CONCLUSION

In April 2014, Boko Haram became a global household name following the militant Islamist group's abduction of 276 schoolgirls from a secondary school in Chibok, a remote town in Nigeria's northeastern state of Bornu. Although Boko Haram had been unleashing terror on Nigerian civilians and state officials since 2008, this tragic event called world attention to the intense danger of Islamic extremism in Nigerian society. While it is true that this radical group's brutal activities do not represent the myriad role of Muslim groups in Nigerian society, it would be shortsighted to dismiss Boko Haram as an aberration in Muslim Northern Nigeria. Despite the unique context in which it exploded on the Nigerian public scene, Boko Haram is another example of militant Northern Muslim movements insisting on the radical transformation of the state in Northern Nigeria, going back several centuries. In the context of contemporary Nigerian politics, Boko Haram's horrific attacks have put a global spotlight on the deepening crisis of the nation-state, revealing the damaging consequences of the sharia crisis, neopatrimonialism, and neoliberalism in the context of the post-9/11 "global war on terror." Interestingly, Boko Haram's founder, Mohammed Yusuf—who was murdered in 2009 by Nigerian security forces—had criticized the custodians of state power in a way that curiously resembled critiques by previous militant Islamist groups analyzed in detail in this book, notably neo-Mahdi in the early colonial period and 'Yan tatsina under military rule in the 1980s. These groups had fought Nigerian colonial and postcolonial regimes, denouncing them as illegitimate and corrupt. However, at the other end of the spectrum of the world religions—either challenging or affirming the legitimacy of the holders of state power—is the myriad of mainstream Muslim and Christian movements that have sought to transform Nigerian society through peaceful means since the imposition of colonial rule at the turn of the twentieth century. For over two centuries, this broad range of political and social activities by Muslim and Christian structures has consistently reflected the complicated role of these world religious movements in the making of modern Nigeria.

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Focusing on the social, political, and economic transformation of the diverse people of Nigeria since the turbulent nineteenth century, in this book I have analyzed how the entangled histories of Islam and Christianity are embedded in structures of society and how these religious forces profoundly shaped the colonial and postcolonial Nigerian state and society. Muslim and Christian movements not only have been dynamic in shaping the contours of the nation-state but also have been foundational in the making of modern Nigerian society. Specifically, Islamic reformist and evangelical Christian movements were integral to the social structure and ideological framework on which the modern Nigerian state and society were grafted after the imposition of colonial rule at the turn of the twentieth century. The intersections of contending regional and global religious movements were decisive in transforming Nigeria into a modern state and society—and these religious structures themselves were transformed by the enduring social, political, and economic imperatives of Nigeria's diverse communities.

Although the imbrications of these religious forces had an enduring impact on the structures of Nigerian society, their intersecting currents also greatly influenced a complicated political process, shaping power configurations in the modern Nigerian state. With fierce power struggles in a fragile nation-state,[1] the interactions between Christian and Muslim movements have consistently transformed Nigerian social relations since the imposition of colonial rule at the turn of the twentieth century. In the Hausa-Fulani Muslim North, Islamic structures anchored on the Sokoto Caliphate sustained the transformation of emirate society. In the Middle Belt and Yoruba Southwest, however, it was Christianity that provided a crucial framework for articulating a pathway to modernity within a structurally imbalanced Nigerian state and society.

Rather than seeing Islam and Christianity as anachronistic and atavistic, in my estimation, Nigeria's varied communities' encounters with these world religious movements have been pivotal to creating tapestries that reflect dialectical tensions between tradition and modernity, local and global, national and transnational, since the turbulent nineteenth century. At various stages of Nigeria's political history, these complicated religious forces have evolved in multilayered local, national, and transnational contexts. Their dynamic manifestations have influenced power configurations in a colonial context, shaped power relations during decolonization, helped mold Nigeria's problematic postcolonial nation-state, and responded to the forces of globalism at the turn of the twenty-first century. Overall, in postcolonial Nigeria, Muslim and Christian movements, along with their various segmented identities—Sufi, neo-Salafi, Protestant, Catholic, Pentecostal, and African-initiated church movements—are integrated

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into the fabric of Nigerian society, exposing the fault lines of the country's entrenched ethno-regional, ethno-religious, and neopatrimonial nation-state.

It would be presumptuous to suggest that the extensive Muslim and Christian currents that transformed Nigeria's diverse communities could fully be analyzed in a single book. Nevertheless, I have sought to offer a detailed analysis of major Muslim and Christian movements that are integral to the processes of social change in three critical regions where they have repeatedly intersected over the past two centuries. Although the nineteenth-century Sokoto Jihad in the Hausa-Fulani region of Northern Nigeria and the Christian missionary movement in Southern Nigeria were independent religious currents, their convergence at the turn of the twentieth century, propelled by British imperial objectives, provided dynamic structures, ideologies, and doctrines that profoundly transformed Nigeria. The Sokoto Jihad provided a structural framework and legitimating ideology for Hausa-Fulani Muslim rulers to articulate the hierarchies of power[2] in Northern and central Nigeria's diverse communities, while, starting in the mid-1800s with the arrival of Christian missions and propelled by favorable regional conditions, Christian evangelization rapidly transformed social relations in many Southern Nigerian communities.

Following the conquest of the Sokoto Caliphate and the Kanem-Bornu Empire, British administrators co-opted the caliphate's politico-religious structure as the fulcrum of the colonial administrative system of indirect rule in the Northern Nigerian Protectorate. By embracing Hausa-Fulani Muslim rulers, British administrators strengthened the authority of the potentates of the Sokoto Caliphate while simultaneously marginalizing other centers of Muslim authority in Northern Nigeria. More importantly, British rule entrenched the hegemony of Hausa-Fulani Muslim rulers over non-Muslim communities in the protectorate. This expedient system intensified contestations of power, prompting Middle Belt Christian-educated elites to resist Hausa-Fulani Muslim domination.

Given the significance of mission Christianity in Britain's Southern Nigerian Provinces—and Northern Nigeria's Middle Belt communities—the trajectory of social transformation was vastly different in these regions under British colonial rule. Starting with Atlantic Yoruba communities, and fueled by British imperial objectives, Christian missions embarked on the transformation of Southern and Middle Belt communities by the end of the nineteenth century. Indeed, by the early decades of colonial rule, mission Christianity had established a framework for rapid social change in key Southern Nigerian communities. In Yoruba coastal communities, doctrines of modern advancement and progress shaped profoundly by Yoruba Christian returnees from Sierra

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Leone—and to a lesser extent Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Cuban repatriates—and embedded in Yoruba traditions of industry were adapted to the rapidly changing social conditions of the turn of the twentieth century. Indeed, the monumental transformation of Yoruba communities during this period was propelled by the desire of Yoruba missionaries and Christian converts to re-imagine a new world following several decades of turbulence in much of the nineteenth century. Consequently, the devastations of the nineteenth-century Yoruba wars gave way to the development imperatives of a Yoruba Western-educated Christian elite within only a few decades of colonial rule in Yoruba communities.[3] In this context, the impact of mission Christianity in local communities was far-reaching, though Yoruba cosmology did not wither away.[4] As mission Christianity further expanded under colonial rule, new charismatic Christian movements emerged to enrich religious life in Yoruba communities. In turn, this process accelerated the pace of Yoruba ethno-national consciousness under British colonial rule. This process would sustain a formidable Yoruba ethno-national identity in the context of the formation of the Nigerian postcolonial state.

The enduring structures, practices, ideologies, and legacies of the Sokoto Caliphate in emirate society and mission Christianity in Southern and Middle Belt communities were essential factors in Nigeria's decolonization process from 1946 to 1960, when the country gained independence from Britain. As Nigeria embarked on constitutional reforms, the contentious relations between Southern nationalists and Northern Muslim rulers revealed major fault lines between the Northern and Southern Provinces, now reconstituted in three newly established regional governments—the Northern Region (the old Northern Provinces), and Eastern Region and Western Region (the old Southern Provinces). While predominantly Christian Southern nationalists insisted on acceleration to independence, Northern Muslim rulers were inclined to slow down the pace of political change because of their vulnerability to the modern development that Christian missions had encouraged in Southern Nigeria. Consequently, while Southern nationalists called for a strong central government to encourage the integration of Northern Muslim society into the rest of the country, Hausa-Fulani rulers insisted on strong regional government structures to protect the Muslim North from the onslaught of Southern Christian elite. In the end, assuaging the fears of Hausa-Fulani Muslim rulers, British authorities opted for a federal system that strengthened the regional governments at the expense of the central government. This regionalization of state power had broad implications for the role of religion in Northern Nigeria's diverse communities, especially in the immediate years after the attainment of independence.

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In addition to the structural and constitutional divide between the Northern and Southern Provinces, the decolonization process also intensified enduring political contradictions between Hausa-Fulani Muslim rulers and Christian minorities of the Northern Provinces. Indeed, the volatile mix of religious and ethnic identities, along with changing demographic conditions in the region, were essential elements in the struggle for state power and control over the distributive resources of the state during decolonization.[5] As decolonization intensified, Christian missionary influence provided essential ideological and structural frameworks for the disparate non-Muslim ethnic minority groups in central and northeastern Nigeria to resist Hausa-Fulani Muslim domination. Unlike the multitude of "tribal," "pagan" religions of the Northern Nigerian Protectorate in the early years of colonial rule, Christian missionary impact provided an effective universal institutional node of resistance to unite diverse ethnic groups against the real and imagined threat of Hausa-Fulani Muslim domination that had been consolidated under the colonial system of indirect rule. These developments shaped so profoundly by Muslim and Christian identities not only were essential to the articulation of ethno-religious alliances during decolonization, but also provided a framework for Middle Belt and Northern Christian minority resistance to the Hausa-Fulani Muslim political class after Nigeria's independence. Consequently, the enduring structures of the Sokoto Caliphate, the indirect rule system, and the Christian missionary impact all combined to shape competing political interest among various communal groups after decolonization. The structures and ideological orientations of these political alliances continue to have serious implications for governance and development in postcolonial Nigerian politics.[6]

In this fragile postcolonial nation-state system, contending and competing religious movements have consistently promoted divergent ideologies and doctrines that fuel recurring religious violence in Nigeria's Northern and Middle Belt states. Complicated by the insistence of a Southern Christian intelligentsia for the secularization of the Nigerian state, religious-based conflicts—such as the controversy over Nigeria's membership in the Organization of Islamic Conference and the 'Yan tatsine crisis in the 1980s—have intersected with ethnic identities to fuel ethno-religious violence in Northern and Middle Belt states. These enduring religious conflicts were further ignited by the politics of sharia during Nigeria's Fourth Republic—after military despotism in the late 1990s.

With the growing neopatrimonialism of the holders of state power and the devastation of neoliberalism in the 1980s and 1990s, the insistence on expanded sharia by a new generation of Hausa-Fulani political elite provided an alternative vision for the governance of emirate society. The popularity of expanded

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sharia in the twelve Northern states earlier in the Fourth Republic reflects the extent of the alienation of Hausa-Fulani Muslims from the rest of the country and reveals the depth of the crisis of the Nigerian nation-state. Hausa-Fulani advocates of sharia contend that pious Muslim traditions, embodied in expanded sharia, were continually assaulted by Nigeria's Western-oriented state in several ways. First, under colonial rule, sharia was subordinated to English common law by British authorities. Second, sharia's influence suffered because of the modernizing effects of Christian missions in non-Muslim sections of Northern and Middle Belt regions; and, finally, sharia was assailed by the secularist agenda of various Nigerian postcolonial civilian and military governments. Overall, the sharia crisis served as a structural platform for the expression of ethno-religious and ethno-regional struggles between Muslims and Christians in Northern and Middle Belt states and between the dominant political classes in Northern and Southern states. These recurring political alliances and conflicts illuminate numerous struggles for state power among major ethno-regional political classes in the country. Thus, during the early years of the Fourth Republic, the Hausa-Fulani Muslim elite insisted that expanded sharia reflect Northern Muslim traditions and stem eroding moral values. In turn, the political elite within Southern, Middle Belt, and Northern Christian minorities contended that expanded sharia was irreconcilable with Nigeria's constitutional integrity not only because it promotes Northern Muslim sectarianism but also, more importantly, because it violates the liberal traditions enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution. The crisis of sharia during the Fourth Republic certainly reveals the depth of the structural imbalance in Nigerian state and society and highlights the massive gulf between Northern Muslims states, on the one hand, and Southern and Middle Belt states, on the other. With serious implications for the safety of Christian minorities in Northern states, along with growing ethno-religious confrontations in Middle Belt states—where rapidly changing demographic conditions have transformed communal relations since the late colonial period—recurring ethno-religious violence has emerged as an essential element of power politics in Northern and Middle Belt states. The structures, ideologies, and doctrines in this dynamic process have become an essential component of postcolonial Nigerian politics.

At its most extreme level, Muslim militancy has encouraged political violence in Northern communities, especially since the 1980s. Islamic radicalism has a long history in the Northern Nigerian region, going back to the resistance of fringe Muslim movements to British rule, notably neo-Mahdist groups, at the turn of the twentieth century. Concomitantly, militant Islam has had many violent manifestations in postcolonial Northern Nigeria, notably 'Yan tatsine

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militant opposition to Nigerian state authorities in the 1980s and Boko Haram's bloody attacks on churches, state agencies, emirate rulers, and civilians (mostly Northern Christian minorities) since the collapse of expanded sharia in 2007. To be sure, the recurrence of these radical Muslim movements indicates a profound crisis of the postcolonial Nigerian nation-state: in the specific case of Boko Haram, its militancy does not simply reveal the extent of the crisis of national governance; it shows the eroding legitimacy of traditional Muslim rulers in Northern communities because of their essential role as a critical component of Nigeria's neopatrimonial state system.[7] Furthermore, since militant Islamist groups such as Boko Haram have consistently exploited the pressure for sharia to stake their claims in Northern Muslim communities, the custodians of the Nigerian state have had to confront a major constitutional dilemma between Nigerian state secularism and a clamor for an Islamic theocracy in postcolonial Northern Nigeria. Additionally, given the marginalization of Northern Muslim youths, especially with the social consequences of neoliberalism since the 1980s, militant Islamic groups, increasingly embracing radical neo-Salafi doctrines, insist on a Muslim state that would be governed by expanded sharia, as the alternative to Nigeria's problematic Western-oriented secular political system.[8] At the same time, since the militant Islamic group Boko Haram has flourished in the context of deepening state crisis and the "global war on terror," Nigerian state authorities have demonstrated limited capacity to control vast territories in Muslim Northern Nigeria, especially in the northeastern states of Bornu, Yobe, and Adamawa.

Focusing on a concerted response to the serious threat of Boko Haram to the Nigerian state following several years of government ineptitude, the *New York Times* op-ed piece of Nigeria's president-elect, Muhammadu Buhari, in April 2015 to commemorate the one-year anniversary of Boko Haram's abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls captures the extent of the crisis posed by the radical Islamic group to the Nigerian state. Buhari's op-ed is worth quoting at length:

> My administration would welcome the resumption of a military training agreement with the United States, which was halted during the previous administration. We must, of course, have better coordination with the military campaigns of our African allies, like Chad and Niger. But, in the end, the answer to this threat must come from within Nigeria. We must start by deploying more troops to the front and away from civilian areas in central and southern Nigeria where for too long they have been used by successive governments to quell dissent. . . . There are many reasons why vulnerable young people join militant groups, but among them are

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> poverty and ignorance. Indeed Boko Haram—which translates in English, roughly, as "Western Education Is Sinful"—preys on the perverted belief that the opportunities that education brings are sinful. If you are starving and young, and in search of answers as to why your life is so difficult, fundamentalism can be alluring. . . . So we must be ready to offer the parts of our country affected by this group an alternative. Boosting education will be a direct counterbalance to Boko Haram's appeal. In particular we must educate more young girls, ensuring they will grow up to be empowered through learning to play their part as citizens of Nigeria and pull themselves up and out of poverty.[9]

Finally, in the predominantly Christian Southern and Middle Belt states, this crisis of the nation-state also has encouraged the explosion of Pentecostal—and other charismatic—Christian movements. Similar to the resurgence of Islamic reformism in Northern states, the exponential rise of Pentecostal movements in Southern, Middle Belt, and Northern minority communities reflects disruptions of the postcolonial era, expressed profoundly through the Nigerian Civil War, statism, and neoliberalism. In an environment of unbridled political corruption, enduring uncertainty, and prolonged economic insecurity, Pentecostalism has emerged as a heuristic movement that mediates tensions between the temporal and the transcendent. This remarkable movement has empowered its adherents, nurturing a vision that anticipates the future in the context of globalization and transnationalism. Like the Islamic reformism that propelled expanded sharia in Northern Muslim states, the explosion of Pentecostalism was religion's response to the crisis of the nation-state in Southern, Middle Belt, and Christian minority communities in Northern states. While Pentecostalism generally operates outside the purview of formal state agencies, its remarkable capacity to bridge the religious and secular, tradition and modernity, and national and global speaks not only to its resourcefulness but also to its deep engagement with the dialectical tensions between state and society. What is significant about the "reformism" of Nigeria's Pentecostal movement is how it differs from the reformism of Northern Nigeria's neo-Salafi movement. The reformism of Nigeria's neo-Salafi movement drew its legitimacy from scriptural texts that insist on imposing a righteous Muslim theocracy that would transform the inner core of the Nigerian state, while the "reformism" of Pentecostal churches evokes the gift of the Holy Spirit that proclaims a new Christian moral order for its adherents.

The dynamism of Nigeria's Muslim and Christian movements refutes predictable ideas that religious structures inherently are retarding forces against

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modern transformation. The Nigerian experience reveals that these religious movements have been integral to the processes of state-society formation since the turbulent nineteenth century. Thus, it stands to reason that the doctrines of these religious forces are intricately connected to and deeply embedded in the structures of the Nigerian state and society. For more than two centuries, Islam and Christianity—in what we may refer to as mirror-image dialectical tensions—consistently have confronted, strategically contested, occasionally accommodated, and referentially shadowed each other as they have transformed Nigeria's social and political landscape.

The process of colonial rule in Nigeria, exemplified by the Lugardian system of indirect rule and the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Provinces in the early twentieth century, provided the basis for the articulation of Muslim and Christian movements in the drive for state power. On one side of the mirror, Islam provides the structural framework for consolidating Northern Hausa-Fulani Muslim identity in modern Nigerian politics and society. As this hegemony crystalizes, Christianity—on the other side of the mirror—provides a strong framework to articulate an ethno-religious resistance ideology in the political theaters of Nigeria's Northern and Middle Belt regions.

Rather than focus on a theoretical perspective that suggests a Western constitutional solution to Nigeria's multifaceted crises, I have delved into the deep structural and historical roots of Islam and Christianity in the Nigerian political process since the transformative nineteenth century. Since Christianity and Islam are structural elements of Nigerian society, I contend that their prominence in the public sphere is a response to the deepening crisis of the nation-state. Until the custodians of the Nigerian state sustain a durable constitutional and political framework to effectively respond to the country's entrenched ethno-religious and ethno-regional fault lines,[10] the endemic religious crisis in Nigeria's Northern and Middle Belt states will continue to tragically undermine the viability of Africa's most populous and complicated nation-state.

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