Introduction

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It is already nearing two decades since the U.S. terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York, popularly dubbed "9/11" shocked the world, and ushered in a new discourse on the global "war on terror." Since then, several related incidents such as the London Underground bombings, known as "7/7," in July 2005, and the Arab Spring marked by a revolutionary wave of protest and demonstrations in the Arab world and North Africa from 2010 unleashed terror on mostly innocent citizens leading to the collapse of some states and wanton destruction of lives and properties. The lingering Syrian civil war, the growing insurgencies such as the ISIS in Syria and Iraq; the Taliban mayhem in Afghanistan; Al-Qaeda in the Middle East; the Boko Haram uprising in Northern Nigeria; the Al-Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya; religious extremists in Darfur, Mali, Chad, Central African Republic, and Burkina Faso; the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; more recently, the Paris attacks and massacre in November 2015; the San Bernardino public shootings and the London tube stabbings in early December 2015; the London, Belgium, Paris, and Berlin attacks in 2016; the Brussels, Manchester, and London Westminster attacks in 2017; and the Far-Right terrorist attacks and activities in the United States are yet only few instances of the growing globalization of conflict and the internationalization of terror. (See story maps of 661 terrorist attacks and 4,318 fatalities from January to July 2017 alone, at https://storymaps.esri.com /stories/terrorist-attacks/?year=2017. This is, however, a conservative figure that does not include local incidents that do not get captured in these statistics.) The upsurge and proliferation of conflicts pose crucial security threats and challenges to the global society. This is a development that raises an urgency deserving critical scholarly attention as well as stakeholders' quest for not only understanding the holistic factors—remote and immediate causes

for conflict and violence—but also mitigating the exogenous and endogenous factors on conflicts.

The International Sociological Association's Research Committee (22) Sociology of Religion midterm international conference with the theme: *Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives* (Abuja-Nigeria, January 2012), from which most chapters of this book are drawn, was well chosen and quite apt in light of contemporary global security challenges and realities. The timing of the conference was quite auspicious as it coincided with a period in which Nigeria witnessed the escalation of conflict and violence occasioned by the Boko Haram indiscriminate bombings in Abuja and its environs. In 2011 alone, sporadic bombings orchestrated by Boko Haram militants included the May 29 bombings in Abuja and Bauchi, the June 16 bombing of the Nigerian Police Headquarters, August 26 bombings of the U.N. building in Abuja, the attacks in Damaturu on November 4, and the clashes between the Nigerian security operatives and Boko Haram militants in Maiduguri and Damaturu. The fact that the Boko Haram insurgency has continued unabated, even leading in April 2014 to the scandalous kidnap of over 250 female students from the Government Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State of Nigeria, has left stark questions and poses tremendous challenges for the Nigerian government and the global community.

This international interdisciplinary conference set out to focus on theoretical perspectives and case studies to generate more nuanced analyses of social contexts from different times and places, giving greater historical depth to social scientific interpretations of conflict/violence and tolerance in contemporary societies. The conference aimed to foster social scientific expertise on religion, conflict, and violence at multiple levels of analysis, ranging from interpersonal forms of violence to ethnic, class, and civil conflicts. The transnational dimension of these conflicts constitutes an additional level of analysis. The conference also explored ways in which religion is, and is not, implicated in conflict commissioned by State or non-State actors, the ways in which religious groups respond to or negotiate violence, the lived religious meanings of conflict, tolerance and conflict-resolution, and the construction of religious groups as sources of conflict.

While the grave incidents prior to the January 2012 conference created obvious security concerns and actually affected the conference participation eventually, it is remarkable that the turnout was still quite impressive and the conference was able to capture its intended international, interdisciplinary participation, and presentations at multiple angles of scholarly discussions. While some focused upon specific and detailed cases of conflict or tolerance, others delivered a bold and comprehensive analysis of broader historical and theoretical approaches. The unintentional, yet timely focus on Nigeria constructed a web of conversations, linking together seemingly unrelated events

and people. Thus, patterns emerged during presentations that crossed boundaries of culture, religion, ethnicity, and geography. It was a grand opportunity for an interdisciplinary interrogation of issues that relate to religion and conflict, religion and violence, religion and peace, and tolerance.

Increasing cross-disciplinary discourses are focusing on the intersections of conflict and violence in different religious traditions, in varied historical epochs within local and global contexts. Existing theories on religion, conflict, and violence have been largely insufficient in grasping the complexities that characterize all forms of local-global conflicts and violence. Conventional explanations of conflict and violence remain incomplete as they separately emphasize different yet related phenomena of conflict and violence, without much effort to provide for a holistic, comprehensive explanation, or framework that encompasses the full range of interpersonal, institutional, structural, and symbolic conflict. This collection underscores the interplay between religion and politics (local and global) in the production, escalation, management, mitigation, and resolution of conflict. Many of the case studies in the book identify political institutions and leaders as part of the targets for attacks. They also talk of political goals of religious violence as well as political considerations that exist at various levels of religious hostilities. So our holistic explanation of conflict recognizes the crucial location of politics at the heart of religion whether or not the actors openly acknowledge it. The role of religion in politics is also well illuminated through many case studies in this book.

The ceaseless "war on terror," the seemingly intractable civil, political, and religioethnic conflicts globally have contributed to a dramatic reappraisal of the role of religion in conflict, tolerance, and peacebuilding. The aim of this edited collection is to provide a critical, interdisciplinary examination of the relationship between religion, conflict, violence, and tolerance from a local-global perspective, a deliberate approach which clearly differentiates it from past works, and thus, demonstrates its originality. The peer-reviewed contributions that make up this book therefore make a unique contribution to the emerging discourse on religion, conflict, violence, and tolerance in local-global perspectives. Conversely, the fact that the book includes chapters on the dialectical relationship between religion, conflict, violence, and tolerance across diverse global cultures: Africa, Europe, North America, and the Middle East, makes this volume attractive across a broad range of disciplines. The timing of the proposed volume is concurrent with the shift toward debates surrounding conflict and security in the developing world, both within interdisciplinary academic disciplines and within global public discourse. The book therefore reflects and advances the rapidly increasing interest in the empirical and theoretical development of religion, conflict, and peace studies.

Within the context of this relatively new, and rapidly expanding field of religion, conflict, and tolerance in local/global contexts, the book provides a unique and important addition to the current literature for both undergraduate and postgraduate students, and serves as a point of reference for academics from a wide-range of related fields including religious studies, cultural studies, conflict and war studies, history, sociology, anthropology, political science, peace, and strategic studies. The book will also be of interest to policy makers, NGOs, FBOs, professionals, and relevant agencies who wish to adopt a more "holistic" approach to their work. Although a scholarly study, it employs a language accessible to the nonspecialist, and will therefore also appeal to audiences involved in sustainable development, conflict resolution, and human rights issues in the non-Western world.

There is a growing literature that examines how contemporary conflicts are shaped by religion or how indeed religious conflict impacts the wider society. For instance, Timothy Sisk (2011) *Between Terror and Tolerance: Religious Leaders, Conflict, and Peacemaking* moves beyond easy generalizations about religion and conflict. The case studies are linked to an overarching framework that highlights the ambivalence of religion with regard to conflict. The book demonstrates that a pivotal factor in the escalation of tensions to open conflict is the role of elites in exacerbating tensions along identity lines by giving the ideological justification, moral reasoning, and call to violence. The book examines the varied roles of religious leaders in societies deeply divided by ethnic, racial, or religious conflict. The chapters in this book explore cases when religious leaders have justified or catalyzed violence along identity lines, and other instances when religious elites have played a critical role in easing tensions or even laying the foundation for peace and reconciliation. Bjorn Moller (2006) *Religion and Conflict in Africa* provides a brief overview of the religious landscape of Africa with a special focus on the role of religion in the continent's several conflicts. It then proceeds to look at East Africa, utilizing country case studies of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, providing a brief overview of the history of religion and conflict and an assessment of the present situation and the prospects for the future. Toyin Falola (1998) *Violence in Nigeria* explores religious violence and aggression in Nigeria, notably its causes, consequences, and the options for conflict resolution. Zones of religious tensions are identified, as well as general characteristics of violence in Nigeria. Issues in inter- and intra-religious relations, religious organizations, and the states, and the main actors in the conflicts are explored in great detail.

Most of the previous monographs and anthologies that explored the interface of religion and conflict have mostly focused on "Western" understandings of religion, conflict, violence, and tolerance (e.g., Byman 2015; Stern & Berger 2015; Sisk 2011; Barber 2010; Kaplan 2009; Al-Rasheed

2009; Selengut 2008; Hoffman 2006; Pearse 2004, 2007; Stern 2003; Juergensmeyer 2003; Scruton 2003; Appleby 2000). Indeed, there is a dearth of scholarship on this topic beyond western-focused analyses and embracing other contexts such as Africa and the Middle-East, contexts that have experienced varied conflicts/violence in historical and contemporary times. Thus, this book fills an important gap in the growing discourse, stimulating remarkable interest and discussion. With fourteen contributions and an introduction, the book is divided into two main sections (Part I: Global Perspectives and Part II: Local Perspectives), and drawing on a thematic structure with focus on theoretical perspectives and approaches to conflict, violence and tolerance; issues in local/global conflict and violence; religious conflict and the cyberspace; and the challenges of religious pluralism across the globe. The theoretical, conceptual issues draw on case studies from across the globe including the United States, Europe, Israel, Ireland, Nigeria, Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Pakistan, the Netherlands, and Zimbabwe.

The first section of the book comprises six chapters that tackle perspectives that are global in nature.

PART I: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

James V. Spickard, in chapter 1, successfully charts images of religion in politics under a neoliberal economic regime, in three parts. First, he explores the currently popular narrative about "resurgent traditional religion," a story that explains religious violence as the extreme edge of a religious reaction to modernity's ills. This narrative is particularly common among political scientists and public intellectuals from the developed world—the Benjamin Barbers, the Robert Kaplans, and others—who write on international affairs. This is not the only scholarly explanation available, but it is a dominant one and it informs much public policy. Second, Spickard locates this narrative alongside the growth of neoliberal ideologies among both Western intellectuals and comprador elites in the Global South. These ideologies, too, have become dominant in the last thirty years. They have, as he demonstrates, caused much suffering among the world's poor. They have created and sustained some of the very dislocations against which so-called "conservative" religions have rebelled. Those religions have not, however, typically articulated their complaints in socioeconomic terms. They express their rebellion theologically. Finally, he asks a key question: What are the political consequences of seeing religion as the dead hand of the ignorant past, vainly resisting global progress? He contends that framing the choice as "Jihad vs. McWorld" (to use Benjamin Barber's felicitously stark phrasing) insulates neoliberal policies from theological and ethical critique of all kinds. Thus,

identifying religion with violence lessens religion's moral power to call people to right action in what we now must see as a global community. That power, Spickard argues, is ever more needed in the contemporary world.

In chapter 2, Corey L. Williams explores how far our current methodological approaches take us in understanding what is often termed "religious" violence. By reentering an old method, Herbert Blumer's Symbolic Interactionism, he stimulates some very practical methodological reflections on social scientific fieldwork, and more broadly, embeds this within a discussion about the nature of the development, structure, and functioning of human societies. Specifically, this includes reflections on the nature of social interaction and culture and given the current state of the field, Williams makes the case for more empirical, qualitative research on religion and violence. Finally, he argues that the application of the term "religious" to acts of violence is merely the beginning, not the end of social scientific analysis and understanding. Given the nuance and complexity of all forms of social violence, Blumer's method of Symbolic Interactionism provides a clearer gateway to defining the multiple levels of interpersonal and institutional interaction and encompasses the full range of economic, ethnic, civil, class, gender, age, political, and geographical dynamics.

Paul Spickard aptly captures the intricate discourse on Muslims and membership in the United States and Europe in chapter 3. He traces how, from Samuel Huntington to Anders Behring Breivik, many White Christian and Jewish people in the United States and across Europe have over the last two decades come to assume that a fundamental clash of civilizations lies at the core of world affairs. On one side, they see reasonable, democratic, Christian-inflected, peaceful Western nations. On the other, they insist that a monolithic Islamic world is in its essence unreasoning, hate-filled, despotic, and violent. This has led to some very strange developments in the politics of membership throughout Europe and in North America. Many non-Muslim members of European and North American societies have come to see their Muslim fellow residents as fundamentally foreign to their societies. Openly anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant parties hold the reins of government in Denmark, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Austria, and Switzerland. The governments of Germany, France, and most recently the United Kingdom have adopted a clash-of-civilizations rhetoric as well. Even liberal-to-the-core Scandinavia has begun to play an anti-Muslim tune. The chapter explores this development as an example of the *racialization of religion*—that is, the assertion that there exist essential, indelible, characterological differences between Judeo-Christian-inflected people and Muslim-inflected people, and that these presumed differences disqualify Muslims for full membership in Western societies. Drawing particularly on research in the United States and in Germany, with comparative material from other European countries,

Spickard compares the public rhetoric about national membership with the realities of life for Muslim residents in Western countries, as they are charted over this racialized religious divide.

In chapter 4, Najimdeen Ayoola Bakare captures vividly the dynamics and implications of religion and conflict in a globalized cybersphere. In the face of a new world order of information technology, religious groups, and other agents of social change as identified by Robin Hahnel, garner momentum. The new order accounts for the proliferation of the new sphere of interaction, distinctive from Habermasian's public sphere. This new sphere creates a wide connection and networking which in recent times has become a source of strength for primordial sentiments and social capital (Francis Fukuyama), facilitating integration, fragmentation, and ultimately violence at both domestic and global levels. The chapter explores how and to what extent the cybersphere breaks cleavages and fosters national, regional and global social interaction and networking, yet makes the fraternity of domestic and global violence more disturbing. While conflict and violence carry serious ramifications for states and are often disrupted through state antiviolence restrictions, the new sphere pose challenges to the latter as a result of its virtuality and invisibility. Bakare delineates how the popular culture of mobile phones and the Internet aggravates the modern discourse of conflict and violence, and the complicity of religion both at domestic and global levels. He reinvigorates the Khaldunian historical yet philosophical paradigm of conflict and simultaneously blends it with Gramscian theory for a conceptual analysis.

The next two chapters, 5 and 6 further interrogate the nexus between religion and terrorism in Africa and globally. Dodeye U. Williams focuses on the challenges of traditional counterterrorism strategies. She demonstrates how terrorism in many parts of the world has been largely related to groups with religious ideologies, predominantly Islam, in the last few decades. The security of the continent has been threatened by the activities of terrorist groups. African governments, and other global stakeholders, have employed several strategies, predominantly the use of military force, to counter their activities. Some scholars have argued that rather than bringing about security, overdependence on military strategies tend to escalate violence around the region. Drawing upon case studies of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Mali, Al-Shabaab in Somalia, and Boko Haram in Nigeria, Williams explores the environment of conflict in Africa that has enabled religious terrorism, arguing that given the ambivalence of religion, counterterrorism strategies that employ military force as a long-term strategy to contain the threat often ignore the role of religion in Africa. She contends that in the quest for sustainable peace, the religious variable is an important factor to be taken into focus in the war against terrorism on the African continent.

Tunde Agara expands the discourse on religion and terrorism in chapter 6 commencing on a premise that although violence and conflict is endemic to human nature and as old as human societies, it was, nevertheless, limited solely to propagating political, economic, and social goals. In delineating conflicts under two epochs: the pre-Cold War and the post-Cold War epochs, he argues that violent insurgencies and conflict have manifested in forms of revolutions, guerrilla wars, terrorism, and coup d'etats. Although religious terrorism can be traced back to antiquity, its modern manifestation is a relatively recent phenomenon, with terrorism of the Muslim persuasion taking it to a new extreme. The chapter focuses on the roles played by clerics, fatwas, and madrassas in propagating religious intolerance. It proffers ways in which religious intolerance can be curbed rather than the more difficult task of stamping out religious terrorism.

PART II: LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

The second section of the book, made up of nine chapters, addresses case studies drawn from across several geographical contexts that are subsumed here under local perspectives. In chapter 7, Umar Habila Dadem Danfulani highlights basic causes of conflict in Jos Plateau communities, and critically examines some traditional strategies for conflict prevention and management, and postconflict mediation, resolution, reconstruction, reconciliation, and rehabilitation among Jos Plateau communities. Since mediation is a community phenomenon, and the causes of conflict mostly from within, it is imperative that strategies for a long-lasting and permanent peace must be sought from the community. Thus, Danfulani contends that solutions to conflict resolution and management ought therefore to be insider-initiated, community-based, and culturally oriented. Traditional strategies for conflict resolution, discussed in this chapter, drawn from field work data and experiences on the Jos Plateau are woven together with comparative secondary data from Africa and elsewhere. Danfulani's core thesis is that the conflict between various Jos Plateau communities and the Jasawa Muslims of Hausa and Fulani descent since 2001 could be permanently resolved or at least drastically mitigated if traditional strategies for conflict resolution are employed.

Damaris Parsitau remarks that the pursuits for constitutional reforms in Kenya has not only stirred debates and discussions about interfaith relations and dialogue but fueled Islamophobic attitudes toward Kenyan Muslims, in a way that has left unnecessary mutual tension and strain between two dominant faiths. In chapter 8, she explores the debates, controversies, fears, tensions, and suspicions surrounding the inclusion of Kadhi (Islamic) courts in Kenya's constitution review process. Parsitau argues that the process brought

deep-seated tension and suspicion between Muslims and Christians, and for the first time in Kenya's sociopolitical history, religious politics temporarily supplanted ethnic politics as Christian clergy in particular, but also Muslim leaders, stoked the embers of religious violence in an increasingly multi-religious country already reeling from ethnic tensions and tribalism.

In chapter 9, Lovemore Ndlovu traces the role of religion in Zimbabwe's political conflict, space contestation in religious and political domains, stressing how the formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999 changed the Zimbabwean political and religious landscape. Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZANU PF) was pitted against the new political party which inevitably threatened its existence. The rivalry and polarization is visible in all areas of public and private life, including religion. Religion and politics are intertwined in ways that make a strict demarcation difficult. Ndlovu contributes to this debate, by investigating how religion is manipulated by the political parties to further political interests and ends, and to seek legitimacy. Such ambivalence can be further seen in how religious leaders also engage in politics to complicate a rather charged atmosphere.

During the last four decades, Islam has become Europe's second religion after Christianity. This rapid rise has evoked different responses. One of them—and a very important one from a political point of view—is that of Islam criticism, or in its harsh form, of anti-Islamism, which has created a societal climate which is characterized by "polarization." In chapter 10, Sipco J. Vellenga analyzes the effects of responses of leaders of Dutch Islamic and non-Islamic organizations to public expressions of Islam criticism in the Netherlands, particularly the film *Submission* by Theo van Gogh and M.P. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the Danish Mohammed-Cartoons and the film *Fitna* of M.P. Geert Wilders. Findings are based on interviews with leaders of religious organizations and extensive document-based research, drawing also from Kees Schuyt's theory on factors contributing to the transformation of agonism into antagonism. Thus, while the chapter's focus is on the way leaders of Muslim organizations have responded in the tense situation of conflict to public expressions of Islam criticism since "9/11," briefly reflecting on the main outcomes of his investigation, he concludes on the observation of Scott Appleby, that mainstream organizations within large religious traditions tend to promote dialogue rather than violence. By taking a peaceful stance in the current Islam conflict, the Muslim organizations examined, which represent the overwhelming majority of Muslim communities in the Netherlands, give a valuable contribution to "living together" in the country in a period of polarization.

George R. Wilkes observes that two competing attitudes to the notion of "religious conflict" surface in the discourse of Israeli Jewish religious peace initiatives. One justifies the creation of a deliberately moderate religious

initiative in opposition to messianic, fundamentalist irrationalism. The second argues that the resources used by extremists can be effectively used by advocates of peace, without dismissing fundamentally religious aspirations as irrational. In chapter 11, Wilkes examines these positions as responses to the contexts in which a distinctively religious peace initiative has arisen. He gives particular attention to the development of new initiatives since the early 1980s; examines the written expression of these initiatives and their use of recognized religious practices, both in their engagement with local constituencies and in relation to interlocutors outside the Israeli-Jewish context. The timing of these initiatives clearly responds to international events, while their discourse primarily addresses intellectual, social, and political developments as they affect particular parts of the Israeli Jewish population. Wilkes treats the ways in which proponents of an avowedly religious form of peace activism navigate the global and local—as well as the political and the personal—in their descriptions of the deployment of religion for peace and for conflict. These initiatives in common reject or depart from the dualistic oppositions: religion/secularism, peace/conflict, peace/violence which preoccupy many popular academic accounts of the role of religion in justifying war and forging peace. He examines strategies by which the subjects confront these anomalies, noting what they reveal of the difficulties of addressing questions of structure and agency in ways which apply to all of the dimensions of a complex conflict situation.

The dominant discourse on the position of women within the customary justice systems in Africa emphasizes the stark gender disparity whereby women's rights and traditional rule are often described as being incompatible entities and eternal foes. Accordingly, most studies conducted on customary institutions of dispute resolution in the continent often accent the marginalization thesis inscribing the insignificant place and role of women in customary courts contrary to the core objective of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 encouraging the active involvement of women in Peace and Security. In chapter 12, Meron Zeleke demonstrates how such generalizations and overemphasis on marginalization of women at customary courts is problematic on several grounds. First, it conceals the agency of women in peace building. Furthermore, such generalizations have the tendency to create a polarizing dichotomy between formal and customary courts, by describing the formal courts as being more favorable platforms for women. By drawing on the case of women-led customary institution of dispute resolution in Ethiopia, she shows how Arsi women, in a male-dominated, sociocultural environment, actively resolve disputes and uphold their rights. By examining the lived accounts of the *Sinqee* institution and on the local perspectives, she presents the factors and circumstances that allow the institution to remain relevant and effective, the process of dispute resolution, the operational logic and enforcing mechanisms of this institution, and the complexity of *Sinqee*

in relation to the Oromo worldview and belief system. Zeleke briefly presents processes of unfolding social changes affecting *Sinqee*.

In chapter 13, Serawit Bekele Debele's careful analysis of Angatuu's song "Clemency oh Waaqa for the blood of the Oromo" during Irreecha ritual shows how collective prayers are one of many ways through which people respond to social suffering sustained due to problematic state-society relations, typical of authoritarian states like Ethiopia. As she argues, Angatuu in this song, makes a statement pointing to the fact that the Oromo are faced with a force to reckon with. She admits that they are compared to what they are dealing with, too powerless to face the enemy alone and only Him who is above all else can avenge for the Oromo. Angatuu requests Waaqa to intervene and serve justice for the Oromo who have been victimized. The chapter's three sections briefly describe Irreecha, highlights the October 2, 2016 incident to provide a context that informed the nature of the London Irreecha. Social suffering was theorized and analyzed within the context of Irreecha prayer ritual.

Hassan J. Ndzovu demonstrates how attacks targeting anti-jihadi Muslim clerics and noncombatant Christian civilians have increased since 2011, indicating the rise of a homegrown radicalized section of the Muslim population in Kenya. In the last chapter of the book, chapter 14, he argues that a certain religious discourse is used in defining identity that is opposed to pluralism and divergent intellectual opinion in favor of an exclusivist community. To explore this theme, he raises the following questions: (i) how is the present Somali war rationalized as a jihadi duty for Kenyan Muslims?; (ii) to what extent is the intra-Muslim conflict emerging due to divergent interpretation of the jihad concept resolved through the apostasy claim?; and (iii) what is the justification of targeting noncombatant Christian civilians during the jihadi attacks? Using the discourse analysis approach, texts and sermons by actors, supposedly authoritative speakers of the jihadi discourse in Kenya and Somalia, were examined for the assumptions, narratives, and arguments they relayed.

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