Title of Article: Boko Haram: A Nigerian Brand of Thwarted Religious Fundamentalism and Terrorism

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Abstract: Historically, religion bequeaths man with the opportunity to relate with his creator for fulfillment and completeness. However, a new brand of acute religiosity which developed with the late modernity is notably characterised by an excessive emotional enslavement of men to strange dogmas devoided of basis in all known transitional societies. Existentially, the spate of fundamentalism explicable under the cloak of ‘right to worship’ in this era is continually assuming a dangerous dimension in its global context. The core of this deviation lies in the ‘flexibility of meanings’ often made possible by the chronological ethos ‘eternally inherent’ in most religious books and mostly found suitable by spiritual leaders to channel the potentials of their adherents to embark on causes that are diametrically opposed to the true intentions embedded in such religious ethos. Consequently, the boundary between such fundamentalism, sectional interest and criminality stand blurred and thus engenders disillusionment on how best to tackle the upsurge in violence often attendant of fundamentalism. In line with this, this chapter interrogates the environment of religious teachings that promote the activities of Boko Haram and its resultant lethal conflict in Nigeria. It also seeks explanation to this trend in both interpretive and modernization theories and finally, charts a pragmatic direction needed to avert in the future the dire consequences of religious fundamentalism in Nigeria.