Science

in the perspective of

African Religion (AFREL), Islam & Christianity

EDITOR IN CHIEF

S.O. OYEWOLE

EDITORS

* Ade P. Dopamu * I.O. Umejesi * P.O. Amanze

* V.A. Alabi * S.E. Ododo

SCIENCE IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF AFRICAN RELIGION (AFREL), ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

EDITOR –IN– CHIEF
S.O. Oyewole

EDITORS
* Ade P. Dopamu
* I.O. Umejesi
* P.O. Amanze
* V.A. Alabi
* S.E. Ododo

A publication of LSI and NASTRENS

Published by

Local Society Initiative (LSI)
and the Nigerian Association for the Study and Teaching of Religion
and the Natural Sciences (NASTRENS),
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, P.M.B 1515, Ilorin, Nigeria.

© LSI and NASTRENS, 2010

First Published 2010

ISBN
978-978-48449-1-8

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means – electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise – without the prior permission of the copyright owner or the publishers.

Printed in Nigeria by
Decency Printers and stationeries Ltd.,
7, Mijindadi Street, Ita Amodu Street,
Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria.
Tel.: 031 - 22299

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....viii

Preface.....x

About the Editors and Contributors.....xii

Religion and the quest for peace in Nigeria:
Focus on Christianity and Science
Ade P. Dopamu.....1

The Concept of Garden Suburbs for Modernisation of Nigerian
Cities and Towns – A Religion-scientific Perspective
F. A. Oladele.....33

Dream Symbols and Prevalent Personae in the Best and
Worst Dreams of Selected Christian University Students
Victoria Alabi.....37

African Religion and Conservation of Nigeria's
Environment for Sustainable Development
I.O. Umejesi.....55

Necropsy and Necromancy: A Critical Inquiry into the
Cause of Death among the Owan People of Nigeria
B.O. Igboin.....69

Dreams in Tiv Religion: Gateway for Scientific Discoveries
Joseph S. Gbenda.....88

Yorùbá Ontological and Metaphysical Beliefs in Dreams
and their Validity
Lere Adeyemi.....95

Religion and Science: Conflict and Reconciliation –
The Nigerian Experience
C.O. Isiramen.....113

African Traditional Medicine in Contemporary Society
Philemon O. Amanze.....124

Causes and Treatments of Skin Diseases in Ancient Israel, African Society and the Orthodox Medicine: A Comparative Study
C.O. Ogunkunle.....149

Prophet E.O. Babalola and Healing Revivalism in Yorubaland
S. A. Owoeye.....160

Sexuality Education in Nigeria: A Scientific View of the Position of the Catholic Church
P.O. Abioje.....173

Prophecy and Healing: Music as Catalyst
Solomon Ikibe.....205

Traditional Medicine and Christianity: Its Implications for Contemporary Yoruba Christians
Hannah Ishola.....217

The Response of the Nigerian Church to the Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis
Babawale Solomon Taiwo.....224

The Interplay between Divination, Sacrifice and Healing: The Perspective of Yoruba Religion
Adelowo Felix Adetunji.....231

The Impact of the Christian Faith on Indigenous Science and Technology among the Yoruba in Nigeria
Abiola T. Dopamu.....250

Christianity and the Development of Science and Technology in Yorubaland
Rotimi Omotoye.....263

Scientists: The High Priests of a New Technological Culture
A.G. Alamu.....275

Music and Pentecostalism in Nigeria: The Afro-American Influence
Austin Emielu.....287

Church History and Science: Partners or Rivals?
Onah Augustine Odey.....299

Technology and Crime in Nigerian Society
R.A. Olaoye.....313

The Influence of Information Technology on Christendom: An Overview
L.B. Akande.....322

A Comparative Study of the Quranic Explanations and Science on Human Reproduction
Sulaiman Sheu Adua.....329

An Investigation into the Biblical Concept of Prophecy and Healing
E.K. Akano.....339

Spirituality and Science: Is there any Relevance?
M. O. Adeniyi.....350

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Nigeria: Islamic Perspectives
Sa'adatu Hassan Liman.....357

Ethno-Religious Crisis in Nigeria: A Theoretical Consideration for National Integration
Ayinla Saadu Alanamu, A.Y. Muhammed, M. N. Adeoye.....365

Sexual Moral Decadence: A Challenge to Nigerian Christians
S. D. Udofia.....378

Alcoholism and Christian Spirituality: Challenges to Christian Missions in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria
Samson M. Nwaomah.....394

The Role of Technology in Religious Terrorism: Some Matters Arising
Ayinla Saadu Alanamu, A.Y. Muhammed, M. N. Adeoye.....416

The Concept of Morality in Christianity: A Challenge to Moral Decadence in Our Society
M.O. Gbadero.....433

Divination: A Distortion of Divine Revelation?
Gaius A. Umahi.....452

The Science and Spirituality in African Bullet-proofing: The Esan Experience
Don Akhilomen.....461

Impact of Science on Faith: An Islamic Perspective
H.A. Abdulsalam.....475

A Study of the Birds in the Qur'an: Implications for Science and Technology
R.I. Adebayo.....482

Islam and Public Health: Critical Analysis of Shaikh Alikinla's Views
Musa A. Abdu-Raheem.....496

Religious Communication: A Study of Mosque Architecture in Yorubaland
Fola T. Lateju.....512

A Historical Analysis of Traditional African Society and Morality
Lemuel Ekedegwa Odeh.....528

Water Heritage and the Sustainability of the Environment: The Nigerian Experience
Oyeronke Olademo.....536

Religious Violence and Implications for Human Development in 21st Century Nigeria
Festus Femi Asamu.....546

The Role of Religion in Combating Crime: A Theoretical Analysis
Olatunji Abdulganiy.....565

Gender Adjustment to the Tripatriate Forces for Sustainable Marriage in Nigeria: A Case Study of Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State
I.O. Balogun.....586

Science and Traditional Medicine: An Interactive Analysis
Gabriel A. Ajadi.....602

In the Discourse of Christianity and Traditional Medicine
A.O. Okunade.....620

Science, Religion and Evil: A Christian Perspective
F.A. Akinseye.....636

The Performative Nature of African Religion, Islam and Christianity
Ojuade, Jeleel Olasunkanmi.....648

Science, Technology and the Myth of Sàngó in the Aesthetics of Yorùbá Creative and Literary Arts
Hamzat S.A.O.....650

The Significance of Language to the Discourse of Humanities and Science: Yorùbá Islamic Music as a Case Study
Samiat Olubunmi Abubakre..... 655

THE INFLUENCE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ON CHRISTENDOM: AN OVERVIEW

L.B. AKANDE

Introduction

Okafor (1990), states that "the world today is an age of science and technology"[1]. Thus, the use of information technologies in Christendom have become so popular that many Christian bodies are using these modern inventions to communicate the Christian message to millions of people in the world. This is interesting. Among all these modern information technologies, the Internet is the greatest of all; it is an awesome source of information. Christian books and Literatures, favourite Christian music, hymns, messages have all been put on the net, hence relevant and needed information could be downloaded. This is what technological advancement has done to Christendom in Nigeria and the world over. Ilori (2000), supported this view when he opines that: "the socio-economic progress among the industrialized states have been propelled by advancement in science and technology"[2]. Christendom in Nigeria is not left out in the crusade.

However, with all that have been said, with the use of information technology in virtually all areas of recorded human knowledge and enterprise, some measures of caution should be taken in its application.

Thus, this paper therefore examines what information technology is all about, and how it has either make or mar Christendom. Useful suggestions are provided with a view to reducing the negative impact of information technology on Christendom.

What is Information Technology (IT)?

Information Technology deals with the ability to handle and process information with the aid of electronic devices. Machines are

basically involved to process the information, thus creating opportunities for users to handle text, organize, retrieve, store and analyse information effectively.

According to Ekireghwo (1998), he explains that:

> Information technology is not an old wine in a new bottle. It is a field of human knowledge that is made up of three technologies: Computing, micro electronic and telecommunication and how these technologies are used to collect, store, process and distribute any form of information by electronic means.[3]

Today, information is so important in virtually all human endeavours that we are said to be in an age of information. Examples of IT include the following: Computer, Telephones, Internet, Video recorders, Digital Television, etc.

Having explained what Information Technology is, how then can it influence Christendom in this twenty-first century?

Influence of Information Technology on Christendom

The influence of Information Technology on Christendom would be looked at paradoxically. It is not an exaggeration to say that, our generation today is that of science and technology. In the religious circle as well, IT has brought a lot of tremendous developments.

For instance, with the aid of microphones, religious messages can be preached in Churches to a very large crowd effectively and conveniently without much stressing of the voice. Similarly, preachers or ministers who have access to computers, telephones, CDS and even Internet can have their preachings and teachings rightly communicated globally. Even, the remotest villages around the world could also benefit from such messages, thus meeting their spiritual hunger. With the aid of satellites, one can be opportuned not only to hear but equally see religious events related. Churches like Deeper Life Christian Bible Church, The Living Faith, Redeemed Christian Church of God, Seventh-Day Adventist and a host of others rely some of their Annual convention Programmes on the Internet. This has also helped in a great deal to reduce the rate at

which accidents occurred to participants of such programme who probably would have travelled by road to attend the programmes.

Additionally, the use of Digital Video Diskette can enable missionaries to show religious films to people in very remote areas. Such opportunities help to capture people's interest and attention as they watch religious films and instructions that are being communicated to them.

Moreover, very many Churches today have modern and sophisticated Printing Press where their programmes, handbills, tracts, pamphlets and posters are printed. This had replaced the use of town criers.

Commenting further on the positive influence of IT on Christendom, Pastor Kumuyi in his monthly magazine "Christian Women Mirror". Of February, 2006 edition has this to say:

> Many Christian Organizations have seized this Technology to communicate the gospel message to millions of people all over the earth. It is truly amazing![4]

For the Internet, he went further to opine that:

> Favourite Christian Music, hymns, messages, etc. could be down loaded from the net and played on the computer using appropriate software.[5]

In addition to the above, a complete text of the Bible is now available in a disc. While prayers can also be offered through GSM to any one from any part of the world.

Having said all these, it becomes very important to clearly point out that, as good as these inventions are, they can either make or mar Christendom. Unfortunately, the drive towards the negative is much more higher or stronger than to the positive. For instance, apart from the fact that the TV has taken the place of the Bible Studies and prayer meetings in many homes, its influence had reduced drastically the love for God from many Christian hearts. As good as the Television is in sensitizing the public on religious, political and social issues, it also provides programmes that are detrimental and dangerous to man's heart.

Many today have been lured to deceit, indecent, immoral lives and songs, crime, sexual perversion, theft and all forms of anti-social

behaviours, which had hitherto crept into the church right in their various homes as they constantly watch the television. Immoral songs from TV are perfectly learnt and sung by children and adults at the expense of learning and memorizing Bible passages. Worship hours have been replaced with regular gluing to TV.

Besides, one notices that, a lot of the nonsensical dresses worn into the church at weddings or other church programmes are either copied from the television or newspapers, magazines or catalogues. For example, Fadeiye (2002), pointed out in his article "Science, Technology and Moral Decadence in Nigeria: The place of the Mass Media" that; "the Sunday Vanguard of 7/2/2001 (pp.20 and 21) portray the inglorious dresses that are advertised in the newspaper at regular intervals"[6].

Still on television, it can be said that the negative influence of it is responsible for some elements of corruption in the society. And when the society is bad, the Christendom too is adversely affected. Reacting in the same way, Omoyajowo (2001) says:

> Despite the firmness and the iron-handed manner in which some Christian parents handle their children, some of them do dress shabbily, wearing topless, bottomless, openness and half-nude after the fashion of many Nigerian TV news-casters, actor/actresses in soap operas[7].

However, the introduction of the Computer and Internet has worsened matters. Any visit to cyber café and see how youths flock in there browsing even forbidden sites all nights is embarrassing. They spend enormous time watching digital videos and playing computer games that are violent and demonic. Many who leaves home with the intension of going to school or church programmes, end up spending the whole day at the café. The abundance of these critical and pornography on the Internet are enough to be major source of concern to the Governments and other religious Organizations.

The use of the Public address system by most churches has become a sort of disturbance to the peace of the public. At the same time, the GSM or mobile phone can be employed by 419 syndicates to perform evil acts even in Christendom.

Ways of Reducing the Negative Influence of Information Technology on Christendom

From the aforementioned, many measures or techniques could be employed as ways of minimizing the negative influence of IT on Christendom. For this to be adequately achieved, all hands must be on deck, that is parents, governments and Christian organizations must more than ever before be alive to their responsibilities in shaping the society and making it a place worthy of living.

Charity they say begins from home. On the part of parents, they must not be ignorant of the trend of things because ignorance could be very dangerous (Isaiah 5:20; Hoses 6:14). They must have adequate knowledge of the world of IT, and at the same time, in partner with God, be able to relate well with their children on the appropriate use of any technology.

Kumuyi (2006), gave the following examples to substantiate the above view. He says of parents concerning their children that:

> If you don't want them to watch defiling cartoons or Soap operas and pornography, give them cartoons On Bible stories and Bible characters that would teach them Sunday lessons of eternal values, and at the same time get them enthralled and excited. Where possible stay with them to watch these things, and where it's not possible, be sure to discuss with them afterwards[8].

The entire citizenry should as a matter of fact and urgency strongly frown at any act of indecency in the society.

On the part of the Government, they should strictly ensure and stress that television stations take caution in broadcasting home video materials. Corrupt and character-damaging films that promote immorality in our society should be discouraged. Aluko (1970), for instance, believes that:

> The mass media should produce decent programmes that are designed to promote high sense of morality in the society. They should abstain from bringing into public awareness immoral and indecent films, catalogues, songs, programmes etc. which could be regarded as ill-wind that blows nobody any good.[9]

They should also ensure the teaching of religious education at all levels of our educational system. Just as they lay emphasis on the teaching of science, adequate emphasis too should be laid on the teaching of religions since the two cannot be separated. They are two sides of the same coin.

Also, religious bodies and especially Christian organizations has a lot to contribute in this matter. In today's age or generation of science and technology, Christian bodies should positively employ these technological inventions to communicate religious truth to their followers. They should from time to time, on pulpit warn followers of the abuse of IT. In-service training programme should also be encouraged among preachers that are not computer literate, as emphasized by Kumuyi (2006), quoting Bill Clinton, the former President of USA, that: "Anyone who enters the next (this) millennium without being computer literate is illiterate".[10] The Church, most often must on Internet and Television preach against corruption and any form of evil plaguing the society. They should encourage at all levels of education, the teaching of moral values which alone can assist in the development of the nation, technology and Christendom as well.

Conclusion

The above has shown the extent to which Information Technology has influenced Christendom either positively or otherwise. Suggestions have also been provided on some of the techniques to be adopted in reducing the negative influence of IT on Christendom. Nevertheless, in as much as these inventions are morally neutral, they should be carefully handled without abusing them.

Notes and References

1. L.O. Okafor, "A Humanist Approach to Science Teaching – A contemporary challenges to the Science Teacher" in *Education Today*' Vol. 3(4) September 1990: pp.6-7.

2. M.O. Ilori, "Nigeria's Science and Technology Policy" in Ajaegbu, H.I.; Mathew-Daniel, B.J. and Uya, O.E. Nigeria – A People United, A Future Assured (Vol. 1) (Abuja: Federal Ministry of Information 2000): pp.10-12.
3. P.O. Ekireghwo, An Overviewed of Information Technology for Instructional Resources Management NJCL Vol. 2 (1), (1998).
4. W.F. Kumuyi, "The World at Your Door" in Christian Women Mirror Magazine, February 2006., p.10.
5. W.F. Kumuyi, "The World at your Door".
6. J.O. Fadeiye, "Science, Technology and Moral Decadence in Nigeria: The Place of the Mass Media" in Ghola. A. and Ayegboyin D. (eds.), *Religion, Globalization, Science and Technology* Journal of the National Association for the Study of Religions and Eductrum, (Ijebu-Ode: Alansek Press Ltd., 2002): p.69.
7. A. Omoyajowo, Religion, Society and the Home (Ijebu-Ode: Vicco International press 2001): pp.25-27.
8. W.F. Kumuyi, "The World at your door", p.11.
9. K.O. Aluko, "Politics of Decolonization in British West Africa, 1945-1960" in Ajayi, J.F.A. and Crowther, M. (eds.), *History of West Africa* Vol. 11, (London: Longman Publishers 1970): p.27.
10. W.F. Kumuyi, "The World at Your Door", p.10.