is the subject of all historical, economic, social and political processes that take place in the society. Thus, man is both the main actor in and the main victim of all conflicts, tensions, wars and all other societal crises. Incidentally, man desires peace and as a rational and finite being. He often makes attempts to seek it within his reason and exhibit it through his actions. From the inception of society, different attempts have been made by man to attain societal peace. These attempts range from individual scholars, to religious bodies, to local and international organizations. But in spite of all such theories prescribing solutions to crises in the world, the phenomenon itself seems becoming more wide-spread in different complex dimensions rather than being reduced.

I acknowledge different forms of crisis and these can be grouped into two broad categories, namely, violent crises and non-violent crises. The main actor in whichever category of crisis is man. Essentially, the distinguishing features between violent and non-violent crises are: the manner in which the moral agent or the main actor in the scene (that is, man) is involved and the kind of atmosphere that accompanies the crisis. Consequently, a violent crisis can be defined as one in which the main actor in a given situation displays a violent attitude. Thus, it is a kind of crisis which is accompanied by violence. On the other hand, non-violent crisis is conceived of as a violence-free crisis. This category of crisis depends on the meaning, nature and scope of violence. It is not altogether wrong to regard violence as a manifestation of crisis.

At this juncture, it is pertinent to note that it is impossible for a single work such as this, to treat, in detail, all cases and forms of crisis in human life. It is reasoned that its highest point, which is war, should epitomize the other lesser forms of crisis. For the purpose of convenience, I shall now attempt to reflect on the causes of crises or war, against the background of an assumption, that various forms for crisis have some common features.

A Reflection on the Causes of Crises

Human beings have been in crisis since the emergence of society, and this phenomenon has not changed. Today, our lives are constantly threatened because of the complexity of society, technological advancement and sophistication in our development. Thus, as society grows, crises become formidable and complex. For example, we have now possessed the ability to destroy the entire planet at a push of button. This has made human beings the most dangerous species on the planet.

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Crisis is a complex phenomenon. Different people, at different places, in different epochs have been in different forms of crisis. Today, no one would disagree with the fact that crisis is inevitable in human life. Therefore, it is now incumbent on us to find the root of this monstrous act of man. To this end, a wide range of disciplines have studied crisis with the view to uncovering the mysteries behind this seemingly perpetual tendency in man, and preventing its occurrence. Since we have accepted the premise that war is the highest form of socio-political crisis, it is reasonable now to look at the causes of war as a representation of the causes of crisis in human society.

Existing Accounts of the Causes of War

Historical accounts abound of the causes of war. In history the study of war began in about 2,000 years ago with Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War (431-400 BC). Thucydides (1954:49) argued that what made the war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused Sparta. But no matter how plausible Thucydides' thesis concerning the causes of war (particularly the Peloponnesian War for that matter) might sound, it does not dig into the actual root of the phenomenon of war.

Thus, much of the thought and studies devoted to the causes of war have not really agreed as to what could be regarded as the common causes of this monstrous phenomenon in society. And so, to some researchers the whole exercise looks confusing and may likely remain so. For example, in his study of the origins of the First World War, Fray (1929), though identifies militarism, nationalism, economic imperialism and the press as remote causes of the war, he nonetheless considers the system of secret alliances which developed after the Franco-Prussian War as the greatest single underlying cause of the War. Quincy Wright summaries what some writers have identified as the cause of the war as he remarks:

> Writers have declared the cause of World War I to have been the
> Russian or the German mobilization; the Austrian ultimatum;
> the Sarajevo assassination; the aims and ambitions of the Kaiser;
> Poincare, Izvolsky, Berchtold, or someone else; the desire of
> France to recover Alsac-Lorraine or of Austria to dominate the
> Balkans; the European system of alliances; the activities of the
> munitions makers; the lack of an adequate European political

order; armament rivalries; colonial rivalries; commercial policies; the sentiment of nationality; the concept of sovereignty; the struggle for existence; the tendency of nations to expand; the unequal distribution of population, of resources, or of planes of living; the law of diminishing returns; the value of war as an instrument of national solidarity or as an instrument of national policy; ethnocentrism or group egoism; the failure of human spirit and many others (Wright, 1942:727-728).

According to the psychiatrist Storr (1964), one of the reasons for the continuous existence and popularity of war is comradeship. To him, war is a means of ensuring victory over enemies. This means that some people possess the desire to join other people in doing what is unusual, especially in the pursuit of a common course. For such individuals who love to fraternize with others to pursue a common course, armed conflict with common enemies is a welcome development. In the same way, Gray (1970) argues that many Americans regarded the World War II as an event that actually helped them to fulfill a desire of escaping from the monotonous civilian life (which they regarded as anemic and isolated) into a more dynamic one of having to unite with their fellow men in the military. By so doing, the war liberated them from continuous feeling of personal impotence and filled them with feelings of power and vitality.

According to Kegan (1995), war has been persistent because of mankind's failure to keep peace. Kegan supports his position by drawing an illustration from Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War (413-410 BC). He maintains that the war broke out between Athens and Sparta because of the failure of Athens, which was then the dominant city-state in Greece, to keep the peace that had been established by virtue of its dominant status. Kegan feels that the preeminence of Athens had already established peace in Greece and this peace ought to have been preserved by Athens. Unfortunately, its failure to keep this peace created opportunity for war. Therefore, for Kegan the cause of the war was not Sparta's military aggression, as popularly held, but the failure of Athens to organize and plan for war in order to keep the peace. In the same vain, Kegan (1995:281) maintains that, "the Second World War emerged from the flaws of the previous peace and the failure of the victors to…vigilantly and vigorously defend the settlement they imposed".

Kegan rejects pacifism and regards it as one of the causes of war. According to him, pacifism leads to war because it discourages militarism.

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Lack of military might (demilitarization) leads to weakness, which leads to instability, which in turn can trigger off war. Therefore, Kegan is opposed to some doctrines of pacifists and liberals, which promote greater understanding, more generosity and patience as better ways to avoid war than by military deterrence. He insists that peace does not keep itself. Rather, it requires active effort, just as war does. Therefore, states which intend to preserve peace to their advantage must maintain a strong military power and the willingness to use it when necessary. However, we do not agree with Kegan that war can and should be kept by war. As a matter of fact, war begets war and any form of peace attained by means of war is a "de-facto" peace, which is founded on the fear of punishment rather than respect for humanity and commitment to societal progress. Such "peace by force" is short-lived.

Furthermore, some scholars have argued that war is caused by the inbuilt aggression of man. Admittedly, fighting and the struggle for existence are a universal phenomenon among living things, especially human beings. The Darwinian theory of Natural Selection and other related studies have shown that animal species do struggle to survive the tussles of existence. In the course of such struggles, those animal species that possess aggression will survive while those who cannot withstand the situation, probably because they lack the traits of aggression will perish. Consequently, some scholars have argued that aggression is indispensable to the survival of animal species. Competition for dominance is natural with mankind. One of the results of such competition is the evolution or emergence of leadership. It has been argued that the emergence of leadership is enhanced by aggression, as it is the responsibility of the leader to enforce group solidarity, take strategic decisions and maintain discipline. Non-aggressive species and groups of individuals tend not to last long in the struggle for survival. Therefore, it is argued that war is a condition of group cohesion. The problem facing us today is how to channel our aggression without destroying the world.

Stevens (1989) argues that war has served certain basic functions which have contributed to the survival of the species. He claims that war has in the past kept groups in balance with one another and with nature. War has also promoted peace and social organizations within groups. According to him, a group arrives at a profounder awareness of its own unity when it opposes other groups. Stevens claims that this is achieved by satisfying archetypal needs, which could otherwise destroy group cohesion. Thus, fighting within the group is dampened through fear of

an external enemy, aggression being directed outwards against the common foe.

Davie (1929) describes how converts unordered populations into disciplined armies under a war leader. When peace is achieved the successful war chief or leader often retains his preeminence and in this way, dictatorships, monarchs and dynasties are founded. As human communities became larger and more complex, so the threat of war and organization for it became interestingly important instruments for social integration. Communities which failed to respond in this way, perished. Only if they developed and maintained the military virtue could emerging societies hope to protect themselves from warlike neighbours. According to Davie, civilization depends for its very existence on the institutionalization of war. Therefore, war has been inseparable from human history.

According to Saint Thomas Aquinas, wars are waged as means of seeking peace. He declares:

> Even those who seek war and dissension desire nothing but peace, which they do not consider themselves to have. There is no peace when a man agrees with another man counter to what he would prefer. Consequently, men seek peace by means of war to break this concord because it is a defective peace, in order that they may obtain a peace in which nothing is contrary to their will. Hence wars are waged that men may find a more perfect peace than that which they had before. (Aquinas, 1952, part II: 531)

In the research findings of the Social Science Research Committee of the University of Chicago in 1925, more than 250 causes of war were listed and discussed under four headings namely: political, economic, social and psychological. Professor Wright (1935) however summarizes these findings as follows: (1) a state of opinion violently hostile to the existing state of affairs; (2) inadequacy of international organizations to deal with conflicts; (3) inadequate system of law; (4) unstable equilibrium of material forces. For Wright (1942:739) himself "War has politico-technological, juro-ideological, socio-religious, and psycho-economic causes". Turner, (1927) in his book *The Causes of War and the New Revolution,* itemized forty-one causes of war under four headings, namely, economic, dynastic, religious and sentimental factors. Hodges (1932) listed twenty-one causes of war under four headings, namely, social,

political, strategic, and economic (cf. Palmer and Perkins 2002).

Communist dialecticians distinguish between certain kinds of wars namely: imperialist wars, revolutionary wars and wars of national liberation. To them, the root of war is to be found in the inherent contradictions and condition of capitalism and imperialism. And according to Mao, the aim of war is to eliminate war. He writes:

> War, this monster of mutual slaughter among men, will be finally eliminated by the progress of human society, and in the not too distant future too. But there is only one way to eliminate it and that is to oppose war with war, to oppose counter-revolutionary war with revolutionary war, to oppose national counter-revolutionary war with national revolutionary war, and to oppose counter-revolutionary class war with revolutionary class war. History knows only two kinds of war, just and unjust. We support just wars and oppose unjust wars. All counter-revolutionary wars are unjust; all revolutionary wars are just. (Mao, 1972: 7)

Some sociologists have also argued that people who kill with modern technology are exhibiting obedience; they are not exhibiting aggression at all (see Denton 1995: 36-60). But we are aware that the successful persecution of war depends on the mobilization of the corporate aggression of the warrior. An essential aspect of military training is to encourage aggression. Military men are physically and psychologically equipped for aggression and military training is meant to release aggression and impulses from the control of super ego and bring them under the collective control of the military hierarchy. The aim is to bring to the fore the manipulation of this biological propensity inherent in man to subdue enemies. By so doing, the soldiers or military recruits are stripped of their previous identity as civilians. Military trainers activate and channel biological imperatives to prepare the soldiers for any act of aggression. Thus, scholars have argued that the roots of war are traceable to the biological imperative in mankind to wage war.

The arguments so far advanced in support of psychological and biological imperatives as the causes of war or crises are not totally out of place because they are usually exhibited during crises. But we need to be somewhat careful with this remark because psychological and biological imperatives are better and correctly viewed as constant variables or factors which man has to contend with since they are naturally inherent

in him. It is true that all human species are aggressive, and they exhibit this trait during anger or conflict which may be as a result of different reasons. It is against this background that government exists to control and administer justice for the general well-being of the people. Therefore, if men still resort to war in spite of government control, and if it is equally true that government itself as an agent of control is responsible for war, then we can insist that there is more to it than psychological and biological imperatives as the causes of war or crises. At best, they can be regarded as constituting impetus or driving forces but not the real causes of war. Obviously, such driving forces can only be influential on man in an atmosphere of unlimited freedom or when the actor has the opportunity to excessively exercise his freedom to the disadvantage of another person at whom the action is directed. It would be well for us therefore to really examine the role of freedom in relation to the emergence of crises.

The Role of Freedom In Relation to the Causes of War/Crises

Consequent upon the forgoing, it becomes clear that causes of war and other socio-political crises are many and varied. It is also evident that in spite of all these analyses of war and its numerous causes, war has not ceased to break out when the conditions for it become manifest. Surely, this situation remains because scholars have omitted the underlying factor responsible for these causes which is rooted in human freedom.

However, going back to Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War as an analysis of why men wage war, it can be inferred that war is a fact of life because the human species must fight for survival. This submission makes Thucydides essentially a Darwinian, but he failed to show what makes struggle the means through which human species seek survival. It is this shortcoming that this part of our work seeks to address.

Philosophically speaking, I strongly align with the position that humans are free social beings with endowed free-will and the ability to choose between good and evil, love and hatred, acting in a responsible or irresponsible way, etc. "Not to choose is, in fact, to choose not to choose" (Sartre, 1969: 481). Thus, man must exercise his freedom – to harm or not to harm, to fight or not to fight, to encroach or not to encroach on the liberty of others, to go or not to go to war, to destroy or not to destroy, to live or not to live in peace and harmony with others in society etc. Since the exercise of freedom may lead to the clash of

interests, the exercise of freedom by an individual may be detrimental to others with the result that social harmony and peace will be hampered. This, indeed, is the main cause of crises in society.

According to Jean-Paul Sartre, in order to ensure harmony, it is imperative for man in exercising his freedom to consider those of others. He says:

> In the search for freedom, we discover that it depends on the freedom of others, and that the freedom of others depends on us…. As soon as there is commitment I am obliged to want the freedom of others at the same time I want my own freedom. I cannot take my freedom as an end without also taking that of others as an end. (Sartre, 1970: 85)

Thus, crises (including war) are caused by the denial or excessive exercise of freedom. This means that societal peace and the prevention of crisis or war are a function of our freedom. Sartre thus warns that, in order to ensure a harmonious relationship among mankind, we must be mindful of the freedom of others. The adoption of this principle would, no doubt, remove or reduce the occurrence of conflicts in interpersonal, inter-group, interstate and international relationships. It is reasoned therefore that the exercise of freedom and the denial of freedom (conflict of interests) at any of these levels occur in the political, economic, religious, and cultural affairs of man.

Woodrow Wilson, a professor of political science before becoming the President of the United States, had thought that the freedom accorded to states to make secret agreements among themselves, designed to protect their interests and to assure their survival was the real root of evil. That was the beginning of the League of Nations. Although the League of Nations failed to sustain world peace and it was succeeded by the United Nations, it is of importance to us that the attention of the whole world has been drawn to the role of freedom in both the generation of crises and the attainment of peace.

At this juncture, certain assumptions must be made concerning freedom in relation to crises:

(i)   That there are two levels of restraint of freedom – reasonably restrained freedom within the framework of the constitution or law; and unreasonably or unconstitutionally or arbitrarily restrained freedom (deprivation).

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(نقش آزادی در بروز بحران‌ها)

(ii) That any form of unreasonable deprivation (political, economic, religious, cultural, etc.) is a denial of freedom for the exploited and excessive exercise of freedom for the exploiter.

(iii) That when an individual or a group of individuals or a state makes illegal incursions into the affairs of another individual or group of individuals or state for whatever reason, it causes an expression of denial of freedom capable of igniting crises.

It is on the basis of these assumptions that we shall now consider the place of freedom in the political, economic, religious and cultural causes of socio-political crises, with particular emphasis on war.

Political Deprivation

The place of freedom in relation to the "political causes" of socio-political crises, especially war, can be identified within Professor Charles Hodges' (1932) classification of the political causes of war as embracing monarchic, domestic, nationalistic, imperialistic, diplomatic, and juridical factors. All these factors are essentially related to the status and activities of political actors. As a matter of fact, war can be characterized as a critical situation of conflict in form of armed struggle between political actors. According to von Clausewitz (1996), war is a continuation of politics by other means. War is usually brought about as a result of a clash of interests. In most cases, such clashes of interests are political in nature and may be influenced by some other factors. Usually, however, war is either a violent means of seeking redress of injustices/deprivations or a violent means of checking the growth of the opponents. Professor Eagleton (1937: 5) reveals that, "for centuries, war has been regarded as means of remedying unjust situations of settling disputes, of enforcing rights". Mao (1972) contends that the central task and highest form of revolution is to seize political power by force, to solve problems of war, and that this so-called political power emerges from the gun.

Indeed, conflicts in socio-political arena proceed from and reflect the political positions, roles, power, capacities and characteristics of political actors. In that wise, conflicts of interest constitute the negative aspect of political diversity. The political causes of war are not rooted in the inevitability of crises but in the freedom which is exercised in this direction. The political will, the readiness, the organizational and psychological ability of the actors are actualized through their freedom to act in certain ways. Surely, one may have the ability and the will to destroy an individual as means of taking over his belongings or property,

or as means of seeking redress for the wrongdoings of the other side, but such a decision is taken as a result of the individual's freedom. Thus, according to Palmer and Perkins (2002: 2) "conflicts of interest often lead to war, and it is natural that they should do so when each state is legally free to set its own course, or when in fact it is able to do so regardless of legal theory". Most of these conflicts are politically motivated. For example, the 1967-1970 Nigerian Civil War was motivated by the desire of the Eastern Region to secede and become an autonomous nation to be known as "The Republic of Biafra".

The ethnic clashes in Nigeria are partly motivated by the deprivation of political freedom. In the Niger Delta, "the Ijaw and Itsekiri were locked in a protracted and grueling war over the location of Warri South Local Government Council. There was also the struggle by the Ogoni people of the Niger Delta for the control of their God-given oil in periodic social unrest" (Akinboye, 2001). Others like the Ife-Modakeke crisis in the South-West Nigeria and the Zango-Kataf crisis in the North-Central Nigeria, the Umuleri and Aguleri in Anambra state of Nigeria, and the Tiv-Jukun crisis in Benue State over local government elections also fall into this category. Today, almost all ethnic groups in Nigeria feel marginalized, especially in the allocation of social amenities and political positions, the result of which is the evolution and growth of ethnic militias – The Odua People's Congress (OPC), Arewa People's Congress (APC), Egbesu Boys, Bakassi Boys, Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), etc. The protests of these groups are often carried out by means of violence.

In Europe, the attempt by some powerful states to gain more territories and the drive to institute dominance over other powers or states have led to three important strategies – war, balance of power and treaties. In seventeenth century Europe, the desire for expansion by certain states led to series of wars, the result of which was the crave for a "Balance of Power", and which was to be enforced by the actors (powers or states) involved by adhering to the letter of the treaties signed to that effect. Balance of powers is a device made by some great powers to ensure that certain status quo is maintained in relation to their territorial influences and control in the international arena, and this in turn has led the signing of treaties among the great powers. The essential idea of balance of power is "equilibrium". This means that when the weights in the scales of the main actors in any enterprise are equal, a situation of balance of power will result. When this is applied to the world of sovereign states, the concept of balance of power assumes, that through

the shifting of alliances and countervailing pressures, no one power or combination of powers will be allowed to grow so strong as to threaten the security of the rest (Palmer and Perkins, 2002). The importance of this arrangement lies in the fact that such "a just equilibrium in power" among the members of the family of nations will prevent anyone of them from becoming strong enough to enforce its order upon the others. Thus, in the era of balance of power in Europe, states were dragged into war in order to maintain their sovereignty. As a matter of fact, it became obvious, as Spykman (1942: 25) observes, that if the states wished to survive "they must be willing to go to war to preserve a balance against the growing hegemonic power of the period". Unfortunately, rather than preserving peace, balance of power tended to increase tension, thereby creating the very conditions which it was supposedly designed to prevent.

The intensity of tension resulting from the balance of power in Europe explains why there was a sequence of treaties designed to check the exercise of freedom of member states by appeasing them with territorial booty. In the seventeenth century, "statism" or state-system became an important factor in the administration of the continent of Europe. Indeed, the idea of balance of powers started when the state-system began to take the modern form with the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 which came into being at the end of the Thirty Years' War. This marked the disintegration of the Holy Roman Empire. As Palmer and Perkins put it:

> The Treaty of Westphalia may be said to have formalized the nation-state system through its recognition that the empire no longer commanded the allegiance of its parts and that the pope could not everywhere maintain his authority, even in spiritual matters. Henceforth German princes were to rule as they fit, and they were to be free to choose Calvinism, Lutheranism, or Catholicism. (Palmer and Perkins 2002:5)

The issue of freedom gained by the main actors in the war as a result of the coming of the treaty is an important point to note. It shows that the crux of the problem that led to the war was the desire for political freedom or sovereignty. Consequently, Holland and Switzerland were recognized as independent republics; the kingdom of Prussia and eventually the German Empire came into being; France and Sweden gained some territories; and England, France, Spain and Sweden became

great powers.

In the eighteenth century, the treaty of Utrecht (1713) which allowed the partition of Poland was signed. Other treaties in that century include the 1748 Peace of Aix-la Chapelle which was followed by the Seven Years' War in 1756, the Treaty of 1772 between Austria and Russia, etc. Towards the end of the century, the French revolution broke out in 1789, and this culminated in the Napoleonic Wars which pushed all Europe into a series of wars. This marked the beginning of the spread of the three revolutionary principles of Equality, Liberty and Fraternity. These principles deteriorated into aggressive nationalism and the old order in Europe balance of power had been disrupted. It then became necessary for the representatives of nations meeting at Vienna in 1814-15 to seek a way of re-establishing the old system. Consequently, Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, France, Sweden, Portugal, and Spain were recognized as first-rated great powers. And to guard against future disruptions of peace, the Congress established a *cordon sanitaire* between France and her neighbours, and invoked the principles of compensation and legitimacy. These are historical facts to show that the unbridled exercise or the threat of unreasonable denial of political freedom caused the crises which necessitated the fear of dominance and consequently the signing of treaties.

After the Vienna Congress, signing of treaties, formation of alliances, and partitioning of states and communities resulting in wars continued in Europe, some of which include the Treaty of Versailles of 1871, the Triple Alliance of 1882, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, the Triple Entente of 1907, the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 and the League of Nations of 1919. These are also historical facts in support of the claim that Europe was in crises up to World War II because of the expansionist and counter-expansionist moves of the states. This phenomenon can be interpreted to mean the demonstration of arbitrary denial and excessive exercise of freedom, the realization of which informed the idea of establishing the United Nations.

The United Nations was formed in 1945 to monitor and control the arbitrary exercise of freedom by member states in order to achieve global peace. Thus, there was a shift from the arbitrary territorial partitioning formula of balance of power to a policy of non-interference in the liberty and development of the individual states. As noted earlier on, it is true that the main role of the United Nations is to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to world peace and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of peace,

while at the same time, ensuring settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to breach of peace. But it is also true that the suppression of aggression is possible only if the freedom of the member states to arbitrarily acquire territories and interfere with the liberty of others is controlled. In fact, one of its principles is non-interference in the affairs of member states. Thus, each state has the freedom to develop and act within the confines of international law.

Admittedly, while the United Nations Charter codified the unacceptability of war as means of normal politics, it at the same time left two holes in the rule – the unquestionable freedom of right to self-defence (which justifies the existence and development of the military machineries and the creation of new weaponry by each member states); the right of the international community to interfere with military means, under certain circumstances, in the affairs of its member-states. The freedom granted each state to develop weapons has led to the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction, an epidemic that the whole world now stands to condemn. Thus, no matter how pleasant the post-America-Iraq war may be (even if Iraq becomes a paradise), it was morally wrong for America with its allies to interfere in the affairs of Iraq and thereby defy the United Nations' resolutions. Some nations seem to applaud America for overthrowing Saddam Hussein in Iraq. But we must warn that the wind that blew and removed clothes from the wardrobe is capable of undressing anybody walking on the street. The success of America in Iraq is a threat to the whole world.

The unabated freedom of development granted all nations, has led to accumulation of huge military arsenals (starting from ordinary guns to rifles, tanks, missiles and nuclear warheads). The thought of every state now seems to be the eventual growth of its power. To this end, considerable energy and resources are being channeled into the growth and training of armies, development of military organizations and scientific research in the manufacturing of more sophisticated weapons of destruction. These weapons are developed under the pretext of defence, or protection, or stability, or peace. The result of the freedom for self-defence is now threatening world peace as it has developed fear and suspicion among nations. Truly, we have opened a Pandora's Box of technological madness. It is a madness which is capable of destroying the whole human race. The original aim of the American adventure in Iraq was to remove Saddam Hussein who was alleged to have acquired weapons of mass destruction. The rumor of the presence of such weapons in the hands of an aggressive leader like Saddam shook the

world with fear. It is a paradox that the whole world publicly decries weapons of mass destruction, yet it seems fashionable for every nation to secretly acquire them in preparation for war. Up till now, the supposedly huge pile of weapons of mass destruction has not been found in Iraq. The aftermath of this is the ongoing guerrilla attacks on the Americans in Iraq.

Economic Deprivation

In most cases, political and economic causes of crises are taken together because the political control of a territory implies the economic control of the resources of the territory. But "economic wars" are also intensive clashes of economic interests, only resolved through mostly economic means (and almost always with the involvement of political moves such as economic sanctions, territorial blockades, embargoes etc). Quite often, economic war could lead to armed violence or full-scale war. Conflicts of interest are mostly economic in nature. It has been alleged that the main cause of the America-Iraq war is economic – the American government intends to control Iraq's economic resources especially the oil wells. If this allegation is correct, the war can be interpreted to mean an attempt by America and her allies to deprive the Iraqis of the control of their resources for their own national development.

The economic inequality in society is an aspect of the economic deprivation which causes crises. The gap between the rich and poor in every society, as well as between rich countries and poor countries is widening faster than we may think. Poverty is a state of being poor (Hornby, 1995). It is "the inability of any person to attain a minimum standard of living" (The World Bank: 1986). Among economists, "the term poverty connotes a situation of low-income consumption" (Obadan, 1997: 2). Poverty therefore, is a condition in which people live below a specified minimum level of income. According to Galbraith (1958) people are poverty stricken when their incomes even if adequate for survival, fall radically behind that of the community. They are degraded, and they live outside the grades or categories acceptable to the community. Hans-Peter (1994: 38-45) sees poverty as the inability of any person to satisfy his or her needs due to the lack of income or property and or means of change. Poverty, it must be noted, is a plague afflicting people all over the world. More often than not, the poor are dirty, helpless, aimless, unorganized and are comparatively short-lived. Poverty

is not only dehumanizing, it is also debasing because "by its very nature, it is a condition that denies individuals the right to exercise potentials" (Aku *et. al*, 1997: 43). It is a multi-dimensional phenomenon which is not restricted to insufficient food, or poor clothing and poor shelter. Hiffe (1987) maintains that a state of poverty is circumstantial, and depending on circumstances these are two types of poverty, namely, conjuncture poverty and structural poverty. Conjuncture poverty is a transitory state of poverty in which people find themselves in a time of crisis. Very good examples of such people afflicted with temporary poverty are the displaced citizens of Liberia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Burundi, etc., who become refugees in different parts of Africa or elsewhere in the world. On the other hand, structural poverty is a long-term of kind of poverty which is usually a product of many factors such as, the past and present circumstances of the afflicted individual, the condition of the environment in which he lives, the opportunities available for him to develop, etc. Thus, poverty could either be transitory or chronic. A pauper, then, could be said to be a person in a chronic state of poverty. Besides, we acknowledge the fact that poverty is relative, because the riches of a wealthy man in a developing country may be considered worthless in another or a more developed country. A man who has a million Naira in Nigeria classes himself as a millionaire but in the United States of America, his money suffers total debasement as a result of the fallen exchange rate of the Naira to the U.S dollar which points to the disparity in the standard of living in the two countries.

However, the phenomenon of poverty in human society seems to be receiving more attention these days than ever before. This is probably because of increased awareness of the enormous threats which poverty constitutes to human and national development, and peace. Indeed, no nation can successfully develop when the majority of its people are poor. "These issues become more critical in developing countries where poverty has been noted to be pervasive and chronic, engulfing a large proportion of the society" (Imam, 1998:5). This is particularly an overview of the situation in Africa, where poverty has enveloped the whole continent with its attendant negative consequences. In recent years, the World Bank as well as some United Nations Agencies such as the United Nations Development (UNDP), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) carried out studies on poverty in developing nations, including those of Africa, and some solutions were proffered. Yet this monstrous phenomenon remains ever-active and spreads faster with a formidable strength that

seems to defy any solution.

The issue of concern here is not in removing poverty from the surface of the earth but noting that this deplorable phenomenon of widespread poverty and the widening wealth and income gap have increased the probability of armed violence on a scale that could be qualified as "war". In Third World countries, especially in Africa, what may be called "Pauperism" is the main cause of the socio-economic problem inhibiting the attainment of peace. Pauperism, here, is the doctrine or orientation that encourages policies aiming at keeping the poor perpetually in that degrading position in order to create and maintain a gap between them and the rich. This is done in many ways; through government policies, economic means and domination in various forms. Essentially, Pauperism is multi-dimensional. At the international level, pauperism consists in the impoverishment of some developing countries by some individuals or countries, mostly by making such pauperized nations politically unstable, economically stagnant, and disallowing them space for meaningful development thereby arbitrarily restraining their economic freedom.

At the national level, the cause of poverty besides the natural causes include, corruption, greed, deliberate attempts of the government to impoverish the citizens or a section of the country, domination and exploitation of the weak by the strong, nonchalant attitudes of government to the peoples' welfare, neglect of the well-being of the people (or the citizens) by government, mal-administration by a small ruling class who may wish to consider the seat of power as their birthright, all forms of exploitation and oppression of the masses by the ruling class, failure of the government to create employment opportunities, lack of good and affordable system of education, destruction of private resources by the government without compensation, etc. The most fundamental of all these is corruption. According to Tella:

> Corruption is rooted in poverty itself. It is a situation where everybody that seeks political power does so with the intention to acquire property that will not only last the lifetime of that individual, but also sustain the family after he is long dead. This property is acquired at the expense of the majority of the populace who does not have the same amount of power and may never be close to the corridors of power. This is a situation where there is pervasive poverty, and the office-seeker, realizing

that no condition is permanent, tries to maximize his acquisitions within the shortest possible time…. The longer the individual concerned stays in power or within the corridors of power the more public property, including funds, he acquires for the uncertain future… (Tella, 1997: 18-19).

By virtue of their status, the pauperized members of society are hopelessly devalued because poverty creates a situation of disillusionment. Indeed, the poverty of the poor is their greatest obstacle to attaining prosperity. As the saying goes "a hungry man is an angry man" and so, the pauper sees corruption, nepotism and crime that pervade the pauperized society as virtues rather than vices. As long as it is to make ends meet, any way is a way for the poor. He becomes hopelessly desperate and throws righteousness, decency and morality to the winds. He becomes aggressive and engages in all sots of crimes: stealing, killing, robbery and other social vices. That explains why in developing countries especially in Africa today, the propensity to explore all available avenues to steal and embezzle public funds is very high. For example, when recalling the causes of the Liberian war, The Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Mission in Liberia (1994: 18-19) remarks, "corruption is perhaps the most significant factor that is responsible for this war. A man is poor but becomes immensely wealthy overnight once he takes a government job that involves the handling of public funds…". The point to note here is that war and revolts often break out when the missiles of poverty hit the pauperized people. Naturally, the poor usually seeks redress by confrontational means, disobedience to government, disrespect for the laws, violent agitation for change or reform, etc. The poor fears no fall; if he dies in the course of violent agitation for the recognition of his rights, it is all well and good because he would be as hopeless as the dead if he remains complacent to pauperization. So, it is better for him to revolt, even if only for posterity to judge him right. Hence, he is ready to strike at the slightest opportunity when he is pushed to the wall. Thus, the nature of poverty as a product of economic deprivation, among other things, accounts for the high propensity for conflicts in poor nations – Afghanistan, Chechnya, Iraq, East Timor, Burundi, Angola, Eritrea, Nigeria and other developing nations. Eruvbetine expresses this position in clearer terms as he remarks that:

Poverty and deprivation have a way of making people desperate

> and thereby exposing them to the guiles of manipulators of heterogeneity, as is so true of the Nigerian situation. In a sense, therefore, poverty and the exploitation of differences in Nigeria are implicated in all upheavals associated with minority interests, youth activism, ethnicity, environmental degradation, religious bigotry, political instability, policy inconsistencies, marginalization and exclusion. (Eruvbetine, 2001: 2)

Furthermore, the competition for natural resources is one of the sources of economic deprivations, which cause crises or wars. In the industrial world, the possession of resources is significant to their political and economic power. In history, this singular factor has led powerful states to partition, invade and colonize less powerful states. According to Ogundowole (1988: 48), "the progress of every advanced capitalist state derived heavily from the exploitation of the world's backward states". This is what Gerald Piel calls "coercive deprivation". The consequences of colonization of the developing countries are enormous. For example, it has been argued that "with minor exceptions, the socio-political-economic formations of contemporary Africa are creations of colonialism" (Ihonvhere, 1989: 17). The subjugation tendencies inherent in the orientation of the western pattern of administering colonies, their exploitative and pauperizing activities, their international institutions established as agencies of pauperization, "as well as order emanating from these activities and institutions constitute therefore the fundamental obstacles inhibiting progress of the new states" (Ogundowole, 1988: 115) by rending them powerless and poor. The violent orientation of the people of these new states is a product of the colonial background.

In the Middle East, income from the exploitation of natural resources often accounts for greater part of the national income and nearly all the income of the state. The drive to control resources often results in geopolitical clashes and war between states. For example, Iraq invaded Kuwait in order to gain control of Kuwait's oil fields. Also, the fighting in the Congo has inbuilt connections to the availability of uranium (a prime interest of the West) in the country. Clashes of interest in various parts of Africa – Liberia, Angola, and Sierra Leone – doubled because of the ambition of the parties involved to control the diamond fields.

In Nigeria, the Niger Delta's ethnic clashes can be placed, to a large extent, within the context of economic deprivation. The Niger Delta area of Nigeria is the country's oil base. Contrary to the expectations of the

people the area has been neglected and highly polluted as a result of gas-flaring and oil spillage. The refineries emit sulphur dioxide and some other toxic wastes which are quite harmful to man, water resources and vegetation. This phenomenon renders the people, who are predominantly farmers and fishermen, jobless. The youths become idle and more vulnerable to violence. Thus, the consequences of this situation of economic deprivation include persistent agitations for reform (by different representatives of the communities and mostly in the media) in form of environmental health and general well-being, development of infrastructure, general improvement in the standard of living and compensations for the acquired land; claims and counter-claims of ownership of land; sabotage; mistrust among the ethnic groups; violent ethnic clashes; open confrontation with government agents; clashes with the representatives of the oil companies; cutting of flow lines and tampering with the facilities of oil companies operating in the area etc (Osuntokun, 2000). The situation here is a typology of unjust economic deprivation. Hence, Onyekpe declares:

> ….there is no justice in an arrangement which allows the resources of a group or a people to be exploited and plundered without regard for the continued survival of the group. The argument is especially valid for the Niger Delta communities, which have been subjected to decades of imperialist exploitation of their petroleum resources with devastating effects on the ecological, economic and social lives of the people. There is no justice in any arrangement, which focuses on the interests and needs of imperialist forces, the capitalist class and other exploiters' interests, but does not serve the objective interests of the people particularly the lower strata, and the society as a whole. (Onyekpe, 2001: 337)

But imagine that there is a favourable response to the agitations of the people of Niger Delta Area, imagine that their youths are economically empowered, imagine that the necessary infrastructure expected of such a strategic area is put in place, imagine that favourable compensations are paid on the acquired land to the members of the communities in the area, imagine that the environmental pollution in the area is well and adequately treated and the general well-being of the people improves, the rate of incessant violence in the Niger Delta would have been reduced. Thus, one may agree with the argument that:

…a societal condition of widespread and deep poverty is
essentially deprivation suffered by a large segment of society of
some important basics essential for sustaining life such as
sufficient income to provide for housing, clothes, food,
education and health services and adequate opportunities for
productive employment, and that degree of deprivation – and of
hope – leads to societal stress; that stress, in turn leads to
increasing the anger and frustration of the poor suffering these
deprivations who are then receptive to being exploited by
violence-promoting war-bent demagoguery …(Miller, 2000: 11).

Cultural Factors

Culture is an essential element of humanity. Man is a cultural being.
Culture permeates all aspects of his life. His thought, actions and
activities are formed within the framework of a given culture or mixture
of many cultures. His culture reflects his nativity, his language, his
history, his appearance, his beliefs, his attitudes and world-view.
Therefore, culture is the totality of man – he thinks culture, lives culture
and acts culture. Culture embraces, among other things, "knowledge,
beliefs, arts, morals law, customs and other capacities and habits acquired
by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1958: 1). As a social being, man
lives in society where he is constrained either *de facto* or *de jure* to form an
association with others of either the same or diverse cultures or traits.
And to that extent, human beings acculturate. Enculturation is a process
by which culture is acquired and transmitted across generations.

Indeed, cultures are integrated and patterned through their dominant
economic forces, social patterns, key symbols and values. Even at the
level of politics (including international politics) ideology becomes an
aspect of culture. Thus, before and during the Cold War, Socialism or
Communism was the dominant political culture in the East, while
Capitalism was the dominant political culture of the West. These two
political cultures became standards for evaluating good and bad political
systems and thus rather than unity, the world was polarized into East
and West blocs. It was left for any country and its political leaders
seeking greatness to opt for any of the two cultures or simply synthesize
them to form a new and peculiar political culture. This was the
background of the craving for hegemony by America and the then USSR
and which in turn led to threats of war, supports to certain warring

states, etc., all of which epitomize an unhealthy relationship between the two blocs.

Culture is not static, especially now that globalization has really increased the level of cultural integration. By so-doing, more cultural values are acquired and some become obsolete. We are aware of the fact that "the problems of understanding socio-cultural dimensions of war are multiplied in the case of conflicts described as "ethnic" where the local explanatory models are offered to explain, justify or maintain hostilities (Watson and Boag, 2000) between social groups within a state. But it is not contestable that an ethnic group is a people of the same cultural identity which co-exists with other ethnic groups in a plural society. It is expected that in such a plural society cultural integration and social cohesion are necessary for social harmony and peace. On the other hand, plural societies, which have not attained a good measure of integration and social cohesion and where ethnic interests are more emphasized far and above national interests, are usually vulnerable to violence in form of ethnic clashes which may culminate into a civil war. For example, in the present day Nigeria ethnic politics often come to play in the election or selection of leadership, political appointments, etc. Therefore, in politics, in economic and social welfare ethnicity has a role to play in a plural society. Admittedly, the presence of ethnic groups does not cause crises in such a plural society, but it often serves as the vehicle on which people channel their grievances. Thus, ethnicity enhances violence, and as earlier on noted, ethnic clashes in Nigeria are partly motivated by the deprivation of political freedom, the result of which is the evolution of ethnic militias which often agitate for reforms through violent means.

At the inter-state or international level, scholars speak of cultural domination. Conquest, colonization, modernity, education, globalization and the desire of a people to understanding other peoples' cultures have greatly enhanced cultural diffusion, the negative effects of which are cultural pollution or contamination and lose of identity. It has been argued that violence is part of the American way of life. In one of the articles included in Selma Brackman's letter to Kofi Annan concerning the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack in New York and Washington, D.C., Mayur says:

> Look at our entertainment industry. An enormous number of TV programs are based on violence. At a conference in Princeton a few years ago a psychologist truly enlightened us,

> that by the time a child in American is four years old, he or she is exposed to about 3800 hours of violence. Progress has brought this magical gadget to the slums of Lima, to the remote villages of India and Ghana, to the tribal lands of the Philippines. Most news, local and global, is of violence, murder, disaster and death (Mayur, October 5, 2001: 4).

Apart from the culture of violence, a lot of negative aspects of American culture readily filter and diffuse into other cultures through the youths' contact with the outside world. Today, on the Internet, it is very easy for a computer literate person to watch pornographic pictures and films unabated. Worse still, our youths, especially women, now prefer to dress like American models, appearing half-nude and fast abandoning their own traditional and decent ways of dressing. In fact, the Islamic world detests the spread of American culture and ideology. Indeed, it was alleged that the terrorists' attack on America supposedly led by Osama bin Laden was not unconnected with the hatred the Islamic world has for American culture and policies. In truth, the inculcation of American values has improved the sophistication of methods of robbery, stealing, killing and other social ills especially in Africa.

Nevertheless, we must remember that America is a democracy. So, it is argued that democracies may be more peaceful than the non-democratic states (Levy, 2002; Ray 1995; Benoit, 1996; Rummel, 1995). The idea of the "democratic culture and norms" model (Owen, 1997; Russet and Oneal, 2001) suggests that democratic societies are inherently averse to war because citizens will not like to vote to support sending themselves to war. But such an assumption of detestation for war as a culture of democratic societies should not be over stretched because democracies are as likely as authoritarian states to get involved in imperial wars such as wars between democracies, between democracies and autocracies; and above all they are likely to be initiators than targets in such wars (Levy, 2002; Russett and Oneal, 2001; Ray, 1995, Bennett and Stam, 1998). Again, it is expected that the institutional constraints model in a democracy (checks and balances, public opinion, the press, constitutional procedures on decision making etc.) will inhibit the leader from taking unilateral military action, because he needs to secure a broad base public support before adopting risky policies (Levy, 2002). This thesis does not hold for all democracies and at all times. It does not explain, for example, why America frequently fights what she calls "just war" even without the support of broad-based public opinion or the Congress and

even in defiance of United Nations resolutions. The involvement of America in the Kosovo crisis under NATO and the recent America-Iraq war are pointers to the fact that democracy does not necessarily abhor war.

Admittedly, the culture of war is one of the important factors usually considered by scholars when justifying why some nations go to war. This culture of war is an inbuilt element in some political systems and can be attributed to certain factors. For example, scholars have argued that a domestic political and social atmosphere in which formal and informal modes of discrimination are common can translate into higher levels of international violence by the states exhibiting such culture. Thus, a domestic environment of inequality and violence may result in greater likelihood of state use of violence internationally (Caprioli and Trumbore, 2003; Caprioli and Boyer, 2001; Caprioli, 2000; Rummel, 1997; Tessler & Warriner 1997). One form of violence in such an environment with a culture of violence is the type that is predicated on the perception of ethnic superiority. This ethnic superiority can lead to "ethnic cleansing" phenomenon (for example the ethnic cleaning of the Albanians from Kosovo by Slobodan Milosevic in 1999). Thus, Kupchan (1995) argues that aggressive ethno-nationalism is predicated on the superiority of an ethnic group and its right to domination. But if such a group controls state institutions, this aggressiveness is expressed domestically as repression and discrimination against ethnic minorities, and internationally as violence against neighbouring states (Caprioli and Trumbore, 2003; Carment, 1993; Kupchan, 1995; Gellner, 1983). As Caprioli and Trumbore (2003) put it, some citizens of a state in which political and economic inequalities are perpetuated through policy and social practice are more likely to exhibit violence in their foreign policy as they externalize a world-view centered on their own sense of superiority and their perception of power as finite. The point to underscore here is that the Americans, for example, are trained in the art of violence. All American Presidents to date, with the exception of one have at one time or the other acquired military training thereby making them violence-compliant or violence-ready. It is an example of a democracy that spends a lot of its resources preparing and persecuting wars and thus becoming the greatest power in the world.

In Nigeria, the cry against marginalization by different ethnic groups in representation and allocation of resources for development is rampant. Even in our nascent democracy, the agitation has taken a new dimension. Grass-root politics in Nigeria emphasizes ethnicity more than

national interest to the extent that it is very difficult for an individual Nigerian to be purely a nationalist. This is what is responsible for the frequency of ethnic clashes in Nigeria.

Religious Factors

Religion is a contagious madness and tends to create chaos instead of happiness, confusion instead of truth, disunity or polarity instead of unity, harmony and peaceful co-existence of mankind. This is what can be called the "General Psychosis" of mankind. Religion, as an activity, is bi-dimensional. In its broad sense, religion is reduced "to any kind of belief in anything". Thus, in this sense, everybody has a religion. This does not rule out the atheist, scientist, Marxists and all other groups of people whose beliefs explicitly exclude any relationship with an object of worship. It is therefore appropriate to say that everybody holds onto the truth in whatever he or she believes, and thereby exhibits the madness in mankind.

Religion is viewed as "a particular system of faith and worship" (Hornby, 1995: 988). According to Bouquet, religion is "a fixed relationship between the human self and some non-human entities, the sacred, the supernatural, the self-existent, the absolute or simply God" (Bouquet, 1941:16) Religion is therefore a bi-polar phenomenon – man, who is the religious man on one side, and on the other a transcendent being or deity believed to exist and which is worshiped by the religious man (Omoregbe, 1993). This view about religion suggests a dependence of man on the deity which he worships. Schleiermacher (1963: 12) has thus succeeded in revealing the cause of fanaticism in religions as he defines religion as a "feeling of absolute dependence on God".

Thus, in both senses of religion, it seems that every man clings tenaciously to his beliefs or ideas or ways of life or even particular knowledge of truth, until he is influenced by circumstances to change for a new line of thought or faith. Sometimes, such a religionist regards his immediate neighbours who do not share the same views with him as either outcasts or infidels, or simply ignorant of the truth. "Men live by the sum total of their beliefs from practical beliefs (such as the world is round) to deep spiritual ones" (Bailey, 1974: 6). Some men are so "mad" with their beliefs that "they are prepared to live not only by these beliefs but also for them" (Bailey, 1974: 7). Indeed, such men, "are willing to die rather than deny them" (Bailey, 1974: 7). No doubt, the rest of the

world who hold opposing views would label these men deviants, non-conformists, fanatics or "madmen".

It seems therefore, that there is joy in madness which is only experienced and best understood by those who are mad. A madman lives in his own unique world. The problem will be to distinguish between normal and abnormal persons and this is the function of the psychiatrist. But at best the psychiatrist may conclude, as far as his knowledge can carry him, that the madman is mentally unbalanced or has an unsound mind. Though modern science has made it less difficult for us to distinguish between sound and unsound minds, it is regretful that our hope in science as custodian of objective truth is thrown into a disarray when we realize the shortcomings of this height of human knowledge. It is no news that in spite of its preference for precision, scientific certitude or truth is less absolute. Indeed, the distinction between "normal" and "abnormal" is a problematic issue in all of human endeavour. The confusion becomes more heightened when one hears a "madman" calling a "normal" person a madman. Then the question is, who is mad and who is not mad between these two people? It is puzzling to note that even in this sub-conscious state of mind, the madman seems to be aware of the disparity between a sound mind and unsound mind, and so holds his own truth. It would be naïve and unhealthy to allow sentiment in our judgments and dismiss the underlying truth in his remarks. That would amount to deprivation.

It must be noted that truth in religion is self-experienced and holds, and remains so until, perhaps, it is changed by circumstances. Here, human differences including different experiences of individuals play an important role in determining man's attitude to his beliefs or ideas or what he considers as truth. But is absolute truth a mirage As a matter of fact, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Confucians, Taoists, etc. disagree among themselves to the extent that one may be tempted to conclude that all human beings are not from the same source.

Understandably, the objects of worship in these different religions are conceived differently, but at times it is done in such a way as to provoke disagreement which may affect the totality of man's life, more so if the claims are based on absolute faith. For example, while God has a place in Christianity and the Islamic religion as the creator of heavens and earth and the absolute controller of man, Hinduism reduces God, otherwise called "Paramatman", to the level of second-in-command to Brahman, who is regarded as the ultimate reality. In Buddhism, God has no place at all. Even where two beliefs are somehow similar with little

differences, the followers are not ready to appreciate the virtue in tolerance. The Christian and Islamic faiths, for example, have similar doctrines with little differences. But some believers often view these little differences in beliefs as more fundamental to their religions, and hence their intolerance of other religious beliefs becomes a virtue. Yet, they claim to be creatures of the same God.

Indeed, fundamentalists are extremists who emphasize certain aspects of their religion to the condemnation of other religions. As Momoh (2003) puts it "The religious fanatic or fundamentalist holds fervently to the dogma that anyone is doomed who does not belong to his religious sect or denomination" This is an aftermath of the diverse interpretations of the irreconcilable injunctions in the sacred books of each of the religions concerned. Each claims to be superior to the others, and exercises the faith as the only approved revealed religion by God (or the ultimate reality so conceived) to mankind. Thus, persecution and condemnation await whosoever does not share the same faith. The Holy Bible condemns those who do not believe in "Jesus Christ as the son of God, the Truth and the way" (John 14:6), while the Al' Qur'an asserts that the fire of hell will consume those who refuse to accept the Islamic religion.

> And those who believe in Allah and His messengers, they are the truthful and the faithful ones with their Lord. They have their reward and their light. And those who disbelieve and reject our messages, they are the inmates of hell (*Holy Qur'an*, ch. 57:19).

> Yet, the Bible says "Thou shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free" (John ch. 8:32). But where lies the truth? Is truth to be found in the Bible or the Qur'an, or the Upanishads, or Bhagavad-Gita or Adhamatyoga or Brahman Sutra? Is it in the Islamic religion, or Christianity, or Confucianism, or Taoism, or Zoroastrianism, or Buddhism, or the African Traditional religion?

Essentially, religious intolerance and desire for religious domination have brought mankind into crises of varied magnitude. According to Kung (1991:73-74), religious intolerance accounts for many massacres and wars in the Middle and Far East, between Maronite Christians, Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims, between Syrians, Palestinians, Druse and Israelis,

and between Iran and Iraq, between Indians and Pakistanis, Hindus and Sikhs, Singhalese Buddhists and Tamil Hindus, and between Buddhist monks and the Catholic regime in Vietnam, and also today between Catholic and Protestants in Northern Ireland. Mill (1947:92) says, "the notion that it is one man's duty that another should be religious, was the foundation of all the religious persecution ever perpetrated…" Like Kung, Momoh (2003) argues that most of the problems (including religious crisis) confronting mankind and the world have their roots in intolerance.

The way out of the problem is not by removing religion from human life because it seems to be an impossible task. It is also not in forcing all religions to have the same faith, or to compress all religions into one faith because it will amount to the denial of freedom of religion. Hans Kung suggests what he calls "religious peace". According to him, "there can be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. In short, there can be no world peace without religious peace", (Kung, 1991: 76).

But how can religious peace be achieved? Momoh (2003) says, "a world free of religion is not necessarily a world free of war, tension and conflict… For religion, of all causal candidates of war, is the only thing that is supposed to bring peace to man and mankind". Perhaps the way to achieving religious peace "lies in the objective of making each man his brother's keeper and of eradicating all evils in society" (Alao, 1988: 2). This is a message for religious tolerance which according to Momoh can be achieved by waging war against intolerance as proposed by CENPRETO (Centre for the Propagation of Religious and Ethnic Tolerance). The claim of the supremacy of one religion over the others is itself a sign of ignorance because "there is no one alive today who knows enough to say with confidence whether one religion has been greater than all others" (Toynbee, 1956). What needs to be done is the granting of religious freedom within the confines of a set of just laws. But while religious freedom must be guaranteed, the representatives of various religions have a social responsibility to avoid expression of prejudice and acts of discrimination towards those of different beliefs. They should not incite or legitimize hatred, fanaticism and religious wars but should foster tolerance and mutual respect between all (Watson and Boag, 2000). Using Hans Kung's words "religious peace will best be achieved by ignoring the differences and contradictions" (Hans Kung, 1991) in different religions.

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Conclusion

However, since we have identified that crises/war are caused by either the denial or excessive exercise of freedom, it means that the condition for peace should be founded on social justice. This conclusion does not reject the valid points made by scholars who have identified various causes of crises/war. Rather it attempts to subsume all the factors to conflicts emanating from all forms of deprivation. Therefore, any attempt to address crises/war between independent entities must be conscious of the role of freedom as the intrinsic cause of instability in society.

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