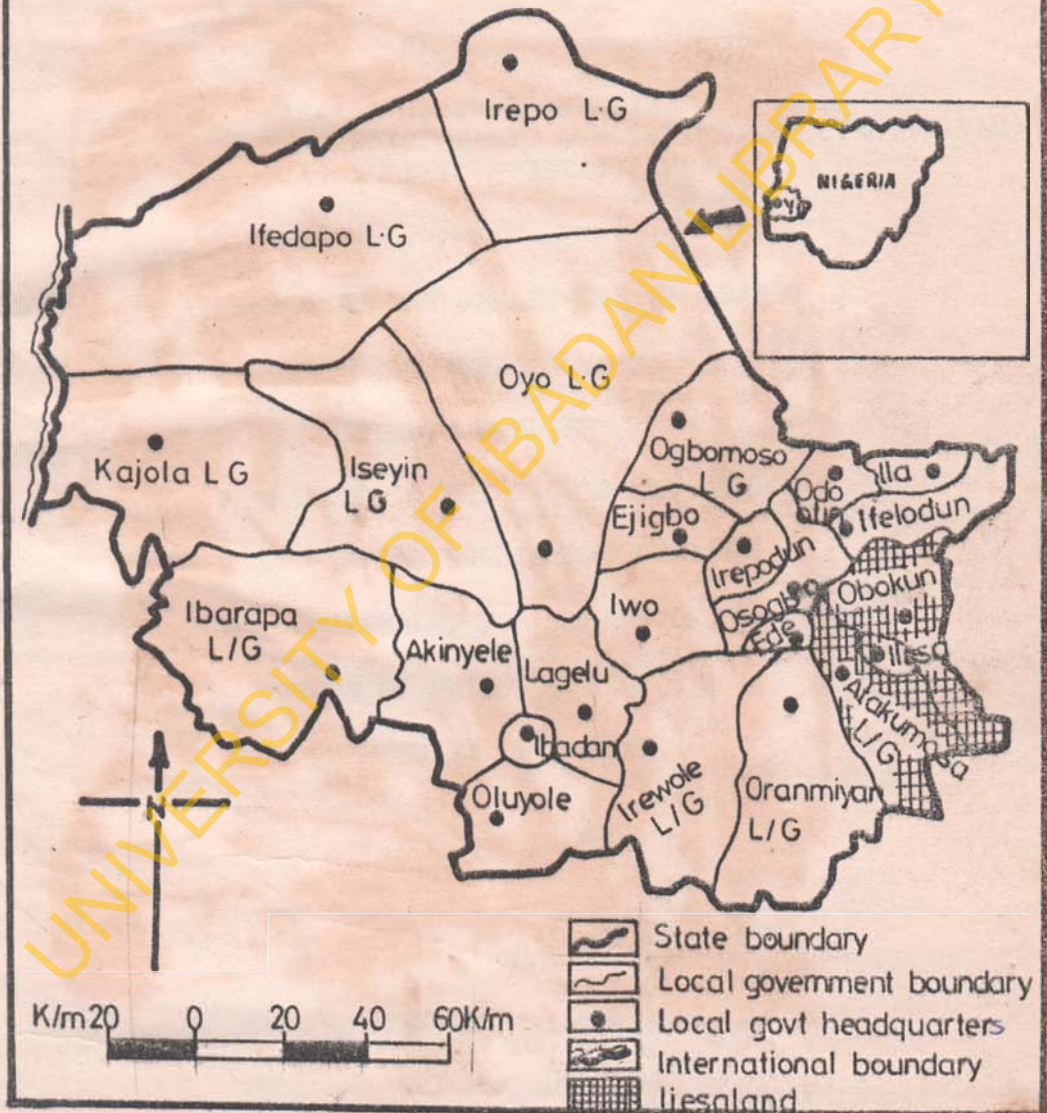




Front page

MAP OF OYO STATE SHOWING IJESALAND

FIG: I



Source: Primary atlas for the Oyo Ondo and Ogun state of Nigeria by M. Duse 1965

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN IJESALAND (1860 - 1968)

BY

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A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ARABIC

AND

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ABSTRACT

Islam, like any other religion in the society is an all-pervading phenomenon transforming individual lives in the society. Therefore, I commence this thesis by examining the ethno-historical and geographical background of Ijesaland. I also survey the traditional religious beliefs of the Ijesa as well as the religious and social milieu which were in existence when Islam was accepted there.

The thesis is mainly on the introduction, the development and growth of Islam in Ijesaland for a period of about one hundred years (1860-1968). I discuss the advent, spread and the propagation of Islam in Ijesaland with emphasis on the various factors that contributed to its spread. These, in my opinion, include the various Muslim festivals and Ijesa-Muslims' enviable activities during the 'Id-ul-Fitr' and 'Id-ul-Adha'.

I also discuss developments that brought about a setback for Islam in the area. These include the death of the first five pilgrims in 1910, the 'gaga' epidemic of 1917/18, the Babalola-Babatope revival of 1930 and Mooko-Mooka, (ability to read and write) introduced by the Christian Missionaries. I also examine the subsequent activities of

the Muslims which led to further spreading of the faith among the people.

As to the introduction of Islam in Ijesaland, my main claim is that unlike other parts of Yorubaland where non-indigenes introduced Islam, Islam was introduced and spread in Ijesaland by Ijesa people themselves through their commercial activities.

Lastly, I discuss the difficulties involved in writing the history of Islam in Ijesaland. I also make suggestions on how to improve Muslims activities in Ijesaland.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty Allah who gave me strength, health and vivacity to complete this work successfully.

and

My much cherished youngest son, Mika'il Olasupo Adeyemi Adeleye.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First, I thank the Almighty Allah who gave me the strength and good health to run and complete this work successfully on schedule.

My gratitude to my gentle, kind and very thorough supervisor, Dr. W. O. A. NASIRU is far more than I can express in words. Towards the completion of this thesis, he gave me not only prompt attention and pains-taking corrections, but also very useful advice, kind assistance and encouragement. At a time when I was about to put off the writing of the thesis his persistent advice and encouragement sustained me.

The former Head of the Department, late Professor M. O. A. Abdul deserves my gratitude for his constant advice and encouragement. He placed his wealth of experience as a seasoned scholar and a researcher in Islamic studies at my disposal. The value of his reservoir of knowledge in Islamic studies is very immense in the completion of this work.

In this manner, Dr. D. O. S. Noibi, the current Acting Head of the Department deserves my thanks for his sincerity and religious displays in solving my problems whenever I approached him. His suggestions really aided me in completing this work. I thank him for his meekness and maturity in handling matters.

I also wish to thank Professor M. S. El-Garh, former Head of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan for kindling my interest in Islamic studies. It was through his kindness and encouragement that I made up my mind to pursue Islamic Studies to a Ph.D. level.

Professor Tunji Oloruntimehin, Head of Department of History, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife deserves mention. Besides my introduction to Islamic studies by him in 1969/70 session when he was a lecturer in the Department of History in the University of Ibadan, he continued to encourage me to pursue the study to a Ph.D. level.

Similarly, I thank Alhajj Dauda Adekilekun, Dr. K. K. Oloso of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan for their untiring efforts in encouraging me towards the completion of this thesis and the audience they granted me whenever I called on them for assistance.

I must not forget to thank the authority of Oyo State College of Education, Ilesa for giving me permission to run the Ph.D. on a conditional Part time basis.

My kind informants deserve my gratitude because without them the completion of this work would have been protracted. Few of them are Late Alhajj S.O. Olatunji of Ereja Street, Ilesa, Chief Lasisi Omole the Obanle of Ijesaland, Alhajj S.A. Fagbamila,

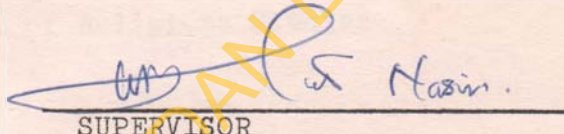
the Chief Imam of Ibokun, Alhajj S. A. Famuyide, the second supervisor of Muslim schools in Ijesaland, now the Chairman of the Nawair-ud-Deen Society of Ilesa, Mr. Boye Uzamot of Ijesa Muslims' Grammar School, Ilesa, and a host of others who deserve my unreserved gratitude for their immeasurable assistance.

Furthermore, I am grateful to my wife, B. M. Adeleye, for her moral and financial support. My daughter, Madinat Olayinka Adeleye deserves my thanks for her co-operation in dictating and re-reading the draft of the thesis to me as many times as possible. Her efforts in the completion of the thesis on time is commendable.

Finally, I wish to state that the opinions expressed in this work are entirely mine and that I accept all the responsibility for any short-comings that it may contain.

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work titled: "The Spread of Islam in Ijesaland, 1860 - 1968 was carried out by Mr. Adeleye, Mika'il Olasupo in the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W. O. A. Nasiru', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.M.	:	Ahmaddiyyah Mission
A.U.D.	:	<u>Ansar-ud-Deen</u>
C.M.S.	:	Church Missionary Society
C.O.M.Y.O.	:	Council of Muslim Youth Organisation
Cm	:	Compiled manuscript
Dept.	:	Department
D.R.S.	:	Department of Religious Studies
edd.	:	Edited
ed.	:	Edition
fn.	:	Footnote
I.D.O.	:	Ijesa Divisional Office
i.e.	:	that is
I.P.B.	:	Islamic Publication Bureau
I.R.K.	:	Islamic Religious Knowledge
I.Q.L.	:	Islamic Quarterly London
L.G.A.	:	Local Government Area.
M.M.	:	Methodist Mission
M.S.S.	:	Muslims Students' Society
pmss.	:	Private manuscript
N.A.I.	:	National Archives, Ibadan
n.d.	:	No date
np.	:	No publisher

- N.T.A. : Nigerian Television Authority
- N.U.D. : Nawair-ud-Deen
- N.Y.S.C. : National Youth Service Corps
- O.Y.S.G. : Oyo State Government
- O.U.P. : Oxford University Press
- S.A.W. : Salah Allah 'alay wa Salam
- trans. : translated
- U.I. : University of Ibadan
- Uf.I.L. : University of Ife Library (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife)
- U.I.L. : University of Ibadan Library
- YOUMBAS : Young Muslim Brothers and Sisters Association
- Z.I.S. : The Zumrat-ul-Islamiyyah Society

GLOSSARY

<u>Al-adhān:</u>	- The Muslim call to prayer
<u>Ahādith:</u>	Traditions of the Prophet (Plu. of ḥadīth)
<u>Allāh</u>	- Name of God in Islam
<u>Al-Malik</u>	- 'The King' it means 'The Sovereign Lord in this context
<u>Al-Muhaymin</u>	- The Protector (God)
<u>Al-Sarr</u>	- The Grammatical inflexion
<u>Al-Wa'az</u>	- Open-air-preaching
<u>Ar-Rahmān</u>	- The Beneficent (God)
<u>Ar-Rahim</u>	- The Merciful (God)
<u>Bayt al-Hikmah</u>	- Islamic House of wisdom
<u>Fard</u>	- Compulsory or obligatory act of religion
<u>Hajj</u>	- Pilgrimage to the Holy Land (MAKKAH)
<u>Haram</u>	- Unlawful
<u>Hisab</u>	- Counting or Arithmetic
<u>'Id</u>	- Feast
<u>Iqamah</u>	- An announcement that prayer is ready to start
<u>Kāfir</u>	- An unbeliever; (a non-Muslim)
<u>Khutbah</u>	- Special sermon on Fridays or 'Id days.
<u>Masjid</u>	- Mosque
<u>Masjid al-Jumu'ah</u>	- The Central Mosque
<u>Mufassir</u>	- Quranic commentator

<u>Nāib</u>	- Deputy Imam
<u>Nasīhah</u>	- admonition; religious advice
<u>Nazafah</u>	- Cleanliness
<u>Qalam</u>	- Reel pen
<u>Salāh</u>	- The obligatory prayer
<u>Sawm</u>	- Ramadan fast
<u>Shirk</u>	- Polytheism
<u>Subh</u>	- Morning or dawn prayer
<u>Surat-ul-Fatihah</u>	- The opening chapter of the Qur'an
<u>Tafsir</u>	- Exegesis of the Qur'an
<u>Al-Wudū'</u>	- Water ablution

II

<u>Aawe</u>	- Muslim Ramadan fast
<u>Adiini</u>	- Religion (Islam)
<u>Adura</u>	- <u>Prayer from al-du'a</u>
<u>Ajiroba</u>	- The first to catch the sight of the Oba in the morning
<u>Akewukewe</u>	- He who has the knowledge of both Arabic (oriented and Western Education)
<u>Aworo</u>	- Priest (of a god)
<u>Balogun</u>	- Commander of the Veteran warriors
<u>Jonmon (Jama'ah)</u>	- A group or a Muslim community

- Labari - News (religious information)
- Mooko-mooka - Ability to read and write
- Ojo ibi - Birthday
- Saro - A Yoruba corrupt word of Sierra-Leone
- Yidi - A Yoruba corrupt form of 'Id which denotes Muslim praying ground.
- giigii - A special rectangular spot marked out for prayers by a Muslim.

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INTRODUCTION

1.0 Islam has made remarkable contributions to the development of Ijesaland. Incidentally, many people are not aware of this potent fact. The degree of the socio-religious significance of Islam can only be ascertained by a thorough research.

1.1 SOURCES AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

With regard to the analysis of the spread of Islam in Ijesaland the first known work was done by R. A. Smith, Islam ni ilu Ilesa, 1949. This work however, was centred only on the activities of early Muslims in Ilesa town. The Executive Muslim Committee made another effort to compile the history of Islam in Ilesa in 1958. This work which is made up of monographs on some interviews, short write-ups and projections could have been used as a primary source but for its lack of dates, names of persons interviewed, their religion and ages. It was therefore devoid of vital elements in proper documentations.

In 1965, I. A. Balogun also wrote a pamphlet entitled "Itan Islam ni Ilu Ilesa, 1965". This work focussed primarily on the life history of introducers of Islam to Ilesa. Like Smith's work, Balogun's pamphlet did not include the spread of Islam to the entire Ijesaland and

neither did it say anything about problems and solutions.

Gbadamosi's acclaimed work on "The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841 - 1908", makes passing remarks about Islam in Ilesa on pages 86 and 87. In fairness to him he could not have written a detailed work on Ijesaland since his study was intended to cover the entire Yorubaland. Consequently, Gbadamosi does not make a direct contribution to the subject of the present study.

It is evident from the above that no actual research has ✓ been done on the spread of Islam in Ijesaland. It is as a result of this that I decided to write on the topic "The Spread of Islam in Ijesaland 1860-1968". In this work I made use of the Holy Qur'an copiously so as to supplement the lack of relevant Islamic books on Ijesaland.

This study would serve as a major contribution to socio-religious studies in the area under study at least in two respects: First, the focus of time for the study is on the years, 1860-1968. The study opens in 1860 because that was the year when Ijesa men and women who had found themselves in 'foreign' lands where they had received exposures to Islam started coming in to introduce the new religion. The terminal date for the study is significant since that marked the period when the role of Islam especially in the field of education was

felt more than ever before. It was in that year that the reknowned Muslim School: Ijesa Muslim Grammar School was founded in Ilesa.

0.2 METHODOLOGY

Methods adopted include collection of materials from Libraries in Oyo State College of Education, Ilesa, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, University of Ibadan, National Archives, Ibadan and finally, Ilesa Public Library. In addition to this, field investigation included consultation of files in Local Government Areas, monographs, letters and religious documents.

On the field exercise, informal interviews were conducted. Occasional interview guides and questionnaires were also used. Personal observations were made and a number of visits paid to most of the mosques in the area.

In concluding this aspect, I need to add here that written information relevant to the History of Islam in Ijesaland within the period under study is very scarce. A lot of available materials is only marginally useful. Future researchers in this field are thus advised to cast their nets wide for relevant materials.

0.3 The study is done in seven main chapters and a conclusion:

In the first chapter highlights of the general pre-Islamic

conditions of Ijesa people within the period of study are stated. Particular reference is also made to the origin, social, political and religious conditions of Ijesa people before the advent of Islam to their area.

In chapter two, I discuss the advent of Islam to Ijesa and its spread to the entire Ijesaland. The general reactions of the people are of course, not left out. The entrenchment, growth and development, all which are related to the spread of Islam are all treated to depict the activities of the early Muslim propagators in the area.

I discussed the series of problems faced by the Muslims in this area under study and solutions to them are also examined.

The general practice of Islam among Ijesa people which differentiates Muslims from non-Muslims to show the people's quality of faith (Iman), attitudes to al-Salat, Sawm payment of Zakat and Pilgrimage to Makkah are treated in the fourth chapter. In addition, the selection and duties of Islamic functionaries in Ijesaland are treated in this chapter.

Islamic social family regulations which serve as models and guides to the generality of Muslims are discussed in details in the fifth chapter together with the values of the regulations to all the Muslims in general and their children in particular.

The introduction of the various Islamic national organisations

and societies with their activities and the formation of the Muslim local societies in Ijesaland are discussed in chapter six to show their origins and values in the area. Among the enviable contributions of both the national organisations as well as the societies are the efforts to build more Mosques and establish more Muslim Schools - Where Islam and Arabic can be studied along with Western education.

The general impact of Islam on the economic, social, religious, political and educational life of the people is dealt with in the seventh chapter.

In concluding this work, a general study of the present situation of Muslims in the area of study is made to explain their former problems and solutions which are pointers to the future of Islam in this area of study. The conclusion is not just a summary of the whole seven chapters, it also explains the difficulties involved in writing the History of early facet of Islam in Ijesaland where very relevant books of references are not easy to come by. Finally, suggestions for better future of Islam in Ijesaland are recommended.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
ABSTRACT	i - ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv - vi
CERTIFICATION	vii
ABBREVIATION	viii - ix
GLOSSARY	x -xii
INTRODUCTION	xiii -xvii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xviii
LIST OF MAPS	xxv
LIST OF PLATES	xxvi

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 IJESALAND BEFORE ISLAM	1
1.1 Geography of Ijesaland	1 - 5
1.2 History of Ijesa People	5
1.2.1 Origin	5 - 9
1.2.2 A brief History of Ijesaland	9 -12
1.3 Socio-Political Life	12 -15
1.4 Economic Life - Emergence of Osomaalo system .	15
1.4.1 History	15 -17
1.4.2 Meaning	17
1.4.3 Origin	17 -18

	<u>PAGE</u>
1.4.4 Business	18 - 20
1.5 Religious Milieu	20 - 22
1.5.1 Ogun	22
1.5.2 Obokun	22 - 23
1.5.3 Ifa Oracle and other divinations	23 - 27
1.5.4 Osun	27 - 30
1.5.5 Obalogun	30 - 33
NOTES AND REFERENCES	34 - 40

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 PENETRATION OF ISLAM TO IJESALAND	41
2.1 Introduction	41 - 45
2.2 Impact of Yoruba inter-tribal and civil wars	45 - 48
2.3 Advent of Islam in Ilesa	48 - 59
2.4 Rise of Islam in Places north of Ilesa	59 - 61
2.4.1 Ijebu-Jesa	61 - 64
2.4.2 Ipetu-Ijesa	64 - 66
2.4.3 Ibokun	66 - 69
2.4.4 Otan-Ile	69 - 75
2.4.5 Ipetu-Ile	75 - 77
2.4.6 Imesi-Ile	77 - 78
2.4.7 Esa-Odo	78 - 79

	<u>PAGE</u>
2.4.8 Esa-Oke	79 - 80
2.4.9 Ikeji-Ile	80 - 81
2.4.10 Iloko-Ijesa	81 - 82
2.4.11 Ijeda	82 - 83
2.5 Rise of Islam in places South of Ilesa	83
2.5.1 Iwara	83 - 85
2.5.2 Ifewara	85 - 86
2.5.3 Igangan	86 - 87
2.5.4 Observations	87 - 92
NOTES AND REFERENCES	92 -106

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 PROBLEMS FACED BY THE NASCENT ISLAM AND SOLUTIONS TO THEM	107
3.1 Religious beliefs of the People	108 - 110
3.2 Accommodation	110 - 111
3.3 Ancestor Worship	111 - 118
3.4 Ijesa People and Amulets	118 - 124
3.5 The Christian response to Islamic expansion ..	124 - 127
3.5.1 Formation of the Various Church denominations	127 - 129
3.5.2 Effect of the Christian Campaigns.....	129 - 139
3.6.1 Extraneous Problems	139 - 140

	<u>PAGE</u>
3.6.2 Lack of Learned Leadership.....	104 - 142
3.6.3 Lack of funds	142 - 144
3.6.4 Inefficient administration of the Muslim bodies	144 - 146
3.6.5 Death of Pilgrims	146 - 149
3.6.6 Impact of the influenza epidemic of 1817 ...	149 - 150
3.6.7 Christian device of attack	150 - 153
3.6.8 Socio-political Problems	153 - 155
NOTES AND REFERENCES	156 - 165

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 PRACTICE OF ISLAM AMONG IJESA PEOPLE	166
4.1 <u>Iman</u>	168 - 173
4.2 <u>Al-Salat</u> (The Obligatory Prayers)	173 - 179
4.3 <u>Juma'at</u> service	179 - 185
4.4 Mosque administration	185 - 187
4.5 The Islamic Functionaries in Ijesaland	187 - 192
4.5.1 <u>Na'ib</u>	192 - 193
4.5.2 <u>Mufassir</u>	193 - 194
4.5.3 <u>Ajanasi</u>	194
4.5.4 <u>Arowasi</u>	194 - 196
4.5.5 <u>Mu'adhhdhin</u>	196 - 199
4.5.6 Remunerations	199

	<u>PAGE</u>
4.5.7 <u>Zakat</u>	200 - 207
4.5.8 <u>Ramadan</u>	207 - 215
4.5.9 <u>Hajj</u>	215 - 222
NOTES AND REFERENCES	223 - 235
 <u>CHAPTER FIVE</u> 	
5.0 ISLAMIC SOCIAL FAMILY REGULATIONS	236
5.1 Marriage	236 - 247
5.2 Marriage Prohibitions	247 - 252
5.3 Essentials of Marriage	252 - 259
5.4 Festivities	259 - 261
5.5 Duties	261 - 264
5.6 Values	264 - 268
5.7 Divorce	268 - 269
5.7.1 Causes	269 - 272
5.7.2 Types	272 - 275
5.7.3 Impact of Islam	275 - 278
5.8 Inheritance	278 - 285
5.9 Debts	285 - 293
5.10 Paternity	293 - 299
NOTES AND REFERENCES	300 - 310

CHAPTER SIX

6.0	ISLAMIC ORGANISATIONS AND SOCIETIES	311
6.1	The <u>Zumurat-ul-Islamiyyah</u> Society	311 - 313
6.2	The <u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u> Society	313 - 315
6.3	The <u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u> Society in Ilesa	315 - 324
6.4	<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u> Society in Ibokun.....	325 - 327
6.5	<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u> Society in Otan-Ile	327 - 331
6.6	The <u>Ansar-ud-Deen</u> Society in Ilesa	331 - 334
6.7	<u>Ansar-ud-Deen</u> Society in Erin-Oke	334 - 338
6.8	<u>Ansar-ud-Deen</u> Society in Ipetu-Ijesa	338 - 339
6.9	The <u>Ansar-ud-Deen</u> Society at Otan-Ile	340
6.10	The Local Societies and Associations	341 - 353
	NOTES AND REFERENCES	354 - 357

CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0	IMPACT OF ISLAM ON IJESA PEOPLE	358
7.1	Social Religious Ceremonies	358
7.1.1	Impact of Islam on 'Osomaale' Special type of Marriage	359 - 361
7.1.2	Child-naming	361 - 369
7.1.3	Circumcision	369 - 371
7.1.4	Burial and funeral rites	371 - 380

	<u>PAGE</u>
7.1.5 Muslim Festivals	380 - 387
7.1.6 <u>'Id-ul-Mawlid</u>	387 - 388
7.2.0 Changes introduced by Islam to the Political Set up of Ijesaland	388 - 392
7.2.1 The growth of Islamic education in Ijesaland	392 - 395
7.2.2 The roles of itinerant preachers and teachers	395 - 398
7.2.3 The pupils' general system of learning	398 - 405
7.2.4 Alhajj Biniyaminu Ogungbangbe's Activities.	405 - 406
7.2.5 His Life History	406 - 408
7.2.6 His Islamic Activities	408
7.2.7 A general appraisal of Islamic education in Ijesaland	408 - 410
NOTES AND REFERENCES	411 - 424
CONCLUSION	425 - 442
APPENDIXES	443 - 471
BIBLIOGRAPHY	472 - 484

LIST OF MAPS

	<u>PAGE</u>
1. Map of Oyo State Showing Ijesaland	Front Page
2. A political map of Ijesaland	2
3. Map of Ijesaland showing farm products	4
4. Major centres of Islamic distribution in Yorubaland Before 1830	42
5. Islamic Expansion in Yorubaland by 1908	55
6. Map of Ijesaland showing some towns	60

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LIST OF PLATES

	<u>PAGE</u>
1. Ilesa Central Mosque built in 1901	54
2. The 5th Chief Imam of Ilesa	58
3. The first Mosque in Ijesaland - Okesa Mosque, Ilesa	176
4. The oldest and eldest of the Imams in Ijesaland	291
5. The first Chairman of <u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u> Society in Ilesa	319
6. Ijesa Muslim Grammar School, Ilesa opened in 1970	322
7. <u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u> Hall, Ilesa, built in 1965	324
8. <u>Ansar-ud-Deen</u> Primary School, Erin-Oke opened in 1940	335
9. The Chief Imam of Ilesa leading ' <u>Id-ul-Adha</u> prayers	386

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 IJESALAND BEFORE ISLAM

1.1 Geography of Ijesaland

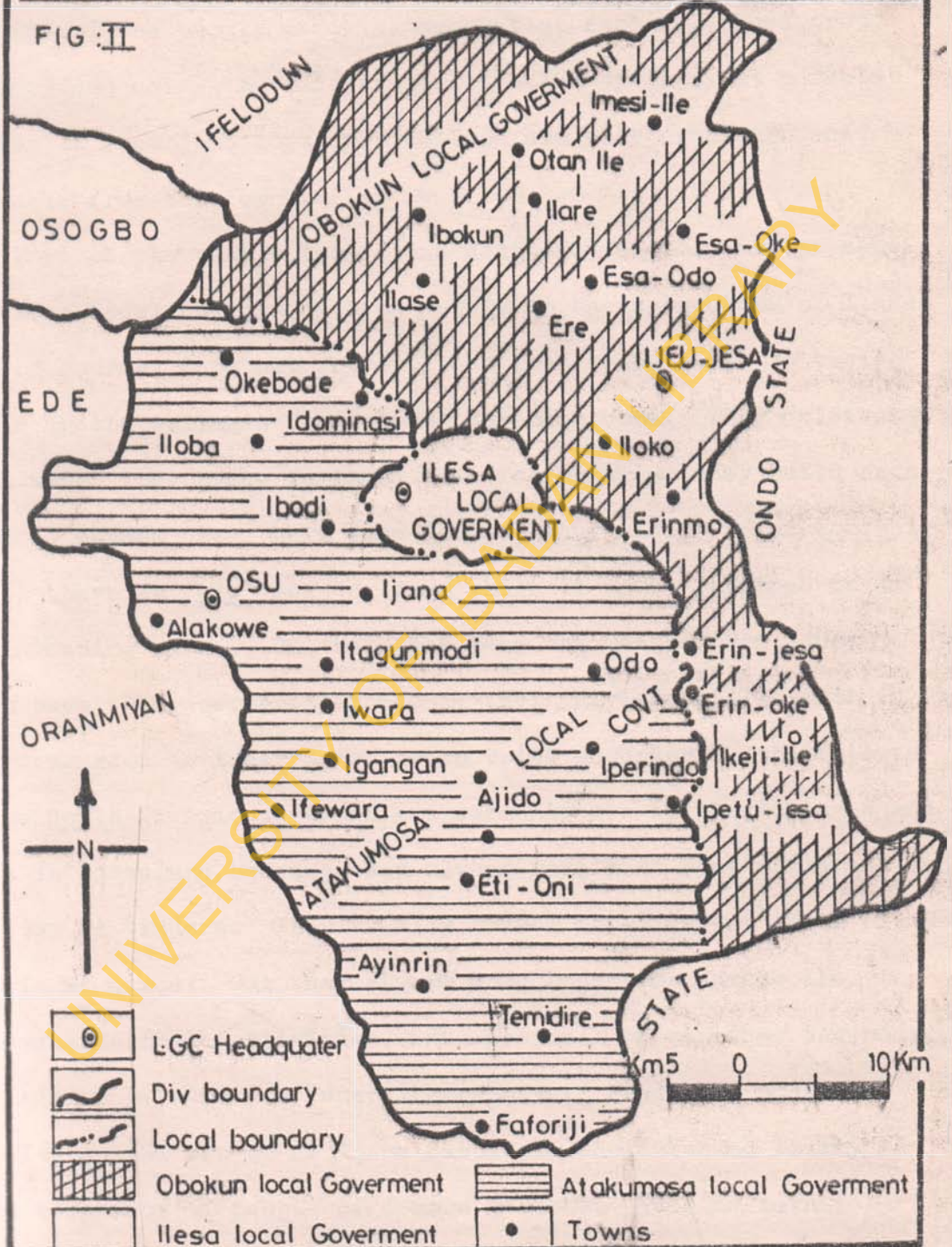
Ijesaland is an area occupied by Ilesa and its districts and it is located in the present Oyo State of Nigeria. Ijesaland is bounded on the north by Ifelodun Local Government Council and on the west by Osogbo, Ede and Oranmiyan Local Government Councils. On the south is Oranmiyan Local Government Council while on east and south east is Ondo State. The area of Ijesaland is about 1,800 sq. km¹. Its headquarters is Ilesa which is about 120km. east of Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State and it is also about 264km from Lagos, the Federal Capital of Nigeria.

Geographically, Ilesa is situated on longitude 4.75° East of the Greenwich and 70.3° North of the equator. This shows clearly that Ilesa lies within the rain forest belt, North-East of Yorubaland².

The major cash crop of Ijesa is cocoa. This is followed by oil palm and rice, the staple crop in Erin-Ijesa area and Ijesa North in general. Food crops like yam, plantain, cassava, maize, bananas, oranges, tomatoes are grown on subsistence basis throughout Ijesaland while the surplus is usually sold in their local markets.

POLITICAL MAP OF IJESALAND SHOWING THE 3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

FIG : II



Source: Ekanade Olusegun, a socio geographical analysis of the present Ijesaland, Lagos bronze gallery, 1975, P.24

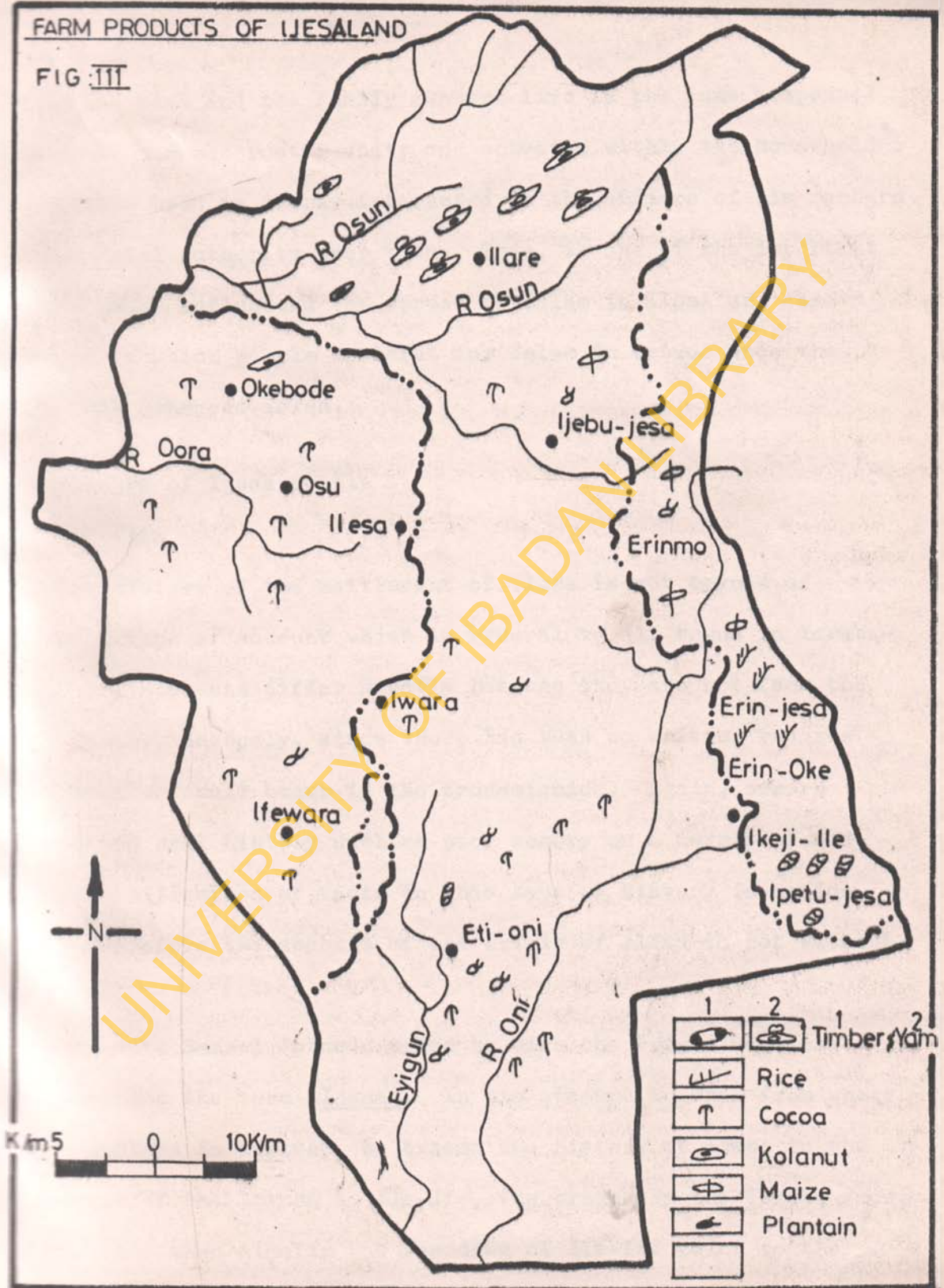
Most Ijesa people practise subsistent farming. Food crops are produced using the shifting cultivation system. At markets located at road junctions surplus food and cash crops are sold to people from the town³.

Most of the people from Ijesa South-Division in the present Atakumosa Local Government area settle in the urban town of Ilesa. This of course, does not prevent them from being loyal to their people in the villages from where they have come. They cultivate crops which they bring to Ilesa town for sale and they build huts or small houses near their farm lands. They always refer to their houses there as 'oko' meaning farm while Ilesa is referred to as 'Ile' meaning home⁴. On the other hand the people from Ijesa North have their permanent homes in their division. Ilesa is never regarded as their homes or as being superior to their towns in the North-Division. Women are commonly seen in the villages and towns in Ijesaland because they always remain at home while the men are away as traders. They usually travel to different parts of Nigeria to trade. But they always come back home during the various ancestral festivities, Ogun festival or marriage ceremony. They also come home for funeral ceremony to grace the occasion.

The social set up of Ijesa people is the extended family which comprises of people of common descent. This is mainly partirilinal. At the apex of the family organisation is the oldest

FARM PRODUCTS OF IJESALAND

FIG : III



Source: Ilesha town planning authority 1975

man as the head and the family members live in the same compound. This as we can see foster unity and cohesion within the household⁵. Each family head is deeply interested in the affairs of his members and has moral authority over them. This, is one of the important factors which influenced the spread of Islam in Ilesa and its environs by which people declared for Islam in crowds once the house head embraced Islam.

1.2 History of Ijesa people

1.2.1 Origin

The history of the settlement of Ilesa is not devoid of legends a type of account which is general to all towns in Yorubaland. The accounts differ greatly because they are not from the same origin. Secondly, since there had been no written records many mistakes could occur in the transmission. Again, errors inherent in oral history such as poor memory as a result of old age or falsification of facts in this type of history is noticeable. Therefore the account of the origin of Ilesa is not without its flaws.

Reverend Samuel Johnson tried to give the origin of Ilesa by explaining the term 'Ijesa'. In his attempt to show from where the term Ilesa is derived, he traced the history of Ijesa to the emigration of the Yoruba to Ile-Ife, the cradle of the Yoruba race, and the time when Alaafin was residing at Ile-Ife prior to the

reign of Sango⁶. During the time, human sacrifices in traditional religion were said to be very common because they were considered the best way to appease their gods.

In order to have regular supply of victims, slaves were purchased and dumped at Ibokun, now a town located about 25 kilometres in the North-East of Ilesa. There the slaves were kept under the watchful eyes of Owaji who tended them as if they were his cattle. From among them selections were said to be made from time to time for sacrificial purposes. According to Reverend Samuel Johnson, the people became docile and did not complain of any maltreatment. That was how Samuel Johnson came to the conclusion that the word 'Ijesa' is a derivative of Ije-Orisa, meaning, 'the food of the gods'. In the same way, he said that 'Ilesa' the capital of Ijesa is derived from 'Ile Orisa', that is the house of gods⁷.

A critical examination of origin of Ijesa or Ilesa given by Samuel Johnson shows very glaring flaws. First, it is very unlikely that the Ijesa people are the 'Ije Orisa' referred to by Johnson because the people are said to be stumpy, muscular and sheepish-looking with a marked want of intelligence. According to Johnson they never at anytime offered resistance to the system of killing them like animals, sacrificed to the gods. It is a widely known fact that the Ijesa people of today are neither dwarf-like people nor stupid. They are strong but they are not

sheepish-looking. They are highly intelligent with a real gift of business acumen. The Ijesa people are specially noted for their adventurous spirit and they are found all over the country today. It is therefore very difficult to believe that they could have stayed peacefully under Owaji of Ibokun to be reared as animals. It is also doubtful to believe that a whole tribe would have accepted to be sacrificed to idols, that is even if such a practice ever happened in the past. Furthermore, the same Samuel Johnson said that war victims were captured as slaves and were used as sacrificial offerings in very olden days among the Yoruba⁸.

Johnson's explanation of 'Ilesa' as 'Ile-Orisa', the house of gods, may be linguistically plausible but it could not have applied to Ilesa alone because Ilesa could not have been the only place harbouring many idols at the time. There were more idols in either Ile-Ife, the mythological home of Yoruba or in Oyo, the political headquarters of an old Empire.

N. O. Oke in his narration claimed that Ijesa people who were farmers used to give annual food supply to Alaafin in Oyo during the time in question. He later concluded that it was as a result of the food supply that the Ijesa were called Ije-Orisa, (food of the gods) while their land was known as Ile-Orisa, meaning, "the house of the gods".

Oke's account too, is not without its flaws. He who brought food to someone could not be regarded as food itself, hence Ije-Orisa could not refer to the Ijesa who supplied annual food stuffs to idols. Secondly, his claim that the inclusion of Ilesa in the Old Oyo Empire is yet to be proved by historians does not conform with widely accepted accounts of Yoruba history⁹.

This leads us to the search for a more probable and acceptable interpretation of the name Ilesa from which Ijesa is derived. Reverend Luke was the first Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) Pastor in Ilesa. In one of his journals he said, 'Ilesa' derived its name from the practice of the emigrants from Ipole who had the free use of bracelets and aprons, the ornaments of the time¹⁰. It is interesting to say here that their Ipole King, Owari prohibited them from compliance with the former custom instead the Kings should be prescribing the dress of their subjects¹¹. All because they wished to demonstrate their authority and full control over the people. It subsequently became a by-word among the people who were desirous of using these ornaments of bracelets and apron of today. People then say "I am going to the 'Home' of fashion or custom"¹². It is this which is contracted into 'Ilesa'. This explanation agrees with the generally accepted meanings of Ilesa and Ijesa by the Ijesa local historians¹³.

It is a general belief among the Yoruba that Olofin-Aye

(Oduduwa) became blind and according to the history all other children of Oduduwa first tried in vain to obtain the sea water needed for the medicine to restore his eye-sight. Owa Obokun Ajibogun who was one of the children went and was able to bring back the brine which was used to prepare the herb that was eventually used to restore Olofin-Aye's partial blindness.

Another account of the origin of Ilesa is that Owa Obokun Ajibogun was recalled to Ile-Ife during Edi festival to select people who would settle with him in his domain. On this occasion fifty hefty people were selected to settle with him. The people were known as the 'Esa' meaning 'The specially selected people or the choicest. Their place of abode or domain called 'Ile Awon Esa', which means the land of the specially selected people - 'Ilesa'.

After the definition of the word Ilesa one may proceed to discuss the brief history of Ijesaland and show the historical, political and religious milieu of Ijesaland during the period under study. One should also highlight the prevailing conditions of Ijesaland before the advent of Islam in the area.

1.2.2 A brief History of Ijesaland

In order to have a clear and complete history of Ijesaland, it is essential to know the extent of the land which the Ijesa people are occupying.

The Owa Obokun Ajibogun (1150 - 1255 A.D.) left Ile-Ife but later stayed at Igbadae, a town now in Atakumosa Local Government area of Ijesaland. His only son, Owa Obokun Awoka Okile (1260 - 1358) migrated to Ilesa where he stayed for a period of seven years and three months before he moved to Ilowa where he died in 1358¹⁴.

The first series of the Owa Obokun of Ijesaland traversed through most other areas of Ijesaland of today. At Owa Obokun Okile's death the victory sword called 'Ida Ajase', passed to Owa Obokun Obarabara-Lokun-Esin (1360 - 1459) and left Ilowa for Ibokun which is now a town in the Obokun Local Government area of Ijesaland and it is about 22.4 kilometres away from Ilesa. At the death of Owa Obokun Obarabara-Lokun-Esin it was the turn of Oba Obokun Owaluse to rule. But his position was usurped by Oba Owari. It was claimed by Ijesa historians that this Oba Owari's claim to the throne was treated with the utmost abhorrence because he hailed from a female line and he was deserted by the Ijesa people. This account states further that the incident took place at Ipole¹⁵, another town in the Atakumosa Local Government Area of Ijesaland. The treatment meted to this usurper (Oba Owari) led to his untimely but heroic death in 1520¹⁶. He was buried at Ipole where he is still worshipped up till today.

The Oba Owa Atakumosa (1526 - 1626) who was considered a

great traveller reigned after Owa Obokun Owaluse. He travelled eastward and stopped at Erinmo (now a small town near Ilesa). He continued his journey eastwards he passed through Ipetu-Ijesa now one of the big towns in Ijesa division. He went as far as to Benin, passing through Akure, Ara, Ikole and other places. As a great traveller he brought back Palmyra (Oguro) seeds to Ijesaland. He also settled a boundary dispute with the Alaafin of Oyo at Ada. Oba Owa Atakumosa made a real land mark in the history of Ijesaland. He created and named streets such as Idasa, Isona, Ogbon-Ado, Itisin, and Oke-Eso¹⁷, all of which are now large and important streets in Ilesa town. The Oba's name remains important in the history of Ijesaland. His great grandson Owa Obokun Ataiyero I also travelled to Benin in 1907 to show his greatness, like it happened to his great grandfather, his palace was burnt once in 1914 by his unidentified enemies and he roofed it with corrugated iron sheets in 1915¹⁸.

While it is not considered here to list the names of every Owa who reigned over Ijesaland with their achievements it is pertinent to refer to the history of Owa Obokun Bilaro to show the extent of Ijesaland and his authority over the land (1631 - 1690) and Oba Owa Obokun Ofonkutu (1846 - 1858). Bilaro summoned for physical help from all the chiefs of the towns of the seven gates¹⁹ of Ilesa when he was about to dig a trench round Ilesa town for his protection and control of the town. These gates or roads now lead

to Ibokun, Umoroko, Iwara, Ipetu, Ibodi, Irojo and Ijebu-Jesa²⁰. He also invited the Ewi of Ado-Ekiti, the Alara, the Olojudo, the Orangun, the Owore, the Osemawe, the Ajero, the Alaye and other brother Obas to join hands with him in construction of the defence²¹. Tolls were collected at these gates from the Owa Obokun Bilaro's reign up to the reign of Owa Obokun Haastrup Ajimoko I in 1896 when the fees were stopped by him. He replaced the payment of fees with collection of land tenure.

The Omo Owa (Owa's sons) were scattered to various communities where there were big markets so that they could govern such markets. They were called Lojas²² (owner of the markets). These Lojas were sent to towns outside Ilesa as representatives of the Owa Obokun of Ijesaland to whom they paid tributes annually²³. Among such towns were Ibodi, Osu, Ijeda, Odo, Ikinyinwa, Ere, Imesi-Ile, Ilase and Iwara.

With this type of delegated powers the political authority of the Owa Obokun of Ijesaland over the said district towns, became more effective. It also showed the extent of Ijesaland.

1.3 Soci-Political Life

Social structure had a considerable influence on every important matter affecting the whole community. That began from the family set up, the street organisation, the village political management to the centre where the Owa was on the highest run of the ladder.

Next came his traditional chiefs. As it was said earlier above, Ilesa was linked with her districts by seven gates. The administrative organisation that emerged from the structure was that each gate that lead to the town or village had a ruler set over it. Each of the rulers was chosen by the Owa from the centre. In most cases the rulers of the villages were princes designated 'Lojus' who were known to be the owners of the markets which were usually the nucleus of any settlement since it was the meeting place for the members of the community. It is again of importance to add here that he who owned the market owned the whole community²⁴.

One of the factors which had influenced the spread of Islam at its inception in Ijesaland was the structure of its society. The social unit was the extended family which was made up of common descent and it was chiefly patrilineal. At the apex of the set up was the eldest man who was the head of the family-where the members of the family lived in the same compound. These members of the family would take orders from the family head while he too would take orders sent down to the street head by the village head²⁵. By this system, every family was deeply interested in the affairs of its members while the family head had moral authority over every member²⁶. It was among the moral rights of the family head to see to the settlement of matters such as related to matrimony, personal quarrels, debts, and adultery. It was in the same form that a small village or town had its head who could exercise judicial power over its own members.

In principle, the Owa was accepted as the controller of Ilesa and the surrounding villages (towns) on one hand and the owner of all lands in Ijesaland on the other hand. That was the cause of the popular clamour by the entire Ijesa people for Owa's full control of the land and the Ijesa people as well in those days²⁷. The control of the whole Ijesaland radiated from Owa in Ilesa to the environs. There was always a common practice of Owa, in those days to acquire any object or human being he liked with or without the consent of owners²⁸.

The political power of the Owa could be clearly understood from the way and manner he accepted or welcomed David Hinderer in 1856 when he, as a Christian Missionary, first came to Ijesaland. The Reverend man first visited him as the traditional owner and controller of his land. Since the Owa accepted him there was no one who could kick against his order. Another evidence of Owa's importance, owner and controller of his people became apparent in Oba Owa Ajimoko I's disagreement with Bishop Phillips in 1897 when the Bishop told him that the Owa's marrying many wives was against the Anglican teaching. The disagreement nearly ruined the C.M.S. Mission in Ilesa and its environs because the Owa insisted that what he did was traditionally and culturally acceptable to his people who gave him strong support.

Another type of social set up among the Ijesa people before the introduction of Islam was the market locations at road junctions.

That allowed all the people in a community to interact and to enjoy buying and selling.

Up till today, Ijesa people are very fond of organising ceremonies. During the time of this study, their various festivals were occasions for joy and happiness as well as days of re-union with sons and daughters who seldom come home²⁹, except once or twice in the year.

The village head or the Oba would appear in the midst of his people as the case may be both as the religious head and political ruler. He would lead the ceremonies. The festivals served as a cord that tied the people together socially. The festivals serve as an invitation for the yearly home call of Ijesa abroad. Marriage ceremonies, street or family meetings were usually fixed for the festive periods.

1.4 Economic Life - Emergence of 'Osomaalo' system

1.4.1 History

Both Ajayi and Akintoye observed, "The most powerful of the kingdoms in the Forest Region of Nigeria is the Ijesa Kingdom which did not only successfully contain the aggression of the Savannah and desert kingdoms but also made aggressive expansion moves"³⁰. The inhabitants of the Forest Kingdom are the Ijesa people who introduced the 'Osomaalo' system as we shall see below. The Ijesa people are courageous. They are usually determined and fearless to execute projects whether military or economic. They take a lot

of risks.

At the time the Yoruba inter-tribal wars came to an end by the Europeans in the late 19th century, the Ijesa people, the Arogunyo³¹, were still bubbling with energy and the thirst for more wars. This energy they ably diverted towards legitimate economic activities which they did with equal if not greater energy than they needed to wage wars. As from the beginning of this century feeder roads were built to link the railway lines which linked Lagos with Northern Nigeria³². Road Motor Services were opened in 1906 to Ibadan, Osogbo and Ede on the rail to Offa, Ilesa and Iwo which lay off it. Nzegwu expatiating on the Road Motor Services added that the Ibadan-Iwo railway was opened on 23rd of October, 1906 and 51.5 kilometre Iwo-Osogbo railway was opened on 22nd of April, 1907³³. From the evidences above it was clear that Ibadan-Oyo and the Ede-Iwo roads were opened after the railway lines they were to serve had been declared opened.

However, in the case of Ilesa-Osogbo road it was not so. The economic activities of the Ijesa people were conspicuous off the rail line and so important were these economic services to the colonial interests that they could not wait until the 22nd of April 1907 when the railway and rail station at Osogbo were actually opened. Earlier before this period Ijesa petty traders were growing in number and began to effect trade transactions in and outside

their towns.

Perhaps, the most important contribution of the Ijesa people to the economic life of the Yoruba in particular and Nigeria in general is in the area of commerce - the retail trade in textile materials which incorporates, perhaps for the first time in the Economic History of the Yoruba, the hire Purchase system otherwise known as 'Osomaalo'.

1.4.2 Meaning

The form of the word as pronounced, 'Osomaalo' makes no complete sense. Not even in the possible Ijesa formulation, 'Oso ni maa lo', it is at best a clause which does not convey a complete meaning until a subordinate adverbial clause of time is added - 'titi mo fia gbowo mi lowo re', meaning, until I must have recovered the money which you owe me from you". However, the word 'Osomaalo' though ambiguous, conveys quite clearly to my Yoruba listener the complete meaning of the complex sentence 'I will be in squat position until I must have recovered the debt you owe me from you' or 'I will not sit down until I must have recovered the debt you owe me from you'.

1.4.3 Origin

Today, the word 'Osomaalo' connotes the Ijesa or an Ijesa person to every hearer. It is commonly used like the word, 'Ijebu' to describe any person who is shrewd and clever in the

art of trade or commerce generally³⁴. It needs to be stated here that the two words are not synonymous because the word 'Osomaalo' stands for shrewdness and acumen in commerce while the word 'Ijebu' in the same context conveys in addition to these qualities, stinginess or miserliness to others as well as to oneself in the desire to acquire wealth.

The word 'Osomaalo', as observed above is closely tied to the process of debt collection. A close examination of the word will reveal that 'Osomaalo' is not an Ijesa word. It is probably adapted to describe the people so called - the Ijesa. It is very logical to believe that a people cannot call itself a name which connotes mockery. Like non-Muslims call Islam Muhammadanism and its adherents as Muhammadans to mock them as worshippers of Prophet Muhammad. So also some people particularly among those the Ijesa people carried out their trade transactions might have been responsible for coining the name based on the manner the Ijesa traders refused to leave the premises of their debtors until they have been paid

It was the view of some of the elders interviewed³⁵ that the word 'Osomaalo' was an 'Oyo' adaptation of the phrase, "Oso ni maa lo" which the Ijesa traders said repeatedly while insisting that their money be paid to them before they could leave or sit down. This idea confirms the derogatory implications of the word at the earliest time. Today many Ijesa people take pride in been called

so because it has become a sort of identification of the entire Ijesa as enterprising people.

1.4.4 Business

An Osomaalo did not trade only in his area; he traded also in distant lands. He began the commercial activity by serving as an apprentice for a period of time after which he became independent. The trade which was chiefly in cloths and gunpowder took the Ijesa far away from their homes. Few among such areas where they settled down for their trade are Oyo, Ibadan, Ikirun, Iwo, Ilorin, Ogbomoso, Ijebu and Epe, Badagry, Abeokuta and Agege. Many went as far as to Ilorin, Sokoto, Pategi, Bauchi and Bida. As it will be seen later in chapter two many of them the 'Osomaalo' traders came in contact with Islam in such towns listed in the above.

A debt collector, an 'Osomaalo' trader would not sit down until he had collected his money. As much as possible, the master 'Osomaalo' stayed out of debt collection. This is for tactical reasons. First, as an elderly person often respected in the community, he might not be able to exert the necessary force required to make the debtor pay the debt by all means. Secondly, his market was limited, consisting of a few adjoining villages and hamlets. So he would like to retain some good-will. Furthermore, he must have stayed long among the people that he was familiar to many of them. Therefore he could not afford to earn the sustained hatred from

the people of a village which automatically followed in the wake of debt collection by force. To make amends was therefore easier by playing the trick of Machiavelli's Cesare Borgia on the suppressed people of Romagna by sacrificing his cruel but able lieutenant, Remirro de Orco³⁶.

By this an 'Osomaalo' trader was able to stay long in places where he traded, and interacted freely with the people in the community. After staying for a large number of years 'abroad', an 'Osomaalo' trader would have to return home with his wealth, wisdom and perhaps a new religion he had acquired during his commercial venture.

1.5 Religious milieu

Ijesa people were with their own various forms of worship before the advent of Islam in the area. From the establishment of Ilesa and its environs, in the thirteenth century, worship of the Supreme Being has been practised by the people. They did not, however identify themselves with an organised religion like Islam because they had no revealed or a set book, (Qur'an), or Christianity (the Bible). To them, religion was a set of rituals which could mobilize Supernatural powers for the purpose of achieving or preventing a change in the state of man or nature. The history of Ilesa and its districts show how some Ijesa rulers, war leaders and great men were worshipped as heroes. This continues up till

this modern time most especially among the adherents of African Traditional Religion who believe that the people deserve to be worshipped.

Ijesa people like all other Africans in general and the Yoruba people of Nigeria in particular believed in the Supreme Being known as Olorun which means God, or (Allah). This Supreme Deity is also called Olodumare and to the Ijesa people like all other people of Yorubaland this Olorun-Olodumare was regarded as a Being of a unique character possessing many noble attributes.

The Ijesa people regarded and still regard God as real. This was why God was known by different attributes. Although the Ijesa people like all other Yoruba people worshipped or venerated the lesser gods, none of them was known to possess attributes like Olodumare or Olorun. This significance is also noticed in the prayer made to Olodumare (anytime, anywhere whenever an occasion calls for a prayer).

The Ijesa people do not only believe in the existence of an Almighty God whom they call Olorun, 'The Lord of Heaven', they also acknowledge Him as the Maker of Heaven and Earth. The Ijesa people's conception in regard to reality of God can be seen in their practice of prefixing God to their various names such as Olorunfemi, (God loves me); Oloruntoyin, (God is enough to praise); Olorunnikinyo, (God makes me happy); Olorunseun, (God has done

something good); Olorunrotimi, (God stays with me) and Olorunkemi (God honours me) to name a few³⁷.

This regard and honour given to God becomes apparent in that God or 'Olodumare' is never represented by any graven images or drawings while other divinities are represented in various forms and dimensions which are painted in different colours particularly such drawings or paintings are still commonly found on the walls of houses of traditional chiefs, Obas, priests and priestesses and worshippers of the different deities throughout the Yorubaland in general and Ilesa and its environs in particular. To the Ijesa people, God is transcendent. It was generally accepted throughout the Ijesaland that the Supreme Being is high and far above all creatures. The Supreme Being is not only one among many but wholly Superior to the other divinities³⁸.

1.5.1 Ogun

Up till today like in the past the Ijesa people like other Yoruba people have belief in Ogun as a deity to be worshipped. For example, if a driver is having constant road accidents or any other worker making use of implements made of iron is having mishaps he will be advised to offer sacrifices to Ogun (god of iron)³⁹.

In Ijesaland there are four centres (towns) where Ogun is commonly worshipped annually in very festive and elaborate celebrations. The entire Ijesa people join in the celebration of worship of Ogun. It is after the worship of Ogun Ipole that Owa

of Ijesaland can send kolanuts to Ibokun and Ijebu-Jesa respectively. The sending of the kolanuts denotes the official information of Ogun festival to the people. For example, it is usually the seventh day after the Owa Obokun of Ijesaland has sent kolanuts to Ipole that Ogun Ipole is worshipped.

Another important festival in the series is:

1.5.2 Obokun

From the history of Ijesaland earlier given it is clear that Owa Obokun Ajibogun was the first Oba Owa Obokun of Ijesaland. As a result of his activities and greatness as an ancestor he was deified as a god. Owa Obokun Atakumosa was also a deified ancestor. The Ijesa do not only venerate them but they believe that they are worshipped.

Among the main centres where Obokun is worshipped by the Ijesa people today are Igbadae, Ilesa, Ibokun and Iloko. All these centres are among the traditional places of veneration of Obokun Ajibogun as an ancestor. The Chief Lemodu of Okesa Ilesa is the official custodian of Owa Obokun' shrine to this day hence the main Obokun shrine is honoured in his compound directly in front of his house.

Any newly installed Chief who has not visited Chief Lemodu's house has not completed his main chieftaincy rites. It is also compulsory for the new chief to visit the shrine for the necessary

traditional rites to be performed for him there. The Lemodu performs the traditional rites for very important and high rank chiefs while his lieutenants perform the rites for the lesser chiefs. In this regard it is clear that it is Obokun who confirms a chief's right to rule the town. The chiefs will have to present the sacrificial materials to be used on the occasion to the priest who in turn communicates with Obokun in the traditional form.

To the whole Ijesa people both at home or 'abroad' the name 'Obokun' is a very sacred word.

1.5.3 Ifa Oracle and other divinations

As a matter of fact, Ifa is a deity which is much respected among the Yoruba people as a whole. Although there are other deities or methods of divination among the Ijesa, Ifa Oracle is the most renowned deity of divination prominent among the Yoruba. Dida Obi, (casting the kolanuts) can be considered to be next in practice. This is a system of consultation with the gods known to Ijesa people long time ago. The type of kolanut used is the species called Obi abata, (kola acuminata) which by tradition must have four lobes (awe merin). Two of such lobes are known to be ako (male) while the other two are called abo (female) in consequence of the natural marks on them.

Among other methods of divination which were commonly known and widely practised among the Ijesa people before the advent of Islam was the Egberindinlogun, which is made up of sixteen cowries.

The use of Opele, was a type of divination among the Ijesa people but it was less frequent than the obi system or method. This Opele consists of eight half-seed shells tied together with a cord or chain which would be about three or four feet long⁴⁰.

The Ijesa people attached much importance to the worship of Ifa right from the foundation of Ilesa in particular and Ijesaland in general. The Owa Ajibogun consulted with the Ifa oracle before he travelled to the sea to bring the brine to Ile-Ife. According to that history it was the sea water which he brought that was used for the herb which was used in restoring their father's sight⁴¹. It is still believed by Ijesa people today like the Ijesa of the past that Ajibogun's success in fetching the sea water to Ile-Ife was because of his consultation with the Ifa oracle before he left for the sea. Owa Obokun Ajibogun is said to have adhered strictly to Ifa's instructions as was said earlier under the 'Brief History of Ijesaland': He succeeded in procuring the brine. It was because of this that Owa Obokun Ajibogun regarded Ifa as his second benefactor and began to worship Ifa. He left Ile-Ife with an Ifa priest who started to live with him in the palace. Ifa was a divinity worshipped personally by Owa Ajibogun and all the Owa Obokuns who succeeded him followed his foot-prints. Up till today in Ilesa and adjoining towns and villages it is the Ifa priest who explains or interpretes what Ifa had to tell the Oba and his people.

The value placed on Ifa oracle is so great that no Owa Obokun takes Ifa oracle lightly or defies its instructions or directives given through the Ifa priest⁴². The Owa Obokun of Ijesaland, like his subjects including the traditional chiefs rely absolutely on the directives and instructions of the Ifa. Up till the present time for example before any Owa Obokun of Ijesaland can be selected the Ifa oracle must be consulted. It is believed that it is usually as a result of Ifa's reply that the king makers choose the Ifa's favourite from among the contestants for the vacant stool.

The popular annual Ifa celebration is usually announced by the Owa Obokun of Ijesaland. The festival usually takes place in the month of July when new yams are officially displayed in front of the Owa Obokun's palace. On the occasion, the Oba Owa Obokun cuts a yam tuber into pieces. This is an indication that he is ready to eat the new yam and that others can begin from that time to eat or sell new yams in the open markets. It is considered a taboo to bring fresh yams to the open or to display them in the market before the Owa's official celebration during which he has "to kick the fresh yams in the market place"⁴³.

The materials for sacrifices to Ifa on the official day of its worship include hens, palm kernels and palm oil. The hens are killed while the Opele is soaked in their blood. Then Ifa literary corpus are chanted glorify Ifa by the priests⁴⁴, after the chickens

would have been prepared in special melon soup for consumption with pounded yam by the whole worshippers.

The verses of the corpus show the great importance which Ifa worshippers attach to the oracle. In the song, they make their requests known to it and pray to it to keep watch over them throughout the season. It is usually at this juncture of the celebration that the Owa Obokun of Ijesaland would dance to a special drum round the Ifa priests who would prostrate in a circular form. The Owa danced round them while they remained in the posture⁴⁵. The occasion was one of the few times when an Owa Obokun of Ijesaland could dance in the open⁴⁶.

Since the establishment of Ijesaland and up till the time of writing this work the Ifa worship in any season would come to an end after the Owa Obokun would have danced in that form. Great meriments; eating and dancing to show unity and happiness would follow. On that occasion, all the Ifa priests and all adherents of Ifa worship would have to forgive and forget any past feuds or disagreements. They would do all those things just because it is believed that Ifa knew the minds of everyone of them⁴⁷.

1.5.4 Osun

Another deity of importance among the Ijesa people is the Osun (the goddess of the river). The Osun was among the gods brought to Ilesa by Oba Owa Obokun Owaluse from Oyo when he was recalled by the Ijesa people.

Generally, according to the belief by the Yoruba people, the Osun is believed to be a goddess who can help a barren woman to produce children⁴⁸. It is the same Osun that is worshipped among the Ijesa people. To the Ijesa, the original home of Osun is Iponda, a town in Obokun Local Government area of Ijesaland. The adherents of Osun believed and still believe very strongly that Osun would take care of any child got through her and that such a child would live to a ripe, old age⁴⁹.

During the very early period of Ijesa history any woman who went to the Osun shrine for a child would have to make some pledge expected to be fulfilled before or after she would have given birth to a child. Among such pledges was that she would bring a black goat, a hen, quantity of beans, sticks of sugercane and other edible items as sacrifices to the goddess of the river, (the Osun deity). In addition such a woman would be responsible for taking care of the shrine by sweeping it daily and by scrubbing the Osun priest's apartment every five days, with animal dungs mixed with green leaves⁵⁰.

Osun was worshipped among the Ijesa through her priest who would lead the other adherents in worship. Ijesa people had belief in the efficacy of cold water obtained from Osun shrine through the priests, most especially before the advent of Islam and Christianity. The cold water would be kept in a special pot called (oru) with ferns slightly tucked into it. Every woman present at the shrine

would carry her own pot on the head while the priest would lead all the Osun adherents present in saying the following in a sing song form to show the importance the Osun worshippers attach to healing and curing by the use of cold water rather than the use of herbs:

1. "Ajape ewe
2. Akaki agbo Olomitutu
3. Aloru mase agbo
4. Iwo lorisa nla
5. Toori omitutu wo arun"

Translation:

1. "An embodiment of medical leaves
2. A concoction with cold water
3. You who have pot but cook no herbs
4. You are a great deity
5. You cure all ailments with cold water"⁵¹

All those in need of either children or protection against enemies or witches would repeat the song after the priest.

It was a common practice among the adherents of Osun divinity in Ilesa and its districts to bear names in association with Osun. Such people prefixed Osun as a great deity with their names such as in the table below:

<u>Name in Yoruba</u>	<u>Name in Ijesa dialect</u>	<u>Translation in English</u>
Osunbunmi	Osununmi	Osun gives me
Osunwale	Osunale	Osun comes home
Osunwumi	Osunremi	I love Osun
Osunyemi	Osunye	Osun fits me

During the Osun festival the adherents both males and females would clap, sing aloud and danced all in the attempt to appease Osun, the goddess of the river⁵². The Osun worshippers have so strong a faith in the goddess of the river that they dared not disobey either her priest or priestess. The Osun worshippers both males and females usually rendered series of services to the Osun priest or priestess because they were considered their divine leaders. Civilization has reduced all these today. People go to the shrine secretly.

1.5.5 Obalogun

In addition to the festivals mentioned above, there are other deified ancestors or heroes which are peculiar to each of the towns where they are venerated for their importance or greatness. For example, Obalogun is one of those ancestors venerated annually in Iloko-Ijesa, (a town in Obokun Local Government area of Ijesaland). Obalogun was said to be a very strong warrior who assisted Oba Atakumosa on many occasions. He later became a famous hunter in Iloko Ijesa⁵³.

It is perhaps enough to say that the Ijesa people were deeply involved in the worship of various idols, veneration of known ancestors of Ijesaland and participation in the various heathenish festivals in their early days. There was no person from any of the towns who dared go against the taboos of these

gods or the ancestors. For example, before the Lorogun festival of Ijebu-Jesa there was no one who could bring new yams into the market place for sale. The people accepted all these taboos as if they were uniniciative whereas it was done all because of the fear of their gods.

Sacrifice was also recognised throughout Ijesaland. Before Islam, various types of sacrifices were practised by Ijesa people. Throughout Ilesa and its environs at the time, sacrifices were to be found at shrines, banks of rivers or brooks, at road junctions, under trees - iroko tress in particular or at the base of a typical tree called akata⁵⁴ or Ose (baoba tree). The sacrifices were believed to be offered to the Orisa or the spirits either to appease or propitiate the gods so as to relieve them of some illness or any other problems. The people were so much involved in the offering and carrying of sacrifices to such an extent that people could not go out safely at night.

Taboos are of variant types among the Ijesa people⁵⁵. There are religious taboos and conventional taboos. There are certain things which must not be done in some streets or towns in Ijesaland. Defiance would mean a violation of taboos and that would invite the wrath of a particular supernatural being or spirit or the ancestor in question. For example, it is prohibited to advertise the sale of palm oil in Isokun Street, in Ilesa⁵⁶.

At Ipole, the hot pap should not be announced for sale⁵⁷. It was also an abomination for any blacksmith to work within the first seven days during Ogun festival of Ijesa. Conventionally, the Ijesa people like all other people in Yorubaland considered it an abomination and defiance of god of iron 'to go in' with a co-hunter's wife⁵⁸.

Generally, the religious situation of Ijesaland before 1860 was considered to be heathenish by the Christian Missionaries who came to Ilesa in 1856. Of course, Ijesaland was regarded as a pantheon of gods in itself for its people worshipped various objects as gods. As a matter of fact scarcely could one visit a house without a shrine of one deity or the other. To the Ijesa, the divinities take prayers to God (Olodumare) because they considered them as intermediaries between them and God. During this period, Ijesaland was full of various types of deities. Almost every compound had its particular deity which was worshipped as a traditional god. Today it has changed drastically. Fewer people are present at the various shrines because of the constant preachings of Muslims and Christians against the worship of idols. Members of Ogboni (the secret society) are also decreasing daily because many Christians and Muslims leave the group in large numbers. Despite the leaders

of the society's solicitations for more members and kind treatments for members and generality of Ijesa people⁵⁹. there was no noticeable improvement. Before discussing further, the impact of Islam on traditional religious practices in Ijesaland it is pertinent to examine how the religion i.e. Islam came to be introduced to the Ijesa people. The next Chapter attempts to do this.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. G.J.A. Ojo, Yoruba Culture (London n.p. 1966), p. 126f
2. George Phillips: Intermediate Historical Atlas for West Africa (London, George Phillip and Sons Ltd., 1954), p. 22.
3. The junction markets later grew and became reputable towns. Some of them are Erinmo, Idominasi, Idoka and Kajola.
4. Journal of M.J. Luke Feb. 11, 1889, O.A.U.L., C.M.S. Gs/A2/06. Up-till today the inhabitants of Ijesa-South Division recognise Ilesa as their first home. They are proud of the praise song: Omo oni ile ibi meji ti ko mo iyi ebi - literally it means, a child who has two homes will not suffer of food (hunger). For more details see: M.A. Mayadenu Isedale Ijesa (Ilesa.), Olusegun Press, 1961, pp. 18-22.
5. For more details, see: Journal of M.J. Luke of February 11, 1889, Ibid., and G.J.A. Ojo: Yoruba Culture, op. cit., pp. 126-127. Culturally, there is remarkable homogeneity in the ethnic characteristics of the dominant group of the Yoruba inhabiting Ijesa. For further details, see: O. Ekanade: Nigerian Magazine op. cit., pp 25-26.
6. Olowokure's claim that the Alaafin once lived in Ile-Ife is not only in disagreement with other scholars of History of Yoruba people's views but lacks authenticity because he did not have any real source either oral or written. Secondly, he did not name Alaafin who so lived in Ile-Ife. For more details about Olowokure's claim see: Olowokure, J.O.R., "Christianity in Ijesaland, 1858-1960". M.A. Dissertation, (O.A.U.L., Ile-Ife, 1980) p.
7. Samuel Johnson: The History of the Yorubas. (The Ford, Lower & Brydone Printers, Ltd., 1976), p. 20.
8. Samuel Johnson: Ibid., pp. 20-21.
9. Headlines: Origin of the Yoruba - January 1984, pp. 2-6ff. See also A.M.J. de Swordt: The Geology of the country around Ilesa - Bulletin No. 13, Geological Survey of Nigeria, (Lagos, 1953) and Abiola Babafemi and Ataiyero, op. cit., pp 5-6.
10. Journal of M.J. Luke, August 1888, September 1888, op. cit. O.A.U.L.: C.M.S. G3/A2/06.

11. Before the short reign of Oba Owari, the people were free to wear any dress of their choice. Owari stopped them of the freedom because he wanted to be recognised as possessing much power over the people. The subjects on their own rejected him and moved out of Ipole.
12. Asa, means custom - 'Mo nlo si ile asa', means, I am going to the home of fashion or custom.
13. For more details see: Abiola, J.D.E. Iwe Itan Ilesa, (Ilesa, Olusegun Press, 1982), p.7.
14. It is now a town near Idoka in Obokun Local Government area of Ijesaland. History confirms it that he died there because he failed to consult the gods with kolanut before he left for Ilowa where divination by kolanut was the practice of Ijesa prior to his recall from Oyo.
15. Ataiyero, S.A., History of the Ijesa Part I, (Ilesa, Olufemi Press, 1972), p. 34.
16. 'Owari' literally means the Owa (Oba) sank. The death was considered heroic because he was believed to have dis-appeared into the ground because he wished to avoid a shame arising out of ugly treatment meted to him. This is why he is still venerated as a hero up till this day! It is vital to state here that his name during his life time was Oba Ajayi Ogun. He was later called Owari because of the nature of his death.
17. For his greatness, the Atakumosa High School, Osu was founded and named after him in 1963. In like manner the Atakumosa Local Government was created in 1976 in his memory. For more details see: O. Ekanade: A socio-Geographical Analysis of the Present Ijesaland, op. cit., p. 25. Idasa, Isare, Isona and Itinsin streets respectively were named after the practice of the first settlers while Ogbon-Ado was specially meant for people from the present Ado-Ekiti. Oke-Eso was a place for the guards. For more details, see: M.A. Mayadenu, Itan Isedale Ijesa, (Ilesa, Olusegun Press, 1959), p. 36.
18. See M.A. Mayadenu, Ibid., p. 36.
19. Paths (roads) that led out of Ilesa to her district towns where tolls were collected.

20. S.A. Ataiyero, op.cit., pp 38-39. These were gates (roads) which lead to all the towns of Ijesaland. Since tolls were collected at the gates, it denoted authority of Owa over the whole Ijesaland. At the same time it indicates the extent of Ijesaland up-to-date.
21. The trench dug round the town marked the extent of the Ilesa and its protection or defence from any of its districts. The above named towns were most important environs or district areas of Ijesaland at the time. That people were invited from those towns also shows that they were all subjects to Owa Obokun Bilaro of Ijesaland.
22. Market was the nucleus of any settlement in the past, like the present.
23. Isakole - (tributes) the payment shows authority and the control of Owa Obokun on such people as his subjects.
24. This is still evident today in that important markets are situated near the palace of the Obas in general and Owa in particular as the 'Ojo-Oba' meaning the Oba's market. This type of market is always the largest of all the markets in the town.
25. The system fostered unity and cohesion within family or household.
26. That was why it was easy for a house or family to declare for Islam as a whole at the advent of Islam to the area. Examples of this was the whole Fagbamila house in Ibokun, accepted Islam through their family head, Amodu Fagbamila in 1880; Tijani Fesogun in 1890 in Otan-Ile, and Yesufu Akinsola's family in Ifewara by 1895 among many others.
27. It was an evidence of the complete freedom for anyone belonging to the Owa's family in those days. Owa's orders must be obeyed. Whatever he demanded by way of land must be given to him. One of the family praise songs shows it as follows: Owa amuni 'mu aparo oko eni "Owa who caught man and the bush fowls on his farm".
28. Owa could seize anything he wanted including beautiful girls on the streets while the message of the seizure would be sent to their parents with the clamour: 'Owa set his foot on them'. The reason was that he was acknowledged, in theory, as the supreme owner of everything.

29. To an Ijesa every town he went to trade was 'oko' (farm), Those who went to Ibadan from Ilase, a very small 'village' then would still call Ibadan, Oko (farm). The essence of the overall idea of both 'farm' and 'Home' here is that they would at one time or the other return home to settle.
30. Ajayi, J.F.A. and Akintoye, S.A.: "Yoruba in the 19th century" in Ground work of Nigerian History, Obaro Ikme (ed). Ibadan, Oxford University Press, 1966; p. 86.
31. People who were happy when fighting in wars.
32. Olugbekan, O: "Road Transport Development in Nigeria", in Proceedings of the Second National Symposium on Science and Technology in National Development, (Lagos, N.C.S.T., Cabinet Office, March 12th - 16th, 1973), pp 1-26.
33. Nzegwu, T.I.U: "Railway Transport Development in Nigeria" in proceedings of the Second National Symposium on Development, op. cit., pp 2-53.
34. Tom, J. and Duncan D: Railway Transportation in Nigeria (1974), an unpublished manuscript), p. 67.
35. Pa. Sule Owoeye of Imo street, Ilesa, Alhajj Shittu of Ibokun and Jibril Aribilola of Igangan in interviews on 6-6-84, and 3-4-85 respectively.
36. Machiavelli Niccolo: The Prince, (New York, the New American Library) 1952, p. 55.
37. Prefixing God to names is a common practice among the Yoruba people as a whole. In the same form deities, ancestors or heroes are also prefixed to names among the Ijesa people. This depicts their type of worship and the various types of gods or deities worshipped or venerated among the Ijesa people - viz: Ogunfunmi, (god of iron gives me); Oyawale (goddess of the river comes home); Edeseun (Ede, a heroine did it) and Ajakaremi (Ajaka, an Ijesa war leader is appeasing to me), to name a few. This too shows Ijesa people's regards for the gods, goddesses, heroes, heroines and deities.
38. J. Omosade Awolalu: Yoruba Beliefs and Sacrificial Rites, (London, Longman Group Ltd., 1979) pp 10-20.
39. This is an example of worship of Ogun at the time of need.

40. See: J.O. Awolalu: op. cit., p. 123 for a detailed narration about the way Opele is operated.
41. Ataiyero, S.A. op. cit., pp 15-16.
42. Pa. Ifalomuwa Ojo of Ayeso, street, Ilesa in an interview on 5/3/85.
43. The kicking of the new yams with the legs by the Owa, Owa fi ese yi isu, is an indication that as from that time he can begin to touch them with his hands which means he can begin to eat them. It can denote that yams will be cheap in the market for that season.
44. i. Iku rorere
Oran buruku rorere
Arun rorere
Oran buruku rorere lasele
- ii. Ifa wi ire
Opele foore
Asoni samodun
Araye soro

Translation of the two verses are:

- i. Death, move far away
All bad things should happen after off:
Diseases, move far away!
All bad things should happen afar off!
- ii. Ifa, speak favourably,
Opele, speak well
We celebrate the feast today and years to come
We have time to celebrate the feast.

The Yoruba form of the song in the above was rendered more in Ijesa dialect. The two verses are transferred here without any alterations. For more details, see: Yinka Asaolu: Ilewo Ifa, (Ilesa, Fatiregun Press 1981), pp 30-31.

45. This is a type of respect and regard for the Owa. Traditionally when the Owa Obokun dances all the people around - are expected to prostrate and kneel down for him. The prostration is out of respect for the Oba. They remained in circle because when the Owa dances no other person should dance.

46. Usually, the Owa Obokun would not dance in the public, unless on this type of occasion because the practice started by the first Owa Obokun has become a custom to all the Oba Owas to follow but civilisation has changed it. Any Owa can dance if he wishes.
47. This shows the belief of Ijesa people in Ifa as a deity which knows 'all things' "Ifa tio n mo igbin ninu ikarahun". 'Ifa which knows the type of a snail in a shell'.
48. Yinka Asaolu, Ilewo Ifa, op. cit., pp 10-14.
49. 'Omo Osun ki ku lewe agba ni yio da' which means 'the child got through Osun (goddess of the river) never dies young, it grows and becomes old'. This was the main cause why many women, nursing mothers and barren women in Ijesaland used to rush to Osun shrine before the arrival of both Christianity and Islam.
50. It was believed that the free manual labour would be compensated for in the form of a child. That was why every barren woman did the work with dedication.
51. Madam Ojumu, the priestess of Osun in Ilesa sang, this song during an interview with her on 8-3-84 in her house.
52. During some interviews with both Yeye Osun, Osunale of Okesa Street, Ilesa on 6th March, 1984 and Yeye Osun Osunremi Ojumu of Fateye's Compound in Ilesa on 8th March, 1984 it was revealed in their answers to some questions that they worship Osun because of their belief in the deity. They did not accept the idea that the children are the fish in the rivers.
53. Iloko is one of the many towns where Obalogan is worshipped in Ijesaland.
54. There were seventy of these trees at the different junctions of the seventy old and important streets of Ilesa township alone. The seventy trees and Oge (baobab) trees were in existence up till 1950 before the installation of electricity in Ilesa when they were all cut down and uprooted. As a result of fear and superstition that the evil spirits lived in the trees and that witches and wizards used to hold their meetings in the shade they provide. People who were unlucky to have their houses near the trees were not free to return home late at nights or to go out early in the morning.

Footnote 54 (contd.)

For more details, see: M.A. Mayadenu Ise awon Kajekaje ni ilu Ilesa (Ilesa, Olusegun Press, 1959)pp. 21-35.

55. Taboos are things one should not do. A ki see, meaning "It is not done"; Eewo means "It is forbidden".
56. "A ki polowo epo ni Isokun afi olowo adin" meaning, palm oil is never advertised at Isokun, (a street in Ilesa) unless the oil made from the nut from palm kernel". 'Epo' is the name of a warrior who saved the people in Isokun from their enemies. It is generally believed that he may reappear for war if his name is mentioned. An interview with Chief S.A. Ataiyero, the Loja of Isireyun and the author of the famous Ijesa "History of the Ijesas Part I, on 3-4-84 revealed the historical information.
57. The Ijesa style of advertising the hot pap was, "Joloki a awamu foro", (Joloki, pap drawn to the mouth in quick successions) (in the hot form). 'Joloki' was believed to be the name of one of Owari's war leaders. It was thought that if Owari should hear the expression he might come up as he promised.
58. Ibante is the apron worn under the trousers by a male person. It is prohibited for a hunter to wear another hunter's apron when such a hunter is still living. It has become a common or a wise saying among the Yoruba people: "Ewo ode kiwo ibante ode", meaning "It is forbidden a hunter should not wear another hunters apron. The word apron or ibante in this context can mean a wife of another hunter.
59. Interviews with Chief Lasisi Omole the Obanla of Ijesaland on 15-3-84 and John Adeniyi, (the Asipa of Ogboni) of Ilesa on 20-3-84 both of who are outstanding and prominent members of the Ogboni Society of Ilesa revealed the idea that members of the society are friendly and never plan evils.

CHAPTER TWO2.0 PENETRATION OF ISLAM TO IJESALAND

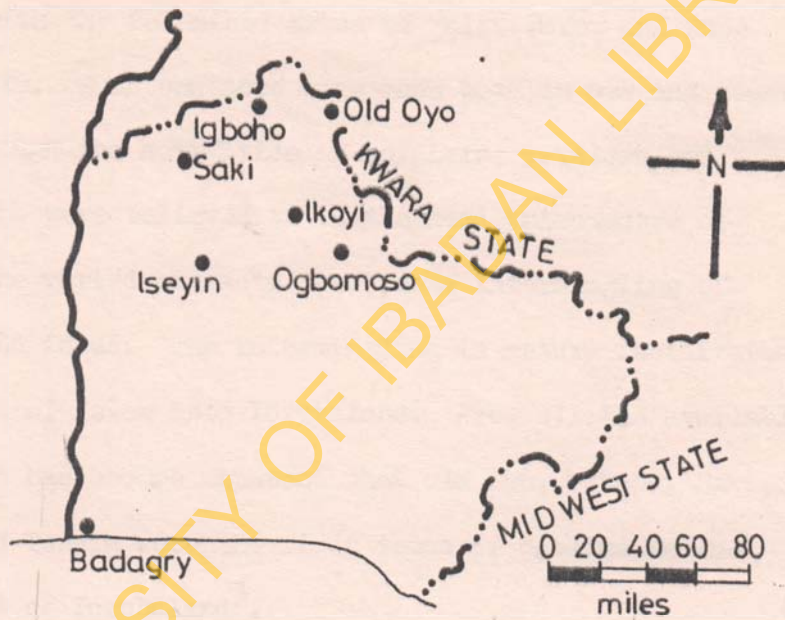
2.1. Introduction.




It is very essential to this study to state first the general situation of Islam in Yorubaland before 1860 in order to make a detailed account of the beginnings of Islam in Ijesaland. During the time, the Yoruba people mostly lived in the area which constitutes the present Oyo, Ogun, Ondo and Lagos States respectively and the Ijesa, (traders), visited many of the towns in these places in their trade ventures at the end of the civil wars. The Yoruba could also be grouped into a number of sub-ethnic groups viz: the Oyo, Egba, Egbado, Ijebu, Ijesa, Ekiti, Ondo, Akoko and Ikale. Of course, this does not mean that the Yoruba could not be found outside the areas just mentioned. For example they could be found in Ilorin, Ketu, Port Novo and other parts of Dahomey¹.

Gbadamosi's assertion that Ilorin could not be regarded as part of the Yoruba is criticised. The fact that Ilorin was under the political control of the Fulani during the time did not remove the truth that Ilorin was made up of Yoruba speaking set of people among others. Secondly there were transactions between the Yoruba areas and Ilorin at the time. It is on record that an Islamic teacher, Al-Salih's (Alimi's)

MAJOR CENTRES OF ISLAMIC DISTRIBUTION IN YORUBALAND BEFORE 1830

FIG: IV



-  International boundary
-  State boundary
-  Major centres of Islamic distribution in Yorubaland

Source: T.G.O Gbadamosi The growth of Islam among the Yoruba 1841 - 1908 London, longman, group L.T.D, 1978, P. XVI

contact with Ilorin from Oyo led to Afonja's success against the Alaafin of Oyo. One of the major facts that aided his alliance with Ilorin in addition to the economic transactions and Islam was the same language, (Yoruba) they spoke².

During this period of study, the Yoruba also had some contact with the islamised areas of Mali, Bornu and Nupe before 1840. Such contacts were made both in war and peace times through the activities of soldiers, settlers and traders who were believed to be the real introducers of Islam. The varied contacts meant some intermingling of peoples and ideas. The intermingling in return facilitated the influx of Islam into Yorubaland. From all the available sources it has become apparent that old Oyo, Igboho, Saki, Ikoyi, and Iseyin were the first towns of Muslims in the North-West of Yorubaland³.

It is very difficult to fix a date of entry of Islam to Yorubaland with precision. What is fairly certain is that mention was made of Muslims in Yorubaland between 1650 and 1658. This was probably during Alaafin Ajagbo's reign⁴. A Muslim leader, Baba-Kewi (A Nupeman) was said to have sent his son Alufaa Yigi to castigate the Alaafin for the murder of his chiefs⁵ for the death of his first son,

Oseindu and all Oyo nobles who came to sympathize with him were asked to be put to death; all because he thought that they feigned their condolence. That was why the Muslim leader, Baba-Kewu sent his son to warn the Alaafin that it was a sin against God for the Alaafin to avenge his son's death on the innocent people. He made it clear to him that it was God who took his child's life⁶.

By the end of the eighteenth century Islam had gained so many converts in Yorubaland that the Yoruba people were propagating Islam as far afield as Porto-Novo in Dahomey. The Porto-Novo historians show that the Yoruba introduced Islam to their country in the reign of Ayikpe, (1775-1783)⁷. From the same source it is apparent that by 1840 there was a considerable degree of Islamisation in Yorubaland. This is evident in that there were at least sprinkling of Muslims in many of the large towns. For example there were many Muslims in Owu before its destruction in 1825. Mention can be made here that there was a Muslim Community in Badagry at the time. It is confirmed that Lander (who was on the Expedition of River Niger saw the colourful celebration of the Muslim, 'Id-ul-Fitr on 27th of March, 1830⁸.

Unlike at its inception when the few Muslims who were scattered over Yorubaland had to worship privately,

the Muslim communities could now organise themselves under their Imams in most of the areas, particularly in Igboho and Oyo. Muslim activities were no more in secret rather; Muslims worshipped in the public. In such towns as Osogbo and Ogbomoso Islamic activities became prominent. As from the mid-eighteenth century among the signs of the prominence were the Islamic offices which were given to prominent Muslims like those of their counterparts who were honoured with traditional chieftaincy titles. Among such Islamic offices were the Parakoyi⁹ who was known to be the head of the Muslim community in Igboho, Oyo, Ogbomoso and Osogbo respectively. There were also the Chief Imam who was the religious leader and the Mu'allim who was the religious teacher. In addition to these Islamic officials were the many Islamic itinerant teachers and preachers.

2.2. Impact of Yoruba inter-tribal and civil wars

During this time there were two momentous events which took place in the Oyo Empire and which should warrant our attention. The two stirring events took place by the end of eighteenth or at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The events later rocked the whole of Yorubaland: first was the political crisis in Oyo which can be dated as far back as 1793 when Alaafin Aole attacked Apomu which was an

Ife town.

The aftermath of the series of wars of the time can be described as fruits carried away by animals, the seeds of which later germinated and grew to become big plants which in return produced fruits in tens, hundreds, thousands and even in millions. The meaning of this literal analogy will become clearer when we come to 'Early Muslims in Ife and its environs' (Later in this chapter). Since 1840 when Ilorin people were checked in their expansion southwards, Ilorin has become more persistent and serious invaders of the Ekiti land.

Akintoye, S.A., one of the writers of Yoruba civil wars, contests the popular notion that the Ibadan forces came to assist the Ekiti people against the Ilorin aggressors¹⁰, this is not really convincing that Ibadan people had any altruistic motives behind the entry of their forces into Ekiti and Ijesa¹¹. It was not only that the Ibadan people came as aggressors, they took many Ijesa and Ekiti sons away as captives of the war. This view agrees with that of a notable writer of Yoruba history, Reverend Samuel Johnson who said, "Ogedengbe was the only leader in whom the Ekiti-Parapo relied to hold their different sections together. His body was covered with scars from wounds. It was not

unlikely that the Ibadans, having acquired rifles a stray bullet might one day put him out of action, and with him the hopes of the Ekiti will be extinguished"¹².

These are some of the series of tribal wars that were fought during this period of study: Among such wars were the Aramoko war between Ibadan and Ijesa. It took place between 1852 and 1854. Mention should also be made of Ilase-Ibadan war of 1852 where many captives were carried away to Ibadan. Another was the Igbajo war against the Ijesa in 1866. It is to be recalled that it was in this war that Odole Ariyasunle, a very powerful and strong warrior in Ibadan drafted many Ijesa people to Ibadan as captives. Others in these series of wars were fought during Ibadan-Ilesa and Osu-Ibadan wars. All the wars took place around the same period. It is also pertinent to say here that the Ibadan forces carried many Ijesa people away as captives¹³. Special attention must also be drawn to the Ibadan invasion of Ilesa in 1865 when houses were raided, properties looted and many Ijesa sons carried away¹⁴.

That was the general situation of Islam in Yorubaland during that period. Tribal war was common. Wars of consolidation and expansion were also rampant. War captives were carried from the vanquished towns by the victorious

forces to their own towns. Many of such captives were used as slaves to do menial work in houses or agricultural duties. A large number of them were sold away to distant areas. Among such areas were the northern part of the country, Dahomey, while many were carried away across the sea. Many of such captives came in contact with Islam in their various places of sojourn before they returned home.

2.3. Advent of Islam in Ijesa

From the history narrated in the above it has become apparent that many Ijesa war prisoners were carried away by their conquerors to different towns such as Ibadan, Oyo, Ife, Ibadan, Ede, Iwo and Ogbomoso. It is also clear that many of such captives were sold away by their masters while they were again resold to towns such as Ilorin, the coastal areas and other distant places such as the northern part of the country. Among such known areas were the Hausaland, the Nupe area, Borno and Sokoto area.

In most of these areas Islam had been growing. For example Borno was specially known in the wake of Islam in Nigeria. The presence of Islam there had been traced to around 1085 to 1097 when the Kanem kingdom was ruled by Mai Umme Jilni¹⁵. The captives or slaves of the tribal wars might have mixed with Muslims in towns such as Epe,

Badagry, Oyo and Ilorin where they could have been Islamised. In addition, after the civil and inter-tribal wars many ex-slaves or Prisoners of war in company of others went back, this time as commercialists, experienced teachers selling chiefly cloths. During this time many more of Ijesa people came in contact with Islam. Since they stayed long among their customers, majority of whom were Muslims, practice of Islam became easy for the 'Osomaalo'. On their return home they resumed the practice of their religion, (Islam). Few out of such nascent Muslims were late Olowo Bakare of Erunge who returned from Epe, Owoso Iawani of Okesa from Iseyin and Sami Arewa from Ilorin. They returned sometime after 1890. Among those who came early in 1860s were Seidu Ogun of Okesa, Abubakare Kamodi of Iwera now Oke-Ola, Abdul Kadiri of Oke-Ese and Abdul Salaam of Egbe-Idie¹⁶. Oral tradition has it that Saidu Ogun returned to Ilesa from the coast while other Muslims started coming to Ilesa from their various places of sojourn as from 1890¹⁷. Islam began to take a better shape with the Islamic activities of Alufaa Gwaibu of the same Oke-Esa, Alufaa Amodu Payese¹⁸ of Egbe-Idi, Alufaa Kamodi of Iwera (now Oke-Ola) and Alufaa Salami Basorun of Egbe-Idi together with Sedu Ogun. Sedu Ogun was

accepted as their leader, 'baba Imale¹⁹', while Alufaa Suaibu led them in prayers.

Seidu Ogun took up the responsibility of organising the small number of Muslims into a community. They first made use of the giigii²⁰ which was erected by one Abu Momodu for Islamic communal and religious activities²¹. The five daily and the Juma'at (Friday) prayers were both observed there. As the Muslims increased in number and continued the practice of Islam without molestation, they thought of erecting a permanent mosque. In their efforts they were able to gain the consent and sympathy of Chief Obanla Ogedengbe Crisarayigi of Ifesaland who gave them a piece of land at Oke-Esa to build a permanent mosque²². Consequently the first mosque was erected at Oke-Esa (now Okeesa) sometimes before 1890 while the second one was built at Egbe -Idi around the same time. The one at Oke-Esa was under the control of Alufaa Amodu Fayese.

Since Seidu Ogun had no knowledge of Arabic, the language of the Holy Qur'an, he was declared not competent to lead the Muslim community at prayers as stated earlier. As he was really interested in Islam and wished for its establishment in Ifesa he decided to make available to the

Muslim community the services of one Alufaa Parakoyi.

This Parakoyi was believed to be a native of Ilorin and he was also brought from the coast²³. Alufaa Parakoyi therefore became the most important and leading Islamic teacher, (Mu'allim) and the Imam of the quarter mosque at Oke-Esa. At the time Oke-Esa was the largest Muslim quarter in Ilesa. Since Alufaa Parakoyi was the most learned and most experienced Muslim leader he used to lead the entire Ilesa Muslim community in prayers.

The point here is that for sometime before the arrival of Alufaa Parakoyi the Muslim community in Ilesa was without a Chief Imam but with a Muslim leader. Since there was no Chief Imam it became difficult for the Ilesa Muslim community to conduct Friday congregational services while few of them who possessed some knowledge of Arabic and Qur'an led the five daily prayers. Some of such men were Ali Balogun of Oke-Esa and Alufaa Arokodana also of Oke-Esa.

Things began to change during the early part of 1890s when more Muslim returnees and supporters of Islam returned to Ilesa from the coast. Among them were two brothers both of whom were from Owa's ruling family. They made use of their positions not only to establish Islam but also to enhance its position. These friends and lovers of Islam

were prince Ajimoko who later became Ajimoko I in 1896 and his half-brother Abu Bakare Crimogunje a trader from Lagos. Others who came back home around the time were late Yesufu Awosanmi of Okesa an 'Osomaalo' from Cke-Oyi, a town in Kwara State and late Faimi Omole who traded in Abeokuta.

A new era dawned on Islam through the untiring efforts of prince Abu Bakare and his half-brother, Oba Owa Ajimoko I. The Muslim community in Ilesa became important. During the reign of this Ajimoko I (1896-1901), Abu Bakare made use of the Owa's position to strengthen Islam. He did this despite all odds. It was also through his efforts and those of the traders who saw the value of mosques in the various towns where they traded as 'Osomaalo' that the Friday congregational services which were led by Alifa Parakoyi started in the town.

In order to facilitate the problems of the Muslims, Oba Ajimoko I gave a piece of land to Ilesa Muslim community in 1901. With one accord and interest in Islam Ilesa Muslim community levied and taxed themselves to raise enough money for the building of the mosque. The activities of the Ijesa traders who returned as Muslims were very important: It is believed that they introduced the

'levy system' on a weekly basis, an experience from their weekly or monthly contributions when they were 'abroad'. At long last the Ijesa Central Mosque of Ilesa, the first of its type in Ijesaland was completed for use in 1902. Although there were no detailed accounts of the cost of the mosque it was estimated to have cost the Muslim community a little less than four hundred pounds (£400), eight hundred naira (₦800.00)²⁴. On the advice of the former 'Osomaalo' traders, from the Muslim community the dedication service of the mosque took place sometime in April 1902. Some money was realised on the day. Both Alufaa Parakoyi and Disu Kamike, the two most learned men in Qur'an, Arabic and Islam at the time took the custody of the money realised on the dedication day of the mosque. The amount of money in their care was said to have been released later for the running expenses of the mosque²⁵.

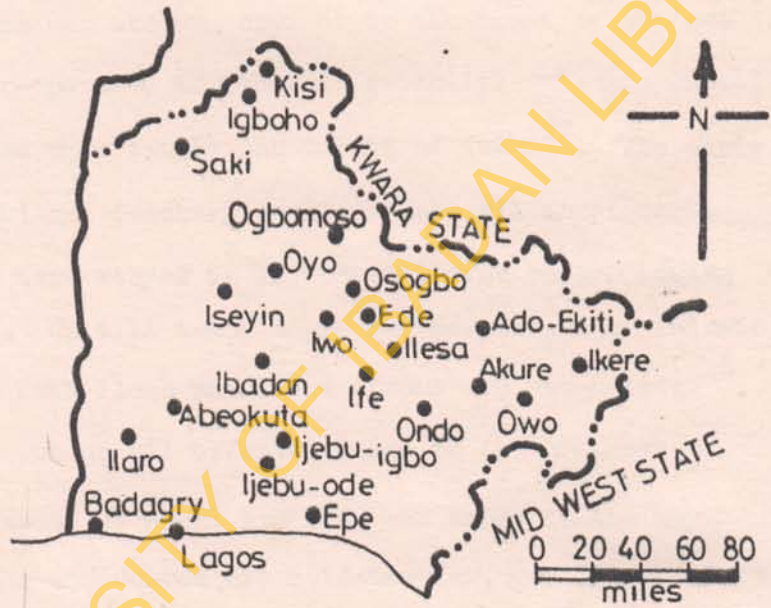
The mosque served as an alluring bait which attracted many important personalities into Islam. First, the Muslims did not only have a central place of worship like their Christian counterpart but also a larger mosque than the C.M.S. Church of Iloro, Ilesa built in 1886. Consequently, Islam was then practised in the open without fear of molestation or shame of ridicule.






ILESIA CENTRAL MOSQUE BUILT IN 1901 RENOVATED IN 1950.

ISLAMIC EXPANSION IN YORUBALAND BY 1908

FIG: V



-  International boundary
-  State boundary
-  Islamic expansion in Yorubaland by 1908

Source : T G O Gbadamosi OP Cit p158

With the continuation of Abu Bakare's efforts to consolidate Islam in the town, the services of one Bisu Kamike who later took over from Alfa Parakoyi as the first and formal Chief Imam of Ilesa was sought. As we have noticed in the above both of them were not natives of Ilesa. Parakoyi was an Ilorin man while Kamike was believed to be a Hausa man who was brought to the coast as a slave²⁶. They both co-operated together to establish Quranic schools where Muslims were taught the tenets of Islam²⁷. The early Muslim or Islamic teachers in Ilesa were all foreigners, all of whom have stayed in the coastal area before coming up to Ilesa. Up till today a greater percentage of Islamic teachers in both Ilesa and its environs are non-natives²⁸. Abu Bakare, put up all efforts to see to the progress of Islam in Ilesa. He spent his time and money in the way of Allah. He influenced his half-brother, Owa Ajinoko I to recognise Islam and to become a friend of Muslims. It was through his closeness to the Owa that the Owa welcomed the Muslims in his palace to offer him constant prayers. Abu Bakare was not only a devoted Muslim he was also a lover of Islam. It was a popular belief among the generality of early Muslims in Ilesa that prince Abu Bakare Orimogunje avoided all worldly things that could prevent him from

being a devout Muslim. He was a virtuous man loved by both Muslims and non-Muslims just because of his transparent honesty and piety. He was one of the known good examples of the early Muslims in Ilesa and its environs. Really, Abu Bakare was one of the architects of Islam in Ijesaland. Abu Bakare became outstanding not only because of his devout religious activities but also because of his very great and important contributions, in cash and in kind all for the progress of Islam²⁹.

By now many people grew to support Islam and more important people became converted to Islam. Among such elites were late Raimi Bewaji, late Disu Jegede Ogboni, late Momodu Dugbe, late Abu Bakare Olowo³⁰, and late Jinadu Idaomi³¹. All these Ijesa elites who became Muslims were from different quarters or streets in Ilesa. Furthermore they were important personalities and social leaders whose children later became strong Muslims. Few among them are Alhajj Olatunji, S.B. Bakare and Alhajj S.A. Famuyide. These people are considered as the Muslim elites who are planners of Islamic activities of progress in Ilesa and its environs³².

From the early history of Islam in Ilesa and its districts as it is narrated one would expect Ijesaland to have become a predominantly Muslim area. Since it is not



THE 5TH CHIEF IMAM OF ILESA ALHAJJ RAHAMAN ABDULAI AKOREDE II
(One of my many informants).

so, there are reasons for the unexpected situation of Islam in Ilesa and its environs as from 1910 we shall see later in chapter three.

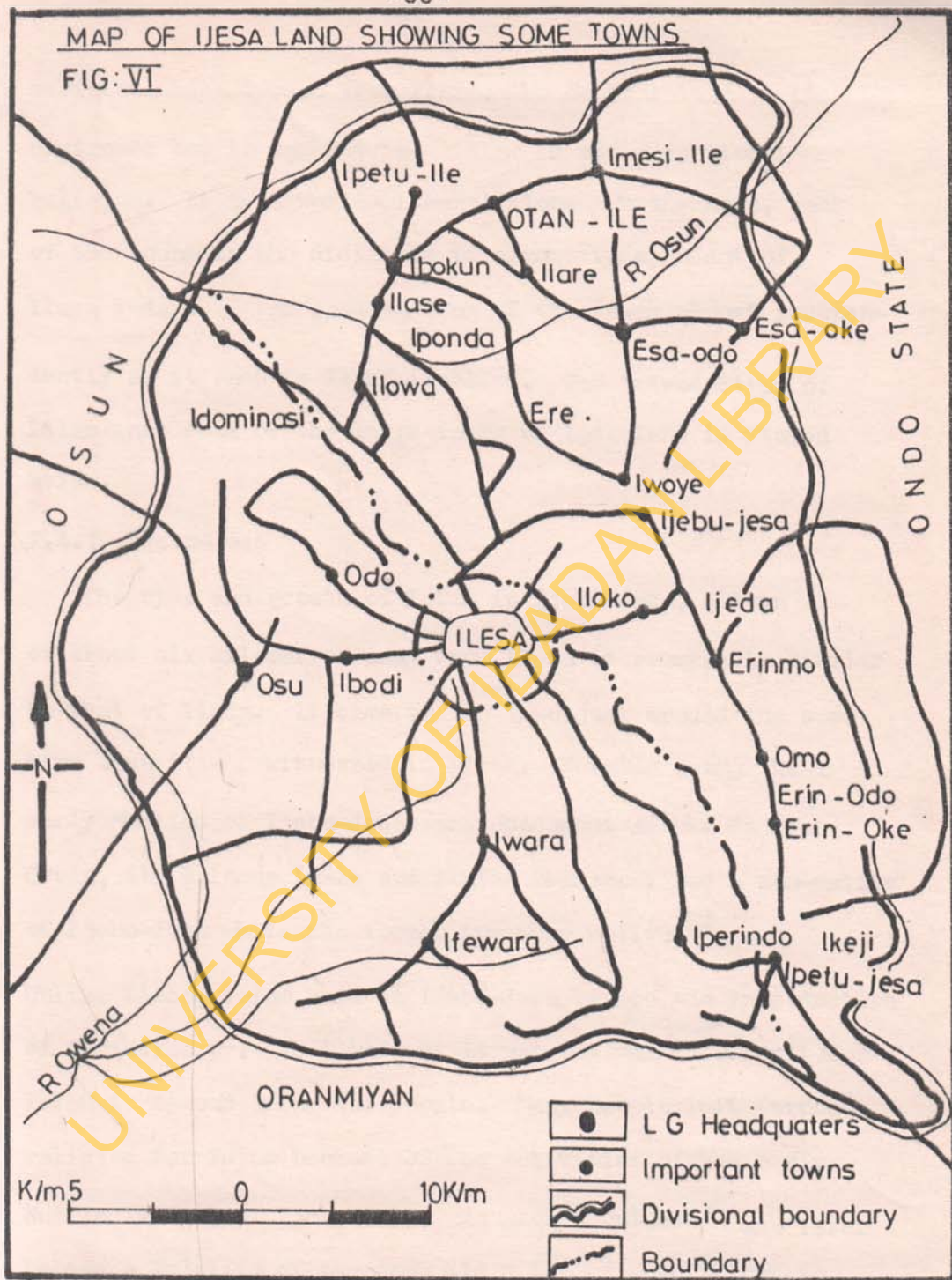
The problems of the early Muslims in Ilesa and its environs were not only the teething difficulties. Really, they were chains of formidable problems. With patience, endurance and prayers however they were gradually overcome. As we shall see later in this work Islam has a better future in Ijesaland. From 1896 to 1968 there had been only four Chief Imams in Ilesa. This is due to the fact that each Imam lived long on earth. The first of them, Alufaa Disu Kamike was a Nupe man. He was said to be a friend to the first known Muslim in Ijesaland, Sedu Ogun of Oke-Esa now Okesa; a street in Ilesa. It was also reported that Sedu Ogun went to the Coast area to search for him when they wanted a Chief Imam for Ilesa. He brought him to Ilesa in 1896. He became the first Chief Imam of Ilesa all because of his knowledge of both the Qur'an and Arabic. Much will be said about the other Imams of Ilesa under the Islamic functionaries in Chapter four.

2.4. Rise of Islam in places north of Ilesa

It is possible to think that the pattern of the spread of Islam to other parts of Ijesaland would be like Christian

MAP OF IJESA LAND SHOWING SOME TOWNS

FIG: VI



Source: Ilesha town planning authority, 1965

religion which spread from Ilesa, the central town to its environs; but it was not so: Islam is not a sectional religion. It is a world-wide-religion. Furthermore, each of the towns in the districts is almost independent of Ilesa today. Islam came to each of the towns almost independently as it came to Ilesa itself³³. The introduction of Islam into some of the large towns of Ijesaland is stated below.

2.4.1 Ijebu-Jesa

The rise and growth of Islam in Ijebu-Jesa, a town of about six kilometres away from Ilesa is remarkably similar to that of Ilesa. It came to the town just around the same time when it was witnessed in Ilesa. Notable among the early Muslims of Ijebu-Jesa were Obadamosi Aabuki Majasan Orolu, Ali Balogun Imale and Alufaa Obadamosi was a non-native of Ijebu-Jesa while the former two were natives³⁴.

Unlike Ilesa, Islam came to Ijebu-Jesa before the introduction of Christianity. That was why it was not very difficult for Islam to spread among the people. Many people left Yoruba religion for Islam because of the activities of the early Muslim leaders of Ijebu-Jesa. An Ilorin butcher³⁵ who later became a Mu'allim of the town did a lot of good things to enhance the position of Islam in Ijebu-Jesa. He was not

only a Muslim preacher, he was also a popular Arabic teacher in both Ijebu-Jesa and the surrounding villages³⁶. His personality and his Islamic activities attracted many people into Islam.

It was that Mu'allim who constructed the giigii where the community worship used to take place near the market place. It is remarkable to know here that it was on that very spot that the central mosque was built later in 1910³⁷. Unfortunately, at last, this man was driven out of Ijebu-Jesa by the Muslim community of the town because he was thought to have much love for money and women. Although they considered some of his activities unIslamic, the foundation which he laid was followed by the Muslims today. The central Mosque which is believed to have been started by him has been rebuilt more than three times on the same spot. Oba Arojojoye I of Ijebu-Jesa gave the very piece of land to the Muslims in 1903. The Oba, a non-Muslim, was favourably disposed towards Islam and the Muslims. The traditional leaders and rulers in this area were well-disposed to Islam. Although leaders and rulers in this area were well-disposed to Islam. Although they did not embrace Islam, they were friends of Islam and they loved Muslims during the period. Good examples of such traditional leaders or rulers which

can be cited here are Chief Ogedengbe Orisarayigi, the Ijesa war leader who died in 1910, Oba Arojojoye I and his chiefs emulated the good examples of Owa Ajimoko I of Ilesa and Chief Ogedengbe in their disposition to both Islam and Muslims³⁸.

Between 1900 and 1968 only three Chief Imams have reigned in Ijebu-Jesa. It is of note that they were all natives of Ijebu-Jesa. The first of them, Alufaa Gbadamosi Aabuki (1908-1925) was from Inurin Lejofi family. During his reign a slave to Chief Odole became the Mu'adhhdhin (Mu'azzin)-- a clear demonstration of lack of class distinction in Islam.

Growth and development of Islam in Ijebu-Jesa was hampered by the Christian preachings and introduction of Western education by the various Christian denominations. Schools and Churches were built almost in every large streets. As it happened in Ilesa Muslim children were either rejected or forced to become Christians in the schools.

With endurance and perseverance the few Muslims remained firm in their faith. Conditions of things did not change much until 1968 when various itinerant teachers and preachers from Ilorin and Oyo area flocked both Ilesa and its environs. The improvement continues up till today and the Muslims' struggle to survive continues.

2.4.2 Ipetu-Ijesa

Islam came to Ipetu-Ijesa in 1910 through its sons who went out as traders particularly to Iwo. After staying there for sometimes they came in contact with Islam by mixing up with Muslims. Since they were convinced of the teachings and practice of the religion they therefore embraced it. Many of them went to Iwo on trade venture as early as 1896 while a greater number of them went after 1900. Notable among them was Olowoniyi who later became Pa Lawal Olowoniyi and Pa Kasumu Eese. Ipetu-Ijesa sons were then interested in both travelling and trading in order to earn a living³⁹.

These adventurers acquired a deep knowledge of both Islam and Arabic Language along with their wealth realized from their trade.

It would have been thought that Ipetu-Ijesa should have been a centre of Islam in Ijesaland because of the Islamic and Arabic knowledge of the nascent Muslims in the town right from the start of their life as Muslims. On the contrary it was not so because it was only the old people alone who accepted Islam at its inception. The youths did not and the returnees (the nascent Muslims) never made much effort to convince them at home. Once a Muslim parent died

the children would cease to be Muslims because they did not have any deep knowledge of the religion. Secondly, they did not accept it seriously during the life time of their parents. To this end the chief Imam of the town expressed his disappointment in that many of the youths were nominal Muslims. Up till today young Muslims who are versed in either Arabic Language or Quranic studies are very scarce in Ipetu-Ijesa.

Ipetu-Ijesa like Ijebu-Jesa enjoyed the services of native Imams. It is comfortable to conclude that this is because of the sound knowledge of the elderly Muslims of the town of the religion itself, the Qur'an and Arabic Language. It is still a surprise that Islam is not thriving well in Ipetu-Ijesa where the indigenes brought the religion into the town. At Otan-Ile where a 'foreigner' introduced the religion⁴⁰, the story is different. Reference can be made to contemporary History of Islam in Ijebu area at the time of study where Hausa Muslim slaves introduced the religion. It is of interest to say that Islam is at a very high pedestal in Ijebu Division up till today⁴¹. Although beautiful mosques are seen around in Ipetu-Ijesa yet Muslims are very few if they are compared with the Christians in the town⁴². It was in recent times that the Muslim parents in Ipetu-Ijesa

began to persuade their children to attend the standard Arabic School built by the Muslim community; but all the same only very few of these children show real or deep interest⁴³.

2.4.3 Ibokun

It is not easy to give a particular date when Islam came to the town. It is a common appraisal of people in Ibokun that Islam came there many times before it could become a force to be reckoned with. The first appearance of Islam in the town was through the Hausa traders or slaves who were known as 'Sonus',⁴⁴ among the people in Ibokun.

The second set of people who introduced Islam to Ibokun were natives who travelled to Iwo and Ilorin as traders and who later returned as Muslims. They began to practise Islam in the open as from 1896 when Oba Ajimoko I of Ijesaland a lover of Islam and a friend of Muslims was on the throne in Ilesa. At the time, those at home who had been practising Islam secretly joined them in their crusade to re-establish and entrench Islam in Ibokun area of Ijesaland⁴⁵. Things became better after 1902 when Alufaa Amoke-Oja and some others came to launch Islam afresh. Muslim leaders from Ilesa could come to Ibokun at the time because Islam had come to stay in Ilesa. It can be remembered that Ilesa central

mosque was completed in 1902. Many important personalities and traditional leaders had supported the cause of Islam in Ilesa during the time. With this type of stable condition at home Muslim leaders in Ilesa could move out to encourage others. Their launching of Islam in Ibokun was erected in 1910 owing to the efforts of many elites of the town among whom were Late Yinusa Shittu and Daoudu Ajayi.

The present Chief Imam, Alhajj Amodu Fagbamila's family was been specially noted for Islamic activities from early times of Islam in Ibokun and this was before 1900, Alhajj Amodu's father Late Yinusa Fagbamila was one of the early Muslims of the town⁴⁶. Alhajj Amodu Fagbamila, the Chief Imam of Ibokun at the time of writing this work was one of the very good Muslims of Ibokun right from youth. He was not only born into Islam, he also took a deep interest in the religion beginning from his childhood. He was born in 1905 and he began his Islamic education from 1910 when he was a pupil of one Alufaa Yahya, (Yaya as it is pronounced among the Ijesa people). He was an Ilorin tailor who was the earliest Muslim teacher in Ibokun. He was living with his teacher as from age of five till when he was about twenty years old. After this he went to Ilorin to further his

Arabic studies there. He came back to Ibokun around 1930 as a Muslim teacher⁴⁷. This period was a very difficult time for Islam in Ijesa Division because of the Christian revival at Oke-Oye in Ilesa in 1930. During this period many Muslims deserted their Mosques for the self-styled revivalist and healer who would not use any medicine. Alufaa Fagbamila (now an Alhaji) did all he could with the co-operation of other ardent Muslims to retain the few remaining believers. As a result of his constant preaching round the town, usually in the evenings and his teaching of the young ones Islam was resuscitated in Ibokun⁴⁸. His deep knowledge of them learnt Arabic from him. He was installed the fourth Chief Imam of Ibokun in 1950.

From the time of his installation he encouraged the youths to begin Islamic activities. The Muslim Primary School was incorporated into Western-oriented primary school in 1955 while a Secondary Modern School was started in 1961. These and other activities gave Islam a good name in Ibokun. Up till the time of this work Islam is thriving so well in Ibokun that Ibokun is now considered one of the important Muslim centres of Ijesaland.

2.4.4 Otan-Ile

Otan-Ile is another big centre of Islam in Ijesaland. It is a general belief that Islam came to the town immediately after the Kiriji War in 1889⁴⁹; but from the following reasons it can be concluded that Islam was known in the town just around 1900. This is very apparent in that Mallam Tijani who came from Ilorin was the first known Muslim in the town. His father, who was not a Muslim, was known in the town during and after the Kiriji war. It was during the time that Tijani's mother was married in Otan-Ile. The mother was a native of the town. At the end of the war Tijani's father returned to his home town, Ote near Ilorin. One cannot say precisely of the time when Islam first reached the town. What is sure was that Mallam Tijani came back to the town as a Muslim in about 1900. Many believed that his father was a Muslim. From all available evidence about the history of Islam in Otan-Ile there is nothing that shows or portrays Pa. Ojeyemi, Mallam Tijani's father as a Muslim. If he was a Muslim at all he would be a nominal one because there was no evidence to show that he ever observed his prayers throughout his long stay of over twenty years in the town. According to the unwritten but reasonable information given by some of Mallam Tijani's pupils of the Arabic School he

started in the town, he was a pupil of one Alufaa Tijani Daniyan in Ilorin. He came to Otan-Ile after his graduation as a competent Arabic teacher⁵⁰. His first convert was one Arekemase a popular man in the town during the period. He later named him Buraimo Arekemase who later became a very ardent Muslim whose children were all born to Islam.

Mallam Tijani's method of conversion may appear to be inconsistent with the teachings of Islam but it worked like magic because many Egungun⁵¹ devotees trooped out in crowds to be converted into Islam. First, he participated in their Egungun worship at the Shrine. This was because masquerade festival was the most outstanding festival of the town. If he wished to use force in conversion he might be killed. Wonderfully, he still allowed the masquerade devotees to go back to their shrine at times until after their full conversion⁵². More than that he allowed them to drink their palm wine until they became fully committed Muslims⁵³. As if he was to encourage them, he too, joined them at the shrine. He ended all these by telling them that his own father Ojeyemi was the 'Oloje' (the highest rank in the masquerade hierarchy). He too, was made the 'Oloje' of Otan-Ile. Mallam Tijani knew what he wanted and he tailored himself to a perfect way of

achieving it⁵⁴. As a Muslim and like all other early Muslims at the time he too, constructed a 'giigii' where he used to observe his prayer alone until he was able to persuade his converts who joined him voluntarily. When he knew he had captured a very large percentage of the population of the town he told them, "Islam does not allow drinking of palm wine or any type of alcohol or any other thing that can intoxicate, because they are unlawful to Muslims⁵⁵. He further reiterate formally that going to shrine or worshipping other gods or their images is unIslamic⁵⁶. From here it is clear that his method was not to show infidelity or unfaithfulness rather it was to depict a system or method which could lure the people to truth⁵⁷.

There was a development in Otan-Ile sometimes in 1964 to prevent the Masquerade from paying homage to Mallam Tijani's tomb. The masquerade persisted because Mallam Tijani was considered as their Chief priest (Chief of the Masqueraders) sometime in his life time. Although the current Chief Iman was not yet installed at the time because of his knowledge about Mallam Tijani's history of how he brought the worshipers of the Spirit of the dead into Islamic fold in the town, he appealed to the Muslim community to shelve the idea. He further concluded that the homage by the masquerades

was a recognition of Islam which could still invite more of the adherents of traditional religion into Islam. This, on its own, is one of the peculiarities in the practice of Islam in Ijesaland. It is to be noted here too that this type of peaceful solution secured for Islam a high position in the town because many of the traditional leaders as well as the masqueraders were embracing Islam. When the converts increased, the old Mosque at Idi-Ayan street Otan-Ile was built in 1910 through the help of the Muslim leaders. By 1933, the central mosque of the town was started. Although the Muslim community began to make use of the mosque as from 1934 yet it was not fully completed by 1984. This may seem to be a surprise since Islam is functioning very well in the town and the Muslims are not only many but they are in the majority. They paid attention to faith and not the building⁵⁸.

One of the factors that helped Islam in Otan-Ile in addition to Mallam Tijani's method is the fervour Islam displayed by the Muslims. They practised what they preached and what Islam enjoins on all believers. They are not found wanting in their Islamic and social activities which enhanced the prestige of Islam and Muslims in the town. They contributed immensely to the development of the town.

The male adults paid their taxes regularly and tried as much as possible to avoid involving themselves in any criminal acts⁵⁹. This good general behaviour of the Muslim body in Otan-Ile attracted more people from Christianity and traditional religion to Islam, even at the very early times before 1950.

This was evident in the quick way they started the Muslim Primary School of six classrooms which was started in 1950, completed it the very year and even opened it for the public use before the end of that year. It was also the same religious spirit in them that led to the introduction of Ansar-ul-Deen Society to the town in 1975 in addition to the Nawar-ul-Deen Society. All these efforts were made in the interest of Islam, its spread, growth and developments as well.

On the other hand the direct pupils of Mallam Tijani are now very few in the town and those who are living have become too old to teach the young ones as they used to do in the past.

These younger people still remain Muslims because their parents are ardent Muslims. Investigations both in their schools and in the town revealed that majority of these younger people consider it a dishonour to their parents if they (the children) are not known as Muslims. Moreover,

almost six out of every ten houses in Otan-Ile show one sign or the other to depict that the inhabitants are Muslims. Otan-Ile is therefore considered a predominantly Muslim area in Ijesaland⁶⁰. Among these signs are Arabic writings which are very common on their door post: (الله أكبر) - 'God is the Greatest' (بيت السلام) - 'The house of peace', (الله قادر) - 'God is able'. Kettles or other vessels for ablution water are seen either in front of houses or at special places in houses. Most of the houses have praying mats or skins of animals hung on the walls or spread at corners in their sitting rooms. Although bearing of Muslim names is not enough to determine who are Muslims but majority of people found on the streets answer to Muslim names. Upon all, the common religious greetings, "As-s-alam alaikum" is frequently heard in the streets and before entering houses. Generally, Otan-Ile is considered a predominant Muslim area in Ijesaland. Many of the young children between the ages of fifteen and twenty years and less than thirty years in Otan-Ile are nominal Muslims. One may however say that the very young ones within the primary school age of six to fourteen years are very firm in the faith. They pay real attention to Islamic activities, learning of Arabic language and the study of the Qur'an. Other Islamic

sciences are taken with deep interest and devotion. This gives a hope that the future of Islam in Otan-Ile is bright⁶¹. At the time of this investigation and research there were a total of thirteen mosque buildings in Otan-Ile, a town of less than 10,000 people as at the 1963 national census in the country⁶². There were only three churches. There is a Muslim primary school of about 600 pupils with about fourteen regular teachers and one special Islamic teacher teaching Islam and Arabic. In addition there is a Christian Primary school, (Methodist) where there are few Muslim children. The community Grammar School in the town is with over 500 students of which almost four out of 10 students are Muslims. Islamic Religious Knowledge is offered as a school subject in all classes. It is taught by a teacher on part-time basis. This is affecting the Muslim children adversely in the pursuance of I.R.K. as a school subject in the School Certificate class⁶³.

2.4.5 Ipetu-Ile

Like in Ibokun, Islam had been firmly established in Ipetu-Ile in about 1900. Islam came to the town through Ipetu-Ile indigenes who went out as traders and as adherents of traditional religion later returned as Muslims. According to Alhajj Badiru Akande the chief Imam of the town, Alli and

Lawal both of whom were natives returned as Muslims from their commercial ventures to distant places beyond Hausaland⁶⁴.

The belief of the people, here is that these two men probably went to Upper Volta⁶⁵ because many of the informants claimed that a girl who came back with Lawal resembled people from Burkina Faso the foreigners commonly seen all over Nigeria begging for gifts in recent years. From the series of interviews conducted it was learnt that Alli's family is no more a Muslim group today while Lawal's family remains firm in the faith of Islam and every member of the family is a real and staunch Muslim. Alli's people deflected to Christianity when the first Christian School was opened in the town in 1950⁶⁶.

Since there were no people with a deep knowledge of the Holy Qur'an within the first few years of Islamic inception in the town, Ipetu-Ile people used to send to Ibokun in order to have a competent Muslim scholar who could lead them in their congregational worship. Ibokun therefore, served them as their area of help or assistance in the time of need. Usually a Muslim who was versed in both Arabic language and the Qur'an would be sent to them to lead them in their worship; such as Friday prayers and services on the 'Id days too.

Notable among such local scholars was one Alufaa Dakun, a native of Ilorin who was very regular in leading congregational prayers. His proper name became obscure as a result of his appellation or nick-name, 'Dakun⁶⁷', which was always used.

The sending of a Muslim scholar from Ibokun did not cease until 1920 when the first Imam of Ipetu-Ile was installed. The Imam too was a native who returned from 'abroad' somewhere in the Northern part of the country (Upper Volta)⁶⁸.

2.4.6 Imesi-Ile

Christianity came after Islam and it later swept the few Muslims it found to Christianity because the early Muslims among whom were Gbabiaka Arowogbadamu and Bello Oye were neither united nor organised. Since the Christians were organised they built a school. Through Western education it was not difficult for them to convert majority of Muslim children in the town into Christianity. Up till today there is only one Mosque in Imesi-Ile as against ten churches. If one goes by the number of houses, Imesi-Ile is the seat of the Methodist Mission in the whole of Ijesa North-Division.

2.4.7 Esa-Odo

The advent of Islam to Esa-Odo was similar to its advent to other towns in Ijesaland. Contact with Muslim areas of Yorubaland and beyond helped Islam in Esa-Odo to grow. Many of the early Muslims of the town came in contact with Islam in Lagos and Ilorin both of which have become Islamic centres before the end of the first half of nineteenth century. Among the early Muslims were Aluko Ladejobi and Ayeni Yinusa who became converted into Islam in Lagos when they travelled there as traders⁶⁹. Bello and Ikotun who studied Arabic Language and Qur'an in Ilorin where they went as traders were both indigenes of Esa-Odo who later returned home as ardent Muslims at a period before 1905. Lawal, on his own, became converted into Islam in Epe and he later became the chief Imam of Esa-Odo in 1905 because of his sound knowledge of both Arabic and Qur'an.

There was no open quarrel between Christians and the Muslims or the adherents of traditional religion and Muslims in Esa-Odo⁷⁰.

Like in Otan-Ile, Islam came to Esa-Odo before Christianity and almost all the important families declared for Islam as groups because of its Africanness in nature.

Though the head of Esa-Odo at the time was not a Muslim yet he had an interest in Islam. He always helped its cause.

He gave Muslims a piece of land on which the first Mosque was built.

2.4.8 Esa-Oke

Although, sons of Esa-Oke were among the Muslims returnees but the Hausa people otherwise known as Gambari⁷¹ were the first set of people to bring Islam to the town. Since many of these Hausa people used to beg for alms when they had no manual work to do. Esa -Oke people therefore looked down on them and on the religion, Islam. They often treated it with indifference or contempt or hatred all because the people considered Islam as a religion of the poor people. It is pertinent to remark that a considerable reinforcement came later when a significant number of Esa-Oke people who had been converted 'abroad' returned home as Muslims in the period before 1900. Many of them went out as traders as far as to Ibadan, Epe, Lagos, Iwo, Ilorin and Iseyin among other towns. So far, the most notable among them were men like Iti-Ogede who returned from Lagos sometimes after 1900. He was from Erijiyan compound in Esa-Oke. Another important man was from Idofin street of the town⁷². One Lawal Bamigboye who returned from Epe sometimes before 1910 as a Muslim was also an important figure whose family remains ardent Muslims till today. Late Bamigboye was learned in both Arabic and the Qur'an.

These nascent Muslims were the first set of natives of Esa-Oke who accepted Islam before they returned to their home town. They were staunch believers who brought true fervour into Islam in the town. The whole town felt their impact because Islam was heard of in the whole town. One of the methods employed by these early Muslims was that Muslims were allowed to live more closely with the pagans whom they cleverly sought to convert. Since they were natives, they knew their people and they went close to them. They prayed and preached publicly in place of the secret or private al-salat of few former Muslims. This method seems the same as that of contemporary Islamic propagators in Ijebu-Ode area of the same period⁷³.

Up till the time of this work there are only two mosques in Esa-Oke. The first one was started in 1905 and completed in 1915 while the second one was started in 1975. It was yet to be completed at the time of the investigation. As against these two Mosques, there are seven big Churches of different Church denominations and three smaller ones.

2.4.9 Ikeji-Ile

Islam is said to have come to Ikeji-Ile before the advent of Christianity. Like all other towns of Ijesaland the early Muslims here included the returnees of the tribal wars of the late 19th century and some of the traders who came

incontact with Muslims during their trade ventures. They later returned home as converted Muslims. Islam is known in the town today and the Muslims are doing well: despite the fact that Muslims are not many they practise their faith without any molestation or quarrels from either christians or adherents of African religion.

Majority of Muslims here are non-natives who came to the town as traders. Peculiarly they helped the natives by encouraging them to embrace Islam. Mallam Ibrahim Ibiyemi from Ikirun organised the building of the second mosque of the town in 1970.

2.4.10 Iloko-Ijesa

In Iloko-Ijesa one of the traders of the last century was one Alufaa Tiamiyu who came from Ilorin. He was a petty trader selling gun powder and cloths. He constructed a giigii near Chief Aloko's house⁷⁴. There he used to observe his obligatory prayers alone. The man had been doing well together with other converts when the Methodist Mission which paralysed the expansion and development of Islam in the town came.

There was a favourable turn of events between 1940 and 1950 when one Benjamin Ogungbangbe travelled to Iwo. He came in contact with Muslims there and became converted into Islam. On his return to Iloko-Ijesa in 1954 he re-introduced Islam to the town. On his conversion he chose Biliyaminu as his

name. He is now an Alhajj -- he went to Makkah in 1965. Alhajj Biliyaminu Ogungbangbe has built two Mosques in the town as a sign of his religious devotion. There is no Muslim primary school in Iloko-Ijesa because Muslims are very few in number.

2.4.11 Ijeda.

Islam did not suffer a much different fate in Ijeda which is the seat of Methodist Mission in this area. Since the majority of those who embraced Islam here were poor and uneducated according to the western system of Education people looked down in Islam⁷⁵. This was why people in Ijeda where many took to Western education did not join the Muslim group in crowds. Today, there is only one Mosque in the town and it is with only very few believers (Muslims).

It is very pertinent to say here that the rapid spread and growth of Islam in the northern part of Ijesaland was a striking feature at this time of study. It appears as if it was only in this area alone that the victims of the tribal and civil wars of the previous decade existed. They began to trickle back home as free men and women and a good number of them had become Muslims. In addition many of the commercialists, the 'Osomaalo' from many of the towns in this area returned home as Muslims at the end of their trade expeditions.

2.5. Rise of Islam in places South of Ilesa

An attempt is made here to discuss the rise of Islam in the southern part of Ilesa, the Atakumosa Local Government area where Muslim communities also sprang up at the beginning of the last century. The growth and development of Islam here did not encounter much opposition from the adherents of the Traditional Religion most especially in Iwara, Ifewara and Igangan .. but it did in towns such as Ipole and Iperindo⁷⁶. Anti-Islamic feelings in the south of Ilesa rose, in most cases from Christian activities which either directly challenged Islam or disputed with it. On the other hand the methods of Islamic propagation themselves were defective as they can be seen in Iwara in general and Ifewara and Igangan in particular as we shall see later.

2.5.1 . Iwara

Islam was first heard of in Iwara in about 1902 when one Alufaa Alabi an itinerant teacher from Ilorin came together with his sister Iya-Egbe to the town as teachers of Arabic and Islamic studies as well as preachers. From all the interviews and investigations conducted both of them paid attention to Islamic professional activities more than teaching of Islam or Arabic. Although Christianity was

already entrenched in the town a large number of people still went to Alufaa Alabi for prayers so that they might have good luck in farming, trading or even in securing good wives. These people who trooped out to Alufaa Alabi's house were not Muslims. They went there because he was a professional Alfa who claimed to be able to cure various diseases including barrenness and madness. Many adherents of Yoruba religion and some Christians of the town became Muslims nominally all because of their needs from their 'healer'⁷⁷.

It was during this time that the first Mosque was built at Oke-Mobi street in 1912. It is of course, important to say that the impact of the rushing and trooping to Alabi's house was not felt in the Church⁷⁸. It was during this time that the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S) now the Anglican Mission was at its Zenith of evangelisation in Ijesaland. At the time, the Muslims were struggling for survival from their tepidity while the general condition of Christian life in Ijesaland was marked with fervour and high zeal. Although, Alabi was not installed the Chief Imam he co-operated with one Onadi's husband who was later installed the Imam of the town⁷⁹. It was during his time that the Mosque at Odo-Mobi street was rebuilt at Oke-Iwara Street.

One Jinade Olatunji, a non-native later became the second Chief Imam and he tried much to revive Islam between, 1915 and 1920. But the epidemic influence of 1917/1918 coupled with the clever system of the Christian evangelisation rendered all his efforts abortive. As the Muslims began to rub shoulders with the Christian community, things were about to improve when the first Christian school was built by the Church Missionary Society in 1923. This was with an adverse effect on both Islam and the few Muslims in Iwara. The Muslim children who attended this Christian School were either convinced or forced to be baptised into Christianity⁸⁰.

2.5.2. Ifewara

Islam reached Ifewara in about 1880. Like all other towns of Ijesaland, introducers of Islam were returnees of the various tribal wars of the previous decades. New converts first began the practice of Islam in privacy. Notable among these early Muslims of the town were Jinadu Akinsola, the father of the Chief Imam, Alfa Ijilokun who later became the Chief Imam of the town in 1965. Jinadu Akinsola became his deputy (na'ib) in the same year 1965. His son Hammad Akinyemi who is the current Chief Imam was therefore born into Islam because his mother A'isah like the father, was a devoted Muslim till her death⁸¹.

Islam was first known many years before the advent of

Christianity in Ifewara. Christian missionaries came with better evangelisation method. They were well organised with the central and concerted efforts of the trained and experienced Reverend Odebode, from Ilesa headquarters. Consequently, they robbed Islam of its growth⁸². Though the Muslims laboured relentlessly to survive yet the introduction of Western education in the established formal school led to the fall or setback of Islam. At the time of writing this work there was only one Mosque in the town against the six Churches there. The only hope for the re-birth of Islam in the town lies solely in the general awareness and the revival - activities of the Muslim Youths of the town⁸³.

2.5.3 Igangan

It is particularly a remarkable feature that Islam and Christianity came to Igangan, a town in the south-west of Ilesa in the same year and through the same family: One Salami Aribilola of Ode-Ilaje Street, Igangan, a gold-smith went on a business trip to Epe in 1896 and became converted. He returned home as a Muslim in 1900. In the same form one Ogungbemi Aribilola travelled to Badagry in 1896 as a trader and returned as Gabriel Aribilola to establish Christian religion in the town in 1900.

At the inception of Islam in the town many important

families, chiefs, adherents of traditional religion (leaders of Yoruba religion) and other known people of Igangan accepted Islam. This Islamic fervour and wide acceptance of Islam continued in the town till 1917/1918 when the epidemic of influenza which ushered in a great setback into Islamic group in the town like other towns of Ijesaland erupted. The impact of the epidemic remained very long with the Muslim community of Igangan. There was only one small N.U.D. Primary School with very few pupils in each of the classes in 1984 during the compilation of this work. There are two Mosques in the town against the six very large Churches of the different Christian denominations.

2.5.4. Observations

In some towns in the south of Ijesaland, it appears as if there were no returnees of the tribal wars of the previous decades because Muslims are scarce in each of the towns. This condition is not prevailing in towns such as Odogbo, Ilerin, Ilota, Ita-Apa and Eti-Oni among others. Until in very recent years, there were no well-known Muslims in each of these towns. Islamic activities were not heard of in them like they were heard of in other towns. Among the various reasons for the absence of Islam and Muslims in most of the towns is that Christianity came to them at a very early period before

the advent of Islam to the area. In addition to this was the fact that Christian central organisation at Ilesa headquarters spread to these towns and others without the slightest opposition or disputation. Moreover the early Christians in these towns were educated men who had received real training in evangelisation from specially trained Christian Missionaries from the centre Ilesa into which various Church denominations had come at the beginning of this century. As it would be expected this led to a sort of keen competition among the various Christian missionaries who began extensive programme of expansion. It was Owa Ajimoko I who invited these various denominations to come down and establish in Ilesa just because of a disagreement between him and Bishop Phillips who was the Superintendent of Ondo/Ilesa District. The Bishop had accused the Oba John Haastrup Ajimoko I who was the first Ijesa Christian Oba of the impact which his excessive polygamous life had upon the Anglican members in Ilesa. The progress of the Christian expansion that followed was by leaps and bounds⁸⁴.

This expansion affected Islam adversely because there was neither a central organisation of the Christian type nor a sort of competition among the Muslim body. That was why the Muslim expansion and progress remained unalluring

and stagnant in most of the towns in the southern parts of Ilesa. Alhajj Saka who is the oldest and the Muslim leader of Aladodo Village claimed to have been in the village since 1917 from Egbe-Idi, a strong Muslim area in Ilesa. His family of four was the only known Muslim family from Odogbo to Eti-Oni during the time⁸⁵. Alhajj Saka stressed further that the common Muslim ceremonies and the 'Id festivals were either not observed or observed privately by individuals. This is because there were no public 'Id praying grounds⁸⁶ or Mosques in these towns until very late in the 1940s⁸⁷.

Things were not with much difference in Irogbo, Ipole, Ise-Ijesa, Odo and Iperindo all in the North-West Area of the Atakumosa Local Government. Even though tradition says that Islam came first to the towns yet it did not expand much before the advent of Christian religion which grew and developed at an incredible rate. The advent of Methodist Mission in Ilesa and its environs inspired the Church Missionary Society to increase its evangelisation campaigns so as not to be eclipsed by the other denominations. This, as can be expected, had an adverse effect on the spread of Islam in the areas because the Muslim group did not have a system of organisation of the Christian type.

As a matter of fact and in fairness to Christianity,

Life of the early Muslims in Ijesaland was one of oneness in the Muslim faith. Their togetherness in their daily obligatory prayers in the Mosque and in their Juma'at prayers and services welded them together as brothers and sisters in Islam. They always depicted their equality before God in their sitting arrangements during prayers and services in their various Mosques throughout the area. All these depicted Islam to Ijesa Muslims in each of people as a unique religion where all are equal. Their ways of organisation and administration made them become a typical Ummah⁹¹. The few Muslims in each of the towns were people of unimpeccable character. It is still a common belief among people in some towns of Ijesaland in general and Ikeji-Ile in particular that the personalities of early Muslim propagators in many of the towns drew some Christians into the Islamic fold. Despite the myriads of problems the nascent Muslims of Ijesaland they pushed ahead with faith, patience and endurance. Up till the time of this research, many of these problems were still alive with Islam in Ijesaland. The Muslim Community continues with the struggle to succeed.

Generally, the nascent Islam in Ijesaland was confronted with series of difficulties. These should not be unexpected. First, other religions existed in the area before the advent

of Islam. Secondly, the social and political life of the people could not assimilate the teachings and practices of Islam easily. On the other hand the early Muslim teachers and preachers themselves were not without their own problems. The next chapter highlights the myriads of problems and states solutions to them.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER TWO

1. T.G.O. Gbadamosi, The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841-1908, (London: Longman Group Limited 1978), p. 13
Dahomey is now Republic of Benin.
2. The alliance was between 1797 and 1800, since Islam became an issue in the conflict, Local (Yoruba) Muslims supported both Afonja and al-Salih against the Alaafin. They trooped into Ilorin and settled at Oke Suna, a street in Ilorin for the early believers who were orthodox in their faith and practices.
3. T.G.O. Gbadamosi, Op. cit P.IV(a). For more details turn to Fig.4.
4. Although there was no clear evidence that the Alaafin embraced Islam but two things are clear:
 - (a) The Alaafin pondered seriously over Baba-Kewu's warning and he (the Alaafin) became convinced of his tyranny.
 - (b) Alufaa-Yigi was said to have remained in the Alaafin's palace at his request. It was around him that nucleus of Muslim converts gathered when he became an Imam in Oyo. For more details see T.G.O. Gbadamosi, Op. cit., p.5.
5. Although Alufaa is a name here and it is a Yoruba term for a Muslim scholar. This Alufaa-Yigi was said to be Arab of descent. His stay in Oyo was reported to have reinforced the eagerness of other Arabs to come to the area.
6. Samuel Johnson, The History of the Yoruba, (Thetford: Lowe & Brydone Printers Limited, 1967) p. 164.
7. T.G.O. Gbadamosi, Op.cit. p.4
8. N.A.U.I: Richard and John Lander, Journal of an Expedition to explore the Course and Termination of the Niger. (1830) pp.24-27.

9. He was the toll collector. This exposed him to some authority over strangers and foreigners. Agiri considers him to be an officer running errands. For more details see Agiri, B.A. "The Development of Local Government in Ogbomoso, 1850-1950" (Univ. of Ibadan, Dept. of History, B.A. Thesis 1966), pp 34-36.
10. For more details see: B.A. Alintoye, The Ilciti-Parapo and the Kiriiji War, Op.cit., pp 37-41.
11. My series of interviews with some traditional chiefs and known authorities in Ijesa local history revealed that the Ibadan people entered the war as aggressors. Salient among this I interviewed are Chief S.A. Ataiyero, the author of "The History of Ijesa, Part I", Chief Obanla of Ijesaland and Oba Palmer Ajayi of Ijebu-Jesa. Both of them are recognised among the Ijesa people for their deep knowledge of Ijesa traditional history.
12. For more details see: Samuel Johnson, Op.cit., p.636
13. M.O. Oke, Op.cit., pp 240 - 246
14. Islam has been established firmly in Ibadan during the time because the Oja-Oba Central mosque was said to have been built around 1850.
15. He was the first Mai who ruled between 1085 and 1097 Records showed that he was converted to Islam before he could become the Chief ruler of the Kingdom. There was much consideration for a Muslim head of state in those days. For more details see: B.O. Babalola: A Text Book of Western African History, 1,000 A.D. to Present Day, (Ado-Ekiti, Omolayo Standard Press, 1975), pp. 20-22 and Sunday Tribune, 29-7-84, p. 10.
16. The few converted Muslims who returned home (Ilesa) during the time practised Islam privately because it was not yet a widely accepted religion in the town. It was not yet a Religio-Licita, (a licensed Religion). See: L.A. Balogun, Itan bi Islam so de Ilesa.(Ilesa, 1965), pp. 6-7 and Alhajj Olayiwola Kazeem's private Manuscript, p. 1.
17. Alhajj Alliyu Anoke-Oja, the Chief Imam of Ilesa and Alhajj S.A. Famuyide, the second Manager of Muslim schools in Ijesaland in interview on 26th of June, 1984 revealed this.

18. He was I.A. Balogun's father - recorder of "Itan bi Islam se de Ilesa", which was recorded in 1965.
19. It means 'the Father of Islam', that is the founder of Islam in Ijesa). Although he was the accepted leader yet he was not allowed to lead the nascent Muslims in the Juma'at as well as in the communal prayers all because he did not fully possess the qualities of an Imam some of which are as follows. An Imam must be learned in both Islam and Arabic which is the language of the Holy Qur'an. He must be versed in the Qur'an and the Hadith and Sunnah of the Prophet. He should be a man of good manners and good appearance. For details see Alhajj Maulana Fazlul Karim, Mishkat-ul-Masabih, Book III, (Lahore Book House, 1940), pp. 361-362.
20. This was a kind of temporary mosque which was used before the erection of a permanent one. It was a small rectangular area usually filled with white and clean sand for the purpose of communal worship by Muslims living in a compound. The spot was usually marked off with big stones, sticks, bottles or bamboos. According to the Chief Imam of Ilesa, Alhajj Alliyu /moke-Oja, it means 'akogba', meaning a special fence built to demarcate a place for use. In this case it was separated for Muslim prayers. Since the early converts usually went there in groups at the time of prayers it might be that the sound of their foot-steps, "giigii" or girigiri', led to the Yoruba name of the spot as 'giigii' because it was a phenomenon and an uncommon site of worship among the Yoruba in general and in Ijesa people in particular.
21. According to my informant, Alhajj Alliyu /moke-Oja, the Chief Imam of Ijesaland in 1984, Abu Momodu was a Nupe man. He too was believed to have come from the coastal area, 'O wa lati eti okun', where he had had contact with Muslims.
22. See: Abdul Raimi Alabi Smith: Islam ni ilu Ijesa. (Ilesa, Clusegun Press, 1949) pp 6-9. The two mosques are still in use up till today - a permanent building was later erected on the spot of the giigii.

23. Epe, Badagry and Lagos were among the towns, considered as coastal areas at the time. See: R.A. Smith: Itan Islam ni Ilesa, Op. cit., p. 8. Alufaa Parakoyi began to lead the Muslim Community in prayers.
24. Alhajj Alliyu Anoke-Oja, the Chief Imam of Ijesaland in interview on 3-3-84.
25. Since there was no written account it was difficult to know the total amount of money collected.
26. Here we can see the importance of both Lagos and Ilorin as Islamic centres where the early Muslims learnt of Islam. For more details, see: R.A. Smith Op. cit., p. 8 and T.A. Balogun, Islam ni ilu Ilesa, Op. cit., pp 9-10
27. Oral tradition reveals that the two mosques at Oke-Esa and Egebe-Idi served as the centres of Quranic education during the period of study. (Interview with the Chief Imam of Ijesaland, Alhajj Alliyu Anoke-Oja on 16th December, 1983 confirmed this information).
28. The Quranic centre at Egebe-Idi Ilesa is manned by Alufaa Ore-ewe, an Ilorin man; the Quranic school started recently at Ipetu-Ijesa is under the control of Alhajj Sa'id Alimi, an Iwo man while that of Otan-Ile is from Ilorin, Alhajj Saka.
29. Abu Bakare's name is mentioned several times as one of the real architects of Islam in Ijesaland in the pamphlet, 'Islam ni ilu Ilesa', "Omo Oba Abu Bakare Olufokansi ni o si je owo pataki ninu awon Musulami akoko ni ilu. O fi owo re, akoko re ati agbara re sin. Kiko mosalasi nla ti oja oba Ilesa yi je ise ribiribi re". Literal translation: Abu Bakare the prince was a true worshipper and an important pillar out of the nascent Muslims in this town (Ilesa). He spent his money, and used his time and strength in the way of Allah. The building of the mosque in the king's market is one of his great achievements".

For more details see: R.A. Smith: Islam ni ilu Ilesa, Op.cit., pp 4-7. It is vital to say here that this small book is different from the pamphlet "Itan bi Islam se de Ilesa", which was compiled by the special executive committee of Muslim Community of Ilesa in 1965.

Alhajj R.A. Smith the writer of, Islam ni ilu Ijesa was a learned Muslim and an Ijesa elite who grew up in Lagos. He studied both Arabic Language and the Holy Qur'an while he was in Lagos. Alhajj Yahyah, the Deputy Chief Imam of Ijesa in interview on 16-12-83 told me that Alhajj Smith stayed in Lagos from 1920-1940 when he returned to Ijesa as a staunch Muslim.

30. He was S.B. Bakare's father, S.B. Bakare is a wealthy Ijesa Muslim who spends part of his wealth in the cause of Islam. He on his own donated a very huge amount of money for the establishment of Ijesa Muslim Grammar School when it was founded in 1970.
31. Ijesa word for a giant. It means late Jinadu Idaomi was very powerful and believed to have possessed much of black medicine and strength.
32. Interview with Alhajj Alliyu Anoke-Oja, the Chief Imam of Ijesaland revealed that the Ijebu Muslim traders flocked Ijesa during the time. The interview with him took place on 16-12-83.
33. Bazr Bola Bolatito, "Muslims' Religion in Ibokun", 1969 (an unpublished manuscript). The author of this private manuscript was the secretary General of Muslim Association of Ibokun from 1960 to December 1983. He did an extensive research into the advent of Islam in Ibokun. He collected his information directly from people born into Islam. Majority of these informants are still living and they are very sound in Arabic language. On the other hand he collected facts from other elders of the town who are non-Muslims but who know much about the three known religions in Ibokun. I visited some of them too. Among those I visited are Ogboni of Ibokun aged (85 years); Alhajj Shitta, aged 90 years; Alhajj Ojuade aged 86 years and Pa Samuel Ajayi aged 100 years to name a few.
34. The Muslim elders of Ijebu-Jesa in interview on 16th April, 1984 revealed the fact. The Chief Imam of Ijebu-Jesa, Alhajj Alubankudi, his deputy Alhajj Raimi Akorede and the Iya Egbe Musuluni of Ijebu-Jesa, Alhajjah Fatimat were among the elders who represented the Muslim community while their Islamic teacher, Mr. Ibrahim was there as the Secretary.

35. From the interviews conducted in Ijebu-Jesa, there was no one who knew the real name of the butcher more than Alapata.
36. See Awon Asaju Minu Esin Islam, (Ijebu-Jesa, April 1984), p. 2. This unpublished manuscript was compiled by the Executive Committee of the Muslim body of Ijebu-Jesa. It is the only written account of Islam of the town.
37. This shows the importance of non-natives in the establishment of Islam in the area.
38. The traditional leaders were really disposed to Islam during the inception of Islam. Chief Ogedengbe of Ijesaland gave a piece of land to the Muslim community in Ilesa at a time before 1890. It was there the first permanent mosque was built in Ijesaland and Oba Owa Ajimoko I gave them another piece of land where the central mosque was built in 1904. Oba Arojojoye on his own gave the Ijebu-Jesa Muslim Community a piece of land for their mosque in 1908. These leaders or rulers did not embrace Islam but they love Islam.
39. A man known as 'Baba-Osabu' a corrupt form of "Baba shop" meaning 'father of shop' or 'owner of shop' returned to the town as a richman in 1900. To become rich like 'Baba shop' many people trooped out of the town to become 'Osomaalo' i.e. an acute trader with real business acumen and many took Iwo as their target. It was out of them that some returned home as Muslims as from 1910, when Ogedengbe, the Ijesa war leader died. Pa Kasimu Eese one of my informants was one of those who travelled to Iwo and came back as a Muslim.
40. We shall see later below.
41. See T.G.O. Gbadamosi, Op.cit., pp 91-93. According to this source one can conclude that those slaves most of whom were Hausa and Ilorin men were humble and fairly restricted circle of people. They practised their religion at the expense of secular things.

42. Alhajj Ibrahim, A General Account of Islam in Ipetu-Ijesa 1910-1975, (Ipetu-Ijesa, Titilayo Printing Press, 1975), pp 5-8. The author of this pamphlet is the Secretary General of Muslim Community in Ipetu-Ijesa up-to-date, 1955 - 20th April, 1985 when the interview with him took place.
43. Intensive interview with some of the pupils in the Arabic School on Sunday, 22nd April, 1984, revealed this.
44. Okan ninu won ngbe ni ile alagba kan to nta etu ibon ni ogbon Egbe. Literally: One of them was living in one elderly person's house who was a seller of gun powder at Ogbon Egbe, (a street in Ibokun). Since people in Ibokun did not recognise the source through which Islam first came to the town they looked down on Islam, as a religion of the poor people. The Hausa people who first introduced Islam to Ibokun were nicknamed as 'Somu' which is a derogatory way of describing an Hausa man as a poor, dirty and dull person among the Ijesa people. "Somu", is common greeting word of the Hausa. It is easy to conclude here that the nickname emanated from the way the Hausa people greet. It was gathered from my interview with the Chief Imam of Ibokun, Alhajj Amodu Fagbamila on 4-3-84 that until recent years people in Ibokun refused to give their children to Muslims in marriage. Of course, things are now improving because many female Christians are now married to male Muslims. This as it can be expected increased the Muslim population in Ibokun.
45. Some among the very nascent Muslims of Ibokun at the time were Giwa Fagbamila, the current Chief Imam's father, one Yunusa a slave to (nwa of Ibokun, Amodu Ajayi who returned as a Muslim from Ganno near Ilorin where he went as a trader, one Bakari in Odo-Gruwo (a street in the town) and Fawibe of Odo-Igbala. For more details see, Bolatito, E.B. Op.cit., pp. 8-10.
46. Second interview with the Muslim Community in Ibokun in their central mosque on 20-3-84 revealed this.
47. First interview with the Chief Imam, Alhajj Amodu Fagbamila himself on 3-3-84.

48. Interview with some of the ardent Muslims of the town, among whom are Alhajj Musa Ajayi, the Muslim treasurer of Ibolun, Alhajj Ojikutu and Alhajj Yesufu an experienced Mu'allim of over thirty years. See: Bola Bazr Bolatito, Islam in Ibolun, Op.cit., pp 18-20.
49. The assumption was proved wrong by all the reasons stated earlier on page 90 in the above. Despite the very cloudy religious milieu in Otan-Ile Mallam Tijani tried hard to observe the prayers and he also celebrated the Muslim festivals. His father did not do any of these things. Therefore the people of Otan-Ile witnessed Islamic activities as from Mallam Tijani's time which dated about 1900. But it can be argued that since his father came from Ilorin, a Muslim Centre he could be a Muslim.
50. Interview with one of his old pupils, Alhajj Iasisi Pesogun, the 'Baba Adini' of Otan-Ile aged 85 years and one of the children of his first convert, Chief Bello Obanla of Otan-Ile aged 70 years on 10-3-84 and the Chief Imam Alhajj Ganiyu Aladeokin on 11-3-84.
51. The Egungun shrine is called 'Igbo-Igbale' because it was there the Egungun priest and others used to hold their secret meetings which women should neither take part in nor hear. Egungun (the masquerade) is believed to be the spirit of the dead and women are prohibited to see the figure of it.
52. He based this his idea or method on the practice of Prophet Muhammad who in setting up the Muslim state supplemented rather than supplanted the social usage of pre-Islamic Arabia. He did this because he knew that customs could not be broken easily. For more details see: Lewis Bernard, The Arabs in History, (London, Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1968), pp 41 and 43 and Asaf A.A.F., Outlines of Muhammadan Law, (London Oxford University Press, 1964). pp 8-10.
53. As committed Muslims they later shunned not only alcohol but all other forbidden things as it is laid down in the Holy Qur'an Chapter 5 verse 93: O ye who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, (Dedication of) stones and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination, - of Satan's handiwork: Eschew such (abomination), that ye may be successful".

54. This his device, 'closeness to the people before conversion proved very successful because he was able to study the traditionalists deeply before the conversion moves. Many of them later became Muslims because of their association with him.
55. See: Qur'an chapter 5 verse 91 for more details.
56. Qur'an chapter 4 verse 48 and chapter 112 verses 1-4.
57. Ini ba femu obo yio se bi obo, which means literally, "He who wants to catch (to hunt) the monkey will act like one". One may add here that this type of method might be what the local Muslim teachers were taught in Ilorin which was more or less the 'Bait al-Hikmah' (the source or fountation of knowledge) to the Muslims of this part of the world during the time of study. This will become more apparent if one refers to one Alufaa Kasumu Adeosun of Modakeke who followed another Alufaa Daniyan from Ilorin in spreading Islam in Modakeke and Ile-Ife between 1890 and 1900. Alufaa Kasumu was known to have employed the method of buying palm wine for his audience because he knew that that was the best loved 'food' of the people of the area. With this method he too, he had many people converted to Islam. Therefore, it may be a correct guess here that that was part of the method of conversion which these early Muslim teachers and preachers were taught locally. In both Otan-Ile and the contemporary Ile-Ife, the converts never went back to the unIslamic activities. They remained Muslims and ceased completely from taking part in all things which Islam achors. To support this Hallam, Tijani's method see: Qur'an chapter 16 verse 125: "Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preachings; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: For thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His Path and who receive guidance". We can conclude here that intention is greater than deeds.
58. Some of the Muslim leaders of the town in interview among whom are the Chief Imam, Alhaji Daniyu Aladeokin and Suberu Daramola, a Muslim teacher revealed that the attention of the Muslims of the area is directed to the expansion and entrenchment of Islam. Alhaji Fesogun, who is popularly known as 'the father of Islam in the town told me that the Muslim community can pray and perform their religious activities in a less sophisticated building once they are dedicated to Allah in their worship. From the general look of things the Muslims in Otan-Ile

Footnote 58 (contd.)

are much more concerned with the teaching of Islam than they are of any other thing. Islamic Education of their young ones is also important in their minds.

59. Chief Bello, Obanla of Otan-Ile aged 70 years and Alhajj Iasisi Fesogun, the Baba Agini of Otan-Ile aged 85 years in interview on 10-3-84 and 11-3-84 respectively revealed the general good behaviour of the Muslims in Otan-Ile. David Olorun a retired Headmaster and a member of the Social Elite's Club of Otan-Ile in interview on 15-4-84 confirmed the good behaviour of the Muslims.
60. This is the general belief of both Muslims and non-Muslims throughout Ijesaland. Although the basis of the people's belief is that many people answer to Muslim names in the area but the most appropriate record is the population Census of Otan-Ile for 1963 when the population figures of the town was 9,468. The breakdown of this figure is as follows:

i. Muslims	5,024)	
ii. Christians	3,604)	9,468
iii. Others	840)	

For more details, see I.L.G., I.D.G., P/C/F. No. 6 "HC" November, 1963 - ILESAN.

61. It is apparent that when the old Muslim parents die, Islam will continue since these young ones who are interested in their religion will grow to become staunch and committed Muslims.
62. Up till the time of writing this work, the officially accepted and recognised Census for this country is that of 1963 as it is always quoted for official matters.
63. Interview conducted with some of the Muslim students in the school and with the current Chief Imam, Alhajj Ganiyu Alade Okin revealed this disadvantage which affects only the Muslim students because there is a permanent teacher of Bible Knowledge in the school. The interview took place on 11-5-85.

64. Won de lati oke rere tio koja ile Hausa larin awon tio dabi awon Fulani. Sugbon won kise Fulani toripe ede won fe dabi ede Oyinbo: Sugbon won ki se Oyinbo. Amo wipe won jo awon tio nse agbe karkiri ile wa bayii. Amoo eleyi toripe Lawal mu omo 'binrin kan wa ti won rope aya re ni. Itan sope a ko mo bi obirin naa se pada lo boya lo si ilu re nio tabi ibomiran akole so". The literal translation is as follows: They returned from a distant place further than the Hausaland among a group of people who were like the Fulani. But they were not because their language was like that of the English people yet they were not English. We know that they resemble (the foreigners) who are beggars all around over our country today. We know this because Lawal brought one girl from there; it was then thought she was his wife. Tradition says it was not known how she departed either to her own town or to another place we cannot say". Interview with the Chief Imam of the town, Alhajj Badiru Akande on Sunday 8th of April, 1984 revealed this.
65. Upper Volta is now Burkina Faso.
66. Alhajj Akande, Badiru: Ibere Islam ni Ipetu-Ile, 1900-1980, p. 8 (A private compilation prepared in 1983 by the Imam himself).
67. "Dakun" is the Ilorin word for "Jowo" meaning 'Please'. Since the Alufaa was fond of using the word in his preaching whenever he wanted to make appeals to them, he was nicknamed "Dakun" which later became his popular name. His proper name became obscure-up till to the time of this research.
68. It is easy to make this conclusion because there are a few surviving returnees from the Upper Niger who are still in the town at the time of the investigation, 3-4-84. There is only one mosque in the town since 1900. The greater percentage of the Muslim community of the town are non-natives. Many of them are from Ada, Ikirun, Ire and Ede. The Muslim community here is well organised. They employed the service of one local Mallam to teach their children Arabic Language and this is usually when they return from the formal schools. A part of their Mosque is used as the classroom for the Arabic pupils.

69. Alhajj Badiru, the current Imam of Esa-Odo in interview on 28-5-84 revealed the fact that both Aluko Iadejobi and Ayeni Yinusa were among the first set of Esa-Odo sons who returned to the town as Muslims after their trade expeditions.
70. Ibid: "Awon elesin ibile tia jiko je kan nari ati awon elesin Kristi laji jo nse po laisi ija tabi aso". "These of the Yoruba religion with whom we were together, before and the Christians alike were together without quarrels.
71. Gambari is a derogatory word among Ijesa people to describe an Hauseman as being poor and dirty. That was why the people of Esa-Oke looked down on Islam as a religion for the poor in the period between 1990 and 1910. Both Oba Owamiran of Esa-Oke and Mr. Ibrahim Bamigboye a grandson to late Bamgboye, the first Muslim teacher of the town in interview on 2-9-84 revealed the people's contempt for Islam. "Awon enia ko tile ka esin Islam si esin kan pataki, ju wipe, esin awon Gambari, sio" Literally: People did not consider Islam to be an important religion more than to say - 'the religion of the Hausa people - Washout'. Since 'Gambari' is known today to be a name among the Hausa people it is probably a good guess to think that there was one Gambari among the first set of the Hausa people who came to Esa-Oke during the time.
72. N.nm: There is no one who remembers the man's name. All the informants referred to him as a man from Idofin Street in Esa-Oke.
73. Op.cit., T.G.C. Gbadamosi, p. 114.
74. Interview with Alhajj Ogungbangbe, the Muslim leader of Iloko-Ijesa and the Proprietor of two Muslim Grammar Schools in the town. He is about 70 years old.
75. Alhajj Ogunmodede in interview on Friday, 12th October, 1984. He is the first Imam of the town since the advent of Islam there in 1910.
76. These are shrines of the ancestors who are believed to be founders of such towns.

77. He was considered a "breaker of all types of sickness or illness. He was believed to possess a power capable of blessing man, woman, even a piece of land to become productive.
78. The frequenters of Alufaa Alabi's house were never committed believers and their visits were all done in secret or private. They still returned to their church as full members.
79. Nam: "Ojo Onadi ni gboqbo eniyan mosi", meaning 'Everybody knew him as Onadi's husband'. My interviews with Chief Lamobi of Iwara and the Muslim community representatives with their Chief Imam Alhaji Idris Olaleye, on Sunday 30th September, 1984 could not reveal the name of the first Imam of Iwara.
80. Alhaji Idris Olaleye the Chief Imam of Ifewara in interview on 6-10-84 remarked that the Christians' clever system of propagation of Christian religion was a bad blow on the growth and development of Islam in Iwara: 'Islam ko lu beni ko qarba o wa reureu'. Literally: Islam never died and it did not grow. It remained retarded.
81. Yusuf Yayi: Arrival of Islam to Ifewara, (Ifewara, 1982), pp 4-5, (a private compilation of the Headmaster of the Nawar-ul-Deen primary school, Ifewara which is contained in a pamphlet printed in 1982. The author is an experienced Grade III teacher who claimed to have stayed in the town for eleven years as a Muslim teacher.
82. Op.cit., J.O.K. Olowokure, p. 18.
83. Interview with the Chief Imam and the current Headmaster of the only Muslim Primary School of the town revealed that Muslim Students Society of Nigeria, Ifewara Branch actively exists in the two Grammar Schools of the town.
84. U.I.L., C.M.C. G3A 2/08; Bishop Phillips' Annual Letter for 1896. In this letter the Bishop expressed his opinion why Oba Owa Ajimoko II invited other Christian denominations to come and establish in Ilesa.

85. These are towns of about 20 kilometres away. My interview with Chief S.O. Thompson, the Oloni of Eti-Oni on Friday, 26th October, 1984 confirmed Alhajj Saka's claim.
86. Id praying ground is called 'Yidi' by the Yoruba Muslims.
87. Interview with Chief Alapa of Ita-Apa on Sunday 28th October, 1984 agreed with Alhajj Saka and Chief Thompson's claim on the 'Growth of Islam in the towns'.
88. Esan, Ayo Willy: Iwe Itan Iperindo, (Ilesa, Olusegun Press, 1962) 8-10.
89. See Qur'an Chapter 112, verses 1-4 (Surat-ul-Ikhlās).
90. The Owari Chief Priest in Ipole and His Highness Oba Abraham Aje, the Tirimi of Iperindo who is also the caretaker of Elejugbe during interview on 29-9-84 and 2-10-84 respectively remarked: "Sugbon aye ti nyi pada nkan ko ri bee mo, Ase loku ti a nse". Literally: But the world is changing. Things are no more the same. We only observe the conventional rites nowadays". Despite the fact that they were both interviewed at different times their remarks were the same on premium placed on the worship of their ancestors who were believed to be the founders of the two towns.
91. The Muslim Community or State which was first set up by Prophet Muhammad (P.E.H.O) in Yathrib (now Medina) in 622 A.D. The Muslims were united in this community where they did all things with one accord including in their services to Allah.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 PROBLEMS FACED BY THE NASCENT ISLAM AND SOLUTIONS TO THEM

Islam as a religion was faced with many difficulties when it was introduced to Ijesaland. This was so because it was new to the people. Although Islam is said to be a way of life, it could not fit easily into the religious, political, as well as the social life of the people. It was not only because Islam has a set of laws and regulations that guide the fundamental principles of the religion but its teachings were not in conformity with the traditional practices of Ijesa people. After Islam has made its in road to Ijesaland every effort was made by the nascent Muslims to establish or entrench it. To do the entrenchment in accordance to the fundamental principles of Islam, they began with the system of elimination and substitution, and modifications in some aspects. All these were done with care so as to avoid clashes or physical combat with adherents of African Traditional Religion. With patience, endurance and perseverance many of the problems were overcome peacefully in accordance with peace which Islam stands for.

3.1 Religious beliefs of the people

Islam had a set of teething problems in Ijesaland and this started with the traditional religious beliefs of the people. Among the Ijesa people just as in other parts of Yorubaland, God is known as 'Olodumare' or 'Olorun' who is the creator and the Owner of the Universe. This Olodumare is approached through the lesser gods or deities, (the Orisas) who are believed to be His ministers in both His administrative and executive functions in the world¹. In other words, the lesser gods are intermediaries between man and Olodumare. Among the Yoruba pantheons are the Orisa-nla, Ogun, Ifa, Sango, Orisa-Oko and Sonponna. The 'worship' or veneration of Esu, Ogun and Orunmila is of special significance among the Ijesa people because it was believed that they were of great assistance to them in their day to day activities. In the same manner, the veneration of some deified ancestors such as Owari, Owaluse, Ologun-Ede and Oba-logun was usually celebrated with glamour². In that wise every Ijesa son and daughter participates in festival celebrations. It is apparent that the problem usually rises since the belief in or worship of these deities or veneration of the ancestors is regarded as skirk in Islam. Association or the worship of other gods or deities with Allah is a grave sin that is

considered unforgivable in Islam³.

The Ijesa people did not only have faith in the gods, they also worshipped them. Usually their images were made in mud or carved in wood to represent the deities or the deified ancestors in their physical forms or features. For example the Esu (icon) shrine would be found at the entrance of every compound where Esu was worshipped. The image was usually in a huge mud in the shape of a human being in sitting posture and with a small roof sheltering it from both the sun and rain. It was believed that it would protect the family from all evils. Up till today, it is known as 'Esu enu ona' meaning "Devil of the gate"⁴. It is a general belief that icon is a general and national god in Ijesaland because it was worshipped generally almost in every compound during the period of this study. It is not really correct to think that the Ijesa people worshipped icon only out of fear rather they worshipped it because of the belief that it would protect them and provide for their needs. When Islam was introduced it became a problem for the Muslims to sever this idea or belief from the people. The Ijesa non-Muslims on their own found it difficult to leave their belief about icon which they held tenaciously while the Muslim propagators too could never accept the idea of associating anything with Allah, (Unity of God), which is the cornerstone

of Islam.⁵

That was why the nascent Muslims directed their constant preachings against polytheism. They tried to make them hate the idols by telling them that the idols could not save themselves let alone other persons. One further emphasised in their preachings that the idols were man made and that anyone who worshipped them was like them; they were not only unintelligent they were mad. In order to discourage them from the worship of idols and ancestors the converts from African Traditional Religion were told to bring their idols to Muslim gatherings where they were burnt into ashes⁶. The nascent preachers emphasised the strong belief in one and living Allah as the surest way for all believers, (Muslims).

3.2. Accommodation.

Perhaps one of the most salient in the series of problems facing Muslims was the difficulty in identifying themselves with members of traditional religious families with whom they had to live with on their return to their homes. Majority of them were adherents of Yoruba religion while a few of them had become converted into Christianity, a religion which was just establishing itself at the time⁷. Hence they lived under the same roof

with them, and for the sake of family solidarity they had to co-operate with adherents of traditional religion and Christianity. With the few Muslim group they became three different groups of people living under the same roof: Although they were the same by birth and in their social interactions yet they became different in their religious beliefs which turned them to be two or three parallel poles. It is common knowledge that the offspring of family solidarity is religious fraternity and this could result into ambivalence. This ambivalence became wider and more deeply-rooted when a Muslim would partake in the periodical celebrations at the ancestral veneration or at the annual festivals of their tribal gods. It is not easy for a Muslim who was either a hunter, a driver or other steel or iron worker not to join others in the general Ogun worship, the festival of which was expected to bring all the people together. He had to offer sacrifice to Ogun (god of iron) whenever he had a problem in his work as a hunter or a blacksmith because that was the general belief and practice of all steel or iron workers among Muslims and non-Muslims alike. This became more difficult to avoid when one sees that the core of worship of Ijesaland is in Ogun (god of iron) which is believed to be the patron of all who

use iron and steel for work⁸. Ogun is also believed to be the patron of warriors, hunters, smiths and mechanics. All these people believe strongly up till now that it can protect them and make their trade prosperous⁹. It was not an easy task for the early Muslim propagators of Ilesa and its districts to persuade the newly converted Muslims to leave this belief which is inimical to Islamic teaching. With more understanding of Islam the Muslims made efforts to detach themselves from any unIslamic practice or worship.

3.3. Ancestor worship

Next in these series of problems is the cult of ancestors. There are various shrines for deified heroes of Ijesa. In the Owa's palace alone, there are Ode-Odu, Adodo, Ajorijo, Odeyanrin and before an Owa is enthroned he must visit all these shrines of ancestors because they are accepted as the founders and protectors of Ijesaland. It has also become very difficult when one thinks of many followers of Yoruba religion who earned their living by the active practice of Yoruba religion. Islamic preachings against the worship of these gods stirred serious bitterness of the traditional religionists against the Muslims and worked against the growth of Islam because of its economic and social implications. The priests, the traditional drummers

who usually realised huge amount of money during the traditional festivals in honour of tutelary divinities and the praise-singers who composed praise-songs for the divinities and the Owa of Ijesaland were convinced that their means of livelihood were gone. The Muslims were considered to be iconoclasts. The point is clear here that they opposed the growth of Islam at the expense of traditional religion¹⁰. The sculptors of the paraphernalia for the worship of the tutelary divinities also participated in the attack against Islam also as a means of defending their daily bread. Most odious to the followers of Yoruba religion was the Muslim open-air-preaching nasihah which was considered to be a practice of organised iconoclasm embarked upon by the nascent Muslims. It was not long before the followers of Yoruba traditional religion came to realise that the traditional heritage left by their forebears was at stake and every possible means must be employed to salvage the situation by forestalling the missionary activities of the nascent Muslims. The Muslims experienced stiff opposition from a good number of traditional quarters in both Ilesa and its environs because they underrated the social position of the converts. The converts were sometimes insured against the possible hostile reaction of their colleagues and their fellow traditional associates.

Such protests as were evinced were overwhelmed by the acclamations of the larger number of the people who flocked to Islam with prominent people.

The conversion into Islam of influential people who had been deeply engulfed in the traditional customs occasioned serious and at times, fatal conflicts in the traditional society. The stronger the attachment of such people to Islam, the more furious was the reaction of their associates who remained in the traditional religion. The popular view in the local quarters was that the expansion and growth of Islam meant the undermining of the position of traditional cults and Institutions. The conversion of notable people among the adherents of traditional religion proved in this area, to be a constant source of veritable tension.

It is obvious that the decline of Yoruba traditional religion as a formal entity in Ilesa has been very rapid between 1896 and 1910 because of the conversion of many of their leaders into Islam. Formally therefore, Yoruba traditional religion in the area was now dying out. This of course, is the result of versatile Muslim preachers condemning the fanatical adherents of African Traditional Religion and members of the Ogboni cult as vermin, and encouraging all of them to embrace Islam. In this way, the early Muslim preachers of the area became famous because all the oppositions from the Ogboni had no adverse effect on these Muslim preachers.

Among them were Alufaa Abdulah Akorede, the father of the Chief Imam of Ijesaland at time of writing this work. He came to Ilesa from Ijebu-Ode as a trader to Ilesa sometimes after 1896 and one Alufaa Areke who came from Lagos about the same period. Akorede was known to be a teacher of Arabic and Islamic studies who taught majority of the nascent Muslims in Ilesa and its environs while Alufaa Areke was another ardent Muslim preacher. Their fame spread far and wide within a very short time. Very many people trooped to various Muslim preachers for ritual ablution of conversion, Dukhl-ul-Islam¹¹.

As from 1902 the Islamic activities of Ijesa Muslims became more prominent. Islamic teachings and preachings were done with much fervency. Alufaa Lawal who later became the second Chief Imam of Ijesaland was one of the few Ijesa people who started the accelerated Islamic propagation as from the tail end of 19th century. Most especially his name started to be heard among the Muslim groups of Ijesaland immediately after 1896. He was one of the leading men for Islamic emancipation and propagation in Ijesaland. Few among his immediate followers or companions were Alufaa Abdullahi Akorede. Mallam Abibu Arowogbadamun Abu Bakare Kaka and Mallam Ibrahim Oke-Iro. They and some others worked together as a team for the progress of Islam. It is

generally believed both by Muslims and non-Muslims of Ijesaland that their time was the golden age of Islam in the area. His name came to a sublime in 1902 when he became the first Ijesa indigene to be enthroned Chief Imam while Alufaa Abdullahi Akorede became his deputy.

Within a decade the Muslims' preachings without violence, foul or vulgar language almost paralysed the African Traditional Religion in both Ilesa and its district towns. The adherents of African Traditional Religion came out in groups to embrace Islam not only because of the simplicity of its adherents and cleanliness in the practice of the religion but because of its 'Africannes' especially accommodation of polygamy.

It was reported that on several occasions, the devotees of Ogun, Obokun and Osun respectively came down in formal formation to challenge the nascent Muslims, their group of assistant preachers, audience and friends. In all this, there were no physical conflicts but there were threats and utterances of incantations believed to be capable of harming the hearers. It is also on record that in any events the Muslim remained steadfast always chanting the Shahadah. The major divinities in the area soon gave up the struggle, leaving the Muslims class undaunted and apparently invigorated as more converts were recorded.

To every Ijesa person it is a common belief that Ilesa or Ijesaland is the seat of 'Oloдумаре' on earth. The correction of the fact needs to be given that the Ijesa people do not refer to either history of the world or that of the whole Yoruba here, rather they think of the number of gods and goddesses worshipped in their domain. Furthermore, they think of the fervency put into their worship among the Ijesa people. In addition the assertion stemmed out of the fact that many deities or deified heroes were worshipped in Ijesaland.

Although, every Muslim is expected to be a good believer the fact needs to be emphasised here that to be a true and practising Muslim all things which Islam abhors must be avoided¹². When Islam became well established, the early Muslims in Ilesa and its districts began to practise the faith in the public. They built mosques for congregational prayers which were said daily or weekly¹³.

It was a big task for pioneer Muslims to substitute for the worship of gods and ancestors the belief in the only living God (Allah) because they were used to the earthly ritual worships of the traditional religion (their old religion). For this reason it became a duty for every believer to learn by heart Surat-ul-Ikhlās¹⁴, Chapter 112 of the holy Qur'an in addition to Surat-ul-Fatihah, Chapter One of the Holy

Qur'an. This Surat-ul-Ikhlās, the chapter of purity emphasises Oneness of God (tawhid) which is the pivot of Islam. The essence or the attributes of God were made to replace the variant traditional names of God: First among the series of the substitution is Allah which is Olodumare, Ar-Rahman means Olore, (The Beneficent), Ar-Rahim is Alanu, (The Merciful), Al-Malik is Obaiye or Oba-Orun or Alase Orun, (The Sovereign Lord) while Al-Qudus means Mimo (Olorun Mimo), (The Holy) and Al-Muhymin stands for Alabo-Orun (The Protector).¹⁵

3.4. Ijesa People and Amulets

The Ijesa as a group were fond of using amulets, wearing of traditional rings and various cords which they believed to be protective or have the power of protection against all evils: Trees falling on people, wild animals attacking or devouring hunters, disease and bad luck among others. Amulets were put under pillows or sewn into dress they were worn as protections against witches or prevention of bad dreams. Rings were worn on fingers and bangles on arms to prevent eating of poisonous food. The faith in them was held tenaciously by their owners who would offer sacrifices to the gods who they believed could help in the efficacy of the

protections. They were also believed to have possessed power to avert evil and misfortune and to bring prosperity. These 'charms' were made from various materials like hair, teeth, leather or head of animals, barks or roots of trees and feathers of birds. They were usually personal to owners¹⁶. Ijesa people also made use of medicine which is said to be a substance used for treating diseases or something having magical power¹⁷. This was the general condition of the Ijesa people as regards their belief and the use of traditional herbs, medicine, charms and even incantations. They posed a real problem to Islam whose teachings appeared to them very strange and foreign. To leave their practices and beliefs overnight was not easy. They could not be made part of Islam either. With patience, endurance and perseverance lasting solutions which were in real conformity to Islamic practices and teachings were arrived at.

Many of the Muslim preachers, missionaries and itinerant mallams knew how to make amulet and medicine. Such Muslims were referred to as Alufaa Onitira¹⁸ or Alufaa Alasiri.¹⁹

Such amulets and medicine are used for the curing of diseases, protection against danger, prevention of infant mortality, prosperity in trade and in business.

The Alufaas made use of the Holy Qur'an to satisfy the curiosity of the converts who were former adherents of the traditional religion in their beliefs and use of things they considered as (medicinal) traditional protections. Among these were the special prayers written out from the Holy Qur'an tied or spined or even sewn with leather as amulets which the people could wear. These were believed to be able to prevent danger or to bring good luck in business or trade. As a result, these Alufaas' houses became centres of attraction for many of the people seeking a type of cure or luck. They prayed for these people by reading certain passages or chapters of the Holy Qur'an to replace the use of traditional amulets for their protections depending on the wordings of the chapters. Among the most commonly used chapters of the Holy Qur'an by these highly regarded Alufaas are Surat-u-Fatihah, The Opening Chapter - Chapter 1 of the Holy Qur'an, Surat-ul-Falag, The Dawn or Day-break, chapter 113; and Surat-ul-Nas, Chapter of Mankind, Chapter 114 among many others²⁰. All that the individual was concerned with was whether it was effective, efficacious or not. As much as the end result was thought or believed to have been achieved they were convinced of the religion, Islam where they found their immediate solace. These Alufaas based their method of healing, cure and

protection on Islam because Islam is against witchcraft, sorcery, and magic which are parts of mischiefs of created things and belief in superstitions all of which are signs of darkness or fear. Whereas a Muslim should cast off fear and take refuge in divine guidance and goodness. The early Muslim Alufaa in Ijesaland therefore were conscious of the method they employed in their practices. Usually, they were to consult first with the Holy Qur'an or Ahadith whether the method to be employed would agree or disagree with the teachings of Islam but as professionals and 'Osomaalo' what to gain from the practice seems more prominent to them. Therefore they would circumvent the system to suit their selfish ends.

The preparation of amulet and medicine by Muslim Alufaa could be in form of what is known among the Yoruba as tira²¹ which is given to the client to keep in his pocket, to hang in his house or to keep somewhere in his vehicle all in an attempt toward off evil. It could also be in the form of hantu²², which the client was told to drink for specific number of days. It could also be in form of prayers, i.e. repetition of a short Quranic verse or other Islamic prayers for a number of times after the five daily prayers or in the dead of the night or after Tahajjud²³ prayer either to bring good luck, safety or protection.

Like the Herbalist of the Yoruba traditional set up, some Alufaa Alasiri among the Muslims also divine in order to foresee the future of his client. This they did through the manipulation of certain geometric numbers called 'Ilmu-al-Hisabi' or working on a white sand spread on a tray²⁵ after the payment of a consultation fee²⁶ on which the suppliant had whispered his intention. After working out some figures and symbols on the whitesand, the Alufaa proceeded to interpret the symbols on the whitesand to tell the problems of his client and to predict what he claimed was the client's future. He then prescribed certain rites believed to help the client achieve his or her goal. In most cases offering of food, money and dresses to the less fortunate people featured prominently in such prescriptions. This of course is a contrast to the prescriptions by the traditional Herbalist of sacrifice of cooked food, egg or money and oil to be placed at cross roads or on the outskirts of the town. In most cases they would be placed at the base of trees in the town. Such trees were many in Ilesa up till 1950 when they were all uprooted in preparation for the erection of electric poles in the town.

Most of the experienced Alufaas do not make use of trays instead they use only plain sheets of paper on which they made

some geometric sketches and symbols after asking the suppliant some introductory questions. It is appropriate to refer to a typical and personal experience at Ogbon-Idio Ilesa during the field work of this thesis. It was during an interview with the 80 year-old Alufaa, one morning when a woman and her child came in for divination²⁷. The Muslim diviner collected consultation fee of one naira (N1.00) from each of them. He then asked for their names, their mothers' names and their birthdates. He later took a plain sheet of board on which he worked some formulas using Arabic figures. There after he narrated what happened to them in the past to each of the clients. He later told them what he thought the future had in stock for them and what they should do to achieve a success in the future. In the absence of the man, later, I enquired from the two clients whether what the Muslim diviner told them had happened to them in the past were correct or not, they both confirmed that they were all true.

Without mincing words Islam frowns at divination or fortune fore-telling. The fore-tellers claim to possess knowledge of the future, whereas in reality no one knows its knowledge except Allah, the Most High. The Qur'an has unambiguously described Allah as, "The knower of the hidden and manifest"²⁸. The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is reported to

have said that the devils catch words from the discussions of the angels and then carry such words to men after mixing lies therewith. In this way therefore, some sayings of men or diviners come out to be true, and in most cases false²⁹. In order to discourage the Muslims from patronizing the fortune-tellers, the Prophet (S.A.W) is reported to have said: Whoever comes to fortune-tellers, and ask him about something, his prayer is not accepted for forty nights³⁰.

Generally, many Muslims in both Ijesa and its districts still patronize the Muslim diviners whenever they have problems. The fact is that such frequenters of such diviners still come back to the Mosque to play their parts as Muslims: Observe the obligatory prayers, answer to Muslim names, attend Muslim meetings and contribute generously to the growth and development of Islam in Ijesaland. In conclusion this general practice of Ijesa people in the use of amulet and visit to diviners for succours and attempt to know the future confirms the general view of many Ijesa Muslims that ambivalence in the practice of Islam although is unIslamic yet it has come to stay³¹.

3.5 The Christian response to Islamic expansion

The Christians never reacted without a cause. The main causes and course of their reactions were as the result of the acceptance of Islam and increase of Muslims in Ijesaland

at the time of study - most especially at a period before 1890 when many converts were made into Islam. At the time Islam seemed to have become the religion of the people because many people including traditional leaders and chiefs leaned towards Islam and became friends of many Muslims. Islam appeared to have gained the upper hand throughout Ijesaland. Converts into Islam increased during this time because of many of those rejected from the Christian domain for having more than a wife had an 'abode' in the Mosque.

The C.M.S. Mission was not happy with the increase of Muslims whose religion, Islam, the Christians in Ilesa considered to be their rival or opponent. Therefore, the Christian body began to look for more missionaries so as to carry out more evangelistic activities and expansion of Christian faith into the districts because up to that period before 1880 the Christian Mission had never gone beyond Ilesa. Islam on its own was developing in the surrounding towns. The Christian Missionaries began force to force evangelisation and disputations on the creed of Islam with the Muslims wherever they met them. The Christian preachers increased in number and spread their garmets throughout Ijesaland.

With perseverance, patience and religious moderation the Muslims surmounted all the silent and clever attacks of the Christians. Things augured well for Muslims as from 1890 when more returness of the various tribal and civil wars returned as Muslims. This was why Islam gained more converts and much position in the political circles and among the traditional chiefs and notable families in Ijesaland before 1897. Within 1890 and 1896 Islam was becoming a wave to sway off the success of the C.M.S. Mission in Ijesaland at the time because the Muslim Community received more and more converts. The war returness who came back as Muslims on their own influenced their various families who became Muslims as well. The converts were both from the only Christian body, (the CMS) that existed in the town at the time and from the adherents of African Traditional Religion.

This type of increase did not please the C.M.S., the only Christian body at the time. In a quick response the C.M.S. under their leader, Right Reverend Oyebode in 1890 gave strict instructions to the Missionaries, preachers in Ilesa at the time to accelerate their preaching activities not only in Ilesa but to move into the district towns of Ilesa. In addition the

number of such men were increased not only to preach in the Churches or open places alone but to visit homes i.e. to go from houses to houses. More over the missionary men of the C.M.S. were also instructed to visit Muslims in their houses to preach Christ to them, all in attempts to convince them that Christ was the only Saviour. In addition the men distributed tracts to their listeners free of charge. The remark needs to be made here that in all, there was no open quarrels between the two groups but there were long arguments or disputations based on the creeds and principles of the two religions as we shall see later - 'Christian device of attack'.

3.5.1. Formation of the various Church denominations.

A disagreement on polygamy broke out between Bishop Phillips and Oba Owa Ajimoko I who was the first Christian traditional ruler of Ijesaland. The Bishop told the Oba that his polygamous life was against the doctrine of the C.M.S. Mission. The Oba reiterated the fact that it was the practice of his land and of his fore fathers to have as many wives as their palace could contain because the number of wives and children a traditional ruler has denoted his greatness and importance to his subjects. He further told the Bishop that he could neither disown or divorce any of his wives because

it was a taboo for him as the chief ruler of the land to send away any of his wives out of his palace. Since the Bishop did not take the Oba's explanations he therefore disagreed with him and told him to leave his palace. The disagreement yielded good dividends for Muslims³² when things began to change in 1897. Islam began to gain more and more converts in the political circle, among the traditional people and notable families. It also gained much position at the period before 1897. Oba Owa John Haastrup, invited various church denominations to come to settle down and establish in his domain.³³

Through the devotedness and clever efforts of Revd. Oyebode in an attempt to send Islam off the race of expansion in the district towns of Ilesa, the C.M.S. swiftly expanded to the other suburbs of Ilesa. The remark needs to be made that all was done without any open or physical class between the two groups as said earlier. Between 1900 and 1911 more than fifteen Churches of the C.M.S. were built in Iperindo area of the present Atakumosa Local Government area of Ijesaland³⁴.

By 1914 before the Roman Catholic Mission (R.C.M) joined the 'race' the Methodist Mission had established more than thirty-six churches in Ilesa and its environs while the C.M.S had as many as forty churches. The Catholic Mission set up their

station (church) in Ilesa in 1914 and gradually like other Missions it spread into the districts, all in the attempt to compete against the expansion of Islam.

3.5.2. Effect of the Christian campaigns.

The campaigns of the different Christian missionaries with trained evangelists and experienced preachers majority of whom were expatriates were all sufficient to paralyse the progress of Islam in Ijesaland because Churches sprang up where there were no Mosques. Secondly Islam is a very unique religion in the sense that it is not named after any human being like any other religion³⁵. Therefore there is no man who can claim to be the founder. The Qur'an says: "..... This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion"³⁶. This is to say Islam is one and Muslims are one whole.

The Christians made use of their various denominations to spread faster and occupied very large areas where no single Muslim existed at the inception of Islam in Ilesa and its environs. Unlike in Islam laymen of the mission, evangelists or trained Catechists were stationed in each of the churches while there were no Imams in most of the existed Mosques. The Muslims tried to supplement the activities of their local

leaders with the services of the itinerant teachers and preachers. Many of them were locally trained in the various places where Islam had been well established at the time. Many of them came from, Ilorin, Lagos, Saki, Iseyin and Oyo.

Generally the tempo of the Christian preachers became accelerated in the country as from 1875 in general while the impact was felt in Ijesaland as from 1896. The Christian missionaries became more fervent in their evangelical activities. During this period the concern of the Christians about the growth of Islam in Yorubaland as a whole came to a climax. It was in this year that the Christians formulated a plan to challenge Muslims expansion and position in Yorubaland as a whole. First, there was the shift of Christian Ministers whose role was not to be cast in the role of pastors, which meant they would go out to preach. To the Christians, that would accelerate evangelic movement. They began to hatch this plan by producing native clergymen trained particularly in Arabic in order to be better equipped and ready to attack Muslim preachers³⁷.

This method did not work well as it was expected because the impact was not felt among the Ijesa people. The Muslims had imbibed so deep a legal Jurisprudence of Islamic practices and

tents, they became so legalistic, they had been so much deeply rooted in Islamic laws and practices that it was not easy for any of them to submit to Christianity. The point here is that the Muslims response to the Christian evangelisation was of a strong resistance in general and it was tougher in Ijesaland. The Muslim ardent evangelisation was with a more fervour among the Ijesa. Theirs was more than the production of pamphlets or tracts³⁸. The constant meetings of the learned Muslims leaders with the Muslim congregation demonstrated in teaching, in giving of sermons and preaching, did much wonderful work among the Muslim communities in Ijesaland³⁹. During the early years of Islam in Ijesaland the Muslims never attempted building schools for Western Studies only for both Arabic and Islam which could aid their study of Qur'an.

During the time, most especially between 1896 and 1901, Ilesa, Ilokun, Ipetu-Ijesa, Otan-Ila, Erin-Oke and Igangan were filled up by itinerant teachers and preachers among whom were scholastic theologians who were preachers by profession. Many of them came from other parts of Yorubaland like Lagos, Abeokuta, Oyo, Ibadan and Ilorin⁴⁰. These religious teachers came out to teach and preach Islam to Ijesa people⁴¹. Although many of them came on invitation some were itinerant or ubiquitous teachers of Islam who came on their own.

The method employed chiefly was the nasihah⁴². The best time they chose was the evening time. The general practice was that the preachers would carry their lamps in the evening with their audience seated round them either in front of the Mosque or at the junction of a street. They could surround themselves with various books on hadith to which they turned for constant references to supplement the holy Qur'an. Both of them served as the sources of the contents of their religious teachings. Typically, preachers from Ilorin and Oyo were very common throughout Ijesaland during this period. This was why the Ijesa people associated Islam with Oyo people. The Oyo Muslims were humble, gentle and dressed less attractive. To this, Ijesa people had a special song to the credit of these Oyo Muslim preachers⁴³.

This evening time was chosen for the nasihah because it would be at the end of the day's work. Both Muslims and non-Muslims could have time and would pay attention to the Islamic teachings and preachings. This type of preaching was based upon the life, practice and deeds of Prophet Muhammad. In addition to this certain aspects of the faith or even the pillars of Islam⁴⁴ could be the theme of such preachings.

In this type of preaching, members of the audience were

allowed to ask or to answer questions based on the practising or any general Islamic points or disputations⁴⁵. The impact of the nasihah was felt throughout Ijesaland at the time because the audience would be made up of Muslims, Christians and adherents of African Traditional Religion who would be eager to ask or dispute very sensitive religious issues. Many times the meetings could become so rowdy and chaotic that the preacher would have to disperse the audience in the interest of peace⁴⁶. This Muslim evening preaching, (nasihah) became so known to the general public that the common "slogan" of the preachers soon became that of the Ijese populace⁴⁷. The whole group of people usually trooped out into the streets to sing the popular song of the Muslim preachers which had become the slogan of the entire people. The song would be rendered in such a rhythmic manner that no hearers, Muslims, many Christians and many adherents of Yoruba Religion would be able to stay behind. Even those asleep would be woken up to hear the Muslim preachers⁴⁸.

The Christians greatest reliance was placed on literacy which was purposefully introduced with the popular clamour; Mooko Mooka, (able to read and write). The Christians considered this for a close contact and evangelisation among the entire people of Ijesaland. As a matter of fact this method

or clamour nearly ruined Islam completely in Ijesaland. The various Christian Missions began to set up schools where they imparted Western Education. Since the Muslims did not wish their children to be lured into Christianity, they did not allow them to go to Christian-established schools. Really, the few Muslim children who attended the Christian schools were either persuaded or forced to become Christians. In some cases Muslims parents too were lured into the Christian faith just because of their interest in the education of their children. Faodi Yesufu family of Ilesa was almost lured into Christianity when a Christian school was built in their village, Eti-Oni, in Atakumosa area in 1925 while the entire people of Aladodo Village turned Christians before a school could be built for them early in 1955. Chief Dr. Lawrence Omole, a child to Late Raimi Omole became a Christian when he was a pupil at Saint John's School, Iloro, Ilesa in the late 1920s. He is today an active member of the church.

The R.C.M. in particular made use of this method to convert youths rather than adults. The advantage of this method was that the youths would grow to become fervent Roman Catholic members and their children would be born into Christian homes. This was why the R.C.M. opened schools in villages where they had no adherents⁴⁹.

When the Muslim leaders and some of their followers were clear about the motives of the Christian Mission they opposed Christian-oriented education for the children. They withdrew many of their children from Christian schools. As a result, Muslim children became less learned, in Western Education which was then accepted as the only education of note in the country⁵⁰ at the time.

Like in any other Yoruba town Muslims in Ilesa and environs were then more in a dilemma: They were to decide on whether to allow their children to go to the Christian oriented schools and lose their religion (Islam) or to prevent them from going to such schools and later to become 'servants' of their counterparts, in the Christian fold who had received the Western Education. It was this problem of educating the young Muslims without any prejudice of conversion that prompted some of the Muslims leaders to join one of the existing Islamic organisations in order to help them to own schools of theirs⁵¹. These Muslim schools would try to rub shoulders with the long-existing, Christian schools as we shall see later in chapter six.⁵²

Up till 1984 it is still a generally accepted statement among the Muslims and Christians that there had never been open quarrels between the Muslim community and the Christian body in both Ilesa and its districts. The fact remains that there had

been occasions of disagreements and disputations which resulted into very sensitive and long arguments⁵³. Also, there had been clever attacks and various threats by one Christian group or the other against the Muslim body in certain areas. A good example here is the incident of Esa-Odo where the C.M.S. Church was built adjacent to the first Mosque built in the town at the beginning of this century. The Christian ringing of both the big bell and the hand bells disturbed the Muslims greatly during their morning prayer, Salat-al-Subh. The inconvenience was so much that they thought of moving to another place to erect another Mosque. As usual with patience and prayers to Allah the hardship came to an end without any open fight. The C.M.S. moved to another more spacious place when their church was rebuilt in 1932. There was another more general but silent threat to Islamic and Muslim expansion in both Ilesa and its environs. By Joseph Babalola and Babatope's revival in 1930 Christian mission reached its zenith in Ijesaland. Deities and images of various Ijesa ancestors were piled up and burnt at Oke-Oye street Ilesa⁵⁴.

This Christian revival of 1930 was really the last straw that broke the camel's back because it rendered Islam to be impotent in Ijesaland. There were no men of equal mettle among the Muslim leaders or preachers in Ijesaland at the time.

Secondly, the few Muslim leaders and preachers who were left behind did not have something reviving like those of the Christian leaders. With the remaining Muslims they persisted in their daily prayers and Juma'at service and prayer⁵⁵. Things remained dull and unprogressive with the Muslim group until early in 1950 when believers such as Alhaji A.R.A. Smith, a Muslim elite who spent his early life with ardent Muslims in Lagos, Alhaji S.A. Famuyide and Alhaji S.A. Olatunji came up in the Muslim group. The last two Alhajis attended Christian schools. With the arrival of these Muslim elites things began to change. Greater improvements and progress became noticeable when more learned and experienced preachers from Lagos, Abeokuta, Ibadan and Ilorin flocked to Ijesa Division afresh. It was a turning point in the history of Islam in Ijesaland when the new Muslim preachers started the open-air-preachings. Muslim Societies too began the Islamic activities which were inviting and educative. Muslim young boys and girls reared their heads. The Islamic activities and fervid practice of Islam became more fervent throughout 1960s. It was an example of the activities which led to disputations of Alhaji Salam Bolaji Akewukewe and Evangelist J.J. Akande in 1964.

The Muslims, however, benefited from the Christian challenge. Muslims were roused to notable defence and propagation of their faith. In the course of persistent Christian challenge, the Muslims began to gain to be more greatly acquainted than ever before with some Christian literature, particularly the Bible. This was particularly true of the Ilorin, Oyo and some Ibadan Muslim mallams and itinerant teachers, who often searched the Christian scriptures for dialectical values.

Muslim attendance of Christian schools had its own salutary effects on the Muslim community of this area. Those who were not converted to Christianity constituted an important group among the Ijesa Muslims. They had learnt about Christianity, at first hand, so to speak. Indeed, on the Christian's testimony, the Muslim pupils showed a remarkable knowledge of Christianity. The influence of this group was felt in the early 1940s when they began to gather momentum and became particularly identified in the following two decades as pioneer founders of various Muslim literary societies and educational societies such as the Nawair-ud-deen and Ansar-ud-Deen.

Also, these educated Muslims were the new leaders of the Ijesa Muslim Community in many ways. They soon had access to some Yoruba and English literature on Islam by which they came

to know more about their religion than had previously been the case, when their knowledge of Islam was only gained by learning Arabic in the hard and tortuous way. Edified by this knowledge, they were in a position, perhaps better than that of the age-old Mu'allims to enlighten their less privileged co-religionists on the tenets of their religion. Their leadership was based on literacy in English and on the grasp of Islam.

In a way, the Christian's stern response to the Muslim expansion stirred the Muslims to evolve new methods of preaching Islam to their adherents and the would-be Muslims. By 1965, many Muslim Vans of various Muslim Societies or organisations are found with loud speakers in the towns throughout Ijesaland on evangelical mission. This, in effect, is on equal pedestal with those of the Christian bodies. Muslim religious records and cassettes are freely played to attract believers and non-believers to either Mosques or places of Islamic lectures. Muslim women now sing Muslim religious songs along with their 'seli'⁵⁶.

3.6.1. Extraneous problems

Islam and Muslims faced many problems since 1860s when Islam came to Ijesaland. The Muslim returnees were not

only hated by the members of their families who were traditional religionists but they were also rejected. Many of them were not allowed to stay among the families. Fear of molestation did not allow the Muslims to practise the religion in the open at first. The obligatory prayers were observed privately. The adhan could not be made and they could not observe any of their prayers in groups not only because there was no building erected as a Mosque but because of the fear of the adherents of African Traditional Religion who considered Muslims to be enemies of African Traditional Religion because of their constant preachings against polytheism and iconoclasm.

As from the early period of 1000 things began to change through the organized systems, friendly attitudes and religious Islamic activities of one Sedu Ogun, Muri Lawal, Dadani Olokodana and Alawiye⁵⁷ as stated earlier in chapter two.

3.6.2. Lack of learned Leadership

The nascent Muslims were faced with the problem of leadership since there was none among them who was learned or versed in Arabic and Qur'an, consequently they could not lead the congregational prayers since they could neither read nor cite from the Qur'an very well. This was also coupled with the

difficulty in reading the Qur'an which was purely in Arabic and which was not translated into Yoruba like the Christian Bible, it posed a difficulty to the Muslims. It made Islam to be very foreign and distant to its adherents. The reading of Arabic literature and pronunciation of Arabic words were both very difficult and very strange to Ijesa Muslims of the period of study.

The Muslims were therefore laughed at by their Christian counterparts that their songs (in Arabic) were neither melodious nor easy to sing⁵⁸. Another knotty aspect of this difficulty was that Qur'anic schools were very scarce and when available the method of teaching therein was associated with excessive whipping, unnecessary repetition of words, long stay in classes and running of myriads or mean errands for the Mu'allims (teachers) and their wives. They would be Muslims compared the system with that of the formal Christian schools where the methods appeared to be better. The nascent Muslims therefore did not have much access to the teaching of Islam. This brought a real setback to Islamic expansion most especially before 1696 when it was not easy to communicate Islamic lessons to the minds of potential Muslims in the area. Although Islam was accepted by important families, traditional leaders and big people in Ilesa, the common people

were scared by the difficulty of reading the Qur'an in Arabic. There was communication gap in the Islamic lessons. While many Muslims converts could not read the Qur'an in Arabic let alone understand its Islamic lessons the Christians were able to read the Bible in Yoruba and get its message. This together with the central administration and financial aid from parent bodies contributed to the rapid spread of Christianity in both Ilesa and its environs within the period. Although some of the itinerant Muslim teachers and preachers who were either invited or came on their own from Ilorin, Ibadan or Lagos tried their best by interpreting some Quranic passages into Yoruba when preaching but they could not meet the standard of the Christian bodies⁵⁹.

3.6.3 Lack of Funds

Another important hardship which almost rendered Islam impotent in Ijesaland during the period of study was the lack of funds. Since there was no financial assistant anywhere the development of Islam, a religion which was just growing in Ijesaland like in some of other towns of Yorubaland of the time became a difficult problem. The Christian bodies such as the C.M.S. and the Catholic Mission at the time were expanding in and out of Ijesaland because of the foreign aids which they were

receiving for the Christian evangelical works. Many zealous and philanthropic Ijesa Muslims tried to raise money for the more important Islamic activities -- such as building of Mosques of comparable size with some of the Christian churches⁶⁰. Many Quranic centres were set up while locally trained Mu'allims (teachers) were invited from some well established Islamic areas. Many of these Arabic teachers made use of parts of the Mosque buildings as classes for their pupils, some turned the verandahs of their houses to classes while some even made use of any shady places, most especially under trees for teaching.

The larger percentage of 'teachers' took to other professions because they were not full-time teachers earning salaries. Secondly, they considered teaching as a religious duty for which fees should not be charged. As human beings they had to feed. So they took to other duties like farming, tailoring and meat selling for their daily bread. This type of teachers on its own made many people look down on Islam when they compared the Christians and their schools with those of Muslims'. It is perhaps correct to say here that in an attempt to improve the state of Islam it was considered another setback because the Muslim body was being looked upon as been local and even parochial. Since the Muslims were interested in their religion that did

not disturb them. They continued with the struggle to succeed in the establishment and expansion of Islam in Ijesaland.

3.6.4. Inefficient administration of the Muslim bodies

Lack of Central organisation and deficient administration of the Muslim body in Ijesaland continued to rear its head. Every one of the Ijesa towns stood independent of Ilesa. Every local leader went at his own pace and in its own way but the general principles of Islam were followed. There was no competition since there were no different denominations in Islam. Of course, this would have been a very good advantage if there had been a central co-ordination of the general administration of every town. Coupled with this was the lack of specially trained men for missionary-works or evangelisation. The itinerant teachers were trained locally. The few who could be considered to be trained paid a great deal of attention to professional activities both in the Obokun Local Government Area and Iwara in the Atakumosa Local Government Area⁶¹.

Things changed with time, Islam then became Religio-licita. In order to have better equipped teachers of Islam in Ijesaland as a whole and in Ilesa in particular the known muslim

leaders among whom were Sedu Ogun, Lawal Owoso, Bello Borokinni and Pari Lawal all of Okesa quarters and a host of others from Isona Street and Egbe-Idi went down to colony or coastal areas to make available the services of seasoned Islamic scholars. It is vital to say that the background of these people was not known. This as it was, it should not be considered as if the Ijesa Muslims of the time were completely ignorant of the contents of their books⁶². Things became better as from 1910 in the studies of both the Qur'an and Ahadith.

Starting from this period more ardent evangelical work among Muslims, however, involved more than the production of pamphlets of the Christian type. It necessarily meant persuading the general situation of things between Christians and Muslims throughout Yorubaland as from late 1880 to late 1900. Many atimes, the reaction of the Muslims was one withdrawal and studied rebuff, and it was usually made to return with more energy and zeal. In essence what they learnt from the Christians gave them insight into Christianity and they made use of such knowledge in gaining more converts into Islam than they did at the earlier years of nineteenth century. Things were at a very high note with Muslims. More important personalities were coming into Islamic fold. Teachers of Islam and more enlightened preachers flocked Ijesaland. More and more compound Mosques were springing up

in Ilesa and its environs. Muslims were beginning to rub shouldiers with the Christians in their methods of preaching. The development of Islam and increased rate of gaining converts into the religion throughout Ijesaland led to a very stiff but silent and organised opposition by the Christians. Perhaps, Islam and increased rate of gaining converts into the religion throughout Ijesaland led to a very stiff but silent and organised opposition by the Christians. Perhaps, Islam would have remained firm with the incessant rate of converts irrespective of the frantic and organised efforts of the Christian bodies against it if not because of the chains of problems that befell it at the time.

3.6.5. Death of pilgrims.

One of the fateful events was the incident of the five Ijesa important personalities and staunch Muslims who went on pilgrimage to Makkah in 1910 and none of whom returned⁶³. This was a real setback to Islam and Muslims alike throughout Ijesaland. It did not only weaken their morale it also weakened the faith of many ardent Muslims. Since that was the first time any Ijesa Muslim went to Hajj going to Hajj became very dreadful to the potential pilgrims throughout Ijesaland. Until the early part of 1930 there was no one who dared go to Hajj in both Ilesa and its environs⁶⁴.

The loss of the five pilgrims who were among the illustrious sons of Ijesaland did not pain the Muslims alone but the entire Ijesa people. Their death was a loss to the Ijesa people as a whole and Ilesa Muslims in particular. There was even speculation in some quarters in Ilesa at the time that they would remain Muslims but they would not venture going to Makkah on pilgrimage. As the speculation was about to gain ground among the Muslim body in Ilesa the Muslim elders among whom were Abibu Arowodidamu, Lawal Owoso of Okesa and Alufaa Ibrahim of Isona Street, Ilesa among many others decided to select a new Imam of Ijesaland because Mallam Pari Lawal who was the Chief Imam was one of the five pilgrims who died either in Makkah or on their way to or from the Holyland.

In the Muslims' decision, the committee of the elders and Muslim elites listed in the above concluded that the Chief Imam's Na'ib, (Deputy) should continue the Chief Imam's duties. Mallam Abdulahi Akorede, the Deputy Chief Imam was then enthroned the Chief Imam of Ijesaland sometimes in December, 1910. He held the post till his death in 1946.

As the Chief Imam his first assignment was to disabuse the minds of Muslims in Ijesaland from the rumour of imminent death

which people thought awaited any future pilgrims. He went from Mosque to Mosque and town to town throughout Ijesaland to advise and persuade Muslims to plan for Hajj which is a pillar of Islam. In his advice he made the people realise that the death of those five pilgrims were isolated events because Muslim from Oyo, Ibadan and other towns went on pilgrimage that very fateful year 1910 and they returned safely.

In addition to the Chief Imam's activities many other Muslim preachers who came to Ijesaland at the time began to preach on importance of Hajj itself to the Muslims.

The loss of the five pilgrims caused a great set-back to the growth of Islam in Ijesaland but with the constant advice and preachings of the Muslim leaders things began to change for a better. Before the end of 1930 the first pilgrim, Alhajj Alliyu Balogun successfully completed the Hajj returned to Ilesa in a religious glamour amidst his relatives and friends who sang and danced to Ilesa Central Mosque. To encourage others he was specially invited to the Mosque on the following Friday to give the congregation of people in the Mosque his experience in Makkah.

With the activities of the new Chief Imam, the Muslim preachers and the physical experiences of Alhajj Balogun the fears of the Muslim community in Ijesaland were allayed. Muslims who

were able and capable began to pay pilgrimage to the Holyland, Makkah as from that time. The number of pilgrims from Ijesaland was very low between 1930 to late 1950s. It increased gradually up to very late in 1860s while the tempo accelerated as from very early in 1970s.

3.6.6. Impact of the influenza epidemic of 1817.

A more serious event was the outbreak of an epidemic disease⁶⁵ in Ilesa and spread throughout the land. This resulted into large number of deaths within a short period of time the dead; were buried hurriedly. On many occasions mass burial took place. Since Muslims did not use coffins⁶⁶ many of their graves were torn open with the corpses scattered by serious erosion at the end of very heavy rains or by pigs or dogs. Both the Christians and the adherents of African Traditional Religion who used coffins did not experience such ugly scenes.

Many young Muslims whose parents died during the time considered both inability of Muslims to use coffins and shallow burial of Muslim corpses as degrading. Since they could not effect a change many of them again renounced their beliefs as Muslims⁶⁷. Although it can be argued that those people who renounced their faith were weak believers and not Muslim perse yet their knowledge of Islam as the nascent Muslims in the area

under study needs to be considered.

As could be imagined the Muslim community in Ilesa was on the verge of total collapse as a result of this influenza episode. In order to restrengthen the lost faith of Muslims in the area, Muslim leaders and preachers embarked on thorough explanations of the Muslim stand on the use of coffins as explained in note '66' in the above.

3.6.7. Christian device of attack

The Christian missionaries added a new dimension to their method of preaching by describing Islam as a religion of force. This type of information became wide spread among the Ijesa people. The Christian missionaries argued that Muslims from Ilorin and Ibadan took part in the series of civil wars against Ijesa. In a quick response many Ijesa people, Christians in particular hated the Ijesa Muslims. This is to explain the fact that any Ijesa indigene who embraced a religion introduced by people from the two towns did not mean well for his fatherland i.e. Ijesaland. This again explains why Ijesa people initially hated Ijesa Muslims. They also considered them as hostile people. Furthermore they considered Ibadan and Ilorin people as dangerous and cunning people, all because of the parts they took in Ijesa-Ekiti Parapo and Ibadan hostility against the Ijesa people

in 1865 when they burnt their houses and carried away both their children and properties.

As smooth as this appears, it needs to be said that it was all a ruse or device by the Christians to make Ijesa people hate the Muslims and Islam. One can come to this type of conclusion because Christianity as a religion was introduced to Ijesaland from Ibadan. Secondly, it was not possible that Christians were not among the soldiers who fought in the various civil wars.

With patience and perseverance as usual however Muslim leaders were able to persuade potential Muslims in particular and Ijesa people in general, that such Muslims who might have taken part in the Yoruba civil wars did so for personal or tribal reasons and not because of religion. Yoruba civil wars were not religious wars. Alhaji Arekemase, one of the erudite preachers of Islam in Ilesa and its district towns between 1901 and 1920 did not limit his preaching and teaching to the Qur'an and Ahadith alone. He also went round to counteract the slogan of the detractors of Islam who taught their adherents that Islam is a religion of force'. He told his audience that there was no soldier among the Muslims of Ilesa. Majority of the nascent Muslims were ex-slaves of the various civil wars fought in

Yorubaland in the 19th century. He added the fact that the early Muslims returned home quietly and practised their religion privately. Later on they began to practise it publicly without any record of open clash or force during either preaching or practising of Islam in Ijesaland.

Muslims in Ijesaland were faced with the clever attitudes of their Christian counterparts who devised new methods to paralyse the development, entrenchment and expansion of Islam in this area. The Muslims had nothing to offer where the Christians established 'Medical Mission'. "Healthy minds in healthy bodies" was the apparent expression of the Christian preachers. The Methodist Mission built the Wesley Guild Hospital Ilesa in 1922. A Maternity Home belonging to the same Christian - The Methodist Maternity Mission Body was built at Imasi-Ile in 1938. These two Medical homes allured many Muslims to Christianity where they believed there were modern healing methods and cure with little cost to bring patients back to health. In quick response, the Muslims accelerated their use of the Qur'an in constant and regular prayers and the use of tira which those who frequented the Alufaas' houses claimed to be efficacious as said earlier under the use of amulets.

Ambivalence⁶⁸ was a problem which is now considered as an

offshoot of the method of cure and healing employed by the Muslims. The establishment of Medical Centres by the Christians led the Muslims to seek ways of assisting sick believers to have back their health. Many went to the hospitals under the pretext that they were Christians. They would have to offer Christian prayers before they were treated while many would have to bear Christian names. In most cases they would have to attend the Methodist Church before they could be recommended for treatment in the hospitals. All along, they would offer their obligatory prayers in private in their homes. Many Muslims returned to herbalists where they offered sacrifices to idols in private all in the attempt to secure good health or to have good luck in their various places of work. At the end, they would still claim to be Muslims. Up till the second half of the twentieth century some Muslims in both Ilesse and its environs still wear the chains or necklaces of the Cross of Jesus! That was very rampant among the Muslim secondary school students and of Teacher's Colleges in Ijesaland⁶⁹.

3.6.8. Socio-Political problems.

Marriage contract posed difficulties to Muslim males from the inception of Islam in Ijesaland. Muslims were refused

marriage to non-Muslims. Since the Muslims were very few in number within the first few decades of Islam in Ilesa and its districts male Muslims could not have enough female Muslims among whom they could choose their future wives. More than this, young women who married their husbands before they became Muslims began to divorce them in large numbers. Many of the Muslim males were without wives for a very long time⁷⁰.

In the political circle Muslims were also looked down upon because they were not learned in Western Education. Until some-time in the early years of 1960s no Muslims held any important political post both in Ilesa and its districts because experienced educated Muslims were scarce. It was only around this period that we heard of very few Muslims as Councillors. Alhajj Saliu Famuyide, the first Muslim Chairman of Ilesa Local Government was appointed by the Military Governor of Oyo State in 1976 and he held the post till early in 1979 at the eve of the Civilian administration. The same Alhajj Famuyide was again elected into the House of Representatives in 1979. Muslims in both Ilesa and its environs are now holding position of responsibilities. The Obanla of Ijesaland who is second in rank to the Oba Owa of Ijesaland is a Muslim - (Chief Lasisi Omole) while the former Lori-Emese, the traditional leader of Owa's House-hold-Chief was

a Muslim - Alhajj Yesufu Onigbogi. Since Ijesaland is generally thought of as a predominantly Christian area definite steps need to be taken by ambitious Islamic scholars to examine the general practice of both Iman and Ibadat among the Ijesa Muslims. The next chapter therefore discusses this to show the depth of Ijesa Muslims' faith and the general practice of the religion, Islam.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. Idowu, E.B., Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief, Op.cit., pp 77-106. This was the general pattern of worship among the Ijesa people before the coming of Islam to the area.
2. These ancestors expect Ologun-Ede were all past Owa of Ijesaland who either helped the Ijesa people in war and peace time. In addition they were considered to be heroes who deserved honour while Ologun-Ede was a woman warrior who saved the Ijesa people from the attack of their enemies. Their worship or veneration denotes associating a partner with Allah and it is unIslamic. For more details see: The Holy Qur'an Chapter 112 verses 1 to 4.
3. See: Surat-ul-Nisaa, (Chapter 4 of the Holy Qur'an verse 48).
4. For more details see: Op.cit., Journal of N.J. Luke, Aug. 1888 to September 1889.
5. See: Surat-ul-Tkhlis, Chapter 112 of the Holy Qur'an.
6. The Chief Imam, Alhajj Alliyu Amoke Oja in interview on 6-5-84.
7. Christian religion was first introduced to Ilesa in 1856 while Islam was first heard of in Ilesa in the early 1860s. For more details see: Ataiyero, B.A. A short History of the Ijesas Part I, pp. 44. Op.cit., and Obadamesi, T.G.O.: The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841-1908, p. 86 Op.cit. respectively.
8. Idowu, E.B. God in Yoruba Belief, Op.cit., pp 85-89.
9. At least this is a common belief of a larger percentage of Yoruba people of Nigeria. Series of interviews with both Christians and Muslims revealed that at least six out of ten Yoruba persons irrespective of their religious faith believe this idea.
10. Among them were the Olukorigi beaters or the strikers of Olukorigi - drums made of Igala (deer) skin and arere wood and Ibembe drum beaters who were especially noted as praise-singers and traditional commentators and informants.

11. Every intended convert would have to take the special bath in order to be cleansed of all filth: First, the intention, (Niyat) will be said. The said convert into Islam will be washed by a learned Muslim leader. The convert will then say the Shahadah, the expression of faith in Islam: "La ilaha illa Allah Muhammadan Rasulu Lahi", which means, "There is no deity but Allah (God) and Prophet Muhammad is His Messenger". For further details see: Muhammad Ali, A Manual of Hadith, (London, Curzon Press, 1978), pp. 59-60, No. 47. Yoruba word for this washing is 'wonka', a corrupt Hausa word which means bath. This special bath begins by washing the head thrice, then the right side followed by the left while the whole body will be washed to toes. Each part washed in ablution will be washed thrice for the thorough cleaning. For more details on general ablution (Wudu) See: Muhammad Mushin Khan; Salih Al-Bukhari-Arabic - Arabic/English Vol.1, (Al-Madinah Al-Munawwara, Kazi Publication, 1979), p. 101, Chapter iv)
12. See: The Holy Qur'an, Surat-ul-Baqarah, Chapter 2 verse 208; O Ye who Believe! Enter into Islam whole heartedly and follow not the footsteps of the devil. For he is to you an avowed enemy".
13. Daily prayers in Islam are: Subh or Fajr, early morning or dawn prayer, Zuhr, Early afternoon prayer; Asr, Late 'Noon prayer; Maghrib Sunset or Evening Prayer and 'Isha, Early Night Prayer. Juma'at and 'Id-ul-Adhah and 'Id-ul-Fitr prayers are weekly and annually prayers respectively.
14. This is the basis of belief or faith in the Oneness of God: 'God is without a partner. He has no equal in the Islamic teachings. This is the main difference between the creed of Islam and that of Christianity.
15. Shaikh Muzaffereddin: Ninety-Nine Names of Allah, (Lagos, I.P.B. 1978), pp 19-26.
16. Rattrary, R.S. Religion and Arts (London, 1954), pp. 23-24. It was almost every Ijesa person who possessed a form of these protections at the time of study: Cords, heads of animals or birds were kept in pockets and in caps to avert various accidents. See also: Protector, Paul: Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (England, Longmans, 1978), 29

17. Ibid., p. 675: See also Sariki, Ibrahim Adeola Alani: Islam among the Eoba and Ijebu Peoples, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1986, p. 158.
18. Alufaa Onitira is the Muslim person who writes some Quranic verses or magical names on a piece of paper and wraps it and covers it with a thin leather or threads. He then asks his suppliant to carry it on him or her. Sometimes it can be kept under mats or pillows. This is done with a view to solving the problems of the suppliant or to allay his or her fears.
19. Alufaa Alasiri is a Muslim man who is believed to possess the knowledge of the secret or hidden things. The word 'Alasiri' is the corrupt Yoruba word for the Arabic word 'al-Sirr
السِر which means the secret or the hidden.
20. Are some of the special chapters of the Holy Qur'an which the Alufaas used constantly in their prayers of protection or safety: Surat-ul-Quraish, chapter 106 is used for protection, security and anxiety: Surat-ul-Nasr is specially used for Succour and God's help in time of need: Surat-ul-Falaq, Chapter 113 provides antidote to superstition and fear from all kinds of ill arising from outer nature and envy on the part of others while Surat-ul-Nas is specially for protection against evil of man and spirit.
21. Tira is a portion of Qur'an written on a sheet of paper in a form, the paper wrapped and tied with threads or leather, sometimes of various colours.
22. Hantu is the writing of some Quranic verses or chapter(s) on a black wooden slate, (Walaa) and washed off with water. Some ingredients may be added in some cases. Among the Ijesa people (Oriri leaves), a type of tree are boiled and squeezed - the liquid from it is used as the 'ink' for writing on the black slate.
23. Ta
23. Tahajjud is one of the voluntary prayers recommended by the Prophet (S.A.W). For more information about the prayers see: Kamal, Abdul Aziz, Everyday Fiqh, Vol. 1, (Lahore, Islamic Publications Ltd., 1975), pp. 154ff.

24. 'Ilmu-al-Hisabi' - Science of counting, (Arithmetic).
25. It is usually made of wood or board where quantity of white sands will be kept for the 'geometrical' workings.
26. The consultation fee varies from one Alufaa to another. In the past, the minimum being at least one penny (one kobo). By 1985, the minimum had become fifty kobo but many Alufaas would not receive anything less than one Naira. Alufaa Orin-Nikewu of Idiwo, Ilesa in an interview on 7-8-85 revealed the increase as the result of the prevailing high cost of living.
27. Alufaa Alhajj Orin-Nikewu is generally known in Ilesa town as Alufaa-Alasiri.
28. Qur'an chapter 23 verse 92.
29. For more details see: Karim, Fazlul, The Religion of Man, (Lahore, The Book House, 1940, Vol. III), p. 95.
30. Ibid., pp 96ff.
31. Alhajj Sule Owoeye of Imo, Ilesa, Alhajj Amodu Balogun Adeyemi, Imam of Ilase, Alhajj Shittu Ajayi of Ibokun in interviews during the field work of this thesis.
32. Many Christians who had more than a wife and who were refused baptism rushed to declare for Islam. This in return swelled the number of the adherents of Islam.
33. To demonstrate that he did not intend to set up a Church of his own and to depict his interest for Islam he gave a piece of land at the Ereja Street to the Muslim Community where the central Mosque was built in 1901.
34. In the Southern part of Ilesa was carved into a Local Government area in 1976 under the name 'Atakumosa Local Government,' Vide Supra, See: Map No.2. This Local Government was named after Oba Owa Obokun Atakumosa, (1526-1646).
35. Christianity is named after Christ, Hinduism after Hindus, Judaism after Judah and Taoism after Taos.
36. Surat-ul-Maida, (The Table spread): Quran 5: 4.

37. See: T.G.O. Gbadamosi: The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841-1908. Op.cit., pp. 127-129
38. For more details see: R.A. Smith; Itan bi Islam se de Ilesa Ilesa Op.cit., pp 4-6.
39. B.B. Bolatito: The Arrival of Islam to Iookun, op.cit., pp. 8-10.
40. T.G.O. Gbadamosi, op.cit., p. 150.
41. Among the preachers were Hausamen, Nupemen and others who had the deep knowledge of both Islam and Alhadith.
42. Religious advice.
43. Mo mo Oyo - mo mo Oyo
Orisi Oyo mo mo pe meje
Ikini ni Oyo onisuru ko ce Lawani erun dududu (sic).

Literal translation:

I know Oyo, I know Oyo (the Oyo people)

I know them up to seven (many types)

First, is the humble Oyo who tied his turban tightly to his mouth.

It was a credit to the Muslims as a whole at the time to know them for their humility. To an Ijesa, the word, 'Oyo' denotes any Yoruba speaking person who is not from Ekiti, Ondo, Ife, Ijebu, or Egbaland.

44. The five pillars of Islam:
- (i) Iman - Belief in One God
 - (ii) Salat - The five obligatory prayers
 - (iii) Zakat - The poor rate
 - (iv) Sawm - The Ramadan Fast
 - (v) Hajj - Pilgrimage to Mecca.
45. The Christians were specially noted for disputations at the time; even up to early 1960s. For details see: Bolaji, S.O. 'Alhajj ati Evangelist in Ilesa' (Ibadan, 1964), pp. 4-18.

46. Islam is a derivate of Salam which means 'peace'. Al-Islam means the religion of peace. Linguistically, a Muslim is a possessor of peace and he must demonstrate peaceful living.

47. Esare wa, e jade wa - Run, come out:
E wa gbo labari - come and hear news (important words)
Labari lale oni - Important words to night.

Labari, is a corrupt Hausa word derived from Arabic word Khabar meaning 'news'. This confirms the fact that learned Hausamen were among the early Muslim preachers of this area.

48. This was one of the methods used by the Muslim preachers to arouse the interest of their listeners and to silence the disputations of aggressive Christians.

49. This system was given a term, "Catch them Young", in a maiden lecture delivered by Reverend Father Oni after his ordination at Oke-Padre Street, Ilesa on September, 1962 - See: R.C.M. Record, 1914-1980, R.C.M. Reading Centre, Oke-Padre, Ilesa.

50. Babs Fafunwa: History of Education in Nigeria, (London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1978) pp. 70-72. In this regard Babs Fafunwa, observes: "Muslims Education in Nigeria was regarded not because the Muslims were unprogressive or because their religion was opposed to formal education but because "education" in those days tended to mean Bible Knowledge, Christian Literature, some Arithmetic, Language and Craft - all geared to produce Christians who could read the Bible".

51. The first of them was the Nawair-ul-Deen School, Odo-Iro, Ilesa founded in 1948; another was N.U.D. school opened in Otan-Ile in 1950 and N.U.D. School Igbaya; Ilesa was opened in 1952. Details of the N.U.D. in Ifesaland are found in chapter six.

52. Among the long existed Christian schools were Saint John's Iloro, Ilesa 1895; Methodist School, Otapete, Ilesa, 1918; Methodist, Otan-Ile, 1925 and the R.C.M. Ilesa 1921.

53. Ijesa Muslim Community, Ipade Evangelist J.J. Akande Ogbomoso at Alhaji Abdus Salam Bello Bolaji ni Ilesa (Ibadan, N.P.N., SW2/23. Isale Ijebu, May, 1964) pp 1-19.
54. The base of the two revivalists is Ojo-Oye, Ilesa where the largest church of the Apostolic Mission in Ijesaland stands till the time of writing this work.
55. The Imam usually gave believers encouraging words of advice during the Khutbah (sermons). Such words strengthened them to remain firm in the Islamic faith.
56. A type of musical instruments specially noted for the Muslim women among the Ijesa people. They use them on various occasions or ceremonies, such as on Muslim marriage, warming of houses, and naming ceremonies. This is against the costly invitation of the secular musicians.
57. He was a praise singer who used to encourage other Muslims by means of songs/ This earned him the name Ala-wi-ye one who explains matters perfectly and clearly.
58. "Osoro ko bi orin kewu", meaning: "As difficult to sing as Arabic song". The people said so just because they did not understand Arabic language. Interview with Alhaji Yahyah - 'Osokoyenikan', the (Na'ib), Deputy Chief Imam of Ijesaland on 18-10-84.
59. Alhaji Balogun Alli of Egbe-Idi Street, Ilesa in interview on 19th Sept., 1984. He was a staunch and ardent Muslim of about 80 years old. He is the Baba-Idini of Ijesaland.
60. Saint John's Church Iloro, Ilesa, was completed and dedicated for use in 1888 while the Ilesa Central Mosque was completed in 1901.

61. "Opo eniyan ni ko lani esin Islam ni igbana nitoripe won qba si esin jeun-jeun", meaning "Many people did not have regard for the religion Islam at the time because they considered it to be a religion for personal advantage". Alhajj Amodu Balogun Adeyemi the Chief Imam of Ilesha in an interview on 25-10-84, re-emphasised this view as one of the points that militated against the acceptance, propagation and progress of Islam in the town.

Alhajj Alliyu Aroke-Oja, the Chief Imam of Ijesaland Tijani Awosanmi of Okesa and Alhajj Dauda of Imo, all in Ilesha in interviews on 4-4-85, 5-4-85 and 6-6-85 respectively confirmed the idea.

62. Uf.I.L. C.M.S. CA2/056, James Johnson's letter to Secretary C.M.S., 29th April, 1875. The books referred to are: The Qur'an and Ahadith.
63. The death of such Pilgrims among whom were Rajmi Bewaji Alfa Dadani Olokodana, Momodu Dugbe and Pari Lawal, the Chief Imam of Ilesha at the time, struck fear in Muslims of Ilesha in particular and Ijesa Muslims in general.
64. The preachers referred to both the Holy Qur'an and other Islamic books whenever they preached to the Muslims in Ilesha and in the district towns to let them know what the Qur'an says about pilgrimage to Makkah. Among such Quranic passages are: Chapter 2, verse 196.

... واتموا الحج والعمرة لله "

Translation: "And complete the Hajj or Umra in the service of Allah".

Chapter 3, verse 97 in part reads:

... والله على الناس حجة البيت

Translation: "... pilgrimage therefore is a duty men owe to Allah"

65. Ajakale arun gaga - An influenza epidemic known as gaga when many people died. "Gaga" is derived from the physical appearance of the affected persons who would be unconscious and walked straggleredly. Chief Obanla of Ijesaland who claimed to be eight years old during the period, (1917/1918), said in one of the interviews with him on 25-10-84 that the influenza epidemic was the result of the filthy habit of the people in the area. He added further, that the people died of various types of diseases such as dysentery, dyspecia, diarrhoea and vomiting.
66. The Ijesa Muslims did not use wooden coffins at the time because they held Qur'an 20 verse 55 tenaciously believing that if corpses were put into wooden coffins they would not come in contact with the earth as the Quranic verse in the above indicates. In addition to this view many of the Muslim teachers and preachers among the Ijesa people at the time preached against the use of wooden coffins. Salient among them was one Alufaa Tiamiyu Akewula, an Islamic teacher and preacher from Ilorin. He was said to have stayed in Ilesa from 1910 to 1922. He based his views or preachings on the report and the practice during the life of the prophet. Ibn Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah said, "Put on your white dresses, because it is the best of your dresses and coffin your dead bodies therewith" Hadith 35 of Alhajj Maulana Fazlul Ibn Majah. For more details refer to, Alhajj Maulana Fazlul Karim: Al-Hadis Book III, (Lahore, The Book House, nd.) pp. 29-45.

Another view expressed by M.A. Rauf is that the dead body should be placed on a bier or in a coffin in front of those who will participate in the Janazah, prayer. For more details see: M.A. Rauf: Islamic Religious and Moral Instruction, Book 3 (Lagos, Islamic Publications Bureau, 1980), p. 48.

It is important to note here that Ijesa people began to use wooden coffins for their corpses just about 1964 when one Alhajj Aremase Karim, a popular Muslim preacher came to Ilesa. During his six year stay he was able to persuade the Muslim community in Ijesaland to be using wooden coffins because it would eventually decay and the dead body will become dust. It is also important to state that costly and decorated wooden

Footnote 66 (Contd.)

coffins are not recommended for the Muslim corpses. The wooden coffin should be of plain colour is the recommended type and it must not be nailed on the top. Steel coffins or coffins with metal or copper decorations are not recommended for the use of Muslim corpses.

67. R.A. Smith: Op.cit., pp 18-20.
68. In this context it denotes the worship of two or more contrary gods or ancestors and it is really unIslamic because it does not show purity of faith. See: Qur'an Surat-ul-Baqarah. (Chapter 2, verse 200ff).
69. Many of the Muslim students who used the dangling cross of Christ did not take it seriously or realise its implications. Interviews with the Muslim students in both The Apostolic Teacher's College, Oke-Oye, Ilesa and The Government Teacher's College Ilesa on 8-8-85 and Divisional Teachers' College, Ijebu-Jesa on 10-11-85 revealed this assertion.
70. This was a constant occurrence in Ibolan, Ilese and Iwara respectively because Islam and Muslims were looked down upon in the early days of Islam in the towns. Things have now changed both Islam and Muslims are now recognised. Muslim males are now marrying non-Muslim females into Islamic fold.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0

PRACTICE OF ISLAM AMONG IJESA PEOPLE

This chapter discusses the general practice of Islam among the Ijesa people to show their faith, Iman in Allah and Mu'amalat, their ways of worship as Muslims.

Iman is Faith or Belief in Allah and Ibadah is an Arabic word derived from 'abada, meaning to worship Allah¹. It portrays that Allah is Master and that man is His slave and whatever a slave, (a man), does in obedience to and for the pleasure of his Master, (Allah) is Mu'amalat. The Islamic concept of Mu'amalat is very wide. If one is able to free oneself from vulgar speech, falsehood, malice - abuse and one speaks the truth and talks godly things and does all because God has so ordained one to do so, one has performed an act of good deed. Furthermore, if one obeys the law of God in letter and spirit in one's commercial or economic affairs and abides by it in one's dealings with one's parents, relatives and friends and those who come in contact with one, verily all these activities of one are Mu'amalat. Helping the poor and the destitute, giving food to the hungry, serving the afflicted persons and if all these are done not for any personal gain but only to seek the pleasure of God, they are nothing short of religious deeds (Mu'amalat) that attract rewards from Allah.

Both Iman and Mu'amalat are the basis of religious practices in Islam. Generally, Iman is belief in Oneness of Allah while Mu'amalat is the root of practices in Islam. The practices as expected start from the Mosque without mixing any other thing with the worship of Allah. Iman is the first pillar of Islam while al-salat, (obligatory prayer) is second. Therefore the performance of al-salat expected to be in any clean ^{place} /and is to be offered only to God.² To this the Holy Qur'an the main source of Islam in Surat-ul-Jinn, Chapter 72 verse 18 reads:

"... وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا ."

Translation:

"And the places of worship are for Allah (alone) so invoke not anyone along with Allah".

Islamic practices are generally demonstrated in the ways and manners one carries out the religious obligations of the whole five pillars on which Islam is built: Al-Salat, Zakat (Legal alms-giving) Sawm, (Fasting in the month of Ramadan, and Hajj, (Pilgrimage to Makkah) and Iman which is the pivot of them all. If any of the five pillars in the above is not well done or practised by any believer it means he is not a Muslim per se because Islam as religion is firmly built on them.³

It has become apparent therefore that the first and the most important principle of Islam which serves as the bedrock on which Islam is built is faith. This faith is the whole edifice of all - comprehensive basis of temporal and spiritual life of human being. To this, the prime belief of a Muslim, is the belief in the existence of the one and only one Supreme Being, Allah. All other Beliefs are derived from and are subsidiary to this one belief only. Further more all the ethical and temporal rules that govern society emanate from Allah, the Subject of this belief. Everything that exists has its beginning from and returns to Allah only.

The general practices of all these pillars of Islam and their peculiarities, (in some cases) among the 'Osomali' - traders, Ijesa people are treated in this chapter as we shall see below:

4.1. Iman.

Faith is a full knowledge of God and unshakable belief in Him. Iman, the Arabic word which is rendered in English as faith, literally means 'to know, to belief' and to be convinced beyond the least shadow of doubt. Faith, thus, is firm belief arising out of knowledge and conviction of Allah. Anyone who knows and reposes unshakable belief in the unity of Allah, in His Attributes, in His law and the revealed Guidance,

and in the Divine Code of Reward and punishment is al-Mumin, the faithful. The faith invariably leads man to a life of obedience and submission to the Will of Allah. It is very apparent that one who lives this life of submission is a Muslim. It therefore means that without faith, (Iman) no man can be a true Muslim. Faith, is therefore essential to Islam which is the very starting point, without which no beginning can be made. The relation of Islam to faith is the same as that of a tree to its seeds. The Holy Qur'an, the main book of Islam and a Book of books refers to this faith constantly⁴.

With all the points above in the minds of the nascent Muslims, preachers and teachers of Islam in Ijesaland they focussed their Islamic activities and preachings against polytheism which was very rampant in both Ilesa and its district at the time. It was a common practice of the people after their conversion they still took part in their family traditional worship whereas this is really against the principle of Islam which is worship of Allah alone and trust in Him⁵.

It was gathered that Yesufu (Yusuf) Faodi Awosanmi of Okesa Street, Ilesa remained a Muslim till he died in 1935 but he did not cease from some of his traditional practices

because he was an Ifa priest by profession⁶. The whole household of late Yusuf Faodi Awosanmi remains practising and staunch Muslims by 1985, except few out of his grand - children who were perhaps influenced by their Christian-mothers and one of the direct children who attended the Catholic Primary School, Ilesa. He from there became a Christian and took Francis as his name in place of his Muslim name, Fatai before he died.

As said earlier, in Chapter One, the general whorship, belief or faith of Ijesa people in idols before the advent of Islam was one of the problems which nascent Islam and early Muslims faced in Ijesaland. It did not only interfere with their Islamic faith but corrupted it. It was a real task for the early Muslim leaders of Ijesaland to straighten the crude faith of the early Muslims in both Ilesa and its environs. The Muslim preachers and teachers were reported to have held series of meetings with the Muslim leaders on how to improve the peculiar attitudes of Muslims in Ijesaland to their faith. The Muslim community in the whole of Ijesaland was reported to have attempted to revolt against the Muslim teachers and preachers sometimes between 1908 and 1910 when some Muslims emphasised that Islam could not detach them completely from

their families, their traditional practices or their annual family feasts which was expressed in a song⁷ that was widely sung throughout the area.

After the meetings of the Muslim teachers and preachers with the Muslim leaders individually and atimes in groups, they decided to improve their teachings and preachings because they thought that it was because the early Muslims had a shallow knowledge of Islam that they had a mixed idea about Allah and dilluted faith. They therefore began almost a house to house, town to town preaching throughout Ijesaland with emphasis on the Oneness of God which is the pivot of Islam. By the time the teachers of Islam formed a group under their leader Alufaa (Alfa), Arckomase who was considered an orator, and a true Muslim. According to some of my informants among whom were Pa Jinadu Eese of Ipetu-Ijesa the preachers formed a team so as to teach the same principles at nearly the same time to their listeners⁸.

In addition to the improvement of their teaching method they taught their listeners to memorise Surat-ul-Ikhlās in addition to Surat-ul-Fatihah so as to aid them in their faith and in their understanding of Oneness of Allah. The preachers took the pain to explain the contents of the Surat-ul-Ikhlās,

Chapter 112 of the Holy Qur'an which teaches the pivot of Islam to both Muslims and potential ones⁹.

The team of preachers added another dimension to their method of preaching. Right from that time every new convert into Islam who was known to be an adherent of Traditional Religion or a worshipper of an ancestor was asked to bring the image of such an ancestor to the central Mosque of the town or an open place where a Mosque did not exist at the time to be burnt in the presence of others. First, to deter others and secondly so as to prevent the convert from worshipping the idol any more. This method helped the Muslim body in Ijesaland because Muslims began to worship the living Allah-among others in the Mosque or to observe the obligatory prayers in their houses. The system really yielded a good dividend to the Muslim group, not only that the people who were already converted into Islam were having unshakable faith many more converts were recorded. This was perhaps why the Christians resorted to the type of system during their revival of 1930¹⁰ in Oke-Oye, Ilesa.

In modern years up to the time of writing this work staunch Muslims are still members of some social groups in each of the district towns of Ilesa, like in Ilesa itself. In these societies are Christians while in a few cases there are adherents of African Traditional Religion. The defence here from some of the informants

is that non-religious matters are discussed in such societies -- it is fully social matters where they think generally on the progress and smooth running of the towns. In the light of this the youths are forming religious societies: Muslim student society, Deen-ul-Hag, and Sheriff Guard among others as we shall see in chapter seven. Consequently Muslims in Ijesaland are no more soliciting favours from the inanimate objects, called gods¹¹.

4.2. Al-Salat, (The Obligatory Prayers)

Al-Salat is the most primary and the most important of the obligations Muslims owe to Allah. It is also one of the most outstanding ways in which a Muslim can demonstrate his Mu'amalat or worship of Allah, the Supreme Being who has absolute control over man and all things. Man only proposes, God disposes. Therefore in addition to making an effort, man has to pray for guidance and success in whatever he does, this of course is du'a.

In Islam the basic relation between God and man is that of the Creator and the created. The purpose of which man is created is to worship Allah. Man is free and has direct access to Allah to make requests for his well being.

This is very clear in that many of the verses of the Holy Qur'an are in prayer form. In addition to the five daily prayers,

prayers still range from worldly matters to the seeking of Allah's forgiveness and other matters of the Here-after-. All these are offered during Du'a.

In Islam there are the five daily obligatory prayers known as al-Salat and there are prescribed times for the observation of each of the prayers¹².

With the teachings and good examples of the introducers of Islam to Ijesaland, the people knew the value of al-Salat. It is pertinent to state here that right from the start when Islam was first introduced to Ijesaland Muslims in this area chose to observe al-Salat individually in their homes, places of work, on their farms or in shops more than observing them in Mosques. This is not unexpected because many of them were farmers or traders who would be at their places of work during the greater hours of the day. But they took it upon themselves to observe both Subh and Ishah prayers congregationally, in the Mosque where it existed or in a Muslim leader's house where a Mosque was not erected. In some of the big towns of Ijesa where there were Muslim traders and Hausa people the five daily prayers were said to be observed in the Mosques¹³. Up till the present time, worshippers are always larger in the Mosques during both Subh and Isha prayers. This is one of the peculiar conditions of Islam in Ijesaland. The Muslims

believe that they must beg Allah for guidance and thank Him for His protections congregationally during Subh and Isha prayers respectively.

The people (Muslims in this area) place premium on the two prayers because of personal reasons and convenience. First, in the morning prayer they usually pray for success or gains in their business and safety throughout their journeys. In the same form they believe Allah must be thanked and praised for the blessings received during the day and requests for protection against the perils of the night. Furthermore, the people have much time both in the mornings before they leave for their various places of work and in the evening when they return. During these periods they have more time for the non-obligatory nafilats and supplications¹⁴. In other three daily prayers they may observe them in their places of work when in most cases two of them may be observed together. In most cases there will be no non-obligatory nafilats; whereas prayer is expected to be the first and sole duty of a Muslim. It is also a submission to God's will put into action. Man is created for the worship of Allah.

Okesa was the first Muslim area in Ilesa. There we heard of the nascent Muslims first. Among whom were Pa Seidu Ogun, the first Muslim known in Ijesaland, late Lawal Owoso and Alufaa (Alfa)



THE FIRST MOSQUE IN IJESALAND, OKESA, ILESA.
(BUILT BEFORE 1890) FIRST RENOVATED IN 1960.

Arokodana. This Okesa Mosque was the first Mosque built in Ilesa sometimes before 1890. The worshippers gave respect to their Imam and his deputy. They follow Islamic teaching that emphasises obedience and respect to men in authority¹⁵.

The situation is not the same at the Ilesa Central Mosque where there are many Hausamen who are traders or petty artisans who stationed permanently around the Mosque to display their materials of trade. Some other Muslim men and women who have their shops, stores or stalls around the Mosque usually observe their Zuhr, Asr and Maghrib prayers in the Central Mosque while the Subh and Ishah prayers are observed at home or in the various ratib Mosques near to their houses.

In places like Igangan, Osu, Itagunmodi, Araromi-Itagunmodi all in Atakumosa Local Government Area, Muslims here accept the obligatory prayers as a duty. Majority of the Muslims here except in Igangan are non-natives. They are either from Ikirun or Osogbo while others are from Iwo, Ede and various towns from Kwara State¹⁶. In other towns such as Iperindo, Eti-Oni, Owode, Odogbo Ile-Igbo, Ipole, Irogbo and Odo, all in the same Atakumosa Local Government area, Muslims are scanty and where there were no Mosques except Owode¹⁷ it is only during Isha time that worshippers turn up in a large number. This is because the majority of Muslims here are either farmers or labourers and women

petty traders who usually leave home very early in the morning for their places of work. Interviews revealed that they prefer observing Subh prayer in their houses while Zuhr, Asr and Maghrib prayers are observed in their various places of work and return home for Isha' in the Mosque.

From the series of interviews conducted in Erin-Oke, Otan-Ile and Ibokun it became evident that Muslims in the area are devoted believers. The deputy Imam of Erin-Oke, Alhajj Ibrahim Olorunkosebi reiterated that the Muslims in Erin-Oke place much emphasis on the worship most especially in the observation of their prayers. Mallam Isimailah Kehinde of Otan-Ile remarked that majority of the Muslims in the town are either farmers or traders and as such they find it difficult to observe their prayers in the Mosque but the Juma'at service is a must for every Muslim to attend.

Generally, in order to encourage believers to attend their prayers in the Mosque some of the Mosques in Ilesa have devised a method of recording the attendance during each of the obligatory prayers and Juma'at service.

Special groups in each Mosque in both Ilesa and the district towns go out occasionally to visit either absentees or sick members. During the period supplications are usually offered. This is done in order to encourage believers to have believe in the efficacy of prayer. It also demonstrates oneness and solidarity of the Muslims¹⁸.

4.3. Juma'at Service

In all, great rewards have been promised in the traditions about divine service on Friday¹⁹. Of course, no day in the week is set aside in Islam for exclusive devotion to God. This is unlike Christianity and Judaism when Sunday or Saturday is given prominence out of the seven days in the week. All the same Islam lays down that Friday is a special day of the week and there is an hour in it which is an opportune moment for acceptance of supplications.²⁰ The hour, of course, is not known. It may only be searched for in the whole of Friday.

Juma'at prayer is (wajib)²⁴ and takes place of Zuhr prayer. Every believer is commanded to attend the Juma'at prayer. This is clearly stated in the Holy Qur'an²². The Quranic verse shows that Friday prayer is obligatory upon all Muslims who are not sick or insane. Beginning from the inception of Islam into Ijesaland the teachers of Islam and preachers in the area did not only teach the believers the importance and values of Friday they also demonstrated its importance. Before the erection of the Okesa Mosque, the first in Ijesaland, the Muslims used to have their congregational prayers and Juma'at service behind their leader, Sedu, (Zaid) at Ogun's Compound at Oke-Esa (now Okesa) while others at Egbe -Idi used to hold theirs in Suberu (Zubayr) Kanmodi's Compound at Egbe-Idi both in Ilesa. Mallam Tijani Olojede of Otan-Ile used to hold his obligatory prayers and

Juma'at service with as few as four people in the rectangular piece of land he carved out at the Idi-Odan Street in Otan-Ile. In the same manner Alfa Amodu Fagbamila of Ibokun and his family used to hold the Juma'at service in his compound as early as 1900. It was also reported that the first Muslim teacher, Alfa Oko Onadi and his sister plus another man who was an Ilorin trader²³ used to observe their Friday prayer and service alone in Alfa Oko Onadi's verandah²⁴.

Throughout Ijesaland, at the time, congregational observation of Juma'at prayer was emphasized by all the Islamic teachers and preachers. This was why every Muslim community sought for learned Muslim leaders who could lead them in prayers. In Ilesa one Disu Kanneke was sought for and brought to Ilesa from the sea side by Zaid Ogun. Eventually, Disu Kanneke became the first formal Chief Imam of Ilesa, 1896 - 1901 as stated in chapter two. The Muslim from Ipetu-Ile, a town of about five kilometres away from Ibokun used to come to Ibokun for their Juma'at prayer until sometimes after 1910 when Alfa Dakun started going from Ibokun to lead Muslims in prayers in Ipetu-Ile. This continued until around 1920 when they had a qualified Imam of theirs, Alfa Bello Odebode who reigned as the Chief Imam from 1920 to 1939²⁵.

Things were not very different in Ipetu-Ijesa, Igangan, Iwara, Osu, and Imesi-Ile where Muslims could not hold Juma'at services or prayers congregationally for a long time, until when they were able to secure able Muslim leaders who were really knowledgeable in both Islam and Arabic to lead them.

'The search for the learned leaders was the outcome of the Muslim preachers and teachers' emphasis on the value and importance placed on the Juma'at service and prayer. Really, the emphasis of the teachers and preachers yielded high dividends for nascent Islam because by having qualified Imams the teaching of Islam did improve and became a constant event and no more distant like that of the itinerant teachers who were not stationary. Theirs was to preach and leave the place within a very short time.' 'The ubiquitous teachers' teachings were not only unauthentic like those of the Imams they were diluted for their personal and selfish ends. Since majority of them were professional Alfas, they laid much emphasis on activities that could swell their purses more than what could win for Islam a better name, rather many of their activities caused real enigma and setbacks to the nascent Islam.

Generally, Muslims in Ijesaland took a keen interest in Juma'at service and prayer. They did it to such an

extent that Fridays used to appear as feast days among them. During the early days of Islam in Ijesaland Muslims almost paid more attention to social aspects of as-salat than to the religious aspects of it. Ijesa as a group has much love for festivities and merry-making. This aspect of their life was transferred into the Juma'at service and prayer. But with the constant preachings of the early teachers of Islam against irreligious deeds and outward shows in worship things began to change. It was reported that Alfa Alawiye one of the most outstanding preachers of the time attacked such men and women who were indulged in buying extravagant uniform dresses for almost every Friday service. As a Muslim preacher and praise-singer he formulated many songs against persons and groups of Muslims who placed a great deal of premium on dresses and dancing to Mosques almost on every Friday²⁶.

In the past, between 1900 and 1920 Muslims all over Ijesaland were very regular and punctual during Juma'at service and prayer. Things are not the same in recent times, in many of the Mosques in Ijesaland. From personal experience and visits to Mosques during the compilation of this work in Ilesa, Ibokun, Ijebu-Jesa, Ipetu-Ijesa, Igangan, Iwara among others Muslims in their central Mosques did not come until after the Khutbah when as-salat would have

been said. Another point noticed was that many of the late comers would like to sit in the front causing disorder and unnecessary noise. It was not only the over-stepping of the necks of other worshippers that was bad in this practice but it did not show democracy, absence of distinction between the high and low, the rich and the poor, the noble and the ignoble which Islam is out to preach²⁷. There is also another dimension to the noise usually made by the congregation during the Khutbah in that much attention is placed on collection of the weekly Sadaqat by the collectors who disturb the congregation with the sound of coins in the various containers in addition to their loud and repeated saying of "Fi Sabil Lillahi" (in the way of Allah) when alms givers are dropping their pieces of coins into the containers.

The Imams, on their own, usually follow the regulations or rules of Khutbah: They usually deliver the sermon before the prayer begins. In order to keep the solidarity the language of the sermon is always that of the congregation, Yoruba sometimes Ijesa dialect is used to convey real meanings of what the Imam wishes to impart to the audience.

From observations the congregation is usually noisy and rowdy after prayers on Fridays.

Members often become impatient as every one wants to leave the Mosque for his or her shops, stores or stalls to resume buying and selling. The haste in going back would be to gain what he or she thought he has lost during the short period of about thirty minutes or an hour he spent in the Mosque for the Friday service. As noticed in many Mosques after the Friday prayers women were always calm and patient. They usually remain behind and listen to possible general announcements and advice of the Imam. It was also noticed in Ilesa, Ikeji-Ile and Ibodi that majority of the Muslim children are only in the Mosque to play. The situation was different in Otan-Ile, Ibokun and Erin-Oke where children both males and females appeared very sober and very attentive during sermons by their Imams. Majority of the children who were school children were with their rosaries²⁸. Many of them waited patiently for their parents to help them carry their praying mats or animal skins.

Generally, there has been renewed efforts since 1965 to regenerate and create awareness of Islam and piety for Allah among the Muslims of the area in general and Ilesa in particular. The Chief Imam of Ilesa and the ratibi Imams held series of meetings on how to improve the moral standard of the Muslim body. They came to conclusions that the Muslim

leaders themselves should live above board. Friday Khutbahs should be based on Imam belief in God. Parents were also advised to educate their children on importance of Islam. Teachers of Muslim schools were also told to put more efforts to teaching of Islam with salient moral lessons. By the end of 1970 a group of Muslim leaders, including men and women under the leadership of Alhajj Saliu Famuyide were mandated to visit the Ijesa Muslim Grammar School to help the Muslim body by encouraging the real teachings of Islam by seeing that the children leave on time to attend the Friday service and prayer with their parents. This has started to yield good result in that children are now more sober in their various Mosques not only on Fridays, but also on ordinary days²⁹.

4.4. Mosque administration

Islam as a religion recognises orderliness and obedience to men in authority and all laid down rules and regulations. All these are done in obedience to Allah: See the Holy Qur'an 4.59: "O ye who believe! Obey God, and obey the Apostle and those charged with authority among you...." With all these behind their minds Muslims in Ijesaland set up Mosque functionaires.

The mosque is the centre of all round Islamic activities

since Islam considers every action in the world as 'Ibadat or worship if done with the object of pleasing Allah, every good action can be lovely done within the Mosque. For this reason no separate house for each item of national or community's work is required. This is to say that the Mosque can be used, first, as a place of prayer, as a school for teaching and as an office for secretarial work and as a forum for political discussions. The Mosque is therefore not only the spiritual centre of the Muslims but also their political, educational and social centre.

The first functionary in the history of Islam was Prophet Muhammad. He was the supreme ruler of the religious as well as temporal affairs of the state. He was the law giver, Commander-in-Chief, the Chief Justice and the Head of the entire administrative machinery. He also regulated social matters, formulated laws in the light of the Qur'an and enforced them. He also acquired territories and administered them³⁰. The Prophet, apart from being the Imam gave the interpretations of the revelations he received. He thus became the Mufasssir (Commentator of the Qur'an). He explained seemingly ambiguous passages to his companions. Such explanations as well as answers to some questions asked by the companions were written down by them to form the commentaries of such passages. This gave the tabi'un³¹ the opportunity of understanding the text of the Qur'an.

It is therefore necessary to have Mosque functionaires so as to aid the smooth running of the Mosque. Although their appointments are based on religion they will still carry out some social functions. It is this that motivates me to examine the operation of Islamic religious and social functionaires of the Mosque in Ijesaland.

4.5. The Islamic functionaires in Ijesaland.

For effective administration of the Mosques in both Ilesa and its district towns certain officers with specific duties feature prominently. The first of these is the Chief Imam commonly known as Lemomu who is the head of the Muslim community³². The Imam leads the prayers in the Mosque. The congregation silently follows him in the recitation of Quranic verses and prostrations. The Imam as the spiritual leader of the Muslims is expected to possess some sterling qualities that will aid him in his functions. He must be knowledgeable, healthy, and friendly among other virtuous qualities. He should have the support of his people. This was one of the reasons that aided the incumbent Chief Imam of Ijesaland in selecting him in 1985. The Chief Imam of Ilesa, at the time of this compilation was specially noted for his very sound knowledge of Arabic, the Quran and Ahadith³³.

Also the Chief Imam of Ibokun at the time of compilation of this thesis in 1986 was the oldest and eldest of all the Muslim Imams of Ijesaland. He too is respected for his deep knowledge of both Arabic and Qur'an plus Ahadith. This was confirmed during personal interviews with him. He had one time or the other been a teacher of almost all the Muslim leaders of Ijesaland at the time of writing this thesis. The Chief Imam of Ilesa during an interview with him even confirmed the fact that he studied at a time under him.

Generally, in both Ilesa and its district towns the appointments of Chief Imams are strictly selective there is no room for hereditary succession to Imamship. But those to be appointed must possess certain qualities that include piety, manhood, sanity, maturity and 'knowledge'. An Imam must have the knowledge of this which make a Salat perfect or void. He must also have a knowledge of what are recited in prayers³⁴. Moreover, incase there are more than one candidates for the post certain criteria shall be used in determining the most qualified of them. On this, Abu Mas'd report the Prophet (S.A.W) as saying:

The Imam of the Muslims should be
Such a one as possesses the deepest
Knowledge and understanding of the
Qur'an; if all are equal in this
The Imam should be the one who has

The deepest knowledge of the Sunnah
 And Shari'ah; if all are equal in
 This, he should be the one who migrated
 first; (from Makkah to Madinah)
 And if all of the men are equal in this too,
 then the one who is senior most in age³⁵.

"The deepest knowledge of the Qur'an here implies that the Imam should have a special inclination and taste for the Qur'an: He should have committed a large portion of it to memory and should be able to recite it well, and have a deep insight into its meanings and contents. He must have understood and absorbed its message very well. As it happened in Otan-Ile and silently in Ilesa where there were more than a candidate, then he should be the one who has offered maximum sacrifices for the sake of Islam and upheld its cause through all vicissitudes of life such as emigrants did from Makkah to Madinah.

If it is recalled here when Islam was first introduced among the Ijesa people, the first Chief Imams in most towns were those who possessed sound knowledge of the Qur'an, Arabic, Islam or Ahadith and most of them were non-indigenes. In Ijesaland there had been minor struggles in some cases for the post of the Chief Imam, such struggles and competitions were amicably settled so as to avoid dissensions.

Reference cannot but be made again to the long interregnum in Otan-Ile for a period of almost ten years, 1933 to 1943 before an acting Chief Imam was appointed. There was a struggle between two people who wished to occupy the vacant stool of the Chief Imam left after the death of Alfa Tijani, the first Chief Imam of the town. Alfa Bello and Alfa Audu Alawusa were presented by two different Muslim groups. This led to a feud among the Muslims in general. It is to be recalled here that Alfa Audu Alawusa deputised for Alfa Tijani before he died. On that point a group of the Muslims in the town supported him while the other group supported Alfa Bello for his Islamic and Arabic knowledge; but supporters of Alfa Audu argued that both Alfa Audu and Alfa Bello were among the pupils who studied directly under Alfa Tijani and that they were both knowledgeable. The Muslim community of the town came to a stalemate in the selection of who would be the Chief Imam. It was left till 1943 when a reconciliation committee of Muslim leaders from both Ilesa and Ikirun came to appoint Audu Alawusa's son, Jinadu Alawusa as the acting Chief Imam pending the selection of the Chief Imam. As it would be expected there was no full co-operation in the Mosque and among the entire Muslim community as well. Another dawn of peaceful and final settlement came through the activities of Alhajj Olorisaje from Ibadan who was an Arabic teacher in Otan-Ile, in the Nawair-Ud-Deen Primary School between 1942 and 1948.

He tried to unite the entire Muslim community of the town and by organising a committee of leaders through whose efforts Alfa Gbadamosi, (Badmus) was unanimously selected as the second Chief Imam of the town in 1949 the year when the two former competitors died³⁶. In Ilesa there was no such competition and struggle for the vacant stool left by Alufaa Pari Lawal who died in Makkah in 1910. His deputy Alufaa Abdullahi Akorode was unanimously appointed as the Chief Imam of Ilesa. At his death in 1946, his deputy Alhajj Alliyu Amo-oja was elected as the Chief Imam of the town. He was selected because of his deep knowledge of the Qur'an. In all, there were no known disturbances or struggles for the post of Imams in Ijesaland since a potential Imam would have been showing his qualities before the death of a reigning Imam. As stated earlier all the minor struggles were peacefully and amicably settled without referring them to the Muslim community.

The Chief Imam is to the Muslim community as the Oba is to the town in his political and religious authority. Despite this fact the Oba is recognised as the temporal head by the Chief Imam while the Oba in return is to recognise the Chief Imam as the spiritual head of his people, (Muslims). The turbaning of the Chief Imam is only witnessed by the Oba as a political head. He does not have any authority in the selection, enthroning or turbaning³⁷; unlike in Ijebu-Ode where the Chief

Imam elect is presented to the Awujale officially as a customary approval of practice³⁸. The Owa Obokun of Ijesaland is only invited as the most special guest of honour to witness the occasion. His presence is ceremonial involving no religious rites in any way³⁹.

4.5.1 Na'ib

The Naib (the Deputy Chief Imam) is next officer in ascending order and importance. This naib is known and called Noibi among the Ijesa people. The appointment is almost the same as that of the Chief Imam or Imam in ratibi Mosques. The appointment is also by strict selection bearing in mind the qualities of the Chief Imam as stated in the above. His name will later be presented to the Mosque committee for ratification and to the entire members of the Muslim community. In most of the quarter Mosques visited there were no deputies⁴⁰. It is not automatic in Ijesaland for the Naib to become the Chief Imam in the Central Mosque or Imam in the ratibi Mosque where the Imam exists. This is why there are always some minor struggles for the post once an imam dies. This is a typical problem about selection of Imams in Ijesaland that needs overhauling as I suggest in the conclusion of this work. Among the so called qualities followed in Ijesaland is knowledge of the Qur'an, old age or experience, usefulness and acceptability to the community. Here some sort of politics comes in because both past usefulness and acceptability to the community

are difficult to measure.

4.5.2 Mufassir

In Ilesa the third in rank is the Mufassir who is usually the head of the learned class, the Alfas. He conducts Quranic Tafsir, (interpretations of the Holy Qur'an), most especially during the month of Ramadan. This system is also followed by each of the ratibi Imams of both Ilesa and the surrounding towns north and south of it. The only noticeable difference is that the number in each class is less in the quarter than in the central Mosque. He is known and called Alufaa, Tafusiru, (Alfa Tafsir) by the people. In most cases in Ijesaland the quarter Imams are always the Mufassirs. The case of Ilesa town is very interesting in that both the Chief Imam and his deputy were Mufassirs because both of them have the sound knowledge of the Holy Qur'an, the Ahadith and Islamic Jurisprudence.

As from 1910 in addition to the fact that they should possess knowledge both of them were expected to be religious and pious. But it was said that late Alufaa Akorede Abdullahi enjoyed the support of the Muslim community more than Alliyu Aroke-oja did. First Abdullahi was older and more experienced than Alliyu. The Muslim community agreed to give Alufaa Akorede the chance. It was also said that Alliyu had not been officially appointed as the deputy of the Chief Imam at the time. It can be cited here that in all Mosques visited there

were no known or recognised Katib⁴¹.

4.5.3. Ajanasi

Ajanasi (the assistant of the Mufassir) is another officer in the Mosque among the Ijesa Muslims. This office of course, is not strictly permanent. Every learned person in the Qur'an and Arabic or Hadith can be called upon. In most cases some can hold the office for a long period even throughout one's life. Alfa Tiamiyu Sarumi has been the assistant of the Mufassir in Ilesa Central Mosque for the past ten years. The same rotational system in the appointment of the assistant of the Mufassir operates in almost all other towns of Ijesaland except in a place where there is not more than one competent person. Such cases happened in a few of the towns visited such as in Ipetu-Ile, Iwara, Odo, Odogbo and Ibodi. People who have been acting as the assistants of the Mufassirs in these towns have been doing so for a long time ranging from five to ten years without any hope of changing them since there are no other competent persons to replace them.

4.5.4. Arowasi

'Arowasi' is another official of the Mosque among the Ijesa Muslims. He is also seen in the central Mosque. He assists other officials of the Mosque by helping them to repeat their words whenever there is any occasion for it. The holder of this

office does not need to be a scholar. All he needs is good and loud voice in addition to being a good Muslim. Since he follows the Imam about most especially on religious occasions, he is known and called by a derogatory name by the Ijesa people, Ole ntele Alfa, meaning (the lazy man who follows the learned one). Almost all the quarter Mosques visited have this officer who acts as the megaphone of the Imam⁴². 'Agbona Imam', is the carrier of the staff of Office of the Chief Imam. He is also seen at the Central Mosque with the Chief Imam on official and religious occasions. The staff of office of the Chief Imam is an insignia of his office. By custom it is usually presented to him by a learned Muslim scholar, or an Imam of greater personality on the day of his turbaning. The incumbent Chief Imam of Ijesaland received his staff of office from the Are Musuluni of Yorubaland, Alhajj Aziz Arisekola on 20th of October 1985 at the Ilesa central Mosque when he was turbaned as the Chief Imam. The carrier of the staff of office of the Chief Imam carries it every Friday and on both 'Id-ul-Fitr' and 'Id-ul Adha' days respectively. This office too does not need any special requirement in terms of Islamic education or Arabic Language. He needs to be a good Muslim because whenever the Chief Imam appears in the Mosque it is the staff carrier who will first be seen.

The holder of the post is always proud of himself as an important religious functionary in the town because of his presence at all religious occasions where the Chief Imam officiates he is there by the virtue of his office. Information confirms it that this carrier of the staff of office used to go in front of the Chief Imam whenever he walked to officiate and if he rode on a horse the carrier would also walk in front of him. In the modern times when the Chief Imam of Ijesaland rides in a car the carrier of the staff of office will still sit in front of the car with the driver. On getting down from the car the carrier will also be seen in front of the Chief Imam piloting the Chief Imam to his seat.

The remark needs to be made here that there is a difference between the staff of office of the Chief Imam which is an insignia of his spiritual position of his office. On the other hand the Owa Obokun's staff of office is his symbol of political authority and traditional royalty.

4.5.5. Mu'adhdhin

The Mu'adhdhin is the caller of believers to the Mosque whenever it is prayer time. His main duty is to invite the worshippers to the Mosque. He was, sometimes in the early period of Islam, an incense carrier because the Prophet was said to be accustomed to the burning of incense in Madinah Mosque. Bilal an Abyssinian negro was the first Mu'adhdhin⁴³. He is known and called Ladani or Dadani by the Ijesa people. The position of the Mu'adhdhin is important.

It is he who calls worshippers to prayers and at the same time he is responsible for the Iqamah⁴⁴. The Mu'adhdhin is expected to be physically and spiritually well. He should have a loud, and melodious voice. He must know and keep the times of each of the obligatory prayers. He must know the adhan, (the call to prayer) very well. He must be a person who can discern the direction of the qibla, the direction of the Holy Mosque in Makkah. In addition he must live near the Mosque and be able to wake up early to call believers to the morning prayer, al-subh. Upon all, he must be a good and practising Muslim.

In all Mosques visited throughout Ijesaland, this is the only office that the indigenes (Ijesa people) always hold.

There is also a type of Mosque committee which started to function in recent years. Partially there are representatives of some large quarter Mosques in Ilesa in the committee of the Central Mosque. Interviews revealed that the important personalities of the Central Mosque usually dominate their meetings. In other towns in Ijesaland there are also Mosque committees in each of the large district towns where people are selected to hold meetings, make plans and take decisions on

how to manage or run the Mosque affairs. This committee is responsible for the collection of voluntary donations, levies and gifts in the Central Mosque. Within the last few years, as from 1968 to be specific, members chose some officers to oversee the proper maintenance of the Mosque. The committee is again broken into different standing committees, like building, social and land committee. The building committee handles all building projects on behalf of the Muslim community. The building of some shops at Ereguru Street, Ilesa was handled by this committee when the maintenance committee handles the necessary repairs and renovation in the central Mosque. The quarter Mosques too are copying the central Mosque. Almost every quarter Mosque has various committees running and caring for different projects of the Mosque. The building of the Arabic schools in both Ibokun and Ipetu-Ijesa was handled by the building committees of the Central Mosques in the two towns. The maintenance of all electronic equipments of the Mosque is the sole responsibility of the social committee. The only important committee that is yet to evolve itself in Ijesaland is the Council of ratibi Imams in each of the towns and the Council of Chief Imams of all the towns in Ijesaland. If this is done there will be a central organisation which will lead to useful concerted efforts like those of the Christian body in Ijesaland⁴⁵.

4.5.6 Remunerations

All the offices listed above are confronted with one big problem and that is the remunerations for each of the officials. By 1968 and thereafter there was no visible regular means of livelihood for them. Although many of them were not engaged in secular duties, despite that they did not receive fine wages. They however, depended mostly on the subsistence from Zakat, (if paid at all) and Sadaqat (voluntary gifts). Whenever, there were social or religious ceremonies like marriages, funeral, and child-naming ceremonies, money and other donations collected are shared out among them. Any money collected is divided into six parts. The first part, is given to the Chief Imam while the second is shared among the Naib and most elderly but learned Baba Adiini (the patron of the Muslims). The third part will be sub-divided into two parts. The first half is given to Alfa Tafsir, (Mufassir) and his assistant, (the Ajanasi) while the remaining half will be shared among others, the Imam's echo (Arowasi), the caller to prayer, (the Hu'adhdhin) and the staff carrier of the Chief Imam. The remaining portion will be shared by other officers present⁴⁶ leaving a little portion into the coffers of the Mosque.

This system or method of sharing the money so collected among the Mosque functionaries in Ilesa is almost the same among

the Muslim officials throughout among the Yoruba Muslims in Yorubaland. The Muslim elites, most especially the educated ones began to frown at the method as from 1964 at the departure of Alhajj Akawa-Kowe - Alhajj Bolaji who gave rousing and hot challenges in his preachings with the Evangelist from Ogbomoso in 1964 as stated in chapter three above.

4.5.7 Zakat

Zakat is the third pillar and an obligation in Islam. Literally it means purification and technically it is contribution of property for the use of the poor the needy in the way of Allah as a sanctification of the remainder of the property. Historically, Zakat became an institution and compulsory duty on the first of Ramadan in the second year of Hijrah⁴⁷. Zakat is therefore not only a regular charity but a Sadaqah. It is also a command from Allah to all Muslims to pay the Zakat as it is compulsory for them to observe regular prayers (al-Salat). The Holy Qur'an chapter 2 verse 43 says "And bestead - fast in prayer; practise regular charity and bow down your heads with those who bow down."

Zakat is a state institution and also a contribution towards national fund for upliftment of the nation and other humanitarian works. It can be remembered that when the Holy Prophet assumed control of the government of the Muslim state he made Zakat a state institution. During the period both the governors and officers used to collect it and remit to the public treasuries of the state. This was continued even after the death of the Prophet because Abu Bakr, the first of the Orthodox Caliphs declared war against those who refused to pay⁴⁸ Zakat. This further confirms that payment of Zakat is compulsory on all Muslims.

Although the payment of Zakat is incumbent upon every Muslim, it is to be paid by those who are free, sane, and who are adults. Zakat is paid on goods of increase which are of two types - real and capable of measurement. According to Muallana Fazlul Karim real things are animals that can increase by having young ones while things of measurement are gold and silver. Things that are not capable of increasing the buildings and other personal effects. Things that can increase are subjects of Zakat while things that cannot increase are exempted from Zakat⁴⁹.

No Zakat is due on camels less than five or any flock of goats less than forty. At the same time there is no Zakat paid upon horses, asses, or mules that are not articles of commerce and no Zakat is due on young goats or camels which are under one year.

Generally, Zakat is due upon all articles of merchandises of whatever description when the value amounts to a Nisab⁵⁰.

Among the nascent Muslims in Ijesaland they preferred to reduce their materials to money for easier calculation and personal convenience in payment. It is worthy of note here that the money or materials paid as Zakat are not what Allah needs. Allah is above any want or desire. He in His Being Mercy promises every Muslim rewards manifold if he helps his brother. Since there is no basic condition for being thus rewarded every Muslim is expected to pay in the name of Allah without expecting nor demanding any worldly gains from the beneficiaries nor aim at making a name of a philanthropist.

Zakat is as basic to Islam as other forms of Ibadat. Its fundamental importance lies in the fact that it fosters in Muslims the qualities of sacrifice and rids them of selfishness and philology. Islam accepts within its fold only those who are ready to give away (pay Zakat), in God's way from their hardearned wealth willingly and without any temporal or personal gains.

Collectors of Zakat must be Muslims leaders who establish regular prayers and believe in God and the last day⁵¹. On the other hand the recipients of the objects of Zakat are among following: The poor, the needy, the officials over them, those whose minds are made to incline to truth, the ransoming of

captives, those in debts, and to be spent in the way of Allah and for the wayfarers⁵².

Right from the inception of Islam into Ijesaland the nascent preachers and teachers of Islam taught the importance and values of Zakat like other pillars of Islam to the Muslim converts. It was gathered during the field works that it was difficult for the Ijesa Muslims to pay Zakat regularly. But one Alfa Arekemase, one of the outstanding Muslim preachers tried to encourage the people to pay Zakat by referring to one of the traditions of the Prophet on the payment of Zakat⁵³. "Whose Allah gives wealth but who does not pay his Zakat, his wealth will be made to appear to him on the Resurrection Day to a huge bald snake having two fangs for it. It will be put round his neck on the Resurrection Day and then take hold of him with its two fangs. Afterwards it will say; I am your wealth, I am your hidden treasure⁵⁴. According to this source this tradition instilled willingness of paying Zakat in the believers rather than forcing them. The good spirit of paying Zakat continued up till very late in 1930 or early in 1940. After this period the Muslims suspected that collectors were diverting the materials of Zakat more to personal uses than to those who were expected to be potential recipients. One Alfa Omoreaye in Ibokun was said to have been wearing clothes collected as Zakat while an Ilorin teacher⁵⁵ of Islam in Otan-Ile was alleged to be spending money

collected for Zakat openly without the consent of the Muslim community of the town between 1935 - 1940. In Ilesa Alfa Alawiye was said to be going round houses of Muslims collecting what was said to be Zakat rather than Sadagat and spent such money and used some of the materials all by himself⁵⁶. Really, Alfa Alawiye was one of the propagators of Islam in Ijesaland in the early years of this century. He went round Ijesa towns to correct ill practices among the Muslim bodies in songs. One of many of his moral teaching or ill-correcting songs is as follows:

"Lai illa ila Allahu (2ce)
Ekute wole gbe lawani
Elimiran lo
Ile-aye le ri yen o"⁵⁷

Translation:

"There is no deity but Allah
 Mouse enters a house
 And carries a turban (of a believer) away
 That is how we see the world".

As from this period payment of Zakat became low for various reasons: The effect of the second world war affected a very large number of people including Muslims. Secondly, as from late in 1940s the Muslim Societies came up in Ijesaland and various religious activities that needed money to run came up. The payment of such levies affected the payment of Zakat by the same group of people.

Among such activities that involved payment of money was the payment of teachers' salaries in the newly established Muslim schools. Among such other reasons was the Zakat was thought not used appropriately because they were still levied whenever there was any work to be done such as building of the Mosque whereas Zakat is expected to be spent in the way of Allah. There was also general complaints that there was no good administration of the Zakat paid. In other words the payers did not trust the collectors.

It was gathered that things changed again when enlightened people among whom was late Alhajj Rahman Smith, Alhajj Ibrahim of Isona among others rose to re-educate people about the values of Zakat. It was also gathered people were selected to monitor the collection of Zakat. Among such people was Alhajj Sarumi Bazr 'Musa alias Olorunbasiri'⁵⁸.

In the recent years, only few people still pay the Zakat correctly because it is not easy for people to discern their Nisab from the whole of their capital. At the same time the rich people among the Muslims may not like to disclose their total wealth while they just pay any amount of money thought fit or they can afford as Zakat. Since they pay directly to the Chief Imam or Imams payers do not have full trust in the administration of the money or the materials so

collected. Up till the time of writing this work, the situation remained the same all over Ijesaland. On interview some Imams claimed to give or render the account of any Zakat paid to them to the group of selected leaders of their Mosques. This type of explanation did not satisfy the majority of the Muslims as revealed through the series of interviews⁵⁹. The difficulties confronting the people in payment of Zakat in this area include the inability to discern which of the goods increase and which do not increase. To them they do not own animals which increase by young ones if they have at all they are not for commercial purposes. Many who own houses in the past considered them as personal effects on what they were not to pay Zakat. Those who own houses in this modern time and give them out on rent basis still claim in most cases that the houses are personal effects. Invariably many people do not wish to pay Zakat today.

From the series of interviews throughout Ijesaland it has become clear that majority of people who still pay Zakat today are old people who are almost seventy years of age but capable. The fact remains that the amount such people pay is very small. The Chief Imam of Ibokun, Ijebu-Jesa, Otan-Ile and Igangan remarked that such amount of money and materials collected are always spent in the way of Allah while remaining amount of money and materials are given to the poor and needy people, widows

and aged people inclusive in the mosque⁶⁰.

It was also gathered that since majority of people are trying to avoid the payment of Zakat the various Muslim leaders, resorted to levying and launching for collecting money to revert the position of Islam in general in Ijesaland. Money realised from levies and such launchings are now used in building Mosques, Muslim Halls, buying of vehicles for the propagation of Islam. The encouragement for the payment of Zakat continues in Ijesaland even now that many youth organizations and societies are springing up; the value and importance of Zakat are been preached to the people in Mosques and in all Muslim gatherings.

Payment of Zakat is now taking a better shape in Ijesaland. Muslims are even advising fellow Muslims to resume the payment of Zakat. The basis of this type of advice is that they prefer payment of Zakat and voluntary donations and spending it in the way of Allah to launching which many religious Muslims in this area consider to be noise making and collection of money for Allah's work in an outward show which is irreligious⁶¹.

4.5.8 Ramadan

Fasting in the month of Ramadan is an institution in Islam. The injunction about fasting was revealed in the year 2 A.H.⁶²

Like prayer, the institution of fasting is kept alive as it is observed every year in the world of Islam and forms the regulating principles of entire Muslims' life. Islam abolished the former pantheistic idea of fasting and introduced a highly developed significance of it. The object of fasting in Islam is that Muslims may guard against evil and learn self discipline⁶³.

Ideally, the Chief object of fasting in Islam is to generate power in man which can control unruly passions that are roots of all evils and they can be regulated by the method of fasting. In case of excessive food and drink, passions or evils rear their heads and lead to commitment of tremendous havoc in the spiritual world.

From the time of introduction of Islam to Ijesaland the teachers and preachers of Islam laid emphasis on the importance and values of fasting in the month of Ramadan to the nascent Muslims. The usual practice of voracity of Ijesa people before the advent of Islam became abated among the Ijesa Muslims within a short period because of their fasting during the month of Ramadan. With their full concept of the values and importance of the Ramadan they became less in their physical weakness of the body and in their weakness of passion. God knows the medicines for passions and therefore He prescribed fasting. Fasting of Muslims does not profit Allah nor does

our eating a loss to Him; but when in His wisdom, He decreed fasting, He did it that Muslims who fast may be given health of body and soul⁶⁴.

Ijesa Muslims soon realised that fasting in the month of Ramadan inviolates the soul and enlivens it blind and dark just as excessive water destroys crops⁶⁵. Generally, fasting has been introduced as it kills the animals propensities in a man and in Islamic fasting there is nothing to be eaten or drunk from the early dawn till the sunset. The Ijesa Muslims, those converts from the Christian group in particular recognised the difference between the Muslim Ramadan fast and the Christians' lent where no dawn meal is taken and in most cases it was made personal and private too. It is not compulsory for every Christian to fast even during the forty day fast in the commemoration of Christ's fast (the Lent)⁶⁶.

Fasting in the month of Ramadan complements a basic teaching of Islam - 'equality' which the early teachers of Islam emphasised at the introduction of Islam to Ijesaland: "Men and women, old and young, the rich and the poor are all equal before Allah", was the general one of the Islamic teachers and preachers who came to this area at the time. This idea Alufan (Alfa) Alawiye rendered in a song which the people admired very much and served as alluring bait that attracted many converts into Islam

where equality reigns supreme⁶⁷. In a sense the Ramadan fast removes false sense of prestige. It also removes pride because a hungry man finds himself weak and naturally turns to one who is strong. The Ramadan fast made every Muslim in Ijesaland modest and turned his mind towards the almighty Allah for help.

Since many of the people were either traders or farmers they needed time for their duties. During the Ramadan fast many would have to wake up as early as 3 a.m. to prepare for the dawn meal. After taking the meal there was no more sleep, many of them would have to travel while some would have to go to their distant farms. All what they needed to do would be done with all their strength because they have taken the dawn meal while others who were non-Muslims would begin to search for food at around 9 a.m. The Muslim farmers would continue with their work. By the mid-day they would both retire to rest. The Muslim farmers in this way gained more secularly - in the terms of their farm work and products in that much of the time they might have spent in searching for food during the time they were to be working was devoted for their work. Secondly, up till this modern time, the Ramadan fast reduces the long period of sleep and thus a great time is saved for work. Every Ijesa person likes enjoyment frequent eating of pounded yam, and other worldly pleasures. The Ramadan fast checked all the excessiveness

among the Ijesa Muslims. Years, after years the lessons gained from the annual Ramadan, fast corrected such irreligious deeds of the people. By the time of writing this thesis most of the excessivenesses and passions are no more prominent among the Muslims in this area⁶⁸.

Before the advent of Islam to Ijesaland the idea of giving Sadaqat, was not known rather people used to give gifts to relatives, mothers or fathers-in-law and neighbours. As it is clear the givers of such things would expect some rewards in return for their own kindness to them. But on introduction of Islam the Muslims learnt the lessons that kindness to others was a real blessing to the givers themselves than the receivers⁶⁹. They also have sympathy for the hungry people because fasting is the only thing which enforces pangs of hunger to the body of the rich. Thus, this sense enkindles a spirit of kindness to the poor and the distressed.

Really, there were nominal Muslims in Ijesaland even after many years of their conversion into Islam. With the series of lessons gained during Ramadan fast their faith in God became a living force. A fasting man can easily satisfy himself by taking food or drink in the corners of his house. Physically there is no one to see him but he feels that Allah is near him and so he restrains himself. Thus the existence of Allah is felt closer.

This was what really happened to Ijesa people as from 1901. Many of the nominal ones had more faith in Allah as the result of the lessons they gained from the daily tafsir organised by their various teachers of Islam during the Ramadan time to enable them understand the Qur'an.

There was a singular occurrence in Ipole where it was reported that there was a disagreement between the Muslims and some towns people during a Ramadan night in early 1940s. The non-Muslims complained that the 'few' Muslims in the town were disturbing them at night by their activities intended to wake up other Muslims to prepare their dawn meals. The chief of the town, Chief Ogboni was reported to have settled the matter between the two groups amicably⁷⁰. Throughout Ijesaland there was no other place where such an incident happened whether in the past or in the modern times.

Economically, Ijesa people realised profits during the Ramadan fast both in the long past and up till the time under-study. As traders, many women would become sellers of various items of food mostly to be sold in the evening times for breaking the fast. Among such food items are corn starch, moinmoin and akara⁷¹. On the other hand many sellers non-Muslims in particular will not like the Ramadan fast time because they sell less with less gains. For example food sellers of pounded yam in particular usually complain bitterly of not selling

much during the Muslim fasting period. From the general interviews and reports during 1965 Ramadan fast all the beer parlours, hotels, palm wine sheds and some restaurants complained of very low sales while many compound beer parlours and wine sheds were said to close down completely most especially in Egbe-Idi street, and Okesa in Ilesa, Ibokun, Otan-Ile and Erin-Oke, predominant areas of Muslims in Ijesaland⁷². It is reported that the International Breweries Limited Ilesa has a very low sale during the 1985 and 1986 Ramadan fast periods generally⁷³.

The general impact of the Ramadan is more felt by the Ijesa Muslims who usually turn out in great numbers to attend both Tafsir and Ishah prayers during the Ramadan time than during ordinary days or months.

At the end of the Ramadan fast comes the 'Id-ul-Fitr'. As said earlier Ijesa people like social gathering, festivity and ceremony. This is why they usually troop out in very large number for 'Id-ul-Fitr service and prayer respectively. In the celebrations of the 'Id', Muslims usually show their happiness and their joy. They wear their new dresses. They go out after the prayer from the praying ground to visit relatives and friends after exchanging greetings of joy, happiness and blessing of celebrations among themselves⁷⁴.

It was gathered from the interviews conducted and personal observations that majority of Muslims who turned up in large numbers in Ileso, Osu, and Ijebu-Jesa during the 'Id-ul-Fitr prayer of 1965 did so not because of their religious devotedness but for the social aspect - most especially among the youths. Things were not the same in Ibolan, Otan-Ile, Erin-Oke and Igangan where the concern of the Muslims for turning out in large number was much on the spirit of Islam and their faith and closeness to Allah⁷⁵.

Ramadan fast like in all other places in the country creates awareness of Islam in Ijesaland. The awareness can be looked into from two dimensions: Soberness and quietness are both noticed throughout Ijesaland during the Ramadan fast in that most of the people's ceremonies are always put off till the end of the Muslims' Ramadan fast so that many people can turn up for the social togetherness. This in a way shows a recognition of Islam among the people. On the other hand it shows that the religious affiliation or practice does not detach Ijesa Muslims from their social meetings or from their family solidarity. Muslims will join friends, relatives or co-workers at Christian marriage, funeral ceremonies, house warming and street or compound meetings. Many Muslims will never partake in any un-Islamic food or worship⁷⁶.

Investigations conducted particularly in Ilesa, Erin-Oke, Ibodi, Ipetu-Ijesa and Itagunmodi revealed that some Muslims are still involved in drinking of beer, palm wine or the locally brewed wine in Erin-Oke in particular⁷⁷. It may not be too much to say here that the soberness and quietness of Ilesa and its district towns during the Ramadan fast and resumption of the drinking and high sales recorded by the sellers of the various alcoholic drinks after Ramadan is only an inference that Muslims in this area still partake in their drinking either privately or openly after the Ramadan fast whereas the moral lessons gained during the period are expected to remain with the Muslims throughout their life span.

4.5.9 Hajj

Hajj, Pilgrimage to Makkah has been described as conferences for the welfare of the community as a whole Muslim world⁷⁸ and it is a duty a Muslim owes to Allah.

The Holy Qur'an also confirms it that there are advantages for men in Hajj: "That they witness the benefits (provided) for them"⁷⁹. Since there are benefits for material and spiritual life of man and it is a command for all Muslims who can afford to go to Makkah at least once in one's life time, it is therefore incumbent on every Muslim to go and pay a pilgrimage to the House of Allah:

”... والله على الناس من البيت”

Translation:

”.....Pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to Allah.....”⁸⁰

Hajj affords a practical example to believe in the divine origin of all revealed books. It is universally admitted that the Ka'abah is an old shrine and memories of the Patriarch Ibrahim and his struggles for pure monotheism are deeply associated with it. Hajj is also a commemoration of the great sacrifice of Ibrahim and his triumph. To this end it is essentially important for Muslims to visit the Holy city of Makkah to complete the practical aspects, Ibadat of Islam. This type of spirit is not fully manifested in other religious systems. Hajj is a culmination of faith because the pilgrims go to Hajj to demonstrate faith and not to search for it. It gives opportunities for mutual help. The Qur'an unambiguously says that there is no blame on any Muslim who seeks bounty from the Lord:

”It is no crime in you
If ye seek of the bounty
Of your Lord during Pilgrimage”⁸¹

There is also spiritual significance of Hajj which the potential pilgrims should aim at. Hajj is usually performed in the sacred months of Shawwal, Zul-ga'd and Sul-Hajj. In these months every pilgrim stops from foul things of every description. Thus Qur'an 2 verse 197 says:

"For Hajj are the months well known. If any one undertakes the duty there in, let there be no obscenity (amorous speech), nor wickedness, (abusing) for wrangling (disputing) in the Hajj.....". All these are also parts of the good lessons which believers have learnt probably in theory and they are now put into practical life in Hajj.

'The Pilgrimage to the House', the Hajj is the fifth and final pillar of Islam. It is a declaration of Belief a process of renovation, and expression of inspiration, motivation and devotion and it is an acknowledgement and obedience to the command of God as said earlier in the above.

The Hajj is not performed because the pilgrims seek inspiration but because they are already inspired. The Hajj therefore is an expression, and not a search for belief⁸².

Conscious of all the values and importance of Hajj, five Ijesa Muslims ventured to go on Pilgrimage to Makkah in 1910 and out of the five people that went not a single one returned. They all died either in Makkah or on the way to or from⁸⁷. As stated earlier in chapter three for a very long time no Muslims dared go to Makkah for fear of death. It was of course resumed after 1930⁸⁴. Some of the early Muslims who performed the Hajj are Alhajj Rahman Smith, Alhajj Ibrahim of Isona, Alhajj Basiri, (Bazr) Sarumi, Alhajj Alliyu Amoke-Oja and Alhajj Yahyah

Osokoye-Enikan. All these people went sometimes before 1950. There was no female Muslim from Ijesaland who went on Pilgrimage to Makkah until very late in 1950. As from this period and early 1960s many people began to prepare for Pilgrimage to Makkah in Ijesaland. Before this period it appeared as if going to Hajj was mainly for only old people of fifty years and above because from the interviews conducted hardly was there anyone less than fifty years out of those who went to Hajj both in Ilesa and the other towns of Ijesaland. Generally, only very few people from the other towns did venture going on pilgrimage to Makkah. The Chief Imam of Ibokun, Alhajj Shittu, Alhajj Bello Ajayi and Alhajj Ibrahim Kuruyejo of Ibokun went to Hajj all at a time before 1960. In Otan-Ile, although Islam was striving well in the town yet only very few people went to Pilgrimage to Makkah during the time. The situation was not with much difference in Erin-Odo, Erin-Oke, Erinmo and Osu respectively. Despite the fact that Muslims were very few in Erin-Odo the example of Alhajj Abu Bakare, (Abu Bakr) Tukuru who went to Hajj as early as 1945 encouraged other Muslims to go on Pilgrimage as early as from 1950s. Also in Erinmo, Alhajj Bello Olorunlomeru went to Makkah in the same year 1945 and many others followed his example as from 1950. In Ipetu-Ijesa going on Pilgrimage to Makkah became a competition after the return of Alhajj Bakare Olowoniyi early in 1940s. He was given a warm and rousing welcome by the natives, non-natives,

Muslims and Christians of the town⁸⁵.

Both the preparation for Hajj and the welcoming of the pilgrims after performing the rites of Hajj really created awareness of Islam throughout Ijesaland. When Alhajj Abu Bakare Tukurru returned from Makkah in 1945 it was a real joy of happiness among the Muslim group of Erin-Odo in general and a pride to his family in particular. The ceremonies that followed his return served as an impetus to other Muslims who began to save money for the Hajj. The awareness caused some unhealthy preparations for the potential pilgrims in a way. Many Alfas in their preparations usually organised special prayers where the audience would donate for the particular intending pilgrim. In most cases the money so collected would be divided into two parts, a part would be for the intending pilgrim himself while the remaining half will be for the alfas who officiated at the prayer. Information collected from different informants revealed that many atimes the intending pilgrim and the alfas would end in a chaos and disagreement when the alfas would wish to have a larger portion of the amount of money so collected. When such a thing occurred and became constant events the alfas later devised a method which has reduced the occurrence of constant feuds. When such a meeting or organised prayer comes up there are two plates or containers

placed in the front of the alfas and the intended pilgrim. At the start of the prayers, the people present are shown the two places of which one is for the intending pilgrim while the other one is for the alfas.

On return from Hajj, the first few Fridays are always Fridays of dancing and ceremonies throughout the period. Buying of uniform dresses slaughtering of animals and other social shows usually mark the return of the Alhajjs and Alhajjahs from Makkah. On many occasions dancing around and visits to relatives' homes and pasting of fellow Alhajjs or Alhajjahs with Naira is part of the celebrations or ceremonies to mark the return of the pilgrims from Hajj (Makkah). In most cases many new Alhajjs or Alhajjahs borrow money for the shows or ceremonies. All these points are really against the teachings of Islam concerning spending because Islam is against waste either of wealth or money. "...waste not by excess for God loveth not the wasters"⁸⁶.

Despite all odds, impact of Hajj is felt in all the towns in Ijesaland. It does not only creates awareness of Islam it also shows the effect of the moral lessons of Hajj in the deeds, sayings, and even dresses of some Alhajjs and Alhajjahs. For instance Alhajjah Salamotu (Salamat) Balogun Titilope, a Beer seller in Okesa Street, Ilesa closed up her beer shop immediately she returned from Makkah. She is now, (1986) a humble cement

seller and a religious woman who prays for every person who greets her whenever she goes out in her car⁸⁷ as the Balogun 'Obirin Musulumi⁸⁸ of Ilesa.

In recent years as from 1966 to be specific, a meeting of all the Alhajjahs and Alhajje in Ilesa town was started so as to educate every one of them in their ways of deeds and behaviours and the type of trade that are suitable for an Alhajj or Alhajjah. The Chairman of this religious group in Ilesa is Alhajj Basiri (Bazr) Sarumi⁸⁹. In both Ibokun and Otan-Ile the preparation is ready to take off for the meeting of those who have performed the Hajj. This type of meeting in a way is a sort of encouragement for others to make haste in their attempts to go to Makkah on Pilgrimage. The impact of the Pilgrimage to Makkah is immense among the Muslims in particular and the non-Muslims in Ijesaland in general. Decent and modest women wear special dresses known and called "Alhajjah style". Such dresses usually cover the head, the neck and cover the arms to the wrists. The imitation in dress is common among the people in Ilesa and other towns in Ijesaland among both Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

Although there is no proper records of people who have performed the Hajj in all the towns in Ijesaland, it is apparent that the number of pilgrims increased in Ilesa, Ibokun, Otan-Ile

Ijebu-Jesa, Igangan, Ipetu-Ile and Ipetu-Ijesa as from 1960s. This was as a result of the good examples of those who performed the Hajj and attempts of others to perform the Hajj as the fifth pillar of Islam. To Ijesa Muslims performance of Hajj means a full completion of the principles of Islam. It is a pride for any Muslim who has performed the Hajj in this area. Hajj is socially considered honourable, religiously rewarding and generally educative. Any Muslim who has performed the Hajj is always highly respected by the people, among Muslims and non-Muslims as well, in the past between 1930 and 1960. The situation is no more the same when many returned from Hajj to be doing menial types of work while a great number of them are even jobless.

NOTES AND REFERENCES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Al-Mamlakat al-'Arabiyyat al-Su'udiyat, Kitabu ul-'Ulumu-ul-Diniyat - Al-Tawhid - Al-Fiqh Al-Hadith, (Jidat, Dar-ul - ('Asfihani wa Suraka 'ihi lil-taba' at, 1975), P.5.

2. Ibid., p.5

3. The Holy Prophet, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is quoted to have said:

”بني الإسلام على خمس: شهادة أن لا إله إلا الله وأن محمداً رسول الله وإقام الصلاة وإيتاء الزكاة وصوم البيت ووضوء رمضان رواه البخاري ومسلم

Translation:

”Islam has been built upon five (pillars), things: Testifying that there is only one God and that Muhammad is His Apostle, saying the prayers; giving legal alms, Pilgrimage to the House (Makkah), and fasting during Ramadan. Both Bukhari and Muslim relate this. See M.O.A. Abdul, The Selected Traditions of Al-Nawawi Lagos, I.P.B., 1973), pp 23-24.

4. See the Holy Qur'an, Chapter 2 verse 6:

”As to those who reject Faith, it is the same to them whether thou warn them or do not warn them; they will not believe”. The implication of 'those who reject faith' here is deliberate rejection of faith. This is opposed to a mistaken idea of God or faith. This in reality is not consistent with an earnest desire to see the truth. In such a case God's Mercy or guidance is not efficacious when faith is deliberately rejected. For further details on faith see Qur'an chapter 3 verse 4 and chapter 6 verses 24 and 25.

”فَاعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَيْهِ”

5. Translation

” . . . Then worship and trust in Him . . .”. Whereas in the traditional worship the Ijesa people did worship their ancestors, paid homage to their images or graves, asked for children and other blessings from the departed members of

their family which was a violation of the law of Allah. The nascent or early Muslim teachers and preachers wanted the Ijësà Muslims to leave the unIslamic practices and to have an unflinching conviction firmly rooted in their minds and hearts. At such they would become or remain immune from insidious deeds and perversions, all of which were known to Allah. For more details see Qur'an Chapter II, verse 123.

6. One of his sons, Mr. Tijani Awosanmi, a practising Muslim in an interview on Sunday 4th August, 1985 revealed this fact.

7. "Emi o soro ile mi o -- Emi o soro ile mio, Imole (Islam) ko ni ki nma soro Emi o soro ile mio - Emi o soro ile mi o".

The literal translation:

"I will celebrate my customary festival (2ce)
Islam does not prevent me from celebrating my
customary festival
I will celebrate my customary festival (2ce)".

The Imam of Iwara, Alhaji Idris Olaleye, Chief Loye, the Oba of Igangan and Chief Lasisi Omole, the Obanla of Ijesaland in interviews at different times in 1985 confirmed the idea and the theme of the song.

8. Although the group achieved its objective but the members soon separated and began individual preaching again. The members separated chiefly because there was no Muslim central organisation and lack of remuneration for their travels.

9. See Qur'an Chapter 112, verses 1 to 4 for more details.

10. Babatope, J.A. Iwosan Lailogun (Lagos, 1931) pp. 8-20
See also Babatope, J.A. Faith Healing, in the Apostolic Church Nigeria, (Brnadford, Mission Press, 1939) pp 12-15

11. For good qualities of a Muslims' Faith see: Maududi Abul A'la; Towards Understanding Islam, (Gary India, I.I.F.S.O., (1970), pp 21-30 views of many people interviewed confirmed with this.

12. The Prophet is reported to have given a broad time for the observation of the obligatory prayers:

عن عبد الله بن عمرو قال : قال رسول الله (صلعم)
الظَّهْرُ إِذَا زَالَتِ الشَّمْسُ وَكَانَ ظِلُّ الرَّجُلِ لَطْوَهُ مَا لَمْ
يَحْضُرَ الْعَصْرَ وَوَقْتُ الْعَصْرِ مَا لَمْ تَضْغُرِ الشَّمْسُ"

Translation:

"Abdullah B. Amr reported that the Messenger of Allah said: The time of Zuhr prayer remains till the sun declines and the shadow of a man becomes double his length and so long as the Asr prayer does not come, and the time of Asr prayer remains so as the sun does not become yellow". For more details see: Maulana Fazl Karim, Al-hadio-Mushkat-ul-Masabih, (Lahore, The Book house, 1940) pp. 170-171.

13. Series of interviews conducted in Ilesa, Ibokun, Ipetu-Ijesa, Otan-Ile, Ifewara and Igangan revealed that Central Mosques of the towns used to record sizeable number of worshippers during Zuhr, Asr and Maghrib prayers like during Suhn and Ishah prayers before the people would leave for or return from their various places of work.
14. Evidence collected through interviews conducted from Muslim traders (in markets) and businessmen and women (in their shops) in Ilesa, Ijebu-Jesa, Ibokun, Ipetu-Ijesa, Erin-Oke, Otan-Ile, Ikoji-Ile, Iwara, Igangan and Osu among many other towns in both 1984 and 1985 respectively.

"يا ايها الذين آمنوا اطيعوا الله واطيعوا
الامر منكم . . ."

15. Translation:
"O ye who believe! Obey God and Obey the Apostle, and those charged with authority among you". Qur'an 4., verse 59.
16. The Muslims here are devoted worshippers because they are from the real Islamic areas of Oyo State and Kwara State is predominantly Muslim area.
17. From a personal contact and interview with people in Owode majority of them are from Offa, Ilorin, Ote and Ogbomosho. They are devoted Muslims. They observe the obligatory prayers regularly and at the prescribed time for each of them.

18. Alhajj Biliaminu Ogungbangbe, Chief Imam of Iloko-Ijesa and proprietor of the Muslim Commercial High School, Iloko-Ijesa and Alhajj Lasisi Sule, the Chief Imam of Igangan expressed their joy for the success of a system that depicts Muslims as lovers of one another and a real demonstration of Islamic brotherhood.
19. Maulana Fazlul Karim, Al-Hadis-Mushkat-ul-Mashbih, Book III, (Lahore, The Book House, 1940), p. 448 (under Jumma Prayer).
20. Abu Lobabala-b-Abdul reported that the Apostle of Allah said: "Jumma day is the best of the days and the greatest near Allah, and it is greater than the day of Sacrifice and the day of Fitr. . .". For more details see Ibid., p. 445, No.662.
21. Wajib, things that are obligatory another word is (Fard). For more details see: Nasir, Seyyed Hossein, Ideals and Realities of Islam, (London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1972), p.96.
22. The Qur'an however, says without any distinction of number of people:
- "يا ايها الذين آمنوا اذا نودى للصلاة من يوم الجمعة فاسمعوا لى ذكر الله وذروا البيع ذلكم خير لكم ان كنتم تعلمون"
- Translation:
- "O ye who believe when the call is proclaimed To prayer on Friday, (the day of assembly) hasten earnestly to remembrance of God and leave off business (and traffic) that is best for you if ye but knew". (Qur'an, 62 verse 9).
23. The Ilorin trader's name was not known. The series of interviews conducted among people in the town could not reveal his name. The best people referred to him as 'Baba-eletu-Ibon'. That is a gun powder seller. Evidence of lack of written materials shows itself here. There was no one who could say any of the three nascent Muslims of Iwara's name.

24. The Chief Imam of Iwara, Alhajj Idris Olaleye in one of the interviews on 16-10-85 revealed the fact that the three people remained the only Muslims of the town for a period of over ten years as from about 1900 to 1910.
25. Alhajj Sakariyah Odebode, the Chief Imam of Ipetu-Ile in an interview together with the Muslim Community elders on 20-10-85.
26. An example of the song is as follows:

1. "Oro ijo ko lawi (2ce)
Esin re la bere o
Imole (Muslim) to nje elede
To nje aja ti o npe ara re ni Imole (Muslim)
Oro ijo ko lawi.

2. O ba wo aran oju ko ba omi
Ti o ko ba ni Imani (Imam)
Ofo lasanlasan ni ijo re
Ajo Foyinbo ti ko ni (Imam)
Ko ni ipo ninu Mosalasi wa".

Literal translation:

1. "It is not dancing that we say (want)
 It is your faith that we ask
 A Muslim who eats pork
 And eats the dog meat and calls himself a Muslim
 It is not dancing we say (want).

2. If you wear the best velvet
 If you have no faith
 Your dancing is in vain
 A dancer who danced for the whiteman
 who has no faith
 Has no place in the Mosque (among the Muslims)".

Pa Karim Komolafe of H.56, Iloro Ilesa in an interview revealed the fact that he was a child at the time sometimes after 1910 when the preacher, Alufaa (Alfa) Alawiye referred to in his song. He confirmed that the Central Mosque in Ilesa used to appear as festive day at the time.

He rendered this song in a melodious voice that he said was Alufaa Alawiye's tone. In one of my questions to him Pa Karim said that undoubtedly the praise-singer and preacher, Alufaa Alawiye's songs did correct many ills and irreligious deeds among the Muslims throughout Ijesaland.

27. For more on democracy in the Mosque and class, distinction see Maulana Fazlul Karim, Al-Hadis Book III, op. cit. p.462, Note, 1972.
28. Basically, these three towns are the predominantly Muslim areas of Ijesaland and the children are probably emulating their parents in their religious understanding.
29. Alhajj Saliu Famuyide in an interview sometimes in February, 1986 and personal observations in the Central Mosque in Ilesa in particular.
30. For more details see: Siddiqui, H.A., The Origins and Development of Islamic Institutions, (Karachi, Jamiyatul Falah Press, 1969), pp. 28 and 29.
31. Tabiun - The immediate generation after that of the companions. For details on the Prophet Muhammad as the Chief and Head of Ummah and administrator see: Shaukat Ali, Administrative ethics in a Muslim State, (Lahore, Publishers United Press, 1970), p. 9.
32. Lomomu is the corrupted form of the Arabic word al-Imam who is the spiritual head in any of the Mosques throughout the area.
33. The Chairman of the Nasir-ud-Deen Society of Ilesa, Alhajj S.A. Famuyide, the Chief Imam of Ibokun, Alhajj Amodu Yinusa and the Chief Imam of Otan-Ile, Alhajj Abdul Ganiyu Aladeokin in an interview on the day when the Chief Imam, Alhajj Rahman Akorede was turbaned as the Chief Imam of Ijesaland.
34. Quadri, Y. A. Islamic Acts of Worship According to Al-Ashmawi (Ijebu-Ode, 1985), p. 46.
35. Karim, op.cit., vol. III, p. 362

36. The Chief Imam of the town, Alhajj Abdul Ganiyu Aladeokin, Alhajj Lasisi Fesogun, the Baba Adiini of Otan-Ile and Pa. Yusuf Daramola both of them direct pupils of Alfa Tijani revealed or narrated the events that led to the long interregnum and the selection of Alfa Badmus as the Chief Imam.
37. Akande, R.M., Islamic religious functionaires in the city of Ibadan, (Ibadan, Dept. of Arabic and Islamic Studies, M.A. Dissertation, 1980) p. 27 and also Salami, L.O. System of Mosque Administration, (Ibadan, Dept. of Arabic and Islamic Long Essay, 1969), pp.37 and 38.
38. Seriki, I.A.A. op.cit., pp 429-430
39. The Chief Imam of Ilesa Alhajj Rahman Akorede in an interview on 8-2-86.
40. What happened in most cases is delegation of power to competent members of the Mosques to lead the prayers whenever the need arises in the absence of the ratibi Imam.
41. In answers to some questions by the Chief Imam of Ilesa, Ibokun, Otan-Ile and Ipetu-Ijesa, Itagunmodi and Igangan they claimed that the office was necessary since he will be able to speak in the language of their people. To this they quoted Qur'an 14 verse 4: "We sent not an Apostle except (to teach) in the language of his own people..."
42. Despite the derogatory name by which this officer is called people still struggle to be one, all because of the share of money given to him at the end of a religious visit to social gatherings or funeral ceremonies. In addition personal gifts of money known and called "Bami dele" are usually given to them when they go out with the Imams.
43. Hitti, P.K. History of the Arabs (London, Macmillan, 1960), p. 106.
44. The error of pronunciation arises because of the inability of the people to pronounce the Arabic word al-Muadhhdhin and al-Adhan, 'the caller' and 'the call' to prayer respectively.

45. Interviews conducted among the ratibi Imams revealed that they were eager to evolve such a council in no time from that time in April, 1986 while the Chief Imams of the towns feared the demination of Ilesa.
46. Alhajj Sule Ibrahim, the ratibi Imam of Okosa Ilesa, interviewed on 20-12-86. He stated further that on many occasions, only those who go to such occasions who will share the money collected among themselves because others who do not go might have gone for their normal secular duties where they can earn more money.
47. Maulana Fazlul Karim, Vol.II, op.cit. p.36.
48. Ibid., p. 37
49. Maulana Fazlul Karim, Vol.II, op.cit. pp.37 and 38
50. The whole property of a believer which consists of twenty dinars, equivalent of 40 Naira (₦40.00) of his hoarded wealth for a whole year. See: Maudub Abdul A'la, Towards Understanding Islam op.cit., p. 137
51. For details see Qur'an Chapter 4 verse 162
52. See: Qur'an Chapter 9 verse 60
53. Alahjj Abdul Rahaman Alorode in an interview on 8-6-84 revealed this when he was the Clori Cnitafusiri, (the Footnote 40 contd.)
Chief or Head of the Mufassirs -- interpreter of the Qur'an for Ijesaland early in 1985 before he became the Chief Imam. He renarrated the same story on 10-12-85, when he had become the Chief Imam of Ijesaland.
54. For further details on the Hadith see: Maulana Fazlul Karim op.cit., Vol.II, pp 43 and 45. See also the Holy Qur'an Chapter 3, verse 180 for the full recitation fo the verse alluded to by the Prophet: Alfa Arekemase stayed in Ilesa from about 1900 till very early in 1920s; of course he used to travel to other towns.
55. In all, no one was able to give the real name of the man. Every person interviewed referred to him simply as an 'Ilorin teacher'.

56. Although, interviews collected show that Alfa Alawiye was collecting Zakat but I tend to believe that he was collecting Sadaqat because he was a praise singer who helped in the propagation of Islam in Ijesaland by means of his religious and self-explicit songs.
57. 'La ila illa Allah' is the correct form of Lai illa ila Allahu which is the expression of faith in Islam but it is used to express surprise in this Context. The general idea expressed in the song is to correct the idea of Muslims who abandoned Islam or Muslims who failed to turn up in the Mosque for prayers or who has ceased to join Muslim meetings. Such Muslims who were not seen among the group of Muslims were thought to have kept their turbans in the house where the mouse would devour them.
58. Alhajj S.A. Famuyide, the Chairman of the Nawair-ud-Deen Society at the time of this interview in December, 1985. He was also the second Supervisor of all Muslim schools in Ijesaland, (1955-1970) revealed this fact.
59. Aziz Ojo of Isikin Mosque, Ilesa, Mallam Isimaila of Otan-Ile and Alhajj Suberu (Zubayr) Owoeye of Erin-Oke, who was the ratib Imam of Idofin Street at the time of this compilation in 1985 stated the points in interviews on 6-10-84; 10-10-85 and 15-10-85 respectively.
60. Part of the information collected during the field work of this compilation in 1984 and 1985.
61. Alhajj Yunus Fagbamila, the Chief Imam of Ibokun and Alhajj Abdul Ganiyu Aladeokin, the Chief Imam of Otan-Ile's idea in interviews on 4-3-84 and on 12-2-86 respectively but Alhajj Biliaminu Ogunbangbe of Iloko-Ijesa contradicted the idea in an interview on 8-10-84. He said launching or even open donations to raise money for God's work is good because it will either encourage or stir others to contribute their quota in running of Allah's work.
62. Maulana Fazlul Karim, Al-Hadis, Vol.II., op.cit., p. 508, chapter 35, Note 2035.

” يا ايها الذين آمنوا كتب عليكم الصيام كما
 كتب علي الذين من قبلكم لعلكم تتقون . . . ”

Translation:

"O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you As it was prescribed to those before you that Ye may learn self-restraint". (Qur'an 2 verse 183).

Fasting existed before its introduction to Islam but it was for various reasons, for killing passions, a sort of atonement, a sign of grief or mourning Islam abolished all these irreligious practices or ideas and introduced the ideal objective of fasting-self-restraint and discipline a sort of power in man which can control unruly passions: See Karim Book II, op.cit., pp. 508 and 509 and for more regulations on fasting see Qur'an 2 verse 184-185.

64. For more details see Karim op.cit., pp 509 and 510.
65. To this Alhaji Suberu (Zubayr) Owoeye, the Imam of Idofin ratibi Mosque of Erin-Oke, expressed in an interview: "Laipe ni awon Musuluni mo pe anfaani nla ni awa nse fun won. Raliatu Abeke Ibrahim of Odo-Ode, Erin-Oke tun so pe ni nkan bi ogun odun ni akoko awe ti a nse tafusiri (Tafsir) o ma nmu ori enia na npe ara asi ma da ni akoko awe ju akoko miran lo".

Translation:

"Very soon Muslims knew that fasting (in the month of Ramadan) was advantageous to their bodies. Raliat Abeke Ibrahim (a Muslim) from Odo-Ode, Erin-Oke said that in about twenty years ago during the exegesis of the Holy Qur'an of the Ramadan fast people appeared sound and more at alert than during ordinary time".

66. John Omole of the Cherubim and Seraphim of Idasa Ilesa in an interview on 18-12-86 remarked that the forty day fast of Christians differs from the thirty day Ramadan fast because Christians fast in remembrance of Christ, 'Son' of God while Muslims claim to be fasting because God prescribed it. According to him that was why many who were rejected baptism by the C.M.S. as from 1896 refused to be Muslims.
67. Alhaji Alliyu Awoke-Oja, the Chief Imam of Ilesa and Alhaji Amodu Yinusa Fagbamila, the Chief Imam of Ibokun during one of the series of the interviews with them in 1985 rendered the song as follows: despite the interview which took place at different times the themes of the song were the same:

"Okan na ni wa lodo Olorun (2ce)
Be ebi ti npolola o be lo npa talaka
Be ebi ti npa joye be lo npa alade
Okan na ni wa lodo Allah"

Translation:

"We are all equal in the presence of God (2ce)
 As the rich feels the hunger, same is the poor
 As an ordinary chief feels hunger same is the king
 We are all equal in the presence of Allah".

68. R.A. Smith, op.cit., pp 18-22
69. For more on charity and increase of reward see Qur'an 30, verse 39, The people under study had ample time to learn more of these values in their Tafsir lessons during the Ramadan fast.
70. Alufaa (Alfa) Jinadu Jobe in an interview on Sunday 20th, 1986. In the real sense Muslims are very few in this town, which is the seat of worship of Owari, a popular ancestor of Ijesaland.
71. Both are made from beans.
72. These three towns are chiefly Muslim areas of Ijesaland because of various reasons: The three towns are nearer to Osun area, one of the predominantly Muslim areas of the Yorubaland - See Figure III. People from this area are many either as farmers or traders in each of the three towns. Muslim scholars, direct pupils and their children in some cases who are the introducers of Islam into these towns are still alive as staunch Muslims up-to-date, 1986 but the closure of beer parlours and palm wine sheds suggest that Muslims in the area drink them. From the series of interviews conducted there was no other evidence to confirm the inference.
73. Mr. Kabiru (Kabir) Akinola, the Managing Director of the Company in an exclusive interview on 21-12-86 revealed the fact that it appears that Muslims all over the country in general drink much beer because there was a noticeable reduction both in the production and sales during the Muslim fasts of 1985 and 1986.

74. For more details about the 'Id-ul-Fitr celebrations see 'Abi Al-Hasan 'Alliyyu Al-Malikiy Ashadhiliyy, op.cit. p.34.
75. Result of the series of interviews and meetings with the Muslim Youths in the areas listed.
76. It has become noticeable that Muslims will never show up at the Ogun and Obokun ancestral worships which are both considered as a natural cord that bounded Ijesa people together irrespective of religion or town. Despite the announcement and passionate appeals of the Oba Adekunle Aromolaran to the Iwode-Ogun of 19-12-86 it was noticed that no Muslims turned up for the call, a meeting of which took place directly in front of the Ilesa Central Mosque.
77. It is believed among the Muslims and non-Muslims who are sellers of the various intoxicants that Muslims do not only sell they also buy and drink. Madam Raliat Ila, Akinyemi, a brewer of the local wine in Erin-Oke, Iya-Ila, a Muslim who sells palm wine at Akoja Street, Ilesa who refused to declare her Muslim name confirmed in an interview on Sunday 21-12-86 that Muslims are her greater buyers. She added that many of them will cease coming during the Ramadan fast time. The Chief Imam of Ilesa, Alhajj Abdul Rahaman Akorede in another interview on the same date said, "A koni siwo iwasun nipa ise ibi otin mimu. Emi fun ra mi ro pe awon enia wa si nmun. Meaning: We shall not stop our preachings about the evils of drinking alcohol. I myself think that some of our people (Muslims) still partake in it.
78. For more details see Karim, M.F. Book III op.cit., p. 563 This his idea or view has also been expressly encouraged by a verse of the Qur'an in connection with Hajj:
- ...وتعاونوا على البر والتقوى ولا تعاونوا على الأثم
والعدوان واتقوا الله"

Translation:

"...Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour....". - Qur'an 5 verse 3.

79. Qur'an 22 verse 28. There are benefits for both the material life and the spiritual life in going to Hajj for more details see Yusuf Ali Vol.II, op.cit., Note 2800 of Chapter 22 verse 28.

80. Qur'an 3 verse 97.
81. Qur'an 2 verse 198 see also Yusuf Ali's comments on the verse on page 79 note 219 of the Holy Qur'an.
82. Ziauddin Sardar, Hajj Studies, Volume 1, (London, Biddles Ltd., nd.) pp 27 and 28.
83. Vide Supra, p. 173
84. Ibid.
85. Alhajj Kazim Yusuf, the Chief Imam of Ipetu-Ijesa in an interview on Sunday 26th January, 1986 revealed that lack of fund prevented many people from going on pilgrimage. He also added that examples of those who had gone on pilgrimage to Makkah served as real impetus to others including himself. On the same day Pa Eese Kasumu (Kazim) in an interview said that without money one who loves to go to Makkah cannot go. He consoled himself by saying "Aniyan loju" meaning, "It is intention that matters". Aniyan is the corrupted form of the Arabic word, al-niyyat meaning "intention". By this it was inferred that he has the intention of going on pilgrimage but he cannot afford going. Pa Eese is about 85 years old. He was one of my good informants of the town.
86. Qur'an verse 141 - squanderers are enemies of God.
87. During an interview with her on Sunday 21-12-86 she stopped from her discussions with me to observe her Zuhr prayer when it was time. In an answer to one of the series of my questions she said that she preferred spending her money in the way of Allah to giving it to secular societies. She is now preparing to build a Mosque in her Compound. She returned from Makkah in 1980.
88. Patron of Muslim women.
89. Alhajj Bazr Saruni in an interview on Sunday 21-12-86 in his residence in Omofe said that their meeting takes place regularly on the last Friday of the month in the Central Mosque. For more on the lessons, qualities, duties of anyone who has performed the Hajj, see: 'Abdullah bn Abi Zayd al-Qayrawani, op.cit., pp. 77-79.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 ISLAMIC SOCIAL FAMILY REGULATIONS

Attempt is made here to discuss in general the Islamic family regulations as they relate to marriage, prohibitions and essentials of marriage, inheritance and paternity as practised by Ijesa Muslims.

5.1 Marriage

According to Islam marriage is described as the union of two souls for love and two bodies for procreation and legalising of children¹. If man is said to be free and therefore claims a free intercourse with every woman it will mean a disorder and chaos in the society leading ultimately to destruction of human civilisation. If that is so, man is therefore nothing but only a beast. The limitation to free love and free intercourse by marriage is for the ultimate benefit of human development as a whole and particularly for the progress of human civilization. Marriage stirs love at first for a wife, then for the children, for the kiths and kins, for the society and ultimately for the human race as a whole. This is because the real unit of human civilisation is the family and there can be no family if there is no marriage.

In Islam unlike in Christianity every man is advised to marry because there is no celibacy² in Islam, there is no room

for monks or nuns. A Muslim marriage is a civil contract based on mutual consent of the bride and bridegroom, as distinguished from the sacramental form of marriage. Although there is a provision for an officiating Muslim leader in a Muslim marriage, it requires no priest and no sacramental rights. At best, the registration of mutual consent may be done. As we shall see below a woman has got a right in her acquired properties before and after her marriage. In addition she has a distinct lien upon her husband's property for her ante-nuptial settlements³.

In like manner marriage was very important in the life of the 'Osomaalo' even before the advent of Islam to Ijesaland. It was not only because of the social values of marriage to them but because a wife was considered as a fittable companion of a man in his day to day activities. It is not because of her assistance to man in his farm work or trade activities. It was considered of high value in the religious circles to a leader who had wives and children because he would have the feelings for others' wives and children. A religious leader, priest of a god who was unmarried would not be allowed to lead others to offer sacrifice to the god or an ancestor right from the foundation of Ijesaland⁴. More importantly as an agrarian group of people they needed women and children to assist them in their farm work. Furthermore the number of wives and children a man

had at the time denoted his importance and greatness in the society.

Polygamy formed a conspicuous feature of the institution of marriage in Ilesa and its districts. In this area and Yorubaland at large, the institution of marriage was a product of the economic, social and political circumstances of the indigenous society.

Adherents of Islam were discouraged from the practice of marrying as many women as possible. The number of women which a Muslim man could have was limited to four. This is even if they could be maintained with justice⁵. Whereas polygamy in the traditional religion was considered an index of wealth and prestige. This was why it was the Obas, Lojas, and Chiefs who usually possessed the largest number of wives. Some were even reported to have got large number of wives⁶. As said above, polygamy remained; to some extent, a feature of both traditional religion and Islam in the area but polygamy in Islamic Religion is limited to only four wives concurrently⁷. This was contrary to the loose and unlimited polygamy of the African Religion. With the adaptation of Islam to this age-long institution, Islam still reaped a fine reward and spread in the area in an inverse ratio to Christianity. This of course was at the period before 1910⁸.

In Ilesa and its districts, the practice before Islam was that marriage was patrilineal. The girl was offered almost for sale and the parents dominated the affairs. Little or no opportunity was given to the girl concerned. Infact, marriage by then was more or less a commercial transaction. With the introduction of Islam, there was a significant transformation. The girl's consent was required before the conclusion of the marriage contract. There should be no duress or any constraint. The love talks would be made between the girl and the would be husband. There was the offer of love (Ijab)⁹, from the man and acceptance, (Qubul)¹⁰, from the bride in question. However, there was still the matrimonial restraint (Jabr) with the utmost rigour. This right in Islam belongs to the father, or in default of him, his eldest, or testamentary guardian or grandfather. Custom may modify these regulations; thus among the Ijesa Muslims after the death of the father his brother, not his eldest son had the right of Jabr.

In Islam, the future of the divorcee or widow is in her own hands but in the area this might be decided by the family of her deceased husband.

The main disparity between local custom of the people and Islamic law is found in the categories of permitted and forbidden people to marry. The Muslims in Ilesa and its environs considered

marriage to first cousins to be incestuous because cousins were regarded as 'brothers' and 'sisters' whereas Islam allows marriage with both cross and parallel cousins¹¹. Islam thus affected rules on exogamous marriage by its preference for in-marriage which did not gain ground among the Muslims in Ijesaland in particular and among the Muslim communities of Yorubaland in general. Muslims everywhere in the area married women from traditional quarters for the intention was that they should become Muslims. It was of course, forbidden for a Muslim woman to marry a non-Muslim man. Such a step was considered no less than apostasy and anybody who attempted this was not only stigmatized as a Kafir but a loss to Islamic community of the area.

The local marriage contract in the area was chiefly an arrangement between two families and not between two individuals. It was characterised by the payment of a bride price¹², as guarantee of stability and compensation to the wife's family for the missing of its member, the said bride. The amount payable was (£5) five pounds and later rose to (£7.10^s), seven pounds ten shillings - (₦10) ten naira and (₦15.00) fifteen naira respectively. By 1984 it has risen to (₦50.00), fifty naira minimum.

The practice introduced by Islam involved two individuals, whilst the payment of money, dowry assumed a different significance. Free gift of the marriage portions (Sadaqat) is legally the property of the wife and should be given to her on marriage¹³.

There was also the practice of paying a dowry¹⁴,

Here is the general pattern about marriage in the area before the introduction of Islam: when a man wished to contact a comfortable marriage, he transferred animals, goods, and money, to the bride's family. At intervals, he helped the family on farm plots. The bride-price involved was usually handed over in two parts: The first, when the contract was definitely concluded, in the carrying of the kolanuts and usually went to the mother. Shortly before the marriage day, the next item was usually paid to the father and this was usually considered as the last and most legitimate money¹⁵ paid by a husband to his father-in-law. This might be paid when the husband took the possession of the wife. Eru-iyawo (articles of various types) would be sent during the last week of preparation for the marriage. Apart from the bride-price, the bridegroom should provide his wife with special gift of money which was a type of dowry for the bride and this should be sent during the day preceding the consummation.

At the advent of Islam, Islamic mode of marriage was introduced to the people. At the people's Islamic marriage, betrothal, (Yigi) and in the marriage according to the Muslim rite, (Isoyigi)¹⁶ or Al-Nikah, there were three features: Traditional bride-wealth remitted to the bride's family, betrothal money; and Sadugat given by husband to wife according to the

Qur'an (Qur'an 4 verse 4). This amount is not specified.

It depends on the financial strength of the giver (the husband).

In discussing the impact of Islam on the local marriage ceremonies in Ilesa and its environs we are to bear in mind that there was a fusion of both traditional and Islamic ceremonies in the area. The Islamic ceremonies might be performed before the custom rites would commence, or vice-versa. The ceremonies were celebrated to mark the transference of the bride to the bridegroom's residence. Islamic elements in the rites were: the henna¹⁷ ceremony, bathing of the bride¹⁸, her veiling, and walimat¹⁹, feast after which she was taken to the bridegroom's house. These are only mentioned as Islamic elements because they are traditional in the Islamic circles in most lands, not that they are necessarily introduced by Islam: Henna usage for example reached Sudan long before Islam²⁰.

At the end of these traditional and Islamic performances the bride will now have to leave for the bridegroom's house. In the past even at the advent of Islam brides were usually taken to the bridegroom's parents houses at night. Things were no more the same by 1968. A newly married woman will now go straight to her husband's house. No more in the midst of tens of relatives rather with very few friends or relatives.

Marriage according to Muslim practice or Islamic Law is not

a sacrament, but purely a civil contract. Though solemnized generally with recitation of certain verses from the Qur'an, yet the Islamic law does not positively prescribe any service peculiar to the occasion²¹. The objects, therefore, are the promotion of a normal family life and the legalization of children as said earlier in the above.

At the time under study Ijesa people's marriage took a new dimension. Much materials were no more demanded by brides rather the potential husbands were requested to buy a number of latest dresses while a bride who learns a type of work, such as tailoring may request the husband to buy a machine for her. Since Ijesa Muslim live among the people they are not much different in this aspect which is purely social. The Muslim parents' emphasis are that their children must marry practising Muslims, the marriage ceremonies must strictly be Islamic. Further more Muslim parents throughout Ijesaland do not succumb to relatives following a bride to a bridegroom's house demanding for food, money or drink; a practice which is very common in the non-Muslims' marriages throughout Ijesaland. Much of this will be discussed under the marriage festivities below.

Before the advent of Islam to Ijesaland minors could be given out in marriage. It was even reported that a child yet unborn could also be betrothed right from pregnancy. If such a child was born to a male another promise would be given to such a

man who would have served the potential father or mother-in-law for a number of years. Minors could be given out to a man who loaned a man some money and if he failed to pay such a debt such a minor would become a wife to such a creditor²². On many occasions both matured and unmatured girls could be forced to husbands against their wishes while men too could be husbands against their wishes while men too could be compelled to marry girls who were not of their choice while a practice of snatching of girls on streets without the girls' consents was a common practice. On introduction of Islam to the area understudy this type of practice which they considered unIslamic ceased since it is wrong to force a child either male or female to marry a person who is not of his or her choice. According to Islam, the marriage of minors can be contracted by the guardians, though such a marriage is valid, yet is capable of being repudiated. A marriage entered into by a girl while she had not attained puberty was not a marriage in the 'eye' of the law, and was therefore void²³. This is to say that if a Muslim minor has been married during minority by a guardian, the minor has the right on attaining majority to repudiate such a marriage²⁴. However, Ijesa Muslims allow their children to marry husbands of their choice.

The general observation from all places visited and interviews conducted was that a girl should attain the age between 18

to 20 years and a boy from 20 to 25 years before marriage. Among the Muslims in this area private or secret marriage is never recognised and that over payment or huge amount of money paid as dowry is not a Muslim practice. Muslims throughout Ijesaland do not succumb to the charging of any amount of money to be paid to either the mother or father-in-law respectively. It was reported in Otan-Ile, one of the Muslim predominant areas of Ijesaland that if a son-in-law has the ability to give the parents of his bride a thousand naira it would be accepted because it is a free gift. But the emphasis was emphatically made that Muslim girls will never be given to husbands as if they are sold off²⁵. At the same time the Ijesa Muslims emphasised the payment of mahr, dowry not only because it is a command in the Holy Qur'an: "And give the women on marriage their dower as a free gift . . .". (Chapter 4 verse 4), but for its importance among the Ijesa people in general. It is a customary practice of the people that a woman who does not receive the dower which they call the 'bride price' is not a recognised wife. On the other hand a man who fails to pay the 'bride price' is never recognised as a real husband²⁶.

This aspect of Islamic practice lured many Ijesa people into Islam in that payment of the dower or Sadaqat to a bride was never dictated in the Muslim community as it was practised by

other members of the society. .

Polygamy was regarded by the people of Ijesaland as a way of being fair to women by providing husbands for all of them. The husband, although not a boss, was the controller of the home. Islam too, gives the husband the control of the family and he must satisfy all the needs of his wives. An Ijesaman feels proud to feed, and clothe his wives. It is also a part of a Muslim husbands duty to feed, clothe and house his wives. This aspect is also a form of the africanness of Islam that attracted many of the Ijesa traditional leaders into Islam at its introduction.

Marriage contract posed difficulties to Muslim males from the inception of Islam to Ijesaland. Muslims were refused marriage to non-Muslims. Since the Muslims were very few in number within the first few decades of Islam in Ilesa and its districts male Muslims could not have enough female Muslims among whom they could choose their future wives. More than this, young women who married their husbands before they became Muslims began to divorce them in large numbers. Many of the Muslim males were without wives for a very long time, most especially in Ibokun, Ilase, and Iwara where both Islam and Muslims were looked down upon. Things have changed, both Islam and Muslims are now recognised.

5.2 Marriage prohibitions

Really marriage is recognised as basis of society in Islam. It is a contract, but it is also a sacred covenant. In Islam marriage is considered as an institution that leads to the uplift of man and it is also a means for the continuance of the human race. As important as marriage is in Islam there are prohibitions i.e. the obstructions to it. This is so because Islam as a religion has rules and regulations the limit of which a Muslim can act. Anything outside the set out or laid down laws are unIslamic. The Holy Qur'an, the main source of Islamic law states these marriage prohibitions unambiguously²⁷.

From the scheme of prohibitions it is clear that prohibitions in marriage arise as a result of any of the following reasons:

- (a) Blood relationship
- (b) Being of the same family in marriage
- (c) Fosterage or milk relationship

There is another prohibition. A Muslim cannot marry an idolatress because the Holy Qur'an in a command expresses:

"... ولا تتكلموا المشركات حتى يؤمنن ..."

Translation: "Do not marry unbelieving women (idolaters) until they believe . . .". (Chapter 2 verse 221).

A further classification of the prohibitions in marriage can be: permanent or temporary restrictions.

Before the advent of Islam to Ijesaland there was no discrimination of religion, the people married as far as they were not related. Fosterage or milk relationship up-to-date does not prevent marriage to some extent among the Ijesa people. It is totally prohibited for a foster-son to marry a foster-mother but if the foster-child is a female another child or a direct child of the foster-mother can marry her and vice-versa. For example in Osodi family of Idasa Street, Ilesa Odagbodo, a female-foster-child to late Tinuola was married to a male child of her foster-mother very late in 1930s²⁸. The same practice of marriage is not considered either irregular or void among the Ijesa people. Series of interviews conducted on same revealed that the people considered such a marriage to be very legal. It was only in Otan-Ile that an old man reiterated that it is for decency sake alone that a foster-father may not marry his foster-daughter²⁹.

Generally, there are no set out laws of prohibitions in marriage among the Ijesa people as there are in Islam but custom and consensus of opinion of others guide the sexual relations of Ijesa people. Although Islam does not frown at marrying first cousins but the Ijesa people and Ijesa Muslims

do not succumb to this type of marriage because first cousins are considered to be 'brothers' or 'sisters' as the case may be. It is not even easy among the Ijesa Muslims to marry to girls whose houses are in the same compound or near to each other despite they are not having blood relations. Some go to the extent of forbidding to marry a child of their very close friends as a wife. This practice is very common in the Atakumosa L.G.A. where they believe that they are closely related. But in Ilesa it is not the same. Nearness of houses or living in the same compound is never a barrier to marriage.

Before the introduction of Islam to Ilesa and its environs the people did have sexual intercourse with their step-mothers and in some cases married them while in some abnormal cases they seduced from their fathers. The practice of inheriting dead fathers' wives was common, among the Ijesa people. It is only practised among the non-Muslims today because it is glaring prohibition in Islam. The Holy Qur'an in a direct and clear language expresses this prohibition³⁰. It cannot but be said that up-to-date in some isolated cases some Muslims still inherit their step-mothers despite the fact that they know of the prohibitions in the Qur'an³¹.

Among the Yoruba people in general and Ijesa Muslims in particular there is no time that the restriction of a man marrying

two sisters of the same parents can be removed. Although Islam permits this if there is divorce or death of the former sister (wife). But in isolated cases too, some Muslims have married idolatresses, with the intention of converting them into Islam³². Many widows would never observe the iddah before moving to another man's house, and when observed they were not properly done. It was reported that many Muslim widows would have been allowing other men to sleep with them before the expiration of the four consecutive months and ten days stated in the Holy Qur'an³³. In most cases many of them would not remain in their husband homes for the prescribed number of months. From the field work on the marriage prohibitions majority of Muslims interviewed confessed that the case of divorce is worst. Many divorcees would remain in their husbands homes without official divorce and would be keeping other men as 'husbands' while some would pack suddenly in a day without observing a day of the iddah and moved to another husband's house. In most cases such husbands would be Muslims. Reports gathered too confirmed that many women in this area would intentionally feigned quarrels and consequently moved to their parents' homes and from there moved to other men's homes and without any rites or marriage essentials would become 'wives', to other men, many of whom would be Muslims. On the other hand some of them would summon their

former husbands to court and within two weeks the marriage which were conducted in the Muslim way would be dissolved un-Islamically³⁴.

Generally, there are just a few exceptions in the Muslim marriage prohibitions or restrictions among the Ijesa Muslims which are adhered to. From the exhaustive interviews it appears as if most of the prohibitions stated in the above are all in theory among the Ijesa Muslims. Particularly, the regulations concerning widows who wish to remarry, divorcees and step-mothers are not strictly observed that is even when observed at all. Where they adhere strictly to the stipulated laid down regulations of the Holy Qur'an about marriage prohibitions are in the case of mothers, grandmothers or daughters, that is in consanguinity in general. In case of affinity the strictness in the adherence is loose because there are isolated cases of few men who married two sisters either concurrently or with a ruse of divorcing or ejecting one for the other and at last the one may come back while the two remain as wives³⁵. During the compilation of this work a few pregnant women were seen in customary courts in Ilesa; Iwara and Osu making bids for divorce whereas a pregnant woman is required to observe iddah till delivery³⁶.

It is said, "when a Muslim takes a fifth wife it is not void but irregular"³⁷. Islamically, four wives concurrently is

the limit. Many Muslims in Ijesaland take their knowledge of this kind of a sentence to go beyond of four wives recommended by the Holy Qur'an³⁸. In Ibokun-Ijesa an Alhajj recorded up to seven wives but there were only four at a time under his roof. This type of trick was seldomly used by some Muslims in Ijesaland either to circumvent the Islamic marriage prohibitions or to break the laid down principles of the Qur'an about marriage. Things are now changing, by 1965, the various Muslim societies and learned Islamic leaders among whom are the Chief Imam of Ijesaland, the Chief Imam of Ibokun, Otan-Ile and Erin-Oke like the Chief Imam of Ipetu-Ijesa were on the path to correct all the ill practices. They were doing this not only by their ideal Islamic examples but by their day to day preachings against such ills.

5.3 Essentials of marriage

In Islam marriage is called a mithaq³⁹. In the Qur'an it is a covenant between the husband and the wife⁴⁰. A very high premium is placed on marriage in Islam. Before a woman can be said to become one body and one soul in marriage some conditions are necessary. Before the advent of Islam to Ijesaland a girl and the future husband might not talk together or see themselves for discussions on their proposed marriage. All the love talks could be done by the parents of the two parties. At best it could be through an intermediary. Islam discouraged

this aspect of marriage because marriage contract should be entered into by mutual consent expressed by the two parties. There should be no duress or any constraint. The love talks will be done between the two themselves; (the boy and the girl). The offer (Ijab) must be straight forward and the acceptance (Qubul) of the offer too must be willingly. The Prophet (S.A.W.) asked people to see their brides before marrying them⁴¹. This too is not only part of willingness and mutual agreement but physically the two will have to see each other. The Holy Qur'an states clearly: ". . . Marry such women as seem good to you . . ." ⁴².

After the affirmation or declaration and acceptance or consent the marriage is not yet given the character of sacred contract. A dowry is always a consideration of the contract marriage because it is essential to the validity of a Muslim marriage. The Holy Qur'an chapter 33 verse 50 says: "O Prophet! We have made lawful to thee⁴³ thy wives to whom thou has paid their dowers; . . .". This shows that the payment of nuptial gift to the bride before marriage is not only a Sunnah but obligatory. But before the introduction of Islam to Ijesaland the payment of dowry though vital yet very irregular in that some would not pay while some parents would give out or force the child to go with a potential husband without given her any gift. In most cases the parents alone would receive the dowry while the girl would

be sent to the bridegroom's house empty handed. There was a report of a bride who went to her bridegroom's house weeping and cursing the parents for receiving all essential things on her without giving her a share of hers⁴⁴.

Although there is no specific amount of money laid down as the lawful or obligatory amount to be paid in the Qur'an⁴⁵, the Ijesa Muslims follow the custom of their people and pay a minimum of ₦50 on every bride by 1968. As stated in the above when discussing marriage this amount is usually for the parents while the girl will have to be given her own gift, (Sadaqah) by the bridegroom according to his own wealth and social position. In many cases this amount will be bigger than the parents': This of course, depends on the interest and financial position of the bridegroom. Usually, since the parents' amount of dowry⁴⁶ is fixed it is not commonly increased by bridegrooms. Like among the non-Muslims in Ijesaland the payment of Mahr or Sadaqat on the part of the husband is an admission of the independence of the wife. The settling of dowry or nuptial gift on the woman at the marriage is very obligatory. Before the introduction of Islam among the Ijesa people the payment of the dowry to the parents was usually done early in the morning with two large kegs or gourds of palm wine and at least it would be accompanied with a bottle of any hot drink - which the elders of the bride's paternal and maternal relatives would use in offering special prayers for the

would be couples. On introduction of Islam the carrying of any sort of alcoholic drinks along with the dowry was stopped completely only the dowry would be brought still in the morning time. Although the elders of the bride's paternal and maternal relatives would be there, the sort of prayers offered would fully be restricted to Islamic supplicatory prayers. This is to say that there is no special prayer meant for this occasion. The fact remains that Islamic forms of prayers or words will be used:

Starting of prayers with words such as 'Bismi-l-lahi-Alhamdu-li-l-lahi' 'In Allah's name, Praise to Allah' among others are typical words of this occasion. The name Allah will constantly be used in place of other traditional names commonly used among the non-Muslims; such as Elemilale, Oluorogbo, Obokun-Oka⁴⁷.

In the place of the series of alcoholic drinks usually drunk on the occasion various types of mineral drinks such as Coca-Cola, Sprite, Fanta, Krest bitter Lemon among others are now in use in the Muslim circles.

Islam corrected a general practice by which some Ijesa personalities would turn their female pawns to wives without the consent of their debtors who were the direct masters of such pawns. That practice was common among tradition leaders, war leaders and wealthy people before the end of last century. In this connection the Qur'an says:

... فانكحواهن باذن اوليهن واتوهن
أبوهن ..."

Translation:

"... Marry them with the consent of their masters and give them their dowers..."⁴⁸

Among the Ijesa people before the introduction of Islam to the area only one person, either a relative or at best a paternal relative could singularly betrothe a girl to a husband after receiving the dowry. On many occasions a girl on her own could decide to leave for a man's house as a wife. To her people the marriage would be considered valid so long it was the girl's wish. On many occasions such type of marriage would not last and it could resort to divorce or the girl would pack out of the husband's house. This was easy because there were no witnesses at their marriage contract. Much of this will be said under publicity and marriage divorce below.

On introduction of Islam to Ijesaland the nascent Muslims emphasised the presence of at least two or four witnesses at any marriage contract⁴⁹. Until late 1960s this type of witnesses was emphasised by Muslim leaders in Ijesaland. From all reports gathered this system was almost the traditional system where the two fathers and the mothers of both of the bride and the bridegroom would be present as the givers and receivers of the bride

respectively. Maulana Karim on his own expresses that marriage contracted without witnesses is merely invalid (fasid) but not void, (batil). He also added where there are witnesses they must be free, sane, major and Muslims⁵⁰.

Generally, as from about 1968 the matter of witnesses at a Muslim marriage is not taken slightly. Witnesses will now be called out to enter into writing that are the givers and receivers of the bride and this will be in the presence of a Muslim leader. In most cases it may be the Imam, the Mufassir, the Chief Imam of the town or any other learned Muslim person recognised for his Islamic knowledge among the Muslim community of the area or town.

In Islam publicity of marriage is very important. Muslim marriage excludes clandestine sexual relations. Thus the one fact that distinguishes marriage from fornication and clandestine relations is its publicity. The mutual consent of two parties to live as husband and wife does not constitute a marriage unless that consent is expressed publicly and in the presence of witnesses as said earlier. An essential feature of the Islamic marriage is therefore the publication of the news by gathering together, preferably in a public place such as in the Mosque premises⁵¹ or in a special hall meant for such a social event.

This differentiates Islamic marriage from marriage in other religion where there is room for secret marriage. In

Islam there is no marriage by proxy⁵². Publicity of marriage is therefore one of the aspects of Islamic influence on the social life of the entire Ijesa people. Usually, the occasion brings all local Imams and Muslim scholars in the locality together. The delivery of a marriage sermon (Khutbah) on the occasion before the announcement of marriage is another factor which helps the publicity of the union. The occasion also serves the dual purpose of giving it a sacred character and making it a forum for the education of the community⁵³. The Chief Imam or the officiating minister shall read the (Khutbat) marriage sermon and then expatiate on the Quranic verses there in. After this, the officiating minister shall read the marriage benediction⁵⁴.

Unlike among the Egba and Ijebu peoples this benediction is the close of the ceremony. There is no presentation of kolanuts to the Alfas or the mallams⁵⁵. At best they can be given money gift and food while the newly married woman can be presented with a beautiful praying mat, a rosary and a kettle for ablution if she was not a Muslim before the marriage. In place of the traditional form of washing the bride's legs and carrying her into the bridegroom's house, Islam has effected a change or an innovation. The bride will only perform water ablution (Wudu) at the entrance of her husband's house before she enters the house in the presence of a large crowd of relatives, friends

and onlookers. This will be followed by the merriments of the marriage feast.

5.4 Festivities

At the end of the marriage ceremonies will come the marriage feast known as walimah. This walimah is expected to be held on the occasion of joining the wife and husband together. The feast is also expected to be given by the husband. In the ~~past~~ before 1968 among the Ijesa Muslims the walimah⁵⁶ was usually held mainly in the husband's house after the nikah is over. The officiating Alfa and his group would be given their share of the animal slaughtered and a gift, (Sadaqat) of money when they would have completed the ceremony as discussed below. Eating, singing and dancing would follow. But as from 1960 some of the innovations within Islamic limit began to be in operation as stated below: Places either in the Mosque premises or in the Muslim special halls built for Islamic social and religious activities, eating, dancing and other merriments that follow had replaced the traditional weeping of the 'bride'. Whenever al-Nikah is over, they usually take place either in the Mosque premises or in the halls. This does not rule out the possibilities of such feasts taken place in the husband's house. Even such a feast, of course which can be considered as entertainment takes place in the wife's house too. Ijesa people as said earlier

are found of merriments, therefore this type of occasion, al-Nikah is important that entertainments of friends, relatives and other good wishers will take place in close relatives of both the wife and husband's houses⁵⁷.

Currently, in 1986 poets, praise-singers and drummers are found at the marriage feasts among the Ijesa people. Although this type of social and merry-making are allowed but the Muslim leaders in the area always emphasise moderations in whatever they do because Islam is against overspending and the Islamic practice is to slaughter one goat to feed the guests⁵⁸.

This marriage feast is another step in the publicity of marriage which differentiates al-Nikah from adultery or fornication. The remark here is that the innovations which are still within Islamic principles are encouraging the youths both males and females to be alive to Islam than what is used to be in the past⁵⁹.

In discussing the impact of Islam on the Local marriage ceremonies in Ijesa and its environs we are to bear in mind that there is a fusion of both traditional and Islamic ceremonies in the area. The Islamic ceremonies may be performed before the custom rites will commence, or *vice versa*. The ceremonies are celebrated to mark the transference of the bride to the bridegroom's residence.

5.5 Duties

From a material as well as a spiritual point of view, Islam recognises the position of woman to be the same as that of man. This is to say that the husband is not a boss to his wife and the wife too is not a pawn; a type of social condition that existed between a wife and a husband in Ijesaland before the advent of Islam to the place. Good works bring the same reward, whether to a male or a female. To this the Holy Qur'an says, "Whoever works righteousness, man or woman and has faith, verily, to him will We give a new life . . ." ⁶².

Duties here are to be understood as the duties of both the wife and husband to each other. The functions of the wife so far as the home is concerned starts with the care of the home as her territory while the husband too is a ruler in it. Before the advent of Islam to Ijesaland wives were used or considered just as house helps or slaves. Socially, the woman had no position more than to procreate, help the husband on the farm and to prepare the husband's food. In her obedience to the husband she was completely servile and slave like and upon all she was not well cared for. On introduction of Islam the wife assumed a right position. She began to be maintained by the husband. The maintenance ⁶³ of the wife by the husband became incumbent

on the husband to feed, clothe and house his wife. It was a practice of the nascent Muslims in this area to see that the maintenance of their wives did not fall short of the wives' ways of life before marriage and at the same time the maintenance would not make the husband become a bossy husband. On the other hand the said maintenance are only compulsory for the husband if the wife is capable and discharges her marital duties⁶⁴. This is to say that a wife is entitled to maintenance by virtue of marriage. It is also part of a wife's duty or right to demand a dowry from her suitor according to his standards and also according to his means⁶⁵.

Although the husband is considered the ruler of the family but he should never treat his wife with harshness rather the man should live with his wife on a footing of kindness and equality⁶⁶. This is the part of Islamic influence on satisfaction of the conditions of happy marriage when the husband consorts with his wife in an equitable and kind manner. This is against the traditional behaviours of husbands not only despising their wives in words but lashing them brutally instead of peaceful settlement of misunderstandings. Commonly before the introduction of Islam to Ijesaland old wives were usually neglected for the other paspering and high regards for the new or

younger wives. On the introduction of Islam nascent Muslims were told or taught that a wife either old or young was entitled to impartial treatment where there were other co-wives. The husband must discharge his responsibility to his wife cheerfully, without reproach, injury or condescendence. The husband must do all the cares in accordance to his means and wife's style of life⁶⁷. From the series of interviews conducted during the compilation of this work it was gathered that Muslims wives in Ijesaland are now partners in marital relationship. They are therefore contributing to the success and blissfulness of the marriage as much as they can. More than usual, before they became Muslims they are now more attentive to the comfort and well being of their mates - their husbands. According to this same source they now try not to offend or hurt the feelings of their husbands⁶⁸. It was also gathered that Muslim husbands began to have more control on the movement and the types of work or social groups that their wives would do or join respectively⁶⁹.

Précisely, the general duties of the husband to his wife and vice versa are their rights to each other. The husband can inherit part of a wife's property while the wife too has a right to inherit part of the husband's property according to the Holy Qur'an⁷⁰.

They both have the right of advice to each other either socially or religiously. According to the above Quranic quotation the husband can inherit half of his deceased wife's property if she leaves no child while he can only inherit a fourth if the deceased wife leaves a child. The widow on her part can get only a fourth of the deceased husband's property if he leaves no children and an eighth if he leaves children. More of this will be said below under 'inheritance according to the Qur'an'.

5.6 Values

Marriage is important in the life of a man. It is because of its values that Islam lays emphasis on it because wives are to help husbands while the husbands too are to care for their wives. It is only in doing that they can have a peaceful and enjoyable couples' life. 'Two heads are better than one', the two, wife and husband will rest and put their heads and minds together in one flesh and soul. It is when there is peace in their minds that can be peace at home; it is then they will be able to think of their religion and do the wish of Allah. After marriage, yearning for women by men and for men by women to satisfy the personal urge and craving for sexual inclination or satisfaction will cease⁷¹. That will mean the avoidance of the grave sin in Islam, adultery or fornication.

Before the introduction of Islam to Ijesaland wives were not much considered as partners. They were being used as slaves to do menial work both at home or on the farms. Husbands considered their wives to be chattles that could be used and be left off whenever they were no more needed. The main value that Ijesa people attached to their wives before the advent of Islam was the dignity and recognition a man had by the number of wives he had. Secondly, husbands, most especially traditional leaders who had many wives would be proud on festive days when he assembled all his wives in front of his house. The wives would all knee down in a great respect and honour for their husband. They would not only pay homage to their husband, they would in addition sang in his honour as their lord, the owner of their heads and body⁷³. With that joy of greatness and pride he would move to the Owa's palace with his wives going in the front. As part of the honour and regard for their husband they would not put on their headgears or scarfs⁷⁴. In this way it is apparent that the value husbands attached to wives in addition to procreation was only of the physical assistance they could render either on the farms or in the social gatherings.

On introduction of Islam to Ijesaland wife's values became more important among the Muslims in particular. The value was no more only in the physical sphere of life as it was before the advent of Islam. The values include mental, social and spiritual. As a part of the mental benefit of marriage is peace of mind that marriage gives to the husband as well as to the wife too. To this, the Qur'an says: "And out of His signs there is that He creates mates for you from yourselves, that you may find peace of mind in them; and He put between you love and compassion. Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect"⁷⁵. By marriage, a lazy man is turned to an active man, a spend thrift, frugal and the hard-hearted kind. Therefore marriage of a wife is a harbinger of new thoughts, ideas, responsibilities and obligations. By marriage the mind is set up to thoughts and actions which were dormant before marriage.

There is also the social value of a wife which is more important and more prominent than what it was among the Ijesa people before the arrival of Islam to Ijesaland. For instance the Qur'an has the following to say about marriage or wife: "And He it is who has created man from water, and then He has made for him blood and marriage relationship"⁷⁶. This Quranic verse can therefore be said to be the basis of the idea that

marriage creates a family consisting of children and wife. Families create society and progress of a family which means the progress of the society. Furthermore marriage creates a new compenion of Kith and Kin, because sons and daughters go to create new families and hospitalities, fellow-feeling, kindness and mutual help become binding among these relations. It is therefore sure that a Muslim marriage gives impetus to social virtues. The moral value of marriage is glaringly noticed in checking unruly sexual passions which are the quickest way of falling to sins and crimes. It is well-known that out of sexual passions, many great sins are committed in this world. If it is satisfied by marriage, many crimes will disappear from the world. Thus it shows that marriage contributes immensely to moral welfare of individuals, families and societies and eventually moral progress that leads to spiritual progress.

Before the introduction of Islam to both Ilesa and its districts towns the value attached to marriage, was that of the physical or social gain. Islam improved greatly on the values and status of women in marriage. Both males and females, the old and the young are all equal before Allah. Although the wife is expected to be under the control of the husband, the husband too is to care for his wife. Upon all the husband and

relationship is no more of that of a master and servant. This is clearer from the meaning of the word marriage, al-Nikah which means uniting or union of two bodies to become one. This idea will give the real importance of a wife to a husband as the closest person to him in thoughts and in all activities of the family. Husband and wife are expected to have mutual support, mutual comfort and mutual protection, fitting into each other as a garment fits the body and protects the body too.

The early Islamic teachers and the nascent Muslim leaders among the Ijesa people fed them with this type of Islamic teaching about marriage for a very long period, (as from 1860s to 1896) before women in general could be given the right position as wives⁷⁷.

5.7 Divorce

Marriage in Islam is a contract between two parties, a husband and a wife. It is therefore clear that the contract shall continue only so long the two parties carry out the terms and conditions of their contract. It becomes a necessity to break the tie if there is an unresolvable cog that can lead to a prolonged or an endless pain in the family.

At marriage both the husband will sign and seal the marriage contract - the indication of agreement to the contract.

If either or both of them or one of them fail to carry out the term and conditions of the contract the contract is then broken. It is safer to separate themselves in the interest of peace because the love between them is lost⁷⁸. The ground of talaq in Islam is to avoid hardship of both husband and wife when there is no more any between them. Dissolution therefore becomes necessary to separate the wife and husband for peace. It becomes unreasonable and a sheer foolishness to keep them tied up in matrimonial bond when it is unpleasant to both. Therefore it is a natural law that the dissatisfied couple should be separated from the marriage tie for the welfare of the household, children and society.

5.7.1 Causes

Among such conditions that can lead to divorce or separation of two couples is impotence. Although Islam as a religion hates divorce but if a husband is impotent his marriage to a woman becomes defective because procreation for the man becomes impossible. If such a wife is forced to stay it may lead the woman to commit adultery which is a grave sin in Islam. It will be better for such a marriage contract to be broken. If on the other hand a woman is caught in adultery the marriage cord must be let loose - to allow separation of the wife and husband⁷⁹

because the Qur'an says in a very plain language that believers should not even come near adultery because it is a shameful deed and an evil opening which opens to other evils⁸⁰. A woman who commits adultery should divorce. If a husband generally resorts to adultery it is also a nuisance to keep his marriage tie with his wife most especially when all efforts to bring about a compromise prove unavailing. Despite the fact that marriage is expected to fuse two souls into a body and the thoughts of the husband should be that of wife, if a husband or a wife becomes permanently diseased or unfit for sexual intercourse justice demands a divorce.

If after marriage a woman or a man changes his religion from Islam there is also a reasonable justice to allow the break-off of such a marriage contract since it is wrong for a Muslim to marry an idolatress⁸¹. What is paramount is that caution must be taken so as not to allow any flimsy excuse to lead to divorce.

Upon all the Qur'an as a book of guidance lays down the principle of divorce which is described in the Qur'an thus: "And if you fear a breach, (Shiqaq)⁸² between the two, then appoint an arbiter from his people and an arbiter from her people. If they both desire agreement, Allah will effect harmony

between them, surely, Allah is ever knowing". The Qur'an further explains if they cannot be reconciled: "And if they separate, Allah will render them both free from want out of His ampleness, and Allah is ever Ample-giving, Wise"⁸⁴.

Divorce is resorted to as the last result. The Prophet showed his dislike to divorce in no uncertain terms. He is reported to have said that "with Allah, the most detestable of all things permitted is divorce"⁸⁵.

All said and done, it appears divorce cannot be avoided because once marital life is wrecked, the home is utterly broken up by misunderstanding, jealousy, cruelty or infidelity there are no other means to restore the marital joy if all attempts of reconciliation fail. It is very apparent that there is no system of law that can produce marital happiness, humane laws may only alleviate suffering. Justification for divorce therefore finds a support in the idea that it is better to reck the unity of the family than to wreck the future happiness of the parties by binding them to a companionship that has become adious.

Before the introduction of Islam to the Ijesa people, causes of divorce were not with strong reasons. A wife could be divorced for a simple offence such as returning late from

the market or a wife's failure in not going to the farm just once. Precisely an 'Osomaalo' man could divorce his wife just on a less important excuse⁸⁶. There was no written law about that could lead to divorce of a wife. Every individual followed practice, custom and dictations of the mind on many occasions. Even adultery that Islam abhors could sometimes be condoned by many husbands among the Ijesa people while some others would not even allow other men to cross only their wife's legs when sitting down. This is to show that there were no uniform causes of divorces or the same treatments for erring wives.

On introduction of Islam Muslim followed the Qur'anic injunctions on causes of divorce. Since there are uniform treatments for erring wives as stated in the above it was not difficult to discern causes that could lead to divorce or reconciliation. Here the Alfasi and the Muslim leaders made use of their position to serve as arbiters or reconciling people in cases which were reconciliable.

5.7.2 Types

Principally, there are three ways of dissolving marriages. These principles are followed so as to avoid hasty dissolution of marriages:

(a) Talag (unilateral repudiation by the husband). This is the system by which, when the husband is determined on divorce he pronounces the talag three times. The words used must indicate a clear and unambiguous intention to dissolve the marriage. For example it can be expressed:

- (i) 'Thou art divorced' or 'You are divorced'.
- (ii) 'I have divorced thee' or 'I divorced you'.
- (iii) 'I divorced (name) for ever and render her haram for me'⁸⁷.

Before talag can be effective the following conditions must be satisfied:

- (i) The husband pronounces the talag of his own free will. The husband must be in sane condition.
- (ii) The words must be clear and unambiguous.
- (iii) The talag must be communicated to the wife⁸⁸.

Remarriage of the divorced parties is encouraged and recommended as being more profitable and purer for the two parties⁸⁹. The Prophet was advised not to drive the divorced wife from their homes even when they have reached their prescribed time, either to retain them with kindness or separate them with kindness⁹⁰.

The second type of divorce is Khul' and Mubara'ah, which means Divorce by Mutual agreement. This is when a woman from her unwillingness to fulfil conjugal duties, desired to obtain

a divorce, she may obtain a release from the marital contract by giving up her dowry if it has not been paid or refund it if it has been paid. Other property can be used to compensate the husband's agreement to release her. This type of divorce is known and called Khul'.

In case both the husband and wife become tired of each other and can no longer live together and they have mutual aversion. It means they both agree to part. This type of divorce is called Mubara'ah. As it can be expected no party pays anything as compensation to each other. It shows that they both agree to disagree. This type of divorce khul' of Mubara'ah is irrevocable.

The third grade of divorce is Faskh which is where a marriage is dissolved by the command of the Court of Law. In this case the divorce will be based on specific ground, a cause for calling it Faskh.

When a husband is guilty of a conduct which results into difficulty of a matrimonial life to become intolerable to the wife either by failing in his duties to the wife or by neglecting some of the duties imposed on him by the law of marriage the wife has the right to sue for divorce. All because the husband has failed to fulfil the engagements imposed on him as obligations of marriage.

If the court views the ground by which the wife wants a divorce to be temporary causes the court may take steps to remove them and advise the marriage to remain.

The most important excuse for a dissolution of marriage by a court order is a proved case of adultery against a wife or husband because the Qur'an considers it a serious offence that deserves a stern punishment⁹¹.

As we shall see later before the introduction of Islam to Ijesaland there were these types of checks and balances in the system of divorce among the Ijesa people. Divorce was resorted to in many cases as passing whims and because of flimsy reasons in some cases while the traditional leaders rejected or kicked out wives from their homes just to demonstrate their power of authority⁹².

5.7.3 Impact of Islam

The effect of the teaching of Islam on the social life of Ijesa people is manifested in the procedure of divorce among the Muslims. According to Islam divorced women shall observe 'Iddah, (waiting period) for three monthly periods.

On this the Qur'an says:

"المطلقات يتربصن بأنفسهن ثلاثة قرو"

Translation:

"Divorce women shall wait

Concerning themselves for three
monthly periods . . . "93.

The waiting period is to correct the error of the traditional practice where a former husband's pregnancy would be carried to a new husband's house. Islam therefore makes a clarity to determine whether pregnancy has occurred between the couple and this will manifest itself within the three months stipulated. Secondly, Islam, a religion of peace and a way of life designs to make possible reconciliation since the woman should remain in the matrimonial home and be maintained by the husband throughout the three months prescribed by the Holy Qur'an. Furthermore since the husband is under obligation to show kindness to her during the period and he is encouraged to give the matter a second thought during the Iddah period.

During the course of research or the field work towards this thesis, not much information was available regarding the procedure of divorce that was followed by the people under study after the introduction and establishment of Islam among the people concerned. It is not difficult to conjecture the reason for this: Incidents of divorce among the Muslims prior to more recent times were not common; and where divorce occurred it was generally regarded as a private affair and so not much

knowledge of the procedure followed was likely to be widely practised. It was likely to be restricted to a Muslim group. It is obvious that the nascent Muslim teachers, preachers and leaders among the Ijesa were aware of this procedure and formed reconciliatory groups in some cases for possible peace settlements. Evidence of this is that the widow's iddah or widowhood is observed in Muslim families even up to the time under study among the Ijesa Muslims. There is difficulty in ascertaining whether the iddah of divorce is observed or not because many of the Muslim divorced cases were treated in the customary courts where Islamic laws were not made use of⁹⁴. Consequently, Muslim leaders and Mallams exerted Islamic influence on their member Muslims by intervening swiftly in family disputes involving husbands and wives to prevent them from going to court. In most cases they usually prevailed over them and consequently averting going to secular courts to settle what should be religious matters. These Muslim scholars, leaders, or mallams use their knowledge of the Qur'an to discharge dissolution of marriage or neglect of the woman by her husband. It is only in few cases where the intervention of the leaders or mallams fail that the couple can go to court where the Islamic legal system is however, either not known or not made use of or unrecognised. On many occasions Iddah is not even observed. This anomaly, of course, is not

peculiar to Ijesa Muslims alone but common among Yoruba Muslims in general. Therefore, the reaction of the Muslims to it has been general among the Yoruba Muslims. In the 1920s and 1930s Muslims in Lagos and Ibadan demanded for the establishment of Shari'ah Courts in their domains. That was jointly done in protest against the subjection of Muslims to customary family laws in customary courts⁹⁵. In these very recent years similar demands have been made especially since the country-wide debate on the Shari'ah provisions in 1979 constitution of Nigeria. With this type of provisions in the nation's constitution, there is a ray of hope that in the nearest future the Southern part of Nigeria may be lucky to have Shari'ah courts introduced to Yorubaland in particular in which Ijesaland will be included. Since the Muslim body in the area is eager to have a Shari'ah court.

5.8 Inheritance

There is a general term for inheritance among the Yoruba people of Nigeria as "Ogun" while the distribution of a deceased person to his heirs and heiresses in most cases is known and called "Ogun pinpin". Among the Yoruba people in general and Ijesa people in particular when a person dies his properties, both movable and immovable constitute his legacy that are expected to be distributed among those members of his family who are entitled to have shared of the properties. Generally and customarily too

among the Ijesa people as it was traditionally the practice in other parts of Yorubaland, the legacy of a deceased person was mainly inherited only by male members of his family. Those who are competent to inherit or have shares in such properties are the deceased man's sons and his younger brothers, nephews and male first cousins in some extreme cases. This shows that female children were excluded from inheriting the immovable property of their father. Typical example in this line is that they could not inherit a farm land or other landed property. There is an Ijesa old adage that is expressed thus, "Ajemo Ogun ni Omobinrin". Literally it means "Female children are to be inherited along with legacy or property (of a deceased father)⁹⁶. This practice of course, has become obsolete because the practice has long been modified in some parts of Yorubaland especially in Egba⁹⁷, Ijesaland⁹⁸ and Ibadan⁹⁹ where female members can now inherit parents' properties along with their male counterparts.

It is a prohibition among the Ijesa people for an elderly person to benefit from the inheritance of his younger relation no matter how closely or distantly related. Similarly it is an abomination for a father to inherit his deceased son. It is a common saying among the Ijesa people like other Yoruba people that it is shameful for a father to inherit his son and it is also shameful for an elderly person who inherits from his

deceased younger brother.

Commonly the estate or legacy of a man who had children by only one wife could be distributed among his children equally. Problem arises where a man has legal children by more than one wife because his estate or legacy would be divided per stripe¹⁰⁰. The system is the practice by which the property is shared into as many parts as the number of wives of the deceased husband. This means that the children of each wife are collectively given their own share as a unit and if they liked they could divide this among themselves for individual child to have his own portion of the unit. Since this type of system does not lead to equality or equal proportion of the share to individual child the legacy of a polygamous family is often accompanied with rancour, family feuds, discontent and animosity among the deceased children; all because of the result of inequality of share arising from the system of inheritance. In order to avert this type of discontent and rancour that usually mark the sharing of a deceased husband throughout Ijesaland the family elders atimes resolve to waive the traditional distribution of per stripe in favour of par capital¹⁰¹ under which every child receives an equal share of the father's legacy regardless of the number of children born by every wife to the late husband. Among the people under study, wives are regarded as part of what the deceased left which are to be shared.

Sometimes, a man can decide to state before his death how his legacy or property would be shared after his death; inform of the bequest or will. Since many of the old parents' bequests are unwritten, their wills or bequests are made in the presence of the affected children and others with the elder members of the family present. Usually this type of incident takes the form of a death-bed declaration followed by curses in case the wills should not be implemented.

On introduction of Islam to Ijesaland it shed light on the system and methods of sharing a deceased's legacy or properties. The Muslim Law of Inheritance, Ilm-ul-Faraiz¹⁰³, is a great achievement of the Muslim jurists. The nascent Muslim teachers and leaders in Ijesaland used the system to improve the former anomalies, rancors and discontents that usually followed the sharing of a deceased's legacy.

The Islamic law of inheritance really introduced reform into the rules relating to inheritance. It is not only that it makes the female a co-sharer with the male in the property of the deceased person it is also divided among the heirs on a democratic basis. Under this Muslim Law of Inheritance every child receives his or her share according to proportion stipulated in the Holy Qur'an according to the degree of individual relationship to the deceased person. Unlike in Yoruba traditional

practice both male and female children inherit in Islam with the principle that a male takes twice of what a female receives. The Holy Qur'an in this connection says:

Translation:

Allah enjoins you concerning your
Children: for male is the equal of the
portion of two females . . . "104

It is erroneous to think that by giving a woman half the share of a man in inheritance that Islam gives much priority to man over woman. Islam, a way of life only tries to maintain equilibrium in dealing with both man and woman considering the duties of each of them in the family. A man is saddled with much burdens, financial responsibilities and liabilities with general advice to the family.

Unlike in Yoruba traditional practice of 'per stripe' system, Islam caters for every legitimate child of the family on individual merit. On the other hand Islam regulates or limits the freedom a person can exercise in disposing his property before his death through bequest. He cannot bequest more than one-third of his estate according to the laws of inheritance¹⁰⁵.

Judging from Yoruba traditional practice it is an abomination for a deceased person's parents to have shares in the property of their dead child. Islam makes provision for them who survived him to share from his estate. This Islamic provision is based from his estate. This Islamic provision is based on reality than sentimental disposition of man who thinks that no one would wish to survive his child in order to inherit him. On reality, Islam does not lose sight of the fact that a deceased child or person forms a part of his parents family on whom the parent might be depended while alive. This is why Islam does not permit the wealth of a deceased person to accumulate at the hands of his children or younger relations while his parents are left suffering in poverty. Precisely, the basis of parents sharing from the estate of their deceased children is summed up in this Quranic passage:

" . . . Your parents and your children
You know not which of them is the nearer
to you in benefit . . . " ¹⁰⁶

This is why the parents are included in the primary heirs in Islam:

- i) The child, male or female
- ii) The father

iii) The mother

The husband, and the wife are also primary heirs and they always inherit. The first three heirs in the above succeed first and in their default their substitutes - child of a son, true grandfather and true grandmother inherit the property¹⁰⁷.

Before the introduction of Islam to Ijesaland it was a prohibition for a husband to inherit a wife's property. But Islam accommodates it as lawful for a man or husband to inherit a half of his deceased wife's property if she leaves no child, the husband gets only a fourth basing it on the principle that the female share is generally half the male share. On the other hand the widow too gets a fourth of her deceased husband's property, if he leaves no children and an eighth if he leaves children. If there are more widows than one, their collective share is a fourth or an eighth as the case may be; high in degree they divide equally¹⁰⁸.

Among the Ijesa people only on few occasions that Ijesa Muslims made use of the Islamic provisions in sharing the estate of the deceased ones. First, it was revealed during the research of this thesis that many Muslims in both Ilesa and its district towns were not aware of the Islamic provisions on inheritance. Secondly, the traditional practice has become a norm of the

people which is very difficult to break or set aside for two reasons: Ijesa people place much recognition on close or distant relations and since all of them cannot be Muslims there must be disagreements in using the Muslim Law of inheritance which the non-Muslims will not accept not only because they do not understand it but because it will not favour them. Secondly, some of the primary heirs are forbidden to inherit a deceased person among the people. If he does so because of Islam shame will not allow him to walk in the streets¹⁰⁹. The law was applied only where there are no problems.

Well, with the introduction of Islam a common practice among the Ijesa people in general is now on a reduction while it is completely eradicated among the Muslims for a son to inherit his dead father's wife¹¹⁰. This is one of the civilizations and impacts of Islam on the generality of Ijesa people because it is not only Muslims alone who have left out the practice as a thing of the past - Christians and majority of the adherents of African Traditional Religion inclusive.

5.9 Debts

Debts was a common practice among the 'Osomaalo' before the introduction of Islam to Ijesaland, even after its introduction and up till this modern time, at the time of writing

this thesis there were still many debtors of different types. Many reasons made the people to become debtors. As traders, the people could sell their materials to others who would not be able to pay and such people would remain debtors for a long time. In many cases debtors could not be able to pay because such materials would have been sold at exorbitant prices with much gain for the creditors. Once the amount of money became huge the debtors might find it difficult to pay. This type of debt is the 'simple' kind while a more difficult one was the debt arising from loans with very high rate of interest. The creditors would be happy to be receiving only the interest regularly leaving the capital to be yielding continuous interests, weekly, monthly or annually as the case might be. As said earlier under 'the emergence of the 'Osonaalo' system Ijesa people introduced the crude form of hire purchase to different parts of this country. This hire purchase system was a system that aided many Ijesa people to have become rich men and women up till the time of this compilation.

Many people became debtors because of unavoidable conditions. Owing a house was considered paramount to the existence and social eligibility of an Ijesa. A man who wished to build a house could buy the materials all on credit. Since houses were not commercial yielding venture in those past years in Ijesaland it was difficult

for the debtor to pay. Funeral ceremonies, most especially of either father or mothers-in-law or one's father could lead men to borrow money at an exorbitant rates of interest. Having cases in courts of Law was among many other reasons that could lead to loans and this type of condition would be an advantage to money-lender who would charge a very high rate of interest as much as five shillings, (fifty kobo) on a pound, (two naira) monthly¹¹¹. This was why many money-lenders became rich but notorious and unpopular among the people. If a debtor failed to pay his creditor his house could be seized. On many occasions the debtor could give out one of his children to his creditor in lieu of his debt. If a female the creditor could make her his wife after a long period of time without payment of the debt by her father; and if a male he could remain a pawn of the creditor throughout his life once the father could not pay his debt¹¹². Atimes landed property could be used as a surety. In the long past up to 1940s there were not written agreements between debtors and credits and many were faithful to the verbal and unwitnessed agreements while a most of others were not.

This type of 'trade' remained among the Ijesa people up to the time of writing this work. It was gathered that the bulk of people in the business are now the motor dealers whose buyers are mostly taxi drivers - who buys cars on hire purchase rate¹¹³.

This time around there is always an agreement, witnessed, sealed and signed either through a qualified lawyer or a reputable letter-writer. The rate of payment is usually after a deposit of an amount of money ranging from one-fourth to the half of the whole amount of money would have been paid while the interest will continue to be paid on a monthly rate of about ₦300. The seller, (the creditor) keeps the duplicate keys of the car, and it is usually licensed in the seller's name until the buyer completes the payment when a certificate of transfer of ownership will be given to the buyer, (the debtor). If the debtor fails to pay the money rate of payment within a month the creditor has the right to seize and resell the car for any amount of money he wishes so long it pleases the new buyer. This shows that the onus of right of the car rests with the creditor until the full payment is made by the buyer.

Generally, if a debtor died in the past, the creditor could delay the burial until he was paid and in some cases that could be the end of the debt if the children or relations claimed innocence of such a debt. This was the general situation of debts or debtors and creditors in Ijesaland before the introduction of Islam to the area.

On the introduction of Islam it effected some changes in the models of both borrowing and payment. Islamic attitude about

debt is liberal because it is based on a principle that all creatures and men are in want of something or other. Only the Almighty Allah is without any want¹¹⁴. Basically all in want should seek help from Allah who has got no want. Man also should extend his helping hand to his brother who is in want. Islamically, this can be done in two ways: First is loan with condition of repayment or gratuitous loan without any compensation. This is to say that Islam does not recognise loan with interest. It recognises only gratuitous loan. Islam craves for a long without compensation or interest for the benefit of the debtor¹¹⁵. The Holy Qur'an the main source of Islamic law says that anyone who offers to Allah a gratuitous loan will have a double reward and forgiveness¹¹⁶. Every Muslim of sound mind and not a minor may dispose of his property by gift. The early teachers of Islam to Ijesaland gave this type of Islamic teachings to the nascent Muslims on the motives of debts to change the people's former Shylock system of loaning and repayment of debts before the introduction of Islam to the area.

Writing down of debts is also an ordinance of the Qur'an:

". . . In transaction involving

Future obligations

In a fixed period of time

Reduce them to writing

Let a scribe write down

Faithfully as between
The parties . . . "117.

This writing down is to make the transaction definite and appropriate. Qur'an recommends leniency towards debtors rather than harsh treatment which was the practice among the 'Osomaalo' before the introduction of Islam to them:

... "وان كان ذوعسرة قنطرة الى ميسرة وان
تصدقوا خير لكم ان كنتم تعلمون . "

If the debtor is
In a difficulty,
Grant him time
Till it is easy
For him to repay
But if ye remit it
By way of charity;
That is best for you
If ye only knew¹¹⁸ .

This research revealed the fact that only few Muslims operated these regulations in Ijesaland. Among such people were religious leaders. Imams in particular and that was among the nascent Muslims: The Late Chief Imam of Ilesa, Alhaji Alliyu Amoke-Oja was known by his special practice of loaning Muslims money without interest and followed the Qur'anic regulations of



ALHAJJ YINUSA AMODU FAGBAMILA, CHIEF IMAM OF IBOKUN.
(The oldest and eldest of the Imams in Ijesaland).

writing down and witnessing with the dictations of the terms of payment. In most cases he was said to give out some loans to the debtors as free gifts if such people found repayment difficult. But it was also said he would never loan such people any money again¹¹⁹. The same thing was said of the Chief Imam of Ibokun, Alhajj Amodu Yinusa Fagbamila who was still in the practice of loaning Muslim brothers and sisters small amounts of money without interests and following the Quranic regulations as stated in the above¹²⁰. Generally the Islamic practice or regulations on debts are followed by only very few people throughout Ijesaland. The rich Muslims in particular refuse to loan out money instead they prefer donations to Mosques and Muslim Societies. Few Muslims who are motor-dealers do not involve themselves in stern treatments of their debtors or demand exorbitant rates of increase from them. This was evident at the burial of late Alhajj Buraimo (Ibrahim) Popoola on 10-9-86 when all taxi drivers refused to work for half of a day in his honour and regard for him because of his kindness and leniency towards his buyers(debtors).

It is an Islamic regulation that property of a deceased person must not be shared until when his debts are paid. This too, is an improvement on the practice among the Ijesa people before the introduction of Islam to the area once a person died

his children and relations could deny knowing anything about his debts and the creditor had no more alternative than to forgo the debt unwillingly.

5.14 Paternity

Socially, the Ijesa people live in compounds where the grandfather, grandchildren and great grandchildren live together under the umbrella of the head of the family, (the grandfather). In their own interest and that of the society amongst whom they live they are reckoned as belonging to his stock, and his actual physical paternity. Ijesa people are strictly sensitive of fatherhood both on the side of the father himself and that of the child too. There is no man, (a father) who wishes to keep an illegitimate child under his roof while there is no child who is disclaimed by a father who will like to stay with him or live among his other children in the same house until when the legitimacy or otherwise about him can be determined.

Once a man paid dowry on a woman any children produced by her would be the husband's legal children so long the woman remained in the husband's house. If the wife was caught in adultery at best the legal husband would sue the man to a court of law for damages. The child born in this form was still a legal child of the legal husband¹²¹.

In some cases the legal husband could disown the child and if forced on him by his own parents and those of the woman the child would not be regarded a legal one by the 'father'. Commonly he would be called by the name 'a bastard' and if accepted by the other man; he might accept it a legal child but the society would know him as a bastard. In most cases in the past such a child would commit suicide either by hanging himself or taking poisonous herbs¹²². Before the introduction of Islam if a son preganated his step-mother while the father was still alive although the father would be offended yet the child born would be accepted by the father as a legal child.

Polygamy was practised among Ijesa people but children born by concubines were considered illegal while those born by wives who stayed outside the legal husband's house with the husband's consent were considered as legal children because their mothers were legally married.

On many occasions arguments usually arose on who owned a child between two or among more than three men and each of them would have had sexual intercourse with a woman at different times. If the dispute arose before the birth of the child the men would be advised to wait till when the woman would give birth to the child to know who out of them

the child would resemble. If unfortunately the child resembled the mother and none of the men, the customary practice of "it is the mother who knows the father of her child", "Iya omo ni o mo baba omo re", would be resorted to. On many occasions the child would be given to a wrong father because the woman could sometimes give the child to a man of her choice who she thought would care for her and the child very well. During this period men from the royal family or people with noble births were given such children because the children's mother would prefer such men. In some abnormal cases some men could reject their legal children together with their mothers all because of their hatred for their wives or for the wives' parents. Quarrels between two villages or towns could lead to rejection of children born by wives married from such villages and since there was no legal form for either claiming or disclaiming a child, rejection of children like that of divorce was very rampant. Up-to-this modern time, there were still few cases of arguments of legitimacy of children. Visits to a few customary courts in the area revealed that president of customary courts used their positions and the power of law vested on them to force ownership of children on fathers who wished to reject legal children.

Many were directed to the hospitals for blood test, most especially where mothers refused a man as the legal father of a child. Generally there was no proper regulation about legitimacy of a child before the advent of Islam to the area.

At any rate, whatever the reasons for and frequency of disputes or arguments of ownership of children, Islam categorically condemned the practice of indiscriminate rejection of children by parents and substituted workable rights to legitimacy. Like the inalienable right to life, a child in Islam has the equally inalienable right to legitimacy based on the "Principles of legitimacy" which in summary is quoted by Abda'Ati, from Rose Coser, "holds that every child shall have a father, and one father only"¹²³. This general principle was introduced to Ijesaland at the advent of Islam by so doing Islam probably meant to put an end to the practice among the Ijesa people like the Arabs of the past that left the individual sometimes without any secure identity. According to Asaf, the rule as to acknowledgement of legitimacy arises only if the paternity of a child is not certain to use his terminology 'the paternity of a child must neither be 'proved' nor disproved', but it should be, 'not proved'¹²⁴. This idea means that a child's father is sure and must be known rather than proving or disproving legitimacy. It is the legitimacy of marriage

and union that can prove a legitimate child to a father. An illegitimate son cannot be 'acknowledged' as legitimate for there is no such thing as 'legitimation' in Islam. An acknowledgement by a Muslim that a person is his son is substantive evidence that the person is his legitimate son. First, among such evidences, the ages of the parties must be such as to be in consonance with the presumption of paternity. Secondly marriage must be possible, (legal) between the father and mother. The person acknowledged must not be the off-spring of Zina (illicit intercourse); and fourthly, there must not have been a disclaimer or repudiation on the part of the person acknowledged.

On introduction of Islam to Ijesaland whenever any case of disputes or argument on paternity arose the Muslim leaders and teachers would see that the marriage between the two parties would be held proved and the man's legitimacy established unless the marriage was disproved. From the facts collected during the field work of this thesis despite the Islami stand on the issue there were still constant disputes and arguments because legally married wives still produced illegal children. Real cases of married women becoming pregnated by other men when they still stayed under the roofs of their legal husbands did happen but

since the husbands knew the differences in the months when they had sexual intercourse with their wives and the time such wives bore their children. It was this that led the Muslim leaders to go deep into the study of Fiqh and with emphasis on the status of the child in Islam¹²⁵. They came up with the Muslim law that ensures the child's right of legitimacy. For example, the conception-birth span is set by various schools of law at a minimum of six lunar months and a maximum of four years. Thus, if a husband and wife cohabit and she gives birth six months thereafter, the infant will be regarded a legitimate child of its parents. When this aspect of the law came into operation there was a cessation of disputes and arguments of paternity among the Muslims in the place under study.

The acknowledgement may be either expressed or implied by conduct. It must be a statement or conduct intended to have legal effect - a mere causal admission as it was commonly done among the Ijesa people at a time before 1920, is Islamically not enough. Furthermore a prolonged cohabitation in the nature of concubinage, inconsistent with the rotation of husband and wife is not sufficient for legitimacy of a child. A clear repudiation by the father would also destroy the force of an implied acknowledgement. Islam made

an impact which was very significant in that the former practice of acknowledgement and later repudiated was prohibited by Islam. An acknowledgement once made is not revocable. Every legitimate or acknowledged child has right to inherit the father's property. Islam has corrected the ill practise of refusing acknowledged child to inherit the deceased father.

It was gathered that many Muslims do not make use of this system any more. At best where it is made use of it is a mixture of both Yoruba system and that of Islam. In most cases people prefer going to courts for settlement of paternity-disputes or arguments in this modern time.

At the emergence of the national Societies Ijesa Muslims became more knowledgeable in Islam and more awared of the Islamic practices through the ceaseless teachings of the learned Islamic teachers and preachers. Availability of translated works of both the Qur'an and Ahadith aided the understanding of many Muslims who attended the western oriented schools established by the various societies.

NOTES AND REFERENCES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. Maulana Fazlul Karim, Book II, op. cit., p. 629.
2. Abdul, M.O.A., Studies in Islamic Series Book I (Lagos, I.I.B., 1971); p. 90 and Fyzee, A.A., Outlines of Muhammadan Law, (London, Oxford University Press).
3. For more details on a Muslim marriage see, Maulana Fazlul Karim, Book II, op. cit., p. 631.
4. Mayadenu, M.A. Itan Isedale Ijesa, op. cit., pp 21-22.
5. For more details read Qur'an chapter 4 verse 3ff.
6. In this connection, the following Yoruba saying is apposite: Gbogbo obinrin ni iyawo Oba - "All women are king's wives" Oba oko gbogbo aye - "The King, the Husband of all women".
7. Webster, J.B., The African Churches among the Yoruba, op. cit., p. 99.
8. Trimingham, T.S., Islam in West Africa, op. cit., 165.
9. The usual form of proposal is "I have married myself to you".
10. The acceptance is, "I have consented". See Asaf, A.A. op. cit., p. 88.
11. Ali, b. Abu Talib, the fourth of the Orthodox Caliphs and the cousin of Prophet Muhammad married Fatimat, the daughter of the latter. For more details see: Lajnat-minal 'Wanna', Al-Tifl-ul-Muslim, (Beirut, 1962), pp. 106-107.
12. Owo ana: Owo ori iyawo (in Yoruba language).
13. The Holy Qur'an chapter 4, werse 4 "And give women (on marriage) their dower (mahr) as free gift . . .".
14. Yoruba: Isanlelori.

15. This is called Owo-ibowo or idokan for the final preparation.
16. This is the real marriage contract. We are to note that Ituyigi talaq is marriage dissolution or untying of marriage bands or cords. For more details about Yigi see: Canon C.W. Wakeman: A Dictionary of the Yoruba Language, (London, Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 233.
17. Yoruba: Laali Lile: Arabic: Linna.
18. Yoruba: Iwe-iyawo.
19. Feast of departure to the new husband's house.
20. Trimingham, J.S., Islam in West Africa, op.cit., 172.
21. Asaf, A.A., Outlines of Muhammadan Law, op. cit., p. 87.
22. Pa Kazim Eese, the oldest Muslim person of about 95 years of age in an interview at Ipetu-Ijesa revealed the fact of forceful marriages of minors among Ipetu-Ijesa people before and after the introduction of Islam to the town. He said further that the nascent Muslims ceased such a practice once they were converted into Islam.
23. For more details on the marriage of minors and guardianship in marriage see Asaf, A.A., Outlines of Muhammadan Law, op. cit., pp 90-91 and 188-193.
24. The presumption is that a person attains majority at 15 years but the same source says that earliest period for a boy is 12 years and for a girl is 9 years. This kind of limitation of age is very unworkable among Muslims in Ijesaland because people of this type of age are considered immature to marry. For more details about maturity (majority) see Ibid., p. 90.
25. Alhajj Aliu, (Ali), the Naib of Otan-Ile in an interview on 8-4-86, jokingly said: "Ana mi ti o ba ni agbara re lati fun mi ni egberun poun ti nko ba ti fi ipa mu ma gba o".

Literal translation:

"If my in-law (son-in-law), has the ability to give me one thousand pounds, (two thousand naira), without my forcing him, I will accept it". In Islamic law mahr is for the parents while Sadaqat is a gift to the wife. The Prophet used mahr to amelorate the position of the wife in Islam and it was combined with Sadaqat it became a settlement or a provision for the wife. By 1986 Muslim parents still received mahr (dowry) in Ijesaland while gift Sadaqat is given to the wife. For more details on Sadaqat Mahr see Asaf, A.A. Fyzee, op. cit., pp 126-127.

26. Pa Kazim Eese of Ipetu-Ijesa in one of the series of interviews with him in 1985 remarked: "Ogun ti a ko fi owo se ehin amu ni o nge". Translation: Any medicine on which no money is paid is usually kept behind the water pot" - meaning "It is valueless".
27. See Qur'an 4 verse 23 for the marriage prohibitions.
28. Raliat Yinusa one of late Tinuola's children in an interview on 30-12-86 in their Osodi family, Idasa Ilesa revealed this event.
29. A man who chose to remain anonymous in Igangan said that a foster-child is not even related to the foster-mother only decency can prevent him from marrying her.
- 30.

Translation:

"And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what is past . . ." (see Qur'an 4 verse 32).

31. A few cases of this occur among some Muslims in Ilesa. Since they are isolated cases only the research of this type can reveal them. For the prohibition see Q. 4: 22.

32. Karim Komolafe of H. 66, Iloro, Ilesa married an Osun worshipper's child. By now, 1986 she is 'Aishat Komolafe. I believe that it is not Islamic because the woman never believed before marriage.
33. Qur'an chapter 2 verse 234.
34. Since there are no Shari'ah courts in this part of the country the blames of such women are not much. On the other hand since they are Muslims they should at least follow the Iddah system.
35. Islamically this type of marriage is void. This practice is not much known among the Muslims in this area.
36. Divorce during pregnancy is not allowed. See Qur'an 65 verse 4. Chief Lasisi Omole, the president Obala of Ilesa customary court in an interview remarked that by law any woman who sought divorce must be given attention. In his answer to another question he remarked sharply. "This is not a Shari'ah Court and I am here as a Judge and not as a Muslim".
37. For details about a fifth wife and irregular marriage see Asaf Fyzee, A.A. Outlines of Muhammadan Law, op. cit., pp 93: 107-108.
38. Op. cit., Qur'an chapter 4 verse 3.
39. Mithaq is a covenant between the husband and wife.
40. "And how could you take it (dowry) when ye have gone in unto each other and they have taken from you a solemn covenant?". Qur'an 4 verse 21.
41. Hummad Ali, Manual of Hadith op. cit., p. 271.
42. See Qur'an 4 verse 3. If the two do not see each other how will they know their choice!
43. This introduces no exception or privilege. Every man must pay the dowry on his wife or wives.

44. Alhajj Saka of Aladodo, a village in Atakumosa L.G.A. in an interview on 16-4-86 remarked that her sister was sent to the husband's house in 1934 almost naked after the parents have got not only their rights but the bride's too.
45. ". . . But bestow on them (a suitable gift), the wealthy according to his means and the poor according to his means". (Qur'an 2 verse 236).
46. Specifically, the word mahr is used for the parents' gift, or dowry while Sadaqat is used for the bride's nuptial gift. Of course, atimes the two words are used interchangeably.
47. They are all sons of ancestors of Ijesaland.
48. Qur'an chapter 4 verse 25.
49. Alhajj Alibankudi, the Chief Imam of Ijebu-Jesa in an interview, 10-10-85 remarked that the four witnesses will be the two parents of the bride and those of the bridegroom. For details see Asaf, A.A. Fyzee, op. cit., pp 89-90.
50. For more details see Muulana Karim, Al-Hadi Book II op. cit., p. 642.
51. Mala, Sam. Babs., The functions of the mosque in West Africa, (Ibadan, IBIPRESS, Journal of NASR, 1980) p. 52.
52. Abdul, M.O.A., Islam As a Religion, (Lagos, I.P.B., 1978 (ed.), p. 90.
53. Seriki, I.A.A., Islam among the Egba and Ijebu peoples, op. cit., p. 523.
54. Ansar-ud-Deen Society of Nigeria, Religious Propaganda and Mission Board, Order of Marriage, Birth and Death Ceremonies etc. (Lagos, Ansar-ud-Deen Press, 1969), p. 9. See APPENDIX III for the text and translations of the Khutbat.

55. Seriki, I.A.A., Op. cit., p. 525.
56. Walimah is sunnah. For more details on feasts see Maulana Karim, Book II, op. cit., p. 663.
57. Mr. Boye Uzamat, the president of Nawair-ud-Deen Youth Society of Nigeria, Ilesa Branch in an interview during a Muslim marriage in the Nawair-ud-Deen Hall Obalogueun Street, Ilesa on 7-12-86 remarked that marriage feast in this form is really renovating and regenerating the Muslim youths in Ijesaland. In his quick answer to another question he emphatically remarked that unIslamic deeds will never be permitted in any form. Mr. Boye Uzamat is a graduate from University of Ilorin, Dept. of Religions.
58. For more details on the forms and number of goat(s) to be slaughtered see: Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, op. cit., pp. 518 and 519.
59. Fatimat Bakare, an N.C.E. graduate who is yet to marry in an interview on 7-12-86 remarked that all females are happy at the type of Muslims marriage of 'this modern time'.
60. For more details on the marriage contract see: Abdul, M.O.A., Islam As a Religion: Faith and Duties, op. cit., pp 90-92.
61. Yoruba: Cowo Fatihati: a type of money gift paid to the officiating Alfa during marriage ceremony.
62. Qur'an 16 verse 97 "Faith" in this context means right conduct. See Yusuf Ali, Holy Qur'an vol. II, op. cit., p. 683, Note 2137 for more details on 'Faith' and 'conduct'.
63. Nafaqa, comprehends food, raiment and lodging or housing but in common parlance it is limited to feeding of the wife. For more details on nafaqa see Asaf, A.A. Fyzee, Outlines of Muhammadan Law, op. cit., p. 202.
64. Ibid., p. 203.

65. Mammudah Abdulati, Islam in Focus, (Damascus, the Holy Koran Publishing House, 1977), p. 180.
66. Qur'an 4 verse 19.
67. Alhajj Yesufu (Yusuf) Kazeem, (Kazim) the Chief Imam of Ipetu-Ijesa on 10-10-85 emphasised that the rights are to be exercised without extravagance or miserliness.
68. The women, (Muslim wives) in Ijesaland are following closely the teachings of Islam in this regard. See Qur'an 25 verse 74 "Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes".
69. Alhajj Yusuf Kazim, the Chief Imam of Ipetu-Ijesa, Alhajj Dauda Lawal a Muslim leader in Iwaraja, Mallam Malik Ojurongbe, an Arabic teacher in Otan-Ile, Alhajjah Serifat Jinadu, a wife to the Mufassir of Igangan, Alhajj Basr Sarumi, Chairman of the Alhajja and Alhajjahs in Ilesa and Alhajjah Salamat Titilope Adediran in Ilesa all in interviews at different times in November 1986 and January 1987 respectively expressed the same view.
70. Holy Qur'an chapter 4 verse 12.
71. For more details about rules and conditions of husbands and wives' sexual relations see Karim M.F., Al-Hadio Book III, op. cit., pp 668-669.
72. For seriousness of adultery as a sin see Qur'an 17 verse 32.
73. "Oluwa mi, Olowo ori mi, Oko mi ti o ni mi lati ori de ese. Tire ni mi titi aye".
- Literal translation:
- "My Lord; the owner of my head; my husband who owned me from (my) head to (my) toes: I am yours for ever".
74. Mayadenu, M.A. Iwe Itan Esidale Ijesa, op. cit., pp 40-45.

75. Qur'an 33 verse 21.
76. Qur'an 25 verse 54.
77. Alhajj Alliyu Amoke-Oja, the Chief Imam of Ilesa in an interview on 3-3-85 expressed that the nascent Muslims expected a servile type of obedience and master servant relationship from their wives all because they fed and maintained them. He further said that with the ceaseless teaching of the early Muslim teachers the situation improved.
78. See Qur'an 4 verse 35.
79. Karim, M.F., Book III, op. cit., p. 697.
80. See Qur'an 17 verse 32.
81. Asaf, A.A., Op. cit., p. 94.
82. Shiqaq - The Qur'an gives not only the principles of divorce, which is Shiqad, a branch i.e. a disagreement to live together as husband and wife but also the process to be adopted when a rupture of marital relations is feared.
83. Qur'an 4 verse 35.
84. Qur'an 4 verse 130.
85. See Muhammad Ali, Manual of the Hadith, p. 284. No. 1, and see Also Asaf, A.A., Outlines of Muhammadan Law, op. cit., p. 139.
86. Ibid., p. 141 and for more comprehensive treatment of the rules of talaq, see Jaziri, Kitabu'l-Fiqh 'ala' lMadhahil - Arba'a, (Cairo, 1938), 2nd ed., Chapter IV, p. 278.
86. Chief S.A. Ataiyero, the author of the widely known book, 'The History of the Ijesas Part I', in an interview in his house at Ataiyero Lane Ita-Ofa, Ilesa made the assertion. He even said that his father could divorce his wife for not kneeling down to greet him (the father).

87. In this case the proof of intention is necessary because the words are unambiguous. See Asaf, A.A.F. Outlines of Muhammadan Law, op. cit., p. 143.
88. Abdul, M.O.A., Islam as a Religion, op. cit., p. 96.
89. Muhammad Ali, Religion of Islam, Op. cit., p. 557 and See also Qur'an 2 verse 232.
90. Karim, F., Al-Hadis, Book III, p. 698 and see also Qur'an 65 verse 1.
91. Qur'an 24 verse 2.
92. Alhajj Idris Olaleye, Chief Imams of Iwara in interview on 8-8-86.
93. Qur'an 2 verse 228.
94. Series of interviews conducted in Ibokun, Ilare, Itapa, Igangan, Ilesa and Ijebu-Jesa revealed that only learned Muslims and Muslim leaders probably observe or attach importance to Iddah of divorce in this area.
95. Seriki, I.A.A., Op. cit., p. 528.
96. This is equivalent to the general Yoruba adage: "Aikosi okunrin ni obinrin nje ogun ada", meaning, "a woman only becomes a heir of cutlass in the absence of a man. This adage is an indication that a daughter could only inherit her father's property only on abnormal occasion. For more details see Olaniyan, A.A. "Comparative Studies of Islam and Yoruba Laws of Inheritance". (Ilorin, Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, 1982), p. 23, (an unpublished long essay).
97. Seriki, I.A.A., Op. cit., p. 541.
98. His Highness Oba Akinla of Erin. Interviewed on 6th March, 1986.
99. Olaniyan, A.A. Op. cit., pp 23-24.
100. Onidi-jidi as it is known and called by Ijesa people.

101. Olori-jori as it is called by Ijesa people, "Ori-ko-jori", meaning "No head is better than the other" is another name for the par-capital system.
102. Alhajj Ganiyu Akewusola, alias 'Ni Kuara' of Itagunmodi and Chief Oye Aluko of Omofe, Street, Ilesa. Interviewed on 20-1-86 and 28-1-86 respectively.
103. Ilm-ul-Faraiz is the Muslim Law of Inheritance, in its minutest details it is a system rendered to perfection in the sharing of legacy or proportion of Muslim deceased persons. For details see Jung Mohamed, The Muslim Law of Inheritance, (Pakistan, Educational Press, 1934), p. 1.
104. Qur'an 4 verse 11.
105. Asaf, A.A., Outlines of Muhammadan Law, Op. cit., p. 350.
106. For details see Qur'an op. cit., 4 verse 11.
107. Jung, Mohamed, The Muslim Law of Inheritance, op. cit., p. 31.
108. See Qur'an 4 verse 12 and Ali Muhammad, The Holy Qur'an op. cit., Note, 519, p. 102.
109. Alhajj Wahab Akorede of Iroye, Ilesa, Alhajj Yinusa Fagbamila, the Chief Imam of Ibokun and Chief Loye of Igangan in interviews on different dates in 1985 complained of the difficulties in making use of the Muslim Law of inheritance in Ijesaland because many aspects of the Law is against the Yoruba or Ijesa way of life or custom.
110. As a prohibition to marry or inherit one's father's wife see Qur'an 4 verse 22.
111. Ojo Igando, a former money-lender who was a prophet at the time of writing this thesis made the personal and confessional statement in an interview on 30-3-86.
112. Madam Bimbola Alaafin Itaakogun, a wife to a widely known money-lender (Alaafin Ita-akogun), in Ijesaland up to 1955 before he died. The wife in an interview on 30-3-86 revealed the fact that her late husband married two of his wives in this manner - without paying any dowry.

113. John Adeniran Adeniyi of Iloro, a taxi driver of over fifteen years of experience in an interview on Sunday, 2nd November, 1986 disclosed this fact.
114. Karim, M.F., Al-Hadio-Book III, op. cit., p. 202.
115. Ibid., p. 203.
116. See the Qur'an 64 verse 17 and 57 verse 18.
117. See Qur'an 2 verse 282.
118. Qur'an 2 verse 280.
119. Alhajj Yahyah Oso-Koye-Enikan his deputy in one of the series of interviews in late 1986 made the remarks.
120. Alhajjah Fatimat Shittu, a widow confirmed this in an interview in her late husband's house, No. 42, Ipetu-Ile Road, Ibokun on 26-12-86.
121. Chief E.O. Fajuyitan, a former Customary Court President and Chief Lasisi Omole, the Obanla of Ijesaland, a customary court President at Interviews related the facts on 5-3-86 and 6-3-86 respectively.
122. Ibid., Chief Lasisi Omole, the Obanla of Ijesaland in an interviewed expressed that such a child would kill himself so as to avoid the shame of being called a "bastard".
123. Abdal'Ati, Hammadah, The Family Structure in Islam, (Lagos, I.F.B., 1982), p. 108.
124. Asaf, A.A.F., Outlines of Muhammadan Law, op. cit., p. 183.
125. Alhajj Amodu Yinusa Fagbanila, the Chief Imam of Ibokun who was the oldest of all Muslim Imams and scholars of Ijesaland at the time of the interview in 1986 made this declaration.

CHAPTER SIX6.0. ISLAMIC ORGANISATIONS AND SOCIETIES IN IJESALAND

At a period before 1945 individual Muslims in Ijesaland in general and in Ilesa in particular were eager to form Islamic organisations or to join one of the existing Muslim organisations in order to assist one another to own schools of their own. This was necessary at the time because the Muslim children were either rejected in the existing Christian schools¹ or were admitted with the condition that both the children and their parents would get converted to Christianity. Many societies therefore came into existence.

6.1. The Zumurat-ul-Islamiyyah Society

This society was the first Muslim organisation known in Ilesa and its districts. At the very difficult time when enlightened Muslims in Ijesaland were eager to form a Muslim Society or join one with national recognition, late Alhajj Abdul Rahman Smith, an educated Muslim, made an approach at the Lagos Headquarters of the Society in 1945. He invited the society members to establish a school in Ilesa. His request was enthusiastically accepted because the members of the Society were ready and willing to help in the spread of Islam throughout Nigeria.

Both the consultation and the invitation by late Alhajj Abdul Rahman Smith were done on his personal basis. Immediately he knew that the representatives of the society would visit Ilesa he consulted with some strong Muslim leaders² in Ilesa to inform them of the private arrangement he had made in Lagos for the progress of Islam in Ijesaland. Since the Muslim community was in dire need of Muslim schools where their children could receive Western -- oriented education without the condition of converting them to Christianity, the idea was warmly welcomed by the entire Muslim body in July, 1946³.

As a result of the acceptance of late Smith's suggestion that Muslims should own schools of theirs the liberal society, Zumurrat-ul-Islammiyyah founded the first school in Ilesa in 1947 at Odo-Iro Street and another at Ibala Road. The third school was built in Igangan in the same year 1947. As a result of financial difficulty and lack of proper administration coupled with little or no supervision, two of the schools were later transferred to N.U.D. administration in 1948 as shall be seen later. The Zumurat-ul-Islamiyyah School at Ibala Road Ilesa which was left for the society was only in name to compensate the Society because the N.U.D. Society took over the administration and the supervision of all Muslim schools

in Ijesaland as from 1950 chiefly because of poor and defective administration. The Z.U.I. Society itself was not much heard of as from 1950 in Ilesa because late Alhajj Smith who introduced it to Ijesa people later became a prominent member of the N.U.D. Society as its first Chairman in Ijesaland.

Whatever may be the case it was the Z.U.I. Society that paved the way for the N.U.D. and A.U.D. Societies in both Ilesa and its environs. According to Alhajj Sule Ibrahim, the Deputy Imam of Okesa Mosque in Ilesa and Alhajj Lasisi Sule, the Chief Imam of Igangan who was the Chairman of the defunct Z.U.I. of Igangan in 1946 who spoke in Yoruba expressed that: 'If the builder of a house fails to build what will the plasterer plaster and what will the painter paint'⁴. In other words it was the Z.U.I. Society that opened the minds and eyes of Ijesa Muslims to Western education.

6.2. The Nawair-ud-Deen Society

This Society was started in Abeokuta, the capital of what is now Ogun State. It is an off-shoot of another Muslim organisation called, Ummat Rasulullah, (the Community of the Messenger of Allah). The N.U.D. as a society was founded in 1930s by some Young Muslims in Abeokuta and was officially launched on

28th November, 1939 as the Young Nawair-ud-Deen Society of Nigeria⁵. The word "Young" attached to the Society was however removed in 1966 because of the changes made in the constitution of the Society⁶. The first President - General of the Society was Alhajj Gafar Gbenro.

The objectives of the Society are as follows in its constitution:

- (a) to promote, foster, encourage and sustain the religion of Islam.
 - (b) to promote educational, moral, social and cultural advancement of the Muslim community.
 - (c) to establish and maintain bookshops, magazines, libraries, printing press and any other business in the interest of Islam and for the advancement of Muslim Community generally. The carrying out of the aims and objectives shall be met by periodical and special contributions by members and collection of appeals from general public.
- (1) The Society shall be non-political⁷.

In Ijesaland the Nawair-ud-Deen Society was founded as a result of the clever attitude of the Christian Missionaries in preventing the Muslim children from having access to Western oriented education in the established Christian schools in the

area under study. Whenever they were allowed access as said earlier it would be on the condition of becoming Christians. The Muslim leaders in Ijesaland became conscious of the motives of the Christian Mission they therefore opposed Christian-oriented education for their children. This explains why there are only few Muslim children among the highly placed persons who have received sound Western education occupying key posts in the Government of the old Western Nigeria. Babs Fafunwa's observation is apposite: "Muslim education in Nigeria was retarded not because Muslims were unprogressive or because their religion was opposed to formal education but because "education" in those days tended to mean Bible knowledge, Christian ethics, Christian moral instruction, Christian literature, some Arithmetic, Language and crafts -- all geared to produce Christians who could read the Bible"⁸.

6.3. The Nawair-ul-Deen Society in Ilesa

From the above explanations it is clear that the Muslims in Ilesa and its environs were in a dilemma. They were to decide on whether to allow their children to go to the Christian oriented schools and lose their Islamic identity or to prevent them from going to such schools and later become less privileged people without Western education where Western education was the yard stick for appointment into official and enviable posts.

It was the problem of educating the young Muslims without any risk of conversion that prompted some Muslim leaders in Ilesa to organise a voluntary agency or join one of the existing Islamic organisations.

They began to think of this idea as from 1945. Their intention was to join the Nawair-ud-Deen Society because they have heard of its fame, especially its educational programmes and propagation of Islam. A member of this progressive group who first came in contact with the N.U.D. Society was Alhajj Ali Balogun. He came across one Mr. Yusuf Adetona a very important member of the N.U.D. Society. Mr. Yusuf Adetona was then working at Ilorin as the General Manager of the G.B. Ollivant. Alhajj Ali made their group's intention of joining the M.U.D. Society known to Mr. Adetona. On his return to Ilesa he informed his progressive colleagues of his discussions with Mr. Adetona, a very staunch and influential member of the N.U.D. Society in Abeokuta⁹.

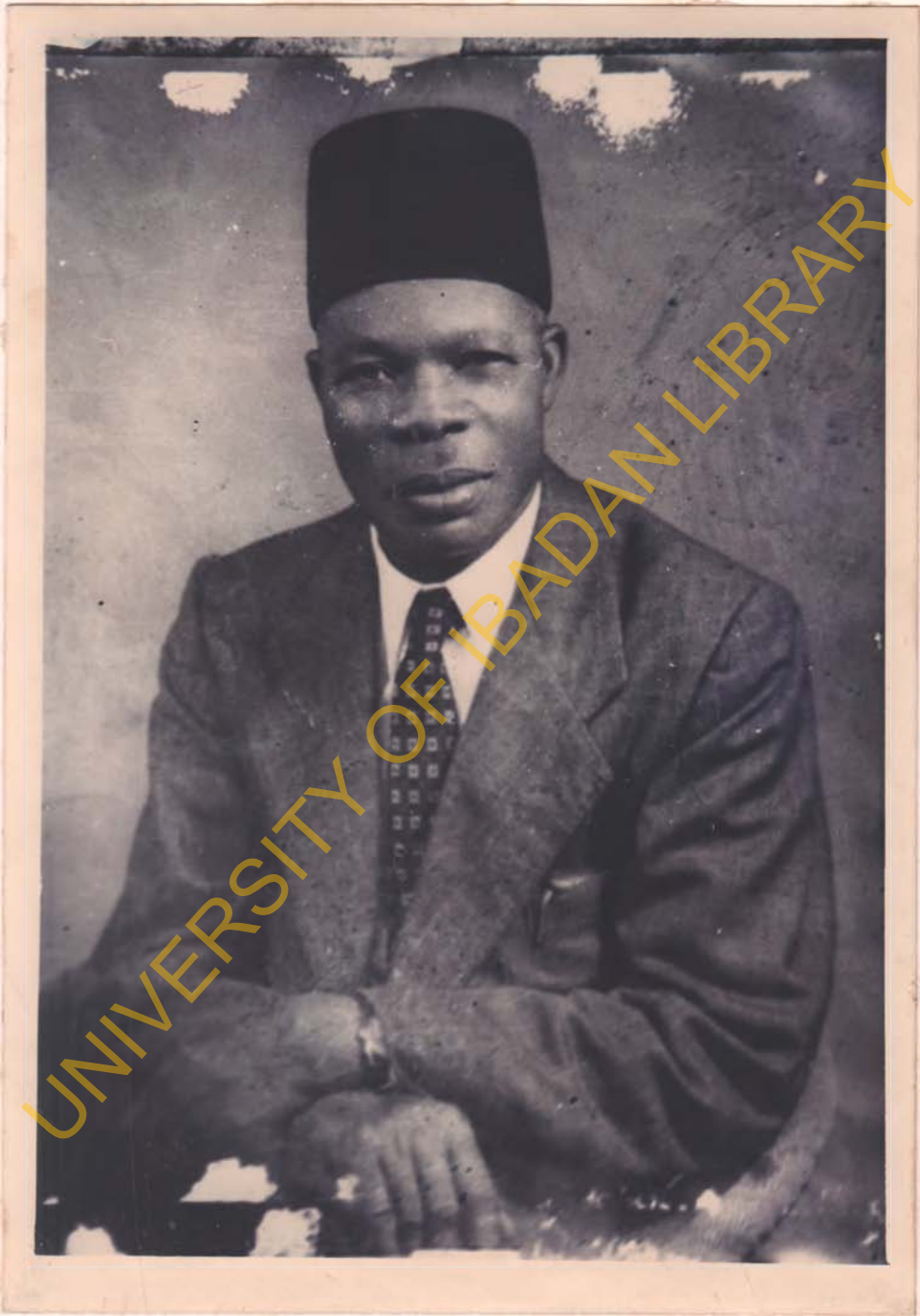
In order to resolve and make necessary arrangements in preparation to join the Society, a delegation of five members under the leadership of Alhajj Ali Balogun was sent to Abeokuta early in 1946. Other members of the delegation were Alhajj Bello

Arewa; Alhajj Salami Olatunji, Mr. Lasisi Balogun and Alhajj Musa Sarumi. At the end of their discussions at the headquarters in Abeokuta they all agreed that Ilesa would not be a branch but a centre on its own since there were other towns around her¹⁰. On 15th of May, 1948 the Nawair-ud-Deen Society Ilesa Centre was officially launched in Ilesa at Odo-Iro with Owa Ajimoko II as the special guest while the District Officer (D.O.) Major Weydon presided over the meeting¹¹.

As will be seen later this Society was an asset as well as a blessing to the Muslim Communities in Ijesaland. Unfortunately people could not see it in this light initially because they thought that it would bring disunity. Many strong Muslims went against the idea of bringing any Muslim Society to Ijesaland, thinking that it could probably lead to schism of Muslims in Ijesaland. If, in reality that happened, it would have meant a disunity of the Muslim body in the area under study. To those who went against the idea, it was done in ignorance because they thought that when they were united they could not achieve much in the progress and propagation of Islam talkless of when they possibly became disunited¹². The rejection of the Society was not strong in Ilesa since they wanted schools and they knew that through the assistance of the Society Muslims in the area

would secure schools of theirs. The only point of discord was on the choice of the Chairman of the Society. Many of the members wanted either Alhajj Baka Sarumi or Alhajj Musa Sarumi because they were wealthy and they were ready to spend their money in the way of Allah. The Muslim elites wanted Alhajj Abdul Rahman Smith because of his knowledge of Western education and his activities as the only Muslim leader who brought Z.U.I. Society that built three Muslim schools at different locations in Ijesaland. At last Alhajj Abdul Rahman Smith was chosen as the Chairman of the Nawair-ud-Deen Society Ilesa Centre sometime in December, 1949.

The N.U.D. Society Ilesa began to pursue vigorously one of their main objectives i.e. "to promote the educational advancement of the Muslim Community". They started this by searching for an area of land on which they could build schools for Muslim children in the Muslim way and in which they could teach Arabic and Islamic subjects along the Western-oriented subjects. This explains the reason why most of the Muslim schools in both Ilesa and its environs at present are almost N.U.D. schools. The first in the series was the N.U.D. Primary School Odo-Iro, Ilesa which was officially opened in 1948. Another was opened at Imuroko Street, in 1950 while a third a N.U.D. school was opened in Igbaye



ALHAJJ ABDUL RAHMAN SMITH, THE FIRST CHAIRMAN OF
NAWAIR-UD-DEEN SOCIETY, ILESA (FOUNDED IN 1948).

Street in 1952.

Although there are N.U.D. Society branches in many of the towns in Ijesaland yet it seems that the bulk of the Muslim educational programmes radiates from Ilesa, Centre of the N.U.D. Society. The N.U.D. Society in Ijesaland worked as a team despite the fact that the Society was established almost in every town in this area. The unity aided the progress and achievements of Islam in the whole of Ijesaland. For example with the cooperation of the N.U.D. at Ilesa one N.U.D. Primary school was opened in Otan-Ile in 1950.

With the take off of all primary schools by the defunct Western Region in 1955 when the free Primary Education began, the N.U.D. Society from its strong-hold at the centre, Ilesa tried untiringly to have more schools in other towns of Ijesaland. It was in the year 1954 that more N.U.D. schools were built in Ibokun and Ilase while those in Itagun-Modi, Ifewara and Esa-Oke were built in 1955. The N.U.D. in Ijesaland continued communities as a whole. In the pursuance of this objective the Society was able to secure a school for Ikeji-Arakeji in 1973 and another for Ijebu-Jesa Muslim Community in 1975. Osu, the Headquarters of Atakumosa Local Government secured a Muslim

primary school in 1978. Nawair-ud-Deen Society is not yet officially launched in the two towns. It was an effort of the Muslim communities of the towns with the co-operation of both the N.U.D. and Ansar-ud-Deen Societies from Ilesa that ushered in the schools.

With a few years the effect of the Western-oriented primary schools initiated by the N.U.D. Society became noticeable.

The Ijesa Muslim Grammar school which was officially opened in 1970 drew inspiration from the activities of the N.U.D. Both the Muslim Commercial High School, Iloko-Ijesa and Ojudayi Muslim College of the same town Iloko are the off springs of the Muslim Primary Schools established by the N.U.D. Society of Ijesaland.

In addition there are many Arabic schools started by either the Nawair-ud-Deen Society or individual members of the N.U.D. Society throughout Ijesaland. Mention can be made of Alhaji Ibrahim's Arabic School at Oke-Eso, Ilesa and Mallam Isimaila Ademola's Arabic Schools in Ajido, Odogbo and Iperindo, all in Atakumosa Local Government Area.

The Nawair-ud-Deen Society in Ilesa is really doing Islam proud in the town. The Nawair-ud-Deen hall for the use of Muslim sons and daughters was built and officially opened in



IJESA MUSLIM GRAMMAR SCHOOL, IROJO, ILESA (OPENED IN 1970).

1965. Instead of hiring of non - religious places for Islamic activities such as Muslim marriages, Muslim meetings and entertainments or religious plays by Muslim children take place in the N.U.D. Hall Odo-Iro, Ilesa. The Muslim praying ground in Ilesa is now cleared by hired labourers instead of the old Muslim parents doing the irksome work of weeding or hoeing. This improvement came after a suggestion made by the incumbent Chairman of the Society in person of Alhajj Salihu Abodunde Famuyide sometime before 1968.

In addition to the occasional preaching at strategic positions both in Ilesa and other towns by the Society the period between 10 am - 12 noon every Friday is devoted to prayers and enlightenments from the Holy Qur'an. The N.U.D. Ilesa members' special dress (white) and their religious songs on the two 'Id days when they begin to dance from the Ilesa Central Mosque to Muslim praying ground are always enticing and capable of attracting more people into Islam¹³.

In all its ramifications the N.U.D. Society of Ilesa centre has placed Islam both in name and in status high among other religious groups in particular and throughout Ijesaland in general.



NAWAIR-UD-DEEN HALL ILESA (BUILT IN 1965).

6.4 Nawair-ud-Deen Society in Ibokun

As said earlier many Muslim leaders went against the introduction of Nawair-ud-Deen Society. In each of the towns the reasons for the rejection were not the same. In Ibokun the rejection of the Muslim leaders against the introduction of the Society was based on the fact that the Western education which the supporters of the Society claimed that it would bring would make them lose their identity, Islam. As the result of the timely intervention and convincing persuasions of late Alhajj Abdul Rahman Smith, the Chairman of the N.U.D. Society of Ilesa Centre, the Society was finally established in Ibokun very early in 1950. Among the pioneering members are Alhajj Shittu, Alhajj Sule Ajayi, Alhajj Salawu Ogundipe and Alhajj Kuruyejo¹⁴.

Immediately when the Society was established the members began to pursue some of its objectives with emphasis on the propagation of Islam and promotion of educational advancement of the Muslim Community of the town. Every Sunday evening was devoted for open-air-preaching. On many occasions Muslims with sound knowledge of the Qur'an were invited from predominantly Muslim neighbouring towns of Ada-Owode, Ikirun, Osogbo or Ede to give inviting and rousing sermons where many people were

won into Islam¹⁵. Propagation of Islam was closely followed by their vigorous pursuance of their drawn up educational programmes. They wanted a separate primary school of theirs where both Islamic sciences and Arabic language would be given side by side with Western education. Through their personal efforts by contributing money and wealthy ones among them donating huge amount of money they were able to complete a building of six classrooms which was officially opened in 1952. They did not stop at that they struggled hard to secure a Secondary Modern School for the general use of the Muslim children as from 1958. According to Alhaji Sule Bello the Arabic teacher of their Primary school since 1955, the struggle to own a Secondary School started since the closure of all Secondary Modern Schools in the State by the Government. He further added that the plan to build a standard Arabic School for neighbouring towns such as Ilase, Ikinyinwa, Ilahun and Ipetu-Ile was almost completed.

On the social aspect, the members of the society try to show good examples to others on many spheres of life. On the two 'Id days, 'Id-ul-Fitr and 'Id-ul-Adha they will all appear in their white, stainless dresses and dance to the Muslim praying ground as a group.

Lectures are organised in the evenings of the 'Ids for the whole Muslims. They make their impacts felt during child-naming and marriage ceremonies. For example they effected changes in the old system of the officiating Alfas taking away the whole amount of money collected during these ceremonies. The practice is now to share the amount of money into two, a part for the celebrant in case of the child-naming and the other half for the officiating Alfas while the bride and bridegroom may decide either to leave the whole money collected during prayers for the officiating leaders or take a percentage of it.

At present the members make use of either the Central Mosque or a school room for their social meetings or gatherings. According to their Secretary Mr. Raimi Fagbamila, the Nawair-ud-Deen Hall Ibokun would soon be completed because every arrangement for the take off has been made.

6.5. Nawair-ud-Deen Society in Otan-Ile.

It was not only in Ilesa and Ibokun that people went against the inauguration of the N.U.D. Society. In Otan-Ile the rejection of the Society was due to people's personal hatred for the traders who introduced the Society to the town. The

disgruntled people went to the extent of colluding with members of the Methodist Church of the town to attack the members of the proposed N.U.D. Society. Like in Ibokun late Alhajj Smith waded in and through his persuasions and that of other enlightened members of the Society under Alhajj Smith's leadership as the Chairman of the Society of Ilesa Centre, the Muslim leaders in Otan-Ile realised the value of allowing the Society to stay. The society was finally established in the town early in 1950.

Like in both Ilesa and Ibokun the Society pursued the main objectives of propagation of Islam and educational advancement of the Muslim people vigorously. Preaching Islam to the people was not new to them since their old Society, 'Alasalatu'¹⁶, the members of which became N.U.D. members have taken open-air-preaching as one of their main duties under their leader Mr. Azeez Fesogun now (Pa Fesogun)¹⁷, the Chairman of the N.U.D. in the town since its inception in 1950.

The members set up an Education-Committee made up of some of the pioneering members under the chairmanship of Mr. Azeez Fesogun. Others were Mr. Hassan Odewole, 'Yisa Fasunlade, Sanusi Isabunmi, Jinadu Ajayi and Gbadamosi Ale. The committee quickly completed a plan of building a school where their children could

be taught Western education along with Islamic studies and Arabic language. The suggestion was approved by the whole Muslim community of the town.

In addition to money collected from the Muslims as a whole and donations from the N.U.D. members direct labour was also used to complete a building of six classrooms before the end of June 1950. With the untiring co-operation of N.U.D. members from the centre, in Ilesa the school was officially opened before the end of July, 1950 while they had started to make use of a part of the building as early as January of the year¹⁸.

The society completed the N.U.D. Hall Otan-Ile in 1972 when the foundation was laid in 1971. This shows the interest and speed with which Otan-Ile N.U.D. did its work. As could be remembered, the society was officially launched in the town in 1950 while their school, a building of six classrooms, was completed in the same year.

Although N.U.D. Society Ilesa Centre has branches in some other towns in Ijesaland among which are Igangan, Itagunmodi, Ipetu-Ile and Ijebu-Jesa they are just springing up. Each of them is trying to establish the Society firmly before embarking on important projects. The N.U.D. Society works as a body in Ijesaland. The Society has established Arabic Schools in some

towns in Ijesaland. They are in Otan-Ile, Igangan, Itagun, Ipetu-Ile and Osu respectively with very few pupils in most of the towns. The Muallims are not competent or qualified in most cases yet the Schools serve a purpose i.e. places where Arabic Language, the language of the Qur'an can be taught. These private schools serve as stepping stone for the Muslim children to have a first knowledge of their religion, Islam, before school age for the formal knowledge of Arabic and Islamic studies. In addition, people of old age, male and female who can no more attend the formal schools make use of these private Arabic schools to receive instructions about Islam.

The 'birth' of N.U.D. Society in Ilesa and its environs can be described as "the rebirth of Islam" in Ijesaland because it was this Society that revived Islam from its phlegmatic state since the Christian revival of 1930 which wopt away the bulk of Muslims in Ijesaland and also paralysed Islam in the area under study. The reawakening of Muslims to their religious duties with a new vigour started within a very short period after the official launching of the Society in Ilesa in 1948. Occasional preachings which can be considered as revival of Islam were always led by Muslim leaders and leading members of the society. They began to travel round the towns in Ijesaland

as from 1951 to create awareness of Islam by giving lectures not only in the Mosques and open places in the evenings but also in schools to Muslim youths. This idea was laudable and welcomed by the various Muslim Communities in Ijesaland because it aided Muslim Children not only to understand their religion it served as impetus to make them grow as practising Muslims.

Women education was a 'baby' of the N.U.D. Society in Ijesaland. Before 1948, that is before the arrival of this touch bearer - the N.U.D. Society there were scarcely any Muslim females who were literates¹⁹.

Socially, the N.U.D. Society has elevated the Muslims in Ijesaland to an enviable level. The wearing of stainless white robes by all members on ceremonial occasions such as on 'Id day when going to the Muslim praying ground has become a talk of the people in the town. Singing of melodious songs while all the members leave their cars and dance from the Central Mosque to the Muslim praying ground is seen to have lured many people into Islam both in Ilesa and its environs.

6.6. The Ansar-ud-Deen Society in Ilesa

The Ansar-ud-Deen Society is another important and long-established Muslim Organisation with membership spread all over Nigeria. It was founded by educated young Muslims in Lagos since

1923. The foundation members having been exposed to Western Education became dissatisfied with the apparent ignorance of the Muslims without western education which was the cause of the low social status of the generality of Muslims throughout the country at the time²⁰.

In like manner the Ansar-ud-Deen Society was founded in Ilesa by a set of young enlightened, educated youths who were deeply interested in Islam and Education. The youths numbering only seven at the time when they first thought of forming a Muslim movement for the Muslim Youths were optimistic that the religion, Islam would develop to a very high level in Ijesaland to the extent of standing on the same pedestal with Christianity²¹. The seven pioneering members were Alhajj Lawal, Mr. Oriowo Abu, Mr. Muniru Akodu, Mr. Ibrahim Bangboye, Mallam Sule Akintayo, Alhajj Muhammad Sheriki Hassan and one Alfa Barika from Oye-Ekiti. All the foundation members are still alive at the time of writing this thesis²².

Alhajj Lawal has been the Chairman of the Society since its foundation. Initially, Mr. Ibrahim Bangboye who was then a Grade II teacher teaching in Zumurat-ul-Islamiyyah Primary School Ibalá Road, Ilesa first thought of a Muslim Youth

Organisation while Alhajj Alkintayo suggested that it would be better for them to join an existing Society -- Ansar-ud-Deen Society of Nigeria. All arrangements were later completed and application made to the Headquarters of the Society in Lagos indicating their interest and willingness to become members of this progressive and educative Society. The Society was officially launched in Ilesa in 1968 with about forty-two members on roll.

Initially, the members started to hold their regular meeting at the Ilesa Central Mosque before a small piece of land was bought at Oke-Ola Ilesa where a little building was erected for the use of the Society. This building is now used as the Arabic School for the members' and other Muslims' children. The Society in search for a suitable place later bought twelve plots of land on the way to Ijebu-Jesa where an uncompleted hall was built. Since the place was too distant from the town and observing the obligatory prayers there will not be easy, the Society later secured another piece of land at Oke-Ola where the permanent Ansar-ud-Deen Central Mosque is now under construction.

One of the most important aims of the Society is to help in the spread of Islam and this aspect of the objectives of the Society is not left out. From time to time, the members

organise open-air-preaching both in Ilesa and its environs.

Like the Nawair-ud-Deen the Ansar-ud-Deen Society is helping in the real revival of Islam.

In addition to building of their Mosque they make use of the temporary building at Isinkin as their places of worship and hold their regular meetings there. The plan is on to build an Ansar-ud-Deen Grammar school in Ilesa. Up to the time of compiling this thesis the Ansar-ud-Deen Society of Ilesa centre was still a member of Ilesa Central Mosque where its members observe their Juma'at services. In addition they contribute money to the development of the Mosque. They have members in some of the Central Mosque Committees. Mr. Ibrahim Bangboye is a member of the development committee while Alhajj Muhammad Hassan is a member of the advisory committee. To demonstrate this well organised society's co-operation with the general Muslim community, all its members attend the same Muslim praying ground together with the Muslim body of Ilesa on the 'Id days.

6.7. Ansar-ud-Deen Society in Erin-Oke

Ansar-ud-Deen Society has long been in Erin-Oke even long before Ilesa. Introduction of Ansar-ud-Deen Society to Erin-Oke was circumstantial in that it was the interest of owning a Muslim



ANSAR-UD-DEEN PRIMARY SCHOOL, ERIN-OKE (OPENED IN 1940).

school that led to the Muslim community in the town in contact with the Ansar-ud-Deen Society headquarters in Lagos sometime in 1952. Muslim children were rejected in Saint Jacob's C.M.S. school in Erin-Ijesa as far back as 1939. Any Muslim child to be admitted would agree to be converted into Christian religion in most cases the child's parents might be compelled to be converted as well. This annoyed the Muslim community and many removed their children from the Christian school since they could not compromise with their religion, Islam²⁴. In order to secure a Muslim school for their children Pa Lawal Olayode Akintola a very strong and enlightened Muslim came to Ilesa to meet Alhajj Alli Balogun another Muslim elite who was based in Lagos. It was this Alli Balogun who directed Erin-Oke Muslims to Ansar-ud-Deen Society Headquarters in Lagos. The Society made all efforts to see that the school at Erin-Oke was approved by the defunct Western Region Government sometime in 1954 at the eve of Free Primary Education as the Ansar-ud-Deen Primary School, Erin-Oke²⁵.

As from that year the entire Muslim Community in Erin-Oke naturally became Ansar-ud-Deen members. The early members include Pa Olayode Lawal Akintola, Saka Popoola, Seidu Atobalo, Yesuf Adesina, Sadiku Sule, Bello Ogunlokun, Kasumu Obiri, Pa Karim Omotoye Ogunjembola and Muibi Aladesulu. The first Chairman of the society was Pa Olayode Lawal

Akintola, the current Chairman is Muibi Aladesulu while the Secretary/Treasurer is Muibi Adebambi who was the current Headmaster of the A.U.D. School of the town at the time of writing this thesis. He was also the Society's representative in the annual conference of the society in Lagos. Since the official inauguration of the society in 1954 the Central Mosque of the town and Mosques built after the year 1954, now five in number are all A.U.D. Mosques.

From the history of the introduction of the Society to Erin-Oke it is clear that education and interest of Islam were both the main concern of the Muslim community of the town. Like in Ilesa the plan is very strong to build an Ansar-ud-Deen Grammar School in Erin-Oke. Propagation of Islam is also very prominent in the programmes of the people. Learned Islamic persons and preachers are always invited from time to time to preach Islam while the whole month of Ramadan is always devoted to both Tafsir and the study of Hadith. The Chairman of the Society Mr. Muibi Aladesulu in an interview expressed with much concern the society's plan to build the Ansar-ud-Deen Hall and an Arabic school. He further said that Arabic is presently studied in the Mosque and Alhajj Abdul Karim Akintoye is alone financing the running of the Arabic study - He pays the Arabic

teachers as the "Area Balogun Musulumi", President General of Muslims of Erin-Oke.

6.8. Ansar-ud-Deen Society in Ipetu-Ijesa

Both Alhajj Yusuf Kazeem, the Chief Imam of Ipetu-Ijesa and Alhajj Jami'u Kazeem were both instrumental to the introduction of the Ansar-ud-Deen Society in Ipetu-Ijesa in 1954.

Both of them knew much about the laudable activities of the Society in both Lagos and Ibadan, most especially Alhajj Jami'u who studied Arabic in Lagos and had been an Arabic teacher since 1945 in the Ansar-ud-Deen School, Isolo in Lagos. He came home to tell his people to affiliate with the A.U.D. society so that they could own a school of theirs. At the eve of Free Primary education in the defunct Western Region in 1954 with the assistance of A.U.D. Society Headquarters an A.U.D. School was built at the present site in the town with about twenty pupils. Ipetu-Ijesa Muslim community later registered as full members of the Ansar-ud-Deen Society of Nigeria in 1955.

Among the pioneering members are Alhajj Yusuf Kazeem, Chief Otun Kazeem, Mr. Bello Balogun, Pa Eeso Kazeem, the oldest of all the Muslims of the town, Alhajj Jami'u who remains the A.U.D. School Muallim since its establishment in 1954 and Alhajj Sule Ibrahim, a Grade II School teacher.

Ipetu-Ijesa branch of A.U.D. has been very active and specially noted for being well organised. Like the Erin-Oke branch. The entire Muslims in the town are all A.U.D. members and the five Mosques of the town are all built by the Society. In addition to the school and the Mosques, there is an A.U.D. Hall for the social use of the Muslims. The Hall and their Arabic School were built in 1968. The Society pays the Arabic teachers. All willing Muslim children are therefore free to attend the school since there is no additional fees paid.

Like the Ijesa Branch, Ipetu-Ijesa branch is a Grade I member of the A.U.D. of Nigeria. The annual membership and conference money of ₦300,00 is always paid regularly and promptly too²⁶.

The main problem of the A.U.D. Society of Ipetu-Ijesa is the clever attack received from the Christian body of the town. It is usually on land disputes. In an extensive interview with Alhajj Jami'u and Pa. Eese Kazeem it was gathered that the Christians always dispute with them any time the Society wishes to erect a Mosque or school anywhere in the town.

6.9. The Ansar-ud-Deen Society at Otan-Ile.

It was gathered in Otan-Ile that Ansar-ud-Deen Society was introduced into the town by Mr. Yunus Fatomide sometimes after 1968. Mr. Yunus Fatomide, the introducer and the Chairman of the Society remarked that the entire nascent members of A.U.D. Society Otan-Ile were at one time or the other members of the N.U.D. Society of the town and that they joined A.U.D. Society just for further development of Islam in the town and not because of any dissension or dispute. Among the early members are Mr. Suberu Olayiwola, Mr. Nasiru Oripe, Mr. Badiru Oni and Alhajj Ibrahim Asaolu.

Their activities in the town include sermons, occasional lectures to revive dormant Muslims in general. They undertake naming and marriage ceremonies. Money collected from such religious social activities is used in the progress and propagation of Islam in the town. For example this young Muslim Society of the town built the Ansar-ud-Deen Society Hall for the use of the members and non-members since 1979.

A.U.D. Otan-Ile has many good proposals for the future developments of Islam in the town. The plan is on the way to erect a primary school, a standard and approved Arabic school in Otan-Ile. There is a very healthy rivalry between the N.U.D. society and the A.U.D. Society of Otan-Ile. From the look of things and the information gathered during the process of this thesis they are all working towards the

growth and development of Islam in their town and in Ijesaland as a whole.

6.10. The Local Societies and Associations

Local Muslim Societies and Associations existed right from the inception of Islam in Ijesaland. More of such societies sprang up as from 1940s in the bid to propagate and help in the development of Islam in the area under study. Since many of the Societies are the same in name and functions throughout Ijesaland attempt is therefore made here to treat some of them together and not as they exist in each of the towns. In the ways they help both religiously, socially and politically are therefore highlighted below.

Among the various local Societies that exist in the various Mosques in Ijesaland are the 'Alasalatu' Society meaning the people who engage in benediction of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), Erbe Ayebe, 'A Society in the honour of the Oba (king), 'Osupa Adiini', The Moon of Religion, (Islam), Nur-ul-Islam, Light of Islam, Omolere Adiini, 'Children are the honour of Islam and Ore degbe, Young Muslim Association - 'Friendship' Young Muslim Association among many others. As we shall come across later many of these Societies are named either in association to Islam or after the Prophet just to identify themselves with both Islam and its arch Prophet -- Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

The commonest of all these local Societies which existed long time among the Ijesa Muslims are Ayeba Society and the 'Alasalatu' Society. 'Ayeba Society in particular existed in almost every Mosque in this area right from the inception of Islam in the area under study. This Society comprised of Muslim elites in each of the towns. They were fashionable elites who were mainly Muslim men who undertook self-help projects and saw to the progress of the towns in general and that of Islam in particular. It was a powerful Society of the enlightened Muslims. It was an Islamic organisation which was very popular and widely known throughout Ijesaland for its Islamic progressive activities right from the consolidation period of Islam.

Its popularity over-shadowed almost all other Societies, secular or Christian Societies alike. This gave the Giwa, the President-General of the Society a power and popularity that was almost equal to that of a paramount chief in each of the towns in Ijesaland. This brought him to be very close to the men in authority. It can therefore be expressed here that Muslims in Ijesaland were not politically distant from the corridor of power right from the inception of Islam to the people or during its consolidation.

Generally, the Ayeba Society fostered corporate feeling among the Ijesa Muslims. The Society did not only help the progressive spread and consolidation of the Muslim Committees it also promoted community development. This was possible because the President-Generals of the Society in most cases were former 'Osomaalo' who had travelled to some of the Islamised towns. Their Islamic experiences in those towns were made use of in their homes.

For example late Sanusi Gbabiaka who was the President - General of the Society in Ilesa as from 1900 returned from Abeokuta and Egbado areas as a trader. In Ibolun late Yunus Fagbamila the President-General of the Society sometime before 1910 was once a trader in Ilorin while late Ali Balogun of Ijebu-Jesa who was the first President-General of the Society was a war returnee from the coastal area from where he had come in contact with Islam²⁷. Alhaji Gbadamosi Agbo who later became the Chief Imam of Otan-Ile in 1949 was a former President-General of Ayeba Society of the town and he was once a trader in Idseyin. Alfa Ibrahim Jegode of Iwaraja the President of the Society returned from Lagos where he studied Arabic while Mallam Yakub Aribilola returned from Epe to become the President of Ayeba Society²⁸ of Igangan as from 1912.

Ayeba Society is closely followed in popularity by the 'Assalatatu' Society a group of people who engage or devote their time for prayers i.e. Allah's benediction on Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). Basically, this Society based their practice on a verse of the Holy Qur'an:

"ان الله وملائكته يصلون على النبي يا ايها الذين آمنوا صلوا عليه وسلمتسليما ."

Translation:

"God and His Angels
Send blessings on the Prophet;
O ye that believe!
Send ye blessings on him
And salute him
With all respect"²⁹.

It is apposite to assert here that it is in obedience to this Qur'anic verse that many Muslims either as individuals or as groups recite various forms of the "Assalat". The simplest form of which is as follows:

" اللهم صل على محمد وسلم "

Meaning:

"O Allah send Thy blessings
And benediction on Muhammad".

It is therefore the aim of 'Alasalatu' Society to bring people together for the purpose of praying as a sort of extra act of devotion, because anyone who wishes for extra blessings from Allah will do extra duties.

A brief history of this Society is necessary here so as to know its origin and its cause. It was founded in Abeokuta in 1934 by one devoted Muslim, Ahmad Rufai Abdul Gani Akorede Qudus who died in 1984. He founded this Society because of the lukewarm attitude of the Muslim women to Islam at the time³⁰. Majority of the women at the time would not observe prayers talkless of participating in Islamic activities while a larger percentage of them did not even know what Islam was all about. The situation was almost the same in Yorubaland, at the time if not throughout Nigeria. This was because of lack of Islamic education on the part of the Yoruba women at the time. For example the paternal grand mother of the writer of this thesis who had been a Muslim in Ilesa since 1900 could hardly recite Surat-ul-Fatiha correctly before her death in 1982.

Ahaji Akorede's decision to have founded Alasalatu Society was very appropriate and very necessary because his

main objective was to teach the women about Islam. He began by inviting women into the Society and some few men who served as helping hand to the founder of the Society. He fixed three days in the week for the prayers: Wednesday, Thursday and Friday when single forms of prayers in glorification of Allah mentioned earlier in the above are chanted about a hundred times each.

This Alaslatu Society did not start in Ilesa until very early in 1950 when that enlightened and educated Muslim late Alhajj Abdul Rahman Smith, returned home to Ilesa from Lagos. Initially he was criticised for having both men and women in the same Society which usually took place in the mornings immediately after the Suhb prayer (in the Central Mosque). He patiently explained to his critics that the practice had started in Abeokuta over twenty years back. He did not stop at chanting of prayers alone, the members were taught how to read the Holy Quran. They received lessons in Islam as well.

The leader of the group in Ilesa Alhajj Yahya Osokroyenikan follows the good examples of his predecessor, holding constant prayers. Throughout Ijesaland the Alaslatu Society members are specially known for the regular prayers and chanting of Allah's Glorification and Benifications.

The leader of the group in Ipetu-Ijesa Alhajj Jami'u Kazeem said in an interview that members do visit sick members to offer them special prayers while many other Muslims would send to the Society for assistance in prayers. He further said that the Society has demonstrated the efficacy of prayers to the Muslim community of the town to such an extent that there are no days of their meetings within the week that they will not receive a letter or two from the Muslim community asking for special prayers. According to the leader such requests always give unalloyed joy to them in the Society because it denotes that the society does not alienate itself from the Muslim Community.

Throughout Ijesaland the Society has added another Islamic dimension in that it also features prominently in social life of the Muslims: On occasions of marriage, house building, child-birth and on other occasions of joy the entire members of the Society are there to grace the occasion with their melodious, religious songs and special music instrument called 'Seli' and 'Sekere'³¹ beads. In this light the wasteful spending for a secular orchestra is avoided. This group has also prevented a secular and non-religious Musical group from entertaining a Muslim group with vulgar and foul words.

As said earlier above this society follows the same pattern of organisation throughout among the Ijesa Muslims and it is also known by the same name, 'Alasalatu'. There was an attempt in Otan-Ile to name the Society after a Muslim leader, as 'Alasalatu' Tijani Society in 1968 the idea was dropped before the entire Muslim community could hear of it because it is unIslamic to adore human beings³².

It is usual practice of this society in Ijesaland to hold an annual anniversary of the Society usually within the 40th day of the Ramadan fast. This type of anniversary is for three purposes: To give special prayer of thanks to Allah, to gain more recognition and to raise money for the religious projects and development of Islam in general³³.

It was gathered during the field work of this thesis that the plan is underway to build the society's Zawiyya, where prayer-meetings are to be held permanently in each of the following towns, Ilesa, Ibokun, Otan-Ile, Igangan, Ijebu-Jesa and Ipetu-Ijesa.

Generally, as a result of the religious, social and other vital activities such as religious projects and aids to the poor the Alasalatu Society has become a very popular and prominent Muslim organisation in each of the towns in Ijesaland.

'Oredogbe' Young Muslim Association is another local society that is gaining fame in Ilesa in particular. From its name it means 'friendship' becomes a Society. The association was founded in 1965. Its life president is Alhajj Muraina Oladimeji from Osogbo. Out of the one hundred and twenty members of the Association at the time of this interview in 1985 more than about one hundred of them were non-Ijesa indigenes who were from some of the Muslim predominantly areas of Yorubaland -- Osogbo, Iwo, Ede and Ikirun. According to the president, Alhajj Muraina it was more than five years of the Society's establishment before any Ijesaman ventured joining it.

This Society is a male society. Women are not accepted as members because it is unlawful for men to be in the same place together with women, most especially when most of the men there are not their husbands³⁴. The writer advised their president to welcome females while the males should maintain a decorum all because both males and females should help in the spread of Islam.

The following are the aims and objectives of the Society which is based at Oke-Parde Street, Ilesa:

- (i) to raise the standard of Islam in Ijesaland.
- (ii) to differentiate Muslims from non-Muslims.
- (iii) to aid the poor.

(iv) to establish Arabic schools.

(v) to bring all Muslims in Ijesaland together as brothers and sisters.

Really, if this Association was not formed many of its strong members would have joined various secular societies where mundane acts will not be frowned at³⁵. This association therefore has retained a cream of mid-aged fashionable Muslim men from being lured into the worldly circle. Since the formation of the association in 1965 the members had visited many of the Muslims in the various towns in Ijesaland telling them the aims of the Society and enlightening them that Islam stands for peace. The Society has established Arabic schools in Ilesa and Iwara where both Arabic and Islam are studied after the official Western Education school hours. As part of its assistance the growth of Islam in Ijesaland, it has donated money and materials to some Mosques -- about 100 plastic kettles to Ilesa Central Mosque, some praying mats to the Central Mosque in Ijebu-Jesa, Igangan and Iwara in the same year³⁶.

Although there are other local societies and organisations or associations among the various Muslim Communities in Ijesaland, Oredegbe Young Muslim Association of Ilesa seems to have clearer aims and to have fulfilled them to an enviable extent as it has been seen in the above. Among other local

Societies in the various towns in the area under study are Anabi Lonigba Society in Ilesa (The epoch belongs to the Prophet), Agbega Adiini, (Upliftment of Islam) in Otan-Ile, Ilosiwaju Adiini, (Progress of Islam) in Ipetu-Ijesa, Ere Anabi, (Profit of the Prophet), in Ikeji-Ile and Adiini Lere, (Islam is profitable), in Ipetu-Ile. The various Societies took such names so as to identify themselves with Islam and its prophet. This in a way was an advantage to Islam because such names like the activities of the members lured many more people into Islam.

The local societies in particular started propagation of Islam at their own level of understanding of Islam before the arrival of the National Muslim Organisations. In reality members of these National Organisations did not only accelerate the tempo of preaching and spread of Islam in Ijesaland they also added educational advancement of the people and building Muslim schools.

Generally, as it has been seen from the various Islamic activities of both national Societies and local associations or organisations they have achieved much for Islam in Ijesaland. The various societies, organisations and movements had helped much in the entrenchment, consolidation like in the expansion and propagation of Islam among Ijesa people.

It has also been seen clearly that the introduction of the various societies did not bring any schism into Islam among the people under study rather it stirred healthy rivalry which propelled progress among the Muslim communities throughout Ijesaland. They all aim principally for effectiveness in the propagation of Islam and educational advancement of the Muslim Communities of Ijesaland as a body. The Societies and organisations depicted and still showing it clearly that Islam is one since God, its author, is One. They hold firm to the command of God that Muslims should not be divided. Muslims are keepers of one another and brothers of each other³⁷.

From the general activities of the various Muslim Societies, Organisations and associations in Ijesaland right from inception of Islam in the area up to the time of writing this thesis it has been proved beyond any doubt that Muslim Societies or associations are not denominations since they co-existed peacefully and worked together for the success of Islam without any feuds or disputations. They also showed Islam as a national religion³⁸. All the members of the different Societies, Organisations, Movements or associations hold firm to what the Qur'an enjoins upon all the adherents of

Islam.

"واعتصموا بحبل الله جميعا ولا تفرقوا . . . "

Translation:

"And hold fast, all together by the rope which God
(stretches out for you), and be not divided among
yourselves . . . "39.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. Among the Christian schools of the time were: The C.M.S. - Saint John's School Ilesa founded 1895; Methodist Otapete, Ilesa (1918); Methodist School, Otan-Ile (1925); R.C.M. School, Oko-Parde, Ilesa (1921) and The Apostolic Central School, Oke-Cye, Ilesa (1936). For more details see Ojo, G.C., Commercialisation of Christianity in Ilesa, Op.cit. pp.52-54.
2. Alhaji Salihu Faruqi in an interview on 30/3/85 mentioned late Alhaji Ali Amoko-Ojo, late Alhaji Saka Sarumi, Alhaji Ali Balogun and Alhaji Ibrahim Isom as some of the Muslim leaders.
3. Ibid.
4. They were both referring to Lumayat-ul-Islamiyyah Society as the builder that laid the foundation of Western-oriented education for the Muslim children in Ijesaland by building three schools where both Islam and Western education could be taught without the anxiety of converting the pupils to Christianity. The interviews took place on 10th and 16th of April, 1985 respectively.
5. Badmos, A.B., The Nawair-ul-Been Society of Abeokuta an unpublished Long Essay, Cent. of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Ibadan, 1972 p.11.
6. See: The Nawair-ul-Been Society Constitution, Abeokuta Idegboure Press, 1966, p.1, article 2.
7. Ibid. p.1, Article 4 (a) - (d).
8. Paul Pafunwa, History of Education in Nigeria, (LONDON George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1978), pp 70-72.
9. Interview with late Alhaji Saka Sarumi on 6-2-85 when he was the Chairman of N.U.I. Society of Ilesa.
10. Alhaji Salami Olatunji, a member of the delegation in an interview on 23-12-84 expressed that the agreement was never given to them in form of a written document.

11. Major Weydon, Ijesa Division Record, I/D/O/S/, Ilesa, May-September, 1948. There was no evidence to show that he delivered any written speech on the memorable day.
12. This was the common idea of N.U.D. Society leaders interviewed in Ilesa, Otan-Ile, and Ibolun on 30-4-85; 3-5-85 and 8-3-85 respectively.
13. Series of interviews conducted during the 'Idul-Fitr celebrations on 6-5-87 among both Muslims and non-Muslims.
14. Mr. Kaini Faybanila, the first and still the incumbent Secretary of the Society in an interview on 8-12-86.
15. Alhaji Sule Bello one of the pioneering members in an interview on 8-12-86.
16. It is Yoruba corrupt pronunciation of the Arabic word: Al-Salat which means 'the obligatory prayer'. The word 'Alasalatu' is a compound word - Ala-Salatu which means 'Owner of Salatu i.e. prayer. Invariably, Alasalatu means 'a society of prayerful people'.
17. He was one of the few direct pupils of ALFA Tijani who introduced Islam to the town in about 1900.
18. Mr. Jinadu Ajayi the Secretary of the N.U.D. Otan-Ile 1950 Education - Committee in an interview on 8-12-86.
19. See - N.U.D. Society, Ustin Islam ni Ile Ijesa, (Ilesa Kingo Printing Press, n.d.), pp.8-14.
20. Ansar-ud-Deen Society of Nigeria, Souvenir brochure pp. 14-15
21. Mr. Ibrahim Bamgboye, one of the seven pioneering members of A.U.D. Society in Ilesa interviewed on 8-12-86, See also Solatito, E.B. Arrival of Islam to Ibolun, Op.cit. p.7
22. Mr. Ibrahim Bamgboye re-interviewed 2-1-87.

23. Supporters and helpers of Islam. Basically the Madinese Muslims, the people who welcomed Prophet Muhammad and Muhajirun, the emigrants from Makkah were termed Ansar. For further details see Litt, P.K., History of the Arabs, Op.cit., p.116
24. Pa Lawal Alintola one of the most able and forceful foundation members of A.U.D. Society of the town in an interview on 18-3-86.
25. Interview with Pa Clarence Lawal Alintola and Pa Karim Olotoye Ogunjebola, the first Muslim to be buried on the 6th day in accordance with the Muslim traditional practice in Erin-Oke. The interview took place on 25-6-86.
26. Interview with Alhajj Jami'u Kazeem, one of the two representatives of Ipetu-Ijesa A.U.D. Society at the yearly conference of A.U.D. in Lagos - interviewed on 26-5-86.
27. Alhajj Saibu Alubankudi, the Chief Imam of Ijebu-Jesa in an interview on 15-12-84.
28. Precisely this society was the mouth organ and political representatives of the Muslim Community in each of the towns in Ijesaland.
29. Qur'an chapter 33 verse 56.
30. See Seriki I.A.A., Op.cit. p. 353
31. A drum made from calabash netted with strings of cowries - See E.J. Wandé and Bishop Crowther, A Dictionary of the Yoruba Language, (London, Oxford University Press, 1961), p.214.

32. Mallam Rabi'u Alabi Daramola in an interview on 16-5-86 explained that the decision was made in order to honour Alfa Tijani who was the first person who introduced Islam to Otan-Ile.
33. Interview conducted on 7th of June, 1987 during the Society's annual anniversary at Ilesa.
34. That was the president of the association, Alhaji Oladimeji's answer to why women were not welcomed as members of the association. He further added that women were not admitted into the association so as to avoid the temptations of females. The interview took place in the association's centre at Oke-Parde Street, Ilesa on 8-8-85.
35. Interviews conducted with some of the members who were present on 8-8-85 in their usual meeting centre of Oke-Parde Street, in Ilesa.
36. The president of the Association in an interview after the Central Committee of the Mosque administration's meeting at Ilesa Central Mosque on 14-6-87.
37. See Qur'an chapter 49 verse 10: "The believers, are but a single Brotherhood". For more details about Islamic Brotherhood - see Reference Note to the above Quranic verse in Yusuf Ali, *Op.cit.* p.1405 Note 429.
38. It is unlike a religion meant for particular race or people of a particular country or place. For more details see Fabunmi, M.A. *Ifẹ-The Genesis of Yoruba Race*, (Ikeja-Lagos, John West Publications Ltd., 1985), p.89.
39. See Qur'an chapter 3, verse 103 and for more details see Yusuf Ali, *Op.cit.*, Reference Note to the Quranic verse on p. 149, Note 429.

CHAPTER SEVEN7.0 IMPACT OF ISLAM ON IJESA PEOPLE

7.1. Social Religious Ceremonies

Ijesa people take delight in social and religious ceremonies. As from the establishment of Ijesa and its environs in as early as 12th century social religious activities or ceremonies had been very prominent in the life of the people. The traditional worship of the people before the advent of Islam to the area involved much of religious ceremonies at the shrines or graves of ancestors. In like manner betrothal of their children to husbands usually involved social and religious ceremonies in that friends and relatives would be invited to grease such occasions of joy where prayers would be rendered. At the introduction of Islam to Ijesaland many of the traditional leaders embraced it because it was not devoid of social and religious ceremonies. The attempt is therefore made here to examine the impacts of Islam on the various ceremonies among the Ijesa people and various Muslim festival and their impacts on the people in a way and the spread and establishment of the religion on the other.

7.1.1. Impact of Islam on 'Osomaalo' special type of marriage

As traders Ijesa people, the 'Osomaalo' were in the habit of travelling to distant places, far away from their homes on their trade ventures. It was also a common practice of the 'Osomaalo' to marry girls, wives from their home towns and since they usually came home once in a year choosing a partner was a quick business. In most cases the courtship, payment of dowry, knowing the parents of the two parties and the official betrothal would not last more than two weeks. In this case the full ceremonies of traditional washing of the new wife's feet or the customary practice of carrying the bride¹ into the bridegroom's house would not be observed. The usual practice known by the name, "Pade mi ni idi oko" "meet me at the motor park"² was usually the style of the Osomaalo's marriage of the time. In some cases parents would not be known at all. Giving of gifts in form of money, new dresses, an umbrella and a round box made of either iron sheets or kerosine tins would suffice to win a girl's love. Inconsequent the 'Osomaalo' would elope with the girl to his place of work at the end of his two or three week stay at home for the new year. Without much problems, the girl had become his

wife, On many occasions the parents of the bridegroom would go and inform the parents of the bride that their child had gone away with so and so girl of theirs. The bridegroom's parents could then make a promise of paying the dowry and do other ceremonials the following year when their child would come home with his wife and children in some cases.

On introduction of Islam this type of marriage was condemned. Instead the Islamic practice of marriage where the full consent of the girl would be taken, the love talks to take place between the two parties without the slightest restraint or duress as stated earlier under the essentials of marriage was introduced. The payment of dowry and gifts, sadakat to the parents and the girl respectively were part of arrangements before the social and religious ceremonies would follow: The presence of the Imam or any other religious leader, to perform the Muslim marriage in the Islamic way is very vital. The witnesses of the both parties, the publicity and the Islamic marriage festivities that follow make a very apparent difference between marriage and fornication. Since the establishment of Islam in Ijesaland most especially as from very early

in 1920s the 'Pade mi ni idi oko' type of marriage has stopped among the Muslims and replaced with the Muslim type of marriage.

7.1.2. Child-naming

Before the advent of Islam, it was customary for the mother of a new baby to remain indoors until the day of naming ceremony of her child. During this period of confinement, she must observe the taboos as were connected with the lineage of her husband. If she happened to be married to a husband who hailed from Alata³ lineage, she was expected to be eating saltless food for a period of seven days if the child was a female and nine days if a male. She would also be forbidden to eat any flesh of an animal (meat or fish).

During the period between the day of birth and the day of naming ceremony, the baby should be studied if it has had any celestial name such as 'Dada' - Baby with curls on his head when born", 'Aina' - Baby girl with its umbilical cord coiled round its neck when born", 'Ojo' - Baby boy born with its umbilical cord round its neck". 'Ige' - "Baby born with legs coming out first, Kehinde and Taiwo

(usually called *Tayo*) - twin - babies. Every Yoruba name has a character and a significance of its own. No child is given a name without a cause; and that cause is not the bare cause that a child must be born before it can receive a name. Everyone of the names is almost invariably a sentence, a clause or an abbreviation of a sentence which can be broken into component parts⁴. These common features of Yoruba child - naming ceremony were in vogue in Ijesaland before the coming of Islam.

The officiating person was always the head of the family, usually the grandfather of the husband and in the absence of this any senior male paternal relative of the husband or the father of the new child himself. It was any of these who should determine what name or names should be given to the baby.

The day of name-giving varied according to the sex of the baby born. For a male child, the naming ceremony usually came up on the ninth day, for a female baby it was on the seventh day and for twins it was usually held on the eighth day. On such an occasion materials such as roasted rat, allegator pepper, salt, water, sugar cane, bitter kola, kolanuts and honey were used to conduct the naming ceremony.

Each of these materials carried a significance for the life of the baby, in particular they signified things such as longevity, happiness, victory over enemies and in general success during the baby's span of life⁵.

In addition to the normal or celestial name as the case may be, the child also received a special name called Oriki cognomen which could be used to appease him whenever he seemed angry. After that day the confinement to which the mother had been subjected to automatically ceased.

When Islam came, it accommodated those aspects of traditional practices which were not inimical to its teachings -- naming ceremony and circumcision of both male and female children. The modification was of course made to leave those aspects which could not fit into Islam because of their polytheistic nature or practice. Offering of kola-nuts to ancestors, pouring of oil on the grave or tomb of a departed member of the family for the mother and child to lick as a sign of regard and homage to the ancestor were not accommodated. The practice of a mother keeping indoors until the day of child-naming ceremony approached, lingered on but the practice of observing certain local taboos was discontinued as being unIslamic. The fact that Yoruba name

was significant and illustrative of certain circumstances is the life of the baby and its parents continued⁶. Some names such as Olosunde; (The Osun worshipper comes); Ogunfurmi (the god of iron gives me and Edewale - Ede, a goddess of the Ijesa comes home) are among the various family names which the Muslims in the area refused to bear because they are heathenistic. Thus Islamic names were given to Muslim babies in addition to the celestial or Oriki and other family names which were considered not unIslamic.

However, the role of the grandfather of the husband or the father of the new child was taken over by the Chief Imam or compound Imam and his Jama's or any learned Muslim will be present for the naming while some food items which are not symbols of any idol or ancestors will be prepared for the guest's consumption. The officiating officer citing from both the Qur'an and Hadith would perform the child-naming ceremony. The Chief Imam or the Muslim Officer concerned started the work of bringing up the baby in the Muslim way by reciting the (Adhan)⁷, the call to prayer into the child's right ear while the Iqamah⁸, (the statement that prayer is ready) was recited into its left ear. In most

cases this would be done as soon as the child was born. By this the Imam opens the ceremony with praises of Allah and blessings for the Prophet (S.A.W.). This is followed with the reading of some selected Quranic verses on the creation of man⁹ and on Allah's exclusive power to grant children, male, female, or both to whomever He pleases or to withhold the granting of children to whomever He pleases¹⁰. He then reads a prayer at the end of which he pronounces the child's name three times. This prayer is the Khutbah¹¹, (sermon) for the naming ceremony. Usually it is not translated. However, after the reading the officiating Imam expatiates on the verses with some narratives and religious songs so as to embellish the ceremony.

In the local traditional practice, presentation of money and materials made to the baby were usually handed over to the mother until the baby would grow old. When Islam came, gift of money was usually taken away by the officiating officers. This was considered to be a form of remuneration for the work done. This was permitted by the Muslims as their officers were not usually paid officially. They relied on gifts from the Jama'a on festivals and other occasions. Currently by the time of writing this thesis an improvement or innovation was in operation whereby the

officiating Muslim leaders were given voluntary money gifts and food on occasions of naming ceremonies rather than taking away the whole donations and gifts for the new born baby.

Instead of varying days according to the sex or type of baby in the local practice, Islam introduced the system of giving a baby name on the eighth day regardless of its sex. It is a commendation to Islam that the system is now taken over throughout the area, either Muslims or adherents of African religion give names to their babies on the eighth day. As part of cleanliness which is important in Islam it is a commendable custom to shave the hair on the child's head on the day before it was given a name in conformity with the jurists' opinion that such a practice is recommended¹². On the day of child-naming ceremony alms are given to the poor and animals, goats or rams are slaughtered for parties because it is a day of joy and thanks giving to Allah. As usual, the Muslim leaders in Ijesa area preach and give strong advice against excess in spending during ceremonies because it is tantamount to wastage and wasters are enemies of Allah¹³.

" ولا تسرفوا الله لا يحب المفسرين . "

Translation:

" . . . But waste not by excess for God loveth not wasters".

Muslims among the Ijesa people past and present give Muslim names to their children as first names against the practice of the traditional ones that was known among them before the advent of Islam. Since Ijesa people love meaningful and important names careful selection of Muslim names is therefore common among the Ijesa Muslims. Among such names are:

- Muhammad - The praiseworthy (name of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W.)
- Sadiq - The trustworthy, (other name or appellation of Abu Bakr).
- Latif - The kind One (One of the attributes of God).
- Latifat - The kind One (for a female child).
- Jibir - Name of the arch-Angels of God.
- Mikail - Name of One of the Angels of God.
- Fatimat - Name of the Prophet's daughter.

Despite the fact that Ijesa Muslims avoided Yoruba second names that have obvious connotation of polytheism they are still in the habit of giving their children middle

names that they believe have no polytheistic connotations. However, some of these middle names do have elements of shirk, (polytheism); preachings and stern advice by the Muslim leaders are made against such middle names as:

- 'Yetunde - (my) dead mother has come again.
- Iyabo - (my) dead mother has arrived.
- Babatunji - (my) dead father has resurrected.
- Babatunde - (my) dead father has come again.

It is apparent from the meanings of these names in the above that they connote belief in re-incarnation which is regarded as shirk in Islam. As an evidence of the Muslims' heed to the preachings and advice of the leaders in the place of such names, names that reflect the parents' piety and belief in Allah are given to children as their second names. Among such names are:

- Olorunfemi - God, (Allah) loves me.
- Oloruntoyin - Allah deserves to be praised.
- Olorundaisi - Allah protects this.

Ijesa people like other Yoruba people believed that twins were mysterious children and signs of bad omen to their parents. Therefore parents made propitiatory sacrifices to them until they grew to adulthood. With introduction

of Islam among the people under study they realised that Islam regards twins as normal children because it is Allah who gives one, two or three children or more at a time to whoever He pleases. Commonly, twins born to Muslim parents are given Muslim names in the normal ceremony as stated in the above. The most common of these names are Hassan and Husain if they are both males and Hasanat and Husainat, if they are both females. In addition, to the Muslim names, the Muslim parents of twins still retain the traditional names of Taiwo and Kehinde¹⁴, given to the first born and the second respectively. Despite this the propitiatory sacrifices or erection of mini-statue for twins are no more made by Muslims of the area under study. Muslim parents can never be found among twins-parents, who are commonly seen at the Ilesa, Ijebu-Jesa, Ipetu-Ijesa or Ibokun motor parks begging for alms on behalf of their twin-children.

7.1.3. Circumcision

The customs about circumcision and excision antedated the introduction of Islam to Ilesa and its environs. Islam sought to destroy traditional religious associations

with which the rite was closely bound up: The invitation of Ogun priest, pouring of oil on materials of iron or steel for both the mother and child to lick, washing of the child's genital organ at Ogun shrine for seven days if a female and nine days if a male. All in the attempt to make the sore heal up quickly and for the child not to die of pain. All these activities were condemned by the Muslims because they were considered to be paganistic.

The Risala of Ibn Abu Zaid followed by the people in this area and West Africa at large considers circumcision (Khitan) which is not mentioned at all in the Qur'an as obligatory (wajib)¹⁵. The assertion is based on the idea that it was practised by the Arabs of Jahilivah period and adopted without question by prophet Muhammad; and excision (Khifad) is considered commendable. So the "schools" differ as to whether it is indispensable: The Shaf'ites call it wajib and its neglect punishable, while Malikis regard it as no more than Sunnah or commendable¹⁶. Muslims, with a few doubt exceptions, in practice regard it as an essential of the faith. The knowledgeable ones among the Muslims in Ilesa and its environs represented the rites as ordained by God. This means it was not practised merely because the

ancestors did them. The practice was therefore transformed from the traditional milieu into Islamic purification rite. Usually the Muslim clergyman was not uninvolved, in some towns in the area he performed the operation, accompanying it with prayer which brought Islam into esteem transitional rite¹⁷.

Traditionally, an uncircumcised person is considered physically unclean. Even the Bible considers the uncircumcised persons as been unclean. The Gentiles are typically the uncircumcised race that Israel hated¹⁸. "Allah is beautiful (and therefore) He likes beauty; Allah is Generous (and hence) He likes generosity; Allah is clean (and therefore) like cleanliness¹⁹. The fact that pious Caliph Omar II is said to have declared that circumcision was not demanded from converts, for "Allah sent Muhammad to summon men (to Islam) and not to circumcise"²⁰, does not mean that circumcision is haram (unlawful) it is halal, (lawful or commendable),

7.1.4. Burial and funeral rites

Before the advent of Islam into Ifosa and its districts, burial and funeral rites were observed with varying details from place to place. With the rites, survivors have the strong belief that the deceased was only making a journey

into another world for a new life. These survivors had a firm belief that the spirit of the dead person would come back into the family²¹.

This was why it was mandatory for the relatives of the deceased to kill a fowl as an immediate rite for the dead person. The fowl²², hen or cock was meant to clear the way and make the journey easy and smooth for the deceased. When the corpse would be laid in state, a yam meal was prepared for both the sympathisers and relatives around to eat. A portion of it would be placed at the foot of the bier with the belief that the dead person should have his own share of the food.

Traditionally, the children and relatives of the deceased would gather round during the burial time while each of them would bring cloths or clothes, fowls or animals. The body was shrouded in all the cloths and clothes which were believed to be for the use of the deceased person in the next world. The fowls and animals were slaughtered, a part for the people's consumption while the remaining portion was for the deceased. In most cases the dead person's share would be buried with him or placed it on his grave.

Messages were sent through the deceased to the departed folks or relatives who had gone long time ago. The traditional sexton, (usually a male) would descend into the grave and he would perform the rite of splitting the kolanuts and placing certain articles including food and condiments beside the body of the deceased. This was the rite of covenant,²³. After this period the covering of the deceased with the earth would begin. This was usually followed by the customary weeping and wailing by relatives, children and friends of the deceased. Several days after the burial there was another rite designed to draw the spirit of the deceased into the house²⁴.

When Islam was introduced to Ilesa and its environs it effected some changes in the burial system of the people: When a Muslim died the body was washed with soap or some other disinfectants and cleansed of all impurities which might be due to disease. The traditional practice of a male person washing the corpse of both male or female corpses gave way for male Muslim person washing male corpse while a female would also wash a female corpse. In washing the dead body the parts which are usually washed in Wudu were washed first while the washing of the whole body would

follow²⁵. Unlike in the local traditional practice where lot and lot of cloths and clothes were used in shrouding the deceased while some more cloths and clothes were put in the coffin for the dead person's 'use', it would be wrapped in one or more white sheets and scent was also added. After the ritual washing, the corpse should be laid flat on a mat with his or her head oriented towards (qibla). It would then be carried to the grave where it would be buried after the performance of Salat-al-Janazah. There is prayer for the funeral of both grow up people and for the juveniles too. The commonest of these prayers are as follows:

دعاء الجنائزة

"اللهم اغفر لحينا وميتنا وشاهدنا وغائبنا
وصغيرنا وكبيرنا وذكرنا وأنثنا . اللهم من
أحييته منا فأحيه على الاسلام ومن توفّيته
منا توفّه على الايمان . اللهم لا تحرمنا أجره
ولا تفتنا بعده ."

Translation: "O Allah! forgive our living and our dead and our present and our absent and our youngsters and our elders and our men and our women. O Allah! whomsoever Thou keepst alive

from among us keep him alive on Islam and whosoever Thou giveth death from amongst us give him death on Faith.

O Allah! deprive us not of his/her reward and test us not after his/her²⁶.

For a juvenile:

دعاء الجنائز للقصار

اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْهُ لَنَا سَالِفًا وَفَرَطًا وَاجْعَلْهُ
لَنَا أَجْرًا وَذَخِيرًا وَاجْعَلْهُ لَنَا شَافِعًا
وَمُشَفَعًا.

Translation: "O Allah! make him our fore-runner and make him our reward and provision and make him our intercessor and object of intercession"²⁷.

The above prayers can only be said after performing the wudu and making the 'Niyyat, intention of janazah prayer. The Takbir will be said and the istiftah, Subhanaka Allahumma wa bi hamdika wa tabaraka smuka wa ta'ala jadduka wa la ilaha ghairuka - meaning: "Glory to Thee, O Allah, and Thine is Paradise and blessed is Thy name, and exalted is Thy Majesty and there is none to be served besides Thee. This will be followed by the recitation of Surat-ul-Fatihah in a low

voice by both the Imam and those who follow him before the above prayer(s) for the dead will be said.

At the grave side a ritual service would be held over the corpse. Instead of the weeping and wailing of the people at the grave side all Muslims present would be told not to do so because the teaching of Islam on this require the bereaved to exercise patience and perseverance. In reference to a tradition of the Prophet the deceased receives punishment in the grave as a result of wailings of his or her people²⁸. This creates or instills fear into the people and serves a cause that minimizes the practice at Muslim burials. Unlike the adherents of Yoruba religion Muslims do not delay the burial of a corpse more than 24 hours in a normal condition while the adherents of Yoruba religion can lay a corpse in state for three or more days before burial.

The traditional burial and funeral rites were supplanted by Islamic rituals. The role of the traditional priest was taken over by the Chief Imam and his Jama's who possessed some knowledge of the Qur'an. The practice of slaying "The fare-fowl" was discouraged as bordering on sacrifice to the deceased. Instead of messages which were usually sent through

the deceased to the people who had died before, the Chief Imam and his Jama'ah adopted the method of praying for the deceased: "O Allah! grant him protection, and have mercy on him, and keep him in good condition, and pardon him, and make his entertainment honourable, and expand his place of entering and wash him with water and snow and hail and clean him of faults as the white cloth is cleansed of fross"²⁹.

Such occasions usually involved giving sermons to the survivors to be mindful of hereafter and amend their ways. Religious advice to show heaven as the last homes of believers, a place of peace and security and where there are no toils or weariness were all features of the sermon³⁰. Weeping and wailing of relatives, children and other sympathizers at the grave of a Muslim is not allowed in Islam as said earlier because death is inevitable and it is a transition³¹.

The usual expensive funeral ceremonies of the traditional practice after the burial of the deceased is very unIslamic and the Muslims were discouraged of it. However, moderation in this case was recommended for the Muslims. These early Muslim preachers in the area based their

sermon of moderation in all spending in general and funeral ceremonies in particular on teachings of the Holy Qur'an³². These types of wasteful spending at funeral ceremonies were neither Sadaqat nor Zakat³³.

Traditionally the dead body of a child was either thrown to the bush or buried hurriedly in this area under study before the advent of Islam. There were reports that some were even burnt³⁴. Islam brought a change to the life of Muslims in this line. The funeral service of a child was similar to that of an adult except that in the prayer after the third takbir, the funeral prayer for the Juveniles as stated in the above will be recited.

It was a common practice of the people in Ijesaland to carve and paint images of their ancestors because they loved to retain the physical features of those departed important traditional leaders or warriors. Secondly, they wished to retain their figures to be seen whenever they offered them sacrifices in veneration. Some of such carved images are still commonly found in houses of chiefs, palaces and shrines. Paintings or drawings of such people are also found on walls too. In some other places these images are put in corners of houses where they were worshipped.

Twin children were considered as marked or extraordinary children. That was why parents usually made dolls of either one or the two if they died. Such doll or dolls would remain objects of worship to the parents. On the introduction of Islam all these types of practice were condemned as idolatry which is a grave sin in Islam because idolaters are unbelievers³⁵.

Emphasis was made of Surat-ul-Ikhlās. The meaning and full explanations of the chapter were taught the people. This very chapter like Surat-ul-Fatihah was made compulsory for Muslims in the area to memorise so as to make use of them in their obligatory prayers. Secondly, the constant reading and reciting of the two chapters would remind the Muslims that their prayers and requests should be directed to Allah alone and oneness of God would become more apparent to them.

The eighth-day and fortieth-day ceremonies are a sort of innovation introduced generally by Yoruba Muslims to replace the third-day and seventh-day funeral ceremonies in the traditional society because the activities involved cannot polytheism. Although this Muslim modification is never stipulated by Islam, it was introduced as a traditional

practice to bring both Muslim relatives and other sympathisers together in sober reflection. Generally, the ceremonies here are in form of open-air preaching. The audience would be reminded of their religious duties before they are overtaken by death. The occasion is usually made use of to offer prayers for those pious ones who died long time ago among the members of the Muslim community and the deceased's children and relatives in general. Unlike among the Ijebu and Egba peoples cooked food items are never taken to the Mosque on the eighth or fortieth-day³⁶. Such food items can be served to people present in the deceased's house after the ceremonies and this is on the condition that the deceased is a person of old age. Commonly all those who are younger than the deceased will only take part in prayers but will never wait to partake of any food presented to the people present.

7.1.5. Muslim Festivals

Some of the festivals observed among the Ijesa people include Ashura³⁷ or Muharram known and called Kayokayo³⁸ among the Yoruba people, 'Id-ul-Fitr' the festival observed at the end of Ramadan fasts, 'Id-ul-Adha', a festival of

sacrifice observed on the 10th of Dhul-Hijjah and 'Id-ul-Mawlid, a special festival to mark the birthday of the Apostle of God.

The Yoruba name of this festival Kayokayo which literally means 'the festival of plenty' is not unconnected with the preparations for it and the general agricultural harvesting period at the time. As part of the Muslim preparations for it, the legs of slaughtered rams during the 'Id-al-Kabir, in the month of Dhul-Hijjah (the 12th month of Islamic year) were usually preserved till the following month, Muharram³⁹ for the celebration of the Kayokayo - when everybody would eat to his fullest.

The celebrations include 'a fire display' carried out by the youths, boys in particular. They would thrust and throw the torches made of dried materials such as the barks of the raffia palm to one another. Age-group fighting age-group, not seriously but keenly with marked excitement. Really, it was a mockery of a fire battle. Everyone who took part would try to show to others that he was the best in the 'fire display'. The fire display was in commemoration of al-Husayn's "martyrdom" established by the Shi'ah Muslims as an annual practice observing the tenth days of Muharram

as a day of lamentation, heroic struggle and suffering in his remembrance⁴⁰. This annual passion play is in two parts: one is called 'Ashura' (the tenth day of Muharram and the other forty days after the tenth day of Muharram in Karbala' entitled "the Return of the Head"⁴¹. This of course is against Seriki's view that the origin of the festival is not known or is it with the same origin as stated by Doi who stated that it was as a result of Muh and his family's. He further stated that they lit grasses so that they could see well on the 40th day and made a feast. Doi concluded the story by saying that it was in remembrance of the fire made at the shore that Muslims set apart the 10th day of Muharram as Ashura feast day⁴³.

As from the second half of this century celebration of the festival began to die out in Ijesaland like in other Yoruba towns. Among the reasons for receding the festival are, one, the hazards which the participants used to incur. Usually, many were treated for burns which constituted a regular aftermath of the Kayokayo (the 'Ashura' celebration) but excitement lured some people into it. Furthermore, the

Muslim community in Ijesaland considered it a secular and irreligious show because it corresponded to the Ijopa⁴⁴ of many of the towns of this area and Adagba⁴⁵ of Isaobi in Atakumosa Local Government area. Moreover, the excitement provoked by the occasion. It was also considered a rough play and a sexual temptation when girls would keep to the dark areas in the town while the boys would throw their torches to them to surprise and terrify the girls⁴⁶. Furthermore, the eating during this festival was rather too excessive when a man would have to eat for about five times in a day. This was considered wasteful by the Muslim leaders in Ijesaland.

Socially, the festival was a useful link between the cross-section of the community. Although, there was a good deal of teasing and joking the language of the ceremonial was never obscene. As a part of the social impart of the festival, the relationship between one member of the family and the other usually became more cordial with the exchange of visits and jokes. The institution of joking relationship played a glaring part in Ijesa social like like in all other Yoruba towns of the period⁴⁷. This becomes clearer as the extent of the joking relationship is known: Such relationship obtained between group parents and grandchildren;

between cross cousins and a man with his uncle's wives. To sum it up, it obtained between one Muslim and another at one hand and between a Muslim and a non-Muslim on the other hand. The active partners in this joking relationship were always the young ones. The torch festival, (Kayokayo) was always an occasion for many social relationships. It served much of age group solidarity, political allegiance, kinship bonds and friendship⁴⁸.

7.1.7 'Idul-Fitr and 'Id-ul-Adha

The festival at the end of Ramadan month (Id-ul-Fitr) and 'Id-ul-Adha respectively in turn served as great importance to the consolidation of Islam as from 1870s to 1901. The treatment of the two festivals are combined below because they are both celebrated in identical forms minus the slaughtering (sacrifice) of animals in the 'Id-ul-Adha in were of great significance to the course of Islam during the period of Islamic consolidation in Ijesa area of Yorubaland. The occasions of the two celebrations were always of real and great jocundity which, in return helped in the

entrenchment and the spread of Islam in the area at time of study because the celebrations lured many people into Islam. The 'Id prayers which were usually observed in the open with the gay appearance of the colossal number of people in their new attires gave real gaiety to Islam. The free gift, Sadaqat of 'Id-ul-Fitr and the distribution of the animals slaughtered during 'Id-ul-Adha combined together to produce an influence which was felt in both Muslim and non-Muslim quarters in Ilesa and its environs since the inception of Islam in that part of Yorubaland. The two festivals involved prayers on the 'Id ground which is usually at the outskirts of the town or village as the case may be⁴⁹. The prayers were usually observed under the auspices of the Chief Imam and his lieutenant while the Khutbat will be given by the Chief Imam⁵⁰.

Another vital aspect of the celebrations in Ilesa and its districts were the activities of various Muslim societies which usually influenced their non-Muslim colleagues on such occasions. On the festival days, all Muslims with their families and all well-wishers not minding their own religious convictions would visit these Muslim brothers and sisters. They on their own would send pieces of the animals slaughtered



ALHAJJ ABDUL RAHMAN AKOREDE, CHIEF IMAM OF ILESA
LEADING 'ID-UL-ADHA PRAYERS

(As a Muslim this boy holding the Umbrella should
also join others in prayer).

to the neighbouring non-Muslim friends and relations. These groups of people usually received the gift of the meat with joy and appreciation. In addition they would pray for the Muslims that the next annual festival might be celebrated on a grander scale, with good health for all of them together. This type of interaction in a way created an awareness of Islam, since it existed not only between Muslims and Christians but also between Muslims and the followers of African Traditional Religion. The impact of this type of interaction on the expansion of Islam in this area was of great significance.

7.1.6. 'Id-ul-Mawlid

Mawlid-ul-Nabiyyi, birth of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is celebrated in the month of Rabi'ul Awwal, the third Islamic month. During this celebration the Society known as Egbe Ojo Ibi Anabi⁵¹, was of great importance. This society was made up of able-bodied, pious young Muslims who were all men. They usually wore their specially built attires of white robes, white caps and white canvas tennis shoes. With this gaiety and other Islamic activities they gave colourful attraction to Islam both during the Islamic resurgence and consolidation in Ijesaland, 1870-1890 and

1896-1901 respectively. This society attracted both Muslims and non-Muslims with their attires and songs which were not only melodious but meaningful⁵². As part of their celebrations of the Mawlid-ul-Nabiyi Quranic stories that were connected with Prophet Muhammad were dramatised in Mosques or halls and schools in some cases to entertain the large number of people who usually trooped to the towns for this occasion. Invariably the Muslim festivals replaced the traditional festivals and the people ceased offering their sacrifices to ancestral gods.

7.2.0 Changes introduced by Islam to the political set up of Ijesaland

The remarkable feature of the history of the Muslim Community in Ilesa and its environs within the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first twenty years of the twentieth century was its relationship with the political authorities. First, consideration in this regard was the attitude to the Muslim community in Ilesa and its districts to those of their fellow Muslims who took up political offices. The community was silent; it neither forbade nor encouraged Muslims to take up such titles within the society. For this reason, Muslims hardly

become the Oba or important chiefs in the area within the period. If anyone of them became one, it was done with little or no reference to the Muslim community⁵³. There is no room for ambivalence in Islam⁵⁴. This was one of the reasons why Muslims were not able to influence much political decisions or establish an Islamic State de facto in Ilesa and its environs within the time.

In Ilesa up to the time of compiling this work there had not been a Muslim Owa of Ijesaland. Nevertheless, there are evidences to show how Muslim political influence at Ilesa was felt at the period before 1910. With the Oba in particular, Muslims almost had more than their rights. He influenced the political leaders to love Islam while some although did not embrace the religion, became friends of Muslims and fought for the cause of Islam⁵⁵. In addition to this, the Muslim communities in both Ilesa and its environs have the practice of calling on the Obas in their courts on every Friday shortly after the Juma'at prayer to offer prayers for the Oba, their various officers, the courtiers and the entire people of the town as a whole⁵⁶. All these Muslim activities were done peacefully to secure peace for the entire community. The Muslim's visits to

Owa's palace were not on rival basis. It was to strengthen their religious stand and political influence.

Importantly, the Muslim community still approved of whatever support the few Muslims who held traditional or Chieftaincy titles rendered to Islam: Support against persecutors, support in cash or in kind for the building or rebuilding of Mosques. In spite of their support of Islam and possibly because of the tepid nature of their faith, Muslims holding traditional titles within the traditional society or the so-called "pagan" society were hardly ever made officers in the Mosque. The Muslims recognised and were loyal to the traditional political authorities but Muslims would not compromise their faith. The attitude is permitted by the Qur'an as long as such authorities did not proscribe or threaten their practice of Islam⁵⁷. The Muslim community in Ilesa in particular and its districts in general fostered some relationship on the platform of loyalty to and mutual recognition of the traditional political set-up.

Similarly, general among the Muslim community in Ilesa and its districts was the role which was given to the political head i.e. Oba in the process of installing chief officers of the mosque, among which are the Chief Imam,

Otun Balogun Imole, the deputy Chief Imam and others. Whenever a candidate was agreed upon by the Muslim community it has become a custom to invite the Oba to the installation. In most cases such officers were turbaned in the presence of the ruling oba himself⁵⁸.

This practice which grew with times, probably started as a matter of courtesy, or astute policy. It has now become a strong link binding the Oba, first, with the Muslim Officers' recognition of him as the political head and secondly, the Muslim community now showing him as the temporal and political head of his domain. This in turn is helping the Oba in general in his working and cohesive relationship with his Muslim subjects.

In-between the festivals, and the installation ceremonies as already pointed out, the Muslim community tried to maintain good relationship with the local political leaders. However they were discouraged by Islam and knowledgeable Muslims from finding solace in time of trouble from the traditional leaders, who were non-Muslims or who were without Islamic learnings. In particular the Muslim communities in both Ilesa and its environs would have nothing to do with any member of the "Ogboni cult"⁵⁹.

To the Muslims, this Ogboni cult is a vermin.

The close and friendly relations of the people towards the political powers yielded beneficial results for the cause of Islam in the area before the end of the second decade of this century. Indeed, some of them adopted Islam by various means: many traditional leaders loved Islam, became friends of Muslims, did help Islam and Muslims but never embraced Islam officially. The natural and cultural tendency of Yoruba to respect authority or rulers and elders is also one of the bases of Islamic teachings about men in authority.⁶⁰ The political emancipation of the Muslims among the people under study gave rise to their educational aspiration.

7.2.1. The growth of Islamic education in Ijesaland

Islam as a religion of enlightenment places much premium on learning or education. Both the Qur'an and Hadith, the two main sources of Islam bear testimony to this very vital aspect of Islam. The very first revelation to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is a real attestation to the fact that education is a basis in Islam⁶¹.

It is also very apparent that the emphasis on learning and knowledge in Islam is very great because the Holy Qur'an states clearly that Prophet Muhammad was urged to

pray for the increase of knowledge:

" قُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا . "

Translation:

"....Say, O my Lord! increase me in knowledge⁶²."

The advancement of this knowledge was expanded by the Holy Qur'an, the contents of which are God's own words, which are uncreated⁶³. In order to persuade Muslims to search for intellectual progress and to encourage learning and the acquisition of knowledge, *was* quoted the Prophet to have said:

" . . . اطلبوا العلم ولو كان بالصين . . . "

Translation:

"....Search for knowledge though it be in China⁶⁴."

Another hadith that serves as the impetus for the search of learning by all Muslims is the tradition of the Prophet that says:

" اطلب العلم فريضة على كل
مسلم ومسلمة . "

Translation:

"Acquisition of knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim, male or female⁶⁵."

These types of exhortations stirred the nascent Muslims as well as the succeeding generations to search for knowledge. The Prophet himself was the best example of a teacher whose examples and eagerness for learning and teaching became the summah to be meticulously followed by all his immediate followers and Muslims in general⁶⁶. Many of the immediate great teachers after Prophet Muhammad gave their lectures in the Mosques in the cities of Makkah, Medinah, Kufah, Basrah and Damascus. At the same time, there were Majalis-al-Adab, special schools for children where Adab (moral instruction, social and cultural disciplines) were the main subjects taught. A teacher in this type of school is called Muaddib⁶⁷. This shows clearly that learning and teaching is considered a religious duty in Islam and it is not necessarily carried out for material gains. Therefore introduction of Islam to a place also means the introduction of Islamic learning. The primary stages of study of this learning would therefore include the Qur'an, the main source of Islam and Arabic, an intergral part of Islam itself. The study would enable the

new converts into Islam to perform their religious duties, especially al-Salat that differentiates Islam from other religions⁶⁸.

Consequently this part of this thesis focusses on Islamic education among the Ijesa people during the period under study. The part played by the itinerant preachers and teachers is examined and the Quranic school system is also discussed.

7.2.2. The roles of itinerant preachers and teachers

The growth of Islamic knowledge in the period of study started chiefly by the itinerant preachers and teachers who were the chief commentators⁶⁹ of the Qur'an. At times, they established Quranic schools. It cannot be said precisely when the Quranic schools⁷⁰ founded for the teaching of Qur'an first appeared in both Ijesa and its environs. What is sure is that whenever Islam spread, the rudimentary knowledge of Qur'an and the Ahadith (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad) also began to be taught to the adherents of Islam by these kind religious men.

Islamic scholarship is known to have always been given impetus by the Muslim traders, preachers and scholars from such towns as Oyo, Iseyin, Saki, Kisi and Igbeti where

examples of such Quranic schools were to be found at the time. Many other Islamic scholars also came from parts of Kwara on short visits to other towns including Ilesha and its districts in order to propagate Islam and to teach the Qur'an. The quality of their knowledge can scarcely be measured now partly in consequence of the paucity of their own literary productions. However, these teachers brought with them copies of the Qur'an and some other Islamic books probably Hadith. They constantly renewed the enthusiasm to pursue learning in the various towns through their open-air preaching.

The dissemination of the Quranic knowledge was maintained through study at the feet of these learned itinerant teachers who travelled distant places in search of knowledge and to impart too. According to Alhaji Wahab Akorode, a direct son to the third Chief Imam of Ilesha these men were happy to impart knowledge⁷⁰. The main stay of the pupils' study here was the Qur'an in the elementary Quranic schools where of course memorisation of the Qur'an most especially, the short Surahs (Chapters) was the main duty of the pupils. Surat-ul-Fatihah was always taught first because of its importance and indispensability in the Muslim ritual prayers.

Emphasising its importance, a Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) says:

" لا صلاة لمن لم يقرأ بفاتحة الكتاب "

Meaning:

"He who does not recite the opening chapter (Surat-ul-Fatihah) has not performed prayer (Salat)⁷¹. The memorisation system of the Qur'an at the top of the learners' voices gave the name of the school, Ije-Kewu, (a house where Arabic is chanted) which were usually in the sitting room or at times at the veranda of the teacher and at times, it could be under shady trees or at the side of the Mosque. 'It is therefore, most likely that Western Education preceded Islamic Education in Ijesaland by at least forty years. All the same, Islamic education is an important aspect of the consolidation of Islam. We can appreciate this much if one avoids being unduly influenced by the reports of Christian missionaries among who are Foster A.F. and James Johnson and those foreign armchair investigators who were only casual travellers who were too fond of depicting Yoruba Muslims as ignorants⁷².

The various local and 'foreign' Muslims scholars most especially those from Ilorin established Quranic schools

where Qur'an was studied in stages viz:⁷³ The sixty divisions of the whole chapters of the Holy Quran known as hizb. This division is for easy learning and memorization. The short surahs were always written on the wooden board for the learner. Of course, he would have mastered the Arabic alphabets before the reading stage is reached. The master would use the black ink⁷⁴ to do the writing. He often used a special pen⁷⁵ that was made out of dried straws or bamboo stick.

7.2.3. The pupils' general system of learning

The pupils read from their individual wooden-slates, called walaa⁷⁶ on which the mu'allim or malleem⁷⁷ or sometimes the most senior pupil had written the letters, Arabic alphabets in piece meal to constitute a lesson. Before a set of new letters would be written on it, the former lesson would be washed off it thoroughly with the aid of eepin, a type of coarse bark or sandpaper like leaves. Thereafter, a whitish substance usually made of crushed eko or boiled cassava starch later diluted with water was neatly applied to the surface of the walaa, so as to make it shine brightly and smooth enough to write on. More essentially, the substance would make the new inscriptions written on it stick

there too. As said earlier the special ink used in writing on the walaa is made of young leaves of oriri vegetable leaves. Usually the leaves would be boiled thoroughly until they become thick, dark fluid suitable for writing. At this stage the pupil would not use a kalamu, qalam (pen) which would be made simply from either guinea corn straw or bamboo wood-silice which would be carefully and skilfully trimmed to give a nib-like point. Since the pupil had not started writing, the teacher alone would use the pen to write the pupil's lessons.

The method of teaching the Arabic Alphabets is not with much difference with the general method of teaching in the Quranic school: "the mu'allim gave a model reading of the letters written on the walaa from his own walaa or slate usually larger than the pupils'. The pupils repeated the letters after him in a chorus form without recognising the individual letters since the teacher would read them in a piece sometimes several times. After this listening stage, the pupils repeated the passage several times usually in the form of a sing-song. In the process, the pupils mastered the pronunciation of the letters making up words. In doing that the student is expected to recognize the letters but for

the method used many of the students in a class were unable to recognize them. Although at this stage pupils begin to learn short surahs of the holy Qur'an they are unable to recognise the letters that make up the words. Moreover, as a result of repeated recitation of the short Surahs the pupils often succeeded in memorizing them. Of course, the memorization of the short Surahs is very essential at this stage as it enables the learner to make use of them during his daily prayers as stated earlier.

At this elementary stage an alfa or Mallam could gather his own children and those of Muslim neighbours in his sitting room or under his verandah. Children of other interested people in the area might join them later. Commonly, it was a free service which the Alfas considered to be a religious duty to teach others the words of Allah. Alhaji Ibrahim Sule of Oke-Eso, Ilesa an Arabic teacher who was using the verandah of his house as a classroom emphasised a fact that it was meritorious for a Muslim to teach the Prophet's Sunnah or words to others⁷³. He further explained that teaching the Muslim children from youth will prevent them from being lured into another religion. This stage of learning did help the Muslim children to have at

least a basic knowledge of Islam and Arabic because they would learn the Arabic alphabets before they begin the memorization of the short Surahs.

Under a normal condition by the time a pupil has grasped knowledge of the alphabets he ought to be able to write them⁷⁹. He would not only read Arabic words he would also be able to copy them as well. At this stage the pupil did not know or learn the meaning of what his teacher has taught him from the Qur'an but some curious pupils could pick up some few translations unconsciously. This was of course at either open-air preaching or during any religious ceremony such as during the funeral, wedding, child-naming and commonly during fasting period when the tafsir will be given by Mufassir the commentator of the Qur'an.

The Ogere⁸⁰ or the Idiitu⁸¹ stages are to be termed as the 'elementary' stages. It is pertinent that many learners would never go beyond these two stages in Ilesa and its environs. This really affected the stability of Islam in Ijesaland because Muslims were erroneously considered as illiterates while Islam itself was thought to prevent learning. This was why many traditional religionists moved to Christianity where they could proceed to learning i.e.

Western Education because Ijesa like other people in Yorubaland equated literacy with Western education. Little did they realize the fact that people could be literate in languages other than English which the Western education introduced.

Generally, it was expected that a Quranic school existed wherever Islam was introduced and embraced. The case was different in Ijesaland. Such schools sprang up only in Ilesa, Ibokun and Otan-Ile. Here mention should be made that Alhaji Disu Kannike, the first Chief Imam of Ilesa and his successor Alfa, Pari Lawal set up such a school in the town making use of their houses or the Mosque to teach some of the nascent Muslims who were interested in learning⁸². The third Chief Imam of Ijesa Mallam Abdullahi Akorede continued with this type of teaching with much vigour. Few out of his pupils sometime before 1940 were Mallam Abibu, (Habib) Arowogbadamun, Bakare Kaka and Mallam Ibrahim Oke-Iro. The Ilorin teacher and trader, Mallam Dakun set up this type of school in Ibokun. The Chief Imam of the town at the time of writing this thesis in 1986 was one of the ex-pupils of this Islamic scholar⁸³. The introducer of Islam to Otan-Ile, Mallam Tijani Olojede was the first Mu'allim of the school he established in the town at a time

before 1920. Some of his direct pupils were still living at the time of this compilation⁸⁴.

On completion of this type of Arabic education a few students who wished to go further in their studies to the third and last level which was the post 'Ilm or the secondary stage. There a student chose his specialisation of studies. Usually, many of the students' choice was the knowledge of Tafsir⁸⁵. The general belief was that after this third and final stage, a Muslim student had become a scholar who could not only read but translate and interpret the Qur'an and other Islamic theological and philosophical works accurately. It is remarkable to state here that Muslim students who wished to reach this level from any town in Ijesaland would have to travel to Ilorin, Ibadan or Abeokuta where such schools existed. This affected the growth and development of Islam in Ijesaland in a way and it was the main cause of not having many Ijesa indigenes as Muslims scholars. The few who existed even at the time of writing this work were those who could afford the expenses and the pain of leaving their homes to study in another town.

Consequently, many Ijesa Muslims learnt the Qur'an from the Mallams or Mu'allims who graduated from the existed

Ilm or post Ilm schools in the other towns. Many of these scholars who taught Ijesa Muslims (scholars) were non-indigenes in most cases. Ijesa scholars who later established Quranic schools made use of their homes. Unlike among the Ijebu and Egba peoples where Quranic schools, Ilm and even post Ilm studies were offered because the founders and teachers of such schools were themselves permanent since they were natives and were knowledgeable in Islamic studies⁸⁶, itinerant preachers and teachers established such schools in Ilesa, Ibokun, Otan-Ije, Ipetu-Ijesa and Igangan. Once the founders returned to their homes the schools ceased to function. This in effect retarded the growth of Islam and Islamic education among the Ijesa Muslims. The cumbersome system of learning in the Quranic schools retarded the progress of many Muslim children in Ijesaland at the time of study. They became depressed the more when there were no recognised certificates of attestation issued to them while their counterparts in Christian schools received certificates that could fetch them white collar jobs at the end of their course in the schools.

However, the series of criticisms against the Quranic Schools notwithstanding they were means to distinguish the Muslim children from their Christian counterparts who attended the Christian Mission Schools.

Whatever may be the short-comings of these schools they serve as avenues by which Muslim children can have an early knowledge of their religion⁸⁷. The older ones too are making use of Quranic schools to learn at least short surahs which they can make use of in their daily obligatory prayers. With all efforts of the Muslim communities in Ijesaland to train their children in the way of Allah and to have the knowledge of their religion, right from youth, there is a bright hope for the future of Islam and Islamic education in the area.

As we shall see below it was this kind of inspiration that stirred a Muslim converted man to struggle very hard to build two Muslim secondary Grammar Schools in his town, Iloko-Ijesa within a period of six years.

7.2.4. Alhaji Miniyaminu Ogungbangbo's Activities.

In a succession the newly converted Muslim on his own started one Muslim School after the other in his home town, Iloko-Ijesa. When he started the building of the first school in 1967, initially people thought that he was concerned much with what he could gain in terms of material wealth in setting up the school as a proprietary one. This illustrious Muslim happened to be a convert from Christianity to Islam.

7.2.5. His life history.

He is Alhājj Biliyaminu Ogungbangbe born on 13th of March, 1922 in a small town, Iloko-Ijesa, a town of about eight kilometres to Ijesa. As a christian he went to Methodist school Ijeda from 1930 to 1932. He withdrew from the school at the death of his father in 1932. By 1935 he followed one of his uncles to Offa in Kwara State. He again began his studies in a C.M.S. Primary school in the town where he was said to have read the then primaries two "A" and Class two. He moved to Ilorin in 1936 where he read standard one at the C.M.S. primary school Ilorin. He from there moved to Ado-Ekiti in 1937 where he read standards two and three. By 1939 he came down to Iwo.

Since he could not continue with his education he became an apprentice under an Ijesaman learning the popular Ijesa trade, 'Osomalo'. By 1944 he set up on his own. It was during this period that he moved close to Muslims and became interested in Islam. He then began to study in the Arabic school under Alfa Salawa Akanbi Alawiye in Elere's compound, Isala-Oba Iwo's compound. Invariably he became a Muslim in 1950.

According to him he dreamt a dream in which he was directed to a dwarf called Kujere to teach him the Qur'an. He went to the man and the man refused to teach him and from there went to a known Arabic school as stated in the above.

As a Muslim God blessed him. In the very year, 1950 he was married to his first wife Afusat Adetinuwe Ogungbangbe and the following year he started his first house at D.18 Ogbon-Titun, Iloko-Ijesa.

By 1952 he went back to Christianity. He began to preach Christianity to others again, all because of his deep knowledge of the Bible. By March 1954 according to Alhajj Ogungbangbe he had another dream where he saw a man with an abnormal head bigger than his body. The man prevented him to go because he blocked the road. Looking at his head he saw another man who gave him a rosary and told him not to run away from that abnormal man. He from that time became a devoted and a fully committed Muslim as from that day.

He was the only Muslim from his family. During the time there were a Mallam called Iwal from Ido-Osun near Ede, another Mallam, Sausi from Ilere-Elkiti and one man from Auchi in Mid-West Region now Bendel State.

All of them were good Muslims and there was no Mosque in the town or any Islamic centre.

7.2.6. His Islamic activities

He planned of building a Mosque in 1959 but the towns people prevented him from doing so. They went to the extent of masterminding a political problem against him, saying that he was the one who tore the Action Group postal pasted in the town. Consequently he was sent to prisons on 8th December, 1959 for nine months with hard labour in the defunct Customary Court Grade 'B' Ijesu-Jesa. According to Alhaji Ogungbangbe he appealed to Customary Court Grade 'A' Ilesa and won the appeal and his term of imprisonment was scraped off on 5th of May, 1960. He later built the Mosque in the town and went to Hajj in 1965. He began to struggle for establishing a Muslim school in the town, Iloko.

7.2.7. A general appraisal of Islamic education in Ijesaland

Generally, Islam is now taught as a school subject in some schools in Ijesaland i.e. both in Muslim and non-Muslim schools alike. Of course, that started in recent years and not before 1968 because it was taught only in Muslim schools before that period.

The establishment of Muslim schools and colleges in many of the towns and villages in Ijesaland was the handiwork of the various Muslim communities, organisations and individuals in Ijesaland. This in essence means a real contribution of the Muslims to the Liberation of the Muslim children from Christian indoctrination in the non-Muslim institutions where they sought education. The Muslim schools in a way have been great assets to the Muslims either as a whole or individuals because such Muslim schools have produced many people in different and useful professions without losing their religion. Although unlike Muslim children in other parts of Yorubaland only very few of them have taken deep interest in both Arabic and Islamic studies in higher institutions what is sure is that they remain Muslims.

All attempts to modernize Arabic or Quranic schools in Ijesaland have not achieved much success all because majority of these schools are privately owned schools while many are non-fee-paying schools where Muslim neighbour children gathered for rudimentary Arabic and Islamic education. Many of these schools are still held under veranders or in ratib Mosques in some cases.

At the time of writing this thesis only in very few Muslim schools in Ijesaland were the traditional wooden slates (walaa) were still used. Instead pupils were provided

with some Islamic text books and papers to write upon. In most of these Arabic schools classroom system was used where chalk-board, tables, chairs, pens and pencils were all introduced for students use. Many of these schools were evening schools when the pupils would have returned from formal schools where Western-oriented type of education was the main pursuit. Consequently pupils' attendance in the Arabic schools became very irregular and materials to be used by the pupils were not purchased by many parents⁹² who could not buy those equipments recommended in the formal Western Education schools.

In general, these Arabic schools in Ijesaland except the Arabic and Islamic Training Centre of Ibokun and Ojudayi Arabic College of Iloko-Ijesa all others fall short of formal schools. It was only in these two schools that uniform dresses were used for the purpose of neatness and easy identification. They take semblance of the traditional of Quranic schools. Whatever may be their shortcomings they are glaring impacts of Islamic education among Ijesa people.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER SEVEN

1. It is expressed thus: "Igbe Iyawo" and this is a part of the social traditional practice among the entire Yoruba people.
2. A quick type of marriage system commonly practised by the 'Osomaalo'.
3. A traditional lineage where saltless food is eaten on purpose of birth rites: Mariam Awosanmi aged 80 years and a Muslim by marriage said in an interview in her residence, J.23 Okesa, Ilesa that she was from that family. She further said that it was as a result of a curse from a slave-wife who was not well treated or cared for when she gave birth to a child. The slave woman could not have salt in all her meals for a period of nine days when she gave birth to a male child and seven days for a female. Since that time the tradition remains a birth rite. According to the woman those who failed to observe the rite had their children buried before fourteenth day. The interview took place on 22-10-85.
4. The following names are examples: Taiwo in full is Eriti-Owa-to-aye-wo, 'He who came to taste the world' Oluseyi -- 'Oluwa se-yi' -- 'God did this'. Adegoke This name in full is 'Ade-gun-oke' -- 'Crown ascended the top and Adeleye in full is 'Ade-ni-eye' -- 'Crown has honour', Kehinde -- Eriti o de gbehin -- He who comes last or second in twin birth.
5. Chief Olori-Omo of H.66, Iloro Ilesa, Pa Karimu Komolafe in an interview on 6-7-85 reaffirmed this traditional assertion.
6. The following names are appostie: Abiodun -- the full form of it is 'Abi-si-odun' That (child) which was born on the occasion of periodical festival and Adelaja -- if broken into parts in "Ade-la-ija" Ade (Crown) that settled a dispute.
- 7.
7. The Adhan:

- (i) Allah Akbar - Allah Akbar
- (ii) Ash-hadu an la ila illa Allah (2 times)
- (iii) Ash-hadu anna Muhammadah Rasul-ul-Lahi (2 times)
- (iv) Hayya 'alla Salah - Hayya 'alla Salah
- (v) Hayya 'alla Falah - Hayya 'alla Falah
- (vi) ~~Allah akbar~~ - Allah akbar
- (vii) La ila illa Allah.

Translation:

- (i) God is the Greatest - God is the Greatest
- (ii) I bear witness that nothing deserves to be worshipped but God.
- (iii) I witness that Muhammad is the Apostle of God
- (iv) Come to prayer - Come to prayer
- (v) Come to success - Come to success
- (vi) God is the Greatest - God is the Greatest
- (vii) Nothing deserves to be worshipped but God.

8. Iqamah:

- (i) Allah Akbar-Allah Akbar
- (ii) Ash-hadu an la ila illa Allah
- (iii) Ash-hadu anna Muhammadan Rasul-ul-Lahi
- (iv) Hayya 'ala-s-Salah
- (v) Hayya 'ala-Falah
- (vi) Qad qamat-s-Salah

Translation:

- (i) God is the Greatest - God is the Greatest
- (ii) I bear witness that nothing deserves worship except God
- (iii) I bear witness that Muhammad is His Apostle
- (iv) Come to prayer
- (v) Come to **success**
- (vi) Prayer is ready (to start).

- 9. Qur'an 23 verses 12 to 14.
- 10. Qur'an 42 verses 49-50.
- 11. See Appendix III of thesis for the text of the Khutbah.

12. Seriki, I.A.A. Op.cit., pp.529-530 and see also Shihabud-din, Abdur Rahman, Irshadu as-Salik, Cairo, n.p., n.d., p.55.
13. Qur'an 6 verse 141
14. Vide Supra Note '4' in the above.
15. Levy, R., The Social Structure of Islam, (London Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp.251-252.
16. Ibid.
17. By the time of writing this thesis, the role of the local circumcision man called (al-akomola or onikola) is not as marked as the Muslim Alfas among the Muslims in both Ilesa and its district towns.
18. I Samuel, Chapter 17, verses 26 and 27.
19. "Cleanliness is part of Religion: it is even considered as half the Faith". For more details see: Bashir, B.A., Riyad Ahadith al-Nabiyi, (Rabwat, West Pakistan, 1958), p.17 See also, Hussain, S.M.N. Sayings of the Holy Prophet (Jos, Savanna Press, 1978), pp.28 (No.288) p.29, (No.293) and 37 (No.393). The surplus skin of an uncircumcised person usually contains dirt.
20. Levy R.: Social Structure of Islam, Op.cit., p.251
21. Sometimes in human figure who may be reborn by any member of the family.
22. This was called, "Adie Irana" - meaning "The fare-fowl" which was compulsory to be killed whenever any person of age died. The practice was not only a sign of regard or respect for the dead person, it was also a traditional rite believed to ease the "home-journey" of every person who was ripe before he died. This is why the expression, "Adie irana ki se eran ajogbe". "The fare-fowl is for everybody to pay" is apposite because all who survived their parents must kill one.

23. "Biba oku ya'hu" -- Entering into a covenant with the deceased".
24. By this, it was believed that the survivors would again be able to have occasional contact with the deceased.
25. Ali, M.M.: The Muslim Prayer Book, (Lahore, Dar-ul-Kutub Islamic Ltd., 1957), pp. 39-42.
26. Ibid., pp 61-63 and for more details on funeral prayers and supplications see Abdulahi bn. Abi Sayd, Risalat Al-Iman Al-Alam, Al-'Amil Al-Alema Al-Habri Al-Jaham, (n.t., Majma'at Adwat Nassar n.d.), pp.55-59.
27. Ibid.
28. See Sahih al-Bukhari (English version), Vol.II, op.cit. p.213.
29. Ali, M.M.: The Muslim Prayer Book, op.cit., p.43
30. Heaven-Gardens, fountain of peace and security where there is lurking sense of injury nor fatigue; see: Qur'an 15: 45-48 and Qur'an 35: 33-35.
31. For further details see: Qur'an 3:165: "Every soul shall have a taste of death....".
32. "Lo! the squanderers were ever brothers of the devils, and the devil was ever an ingrate to his Lord". See: Qur'an, Surat-ul-Bani-Isra'il. Chapter 17 verse 27 for further details.

33. It is apparent that there is no religious reward for the squanderers either here or thereafter rather they invite curse on themselves". "Spend your wealth for the cause of Allah, be not cast by your own hands to ruin but do good for God loveth those who do good". Qur'an, Surat-ul-Baqarah, Chapter 2 verse 195.
34. Chief Iasisi Omole, the Opanla of Ijesaland and His Highness, Oba S.A. Adeosun, the Alcinla of Erin-Ijesa and Alhajj Yinusa Pagbamila, the Chief Inam of Ipojun in interviews on 8-5-84, 9-5-84 and 15-5-84 respectively revealed the fact that the abilus (children who are supposed to have come back after death to their mothers and born again) were usually buried in this form.
35. Surat-ul-Nisa, chapter 4 verse 47: "God forgiveth not that partners should be set up with Him; but he forgiveth anything else, to whom He pleaseth; to set up partners with God is to devic a sin most heinous indeed". For more information about Islamic concept of images or paintings of ancestors see: Levy, Reuben: The Social Structure of Islam, op.cit., pp.252-253.
36. Seriki, I.A.A. op.cit., p.537
38. This festival is usually observed on the 10th night of Muharram which Africans practice connected with the New Year and it has become a Muslim annual festival. Since it is continually moving round the year, it has been disconnected from the agricultural season. Islamically, this is Shi'ah Muslims' practice in commemoration of Husayn's "martyrdom". Since the Sunni Muslims do not share the same belief about the "martyrdom" and heroic struggle and suffering of the Shi'ites about al-Husayn the practice is now in oblivion. For more details of the origin of ('Ashura') see: Trimingham, J.S. A History of Islam in West Africa, (London, Cxford Press, 1965) p. 76 and P.K. Hitti: History of the Arab, op.cit., pp.133 and 191.

38. Kayokayo, literally means 'the festival of plenty'.
39. Muharram, First month of Islamic Calendar
40. The significance of the festival is less important to the Sunni Muslims who considered it a mockery of 'the Return' of al-Husayn's Head". Series of interviews conducted among the Muslims in Ijesaland revealed that the festival was secular and connotes paganism - a cause for its recantation.
41. P.K. Hitti: History of the Arabs, (London, Macmillan, 1970), p.191.
42. Seriki, I.A.A., op.cit., p.495
43. Doi, R., Islam in Nigeria (Zaria, Gaskiyyah Press, 1985) p.151.
44. This is a traditional festival of many towns of Ijesa which also fell to the harvesting periods. Among such towns that celebrate this festival where whipping is displayed annually are Ilase, Ibokun, Imesi-Ile, Erin-Ijesa, Epe, Igbadae and Igangan.
45. Another traditional festival in Ijesa, in Isaobi in Atakumosa Local Government area. It is in commemoration of a leading warrior of the area. The Adagba worshippers would cover their bodies with nettle - leaves and danced round the town. The dancers in their ecstasy and excitement would not feel the nettle rashes at all. The Adagba festival is also in an oblivion in this modern time.
46. In an interview Alhajj Sarumi, a Muslim leader in Ijesa, aged 80 years and Alhajj Idnis Arewa, a grandson of Late Arewa who was one of the first-five Ijesa persons to go to Makkah in 1910 revealed the fact that Kayokayo or 'Ashura' had become irreligious by the time it was ceased to be observed. Young men, boys and girls paid attention to the Social and Secular aspects. They went further to say that people did not even know the religious value of the festival more than the excessive eating and the hazards of burns, brushes and broken legs at the end of the celebration. Hence the Muslim Community leaders came to a decision to recant it.

47. Adelowo, E.D. Islam in Oyo and its environs in the 19th century, an unpublished Ph.D. Unibadan, Department of Religious Studies, 1978, pp 346-347.
48. According to the Muslim Community leaders in each of the big towns of the area in various interviews confirmed the fact that the time was when great number of people who embraced Islam were usually recorded. This was particularly so in Ilesa, Ibokun, Otan-Ile and Erin-Oke. The Chief Imam of Ibokun, Alhaji Yunusa Fagbamila quickly added a fact that majority of such converts were only interested in the social and joking aspects. Many of such converts later recanted Islam he added.
49. The 'Id ground is usually set out at outskirts of the town because of the large number of people who will attend 'Id services or prayers that the Mosque cannot contain. Secondly, 'Id-al-Adha in particular is in commemoration of Prophet Ibrahim's taking his child Isma'il out of their place of abode in an attempt to offer him to Allah in sacrifice as a fulfilment of his promise to Allah. See Qur'an 37 verses 101 to 107. For more details see: Ali Musa Raza Muhajir; Lessons From the Stories of the Qur'an, (Lahore, Urdu Type Press, 1965), pp.65-66, and Abdillehi bn. Abi Hatd, op.cit. pp. 48-50.
50. See samples of the Khutbat in Appendix III.
51. This was a special society for the upliftment and spread of Islam in Ijesaland at the time. It was centred in Ilesa. Other towns later set on their own local Muslim Societies.
52. (I) An j'ola Anabi falala
Fa laila falala
An j'ola Anabi falala
Fa laila falala
Esu kori wa gbese mo o
Fa laila falala
Ako lowo ebo mo o
Fa laila falala

(II). E wa jo ijo Anabi
Fa laila falala
Eyin elebologun o jade wa o
Fa laila falala
E wa sodo awa Musuluni o
Fa laila falala
Alujana ni'le awa
Fa laila falala

The literally translations of the two tanzers are:

- (I) We are enjoying the Prophet's honour
 We are in plentiful
 The devil has no power over us again
 We are in plentiful
 We have no money for sacrifice (to idol) again
 We are in plentiful.
- (II) Come and dance the Prophet's dance
 We are enjoying (In God)
 Come out, you herbalists and medicinemen
 We are in plentiful
 Come to (us) the Muslims
 We are enjoying in plentiful
 Paradise is our own home
 Therefore there is no deity except Allah.

The overall meaning of the song was that the believers (Muslims) derived enjoyment from Islam through Prophet Muhammad who was the seal of all the Prophets of Allah. The phrase: Fa laila falala is the corrupt form of the Arabic term: Fa la ilah illa Allah which means, "Indeed there is no god but Allah". It is a part of the Islamic expression of faith: La ilah illa Allah wa Muhammad Rasuluhu meaning "There is no deity to be worshipped except Allah and Prophet Muhammad is His Apostle.

53. The Muslim group would consider him to have become an unbeliever, a Kafir, or a hypocrite because such men in performing their traditional duties would involve themselves in unIslamic activities. This is apparent in the traditional worship of the ancestors premordials and departed heroes of Ijesaland.
54. However, the Muslims could still count on some of their co-religionists within the political set-up in towns such as Otan-Ije and Ibolan where Alfa Tijani made use of "Eni ba ma mu obo ase bi obo". "He who wants to hunt or catch a monkey will act like one". This Alfa Tijani's method was a very striking feature of the consolidation of Islam which was a further entrenchment of Muslims in the political set up of some other towns in Ilesa and its districts, and the corollary movement towards the inauguration of an Islamic theocratic state in such areas. This was a matter of course in the history of Islam everywhere in the world. For more details see: Kasr, S.H.: Ideals and Realities of Islam, op.cit., pp 97-118, and Mandudi, A.A.: Islamic Law and Constitution. (Lahore, 1960), pp 2-10 and Qur'an Chapter 2 verse 208 which emphasises a full submission to the will of Allah.
55. This was stated during Owa Maastrop I's reign from 1896 - 1901.
56. This denotes the peace of Islam - 'peaceful co-existence' and the stand of Islam here is clear: "Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knowest best who have strayed from His path, and who receive guidance" - (Qur'an, 16:125).

Footnote 56 (contd.)

This was the basis why Muslims were not paying homage to the traditional leaders.

57. " يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ
 وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولَى الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ . . . "

Translation:

"O ye who believe
 Obey God and obey the Apostle
 And those charged with authority
 Among you".

- See Qur'an 4 verse 59.

58. This practice generated the common saying that 'Oba ni Olori ilu, meaning: The Oba is the political head (chief controller) of the town. The Oba's function in this connection was largely ceremonial involving no religious rites. In a way, it was analogous to his role in the traditional society. Alhajj S.O. Olatunji in an interview and the Chief Imam of Ijesaland, Alhajj Ali Amoke-Oja in an interview on 3-3-84 expressed the view. This their idea confirms the assertion that 'Religion and Politics cannot be separated.
59. Members are idolaters who are polytheists and polytheism is a grave sin in Islam. Islam as a religion does not allow joining gods with God, and God will not forgive anyone that sets up partners with Him: "God forgiveth not that partners should be set up with Him to set up partners with God is to device a sin most heinous indeed" (Qur'an 4:48). Members of secret societies are enemies of Islam and they must be shunned by Muslims.

60. Vide Supre, See note 57 in the above
61. Surat-ul-Alaq, chapter 96 verses 1 to 3
62. Surat-ul-Ta-Ha, chapter 20 verse 114
63. Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought the Liberal Age 1798-1939, (London, Oxford University Press, 1970), pp 1-2.
64. Bashir, B.A. Riyad Ahadith al-Nabiy, (Rabwah, Pakistan, Nurat Art Press, 1958), p. 16 and also Shems Friendland, Savings of the Prophet Muhammad, (London, Wildwood House, 1977), pp. 29-31.
65. Ibid., p.12
66. Hasan, S.A., Education in Early Islam, NASR., No.2, of September, 1980, op.cit. p.45
67. Adeleye, Kikail Olasupo, Islam and Education, The Islamic Quarterly, London, op.cit., p. 143
68. It is only in Islam that obligatory prayers exist and observed strictly at the proscribed times.
69. The interpreters of the Qur'an who gave commentaries Tafsir (exegesis of Qur'an) which is an important Science is the study of Qur'an. He who engages in the study is called Muffasir in Arabic and Onitafusiru in Yoruba.
70. They based their joy in searching and imparting knowledge on one of the traditions of the Prophet reported by Tirmidhi:

" من خرج في طلب العلم فهو في
سبيل الله حتى يرجع . "

Footnote 70 (contd.)

Translation:

"...He who goes forth in search of knowledge is on the road to Allah till he returns". See Bashir, B.A., Riyad Ahadith al-Nabiy, op.cit. p.12, No.2

71. Karim, Book III, op.cit., p. 266, Note 221
72. Gbadamosi, T.G.O., op.cit., p. 62
73. Agbetola, A.S., Islam in Ondo State of Nigeria 1850-1960, University of Ibadan, an unpublished Ph.D. thesis, (1983), p.318.
74. That would be extracted from the boiled vegetable leaves of a type tree called oriri.
75. Yoruba: Kalamu, a corrupt pronunciation of the Arabic word Qalam.
76. Special wooden slates made by the artists or woodcarvers. This type of slates were "imported" from Ilorin or Ede by the 'foreigners' mu'allims, teachers who were mostly traders or preachers who in return would resell to their pupils.
77. Mu'allim is an Arabic word meaning teacher, its corrupt form is Mallam which is commonly used among the Hausa. It later became a word in use among the Yoruba people in general and the people under study because some Hausa men were among the nascent Muslim teachers in the area.
78. He was the Naib, (Deputy), Imam of Okosa, Ilesa when compilation of this thesis was being carried out. I was informed that he based his idea on one of the Hadith of the Prophet as reported by Bukhari:

"... بلغوا عني ولو آية ."

Meaning:

"Convey my words though it be a sentence, (a verse)".
For more details see: Bashir, B.A., Riyad Ahadith al-Nabiy op.cit., p.14.

79. See; Nasiru, W.O.A.: Islamic Learning among the Yoruba 1896-1963, (an unpublished Doctorate Thesis, University of Ibadan, 1977, pp.55-57, and Aghetola, A.S., Islam in Ondo State of Nigeria, 1850-1960, (also an unpublished Doctorate Thesis, University of Ibadan), pp. 328-329.
80. Fast reading without learning the translations or the Grammartical structures of words or sentences.
81. Fast reading through without grasping the meaning of what read. This affected the nascent Muslims in that they could not interpret the Qur'an like their Christian counterparts who understood what they read.
82. Chiefly Tafsir was studied because the pupils were all aged people. Alhajj Alliyu Amoke-Oja, the Chief Imam of Ilesa revealed the fact on 5-2-85.
83. Alhajj Yunusa Amodu Fagbemila, the Chief Imam of Ibokun himself revealed this fact in one of the series of the interviews with him in 1986.
84. Alhajj Ladisi Fesogun, the Baba Adini, the Patron of the Muslim Community of Otan-Ile was one of the ex-pupuls of Mallam Tijani Olojede.
85. Tafsir, is the exegies of the Qur'an, that is, the science of the interpretation of the Qur'an.
86. Seriki, I.A.A., op.cit., 208

87. A basis for the common saying of Ijesa like other Yoruba people: "Lati igba owe ni Musulami ti nko omo re ni esin". Meaning, "It is right from youth that a Muslim teaches the components of (his religion, Islam) to his child".
88. Alhajj Sule Yusuf, a Mu'allim at the ratib Mosque of Ifofin Ilesa interviewed on 4-2-86 revealed this problem.

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CONCLUSION

In concluding this work, the general Survey and background history of Islam in Ijesaland is reviewed. The general summary of the findings in the previous seven chapters are given. Attention is also drawn to some observations and suggestions concerning the general position of Islam and the Ijesa Muslims in their Social and public life.

Islam in Ilesa and its environs has a long history behind it with very eventful beginnings. The materials relevant to the early facet of Islam in the area have so far been very meagre. There was no evidence of any writing before the Jihad which spread down to Osogbo in 1840. Although, it was possible that the Kingdom of Oyo, the most northerly of the Yoruba states might have adopted the practice of Writing in Arabic from its islamised neighbours to the northern part of this country, if it was, it was not universal. From all the available sources within reach, if written materials existed at all, they have not survived. From all evidences and practical purposes the history of the people of Ilesa and its environs up to the first five decades of the nineteenth century is the history of a wholly-non-literate people. This is why the history of the people of the area in general and that of Islam in particular presents obvious problems. In the construction of this type of history of the

people, one is forced to rely on conventional or oral history because of the absence of any kind of written documentation of the early history. Thus it has not been very possible to provide more than outline of the history and features of Islam in the period of the arrival of the various returnees of the various tribal wars and the beginning of Islam both in Ilesa and its environs in 1860s.

However, in the subsequent period, the sources available both in written and oral forms are diverse and considerable. Both the footnotes and bibliography show that the sources consist of records left by literate neighbours and visitors to Ijesaland in particular and Yorubaland in general. To the north of Oyo and its districts, as it has been observed were people literate in Arabic. Possibly certain individuals from these areas certainly visited Ilesa as well as its satellite towns on various occasions. Yet, the amount of contemporary Arabic documentation of Yoruba history in general is negligible while that of Ilesa and its environs in particular so far is yet to be recovered. For contemporary written evidence we are almost entirely dependent upon European nations - Portuguese, Dutch, French and English in particular. As far back as the late fifteenth century these Europeans had established contacts

by sea with West African coast to the south end of Yorubaland.

The sources so far outlined in the above are largely incidental and indirect. A bolder attempt can now be made within the limits provided by the sources to construct the history of the growth of Islam among the Ijesa people as from the end of the first decade in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The various tribal wars and political agitations of the period with their aftermath obviously constituted a watershed in the history of Islam in Ilesa and its environs. In reality, of the towns in the area, Ilesa was the most hit of the tribal wars because there the Owa of Ijesaland was residing. Thus Ilesa was the seat of the government in Ijesaland. The traditional leaders and strongmen of the land were almost rendered in complete disarray and confusion because many of them were carried away as captives of the wars. Though already shaken the traditional religion of the people remained unbroken since there was no substitute. As from 1856 a new religion, Christianity came. As it was establishing itself more war returnees came. Among them were those who had come in contact with Islam. As from 1860s the religious groups in Ijesaland became three:

- i. The traditional Religion of the people

- ii) Christianity
- iii) Islam.

However, the struggles for survival and growth of the religions took a silent dimension throughout Ijesaland; the adherents of African traditional religion attracted more attention to themselves by holding frequent meetings with all members. The Christians made use of literacy introduced by the Missionaries to lure people to Christianity. The Muslims on their own attracted more adherents because of their tolerance, constant prayers in Mosques and in members' houses in addition to series of open-air preachings was also closely followed by the 'Africaness' of Islam: Plurality of wives but not more than four concurrently were allowed to every Muslim. Islam as a religion is not against the use of herbs or curative medicines. Muslims in Ilesa and its environs did all these in the domain of Islam. Upon all, the Holy Qur'an was the source of prayers for all Muslims. As a reflection of accommodating nature of Islam many converts were made into it. All the erstwhile developments such crude system of worship and the time honoured leadership of 'Aworo' or 'Abore' (Priest of an idol) gave way and were supplanted by new developments. Adaption to local conditions without any adverse changes to practice of Islam were allowed to trickle on. The new

developments were evident. This is well expressed in the inauguration of the office of the Imams, a development consequent upon the increased number of Muslims in Ijesaland at the time. It was obvious that the Muslim community was adopting some social traditions while at the same time making its own social and political impact on the generality of Ijesa people.

In the resurgence of Islam in the area, a remarkable role was played by external forces. This was one of the many factors that helped in the consolidation of Islam in Ilesa and its environs. Returnees from Sierra-Leone and Brazil stationed in Lagos and radiated activities to the sustaining support procured by the various itinerant teachers and preachers. Most of the local preachers who were learned in Islamic sciences, came from Oyo, Abeokuta, Ilorin while a few of them who were solely traders came from Ijebu. They all helped to improve on the level of Islamic knowledge among Muslims and standard of worship. They earned for the Muslim community considerable respect. In fact, more significant was the strong support and co-operation which a Muslim gave to the other. This was manifested in the information of Muslim societies. At the initial stage some Muslims were engaged in un-Islamic practices, yet the early Muslims Missionaries did not do the correction with force or stern warnings even though such un-Islamic practices were discouraged.

Reasons evolved for the type of reaction is that it is not easy for man to breakaway from tradition so easily. Hence, some of them at the time continued in drinking alcohol, eating pork and taking libation. In some places such a tolerance won many people into Islam.

After the full consolidation and entrenchment of Islam, all the un-Islamic practices were no more tolerated. The Muslim Missionaries condemned and discouraged in stern warnings any Muslim who still persisted in any un-Islamic deeds or indulged in taking part in traditional practices that were polytheistic in nature. The missionaries like the Muslim societies helped to forge some sort of unity among the Muslims in the area. The various local Muslim societies came together as a group to assist in the funding of Islamic projects and in the modern times, they coalesced to form the various modern organisations. It was even the various societies that set a pace and paved the smooth way for any of the national organisations to introduce and establish themselves for the progress of Islam in Ilesa and its environs.

The open-air service of the itinerant Muslim teachers and preachers were indeed means of educating the Muslims and non-Muslims in the community. At the time people found it very convenient to attend the open-air evening service because it

would fall within their leisure period. Since they did not pay much attention to Western-oriented Education for their children and there was no much desire for material wealth as it is today, the open-air services were usually packed full with people. At these kinds of services many non-Muslims were converted into Islam while some unsteady Muslims were encouraged to be steadfast. Further more the desire to acquire knowledge of Islamic practices made people attend the open-air-services.

The general practices of Islam like the penetration of Islam to Ijesaland effected great improvements in the religious, social and political life of the people. As discussed in Chapter four the Ijesa Muslims held their faith (belief) in oneness of God tenaciously. They tried to leave their polytheistic practices for the belief in the living Allah who accepts no partner or other gods to be worshipped along with Him. The obligatory prayers were accepted as a duty. Even when there were no roofed Mosques, prayers were observed congregationally in the Muslim leaders' houses. They turned to Allah in prayers in times of troubles. Where things went beyond their help the Alfas were called upon for help instead of going to the herbalists for traditional practices to solve their problems. Despite the nature of Ijesa people's work, (farming and trading) they did not fail to answer the call to Juma'at Services on every Friday.

Socially, Muslims in Ijesaland are not left out. What is important is that in all they want to do they do not go outside the laid down principles of Islam and the Sunnahs of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). Their social gatherings are also marked with religious connotations.

Politically and administratively, Muslims in this area understudy are known for a well and neat work. The Chief Imams in each of the towns and the Mosque functionaries carry out their duties effectively. The Muslims have very high regards for the Chief Imams who are put in the position of the Obas. Despite the fact that the Muslims have regard and honours for the Obas as their temporal heads and men in authority the Chief Imams in each of the towns are also honoured and obeyed as spiritual heads of the Muslim community. In practice these Chief Imams are to respect and obey the Obas once they do not prevent them from practising their faith and carrying out their Islamic duties. This is based on Qur'anic teachings: Qur'an chapter IV verse 59.

Since Islam and politics cannot be easily separated Muslims here, in the area under study took part in the previous civilian regimes but they never went against the teachings of Islam. For example Alhaji Salihu Fasuyide, a leading Muslim figure in Ijesaland had started to be important in political

circles as early as from 1959. He was a leading figure in the defunct N.C.N.C. political party. Throughout his days in active politics he never shirked his religious duties.

Any chieftaincy title that may lead to pay homage to ancestors is inimical to Islam. This is why Muslims in Ijesaland refused such titles politely even when they were invited to take them by the Owa of Ijesaland. As it is believed or thought in some quarters this affected Ijesa Muslims politically because they were thought not to have sayings in the political developments of Ijesa people. This is of course proved incorrect because despite Muslims' refusal of certain chieftaincy titles they were not distant from the men in authority in Ijesaland. The closeness of the Chief Imams to the Obas brought the entire Muslims to be closer to the Oba in particular and to men in authority in general. The end result of such activities therefore have proved to be the source for the closeness, rapport and insight into the administrative and political processes of the towns by the Muslim leaders.

Despite the myriads of difficulties that sometimes militated against the spread of Islam in Ijesaland as discussed fully in Chapter Three the religion continued to attract more people mainly because of its peaceful co-existence and decisive tolerance. Tolerance and non-hostile attitude won many

people to Islam. This is to say that they **out** of their own volition abandoned traditional or pagan practices.

The kind gesture and generosity of those who introduced Islam to some Ijesa towns as well as those of nascent Muslims in those towns served as real contributory factors to the acceptance and growth of Islam. It was a general practice in most of the towns that the Muslims used to invite non-Muslims to feast during Ramadan fasting period and on the occasion of Id-ul-Adha when slaughtered rams were sent out to the poor and the neighbours.

The Osomaalo traders who returned home as Muslims played very great part in the building of Mosques in each of the towns in general and in the siting of the Central Mosques in particular. Their system of weekly or monthly contributions which they introduced raised for the building of Central Mosques in each of the large towns of Ijesaland. It accelerated the speed of completing them because there was more available fund for use. On the other hand erection of the Central Mosques served useful purposes because it enticed more converts into Islam.

Some major factors helped in the consolidation and spread of Islam among the Ijesa people. One of these factors was the introduction of Muslim Society which sprang up in the towns throughout Ijesaland. The organisation of these early

societies was simple and they encouraged co-operation among their members as a means of ensuring steadfastness in the face of all odds or difficulties.

At the inception of Islam among the people under study it was a common practice among the Muslim leaders to deliver stereo-typed Khutbah, (sermon) in Arabic. As a result it became difficult for a large percentage of their listeners to understand. This really affected the spread of Islam in that many adherents had very shallow knowledge of both Islam and the Qur'an. It was this that prompted some communities to cease giving sermon in Arabic to a congregation of worshippers which did not understand the language since the purpose of a sermon is to educate the congregation. Such communities, among which were Erin-Oke and Otan-Ile have embraced the idea of translating the Khutbah into the local language or the idea of delivering the sermon directly in the local language.

As from the inception of Islam among the Ijesa people, the first Imams in most of the towns were the non-indigenes. In most cases they were the introducers of Islam to the people since they were the most learned at the time. In a few cases Islamic scholars were sought for during people's travels to Lagos and its environs before a suitable Imam could be got. The indigenes later became competent after acquiring enough

knowledge of the Qur'an and Arabic Language. Things have taken different shapes in the modern time, knowledge of the Qur'an is no longer the only yardstick for the appointment of an Imam most especially the Imam al-Jama'at. Experience as a Muslim, acceptability by the Muslim Community over which the Imam will govern and good health are some of the qualities looked for in a prospective Imam in Ijesaland. Disputes over the selection of Imams were not common among the people under study. The singular occurrence of Otan-Ile between 1933 and 1943 when there was a vacuum in the existence of a Chief Imam was amicably settled by Muslim leaders from inside and outside Ijesaland before the end of the year 1943. A new Imam was finally selected by the people in 1949.

Although Hausa Muslim traders were known to have played a part in the area under study at the inception of Islam to the area, however Hausa Community was not known to have played much part in the spread of Islam in each of the towns in Ijesaland. This of course appears peculiar to Ijesaland because Hausa Communities are known to play much and glaring parts in the spread, entrenchment and in Islamic practices in other towns throughout Yorubaland. The reason for this is not far fetched, Ijesa people did not go close to the Hausamen right from the inception of Islam to the people under study. As stated earlier

in chapter two, both Ibokun people and those people in Esa-Oke refused Islam initially because they considered it to be a religion of the Hausa. However, the fact remains that the Muslim Community welcomed the Hausa Muslims. They prayed together in the same Mosque but the Hausamen and women did not have room to shine in their religious practices like in all other Yoruba towns. Although they were not repressed in any form yet they were handicapped. For example unlike in other towns in Yorubaland Hausa Community was not given a separate place of abode called Sabongari (the Hausa Community) anywhere in Ijesaland even by 1968.

Islam introduces a practical institution that has real influence on the culture of Ijesa people. With the introduction of Islam among Ijesa people worship and propitiation of cults, ancestors and deified gods became less. There was a general redirection of worship to the living God (Allāh). Islamic worship and festivals have immense impact upon the social and religious life of the people. For example the Arabic language through Islamic worship had also some influence on the Yoruba language spoken by the entire Ijesa people like in other Yoruba towns.

Islamic way of slaughtering animals and mentioning of Allāh's name is generally in vogue and acceptable to the generality of the people so much that non-Muslims invite

Muslims to assist them in slaughtering of animals. This has been carried out to an extent that some Muslims of the people under study have become professionals in the slaughtering animals and cutting them into pieces, during various occasions like ceremonies, child-naming, house warming, birthday ceremonies and funeral ceremonies of old people.

Islamic method of marriage has virtually replaced the traditional marriage. The Muslim practice of marrying four wives concurrently has replaced the loose polygamy practised by Ijesa people before the introduction of Islam. The fact needs to be stated here that the majority of the educated Muslims among the Ijesa marry only one wife. This can be explained fully in conjunction to Qur'an Chapter 4 verse 3, that is inability to do justice to more than one wife equally is better to stick to one as emphasised by the Qur'anic reference in the above.

As it has been fully discussed in Chapter seven Islam has greatly influenced child-naming, burial and funeral ceremonies and the system of inheritance among the Ijesa people.

Lack of western oriented education by Muslims in Ijesaland contributed immensely to their educational and social setbacks. They received Western education late because they feared of conversion to Christianity in the existed Christian schools. The Muslims so converted although attained high standard and

later held important positions remained Christians. Resultantly Ijesa Muslims who are in leadership-position in both public and private sectors of the economy are relatively very few, It was this together with clever attacks of Muslims that led to the establishment of Western oriented schools by the Muslim communities in Ijesaland. Still with patience and endurance some Ijesa Muslim children endeavoured to have risen to some levels in their various spheres of life.

Generally, development of Islam and Muslims in Ijesaland warrant attention so as to discuss the qualities, problems and suggestions for further development with regard to various forms of entertainments in Ilesa and its environs which are just raising their heads. This is why they are now limited to the school and Mosque environment. There are no known Muslim musicians in Ijesaland as they are known at Ibadan, Abeokuta, Ijebu-Ode and some other Yoruba towns. The 'Alasalatu' group of musicians of Ilesa can improve on the present standard if middle aged women and few Muslim children are co-opted to add more melody and vivacity to their songs. The group in Ilesa can do Islam better if it can move out to other towns in Ijesaland for Islamic ceremonies and activities.

Muslims throughout Ijesaland like other people pay much premium on the education of their children. In order to avoid

heavy concentration on Western education at the expense of Islamic education, more Arabic Schools of good standards are being built in each of the large towns in addition to the local Arabic centres or schools in existence. The plan is already in the making to have more Muslim schools in addition to the existing ones where both the Western oriented education and Islamic studies can be imparted to the Muslim children. That is why the Ansar-ud-Deen Society Ilesa Branch has secured a very large piece of land at Ilo on the way to Ijebu-Jesa where the Ansar-ud-Deen Grammar School will be built.

To ease the problem of shortage or lack of Islamic teachers in Ijesaland the Muslim leaders should approach the problem in a peaceful manner to attain a lasting solution. The Chairmen and the secretaries of the three local Schools Boards should be informed of the situation in some schools where Headmasters or Principles refuse the teaching of Islamic Religious Knowledge in their schools. It should be made mandatory on every headmaster and principal of primary and post-primary institutions to make the teaching of Islamic Studies available to all Muslim pupils and students as it is entrenched in section 35 (209) of the 1979 Constitution of Nigeria.

Ijesaland is generally and widely known as a Christian

centre all because of the various Church denominations based in Ijesaland and hundreds of Churches erected in almost every street of the towns. As a sort of healthy rivalry Muslims have to start to build new Mosques in almost all the big towns while more Muslims in large streets or compounds can make plans of building more Ratibi Mosques. Individual wealthy Muslims should try to build personal Mosques in their various houses or compounds.

Although the existing system of selecting Imams in Ijesaland is fair yet it needs to be overhauled. The Muslims must adhere strictly to divine injunctions by ensuring that the most qualified persons are selected as Imams and next qualified ones are appointed as their deputies. This will make it appropriate for any of the deputies to become Imams if the case arises. This will abate the unhealthy rivalry and struggle to become the Imam at the death of one. The practice whereby an existing deputy is set aside and a new man is made Imam is not very encouraging because it does not really call for full co-operation in the Mosque administration it can pave way for bad blood.

In **Conclusion** Ijesaland is virtually a centre of spiritual worship, a centre of **ancient** traditions, deified gods, heroes and heroines and also a base of various Christian religious groups

where Churches exist in hundreds in every town. There is hardly a street in Ijesaland, however small, where there cannot be found one or two churches. It is therefore a credit for Islam and Muslims in Ijesaland that in the face of all odds, Muslims hold to their faith firmly and co-exist in harmony, peace and concords.

What is left for Muslims in Ijesaland is a concerted effort to work as a team with a central organisation. If this is done forgetting the fear of one Muslim Community dominating the others things will augur well for the entire Muslims in Ijesaland because it will give room for organising refresher courses either by the League of Imams or Alfas or by the Council of Muslim Youth Organisations, (COMYO).

APPENDIXESAPPENDIX I

List of Muslim Associations in Ilesha and some towns in its environs:

ILESIA

Agbega Adiini
 Alasalatu
 Anabi Lonigba
 Egbe Ayeni
 Egbe Ayeba
 Egbe Ojo Ibi Anabi
 Osupa Adiini
 Young Muslim Association
 Olorun Iansin
 Muru-1-Islamiyyah

IBOKUN

Alasalatu
 Egbe Ayeba
 Egbe Emi Lere Adiini
 Adiini lo nigba

OWAN-ILE

Alasalatu
 Igbalaye Adiini
 Agbega Adiini
 Adiini lere

IPEJU-IJESU

Alasalatu
 Egbe Iya Asuna
 Ilosiwaju Adiini
 Omolere Adiini

ERIN-OFE

Alasalatu
 Ere Anabi
 Agbega Adiini
 Adiini lo nigba

IJESU-JESA

Alasalatu
 Adiini wu mi
 Adiini lo lode
 Adiini lere

IPEJU-ILE

Alasalatu
 Imole Adiini
 Emi lere Adiini
 Adiini Dun

IGANIGAN

Alasalatu
 Adiini lere
 Adiini lo ni Igba

IPEJU-ILE

Alasalatu
 Adiini lo ni Igba
 Adiini lere

IKEJI-ILE

Alasalatu
 Osupa Adiini
 Omolere Adiini

APPENDIX II

LIST OF ROOFED MOSQUES IN SOME OF THE TOWNS IN IJESALAND

<u>TOWNS</u>	<u>NO. OF ROOFED MOSQUES</u>
1. Erin-Odo	1
2. Erin-Oke	5
3. Erinmo	1
4. Esa-Odo	1
5. Esa-Oke	1
6. Ibokun	6
7. Idominasi	1
8. Ifewara	3
9. Igangan	2
10. Ijebu-Jesa	4
11. Ijeda	1
12. Iponda	1
13. Ikeji-Ile	1
14. Ikeji-Arakeji	1
15. Ikinyinwa	1
16. Ilase	4
17. Ilare	1
18. Ilesa	60
19. Iloko-Ijesa	1
20. Ilowa	1
21. Imesi-Ile	1
22. Ipetu-Ile	1
23. Ipetu-Ijesa	1
24. Itagunmedi	5
25. Iwaraja	1
26. Iwara	1
27. Otan-Ile	12

APPENDIX III

SAMPLES OF KHUTBAT

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خطبة العقيدة

(التسمية)

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم . . . بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم . . .
الحمد لله رب العالمين الرحمن الرحيم مالك يوم الدين إياك
نعبد وإياك نستعين . . . أهدنا الصراط المستقيم . . . صراط
الذين أنعمت عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين . . . آمين .
اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد الفاتح لما أغلق والخاتم لما سبق
ناصر الحق بالصدق والهادي إلى صراطك المستقيم وعلى اله حق
قدره ومناجاة أرى الحمد لله . . . يهب لمن يشاء آفاتا ويهب لمن
يشاء زلزلا أو يزوجهما ذكرا نثا وإنثا ويجعل من يشاء عقيما
إن الله على كل شيء شهيد . . . الحمد لله الذي أوجدنا من العدم إلى
الوجود ومن الوجود إلى العدم الذي اجتمعنا على هذا
الصراط أو الصراط سميناه أو سميناها كذا وكذا .
اللهم بأمره نصره وأجعله سعيدا في الدنيا والآخرة واجعله
مباركا واجعله بمرأى والده يده يا أرحم الراحمين بسمر
الفاطمة .

خطبة الجمعة

(الفصل الأول)

أحمد لله الذي له ملك السموات والأرض وعندَه علم الساعة واليه ترجعون .
الحمد لله الذي خلق الخلق على الأطلاق ، فأمر السموات والأرض وبسط
الأرزاق ، وتبسطه العسير في أوكارها ، وتحمده الأملاك في الأفاق . فسبحانه
هو العليُّ الرازق . لا تنفد خزائنه بكثرة الانفاق . الحديث قال عليه
الصلاة والسلام :

الرحمسون يرغمهم الرحمن ، ارضوا عن في الأرض يرحمكم من في السماء .
أحمده سبحانه وتعالى ، وما زال حمده يحذب البركة والأرزاق . أشهد أن
لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له وأشهد أن محمدا عبده ورسوله
والصلاة والسلام على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وأصحابه الذين كانوا
بتسبيحك شريفة قدام العالمين . آمين .

(الفصل الثاني)

أيها الناس اظنوا برحمكم الله تعالى أن زماننا هذا قد فسدت
فيه الاخلاق ، أفسد الفساد في البر والبحر بما كسبت أيدي الناس
ليذيقهم بهم العذاب العنتي عملوا بعملهم يرجعون . ويا أولي الألباب
أنظروا نبياكم بعين الفكر والاعتبار ، والى جميع الحيوانات التي يجب
أن تعتبر وقد منح بها عيوننا كثيرا . . . حيث قال تعالى في القرآن
سورة الحديد (٥٧) آياتها ١٦ - ١٧ إسم الله الرحمان الرحيم . . .
ألم يأن للذين آمنوا أن تخشع قلوبهم لذكر الله وما نزل من الحق

ولا يكونوا كالمذنبين أوتوا الكتاب من قبل فطال عليهم الأمد فقست قلوبهم وشهدوا أنهم خاسرون . اعلموا أن الله يحيى الأرض بعد موتها قد بينا لكم الآيات لعلكم تعقلون .

(الفصل الثالث)

عباد الله أتت الله بما أمر بالعدل والاحسان وابتغاء ذي القربى وينهى عن الفحشاء والمنكر والبغى مما لكم لعلكم تذكرون .

الدعاء

اللهم ربنا بما ربنا تقبل منا أنتك سميع الدعاء . وتب علينا يا مولانا أنتك انعم القواب الرحيم . . ولهدنا ووفقنا الى الحق والى طريق المستقيم . آمين . سبحان رب العزة عما يصفون وسلام على المرسلين والحمد لله رب العالمين .

فطيرة عيد الفطر

أعوذ باللّٰه من الّٰه يبدان الرّحيم بسم اللّٰه الرّحمان الرّحيم .
اللّٰه أكبر اللّٰه أكبر اللّٰه أكبر واللّٰه أكبر لا اله الا اللّٰه وللّٰه الحمد
سبحان من نور قابوس العارفين بسرّان الهداية والفرقان وسبح
صدور الصّالحين بنور المغفرة ولايمان والحرام عبادة المؤمنيين
بصيام من رمان اللّٰه أكبر اللّٰه أكبر لا اله الا اللّٰه أكبر
اللّٰه أكبر وللّٰه الحمد سبحان من فتح لهم ابواب الرّحمة والرّموان
ووعدهم بدخول باب من ابواب الجنان كما أخبرنا نبيّ أخمر
الرّموان أنّ في الجنّة بابا يقال له الرّمان لا يدخله الا صائموا
شهر رمضان واللّٰه أكبر اللّٰه أكبر لا اله الا اللّٰه أكبر وللّٰه
الحمد سبحان من أنزل الفرقان على نبيّنا في اشرف ليلة من ليالي
رمضان وجعل تمامها خيرا من قيام الشهر بالعدل والاحسان
وارسل فيه الملائكة لطلب سلامة على كافة اهل الحق والايقان
وغفر لهم جميع الكبائر والمعصيات .

اللّٰه أكبر اللّٰه أكبر لا اله الا اللّٰه أكبر وللّٰه الحمد ثمّ الصلوة
والسّلام على خير النور بدر النور نور الهدى صاحب قاب قوسين
أو أدنى رسول الشّافلين نبيّ الرّحمة والحرّمين امام القبليتين شفيح
الأمم نبي الدارين خاتم النبيين صلّى اللّٰه عليه وسلّم وعلى آله وخلفائه
الراشدين عنه وصلى على الامام سيّد اهل الفرقان خليفة رسول اللّٰه صلّى
اللّٰه عليه وسلّم في كلّ مكان أمين المؤمنين أبي بكر الصّدّيق والصّادق
الشّفيق رضي اللّٰه تعالى عنه وعلى الامام قاتل الكفرة واهل الاثميان

أمير المؤمنين عمر الفاروق المؤيد بالاحسان رضى الله تعالى
عنه وعلی الامام حبيب الله المنان ناصر أهل الايمان جامع
الشران أمير المؤمنين عثمان بن عفان رضى الله عنه تعالى
ولی أشجع الشجعان مطعم المساكين والجيحان أمير المؤمنين
علی المرتضى أسد الله المستعان كرم الله وجهه وعلی الأمان
الفاضلین الكاملین أبی محمد الحسن وأبى عبد الله الحسين
رضی الله تعالى عنهما وعلی أمهما سيدة النساء فاطمة الزهراء
رضی الله تعالى عنهما وعلی عمیه الشرفین المكرمین بین الناس
التمزة والعباس رضی الله تعالى عنهما وعلی جمیع المهاجرین
والأنصار والتابعین الاشبهار الابرار الی یوم القيامة رضی الله
تعالى عنهم أجمعین .• اعلموا أن یومکم هذا یوم عظیم
میرت سئلہ اللہ تعالیٰ عید المؤمنین ورجاء الالبین اعسنوا
علی الیتیم والفقراء والمساکین كما روى عن النبی صلی الله علیه
وسلم أن وادقاتکم عن صغیر وعید نصف شعبان یوم غصاعا
من تمر شعیرا اعلموا أن صدقاتکم الفطر واجبة علی کل
مسلم له نصاب فاضل عن حیوانه الأضلیة لنفسه واطفه
من غیر وجاریتہ ملکا قاله النبی صلی الله علیه وسلم زکاة
الضائر طهارة للصیام من اللغو والرّفث وطعمه المساکین
فسفر الله لنا عن ذنوبنا ان الله یأمرکم بالعدل والاحسان وایتاء
ذی القربى وينهى عن الفحشاء والمنکر والبغی یعظکم لعلکم
تذکرون .•

الضحية المشهورة لعيد الأضحى

اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَبِيرًا ، فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ بَكْرَةً وَأَمِيلاً ،
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَمَاتَ مَنْ مَاتَ وَأَحْيَا مَنْ لَمْ يَمُتْ ، قَالَ تَعَالَى : (كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ نَاطِقَةٌ مَمُوتٌ) اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ كُلَّ أَمِيرٍ وَوَزِيرٍ يَمُوتُ وَكُلُّ فَنِيٍّ وَفَقِيرٍ
يَعْمُرُ ، وَكُلُّ سَخِيٍّ وَيَخِيلُ يَمُوتُ وَكُلُّ شَقِيٍّ وَسَعِيدٍ يَمُوتُ وَكُلُّ مُسْلِمٍ
وَكَافِرٍ يَمُوتُ وَكُلُّ سَاهِلٍ وَعَالِمٍ يَمُوتُ وَكُلُّ صَاحِبِ مَرِيضٍ يَمُوتُ وَكُلُّ شَرِيفٍ
وَرَسُولٍ يَمُوتُ وَلَا يَبْقَى إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ الَّذِي لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ .

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَبِيرًا وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ بَكْرَةً وَأَمِيلاً أَيُّهَا
النَّاسُ اعْلَمُوا رَحِمَكُمُ اللَّهُ أَنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارُ الْفَنَاءِ لَا دَارُ الْبَقَاءِ ، وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ
كُلَّ آتٍ قَدِ رَيْبُهُ ، وَأَنَّ الْبَعِيدَ مَا لَيْسَ بِآتٍ اسْتَعِدُّوا لِلْمَوْتِ فَإِنَّهُ لَا شَكَّ آتٍ ،
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ هَذَا الْيَوْمَ عِيدُ الْأَضْحَى وَفِعُولُ الضَّأْنِ وَإِنَّا هِيَ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ ذَكْوَرِ
الْمَعْزِ وَذَكْوَرِ الْمَعْزِ فِي الضَّحَايَا أَفْضَلُ مِنْ خَصْيَانِهَا وَفَضْلِيَانِهَا
أَفْضَلُ مِنَ الْإِبِلِ وَالْبَقَرِ ثُمَّ الضَّأْنُ ثُمَّ الْمَعْزُ . وَلَا يَجُوزُ فِي ذَلِكَ شَيْءٌ مِنْ
الْمَوْرَةِ وَلَا الْمَرْيُوضَةِ وَلَا الْمَرْجُومَةِ وَلَا الْعَجْفَاءِ الْمَتَّى لَا شَعْمَ فِيهَا وَيَتَقَى
فِيهَا الْعَيْبُ كُلُّهُ ، وَلَا مَشْقُوقَةٌ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ يَسْبِيحًا ، وَكَذَلِكَ الْقَنَاعُ
وَلَا مَكْسُورَةٌ الْقَرْنُ إِنْ كَانَ مَدْمَى فَلَا يَجُوزُ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَدْمَ فَذَلِكَ حَائِزٌ .

والأضحية سنة أكيدة واجبة على الأحرار البالغين ، ولا تبيح على
العبيد ولا على العجاج ، واعلموا أنها أفضل من صدقة سبعين
دينارا ولا تتركوها إن كنتم قادرين عليها فإن الله لا يضيع أجر المحسنين .

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ عِدَّةٍ مِمَّا ذَكَرَهُ الذَّاكِرُونَ ،
وَعَفَلْ عَنِ ذِكْرِهِ الْخَافِلُونَ وَهُوَ الْحَيُّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ
الدِّينَ • اللَّهُمَّ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ •

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Translation of Khutbat (Sermon) of al-Aqiqat
(Child-naming)

I seek refuge in Allāh from the accursed devil. In the name of Allāh the Beneficent the Merciful.

Praise be to Allāh the Lord of the worlds. The Beneficent, the Merciful. The Owner of the day of Judgement. It is you we worship, and it is from You we ask for assistance. Guide us into the right path; the path of those whom you have shown favour. Not the path of those with whom you are angry nor the path of those who go astray (amen).

O! Allāh, bless our leader, Muhammad the Opener of what has been closed and the seal of what has come before, the favour of the truth with truth and guidance to your right path; and upon his family, the truth of his power and His Mighty measure.

He blesses whoever He likes with female, and He blesses whoever He likes with male, or mix it with both male and female or He makes whoever He likes a barrel. Surely Allāh is the best Knower and best Judge.

Praise be to Allāh Who created us into life from nothingness and from existence to death, Who gathered us on this naming and we name him or her . . .

Oh! Allāh give him/her long life and make him/her lucky one in this life and Hereafter and bless him/her and make him/her a good child to his/her parents. Oh! Lord You are the Greatest Blessor.

Reading of Surat-ul-Fatihāt ends the ceremony.

Translation of Jumu'ah (Friday) Khutbah (Sermon)

Part One

Praise be to Allāh, The One Who is the King of both heaven and earth and the knowledge is with Him. He has the knowledge of time and to Him we will all return.

Praise be to Allāh, the maker of the creatures, of the human beings and others and He is the One Who creates both heaven and earth. He distributes blessings and the birds sing His praises in their nests, and all the Kings of the earth give Him His deserved honour on His throne.

And His Glory is the highest and most blessed. No amount of spending that can reduce His wealth.

In the prophetic saying, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be On Him) said, "The Merciful Allāh will have Mercy upon them who show Mercy. Show mercy to the people on earth and Allāh will show mercy on you in the Hereafter. Thank and praise be to Allāh the High Whose Praises will be most blessed and of everlasting wealth."

I testify that there is no other God except Him. He is the only one Who has no partner and I testify that Prophet Muhammad is His Messenger and His Apostle and May the Peace and blessings of Allah be upon the noble Prophet Muhammad and His companions, his house-hold, those who uphold the law and order in the righteous way (amen).

Part Two

Oh! you people believe that Allāh the Most High will show mercy on you. Know that through our time people's behaviours have become immoral. Indiscipline has spread distinctively over the earth and the sea as the result of evil work of man. So as to taste some of their handi-works and to Him they would return.

Oh! you people look at your life with deep wisdom and thinking and to all other events over which we should consider and over which our eyes should shed great tears.

Hence Almighty Allāh said in the Holy Qur'an, chapter 57 verses 16 and 17:

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
"Has not the time arrived for believers that their hearts in all humility should engage in the remembrance of Allāh . . . Know you (all) that Allāh giveth life to the earth after its death! Already have We shown the signs plainly to you that ye may learn wisdom."

Part Three

Oh! you servant of God, Allāh commands you to do justice and good to others and to do good to those who are near and far (kiths and kins) and He forbids all acts of indecency. Allah enjoins you so as to remember indiscipline.

The Prayer

Ohi God, our Lord accept from us because you are the listener of the prayer. Forgive us Ohi our Lord. Surely You are the Most forgiver and the Merciful and guide us and lead us into the truth and into the right way (amen).

All Praises due to the Almighty God and May the blessings of Allāh be upon all prophets and be to Allah the King of the whole universe.

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Translation of Khutbat (Sermon) of Īd-ul-Fitr

I seek refuge in Allah from accursed devil. In the name of Allāh the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Allāh is the Greatest, Allāh is the Greatest, Allāh is the Greatest, Allah is Great. There is no deity except Allah, and Praise be to Him. Glory be to Who has illuminated the hearts of Saints with the lamp of the Holy Qur'ān and its guidance and enlightened the breast of the fasters with the light of faith, forgiveness and lawful things also honoured the believers with fasting during the sacred month of Ramaḍān. Allāh is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest. All Praise and gratitude is due to Him. (He is free from every kind of blemish). He has opened wide the gates of blessings and pleasure, to the fasters and also promised them paradise by one of its many gates just as the last of the prophets has foretold. There is a gate in Paradise known as "Rayyan" and no one will be allowed to enter it, but those who fast during the sacred month of Ramaḍān. Allāh is the Greatest, Allāh is the Greatest, no one is worth of worship but Allāh. Allāh is Greatest and all Praise and gratitude is due to Him. He is free from every kind of blemish. He has revealed the Holy Qur'ān to our prophet in the most distinguished and celebrated Night of the month of Ramaḍān and declared the prayers offered during that Night better than the prayers of a thousand months with equal justice and generosity.

He also sent down angels in that Night to deliver. His blessings to all the righteous believers and to forgive all their great and small sins.

Part Two

Allāh is the Greatest, Allāh is the Greatest No one is worthy of worship but Allāh. Allāh is the Greatest. All Praise and gratitude is due to Him. We do send our blessings and salutations to the best of the creation, to the brilliant moon, to the light of guidance, that is to the Holy Prophet who sat before Allāh nearer than the two ends of a bow. Prophet of all humanity and Mercy, the Night of his ascents to the heavens. He is the Apostle of the two worlds, prophet of the Qiblas. He is the intercessor for all nations before Allāh, the last and the true prophet of Allāh, (Peace be on Him and on all His posterity).

Then we send blessings to all His righteous Caliphs particularly on the chief of all Saints and the succour of the Holy Prophet in all places, the commander of the faithful, Abu Bakr, the truthful who was true and kind to all. May Allāh have mercy on him. We also send blessings on the leader the favourite of Allāh killer of the unbelief, commander of the faithfuls, Umar the distinguished helper in truth. May Allāh have Mercy on him. Then the collector and compiler of the Holy Qur'ān, the commander of the faithfuls, Uthman, son of 'Affan. Then we send blessings on the bravest of all braves, the nourisher of the poor and the hungry, the commander of the faithfuls, Ali the victorious Lion of Allāh. (May Allāh bless his face).

Then we send blessings on the two most perfect and greatest leaders, Hassan, father of Muhammad, Husain, father of Abdullah, (May Allāh be pleased with them), and on their pious mother, the chief of all believers and believing women, Fatimat, the flower (May God be pleased with her) and on the two pious and reverend uncles of the Holy Prophet Hamzat and Abbas (May God be pleased with them). We then send blessings on all the Refugees and their helpers and on all those righteous people who followed the Holy Prophet faithfully (May God be pleased with all of them).

Ohi believers, you must realise that 'Id day of yours is a very glorious and honoured day, for Allāh has made it a great source of pleasure for the believers and hope for those who request and demand.

Therefore, you must be generous and bountiful to the orphans, to the poor and your house-holds just as the Holy Prophet says: "On 'Id day all of you whether old or young must pay (fitr) alms to the orphan and the poor. The equality of alms by each person is two special measures of grain or four special measures of dates or barley. And this 'Id alms have been enjoined on all Muslims who have spared money from their immediate needs on behalf of their own, their children, their males and females or female or male slaves who are under their custodianship.

The Holy Prophet (May Peace of God be upon him) also added more, 'Id alms purifies your fasting from any incedent and ignoble acts during the month of Ramadān and they also provide food for the poor.

Oh! Allah help those who help the true religion of thy, of thy Prophet and let us be among them and dishonour those who try to dishonour thy religion, and do not let us be among them.

O! servants of Allāh, May He take Mercy on you, He commands you to be just and true to all mankind, and to be benevolent towards your relatives and the poor. May He restrain you from all kinds of sins and shameful things. He gives you this advice that you may realise righteousness and tread the right path, and never forget that the remembrance and the glorification of Allāh is the distinguish praise worthy of honour, faultless, important and magnificent thing in the world.

May Allāh forgive us our sins (amen).

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Translation of Khutbat (Sermon) of 'Id-ul-Adhā

Allāh is Great, Allāh is Great, Allāh is Great. Allāh the Most Great, Glory be to God in the morning and in the evening. Praise be to Allāh Who kills those who died and gives life to those who are living. Allāh the Most High said: "Every soul will taste the death." Let us know that kings; chiefs; rich; poor; miser; generous; lucky, unlucky; believers; non-believers; illiterates; literates; healthy; sick; popular and unpopular, all shall taste death. Nobody will remain except Allāh the Only Who has no example on the earth and in heaven. He hears and He knows.

Second Step

Allāh is Great and Praise be to Allāh in times without number. Glory be to Allah in the morning and in the evening.

O! you people (May God be pleased with you), let us know that this life is vanity and it is not an everlasting place. And know that whatever is coming has approached. And anything that is far does not mean that it will not come. Prepare for death because there is no doubt on its coming, and know that today is 'Id-ul-Adhā day. Killing of male sheep (rams) is better than female-sheep and killing of male goat (he-goat) is better than female goat.

The forbidden animals to be sacrificed are the sick ones, and one that its horn has damaged or three legged and one eyed rams and those that their ears had cut.

The one that its horn has damaged if the damaged part has healed it is acceptable.

The festival is compulsory on every free adult and not compulsory on captives and pilgrims.

And know that it is better to have alms giving with seventy dīnāru and so don't abandon it if you are able to observe it. God does not cheat the doers of goodness.

O! Allāh bless our leader Prophet Muhammad and his family in the number of those who remember Him and in the number of those who ignore His remembrance.

Allāh is everlasting; there is none like Him. Call Him in purity. He is the Owner of (His) religion.

Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the Universe.

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APPENDIX IV.A LIST OF MUSLIM SCHOOLS IN IJESLANDATAKUMOSA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

<u>SCHOOLS</u>	<u>TOWNS</u>	<u>WHEN FOUNDED</u>
<u>Ansar-ud-Deen</u>	Araromi, Itagunmodi	1955
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Igangan	1948
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Ifewara	1952
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Itagunmodi	1955
Muslim School Osu	Osu	1978

ILESA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

<u>SCHOOLS</u>	<u>STREETS</u>	<u>WHEN FOUNDED</u>
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Odo-Iro	1948
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Imuroko Road	1948
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Oke-Eso-Igbaye	1955
<u>Zumurat-ul-Islamiyyah</u>	Ibala Road	1948

GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Ijesa Muslim Grammar School, Orisunbare-Irojo 1971

OJOKUN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

<u>SCHOOLS</u>	<u>TOWNS</u>	<u>WHEN FOUNDED</u>
<u>Ansar-ud-Deen</u>	Erin-Oke	1942/1952
<u>Ansar-ud-Deen</u>	Ipetu-Ijesa	1954
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Ibokun	1952
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Ilase	1954
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Otan-Ile	1950
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Esa-Oke	1955
<u>Nawair-ud-Deen</u>	Ikeji-Arakeji	1979
Muslim Comm. Schl.	Ijebu-Jesa	1979
Siraju-ud-Deen	Ipetu-Ile	1969
Siraju-ud-Deen	Owena	1975
Muslim Comm. High Schl.	Iloko-Ijesa	1970/1973

APPENDIX V

List of Chief Imams, Past and Present in some
Towns in Ijesaland

ERIN-ODO

Mallam Abubakare Sidiq: 1910-1925
Alhajj Tukuru Abubakare: 1925-up-to-date

ERIN-OKE

Alufaa Bello Ajayi: 1901-1942
Sadiq Orangun: 1942-1969
Alhajj Salisu Akinola - 1969-up-to-date

ERINMO

Amuda Olorunnisola: 1910-1934
Sanni Akorede: 1934-1944
Alufaa Alliyu: 1944-1947
Alhajj Bello Olorunlomo-Eru: 1947-1967
Alhajj Bakare Olorunlomo-Eru: 1967-up-to-date

ESA-ODO

Alufaa Basiru Akande: 1934-1939
Alufaa Sulaiman Afilaka: 1940-1969
Alhajj Basiru Ojo Akande: 1974-up-to-date

ESA-OKE

Alufaa Iti-Ogede Kasumu: 1912-1926
Alufaa Jimoh Baale: 1926-1948
Alufaa Ibrahim Segilola: 1948-1975
Alhajj Jimoh Djurongbe: 1975-up-to-date

ISOKUN

Alufaa Alli Fagbamila: 1920-1929
Alufaa Bello: 1929-1964
Alhajj Amodu Fagbamila: 1964-up-to-date

ILESA

Mallam Disu Kannike: 1896-1901
Pari Lawal: 1901-1910
Abdullahi Akorede: 1910-1946
Alhajj Alliyu Amoke-Oja: 1946-1985
Alhajj Abdul Rahman Akorede: 1985-up-to-date

IMESI-ILE

Alufaa Olakisan Muhammad: 1915-1930
Alufaa Ojo Balogun: 1932-1967
Alhajj Husaini Sekoni: 1971-up-to-date

IPETU-ILE

Bello Odebode: 1920-1939
Bakare Aderibigbe: 1940-1975
Alhajj Sakariyah Odebode: 1976-up-to-date

IPETU-IJESA

Lawal Olowoniyi: 1910-1916
Bakare Okunrinmeta: 1918-1920
Kolawole Uzama: 1920-1944
Alhajj Bakare Olowoniyi: 1944-1952
Alhajj Yesufu Kazim: 1952-up-to-date

IWARAJA

Alufaa Ibrahim Jegede: 1930-1974
Alhajj Sanni Otenigbabe: 1975-up-to-date

IWARA

Alufaa Ilorin Oko-Onadi (Ag. Imam): 1910-1920
Alufaa Junaid Olatunji: 1977-1979
Alhajj Idris Olaleye: 1979-up-to-date

OTAN-ILE

Mallam Tijani Olojede: 1906-1938
Alhajj Gbadamosi Agbo: 1949-1967
Alhajj Abdul Ganiyu: 1981-up-to-date

APPENDIX VI

Oral Evidence

By now the use of oral evidence for historical purposes has become accepted. Indeed, it is unavoidable in a work of this nature where documented information directly relevant to the topic is very scanty when compared with any work on the Christian Missionaries - particularly in this area under study (Ijesaland).

It is of no doubt that the Ijesa Muslims do possess a remarkable high sense of history. In every town of the area that I visited, the people cherish and acknowledge of their beginnings and developments. This on its own facilitated the collection of historical data and it explains why there was not only a number of published local works on the history of Islam, but also some number of manuscripts on this subjects. In most cases the manuscripts were prepared in readiness for my interview.

During the field work of this thesis a large number of Muslim communities in Ilesa and its environs were visited sometimes more than once, in order to collect and check evidence relating to this work. I found the

people enthusiastic and co-operative, most especially as they came to know about my academic learnings, my interest in the community, my knowledge of Islam and a little of Arabic.

My formal interviews took place with the elders (Muslims and non-Muslims), Muslim leaders and the Muslim communities in general. On many occasions I had 'unofficial' interviews with individual Muslims and non-Muslims in their private homes. Sometimes these my interviews were with local historians, traditional chiefs, relatives of Muslims, or others whose by their age or connections might have some relevant information to give. Among such people were the most helpful. To have a useful and meaningful compilation, generally, however, a valid story can be pieced together by a careful use of both oral and documented evidence.

This is why I have below a selected list of informants where and when they were interviewed:

ALADODO

Alhajj Saka Balogun, the first Muslim of the village,
28-10-84 and 9-9-85.
Sunmonu Ibrahim, a farmer from Offa in Kwara, 9-9-85.

ERIN-ODO

Alhajj Tukuru Abu Bakare, the Chief Imam, 18-3-84.
Oba Stephen Adeosun Akinla II, 18-8-84.
Mr. J.A. Akinfenwa, a native and a retired Principal of
Muslim Grammar School of Iloko-Ijesa 10-6-85
Mrs. Musili Dangboye, a retired Grade II teacher, 10-1-86.

ERIN-OKE

Alhajj Sule Akinola, the Chief Imam, 11-4-84.
Mallam Salami Agbeda, a Muslim leader 20-6-84.
Mr. Nasiru Ojo, a native and Principal of Irepodun
Community High School, Erin-Oke, 16-9-84.
Madam Salamotu, Balogun Obirin, 10-3-85.
Miss Jumoke Bello, a member of the M.S.S. 10-12-85.

ESA-ODO

Alhajj Badiru Ojo Akande, the Chief Imam, 28-5-84.
Alhajj Gbadamosi Bakare, 28-5-84.
Mustafa Aqisa, the Onitafusiru of Esa-Odo 8-5-85.
Alhajj Yusuf Dangboye, one of the sons of the first
Chief Imam of the town, 8-5-85.

ESA-OKI

Mr. Ibrahim Bamigboye, the Chairman Building Committee
of the Ansar-ud-Deen Mosque, Ilesa, 4-9-84.
Alhajj Jimoh Ojuringbe, the Chief Imam, 8-10-85.

IBOKUN

Alhajj Amodu Yinusa Fagbamila, the Chief Imam, 4-3-84.
Alhajj Musa Ajayi, the Muslim Treasurer of Ibokun 4-3-84.
Alhajj Yesufu Sule, an experienced Mu'allim of over thirty
years (1955), 4-3-84.

Oba Olajide Oyekanmi Adanlowo, IV, the Ogboni of Ibokun, 6-4-84.

Alhajj F.A. Siaka, a Muslim leader in Ibokun, Mallam Tijani Oladosu, a Mu'allim from the Sumurat-ul-Salihimu Arabic School, Ibokun, 6-10-85.

IGANGAN

Alhajj Lasisi Sule, the Chief Imam, 10-4-84.

Alhajj I.K. Jinadu, Onitafusiru of Igangan, 10-4-84.

Chief B.O. Apibilola, the Loja of Igangan, 6-6-84.

IJEBU-JESA

Alhajj Saibu Alubankudi, the Chief Imam, 15-12-84.

Oba Ajayi Palmer, the Ogboni of Ijebu-Jesa, 14-2-84.

Chief Eesegba, a traditional ruler, 14-2-84.

Alhajjah Fatimat - the 'Iya Asuna', 16-4-84.

Alhajj Raimi Akorede, the Deputy Imam, 16-4-84.

IJEDA-IJESA

Alhajj Kamoru Ogunmodede, the Muslim leader, 12-10-84.

IKEJI-ARAKEJI

Alhajj Tijani Ayelabola, the Chief Imam, 5-10-85.

Abu Bakare, an Ilorin Muslim trader who had stayed in the town for over 40 years, 5-10-85.

IKEJI-ILE

Mallam Ibrahim Owoeye, a Muslim teacher, 5-10-85.

Ayi Balogun, a woman Muslim leader of about 70 years old, 5-10-85.

IKINYINWA

Alhajj Amodu Balogun Adeyemi, the Chief Imam, 25-2-84 and 10-10-85.

Alufaa Bakare, Alias Gbogbonise, 9-11-85.

ILASE

Alhajj Muhammad Muritala, the Chief Imam, 16-8-85
 Madam Olosunde Ojumu, the priestess of Osun aged 85 years
 18-9-85.

ILARE

Alhajj Nasiru Odedele, the Chief Imam, 5-9-85.

Ilesa

Alhajj Alli Amoke-Oja, the Chief Imam, 10-12-83, 26-6-84
 and 4-5-85.

Chief Lasisi Omole, the Obanla of Ijesaland, 3-12-83 and
 3-3-84.

Apostle Paul Fasan, one of the founders of the Apostolic
 Mission, 4-4-84.

Alhajj S.O. Olatunji, 10-2-84 and 4-6-85.

Alhajj S.A. Famuyide, the 2nd Manager of the Muslim Schools
 in Ijesaland 26-6-84 and 2-2-86.

Alhajj Yahya Osokoyenikan, the Deputy Imam - 15-2-84.

Alhajj Basir Sarumi, a Muslim leader, 6-5-85.

Madam Oladapo Famuyiwa, the Lejoka of Ilesa, 3-3-84.

Chief S.O. Fajuyitan, 24-3-84.

Chief Lemodu of Ijesaland, 3-3-84.

Chief S.O. Thompson, 16-4-84.

Mr. Boye Uzamot, adviser to the M.S.S. Ilesa Branch, 12-12-85.

Iloko-Ijesa

Alhajj Biliaminu Ogungbangbe, the Chief Imam and the
 proprietor of Muslim Commercial Grammar School of
 Iloko-Ijesa, 8-10-84.

Alufaa Jinadu, a Muslim leader and the Muezzin, 18-10-84.

Alhajj Jimoh Adekile, a child to the first Chief Imam and
 his mother madam Awawu Adekile 16-4-85.

IWARA

Alhajj Idris Olaleye, the Chief Imam, 6-10-84.
Chief Lumobi of Iwara, 30-9-84.

IFEWARA

Alhajj Hamad Akinsola, the Chief Imam, 7-10-84.
Mr. Yusufu Yaayi, H.M. Nawair-ud-Deen School, 7-10-84.

ITA-APA

The Alapa of Ita-Apa, 28-10-84.
Alufaa Alarape Kazeem, an Ilorin trader, 28-10-84.

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