Introduction

A crisis of confidence is emerging in relations between the Western and Muslim worlds, especially in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. Heightening the tension is the war on terrorism, whether defined as preventing nonstate networks from attacking global infrastructure or warding off the challenge of so-called rogue states. To complicate matters, the Western and Muslim worlds themselves are divided on political and policy issues, while constituencies on all sides fail to recognize or understand the basic forces at play. Hence they tend to rely on symbols and slogans rather than informed thinking in addressing their differences. In democracies of the West, even national populations and political leaders differ in their perceptions of the nature of the threats looming on the world's horizon. Those leaders may well face a backlash at the polls if they fail to educate their populations about the realities of today's globalizing, interdependent world, which has clearly entered a new era in international relations.

Nowhere is the West's poor grasp of these matters more noticeable than in its approach to the non-Arab Muslim world, which since the end of the cold war has been mainly one of benign neglect. This has ranged from downsizing embassy, consular, and aid resources to curtailing forms of human engagement such as student and scholar exchanges or professional and business interactions. Policies that rest on such a base tend to be fraught with unintended consequences, concentrate only on the short term, and consist of either overactions or underreactions. If the war on terrorism is to be consequential, which is a concern of virtually all governments of the world, plus organizations ranging from the United Nations to the Organization of the Islamic Conference, a precondition for engagement is clearly some effort at

mutual understanding. Power politics of the might-makes-right variety are hardly sufficient to assess the root causes of mistrust and often produce negative reactions that hinder constructive engagement. Furthermore, images of forceful interaction that can now be transmitted globally with the aid of modern technology may abet a clash of civilizations (which is the stated goal of groups such as al Qaeda) rather than a dialogue, or more hopefully, cross-cultural cooperation focusing on our common human problems and challenges.

Even a dialogue approach that democratizes participation in policies of interaction, perhaps through a vast increase in nongovernmental organizations with specific agendas or through the spread of democratic electoral institutions, may complicate statesmanship, especially in determining how concepts such as women's rights or human rights might fit into U.S.-Muslim world relations. Another idea that must be entertained in a pluralistic world seeking to live in peace is that of multiple jurisprudential systems (or alternative dispute resolution systems), since the desire for justice is at the heart of many current grievances exploding into violent conflict.

Before any real dialogue can begin, Westerners must recognize that the Muslim world rests on a wide variety of cultural foundations and historical legacies and that many reforms (and reactions to reform) are well under way there. Also, they must remember that economic globalization creates new winners and losers (or in oil-producing countries, new classes of haves and have-nots). As the pace of change accelerates and uncertainty intensifies, many will turn to their spiritual foundations for guidance. Such fundamentalism, or going back to basics, is a worldwide phenomenon and a typical human response to uncertainty. It should not be an excuse for launching a new era of religious wars.

These complexities are well illustrated in Nigeria. Of its approximately 138 million people, about half (69 million) are Muslim and half Christian or traditional. This makes Nigeria tied with Turkey and Iran for having the sixth largest Muslim population in the world, after Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Egypt. Yet all its religions rest on a solid foundation of African cultural traditions. Hence religious identity may not have the same meaning in Nigeria as it does elsewhere, whether in Saudi Arabia or in Texas. Indeed, there are probably more commonalities among Nigerian ethnoreligious groups than differences. Part of the challenge for Nigerian scholars is to reclaim this African heritage without being overwhelmed by the forces of religious globalization or the extreme forms of secularism that emerged during the cold war.

Without doubt, Nigeria is central to global stability. If some form of dialogue among Nigerian groups or between the Western world and the Muslim world is not forthcoming, the prospect of violence and terrorism may well persist, and, in extreme cases, nations may fail. As a stark reminder of what can happen when political leadership or systems crumble, more than 2 million died in Nigeria's civil war of 1967–70. A failure in Nigeria today would have even more extreme consequences in view of its oil wealth and military technologies, which would be available to destabilize the whole of West Africa.

In 1999 Nigeria returned to civilian rule expecting that a "democratic dividend" would be improved conditions for all. But when expectations go up and realities go down, as Ted Gurr has long maintained, "men rebel."[1] Perhaps that is why Nigeria's several attempts at democratic federalism have failed. Tensions are again high in the current Fourth Republic iteration owing to the polarization of wealth, overt corruption, increase in poverty and crime, and some extreme forms of election fraud. Whether democratic federalism will turn out to be part of the problem or part of the solution remains to be seen. At a minimum, the Western world has an interest in strengthening the institutions of a multiparty democracy in which rule-of-law principles pertain, and in which state and local forms of federalism balance the considerable centralization inherited from the military periods.

The key to democratic federalism is the engagement of civil society, which must then strengthen its capacities for resolving conflicts to ensure that minor local issues do not blow up into system-threatening crises. To sacrifice these principles of democracy for the short-term gains of allies in the war on terrorism may create more problems down the line.[2]

While it is too early to assess Nigeria's Fourth Republic, an essential first step to this end is to understand the state's historical and cultural underpinnings. Since humans tend to see the world as a projection of themselves, it is fair to say that Westerners are more familiar with the Westernized, Christian, secular, southern parts of Nigeria than with the Muslim north. Some Nigerians believe such a north-south dichotomy exists and is so deep that it threatens the existence of the nation. At the same time, many of Nigeria's leaders have worked hard to build bridges of understanding and to mediate conflicts between the country's factions.

A caveat to mention at this point concerns the modes of analysis appropriate to the Nigerian context. Western social sciences (and indeed most Western governmental organizations) tend to distinguish between the economic, political, religious, social, and other dimensions of culture. In non-Western cultures, including those of Nigeria, these dimensions overlap.

Hence it makes no sense to debate whether events (such as the 2000 and 2004 riots in northern Nigeria) are political, religious, or socioeconomic in nature. The answer is all of the above. If anything, Westerners usually overemphasize the religious dimension (often in an alarmist manner) or undervalue it (secular analysts, for example, tend to assess almost everything through an economic lens).

For historical reasons, religion in Nigeria, whether Islam or Christianity, is largely based on ethnic tradition or location. Religious practices differ even within the same ethnolocational context, particularly between elites and the grassroots masses. To judge whether the country's civic society has the capacity to engage in conflict resolution behavior under a system of democratic federalism, it is important to recognize that by international standards the levels of religious commitment, belief, and practice in Nigeria are extremely high, in both the Muslim and Christian communities.[3] Hence secularism is mainly a minority perspective in a country that explicitly regards itself as multireligious. This intense multireligious nature makes Nigeria an important case study in the academic and policy domains.

This volume is for the general Western reader, including those interested in policy issues, who may be unfamiliar with the particulars of the Nigerian case. Its central tenet is that most current developments do not make sense unless viewed in their historical and cultural framework. Indeed, the unintended consequences of actions and policies that lack this broader perspective often undermine the best of intentions. Historical patterns and incidents are therefore summarized briefly throughout the book, with suggestions for further reading in the footnotes. Electoral patterns and selected biographies are provided in the appendixes.

My interpretations and assessments are based on four decades of research and teaching in Nigeria, as well as extensive travel throughout the federation. Over the years, I have been indebted to many Nigerian colleagues and scholars. The views expressed in this study, however, are my own. They are an attempt to contribute to the cross-cultural bridge building that has helped keep Nigeria together. Now, in a highly polarized world, the need for international bridges is more urgent than ever.

This study focuses on issues of conflict and conflict resolution in contexts where civic cultures interact with electoral politics. Some issues have acquired broader significance since the end of the cold war world and September 11. Western scholars and policymakers often emphasize the headline-grabbing instances of conflict in Nigeria, especially in the face of September 11 and the international war on terrorism. This volume pro-

vides context for a more balanced perspective, concentrating on the Nigerian Muslim community, especially in the northern emirate states and the southwestern Yoruba states, but with some attention to the Islam experience in the northeastern Borno area and the northern Middle Belt. The Muslim community in Nigeria has evolved over time both in its relations with other Muslims and with Christian communities.[4] During the democratic phases of the federation, Muslim civic culture bequeathed two major legacies on Nigeria: a state-based (northern emirate) system and a nonstate (for example, southwestern Yoruba) system.[5] Since the national elections of 1999 and 2003, political relationships between the Muslim emirate states in the north and the Yoruba cultural states in the southwest have become an urgent issue challenging the unity of the federation.

In examining these and other challenges, the book follows four main avenues of discussion. Part 1 provides background information on Nigeria's place in international affairs and its experience with federalism. Part 2 examines Nigerian Muslim identities and civic cultures, as reflected in the practices of sufi brotherhoods and anti-innovation legalists, emirate and Yoruba Muslim civic groups, and Muslim political and national identities. Part 3 highlights the challenges of Nigerian democratic federalism, notably those related to the emerging Fourth Republic and the shari'a issue (that is, debate about the application of Islamic law based on the Qur'an), plus others arising from the country's civic cultures and attempts at conflict resolution, including religious tolerance. In part 4, the discussion turns to Nigeria's approaches to conflict resolution, an evaluation of conflict models, key elements of Muslim civic cultures and conflict resolution, and their implications for Nigeria's relations with the international community.

Democratic federalism in Nigeria represents a critical experiment in the global quest for political frameworks that can achieve unity in the presence of diversity. Some issues of basic concern in such an experiment are how the component states and local governments are configured and what kinds of relations exist between different levels of federal, state, and local government.

Nigeria's civilian periods have been profoundly affected by the centralizing practices under military rule and its oil economy.[6] Nonetheless, the state has managed to cohere by recognizing its regional and geocultural zones and allowing power to be shared across such zones. As a result, political alliances across regions (and thus across ethnoreligious groups) have become a necessary condition for national unity (see map 1 showing the states of Nigeria). That is why Nigeria relies on both traditional cultural and more modern mechanisms to resolve conflicts. The Nigerian case is central to

Map 1. Nigeria and Its Thirty-Six States Today

R

Nguru

Jigawa

Kano

Yobe

Dutse

Damaturu

Potiskum

Maiduguri

Borno

Lake
Chad

CHAD

N'Djamena

Chari

Kari

Damboa

Bauchi

Gongola

Bauchi

Biu

Mubi

Gombe

Kumo

Gombe

Logone

Amper

Adamawa

Plateau

Benue

Yola

Lagdo
Res.

Yelwa

Jalingo

Ibi

Bantaji

Ganye

Taraba

Wukari

Taraba

Katsina-Ala

Bissaula

CAMEROON

Madeira
Islands (Port.)

Canary
Islands (Sp.)

TUNISIA

MOROCCO

ALGERIA

LIBYA

EGYPT

WESTERN
SAHARA

MAURITANIA

MALI

NIGER

CHAD

SUDAN

ERITREA

DJIBOUTI

CAPE
VERDE

THE
GAMBIA

SENEGAL

GUINEA
BISSAU

GUINEA

SIERRA LEONE

LIBERIA

CÔTE
D'IVOIRE

GHANA

BURKINA
FASO

BENIN

TOGO

NIGERIA

CAMEROON

CENTRAL
AFRICAN REPUBLIC

ETHIOPIA

SOMALIA

EQUATORIAL
GUINEA

SAO TOME
AND PRINCIPE

GABON

REP. OF THE CONGO

DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC
OF THE
CONGO

UGANDA

RWANDA

BURUNDI

KENYA

TANZANIA

ANGOLA

MALAWI

COMOROS

ZAMBIA

MOZAMBIQUE

MADAGASCAR

ZIMBABWE

NAMIBIA

BOTSWANA

SOUTH
AFRICA

SWAZILAND

LESOTHO

models of conflict and broader issues both in Africa and in U.S.-Muslim world relations.[7]

In particular, the case sheds light on two questions of great concern to the global community. First, when a nation of extreme ethnoreligious diversity shifts from military rule to democratic federalism, will indigenous civic cultures in predominantly Muslim areas reinforce or undermine efforts at conflict resolution? Second, what is an appropriate role, if any, for the international community in encouraging troubled zones to resolve their conflicts?

The discussion in Part 1 lays the groundwork for the analysis of these questions. Chapter 1 covers four main topics: Muslim Nigeria's role in the international community (especially on matters of dialogue with the Western world and with the Islamic world); Western public opinion and policy perspectives, as well as the challenges ahead; conflict theory and its links to civic culture, religion, and democratic federalism; and the relevance of the Nigerian case in evaluating conflict theories. Focusing on the emergence of democratic federalism in Nigeria, chapter 2 considers the implications of the legacy of north-south regionalism, the idea of geocultural zones, the challenges of political structure, and the country's Muslim civic cultures and their issues.

Nigeria's Muslim identities and civic cultures are examined more closely in the next four chapters, beginning in chapter 3 with the major categories of religious identity in the Nigerian Muslim community and their general value orientations, both of which will have bearing on the state's transition to a stable system of democratic federalism over the long term. Chapter 4 concentrates on the traditional civic culture of the emirate states of northern Nigeria, with an emphasis on its five value orientations: time and destiny, community, authority and decisionmaking, civic space (including scope of the state), and conflict resolution (including concepts of justice). Chapter 5 then turns to the Yoruba Muslim community, the Yoruba blend of Christians and traditionalists, civic values and capital city issue, and the emphasis on family values and religious tolerance. As chapter 6 demonstrates, Nigeria's national Muslim identities and values can also be divided along progressive, progressive-conservative, and military lines, or on the basis of their affiliation with women's organizations and national umbrella organizations. As is also pointed out, each category has a particular orientation to authority, community, change, and conflict resolution.

With the end of military rule and establishment of the Fourth Republic on May 29, 1999, Nigeria began yet another attempt at democratic federalism. The patterns of federal-state-local relations under the current three-tier struc-

ture are the subject of chapter 7, which explores emerging issues of Nigerian federalism, politics and federal character, states' rights and criminal law, and the aftermath of the 2003 elections, through 2005. Since the reintroduction of shari'a law, however, new tensions and conflicts have arisen both within the Muslim community and between the Muslim and Christian communities. Relations grew even tenser following the elections of 2003, especially when the results were contested. Contributing factors include the politics of shari'a in the north, the mediating influence of "federal character" appointments, processes of implementation, and patterns of implementation in the shari'a states, all discussed in chapter 8. Interestingly, several patterns of sociopolitical conflict are associated with the shari'a states, as noted in chapter 9. In chapter 10, the information gathered to this point is applied in the exploration of four broad issues: religious tolerance and conflict within the Muslim community, religious tolerance and conflict within the Christian community, tolerance and conflict between Muslim and Christian communities, and communications and crisis management networks.

The way in which civic cultures and democratic federalism tend to deal with conflict is the subject of chapter 11, which provides insight into their approach to power sharing, symbolism, and leadership. The book concludes with a summary of Nigerian approaches to conflict resolution, an evaluation of conflict models, and some thoughts on the lessons to be drawn from conflict resolution in Muslim civic cultures. Nigeria's experience in this regard is clearly of utmost interest to the international community.