

WORLDVIEW: A SPOTLIGHT ON THE AFRICAN MIDDLE REALM AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR PLURALISTIC NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to further earlier works on the issue of worldview. The word worldview has been with us for a long time and many scholars, depending on their areas of specialty and interest, have given different definitions for it. This paper has however set out to show what it's about and has focus on the African middle realm to show the implication for life in Nigeria today. The paper uses data from recently published researches and those still being conducted as primary materials. The secondary data used are from books, academic journals and the World Wide Web. The web is used for more recent materials. The main aim of the paper is to identify the African middle realm, and to discuss the key characters therein, their activities and their implication for living in Nigeria today. It is hoped that having this body of knowledge by Nigerians themselves and visitors to the country will help people adjust their ways of life and know how they relate with other people as they go about their daily businesses and life in general. While visitors will have a better understanding of the local people as they get to appreciate why and how they do what they do. It is also hoped that the understanding of this paper will encourage peaceful coexistence among Nigerians even as they become more hospitable to visitors in their various domains.

KEYWORDS: Worldview, Spotlight, Middle Realm, Implication, Pluralistic

CLARIFICATION OF KEYWORDS AND PHRASES

Spotlight

Is the area of light projection to emphasize a situation or a phenomenon to make apparent and obvious by identifying, showing or making it visible for all to see. For this paper, to spotlight the African Middle realm is to brilliantly bring to public notice what that realm is about and especially what happens therein by shading a narrow light on that space to illuminate people's perception of this aspect of life in African.

Implication

Mariam Webster English dictionary (Compact Disc) sees the word 'implication' as a possible future effect or result. The current writer uses the word implication in this paper to suggest a connection between activities in the African middle realm and their impact

on Nigeria (as a country) and on the lives of its people as they go about their daily lives and businesses.

Pluralistic

Pluralistic, according to Mariam Webster English Dictionary, is a situation in which people of different social class, group, religion, races etc are together in a society but continue to have their traditions and interests. This aptly describes the Nigerian country which has three major religions, Islam, Christianity and African Traditional Religion, three major Language groups, Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba with other languages and people's group usually put between 350 and 400 by linguists. They are spread across six different geo-political zones across 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (Maina Survey 132).

WORLDVIEW: SOME ELEMENTS OF THE AFRICAN MIDDLE REALM

Worldview

The word worldview has been with us for a long time. Gary Maxey and Danfulani Umar inform us that "Worldview" is the translation of the German word *Weltanschauung* which has been around for over 150 years. It is a comprehensive conception or image of the universe and of humanity's relations to it. It is how we understand the world around us and how we explain what we see or beliefs of what is real (27). It has been described as one's or people's philosophy, a complex of their beliefs, attitudes towards things and it seeks to answer fundamental questions about life and man's relationship to the universe. A worldview is a mental model of reality, a framework of ideas and attitudes about the world, ourselves, and life, a comprehensive system of beliefs-with answers for a wide range of questions about life and existence like: Who are humans? Why are we here? What is our purpose in life? What are your goals for life? What are your values and priorities? What can we know, and how and with how much certainty? Does reality include only matter/energy, or is there more? A person's worldview is affected by many factors-by their inherited characteristics, background experiences and life situations, the values, attitudes, and habits they have developed, and more-and these vary from one person to another, even though some parts of a worldview are shared by many people in a community, other parts differ for individuals (1). Everyone and peoples groups irrespective of their idiosyncrasies has a worldview of their own that guides their thinking and way of life and no two individuals or people's groups have the same worldview. They could however be similar but never the same.

African Worldviews

Given the above position, African worldview would be said to be the diverse philosophies, attitudes, believe systems, and thinking patterns of the different African people groups on the continent. Maxey and Danfulani confirm this when they opine that every ethnic group in Africa has its own traditional belief system. No two are identical. However, there are

so many characteristics held in common between different traditional African beliefs systems that it is not unfair to describe those common characteristics and to consider them in a broad sense as typical African Traditional Religion (ATR), in the singular. This was the position canvassed by Bolaji Idowu. Despite the position of John Mbiti and Idowu, this current writer argues that there are occasions when ATR is best referred to in the plural as there are instances that it is referred to in the singular. We can think of the typical African Religion Worldview as made of three or four tiers or planes (realms in our case). First, the physical visible world around us inhabited by humans, animals, rivers, mountains and all other visible objects. Secondly, the quite remote, inaccessible and largely unknown and invisible world inhabited by the mysterious God (presumably somewhere in the sky or the heaven) and, thirdly a normal invisible third realm or spirit world inhabited by lesser deities, benevolent and malevolent spirits, as well as the spirit of the ancestors, or the living dead.

According to Yusufu Turaki, African Traditional worldview is the embodiment of culture, religion, customs, values and traditions (40). While Oji E.D notes that African worldview is the fundamental core of their reality which manifests in their beliefs, values, response to the physical and spiritual realms. This influences the way they think, observe, and perceive, which ultimately controls the way they dress, build their houses, and maintain their environment. It is the basic principle within the life of a particular geographical region that affects perception, motivates life, determines values and truth, generates beliefs, moulds behaviour and excites emotions (in Yusuf Turaki 40). For our purpose in this paper we will align with Turaki and Oji's description of African Worldview stated above.

The importance of a people's worldview cannot be over-emphasized as can be seen from the above definitions and description by different scholars. James Sire seems to sum up this importance when he notes that "If we do not perceive how others interpret the meaning of the world around them, we may not know how to communicate with them or understand them" (Quoted in Maxey and Danfulani 27). In his analysis of the worldview of Chadic speakers in Plateau State, Umar Danfulani notes that Chadic speakers divide the world into two sections, the visible world, *terra firm*, which they call *yilgurum*, the human world, and the invisible or unseen world, which they call *YilNji* the spirit world. He adds that we could speak of a third world which is the world of the mystical forces. They help human beings (*gurummo*) to relate with the spirit world. The mystical world is composed of magic (*Baakka*), witchcraft (soghot), sorcery, the evil eye, medicine (*yen*) and divination (*pa*) (38).

THE AFRICAN MIDDLE REALM

According to Maxey and Danfulani the third or the African Middle realm is inhabited by benevolent and malevolent spirits, lesser deities, spirits of the ancestors, or the "living dead." It is a mystical world of human manipulation controlled to greater or

lesser degrees by what Africans consider their religious functionaries, experts and professionals (also viewed as the cream of African intelligentsia, elite and genii). This include the positive experts like healers (medicine-men and women) and the art of healing, diviners and divination, sacred rulers and art of ruling, rain makers and catchers, priesthood and sacrifice, and magic and the helpful application of (productive and protective) white magic. The negative functionaries are composed of witches and their covens, sorcery and the application of bad medicine, the evil eyes and blood -letting piercing gaze, voodoo (referred to as *Dajol* by the Mwaghavul and their kit and kin on the Plateau (31-32). In spite of attempts to distort, falsify, derogate the activities of members of the African middle realm by largely Western scholarship, Missionaries, Colonial administrators and popular American writers through the expression of their exaggerated ignorance, fears and prejudices. Witchcraft activities are quite pervasive and replete in many African societies. Mbiti confirms this when he notes that

...every African who has grown up in the traditional environment will, no doubt, know something about these mystical power which often experienced and manifest itself, in the form of magic, divination, witchcraft and mysterious phenomena that seem to defy even immediate scientific explanations. Every African living in a village can tell an almost endless number of such stories which to an outsider they sound more like fiction than reality. But the whole psychic atmosphere of African village life is filled with beliefs in this mystical power. African peoples know that the universe has a power force or whatever one may call it. It is difficult to know exactly how it functions. Even where allowances is made for conjuring tricks, obvious cheating, superstition, manipulation of hidden means of communication and other skilled and use of law of nature, one is left and confronted with phenomena which as yet cannot be scientifically explained away. The stories told by those that have experienced this power cannot be dismissed as trickery, hypnotism or purely the result of psychological condition. To my knowledge there is no African society which does not hold belief in mystical power of one type or the other (194-197).

Mbiti's assertion cannot be truer when African concept of reality and destiny are deeply rooted in the Spirit world where all social and spiritual phenomena are governed by the laws of spiritual mystery. Turaki notes that the African spirit world can be divided in two broad categories: non-human spirit world, and the world of the spirits of the dead. The Non-human spirits are categorized in hierarchical order in accordance with their importance in the society or by the powers they exude and the roles they play in such societies' ontological order (Orji quoted in Turaki 41).

The realities of mystical powers are not a preserve of Africana and African traditional religion. Other world religions like Christianity also believe in the existence and powers of mystical powers. The only difference is in their belief in the source of such powers. Christianity for example, wholly believe that mystical powers are largely

demonic and come from the devil, while African religions see it as being placed by God in nature for those that can tap and use them. Lois Fuller, a Christian Missionary asserts that: 'The Bible reveals that mystical powers are real. They operate on two principles: demonic power and deception.' She buttresses this point by quoting verses which shows how demons operate and how people of God disarm them through prayers in the name of Jesus Christ. Acts 16 (Paul and the demon possessed Girl), Ex. 7, 8:7 (Pharaoh's Magicians and Moses), Mat. 24:24 (The false Christ and the Anti-Christ), Rev 13:13-15 (great miracles by the devil through the beast) (83-84).

The mystical forces are so seen because it is not everyone that is endowed with the ability to see or understand them. Richard Gehman notes that "Mystical powers according to ATR are beyond our ability to understand. They are not natural powers but powers from unseen and unexplained sources. These are the powers of witchcraft, magic and sorcery." One cannot understand ATR unless he has a thorough understanding of mystical forces. For this belief and practice affects the behaviour of the traditional and modern African alike (43). This explains why Ali Maina notes that:

...it is common place for African people, especially in Nigeria, to say this is not ordinary when bad things happen in society or to people. To the extent that when someone dies, they believe that some forces, not nature, brought about their death as they ask: 'who killed them?' Not 'what killed them?' Even when rain destroys crops on a farm they say it is not ordinary or when a young couple don't bear children a couple of years after marriage they visit diviners to find out the reason(s) because they believe it's the handy work of evil forces. As a result, people are often in perpetual fear of the unknown and of these mystical forces; as they, more often than not, blame all negative happenings within their communities on these forces (Extraordinary 32).

SOME INDIVIDUAL ELEMENTS IN THE AFRICAN MIDDLE REALM

Magic

Different scholars have described the phenomenon of magic in many different ways but generally speaking it is the use of said words and acts aimed at getting a desired preferred outcome by its practitioners. Bolaji Idowu for example, describes it as "A desire which man seeks to reach the goal of self-efforts and independent achievement devices" (189). Magic, according to Frazer James, "Uses impersonal power through the use of rituals and ceremony to seek the will of its practitioners who believe in spirits and gods to make their acts possible" (in Gehman 44). Since the powers of magic are beyond the understanding of many within the community it exudes fear among them. Magic is man's desire to reach some personal set goals or that of those that seek help from the magician. It is man's attempt to tap divine power by manipulating supernatural forces within the environment in the universe to achieve some set goals or desire to satisfy his ego. As a result magicians manipulate these forces instead of begging them as what they want must

be granted them. For this reason Fuller notes that: “magic is more self-centred. Most people, even in religions, mix religion and magic because people want to get their own desire (73). (Idowu in Maina The Nature 153). According to Gehman Magic:

Refers to the saying of sets words and the doing of set acts in order to control and bend the powers of the world to do what a person wishes. It involves forcing something to happen instead of praying to God for something to happen. It grows from the belief that the universe is filled with a power that man can use to help or harm others if only he can say and do the magic things. It uses impersonal powers through the use of rituals and ceremony. Like religion practitioners of magic need to trust, depend on and have confidence in it to work for them (44-45).

Types of magic

Magic, like witchcraft is a global phenomenon which impacts the lives of people in their communities both negatively and positively. This explains why different scholars identify different kinds of magic which produces either negative or positive results depending on the desire of the magician.

White and Black Magic

Gehman for example identifies various kinds of magic to include white (good) magic and black (bad) magic. He notes that:

The good is used for protection against evil forces that are found everywhere. The use of charms, amulets, herbs, seeds, powder, skin, feathers, chanting of magical formula, cuts of the body and many other magical practices are used to protect individuals, houses, animals and other possessions from evil powers. These are prepared and giving by witchdoctors who are feared in their communities. Good magic can also be used to bring rain, get a lover and other good individual and societal needs. In contrast bad magic is done to harm people and or property in a society. It is practiced at night without societal approval because it's feared by the people because it's associated with sorcery (45-46).

Mbiti notes that the practice of black magic is based largely on suspicion, hearsay, accusation and or jealousy which go on in most African villages (46)

Imitative Magic

Gehman also discussed the contagious and imitative magic. He notes that the imitative magic popularly called “sympathetic magic and or homeopathic magic” depends on an apparent association or agreement between things. This kind of magic work on the principle of: “Like produces like” or the “effect resembles the cause.” That is things that look alike have an effect upon one another. The magician produces an effigy from materials like wood, mud or other material. He then tries to hurt the effigy with sharp objects like needle, knife thorn or other harmful materials. Whatever harm is done to the effigy produces harm to the enemy. Imitative magic can also be used for good things like

rain making. The magician will spit water from his mouth and spew it into the sky and it will fall like rain (46).

Sympathetic or Contagious Magic

Gehman further discussed sympathetic magic which is also called the “contagious magic.” This means things that have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance, even after the physical contact has been removed. It could be ones hair, cut toe or finger nails, faeces, clothes, footprints, placenta and umbilical cords. This explains why people fear to leave such items carelessly.

Some women are afraid to give birth in the hospital for fear that their after birth could be used for bad magic. This magic can be used for both good and bad magic. On the other hand personal and public magic are as their name implies are used for individual and group needs. The individual may purchase various charms for protection against evil forces. They are often made from leather materials containing dried leaves, or a text of the Holy Koran for Muslims, which may be hung around the neck. Knots are worn which tie a spell from affecting the wearer. Iron bracelets or chain are also used against sorcery. Other media used to make charms include wild animal horn, bone, teeth and skin of crocodiles and snakes. They are often filled with elements prepared by the magician. They are usually wrapped in these skins and other leather materials and sold to interested buyers who seek protection or seek a lover. Public magic are usually prepared for households, villages and towns. They are placed at entrances of houses, villages, farms using bamboo poles, sticks and the likes or buried in the farm against theft. Some make arches of palm fronds and dead birds (47-48).

Danfulani Umar notes that the potency of magic- *Baakka* (splitting head, among Chadic speakers of the Plateau) resides in certain said words or spell, accompanied by certain ritual acts or formula and medicine (*yen*). It is composed of things used, the magical material; things done, the magical rites, and the things spoken, the magical spells; usually accompanied by taboos and customs to be avoided. They use magic to assert control over nature, by manipulating supernatural powers that pervade the universe either for good or evil. The Chadic speakers may use *Baakka* for entertainment purposes (*yenndaat*) and employ it for ghost hunting (*yakwapwan /shon*), it also acquires and used for skill such as strength, farming and drumming. Moreover magical means are used with medicine to render hunters and warriors invisible while gaming and in war times, or if the warrior is killed in battle they can use *baakka* to bring them back to life (*bandaas*). It is also used for protection against danger. People with powers of *Zari/Potur* are regarded as owners of magical powers (*Nyem/Ngubaakka*). Studies show that *Baakka* has no evil intentions but wonder maker/making. This thinking has led to this expression among the Chadic Speakers “The person who has “Splitted head”. It also exhibits great potentials for productive and protective used. In spite of these beneficial potentials to society some practitioners still use it for evil purpose (53-54). According to Mbiti:

Magic is generally considered under “good magic” and “evil magic” The use of good magic is accepted and esteemed by society. It is chiefly the specialist and particularly the medicine-man, diviner and rainmaker, who use their knowledge and manipulation of this mystical power for the welfare of the community. It is used in the treatment of disease, in counteracting misfortunes, witchcraft, or destroying evil. Africans use many means to showcase their use of magic. Apart from physical charms, amulets, powder, rags, feathers cuttings on people’s bodies, they place standing forked in the middle of a homestead, strewn ashes around the compound, potsherd on the house roof or lacing their children with coils round their necks or wrist among other means (198).

Witchcraft

Witchcraft is another extraordinary dimension of human behaviour (Maina Another 32). Unlike other mystical forces mentioned above witchcraft is an act of using innate, mysterious and supernatural powers to do extraordinary things. The practitioners of witchcraft are human beings who use these powers within their communities and beyond. Their public mention of witches largely depends on the worldview in which they operate. So they are often not known until they are accused or caught in the act. This global phenomenon causes sickness, calamity, destruction, harm or death to property and people around the community where it is practiced.

The victims of this act are often close relations of the practitioners. They include their siblings, parents, uncles, in-laws and their perceived enemies among others. Some witches can be benevolent while many are malevolent (Maina Global 126). Witchcraft has been in practice for centuries in different parts of the globe. For example Shagoar Weghf notes that “in Europe witchcraft was prominent in the Middle Ages and during the Renaissance period but among Africans the belief in witchcraft is ever strong” (in Maina, Another 32). According to Lois Fuller:

Most witches are believed to be women though in some societies men also practice this craft and their work is invisible to the natural eye. They cause sickness and death by taking on their spiritual forms and attacking other people. Many groups believe witches do their work mainly at night while their bodies are asleep. That their souls fly about sometimes on or as birds (e.g. owl), animals (e.g. cats) or insects (e.g. fireflies. They go to meetings in the top of tall trees where they bring the spirit and souls of their victims for their communal feasting. As the witch sucks the blood and eat their victim’s body they waste away and eventually die (76-77).

Gehman notes that witches have the following characteristics:

Apart from being mostly women, witches are born with an evil nature that gives them the ability to do evil by just thinking, looking or speaking. They are against society and are greatly feared by society. They do not use medicine or material things as her craft is an act of the mind; they fly at night and enjoy dancing naked

with insatiable desire for human blood and flesh. As a result society often blame every kind of evil, trouble like sickness, misfortune, calamity, destruction and death on witches and witchcraft (Gehman 50).

Although the powers of most witches are natural and inborn, Fuller informs us that:

These powers could be inherited, purchased while some people were forced or invited to become witches by demons. Some just join voluntarily to protect themselves and families from attack by other witches. Some of the witches do not even know they are until they are accused by their families, neighbours and their victims (77-78).

In view of the menace caused by the activities of witchcraft, societies have over the centuries evolved ways to curb them. For example traditional societies in Africa have evolved various methods of combating this craft. Some use traditional healers and diviners who specialises in finding out which witch is responsible for a sickness and get her or them to release the soul back to the victim before they die. Some use secret societies to hunt out and punish witches (Fuller 79-80). In modern times in places like Nigeria “one hear of witchcraft accusation and witch-hunt almost on daily basis. Most times mob action and violence are meted on people accused of witchcraft. These actions are often characterized by severe beating, scorching with fire, being thrown into open pits and wells. Some of the accused people often meet their early death as no one could save them from the mob (Maina Global 132).

Sorcery

Sorcery in Africa is often associated with black magic, bad medicine where evil and demonic forces are used to harm or kill other people and cause destruction to their homesteads and property. Fuller for example notes that “Bad medicine and black magic” are used to harm enemies or their property. People who use it extensively, either against their own enemies or hired against other people’s enemies are called sorcerers in technical sense. A sorcerer attacks because of hatred (74). A sorcerer uses black magic, charms and medicine and they are anti-society Hence black magic is associated with sorcery and sometimes called black magic or offensive magic (Gehman 50). Parrinder on the other hand suggests that it is best to limit the word “wizard” to a dealer in black magic. A wizard is, therefore, a black magician or a sorcerer” Although a wizard is confused with a male witch, a male witch cannot be a sorcerer since a sorcerer is not a witch (in Gehman 50). Mariam Webster English also defines sorcery as the use of magical powers that are obtained through evil spirits. We can from the foregoing conclude that sorcery is the art of using black magic, charms and bad medicine to cause harm to a sorcerer’s enemies or those of his clients. The act is anti-society since it’s harmful to its members and counter-productive to society’s wellbeing and progress.

Divination

According to Danfulani the word “divination” is a derivation of the Latin *divinare* which means ‘to divine’. This was in turn derived from *divinus*, which is related to *Deus*, the Latin term for the Divinity. The linking of divination to the deity or divine presupposes that divination has something of the excellence, perfection and sacredness that characterize, or devoted to the deity (Pebble 57). In the Greek language, we find *manteia* or *mantis*, which means Divination and diviner respectively. From this have emerged the phrases ‘Mantic practice’ and ‘Mantic system’ and all compound words ending with ‘Mancy’ such as chiromancy, oneiromancy, somatomancy and cosinomancy (Rose H.J. in Danfulani 61). As a major thesis he extensively discussed various concepts of divination, typologies of divination, polarization of divination typologies between two extreme poles among other topics related to the subject of divination (56-218). For Mariam Webster English Dictionary, divination is the art or practice that seeks to foresee or foretell the future events or discover hidden knowledge usually by the interpretation of omens or by the aid of supernatural powers (Compact Disk).

Divination is the art of finding out hidden, spiritual or future knowledge by some signs by a divinity. It can be used to find out which ancestor has reincarnated in a child. What or who caused a death, sickness or other troubles and their remedies. It can be used to direct on how to find lost items, identify witches and wizards in a community and how to make good decisions for the future of a community. One can become a diviner by receiving instructions through dreams or inheriting the profession from parents or by personal interest. In some cultures and societies medicine men and traditional healers are also diviners. In the Yoruba culture for example, a *216abalawo* have apprentice who pay apprenticeship fees and pay for initiation after proving their ability (Fuller 72). In view of its good nature and usefulness in society it is widely accepted by and practiced in most societies in African.

Evil Eye

This is a power with its blood-letting gaze. It gives its possessor the ability to inflict pain and instant fever on its potential victim by just giving them a piercing gaze. The universality of this power is not ascertain here but it is a common practice in regions across Africa and in communities especially within Nigeria and pervasive among the Chadic speakers in Plateau State, Central Nigeria. Maxey and Danfulani identifies the people groups that practice it to include: Mwaghavul, Mupun, M’ship, Chakfem, Meyang, Mushere, Kofyerans Njak and the application of black magic or bad medicine (Maxey and Danfulani 32). The Mwaghavul, like some of their Chadic kith and kin, call it (*fwotoghom*, spitting blood) (Danfulani 53).

This writer who is from the Mwaghavul extraction have fallen victim of those with this power. As a child he visited his village, on school vacation with his siblings. A woman in the house gave him a piercing gaze and he suddenly had severe fever throughout the

day. It is believed that jealous and envious women who don't like the faces of their victims afflict them with this power. A particular leave was boiled for him to drink before he was healed.

Yen (Medicine)

Medicine is another powerful member of the African third realm of Mystical forces. Yen could have good and bad uses in the African society. According to Fuller, medicines are the stuff, charms, magic, herbs or other objects used by the medicine man to bring the desired healing effect or protection to individuals in need of healing or protection. Some medicines are swallowed, some are rubbed on the body or used to wash the body but many are just worn or kept near the thing or person in need of healing. Medicine has its own taboo and requirements which must be observed. Magic and medicine are considered either good or bad depending on how they are used (74). Medicine is seen as a positive force in society in the African worldview. Medicine men/women are experts who are counted among the cream of African intelligentsia and genii for their acts of healing, and divinations (Maxey and Danfulani 31). Gehman draws a link between Medicine and charms in African thoughts. He notes that:

Charms are made by witchdoctors out of materials such as herbs, roots, barks, insects, skins and bones, leaves and animal horns. They are made powerful through magic as certain set words are repeated. Charms may be used for variety of purposes ; attracting a lover, gaining employment, admission into schools, protection from witchcraft, producing much food on farms and gardens,, gathering wealth, to protect warriors from harm and death. Charms and medicine partake of the same nature. Charms may be a kind of medicine and medicine has the effect of charm. But generally, Charms are used as protective magic and medicine are used for healing magic (Gehman 48).

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLURALISTIC NIGERIA

The activities and practices of members of the African middle realm in pluralistic Nigeria as discussed above will no doubt breed some bad blood and cause some discomfort for those who don't practice or even believe in them. It's obvious that some members of the African third realm, mystical world are anti-society and they live among us by putting the lives of many in potential danger.

This fact has put many in perpetual fear of the unknown. While the bold ones will often storm the judicial system with complaints for redress and justice for wrongs done them. Also, since not all the religions and regions of the country allows these practices, those that practice them will heightens the already mutual distrust that has since characterized live between and amongst people within the polity. With the tension

occasioned by the fear of these social menaces the security of the polity will be further put in jeopardy.

As a result, the state security system will be over-stretched because their men will be caught between maintaining law and order among loyal, peaceful and patriotic citizens and fighting unlawful state actors including members of the mystical world and those that will be poised to take laws into their hands to engage in jungle justice to avenge wrongs done to them. Worst still, state resources that should be channelled to other aspects of state development will be diverted to security to fight insecurity as it is being witnessed now. As a matter of urgency, this paper urges the national and state governments to be proactive by coming up with laws and policies that will curtail the activities of these anti-social groups to forestall further breakdown of law and order. After adequate public enlightenments and community advocacy government must demonstrate genuine will and determination to punish defaulters and breakers of these laws without fear or favour to deter all those that plan to test government's will and cause social disorder and disharmony. Government should encourage traditional rulers to always take serious and stiff stands against practitioners of these anti-social activities in their domains. Religious organizations like churches and mosques should intensify teachings and sermons against these practices. While adherents should be admonished to be more tolerant of other religious groups, visitors to rural communities where these practices are more prevalent should learn to respect the customs and traditions of their host communities at all times. Security agencies should always be on red alert to checkmate any unlawful act by people from any part of the country.

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