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# Religious Diversity and Violent Conflict: Lessons from Nigeria

ROBERT DOWD

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What explains why certain countries or regions of the world are more prone to inter-religious conflict than others? This is an immensely important question as religious tensions continue to fuel and be fueled by social conflict in various parts of the world. If we can identify conditions that make some societies more or less prone to inter-religious conflict than others, we can devote ourselves to fostering conditions that decrease the likelihood that religion is used to inspire violence. More ambitiously, we may even be able to cultivate conditions that increase the likelihood that religious institutions are harbingers of tolerance and peace rather than intolerance and violent social conflict. While there are many explanatory variables we could examine to explain why there is more religious conflict in some societies than others, such as poverty, urbanization, and geo-political context, this essay focuses on religious diversity within societies.

The conventional wisdom is that religious institutions tend to play a more constructive role, or at least a less destructive one, in religiously homogeneous societies than in religiously diverse societies.<sup>1</sup> This is the

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**Robert A. Dowd** is Assistant Professor of Political Science and Director of the Ford Family Program in Human Development Studies and Solidarity in the Kellogg Institute for International Studies at the University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana. His research interests include African politics, ethnic politics, and the impact of religion on development outcomes and political institutions. He is currently working on a book manuscript titled, *God and Democracy in Africa: Islam, Christianity and Liberal Government*.

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conventional wisdom, with good reason. The underlying logic is sound, and there appears to be plenty of evidence to support it.<sup>2</sup> Without the presence of people who adhere to different religions or belong to other religious communities, those we might call “religious others,” it is hard to imagine how religion can be used to fuel violent conflict. The more divided a society is by religion, the more likely it is that religion can be used to fuel social conflict. When we look around the world, we find religiously diverse societies, particularly where religious and other social identities like class and ethnicity overlap, to be among the most strife-ridden.<sup>3</sup> Although there are religiously diverse societies where there is social tolerance and a low level of societal conflict, such as the United States, most analysts presume that social tolerance preceded and explains religious diversity in such societies.<sup>4</sup> It would seem to follow, then, that if we want to decrease the likelihood that religion is used to fuel social conflict in the world, particularly in

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religious intolerance and the likelihood of destabilizing religious-based social conflict; that the country would be a more peaceful if it were partitioned differently so as to create more religiously homogeneous political units.<sup>7</sup>

new and fragile democracies, we should keep people of different religions apart from one another, and largely confine political competition to people who share the same religious identities.<sup>5</sup>

Nigeria is often considered the “poster child” for this conventional wisdom. Including almost equal percentages of Christians and Muslims, Nigeria has been the site of considerable religious strife. Since the early 1980s, clashes have taken place between Christians and Muslims that have claimed tens of thousands of lives.<sup>6</sup> Over the past few decades, it would appear that there has been consistently more religious strife in Nigeria than in other countries in sub-Saharan Africa largely because the country is divided between Christians and Muslims. Religious differences overlap and reinforce ethnic differences in many parts of the country. The assumption is that Nigeria’s religious diversity increases

This essay is intended to spark more careful consideration of the important problem of religious conflict by pointing to evidence from Nigeria. This evidence calls into question the conventional wisdom and policies that seek to prevent or end religious-based social conflict by preserving or creating religiously homogeneous political units. Although Nigeria's Muslim-Christian divide is thought to have prompted destabilizing religious competition and to have inspired religious intolerance that have resulted in much of the violence that has shaken the country, I find that communal religious engagement among both Christians and Muslims tends to have a more positive effect on religious tolerance in Nigeria's more religiously diverse settings than in the country's more religiously homogeneous ones. In the following section I briefly describe the conventional wisdom and the evidence that appears to support it. I go on to analyze data collected from Nigeria and discuss the implications of the results. Because this essay represents a first cut at a limited body of data, I conclude with questions for further research.

### RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

It is important to be clear about what we mean by religious diversity. I propose that there are three dimensions to religious diversity. One is qualitative and pertains to differences in creed. All else being equal, a society where religious communities are distinguished by core beliefs (e.g., a society with Christians who believe Jesus was God and Muslims who do not believe Jesus was God) is more diverse than the society where they are not (e.g., society with Protestants and Catholics or Shi'a and Sunni). The second dimension is quantitative and concerns the number of distinctive religious groups. All else being equal, a society with more distinctive religious groups, particularly a higher number of different world religions (e.g., Christians, Muslims, and Hindus), is more diverse than a society with fewer distinctive religious groups (e.g., Christians and Muslims). Of course, the number of different religious communities in a society tells us nothing of their relative size. Therefore, the third dimension of religious diversity is proportionality. I consider a society where half the population belongs to one religious community and half the population belongs to another to be more diverse than a society that includes five religious communities, one of which includes 90 percent of the population. The most religiously diverse societies include sizeable percentages of different world religions and different denominations within these world religions.

It is important to recognize that differences between distinct world religions, and between denominations within world religions, have been

used to fuel social conflict. In some societies conflict has been as or more intense between people of different denominations within the same religions than between people of distinctive world religions, such as the case of Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland and Sunni and Shi'a in Iraq. In others, the conflict is between different religions, such as Hindus and Muslims in parts of India and Christians and Muslims in Bosnia and Nigeria. The question is, what are the religious demographics of tolerance and intolerance? How does religious diversity, taking into consideration all three of its dimensions, affect the likelihood that religion is effectively used to promote social peace or fuel social conflict?

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the likelihood of social conflict.<sup>8</sup> The logic of the conventional wisdom concerning how religious divisions lead to destabilizing conflict certainly seems sound: in religiously diverse societies where democratic institutions are new and fragile, we tend to find intense religious contestation as religious communities compete for adherents and/or social influence. Nigeria, Bosnia, and Iraq are cases in point. A number of studies have found a positive association between religious diversity and social conflict.<sup>9</sup>

The problem with several studies that focus on religious diversity and social conflict is that they typically analyze cross-national data, look at societies from a distance, and only

compare countries.<sup>10</sup> If we really want to understand how religious diversity affects social conflict, we need to dig more deeply into countries and examine individual-level data. We need to know how and why activity in a religious community might affect the likelihood that an individual engages in violent activities. I propose that there is something to be learned from individual-level data analysis and consideration of sub-national variation.<sup>11</sup> Without denying that religious differences have been or are being used to

fuel the flames of social conflict in several religiously divided countries, it is worth noting that observers have found that the most religiously diverse and integrated neighborhoods of divided and conflict-prone cities, like Sarajevo and Belfast, have tended to be the most peaceful.<sup>12</sup> These studies suggest that religious segregation, rather than religious diversity, fosters violent conflict, and that keeping religious communities apart for the sake of peace and stability is ultimately counterproductive.

#### AN EXPLANATION THAT FOCUSES ON THE LOCAL

In this essay, I offer an explanation that focuses on the local. If religious diversity affects the likelihood that religious communities encourage or discourage actions and attitudes that lead to social conflict, I suggest that religious leaders play an important role. If we want to understand how religious diversity affects the likelihood of social conflict, we need to zero in on what the causal mechanisms might be; what triggers conflict and why.

The first step is to consider the goals of religious leaders and how variation in religious diversity is likely to affect the way religious leaders decide to achieve their goals. Christianity and Islam are transnational and expansion-oriented religions. Jesus sent his followers out to “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Gospel Matthew Chapter 28, Verse 19) and the Qu’ran instructs “... fight them until there is no more *fitnah* (disbelief) and all believe in Allah alone throughout the world” (Qu’ran 8:39). Christianity and Islam seek to influence culture, the norms and values that guide behavior and determine the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable conduct. While there are certainly some Christian communities that do not actively seek converts or to shape the public realm, the vast majority of Christian churches, like Islamic communities, desire to grow and shape the world around them according to their understanding of God’s will.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, I assume that most Christian and Muslim religious leaders have two primary objectives: (1) to grow their religious communities as large as they can and (2) to influence the norms and values of the wider society.

In settings that have been religiously diverse for a long period of time, we are likely to find religious leaders who recognize, or who have learned from their predecessors, that the best way to achieve their goals of expansion and influence is to promote tolerance and eschew attempts to become the dominant religious community, instead working to ensure that no religious community becomes dominant. In localities that are religiously homogeneous, or newly diverse and highly segregated, religious

leaders tend to be less openly supportive of religious tolerance. Leaders of a long-dominant religious majority are more likely to seek their goals (i.e., growth and influence) by securing advantages for their own religious groups at the expense of others and, in so doing, encourage social conflict.

This explanation supposes that when and where religious leaders interested in dominating the religious landscape consider complete dominance too costly to achieve, as they would in the most religiously diverse of settings, they will put their energies into ensuring that no religious community will ever be able to achieve it.<sup>14</sup> In the most highly diverse of settings, religious leaders are likely to find the costs of achieving their goals of expansion and social influence by securing special privileges for their religious communities too high. They are likely to decide that it is less costly to work hard to promote religious tolerance and to ensure that no religious community ever enjoys such special advantages. The preferred course of action for religious leaders in highly diverse settings is to promote religious tolerance and state neutrality in religious affairs. To do otherwise would be to open the way for mutually assured destruction.

This reasoning also builds on the work of Anthony Gill, who proposes that in the most religiously diverse settings, every religious institution behaves like a minority institution. Where all religious institutions are minority institutions,

... all religious firms [institutions] will prefer a minimum level of religious liberty that allows all existing faiths to practice freely within reason. [This is because] imposing restrictions on one faith could potentially lead to religious conflict wherein one's own religious institution finds itself under repressive legislation.<sup>15</sup>

Gill goes on to argue that religious liberty or freedom of conscience is likely to emerge in a religiously diverse society where there is also political competition.<sup>16</sup> He argues that, in such a society, politicians will try not to offend any one of the competitive religious groups and religious leaders will try to prevent single religious group from becoming more politically influential than any other.

## EVIDENCE FROM NIGERIA

The case of Nigeria illustrates the complexities of religious geography and social conflict. No one can contest that interreligious conflict has been a problem in this religiously diverse country. Nigeria's population of 165 million people is almost evenly divided between Christians and Muslims, and religious violence has cost Nigeria dearly. Thousands of lives have been

lost due to religiously inspired or related violence since the late 1970s and early 1980s. Besides the cities of the north where the Christian population has increased over the years, inter-religious violence has also been significant in cities where the Muslim population has grown in recent decades. The city of Jos, in Plateau State, is a case in point. It is interesting to note that there is little, if any, evidence of inter-religious riots in Jos or other areas of the Middle Belt until the 1990s. Since the early 1990s, however, violence has become relatively common. The Nigerian government issued a report in 2004 in which it estimated that 54,000 people died in inter-communal violence in Plateau State between 1999 and 2004 alone.<sup>17</sup>

While some religious leaders have tried to promote tolerance and accommodation in the north and the Middle Belt, all too often their voices have not been heard over those who preach an illiberal brand of Islam or Christianity.<sup>18</sup> With the rise of Islamists groups, most notably *Boko Haram*, the last five years have been especially deadly. However, when we look within Nigeria, we find that most of the interreligious violence has not been distributed evenly across the country. Location matters. And, interestingly enough, religious violence has been less common in Nigeria's most religiously diverse locations than in its more religiously homogeneous ones or settings that are religiously diverse but highly segregated along religious lines.

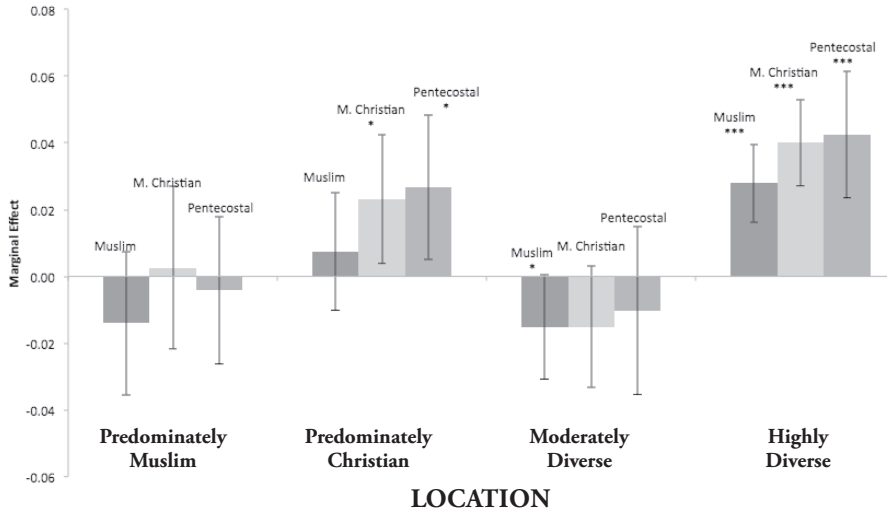
*While there have been religious leaders who have tried to promote tolerance and accommodation in the north and the Middle Belt, all too often their voices have not been heard over those who preach an illiberal brand of Islam or Christianity.*

Not only is religious violence less common in Nigeria's diverse locations than in locations that are homogeneous or segregated, but religious observance has the most positive effect on religious tolerance in diverse settings. In a study of Christians and Muslims conducted in four settings across Nigeria in 2006, I found that religious observance, measured as a composite of attendance at communal activities and contact with religious leaders, is positively related to respect for religious freedom among mainline Christians (i.e., Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans, Presbyterians), Pentecostals (i.e., Church of God and other independent churches), and Muslims in the most religiously diverse of the four settings (see Figure 1 below). This I found while controlling for other factors that may affect respect for religious freedom, such as education, income, age, and gender.



FIGURE 1

*Marginal Effect (95% Confidence Intervals)  
for Interaction Term in Respect for Religious Liberty Probit  
Location x Religious Group*



\* $P$ -value < 0.10; \*\*  $P$ -value < 0.05; \*\*\*  $P$ -value < 0.001

A great deal has happened in Nigeria since 2006, and there is reason to think that, if we were to repeat the survey today, we may find that the results do not hold up so well. Inter-religious tensions in Nigeria have appeared to intensify during recent years. The April 2011 presidential election was followed by inter-religious violence, as some Muslims feel they were cheated out of the presidency. In many parts of the country, Christians are on edge because of Islamist militancy.

The Islamist group, *Boko Haram*, has seemingly become more aggressive and effective in recent years, attacking churches in addition to government and United Nations installations. More religious riots have occurred in religiously diverse but highly segregated cities like Jos and Kaduna, heightening tensions between Christians and Muslims and segregating cities that were already highly segregated along religious and ethnic lines.<sup>19</sup> Violence has also occurred in predominately Muslims cities with significant Christian populations, like Kano.<sup>20</sup> The Council on Foreign Relations Security Tracker estimates that there have been 785 deaths due to sectarian violence in the city of Jos between 2011 and 2013. A state of emergency has been declared in several states in the north and the Middle Belt of Nigeria in 2012 and 2013. Perhaps the results reported above are artifacts of the timing of the 2006 survey; a sweet but fleeting moment in history that has been soured by recent events.



While more analysis is necessary, there is evidence to suggest that the association between greater religious diversity and tolerance largely holds. Using data from the latest round of the Afrobarometer survey,<sup>21</sup> collected in Nigeria in 2012, I find there is a more positive association between religious group engagement and respect for basic freedoms in religiously diverse states (states where neither Christians nor Muslims represent more than 60 percent of the population) than in more religiously homogeneous states. Further, anecdotal evidence suggests that religious social networks have been more effective at fighting off attempts to spread extremism in settings that have long been religiously diverse than in those that are religiously homogeneous or have only recently become religiously diverse. For example, in the city of Ibadan, Christian and Muslim leaders have repeatedly issued joint statements and collaborated to sponsor events designed to prevent episodes of inter-religious violence and heightened rhetoric from raising fears and acts of reprisal.<sup>22</sup> One Nigerian Catholic priest who had worked in Kaduna for many years before being assigned to Ibadan told me,

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Christian and Muslim leaders are pro-active here [in Ibadan]. They work together more easily and they do so quickly to squash rumors that can spread and cause uneducated people to attack one another. There are people who love spreading rumors that Christians are attacking Muslims or Muslims are attacking Christians. In Kaduna, we [religious leaders] always seemed to be too slow. Rumors fly there and the next thing you know, people are fighting each other.<sup>23</sup>

As I suggest above, if religious diversity affects the likelihood that religious communities encourage tolerance, there is good reason to suspect that religious leaders play an important role. In other words, the religious diversity of a setting may affect whether religious leaders choose to encourage tolerance among members of the communities they lead. In-depth interviews with religious leaders across the four Nigerian settings help us to discern variations in the degree to which they promote respect for religious freedom, and whether differences in religious diversity explain this

variation. Although the number of interviews conducted is not sufficient to allow us to draw hard conclusions, those we have conducted suggest that religious diversity affects the decisions made by Nigeria's Christian and Muslim leaders to actively encourage respect for religious liberty and separation of religious and state authority.

There is evidence to indicate that Pentecostal Christian religious leaders are more encouraging of respect for religious liberty in the most religiously diverse of the four settings, Ibadan, because of its diversity. For example, Thomas, an elder in a Pentecostal church in Ibadan, stated that Jesus calls on Christians to resist using state-granted privileges to spread the faith at the expense of Islam. "I think we must be smart about how we spread the faith," he added. He went on to say:

We should not try [to spread the faith] through laws and government. This could really backfire on us. Muslims will try to spread their religion in the same way, as they have in the north. There are many Muslims here and they are often more willing to fight for their religion than Christians. We may lose and this would be very bad. Instead of trying to use government, we should just make sure government allows us to worship in freedom.<sup>24</sup>

Thomas' statement stands in marked contrast to that of Ezekial, a Pentecostal elder in Enugu, a predominantly Christian setting. Ezekial said that there is nothing wrong with trying to promote Christianity through government and state support if the conditions are right. By right conditions, he meant a predominantly Christian population: "When Christians are in the majority, we should be allowed to make laws that uphold our faith and morals." Ezekial was quick to point out that this did not mean he was intolerant of Muslims, or that they should not be welcome to live and work in Enugu: "Muslims are Nigerians too and they deserve to live anywhere they want in this country. However, if they want to live under their laws, they should move somewhere else. This area is a Christian area."<sup>25</sup>

These two Pentecostal Christian leaders are both trying to promote the growth and influence of the religious communities they lead, but in very different ways. The statements made by Thomas in Ibadan and Ezekial in Enugu indicate that both are behaving strategically. In Ibadan, Thomas seeks to promote the growth and influence of his religious community by promoting tolerance and state neutrality in religious affairs. He points to the significant presence of Muslims in the area to support his strategy. In Enugu, Ezekial strives to promote the growth and influence of his religious community by supporting special state-granted privileges for Christianity

in order to check the growth of Islam in the area. Ezekial points to Enugu's Christian majority to justify this position.

There is also anecdotal evidence to suggest that several Christian and Muslim religious leaders in Jos, a moderately diverse setting, are discouraging respect for religious freedom and differences of opinion. A number of these leaders in Jos are encouraging their followers to not associate with members of the other religion and to do their best to prevent them from moving into the area. Christians, who once formed a clear majority in Jos, fear that Muslims seek to take over Jos and turn it into a "northern city" where Islam enjoys cultural and political supremacy. John, a Pentecostal pastor in Jos, believes in mobilizing his flock for political action to ensure that Christianity maintains its supremacy in the area. According to John, Christians must protect their influence over the culture and politics of Jos. He stated:

If we do not keep reminding politicians that we still form the majority of the population, we will lose our rights. Muslims here in Jos have become a big problem and I think they need to know that this is Christian territory. We need to prevent Muslims from taking over. We cannot let the Muslims take over this place. They will if we let them.<sup>26</sup>

On the other hand, Hussein, a Muslim religious leader in Jos, hopes for the day when Jos becomes a city where Islam will gain greater influence than Christianity. He asserted:

We must make sure that Muslims make their voices heard. Otherwise, I know the politicians, many [of whom] are Christians, will forget us. The politicians have got to know that we Muslims form the majority. This is not a Christian city. By Allah, this is a city where Islam will prevail. More Muslims move in and more Christians move out. This is a good thing. Most Christians do not live morally upright lives.<sup>27</sup>

These statements suggest that these religious leaders see themselves locked in a battle for cultural dominance that will result in one winner: Christianity or Islam. In contrast to Christian and Muslim religious leaders in Ibadan, the statements of leaders in Jos indicate that their strategy to promote the growth and influence of their religious communities is to foster discrimination against other religious communities. We cannot help but wonder what explains the difference between Ibadan and Jos. Although more religiously diverse than Enugu and Kano, Jos is not as religiously diverse as Ibadan. As of 2003, the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey estimated that 61 percent of Jos' population was Christian and almost 37 percent was

Muslim. The same study estimated that Ibadan's population was 50 percent Muslim and 49 percent Christian. Further, Ibadan has been religiously diverse for more than one hundred years.<sup>28</sup> The Muslim population in Jos has been growing steadily over the past two decades.<sup>29</sup> The dramatic growth in the Muslim population largely due to migration from the north has turned a city where Christianity was once dominant into a moderately diverse and segregated city in just a few decades.

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Apart from the interviews reported above, there is evidence to suggest that Christian and Muslim religious leaders in highly diverse Ibadan feel relatively more secure when it comes to the place of religion in society than those in moderately diverse Jos. The campaign to constitutionally enshrine the *shari'a* during the late 1970s and 1980s failed to gain much support in Ibadan and most parts of Nigeria's highly diverse southwest. Muslim religious leaders in the southwest "encouraged a separation of church or mosque and state and a religious pluralism."<sup>30</sup> Members of the Constituent Assembly (MCA) from the southwest who were charged with drawing up a new constitution for Nigeria during the 1970s were the least

extreme on the issue of the place of the *shari'a*.<sup>31</sup> Laitin conducted a survey of MCAs and found that 76 percent of them took moderate positions on the *shari'a* issue, whereas 80 percent of northerners and 77 percent of those from the Middle Belt took extreme positions.<sup>32</sup>

In predominantly Muslim Kano and other northern cities, Falola notes that Muslim leaders tended to take extreme positions on the *shari'a* issue.<sup>33</sup> One such leader was Abubakar Gumi. "Gumi was relentless in his attempt to promote an Islamic regime in Nigeria. He did not think any Christian should be allowed to preside over Nigeria."<sup>34</sup> Falola notes that these "pro-*shari'a* groups found themselves attacked by both Christians and fellow Muslims [in Ibadan and other areas of diverse and integrated southwestern Nigeria]."<sup>35</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The evidence from Nigeria demonstrates the importance of analyzing sub-national and individual-level data when attempting to understand whether and how religious diversity affects the likelihood of social conflict. While I focus on the case of Nigeria here, the results suggests that an analysis of sub-national data gathered from other countries might very well call into question conclusions based on national-level data alone.

If we find a great deal of interreligious violence in a religiously diverse country, but we find that religious observance has a positive association with social tolerance in religiously diverse settings within that country, as I find in Nigeria, we cannot very well conclude that religious diversity leads to social conflict. Further, if we find evidence that religious leaders are basing their decisions to encourage respect for religious tolerance on the level of religious diversity in their society, as we have in Nigeria (with greater diversity prompting more open support for religious tolerance), then we have taken a step toward establishing a causal relationship between the variation in religious diversity and religious-based support for religious tolerance.

While it is true that destabilizing religious conflict has been all too common in religiously diverse countries like Nigeria, the findings reported here suggest there is good reason to believe that religious segregation rather than religious diversity is the cause of such conflict. The findings presented in this essay imply that attempts to promote religious-based support for religious tolerance and peaceful relations between religious groups would be enhanced by the cultivation of religious diversity and religious integration rather than the creation of religious homogeneity or the maintenance of religious segregation.

While religious diversity and integration cannot be manufactured, there are important roles for state and civil society actors to play in carefully fostering diversity and promoting religiously integrated societies. For

example, state actors can pass and enforce laws that open the way for geographic territories to become more religiously diverse by ensuring public schools and other institutions, such as the military, are religiously

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 .....

integrated. If there are interreligious tensions within a state, policymakers may develop political institutions that incentivize moderation and accommodation between religious groups. Besides the state, civil society also has a crucially important role to play in promoting religiously integrated communities. Interreligious voluntary associations tend to promote mutual understanding and tolerance, increasing the likelihood that geographic areas become religiously diverse and integrated.<sup>36</sup> Such associations deserve greater attention and support than they typically receive.

While this essay does provide some evidence to suggest that differences in religious diversity do affect the content of preaching, it is admittedly very limited. Further research is needed to understand how religious diversity affects religious-based support for freedom of religion and separation of religious and state authority. First, future research should include more countries and more locations within countries than featured in this essay. Besides including countries that vary in terms of their religious diversity, we would do well to include several settings within countries that share similar levels of religious diversity. In this way, we can more accurately distinguish the effects of religious diversity from the effects of conditions that are unique to any one country or location. Second, more research is needed to discern the relationship between changing religious demography and preaching on tolerance. The most promising studies intended to promote understanding of the variation in the “tolerance content” of preaching across the world would integrate qualitative and quantitative methods. Careful content analysis of sermons is essential. It is also important to have a large enough sample of preachers and locations so that trends and patterns become apparent. Ideally, the sample of preachers would span many countries, several regions of the world, various socio-economic conditions, and different religious traditions.

Finally, future research would also do well to include longitudinal studies and assess whether and how changes in the religious diversity of settings affects the tolerance content preached by the same religious leader across time. Following religious leaders across time for many years would allow us to estimate the effects of changes in religious demography (or the lack of change in religious demography) on the tolerance content of preaching. However, rather than simply focus on the preaching, such longitudinal studies should also focus on the impact of such preaching. A longer temporal dimension would allow us to arrive at a more complete explanation for the variation in the impact of religious communities on social conflict. *f*



## ENDNOTES

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  - 18 Some of these leaders include Aminu Kano, Abubakar Balewa Maitama Sule, and Shehu Shagari, who are known for promoting moderation and tolerance.
  - 19 See “Post-Election Riots in Kaduna, Baurchi, Yobe, and Niger,” *Vanguard*, April 19, 2011; See also “Jos Riots: So Close Yet so Far Apart,” *Vanguard*, January 30, 2011.
  - 20 See *Sabara Reporters*, April 18, 2011; See also “Nigeria: Post-Election Violence Kills 800,” Human Rights Watch, May 7, 2011.
  - 21 The Afrobarometer survey data was collected in 2013. The survey included 2,400 respondents randomly selected from across the country. Of the respondents, 55 percent were Christians and 44 percent were Muslims. I am grateful to the Afrobarometer directors, who released the 2013 data to me. When released publicly, the data will be accessible at [www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org).
  - 22 See “Christian, Muslim Clerics Admonish Nigerians on Peaceful Co-existence,” *News Agency of Nigeria*, March 12, 2012.
  - 23 Interview by the author, October 14, 2011.
  - 24 Interview by the author, November 8, 2006.
  - 25 Interview by the author, November 12, 2006.
  - 26 Interview by the author, November 11, 2006.
  - 27 Interview by the author, November 10, 2006.
  - 28 J.D.Y Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003); David Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change Among the Yoruba* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).
  - 29 John Paden, *Faith and Politics in Nigeria: Nigeria as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2008).<sup>30</sup> John N. Paden, *Muslim Civic Cultures and Conflict Resolution: The Challenge of Democratic Federalism in Nigeria* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2005).
  - 31 David Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change Among the Yoruba* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 9.
  - 32 *Ibid.*; Laitin found more “renegade” MCAs were from the southwest than from any other region of the country. Laitin defines a renegade as a Christian who did not unconditionally oppose a place for the *shari’a* in the public realm or a Muslim who did not insist on enshrining the *shari’a*. Twenty percent of MCA’s from the southwest were renegades.
  - 33 Toyin Falola, *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1998).
  - 34 *Ibid.*, 80.
  - 35 *Ibid.*, 83.
  - 36 Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).