



Globalization and Inter-Religious Dialogue in African Cultural Context

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ABSTRACT

Globalization is a complex concept that cannot be defined within a set time frame, nor is it a process that can be defined clearly without any biases or ambiguity. Globalization cannot be expounded upon with certainty and be applicable to all people and in all situations. Globalization involves economic integration, the transfer of policies across borders, the transmission of knowledge, cultural stability, the reproduction, relations, and discourses of power. It is a global process, a concept, a revolution, and an establishment of the global market free from socio-political control. Globalization encompasses everything. It is a concept that has been defined variously over the years, with some connotations referring to progress, development and stability, integration and cooperation, and others referring to regression, colonialism, and destabilization. Despite these challenges, this term brings with it a multitude of hidden agendas. An individual's political ideology, geographic location, social status, cultural background, and ethnic and religious affiliation provide the background that determines how globalization is interpreted. The African continent is large with diverse culture and traditions. Their social and cultural values tend toward relationships, hospitality and tolerance of all religious ideas and worldviews. This attitude of the African people accounts for the reasons why religions such as Christianity and Islam had thrived on the continent as they encounter the culture and religions of the traditional people of Africa. The traditional people are either inclusive or pluralistic in their orientations and worldviews. They recognize the fact that the God which Islam and Christianity proclaimed is the

same God which the traditional people are worshipping and so when they encountered Islam and Christianity, to dialogue with and tolerate these new religions is not difficult. This paper is purely a literary work. The thesis of this essay is that accommodation, solidarity and sharing peculiar to the African culture makes the environment conducive for inter-religious encounters and that inter-religious dialogue is a tool for religious peace and harmony in Africa. The task of this paper therefore, is threefold: One, to discuss the characteristics of the African cultural environment and advance some of the factors that are responsible for the possibility of inter-religious dialogue in African cultural environment. Two, to highlight the necessity of and hindrances to inter-religious dialogue in a pluralistic environment such as African cultural environment and finally discuss the forms of inter-religious dialogue in a globalized African community. The writer uses material from the library and internet sources. He consulted articles in Journal, Dictionaries and textbooks.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

GLOBALIZATION

An individual's political ideology, geographic location, social status, cultural background, and ethnic and religious affiliation provide the background that determines how globalization is interpreted. For example, Andrew Igenozza describes globalization as a situation which affects or engulfs the whole world. It is like the entire world at one's doorstep: the foreign religions and ideologies, the good and the bad.¹ Kenichi Ohmae defines it as the onset of the borderless world."² These two definitions do not have positive or negative connotations but is vague and inclusive. These definitions could be used as a basis for a working paper on a number of subjects, including technology, trade agreements, and just about any other issue that deals with overcoming traditional boundaries. Gold Anie defines globalization as a new form of intellectual colonialism. By this definition he tied globalization to western intellectual and theological production

in which everyone is expected to view things from western perspective and do things in the way the west would do it without questioning.³ Roland Robertson describes globalization as the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole.⁴ Under the impact of globalization, the world has become “a single place.”⁵ Of course, the size of the world has not changed, but access to distant locations has broadened our imaginative grasp of the world. Like a “girdle put round the earth” which “binds the world and the nations of the earth together,”⁶ transnational technologies that make the world a single place are characteristic of the globalizing era. Fletcher notes “while the compression of the world through current systems of economics, migration, media, and technology may make 21st-century Christians acutely aware of globality, the movement of persons and ideas through global systems is not unique to our time.”⁷ The sense of how technological advances shrink the globe was recognized in the late 19th century, expressed, for example, by Isabell Bogelot: “At this time, when steam and electricity have eliminated distances, nothing can happen among one people that does not have its echo among all the others.”⁸ There are various definitions of globalization based on the available materials and resources at hand. These definitions cut across different discipline. In reviewing all of these definitions, it is clear that the literature does not come any closer to an understanding of what globalization actually is. Due to the complexity of the concept, research projects, articles, and discussions usually remain focused on a single aspect of globalization in order to be able to provide some concrete solutions and recommendations. From reviewing various definition of globalization I have been able to adapt Al-Rodha’s definition of globalization which states that

Globalization is a process that encompasses the origin, the path, and consequences of transnational and transcultural amalgamation of human and non-human activities. ⁹

In the development of this definition of globalization, it was vital to utilize a broad perspective in order for it to be brief yet as comprehensive as possible. Globalization is not an endpoint to be discussed and then forgotten. Rather, it is a process, a current that has been impacting communities, cultures, and economies for hundreds of years. It is a result of the multinational and multicultural amalgamations that have occurred globally throughout human history. It encompasses the origin and the path that is, the course and the result of these amalgamations. This merger of various worldviews has transpired through activities that are both human and non-human in nature.¹⁰ Human activities encompass the linguistic, cultural, economic, and political aspects of human life (along with many others) that are a part of the human and social sphere. It is also important to include non-human activities, which incorporate, but are not limited to, the spread of bacteria and non-human diseases such as bird flu, as well as natural disasters such as tornadoes, tsunamis, earthquakes, and hurricanes. As all of these issues impact human and global security, it is my opinion that a truly comprehensive definition of globalization must address these issues. In addition, it is important to recognize that globalization is not a force that needs to be stopped; rather, it is a process that influences each of us in a number of ways, both to our benefit and also to our detriment. When embraced in the context of our definition, globalization can be understood in a way that allows for a greater appreciation of, and, consequently, movement towards furthering, individual, as well as global security and stability.

TECHNOLOGY

Everybody agrees that technology, especially information technology is the vehicle that drives globalization forward.¹¹ The cost of communication and computing has fallen dramatically in advanced country while in the third world the cost is falling and rising. Air transport in Africa has become far more competitive and the progress in computer technology means that transactions are made at the speed of lightning. Technology has made it possible to dialogue

or talk with anybody anywhere in the world. It has also made it possible to listen to religious view of different religious persuasion thus moving religion from exclusive realm to inclusiveness. Trade transaction has become easy; people can do business anywhere in the world. With just a button, many things are accomplished. The growth in technology today is a challenge to our religious and theological worldview. Technology has influenced our culture and attitude today when compared with what we were twenty years ago. Information technology which is the root of globalization has popularized secularism and humanism and as such most people are more technologically oriented than putting their faith in God. Technology has influenced Christianity and other religions to the extent that the bible is now read electronically. People don't need to carry their bible to church or Sunday school because technology has made it possible to read the bible on power point and transmitted live when the teaching or preaching is going on. Technology has made it possible to watch services, sports, scenes and events on screen live as technology has brought us good dividend. Sattanov rightly observed that;

Nobody will deny the fact that the ways in which information have been disseminated around the world over the past two decades changed drastically. Today we are living in the period, which can be deservedly called the "information age". The influence of the "information age" can be observed, among other things, on example of such a phenomenon of the human civilisation as religion. New communications and information technologies (IT) help to disseminate both knowledge about a religion and religious knowledge world-wide. It is now possible for any religion to spread beyond the national borders. All of this is resulting in a process, which can be termed as "globalisation of religion."¹²

I think as Christians we should not be carried away by our technological breakthrough to the extent that we deny the existence of the Ultimate reality. The advanced technology we experience today has long been prophesied by Prophet Daniel when he said in the latter times knowledge shall be increased and men shall run to and fro... the contemporary people should allow the increase in knowledge in every sphere of human endeavor, sciences and

technology to affect them so as to become relevant to the society. The increase in knowledge has brought a lot of development for humanity. One of these developments is making the world a global village. Whereby it is easy to interact or communicate with people in any part of the world just at the press of button. So what we notice today is the reality of what increase in knowledge has accomplished for humanity.

Globalization and technology are two related terms that have affected every societal value both positively and negatively. Globalization is now making the cultures to interact and so people can learn good things in the culture of other people. Due to globalization and technology, Asian can value the culture of the American and African can appreciate the culture and worldviews of other people living within the continent and outside. In fact religious views of different religious denomination can now be appreciated and understood which in effect will facilitate dialogue that will bring about peaceful co-existence.

INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

The term “dialogue” is derived from the Greek *dia-logos* which literally means “through word.” Dialogue is therefore “talking together” or “conversation.” Interreligious dialogue is primarily a conversation between believers of different faiths or religious traditions. Fundamentally, inter-religious dialogue has come to be understood as an encounter between people who live by different faith traditions in an atmosphere of mutual trust and acceptance. According to S. Wesley Ariarajah, inter-faith dialogue is seen as a way not only to become informed about the faiths of others but also to rediscover essential dimensions of one’s own faith tradition. The benefits of removing historical prejudices and enmities as well as new possibilities for working together for common good [are] recognized and affirmed.¹³ Inter-religious dialogue therefore can be a discourse between two or more religious organizations for better understanding of the tenets of each religion in order to promote peaceful coexistence among the practitioners of such religions. According to Vatican definition of dialogue,

dialogue can be understood in different ways. Firstly, at the purely human level, it means reciprocal communication, leading to a common goal or, at a deeper level, to interpersonal communion. Secondly, dialogue can be taken as an attitude of respect and friendship, which permeates or should permeate all those activities constituting the evangelizing mission of the Church. This can appropriately be called "the spirit of dialogue".¹⁴ Thirdly, in the context of religious plurality, dialogue means "all positive and constructive interreligious relations with individuals and communities of other faiths which are directed at mutual understanding and enrichment," in obedience to truth and respect for freedom. It includes both witness and the exploration of respective religious convictions. .¹⁵ According to Father Francis he highlights what interreligious dialogue is not and why is it necessary especially in any multicultural and pluralistic setting as we have in Africa. He notes that interreligious dialogue is neither a study of world religions (a theological reflection on religions) nor a comparative study of creeds and doctrines, although such studies are important and useful. Interreligious dialogue is not a scientific debate between experts in religions, because no one tries establishing what is right or wrong. It is also not a box of pre-established and pre-determined laws from which solutions can be drawn at any moment. In other words, it is not a forum of conflicts resolution, though someone might find the truth of the matter. It is not an effort to persuade the other to embrace one's own religion since conversion from one religion to another must be free. It can be viewed as conversion –Christians and non-Christians to God. It is not a forum where differences in doctrines and practices are considered as obstacles, therefore they should be ignored and thrown away and it is not a simple exchange of information about each other's religious beliefs. Father Francis Arinze asserts that the search for peace and not conversion is the major goal of interreligious dialogue which is the characteristic of African environment, thus conversion to either of the religions is not ruled out. This must be free.¹⁶ He thus gives a vivid picture of what interreligious dialogue should be. He notes that first and foremost inter-religious dialogue is an attitude

that someone acquires or the kind of options open to him in developing his own point of view of other religions. Thus he speaks as follows:

An attitude could be defined the manner of his acting or his thinking; one's disposition, opinion or mental set. Some believe that all other religions are false except theirs. Some others assert that each religion is the appropriate expression of its own culture. Still others think that all religions are the same. So people may have different attitudes towards other religions. Here are the most well known: rationalism, Romanticism, relativism, exclusivism, dialectic, reconception, tolerance, dialogue, Catholicism and presence. The attitude of African Christians towards other religions these last decades is of special concern because the future of Africa that should be shaped in a way that promotes harmony for the avoidance of religious conflicts partly depends on this.¹⁷

All of this is resulting in a process, which can be termed as “globalisation of religion.”¹⁸ The phenomenon of globalisation of religion has made it easier to transfer the all-embracing message of any religion all over the world. As a result, societies are becoming less exclusive and more multi-religious.¹⁹ Social reality forces world religious communities to get rid of their exclusive attitudes and to develop some universal orientations, which should be more accommodating to the other. In these conditions, various forms of interreligious dialogue shall have crucial importance.²⁰ Thus interreligious dialogue will be fruitful as people of different religions and faith encounter each other in an atmosphere of freedom and openness for each partner to listen and understand each other.

THE AFRICAN CULTURE

Every culture in the world has its own definiteness. No culture is the same. In Africa we have diverse people with different culture. The culture of the Africans is not the same, there are similarities in some places but the differences are of larger magnitude. By culture, we mean the way of life of the people which has to

do with their languages, customs, traditions, religions and their attitude to life or worldviews John Mbiti notes that the African culture is the totality of their world view.²¹Oyelakin agrees with Mbiti when he also describes culture as a way of life of the people and it encompasses the totality of their beliefs and practices.²² This present writer supports the definition of culture that encompasses the totality of the being of the people. There are so many cultures in the world which are marked by their distinct qualities. For instance, we have American culture, British culture, Russian culture, etc. In Africa we have the Ashanti culture, the Ga culture in Ghana, in Nigeria we have the Hausa culture, Igbo culture, Urhobo culture and the Yoruba culture. All of these are embedded in what is called the African culture.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN TRADITIONAL CULTURE

The following features are characterized by African Culture and this has sharpened the African culture to offer an environment for interreligious dialogue. These features are:

Firstly, the African culture promotes interfaith dialogue because its orientation is towards communal and human relation. The African setting is more of communal outlook where every member of the community sees themselves as brothers and partners in progress. The community leaders are appointed to see to the growth of the community and make it a duty to see that peace and harmony prevail in the community. This communal setting brings in improvement in human relations. Every member of the community assists themselves in one form or the other; there is no room for selfishness in any quarter. The level of interaction among the people is so cordial to the extent that they do things together. Mbiti observes that communal setting of the African people unites them together and also gives room for strangers to be accepted and accommodated within the community.²³Nihinlola sums up this cultural trait of the African as follows: "Some of the social and cultural values of the traditional African society are relationships, selflessness, hospitality and spirit of

inclusiveness. He notes that by implication a life that is not spent to build up human relationship is a wasted life.”²⁴

Secondly, the principle of trans-religiosity is another factor. This principle goes beyond live and let live attitude that is foreign to the community. The people accept and appropriate religious ideas and rituals of all available institutions while at the same time remaining in their own tradition.²⁵ They attend and participate in other religious ceremonies like naming, marriages, funeral etc without discriminating about the religion of the other people. According to Idowu, during these ceremonies the people pray and sing together, dance and rejoice with the celebrant not minding their religious views and convictions.

Thirdly, there is absolute religious toleration in African culture and religions. It is quite natural that other people should have their own religious convictions; they never force their view on others. There is absolute religious tolerance among the people in Africa. In Yoruba land the Muslims, Christians and traditional worshippers lived together and do things together. During the Ramadan festival there is love sharing among all the religious adherents in the community; also when there is a traditional religious festival, Christians and Muslims alike observe and participate in the festival. It is natural for an average African to be tolerant due to the fact that the culture teaches respect for others view and one is encouraged to respect others ideals or views. Religious fanaticism is foreign to the African culture until recently when there is influx of foreign culture on the African culture. This foreign culture has greatly influenced the culture of the people and contaminated its values. Religious intolerance has not been part of the cultural life of the African people because their religion is pluralistic and not exclusive when compared with other religions that have been established on African soil like Christianity and Islam. An African respects and values human life and cherishes personal independence.

Fourthly, there is always a rejection of aggressive evangelism. The cultural environment is a platform that grants Muslims, Christians and

traditional worshippers the opportunity to learn from one another as corporate groups and also provide enabling environment where they can work together in order to achieve a common goal of enhancing their collective well being. The goal of all religions is peaceful co-existence among the people. This can only be achieved when there is respect for each other's views. The traditional African setting is pluralistic in nature and no exclusivist position will thrive because they see themselves as serving the same God.

Fifthly, the family setting in Africa is of linear and nuclear family. This setting gives room for the respect of elders or family head. There is strong attachment among the extended family. The bond is so strong that whatever the family head says is binding. Everyone in the community belongs to one clan or the other. There is mutual understanding and cordial relationship among the members of each clan in the community.²⁶ Within each clan there is a shrine where the ancestral tools are kept. The ancestral tools are usually visited when there is the need for consultation whenever the family deems fit so. This tool is used for the protection and blessing of the members. The family is made up of people of various religious inclinations and background despite this they support and assist one another in every matter of economy.²⁷ Also there is peaceful co-existence among the family. No one is fanatical about his or her religion. All religious adherents live in peace and harmony among themselves. All these factors enhance inter-religious dialogue to be possible in Africa.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN AFRICAN CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

The following factors are responsible for the possibility of inter-religious dialogue in African Cultural environment. These factors are stated below:

1. Religious values: The African religion is pluralistic in nature. This is shown in their understanding of the supreme deity. The primal religion they practice accommodates all religious beliefs. The popular saying

among the traditional worshippers is that all roads lead to the same God. God is universally available through all religious traditions. The various religious traditions are to be understood as complementary, rather than contradictory insight into the nature of the divine reality. This assertion gives room for inter-religious dialogue, where no religion is seen as superior or antagonistic against the other but rather complement the other's belief. Also by the virtue of the fact that Africans believe in supreme deity, divinity, spirits, life after death and in mysterious powers, other religions like Judaism, Christianity and Islam also believe in them, so to dialogue and identify areas of differences should not lead to religious bigotry and discrimination.

2. Social values: The social values of the African culture offer an avenue for interreligious dialogue. By social values we mean the social life of the people vis a vis their cultural habits, attitudes and disposition to social norms and values. Africans are accommodating, friendly and tolerant; their traditional religion is not hostile to other religious faiths so to interact and dialogue in African environment is not difficult when compared with Arab or Asian setting where their environment is hostile to other people's faith and religion.
3. Communal values: The African environments are communal in nature. Their orientations tend toward peaceful co-existence within the community. African communities are known for communal cooperation, respect and tolerance of one another not until the advent of Islam and Christianity that African communities were beginning to be torn apart. The two religions that were introduced on the African soil seek to convert traditional people to their religions. As a result, some sort of force or coercion was introduced, and to worsen the situation, the colonial masters joined forces with the foreign missionary to co-opt the traditional worshippers into Christianity. Hence, those that refused to join the religion were castigated. As many people joined Christianity, the

traditional world view and communal spirit began to wane and over time, most of the values the Africans were known for began to give way to foreign ways of life. Thus, today as a result of globalization, the African environment is becoming gradually intolerant to interreligious dialogue. Once the culture of the African people, that is characterized by solidarity and sharing, is eroded by foreign intrusion then African soil will become hostile to religious dialogue.

4. Education: Education also has its role in making the African environment best for interreligious dialogue. The African Christians are beginning to understand the fact that it is not only in the church where salvation lies. Salvation can also be found in other religions. The enlightenment that religious exclusivism will continue to create hatred and bigotry among adherents of other religions have necessitated the church community to have a rethink on their exclusive theory that says only those who believe in Christ will be saved. Education has been a strong weapon that makes religious dialogue possible in African setting. African religious system is pluralistic and it accommodates others views and opinions.²⁸

5. Economic values: The African soil is a fertile environment for economic activities. The economic orientations of the African people have caused them to have religious encounter with people of other faith. Africans are notably peasant and merchant. They move from place to place to sell their wares and interact with diverse people of other religions. In the course of carrying out their daily activities, the African traders encounter different people of diverse religious beliefs and philosophy. As a result of the people's engagement and interaction in trade and business, religious dialogue became inevitable because Africans, as they trade they bring along their religion into it. This dialogue in most cases benefited the

people and helped in a way to bring about peaceful coexistence among them.

THE NECESSITY FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

The ultimate aim of all religious founders was to bring peace to the world. So, Interreligious dialogue is necessary for peace and peaceful co-existence among the people living in a multicultural and pluralistic environment.

Citing Plato, Arinze says:

It seems to me to have thought the world foolish in not understanding that all are always at war with one another; and if in war there ought to be common meals and certain persons regularly appointed under others to protect an army, they should be continued in peace.²⁹

This means that it is peace we need not war. Commonly people say that if you want peace, you must prepare for war. I say, if you want peace, you must prepare for peace. When we say that Interreligious dialogue is necessary we mean that without it we cannot reach to the end or with it, we can reach to the end with fewer difficulties. The end can be understood as peace or justice or harmony or coexistence or cooperation. Interreligious dialogue is not a man-made activity but God's. The human person is dialogical individual whose whole life is marked by dialogue with God, with his fellow humans and with the world/creation. In Genesis 1:27-28 we read how God dialogued with the heavenly council about what he wanted to do so the very life of God is dialogical. So it becomes imperative that we live in dialogue because that is the essence of our calling.³⁰ All the religions of the world should come together in a spirit of ecumenism and dialogue and arrive at a threshold where everyone will live at peace in co-existence. NtedikaMvumbi notes that dialogue is necessary because the Church is born of the dialogue between God and humans through Christ and in the Holy Spirit. Since God does not leave any person or any culture without some experience of his will, we collaborate with what God has already sown in each individual.³¹ It is therefore necessary that men and women of this world dialogue for their well-being and redemption. No human hates harmony, peace, justice

(commutative, associative and social). These come through God's grace and human's work.³²

HINDERANCES TO INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Interreligious dialogue is possible but it also has difficulties. Jean-Mary Gaudel said that the highest form of dialogue will always be the cross, not as a dogma, but as a mystery which we cannot avoid.³³ Dialogue with other religions goes with some obstacles. Many scholars have listed such as:

1. Paucity of deep knowledge of one's religion, deficiency of the knowledge of other religions.
 2. Fear of the unknown.
 3. Suspicion.
 4. Lack of self-critical assessment,
 5. Superiority and inferiority complexes,
 6. Disparity between those taking part in dialogue,
 7. Inequality in theological development
 8. To these is added confusion between faith and reason, lack of theological and metaphysical language that can be used to explain certain truths.
- Nowadays, the presence of independent preachers constitutes an obstacle.

FORMS OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN A GLOBALIZED COMMUNITY³⁴

Scholars have identified four major forms of dialogue these are dialogue of life, social dialogue, dialogue of experts, and dialogue of experience.

1. Dialogue of life: Sometimes, called "unarticulated dialogue" because it could take place in all the ordinary interactions and interrelations between people of different religions, without a premeditated plan or structure.³⁵ It takes place in our homes, families, villages, schools, towns and cities. Many ordinary but important things happen when we live, work, visit and study with people of

different faiths.

2. Social dialogue: Cardinal Arinze calls it “dialogue of action”. This happens when people of different religions cooperate and involve themselves in joint projects for a common good or common concern, such as building a road, bridge, a hospital or a center for learning. For instance, there are some joint organizations of Christians and Muslims working for the promotion of human rights and eradication of diseases.³⁶

3. Dialogue of experts: here, specialists or theologians in various religions listen to one another, present the doctrines, beliefs and practices of their respective religions –not in a self-protective way but in a well-articulated manner, discover and rediscover their common points and differences. With the use of science and technology, they find a consensus where they can meet in order to face the challenges of the modern world.

4. Dialogue of experience: For instance prayer and meditation, as fundamental expressions of religious faith, could be interreligious meeting points because there are a lot of experiences to share in different traditions. These two experiences allow someone to start a journey towards the other; it takes place, particularly among believers who adore the same God (Judaism, Christianity and Islam).³⁷

5. In the dialogue of intellectual exchange faith is seeking understanding and theologians and religious scholars grapple many times with issues that cut across religious lines. Often the insights in one tradition are absolutized. In order to further a more adequate understanding one needs also an exchange at the intellectual level in order to see the deeper meaning with rituals, customs and symbols. This must accompany a deeper search for insight, where one seeks to reach the Absolute beyond even if one never reaches the final truth.³⁸

6. In the dialogue of spiritual experience an attempt is made to share in one another's search for experiencing God. Going into that kind of dialogue one reads the other religious sources as spiritual documents. The aim of this activity is to discern God's presence and action. Prayer and meditation can be shared and this can be experienced as liberating.³⁹

7. The dialogue of common action can happen at different levels. Common human and spiritual values can be promoted but also alliances can be formed at the political and socioeconomic level with a view to transforming the human community. All religions can normally agree to the goal of making the world a little more just. How that is done is then often a matter of discussion, but such discussion carried out in respect and understanding of the Others foundation can be an important step to more lasting and sustainable solutions to the burning problems of the day.⁴⁰

Dialogue between people of different faiths is not only necessary for instrumental reasons, but also because we are bound together in a common search for the truth. The religious truth claims may sometimes conflict, but they need to be understood in the context of the whole. Religions order and create structure in our lives. They give meaning, foster community and provide for liberation. When the interreligious dialogue transcends the exchange of niceties, those questions will come to the forefront. What we need is a frank and truthful exchange of how our respective traditions best contribute to order and community, meaning and liberation.⁴¹

CONCLUSION

This paper has been able to discuss globalization, African cultural environment and interreligious dialogue. It has also advanced reasons why interreligious dialogue is possible and necessary in Africa. The paper has come to view interreligious dialogue as a tool that brings about peaceful co-existence in any pluralistic environment. The African culture is so rich in its values and practices that the experience of globalization should add values to its culture rather than allow global technology to destroy its values. Arinze notes that interreligious dialogue is really important if not necessary to us as Africans since our continent has become more than any period highly pluralistic. A misguided pluralism of religion has caused and could still cause conflicts, divisions and wars. Perhaps, the major features of their cultures –solidarity and sharing-

should motivate Africans more and more to consider Interreligious dialogue not as an optional but an imperative activity.

END NOTES

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³ Gold Anie, Globalization and Demythologization in Africa Biblical Hermeneutics Ogbomoso Journal of Theology vol No 10, December 2005), p. 68-78.

⁴ Roland Robertson, Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture (London: Sage, 1992),8

⁵ Robertson, 8

⁶ Jeannine Hill Fletcher Religious Pluralism in an Era of Globalization: The Making of Modern Religious Identity Theological Studies vol no 69: 2008), 394-411.

⁷ Fletcher, 394

⁸ Fletcher

⁹Nayef R. F. Al-Rodhan Definitions of Globalization: A Comprehensive Overview and a Proposed Definition June 2006, www.webster@gcsp.ch accessed on November 1, 2012.

¹⁰Nayef R. F. Al-Rodhan, www.webster@gcsp.ch accessed on November 1, 2012.

¹¹ Viggo Mortensen “Globalization, Global Ethics and Interreligious Dialogue in a Multireligious Context.” Viggo Mortensen, dr. theol., is a professor of systematic theology and holds a chair in Global Christianity and Ecumenical Concerns at the University of Aarhus, Denmark. He is the founder and director of the Danish Center for Multireligious Studies. 1991-1999 he served as director for the Department for Theology and Studies at the Lutheran World Federation.

¹²Sattanov www.Azerbaijan.com/interreligion.htm accessed on Nov 4th 2012.

¹³ S. Wesley Ariarajah, “Interfaith Dialogue” in *Dictionary of the Ecumenical Movement* 2nd Edition, edited by Nicholas Lossky et. a.. (Geneva, WCC Publications 2002) page 314. The expressions “interreligious dialogue” and “inter-faith dialogue” are used here interchangeably. See Emmanuel Martey “the challenge of inter-religious dialogue and praxis to the African theological community” Trinity Theological College, Legon Ghana.

¹⁴Pontifical Council For Inter-Religious Dialogue *Dialogue And Proclamation* Reflection And Orientations On Interreligious Dialogue And The Proclamation Of The Gospel Of Jesus Christ 2007 electronic.

¹⁵Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue. See Kemal Ataman Understanding Other Religions: Al-Biruni and Gadamer’s “Fusion of Horizon” (Washington: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2008), p.1-5; 77ff.

¹⁶ Cardinal Francis Arinze, *Meeting other believers* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1997), pp.9-

10.

¹⁷Arinze, 9-10

¹⁸Rufat n. Sattarov “*Interreligious Dialogue In The Era Of Globalisation: The Example Of Azerbaijan*” Germany: Free University Berlin), 2008

¹⁹Sattarov “*Interreligious Dialogue In The Era Of Globalisation: The Example Of Azerbaijan*” Germany: Free University Berlin), 2008

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*. (London: Heinemann Education Books, 1969), p.24

²²Richard Oyelakin, Yoruba Traditional Medicine and the Challenge of Integration *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 3.3(September 2009):70-88

²³CosmasEboSarba Lecture Note on Comparative Religion

²⁴EmiolaNihinlola ‘The Impact of Globalization On African Culture: A theological Response

²⁵Sarba

²⁶Sarba

²⁷Sarba

²⁸ See Kemal Ataman *Understanding Other Religions: Al-Biruni and Gadamer’s “Fusion*

of Horizon” (Washington: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2008), p.13-15. For detailed discussion on inclusivism and exclusivism See Alan Race, *Christians and Religious Pluralism: Patters in Christian Theology of Religions* (New York: Orbis Books, 1982), p 38-69; See also Gavin D’Costa, *Theology and Religious Pluralism: The Challenge of other Religions* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), p.80-117.

²⁹Arinze Cf Plato, *treatise on law*.

³⁰Peter Lobo, Brief historical background to interfaith dialogue in *Sound the Conc. Conference on interfaith dialogue* (Bangkok-Thailand, 2002), p. 24

³¹ See Frederick NtedikaMvumbi, *Principles For Interreligious Dialogue: Viewpoint Of The Church Created by DEAN-FASS* Frederic NtedikaMvumbi, OP p.10ff

³² See Frederick NtedikaMvumbi, *Principles For Interreligious Dialogue: Viewpoint Of The Church Created by DEAN-FASS* Frederic NtedikaMvumbi, OP p.10ff

³³ Jean-Marie Gaudel, *Encounters and clashes: Islam and Christianity in history* vol.1 (Rome).

³⁴Mvumbi, OP p.10ff

³⁵Mvumbi

³⁶Arinze

³⁷Arinze

³⁸ Mortensen

³⁹ Mortensen

⁴⁰ Mortensen

⁴¹ Mortensen