



Kpakpando Journal of History and International Studies

The Relevance of African Divinities in the Contemporary World Order

Okafor Emmanuel Kelechi

Department of Religion and Peace Studies,
Imo State University, Owerri, Nigeria

Kpakpando Journal of History and International Studies: Vol. 1 no. 4 July, 2024. ISSN: 2437-1750

Abstract

This paper titled: “The Relevance of African Divinities in the Contemporary World Order”, is aimed at examining the genuine spirit of the cult of the divinities in African traditional setting, and its importance in the promotion of peace, in the different regions of the world bedeviled by armed conflict, today. To promote authenticity and proper appreciation of the uniqueness of the phenomenon under examination this study employs the theories of animism and religion. The use of both the primary and the secondary sources, and the phenomenological and sociological methods is for adequate Data collection, and analysis of the data collected. As regards the findings of this paper, it is obvious that the genuine spirit of the African deities has the capacity to encourage peace in the contemporary world order, if properly used. It strengthens the relationship between man, the society and the divine; promotes mutual understanding and respect, and hedges human life with taboos, to avoid its soiling in African indigenous set up. Thus, this academic work, carefully, recommends, among others things, the outright condemnation of any idea, action or inaction that stands against human life and dignity, in any part of the world.

Keywords: The World, African Traditional Divinities, Peace, Mutual Understanding and Respect, Human Life

Introduction

The word “divinity”, normally, concerns itself with the quality or character of being divine. As regards the concept “divine”, it deals with pertaining to, proceeding from, or of the nature of God or of a god; sacred. The African traditional divinities, as long as the indigenous African man is concerned, are sacred and peaceful. They are kind and friendly to all those who, sincerely abide by the injunctions of the Supreme Being “God”, and conform with the customs and norms of the land. It is perceived that the biblical deities or gods may be blind, lame, powerless, dysfunctional, etc., but not the African traditional divinities; they (the African deities) are seen as vibrant, active and ever active. Many devotees testify to different help received from the above indigenous gods and goddesses.

One of the major functions of the African traditional divinities is to uphold the social and moral orders. They reward members of the society who comply with the rules and regulations of the society with prosperity, protection, etc., and punish those whose actions are contrary to the norms and customs of the land with failure, ill-health, etc. When a crime and the perpetrator become so difficult to detect, deities like “Amadioha”, in

Igbo land, “Oranfe”, in Ile-Ife, and “Sokogba” of Nupe who are agents of the Supreme Being, against undetected crimes, swing into action; they gather evidences against the evil deed, expose the criminal and impose the appropriate penalty for the transgression of the customs and norms of the society.

Contrary to the Christian and Islamic teachings that the divinities are the agents of Satan (the devil) and thus, the rivals of God or Allah, the theology of the African traditional religion has it that the African deities like “Anyanwu”, among the Igbo, “Orunmila” or “Ifa” of the Yoruba, etc., are children of God. They derived their existence from God and therefore, have no absolute existence. Some of their principal roles include:

- i. Ministers in the theocratic government of the universe with portfolio
- ii. Intermediaries between God and man
- iii. Serve as guardians and policemen of morality (Quarcoopome, 1987, P. 73).

From the foregoing, it is obvious that the African traditional divinities are agents of justice, peace, brotherhood, progress, order, etc. These are the values the various troubled

regions of the world, today, need to move forward, since deadly military weapons like howitzers, high mobility artillery rocket system (HIMARS), storm shadow cruise missiles, etc., have failed to bring back peace and harmony in places like Ukraine, Yemen, Nigeria, Palestine, etc. There is no gainsaying that the armed conflicts in the said parts of the world have led to the untimely death of some innocent contemporary men, women and children. They have also impacted the world's economy negatively. Abject poverty, severe hunger, etc., are now ravaging some families.

The U.S, Britain, France, Germany, etc., have directly and indirectly, tried to end the above crises, to no avail. It is high time contemporary world leaders and their followers allowed every department of their lives to be saturated by love, peace, truth, humility, tolerance, etc., which the genuine spirit of the African indigenous divinities supports, and which enabled the above deities to accommodate the Western culture, Christianity and Islam, despite their attacks on some of their (the African divinities) shrines and altars in places like, Aro-Chukwu (in present-day Abia State, Nigeria), Ihinna and Umuihi (in present-day Imo State, Nigeria), (Kalu, in Ofomata, 2002, p. 351),

Sokoto (in present-day Northern Nigeria), etc., and their designation of the above gods and goddesses with derogatory terminologies like “primitive”, “paganism”, “fetishism”, “idolatry”, etc. (Quarcoopome, 1987, pp. 14-23). Really, if this is properly done, it will go a long way to promote peace in the world.

Statement of the Problem

Without peace it will be very difficult to achieve sustainable development in any society. Peace, tranquility and harmony promote social cohesion by carefully greasing the wheels of the structures and systems in the society. Of course, one of the major aims of development is to improve the welfare of man. Osita, in the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (2004, p. 27), agrees with the said idea when he writes that increasingly development is seen to be about people. The UNDP Human Development Report (1999, p. 1), anticipates the above views when it states that the real wealth of a nation is its people, and the purpose of development is to create enabling environment to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. The armed conflicts in some parts of the world, today, are undermining sustainable development in places like Ukraine, Palestine, Nigeria, etc. Indeed, this

has cost certain contemporary people their properties, dignity and lives.

The genuine spirit of the African traditional deities like “Asase Ya” of the Akans, and “Ala” among the Igbo, etc., helps, to a very significant extent, in upholding and guarding the social order and public morality, in African indigenous setting. Unfortunately, certain contemporary African political leaders have little or no regard for truth, brotherhood, etc., which the genuine spirit of the said divinities encourage. There is severe hunger, abject poverty, loss of sense of sacredness of human life, etc., in some African communities today, due to the above ugly situation. The African socio-cultural values, like brotherhood, order, peace, truth, justice, etc., once again, always receive the indigenous African divinities’ blessing; they lubricate the wheels of the social structures and systems, protect human life from trivialization, and strengthen the relationship between man and the divine. These values can also help to promote peace and tranquility in the various troubled regions of the world today, if the contemporary world leaders and their followers, sincerely, give heart to them.

Cutting edge, and deadly military weapons like HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery

Rocket System), Howitzers, etc., will never encourage lasting peace in the world. They are instruments of torture, domination, etc. They try to prove, sometimes, that the user has little or no interest in the wellbeing of the other party in a conflict. As a matter of fact, the primary motivation in domination is the desire to win, and for this reason, make the other party lose. This style of handling crisis can hardly bring about an enduring solution to crisis, in this world.

Ochinya, in Best (2012, p. 121), makes this point clearer thus:

Domination is a style of dealing with conflict derived from the disposition of people to assert themselves in situations... it is all about the person and the person alone... it is an attempt to deny the rights of the other person ... Even if the assertive person “succeeds” in “winning” the case, there is a tendency that the “resolution” will leave behind “grudges” in the other party. Accordingly, whenever the opportunity arises, that (one) party would express discontent, which would possibly lead to the “re-opening” of an old wound. {Adjust the indentation properly}

So, the world, indeed, needs the aforestated African socio-cultural values, which the genuine spirit of the African traditional deities like, “Jakuta” (of the Yoruba),

“Amadioha” (among the Igbo), etc., supports, to move forward, now.

Purpose of the Study

This academic work is aimed at appraising the cult of the divinities in African traditional set up. The main task is to establish whether or not there are elements of the African cultural values supported by the said divinities. Again, is the regard for the above deities in the traditional African society of any moral significance to the traditional African man?

Specific to this purpose then are:

- i. To analyze the feelings of the contemporary African people (Christians and Muslims in Africa inclusive) towards the African divinities.
- ii. To ascertain if the genuine spirit of the African deities played a significant role in the maintenance of law, peace and order in African traditional setting.
- iii. To investigate the recent concern expressed about armed conflicts in some parts of the world today, which have led to the untimely death of some people in places like Republic of Yemen, Gaza, etc.

- iv. To examine the socio-moral implications of the negligence of the indigenous values associated with the African deities, in the lives of some contemporary Africans.
- v. To suggest some objective ways the genuine spirit of the African divinities can be used to restore peace in the troubled parts of the world, today.

Theoretical Framework

This study is viewed through the prisms of the theories of animism and religion, to carefully appreciate the uniqueness of the phenomenon under investigation. The theory of animism was propounded by Edward Tylor, in 1871, to explain among other things the origin of religion, divinities, etc. The term “Animism” is derived from the Latin word “Anima” meaning “soul” (Quarcoopome, 1987, p. 1). It is the belief and ability of spiritual beings to occupy animate and inanimate objects. It has to do with individual creatures capable of continual existence after death. It also has to do with other spirits upward to the rank of powerful deities.

Tylor postulated that the belief in souls gave rise to the belief that spirits may from time to time possess or inhabit living and non-living things (Tylor, 1913, p. 424). He observed that

the primitive man thought that while he was lying down asleep, his physical being was engaged elsewhere in normal and abnormal activities, because of his dreams and visions. From this he first conceived the idea of a separate spirit, or soul or double. Through the same process he came to the belief that other spirits visited his own and became convinced in the belief that other human beings have souls which are separate and can exist outside the body (Quarcoopome, 1987, pp. 21-22).

Tylor also observed the experience of death and affirmed that there was something which makes a man a living being. That something he compared to breath and so when a person ceases to breathe he is declared dead. That something, Tylor suggests, is the soul. Therefore, according to Tylor, the idea of the soul is derived from dreams and visions in which dead people appear and so gave rise to the idea that the soul might be alive. It is also derived from breath.

From this, primitive man supposed that animals and even inanimate objects (for example, mountains, trees, etc., which are also seen in dreams and visions) have souls or spirits. Tylor then concluded that it is the doctrine of the soul that gave birth to the wider doctrine of spirits, divinities and God himself. This happened when man regarded

these spirits as being responsible for events and incidents in the world, which can and does affect man for good or for evil (Quarcoopome, 1987, p. 22).

Concerning Emile Durkheim, his theory of religion, which he propounded in 1912, sees religion as the force that holds traditional society together (Nwaike, 1999, p. 49). The values, ideas and hopes that bind a society together are all celebrated in religion. In his “Elementary Forms of Religious Life,” Durkheim identifies some social functions of religion which endears it to the society. Some of these social values include its integrating force and influence in the society. He sees religion as binding the society together because of self-discipline it imposes on the adherents. It equally reinforces solidarity through the coming together of individuals for religious rituals. Also, by linking people to their past, religion revitalizes social heritage. People equally derive a pleasant sense of social well-being through the euphoric function of religion.

Durkheim also sees one of the values of religion to the society in the fact that it reinforces the norms and values of the society. Through such things as rites of passage religion integrates people into meaningful group relationship as well as

helps people grapple with their emotional crises. It is important to state here that Durkheim does not see religion as different from society (Nwaike, 1999, p. 49). As long as he is concerned, religion is the worship of society as it is the result of social effervescence.

A careful look at the aforesaid theories indicates that Tylor and Durkheim have made landmark contributions to the development and advancement of religion. Tylor's position that the divinities have the capacity to influence man positively or negatively agrees with the African indigenous man's view of the African traditional deities. Notwithstanding, the African divinities do not dwell or reside permanently in natural objects. Groves, streams, mountains, rocks, etc., are only receptacles for the African divinities. The above natural objects may be destroyed but not the African indigenous deities; once more, they are not to be confused with the natural objects which they may from time to time inhabit.

Durkheim's idea of religion as the worship of society seems incorrect. In African traditional society, the Supreme Being (God) is worshipped directly and sometimes indirectly (through the deities). However, his view that religion has elements that foster

social solidarity deserves commendation. This is because the African traditional religion, which the African deities are a significant part of, promotes unity, peace, etc., in the traditional African society. And any idea, action or inaction that tries to undermine any of the above values in the said set up, is strongly frowned upon by the African divinities.

The African Indigenous Cosmology

The concept "cosmology", etymologically, is derived from two Greek words "cosmos" and "Logos". "Cosmos" meaning "universe" while "Logos" means "science" (Kanu, 2015, p.7). From the said perspective one can rightly say that the term "cosmology" means the systematic study of the universe; by universe is meant worldview. Any attempt to study the African traditional people, without proper examination of their worldview, will end in futility; this is simply because their world view influences every aspect of their lives.

The African indigenous worldview, according to Egbucha (2007, p.26), is essentially holistic, humanized and explained in mythical terms. In African traditional set up, the African man's worldview is made up of the spiritual and physical realms; though

each of these two realms enjoys separate existence, there is a close relationship between them. Kanu (2015, p.95) and Ekwealor, in Oguegbu (1990, p.30), agree with the above stated view when they hold that there is really no distinction between the physical and spiritual realms, between the visible and the invisible, the sacred and the profane. There is a corporate existence of reality in the African universe and this corporate existence is not brought to an end by the death of an individual, but extends into the hereafter. It is in this regard that the indigenous African man speaks of his death as a return to the world of the ancestors; he communes with the Infinite, the deities, the spirits, the ancestors and vice versa. Little wonder the indigenous religion plays a dominant role in his day to day activities.

God in the African traditional man's universe according to Quarcoopome (1987), in Kanu (2015, p.96), is a reality and not an abstract concept. He is unique, real and active, absolute controller of the universe, one, creator, king, omnipotent, eternal, judge, etc. As regards the divinities (deities), they share aspects of the divine status; they are offspring or children of the Supreme Being, and intermediaries between man and the infinite. Spirits in the indigenous African man's

universe can be categorized into two kinds or types; the benevolent and the malevolent spirits. The benevolent spirits bring good fortune to the people, though they can also bring punishment on the people based on an atrocity or abomination committed. Permit me to state at this point that the ancestors belong to this class. Many Scholars like Arinze (1970, p.21), Madu (1997, p.65), Metuh (1991), etc., have written on the African indigenous ancestors, and in all they agree that the African ancestors are the guidance of morality in the land. In African indigenous cosmology, man is at the centre of the universe. On this Mbiti (1969, p.92), asserts that man is at the very centre of existence and the African people see everything else in its relation to this central position of man... it is as if God exists for the sake of man. Metuh (1991, p.109), and Kanu (2015, p.118), corroborate Mbiti's view when they write that everything else in African worldview seems to get its bearing and significance from the position, meaning and end of man. The idea of God, divinities, ancestors, rituals, sacrifices, etc., is only useful to the extent that they serve the needs of the human person.

A careful look at the aforesaid ideas shows that religion is an inseparable aspect of life of

the traditional African man. It also, indicates that the indigenous African man has a very high regard for human life and dignity, peace, order, discipline, togetherness, brotherhood, unity, uprightness, etc. Any idea, action or inaction that tries to undermine the honest spirit of his cultural values is evil.

The genuine African indigenous cultural values are not against the Christian and the Islamic values; Christianity and Islam have always identified with the genuine spirit of the African traditional values which promotes peace, caring, love, etc. The main opposition to the African traditional culture is the Western cultural vessel in which Christianity has been conveyed to Africa; institutional celibacy, flowing garments reminiscent of the Roman toga or of Medieval Europe, monogamy, etc., have made the indigenous African man uncomfortable on his own soil.

The African Divinities

The indigenous African divinities, as long as the traditional African man is involved, emanated from the Supreme Being “God.” Thus, it is wrong to say that they were created by God, but more correct to speak of them as offspring or children of God (Kanu, 2015, p. 102). Of course they are not the object of

idolatry. Quarcoopome (1987, p. 70), makes this point clearer when he writes that far from being the object of idolatry, the African Divinities are in a father – son relationship with God. It is pertinent to observe here that in all the indigenous African myths the divinities are seen as the sons of God. Idowu (1973, p. 169), anticipates the above idea when he states that “Orisanla”, the archdivinity among the Yoruba, is a derivation partaking of the very nature and metaphysical attributes of “Olodumare”. Hence, he is often known as Deity’s son or deputy, vested with the power and authority of royal sonship.

Permit me state at this juncture that the said deities do not have absolute existence, this is because they derive their existence from the Supreme Being (God). They are vested with power and authority, but because they derive from God, their powers and authority are meaningless apart from him (Idowu, 1973, p. 169). Each divinity in African traditional setup has a local name which describes either his allotted function or the phenomenon which is believed to be a manifestation or emblem of his being. The divine wrath is represented by some of the divinities. The Yoruba divinity representing the wrath of god is “Jakuta”. “Jakuta” is the Solar and

Thunder divinity, the divine minister of justice. He is now identified with “Shango” who was attracted by this divinity and so entered the pantheon in that respect. “Oramfe” is the Ile-Ife name for the same manifestation of the wrath of God. In Nupe he is called “Sokogba” (God’s axe); the axe belongs to God to be thrown at the children of disobedience (Quarcoopome, 1987, p. 71). The Igbo name is “Amadioha”; he punishes wicked and evil people. Such people are buried outside the town. Since the world belongs to God, the social and moral orders are according to his ordinances, far above all divisions and races. The divinity of God’s wrath is therefore, the Minister of Justice in God’s government.

Some African divinities are connected with natural objects like rivers, lakes, streams, lagoons, groves, etc. The Yoruba has “Oya” (the River Niger) wife of “Shango”, and “Olajuni” goddess of the Sea. Among the Akans, there are the earth goddesses “Asase Ya”, the consort of “Onyame”; “Tano”, “Pra” (Rivers), “Bosomtwe” (Lake), etc. (Quarcoopome, 1987, p.72). In Igboland “Ala” is the earth goddess and also the archdivinity. There is no gainsaying that the natural objects are the manifestation or emblem of the divinities. The divinity is not

always present in this temporary abode which he enters at will or when invited by the priest.

Some of the African traditional divinities are deified ancestors of past heroes of the society. For example, “Shango” was the fourth king of Oyo, the ancient Yoruba capital. He is the personification of “Jakuta”, the divine minister of justice. Others are “Orisa-Oko” and “Ayelala”, all of the Yoruba.

As regards the functions of the said divinities, they were brought into being as functionaries in the theocratic government of the universe; they are ministers, each with his own definite portfolio in Deity’s monarchical government. Each is in his own sphere an administrative head of a department (Idowu, 1973, p. 170). In Yoruba land, once again, “Jakuta” (Shango) is the divine minister of justice, “Orisanla” is regarded as the sculpture divinity; “Orunmila” is the oracle divinity; “Esu” is the divine messenger and inspector general; “Ogun”, the divinity of iron and war, is the divinity of hunters, the blacksmiths, the goldsmiths, the barbers, the butchers and (in modern time) the mechanics, the lorry and taxi-drivers, and indeed, all workers in iron and steel (Awolalu, 1979, p.32). In the field of agriculture there is “Orisa-Oko” who is regarded as the patron divinity of Yoruba

farmers. “Osayin” is the divinity in charge of health for he is said to control the portfolio of medicine.

The African divinities also function as intermediaries between God and man. With their derived powers from God, they are able to foretell the future and prevent misfortune. Little wonder they are approached, in African traditional set up, on all occasions of life, for protection against misfortune, for peace and for prosperity. In times of war, they are consulted to ensure victory and in times of epidemic or other national crisis, they are approached to find out what could be done to ward off the danger.

The positive response of the divinities to the problems and needs of the communities they serve is indicative of their reality and potency, as intermediaries between God and man. The recognition and appreciation of such help is borne out of personal theophoric names compounded with the name of the divinities. This is very typical of the Yoruba. There are such names as “Shangobiya” (Shango gave it); “Ogunsola” (Ogun does an honourable thing); “Fasuna” (Ifa acts mercifully); “Fasoranti” (Ifa does not fail to solve a problem), etc. (Quarcoopome, 1987, p. 73).

It is noteworthy to state here that the African traditional divinities also act as guardians and policemen of public morality. As representatives of God in upholding the social and moral orders, they punish those who disobey the norms of the society with sickness and misfortune, and reward with prosperity those who conform to the rules and regulations of the society. For this reason, the African indigenous divinities are cohesive factors of the society, helping to maintain law and order. In many African traditional communities, the said divinities have the greatest and most powerful temples, and their priests and priestesses are recognized as leaders before others.

A cursory look at the aforesaid views shows that the genuine spirit of the African cult of the divinities, which promotes peace, progress, etc., has the capacity to restore harmony and peace in all the troubled regions of the world today, if properly harnessed. Therefore, contemporary world leaders should, critically, consider it in their efforts to promote world peace. Since the hand grenades, torpedoes, howitzers, machine guns, navy destroyers, tanks, cruise missiles, nuclear warheads, etc., have failed to bring an enduring peace in places like Afghanistan, Gaza, Burkina Faso and the Sahel, Central

African Republic, Chad and the Lake Chad Basin, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, etc.

Failure of Cutting-Edge Military Weapons

The world today, is witnessing the presence of certain state of the art military weapons like, the GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast (MOAB), the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM), High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), Leopard 2 tanks, Storm Shadow Cruise Missiles, etc., due to the great inroads some contemporary scientists, technologists and companies, like Albert L. Weimorts, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman and BAE systems, etc., are making on projects associated with military arms upgrade in the U.S., Europe, China, etc., (Al Jazeera, 2023, p.4 & Slashgear, 2023, p. 1). Regrettably, the above cutting edge military weapons are yet to bring an enduring peace to places like Ukraine, Gaza, Afghanistan, Sudan, etc. This may be as a result of the fact that these military weapons were mainly created to exert dominance over an adversary.

The said weapons are antilife. Of course, some contemporary men, women and children have lost their properties, dignity

and lives in some parts of the world like Syria, Somalia, etc., because of the presence of the aforesaid dangerous military weapons. This may continue if contemporary world leaders fail to embrace the rich African Socio-cultural values of truth, love, peace, harmony, order, etc., which the genuine spirit of the African divinities encourage.

Some people in certain parts of the world today, like Nigeria, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine, Palestine, etc., are witnessing severe hunger, abject poverty, low spirits, etc. They need love, encouragement, peace, order, etc., not humiliation, dehumanization, rejection, destruction, etc., which the above-mentioned military weapons seem to be promoting, directly and indirectly, in places like Ukraine, Gaza, etc., today. The genuine spirit of the African indigenous deities in African traditional setting ensures that the relationship that exists among the members of the society is cordial; devoid of rancor, arrogance, etc. Through this process it promotes unity, development, etc., in the society. It has a very high regard for the human life. This is because it (human life) is assumed to be sacred. Thus, the genuine spirit of the African divinities frowns at any attempt to violate human life. Little wonder

the traditional African man treats issues associated with human life with utmost care.

The efforts of certain contemporary world leaders like President Biden of the United States of America, to promote world peace may not be successful, unless truth, love, mutual understanding and respect, etc., which the genuine spirit of the African divinities supports are properly incorporated.

Evaluation

The use of state of the art and dangerous military weapons as a means of resolving conflicts is yet to bring long-lasting peace in the troubled regions of the world, today. In fact, some contemporary families have lost some of their members, properties, etc., because of the presence of the said weapons in the world, at the moment. Thus, there is so much anger, hatred, frustration, etc., in certain places like Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan, etc., now, because of the above ugly situation.

The world, today, needs altruism, truth, justice, forgiveness, love, mutual understanding and respect, etc., to move forward. These values have received the genuine spirit of the African divinities' blessing. In the traditional situation, the said genuine spirit of the African divinities has a

very high regard for the human life. Human life ensures the continuity of the society, and concretizes the relationship between the Divine and man. Thus, it frowns at any attempt to trivialize its (human Life's) value and sacredness.

The African traditional divinities in the above setting act as guardians and police men of public morality. They are cohesive factors of society, helping to maintain peace, law, order and the relationship between man and the Divine. Therefore, the said genuine spirit of the African indigenous divinities has the capacity to promote enduring peace in the world, today, if properly harnessed by the various contemporary world leaders.

The African traditional divinities do not constitute object of idolatry, as wrongly perceived by both the Christians and the Muslims in and outside Africa. In fact, they (the African divinities) are children of God, as long as the indigenous African man is involved. It is high time the genuine spirit of the African cult of the divinities was carefully considered by the contemporary world leaders, in their efforts to promote long-lasting peace in all the crises ridden sections of the world.

Recommendations

Peace, tranquility and harmony are very necessary for the actualization of sustainable development in any society. Unfortunately, certain parts of the world today, are crises ridden. The attempts by some contemporary world leaders to bring back peace in the said troubled regions of the world, via cutting edge military weapons like, hand grenades, torpedoes, howitzers, etc., have so far, proved abortive, to the detriment of the existence of some people, especially women and children, living in those areas. To ameliorate the above untoward situation, we recommend the following:

- i. The African cultural values of love, respect for human life, brotherhood, justice, etc., which have been relegated to the background by certain contemporary Africans must be carefully resuscitated.
- ii. The tendency to resort to violence at the least provocation must be discouraged among contemporary people, all over the world.
- iii. Contemporary world leaders must, sincerely, embrace the genuine spirit of the African traditional divinities, which encourages altruism, brotherhood, love, truth, etc.

Conclusion

Some parts of the world today are in turmoil, due to armed conflicts. The above situation has indeed, cost certain contemporary innocent men, women and children their precious lives, properties, etc. in places like Ukraine, Afghanistan, Syria, etc. Political world leaders such as Joe Biden of the United States of America, Rishi Sunak of Britain, Emmanuel Macron of France, Olaf Scholz of Germany, etc., have, directly and indirectly, used certain state of the art, and dangerous military weapons like howitzers, navy destroyers, tanks (the American M1 Abrams, German leopards, British challengers, etc.), Cruise missiles, B – 52 Stratofortress, etc., in attempt to bring back peace in the said troubled regions of the world. Regrettably, the efforts of the afore-stated world leaders, so far, have failed to achieve the intended result. In fact, this has equally led to the untimely death of some well-meaning contemporary people, in the said troubled places.

There is no gainsaying that the world today, needs brotherhood, peace, love, altruism, etc., to move forward. The above values have the blessing of the genuine spirit of the African indigenous divinities, which has a very high regard for human life, promotes

harmony, progress, etc., and frowns at any attempt to soil the connection between man and the divine in the traditional African situation. Thus, if the above genuine spirit of the African deities is properly harnessed it will go a long way to encourage enduring peace in the world. As long as the traditional African man is concerned, the African divinities do not constitute object of idolatry; they are children of God, vibrant and peace loving. Little wonder peace and progress reign supreme in the traditional African society.

References

- Arinze, F. (1970). *Sacrifice in Ibo Religion*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Awolalu, J. (1979). *Yoruba Belief and Sacrificial Rites*. Ikeja: Longman.
- Best, S. (Ed.). (2012). *Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies in West Africa*. Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Egbucha, G. (2007). *Religious Change in Birth, Puberty & Marriage Rites in Owerri, Imo State*. Aba: Assemblies of God Press.
- Idowu, E. (1973). *African traditional Religion*. London: SCM Press.
- Kanu, A. (2015). *A Hermeneutic Approach to African Traditional Religion, Theology and Philosophy*. Jos: Fab Anieh.
- Madu, I. (1997). *Fundamentals of Religious Studies*. Calabar: Franedoh.
- Mbiti, J. (1969). *African Religions and Society*. Nairobi: Eastern Educational.
- Metuh, I. (1991). *African Religions in Western Conceptual Schemes*. Jos: Imico.
- Nawike, E. (1999). *An Introductory Sociology of Religion*. Owerri: Ihem David Press.
- Ofomata, G. (Ed.). (2002). *A Survey of the Igbo Nation*. Onitsha: African First Publishers Ltd.
- Quarcoopome, T. (1987). *West African Traditional Religion*. Ibadan: African Universities Press.
- Tylor, E. (1913). *Primitive Culture*. London: John Murray.
- UNDP. (1999). *Human Development Report*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wikipedia.org (2023). Emile Durkheim Retrieved online November 30th, 2023 at https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/%89mile_Durkheim
- www.aljazeera.com (2023). Will Ukraine's New Weapons Help its Fight Against Russia? (2023). Retrieved online November 5th, 2023 at <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/3/5/25/will-ukraines-new-weapons-boost-counterattacks-against-russia>.
- www.slashgear.com (2023). The Most Dangerous Military Weapons Ranked by Length of Service in (2023). Retrieved online November 29th, 2023 at <https://www.slashgear.com/1235076/the-most-dangerous-military-weapons-ranked-by-length-of-service>.