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Al-Jihād al-T'alīmī - In Search of a United Front in Educational Jihād and The Experience of Yoruba Muslims

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the early Muslim/Christian encounters in Yorubaland in Nigeria and how Yoruba Muslims were united in their intellectual and missionary activities in their quest to stop the conversion of Muslims by early Christian missionaries. The paper traces the origin and development of Islamic organizations in Nigeria to the desires of Muslims to be educated without being converted to Christianity by missionaries who pioneered the modern school system in Nigeria. While the Muslim/Christian encounter has, on many occasions, been characterized by antagonistic, bitter and aggressive relationship, it has also witnessed periods of peaceful interfaith coexistence and competition. This paper also examines the attitudes of Yoruba Muslims as exponents of interfaith intellectual friendship and competition towards Christian educational evangelism in Nigeria both in the colonial and post-colonial eras. It argues that this Yoruba disposition is the outcome of their united perception of the concept of *Jihād* in Islam. Finally, the paper reveals the need for Islamic organizations that have founded Islamic schools to be actively involved in sustaining this *Ummatic* spirit of unity by continuously upholding the Yoruba Muslim interfaith intellectualism.

Though Nigeria today is witnessing an ever increasing wave of sectarian, socio-cultural and religious conflicts and disturbances, especially between the practitioners of the two major religions in the country-Islam and Christianity, the country can learn from the attitudes of Yoruba Muslims during both their early and current encounters with Christianity. In describing Muslim/Christian encounter in history, one can identify both periods of religious intolerance, aggression and antagonism as well as religious acquaintance, intellectual competitions in terms of debates, polemics and inter-religious cooperation. One of the latter periods took place between Muslims and Christians before and during the colonial Nigeria and is still being re-enacted in today's postcolonial era. Nigeria, a colonial creation, is today the tenth most populous country in the world, the most populous African nation and a country with a large Muslim population in the majority.

While Ubah has argued that the Yoruba Islam is of a quiet type due to the fact that they indigenized or domesticated the religion.¹ I argue here, that the peaceful nature of the Yoruba Muslims as opposed to the revolutionary nature of the Hausa Muslims, for instance, is not due to the "indigenization" and/or "domestication" of Islam. Neither is it due to the Yoruba abandonment of the "revolutionary potentials" and teachings of Islam as opined by Ubah above. On the contrary, the Yoruba in their general united and peaceful nature to Christian evangelization demonstrate a broader understanding of the concept of *Jihād* in Islam. I will therefore proceed to explain this broader understanding of the concept of *Jihād* in Islam. This will be followed by a brief history of the advent of Islam in Nigeria, and the rise of socio-cultural and religious conflicts in the country.

I will then discuss the early Muslim/Christian encounter in Nigeria and how the Yoruba Muslims through their united and concerted efforts employed the establishment of Islamic organizations to found Islamic schools that curbed Christian evangelization. It is these united and concerted efforts that I term "educational *Jihād*" in this paper because the Yoruba Muslims used their united and concerted efforts to compete with Christian missionaries in the conversion of Islamic adherents to Christianity through the modern school system. After this, I will show the need for Islamic organizations that have founded Islamic schools to embrace the teachings of unity and co-operation to sustain their interfaith intellectual competition with Christianity in Nigeria.

A Review of the Concept of *Jihād*

The concept of *Jihād* in Islam has for a long time been one of the most contentious and hotly debated issues. A lot of people have understood the concept in a very narrow form that entails holy pogrom or massacre of non-Muslims in particular. This interpretation of *Jihād* is supported by a lot of classical texts in Islam. The thesis, though based on the maxim that the world is divided into two antagonistic spaces; the abode of peace and the abode of war, is not founded on any textual evidence from the absolute sources of Islam. It is, rather, as shown by many scholars, that the maxim was historically contingent on the age-

¹ See Ubah Chinedu N., *Islam in African history* (Nigeria: Baraka Press and Publisher, 2001).

long hostility that existed between the early Muslims and the unbelievers in Makkah and later between the Muslims and Roman Catholic Christians. Oladosu has elaborated on this point when he discusses how people at various times, both lay individuals and Muslim scholars have appropriated upon themselves the authority to kill and slaughter "infidels" in the name of God.²

What is however traceable to the absolute sources of Islam is that *Jihād* in Islam is an all encompassing concept as it connotes all activities carried out for the sole aim of pleasing Allah.³ Hence all activities undertaken for the collective wellbeing of humanity as long as they are done to win the pleasure of Allah are regarded as *Jihād* in Islam. It is in this context that war and other violent resistance to oppression, persecution and social injustice can be technically regarded as *Jihād* in Islam as stated in various Qur'anic passages (2:190.-193, 4:75-76, 22:39-41 and 60:9). It is highly significant that the second to the last passage above reads thus:

*Permission (to fight) has been granted to those against whom war has been waged because they have been treated unjustly, and Allah is certainly able to help them. These are the people who have been expelled unjustly from their homes only for the reason that they said, "Our Lord is Allah." Had Allah not repelled one people by means of another people, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is often mentioned, would have been demolished.*⁴

² Oladosu, Afis Ayinde "Victims, Witnesses and Perpetrators: The Poetics of Violence in Islamic Jurisprudence" in Afis Ayinde Oladosu (ed.) *Islam in Contemporary Africa: On Violence, Terrorism and Development* (New Castle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), pp. 1-20.

³ Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones* (Kuwait: IIFSO, 1978), p. 93.

⁴ S. Abul A'la Maududi, *The meaning of the Qur'an*. Vol. V (New Delhi: Board of Islamic Publications, N.D.), p. 206.

In the passage, monasteries, churches and synagogues just like mosques are all regarded as sacred places for which Allah has appointed some people to prevent their destruction and desecration. This perhaps informed Ezzati⁵ in his conclusion that *Jihād* in Islam is a measure that guarantees room for more than one religion to exist.

This accommodation of other religions in Islam was amply demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad (SĀW) on many occasions. This prophetic accommodation of non-Muslims, especially Christians could be seen in his support for the Roman Christians in their conflict with Persia in the early days of Islam in Arabia. This was followed by the Prophet's reception and hospitality to the Christian delegation from Najran whom he received in his mosque.⁶

The Prophet demonstrated similar respect and accommodation for the Jews. For instance, when the Jews of Khaybar murdered a Muslim and the murderer could not be identified, the Prophet personally paid a hundred camels to the family of the deceased as compensation. No wonder D.D. Macdonald in the Encyclopaedia of Islam, despite his support of the age-long thesis of the sword regarding the spread of Islam, agrees that the "idea of spreading Islam by force was not present in the mind of the Prophet."⁷

In addition, the above military *Jihād* in Islam, which is war and other violent resistance to oppression, persecution and social injustice which has made many people to conclude that *Jihād* essentially means 'holy war' is guided by many principles to ensure that it does not become a means of 'spreading Islam by force'. One of such guiding principles is the commandment to "wage war against those who fight you" (2:190-193). Furthermore, non-combatants, women, children, the old and monks are not to be attacked as commanded by the Prophet. Just as pastures, trees, crops, wells and fruits are not to be destroyed nor prisoners of war and animals to be slaughtered or tortured.⁸

⁵ A. Ezzati, *The Spread of Islam* (Lagos: Islamic Publications Bureau, 1979), pp. 6 and 285.

⁶ Muhammad H. Haykal, *The Life of Muhammad* translated by Ismail Raji al-faruqi (USA: North American Trust Publications, 1976), pp. 481-482.

⁷ Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, "Jihad in Islamic Institution and the Yoruba experience" *Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, Lagos, Adeniran, ogunsanya College of education, (2001), pp. 111-117.

⁸ Ibid.

I therefore argue that it is the above conception of *Jihād* in Islam that informed the peaceful nature of the Yoruba Muslims united and concerted educational *Jihād* against Christianity as opposed to the revolutionary nature of the Hausa Muslims, in their encounter with Christianity and the conversion of Muslim students in missionary schools. In their encounter with Christian evangelism in schools, Yoruba Muslims demonstrate a broad understanding of *Jihād* in line with the provision of and protection of human rights as parts of the basic, fundamental and unchangeable universal ultimate objectives in Islam which revolve round the five ultimate objectives of the Islamic Law (*al-maqāsid al-khamsah*). The preservation of these ultimate objectives is obligatory on every Muslim and includes the right to religion, expression, conscience and assembly. The attainment of these rights forms part of the ultimate objectives of the Islamic Law.⁹ The Islamic law teaches that respect for human life and dignity of every human is sacred because of the membership of the human race (Q17: 70).

I will now briefly look at the advent of Islam in Nigeria as well as some of the conflicts in the country, before proceeding to discuss the Muslim/Christian encounter and the Yoruba Muslim educational *Jihād* in checkmating the conversion of Muslim Students.

The Advent of Islam in Nigeria

According to the late Babs Fafunwa, a former Minister of Education in Nigeria, Islam preceded the coming of Christianity in the entity now called Nigeria as a whole by 300 years.¹⁰ Islam was brought by the Berbers of North Africa to the West African country and was already flourishing well by the eleventh century. The late M.O.A. Abdul, the first Nigerian Professor of Islamic studies, explained that at the time of the decline of the Mali Empire, it was in Nigeria especially the Northern part, such as Kano, Katsina and Zaria, that many of its scholars went to settle. Even the Yoruba in South-western Nigeria still refer to Islam as "*esin Imale*" meaning the religion of Mali.¹¹

⁹ See Al-Ghazzālī Abū Hāmid, *al-Mustasfā min ilm al-usūl* (Baghdād: Muthanā, 1970 and Al-Shātībī Muhammad, *al-muwāfaqāt fī usūl al-sharī'ah* new ed. vol. 4 (Lebanon: Dār al-ma'rifa, 1996).

¹⁰ Babs Aliu Fafunwa, *History of Education in Nigeria* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982), 70.

¹¹ Ibid., Islamic Publications Bureau, 1982), 121.

As in other parts of West Africa, Islam in Nigeria generally owes its spread and expansion mainly to the contributions of Islamic reforming movements of the *Sūfī* orders especially the *Qādirīyyah* and *Tijāniyyah* orders which were the foremost Islamic organizations in Nigeria. These *Sūfī* orders pioneered the organized propagation of Islam in Nigeria and they built the first sets of mosques and Arabic Schools where people came to learn about Islam mostly from the *Sūfī* and *Mālikī* teachers. These *Sūfī Mālikī* scholars of the *Qādirīyyah* order initiated the revival of Islam in Northern Nigeria. According to Hisket, these *jihād* scholars were inspired by the *Qādirīyyah Sūfī* order, to which they attributed their success during the *Jihād*.¹²

The leader of these *Sūfī* cum *jihād* scholars was the *Jihādī Shaykh* 'Uthmān ibn Fūdī popularly known as Usman Dan Fodio. One major aspect of these scholars' contribution to the growth of Islam was in the area of the education of Muslim women. Both *Shaykh* 'Uthmān ibn Fūdī and his younger brother, Abdullāh Ibn Fūdī, fought vigorously against all the harmful and oppressive practices women were subjected to in the name of Islam and called for their emancipation, they also launched Muslim women in Nigeria into active *da'wah* work and the efforts to bring about Islamic revivalism among women. Even Nana Asmau, the *Shaykh*'s daughter also attained the status of a senior fakir in the order.¹³

They also supported the education and activism of Muslim women. They organized numerous women's educational groups and ensured that all women were incorporated into these groups as well as in the life of the community as *Sūfī* masters, teachers, and supporting professionals on the battle fields and even at times as combatants. Nana Asmau was in charge of the organization of teachers for itinerant women during both the pre-and-post revolution periods. Muslim women continued to play the above respected roles and many others such as making battle garments, preparing food for combatants and caring for and transporting the wounded combatants from the battle field, processing milk products and grains, crafting containers for food

¹² M.Ed. Hisket (ed.), *Abdullāh ibn Muhammad's Tazyin al-Waraqat*, (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1963), pp. 80, 81, 129-130.

¹³ Boyd Dean, "The Works of Nana Asmau (1793-1865)", p. 11.

and water and providing nursing and medical care till the demise of the Caliphate at the hands of the British colonial masters. The *Shaykh*'s mother and grandmother were learned, as well as the mothers of many other *jihādists* throughout West Africa in the eighteenth century, since this was a common feature of the mystical orders in West Africa. So the Sokoto *jihād* scholars maintained this tradition of active Muslim women's scholarship.¹⁴

Among the Yoruba, Islam can be said to have gained a strong foothold only in the 1550s despite its presence before then. According to S. Johnson, it was around that time that a Muslim cleric, Baba-kewu reprimanded the *Alaafin* of Oyo for killing some of his subjects due to the death of his son. The King was then compelled to apologize before the people.¹⁵ The action taken by the cleric must have been the result of a strong Muslim presence and influence, hence, J. O. Awolalu established that by 1840, Islam was fully entrenched in Yoruba land and some Muslim communities were already flourishing.¹⁶ A key factor that brought about this influence was the conversions to Islam by many kings in Western Sudan. Another factor was the services rendered by Muslim clerics generally to the Kings and warlords in Yoruba land. For instance, Bashorun Ga of Ibadan had a Muslim spiritual mentor who came from Iwo, Aare Latosa also had *Shaykh* Bello as his spiritual mentor, while Alfa Ishaq was the spiritual adviser of *Balogun Akere* of Ibadan. These Muslim clerics rendered prayers for spiritual fortification especially during wars.¹⁷

The Rise of Socio-cultural and Religious Conflicts

By the time Lagos state became a British Colony, the influence by Islam had gained momentum considerably among the Yoruba. It is on record that the Muslims in Lagos actually petitioned the British Colonial Government in 1899, demanding for the establishment of the Islamic legal system and Muib Opeloye, the former Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Lagos State University and a professor of Islamic Studies explains that the strong presence of Islam in Yoruba land

¹⁴ Ibid and Hisket, pp. 80, 81, 129-130.

¹⁵ See Johnson, S. *The history of the Yorubas* (Lagos: CSS Bookshop, 1976).

¹⁶ See Awolalu, J. O. *Yoruba Beliefs and Sacrificial rites* (London: Longman, 1979).

¹⁷ M. O. A. Abdul Rahman, (1989) "A Thematic and Stylistic Study of Arabic Poetry in Ibadan, 1876-1976," (Doctoral dissertation, University of Ibadan, 1989), 23-24.

resulted in the establishment of Islamic courts by some Yoruba Muslim traditional rulers in their domains.¹⁸

The attitude of the Colonial masters in undermining the operation of the Islamic law actually contributed in no small measure to the rise of socio-cultural and religious conflicts in Nigeria. Though Lord Lugard, the then Governor-General promised not to undermine the practice of the *Shari'ah* or intrude into the lives of Muslims in Nigeria, the British government led by him later abolished penalties they considered repugnant to natural justice such as amputation, death penalty, non-inheritance of an heir who differs from the religion of the deceased. In 1943, for example, the Supreme Court overturned the decision of an alkali court that Mary a Christian could not inherit from her Muslim father. Again in 1948, the West African court of appeal set aside a death sentence passed on a murderer because it was contrary to the British common law.¹⁹

This led to many violent demonstrations by Muslims in Northern Nigeria during the colonial era and since that time; there has been a train of killing, burning and destruction of lives, properties, Mosques, Churches and houses particularly in the middle-Belt region not only over the *Shari'ah* imbroglio but also over other socio-cultural and tribal cum religious matters. Since then, any demand by Muslims on the *Shari'ah* has always been met with stiff opposition from the Christians because they perceived the implementation of the *Shari'ah* in Nigeria as a symbol of Muslim domination. For instance, the demand by Muslims in 1977/78 for a federal *Shari'ah* court to sit over appeals from state *Shari'ah* courts was totally rejected by the Christian members of the 1977/78 Constituent Assembly. Its deliberation resulted in a total stalemate with Muslims from the North walking out of the conference until the Yoruba Muslims served as the mediators which diffused the tension. The Yoruba Muslims were the vanguards of a compromise acceptable to both Muslims and Christians, that is, the provision of a special committee of the Supreme Court in place of a federal *Shari'ah* court to sit over appeals from state *Shari'ah* courts.²⁰

¹⁸ See Muib Opeloye, "Building Bridges of Understanding between Islam and Christianity in Nigeria," in *Lagos State University Inaugural lecture series* (Lagos: Lagos State University, 2001).

¹⁹ See A.G. Karibi-Whyte, *History and Sources of Nigerian Criminal Law*, Ibadan: David D. Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba*, Chicago: University Press, 1986, p. 418.

Though the above scenario was replayed during the 1988 Constitutional Assembly, the most violent crises in Nigeria over the *Shari'ah* was to occur in Kaduna. This happened over the re-introduction of the criminal aspects of the *Shari'ah* following the democratic dispensation that ushered in a new republic in 1999. Though the *Shari'ah* initiative came from Zamfara state, no conflict has taken place over there till today. It was however in Kafanchan, Kaduna state that several hundreds of Christians gathered to protest against the re-introduction of the criminal aspects of the *Shari'ah* which eventually turned into violent riots and demonstrations.

I had an interactive session with a cross section of both Muslim and Christian students on the *Shari'ah* issue at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria in 2001 when I was invited by the Press club of the Postgraduate Hall to talk on the re-introduction of the criminal aspects of the *Shari'ah* and according to most respondents, economic factor is strongly connected with these conflicts. It was argued that though Zamfara state was a predominantly Muslim state, the Christians supported the move because they were economically and politically well off. In fact, the state was the first in the country to approve a new minimum wage of 5,000 naira. This amount was far higher than what even the Federal government was paying then.²¹

Though the above payment of the then minimum wage of 5,000 naira may be viewed as evidence in support of the economic dimension in religious uprising in Nigeria, yet it is noteworthy that Zamfara is a state with a Muslim majority and a very small Christian minority which could have accounted for the non-violent reaction to the re-introduction of the criminal codes of the Islamic law compared with the above Kaduna state which has a substantial Christian population. Lewis has, nonetheless, traced the economic dimension in religious conflicts in Nigeria to the emergence of a radical group known as Maitatsine in Kano led by a Malam Muhammadu Marwa in 1980, which attacked and killed other Muslims who did not belong to the group. According to Lewis, this group had its primary constituency among the Northern Muslim *talakawa* (commoners) and it took the combined operations of both the Police and Armed forces of Nigeria to quell the attacks of the group. Similarly, the Major Gideon Orkar led

²¹ *The Nigerian Tribune*, January 27, 2000.

coup of 1990 reflected this economic dimension. Its religious dimension could be seen when the leader of the coup mentioned the excision of the five core Muslim states in the north. Interestingly, the leader of the coup comes from the middle belt area that may be regarded as the Bible belt region of Nigeria. He also accused those states that were to be excised of domination over the other parts of the country.²²

More so, it came on the heels of many allegations against the Babangida regime first over the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) issue. The regime's attempt to join the OIC was used to poison Christian minds against it. It was, therefore, accused by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) of being a principal agency of Islamization in Nigeria barely two months before the above coup. The open letter of the Christian Association of Nigeria shows that its grouse was mainly over political appointments.²³

As stated above, the Yoruba played a very important role in resolving the *Shari'ah* imbroglio when the proposal for a federal *Shari'ah* court to sit over appeals from state *Shari'ah* courts was totally rejected by the Christian members of the 1977/78 constituent Assembly. As would be seen now, they equally averted what could have been a "holy war" during the early encounter with Christianity through the establishment of Islamic organizations that founded Islamic schools to curb the conversion of Muslim students to Christianity in Nigeria.

Yoruba Muslims, Christianity and Educational Jihād

The advent of Christianity in Nigeria opened a new chapter in the history of not only the sovereign political entities in Nigeria, but more importantly, in the lives of Muslims. The Christian missionaries used Western education to Christianize non-Christians including the Muslims. Through this educational evangelism, Christian missionaries, indeed the Christian Church, succeeded to a large extent. Many Muslims, in order to go to school, had to become Christians as Yusuf became Joseph, Lawal, Lawalson and Ibrahim, Abraham among others. Nonetheless, in the South a different approach, from that of the

²² See Peter M. Lewis "Islam, Protest and Conflicts in Nigeria", *African Notes*, Washington: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Number 10 December 2002.

²³ *African Concord*, February 5, 1990: 36-37.

North was adopted to confront the challenge of Christian evangelization. There, the Muslims saw the sole aim of British education as the conversion of the Muslims to Christianity and therefore resolved to establish Muslim organizations such as the *Ahmadiyyah* Movement in Islam, the *Ansar-ud-Deen* Society of Nigeria, *Nawar-ud-Deen* Society of Nigeria and the *Anwarul-Islam* Society of Nigeria etc that would in turn found their own schools in order to checkmate this crusade.²⁴

For instance, the *Ahmadiyyah* Movement which came into Nigeria on the invitation of some Nigerian Muslims like the late Oba of Lagos, Oba Musaddiq Adeniyi Adenle, Jibril Martins and Mr. L. Basil Augusto (who later travelled to the UK to train as a lawyer and became a Barrister) because of what the organization offered them in terms of educational assistance was founded in 1916 with Mr. L. Basil Augusto as the first chairman. With the arrival of the *Ahmadiyyah* Movement representative, Maulvi A. R. Nayar from India, the organization immediately embarked on projects, foremost of which was the establishment of schools, hospitals and printing presses.²⁵

In a nutshell, one major thing all these Islamic organizations had in common was that they all took up the challenge of establishing Muslim schools as a kind of educational *Jihād*. Through this educational *Jihād*, Christianization of the Muslims was drastically reduced. All of them were also founded in Yoruba land because this was where Muslims were seriously contending with the Christian educational crusade in Schools. No wonder the earliest Islamic organization in the North was only founded in 1952 and even then by some Yoruba Muslims. This is the *Nurudeen* Society of Nigeria which had its first inauguration the following year in Zaria. This development later culminated in the establishment of the *Jamaat Nasril Islam* in 1961 to assist in the promotion of Islamic schools and training of teachers for these schools.²⁶

²⁴ Ibrahim Olatunde Uthman, *Muslim Women of Nigeria and the Feminist Discourse*. (Malaysia: International Islamic University, 2008), pp. 5, 114 and 115.

²⁵ Abdul-Lateef Adekilekun, *Selected Islamic Organizations in Nigeria (1916-1986)* (Nigeria: N.P., 1989), pp. 19-83 and 190-198.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 107-121).

There is no doubt also that these organizations were able to drastically reduce the Christian educational crusade in Yoruba land in Nigeria despite the colonial support for Christian missionary work, a fact confirmed by the 1952 census where the percentages of the Muslim population were 62.50%, 52.10%, 50.80%, 48.60% and 41.80% for Ibadan, Lagos, Ijebu-Ode, Abeokuta and Oyo respectively. Interestingly, the population of Muslims was higher in number than that of the Christians in these towns despite the fact that the said census was conducted by the colonialists, who were Christians before leaving Nigeria.²⁷ Surprisingly too, the census is not in dispute, as is the case with all others conducted by Nigerians after independence, including the recently announced 2006 census. In a fact, a recent report, the Pew Forum in the US confirms the increasing number of Muslims in Nigeria.²⁸

Foremost among these Islamic organizations today is the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria, (MSSN) which was founded in 1954 in Lagos state. It is the sole organization that represents all Muslim students in schools, including higher institutions of learning throughout Nigeria. One of the achievements of this society is the education of Muslim women. That the majority of the Islamic organizations in the country have nowadays established women wings can be traced to the society. This was initiated by this Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria, which went to the extent of selecting women as vice presidents. This probably explains why the former Deputy Governor of Lagos State and Deputy President of the Federation of Muslim Women Associations in Nigeria, Alhaja Lateefah Okunnu credited the MSSN with the provision of the launching pad for the Islamic re-awakening in Nigeria in the recent past (Uthman, 2008: 5, and 111-115).²⁹

An example of Muslims encounter with Christians in contemporary Nigeria happened between members of the Muslim Students Society, University of Ibadan Branch and a Christian student on Friday, 13 August, 2010. The female Christian student came to disrupt the Friday prayers in the University mosque during the last Ramadan fasting

period. Though she dressed like a female Muslim student, entered the mosque and sat quietly ostensibly to listen to the Imam's pre-prayer lecture (*Khutbah*). Immediately the Imam started the Friday prayer with the chanting of *Allaha Akbar* (God is Great), the Christian student started shouting and announcing that all the Muslims in the mosque were going to hell unless they accepted Jesus as their lord and saviour. But despite the provocation, the Muslim students patiently completed their prayer before detaining the student and later handed her over to the university authorities. But for the Yoruba Muslims' historical peaceful and intellectual approach to religious issues, the incident could have degenerated into an unfortunate deadly incident.³⁰

The Federation of Muslim Women Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN) is another Islamic organization founded in Minna in 1985. It is a conglomeration of Muslim women organizations in Nigeria which mobilizes Muslim women to play active roles in all aspects of life, promoting their solidarity and uniting all Muslim women's organizations in the country to speak with one voice on national issues. An example of FOMWAN's peaceful encounter with non-Muslims, including Christians, is the institution of charities that benefit not only Muslim women, children, orphans but also other indigent members of the society, regardless of their religious affiliations. FOMWAN also engages peacefully and intellectually with non-Muslims, especially Christians on national issues like the application of the Islamic penal codes.³¹

It is very clear that the leading roles being played by Islam and many Muslims in all sectors of the Nigerian society was to a very large extent as a result of the peaceful, intellectual and dialogical activities of Islamic organizations that came into existence to challenge Christian evangelism through the above defined pure educational *Jihād*. The prevailing state of the Islamic Organizations in Nigeria, especially, with the establishment of some Islamic universities like *Al-Hikmah* University, Fountain University and Crescent University through the collaboration with the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY),

²⁷. See the University of Ibadan subsequent bulletins on the incident e.g. bulletins on letter from the chapel of resurrection available at http://ui.edu.ng/sites/default/files/17082010_2.pdf, on management decisions on the disruption of the prayer, available at <http://ui.edu.ng/sites/default/files/23082010.pdf> and designated areas of worship available at http://ui.edu.ng/sites/default/files/030910_3.pdf.

²⁸. Uthman, *Muslim Women of Nigeria*, pp. 5, 111-115.

²⁷. Abd al-Rahman I. Doi, *Islam in Nigeria* (Zaria: Gaskiya corporation, 1984), p. 81.

²⁸. Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, *Mapping the Global Muslim Population: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population* (Washington D. C.: Pew Research Centre, 2009), 4-10.

²⁹. Uthman, *Muslim Women*, 5 & 111-115.

NASFAT Society of Nigeria and Islamic Movement for Africa respectively also projects these organizations today as champions of educational *Jihād* in contemporary Nigerian society. This is because just as the *Ahmadiyyah* Movement in Islam, the *Ansar- ud- Deen* Society of Nigeria, *Nawar- ud- Deen* Society of Nigeria and the *Anwarul- Islam* Society of Nigeria pioneered the founding of Muslim primary and secondary schools which accounted for the intellectual competition with Christians evangelism in the past, establishing Islamic Universities by the above organizations will also go a long way in confronting Christian evangelism at the tertiary intellectual realm.

Conclusion

While it is still early to evaluate the impacts of these new organizations on the Muslim community in Nigeria because they are too young compared with the old organizations, it is possible to assert that the establishment of Islamic Universities shows how strong and relevant some of them have become. As these universities embrace internationalization and multidisciplinary approaches to the study of Islam, and as they produce scholars into the Nigerian society, their students and scholars of Islam will also be well-positioned to sustain the educational *Jihād*. To achieve this, there is need for these universities to make their educational institutions demanding and open, respectful of both Islamic and non-Muslim traditions and open to scientific and educational innovations where students must be taught to express themselves, give their opinions and articulate their doubts and hopes. There must be room for discussions, debates and exchange of ideas and views.

But on the negative side, Islamic universities like Crescent University, often admit Muslim children from the affluent middle and upper class families. These are children from families who can afford the high tuition the institution often charges, thus making the university very elitist in nature. Ironically, by charging high tuition fees to accommodate the children of affluent middle and upper class income families, it is expected that the staff are well educated and well paid with many of the teaching staff having teaching and pedagogical qualifications but this is not always the case.

There is also the tendency to always immerse the students in only the *Asalatu* and *Dhikr* sessions of founding organizations, so much so that

even the Muslim Students Society of Nigeria, the only viable Muslim organization on Nigerian campuses may be outlawed. This development may turn the above Islamic universities sectarian and destroy the unity of Muslims.

Lastly, the investment of time, energy and money in the establishment of Islamic universities is very huge. Many of their founders did not equally have the financial resources and academic competence to set them up *ab initio*. On the basis of these shortcomings, if nothing is done to address them, the Islamic organizations that founded these universities may not be able to retain their relevance among the Muslims of Nigeria and sustain their educational *Jihād*. To forestall this, there may be need for a complementary and joint educational partnership among Islamic organizations. Instead of having Islamic universities that duplicate one another, Islamic organizations could focus more on providing a world class university that is jointly founded and funded by them. This would demand the involvement of many Muslims and Islamic organizations in the running of these universities. This has become an imperative if these "Islamic" Universities must compete with secular and government universities and even sustain the unity of Muslims.