RELIGIOUS MILITANCY AND TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA: A CASE STUDY OF
POLITICAL ISLAM

BY

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10250878

THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON,
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LEGON JULY
DECLARATION

I, Nartey Prosper Kwame, do hereby declare that this dissertation is an outcome of an original research conducted by me under the supervision of Dr. Philip Attuquayefio and that no part of it has been submitted anywhere for any other purpose. All sources of information collected and materials used have been duly acknowledged by reference and bibliography.

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(STUDENT) (SUPERVISOR)

DATE…………… ………………… DATE……………………………
DEDICATION

To my parents, Mr. John Kwadwo Narreyn, Mrs Agnes Narreyn: Mr. Frank Owusu, and Mr. Gyebi Asante for their love, support and dedication.

I also dedicate this work to the Most High God, wonderful, counselor, whose strength is made perfect in my weakness. Thank you to all who supported and comforted me during this academic year.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude goes to Dr. Philip Attuquayefio, my supervisor for his meticulous guidance, patience, sound advice and consideration which has led to the successful completion of this Dissertation.

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I would like to thank Mr and Mrs Tavie, Pastor Frank Nsafuah, Ms. Sheila Gifty Dzorka 1, Mr. Adinda Francis, and Mr. Patrick Akanyedi, for their diverse and edifying contribution to my work.

Finally, the encouragement and support received from family members, friends and colleagues cannot escape my appreciation and gratefulness.

Notwithstanding the above, I remain solely responsible for any shortcomings that this work may suffer.
### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAD</td>
<td>Ansar Al Dine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQIM</td>
<td>Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIA</td>
<td>Central Intelligence Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIS</td>
<td>Front Islamique du Salut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLN</td>
<td>Front de Liberation Nationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIA</td>
<td>Armed Islamic Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSPC</td>
<td>Groupe Salafiste pour la Predication et le Combat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEDs</td>
<td>Improvised Explosive Devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERPOL</td>
<td>International Police Organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISIS</td>
<td>Islamic state of Iraq and Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LECIAD</td>
<td>Legon Center for International Affairs and Diplomacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCs</td>
<td>Least Developed countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LRA</td>
<td>Lord’s Resistance Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIA</td>
<td>Mouvement Islamique Armee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MIA - Mouvement Islamique de l’ Azawad

MNLA - National Movement for the liberation of Azawad

MOJWA - Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa

RealIRA - Real Irish Republic Army

SALW - Small Arms and Light Weapons

UNESCO - United Nation’s Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNICEF - United Nations Children Fund
## TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION … … … … … … … … … … … … … … i

DEDICATION … … … … … … … … … … … … … … ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT … … … … … … … … … … … … … iii

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS  … … … … … … … iv

TABLE OF CONTENT  … … … … … … … … … … … … … v

ABSTRACT  … … … … … … … … … … … … … … vi

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Background to the problem statement  … … … … … … … … … … … 1

1.2 Statement of the research problem  … … … … … … … … … … … 3

1.3 Research questions  … … … … … … … … … … … … … 4

1.4 Objectives of the study  … … … … … … … … … … … … … 4

1.5 Scope of the study  … … … … … … … … … … … … … 5

1.6 Rationale of the study  … … … … … … … … … … … … … 5

1.7 Conceptual framework  … … … … … … … … … … … … … 5

1.8 Literature review  … … … … … … … … … … … … … 9

1.9 Sources of data  … … … … … … … … … … … … … 16
### CHAPTER TWO: AN OVERVIEW OF TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.0 Introduction</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Contemporary terrorist groups in West Africa</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 Origin of Boko Haram</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 The linguistic background of Boko Haram</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3 The Philosophy of Boko Haram</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 The History of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 The Political history of Algeria</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 The Armed Islamic group</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3 The Evolution of the GSPC</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.4 Merger with Al Qaeda in Iraq</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 History of Ansar Al Dine</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 The national movement for the liberation of azawad</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 Formation of Ansar Al Dine</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Early forms of islamic militancy in West Africa</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Impact of political islam on terrorism in West Africa</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1 Conceptualisation of Muslims as terrorist</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2 Heightened interest in political Islam and terrorism</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Relationship between Political Islam and Terrorism</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1 Islam and the people of the book</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2 Suicide bombing</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.3 The doctrine of jihad</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.4 The creation of an Islamic state</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.5 Political Islam and secularism</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5. Conclusion</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End notes</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0 Introduction</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Summary of findings</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Conclusions</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Recommendations</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT.

Within the discourse on terrorism in West Africa, the linkage between Islam and terrorism has been prominent. This is because of the noticeable relationship between terrorist rhetoric and Islam. Experts in the religion including Imams have however distanced the religion from these actions suggesting that reference to Islam in a terrorism context is more political than religious. They therefore suggest a difference between Islam and Political Islam. With several of the active terrorist groups in West Africa including Ansaru, Ansar al Dine, and Boko Haram indicating some affinity to Islam the discussion about the linkage between Political Islam and terrorism has been topical in the last five years. This notwithstanding, other analysts have pointed to other reasons offered by terrorist in justification of their activities. In the absence of a clearly laid out cause, the linkage assumed between political Islam and terrorism is not conclusive. This study examines the leading factors that cause terrorism in West Africa and sought to explore the linkage between Political Islam and Terrorism. This research also uses political Islam as a Conceptual framework to evaluate the linkages between Islam and Terrorism as political Islam seeks to provide answers to the challenges of Muslim world in contemporary times. The study concludes that the nature of terrorism in West Africa includes abduction, bombing of churches and schools, pillage and destruction of heritage sites, killings of civilians, hijacking of planes. The causes of terrorism in West Africa include poverty, lack of socio economic development, high illiteracy, availability of small and light weapons. The study also finds a strong relationship between political Islam and terrorism. The study notes ending stereotyping of Muslims as terrorist, a change in the foreign policy of the West as well as platforms for religious dialogue as ways of detaching Islam from Terrorism.
CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Background to the Problem Statement.

Since the September, 9 2001 terrorist invasion of the United States of America that resulted in a proclamation of a universal war on Terrorism, one of the prominent themes of security studies have been terrorism and other cases of violent extremism. In the process, policy makers and academics have explored the foundation and causes of contemporary terrorism. Among the themes defining the consideration of causes is religion. Solomon has for instance highlighted the inexorable linkages between religion and contemporary terrorism.¹

According to Patricia Chang, religion has risen as an issue of prominence across the globe; it has become a more salient political force. This makes it difficult to disentangle religious groups and their motives from political ones. Often the protection of religious freedom is inseparable from involvement in indigenous political battles with sovereign states.²

Islam is one of the competing ideologies that dominate world politics. The impact of Islam in the conduct of world politics has become increasingly important. Islamic religion just like the Christian religion believes in the doctrine that there is only one God. Simply put it is monotheistic in nature. The origin of the Islamic religion can be traced back to the 7th century C.E in the Middle East. The literal meaning of Islam is “surrender” or “submission” to Allah’s will. Islam was founded on the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as an expression of surrender to the will of Allah. The Quran is the holy scripture of Islam; it basically contains the teachings and sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad that were believed to be revealed to him by Angel Jibriel in the cave of Hira from Allah. An important belief to Islamic
teaching is the Tawhid; this is because Islam is monotheistic in tradition. Tawhid is the belief that Allah is a God without equals, the one true God and should be worshipped alone. Based on doctrinal differences Islam has a couple of sects, and among these sects comes with a lot of variety in their worship of Allah. The two leading or popular sects as far as Islam is concerned are the Sunni and Shi’a, these two main sects of Islam have their own whims and caprices of maintaining the sanctity and discipline in the Islamic religion. The foundational beliefs and practices of the Islamic religion are what are termed as the “Five Pillars of Islam”. These are made up of Kalimatu-shahada (the declaration of the faith), Salat (the five daily prayers), Zakat (charity or alms giving), Sawn (fasting required of every Muslim), and the Hajj (pilgrimage to the Holy City of Mecca once in a Muslim’s life). An essential feature of Islam is the importance of some specific Holy places such as Jerusalem Mecca, and Medina. Again in the Islamic religion there is no strong difference in the life of a Muslim as a religion and that of the Muslim as a secular individual; every domain of a Muslim’s life are to be geared towards the upliftment of the name of Allah.³

After the death of Muhammad, Islam developed through wars of conquest beyond its place of origin in the 7th century C.E thus the Arabian Peninsula, and has now expanded to all parts of the Globe with important hold in the Americas, Africa, Europe and Asia.⁴

Pape has projected the linkages between Islam and terrorism.⁵ Attuquayefio has also indicated that due to the overwhelming number of terrorist organisations demonstrating their closeness to Islam, it has caused a slur on a religion whose primacy is peace in the universe to be ironically constantly involved in some of the worse and nefarious acts of terrorism.⁶ West Africa in the Post-Cold War era, has witnessed an array of threats of religious militancy and terrorism. The
institutional and economic weakness associated to the Post-Cold War West African states to a large extent enhanced the rise of religious militancy and terrorism in the sub region.

The rise and occupation of northern Mali by the Ansar Al Dine Militant group wanting to form an Islamic state of Mali in 2012, has been one of the major historical landmarks of religious violence in the sub region. The evolvement of the popular terrorist group in Nigeria, Boko Haram in 2009 has been the most dramatic and tragic. Its violence stance is witnessed in major bombing activities attributed to the group in 2009 when they started destroying churches and attacking anything identified with Western values. As a jihadist campaign, they are basically committed to fighting the existing Western status quo in order to create an Islamic state of Nigeria which will be ruled by the sharia.  

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

West Africa has within the last two decades earned a reputation as one of the fronts in global Terrorism. In Mali terrorist groups are becoming more organized and a leading terrorist group Ansar Al Dine has intensified its insurgency in Mali carrying out more than 60 attacks on targets since May 2016. The expansion of AQIM into sub Saharan Africa which culminated in the deadly terrorist attacks in Burkina Faso and Cote d’Ivoire in January and March 2016 respectively symbolizes the enduring resilience of the AQIM. The beginning of August 2011 has seen a continuous planting of bombs by Boko Haram frequently in Nigeria’s north east. Boko Haram in March 2012 raised down some 12 public schools into ashes in Maduiguri. The end results is the forcing of as many as 10,000 pupils out of education. From the above, there is a noticeable trend that quite a good number of terrorist groups in West Africa maintain some inclination to Islam. Experts in the religion including Imams have however distanced the religion
form these actions suggesting that reference to Islam in a terrorism context is more political than religious. They therefore suggest a difference between Islam and Political Islam. Several of the active terrorist groups in West Africa including Ansaru, Ansar Al Dine and Boko Haram indicate some affinity to Islam. The discussion about the linkage between Political Islam and terrorism has been expanded to cover West Africa. This notwithstanding, these same groups have offered other reasons in justification of their actions. Among the floundering motives Boko Haram offers for justification of its actions are the pain of losing their members and leader through the heavy handedness of the Nigerian Police in 2009 as well as developmental imbalances between Nigeria’s North and South. These reasons are not religions and more specifically, Islam oriented. In the absence of a clearly laid out cause, the linkage assumed between political Islam and terrorism is not conclusive. This is the research problem the study examines.

1.3 Research Question.

The examination of the research problem is guided by the following research questions.

1. What is the nature of terrorism in West Africa?

2. What are the causes of terrorism in West Africa?

3. What is the relationship between Political Islam and terrorism in West Africa?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The overall objective guiding this research is to ascertain the extent to which Political Islam influences terrorism in the West African sub region. The specific objectives are as follows;

- To evaluate the nature of terrorism in West Africa.
- To examine the causes of terrorism in West Africa.
➢ To investigate the relationship between Political Islam and terrorism in West Africa.

1.5 Scope of the study

The study focuses on Boko Haram, Ansar Al Dine and the Al Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). These are the main terrorist groups operating in West Africa that have suggested some affinity with Islam and have used Islam to mobilize recruits at some point. Media reports have perennially reflected on how the above terror groups employed the teaching of Islam in the madrassas. They therefore offer typical case studies for the exploration of the topic.

1.6 Rationale of the Study

This study contributes to existing knowledge on the different dimensions of terrorism in West Africa. Assessing the role of Political Islam in Terrorism in the sub-region is a step to help evaluate the various ways in which Terrorism develops or keeps increasing. The findings of this study may also serve as a useful reference material for a range of users such as policy makers, security analysts, scholars as well as students who are involved in the study of terrorism or a reminder of the difficulties that need to be overcome with regards to counter terrorism in West Africa.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

The research is set in the framework of Political Islam. Political Islam in a broad scope refers to the several contemporary Political revolutions, ideological dimensions, and state-centered policies with the overall objective of giving Islam an authoritative status in political life. Political Islam believe that “Islam as a body of faith has something valuable to say about how
politics and society should be ordered in the contemporary Muslim world and implemented in some fashion”.

It has the main objective of disproving the following assertions about Islam. That Islam has some uniqueness that prevents separation between religion and state; and that religion portrays or directs political action in Muslim Umma; As a phenomenon Political Islam is monolithic and by definition has a universal occurrence independent of the social and political setting in which Islamic organizations operate; that adherents of Political Islam are fanatics who are fixated with introducing the sharia law and enforcing Allah’s supremacy and thus are unable to make political compromises as well as forming consortiums with other groups.

Political Islam further seeks to disprove the assertion that adherents of Political Islam are conspicuously anti-democratic and believe in the sovereignty of Allah. They use democracy to come to power but relegate it to the back in order to perpetuate their rule hence laying credence to the assertion that Islamist has sworn to the allegiance of one person, one vote, one time; Finally it seeks to disprove the assertion that Islam is violent and encourages it followers to take illegal and unconstitutional methods to pursue divinely sanctioned goals.

Political Islam is also referred to as ‘Islamism’ by authors such as Graham fuller. The French writers were the first at the end of the 17th century to use the term Islamism. The first mention of the word according to Le Petit Robert is 1697. Among the earliest writers are Voltaire, an ardent philosopher during the era of enlightenment is noted as one of the first writers to use the term. In the writings from 1838, Tocqueville found the origin of Political Islam in Judaism. Comte de Gobineau, Caussin de Perceval, Baron Bernard Carra and Ernest Renan de Vaux all used the
term Islamism to simply mean a religious practice basically emptied of a particular ideological or political association.  

The concept of Political Islam gained universal attention with the development of the Islamic movement under the rulership of Ayatollah Khomeini, who propagated a Political Islam and formed the first Islamist system of government in the twentieth century. However it took the disaster of 9/11 event in the USA to see an increase in academic and particular need for conceptual unravelment of Political Islam. The basic norm of Political Islam has been that, it makes a clarion call on all Muslims to create an ‘Islamic state’. An Islamic state is one in which all the laws that regulate the state is based on the Sharia.  

To Mohammed Ayoob, Political Islam is “a form of instrumentalisation of Islam by individuals, groups and organizations that pursue political objectives” The deductions of Mohammed Ayoob’s definition of Islamism is that as a concept Political Islam provides political solutions to the contemporary socio economic and political challenges of Islam. This it intends to achieve by imagining a future, in which the basic principles and doctrines of Islam are reinvented from the traditional Islam to be used in the administration of the state.  

Fuller posits that the origin of the concept of Political Islam is a naturally occurring phenomenon and notes the following “indeed, how could politics ever remain indifferent to such a powerful motive force as religion. And how could religion, with its vision of the place of human existence in the grand scheme of things remain uninterested in the form, expression, and direction of human society and politics”. The earliest propounders of the concept of Political
Islam include but not limited to, Abu Ala Maduidi, Sayyid Qutb, Ruhollah Khomeini and Hasan al Banna.\textsuperscript{16}

A critic of the concept of Political Islam lies in their belief that a political Islamic state which is the goal of Islamism will be able to bring up a government emptied of corruption of power and human frailty. It must be noted however that the two pioneering states of Political Islam that sought to create an Islamic state failed in this bid. According to Roy Olivier the failure of the Mujahedeen Afghanistan and Islamic republic of Iran gave credence to this fact. In both Iran and Afghanistan, the courageous bloodshed and the sacrifice of Islam that brought the heroic Islamic insurgents to government was marred by gross corruption and worst dictatorial governance. Thus Political Islam itself was not more successful than the other political ideologies.\textsuperscript{17}

Another critic of Political Islam is the concept’s neglect of other salient issues and has thus been labeled as mind limiting. Political Islam as a concept has given so much attention to the importance of Islam only in the field of politics to the neglect of Islam in all fields of life. This has led to the branding of Political Islam as a narrow concept that lacks the zeal and love in understanding and appreciating the world entirely. Habib Boulares has intimated his regret that the concept of Political Islam in general does not devote time and energy to construct consistent theories. Olivier Roy complains of Political Islam being intellectually stagnant in the sense that its founding proponents such as Abu Ala Maduidi, Sayyid Qutb, Hassan al Banna, all the while prior to 1978 wrote nothing of academic interest but just prayers, pieces of articles, weak glosses and quotes of popular Islamic scholars.\textsuperscript{18} To conclude, according to Islamism the thematic study of human society and attitude was dismissed as unislamic.
A concept that is able to provide socio economic and political answers to the challenges of the Muslim world in contemporary times\textsuperscript{19} is of relevance to resolving the role of Political Islam in terrorism in the West Africa sub region.

1.8 Literature Review

In his work entitled Islam and terrorism Mark Gabriel writing on the root causes of terrorism, noted that terrorist are only following a philosophy. In trying to explain this he emphasised that the contents of the Quran and Hadith are the basis for \textit{sharia} and other Islamic legal courts.\textsuperscript{20} Gabriel argues that according to the Quran, one of the surest ways of gaining entrance to heaven was to die fighting a holy war popularly termed as Jihad. This according to Gabriel perfectly explains the rationale behind jihad fighters and suicide bombers. He explained the meaning of Jihad as striving for the cause of Allah but understood by radicals as meaning Muslims must defend the cause of Islam by fighting the enemy till the enemy dies or the Muslim dies.\textsuperscript{21}

He continues that according to Islam, if a Muslim dies in a holy war, he gets a straight entrance into heaven without having to go to the grave to await judgment. Gabriel continues to distinguish between the different funeral rites for jihadist fighters. He noted that when a Muslim dies in jihad, an entirely different burial ceremony is admonished. When a normal Muslim dies, his corpse is cleaned thoroughly and embalmed neatly just like when one is preparing to go to the mosque. On the other hand when a Muslim dies in jihad, his corpse is not washed nor either dressed in neat clothing. That corpse is buried in the manner in which the jihadist died. It is believed his deformed body and blood stains serves as witness and evidence for his course to bring, glory, sanctity, dignity and honour to the call of Allah.\textsuperscript{22}
The change in approach of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (SAW) from Mecca to Medina represents a major change in the evolution of Islam from a purely spiritual religious movement to a political movement. In this sense I do share Gabriel’s view. Islam’s transition from a spiritual to a political ideology or the combination of the two has been the underlying factors of the concept of Political Islam. However it is important to note that Gabriel is a disgruntled and bitter Muslim thus leading to these inferences about Islam. This study looks at the other potential causes of terrorism apart from Islam.

Bernard Lewis in his book Islam and the West states that for a period of 1,400 years, since the inception of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula, Muslims and Christians have occupied the Globe alongside each other; constantly as neighbours, frequently as rivals, and at other times as enemies. Lewis goes on to say that Christianity and Islam are sister religions with many common customs. Each religion sees itself as the deliverer of Gods will to Man carrying with them the responsibility of reaching others if not everyone in the world. Hence, each regarded the other as a rival in the spread of their belief, consequently resulting in protracted series of rivalry evident in the early Holy wars (Jihad) and the Crusades. This shared course of the two civilizations has divided them far more than their differences have.

According to Lewis, apart from historians, the term “Christendom” is hardly used: the civilization formally designated by that name has undergone a transformation, secularization and has come to be known, in various contexts, as Europe, as the free world, and, currently, principally as the West whiles Islam hasn’t changed.

He goes further to explain that Islam is not a final destiny; it is a monotheistic religion. Thus for Muslims “Religion” means more than the similar meaning of the term “Religion” for Christians.
Islam, unlike Christianity is not just a system of believe and worship or a department of life, if you may say, different from the other departments of life. Islam on the other hand is an embodiment of all aspect of life; it is made up of rules such as civil, criminal as well as what we sometimes refer to as constitutional law.  

In the opinion of Lewis a comparative analysis between the history of Islam and that of Christianity depicts that there could be no clash of civilization at all. This is because to him the roles of the assumed leaders are different. The Pope has only a spiritual authority whiles the caliphate that is seen as the leader of the Islamic world combines political and religious authority and not spiritual authority as in the case of the pope. Thus Bernard does not seem to see the fault lines between conflict and cooperation neither between the state and the church. This is because the caliph who is the head of Islam combines both functions.

Islamic allegiance and political identity transcends all others. The Caliph was sovereign. Even though there was a decline in the central power that the Caliph held; the model of a single Islamic state was very strong. The longing for a single Islamic state still stands as an appealing dream for all Muslims as depicted by contemporary happenings in the Globe. Muslims seem to struggle to fit into the world largely created by Christians which in times past belong to them.

Some of the doctrines of the Christian religion give Muslim theologians and scholars a hard time in wrapping their understanding around them. Such doctrines as the sonship and the divine nature of Christ, and God in three persons are seen as a blasphemy in the sight of Muslims. These are ambiguities that they find difficult to understand because the Holy Quran rejects such doctrines. (Quran 5:75-76 and 112:1-4). Despite the above challenges in general, Muslims are
ready and willing to be tolerant to Christendom. This is because the Quran admonish them to do so, despite these perceived aberrations.²⁷

On the strong emergence of religious violence in the Post-Cold War period, Samuel Huntington argues that the post-Cold war international system will be associated with conflicts between different world cultures.²⁸ Obviously speaking he noted that among these cultural conflicts will be the clash between Islamic culture and Western or Judeo-Christian culture. He describes civilization as the highest level or form of every culture. However, Huntington rejects the idea that the major threat to western civilization is Islamic fundamentalism. He contends that “the underlining problem for the west is not Islamic fundamentalism; it is Islam, different civilizations whose people are convinced of the religious supremacy of their culture and are yet fixated with the inferiority of their power”.²⁹ His argument is based on his debatable assertion that “Islam’s borders are bloody, and so are its innards”.³⁰ He posits that Muslims constitute one fifth of the population of the Globe yet as at 1990 they had been far more Islamic intergroup attacks than any civilization of the world.³¹

He outlines six possible causes of violence either among Muslim groups or with non-Muslim groups. He argues, first, that the doctrine of Islam commands war against non-believers and the prophet Muhammad himself was known to be a skillful military commander. As such, the foundation of Islam is replete with violence. Secondly, since Islam expanded mainly through wars of conquest, such expansion resulted in Muslims living in physical proximity with people of other civilizations. The frequent clashes between Muslims and non-Muslims are the end products of those conquests. The third possible cause, according to Huntington, is the “indigestibility of Muslims”.³² He describes Islam as a strict faith. It doesn’t consolidate religion and politics and draws great distinction between those he refers to as Dar al-Islam (peaceful
home of Islam) and the others he refer to as Dar al-harb (territory of war). This in Huntington’s opinion makes it challenging for Muslims to adapt to live tolerantly and peacefully with non-Muslims.

The fourth cause of violence in Islam is Western economic expansion and the subordination or marginalisation of the Muslim world in the 19th and 20th centuries. This essentially portrayed Muslims as weak and as such attractive target. Muslims have been victims of anti-Muslim prejudices and so wars attributed to Islam are seen as wars of self-defense. The absence of one core state in Islam has also been advanced by Huntington as the fifth possible cause of war among Muslims or between Muslims and non-Muslims. According to him, Islam lacks a dominant center and so states such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Turkey compete for dominance in the Contemporary world of Muslims resulting in tension and instability. Finally the increasing availability of unemployed youth in Muslim umma is a conspicuous cause of violence in every society.33

On the part of the West, Huntington argues that the challenge within the “west’s-particularly America’s effort- to promote a universal western culture- belief that the non-western people should submit themselves to the Western values of democracy, free markets, limited government, human rights, individualism, the rule of law and should embody these values in their institutions- and its declining ability to do so”.34 To him, interactions between this kind of “Western arrogance and Islamic intolerance” is automatic cause of conflict between the two civilizations.35 Thus Islam’s intolerance to the West’s attempt to impose its values and culture on it (Islam) is the crust of the conflict between these two civilizations.
While appreciating the extensive work done by Huntington in this area, his generalization in associating war with Islam might not be entirely right. There is enough evidence to show that there are many Muslim countries and societies living peacefully among themselves and with their non-Muslim neighbours. Therefore, Islamic faith is not a necessary and sufficient cause of violence against non-Muslims. This notwithstanding, the strong emergence of religiously motivated violence after the cold war, especially in the case of West Africa is significant.

Nkwi in “Terrorism in West African History: A 21st Century Appraisal.” examines the place of West Africa as the citadel of organized terrorism in the 21st century. He notes that terrorism has gotten heightened attention since 9/11 the world over and West Africa has not been an exception. He indicates the difficulty of scholars in defining terrorism in the sub region and opines that this is because what is seen as terrorism to one person will not be seen in another’s perspective as terror. He adopts the AU’s definition of terrorism as the best way to understand terrorism in the region.

In his words terrorism is a “longue duree” rather than a contemporary phenomenon. He notes that terrorism has existed in the West Africa prior to 9/11. To him terrorism in West Africa has taken on national and transnational dimensions after 9/11 which also coincided with academia’s interest in the subject of terrorism.

He revealed the notion of scholars such as Yoroms who not until 2006 were still doubtful whether terrorism in West Africa was real. Their reason was that terrorist groups in West Africa have not used the region to carry out significant activities outside the continent. To Yoroms, West Africa was the only place where terrorist hide and launched activities within the continent. Nkwi disagrees with Yoroms opinion that because there has not been international dimensions of
terrorism in West Africa it is nonexistent in the Sub region as too simplistic and reductionist; if we do not take into consideration the deeper historical roots of terrorism. He adopts the African union’s definition of terrorism as a better way of appreciating the phenomenon of terrorism. I agree and appreciate Nkwi’s opinion that in trying to understand terrorism in West Africa its historical roots cannot be relegated to the back\textsuperscript{36}

In agreement with Huntington, Judith Miller, in “The Challenges of Radical Islam”\textsuperscript{37} maintains that Islamic militancy is a real threat to western civilization. She agrees with Huntington that religiously motivated qualms have emerged strongly after the Cold War and the most significant among them is the threat of radical Islam. She recalls a supposed meeting held by popular Islamic politicians and scholars in Sudan in 1991 as a deliberate attempt by the Muslim world to reinforce Islamic opposition to the West. She, therefore, urge for practical measures by the United States and the West to counter this opposition.\textsuperscript{38} Miller, unlike Huntington, however argues that there is difference between mainstream moderate Islam and radical Islam.

With regards to the above Leon T. Hadar, in “What Green Peril” opines that Islam is not as united as it is thought to be and is not necessarily a threat to the West. He argues that the term Islamic fundamentalism is a western manipulation through the mass media and is just like the propaganda used during the cold war era. Islam is not that unified and monolithic; it is diverse and militant activities all over the world against Western interest is rather motivated by economic and political strategic reasons. The chaos and anarchy in the Middle East and the continuing rivalry between the west and the Islamic world is a response to the fiasco of western civilization and the desire for preferred option to the corrupt society created by the west. Hadar rejects the idea of clash of western and Islamic civilizations. For him, these evolvement do not reflect a war between Western and Islamic civilization.\textsuperscript{39}
He argues that the several militant and prosperous Islamic fundamental countering has been spearhead and funded by the United States\textsuperscript{40} which is seen as the leader of the West. He cites the example of the Pakistani Mujahedeen militant group which successfully overthrew the soviet backed government in Afghanistan. Its remnants now constitute the greatest threat to the West.

A critique of Samuel Huntington’s clash of civilization is that it talks more of culture being the source of conflict. The buildup of his work is based on the notion that the most salient differences between people are cultural and not political, ideological or economic. If cultural differences are the underlying factor, then it should follow that they account for conflicts in Huntington’s world.

1.9 Sources of Data

The research work relied on both primary and secondary sources for the study. Primary data were obtained from unstructured interviews from experts such as Dr. Ken Ahorsu a Research Fellow of LECIAD, Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Centre. He is a specialist on International security Litigation, International Politics, Human rights and democracy, Conflict Resolution, Peace and Conflict studies, Negotiation Arbitration and Mediation, Middle East, Alternative Dispute Resolution and Conflict Negotiation. Irbad Ibrahim an Arabic Scholar, Expert in security studies and a Peace Ambassador of the 2016 Elections of Ghana was also interviewed. These are individuals who have followed the evolution of terrorism in West Africa. Secondary data were obtained from the Quran, Bible, Textbooks on International relations, magazines and journal articles. The Balme Library, the Institute of African Studies Library, American Corner library as well as LECIAD Library; all in the University of Ghana-Legon were of immense benefit to the study. Internet websites where information relevant to the topic was obtained were also explored.
1.10 Research Methodology

This research used qualitative data analysis, with emphasis on interpretative analysis of content from relevant academic literature, online resources and media reports. The study also makes use of reviews of data from literature on terrorism in West Africa and assesses the various dimensions researchers in the field have analyzed the subject of the study. Cole defines content analysis as a method of analyzing written, verbal or visual communication messages. It allows the researcher to test theoretical issues to enhance understanding of the data. Using content analysis allows for a historical and cultural insight through the analysis of existing text on the topic. The benefit for this study is that it allows for conscious deductions from the array of essays and literature on the topic of terrorism in West Africa. This includes a detailed explication of the linkage between Political Islam and terrorism in West Africa. A study that seeks to describe a problem requires a robust qualitative approach.

1.11 Arrangement of Chapters

The study is organized into four main chapters. Chapter one is the introduction, chapter two presents an overview of terrorism in West Africa. Chapter three deals with an analysis of political Islam and terrorism in West Africa. Chapter four is the summary of findings, recommendations and conclusions.
END NOTES.


16. Ibid.


18. Ibid. p.60,

END NOTES

21. Ibid, p.28
22. Ibid, p.29
24. Ibid
25. Ibid
27. Ibid
29. Ibid., p.217
30.Ibid
31. Ibid., pp. 254-256
32. Ibid., p. 264
33. Ibid., pp.263-265
34. Ibid., p.183
35. Ibid
38. Ibid
40. Ibid
CHAPTER TWO

AN OVERVIEW OF TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA

2.0 Introduction

The term terrorism has been defined by the Jonathan Netanyahu institute in Israel as systematic murder, maiming, and menacing of the innocent in order to instill fear for political ends; a situation where a group of people of individuals use violence to intimidate innocent population for political ends. Terrorism is also as a transnational phenomenon which increases threat to human life, state stability and international insecurity. The Post-Cold War era has witnessed a metamorphosis in state sponsored terrorism to religious terrorism which is in the lead by Islam. This chapter assesses the emergence of contemporary forms of terrorism in West Africa. It continues to look at the causes of terrorism in the West Africa sub region by looking at their origins and the manifestations of their brutal activities in the sub region.

2.1 Contemporary Terrorist groups in West Africa.

Religious militancy in West Africa is not a new phenomenon. Religion, through its belief systems, doctrines, institutions and interpretational differences, often becomes a fault line that motivates conflict. In such instances, while religion may or may not be the real cause or motivation for violence, it serves as an ideal mechanism for the motivation, mobilization and legitimization of violence in conflict manifestations. The origin of Boko Haram, Ansar Al dine and Al Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb as contemporary Islamic militant groups in West Africa that has resorted to violence as a legitimate path to establishing a puritan Islamic society in Nigeria, Mali and Algeria respectively, is explored.
2.2.1 Origin and Evolution of Boko Haram

The security forces of Nigeria have given the origin of Boko Haram back to 1995. Abubakar Lawan formed the *Ahlulusunnawal’ jamah’ ah hijra* brotherhood at the university of Maduguri, Bono State. It developed as a nonviolent sect until Mohammed Yusuf took over the helm of affairs of the faction in 2002. This was the period immediately after Abubakar Lawan moved on to pursue further studies in Saudi Arabia. The leadership of Mohammed Yusuf saw a significant metamorphosis of the movement with new names such as the *Yusufiyyah, Muhajirun, Nigerian Taliban, Jama’ atuAhlissunnahlidda ‘awatiwal Jihad* and most popularly *Boko Haram*.

Some of the accounts of the origins of Boko Haram link it to the Maitatsine insurrection that took place in the dawn of the 1980s. It culminated in the death of thousands of people in five of the states of Northern Nigeria. The Maitatsine revolution had the origin of its name taken after the preachings of a popular Muslim preacher, Muhammadu Marwa. He is known to have migrated from his native country Cameroun in 1945 to the region of Northern Nigeria. Marwa’s radical preaching, directed to both political and religious authorities, earned him the title “Maitatsine” which is translated in Hausa as “he who curses”. The colonial administration under the British had Marwa deported to his native Country Cameroun. However upon the independence of Nigeria that saw the collapse of the British colonial administration Maitatsine once again returned to Nigeria. Because of his sermons he gained popularity once again and by the 1970s, had garnered a great following. His militant followers were known as the Yan Tatsine. Popularly among his followers were unemployed migrants, youths from the north of the country, as well as others who felt that the Formal Muslim authority was insensitive to their grievances. During a rebellion in Kano in December 1980 the security forces of Nigeria had Maitatsine killed. The Yan Tatsine thus his followers embarked on an uprising again in 1982, 1984, and 1985. The
common thing is that Boko Haram and Yan Tatsine has been both tagged as a fanatic fraternity whose stance or beliefs in Islam is not upheld by most of the Muslims in Nigeria.³

Boko Haram’s violent path begun with a burst up with the Nigerian police forces in 2004 and also in 2009 with an incursion on a Bauchi Police station which resulted in the death of over 700. This period of violence was triggered by a raid in Dutsen, Tenshin and Bauchi by joint security team. It was shortly after this engagement that Muhammad Yusuf died, however it was not clear whether he was killed in conflict, in police custody, or during an escape. The demise of Yusuf saw Boko Haram undergo immense transformation under the administration of Abubakar Shekau, a former deputy to Yusuf. The deadly turn that the movement took since then has been described as a revenge for the death of Yusuf.⁴

The etymology of Boko Haram is acquired from the fusion of the Hausa meaning of a book (“Book learning”), as well as Arabic term haram, this refers to activities that are seen as “ungodly” or “sinful”. It must be noted that “Boko Haram” is just the name of the group but also a slogan with an ideology that “Western education and (such product that arises from it) is sacrilege”.⁵ Despite the popularity of the slogan Boko Haram, the movement’s preferred name is “Jama’atulAhulSunnahLiddawatiwalJihad”.⁶ Another name of the sect is Yusuffiya, its rank is made up of hundreds of poor northern Muslim students, clerics, university students and qualified careers of different professions.⁷ Recruitment for members is based on indoctrination and is believed to have fighters of more than 280,000 in almost all the 19 states of northern Nigeria, Chad and Niger.⁸

Contrary to popular opinion some scholars does not see Boko Haram as a unified movement. There is some schism in the fraternity based on the strategic direction of the group. A current
USA lower House Congress report has indicated that one group of the division is concerned with the domestic affairs of Boko Haram in Nigeria and not its external or international insurgency. Moreover a report published in November 2011 again by the USA Lower House Congress has noted that the schism in the group is about the groups chosen path of violence which some want to see an end to it. Another group is not in favour of the end of violence and the subsequent signing of a peace accord but desires the formation of an Islamic state regulated by the strict laws of sharia.  

In May 2011, a splitter group, Ansaru was formed out of Boko Haram under the leadership of Khalid al-Barnawi and Abu Muhammed. The separation was speculated to have been caused by disagreement about how to share funds, as well as Shekau’s acceptance of civilian’s death. Shekau’s preference for attacking Nigerian targets (rather than international ones), and possibly his favouritism of Kanuris (Borno’s main ethnic group) might be some of the reasons for the differences. the two groups have however, reintegrated since the French intervention in Mali in 2013.

2.3.2 The Linguistic background of the term ‘‘Boko’’

Before British colonial rule of Hausaland and Northern Nigeria, the Hausa language was written in Arabic scripts called Ajami. Ajami, however, lacked a standardized orthography; as such it was not widely used. Later, Christian missionaries under colonialism attempted to use Roman script in writing the Hausa Language. This kind of script was termed as ‘‘Boko’’. The first use of Roman script to write Hausa took place in 1843. J.F Schon, a Christian missionary from London, wrote the first Roman scripted Hausa book entitled ‘‘Magana Hausa’’ (Speeches in Hausa). Subsequently, other Christian missionaries and people from other organizations interested in
Hausa used the Roman script in writing the Hausa Language. The use of the script by colonial authority increased its popularity and subsequently led to the neglect of the Arabic based Ajami.\textsuperscript{12}

Under colonial rule, Boko received official backing and was used in court proceedings, payment receipts, government notices and other official matters. By 1960, when Nigeria gained independence, Boko had developed into a fully integrated Western system of education. This had an overall effect on Islamic education and culture in northern Nigeria. Today, Boko is taught as a language in primary, secondary and university levels. In the spoken Hausa Language, Boko literally means ‘book’ and at the same time it generally connotes Western civilization, which includes Western style education. The erstwhile Ajami, on the other hand, also connotes Islamic civilization and education.\textsuperscript{13}

The claim of Boko Haram that Western education and culture (boko) is forbidden (haram), and therefore should be eliminated; by implication, means a call for the cultural and educational system that existed under the northern Nigeria society prior to the introduction of Western civilization. As shared by Boko Haram’s radical leader Yusuf, “Our land was an Islamic state before the colonial masters turned it into kafir (infidel) land. The current system is contrary to true Islamic beliefs”.\textsuperscript{14} What they seem not to admit, however, is that before the advent of colonialism and for that matter Western influence, there was nothing like a monolithic Nigerian state which they are seeking to rule by sharia laws. Sharia was used only in the north which by then constituted the Sokoto and Borno Islamic states. Their quest to make the Christian dominated south a part of a larger Islamic state goes against the Islamic majority/minority principle which states that Jihad be waged where Muslims are of the majority but when in the
minority, they must peacefully coexist and submit to the system of administration and that Allah himself will intervene in their course.\textsuperscript{15}

2.2.3 The Philosophy of Boko Haram

The violence of Boko Haram made them imitate Marwa’s Maitatsine in terms of objectives, organizational structure, philosophy and armed struggle. Some have attributed these aims and objectives to the cumulative ramification of, poverty, deprivation, insecurity and economic injustices which have bedeviled the northern Nigerian society. Boko Haram as part of its philosophy is bent on regulating the country with sharia law, especially in the north where its presence is most felt. As noted above it denounces any linkage with everything that is Western be it the educational system or their societal structure.\textsuperscript{16} The origin of this philosophy is grounded in classical Islamic religious practice. Traditional Islamic practice has a disdain for Western education and the corrupt civil servants who are its end products. That is why to the fraternity Boko Haram, literally means “Western education is a sin”. In stark contrast in August 2009 a statement allegedly released by the acting head of the sect Mallam Sanni Umaru, disagreed with such assertions as he posited the groups perspective that “Western education is a sin” is misconstrued by media. He goes on to say that the group’s name means “Western Civilization” is a taboo. The distinguishing factor between the two is that, saying “Western education is a sin” depicts their aversion for formal education. This is utterly false. Saying Western civilization is a sin simply upholds the belief of Boko Haram in the morals and values of the orthodox Islamic religious practice as a culture.\textsuperscript{17}

As a movement Boko Haram is not against the contemporary world out rightly. Their use of science and technology and internet through, videos, mobile phones, DVDs cameras, You tube,
chemical weaponry, automatic weapons, and vehicles depicts its preparedness to utilize some of
the beneficial outcomes of western education if it inures to their benefit. Again as a philosophy
Boko Haram rejects some people in northern Nigeria who they refer to as “Yan boko”. Yan boko
simply means “child of the book.” It is a term to classify the educated elite who are a byproduct
of British colonial policy of Indirect rule once upon a time in Nigeria. These are individuals who
have become vulnerable to the love of money and unscrupulous western core values. Thus the
term Yan boko is used to refer to a state of being morally and spiritually bankrupt, lacking
religious piety and a lack of conscience of heinously raising ones financial status at the detriment
of the Islamic umma.18 In the view of Boko Haram, Nigeria as a state has stooped so low to
moral decadence and corruption is ascending as the years go by. Its goal as a revolution is the
establishment of a pure Islamic state emptied of corrupt elites. Thus anybody who can fit into
such an Islamic state is thence an unbeliever. This spirit is imbibed in new recruits to uphold and
also as an inspiration for their operations.19

These religious and moral factors notwithstanding, a number of social and economic reasons are
the bane fuelling Boko Haram’s nefarious attacks and extremism. Other factors include a feeling
of a lack of belongingness and marginalization when a comparative analysis is made between the
rich oil producing south dominated by Christians; impoverishment of the north, the corruption of
the central government and the heavy handed security forces coupled with an inclination to west.
The above mentioned grievances make some Muslims to be sympathetic to the group and lend
their support to them despite their nefarious violent attacks. Boko Haram’s goal is to expunge
northern Nigeria from these societal ills which motivates their request for the creation of an
Islamic state regulated with sharia law.20
As typical with all West Africa Jihadist movements, both old and new, the grievances of Boko Haram are complex. They are a combination of many factors such as the use of religion as a mechanism for mobilization with emphasis on identity as Muslims and the need to fight for the cause of Islam. In the process, there is conflict over the interpretation of scripture with regards to which interpretation is right. Northern Nigeria since 2000 has essentially been ruled by sharia law. However, Boko Haram is not content with the application of the sharia laws as they are implemented and are therefore calling for their own interpretation to be implemented. Not surprisingly, many top Islamic leaders have been attacked by the sect. it could be assumed that they are interested in fighting the secular government and Christians but why are Muslim leaders also being attacked? They are most probably being attacked because they are seen as misinterpreting the scriptures, corrupt, and must therefore be brought to order.

Another complex element regarding the philosophy of Boko Haram is the question of proselytization. What actually does Boko Haram mean by attacking churches and Christians in their call for an Islamic state of Nigeria? Inferring from its name as a group committed to the teachings of the prophet and jihad, a holy war is being waged against Nigerian non-Muslims and Muslims who are perceived by the sect to be infidels. What then could be the motivation for this jihad? Is it a purely religious motive? Religion is manifestly prescriptive on all aspects of life. As such, the broad based grievances of Boko Haram originally lies in the quest for political power to administer sharia, economic power to redistribute wealth to save the “perishing” from the corrupt secular politicians. Political power will automatically grant the right to dictate moral, ethical and social values. Eventually, Islamic civilization will take over from Western civilization and an Islamic state of Nigeria will be ruled by the Almighty Allah which will be devoid of any form of corruption.
2.3 The history of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb

Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Algeria’s biggest and renowned terrorist group, was initially referred to as the Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat, and commonly referred to by its French abbreviation (GSPC, Salafist Group for Call/Preaching and Combat). Al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb was founded as an alternative to the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), as a result of perceived misdirection of the GIA. It emerged in the dawn of 1990s as an incised sect of GIA, when it was preoccupied with a bloody thirsty insurgency against the military junta of Algeria with the sole goal of creating an Islamic state of Algeria. Although it started in Algeria, within the last five years, AQIM has retained operational capacity across West Africa masterminding several attacks in Burkina Faso, Cote D’Ivoire and other parts of West Africa. Because their origins are largely anchored in the political history of Algeria, the following section examines AQIM within the political history of Algeria.

2.3.1 Political history of Algeria

The GSPC originated from the civil unrest that the state of Algeria was engulfed in the 1990s when Islamist combatants made efforts to topple a secular, dictatorial government. This civil war was referred to as “La sale guerre” (the dirty war), this deadly civil unrest begun in 1992 and prolonged into the new century. Since achieving independence from France in 1962, Algeria has been under the control of the Front de Liberation Nationale popularly referred to by its French acronym (FLN) National Liberation Front), a political party renowned for their heroic freedom movement that eliminated the French from Algeria after a prolonged armed struggle. Although the FLN was Islamic in nature, it was from the onset a secular-nationalist freedom revolution built after the Nasser Abdel model of government. During the fight to build an
independent state, Algerian Muslims went to war in support of the FLN. However after winning the struggle for independence, they were sidelined by Mohammad Ahmad Ben Bella’s quasi socialist government after 1962. Again the turning of Algeria into a one party state by President Honouri Bourmedi and who also centralised power within the military elite, led to the evolving of several militant Islamic groups. The Mouvement Islamique Armee (MIA Armed Islamic Movement) led by Mustafa Bouyali, was the first of such groups, which also became known as the Bouyali group.

The demise of Bouyali in 1987 led to the so called Couscous riots that forced then President Chadli Benjedin to introduce some political reforms allowing for multi-party elections. The Front Islamique du Salut (FIS Islamic salvation front) formed in 1989 became the first and formal Islamic political organization to be formed in Algeria. The metropolitan election was won by the FIS in 1990, who consequently won a majority first round of parliamentary votes in 1991. However the FIS’ aspiration of winning elections was shortchanged by a military coup de tat that took over power in early 1992. Thus the FIS swore to turn to violent outlets to demand what had been denied them via elections. Enthused with a taste of victory they had plan to establish an Islamic state of Algeria that rejected the political process dismissing the government as apostates.

2.3.2 The Armed Islamic group

After the military took over power, the Armed Islamic group became very popular in the dawn of 1992. A state of emergency was declared as President Benjedid was deposed. The GIA outcasted the FIS and placed, its leaders in prison as well as placing thousands of Muslim
activists in Saharan detention camps. Formed in the late 1992, the GIA sidestepped the FIS and took the lead in the holy war to create an Islamic state.

The GIA was basically made of veterans who were returning from the Afghanistan war against the USSR; the GIA’s exercises were based on an ideology developed in line with the Islamist Taliban. The safer approach of most militants was a gradual guerilla victory through which an “Islamic State of Algeria” will be created. On the contrary GIA wanted instantly to bring about the Islamic State through the conversion of society through extremism. The GIA ranks was made up of Afghanistan war veterans led by Saïd Qari, who had been with Al-Zawahiri in Peshawar and was also the head of the Algerian faction of Mujahedin.

Qari was given an amount of $40000 by Osama Bin Laden with specific instructions not to back the National reconciliation programme of the government so that the GIA will be the most successful Islamic insurgency. The ideological grounds for the GIA’s campaign was that Algeria’s apostasy was not limited to the government only but also included the citizenry. To them any Muslim who did not believe the specific teaching that the power of the government emanates not from the citizens but from the Quran was designated an apostate.

The doctrine of *Takfirwal-Hijra* meaning excommunication and exile was in the long run disowned by the universal jihad and was behind the later formation of the GSPC. The GIA wanted to be famous but not through the provision of social services or being a solution to the provoking challenges of the people. It rather wanted to gain popularity through notoriety, causing fear and panic. Aside its excesses against the military junta, it had an advanced method of extorting money from the Islamic middle income earners. That was one way it financed its activities. People who did not adhere to their brand of Islam were put to death; this strategy led
to the annihilation of thousands of civilians and made GIA unpopular among the local people. The depopulation of Muslims did not go down well with the global Muslim community and these led the GIA to lose all international love. Although Osama Bin Laden was an ardent supporter of the GIA, however the universal Muslim dissatisfaction with GIA tactics and ideology led him to pull out his support.\textsuperscript{31}

GIA extremism was not restricted to Algerians alone, although the Algerian government was the number one target of the insurgency. The group is known to be behind the death of more than hundred foreigners at the peak of its activities. It was also responsible for the killing of seven abducted monks from France, hijacking of aeroplanes a case in point was the Air France flight in 1994 and also in 1995. It also carried out suicide bombings targeted at French citizens in Paris. The GIA was a disappointment that couldn’t live to the billing of the FIS, thus without the love and support of the local Algerians as well as the greater Al Qaeda it gradually became irrelevant, embarking on its final international attack in 1996. Hassan Hattab formed a break out group known as the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) in 1988 after realizing the misdirection and policy errors under the administration of the GIA.

2.3.3 The Evolution of the GSPC.

Realizing the shift in the aims of the GIA from making Algeria as the target of the apostasy regime popularly known as the “near enemy” to the fight of the “far enemy” which was the Europeans and the Americans. This change in focus was as a result of the change in the leadership structure from time to time and this led to a loss of a goal.\textsuperscript{32} The leadership of GIA including Hassan Hattab, Saïfi El-Para and Shaykh Abou al-Baraa broke away.\textsuperscript{33} Thus Hassan Hattab taking cognizance of the non-existence of any affection for the GIA, brought an end to
the execution of civilians and made plans to reclaim the dented image of the jihadist in Algeria. GSPC in its communiqué released in April 1999, saw Hattab specifically declaring that his foe was the Algerian regime alone and that the umma (Algerian civilians) was safe and should perceive GSPC as an ally. The main goal of the GSPC was to dethrone the incumbent quasi socialist secular government of Algeria, culminating in an AQIM, that will be a partaker of the global war against the “Far Enemy.

However, the emergence of the GSPC was fraught with many challenges. The history of GIA was always staring the GSPC in the face as their fighters were depleted. Hattab’s GSPC became increasingly insignificant as it could not match the incumbent secular government. Again, Hattab’s refusal to commit to greater Al-Qaeda in Iraq, coupled with the dormancy associated with the GSPC between 1999-2003 sparked allegations that he was trying to reconcile with the government. This notion was buttressed by his show of love of the Algiers government’s National Reconciliation Plan in 2005, which was aimed at ending the conflict in Algeria by signing a peace pact with all militants groups. This included amnesty and immunity from all past extremism of former militants.

In addition to the above problems was geographic division in the operations of GSPC. One of this divide was the north of the Atlas Mountains in Algiers, the capital city which was the area that witnessed most conflict during the 1994 civil unrest. The other geographic division was in the extension of the Sahara in southern Algeria, and the border regions of Niger and Mauritania. This led to the emergence of two leaders. Abderrazak le Para (alias AmariSaifi) abducted 32 European tourists and held them in neighboring Mali; he took a ransom from Germany for their release. This move by the southern splinter was the first of several that paved way of new conflict in a region that had Algerian security forces involved.
The southern division of the GSPC is transnational in nature; as it has members from Mauritania and Nigeria. From its base in the Atlas Mountains it is able to cross borders and attack a Mauritanian army base killing 15. The southern splinter group was dedicated to generating money through criminal activities such as abduction for ransom than the greater GSPC course. The leader of the GPSC in the Sahara region was Mokhtar Belmokhtar who operated an expensive smuggling and extortion nexus via the fragile borders. The inability of Hattab to prevent this schism was seen as a weakness; thus Al Qaeda turned its attention to le Para in 2002, and this undermined the GSPC leader. The GSPC also acquired the erstwhile GIA contacts and nexus in Europe that were able to provide logistical support to jihadists during their travels in readiness for operations, but the GSPC did not carry out operations in Europe.

Al-Qaeda Central had supported Hattab as a preferred option to the GIA’s embarrassment but became increasingly discontent with the lack of growth in Algeria while the greater jihad campaign was under threat in Southeast Asia, Afghanistan, Iraq and Europe because of the universal attack on Al Qaeda spearheaded by the USA.

Hattab’s agreement with the secular government’s National reconciliation led to his substitution by the more belligerent Abu Ibrahim Mustafa (alias Nabil Sahraoui) in 2003. It was during the reign of Abu Ibrahim Mustafa that the GSPC became totally committed to Greater Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden on September 11, 2003. However, not much was made of this pact as al-Qaeda Central was still worried of an Algerian group that was more concern about the course of Algeria. Subsequent declaration did little to prove to Greater Al-Qaeda that GSPC was willing to support the universal jihad. Abu Ibrahim Mustafa may have been coerced into this move as a result of the challenges he faced against the strength and might of the Algerian government’s
counter-terrorism machinations. He constantly failed at war because of lack of fighters and was eventually murdered along senior management members of GSPC in June 2004.

Abou Mossaab Abdelouadoud (alias Abdelmalek Droukdal) was designated the leader of the GSPC after Mustafa’s death. Abdelouadoud inherited a GSPC in a crisis, with many international spectators convinced that the GSPC revolution was finally coming to an end. The government of Algeria was attacking on two fronts; the military action that was shrinking the small number of remaining troops and secondly the plans by the Algerian government to offer forgiveness and immunity to former militants as part of the reconciliation plan. 37

2.3.4 Merger with Al Qaeda in Iraq.

The war in Iraq gave way for the incorporation of GSPC with Al Qaeda. Al Qaeda made links with terrorist groups in North Africa introducing new tactics and media attention and became more decentralized. Having taken over the reign of GSPC Abdelouadoud started to issue propaganda declarations to back Abu Musab al-Zarqawi nexus in Iraq. 38 GSPC as a way of showing their commitment to the Greater Al Qaeda web under the auspices of their new leadership encourage Algerians to travel more to Iraq and also supported their violence by congratulating them for the abduction and killing two Algerian diplomats who were murdered in Baghdad. GSPC was just not making a public show but also sent to Morocco, Algeria and Tunisian troops to fight for Al Qaeda in Iraq. 39

Abdelouadoud had a long term goal of merging the GSPC with the universal jihad system of connections in Iraq. Although this was once done in September 2003, Bin laden and al-Zarqawi had their doubts for three main reasons. First, the GIA story and the excesses that resulted in lack of support from the umma and an incompatible ideology that prevented them from
becoming the second biggest Islamic state to be created after Afghanistan. Second, the promise of immunity and amnesty by the national reconciliation was dwindling interest in the insurgency, a case in point was Hassan Hattab. The shrinking of GSPC numbers from 4000 in 2002 to less than 500 in 2006 gave credence to this. Thirdly, the overall concern of GSPC was the Algerian government and not other European states.  

These challenges were solved by Abdelouadoud through a video tape to Iraq, committed fighters to Iraq in 2006. He then finally shown his allegiance of the GSPC to Al Qaeda Central saying “Use us to strike wherever you will, and you will never find in us anything but compliance and obedience”. Thus the GSPC under Abdelouadoud was renamed Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb on the 11th of September 2006, which happens to be the fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. The announcement of the merger with Al Qaeda was made by Zawahiri.  

The merger was to be proven in these three ways; rejection of national reconciliation by the Algerian government; targeting citizens of countries outside Algeria especially super powers such as France; and finally expanding into the sub Saharan African borders such as Mauritania and Mali. This means the Algerian government was no longer the only course of the AQIM.

The AQIM is being considered as a terrorist group in West Africa because it has had interconnections with several jihadist movements in the sub region. AQIM has been a long standing ally of Boko Haram. AQIM itself has had affiliations with a number of Nigerian recruits since the Algerian GSPC was renamed as Al Qaeda’s in the Islamic Maghreb. AQIM has never hidden its desire to manipulate tensions in the West African region; by this it has offered extensive tutelage to Boko Haram fighters and motivated them with weapons such as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).
2.4 History of Ansar Al Dine.

Ansar Al Dine (AAD) is a domestic terrorist group, formed by the famous erstwhile Tuareg rebel leader Iyad Ag Ghaly. Ansar Al Dine Arabic: أنصار الدين, also translated Anṣār ad-Dīn, means "helpers of the (Islamic) religion" or "defenders of the faith" in Arabic. It has a main goal of using the sharia law in ruling Mali. There is the tendency to confuse this movement with the Sufi revolution also called Ançar Dine, which was established in the southern part of Mali by Chérif Ousmane Haidara in the 1980s. In contrast this sufi movement Ancar Dine was formed to resist extremism of militant islamism.

2.4.1 The National Movement for the liberation of Azawad

The origin of Ansar Al Dine is traced from an initial Islamist group, the National Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad (MNLA). The origin of the MNLA is traced back to October 2011. Despite the believe that this terrorist organization has as many as 5000 troops, others doubt the size of its fighters as depicted by its inability to control the jihadist group that erupted in its presence. Just like modern politicians and the tag of corruption every old Tuareg rebellion including that of the MNLA accused the government of Mali for chastising Muslims and also their fiasco in ensuring the development of the Northern part of Mali. Ideologically the MNLA was motivated and inspired by a young generation of Tuareg scholars and intellectuals. The call for an independent and separate Azawad (a historical name for part of northern Mali) was spearheaded by a famous rebel Tuareg leader, in the person of Ibrahim Ag Bahanga, who is popular for the heroic act of leading the Tuareg rebellion of 2007.

The real rebellion against the Army of the government of Mali was formally launched in January 2012; this was seen in specific bombings of the government’s military bases. The
challenge on the part of the MNLA was that it didn’t have a lot of troops to possess and dominate the north of Mali. Thus it had to form collaborations with other militant groups. Most of its battles to take over towns were fought in partnership with Ansar Al Dine. The MNLA to be able to pursue its long term objectives went into a formal partnership with Ansar Al Dine in May 2012, in order to hasten its pace of creating an Islamic state of Azawad. But this partnership was shortlived.\(^47\) events in the aftermath of the French intervention of Mali saw the MNLA gaining the power to take over key towns in the eastern part of the northern zone of Kidal. This region of Mail is noted as one of the most impoverished and least populated but historic home town of the Tuareg.

Presently, the MNLA resides in the Kidal region side by side a divided terrorist group known as the Islamic Movement for Azawad (MIA).\(^48\) Despite the control of most part of the northern region of Mali by the MNLA’s, there is evidence to prove a lack of support from the local people, including many Tuareg. In a bid to whip up local support for the group, the MNLA on several occasions tried to mobilise local leaders and leaders of the ethnic groups in union to build its political platform for the north. Moreover, most of the forces of MNLA were accused of using violence to rob the local people of their property in times of war and violent abuses against the population. The inability of Iyad Ag Ghaly to assume the leadership of the MNLA angered him, this culminated in the announcement of the formation of Ansar Al Dine. This move was in many ways the Islamist version of the MNLA. It was also believed that Iyad was opposed to the MNLA’s independent and secular nature as well as its continuous linkage to the AQIM; to him these were rhetoric to MNLA’s public position.\(^49\)
2.4.2 Formation of Ansar Al Dine.

Ansar Al Dine was founded in December 2011 as a Tuareg militant revolution championed by the charismatic erstwhile Tuareg rebellion leader Iyad Ag Ghaly. Access to information on the size of the group is less though it is alleged to be in the hundreds. In the greater part of 2012, Ansar Al Dine maintained partial or full control over key population zones in Timbuktu and Kidal Regions. Unlike the MNLA’S secular approach; a salafi ideology was adopted by Ansar Al Dine calling for the implementation of a strict version of Sharia law in regions under its authority. At the inception of the rebellion, Ansar Al Dine kept an underground profile. Despite this underdog profile, video footages revealed in March 2012 denounces this assertion. Ansar Al Dine as a terrorist organization played an influential role in fighting and conquering the Malian military in wars in the towns of, Aguelhok, Tessalit and Kidal.

2.5.3 Membership

AAD has the crux of its membership among the Ifora tribe who hails from the southern part of the Tuaregs homeland. Despite claims that it severed ties with the MNLA because of its linkage to AQIM, AAD has also been linked with AQIM because its founding leader Iyad Ag Ghaly is the cousin of AQIM commander Hamada Ag Hama. In contrast, a research fellow at Warwick University who is an expert in jihadism in North Africa by name professor Salma Belaala in April 2012, has noted that this linkage was false, claiming that AAD was opposed to Al Qaeda. The members of the group are known to be from Mali, Nigeria and Algeria. There was a schism in Ansar Al Dine that culminated in the formation of the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA). This group was formed in August 2012 headed by the spokesperson of Ansar Al Dine Omar Ould Hamaha as at April 2012. The MOJWA was affiliated to the AQIM.
2.4.4 Structure of leadership

The structure of leadership of the group comprises of two branches. There was a military structure of leadership and also a political leadership structure. The military branch was made of Local Arabians who had resigned from the army of Mali as well as the Tuareg, who joined the group solely for their unflinching love for Ag Ghaly. Their love for Iyad Al Ghaly encourage them to join and not necessarily the Islamic call for a jihad in Mali. The political structure was also dominated by the Ifoghas, a noble Tuareg clan who still wanted to maintain the supremacy of the clan in the Kidal Region. They include Alghabass Ag Intallah and Hamada Ag Bibi. The military leaders included Cheick Ag Aoussa and Mohammad Ag Aharib.53

2.4.5 Origin of the word Ansar Al Dine

The etymology of the word *ansar* is Arabic which means “helper” or “supporter” or “patron”. The ansar were the first residents of Medina to accept Islam, and were also the Islamic warriors in the centuries immediately after the time of the Prophet. They were popular for their weapons; speed and mobility on the battle field, either as mounted calvary or on foot. The word “*deen*” also spelt *dine* or *din* appears many times in the Quran (Quran 5:3) meaning the “true way of life”. Another meaning of the word dine in Arabic is “a system of life in which human beings consciously surrender themselves to the sovereignty of a higher authority and total obedience in order to gain rewards from it and save themselves from its punishments.” Thence it is wrong to translate it to the English with the word religion.54

2.4.6 Other data

According to the 2016 United States of America (USA) country report on terrorism, Ansar Al Dine is known to have carried out two major fatal attacks; one in 1998 through 2012 (Ansar Al Dine was reportedly responsible for the burning of the tomb of a Sufi saint, a UNESCO World
Heritage site, on 4 May in Timbuktu). In 2016 it was asserted to have a military strength of 200-300 fighters, although the previous year’s country report on terrorism of USA did not state any exact number. Its main mode of funding is drug trafficking. Despite the ambiguity surrounding its linkage to AQIM; the AQIM is an alternative source of funding. The terrorist organisation has once been reported of conveying more than a hundred convoy of cars full of troops, fully armed with small weapons. There are other versions that link the source of weaponry of Ansar Al Dine to the collapse of Muammar Gaddafi’s government in Libya. Soldiers of Ansar Al Dine are believed to have gained a cheap access to the weapon depot of Libya. The weapons of Ansar Al Dine includes medium and heavy self-propelled anti-aircraft guns that can be mounted on trucks.

Another popular schism was that of the division by a group referred to as Islamic Movement for the Azawad (MIA). This split took place on the 24th January 2013. The MIA was headed by renown Tuareg leader Alghabass Ag Intalla as at January 2013. In March 2013 Ansar Al Dine was declared a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the U.S. Department of State and in a similar vein designated as a terrorist organization by Security Council of the United Nations. Ansar Al Dine’s military strength was decimated severely by the 2013 French intervention in Mali.

2.5. Causes of Terrorism in West Africa.

2.5.1 Poverty

Poverty is represented as a key cause of terrorism in West Africa. According to O Neil poverty of all kinds, for example, resources, prospects, choices, respect, enables terrorism to thrive. Poverty causes desperation among citizens and lays the foundation for political extremism. Poverty simply means under development. In West Africa underdevelopment means most
nations don’t have the educational facilities in place in order to reduce the rate of recruiting people into terrorist organization. A case in point is Mali where Ansar Al Dine operates. Mali happens to be one of the impoverished nations not just in West Africa but in the world. Mali is ranked at 182 out of 186 on the United Nations Development Programme’s 2012 Human Development Index. 2011 data from the UNICEF shows that in Mali life expectancy at birth stands at 51 years. Again 50% of the population of Mali lives below the international poverty line of $1.25 per day. The Central Intelligence Agency estimates that nearly 48% of Malians are younger than fifteen. In 2012 the CIA also estimated Mali’s per capita Gross Domestic Product at $1,1000 ranking it 215 out of 229 countries. The Independent has noted that the poverty of northern Nigeria is such that 70% of the people live on less than 60p a day. These conditions thus creates the opportunity for terrorist activities of AQIM, Ansar Al Dine and Boko Haram to thrive in West Africa

O’neil continues to posit that poor societies are synonymous to weak institutions that may not have the capability to curb the recruitment of terrorist or prevent terrorist acts. Thus in a similar vein they are not able to afford the educational programmes that will decrease the growth of terrorism. Thus central governments that are not able to provide the basic economic needs of the country laid the strong foundation for terrorism to thrive in West Africa. Nigeria’s inability to handle up till date the threat of Boko Haram in the country gives credence to this. It must be noted however that leaders of these terrorist organizations are mostly not stricken with poverty. They are wealthy and highly educated individuals. Mohammad Yusuf, Abubakar Lawan, Shekau Abubakar all leaders of Boko Haram were wealthy and highly educated. 21st century terrorism demands the application of organizational development, technological skills as well as management skills that is mostly found among the educated elite, yet terrorist groups need a
great support from the poor and mostly uneducated who forms a great percentage of the grassroot population of West Africa to proceed with the violence. However it must be noted that peoples support for violence does not increase or decrease based on ones level of education or standard of living. This leads to a conclusion that there is no direct causal relationship between poverty and education on terrorism.  

2.5.2 Proliferation of SALW

Kehinde Bolaji has opined that West African is far ahead in designing the infrastructures, institutions, and protocols to curb instability on the continent but it is at the same time the most vulnerable to terrorist attacks. One reason for the above statement according to Bolaji is the availability and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. 

AK 47, Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), Rocket Propelled Grenades(RPGs), Rocket launchers, Anti-Aircraft missiles, 10x40 mm bombs are a few of the weapons which are smuggled into the sub region. These weapons are smuggled into the region in the following ways. Aljazeera has noted that Boko Haram smugglers often times hide SALWs in sacks of all kinds of grains and boxes of goods which are often packed on heavy duty lorries or cargos. Again smugglers design cars specifically for the smuggling of goods, here improvised compartments are created solely for smuggling SALWS. These cars are constructed with hidden chambers to conceal guns and extra fuel tanks to reduce the cost of fuelling such cars. Again tunnels are also used; in July 2013, the security forces of Nigeria chanced upon an underground tunnel which was a nexus to connect bunkers and houses used by Boko Haram for smuggling weapons in the Bulabulin zone. Moreover as security agents gets to know the old smuggling methods, Boko Haram innovate new ones. This includes disguising themselves as women to
elude the attention of border security apparatus. Coupled with the above, they train women who conceal weapons on their backs like babies whiles covered head to toe in their veils or hijabs. The AQIM was attracted into the region because of easy access to arms.

2.5.3 The Porous Borders of West African States.

Spencer has noted that in a nation’s bid to really counter terrorism the integrity of her borders should be her first focus of defence. Unfortunately the sub region’s battle against terrorism has always come to naught because the region has a lot of porous borders. Abba Moro the interior minister of Nigeria recently revealed that there were over 1499 irregular and 84 regular officially identified entries into the country. It simply gives credence to the porous borders of countries in the region. This spread of SALWs can be alluded to as a counter reaction of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of persons, goods and services. This has created an opportunity for terrorist and criminals to exploit and enhance the smuggle of weapons.65

Much of Africa is awashed with weapons, although global and regional laws exist which are to stop the proliferation of arms into the region. This makes it easy for Terrorist organizations to have access to weapons. This result in a ready supply of fire power for Boko Haram to bomb the UN headquarters and abduct international oil executive, kidnap children to be recruited as child soldiers etc. The smuggling of arms is beneficial to terrorist orgnisations in two ways. Firstly it serves as a means of funding their organisation, a case in point is Ansar Al Dine. Secondly, it is easy to get explosives to embark on their clandestine and violent attacks.66

2.5.4 The Fragility of West Africa

Cyril obi has noted that one of the causes of terrorism in the sub region is West Africa’s fragile peace. Societies in West Africa are mostly emerging out of civil unrests. The aftermath of civil
wars makes a country susceptible to infiltration and has the tendency of being a haven for multinational criminal nexus and terrorist groups. The civil war in Liberia for example gave way for the smuggling of SALWs to several parts of West Africa. Such opinions have been enhanced by the linkages established between the illegal trade in diamonds in the sub region at the climax of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean civil unrest. It is opined that rebel groups plying their nefarious acts in the northern parts of Mauritania, Niger, Mali and Chad have a connection with the AQIM. This makes life in West Africa very scary and insecure as rebel groups in Chad also occasional comes to northern Nigeria as a result of the pressure of the Sudan crisis. These rebels are also linked to the belligerent AAD group in Mali and some parts of Niger. In Mali Ansar Al Dine became Stronger with the inception of the civil wars in the country. As a general rule it is believed that states that are weak and frustrated with the curse on conflicts are always susceptible to the incursion of terrorist organizations. In the case of West Africa in the region of Nigeria and Mali this is a truism. Thence the need for governments and states to be capacitated to handle the threat that is posed by such vulnerable states mostly concentrating on the social, economical and historical inequities that serve as the bane of most violence associated with terrorism in West Africa.67

2.5.5 Development of Science and Technology

One of the characteristics of the 21st century is the numerous technological innovations which now go a long way to enhance all organizations including terrorist organizations. These are seen in mobile phones, satellites, I pads and I phones which terrorist groups are taking advantage of these developments in technology to enhance their activities. Terrorist organizations have a social media network which enhances their ability to be transnational criminal organisations exporting their activities of terrorism. A case in point is the AQIM.
As the greatest source of information, the web which consist of unstructured and semi structured data is playing an influential role in international politics. The power of social media in enhancing the geography of terrorism cannot be overlooked in these contemporary times. This brings a new challenge of terrorism as groups involved in militant violence now utilize the prevalence of these scientific innovations are not only used to increase the rate of violence but has also changed the communication landscape of terrorist groups. The dissemination and gathering of information has also changed. Social media tools are used by terrorist organizations to claim ownership or responsibility of any violent act. The YouTube video by Abubakkar Shekau to claim ownership of the abduction of the chibok girls in 2014 is a clear example. Current happenings have shown that terrorist have sophisticated knowledge about science and technology, the internet and social media which they use to garner support for their activities and also to get some sympathy. The merger between GSPC and Al Qaeda was sealed by a video tape to Iraq in which Abdelouadoud used to bring GSPC under the umbrella of Al Qaeda stating that “use us to strike wherever you will, and you will never find in us anything but compliance and obedience”.

Nigerian scholar, Okolie Osemene has opined that social media has revolutionalised the landscape of information and communication in the world. In 2006 since the introduction of twitter, it has grown to become a powerful platform for linking up hundreds of millions of people and organizations around the world including terrorist groups. Other forms of social media includes facebook, flickr, storify, thunderclap, blogs, skype, whatsapp, YouTube etc

2.5.6 Corruption.
There is a huge linkage between corruption and terrorism. The poor in the sub region blame the elite politicians of siphoning the national purse for their selfish desires. This corruption is a reason why terrorism is carried out against the corrupt politician in the case of Boko Haram and Ansar Al Dine. These corrupt politicians are described as “yan boko” literally translated as child of the book. Yan Boko refers to the elite created by the policy of indirect rule and modern day governance who have their heads turned away from Allah by easy money and western values. To be “yan boko” is said to be morally corrupt.71 The educated politicians indulge in corruption to the detriment of the survival of the citizenry.

A corrupt nation incites terrorism; this is because terrorist organizations use corruption to both fund and embark on terrorism. West African countries have become prone to corruption and this makes them susceptible to terrorist activities. State institutions weakened by enshrined corruption are not only unable to fight terrorism but are also susceptible to manipulations by terrorist groups. Institutional corruption in such places like, the police, the army and the judiciary are of great concern to the integrity of the nation as they are the stronghold of state security.

The efficacy and the legitimacy of the army is not only undermined when it is corrupt but can also deteriorates the level of insecurity in the sub region. The deep seated corruption in the army decreases the army’s ability to stop terrorist organisations such as Ansar Al Dine and Boko Haram. Corruption witnessed in the defence sector is not just about financial malfeasance; it may also include the military and other security apparatus operating with substandard equipments, weapons or with no weapons or equipment entirely. The high level of secrecy and fraud that is associated with the defence procurement process is an example of corruption in the defence sector which depicts how the abuse of public purse in the defence sector weakens a country’s ability to counter terrorism and accelerates insecurity. “Nigerian troops were denied weapons to
fight Boko Haram and thousands of lives were lost because of rampant fraud in the procurement process” Nigerian President Buhari Muhammadu revealed this happened when a corrupt multibillion dollar deal to procure weapons and equipment was exposed in the media in November 2015.

From the above analysis, corruption is the technology that lays the foundation for terrorist crimes. Experts and scholars in the field of international politics have noted that corruption in the sub region is gradually accelerating the risk of terrorist organisations obtaining nuclear explosives. Evidence of corruption among border officials enables terrorist to migrate surreptitiously and to easily attack targets or smuggle SALWs. The corruption of border officials makes them susceptible to give false documentation.

2.5.7 Indoctrination
Terrorism is fueled by apocalyptic and radical religious beliefs. Groups wishing to expand the territorial scope of Islam and to increase their influence in Muslim communities in West Africa are cases in point. Ignorant of the dominant Islamic religious values which is peace or whether it is an ambiguity in interpreting the Quran. Terrorist groups in the sub region like Boko Haram, AQIM and AAD have the eventual goal of creating an Islamic state in their respective countries of operation. Some Muslim clerks, Scholars and Imams who are ignorant of the overall goal of Islam, have eventually distorted the Islamic religion. Terrorist exploit the lack of understanding of Islam to radicalize and recruit individuals to embark on atrocious and nefarious acts. In 1999, all the 12 states of Northern Nigeria begun to be ruled by sharia law. However this move was unsatisfactory for Yusuf and his Boko Haram militant group who agitated that the country’s politicians, ruling class and elites were involved in corruption. The pain of Boko Haram
emanates from an imbalance between the Muslim dominated north and the Christian dominated south.74 Religion as the “opiates of the masses” has several qualities that makes it possible to be used for violent acts. Unfortunately Islam has been the most affected; this is because of the doctrine of jihad and others which has been subjected to various interpretations especially by the salafist. Islam has been manipulated in West Africa to satisfy parochial interest under the disguise of creating sanctity in the Islamic religion. This notwithstanding socio economic and political factors as well as globalization underlies the causes of terrorism in west africa.75

2.7 Concluding Observation,

Human security and state stability is still under continuous threat in the face of the prevailing activities of terrorist organisations within West Africa. The canker of terrorism still lingers on as one of the most debilitating cause of fatalities in West Africa as life grows brutish and scary by the day. The causes of terrorism in the sub region include socio economic, political, religious and scientific reasons.

Current events of domestic terrorism have been witnessed in the world’s seventh biggest country, Nigeria, where unconstitutional violence in Maduguiri and Borno perpetrated by Boko Haram has decimated the lives of hundreds of citizens. The challenges facing Nigeria are serious. A small and deeply rooted terrorist group in the community has developed into something bigger, a more formidable and malignant organization. The group may metamorphose into a new terror nexus in the form of Al Qaeda in Nigeria.76 AAD troops carry out violent acts on the infrastructure and targets of Malian citizenry, wreaking pandemonium on the nation’s economy and making life hopeless for hundreds of thousands of residents. The expansion of AQIM into sub Saharan Africa is no good news for West Africa and is also is a scary thought. These incidents of terrorism in the West African forms part of various forms of conflict witnessed
within the sub region. The increasing transnational features of terrorist activity in West Africa should not be overlooked.
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CHAPTER THREE
AN ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL ISLAM AND TERRORISM IN WEST AFRICA

3.0 Introduction

The reaction of the catastrophic events of September 11, was the putting of the concept of Political Islam into the limelight of the study of International politics. West Africa has not been an exception to this phenomenon. The “war on terror” has modified the whole discourse on the relationship between Political Islam and terrorism. The borders of West Africa are not very defined; to the west and south of the sub region is the Atlantic Ocean, and to the north is the Sahara desert. In the east it is bound by an imaginary line approximately along the present eastern boundary of Nigeria. Geographically it is difficult to define the northern and eastern extension of West Africa. This is simply as a result of the non-presence of natural geographic barriers separating this area of Africa from the rest of the continent. This chapter looks at the meaning of political Islam, its origin, its impact on terrorism and the relationship between Political Islam and terrorism in West Africa. Usman Dan Fodio from the early 19th century created an Islamic state in the northern part of Nigeria, and ever since there has always been some relation between political power and religion in West Africa. 1

3.1 Political Islam in West Africa

Margari Hill has narrated the history and expansion of the Islamic religion in West Africa in three stages. These steps include what he terms as Containment, Mixing and the Reform stages. 2 The Containment stage was the first period of the expansion of Islam; it refers to the era when the Muslim North Africans and Arabs began to migrate down across the Sahara desert to trade around the 8th century. The Trans Saharan trade facilitated the encounter between Muslims as they moved across the Sahara desert into the sub region for trade. These Muslims who took part
in the Trans Saharan trade were also members of Muslim fraternities that also provided security and safe guarding of traders on the commercial routes of the Sahara. These traders were well organized and literates. They could write, read and do numeracy or accounting; thence these North Africa tradespersons immediately became very influential in the palaces of the various kingdoms of West Africa, notably the ancient Ghana and Mali empires. They served as consultants and advisors in financial or economic issues. The end product of these financial advises was that it eventually facilitated the conversion of some of the Kings of the major West African empires of the time.³

The Mixing stage was the second stage in the expansion of Islam in West Africa. The spread of Islam at the mixing stage took place gradually over several centuries. This saw many kings officially converting to the Islamic religion but ruled over populations which were not Islamic ⁴ Many of these Kings mixed Islam with African traditional religious practices, the reason scholars and Magari termed this stage Mixing stage. Along the line most citizens begun to practice the Islamic religion but not wholly as they still practiced the convenient aspects of the faith.⁵ This stage of Islam, characterizing the period from the 11th to 18th centuries, coincided with the success of the ancient Mali and Songhai empires.

The third and final stage was the reform stage characterized by the 18th and 19th century holy wars. Muslim rulers and scholars at this period demanded for strict adherence to Islam emptied of all forms of polytheism which had characterized Muslim worship since its coming into West Africa. Also by 1800 the number of Muslims had fallen to a small minority group in non-Muslim states. Scholars of the Western Sudan (West Africa) attributed this to the abandonment of moral standards, simple living habits and purity of faith of their ancestors. An attempt to restore pure Islam resulted in a series of holy wars across the region.⁶ Islam was so successful in West Africa
mainly because Muslim rulers on the continent were very tolerant than Christians to African traditional practices including respect for ancestors, polygamy, circumcision, and beliefs in spirits. Coupled with the above is the fact that the colonial governments used Islamic rulers (Emirs) to administer indirect rule system and this in the long run helped to spread Islam among subject.  

3.2 Early Forms of Islamic Militancy in West Africa.

The 18th and 19th centuries witnessed the decline of Islam in West Africa. The fall of the Songhai Empire in the 14th century resulted in disregard for strict Muslim standard and rules as Muslims increasingly combined Islam with paganism. There was then the need for the creation of Muslim movements for the need to rejuvenate and revive the zeal of strict practice of Islam which was associated with Islam in the world from the mid-18th to the beginning of the 20th century. Apart from the three Futa Muslim states which were founded in the 18th century all other major Islamic states in West Africa were founded in the 19th century.

Between 1769 and 1776 Muslims in the Senegal area waged a revolution and established three Muslim states; Futa Toro, Futa Bondu and Futa Jalon. The success of the Muslim movements in the Futa kingdoms was a motivation to the Fulani all over the Sudan, who looked upon the Futas as their hometown. This also served as a source of hope for the rejuvenation of Islam and Islamic standards of living for the courts and ruling class which were viewed as corrupt and unfaithful.

The greatest of these new Islamic revivalist fraternities was witnessed in the Hausa state of modern day Nigeria. This laid the foundation for the establishment of the Sokoto caliphate. During the late eighteenth century, many Muslims scholars and Islamic clerics had become disillusioned with the insecurity and instability that characterized the Hausa states. Some clerics
continued to reside at the courts of the states, but others who joined the Quadriyyah fraternity
going to think about a campaign that would overthrow existing authorities. The grievances of
the Muslim umma, both Fulani and Hausa, against the aristocracy were religious, political and
economic. Muslims objected to the recruitment of pagans into the armies to fight brother
Muslims; they abhorred the practice of selling Muslims into slavery; they despised the Sultans
for their sacrifice and belief in spirits, for the extravagant and sinfulness of court life as well as
for the servility demanded from commoners. They therefore demanded a total embrace of the
classical moral and spiritual values of Islam, while condemning the corruption of the secular
government who cared less about the strict teachings of the Qur’an as well as oppressing the
poor and the weak.

Uthman Dan Fodio (1754-1817), a member of a Fulani clan with a background of Islamic
scholarship and teaching, was also a member of the Quadriyyah, a Sufi organization that dates
back to the 12th century. Beginning in the 1770s, he begun to travel and propagate Islam
throughout rural Hausaland, denouncing corrupt Islamic practices and the despotic and
unscrupulous rulers who tolerated them. His declarations for religious and political revival
gained him many followers among the Fulani, who considered themselves suppressed by their
rulers, and some Hausa farmers with various social resentment. In 1802, Uthman Dan Fodio
spearheaded a major jihad, this he did with the support of several Fulani and Hausa farmers, he
toppled the region’s Hausa rulers and consequently placed in their positions Fulani Emirs. The
revolution resulted in the centralization of legal authority in the Muslim umma. Educational
reforms and changes of law were now Islamic based. Again Usman Dan Fodio also started a
new wave of literary revival that culminated in the production of a great array of religious essays
that included Arabic texts and vernacular written in Arabic script. His predecessors also pursued the legacy of literary work and educational changes.¹⁴

The next Islamic jihad that followed the Sokoto Caliphate was the establishment of the Macina Islamic state. Just like the pre-revolutionary Hausaland, Macina rulers and people practiced Islam as private religion and elements of paganism were introduced into Islamic worship. Some renounced Islam and returned to African Traditional religions.¹⁵ The Macina Islamic revolution was led by Hamad Bari who had studied under Uthman Dan Fodio. The teachings of Dan Fodio influenced the life of Hamad Bari greatly. The Macina theocratic states thrived until 1862 when Hamad III was killed by al-Hajj Umar, the builder of the Tokolor Empire.¹⁶

The last jihad waged in West Africa before the advent of colonial rule was Tokolor Empire. The Tokolor Empire was the second largest in West Africa in the 19th century, after the Sokoto caliphate. Al Hajj Umar who led the revolution begun an empire building mission based on Islamic laws and by 1854 he had conquered the inland kingdom of Kaarta. He didn’t halt there but in the dawn of the 1860s he expanded his conquest through the upper Niger River states of Segu and Macina.¹⁷

The Tokolor empire of Umar was however different from the Sokoto caliphate and the theocratic state of Macina. In the first place, the rivalry and opposition between the Quadriyyah and the Tijaniyyah orders under the Tokolor Empire were never experienced in the other two Muslim states preceding it. Both Dan Fodio and Hamad Bari championed the cause of a unified Islam while Umar rather propagated the ideals of the Tijaniyyah order against the Quadriyyah and in fact embarked on a project of forcing Quadriyyah Muslims into the Tijaniyyah order. Quadriyyah leadership and members were Umar’s strongest opposition. The Tijaniyyah stressed
action in the course of Islam; the quickest was the war and the sword-point conversion. Umar used the sword to build his empire while Dan Fodio, on the contrary sought conversion by persuasion and negotiation. The interpretation of the jihad was a problem and the zeal with which Umar embarked on his Empire building left many to wonder whether that was a jihad or mere use of Islam for an ambitious empire building. Webster and Boahen assert that: “Some have called Umar a military adventurer using Islam merely as a cloak to hide his ambition for personal power and it is indeed true that military aspect was of first importance. A further complication was that Umar’s preaching tours were mainly among the Mandinka and Tokolor while his empire was built over the Bambara and the Macina. The jihad thus appears as Tokolor imperialism resulting in a Tokolor empire” 18

This indicates that some of the early jihadist movements were not real jihads in the true sense. Islam was just used as a legitimate factor in order to mobilize support. The friction that existed between the two Islamic sects, the Tijaniyyah and the Quadriyyah, also stresses how difference in scriptural and doctrinal interpretation can cause inter religious conflicts. The problem of jihad turning into an empire building was however, not limited to Umar and his Tokolor Empire; all the others used the jihad to establish states and this is a common feature of proselytization. This is usually so because religion generally tends to be prescriptive of all aspects of life, it fails in the proselytization process to distinguish what is religious from what is not-political, economic, ethnic or social etc.

The Sokoto caliphate though popularly known to be true Islamic state could also be seen to have had political, ethnic and economic motives. Politically the Jihad succeeded in shifting political power from Hausa ruler to Fulani aristocrats, with the Hausa oppressed that they welcomed the British as liberators during the British conquest. Again economically, the Caliphate continued to
engage in slave trade and acquired much wealth through trade with the external community ignoring rather the basic reason for which it was established. Webster and Adu Boahen continued to argue that a thorough reform of the Hausa administration was never carried out, and that the evils of the old Hausa dynasties continued under the new Fulani aristocracy. Islam became mix with animism, and even learned scholars made charms and magic, and that the annual expeditions turned into slave raiding.\textsuperscript{19}

Another key characteristic of the older Jihads was the issue of identity. The significance of the role of the Fulani pastoralist ethnic group in these Jihads epitomizes the role of identity in the various jihads. It is established that almost all leaders of pre-colonial Islamic Jihadist movements had Fulani background. The leaders of the Futa Islamic revolution in the 17th century were Fulani; Usman Dan Fodio the leader of the Sokoto Caliphate was Fulani; Hamad Bari and Al Hajj Umar who founded the Macina and the Tokolor Islamic states, respectively, both had Fulani background. Lisa Lindsey explains that the Fulani were specifically drawn to Islam because it provided a preferred identity and governance as well as ensured all believers of the faith are equally treated. These itinerant pastoralist Fulanis therefore saw their common identity in Islam as their trade did not permit them to own permanent land and especially when their objects of interest was in contrast with the real owners of the land and the rulers who were primary producers of agriculture.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{3.3 Impact of Political Islam on terrorism}

The spread of Islam in West Africa in the past increased the level of trade in the region as Islamist were mostly educated and worked as merchants and administrators, financial clerks etc. In the period in which Islam spread into West Africa it increased West African economics by
increasing trade. The impact of Political Islam on terrorism in the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century is looked at below.

3.3.1 Conceptualization of Muslims as terrorist

One of the lamentable impacts of Political Islam on terrorism is the prejudicing of Muslims as terrorists. Ali, a Research Analyst at the Centre for the Study of Contemporary Muslim Societies at the University of Sydney has lamented the role of the media, intellectuals and academia in erroneous branding of terrorism, relating terrorism to Political Islam. Popular discourse in the intellectual exchange has been the conceptualization of Muslims as terrorist and Political Islam as the origin and home of terrorism.\textsuperscript{20}

3.3.2 Heightened interest in both Political Islam and terrorism

Since the unfortunate events of 9/11, the concept of political Islam has taken center stage in international politics. Despite the fact that Ayatollah formed the first Political Islamic state, Political Islam was still not a popular topic among scholars and policy makers. However the universal war on terror has changed the whole landscape and discourse on the relationship between Islam and the West as well as Political Islam and terrorism. An array of books and essays have appeared on the topic ever since.\textsuperscript{21} West Africa has not been an exception there are a slew of scholars, policymakers and organisations who have developed massive interest in the subject of terrorism. Such scholars include Attuquayefio, Onuoha, Bolaji, Hoffman, Ahorsu and the list goes on.

3.4 Relationship between Political Islam and terrorism
An attempt is made to see what is the relationship between Political Islam and terrorism? Are there verses (Surah) in the Quran that promotes terrorism and violence or what is the degree of causal relationship between Political Islam and terrorism? We have reached this deadlock simple because a critical exploration of several websites that works on terrorism shows that a majority of terrorist organisations the world over are Islamic in nature. Better still these terrorist groups have some inclination towards the Islamic religion. Most terrorist in West Africa have the aim of creating an Islamic state in their countries of operation. They also have names that predict an affinity to Islam. Thus here we take a look at what political Islam has in common with terrorism? How does Political Islam explain its support for or rejection of the nefarious activities of terrorist who claim to purge society on Islamic morals and values?

3.4.1 Islam and the people of the book.

Prophet Mohammed (SAW) taught his converts to subdue or exterminate unbelievers. In the Quran the only condition under which Jews and Christians were allowed to live was when they decide to pay the special tax called *jizya*. This *jizya* tax was money given to the Islamic people to make up for the money they lost from no longer participating in activities described as pagan. This is found in Surah 9:29 that says “Fight against such of the people who despite having been given the scripture do not really believe in Allah and the last day, and who do not hold unlawful what Allah and his messengers have declared to be unlawful, do not subscribe to the true faith, until they pay the jizya”. This stance taken by the writer of the journal Mohammed Islam and terrorism is also countered in “Islam denounces terrorism” a book written by “Haruna Yahya”. This is what he has to say with regards to the Christians and Jews referred to as the “people of the book”. The Quran does not give the same tag that it gives to Christians and Jews because these, just like Muslims are also believers in God. They are different from individuals who do
not know anything about God entirely. This is depicted especially in the social relations between the Muslims and the people of the book. The “People of the Book”, Just like Muslims, rely foundationally on God's revelation. They also have moral conscience and appreciate what is lawful as well as what is deemed not lawful. In a similar vein, grant has been given to a Muslim man to marry a woman from among the People of the Book. Why will this same Allah admonish Muslims to kill and subdue the People of the Book? With regards to this subject God commands: Today all good things have been made lawful for you. And the food of those given the Book is also lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. So are chaste women from among the believers and chaste women of those given the Book before you, once you have given them their dowries in marriage, not in fornication or taking them as lovers. But as for anyone who disbelieves, his actions will come to nothing and in the hereafter he will be among the losers. (Qur'an, 5:5)24

3.4.2 suicide bombing

Gabriel argues that according to the Quran one of the surest ways of gaining entrance to heaven was to die fighting a holy war popularly termed as Jihad. This, according to Gabriel, perfectly explains the rationale behind jihad fighters and suicide bombers. He explained the meaning of Jihad as striving for the cause of Allah but understood by radicals as meaning Muslims must defend the cause of Islam by fighting the enemy till the enemy dies or the Muslim dies.

He continues that according to Islam, if a Muslim dies in a holy war, he gets a straight entrance into heaven without having to go to the grave to await judgments. Gabriel continues to distinguish between the different funeral rites for jihadist fighters. He noted that when a Muslim dies in jihad an entirely different burial ceremony is admonished. When a normal Muslim dies, his corpse is cleaned thoroughly and embalmed neatly just like when one is preparing to go to
the mosque. On the other hand when a Muslim dies in jihad, his corpse is not washed nor either dressed in neatly clothing. That corpse is buried in the manner in which the jihadist died. It is believed his deformed body and blood stains serves as witness and evidence for his course to bring, glory, sanctity, dignity and honour to the call of Allah. To counter this assertion Haruna Yahya disagrees in his book noted above. According to him killing oneself or committing suicide is a sin according to the Quran. An increase in suicide bombing and several assaults on state has led to a clarification on the issue of suicide bombing as clearly explained according to the Quran. Some people who are not well versed in Islam have made utterly incorrect assertions such that Islam which is a religion of peace allows suicide attacks. Meanwhile, truth be told, in Islam killing oneself and killing other people are both prohibited. In the words, "Do not kill yourselves." (Surah, 4:29). God has pronounced suicide to be a sin. In Islam it is a taboo for anyone to kill himself or herself, no matter how justifiable the reason. The Prophet reveals suicide to be a sin in the parable, when he says that those who commit suicide will be punished.

It must be noted that according to the Quran, whoever (intentionally) kills himself, then obviously he will be punished in the Fire of Hell, wherein he shall stay forever. This proves clearly that, committing suicide, and carrying out suicide attacks, that results in the death of thousands of innocent people, is a complete abuse of Islamic morality. The Quran has designated suicide and suicide bombing as a sin. It can be deduced from the above analysis that the Quran does not in any way glorify suicide bombings which is one of the commonest means in which terrorist target their victims.

3.4.3 The doctrine of jihad
According to Exposito the doctrine of jihad has not had one meaning among all Muslims everywhere in the world. Every region and their understanding of what the doctrine of jihad means to them. To them the basic requirement of the Quran when it comes to explaining the doctrine of Jihad, what was being practiced by the Holy Prophet regarding the holy wars of jihad has transformed overtime. The meaning of the doctrine of jihad has undergone several challenges in a bid to interprete it. This is solely because in Islam there is no single individual or organization that is seen as a final authority in the interpretation of the Quran. Muslims throughout the generations have dissected, debated and discussed the meaning of the doctrine of jihad. Terrorist for instance have misconstrued Islam and hijacked the doctrine of jihad.  

The meaning of jihad, according to the Quran, refers to the duty placed on all Muslims the world over to fight or exert oneself to practice and ensure the coming to pass of God’s will. Jihad can be classified into two broad categories. Firstly “defensive”- this type of Jihad place emphasis on fighting against persecution of Islam and secondly “offensive”-this is a type of Jihad that mounts a general instructions on Muslims to fight against all unbelievers and propagate the message of Islam. Here Allah encourages Muslims to fight but if the enemy proposes a peace accord then the fighting must come to a halt. This is legibly enshrined in “Surah 8:61 And if they incline towards peace, you should also incline towards it and out your trust in Allah. Surely it is he who is All Hearing, All Knowing.”

The above opinion have been countered by what is referred to as the “the sword verses”. An important sword verse is Surah 9:5- But when the sacred months have expired, slay the polytheist wherever you find them and take them and confine them and lie in wait for them at every place. In contemporary times the meaning of Surah 9:5 is skewed by critics of the Islamic religion and terrorists. Critics use this verse to support the assertion that the religion of Islam is a
violent religion that commands killings. Terrorist such as Boko Haram, AQIM and AAD and the world over have used these *surahs* and *ayahs* to justify clandestine wars against believers, non-Muslims and Muslims who do not buy into their nefarious militant attitude.

In the view of Exposito, Surah 9:5 was a response to the context in which it was revealed. Sometimes to better understand the Quran, a contextual analysis of the period in which the Quran was revealed is important. The verse was making reference to Meccan non-Muslims, the polytheist of Arabia and not the “people of the book” He posits that critics intentionally leave the ending of the Surah 9:5 that specifically states that though Muslims have been ordered to fight and protect themselves, they were to end the war if the enemy stopped its aggression. “But if they convert in repentance and keep up prayer and go on presenting the zakat, leave their path free. Indeed Allah is Great protector and Ever merciful. Thence the sword verse does not encourage violence in the Islamic religion.”

3.4.4 The creation of an Islamic state

Political Islam is a religious and also a political ideology with a complete understanding of Islam that has the eventual goal of conquering the whole world by any means. Boko Haram, AQIM and AAD have the eventual goal of converting their respective nations in which they operate to an Islamic state ruled by sharia law. The desire for a caliphate boils down to the inability of the secular central governments to provide the basic socio economic needs of Muslim umma. To Islamist the present world is both repressive and wrong. This is because it does not synchronise with Islamic principles. Again to adherents of Political Islam the world is considered repressive because non-Muslims occupy what the Islamist considers to be Muslim jurisdiction. To get rid of these unwanted conditions Islamist mainly proposes two identical references in the evolution of
the Islamic religion. The first is the Medina model- this refers to a society modeled by Prophet Mohammed himself. The second refers to the ancient period of the caliphate.

The caliphate is one of the longest serving political institutions in the history of Islam. It spans from 632 AD where the first caliph succeeded Prophet Mohammed to 1924. During this period of the history of Islam, the caliphate reigns were victorious, mostly unifying, and strong. There was lots of development in the era of the caliphate especially during the rule of the second caliph Umar Ibn Al Khattab. To Islamist the rejuvenation of the caliphate ideology is a way Muslim societies can live to achieve the sacred and political sanctity expected of secular governments which they are not able to provide. According to Islamist the restoration of the caliphate is the first step towards the Islamisation of the world. From their point of view, Islam is a universal religion whose aim is to rule over the entire world. After all Allah promised the dominion on the earth to his virtuous servants as claimed in the Quran “the earth is Gods to give as a heritage to such of his servant as he please; and the end is (best) for the righteous: he said: it may be that your lord will destroy your enemy and make you inheritors in the earth; that so he may try you by your deeds” Surah 7:128-129

The Islamist have a variation of means to reach the above mentioned goal, which is quite wide, this transcends peaceful spread of Islam, brainwashing and constitutional struggle to violent methods such as hostage taking, assassination, terrorism, suicide bombings and even extermination of civilian populations. It must be noted however that the use of violence is not methodical; all adherents of Political Islam, Islamist or Muslims do not chart the path of violence all the time. 32
3.4.5 Political Islam and secularism

The proponents of the conceptualization that religion and politics have always been interwoven in Islam are Bernard Lewis and Huntington. According to these scholars Christians or the Western civilization has been able to distinguish religion from politics but Islam has not been able to do likewise. This to them has been a challenge to members of the Islamic umma. They then conclude that Islamist groups in contemporary society are a natural out birth of an anti- secular, anti-democratic cultural tendency in Islamic civilization. However Kumar rejects this wrong opinion of political Islam and notes that though Islam came into being as both a political and a religious power since the 18th century. There has been a defacto distinction of political and religious power in Islam. He notes that every religion has the potential to be used for political purposes and there is therefore the need to distinguish between the role of Islam in societies from the ancient days of Islam till today. To Kurma Islam has transformed in various ways to adapt to the needs of the societies in which it is practiced.33

3.6 Concluding Observation.

Political Islam indeed exists in West Africa in and is not new to the sub region in anyway.34 Muslims just like Christians are not terrorist. Most of them reject the violent actions of their Islamic brotherhood in West Africa. The dominion of the world is the goal of Political Islam, it has thus become difficult for Muslims to come plain and denounce these acts of terrorism. The inability of Islam to better synchronise the Mecca and Medina rule of Mohammed has brought about several understanding and versions of the surahs and ayahs. In other words since Muslims look up to Mohammed as a source of inspiration and a model of behavior, terrorist groups find inspiration for extremism mostly from the teachings of Prophet Mohammed.
when he faced lots of threats to his life in Medina. The Muslims in the world including West Africa are facing a defining moment. Political Islam has a great onus of detaching itself from the assertion that it promotes terrorism. The factors that ensure the continuous violence of terrorism are many and varied with religion and for that matter Islam (used as a motivation for political actions “Political Islam”) is a small portion of the menace of terrorism in International politics.
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31. Mozaffari, MEHDI, “What is Islamism? History and Definition of a Concept,” op.cit
32. Personal interview with Ahorsu, Ken, LECIAD, Legon, Ghana, in Accra, June 26th, 2017
33. Mozaffari, Mehdi, “What is Islamism? History and Definition of a Concept,” op.cit
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CHAPTER FOUR
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

4.0 Introduction

The final chapter consists of the summary of the major findings of the study. Based on the summary conclusions and recommendations which could be effectively used to address the canker of terrorism linked to political Islam was suggested.

4.1 Summary of findings

The research aims at examining the causes of terrorism in West Africa and also determines if there exist a linkage between political Islam and terrorism

The study made several findings which single handedly or in collaboration with other factors enhanced the terrorism experienced in the West Africa region. Terrorism has witnessed a surge in the region with most states being attacked. There is a metamorphosis in state sponsored terrorism to religious terrorism. Most of these terrorist groups in West Africa use all methods to get at their targets. These include abduction, a case in point is the Chibok girls, bombing of churches, hotels, schools and public spaces like markets and beaches, pillage destruction of heritage sites, extermination of civilian populations, hijacking of planes etc. Despite these modus operandi what has made the canker of terrorism in the region deadly is the surge in the transnational nature of these terrorist groups. With this trend life in the region continuously become nasty short and brutal

Firstly among the causes was the issue of poverty. The lack of economic development that enhances the lives of citizens in the sub region makes it easy for terrorism to thrive. The map of
poverty in Africa indicates that the impoverishment of the region is getting better in other regions of Africa but keeps deteriorating in West Africa especially in the hinterlands. Apart from Ghana, Nigeria and Ivory Coast all other countries in West Africa are described as Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The poverty of West Africa is very pathetic and monumental, this makes it easy to recruit terrorist.

A link with poverty is the high level of illiteracy, which is a result of inability of citizens to have the opportunity to access basic education. The cumulative effect of inability to access basic education is monumental rates of unemployment especially among the youth. Thus religious undertones are added to this illiteracy by religious leaders to magnify the inequalities between states and ethnic groups in West Africa which serves as a motivation for terrorism.

Another significant cause of terrorism in West Africa is the availability of SALW. Access to weapons has made it easy for terrorism to thrive in West Africa. It must be noted that this cause of terrorism was as a result of other linked factors, which include the porous borders and the corruption of persons working at the borders of the various West African countries. The availability of SALW is a very important cause that continues to fan the flames of terrorism in West Africa.

A contributing factor to terrorism in the 21st century has been the increase in science and technology. Social media like YouTube, Whatsapp are the new mechanisms used to recruit the youth to become terrorist. This was coupled with the manipulation of the Islamic faith to embark on terrorism for purposes of political Islam.

There is a huge linkage between Political Islam and Terrorism. This is seen in the fact that most terrorist groups in the region have Islamic names like Boko Haram, AQIM, Ansar Al Dine etc.
Most of these terrorist groups want to create an Islamic state in their regions of operation as well as implementing sharia. This goes further to deepen the linkage between political Islam and terrorism. It is believed by many that the Islamic religion is susceptible to violence.

Despite these strong linkages between Political Islam and Terrorism it is erroneous to brand Muslims as terrorist. The republic of Gambia and Senegal have a monumental Islamic populace but have experienced less terrorist activities. Senegal has a Muslim populace of about 95 percent of the Nation whiles Gambia is also having a Muslim populace of about 90 percent of the Nation. Despite these statistics Gambia and Senegal enjoys a great level of calm over a long period of time. On the other hand countries like Nigeria that have a relatively small number of Muslims constantly experience the violence of terrorism in that part of West Africa.¹

Again it must be noted that Muslims are not terrorist.² The members of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and the Real Irish Republican Army (Real IRA) terrorist group that claims to be protecting Catholicism does not make Christians terrorist. In a similar vein the activities of ISIS, AQIM, AAD and Boko Haram does not make Muslims terrorist. The fact that a fringe group of terrorist are embarking on violence in the name of Islam does not mean that all Muslims are terrorist. These terrorist groups make up just a fringe proportion of Muslims in the world and thence the reason why it is incorrect to brand all Muslims as terrorist.³

4.2 Conclusions

The footprint of extremism is a part of the nature of the state in West Africa, but it is not as pronounced as it is in other parts of the continent of Africa.⁴ The causes of terrorism are many and varied. Some singularly or in combination with other factors promote terrorism in West Africa. Several Muslims the world over, including West Africa are not terrorist. Many of them
do not show love for the violent actions of the numerous acclaimed Muslim factions across the length and breadth of the globe. Muslims the World over including West Africa are at a crossroad. Islamist must find ways and means to reclaim the pure truth of Islam which is peace and denounce terrorist groups who have placed the honour and integrity of Islam in disrepute. In the words of Tim Winter he asserts that this will enable “Mainstream Islam to be able to make the loud declaration in public that it already feels in its heart: that terrorists are not Muslims”.6

4.3 Recommendations

With regards to the analysis of terrorism in the Sub Region the following recommendations can be implemented to curb terrorism and also to discontinue the continuous linkage of Political Islam to terrorism

Socio economic development

The governments of countries in West Africa should create the atmosphere for economic and social development of impoverished societies especially Muslim communities. Development of the country side will make the control of terrorism and its management easy. This is because studies have showed that where the secular state is not able to provide it functions, security, jobs, regulating group differences and offering future of hope to them. People then begin to fall on traditional sources of salvation such as ethnicity, religion, etc providing the form of salvation needed. This is where demagogue religious leaders begin to indoctrinate people. There is the need for infrastructural investment in order to help better social services, accessibility to basic social amenities to all citizenry irrespective of their ethnic or religious background. Electricity, portable water, toilet facilities and educational institutions, roads etc should be equally distributed in all parts of the country.7
Formal education

Governments should invest in the education sector of their various countries. The education system should be equipped with the capacity that will make the youth employable at every level. Civic education should be embarked upon to inculcate some values such as patriotism and tolerance to citizens on the need to respect religious opinions and doctrines. The mass media can help in this regard. Adult education can be made available to still make people to get the skills to be employed no matter what happened in one’s childhood. Again Islamic education should be mainstreamed to equip students with employable skills. It is believed that Madrasas concentrate on mastery of Arabic and the Quran that leaves graduates without the needed skill. Madrasas need support from the government, the syllabus need to be checked to ensure the curriculum is fitting. Thus the government needs to monitor Madrasas to determine what is being taught there if any indoctrination is ongoing. Refusal to do this by Nigeria in the Madrasas in Maduiguri and Borno is a contributing factor to the Boko Haram menace.

Good governance

West African leaders should be ready and committed to the tenets of democracy. Freedom, Justice, Probyty and Accountability should be respected, Equality before the law, as well as the principle of Rule of law where no one group of people would be seen to as superior and control the government. This will enhance citizenry confidence in the power of the state to administer justice without fear or favour. This goes a long way to reduce corruption too.

Border intelligence sharing

Little can be done about the porosity of the nature of the borders in West Africa as it’s a natural creation. However border intelligence sharing can help reduce the proliferation of SALW in the
This demands collaboration with neighbouring countries as well as seeking international intelligence aid from the CIA and INTERPOL. The personnel of the security institutions at the borders must also be remunerated well to reduce corruption on the borders of West Africa.¹⁰

Military counterterrorism is outmoded

The violence of countering terrorism by shooting to kill or wiping out terrorist including those who are caught alive is not the sure way of dealing with terrorism. Boko Haram was not a violent group but the attempt by the Nigerian police to wipe out the entire group in 2009 lead to its violent stance under the new leader Abubakar Shekau. The shoot to kill method of countering terrorism is not the way forward.¹¹

Attending to criminality first

For Islam to be detached from terrorism society must make a conscious effort to attend to the criminality of an activity first. If someone commits a crime attention should be focused on the crime without recourse to the race, ethnicity or religious background of the one who committed the crime. This is the first step in detaching Islam from terrorism. A crime is a crime.¹²

Ending stereotyping

In addition to the above for political Islam to be detached from terrorism, stereotyping of Muslims as terrorist must end. A Christian shooting is not considered as an act of extremism but when it is perpetuated by a Muslim then it is directed at Islam. This is propaganda by western media houses that has transcended down to the sub region and must be stopped, If Islam is to be detached from terrorism The security apparatus always wants to link any act of shooting as
witnessed in England and France respectively as an act of terrorism so long as the perpetrator bears a Muslim name. This is what is contributing to the continuous linkage of Islam to terrorism and must be stopped.13

Change in the foreign Policy of the West

Again in order to detach Political Islam from terrorism, The western foreign policy must be amended. Their foreign policy is domineering on Islamic states like Iran during the shia regime. This causes the resurgent’s, the attack on Iraq as well as the attack on Libya. Thus the foreign policies of the west for Islamist should be accommodating. These attacks have rather lead to the growth of Terrorism because most of these terrorist groups with an affinity to Islam the world over see their religion under threat.14 The drone killings must stop, the interference of the West in the Islamic states must cease. Foreign policy of the west must change towards Islamic countries. Islamic Countries should be allowed to determine the kind of political system they would want to live in.15


Ethnicity and religion will always be part and parcel of the political process in West Africa. Countries in West Africa are mostly divided along religious and ethnic lines. The governments should have frequent regular inter faith platform between Christians and Muslims in order to promote amicable co-existence of the believers of the two dominant religions in the sub region. Leadership and teambuilding training for members of these religions can be taught at such dialogues. Most Christians know nothing about the Quran and thence the stereotyping that is witnessed. The Peace councils, the Islamic Association and the Christian Associations of West Africa must sensitize citizens to desist from the use of violence and other unconstitutional
methods but should resort to legal and peaceful methods of conflict resolution among religions in the sub region.\textsuperscript{16}
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UNPUBLISHED


INTERVIEWS

Personal interview with Ahorsu, Ken, LECIAD, Legon, Ghana, in Accra, June 26th, 2017

Interview Questions.

1. What is terrorism?

2. What do you think are the Causes of terrorism in West Africa?

3. Do you see any linkages between religion and Terrorism?

4. Some terrorist groups have tried to portray themselves as Islamist. Do you think they are true believers in the Islamic faith? Please explain your answer.

5. If your answer to question 4 is No. then what brand of Islam do they profess?

6. There is some argument around those who use Islam for purposes of political mobilization (Political Islam) are not true adherents of Islam. Do you think this is a right assertion?

7. How can Political Islam detach itself from Terrorism?
THE MAP OF WEST AFRICA