion will understand it. There cannot be meaningful living without security.ⁱ

As a sequel, much of humanity has turned to science as a source of fulfilment and hope. Technology has seemingly offered power, control and the prospect of overcoming helplessness and dependency, instead of religion. But, this shift has not been helpful. Holistically a vacuum was created as the search for a better material world was without a parallel spiritual advancement.ⁱ Humanity is losing the sense of understanding of its nature as religious being, which presupposes that it is a peaceful being, through the tenets of every proclaimed religion is peace. The advocacy of new heart is necessary because it should be out to express the proper and most essential element of religion, which is openness. This indicates that any group of persons that claim to be worshipping any divine or infinite personality, and it is not open, but secretive, cannot be regarded as religion. Such group can be against peace and justice. Peace is communal, religious and contagious in its effectiveness and meaningfulness.

Contextually, taking the thought of John Paul II, it is commonly positioned that “peace is the ideal of humankind. Peace is necessary. Peace is a duty. Peace is beneficial. It is not a fixed and illogical idea of ours; nor is it an obsession or an illusion. It is a certainty.... Peace is the goal of mankind in the process of its growing self-awareness and of the development of society on the face of the earth. Peace is human power of potential actualisation and societal thrust for development. Peace is humanity itself.”ⁱⁱ On the other note, development, according to Anselm Jimoh, is a condition of the “satisfactions of our socio-cultural needs are guaranteed by providing the opportunities by which we can attain and satisfy these needs an atmosphere for growth resulting from the individual contributions of citizens is created and development begins to take place.”ⁱⁱⁱ With this paper, one may say that there are limited literatures on the attainment of peace and development through the practicality of African Traditional Religion. the dominant academic engagement in our contemporary

time, have been the interest to substantiate the meaningfulness of African Philosophy among other continental philosophies, the analysis of African metaphysical concepts such as witchcraft, incarnation, predestination and the likes., and the altercations of religious conflicts in Africa. Hence, one may confidently sit to infer academically that this paper will be of the few literary works to develop research trend toward the realization of global peace and development through the proper internalization of African Traditional Religion, as beacon of hope for harmonious human society.

Hence, the objective of this paper is to look at the contemporary demands for proper developmental placement of African Traditional Religion (ATR), especially in Nigeria that is currently bedevil with a weighty downplay of religious conflicts. These, in this course of essay, can be attributed to improper internalization and faulty cultivation of religious ideologies and practices that are foreign to our African cultural, spiritual and social development. This paper recognises that ATR is culturally oriented and situated to advance the communitarian ethics that projects that indispensable embrace of peace and justice which necessarily engender the realization of meaningful and integral development.

Methodologically, above, we have stated the thrust of introductory comments of the research. In it, we will clarify the meaning of peace and development contextually, owing to the fact that both concepts are philosophically and socially inseparable. We shall proceed by examining the placement of religion, and with great emphasis on ATR. Then, show the contemporary consideration or recognition of the culture of peace inherent in meaningful practicality of ATR toward the possibility of integral development that is so desired by contemporary Nigerians who are looking forward for meaningful development. Making evaluative comments, we shall conclude this paper by affirming the cultural indispensability and value-laden practicality of ATR towards the godly generation of peace and development, in the midst of other religions.

Contextualization the Placement of Religionⁱ

Put simply, the task of this paper is not to typify the etymology of religion, but to situate the general conviction of its meaning based on its sociological and psychological sittings on the establishment of peace and development. The working of religion is as old as humanity, because the whole affairs of what humanity knows about religion surround it as a religious being. For John Mbiti, religion cultivate the whole person, provides people with a view of the world, answers some questions which nothing else can answer, provides mankind with moral values by which to live, gives food to meet spiritual hunger, inspires great ideas, acts as a means of communication, pays attentions to the key moments of the life of the individual, celebrates life and shows people their limitations.ⁱ Religion is a system of beliefs and practices, which border on the sacred and unite a sect of followers into a single community. Religion is regard as a way of life in the society. It is also a belief in a god(s) and the activities that are connected with this belief, such as praying or worshipping.ⁱ

More straightforwardly, the consciousness of spiritual impulses in humanity shows that religion creates or generates values and attitudes designed to lead to specific action and ultimately to a certain goal of final fulfilment.ⁱ Then, linking religion with morality, Immanuel Kant says that it is the recognition of our duties as divine commands, the categorical imperative. So, one will understand that this relationship is not empty and not without reverence. As for Omoregbe, religion is not a relationship between equals. The human person (the religious man) always feels that the divine

person(the deity) with whom he is engaged in this relationship is superior to him, and sees himself as depending on him.¹ Just as Helen Asgar asserts that;

Ever since the world began, man has demonstrated a natural inclination towards faith and worship of anything he considered superior/difficult to understand. His religion consisted of trying to appease and get favour from the supreme beings he feared. This resulted in performing rituals (some of them barbaric) and keeping traditions or laws to earn goodness and /or everlasting life.¹

This is because humanity who is the religious being believes that this conceived Superior Being or Deity exists, so it shows and expresses acts of worship and reverence in keeping a relationship between them. This is religion and remains very functional as far as humanity remains religious in thinking and consideration.¹ Hence, Erivwo has a supporting view about the origin of religion, that the exercise of the search for the origin of religion may well be an exercise in futility. One basic fact is clear: humanity as it is at presently constituted is a *homo religiosus*.¹ Just as humanity is a social being, so is it a religious being. Religion is therefore tied up with the origin of human person, and the source of its being; man can therefore do nothing about a law of its psychological constitution, but obey it, seeing that its religious is datum.

Hence, it is observed, highly and objectively, that “religion is offered to us in order to make life more meaningful, it is recognition of God, who is absolutely the *Other*, the *Beyond* of visible reality”.¹ The nature of human’s devotion on the consciousness of God and how to reach Him; to an attempt to gain favour from Him, has given rise to founding agents and groups of followers. These groups have been factual and meaningful, even in our modern society. This has given rise to *Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, African Traditional Religion, Judaism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Taoism and Shintoism*.¹ These are the world recognised religions. It is evident that as humanity develops with sense of rationality and religious inclination, there are others in the societies that are making recognitions in many remote communities in the world. Even, maybe, ‘scientism’ and ‘atheism’ can be regarded as some of them that are developing.

So directly, this paper is about the strengthening of African Traditional Religion towards the course of peace in human society amongst other versions of religious practices with particular reference to religious climate of Nigeria. Then, taking *African Traditional Religion(ATR)*, though, with many cultures and formalities, Africa is an area of many elements of religion but with almost similar mode of worship. It is mostly in the form of animism or/and totemism. It is a religion, as way of life that links the ancestors, the living and the yet-to-be born in a web of intergenerational chain or scheme.¹ Africa is so vast and has such a large number of societies which differ from each other considerably that one runs the risk of generalization when one speak of ATR. And yet there is common thread in indigenous values, views and experience which shows a large measure of uniformity.¹ Out of this emerges the African concept of the supernatural, ideas about man, society and nature. All these ideas form a system which gives meaning and significance to African life, identity and personality.

With African Traditional religion, the Africans culturally understand the ways to live with God and his utterances. The development of African traditional religion is not attached to any particular founder and it is polytheistic religion. Africans are all naturally religious because of their general

relationship with natural events and realities. Also, they consider the following elements of understanding the personhood of God: God is essentially a Spirit for there is no image or visible representations of Him. He is recognized as the creator of the world and that there is in it. Next to God are the ancestral Spirits who play a very prominent role in ATR. The ancestors, like God, are always treated with reverence and awe.¹The ATR is embellished with the acts of worship such as libation, offering, invocation, prayer, songs and sacrifice. In this, there is always the form of regular, occasional, direct or indirect worship. The belief of supernatural entities/lesser deities who derive their powers from God, and the practice of totemism, and the workings of witchcraft, magic, sorcery, charms, amulets and exorcism or spirit possession also, there is a firm belief in reincarnation, life after death, future reward and future punishment.¹ All these constituted the valuing of peaceful coexistence and positive symbiotic living amongst the Africans who believe in the working of ancestral judicial system, and the gods as good and impeccable judges of the living and their affairs in administering justice and fairness.

The Thrust of Interest for ATR

Religion has been the product of human's existence, and it has been one of its major tools of social and spiritual integrations. Though, in the course of history it has been also tool of conflicts and destructions, just as a result of improper management of the spirit of misplaced priorities and embellishment of politics with religious principles. As a result of misgivings in our religious practices, we have the problems of proselytization, religious propaganda, fundamentalism, persecution, violation of human rights and denial of religious liberty, weighty nature of religious politics, dominance (particularism), secularism, and the rise of new religions, cults and occultic practices.¹This is because; religion can be made to serve the interests of a personal or collective ego. When it does so, it can develop into some form of fanaticism or fundamentalism.¹This view is particularly true of religion, but the fundamentalists find hard to accept this fact.¹This is the major lot of contemporary humanity. Just as AghoghoEkpruke asserted that "both science and religion can be useful to man, where and when correctly explored. The mistakes of religious extremists or the scientific theory may claim that men are the grandchildren of apes, notwithstanding."¹This is about the reduction of the dignity of humanity in the name of conceptual and pragmatic frameworks of human intelligibility with a maximal application of human religiosity.

It is noted that, for instance, before the Nigerian Civil War, people were committed to religious matters. They were spiritually inclined. Although there were only few churches then, they were spirit-filled, with leaders committed to the work of God. Immediately after Civil War, things began to change. People were no more committed to spiritual matters. Rather, the economic situation in the country created an avenue for created of many privately-owned churches. Instead of preaching words that can elevate life and guarantee salvation, words that can make those who are criminally-minded change their thoughts, many of the sermons are on prosperity.¹

Even with these negations; at the level of human development, mankind cannot do without religion, just because of its influences and the mentality of the attainment of happy end of life which it has put into them. As for Dominic Umoh, "religion is perhaps the only phenomenon which captures man in his entity, giving meaning to his existence, the most fundamental grounds of one's being. True religious commitment costs not less than everything."¹The concept of "everything" indicates the

holistic benefits of humanity which are not outside the practices of religions. Peace, justice, morality, ethics are founded and grounded in certain principles which are centred on the attainment of meaningful and integral human development.¹ Nigerians, just like the whole Africans, are traditionally religious. Not only is Africa among the largest, most linguistically diverse and most politically and economically troubled on the planet, it is arguably the most religious as well.¹ Religion forms the foundation and the all-governing principle of life for the Africans. The full responsibility of all the affairs of life including security, procreation, agriculture, justice belongs to the Deity.¹ We have the consciousness of the existing of the supernatural Being on our beingness and dealing, we were not taught to realise God's existence as many foreign scholars are making to accept. According to Gyekye;

Religion influences in a comprehensive way the thoughts and actions of African life, fully determining practically every aspect of life influencing more behaviour. The African lives in a religious universe: all actions and thought have religious meaning and are inspired or influenced by a religious point of view.¹

Culturally and naturally without difficulty and with less demand of intelligibility and belief, we rely mostly on the intervention of the superior Being, God. It is on our traditional religion belief. This is our identity. But, this is what we have debased by our modern and contemporary sense of civilisation and development that were injected into our consciousness by the arrival of the missionaries and colonisers. It was by the introduction of the own religions (Christianity and Islam) which were and are foreign to the common African. With African Traditional Religion, the Africans have been very close to the Creator with fears and trembling which are embedded in their sense of worship and morality that classify their communitarian togetherness and ethics. This mode of religion is the soul of African communality and interestedness. It is the height of African spiritual projected personality and identity. It is African itself, and should be glorified in order to regain the peace and justice we have lost, as a result of adoption of contrary religions to African personality, religiosity and identity towards the attainment of growth and development.

An Enculturation of Peace in African Traditional Religion

The central message of every religion (not excluding ATR) is on peace, love and the avoidance of conflicts among humans which the founder of any religion had taught his/ her followers for the attainment for happy end. Our religious system produces its own kind of morals and ethics. our religious beliefs are outlined alongside our cultural convictions, by helping in the formulation of concepts of good and evil, morality, ethics and justice. Also, in the institutions of moral duties, customs, superstitions, social laws and regulations, taboos, and the general order of existence in our given society.¹ The ultimate goal of humanistic living is naturally ordered. This central consciousness is on the moral principle on which the value of the life of humanity is weighted, through the culture which makes it to enjoy its own natural rights. This arrangement has been challenged by the reign of insecurity of human lives that possess these rights, especially the right to live, as religion will understand it. Human life is the ultimate source of developmental and transcendental considerations, and it deserves its respects, promotion and protection. There cannot be meaningful living without security. For this, "guaranteeing security of lives and property remains the primary purpose of the State. This is the heart of the contract between the State and the people. Nothing works in any

environment plagued with insecurity.”ⁱBut, in religious palace, security belongs to the Divine that works in the institution of the government. Then, the failure of this is the reign of insecurity posing by the religious institutions who believe in this divine authority; into the state of embarrassment, and metaphysical and social negative criticisms. This makes the sense of peace seem to be probabilistic even in the religious palace Douglas Roche recognized that;

Though, religion does not have an ownership of the formulation of moral standards of a culture of peace. There already exists among religions a consensus for the values, standards, and moral attitudes that are the basis for a moral ethic. Despite their own various failures, the world’s religions bears a responsibility to promote the binding values, convictions, and norms that are valid for all humans regardless of their nationality, social origin, skin, colour, or religion.ⁱ

These indicate the posterity in human existence, that religions have the course to advance the fundamental human rights through the establishment of the environment of which the achievement of peace and love for human life by the living human is realized. On this, the human being is of inestimable worth, an incomparable divine creation; each one unique, like Adam at the beginning, each one is a whole world, a cosmos in miniature. All humanity is bound up in the life of each person. These mentalities for the attainment of peace have led to the development or the constitution of many conferences for the promotion of the culture of peace. They have also facing a lot of difficulties, due to some elements of evaluation of human values of interests. As Douglas Roche said:

The world Parliament of Religions, showing a sense of optimism, continues to focus on the conditions for peace, sustainable development, and ways to protect and promote respect for cultural diversity. Religions are instrumentally placed to effect a transformation in the consciousness of individuals and in public life. But religions first have to rise above their internal pre-occupations and reach out to humanity.ⁱ

The religious and cultural diversities which the world is experiencing are hinged on the unified values of love and peace which they advocate for, through the cultivation of moral conscience, in which Cardinal Basil Hume comments that: “world religions should in a special way represent the moral conscience of the world, and condemn anything which degrades and destroys human life, dignity and freedom. We recognize that anything which offends our common humanity is itself a threat to world peace.”ⁱ Some religions are seemed to have fallen short of these values which are expected of them with regard to human life and dignity. In most cases, the demands of peace and justice are not preached outside the reign of religion, because it is the major message of any established religion. According to the majority of religious leaderships, the nature of God is peace and justice. Right from man’s beginning, there was the general assumption that man was living in a world that is made and directed by a great force beyond man’s control.

In our ATR, for example, there was no physical explanation for thunder apart from its being the expression of God’s anger. He claps and calls his creatures to order and, thereby, also, remind them that he is still there. Anything that beats every rational explanation at that time was attributed to the Divine Power. In fact, not to believe in these things was taken very seriously, as people could not

risk inviting the anger of the Divine through the flagrant of few elements in the community.ⁱ This was the mentality of the normal, ordinary and common African humanity who has the fear of God residing in its consciousness, it believes that it is the Divine Being that should be protecting and fighting its courses for its development and emancipation, not the other way round. Now, the common African humanity who has lost the true sense of its religion has resulted to fighting for the courses of its Creator. It easily tramples on the mercy and benevolent nature of his Creator and then exercises its religious freedom wrongly in the name of the proclamation of religious particularism and exercising its culture of religious fundamentalism, therefore, limiting the essence and attributes of God, especially as the God who is powerful and who saves humanity.

The strength of the ATR will always remain in our consciousness as Africans, because it has great influence in our sense of worship and reverence of our creator. For the sake of development , with ethno-science theory that is found in traditional knowledge and practice of African people and their religion, they have, the Yoruba for instance, the offering of *ebo* (peace sacrifice) daily, weekly, monthly and annually to the gods to ward off evil sickness and insecurity in the land.ⁱ It even, will continue to interplay in our sense of judgment even as adherents of foreign religion. That is why Anselm Ekhelarwill convincingly assert that:

It is not all the time we reckon with the relevance of the influence that traditional religion exerts on the consciousness and the perception of reality of our people. Most agents of evangelisations appear to be oblivious of the fact that the customs and the traditions of our people appear to have been written on a template provided by the traditional religion. For, what do we mean when we say our people are traditionally religious? It is precisely that their way of life is intrinsically expressive of their belief in the existence and worship of the divine being that is believed to have created and sustained us.ⁱ

At any instance, the Africans do not need to be evangelised in order to know God and to accept the practice of other religions. These are parts of their communitarian living and consciousness. The evangelisation in the name of Christian and Islamic religions was and still to establish other forms of worship. Though, many Africans have adopted them as the ideal religions. The African Traditional religion still and must be internalised as humanity develops with sense of transcendental benefits and projection a living life-after-death, and the consideration of the admission of the individuals (as Africans) into ancestral cult. All that is needed is the rebranding of the classification and practicability of ATR and contemporarily internalised with a civilised consciousness and adoptability of interests.

Evaluative Conclusion

It is evident that everyone should know the nothing good happens outside the reign of peace, justice and unity, and that should be the very reason why everyone should strives to make these elements or factors visible and adequately realistic in human living; just because human living is a total meaninglessness without development that necessarily projects him as living rational animal. Nigeria in particular, now in the name of *Boko Haram*, and others religious retaliations, and Africa in general, in the name of religious conflicts in defence of religious boundaries and cultural tolerance is

very evident in the Northern Africa. There have been hurricanes of religious tenets, such as peace, love and justice. It demands the re-embracing of ATR, or the enculturation of foreign religions to suit into our cultural and social mentalities where we recognise the placement of the workability of ancestral cult and relationship in the administration of justice and the institution of peace amongst the living.

All should know that when there is no peace, no meaningful development that could take place. Violence in the name of religion is not part of African culture; the religions in Africa that are associated with violence are alien to our culture. Though, we do have bloody ritual which is not in the name of religious intolerance or mode of evangelisation, but part of worship that is very much occasional. Any incessant human killing in the name of traditional religion is always misinterpretation of the Deity by the priest or priestess of the shrine, or as a result of misguided jealousy and selfishness on the part of the priests or priestesses of the deities or gods as the case may be. That is why one will emphatically say that no institution is perfect, but the traditional religion which is based on our culture is very considerably, because, experiences recent times in Nigeria, for example, have seen that no war from and against the Traditional Religion adherents, but only visible among the Christian and Islamic Adherents, and their religions are foreign to our culture, and we are finding them difficult to understanding their true messages. We can easily practice ATR, because, it is already a part of our consciousness.

There is a general demand on the church, individuals and nations, is to develop the culture of 'New Spirituality' toward the proper management of the earth and everything therein, everything that relates to its existence, most especially the happiness and existence of man, the only rational animal in it, in whom the stewardship of the earth is invested upon by God. This New Spirituality should be based on the understanding of ATR where the respect for the value of man and peace as the ultimate worship. Take the spirituality of the adherents of *Sango* in Yoruba Culture, *Ogun* in Bini culture, *Kpekpe* in Igbanke culture, and the likes, they reverend these deities, even their ancestors, with fear and trembling and with high sense of morality and love, believing when these dispositions are put on, the deity or deities will be pleased, and then, there will be peace, development, harmony and justice in the society. For the universality of ATR, John Mbiti asserts that;

It is religion more than anything else, which colours their (African) understanding of the universe and their empirical participation in that universe, making life a profoundly religious phenomenon. To be is to be religious in a religious universe.ⁱ

The existence of the earth presupposes the existence of man. The former is existing because the latter does. Development is about the both. It is about the spirituality of social justice, social order and 'civilisation of love'. In sum, according to Chris Obi, "religion, belief in the ancient supernatural conglomerate of God, gods, goddesses, spirits, and ancestors, and their associated ritual system provided the main engine of each community's recognised law and custom. The operatives of moral code, in each case, had strong religious underpinning."ⁱ The questions of development are that of social order, and in which ATR has indispensable characteristics to provide. Hence, the absence of earthly violence in any form indicates the elimination of sufferings and wants in human society, in the name of poverty, draughts, wars, ethnic rivalries, unhealthy social and political struggles,

unemployment, armament, and other forms of conflicts and poor resource management. Development is man's proper conscience,¹ and the African with ATR have seen in their love for the universe. To them, the love and safety of the universe are that of the worships of God that should not be compromised

More-so, the thought of 'New Spirituality' that is evident in the Civilization of Love, will easily initiate the culture of peace development can visibly and easily be domesticated in the re-consideration of ATR, and in many case, the inculturation of other religions in the dominance of ATR. This conscience can mostly be found in operation in ATR, and it is about the 'New Spirituality' that is advocated for, for holistic social change in term of religious tolerance and adaptation. The 'New Spirituality' is based on social justice that promotes the respect of the human dignity and rights, because, developmental peace does not grow and can never be situated outside the domain of social justice and respect of human dignity and rights. It is about the culture of the dictum of 'live and let live.'

Conclusively, for the course of peace and development, there is need to recognise that Africans with their religious consciousness are blessed with natural powers and resources. But these powers and resources are being underutilized because of Western religious influences on African culture and tradition. This is not to say that we should do away with the Western religions in dealing with conflicts, but we should the tenets of such religions in African ways- inculturation of religious interests.¹ More Straightforwardly, there is a call and need for us to embrace the ATR which understands the value for peace and justice, and holds on to protect and promote them, especially as we fight the influencing culture of modernity and civilisation in our present living that the reign of religious relativism and *trivialism* is very much evident. The culture of solidarity within the divinized moral reverence is more exemplified in ATR than every other religion, especially in Africa. May be, it is our real religion that we should develop in order to realise the more advocated authentic human development, where peace and justice make sway always.

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- ²⁷Yakubu Turaki, p. 112.
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