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Title: *Conflicting Christologies in a Context of Conflicts: Jesus, the Isawa and Muslim Relation in Nigeria*

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REVIEW

Conflicting Christologies in a Context of Conflict: Jesus, the Isawa and Muslim Relation in Nigeria is a book written by Chentu Dauda Nguvugher in 2010. It is a doctoral thesis that was turned into a textbook, a requirement for award of doctorate degree in Germany (Edinburg University) where the author obtained his PhD. The book has 490 pages and is segmented in the following parts – cover page, fly page, title page, copyright page, preliminary pages and contents, bibliography and index. The author is a theological teacher with the Department of Religion Studies with University of Jos. He wrote the preface for the text and the book has seven (7) chapters with 50 subsections.

The style of presentation of the book was simple, precise and logical. The author uses several illustrations to buttress his points. Abbreviation and acronyms were defined at the preliminary pages for ease of comprehension. *Conflicting Christologies* probes into the thorny dynamics of religion and conflict in Nigeria, which historically has played itself out in the contests for space, resources and access to power between and within communities. Chentu has given us a rare insightful analysis of this complex phenomenon that can only be rooted out through the building of a just and inclusive social framework that will not only provide space and social belonging to all, but also address the needs of the individuals, communities and indeed the wider Nigerian society. Using the experience of the *Isawa*, the author examines the context and

dynamic of religious relation and conflict in Northern Nigeria from a historical and theological perspective. The author critically explores the role of the state and society in generating religious identities and divisions and how such identity have resulted in intermittent and some cases, protracted clashes in recent times. The work, which also provides strong recommendations on how these relationships could be managed, will be useful to policy makers, academic, students of political economy, development activities, conflict managers, journalists and general purpose readers.

The book is segmented into seven (7) chapters. Chapter one which is the introduction provides a theoretical and conceptual nexus between state and religion. Chapter two explores the history, nature and character of the state and economy in northern Nigeria. The chapter examines the state structure in Nigeria. It also provides a detailed understanding of the changing dynamic of the state and how these changes have impacted on religious relations. The chapter articulates two points; that carrying out its historic responsibility of facilitating capitalist social relation of production, the state, in colonial and post-colonial Nigeria, created ethno-religious identities which helped to consolidate the activities of the ruling class. Through this process, the state constructed or deepened the historical differences between ethnic and religious groups. Chapter three is devoted to a discussion of the socio-economic and political background of conflict and religion in the northern states, to set the context for the data analysis that followed. Chapter 4 analyses religious conflict in northern Nigeria. Among those discussed were violence and riots in Kafanchan of Kaduna State, Bauchi conflict of 1994, Jos conflict of 2001 & 2007, Kano conflict of 2001 and 2007, among others. As a corollary to chapter 4, chapter 5 focuses on the Isawa and how they relate with other Muslims. Chapter six examines the role of the state. Chapter 7 discusses the relationship between Christian and Muslims, and it is being manipulated. It also analyses the strategies that is used by the state and how this contribute in worsening the relationship. The concluding chapter provides key recommendations and draws conclusion by relating the *Isawa* case to the larger northern Nigerian experience.

It is a very brilliant work and the author demonstrates high analytical skill to driving outpoints. The textbook will help in not only increasing understanding, it will help policy makers and civil society groups in designing effective mechanism for tackling Muslim-Christian relation in the country. The book will be very useful to policy makers, civil society groups, academics, students and the general public. The only flaw that the author can improve upon is the structural outlay and pattern of narration. It should be structured more of a book than a dissertation. The

grammar at the back of the text can be enhanced; this will help to give the book an international outlook and make it worthwhile

Nevertheless, I preserved and, all in all, I can highly recommend the book. I challenge you to remain unmoved after reading this exceptional book. The book is a reliable addition to literatures on conflict and development