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ABUJA JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIONS (AJPR)

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 1

NOVEMBER 2011

CONTENTS

Notes on Contributors

Editorial Foreward

i - ix.

Religion and Election in Nigeria: A Moral Re-appraisal

By Akiti Glory Alamu

1 - 16.

Voting and Civic Duty: Ensuring the Participation
of Youths in the Electoral Process in Nigeria

By Efemini Andrew

17 - 29.

Jesus and the Law: Exegetical Study and Challenges
of Mt. 5:17-20

By George O. Folarin

30 - 42.

Controlling Technology: The Social Responsibility
of Scientists and Engineers

By Obioha Uwaezeoke Precious

43 - 56.

The Concept of Human Destiny in Islam and
Yoruba Traditional Religion

By Kazeem Adekunle Adegoke

57 - 66.

The Relationship Between Faith and Reason
in the Middle Ages: An Exposition

By Augustus Essien, MSP

67 - 75.

Perspectives on Christian Mission in Nigeria Today

By Adeola Kehinde Adedayo

76 - 86.

Analysis of Religious Statistics and Estimation Mathematics

By Charles O. Nnaji

87 - 99.

On the Possibilities of Peace: A Discourse on the
Philosophy of Language

By Emmanuel M. Ome

100 - 108.

Plato's Philosopher-King Theory and the Contributions
of Nigerian Philosophers to Nation Building

By Godwin Okaneme

109 - 115.

Survival After Death in African and Christian
Perspectives

By Patrick Uchenna Nwosu

116 - 125.

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The idea of a journal Board of the new was received in the Department, due to other things, to the journal. It was received and the possibility of Religions (AJPR) journal. After the space in the main Campus were gradually with the setting

The Board members papers- which are happy to become a reality. This first issue those that you

Akiti Glory Alamu's appraisal" is an overwhelming becomes a "Controlling Obioha Uwaezuoke Precious, Ph.D. mankind, it responsibility explores the to discover Religion. But man's future

EDITORIAL FOREWARD

The idea of a journal was first conceived at the very first meeting of the Academic Board of the newly established Department of Philosophy and Religions. The idea was received with enthusiasm. At the next meeting of the Academic Board of the Department, during matters arising, a committee was immediately set up among other things, to suggest names and to work on the blue print of the conceived journal. It was not long before the committee gave a report with suggested names and the possible guidelines for the journal. Abuja Journal of Philosophy and Religions (AJPR) was unanimously approved and adopted as the name for the journal. After that, the momentum for the journal was dampened due to lack of space in the Mini-Campus and the eventual movement of the Department to the main Campus along Air port Road. It took sometime for things to settle. As things were gradually settling, the idea of the Journal was once again revived, this time with the setting up of the Editorial Board.

The Board immediately went to work and after several meetings, a flier a call for papers- which was approved by the Departmental Board was produced. Today we are happy that the desired dream of the Department to produce a Journal has become a reality and now we have the Abuja Journal of Philosophy and Religions. This first issue is an exciting one because it contains articles on burning issues and those that you cannot afford to miss both on Religions and Philosophy.

Akiti Glory Alamu in his article "Religion and Election in Nigeria: A Moral Re-appraisal" laments on the moral lacuna in the Nigerian politics despite the overwhelming Religiosity of Nigerians. He holds that politics without morality becomes a dirty game, therefore, politics and morality are not to be separated. In "Controlling Technology: The Social Responsibility of Scientists and Engineers," Obioha Uwaezuoke Precious argues that while Technology is largely a blessing to mankind, it has the potent of destruction, hence a call for social and moral responsibility on the part of Scientists and engineers. Kazeem Adekunle Adegoke explores the Concept of Human Destiny in Islam and Yoruba Traditional Religion to discover that while destiny in Islam is monistic, it is dualistic in Yoruba Traditional Religion. Both Religions, however, agree that only God has absolute knowledge of man's future.

Augustus Essien, MSP examines the relationship of faith and Reason in the Middle Ages and concludes that even though faith had an imposing influence on reason in the Middle Ages, reason was not robbed of its autonomy. On the other hand, faith and reason are not in opposition, they are harmonized in truth. In his article "Perspectives on Christian Mission in Nigeria Today," Adeola Kehinde Adedayo outlines the indispensable role of Religion not only in reforming the youth, but also the society at large. He calls on Religion to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Charles Nnaji in the article "Analysis of Religious Statistics and Estimation Mathematics," has opened up an apparently unnoticed aspect of a relationship between Religion and Economy. Banks will now pay attention to when and how money comes and leaves their financial institutions. Emmanuel M. Ome discusses the role of language in peace-making "On the Possibility of Peace: A Discourse in Philosophy of Language." He believes strongly that peace can only be achieved when people are ready to listen to each other on the basis of equality.

In "Plato's Philosopher-King Theory and the Contributions of Nigerian Philosophers to Nation Building, Godwin Okaneme highlights the importance of philosophy not only to the individuals who philosophize, but also to the development of the nation. The litany of philosophers who have contributed to the development of our nation is very informing. Patrick Uchenna Nwosu discusses Life after Death in African Religion and Christianity. He concludes that while the two Religions are not homogeneous, they are harmonized in the belief of life after death. Voting is the fundamental right of citizens and the citizens have the duty to exercise it. This is the argument of Efemini Andrew in his article "Voting as a Civic Duty: Ensuring the Participation of Youths in the Electoral Process in Nigeria." He rightly observes that the participation of youths has been low in the previous elections and therefore, calls on the relevant authorities for political reforms. The lucid exposition of Mt.5:17-20 in "Jesus and the Law: Exegetical Study and Challenges by George O. Folarin is worth reading. In it, Jesus did not do away with the Law; rather, he gave new meaning to it.

The Editorial Board of AJPR is deeply grateful to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Abuja, Prof. A.J.S. Adelabu, the Principal Officers of the University, the Dean and the Staff of Faculty of Arts, the past and present Heads of the Department, and the Board of Studies of the Department of Philosophy and Religions. We are deeply grateful to the members of the Editorial Board for their enormous sacrifices and contributions. Our special thanks go to those who have contributed articles to this first edition of AJPR. It should however be noted that the opinions expressed in these articles are those of the authors and not that of the Editorial Board. On the other hand, the Editorial Board takes responsibility for the typographical errors that may occur in this Journal.

The production of this first edition of AJPR was not without difficulties that should or could be expected in any pioneering adventure. Among the many difficulties we encountered were the slow take off of the project of publishing the Journal. When it was finally taken off, the delay in submission of articles, the process of reviewing or vetting and returning them for editing, the communication problem, notwithstanding the modern communication gadgets, the financial constraints and all that has to do with first time production of a Journal. But we are grateful to God that it is better delayed than denied. However, while we strive for quality and excellence, the Editorial Board accepts the limitations that may be noticed in this first edition. The advantages and the joy of publishing the first edition of AJPR outweigh the possible limitations. It is our belief that subsequent issues will improve upon what is given in this first edition. We invite you to read, enjoy and savour the articles.

CONCEPT OF HUMAN DESTINY IN ISLAM AND YORUBA TRADITIONAL RELIGION

BY

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Abstract

Concept of human destiny is one of the hot-debated issues in religious theodicies of Islam and Yoruba traditional religions. This paper aims at looking at the concept of destiny in Islam and Yoruba traditional religion within the framework of human-divine will of religious theology. The paper goes on clarifying some related terms in *both religions* such as destiny, pre-destination, pre-determination, Qadar, Qada', Taqdir, Akunleyan, Ayanmo and Ori. Brief origin of both Islam and Yoruba Traditional Religion is examined. The theories of Ori and Akunleyan, and Qadar and Taqdir are thoroughly discussed in both Yoruba Traditional Religion and Islam respectively. The paper then compares and contrasts the concept of destiny in both religions before now concluding with the findings and recommendations of the study for academic purpose.

Introduction

Concept of human destiny is one of the hot-debated issues among the Islamic theologians and Yoruba Traditionalists. Apparently, both of Islamic theologians and Yoruba traditionalists approach the various issues related to human destiny in different ways. Islamic theologians approach this issue through dialectical arguments from the premises of reasoning and revelations from the Qur'an and prophetic traditions popularly referred to as *Kitab Wa Sunnah*, while the Yoruba traditionalists approach it through the dialectical arguments from the premises of speculative reasoning, proverbs, myth, folktales and other traditional materials from the Yoruba environments.¹ This position is upheld by both of these scholars that the premises, on which their argument is built, have correct perception, rationality, values and morality which are embedded in it. And it is this mode of thought which its coherence, reality, ideality and rationality can only be seen within the framework of Islamic theology and Yoruba theology. This issue of human destiny becomes more controversial when it reached the area of presence

of evil in the human environment and supremacy of God in human affairs. This is the point where the Greek philosophers wave in to balance the equation between the human destiny and presence of evil in human social life. In order to successfully do this, they propounded the theories of origin of evil in line with the human destiny which are based on Monistic and Dualistic theories. According to these philosophers, monistic theory argues that human destiny and evil is the sole handwork of the Supreme Being which is the ultimate behind every occurrence in the universe, while the dualistic theory professes that human destiny and evil fall between two forces or powers which are controlling every affair in the universe. These are forces or powers of goodness and forces or powers of evil.² Despite the effort of the Greek philosophers to reconcile the origin of human destiny and evil, this problem of human destiny is still going on unabated among the adherents of different religions. This is the reason why this paper tries to examine this concept of human destiny in Islamic theology and Yoruba traditional religious theology. The main purpose of the paper is to expose the theological position of both religions on the hot-debated issues of human destiny and its social impact on the adherents of both religions in the human society.

Conceptual Clarification of Related Terms.

The term "destiny" means what happens to somebody or what will happen to them in future, especially things they cannot change or avoid.³ This word is synonymous with predestination and pre-determination.⁴ Islam is an Arabic term which literally means submission or surrendering. Technically, it means total submission of human being to the Divine will of God (Allah).⁵ In short, it is universally known as one Abrahamic and monotheistic faith of Muslims. Yoruba Traditional Religion (YTR) is a different type of African Traditional Religion in Yorubaland. It comprises of various forms of worship, service and adoration in an indigenous way in Yorubaland.⁶ *Qadar*, according to Cowan, literally means divine fore-ordainment, pre-destination, fate, destiny, lot.⁷ It is the sixth article of faith in Islam. Technically, it is a belief that everything that happens has been decided and planned in advance by God or by one's fate and that human or any artificial force cannot change it. Its synonyms is *Taqdir* which means pre-determination subjection.⁸ The term "*Akunleyan*" is a term in Yoruba traditional religion which also means pre-destination in the literary sense. It is a belief in the pre-ordainment of the event or affair of a human being before ever coming to the physical world.⁹ Its synonyms are *Ayanmo* which means pre-determination and *Ori* which means luck.

Origin of Islam and Yoruba Traditional Religion

Yoruba Traditional Religion comprises of various indigenous worships and cultic practices in Yorubaland. The time of commencement of the Yoruba traditional religion is not documented due to the lack of record and accurate myth and legend during the pre-colonial days of the Yoruba.¹⁰ The creed of Yoruba Traditional Religion is not found in any sacred book but it reflects on the heart of Yoruba people who are religiously notorious in any aspect of their lives. Information on Yoruba traditional religion is preservable through oral tradition, sacred institution and Art forms. Oral traditions are Yoruba cultural rites, myths, legends, folklore, proverbs, names, riddles, prayers, invocation, blessings, curses, incantation, songs, Ifa corpus and adages. Sacred institutions are kingship, priesthood, chieftaincy titles, rites, taboo, festivals, religious beliefs and practices while Art forms are mainly archaeological excavations which could serve as a vital discovery of the past religious beliefs and practices.¹¹ In the Yoruba Traditional Religion, there are many divinities (*Orisa*) and spirits (*Irunmole*) which are regarded as link or intermediary between the people and God (*Olodumare*). It is believed that these divinities and spirits were not created but were brought into being by God before the creation of universe to serve as divine messengers of God. Some of these divinities and spirits are *Orunmila*, *Obatala*, *Ela*, *Yemoja*, *Egungun*, *Oro*, *Agemo*, *Orisa Oko*, *Orisa Ibeji*, *Sango*, *Sanponna*, *Ogun*, *Esu*, *et.cetera*.¹²

Islam is a universal religion of the Muslims from all walks of life. It is misnomer to claim that Islam was founded by Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) in the earlier period of seventh century of Christian Era, 610 C.E. to be precise, when he was called to prophethood and messengership. Rather, Islam was brought into being at the beginning of the existence of the universe. By this account, all the prophets (*Anbiya*) and messengers (*Rusul*) of God (Allah), right from the Prophet Adam (A.S.) to the last prophet and messenger, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) were disciples of Islam, which means that they are all Muslims. Islam as a divine religion reached her peak of perfection during the time of her last prophet, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) who was just a messenger of Islam just like any other messengers.¹³ After the demise of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), Islam spread to all nooks and crannies of the universe. Islam penetrated Yorubaland before the nineteenth century of Christian era as there were considerable degree of Islamization in some towns in Yorubaland through the Islamic activities and preaching tour of some Islamic clerics.¹⁴

Theories of *Ori* and *Akunleyan* in Yoruba Traditional Belief

In Yoruba traditional belief, concept of destiny, pre-determination and pre-destination is attributed to the two theories of *Ori* (luck) and *Akunleyan* (pre-destination). It is believed that the creation of man is the handiwork of *Olodumare* (God), the Sole Creator (*ObaAdeda*) who used to create man without human

head. After that, He would send the man to *Obatala*, the divinity of creation who is incharge of moulding human head (*Ori*). *Obatala* would now mould the human head (*Ori*) and then send the man back to *Olodumare* (God) for the choice of his *Akunleyan*. In the presence of *Olodumare* (God) and *Orunmila*, His deputy, man kneels before both of them to choose his fate (*Ayanmo*) on the basis of his spiritual *Ori* (luck) moulded for him by *Obatala*.¹⁵ The man then comes to the world with this destiny. Try as he may, he will never excel more than what has been imputed in his destiny. As soon as man gets to this world, his parents take him to *Ifa* priest who is representing *Orunmila* to find out his destiny through *Esentaye* (Fate divination). The *Ifa* oracle would inform them of the baby's destiny and some warnings and taboo which are attached to his destiny and which may disturb the baby from achieving his destiny. However, if necessary caution is not taken on the part of man, some evil people in his environment may not allow him to get good things due to him from his destiny. Due to this fact, Yoruba may consult *Ifa* oracle or *Orunmila* who was there when the man was allotted his destiny, to check and balance and to know what should be done to enhance his upward mobility in this life.¹⁶

Concept of *Qadar* and *Taqdir* in Islamic Belief

In Islamic belief, concept of destiny, pre-destination and pre-determination is domiciled on the belief in the *Qadar* and *Taqdir* of God (Allah) on the affairs and sojourn of man on the surface of the earth, which serves as the sixth article of faith (*Iman*) as mentioned earlier. This belief in the *Qadar* and *Taqdir* leads to, some extent, into crucial theme of divine-human relationships which is deeply rooted in the divine will of Allah (*Iradah*). It is through this belief that God (Allah) controls his total creatures on earth because His will is the immediate source of all events and it covers all mankind and history.¹⁷ The Divine wills of Allah (*Iradah*) is captioned under the theme of *Kun Fayakun*, this is ideology of "Be and it is" as pointed out in the Qur'an 36:82-83.

"Verily His (Allah) commend, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, "Be, and it is (*Kun Fayakun*). So Holy is He, in Where Hand is the Kingdom of all things. And to Him will you all be brought back."

There is no way that the issue of human destiny and theme of divine-human will would be discussed without thorough examination of dialectical argument of some Islamic schools of theology (*Ilm al-Kalam*) such as *Qadariyyah*, *Mu'tazilah*, *Jabbariyyah*, *Jahmiyyah*, *Ash'ariyyah*, *Tahawiyyah* and *Maturidiyyah*. Both *Qadariyyah* and *Mu'tazilah* maintain the theory of indeterminism in divine-human

will issue. According to them, man should be the main author of his destiny, he decides and controls his destiny through the employment of his freewill (*Ikhtiyar*) endowed on him by God (Allah). God is not in the least concerned in mandating it nor has God's will anything to do with it.¹⁸ As a result of this, destiny is not imposed on man (*Ghayr Majbur*) and this is the reason why he is going to bear the responsibility (*Taklif*) for his action. This is libertarian view of destiny. In contrary, both *Jabariyyah* and *Jahmiyyah*, on the issue of divine-human will maintain fatalistic view and theory of determinism and thereby deny the human freewill (*Ikhtiyar*) in his destiny. According to them, human destiny is pre-determined and pre-destined by God. Man has no power and role to play in the actualization of his destiny. They argue that everything is from God who has absolute power (*Qudrah*) over everything including human will and destiny. Man is, therefore, forced (*Majbur*) to submit to whatever is decreed for him in his destiny.¹⁹ As for *Ash'ariyyah*, they try to strike the balance between the theological views of the above-mentioned schools by arguing that there is no doubt that God is the main designer of man's destiny and will as man cannot influence his destiny. God only creates in man power (*Qudrah*) and limited freewill (*Ikhtiyar*) to carry out actions corresponding to the actualization of destiny decreed on him. By this, God designs the man's destiny which is finally acquired (*Iktasaba*) by the man. This is the theory of acquisition (*Iktisab*) propounded by *Ash'ariyyah* so as to make man responsible for whatever decreed on him in his destiny.²⁰ According to the *Tahawiyyah* and *Maturiduyyah* schools, the divine will of God, His eternal decree and infinite power on the one hand and freedom of human will and action on the other hand are stressed in the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. These divine will decree and power are consistent with human freedom of choice (*Ikhtiyar*). God is the Creator of all things including their nature and nothing can go against this nature. As an omniscient creator, God knows from eternity what His creatures will do in future, this is the writing of the destiny and the eternal divine decree which would pass in accordance with this divine fore-knowledge. God decrees the affairs He Himself knows from eternity that a man will choose and acquire freely and the man cannot do otherwise on account of time and space within which destiny must be passed through.²¹ This is jurisprudential and theological position of *Ahlu's-Sunnah Wa Jama'ah*.

Comparative Analysis of the Yoruba and Islamic Beliefs on Destiny

It is not out of tune to say that the concept of destiny cut across the Islam and Yoruba Traditional Religion. This concept in both faiths asserts that man's life affairs has been divinely pre-determined by God, Allah or *Olodumare* before the existence of man in the universe and whatever pre-determined for the man will be

his lot and luck during his lifetime. In Islam, man has no role to play in the designing of human destiny as the God, Allah is the main architect of the human destiny and this is the reason why some Islamic scholars regard it as *Qada* (Allah Divine Decree) and *Qadar* (Divine Fore-knowledge).²² On this Qur'an 54:49-50 says:

Verily, all things have we created in proportion and measure (*Qadar*). And our command is but a twinkling of eye.

Qur'an 9:51 also says:

"Say, Nothing shall befall us save that which Allah has prescribed for us."

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) also pointed out that:

Know that even though the community should make a united effort to benefit you in any matter, they would not benefit you in ought save what God has prescribed for you, nor were they to make a united effort to harm you in any matter they would not harm you in ought save what God has prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages are dry.²³

Reverse is the case in the Yoruba Traditional Religion where it is upheld that man has several role to play in both physical and metaphysical world on his destiny. Man decides his destiny in the metaphysical world during the period of *Akunleyan* and *Ayanmo* and the selection of *Ori* before ever coming to the physical world. On getting to the physical world, man embarks on several steps in making his destiny favourable to him. Some of these steps are *Esentaye* rite (Fate divination), *Ifa* consultation, cultural taboo, offering sacrifice to spirits and Divinities.²⁴ By this, in Yoruba Traditional Religion's point of view, on human destiny is handing on the adage which says that one lies on the bed, the way he lays the bed. In short, man decides his destiny himself through his request in metaphysical world and his consultation for divine guidance in the physical world which are finally approved by the God, *Olodumare*. By this, human destiny becomes a designed man's programme of life, which he bids for before coming to the world.²⁵

Despite all these differences in the concept of destiny in Islam and Yoruba Traditional Religion, it will not be fair if this study fails to address the similarities in this concept. Issue of destiny is metaphysical and divine affairs in both Islam and Yoruba Traditional Religion. Both religions uphold the fact that destiny, pre-destination and pre-determination are the metaphysical and divine event that take

place in presence of God, Allah or *Olodumare* before the man is born. The decision taken on destiny in the metaphysical world is what is going to be the lot of the man in the physical world.

Both religions also uphold the fact that human destiny is amendable and changeable. In Islam, destiny can be amended and changed by the supplication, invocation or prayer (*Du'a*) to God who is the main Architect of human destiny for this divine mercy. *Du'a* is a plea from the very heart of a man to his Creator and God in order to exhibit his (man) weakness and helpless to Him and to acknowledge the greatness and mercifulness of Allah in his life affairs. By this, *Du'a* is an effective means of repelling evils and replacing it with goodness.²⁶

On this Qur'an 2:186 says

And when my servants ask you concerning Me, I am indeed near them. I respond to the supplications of the supplicant when He calls me. For they should also answer Me and believe in Me, so that they may be rightly guided.

Qur'an 40:60 also says:

"Any your Lord said: Pray unto Me, I will answer you all."

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) also says:

Nothing increased one's life-span except good deeds and nothing repels destiny except *Du'a*. and verily, a person may be deprived of sustenance due to a sin that he does.²⁷

Similarly, in Yoruba traditional religion, human destiny can be amended and changed from worse to better or *vice-versa*. It is generally upheld that man may never excel more than what is written against him in his destiny, but if he is not careful through his pride, arrogant or mis-behaviour, evil people such as witches, wizards and sorcerers may thwart his attempts to get all good things due to him in his destiny, thereby, changing and amending his destiny from better to worse situation.²⁸ As a result of this development, the affected people are expected to consult *Orunmila*, the *Ifa* oracle, the divine deputy of *Olodumare*, the God to check and balance the human destiny so as to enhance his upward mobility in the life by prescribing some sacrifices (*Ebo*) for him to appease some spirits, divinities, deities, ancestral cult such as *Oro* and *Egungun* cults, heavenly mate cult such as *Emere* or *Elegbe*, Twin cult et. cetera.²⁹

Conclusion

This study has critically examined the concept of destiny in Islam and Yoruba Traditional Religion. It discussed the theories of *Akunleyan*, *Ayanmo* and *Ori* in Yoruba Traditional Religion and theories of *Qadar*, *Qada*, *Taqdir* and *Ikhtiyar* in Islam so as to exhibit the fact that concept of human destiny, despite its controversial nature, is peculiar to both religions. By this, the study discovered the following findings. It is found out that:

- (i) human destiny is a metaphysical life programme of a man in this hysical world;
- (ii) the concept of destiny in Islam is monistic in nature while that of Yoruba Traditional Religion is dualistic;
- (iii) both religions affirm that God is absolutely free from the negative features of human destiny on man;
- (iv) both religions affirm that God has the absolute knowledge of the future of the life affairs of man as no occurrence escapes his notice;
- (v) human destiny can be checked and balanced through the supplication, invocation or prayer (*Du'a*) in Islam and sacrifice offering (*Ebo Riru*) or invocation (*Iwure*) in Yoruba Traditional Religion.

Based on these findings, the study therefore recommends that people or adherents of both religions should not take the concept of destiny as a licence to cause evil enforcement among the people in the society. It should be known that the creed of both religions do not condone evil and violence against the fellow human beings irrespective of their faith.

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