NIGERIA ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES (NATAIS) JOURNAL OF ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

VOL.15 (2012)

TETFUND SUPPORTED PRODUCTION

TERTIARY EDUCATION TRUST FUND

NIGERIA ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES (NATAIS) JOURNAL OF ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

VOL.15 (2012)

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CONTENTS

TOWARDS THE NATIONAL INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: HASAN AL-BANNA'S THEORIES OF *WATANIYYAH* AND *QAWMIYYAH* AS RECIPE

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Abstract
National integration and development of any civilized nation is a matter of necessity. Every nation should be able to boast of her own growth capacity of her own natural disposition without necessarily shedding the blood of innocent soul through the tribal, ethnic and religious clashes in her environs. The vital instrument to achieve this venture requires the people solidarity and national consciousness which Al-Banna termed as *Wataniyyah* and *Qawmiyyah* in his theory of socio-political thought. As a result of this, this paper examines the theories of *Wataniyyah* and *Qawmiyyah* of Hasan Al-Banna as recipe to the national integration and social development in Nigerian environs. The impact these theories could make on the national integration and development in Nigeria as a sovereign country is discussed.

Introduction
Nigeria, as one of the pluralistic sovereign nations, is among the most populous nations in the African continent with diverse ethnic and religious groups of more than three hundred in number. This heterogeneous and pluralistic nature of Nigeria, with its cultural, traditional, customary and religious diversities, help in making the nation a complex social environment. The divergent geographical resources and socio-economic distributions in Nigeria make the movement and settlement of Nigerians from different parts of the nation in search of greener pasture inevitable[1]. Consequently, this mix- up led the nation to become a "Unity in Diversity Zone" and it further makes Nigeria a tension-brewing socio –environment that in the occurrence of a slight misunderstanding, it easily escalates into serious ethnic and religious crisis in which several lives and properties of Nigerians are destroyed[2]. Prior to independence, the Nigerian socio-environment consisted of several empires, kingdoms and states which did not depend on one another in political and socio-economic affairs until the advent of the British colonial imperialists who eventually amalgamated all the ethnic and tribal groups together under one geo-political entity called Nigeria in 1914 so as to create social integration, unity, harmony and peaceful co-existence among Nigerians from the various tribes and ethnic groups. The effort of the colonial imperialists to integrate multi-ethnic groups in Nigerian environs proved abortive as they were guilty of alien imposition, distortion and breaking up of

existing large groups, and coercion of various independent small ethnic groups into inconvenient union[3]. As a result of this development, Nigeria as a pluralistic nation inherited social disintegration from her colonial masters at her period of independence. In recent times, this social integration has assumed a new dimension as a result of the emergence of several ethnic militia groups. These ethnic militia groups are the: Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) for the Yoruba, Arewa People Congress (APC) for the Hausa and Fulani, Bakassi Boys and Movement for Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra(MASSOB) for the Igbo, Movement for Emancipation of Niger Delta(MEND) for the Niger Delta people, Egbesu boys for the Ijaw, Gwama boys for the Ilaje People in Ondo State and Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) of the Ogoni People of River State.[4]

Apart from the above-mentioned ethnic militia groups, there are also religious militia groups such as Maitatsine sect of earlier 1980s in the Hausa- Fulani areas of Nigeria. In the recent time, there is Boko Haram group in Borno and Yobe States, Jesus Army in the Jos- Plateau and Kaduna and several cultic groups in the western and Eastern parts of Nigeria.

The irony of the matter is that each of these militia groups in Nigeria acts on the belief that the national interest of its either ethnic or religious group has been robbed by other ethnic or religious groups and that the interest of their people should be given preference and priority over the interest of other ethnic groups in the country. They used to carry out their militia activities on other ethnic groups out of perceived or suspicious injustice, unnecessary discrimination and marginalization from other ethnic or religious groups, and government insensitivity to their predicaments or government unfavourable policy[5]. If care is not taken, these conflicts may lead to national disintegration in the country. It is against this backdrop that this paper wishes to examine the level of national integration in Nigeria and how this integration could be sustained with the utilization of the theories of *Wataniyyah* and *Qawmiyyah* in Hasan al-Banna's political thought.

Ethnic and Religious Crisis as a Threat to National Integration and Development in Nigeria

Every Nigerian society has witnessed one or two ethnic and religious crises as a result of co-existence, which is characterized by high level of cultural and religious diversity. All the past civilian and military governments' efforts in addressing the problem of ethnic and religious crises in Nigeria have always been abortive as this problem is still re-occurring from time to time. The Obasanjo-led government between 1999 and 2007 had to deal with ethnic and tribal demands on the basis and parameter of measurement of Nigeria's federalism. As the Obasanjo- led government could not give satisfactory response to the question of Nigerian concept of federalism, there was a growing call for Sovereign National Conference in order to decide the basis for the Nigerian concept of federalism.[6]

The socio-cultural groups in Nigeria such as Afenifere, Ohanze, Ndi Igbo and Arewa Congress of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani respectively mounted pressure on the Obasanjo-led government by arguing that the Sovereign National Conference was the

only platform to discuss and find peaceful way of co-existence so as to create national integration, stable policy and an equal federation in its true concept. At last, the Obasanjo-led government endorsed the alternative of giving every Nigerian the opportunity of deliberating on the 1999 Nigerian Constitution in each of the six geo-political zones of the country so as to amend the necessary areas for favouring all affected ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria so as to pave way for national integration. Despite this positive development, the ethnic and religious crisis in the country is still going on unabated in several parts of the country as each ethnic and tribal group still clamours for its cultural identity. Since 1999 till the present time, several ethnic and religious crises have taken place in various environs in Nigeria.[7] In 1999, there were ethnic and tribal clashes in some parts of south-western Nigeria, such as Yoruba versus Hausa- Fulani settlers in Lagos and Ogun States and Yoruba versus Ijaw in Lagos State over the issues of cultural identity, Yoruba versus Hausa-Fulani in Oyo State over the cattle market control and Ife people versus Modakeke people over a boundary dispute and siting of a local government secretariat.

The same problem also occurred in some parts of Northern Nigeria. Between 2001 and 2002, there were ethnic and tribal clashes between the Jukun and Tiv tribes in Benue State over a land boundary dispute, Shendam and Langtang in Jos-Plateau with Hausa-Fulani settlers in Plateau State over a land and cultural identity. Till date, the clash between Jos-Plateau and Hausa-Fulani settlers has not stopped. Similarly, some areas in the Eastern part of the country were not left out in this menace as ethnic and tribal clashes erupted in 2003 and 2004 among Ijaw, Urhobo and Itshekiri in Delta State over the siting of a local government sectariat.[8]

Due to the incessant occurrence of ethnic and tribal clashes in some parts of the country, several ethnic and tribal militia groups emerged from various sections of the country with their militia activities to voice out their national interest and also to kick against the injustice perpetrated against them. Between 2003 and 2007 during the Obasanjo-led government, Movement for Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) employed methods of kidnapping oil expatriates, oil bunkering, pipeline sabotage and staging guerrilla war with the Nigerian forces that were sent to them to maintain peace. In 2008, the Yar'Adua-led government entered into agreement with them that they would be given stipend allowances and technical trainings abroad as a compensation for their land pollution from oil spillage.[9] Recently, the Niger Delta Boys are still threatening to resume their militia activities in the area if the Jonathan-led administration decides to rescind the 2008 agreement.

On religious side, the first religious clash in Nigeria was that of Shari'ah agitation in the National House of Assembly in 1978. This issue later escalated into religious clash between Nigerian Muslims and Christians between 1978 and 1980 in several parts of the country. This clash was immediately followed by the Maitatsine crisis in the Northern parts of the country. This religious crisis quickly spread like hay fire among the Northerners until it was laid to rest in 1984 by the military government under General Muhammad Buhari.[10]

Despite the fact that the Shari'ah legal system has been in existence and practice in Nigeria since the pre-colonial days, its appearance in Nigerian Constitution of 1979 turned to be a fuel for religious crisis in some parts of the country that it nearly tore-apart the country into two religio-political platforms. The crisis reached its zenith in 1999 when the then Zamfara State governor, Alhaji Ahmad Sani Yerima, publicly announced the codification of Shari'ah legal system in the state and thereby extends it to cover criminal matters. Between 2000 and 2003, several states in the Northern part of the country started taking the same step of codification and extension of the Shari'ah legal system to cover criminal matters in their area of jurisdiction.[11]

As soon as the Shari'ah crisis went down, another crisis emerged from one Northern Islamic group called *Jama atu'l-Ahlus'- Sunnah lid-da'wati wa'l- Jihad*, popularly known as Boko Haram. The aim of this group, as asserted in the media is that all western way of life including education, economics, politics and socio-cultures should be declared illegal and unlawful in Nigeria. The Boko Haram crisis, started as more or less a religious crisis at the initial stage until it later became a socio- political crisis in some parts of Northern Nigeria.[12] As at this time, the damage and havoc caused by the Niger Delta Boys and Boko Haram to the national unity and integration of Nigeria as a sovereign nation in term of loss of lives and properties is nothing to write home about.

Hasan Al- Banna and His Theories of *Al-Wataniyyah and Al-Qawmiyyah*

Hasan Al- Banna was a remarkable religio-political figure in the Muslim world. He was born in Egypt in 1906 and he had opportunity of acquiring both Islamic and western education at Cairo University in 1927. He was appointed as a primary school teacher in one of the public schools in Ismailiyyah where he founded an Islamic religio-political organization popularly known as Al-Ikhwān Al- Muslimūn in 1929.[13] After a decade of existence of this organisation, it claimed to have five hundred branches all over Egypt, Hijaz, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, India and North- West Africa. Al-Banna experienced the general characteristics of Islamic political system in attractive and understandable manner to the elites and politicians so as to pave way for the national integration in a sovereign nation. He realized that the secular system of nationalism and patriotism laid down by the western imperialists could not pave way to national integration and development in a pluralistic society. To him, the first national problem of a sovereign nation is to liberate herself from the yoke of imperial domination. As a result of this,[14] Al-Banna came up with the two theories of national integration popularly called *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah*.

Al-Wataniyyah and Al-Qawmiyyah as Theories of National Integration

Hasan Al- Banna in his effort to encourage the people in a pluralistic society to protect the national integration of their country wrote a material, titled *"Da'watunā"* in which he propounded two theories of national integration in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious nation. The two theories of national integration are termed *"Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah.* According to Al-Banna, *Al-Wataniyyah* means patriotism while *Al-*

Qawmiyyah means nationalism. For the understanding of both theories, Al-Banna divided each of the two theories into five. These divisions are illustrated as follows:

1. *Wataniyyat al-Hanīn:* This is the patriotic love for one's country and place of residence. It is a feeling which is allowed by both command of nature and Islam.[15]

2. *Wataniyyah al-Hurriyyah wa-l-ᶜIzzah:* This is the patriotic desire and devotion to work for the restoration of honour and independence of one's country.[16]

3. *Wataniyyah al-Mujtamaᶜah:* This is the patriotic desire and devotion to strengthen the bonds of mutual co-operation between individuals of a region.[17]

4. *Wataniyyat al-Fat-h:* This is a patriotic desire and devotion to conquer and dominate the opposing nation which wages physical and psychological war against our own nation.[18]

5. *Wataniyyah al-Hizbiyyah:* This is the devotion and excess love for party strife just as the pre-Islamic party strife among the Arab tribes in the Arabian Peninsula. It is also a desire to the bitter hatred of one's political opponents without justifiable reasons. Hasan al- Banna said:

"It is a false kind of *al-Wataniyyah*, it does not benefit anybody; not even those who practise it."[19]

According to Hassan al-Banna, the first four kinds of *al-wataniyyah* were encouraged by the teachings of Islam. This should not be mistakenly regarded as patriotism practised in the western nations which tries to strengthen one nation at the expense of others. *Al-Wataniyyah* seek to promote the strength and welfare of all the lands and their emancipation from all foreign dominations.[20]

On the idea of *al-Qawmiyyah,* it is also categorized into five. They are as follows:

1. *Qawmiyyat al-Majd:* This is the nationalistic pride of the young generation in the glory of their forefathers and their heroes with the sincere desire to emulate them. The forefathers and heroes mentioned above are the first generations of preceding nationalists and those who followed their footsteps.[21]

2. *Qawmiyyat al-'Ummah:* This is the act of having special nationalist interest in a person in his particular group and people. This is also a genuine feeling which is approved by Islam as it teaches mutual love among the people in a particular nation.[22]

3. *Qawmiyyat al-Tanzim:* This is the realization that the common aims of freedom and salvation are achieved by the nationalistic struggle of each individual group. It is also another legitimate aspiration approved by Islam because it teaches the people that independent and self -government can be achieved by their unrelenting efforts.[23]

4. *Qawmiyyat al-Jāhiliyyah:* This is the desire to re-establish old tribal sentiments in customs and cultures, and to replace national unity by an exaggerated nationalism and racism in a highly contemptible and dangerous sentiment. Under the influence of this kind of *al-Qawmiyyah*, some nations have destroyed the outwards sign of unity.[24]

5.   *Qawmiyyat al-ʿUdwān:* This is the nationalistic desire to gain domination for one's own *race* over the others as it is practised in some western nations.[25]

The first three kinds of *al-Qawmiyyah* are regarded as commendable and praiseworthy as they can pave way for national integration and unity. This nationalist struggle was put into practice by the first generation of Muslims and they are able to integrate and expand more territories for the empire of Islam. However, the last two kinds of *al-Qawmiyyah* are those which are instigated by the spirit of tribal sentiments. Al-Banna does not overlook the fact that there are natural distinctions between the tribes and nations. Some are better than others, some are worse. The special qualities that a nation may possess should not be used for aggression. They should be used for the promotion of the real purpose of national integration and unity. How this can be done was shown in an exemplary manner by the Arab contemporaries of Muhammad in the seventh century of Christian era. Thus, Al-Banna compared the sovereign nation to either a healthy or an unhealthy person. According to him, tribes or nations are like individuals with regard to strength and weakness, aged and young, health and disease. A healthy person who has fallen ill and has been cured by a skilful physician, who determined the real cause of the disease, often finds himself in better health after his cure than he was before his illness. Thus a nation, which in the course of time has become weak to the point where its very existence is in peril, and where it is in no position to withstand the greed and violence of outsiders, can be cured if the source of the disease is known as if a skilful physician can be found who will effect the cure with the help of God.[27] To Al-Banna, a skilful physician is effective in the utilization of the spirit of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah* in a sovereign and pluralistic nation.

Al-Banna observes that both *Wataniyyah* and *Qawmiyyah* could be utilized to achieve national integration in a sovereign pluralistic nation if they are effectively handled. Though, the two theories could be used to achieve both positive and negative ends depending on the target of the people in such a given nation. This is the main reason why Al-Banna extolled *Wataniyyah al-hanīn, Wataniyyah al-Hurriyyah, Wataniyyah al-Mujtama ah and Wataniyyah al-Fat-h* as vital means of national integration and unity.[28] In the same way, he encouraged people in a pluralistic nation to adopt *Qawmiyyah al-Majd, Qawmiyyah al-Ummah,* and *Qawmiyyah al-Tanzīm* as they can be manipulated to sustain national integration and unity among the people of diverse cultures, language and religions which is peculiar to the Nigerian setting. If the above –mentioned kinds of *Al-Wataniyyat and Al-Qawmiyyat* could be applied to the Nigerian situation where national integration and unity are not stable because of the tribal, ethnic and religious sentiments in several parts of the country, there is every possibility that it would go a long way in curtailing, if not eradicating our national crisis. However, this is not to dispute that principles of *Al-Wataniyyah and Al-Qawmiyyah* do not exist among the various tribes and ethnic groups in Nigeria but the kinds of *Wataniyyah* and *Qawmiyyah* practised are *Wataniyyah al-Hizbiyyah, Qawmiyyah al-Jahiliyyah* and *Qawmiyyah al-ʿUdwan*. These kinds of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah* are seriously condemned by Hasan Al-Banna

himself as they could lead to national disintegration and disunity in any given pluralistic society as it is currently occurring in the Nigerian society.[29]

Several loss of lives and properties have taken place in almost all the Nigerian societies as a result of abuse employment of the spirit of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah*. It has one time led to civil war which almost broke the country into two before it was finally resolved.[30]

It is undisputable that the spirit of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Qawmiyyah* has been ingrained into the blood of individual persons in terms of nationality, ethnicity or religion. What Hasan al- Banna was driving at in his integration theories is that any spirit of *Al-Wataniyyan* and *Al-Qawmiyyah* exhibited should be carried out to sustain national integration and unity of mankind in a pluralistic society irrespective of their tribe, ethnicity and religion.

Conclusion

The study attempted to examine the ethnic and religious conflicts as a threat to national integration and unity in Nigeria and how integration theories of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah* from the political outlook of Hasan al-Banna could be manipulated to solve the problem. Having done this, the study discovers that:

(i)   Every individual person has spirit of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah* in his or her blood in term of tribal or religious sentiment;

(ii)   The theories of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah* could be used to achieve either positive or negative end;

(iii)   If the theories of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah* are piously and perfectly utilised, it could easily pave way to national integration and unity in a pluralistic society such as Nigeria.

Based on these findings, the study recommends that Nigerians should:

(i)   Make use of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah* in a positive way because wrong use of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah* are responsible for the national disintegration and disunity in Nigeria during both the pre-coloonial and post-colonial era.

(ii)   Exhibit their spirit of *Al-Wataniyyah* and *Al-Qawmiyyah* with national interest at the back of their mind so as to ensure national integration and unity.

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