

Islamic Education”, BA project, Dept. of Arabic and Islamic Studies University of Ibadan.

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- Moshood Bakare, Age, 56 years, He is the *Imam* of a local mosque Interviewed at Oja'baarea in Ibadan, on 23rd February, 2007.
- Muraina Muideen, 44 years, Interviewed at his residence in Oke-Odo, Kudeti area in Ibadan on the 20th of March, 2007.
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communication in the school, just like the way English is used in missionary schools in the 1940's.⁶⁷

Pupils with First School Leaving Certificate from Western educational institutions seeking admission into the school take entrance examination to qualify them for admission. The entrance examination usually takes place at the beginning of the session. There are three terms in a session. The third term examination is the most unique because it is the annual promotion examination. After the examination, report cards are issued to the pupils in various classes.⁶⁸

Conclusion

It has been established that Islamic education originated in Ibadan through the activities of Hausa traders and *Mallams* living in Ibadan before the imposition of British rule. Islam continued to thrive under British rule due to the support given to Muslims to establish modern Arabic schools where Islamic and western education would be part of their curriculum. The British authorities maintained regulation and control of the structure, curriculum and recruitment of teachers into the schools. Though they never support the Muslim schools financially, the Islamic education changed the Muslim situation and enhanced Islamic culture and thoughts in Ibadan.

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67. Interview with Alhaji Rasheed Gbadamosi Age, 60years, 3th March, 2007 at his residence in Oja'ba area in Ibadan.

68. Interview with Alhaji Sulaiman Aresigun, Age, 60 years 10th of July, 2007 at his residence in Popoyemoja in Ibadan.

was one of the first few Arabic schools founded in its present location.⁶⁵ The school developed into a modern Arabic school in 1959 and was recognized as a registered Arabic school in Ibadan. The school was established to propagate Islam through teaching. The founder of the school was Sheik Abdul Mojeed Ahmad. The institution, like many other schools of Arabic and Islamic studies, is a source of pride to Muslims in Ibadan. The school was the third modern Arabic school established in Ibadan to promote the study of Islamic literacy and spread the values of Islamic culture. The motto of the school is *Al-Ilmu-Nu'run-Waquwwah*

ألعلم نور وقوة

Knowledge is light and power.

The school was the first school in Ibadan to invite foreign scholars from Cairo in Egypt to teach in the school. In 1968, Ustaz Mohammed Ibrahim Zida, an Egyptian and a lawyer, was invited to teach in the school so as to promote the teaching of Arabic and Islamic studies in Ibadan. The school was located at Odemakin Area, along Catholic Hospital, Academy Road, Eleta, Ibadan.. It is on a plain land, with a storey building of nine classrooms. There is an assembly hall for lectures, seminars and symposium. The school has enough space for a playground and for further extension. The classrooms are well arranged in a single row with windows on the opposite side of each room opening to sunlight and fresh air. Also, adequate provisions are made for staff room, proprietor's office, principal's office and a library.⁶⁶

The school was also established to promote scholarship in Arabic and Islamic studies and to develop in youths the skills of language: listening, speaking, reading and writing, especially in Arabic, so that they would be able to use the Arabic language as a medium of

65.I.A.Subair, Shams-u-deen-al-Islam Arabic Institute: Analytical Study of Contributions to the Promotion of Arabic ad Islamic Education". BA project, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan, 1999, 10-13.

66. Interview with Mr. Bashiru Abbass, Age, 50 years, 12th April, 2007 at his residence in Elekuro in Ibadan.

The duration for the training of the pupils in the school is seven years, after which a certificate will be issued to the students. The graduation ceremony (*Hafulah*) is a unique day filled with splendour and happiness for the parents, graduating students and relatives. There is no fixed period for the celebration of the ceremony; it is usually celebrated before or after the month of Ramadan and *Dhul-Hijjah*.⁶²

The academic programme of the school is similar to that of Kharashi Memorial Secondary Arabic School. The subjects taught in the school are similar and the curriculum is almost the same. But the main difference is that additional subjects, such as Social Studies and Integrated Science are taught in the school. The motto of the school is *Al-Ilmu-nurun-wajamalun*

ألعلم نور و جمال

Knowledge is light and beauty.

The school is also a recognized centre of West African Examination Council, for the writing of School Certificate Examination. As in other Muslim Institutes in Nigeria, the school opens between Saturday and Wednesday; Thursday and Fridays are meant for weekend holidays. The school opens between 7.30 am and 2.00pm each day.⁶³

Mahad Arabi has been described as the mother of Arabic schools in Ibadan because the products of the school have established many Arabic learning centres in different parts of the city. Examples of these schools are *Daru-l-Ilm-al-arabiyyah* at Oke-seni, *Darul-salam* College of Arts and Science, Moniya, Ibadan; *Ma'had Shahadah* at Muslim Area in Odinjo, Ibadan. These schools have contributed to the growth and development of Islam in Ibadan.⁶⁴

Shams-u-deen-al-Islam Arabic Institute Academy

Shams-u-deen-al-Islam Arabic Institute Academy was established in the 1940s and was popularly known as *Madrasah Al-Munawwarah*. It

62. Interview with Alhaji Sanusi Bakare, Age 53 years, 23rd March, 2007 at his residence in Oritamerin area Ibadan.

63. Interview with Alhaji Moshood Bakare, Age, 56 years, He is the *Imam* of a local mosque at Oja'ba area in Ibadan. 23rd February, 2007.

64. Interview with Hassan Usman, Age, 57 years 18th March, 2007 at his residence in Sango Area in Ibadan.

Ma’had Arabiyyah

Ma’had Arabiyyah, popularly known as Arabic Institute of Nigeria, was established in 1958 by late Alhaji Murithada Abdul-Salam (1913-1998) in Ibadan. It was formerly known as *Al-madrasat --al-awaliyat-l-shababil-islam* (Elementary School for Muslim Youth). During its early days, the students were not many and the founder used two rented rooms for classes. By 1960, the school was moved to Oke-Are, Ibadan.⁵⁸

Shortly after colonial rule, the school moved its base to Modina Elekuro, which now serves as its permanent site. The school is divided into three categories, namely *Shahadatul-Ibtida’iyyah*, which is equivalent to primary school certificate; *Idadiyyah*, which is equivalent to junior secondary school; and *Thanawiyah*, which is equivalent to senior secondary school.⁵⁹

The name Arabic Institute of Nigeria was adopted for the school in 1962 by a UNESCO representative in Nigeria. The school, at present, has a three-storey building with twenty-eight classrooms for teaching purposes. Five of these classes are used for teaching advanced courses in Arabic while the others are for intermediate and lower classes. The building also contains staff rooms for teaching and non-teaching staff of the school, and library.⁶⁰

In addition, the school has a standard mosque, which is often used as a central mosque where Friday prayer and other obligatory prayers are performed on other days. The school also has a field for sporting activities. Strict discipline and inspection were regularly carried out by the colonial authority had regulated the curriculum for learning English and Arabic Languages in the school.⁶¹

58. I. K Odeniyi, “The Contribution of Mah’ad Elekuro to the Development of Islam in Ibadan”, B. A. Project Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan, 21-25, 2005, 21-25.

59. Interview with Mr. Muraina Muideen, 44 years, 20th of March, 2007 at his residence in Oke-Odo, Kudeti area in Ibadan.

60. Interview with Alhaji Abdul Rasak Akanbi, Age, 52 years, 20th March, 2007 at his residence in Odinjo area Ibadan.

61. Interview with Alhaji Qasim Abdul Mojeed, 8th September, 2007 at his residence in Bere area Ibadan .

The school was formerly known as Arabic School before the demise of the founder on Wednesday, 12th May, 1965 shortly after his return from Mecca. The school was renamed by Sheik Alhaji Isa Uthman Magaji (who was also a pioneer member and co-founder of the school) as Kharashi Memorial Arabic Secondary School in 1966. The school was re-named to immortalize the name of one of the founders of the school for the indefatigable role he played in the dissemination of Arabic and Islamic knowledge in the community.⁵⁵

The duration of the programme in the school was seven years. All aspects of Islamic education and other branches of knowledge were taught in the school. These include English Language, Mathematics, Arabic Literature (Prose and Poetry), History, Geography, Chemistry, *Tawhid* (faith), *Fiqh* and *Hadiths* (tradition of the prophet). The subjects taught in the school were carefully distributed across different levels in the institution, starting from the (preparatory secondary school) *Idadistage*. Unlike traditional Islamic education, a new syllabus and academic curriculum was introduced to improve the standard of Islamic education in the school.⁵⁶ A board of academic programme was created to look into the academic subjects taught in the schools, as well as the operation of the school activities. Also, the board was charged with the responsibility of disciplining students on examination and allied matters. The academic board committee comprised the proprietor, the principal, the vice-principal and other members of academic staff of the school.⁵⁷

The school usually opens between 8am in the morning and 1.30pm in the afternoon shortly before the afternoon prayer. The school opens from Saturday to Wednesday with a break on Thursdays and Fridays. It is the tradition of all Arabic and Islamic schools to observe the afternoon prayer, *Zuhr*, before departing the school. The school operated in conformity with the educational system operated in the Arab world.

55. Y.O Azeez, "The Founder of Kharashi Memorial Arabic Secondary School, Oke-Oluokun, Oke-Odo Ibadan", B.A. Project, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, 1983, 22-23.

56. Ibid, 22.

57. Ibid, 23.

Kharashi Memorial Arabic Secondary School

Kharashi Memorial Arabic Secondary School was founded in Ibadan in 1945 by Sheik Alhaji Kharashi Muhammed Thanni and Alhaji Isa Mogaji. It was the first of its kind in Ibadan and was designed to assist in the propagation of Islamic culture and Arabic knowledge.⁵⁰ The main reason for the establishment of the school was to spread the Arabic language and Islamic culture among converts and children in a well-arranged manner.⁵¹

The school was the first to move from the traditional system of writing Qur'anic verses on wooden boards, which was studied in the corner of the mosque or outside the courtyard of the teacher, to the use modern printed materials. The school became the first modern Arabic school built in Ibadan and charged with the responsibility of imparting essential Islamic knowledge to the general Muslim community.⁵² The motto of the school is “*Al-Ilmu Akbar walaisasheunfawq-al-Ilmu*”

ألعلم اكبر وليس شئ فوق العلم

Knowledge is the greatest and nothing is greater than knowledge.

There was provision of well-ventilated classrooms, uniforms, chairs and benches, as well as chalk board. In addition, a well-defined curriculum was made available for the dissemination of vital Islamic cultural practices.⁵³ At the beginning, the school was operated in the evening and no tuition fee was paid. The school later changed its operation to morning and was receiving some token from parents and guardians. The money collected was used to run the school activities and to pay the salaries of the teachers.⁵⁴

50. Y.O. Azeez, “The Founder of Kharashi Memorial Arabic Secondary School, OkeOluokun, Oke-Odo Ibadan”, B.A. Project, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, 1983, 22-23.

51. Ibid, 22.

52. Ibid, 23.

53. Interview with Mr Balogun Bashiru on the 26th June 2007 at the school premises in Ibadan, Age 47 years.

54. Interview with Mr Akosile Taoheed on the 27th June 2007. At the school premises in Ibadan. Age, 45 years.

recent study by I.A. Jimoh shows that there were few mosques at the inception of Ibadan city when compared to the end of British rule in 1950.⁴⁴

Arabic Schools in Ibadan under British Administration

In Ibadan, three main formal Arabic schools were established to promote Islamic education and Arabic literacy with a view to enhancing the religious teaching and knowledge of Islam among Yoruba Muslims.⁴⁵ The schools were operated as private schools owned by proprietors. These schools were built by the proprietors and the financial support received on weekly mosque donations by the Muslim groups in the community. At critical stages in the construction of the school buildings, financial request of 500 pounds was made by the Muslim groups to the British administration.⁴⁶ This was rejected by the British on the ground that there was no precedence of such in British administration in Africa.⁴⁷ This system of education brought cultural changes in the mode of dressing, naming, education and language of Yoruba Muslims in Ibadan.⁴⁸ The schools promoted Islamic cultural influence in Ibadan through the establishment of Islamic structures, which undermined the preservation of Yoruba religious identity and culture. Under British rule, the Muslim educational institutions that contributed significantly in this regard were Kharashi Memorial Arabic School, Ma'had Arabi and Shams-u-deen Islamiyyah.⁴⁹

44. I.A. Jimoh, "The Imamate in Ibadan" in T. Babawale et al (eds.) *The Chieftaincy Institution in Nigeria*. Lagos: Centre for Black and African Art Civilization, 2010, 323-341.

45. Interview with Alhaji Abdul-salam Akosile, 57 years, 8th April, 2007 at his residence in Odinjo Area in Ibadan.

46. National Archives Ibadan, Ibadan division, 0732, Establishment of Proposed Mohammedan Schools in Ibadan, Ibadan division 1/3, 1930-1947, 1.

47. *Ibid*, 1.

48. Interview with Alhaji Ahmed Abdul Mojeed, Age, 45 years. The son of the founder of the Shams-u-deen Islamiyyah Arabic School on the 18th April, 2007.

49. Interview with Alhaji Ahmed Abbass. Age, 54 years. He is a teacher of Arabic in Dawatul-Islamiyyah Arabic Secondary School Olorunsogo Express in Ibadan.

spread to different parts of the city.³⁷ Gbadamosi described the schools as *Ile-kewu*, an elementary school where Muslims in Yoruba communities learn the Arabic alphabet. Qur'an and basic principles of Islamic worship were also taught. The schools were mostly attended by young and old people interested in the learning of the simple tenets of Islamic religion. Islamic learning in these schools covered knowledge on the history of the prophets, principles of Islamic prayers and general orientations about the Islamic way of life.³⁸

The school has been described by Gbadamosi as the live-wire for sustaining the life of the Muslim community.³⁹ Similarly, Parrinder and Peel noted that prestige, education and modernism were factors that led to the growth of Islam in Ibadan⁴⁰. The new religion, (i.e. Islam) was seen as *olaju*, "a religion of civilization" that was new within the metropolis of Ibadan.⁴¹ In their opinion, this new religion facilitated a change of orientation and religious life of the people who abandoned their traditional beliefs.⁴² At this juncture, it is necessary to ask the question, how did modernism contribute to the growth of Islam? The term "Modernism", with respect to the growth of Islam in Ibadan, is used to describe the status of learning a foreign language (Arabic) through educational awareness, wearing a foreign dress like the *Jalamia* by men and *Hijab* by women, as well as abandoning participation in traditional festivals and sacrifices commonly found among the adherents of indigenous Yoruba religion.⁴³

The advent of Western education among Muslims in 1896 and the progress and advancement of Islam in the city took a new turn in the twentieth century. It increased its tempo under modern conditions. A

37. Gbadamosi T.G.O., *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba*, 175.

38. Ibid, 174.

39. Ibid, 175.

40. E.G. Parrinder, "Islam and West African Indigenous Religion", 130-141.

41. J.D.Y Peel, "*Olaju*: A Yoruba Concept of Development", *Journal of Development Studies*. Vol.14, No.2, 1978, 139-165.

42. M. Crowther, *West Africa under Colonial Rule*, London: Hutchinson & Company, 1968, 372-73.

43. Interview with Alhaji Sulaiman Aresigun, Age, 60 years 10th of July, 2007 at his residence in Popoyemoja in Ibadan.

In Ibadan, three formal Arabic schools were established under colonial rule. These were Kharashi Arabic schools in 1945, Mah'adArabi and Shams-u-deen Islamiyyah in the 1950s. These schools were established to expand the knowledge of Arabic language and Islamic culture among Muslim converts and children in a well arranged manner. These schools were the forerunner of modern Arabic schools in Ibadan.³³

At this point, the question may be raised, which aspect of Islamic education contributed to the growth of Islam under colonial rule in Ibadan? Islamic education contributed significantly to the growth of Islam in Ibadan in so many ways.³⁴ According to Hunwick, the knowledge about Islam is derived from the “The Book” popularly known among Muslims as the Qur'an. The Qur'an is regarded among Muslims as a verbatim revelation from God and represents the summation of the divine will for mankind.³⁵

The aforementioned statement of Hunwick attests to the fundamental point on how Islamic education facilitated the growth of Islam in the city. More so, without the knowledge of Islamic teaching from the Qur'an (Word of Allah), the *Hadith* (saying of the Prophet Muhammad), the orderliness in the practice and worship of Islam may not have been understood by many Muslim children. It is the knowledge acquired through Islamic education that Muslim jurists were able to understand, interpret and explain the verses of the Qur'an to the people who were yet to be properly Islamized in the practice of the faith.³⁶

With the establishment of Islamic learning centres in most part of the city, knowledge about Islamic ritual worship became increased while other pillars of Islam began to be practised in their pure form. This consequently made the Yoruba Muslim preachers to state that “*Imo lo ladini, Ogbon o gbe*” meaning “knowledge is superior to reasoning on religious matters”. Through Islamic education, Islam

33. Oladiti, A. A., “Islamic Literacy and Cultural Influence in Ibadan”, 2010, 97.

34. Ibid, 98.

35. Hunwick, “The Influence of Arabic Language in West Africa”, *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, Vol. VII, Legon. 1974, 1-24.

36. Ibid, 23.

happened most frequently during Ramadan month-long fast, when itinerant Muslim preachers were seen on the streets expounding their faith.²⁷

Converted Muslim chiefs in Ibadan usually sent for people to preach in their quarters and they were paid for their service either in cash or any kind.²⁸ This explains how Islam was known as a rural and urban religion that has diffused its influence most easily into many Yoruba communities, especially through the area of trade and language interaction.

In Ibadan, Islam was appealing to people because of their interest in trade and mingling with the Hausa Muslim preachers from the North who were found to be trustworthy and honest in their dealings in matters relating to their business. Besides, the graduates of these schools who were proficient in Arabic were looked upon with prestige, honour and fame in the town.²⁹

After the emergence of formal Arabic schools in Ibadan, more and more people continued to accept Islam as a way of life, which to a large extent, facilitated the adoption of Islamic belief system by many Yoruba people.³⁰ Sanneh rightly asserts that Islamic influence was noticeable in the Arabic schools in the ways Islamic daily worship within the school environs was ensured.³¹

The teachers meted out punishment to students who refused to attend Arabic classes or perform regular obligatory Muslim *salat* (prayer) whenever it was time to do so. The students were often punished by being asked to fetch firewood and water, work on the teacher's farm, or wash the clothes of the children and wives of their teachers.³²

27. Parrinder, E.G., "Islam and West African Indigenous Religion", *Numen*, Vol.6, Fasc, 2, April 1959, 130-141.

28. Laitin D.D., 1986. *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 14-15.

29. Parrinder, E.G., "Islam and West African Indigenous Religion", 1959, 130-141.

30. Oladiti, A. A., "Islamic Literacy and Cultural Influence in Ibadan, 2010, 97-103.

31. L. Sanneh. *The Crown and the Turban: Muslims and West African Pluralism*, Boulder: West View Press, 1997, 131.

32. Ibid, 132.

In response to this, the District Officer informed the Superintendent of Education in Ibadan that he did not anticipate any trouble in the establishment of the proposed Muslim Mohammedan School. He stressed that he was not aware of any political objection by the *Baale* and Chief of Ibadan to the establishment of Islamic schools in Ibadan. This was confirmed through a letter from the *Baale's* office recommending the approval of the proposed Mohammedan school.²³

The British administration facilitated the establishment of modern Arabic schools in Ibadan in 1945 after the end of the Second World War. However, the advent of Christianity and the widespread missionary education among the Yoruba people laid the foundation for the establishment of modern Arabic schools similar to the Western schools. Also, the continued resistance of Muslim parents and Islamic teachers against Western education, which was geared toward the conversion of Muslim children to Christianity, partly explained the reason for the desire of the Muslim community to establish formal Arabic institutions to cater for Muslim children.²⁴

In these Muslim schools, facilities similar to those in Western-oriented schools were made available. Such provisions included uniform, furniture for the teachers and the students, organised examinations, salaries for the teachers and administrative staff, report cards issued and holidays. In addition, definite duration and stages of Arabic education were introduced.²⁵

These stages included *Ibtidai* (primary), *Idadi* (preparatory secondary school) and *Thanawi* (secondary school). Each stage had its duration. For example, in some of the schools, three or four years were spent in *Ibtidai*, two or three years in *Idadi*, and three or four years in *Thanawi*. The standard and the quality of Arabic education in Ibadan were measured by the level of students' proficiency in spoken and written Arabic language.²⁶ Parrinder observed that non-Muslim converts to Islam who were knowledgeable in Arabic conducted open-air preaching campaigns against non-Muslims in Ibadan. This

23. Ibid.

24. Nasiru, W.O.A., 1977, "Islamic Literacy Among the Yoruba: 1896-1963", 62.

25. Ibid, 63.

26. Gbadamosi T.G.O. *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba, Op. cit* , 175.

children were to be taught in both Arabic and English languages by Muslim teachers.¹⁸ The use of Arabic language as a medium of instruction in the proposed Islamic schools to be established in Ibadan was targeted at aiding the propagation of Islam and the promotion of Islamic culture.¹⁹

The Arabic institutes later founded in Ibadan were established to promote Arabic and Islamic education. At the forefront of this effort were mainly the Islamic Missionary Society and the Shams-u-deen society of Ibadan. The petition confirmed that Muslim children were discriminated against and excluded from attending Christian schools on the ground that missionary schools were overcrowded.²⁰

Consequent upon the request of Muslims for the establishment of Muslim Mohammedan School, the Superintendent of Education, Oyo Province, wrote to the District Officer in Ibadan that the applicant should fill form s.68 so as to have some idea about the blueprint on ground for the establishment and staffing of the proposed school.²¹ After the submission of this form, the Superintendent of Education subsequently informed the District Officer that the proposed headmaster of the school was a retrenched government school teacher with a very poor record and that from the information gathered through the application form of s.68, the Islamic group, the Ibadan Muslim Advance Education, which advocated for the establishment of the school, did not hold any title to the land on which it intended to build the school. As a result, the Superintendent of Education requested to know whether there were any political objections to the establishment of the school from the *Baale* and traditional council of Ibadan before making his recommendation to the Director of Education.²²

18. Ibid.

19. Oladiti, A. A., 2010, "Islamic Literacy and Cultural Influence in Ibadan, *Op. cit* 97-103.

20. NAI, Ibadan division, 0732, 1.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

Islamic Education in Ibadan 1893-1950

With the advent of British administration in Ibadan in 1893, the British authorities regulated the operation and guideline for the organisation of educational activities in the town.¹⁵ This was due to the perceived imbalances in the opportunities for Muslims to have access to Western education and the fear of having their children converted to Christianity by the existing missionary schools. This reason made the Ibadan Muslim Education Advance¹⁶ wrote a letter through the traditional leader, *Baale* and his council of chiefs to the Resident Officer requesting for uninterrupted approval for Muslims to be given the opportunity to educate their children in their own school and by their own teachers. In the letter, it was stressed that:

We prefer that the children should be taught in both English and Arabic just to suit our purpose both religiously and outwardly. The practice of Excluding the Muslim children from Christian schools have started and Become in force (sic) in every school, owing to overcrowding of the people in schools, thousands of Muslim children have since been loafing about the country and the same time the fear of these children may not turn out barbarously when becoming men of age (sic). Necessitated our forming (sic). An organization in the scope of a society who met and considered it our duty. To petition you for further sanction that these schools may be allowed to be going under any roofing as it is constituted in both English and Arabic languages. Until we may be able to carry out our aim to a certain stage and be well fit to shoulder. Our responsibility of building schools both (sic) educationally and financially.¹⁷

The contents of the above letter confirm the observation Ibadan Muslims sought approval through the Resident District Officer to establish formal Islamic educational institutions where Muslim

15. T. Falola. "From Hospitality to Hostility: Ibadan and Strangers, 1830 – 1904". *Journal of African History*. Vol. 26, No.1, 1985, 51–68.

16. Ibadan Muslim Education Advance is an Islamic organisation under British rule advocating for the promotion of Western education among Muslims in Ibadan

17. National Archives Ibadan, henceforth (NAI) Ibadan division, 0732, Establishment of Proposed Mohammedan Schools in Ibadan, Ibadan division 1/3, 1930-1947, 1.

schools include: *Ma'hadul Arabi*, popularly known as Arabic Institute of Nigeria, Madina; *Kharashi* Memorial Arabic Secondary School, Oke-Odo; and *Shams-u-deen Islam* Arabic School, Ile-Tuntun, Ibadan.⁹ The intentions of the founders of these schools were essentially to impart necessary knowledge of Islamic thought on Muslims for a better and effective practice of Islam, which was in short supply and imperfect under British administration.¹⁰

Indeed, Islamic education is part of a Muslim's religious duty. The ability to read and write in the Arabic language is seriously given attention because it is a major requirement for Islamic daily prayers. Obviously, it is customary for most Islamic communities to have Islamic schools to train Muslims in Arabic literacy.¹¹ The schools are usually located in the *Mallam's* house, often under a tree or in a local mosque. The primary level of Arabic education is the most widespread in Yoruba towns. After this level, students will proceed to one of the famous Islamic centres of learning to advance their knowledge of Arabic.¹²

The Islamic teachers, *Ulama*, are very dedicated to spreading Islamic knowledge across boundaries. This fact led to the establishment of Arabic schools for the growth, development and propagation of Islamic practices in South-western Nigeria¹³. The *Ulamawho* are also the curriculum planners and school administrators incorporate the cultural elements of Islamic practices into the syllabus. However, in many of the Islamic schools, children were taught to memorise the Qur'an.¹⁴

9. Oladiti, A. A., "Islamic Literacy and Cultural Influence in Ibadan, c. 1945-1995". Ph.D.Thesis , Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, 2010, 97-103.

10. Ibid, 103.

11. Ibid, 97.

12. Ibid, 101.

13. Ibid, 102.

14. Gbadamosi T.G.O., *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba*, 175.

Introduction

Islam penetrated into different areas in Ibadan through the activities of Hausa Muslim traders who taught and nurtured the religious life of the town following its acceptance from the natives of the town⁴. The population of Muslims in Ibadan increased and continued to thrive with the enabling Islamic educational institutions established to impart essential Islamic knowledge and develop skills and abilities necessary for Muslims to read and write the Arabic Language.⁵

With the spread of Islam in Ibadan, Muslim educational institutions became popular and scattered all over Muslim dominated communities among the Yoruba people, Ibadan inclusive. These schools were popularly known as *Ile-kewu* (Qur'anic schools).⁶ The main feature of the schools is that students engaged more in learning the Qur'an by heart. According to Fajana, Islamic education was cheap and within the reach of peasant farmers and traders within the town. Islamic education was popular and satisfying to Yoruba Muslims because of the feeling that literacy made them civilised.⁷ Only few people ever thought of divorcing literacy from religion.

In the second half of the nineteenth and up to the twentieth century, Islamic learning attracted more attention of Muslim parents and Islamic scholars. While the former withdrew their wards from the missionary schools, the latter campaigned against the evil of Western education due to the fear that their wards might convert to Christianity.⁸ In Ibadan, the period between 1945 and 1950 witnessed a more rapid growth in the establishing of modern Islamic educational centres to cater for Muslim children. Examples of some of these

1. Clarke P. B. (1982), *West Africa and Islam: study of religious development from the 8th-20th Century*. London: Edward Arnold, 165.

5. Raheemson M.O. 1991, The Rise and Growth of Islam in Ibadan, in G.O. Ogunremi(ed), *A Historical Cultural and Socio-Economic Study of African City*, Ibadan: Oluyole Club, 322-339.

6. Gbadamosi T.G.O., 1978, *The Growth of Islam Among the Yoruba, 1804-1908*, London. Longman, 175.

7. Fajana, A. *Education in Nigeria, 1842-1939, A Historical Analysis*. Longman: Publishers, 1978, 12.

8. Nasiru, W.O.A. *Islamic Literacy Among the Yoruba: 1896-1963* Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan, 1977.

Islamic Education in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria (1893-1960)¹

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Abstract

This paper examines how the growth of Islamic literacy and the Muslims participation in Western education were influenced since 1893 to 1960 when the British authorities compelled to agree with establishing and improving the Muslim educational institutions and so the schools promoted Islamic culture and thought as well as Arabic language. They maintained regulation and control of the structure, curriculum and teachers of the school. It seems that the schools promoted religious pluralism among the various religious groups in Ibadan. The study also notes that the British did not support Islamic groups financially to build their school and suggesting that the genuine interest in reducing the imbalance between western education among Muslims and Christians in Ibadan is in doubt.

Keywords: Ibadan, Islamic education, Muslims, Nigeria, British rule.

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