

Nigerian Arabic and Islamic Drama and the Promotion of Peace and Conflict Resolution among the Muslims: Finding Meaning in Alabi's *Al-A'qidatul-haditha (The Modern Creed)*

Abdulganiyi Musa^{[a],*}; A. Odiba Yunusa^[a]; Y. Okala Yunusa^[a]

^[a] Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Anyigba, Kogi State, Nigeria.

*Corresponding author.

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Abstract

Drama has been widely acclaimed as a positive medium for mirroring the society. It is a representation of life. It entertains, educate and inform. Drama has been employed by playwrights over the years to make constructive social commentaries on issues and happenings in the society. It is not new in Nigeria today that most of the social conflict and disunity among the people especially the Muslims are ascribed to the method of tackling religious issues. Lack of good admonition and application of wisdom has caused so many conflicts among the people. This paper therefore analyses one of Abdulganiy Adebayo Alabi's play texts, *Al-a'qidatul Haditha (The modern creed)*. The play is written in Arabic language with a view to educate the society especially the Muslim youths on method of propagating religious activities with moral approach. The paper therefore draws some valuable lessons that could be learned from the play text which can serve as means of promoting peace and conflict resolution. The researchers adopts the content analysis of qualitative research method. The research findings shows that if propagation of religion is not carefully done with wisdom and good admonition as instructed by Allah and His Messenger (SAW) can lead to hatred, conflict, misconception, insecurity and disorderliness among the citizens. The study recommends that more plays should be written by Arabic and Islamic Scholars to educate and promote peace and security. The paper therefore, concludes that Arabo-Islamic drama is a vital medium for the propagation of peace, conflict resolution and real Islamic culture in Nigeria.

Key words: Arabic Drama; Promotion; Conflict; Peace and Resolution

INTRODUCTION

Drama right from its beginning has been used in analyzing and reshaping the socio-political, socio-cultural, religious and economic structure of all societies in the world. The dramatist is the gadfly of his society. Socrates is quoted by Okafor in Ebo. E.E. as saying that a dramatist is: "the gadfly whom God has attached to the state and all day long in all places...." (Ebo: 108). The dramatist or the playwright as the watchdog of society uses drama as a tool to affect changes in his/her society and environment through his/her works, he aims at showing how things are in his own society. The dramatist can be a moral crusader and at the same time can also be a crusader of immorality as we can see today in our society.

There is almost no society today that is free from moral related issues and different kinds of religious conflicts. Extremisms by some contemporary preachers have caused so many conflicts, misconception, misinformation and misunderstanding of the religion of Islam. The dramatists employ drama as a tool to comment, criticize and correct things in his society. A playwright or dramatist has the capacity to reach all strata of society using a simple language, a simple method. *Abdulganiyi Alabi* is one Nigerian Muslim Arabists who uses drama as a tool to mirror, comment, criticize and correct issues in his society. His play *Al-a'qidatul Haditha (The Modern Creed)* is a play in Arabic language which draws the attention of Muslim preachers who are so rigid in their propagation of Al-Islam to apply leniency in their *da'awah* (propagation) activities and do away with hate speech. The evil in being

extremist in religious propagation is far more than the good.

Today we can perceive different kinds of religious conflicts among the Muslims and as well between the Muslims and other faiths as well. In most cases these conflicts and disunity are caused by some of the propagators and preachers of this religion through their harshness and condemnation on their listeners and people around them. They also lack humility and human relationship. So people misunderstanding other people's ideas and nature could lead to violence. It is on this note the researcher analyses this plays to see how the playwright through his play promote peace and conflict resolution.

CONFLICT AND DIVERSITY

According to Deutsch and Coleman:

Conflicts occurs between people in all kinds of human relationships and in all social settings. Because of the wide range of potential differences among people, the absence of conflict usually signals the absence of meaningful interaction. Conflict by itself is neither good nor bad. However, the manner in which conflict is handled determines whether it is constructive or destructive. (38)

Fisher also submits that: "Conflict is defined as an incompatibility of goals or values between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings toward each other." (67). While Diversity is another concept which is sometimes the starting point of conflict. Diversity is a natural issue that we cannot do away with. There can only be unity in diversity. "Diversity is a nature of human being, it is inclusive and it is part of our everyday reality." (Kapoor 284)

Diversity of culture and opinions is clearly stated in many places in the Qur'an. Human beings are not the same and we cannot be the same because Allah created us in different forms. We differ in colors, in languages and cultures. We were created in different tribes, our mode of upbringing are not the same. We learnt under different teachers and masters. The Qur'an in Suratul Roum verse 22 states our diversity in colors and languages: "And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colors; most surely there are signs in this for the learned"

In another verse of the Qur'an Allah made us to understand that Human beings are destined to differ. "And if your lord had wished He would certainly have made people a single nation, and they shall continue to differ." (Q11:118). In another chapter we are made to understand the purpose of our diversity. "O you man! Surely we have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other, surely the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty) surely Allah is Knowing, Aware." (Q49:13)

Critical look on the above verses of the Qur'an shows that diversity is valued in the Qur'an and on the other hand conflict is rejected. In Suratul Anfal Allah forbid conflict: "And obey Allah and His Messenger and do not dispute for then you will be weak in hearts and your power will depart, and be patient, surely Allah is with the patient." (Q8:46) this particular verse clearly describes failure as definite consequence for conflict/dispute, which is why it is considered an undesirable event.

Islam as a religion considers conflict unsolicited because it is an opposing factor of unity in diversity. If we fail to value diversity and lack the understanding of other people who are different in cultures, ideology, language and religion etc. that will bring about undesirable behaviors such as expression of racism, condemnation of other people ideology, religion, political affiliation as well as discrimination and exclusion. And all these behaviors are the bedrock of conflict. It is a very common fact that no individual can be perfect, and every one by nature has his own limitations. We also have our area of specializations and disciplines. If your own area of discipline is Chemistry for instance, and mine is literature that means we cannot flow in the same ways even though there is interdisciplinary meeting point. We must learn on how to understand and respect other people's culture and ideas. Thus if our diversity is really valued and respected among ourselves it can build peace, harmony and tranquility and synergy.

Today all over the world you can perceive disputes, conflicts, discriminations and other forms of disunity among the Muslims. All these are resulting to serious problems such as fighting, quarrelling and even killings. We now have different groups such as: *Izalatul bid'a Wa iqamotul sunnah*, *Salafiyah*, *Ahmadiyah Movement*, *Tabligh*, *Shi'ites*, *Tijaniyah*, *Qadriyah* just to mention a few. Each of these groups has different ideology and opinions but failed to value their diversities.

A close look at some extremist groups in our society today reveals that they are built upon the ideology of considering themselves as the real Muslims and others who do not follow their way as infidels. And whoever contravenes their teaching is considered an unbeliever irrespective of such a person's involvement in Islam and the rulings of apostasy are applied on such a person.

Islam as a religion is very much aware of human diversity in ramification and also acknowledge the existence of conflict. That is why he sent His messenger (SAW) as a mercy to the entire universe. And He ordered the messenger to call the people to the way of his lord with wisdom and good admonition. Therefore, Muslims especially the propagators of Islam should emulate the Prophet (SAW) in his methodology in relating with people and inviting them to Islam. When we acknowledge our diversities in opinion, ideology, knowledge, interpretation, culture and so on that is when peace will reign and that is what can be called unity in diversity. Ron Fisher asserts

that: "Conflict is an inevitable fact of human existence. If we work to understand and manage it effectively, we can improve both the satisfaction and productivity of our social relationships." (5)

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY *A'QIDATUL-HADITHA (THE MODERN CREED)*

The play is written in Arabic language and the main idea of the play is to attract the attention of the propagators of Islam especially the new generation of Muslim scholars to the adoption of leniency and moderation in their missionary activities and to stay away from repulsive methodology which the evil is more greater than its repairs. The playwright specifically mentioned a particular group that is known to be extremist in relationship with other Muslims and as well other faith (*Salafiyun*). However, the play also revealed that some of their activities are mis-interpretate and mis-understand by people. And that close interaction with them will give you proper understanding of their operational methodology.

The playwright described vividly the character of those Muslims who are fond of calling other Muslims names such as *Kafir* (unbeliever) for not doing exactly what they believed is the right thing as well as seeing many things as innovation.

The play has seven scenes, it is set in imaginary communities with some imaginary characters. The playwright also used an imaginary Islamic Organization called *Jama'atu Adini Yusra*. This organization is believed to be a place where the members are taught on how not to respect the elders and converted into religious extremists.

The major actors in the play are: Alfa Saka, Ajadi and Lamidi. Though there are many characters in the play with different roles.

The play highlight some misconceptions and misconducts in Islam especially during the eight day prayers normally organized by some Muslims for their dead Muslim fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters. In some cases these eight days or forty days prayer will be turned to celebration that you hardly comprehend what they are doing if you are a stranger.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE PLAY

It is very obvious that one of our major predicament in this our religion today is different creeds, opinions and school of thoughts. Among the Muslims we are having different groups with different creeds. Some of these creeds are old while some are new. No one is trying to understand one another, everyone believes his own creed is better than the other. Some will even go to the extent of calling others unbelievers. All these are leading to quarrelling, fighting,

keeping malice and not praying together as Muslims. Condemnation of existing cultures among the people and lack of respect for the elders were also parts of the causes of the conflicts. Another major problem is lack of good methodology in calling people to the proper way of Allah and His Messenger (SAW). This play captured some of these conflicts and we analyze them one after another.

Alfa Saka: Mama good evening (He was moving on)

Mama: (surprising with the action of Alfa Saka and was asking the other ladies standing by her side) is this not Saka who just greeted me?

The Ladies: Yes, he is the one.

Mama: He greeted me while standing, is he mad? Call him for me.

Zainab: (running behind him) Alfa Saka! Alfa Saka!!

Alfa Saka: (turning back) yes.

Zainab: Mama is calling you. (They were both returning to Mama who is waiting with intense.)

Mama: What is this rudeness and when have I become little before you that you are greeting me while standing?

Alfa Saka: (Am sorry) no, oh Mama, who am I to belittle you, except that Islam.....

Mama: Keep quiet! Which Islam are you talking about, are you the one that is teaching me Islam? Is it not the Islam we have be practicing before you are born? You better go down on your kneels before I will slap you.

Alfa Saka: (went down on his kneel) good evening mama.

Mama: Get this into your brain, if you are greeting others while standing, exempt me Awele because I will not take the insult from anybody whoever he is. Your father (Amasa Ayse) who is my brother (May Allah mercy upon his soul) never greet me while standing, where are you from that you greets me while standing? (10-11)

Critical look at this conversation between Mama and Alfa Saka shows that there is conflict and the conflict is due to diversity of creed. This type of conflict is regarded as *Value Conflict*. Ron Fisher asserts that: "Value conflict involves incompatibility in ways of life, ideologies – the preferences, principles and practices that people believe in." (70). It is a general culture and belief in our society that a child or a young person is not supposed to greet an elderly person while standing. He or she must go down on his kneels which is believed to be a sign of respect. However, in the modern creed as was illustrated in this play by the playwright shows that most of the modern Muslim scholars sees that as an un-Islamic for any person to bend down to other creatures either in worship or for any reason at all. But to the elders and other people who are not incline to that ideology sees that as a sign of disrespect and arrogance.

Mama in this scene sees it as disrespectful and belittling for Alfa Saka to greet her while standing and that has put her in a state of anger against Alfa Saka but Alfa Saka was calm not to provoke mama into further anger

by obeying her and quickly going down on his knees and greeted mama which settled the conflict and both departed peacefully. Assuming Alfa Saka insisted that he cannot kneel down because of his creed which according to them forbids a human being kneeling down or bowing down for anybody except Allah alone. The argument and conflict would have continue to linger between them which might have generated to quarreling, but he used his wisdom and patience in resolving the conflict between him and his Aunty.

Lack of wisdom and patience has led to conflicts and fight among the Muslims in our society today. So many Muslim scholars and youths approach issues with harshness and extremism. Though many innovations and un-Islamic deeds are brought into the religion but the way and manners in handling the issues are very important.

Still in Scene one we can still see another illustration of the attitude of those who believed their own creed is better than any other one.

Zainab: Though Alfa Saka is good and humble youth if not that he ascribed himself with the people of the modern creed, those who don't respect anybody and they don't honor their parents. That is they greet them while standing.

Mama: That is their own problems, but as for me Awele (hitting her chest) I will not take that from him. Am his father's elder sister.

Maryam: But he is not among the extremists, those who are abusing this, condemning that. Slandering people all in the name of modern creed. Fauzan the son of my friend greet people of his father's age by extending handshake to them.

Zainab: Is he not the one who broke his elder brother Radio Tape? Saying it is unlawful to listen to music, despite that they are not staying in the same room.

Mrayam: Yes, if not for the neighbors that rushed down there, we would have seen a great calamity.

Zainab: They are harsh, those people are disgusting, and they don't see value in other peoples and they don't respect elders. (12)

The above conversation indicates the radicalism and extremism of some of the Muslim youths of this generation who believe they are on the right way while other Muslims who don't practice their own ways of life or ideology are counted as unbelievers and they place such person as their enemy as it is the cases of the Boko Haram in the North East of Nigeria who had killed many Muslims. The Boko Haram groups believed that Western Education is forbidden for a Muslim, therefore any Muslim that partakes in it is considered non-Muslim.

Look at the case of *Fauzan* who went to the extent of destroying his elder brother's Radio Tape because he believed that listening to music is unlawful despite that he and his brother are not staying together in a room. Both live in their separate rooms but he went into his brother's room and destroyed his tape all in the name of religion.

This action led to a battle between him and his elder brother, if not for the intervention of neighbors, life would have been lost.

Value conflict is a natural phenomenon among people but the way it is handled matters a lot. We must learn to have unity in diversity. Look at the conversation between *Alfa Saka* and his elder brother *Ajadi* in Scene two.

Alfa Saka: Assalamu Alaikum (Peace be upon you).

Ajadi: Wa Alaikum salam (Peace be upon you too) good morning. Am going out right now to attend the eight days prayer of late *Alhaji Durosilohun* and from there I shall proceed to the house of *Ajikonle* to attend the same program. The mother of *Ayinde* died exactly this day last week, so whoever comes to visit me, tell them that I will be back after the noon prayer (Solatul Zuhr).

Alfa Saka: (With surprise) O my brother when will you stop attending these innovative gatherings?

Ajadi: I never ask you to tell me all these. And I didn't invite you to participate. Is there anything that benefits the dead person than prayer?

Alfa Saka: Gathering of prayer that you people have turned to party (celebration) eating, drinking and celebration.

Ajadi: I knew that everything according to you people are innovations. Very soon you people will say to us that to yawn is unlawful, allow me to go am very late, good bye. (14-15)

Despite the difference in understanding and belief between Alfa Saka and his brother, there was no quarreling nor insult. Alfa Saka only tried to point out to his brother how the eight days prayer has been converted to party and celebration which is reality. And his brother also tried to make him understand that a dead person needs prayer. Therefore, it is not wrong to organize a prayer for a dead person.

Sometimes the critics are right but instead of constructive criticism they rather use destructive criticism which usually leads to conflict and insecurity. Let us relate the sayings of Alfa Saka in Scene two to what happened in Scene three at the gathering of the eight days prayer of late *Alhaji Durosilohun*.

Adisa: Let everyone sit properly before the arrival of the Sheik, we have already contacted him through phone and he is on his way very closed to this place. He shall be here by God grace in the next ten minutes. (*Ajadi* moves from his seat to sit on a chair behind the children of the deceased person: Gali, Bamidele, and Betule. Betule was calling a staggering boy who is moving around begging).

Betule: Kokumo, come and take sadaqa (charity) he came to them and each of them were giving him the sum of Ten naira. He turns to live when *Betule* said to her *Kokumo* are you not praying for us after collecting sadaqa from us?

Kokumo: (He turns back and started praying word by word) thank you, may Allah make it for you to have this type of gathering very soon.

Betule: Stop! (The participants were laughing) fool, idiot! Indeed it is members of your family that will die soon.

Kokumo: I thought you are a bride and this is a groom (pointing to her brother bamidele sitting beside her).

Betule: Quite and go away from us! I said keep quiet.

Umar: What is Kokumo's concern with what is going on that they are asking him for prayer? His concern is eating and drinking.

Ajadi: Kokumo's character today is a dramatic scene in the gathering.

Lamidi: This is what those people that called themselves people of modern creed criticize about us. See how the children of the deceased person appear in their colorful and fashionable dressings as if it is fashion day or they are renewing their weddings, that is why he prayed such prayer for them.

Ajadi: Very laughable scene indeed.

Lamidi: At the same time, it calls for reflection.

Comparing this incident at the eight days prayer we can see that the concerns of the people of the modern creed has reflected here. And that is exactly what Alfa Saka told his brother Ajadi when he informed him that he is attending eight days prayer.

In most part of our societies today, people have turned mourning to celebration. If someone dies no matter his or her age we need to mourn such person and as well organize prayers for his or her soul and as well cook foods for people to eat if we have the means and that will serve as *sadaqa* (charity) for the deceased person. But it has been converted to party where they will even invite some musicians who will come and sing and dance.

Another surprising thing is that the deceased person might have suffered from long time sickness and these people celebrating his death did not come to his aid financially until he dies in that sickness. These are some of the bone of contentions by the people of the modern creed but their method of preaching, correction and criticism is sometimes totally wrong.

Kokumo who is not really aware of what was going on thought it is marriage celebration and prayed for similar celebration soon. Is this his fault? The answer is no because there was no sign of mourning. The occasion looks like celebration due to the appearance of the deceased children and the way people were eating and drinking.

Exactly the same thing happened at the house of late Ajikonle in scene four, when a boy was asked to recite some verses from the holy Qur'an and he started reading verses that are related to marriage until he was stopped. He thought the occasion is marriage ceremony because of the way the deceased children dressed and the way foods were flowing. All these gave Ajadi an insight to the points raised by his brother Alfa Saka against the eight days prayer. Ajadi returned home to confess to his brother Alfa Saka about his usual points against the eight days prayer system in our society today.

He informed him about the incidents that took place at the two different eight days prayer he attended. After then he told his brother he will attend their gathering to exactly their ways. Meanwhile let us see these conversations between them.

Ajadi: Do you know my fear about you people? Your creed separate the child from his parents. I witnessed the son of my friend talking to his father without respect and honor.

Alfa Saka: Why?

Ajadi: He calls his father an unbeliever as it is your people's practice.

Alfa Saka: No! No!! (That is bad action) he is misguided. If the father didn't give birth to him into Islam, will he be able to differentiate the correct creed from other creeds to the extent that he will come to him an unbeliever (*Kafir*)?

Ajadi: Okay!

Alfa Saka: Have they forgotten that Allah commanded man to be kind to his parents and advise him to be good to them even though they are truly unbelievers? We don't tolerate people with such actions, come and witness our gathering and you shall understand issues and see different clearities.

Ajadi: I shall witness the gathering with tomorrow.

Alfa Saka: By God's grace.

In this play the playwright used Alfa Saka as a peace keeper who is not harsh on people but always tries to make people see the true picture of their creed and see reasons to why they should accept the creed without any conflict.

Let us look at the incident between Alfa Saka and his Paternal Aunt (Mama) in scene five. Mama was coming out of her house just to observe the noon prayer (*Solatu Zuhr*). She was holding her praying mat while Alfa Saka collected it from her and helped her spread it in front of the house.

Alfa Saka: You want to receive the fresh air?

Mama: Yes, but after the prayer.

Alfa Saka: Should I fetch water into the kettle for you?

Mama: No, I have already performed ablution. Where are you coming from?

Alfa Saka: From the hospital to visit baba.

Mama: How is his condition?

Alfa Saka: Fine, his condition is getting better. He may return back to us tomorrow by the grace of God.

Mama: I visited him this morning and I met him in good condition. (Mama started her prayer and Alfa Saka was sitting closed to her playing with a little child and teaching her some prayers and as well observing mama. All of a sudden mama's prayer got spoiled due to her release of air which nullified her ablution.)

Alfa Saka: Mama, is like you ate vegetable soup.

Mama: That is your problem, look for water for me so that I can renew my ablution.

Alfa Saka: (He fetched water into the kettle and brought it to mama while mama sat on the praying mat and Alfa Saka sat closed to her). Mama I observed some little things in your prayer.

Mama: What did you observed, do you mean that I don't pray correctly?

Alfa Saka: Astagfirullahi (I seek Allah forgiveness) I do not say that, but perfection belong to Allah, He alone makes no mistake.

Maryam: Mama and her son.

Mama: Hear him saying that I don't know how to pray properly, can his mother *Rabi* pray well like I do? (Alfa Saka smiling and saying)

Alfa Saka: My observation has to do with the way you made your intention, intention is made internally not to be pronounce loudly. You make your intention in your mind. Secondly you don't need to stand on your toes while raising up your hands for the *Takbiratul ihram* (Allah is the greatest) and it is compulsory that cloth of a woman must be long to cover her ankle down to the foot. This is all Mama.

Mama: I saw you giving me one out of your wife long gowns (*Jalabiya*). I heard all you said and they are taken man of Makah (she start to perform ablution).

No matter how Mama tried to be harsh and rude to her nephew Alfa Saka, he still maintain peace with her. You see how she even insulted his mother and calling him names, still he was so lenient and humble. Doing this will bring peace, tranquility and harmony instead of conflict which will result to quarrelling, fighting and killing. In Islam methodology of preaching and correcting of peoples mistakes matters a lot. A propagator of Islam must understand unity in diversity. He or she must be careful of his actions and utterances to avoid conflicts and as well be ready to tolerate people's behavior as we can see with Alfa Saka who is the major actor in this play. Alfa Saka throughout his encounters in the play was so diplomatic and tolerant which made him not to have conflict with anybody instead he won peoples heart through his good admonition.

In scene six Ajadi accompanied his brother Alfa Saka to their weekly circle which is organized by the Association which Alfa Saka belongs to. At the meeting lecture was delivered by one of their leading Missioner. After the lecture, there was room for questions and answers. The participants asked several questions including Ajadi and they were given cleared and satisfied answers.

Idrees: You said it is an innovation seek intervention with the religious leaders and the saint, do you mean that these people are not people of blessing and honor?

Ustadh Abdulqadir: No! This is not what I meant, except that Islam doesn't permit seeking Allah pleasure through the use of intervention of anyone or his honor including the Prophet (SAW) that we are aware of his great blessings and honor before Allah. But one can say: O Allah I seek for your blessings just as you bless this

Sheik and as you endowed him with Knowledge, give me the knowledge that will benefit me. So you don't say with the blessing this Sheik no matter his level of knowledge or piety.

Ajadi: Peace be on you. This is my second time of attending this gathering with you people, and I understood through my brother Alfa Saka that this your modern creed is totally different from what we met with the old scholars. We are some of you insulting, downgrading, cursing and calling people unbelievers. And causing separation between a child and his father, and greeting people while standing with pomposity. Where did you get this modern creed from?

Participants: (some were laughing while some shouted Allah is great)

Ustadh Abdulqadir: May Allah reward our brother abundantly for drawing our attention to very important issues that we must take very serious. First and foremost, it is not how you observed. The basis of Islam is one directly from the Prophet (SAW) and nothing has change but there are some issues that were misunderstood and were not clear to us until we laid our hands on correct and reliable sources and we uphold them and that is why people are seeing it as if we have comes with something new.

But our sheiks and scholars of those days worked with the sources at their reach with sincerity and their level of understanding. They are the people that did the real struggle and faced bitterness and acrimonies in the course of spreading Islam. To us they are people of honor and integrity. They deserves our praises.

Participants: (Shouted Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar!!).

Ustadh Abdulqadir: (Continues) May Allah rewards them for us. Insulting them or slandering about them either the living or dead among them is stupidity and part of ignorance. We seek good health from Allah. And secondly, greeting people while standing is not a sign of arrogant as some people perceives but a prophetic method of greeting in Islam. Arrogance and downgrading others are things forbidden by the Islamic law, and whoever is doing that out of arrogant and pomposity is doing on his own. And lastly, Islam has not come to separate children from their parents, both has their rights that must be observed and respected. Allah has commanded kindness to parents even if they are unbelievers.

Ustadh Bell: Just as you have heard from brother, it is glaring that some of us are misunderstanding the basis of our stand. You have left bad impressions in the mind of people. You should stop belittling and insulting other people, uphold sincerity in your actions and be lenient with others. Islam placed *Shar'ah* (Islamic law) as interest. If effort to correct dislike action will lead to great evil then we must avoid that. Call people to the way of Allah with wisdom and good admonition. Don't call any Muslim an unbeliever. We seek refuge in Allah.

Participants: Allahu Akbar!! May Allah forgives us.

Ustadh Abdulqadir: May Allah be our helper. Let us end the meeting, May Allah show us the truth and enrich us in accepting it, and may He show us falsehood and enrich with the ability to stay away from it. Glory be to Him and all praises are due to him, I testify that there is no deity god worthy of worship except you and I seek your forgiveness and I repent on to you.

The above excerpts shows that not all the preachers and propagators of Islam are the same. More importantly, some don't even understand the religion they are propagating. They misunderstood the foundation and basis of Islam. It also show that we should always try to go closer to some persons in order to be clear about their ideology instead of generalizing our judgment about them and their creed. We can see how the Ustadh attended to the questions and gave answers to all the questions and as well cleared the misconceptions about their creed.

If this is how our contemporary scholars are doing then there will be minimum peace among the people. Making mistakes is part of human nature. The Prophet (SAW) said: "Every son of Adam makes mistakes, and the best of those who make mistakes are those who repent" (Reported by At-Tirmidhi, No. 2499).

Every propagator of the religion should bear the fact clearly in their minds and that will put things into their proper perspective. They should not expect people to be perfect or infallible or judge them according to what they think those people should be, and then consider them to have failed if they make a big mistake or error repeatedly. The propagator should deal with them in a realistic manner, based on his knowledge of human nature which is subject to ignorance, negligence, shortcomings, whims and desires and forgetfulness. These are the summary of the message of the playwright to our brothers and sisters who are willing to propagate the religion of Islam to the people.

CONCLUSION

As we have stated above in the abstract, most of the religious conflict and disunity in our society today is ascribed to the method of tackling public issues and the preaching methodologies. Most of preachers no longer have respect for the elders and the old scholars. They downgrade and belittle people, they condemn other people ideas and creeds. All these has caused conflicts and insecurities in many places because no one would want his own idea and creed to be insulted and belittle, we have seen the cases of some parents disowning their children due to their children not respecting them after their affiliation with such groups of scholars/preachers.

Another things is misconceptions about other people's ideologies and creeds. Sometimes we judge other people bases on other people's attitudes without trying to have a

close look to the real message and concepts those people. Some persons are not learned with basis of the religion before embarking on preaching.

The playwright Abdulganiyi Alabi has really used his literal creativity to teach the readers the proper ways of handling the religious evangelism. In this play we see Alfa Saka as the principal actor whom the author used in showing good example of a propagator of Islam who possess the needed qualifications that qualified someone to be a good preacher. He was so lenient, tolerance and humble, and was able to win the heart some persons without any conflicts nor insecurity. This is how a true propagator of Islam should be. Fathi Yakan states:

Islam in this age needs Du'at (propagator) who can clearly present its concepts and principles in a desirable and gripping manner, who will make Islam attractive and not repulsive, who will explain its concepts and not muddle them up. How many a caller distorted Islam by their bad Da'wah, and how many caused it harm while thinking that they were doing good! Hence the necessity for the Da'yah task being performed with sensitivity and precision and its need for adroitness and wisdom (120-121).

The pedagogical function of the Nigerian Arabo-Islamic drama cannot be over emphasized considering the present predicament of our societies ranging from insecurity, rituals, democratic challenges, and religious conflicts. The dramatist is therefore in the best position to mirror the society and to as well educate and reform the society through his literal creativity. And this explains why Aristophanes opines that: "The dramatist should not only offer pleasure but should besides that, be a teacher of morality and political adviser". (xiii)

Folorunsho states that: "The source of drama of a society is obtained from the society, it functions to entertain, instruct and warn the society. It records the cultural traits of the society that has it." (99)

Abdulganiyy Alabic suggested that: "Experts in Arabic drama should direct their attention to societal reform with their works by producing plays that will propagate Islamic values, moral virtues and devoid of ignorant practices that characterize some home video which make some Islamic scholars condemn the art of drama in its entirety" (23)

It is in this light that this paper picked one of the Nigerian Arabo-Islamic plays, *A'qidatul-haditha (The Modern Creed)* for study and analysis. The play reveal the characters of many preachers of Islam in our contemporary societies, it also revealed how people have turned eight days prayer for a decease person into party celebration instead of mourning. The play also revealed our misconceptions and misunderstanding of some persons believes, ideology and creed which make us to hate unnecessarily.

The playwright through his play was able to educate and inform us that peace and conflict resolution can only be achieve through peaceful interaction, tolerance, patience, use of wisdom and good admonition. If these

are adopted, then there will be peace, tranquility, harmony and unity among the Muslims. Taha Jabir asserts that: "Throughout the Qur'an, factionalism and division are treated as serious moral and social evils, whose consequence pollute the human psyche as well as the body politic. Partisanship, fanaticism, hypocrisy and unfairness are among the many ills they breed" (23)

This goes to say that Arabo-Islamic drama in Nigeria has a very significance role in the promotion of peace and conflict resolution among the Muslims.

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