

A Review of the Activities of Christian Missionary, Clergy 'Experts' and Writers on Islam in Nigeria

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Abstract

The study of Islam, interpreting it as well as production of specialized literature on different aspects of it by Christian religious functionaries as a means of evangelizing Muslims goes back to the days of John of Damascus (676 – 749 A.D), it became an organized missionary endeavour at the Council of Vienna in 1312 A.D when 5 university chairs of Arabic were created in Europe for missionary purpose. The trend continues to grow up to the Present time. Christian Missionaries who evangelize Nigeria met Islam well established, thus the strategy of using Arabic and Islamic Studies as a means of evangelizing Muslims and stopping the progress of Islam continued to be employed. Christian Missionaries and clergies of Nigerian origin continue to seek expertise on Islam. This article gives a glimpse into their activities, the huge literature they produce and the response of the Muslims in addressing the Issue

Introduction

This paper attempts to give hints about some of the missionaries who worked on Islam in Nigeria and who studied Islam to complement their missionary endeavour.

The use of Arabic and Islamic Studies, as well as writing about Islam as tools for evangelism in Nigeria goes back to the efforts of the CMS in the South of Nigeria. This was when Christian missionaries saw the growth and expansion of Muslim communities as a threat to the spread of Christianity.

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It was thus resolved at the CMS conference held at Edinburgh in 1875 that men competent in Arabic Language, Qur'anic Studies and rituals should be appointed to deal with Muslims in gentility and humanity. The men should read the Qur'an in its original form with Muslims but should try to convince them that the Bible is better.² CMS placed the issue of learning Arabic for its clergies in the hands of a Muslim bilingual teacher, Idris O.A. Animashaun around 1896, in which classes were held twice or thrice a week. The classes were attended by people such as Rev. M.S. Cole, Rev. James Johnson, the Rev. T.A. J. Ogunbiyi and Rev. M.T. Euler Ajayi. These men began writing, translating and publishing tracks for Muslims.³

Theological Institutes and Seminaries as Centres for Study of Islam and Training of Clergies

In Nigeria, most theological seminaries put emphasis on training of clergies on Muslim evangelism and core Islamic Studies. Some examples of catholic seminaries with such emphasis include S.S. Peter and Paul Major Seminary Ibadan, St. Augustine's Major Seminary, Jos and the Dominican Institute Ibadan. Joseph Kenny states that in a two years diploma programme in Religious Studies at the S.S. Peter and Paul, there is a 60 hours course on Islam in the first year, the second year has 30 hours course on history of Islam in West Africa, and "in the final year of the seminary there is a course of about 10 hours on appraisal of Islam and pastoral approach to Muslims".⁴ A similar programme is run by St. Augustine Major Seminary, which is the regional seminary for the Northern dioceses of the Catholic Church based in Jos.

The Theological College of Northern Nigeria Bukuru Jos, is the largest centre of Christian study of Islam in Northern Nigeria since the real aim of its founders was countering Islam. It has programmes on Islam up to postgraduate levels. Another Institute is the Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS) which has courses and Christian clergy 'experts' on Islam. Huge volumes of literature on Islam are continuously being produced in these institutions, though they depend mostly on foreign trainer books on Muslim evangelism for the training of seminarians on Islam.

² Gbadamosi, T. G. O. (1978), *The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841- 1908*. London: Longman, Appendix p230

³ *Ibid.*, pp 129- 30

⁴ Kenny, Joseph (1977), "The Formation of Dominicans in a Muslim Environment: Ibadan" Presented at Journées Romaines Dominicaines, 1977, <http://josephkenny.joyeurs.com/Nig77a.html> Retrieved 24/10/2010.

These literatures include that of SIM's subsidiary organization, the Life Challenge Africa Nairobi, Kenya, whose aim is also Muslim evangelism. Its works include a five volume trainers' textbooks by Gerhard Nehls and Walter Eric as follows:

Vol. I. Islamics: Islam Basic Aspects: as sees itself, as others see it, as it is.

Vol. II Apologetics: The Islamic – Christian Controversy.

Vol. III Pragmatics: A Tactical and Practical Approach to Muslim Evangelism

Vol. IV Diadactics: Special Materials for Muslim Evangelism

Vol. V Presentation File Summaries, Graphs, Maps, Pictures for Seminars.⁵

Life Challenge Africa also has a syllabus for study in *Islamics* which is the volume one of what it calls Calabash resources titled *Syllabus on Islamics and Christian Witness among Muslims: Courses for Theological Programmes*. The objective of the course, according to the source, is to make students aware of the necessity of Church's involvement in witness among Muslims so that they may desire to evangelize them; prepare them for dialogue; aid them on how to reach Muslims lovingly and present the gospel to them in a meaningful way; and equip students on how to teach their congregations on how to answer Muslims' objections, thus guarding them against appreciating Islam.⁶

Other trainers' Books on Muslim Evangelism used by the theological seminaries included the Caleb Project USA Ministry's *Encountering the World of Islam*,⁷ among many other textbooks.

Apart from the manual for adult evangelist that work among Muslims, there are also works designed to make young Christian minds to detest Islam, one of such materials is *Learning about Islam* from the voice of the Martyrs' LINK INTERNATIONAL. The book is designed for homeschoolers, Sunday School Teacher and families. It is for students of ages 5 to 13. According to the book, it was designed to train Christian children from an early age to defend Christian belief.

⁵ See any Volume of the works e.g. Nehls, Gerhard and Walter Eric (1997), *A Tactical and Practical Approach to Muslim Evangelism*, Nairobi: Life Challenge Africa.

⁶ Henger, Stefen (2004), *Syllabus on Islamics and Christian Witness among Muslims: Courses for Theological Programmes*. Nairobi, Cape Town and Abidjan: SIM- Life Challenge Africa, 7.

⁷ Keith E. Swartley ed. *Encountering the World of Islam*, Atlanta, London and Hyderabad: Authentic Media

Another seminary that offers Islamic Studies in Nigeria is Immanuel College Ibadan. In 1980, Islam in Africa Project (IAP)⁸ and West African Association of Theological Institutes (WAATI) jointly organized a seminar at Immanuel College on the teaching of Islam at Theological Institutes where 15 Nigerian Institutions were represented. Dr. Willem A. Bilfeld was the main speaker and topics such as typology of Islam, Qur'anic Studies, Muslim Theology, Islam in West Africa and Modern time, Christian views of basic Islamic Theological issues and Qur'anic view of other religions were treated. The seminar recommended that all WAATI Institutions include the study of Islam in their curriculum; that it be related to other theological disciplines; that a survey should be undertaken with the aim of developing advanced studies in Islam in West Africa and that general textbooks should be produced for the institutions. The seminar also recommended that the study of Islam in theological institutes should include an introduction to Islam, a study of the history, practices and institutions of Islam in West Africa and a special attention should be given to history, principles and attitudes of Christian – Muslim relations.⁹

Apart from the Christian theological institutes and seminaries, Christian clergies also teach *Islamic*s in the same manner as the seminaries in some Nigerian Universities. The Department of Religious Studies of the University of Ibadan can be cited in this regards.¹⁰

In a critical appraisal of Islamic Studies in Nigerian Universities, Doi cites cases where Islam is taught by Christian or Jewish *Islamicists* whose aim is to show Islam as mere heresy of Judaism or Christianity. He specifically mentions the case of University of Ife (Now Obafemi Awolowo University Ife) where a Jewish lady taught Islamic Studies before he joined the service of the University. The notes and some mimeographed literature she left for students are but a complete distortion of Islam.

⁸ AIP latter Programme for Christian Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) is a Christian project on Islam and Muslim evangelism. According to John Crossley, one of the pioneer officers of the project, the aim of IAP when it was formulated was "to keep before the churches of Africa (South of Sahara) their responsibility for understanding Islam and the Muslims of their region, in view of the Church's task of interpreting faithfully in the Muslim world the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to effect the research and education necessary for this." See Defier, Ahmed Von (1985), *The Fulani Evangelism Project in West Africa*, London: the Islamic Foundation, 12.

⁹ Kenny, Joseph (1980), "Nigeria: three Significant events for Muslim-Christian Relations". *Islamochristiana*, N. 6, 238-239.

¹⁰Doi, Abdur-Rahman (1984), *Islam in Nigeria*. Zaria: Gaskiya Cooperation, 331

Another place is the University of Nigeria Nsukka where Catholic priests are the teachers of Islamic Studies.¹¹

The teaching of Islam by Christian religious functionaries in most cases consist of outright distortion of Islam while even the sources they depend on are really subjective, and no more than Christian interpretation of Islam to confuse and convert Muslims. Doi notes a case of a Muslim graduate of the University of Ibadan who was appointed a teacher at a Grammar School where he taught pupils a distorted view of Islam and was able to convert his old parents to Christianity.¹² Such types of cases make it pertinent for Muslims to rise up to the challenge of countering the efforts of Christian academics' war on Islam through the same or even more organized means.

Some Christian Missionary and Clergy experts on Islam in Nigeria

1. Rev. T.J.A Ogunbiyi

He was the founder of Reformed Ogboni Fraternity in 1918, in an answer to the spread of foreign Freemasonry in Nigeria.¹³ His father Jacob Ogunbiyi was the first Lagos chief to become a Christian and he built a Church. Ogunbiyi's father persuaded him to take a religious vocation whereas he had wanted to be a tailor or carpenter. He attended C.M.S training Institutions from 1886 to 1889, and was posted to Ondo as a teacher. In 1893 he went to Fourah Bay where he obtained a diploma in theology. He had been initiated into a Secret Society when he was a boy. This influenced his founding of a Christian Ogboni Society.¹⁴ He founded his Church at Ikeja after falling out with the CMS in 1930.¹⁵

The track he produced on Islam included *Asaro Kukurú* its English version, *Tracks for Muhammedans*, *Awon Oro Olorun*, which consist of the Lord's prayer the ten commandment and a few biblical texts in Arabic and Yoruba.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ayandele, E. A. (1966), *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842- 1914*. London: Longman, 267.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 271

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 277

Other works he produced included *Awon Imole*, which consists of stories from some Muslim converts to Christianity and *Itan Momodu* a brief biography of the Prophet of Islam (p b u h).¹⁶

2. Rev. Canon Michael Samuel Cole

He is another C.M.S clergy who produced literature on Islam. He is a Nigerian from Ife, and his work was described as "the most notable literary production" at that time.¹⁷ He translated the Qur'an into Yoruba language which was first published in 1906 and later in 1924.¹⁸ Cole 'declaims any pretensions to depth in Arabic literature, or oriental research'. His work is based on available English translation of the Qur'an. The members of his church encouraged the work believing it will help the cause of Christianity. It is however, full of erroneous and prejudiced assertions concerning Islam, since the objective of the translation was to combat what he called an 'error' of faith.¹⁹

3. Dr. Walter R.S. Miller

He was one of the most enthusiastic evangelists who made efforts to convert Muslims to Christianity. Miller, after qualifying as a medical Doctor in 1897, joined the C.M.S Hausa party. He went to Tripoli to learn Hausa, where he met a thirteen year old Hausa boy whom he converted to Christianity. By 1899 he left England for Nigeria. The whole of his early efforts was to convert the Muslims in Northern Nigeria. His efforts were however later turned to the pagans due to the futility of his efforts among Muslims.²⁰

4. Ethel Miller

Another C.M.S missionary who worked on Islam and evangelized the Muslims was Dr. Miller's Sister, Ethel Miller.

¹⁶ Gbadamosi, T. G. O. *The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba*, 130

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ See Ayandele, E. A. *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria*, 133; Crampton, E.P.T (2004) *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*. Updated by M.A.B. Gaya, Bukuru: ACTS , TCNN, 17.

According to Crampton, who described her as "very unorthodox", the CMS nursed some reservations before appointing her as a missionary in the first place. And due to her fanaticism, she had to leave the CMS to pursue an independent mission.²¹ She wrote two offensive pamphlets on Islam, they are the *Truth about Muhammad* and *Women Count*. These works were translated into Hausa and published by Niger press, Miners and the works were distributed by the CMS.²² Crampton however holds a contrary view that the CMS "disliked the pamphlet in question" referring to the *Truth about Muhammad*.²³ The two pamphlets ignited people in the south and north of Nigeria to the extent that the issue was reported to colonial authorities.²⁴ In Lagos, Khalid Shedrack wrote to Sir Bourdillon on behalf of the Muslims. The pamphlet agitated people in Kano that it was banned by the Authorities.²⁵ The senior resident of Zaria province wrote Reverend A. Smith concerning the publications that:

As these pamphlets are, I consider calculated to arouse anger or discontent if nothing worse, if any chance they get into the hands of the wrong people, I must request you in the interest of law and order to refrain from distributing in this province any further copies of these documents.²⁶

Residents in other places such as Sokoto, Kano, Ilorin, Misau, Katagum, Gombe and Bauchi, sought the withdrawal of the pamphlets from their provinces to prevent crisis. Ethel Miller was summoned by the colonial authorities in 1927 concerning the pamphlets and she replied that the document was intended for the Europeans only and not the local people.²⁷

5. Rev. Jeremy Hinds

Jeremy Hinds was another C.M.S missionary who worked among Muslims in Nigeria and wrote works on Islam and the Muslims in Nigeria. Hinds was born in 1932 at South Port, Lancashire (North West England). He was educated at Sedburge and did his National Service in Northern Nigeria in the early 1950's.

²¹ E.P.T Crampton, *Ibid.*, 204 n

²² Bunza, Umar Mukhtar (2007), *Christian Missions among Muslims: Sokoto Province, Nigeria 1935- 1990*, Asmara: African World Press, Inc, 131.

²³ Crampton, E.P.T, *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*

²⁴ Bunza, Umar Mukhtar, *Christian Missions among Muslims* 131.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Quoted in *Ibid*

²⁷ *Ibid*, see Appendix p 265

He was able to learn Hausa and later went back to Oxford University to study in 1954. While there he decided to go and share the message of Christianity with his Hausa friends in Northern Nigeria. On the advice of the General Secretary of CMS, Max Warren, he took a second degree in theology. He spent a year studying Arabic and sometime on Qur'anic study with the help of missionaries who worked in Palestine and Egypt.²⁸

Jeremy Hinds arrived Zaria in 1962 as a lay evangelist. He was appointed the principal of the Diocesan Training Centre (DTC), a position he held for three years. He married Wendy in 1970. A heart attack forced him to live Wusasa and DTC in 1979, while he covered a number of interregnums between principals of the DTC from the end of his tenure to 1979. He returned to Nigeria after recuperating and took an appointment at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria (TCNN) Bukuru, Jos. He was at Bukuru earlier in the mid 1970s for a period of two years before going back to Wusasa. He became a consultant for Islam in Africa Project IAP (Now PROCMURA). After his resignation from TCNN in 1987, CMS seconded him to the Bible Society for the transliteration of the Hausa Bible into *Ajami* Script. He planned relocation to Liberia in 1991 and had to remain in the UK due to the civil war where he held debates with Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims. The work was supported by the CMS and the Jerusalem Trust from 1992 until he died of stroke in 1993.²⁹

Hinds approach to Muslims, according to his former student Ningel Stone, was to determine the exact Muslim sects of an area and get acquainted with their belief through study and dialogue. This will help the evangelist to earn the respect of such groups. It will help to better present the Christian faith to the people, and when they are converted, a ministry of reconciliation rather than alienation will be developed in the community.³⁰ During his stay in Nigeria, Hinds served as teacher of churches about Islam and as an evangelist to the Muslims. His work *Qur'an Word Studies* and *Qur'an Correspondence Course* were written to serve as materials for dialogue. His works are designed to interpret Islamic texts especially the Qur'an in a way it will promote the teachings of Christianity. This was why he said: "The Qur'an and Islamic theology lead inevitably to the Gospel of Jesus Christ".

²⁸ Petch, Roger (2007), "Jeremy Hinds (1932-1993): Teacher and Apologist to Christians and Muslims." *TCNN Research Bulletin*. No. 47, 4- 15.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

His goal was to develop ideas basic to the gospel from the Qur'an. His works on Islam are basically to provide ways for evangelism through the interpretation of the Islamic faith. Such works include; "The Appeal of the Shar'iah", "The Keeping of the "*Mawlud*", the Birth of the Prophet: A Muslim Discussion in the Press", "*Mahdism with Special Reference to Northern Nigeria*", *Nine Dialogues in Honour of Malam Idi Kano*; "Present Trends in Islam in Nigeria", "Theological Values Among Hausa Muslims", "Sufism in Northern Nigeria" etc. His writings on Islam numbered at least up to twenty.³¹

6. Rev. Harry R. Boer

Another Christian missionary who worked on Islam in Nigeria was Rev. Harry R. Boer. He is of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC), and has served for eleven and half years as a minister in United States and Canada, out of which four years was as a chaplain in the US Navy. After discharge, he volunteered for missionary work in Nigeria, and arrived in 1947.³² At this time he did a tour of the Benue province of Northern Nigeria for two and half years, i.e. up to 1950.³³ Before coming to Nigeria, he had spent a year in missionary study at Free University, Amsterdam. In 1950, he went to Union Theological Seminary, New York, for another study in missions. In the academic year of 1951 – 1952, he taught missions at Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan. He pursued a doctoral study at Free University, Amsterdam, from October 1952 to February 1955.³⁴ Before he finished his doctoral study, from 1954, there had been correspondences on invitation to take a teaching/training of pastors for several missions associated with SUM, and by February 1955 he has offered to serve as a tutor at the proposed theological training school. He arrived Nigeria in October 1955,³⁵ and by 1956 had started preparation for the taking up of the school. He served as the organizer of the school for three years.³⁶

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Boer, Harry (1983), *History of Theological College of Northern Nigeria 1950- 1971*. Michigan: Christian Reformed World Missions, 8.

³³ *Ibid*; see also Rengshwat, Jordan Samson (2005), "Founder Member Denominations" in Mark Hopkins and Musa Gaiya (eds.), *Churches in Fellowship: The Story of TEKAN*. Bukuru: ACTS, 148- 49.

³⁴ Harry Boer, *Ibid.*, 8- 9

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p 28

³⁶ *Ibid*; Rengshwat, Jordan Samson, "Founder Member Denominations"

Thus he served as the principal of Theological College of Northern Nigeria from its inception until 1971 when he resigned as principal and teacher in order to devote himself to textbook writing ministry; a work he did from 1972 – 1978. He then returned to U.S.A in May 1978.³⁷

Harry R. Boer taught Islamic Studies at the TCNN and a publication on Islam was developed out of his class notes. The work titled *A Brief History of Islam* was published in 1968 by Daystar Press, Ibadan.³⁸ In its preface Harry Boer provided the reason why they need to embark on the study of Islam, thus: "If the Church is to have real contact with her Muslim environment she should have an understanding of Muslim religion. The Church should always witness to Christ in such a way that she will meet the religious needs of those to whom she speaks..."³⁹ Furthermore, he mentioned that he wrote the work from a Christian point of view and for Christian readers. However, despite his endeavour to be scrupulously honest as to events, he is unable to hide his Christian sentiment in interpreting events.⁴⁰ Therefore, the work is a Christian perspective of the Islamic history. The work shows that the author has no deep knowledge of Islam as he mainly depended on Western sources. The author has no knowledge of Arabic as he used his Hausa pronunciation of some words to spell Arabic terms. For instance he spelt *Salat* as *Salla*. Furthermore, the work, like other works of the Orientalists, wants to attribute the message of Prophet Muhammad to the influences of Judaism and Christianity in Arabia, as well as to the pre-Islamic Arabian culture and religion, as such falsifying the divine origin of the religion.

7. Willem A. Bijlefeld

He is a missionary and Christian scholar of Islam, a *Munaşşirun Mustashiriq*, whose academic career took him from his native Holland to West Africa and the United States of America. He is one of world's renowned missionary writers on Islam in the present time. He was in Nigeria in 1959 when Islam in Africa Project IAP/PROCMURA started. He was in fact its first director in Nigeria and was then based in Jos.

³⁷ Harry Boer, *Ibid.*, pp 163- 4

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Boer, Harry (1968), *A Brief History of Islam*, Ibadan: Daystar Press, vii- viii

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, viii

From 1966 – 1990 he was a professor of Islamic studies at Hartford Seminary, Connecticut, U.S.A. For many years he was the director of the Duncan Black Macdonald Centre for Islamic studies at Hartford, and for years an editor of the *Muslim World*. After his retirement at Hartford, he became part of the Lutheran World Federation working group on Islam whose voluntary work lasted for ten years, 1992 – 2002.⁴¹ The Lutheran World Federation works on Islam covered many countries including Nigeria. The work was called "Islam Group Project". The project in Nigeria under David L. Windibiziri organized series of conferences on Christian-Muslim relations in Jos in 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999 and 2002.⁴²

8. Rev. Fr. Victor Chukwulozie

This is another Christian clergyman who had interest in Islam and relation with Muslims. He organized meetings with Muslims in the early 1960s; the first was in October 1962 in Kano. This was in line with the Vatican Council II. He later formed a committee to arrange further meetings. He was encouraged by the Kaduna Archdiocese of the Catholic Church. In 1963, he organized another lecture for the undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria with the title: "Ecumenism and the Undergraduate".⁴³ Chukwulozie went to Oxford University for studies in Islamic Studies in 1963 and returned to Nigeria in 1970 and took a teaching appointment at the University of Nigeria Nsukka. He was the national correspondent with the Catholic secretariat for non-Christians.⁴⁴ He was the editor of *Nigerian Dialogue*, a journal of inter-faith studies on the relation between Christianity and non-Christian religions which was published by the Nigerian Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Nigerian Office for Dialogue at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. In the late 1970s and the 1980s. Chukwulozie promoted dialogue with Muslims, but the dialogue most Christian missionaries call Muslims to is another dimension of evangelism. Chukwulozie believes that:

⁴¹ Noko, Ishmael (2003), "Preface" in Sigvard Von Sicard and Ingo Wulfhorst (eds.) *Dialogue and Beyond: Christian and Muslim Together in the Way*, Geneva2: LWF Studies, 7.

⁴² See Windibiziri, David (2003), "A Nigeria Experience". In Sigvard Von Sicard and Ingo Wulfhorst (eds.), *Ibid.*, 159

⁴³ Kenny, Joseph (1979), "Christian- Muslim Relation in Nigeria" *Islam-Christianity*. 5, 181- 86. On <http://josephkenny.joyeurs.com/Nigeria/Nig79.htm>; Clarke, P. B. and I Linden (1984), *Islam in Modern Nigeria: A study of a Muslim Community in Post-Independent State 1960 – 1983*. Mainz: Grunewalk, Munich: Kaisler, 128

⁴⁴ Kenny, Joseph, *Ibid.*

In giving our witness we recognize that in most circumstances today the spirit of dialogue is necessary... as we enter dialogue with our commitment to Jesus Christ, time and again the relationship of dialogue give opportunity for authentic witness... we feel able with integrity to commend the way of dialogue as in which Jesus Christ can be confessed in the world today...⁴⁵

Some of his publications are "The Philosophy of Dialogue – Examined in its Nigerian Context,"⁴⁶ "Christian-Muslim Dialogue and Philosophy in African Context",⁴⁷ an editorial "Christian and Muslim Mysticism",⁴⁸ "The Mohammeda Colloquium of 1985: A Nigerian Viewpoint", *Muslim Christian Dialogue in Nigeria* and "Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Nigeria 1986".⁴⁹

9. Rev. Dr. E.O. Oyelade

E.O. Oyelade is one of the most prominent Christian clergy 'experts' on Islam in Nigeria. He is a baptist by denomination. He took over the teaching of Islamic Studies in the Department of Religious Studies of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife in 1977, after Abdur-Rahman Doi left in 1975. He had collaborations with Joseph Kenny O.P. and they jointly presented a paper in 1974 at the seminar of the Institute of Church and Society, Ibadan on a central theme "Christianity in Independent Africa". The title of their paper was "Changes in Christian-Muslim Relations since Independence."

Oyelade was a strong participant in the activities of IAP/PROCMURA. He was the first African to be appointed an area Adviser of the project from 1969-1976. In his paper titled "Islam in Modern History" presented at a conference of IAP at Abidjan in 1982, he states:

If Islam succeeds to become the controller of the Third world affairs, in – particular African affairs, what shall be the fate of the Church? The case of

⁴⁵ Chukwulozie, V. C. (1984), "Christian- Muslim Dialogue and Philosophy in the African Context". *Nigerian Dialogue*.4 (4), 35.

⁴⁶ Chukwulozie, V. C. (1979) "The Philosophy of Dialogue – Examined in its Nigerian Context" *Nigerian Dialogue*. 3 (3), , p 7

⁴⁷ Chukwulozie, V. C. (1984), "Christian- Muslim Dialogue (1984)" *Nigerian Dialogue*.4(4), 3

⁴⁹ See ASC website:

<http://www.ascleiden.nl/%5CPublications%5CBibliographies%5CIslamInAfrica%5C?datastore=4&group1=www\Publications\Bibliographies\IslamInAfrica\&domain=ascleiden.nl&query=chukwulozievictorc&fields=authors>

North Africa in the 7th century is right before our face. It appears that Africa needs not just dialogue with Muslims but also a growing witness to Christ.⁵⁰

These indicate how ardent he was to resist the progress of Islam in Africa, which is the integral objective of IAP. He was one of those who comprehended the activities of IAP and its objectives. In 1991 for instance, he undertook a spring lecture tour on behalf of IAP/PROCMURA of the Theological Institutions in East Africa. In Kenya, he went to Murang'a Bible School (Anglican), St. Paul United Theological College, Bishop Karibi Mofat Bible College, and All Africa Conference of Churches (A.A.C.C) and the National Council of Churches in Kenya. Other countries visited were Malawi, where he visited Zomba Theological College, Tanzania and Uganda.⁵¹

Some of his works on Islam include "The Shar'ia and National Unity in Nigeria", *The Doctrine of Predestination: A study of Religious-Cultural Interactions in Nigeria*, "Christian-Muslim involvement in Evangelism", "Islamic movements in Yoruba land: Challenges and responses in Christian Muslim Relations"⁵² etc.

10. Jan Harm Boer

He is a missionary of Christian Reformed Church of Nigeria and is one of the most enthusiastic evangelists who worked on Islam in Nigeria. He was born in Netherlands and migrated to British Colombia, Canada with his parents. He became a Canadian citizen and left the country for 43 years abroad, out of which he spent 30 years in Nigeria.

Boer attended BC Government High School, Correspondence School, Port Alberni, B.C, Canada, Calvin College, Grand Rapids MI, USA where he obtained a B.A. between 1958 and 1962. He then obtained a Bachelor of Divinity BD at the Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids MU, USA between 1962 – 1965.

He studied African Studies from 1965 – 1966 at the Michigan State University, Lansing, MI, USA. In 1967, he studied Islamic Studies at Pierre Benignus Study Centre, Ibadan Nigeria. He had his PhD in 1979 at Free University Vrije Universiteit,

⁵⁰Quoted in Dikken, Berend- Jan (Drs). "PROCMURA, Project for Christian- Muslim Relations in Africa: Some Reflections about its History, Aims, and Activities from 1959- 1994" Driebergen, Holland, January 1995, 1.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 5.

⁵² *Ibid*.

Amsterdam, The Netherlands. His PhD thesis is titled *Missionary Messengers of Liberation in a Colonial Context*. It is a work about religion and colonialism in Nigeria. A summary of the work is *Missions: Heralds of Capitalism or Christ*. Boer was briefly a lecturer in ethics at the University of Jos, Nigeria from 1978 – 1979. He was also a guest lecturer at Calvin Theological Seminary in Graduate course on missiology in 1981. He taught Missiology/Church & Society from 1993 – 1996 at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria TCNN Bukuru, Jos.

He was a church developer in Nigeria between 1966 – 76, Director Institute of Church and Society, Jos office 1977 – 89 and its consultant from 1991 – 93. Likewise, he was Freelance researcher and writer on Christian-Muslim issues 1996 – 2001 at Grand Rapids, MI, U.S.A. From 2001 to present he lives in Vancouver, BC, Canada where he is still writing.⁵³

His works on Islam, apart from his PhD thesis and its summary, which consist issues on Islam, include *Christianity and Islam under Colonialism in Northern Nigeria*. The booklet is a rejoinder to Fafunwa's article in *New Nigeria* of July 4, 1974 where Fafunwa mentioned that colonial powers and missionaries joined forces to defeat Islam and convert people and leaders to Christianity.⁵⁴ He believes that the only colonial oppression to Islam was the suppression of slave trade, but that colonialism aided the growth of Islam in Nigeria. He quoted the founder of mission that brought him to Nigeria, Kumm, who said Muslims were worse than traditionalists, that Islam was against progress, that the religion promotes Barbarism in Africa, as it is intolerant of Europeans and the "greatest enemy of European culture in Africa."

He further quoted Kumm saying "wherever Muhammadanism has gone, lying and stealing and sexual diseases have spread, until certain pagan places which were clean fifteen years ago, have become syphilitic less pools" according to Kumm Islam "was ALL BAD".⁵⁵

⁵³ See his website <http://www.socialtheology.com/islamica.htm>

⁵⁴ Jan H. Boer. *Christianity and Islam under Colonialism in Northern Nigeria*. Jos: Institute of Church and Society, p5

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p45

His other works on Islam include the 9 volume works he called *Islamica/Studies in Christian-Muslim Relations*. They are: *Nigeria's Decades of Blood 1980 – 2002* Vol. 1 and 2, he called the 2nd volume *Muslims: Why the Violence?, Christian: Why this Muslim Violence*. Other volumes are *Muslims: Why We Reject Secularism; Christians: Secularism – Yes or No; Muslims: Why Muslims Sharia Law, Christians: Why We Reject Muslim law, Christian and Muslim: Parameters for Living Together* and the companion CD-Rom which consists all these works and other works not published in hard copy.

The above mentioned works may not carry the name Nigeria on their titles, but they are all about Islam and relation with Christianity in Nigeria. The works tend to put blames on Islam in any case of violence. The author is a defender of Christianity on many issues in Nigeria. He has no much knowledge about Islam and his writings are mostly on socio-political and economic issues as they relate to religion.

11. Rev. Elijah Kola Akinlade

He was a Christian clergy of Nigerian origin who embarked on a serious work on Islam. He was born in 1924 at Ayetoro Ogun State to a Jehovah Witness family. He attended St. Paul Primary School between 1933 – 1938. Due to the economic problems of his parents, he was unable to continue his education, he was however able to pass the school certificate in 1945. His father was a peasant farmer. Akinlade moved to Abeokuta where he learnt printing and publishing. He later worked in the government civil service. He was once in Ibadan Ministry of Agriculture, and then moved to Ikeja in Lagos, till he retired in 1976.⁵⁶

Akinlade became a prolific writer and produced series of literature. This was due to his love for reading since his primary school days, and as he was fond of reading the Bible for the congregation in the Church while young. He has produced more than thirty works on Yoruba literature. His works in English included *Bishop Ajayi Crowther, Abraham the Friend of God, and A Land without Beggar*. He was elected the president of Yoruba Drama Writers Association in 1994. His work on Islam was his translation of the Qur'an into Yoruba language.

⁵⁶ Abdul Hamid, Abdul Ganiy Akorede. "Al-Mustashriq al-Qiṣṣis Elijah Kola Akinlade wa manhajuhu fi Tarjamatil Qur'an al-Kareem ila Lugati Yoruba", 36- 7.

It was published by Brotherhood Publication Syndicate, Lagos and was printed by Caxton Press West Africa Ltd, Ibadan, in 1965. Abdulhamid who studied the translation of Akinlade explains that Akinlade has no knowledge of Islam and Arabic Language. According to Abdulhamid, he only depended on the English translation of the Qur'an to produce his translation. Thus the work is full of defects and misrepresentations as the translator is ignorant of Islam and Arabic. He used the terminologies of the Yoruba Bible in his translation. There are instances where he gave opposite meaning to the contents of the Qur'an as he made the translation to suit Christian themes.⁵⁷

12. Rev. Samuel Babatunde -Mala

Rev. Sam Babs-Mala of the Christ Apostolic Church was a Christian 'expert' on Islam, up to the time he died in 1996. He was a lecturer of Islamics at the Department of Religious Studies, University of Ibadan. It has been stated in this research that the Department is a Christian centre for the study of Islam in Nigeria. Even Theological Colleges learn and gather data from the Department. The Department has a strong connection with IAP/PROCMURA.

S.B. Mala began his university education at the Department of Religious Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, but because of the Nigerian civil war, he finished with a B.A. at the University of Ibadan in 1967. He did an M.A in West African Studies at the University of Birmingham in 1970, and another M.A in Islamic Studies at the Institute of Islamic Studies McGill University, Montreal, Canada in 1973. He started his teaching career at the Jos campus of the University of Ibadan as a lecturer II in 1974 and moved to Ibadan in 1976. By 1988 he had rose to the rank of a Reader. Pastor Mala was an assistant superintendant of the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC). He was a colleague of Joseph Kenny at the Department as they were the two Christian Islamicists in the late 1970s – 1980s.⁵⁸ Mala received opposition from the Muslims of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies on the teaching of Islam; they particularly laid emphasis on his lack of knowledge of Arabic.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 37; 43; 44ff

⁵⁸Kenny, Joseph, "A.G.S. Pastor Samuel Babatunde Mala: Grave- Side Address" www.josephkennyjoyeurs.com/funeral.htm#4 Accessed 21/ 08/2011

⁵⁹Kenny, Joseph (2004), "Interreligious Dialogue in Nigeria: Personal Reminiscences of 40 years" Anthony A. Akinwale (ed.) *All that they had to Live on*. Essays in Honour of Archbishop John Onayikan and John Aniagwu. Ibadan: The Michael J. Dempsey Centre for Religious and Social Research, Dominican Institute, p 187

He was an ardent participant in IAP/PROCMURA and attended many of its seminars and workshops. Some of his works on Islam include; "The Islamic Affairs Board Controversy in Nigeria and Christian Response", "How to prepare the Mosque for Dialogue", "Islam in Nigerian Politics and the Christian Response", "Muslim Views of Mixed Marriages", "Religion and Development: The Case for Christian-Muslim Joint Responsibility".

Pastor Mala also jointly wrote articles with Joseph Kenny which includes: "Designing Courses on Dialogue" and "Muslim use of Christian Scripture". The latter is a reply to Muslim apologetics concerning the Bible.

13. Modupe Oduyoye

A philologist and an Ibadan Christian publisher, Modupe has interest in Islamic Studies and evangelizing Muslims. He studied English, Latin and History at the University College, Ibadan, Theological Studies at Yale Divinity School, Comparative Semitic Linguistics at Ann Arbor and Egyptian Hieroglyphics at London University. He was a consultant on literature in IAP/PROCMURA. In 1992, he published *Understanding Islam and the Muslims in Africa*, a 68 pages short bibliography to assist the participants in PROCMURA: "the list consist books on research in Islam and the resurgence of Islam, Islamic mission, the history of Christian-Muslim relation in Africa, dialogue, the challenge of religious pluralism etc".⁶⁰ Some of his works on Islam include *Riba: Usury and Bribery in the Bible and the Qur'an*, *Churches Responsibility for Understanding Islam and the Muslims in Africa*, *The Shariy'ah Debate in Nigeria (Sept. 1999 – Oct. 2000)* and another article with the same title.

14. Most Rev. Josiah Idowu – Fearon

This is a prominent Christian *Islamicist*. He is the Bishop of Kaduna Anglican Diocese. Josiah was born in 1949, and he trained for a short period as a soldier. Later he was trained as a priest and was ordained in 1971. He became the Anglican Bishop of Sokoto in 1990 and Bishop of Kaduna in 1997. He later became the president of the Christian Council of Nigeria in 2002, and was made an Archbishop in 2007. He was installed as a six Preacher in Canterbury Cathedral. He had his PhD in Islamic Studies from A.B.U Zaria.

⁶⁰ See Berend- Jan Dikken (Drs), PROCMURA, Project for Christian- Muslim Relations in Africa, p 19

He has taken Degrees from Durham, Birmingham and Hartford seminary. He was the Warden of St. Francis Theological College from 1981 – 1984 and the Provost of St. Michaels Cathedral, Kaduna, 1984 – 1990. He has taught Islam in many seminaries. He is the Chairman of the Northern Nigeria Area Committee of PROCMURA. His works on Islam include “The Shar’iah Debate in Northern States of Nigeria – Implication for West Africa Sub-Region” A paper sent to the consultation of African Christian Islamicists and Area Adviser of PROCMURA held in Ghana in August 2002.⁶¹

15 Fr. Michael Igba Rumun Vishigh O.P

Late Fr. Michael I.R. Vishigh O.P. was another Christian Priest who specialized on Islam as early as 1977. He had been studying some elementary Arabic in Nigeria before he went for further studies. In 1980, he went to Rome to study Islamic Studies and returned with an M.A in 1983. He became a priest at the parish of Gusau while at the same time doing a PhD research in Islamic Studies at the Department of Religious Studies University of Jos under the supervision of Christian lecturers. He was a member of the Nigerian Bishop Think-Tank, and the Commission for Muslim-Christian Relations of the Association of Episcopal Conferences of English-speaking West Africa AECAWA. He was able to secure lands for the Dominicans in Gusau where they started outstations and schools. He was a lecturer and a priest at the University of Jos. His works on Islam include “Islamic *Da’wah*: Some Aspects of Conversion among the Maguzawa of Northern Nigeria.” His evangelistic works covered places like Gusau, Yelwa, Funtua and Malumfashi.

16. Dr. Theresa Adamu

Theresa Adamu was a lecturer of Islamic studies at TCNN Bukuru Jos. she is currently the Registrar of Jos ECWA Theological Seminary (JETS). She now trains Christian clergies on Islam even at international fora.

⁶¹ See Modupe Oduyoye. “The Shariy’ah Debate in Nigeria (Sept. 1999 – Oct. 2000)” in In Klaus Hock (ed.) *The Interface between Research and Dialogue: Christian- Muslim Relations in Africa*. Munster: Lit Verlag, 2004, pp 108; 109n. See also “Josiah Idowu-Fearon” Wikipedia the Free Encyclopaedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josiah_Idowu_Fearon retrieved 29/08/2011. See also mpaconvention.org/speaker/ and www.anglicancommunion.org/./ACNS4303

Her M.A research at TCCN was titled “A Critical Study of the Concept of Revelation in Islam and Christianity” and a PhD at the University of Birmingham UK on “The Impact of PROCMURA in Northern Nigeria”. She is of the Evangelical Reformed Church of Christ (ERCC).

17 Rev. Chentu Dauda Nguvugher

Chentu Dauda Nguvugher of the COCIN Church is another worker on Islam. He did his MSC in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at University of Edinburgh and a PhD at the University of Rostock, Germany. He teaches at TCNN Bukuru Jos and at the University of Jos, Nigeria. He is the author of *Christians under Muslims Rule from Prophet Muhammad to Early Abbasid Caliphs* and *Conflicting Christologies in a Context of Conflict: Jesus, the Isawa and Christian-Muslim Relation in Nigeria*.⁶²

18 Julius Sunday Adekoya

Venerable Julius S. Adekoya is a present member of staff of the Department of Religious Studies University of Ibadan. After a PhD in Islamic Studies, he was allowed to go to Cairo to learn Arabic. At present, he can read and speak some little Arabic.⁶³ His PhD thesis with the title “The Role of Music in Promoting Islam in Yoruba Land” was supervised by Joseph Kenny and was completed in 2005. He is an Anglican and teaches Islam at Samuel Ajayi Crowther University Oyo.

19. Rev. Fr (Prof.) Joseph Kenny OP

Kenny is an American who later obtained a Nigerian citizenship. He came to Nigeria in 1964 primarily to work on how the Catholic Church could reach Muslims in Sokoto Caliphate. Joseph Kenny was able to achieve in the field of Islamic studies what other Christian experts on Islam in Nigeria were unable to achieve. He was able to produce a huge volume of literature in the field, as he was able to produce more than 170 works on Islam in three languages English, Arabic and French. These works range from books, articles, booklets, conference papers, presentations and reviews. Kenny tried to make other clergies to tow his path but most of them find the field too difficult. They find it difficult to join between Islamic scholarship and pastoral work.

⁶² Both works published by ACTS Bukuru, Jos, 2010.

⁶³ Interview with Julius Adekoya at his residence in the University of Ibadan, on 7th November, 2012.

They could not persist on gaining expertise on Islam as Kenny did. This is not peculiar to Catholics but also Protestants who specialized on Islam. Yet Kenny's presentation of Islam depends more on the interpretation of Western scholars and Orientalists despite the fact that he tried to get access to original sources. He affirms what Western scholars affirm and rejects what they reject. When he came to Nigeria, he enthusiastically wanted to stay in the North and Sokoto in particular. He discovered the society was not ripe for that kind of work. Like other missionaries, he loved the place at the beginning but the failure of his effort to relate with Muslims led to his subsequent move to the South. Kenny died on the 28th January 2013 in America, and was buried on the 28th of February 2013 at St. Thomas Priory Samonda Ibadan, Nigeria.

20 Non-Licentiate 'Experts'

Apart from the above mentioned Christian 'experts' on Islam, there are many others in Nigeria who are not licentiate in Islamic Studies or Arabic, but portray themselves as scholars of Islam especially in the Western world. Rev. Musa A.B Gaiya a Professor of Church History at the University of Jos falls into this category. He was a visiting lecturer on *Shari'ah* in Nigeria at the Centre for African Studies, University of Columbia, New York in 2006, and lecturer on Islam and the West at Belfast Bible College, Queens University, Belfast in 2010. Some of his works on Islam include "The *Shari'ah* and Fundamental Human Rights in Nigeria", "The Complexity of the *Shari'ah* Debate in Nigeria"⁶⁴ and so forth. There are many other Christian scholars in Nigeria who fall in this category. They also include Umar Habila Dadem Danfulani, a Professor of History of Religions at the University of Jos. Joseph Kenny also mentioned G.O.M Tasiu who was a Professor of Church History at the University of Jos as a scholar of Islam too.⁶⁵

The Response of Muslims to the Activities of the Missionaries

There are less activities from the Muslim side to study Christianity or to invite the Christians to Islam through active *Da'wah*. Most Islamic organizations are more concerned with teaching and preaching to Muslims alone.

⁶⁴ See his Inaugural Lecture: Gaiya, Musa A. B. (2011), *Religion after 9/ 11: Implication for Religious Studies in Nigerian Universities*, University of Jos 50th Inaugural Lecture, 33

⁶⁵ Kenny, Joseph. Christian- Muslim Relations.

Despite the fact that the Qur'an enjoins Muslims to invite people of other faiths to Islam, and despite the fact that the Qur'an also teaches about other religions thereby encouraging Muslims to study them,⁶⁶ yet Muslims in Nigeria are less interested in the study of Christianity. Even Joseph Kenny who talks about Christian centre for scientific study of Islam, like the Dominican Institute, Ibadan, The St Augustine Major Seminary, Jos and the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, Bukuru, Jos, confirms that "there are no Muslim centres specifically for the study of Christianity or Christian culture....."⁶⁷

Gbadamosi, however, argues that the Muslims of *Yorubaland* benefited from the Christian challenge since Western education was the most potent instrument Christians used against Muslim. He further asserts that the Muslims were aroused to a great defence and propagation of their religion, they learnt Christian Bible and literature for their dialectical value and many scholars of Islam produced works on Islam and Christianity, and Muslim attendance of Christian schools led to the emergence in early 1900s of Muslim literary societies such as Ansar-Ud-deen, Nawair-Ud- Deen and their like.⁶⁸

Sequel to the above, up to the 1960s in Yorubaland there are works of some Muslims who studied Christianity such as *True Light* (1965)⁶⁹ and "Take a Decision... Christianity or Islam" in *Quarterly* of the Islamic Youth League of Nigeria (Sept. 1966)⁷⁰ both works by Alhaji S. B. Bolaji Akewukewe. Other works include *Myth of the Cross* (Lahore, 1975) by Alhaji A. Dirisu Ajibola.⁷¹ Prof. M.O.A. Abdul produced his *Islam and Christianity United* around 1971⁷² and in it he tries to answer the basic Christian objections to Islam and also affirmed Islamic teachings and rituals from Biblical evidences.⁷³

⁶⁶ See Maishanu, IM (2007), "Muslim Study of Religions: an Analysis of its Proponents and their Basic Premises" *Degele: The Journal of FAIS*, Vol. VII, 1- 21, for details on Islamic point of view on the study of religions.

⁶⁷Kenny, Joseph "The Church and Islam in West Africa in the 20th Century (with Particular Reference to Nigeria)" <http://josephkenny.joyeurs.com/Nigeria/Nig88.htm> accessed 28/10/2010

⁶⁸ Gbadamosi, T. G. O. *The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba*, 145-6

⁶⁹ Kenny, Joseph, *Christian- Muslim Relations*.

⁷⁰Ryan, Patric J. (1978), *Imale: Yoruba Participation in Muslim Tradition*. (Harvard Theological Review Harvard Dissertation in Religion) Montana: Scholars Press, 240n

⁷¹ See Kenny, Joseph, *Christian- Muslim Relations*.

⁷² *Ibid.*; Ryan, Patric J., *Imale*, 215

⁷³ Ryan, Patric J., *Ibid.*, 215- 16

Nevertheless, The Islamic Foundation which has its headquarters in Leicester London and an office in Kano, Nigeria, is an educational and research organization aimed at spreading the understanding of Islam among peoples of the world Muslims and non-Muslims.⁷⁴ Other organizations with such aims include Islamic Education Trust (IET) Minna, Nigeria. Its publications division has works of Ahmad Dedat and has produced pamphlets such as *Let us Reason Together* which discussed various themes of Christianity.⁷⁵ IET has *Da'wah* Institute of Nigeria which now train Muslims in Da'wah and produces works on the propagation of Islam among non-Muslims. Its Kaduna office trains new Muslims and its Sokoto office also has boarding facilities for new Muslims.

In Sokoto, there is the Centre for Islamic Propagation and Comparative Religious Education, Mabera. The coordinator is Malam Hussaini Yusuf Mabera who engages in public debates with Christians. He has several works on Christianity to his credit. One of his outstanding areas of work is the rejoinders he wrote to the polemics of GJO Moshey.

Conclusion

The study of *Islamic*s for evangelistic purposes is a major area in many Christian seminaries around the world and in most theological seminaries in Nigeria. The history of Christian evangelism in Nigeria shows the strategized offensives of Christian denominations in Nigeria against Islam and the training of clergies and priests on Islam for evangelistic purposes. Despite the volume of literature produced by Christian 'experts' on Islam in Nigeria, the response of Muslims to that has remained feeble, and despite the Islamic teaching that Muslims should study other religions, Muslims in Nigeria are still less interested in the study of Christianity for *Da'wah* purpose.

⁷⁴ See it website: www.islamic-foundation.org.uk

⁷⁵ IET (1992), *Let us Reason Together*. Minna: IET.