



ILORIN AS A BEACON OF LEARNING AND CULTURE IN WEST AFRICA

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إلورن: منارة العلم والثقافة في غرب أفريقيا

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PREFACE

As a research and academic unit of the University of Ilorin, the Centre for Ilorin Studies (CILS) was established with a clear mandate to carry out the assignments listed below:

- i. collect, catalogue and preserve digital copies of manuscripts on Arabic, religious, historical and cultural heritage of Ilorin Emirate;
- ii. collect and preserve electronic and hard copies of publications of indigenous Ilorin scholars in all academic disciplines;
- iii. collect and preserve electronic and hard copies of publications relating to Ilorin Emirate by lecturers of the University of Ilorin in all disciplines;
- iv. collect and preserve all publications relating to Ilorin Emirate from any part of the world;
- v. promote and organize research on all aspects of development connected to Ilorin;
- vi. publish a periodical bulletin on Ilorin Studies; and
- vii. collaborate with other concerned institutions or organisations to publish journals, books and documents on socio-cultural issues related to Ilorin Emirate in Arabic, English and other languages.

Action is on-going to realize all the goals enumerated above. An aspect of those objectives is the publication of this second book of readings which contains 34 selected papers presented during the 2nd Conference organized by the Centre. The papers were peer-reviewed and corrected before the publication.

The book is entitled *Ilorin as a Beacon of Learning and Culture in West Africa*. It contains 34 chapters grouped under five sections labelled A, B, C, D and E. Section A consists of nine chapters on aspects of the history of Ilorin and Islam, the dominant religion in Ilorin Emirate. Chapter One is an in-depth study of Shaykh al-Maghili's intellectual impact on Islam in West Africa by an Ilorin scholar, Shaykh Adam Abdullahi al-Illori. This is followed by Chapter Two which is a comprehensive biography of Shaykh Tājul-Adab, a legendary Ilorin Muslim scholar whose life was short but had great impact on Arabic and Islamic scholarship in Nigeria and West Africa. The third chapter focuses on the life of another Ilorin scholar named Shaykh Ahmad Rufā'ī Abikan. Furthermore, the fourth chapter discusses the Role of Al-Illori in the Spread of Arabic and Islamic Learning in selected West African Countries.

Chapter Five concentrates on a section of Ilorin city, the Ali-Agan Quarters and the various scholars produced therein. Such scholars include Imams Abdullahi, Abdulsalam, Muhammad Bello, Muhammad Raji, Abubakar, Buseri Muhammad and Ya'qub Ali-Agan. On the other hand, Chapter Six focuses on Ilorin-Ijesha Relations and the spread of Islam and its scholarship in the nineteenth century. The seventh chapter gives an account of the spread of Islam and its culture in Osun State and the glaring Ilorin factor in the exercise. On the other hand, Chapter Eight is focused on an aspect of Islamic culture as practised in Ilorin and that is *IyawoSaara* (Charity Wedding). The correctness or otherwise from the Shari'ah perspective is appraised. The ninth chapter discusses peaceful co-existence and Islamic scholarship which encourages it in Ilorin.

Section B consists of four chapters. It is entitled Science and the Media. Chapter Ten is on the omnipotence, omniscience and creativity of God and the scientific discoveries and advancement in modern technology which both confirm the divine texts of the Qur'an. The paper's substance is based on the reality that God creates while science discovers. Chapter Eleven is on Information and Communications Technology. It is an appraisal of the social media in Islamic propagation among Muslim women in Ilorin.

Chapter Twelve is an analytical Islamic discourse of the relationship between Religion and Science. The paper concludes that a close look at both reveals that there should be no conflict. The thirteenth chapter evaluates the media literacy competence among the youths in Ilorin Emirate, while chapter 14 examines the impact of language and communication on harmonious industrial relations at the University of Ilorin which has realistically become a role model for other citadels of learning.

Section C contains five articles that exclusively focus on Education. Chapters 15 and 16 examine the moral contents of Science Education and Islamic Education as well as the impact of teaching qualifications on the implementation of the Senior School Arabic Curriculum in Ilorin Metropolis respectively. The appraisal is critical, revealing and beneficial.

On the other hand, Chapters 17, 18 and 19 treat the necessity for improved standardization of Arabic and Islamic Education curricula and the role of Ilorin in the spread of Arabic and Islamic scholarship in Ebira land of Kogi State respectively. While the first two are on Curriculum Studies, the latter is on Arabic/Islamic history within Nigeria.

Section D is entitled "Language and Culture" and contains five chapters. Chapter 20 is an attempt to draw scholars' attention to the new dimension of producing new Arabic manuscripts in Nigeria, with a focus on Ilorin Emirate. This is because of the tremendous improvement in the training of scholars in Arabic and Islamic Studies in Nigerian Universities and in Arab countries. Consequently, there is a great improvement in quality, quantity and variety of themes.

Furthermore, Chapter 21 discusses the theoretical and historical perspectives of the Arabic language while Chapter 22 examines *Waka* music as an instrument of socio-cultural development in Ilorin with a focus on the challenges of modernization.

Chapter 23 is an appraisal of Arabic plays written by an Ilorin scholar, Abdul-Ganiyy Adebayo Alabi. The paper is a socio-religious analysis of the three plays studied. On the other hand, Chapter 24 is concentrated on the multilingual and multicultural situation in West Africa. It defines multilingualism and multiculturalism and discusses Pidgin English in West Africa. The challenges and prospects of multilingualism and multiculturalism are also analyzed.

Section E consists of 10 chapters written in Arabic. They cover aspects of Arabic studies in Ilorin and by Ilorin scholars. Chapter 25 contains an account of the contributions of Shaykh Tajul-Adab to the spread of Arabic and Islamic learning in West Africa. His disciples formed various groups with identifiable orientations all over Nigeria, Benin Republic, Togo, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, etc. In addition, Chapters 26 and 27 focus on the contributions of two notable scholars to the growth of Islamic culture and Arabic Linguistics and the growth of Islamic culture in West Africa. The scholars are Professor A.S. Abdussalam and Shaykh Ahmad Bamba of Senegal.

Chapters 28 and 29 examine the Impact of the Arabic Language in boosting cultural links among Muslim communities and the perspective of Arabic poetry on social criticism in Ilorin Emirate. Moreover, Chapters 30 and 31 look into the inputs of ShaykhTajul- Adab and Zumuratul-Mumineen towards Arabic pedagogical poetry and event verses respectively.

Chapter 32 acknowledged the contributions of the old students of Darul-Ulum in Ilorin in the realm of academic activism. Ultimately, Chapters 33, and 34 focus on Arabic manuscripts, their importance to 'Ajami writings of old Ilorin culture and modern Technology in Nigeria. It should be noted that *Ajami*.e. writing Nigerian languages in Arabic alphabet predated English in Nigeria.

First of all, we express our gratitude to Almighty Allah for seeing us through this far. Secondly, we thank the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, Professor A.G. Ambali for his support and eagerness to ginger us to succeed in the mandate given us.

Similarly, it has to be put on record that the Centre has a vibrant Board of Trustees under the able leadership of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor (Mrs.) N.Y.S. Ijaiya. We appreciate the Board's wise guidance and compliance with the letter and spirit of the mandate given to the Centre.

In the same vein, we thank the Coordinators of the three sections of the Centre, namely Professor A.S. Abdussalam (Language and Religious Development Unit, LRDU), Professor B.O. Yusuf (Publications and Outreach Unit, POU) and Dr. I.A. Jawondo (History, Politics and Culture Unit, HPCU). They are focused, innovating and committed. We should not forget to appreciate Professor A.G.A.S. Oladosu, the Pioneer Director of the Centre for laying a solid foundation for the Centre on which we continue to build. Moreover, we thank Mallam A.B. Ambali, an Assistant Research officer and Ph.D. candidate in Arabic for assisting the editors in so many ways to produce this book. All other members of staff of the Centre led by Barr.(Mrs.) Rasheedah Adeta-Babamaleare also acknowledged with gratitude for their cooperation. We must acknowledge also Prof. A.O. Olayiwola, a visiting professor from the University of Maiduguri who is spending his Sabbatical Leave with us at the Centre.

Finally, we urge the reader to take this publication serious as it is a repository of some quintessential works on Nigerian culture, scholarship and cosmology with particular reference to Ilorin Emirate and her neighbours and allies over time. Criticisms, comments, suggestions and rejoinders are welcome- as no human being has the monopoly of knowledge. Allah is the Omniscient Lord Who knows all.

The Editors

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contributions of scholars and teachers in the establishment of various Quranic and indeed modern Arabic institutions through their personal efforts in the quarters. This has accelerated the pace of Arabic and Islamic learning in the area generally.

We have also seen the development and impact of Islamic scholarship on the generality of Muslim community in Ilorin and beyond. This impact led to the proliferation of various *Islamiyyah* schools patterned and modeled by the younger Islamic scholars on the tradition of their teachers. As a result of this, Ilorin has continued to wax stronger in the field of Islamic learning in Nigeria.

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CHAPTER 6

THE PLACE OF ISLAM IN ILORIN-IJESA RELATIONS SINCE THE 19TH CENTURY

I.A. Jawondo

INTRODUCTION

Like issues of the emergence of African states which are interconnected and interrelated, so also are the factors of origin, establishment and spread of Islam. The origin, establishment and spread of Islam in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular have been extensively researched upon. Thus, the results of the researches have revealed quite a number of patterns or models which are sometimes independent and at times inter related and inseparable (Levtzion, 1971).

On the one hand, Islam in some communities has been traced either to independent existence, migration, marriage, etc. By independent existence, we mean longtime existence of Islam in a particular community, and its steady growth to become a recognized or state religion. In this case, no individual could be identified as responsible for introducing Islam into the place neither could a specific date be mentioned. Examples of these abound in West Africa and in Nigeria; Mali and Kanem-Borno empires, some parts of Yoruba land and even Ilorin. However names of the promoters of Islam became a household in most of the places (Al-Hajj, 1968, Stride, G. T. & Ifeka, C. 1971, Ajayi & Crowder 1976, Crowder, 1978, Omolewa 1986).

Migration refers to the activities of the itinerant scholars and Arab merchants who migrated with Islam into some communities. This is about the most popular pattern in Islamisation of West Africa. Here, the roles of foreign and indigenous itinerant scholars as well as the West Africa rulers stood out. The Malian scholars, the Katsinawa scholars and later the Sokoto Jihadists were most prominent (Al-Hajj, 1968, Balogun, 1984, Saulawa, 1992).

Closely related to this, is the utilitarian theory. That is, the use of spiritual endowments by the Islamic clerics to solve peculiar problems of their host communities and consequently lured them into accepting Islam. Like the migration theory, this had profound effects on the peaceful penetration of Islam into West Africa and Nigeria in particular. Though examples of this abound in literature, it suffices to mention some. Islamic clerics served the Habe rulers as clerks, secretaries, ambassadors, advisers and as spiritualists (Saulawa, 1992, Jawondo, 2002).

On the theory of marriage, though researches have not been able to capture many examples but certainly, some grounds have been covered on the use of marriage in the promotion and spread of Islam. Apart from the deliberate marriage engaged in by some scholars by marrying from their host communities to legalize and moralize their stay and make their mark on the communities, benefitting members of the communities also extended the hands of their daughters in marriage to scholars to retain them in the communities. In the late 20th century, daughters of some scholars were also given in marriage to their trusted students and disciples, all in the name of institutionalizing Islam.

In some communities in Nigeria, Islam enjoyed the inter play of factors. For instance, in Ilorin, the history of Islam is based on independent existence and individual promotion. In Hausa land, it is a combination of migration and individual promotion, while in some others, it is a combination of migration and marriage. This refers to a situation where a non-Muslim woman from a non-Muslim community is married to a Muslim or an Islamic scholar. And after effective Islamisation, she returns (with her husband or with the permission of her husband or upon his death) to her community to propagate Islam. While all of the above mentioned models fall under an umbrella theory of peaceful penetration of Islam, some others are under the forceful penetration theory. By this we mean the role of the Jihadists who overran communities to establish or purify Islam. The case of the Moroccans in Songhai Empire, the Arabs in North Africa, and the Fulani in Hausaland are also good examples. All are efforts geared towards the cause of Islam.

At this juncture, it is important to state that the Islamic nexus between Ilorin and Ijesaland that is being explored falls within the larger theory of peaceful penetration (<http://www.egodiuchendu.com/index.php>: 2014)

and the specific theories of marriage, migration and utility as we shall see in the subsequent paragraphs. Islam connected Ilorin-Ijesa together by marriage and migration. It is discovered that the Islamic connections were done by different people, though of Ilorin stock, and at different times.

Islam in Ilorin-Ijesa Relations since 1860

Since the fall of Old Oyo Empire and the emergence of the powerful Ilorin Emirate, there has been serious incursion into the different parts of Yorubaland, Ilesa inclusive, for religious and economic purposes. On the other hand, the Ijesa people, an acknowledged effective merchants, spared no place (Ilorin inclusive) in their distant trading activities. In fact, for their 'must pay' credit facilities and persistent attitude, they are addressed as **Osomalo** in Ilorin. Be that as it may, Islam became a strong factor that bound the two communities together till date.

Ijesaland, an area with a rich history of ancient human settlement, is located in the forest zone of Nigeria and indeed Southwestern geopolitical zone. Ijesaland today, is bounded by Ife and Osogbo to the West, Ondo to the South, Ekiti to the East and Igbominaland to the North. Like Egypt which continued to be the symbol of North Africa, Ilesa which was founded in the sixteenth century has emerged as the modern center of power in Ijesaland, outstripping ancient centers at Ibokun, Ipole and Ijebu-Jesha. Ilesa is located in Osun State of the Southwestern Nigeria. Thus, much of our references are to Ilesa because of its socio-political, religious-economic and cultural importance. To this end, scholars have regarded Ijesaland as a kingdom under the *Owa Obokun*, 'Olori Alade' the paramount ruler in Ijesaland (Michael : 1948) .

It is important to state here that though Islam had been in Yorubaland before the 19th century, it indeed got to Ijesaland through Ilorin-Ijesa connections and not from other places. This is not to deny any later interaction among Yoruba Muslims. The first connection was between the Ilorin Emirate authority and Owa of Obukun through marriage. The second connection was between Alfa Salahuddeen Agunbiade (an Ilorin man) and Alfa Seedu Ogun (Ijesa man) through Islamic scholarship in a Qur'anic school in Ilorin. Thirdly, there was connection between the aforementioned individuals and the Ijesa people through the Owa.

Like most other Muslim societies in Nigeria in general and Yorubaland in particular, the date of the establishment of Islam in Ijesaland is not yet known but what is clear is that by 1860, the impact of Islam was not ignorable. Like the Brazilian Yoruba returnees who played significant role in the establishment and spread of Islam and civilization in Lagos and its environs, so also some Ijesa returnees (mostly merchants), who had been Islamized elsewhere, Ilorin inclusive, played unprecedented role in the establishment and spread of Islam in Ijesaland in general and Ilesa in particular. 'The home-coming of the migrant Muslims (like Alfa Seedu Ogun of Oke-Esha, Alfa Shuaibu of Oke-Esha, Alfa Amodu, Farise of Egbe-Idi, Alfa Kanomodi Iwere, and Alfa Salami Basorun of Egbe-Idi...) proved advantageous and significant for the development of the Muslim community in Ilesa and its environs' (Muritala 2014, Gbadamosi 1978).

The Factor of Alfa Salahuddeen Agunbiade in Islamizing Ijesaland (d.1959)

Alfa Salahuddeen ibn AbdulKadir Agunbiade was born around early 19th Century by Safuriatu (Sofiat) Agunbiade . The parents were believed to have royal blood from Oyo Ile. They migrated as a result of succession dispute in Oyo Ile to Iwo through Offa to Ilorin during the internecine wars that permeated Yorubaland in the 19thC. (Jimoh: 2013).

It is not yet known whether Alfa Salahuddeen was brought into or born in Ilorin. Not much is also known of his parents, whether they ran a polygamous home which was popular then or not. Although oral evidence revealed that AbdulKadir had a wife, Sofiat, but the probability that he travelled out of Oyo with the youngest wife could not be ruled out. Salahudeen is said to have had only a brother whose name could not be remembered but simply called Baba Moro. Another account states that AbdulKadir Agunbiade married Safuriatu in Ilorin from Alalubosa Compound, a place where Alfa Salahuddeen had his Islamic education. This suggests two possibilities; either that AbdulKadir did not bring any wife to Ilorin or that he never married before his sojourn in Ilorin.

Alfa Salahuddeen was said to have married many wives. It is believed they were ninety nine in number (Jimoh: 2013). The authenticity of this information could not be verified. It may have been exaggerated but certainly it could not be taken as a blatant lie given the case of Alfa Bello

Masaba of Bida, Niger state, Nigeria whose NTA documentary of 2003 confirmed a hundred plus wives in his harem. Though Alfa Salahuddeen was said to have been faced with the problem of infant mortality (*abiku*) which could have informed his marriage to many wives, it will not be out of place to think that such a problem would have brought about short-lived marriages. Perhaps death would have taken its toll too. All of these might have been added to make the number of wives credited to him. However, since the man lived in the colonial era, attempt is being intensified in the archives to get more information about him.

Alfa Salahuddeen is said to have had his Qur'anic education at *Ile Alalubosa* (around *Popo Igbonna* area in Ilorin, Kwara State) with a Mallam whose name could not be remembered but simply called Alfa Alalubosa, a disciplinarian (Jimoh: 2013). The level of knowledge attained by him could not be ascertained but it is deducible that he would have been well grounded in Qur'anic exegesis and jurisprudence which were almost common knowledge in Ilorin of that time. The fact that he was invited by his colleague Alfa Seedu Ogun to Islamize Ijesa people confirmed his proven knowledge of Islam. It could not be confirmed why he did not learn from his father AbdulKadir, however little, because it was the practice then to give male children rudimentary Islamic education at home before they were allowed to learn with other teachers. Could it be that AbdulKadir was not learned enough in Islamic education or what? However, when the present *Parakoyi* of Ilesa, Alhaji Jimoh Adio Salahuddeen Agunbiade was asked whether he learnt anything from his father, who was an acknowledged Mallam, he exclaimed NO NO NO. It then sounds to me as if the family dislikes the practice.

It was a common phenomenon for communities, individuals and group of individuals since the beginning of socialization among men to extend invitation to person(s) that could help their cause. This is often dictated by interest, hence, the global principle of 'no permanent friend or enemy'. This aptly applied in the situation of Alfa Salahuddeen who sojourned in Ilesa. He was invited to Ilesa by Alfa Seedu Ogun who was said to have embraced Islam while sojourning in Ilorin (Monsuru: 2011). It is believed that they must have learnt and or lived together as pupil/student of a teacher or as Muslims to have warranted such an invitation. The invitation bordered on teaching and preaching of Islam in Ijesaland (Adebayo: 2006).

From another account, the role of the Ijesa Muslim returnees was stressed in the Islamization of Ijesaland. Prominent among them were Alfa Seedu Ogun and Alfa Shuaib of Oke-Esha, Alfa Amodu Farise and Alfa Salami Basorun of Egbe-Idi, Alfa Kanomoli Iwere, and Alfa Salami Basorun of Egbe-Idi (Gbadamosi 1978). With the cooperation of Ogedengbe, the Obanla of Ilesa, they established Oke-Esha mosque under the leadership of Alfa Seedu Ogun, and Egbe-Idi mosque, under Amodu Farise. This account placed Alfa Salahuddeen Parakoyi together with Alfa Disu Kannike, who became the first Chief Imam of Ilesa during the reign of Ajimoko, all in the late nineteenth century. They were said to have established Quranic schools where Islamic learning was promoted.

Alfa Salahuddeen and his friend Seedu Ogun took the banner of Islam round Ijesaland until the death of Alfa Seedu Ogun. It is difficult to ascertain the level of success attained before the death of Seedu but the fact that Alfa Salahudeen was able to continue the Islamization process, suggests he was accepted by the people and that he was familiar with both the people and the geographical terrain. Perhaps with his disciples and students, he championed the spread of Islam to the nooks and crannies of Ijesaland.

Like the earlier itinerant scholars, the fame of Alfa Salahuddeen became well orchestrated by his ability to apply Islamic science to solve the problem of drought plaguing Ijesaland during the reign of Oba Ataiyero, 1901-1920. The drought defied all traditional approaches even the almighty '*Daro*' who was usually efficacious, until Alfa Salahuddeen was consulted. He pledged to help the community to find a lasting solution to the drought through supplications on the condition that Islam will be allowed to flourish thereafter. They both agreed and he supplicated to Allah. It is claimed that instantly there was a heavy rain which is said to have lasted for seven days (Agunbiade: 2013). This event, like others before it which happened in other places, (Adebayo 2006) is said to have attracted a number of Ijesa people into the fold of Islam.

Consequently, the efficacy of the drought-ending supplications made Alfa Salahudeen famous in Ijesaland and it won him the heart of the then Owa of Ilesa, *Oba Ataiyero* (1901-1920). He became a confidant of the Owa, who introduced him to Alaafin Lawani Agogoiya (1905-1911). For the relevance of Salahuddeen, the Owa, Oba Ataiyero created a title known as

'Parakoyi of Ilesa' for Alfa Salahuddeen but the Owa died shortly, so, he could not confer the title on him (Agunbiade: 2013). It was in the reign of his successor, Oba Aromalalan I (1920-1942) that the title was conferred on Alfa Salahuddeen (Agunbiade, 2013).

The conferment of the title, *Parakoyi* on Alfa Salahuddeen was received with mixed feelings among the Ulama and the generality of the Muslims. While some saw it as a welcome development which would enable Alfa Salahuddeen to further the cause of Islam by injecting Islamic governance into the affairs of the community through useful advice to the Owa and his Council, others saw it as a derailment because the position was political and might have adverse effect on the faith of Alfa Salahuddeen.

Thus, with this apprehension, his brothers and colleagues from Ilorin cried out saying; "*Salau ti ba ara igbo lo ooo*" (Jimoh, 2013), literally meaning Salau has been lured away into the culture of the people of the forest. Although Alfa Salahuddeen was unwavering in Islamic propagation, he however had a stain. It was reported that beads were part of his regalia. He accepted it, and probably he was influenced occasionally to dress in cultural regalia i.e. using beads as opposed to his normal flowing gown with turban (Agunbiade, 2013).

Furthermore, since his assumption of the office of *Parakoyi*, Alfa Salahuddeen was differently addressed in Ijesaland. While some called him by his name, Alfa Salahuddeen, some preferred to call him Alfa *Parakoyi*. There are some possible interpretations of this development. The first probability is that those who called him Alfa *Parakoyi* particularly among the Muslims might be discrediting him for taking the office. Secondly, it could be a descriptive name as a member of the Owa Council and a mark of respect for him by not mentioning his names.

However, it is common in Yoruba land that title holders are usually addressed by their offices. For the above reason, the literature on the history of Islam in Ijesaland contains either Alfa Salahuddeen or Alfa *Parakoyi* to refer to the same personality (Monsuru: 2011 & Gbadamosi 1978)

The Factor of Ilorin Emirate and Owa Institution in the Islamization of Ijesaland

With the settlement of the dust raised in naming a new leader for the Muslim community in Ilorin, after the death of Shaikh Alimi, the emerging Emir, AbdulSalam (1831-1841) consolidated his power by reaching out to prominent Kings and Obas around him. The Owa of Ilesa, Oba Bepolaran happened to be one of the new friends made. There is no evidence to confirm whether AbdulSalam made attempt or was able to convert the Owa to Islam, but oral interview testified to the fact that they were best of friends. This confirms the existence of a great deal of tolerance among them, the type which our nation needs today. The friendship led Emir AbdulSalam to marrying Fagbamila, a senior sister to Arigbatesun, one of the war chiefs of the Owa.

The Ijesa wife of Emir AbdulSalam, though known in Ilesa history as Fagbamila, was popularly called Iya Ijesa in the Emir's palace. Since the husband was Amirul Muminin,, it was taken for granted that she was converted to Islam, even though no one remembers her Muslim name. There is the possibility that the Emir might have tolerated her remaining a traditionalist in the same way he tolerated Owa Bepolaran. However, the fact that other members of her family later became Islamized made the general assumption popular.

The marriage between Emir AbdulSalam and Iya-Ijesa was not blessed with offspring. But given the love between them and her good character to all and sundry, she became loved by everyone in the palace, including courtiers and chiefs. She took great care of her husband and children as well as other women in the harem. However, the joy of Iya-Ijesa became truncated by the Ibadan – Ijesa war. After much enquiry, the Emir got to understand that the war was the cause of her unhappiness, of which was already telling on the mood of the palace. The Emir therefore ordered for the conveyance of her family members down to Ilorin. Fagbamiye, a brother and a sister whose name is not remembered were brought down to Ilorin and both of them were immediately converted to Islam and renamed. Fagbamiye became Aliyu and the sister Fatima. On arrival, they lived in the palace with the Emir's children and attended the Qur'anic school at *Koro Guruma* where Alfa Belgore was the teacher. Iya-Ijesa and family lived in the palace from the time of AbdulSalam through the time of

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Shitta, (1842-1860), to the period of Emir Zubairu (1860-1868), who created an office to accommodate the role played in the palace by Aliyu Ijesa. The post of Ajia Ijesa was created and Aliyu Ijesa was made the first Ajia Ijesa who was the *Wolewode* (Chief Protocol) to the Emir. The Ajia therefore moved out of the palace. He first lived with Asaju family and later moved to the present Abode at Ita-kure, Ilorin.

It was believed that after the institutionalization of the office of Ajia-Ijesa, Iya Ijesa did not live long before she died during the reign of Emir Zubairu (1860-1868). The sister, Fatima-Ijesa decided to return to Ilesha. One is at pains to determine why she left. But it is probably because the Ibadan-Ijesa war had ended or that she went to give a helping hand to the propagation of Islam that had begun in Ijesaland through the activities of Alfa Salahuddeen , Alfa Seedu Ogun and others. Since Aliyu-Ijesa continued to relate with the Ijesa in Ilorin and at home as a learned person, he and Fatima, the sister, would have also contributed to the development of Islam in Ijesaland even though they were not captured in literature.

It is important to say here that we have not been able to ascertain who survived who among all the scholars that were working together after the death of Alfa Seedu Ogun but since Alfa Salahuddeen *Parakoyi* is our principal focus, we learnt however that Alfa Salahuddeen *Parakoyi* died after a brief illness in 1959 at Ilesha but buried in Agunbiade Compound in Ilorin.

The Impact of Ilorin- Ijesa Relations on the two communities

The intergroup relations that started between the two communities since the start of Ilorin Emirate, has grown big and into different directions. It has transcended the border of religion to include social, political, and cultural spheres. The subsequent paragraphs give details.

Religiously, the presence of Alfa Salahudeen Agunbiade Parakoyi led to the spread of Islam in Ijesaland. He built a mosque at Isinkin and a Madrasat (an Islamic School) at *Itagun* . Apart from his preaching tours in Ijesaland, he also thought and preached Islam to people in the area via his mosque and Madrasat (Jimoh, 2014). Through him, many educated Ijesa people became Islamised and learned in Islamic jurisprudence and sciences. Like the Ilorin Emirate chiefs, Alfa *Parakoyi* till date in Ilesha has

the right, to wear turban and Alkimba to the Owa's palace. Given the activities of Alfa Salahuddeen and other Ijesa Muslims, by the beginning of the twentieth century, Islam had been well established beyond Ilesa to other towns and villages in Ijesaland, including Esa Odo where Sheikh AbdulAzeez Ajagbemokeferi was born, (Muritala, 2011). There are evidences that Islam got to Otan-Ile (in Obokun Local Government) and Ibokun also in Ijesaland of Osun State, through Ilorin scholars (Adewusi 2012). In all these places, Islam continues to grow from strength to strength.

In the Council of Owa, Alfa Salahuddeen was an indispensable member. Whenever there was a congress, to deliberate on the welfare and future of the Ijesa people, Owa usually requested the presence of the Parakoyi because of his invaluable contributions. Alfa Salahuddeen Parakoyi, apart from being recognized as the leader of the Muslims in Ilesa, also played mediatory role between indigenes and settlers as well as among settlers. Thus, Alfa Salahuddeen Parakoyi was the only Mallam chief and a non-indigene of the area that was on the pay roll like other chiefs in Ijesaland in general and Ilesa in particular (Jimoh: 2014). Alfa Salahuddeen died in 1959 and after a period of interregnum, he was succeeded by his biological son, Alhaji Jimoh Adio Salahuddeen Agunbiade Parakoyi (Agunbiade, 2013).

Before Ilorin became an emirate, there had been trade links between Ilorin and the South of Nigeria as far as Lagos. These trade links boomed as more and more Ilorin traded in Ijesaland and vice-versa. They both exchanged articles of trade. The Ijesa exchanged kolanut and locally made cloth, with potash ivory, beads, pottery, and mat, among others with Ilorin people. While the Ijesa were and are still found in various areas and businesses in Ilorin, to a large extent, Ilorin traders settled in Ilesa, Ilase, Ijebu-Ijesa among other places. The hospitality of the people of the two communities grew under the effective supervision of Ajia-Ijesa in Ilorin and the Parakoyi of Ilesa. The tradition of giving Kolanuts to the Emir and sharing Kolanuts in the palace among other titleholders and palace courtiers during Islamic festivals began and remained with Ajia-Ijesa who linked it not only to his origin but tried to demonstrate the abundance of the product in Ijesaland.

Conclusion

This paper has shown that Islam played a prominent role in the intergroup relations that existed between Ilorin Emirate and Owa Obokun authorities on the one hand and between Ilorin and Ijesa people on the other hand. This relationship began between Emir Abdulsalam and Owa Bepolaran. It is discovered that a great deal of tolerance existed between the two to be able to establish friendship in spite of their religious differences. The relationship between Alfa Salahuddeen *Parakoyi* and Alfa Seedu Ogun which enhanced Islam in Ijesaland has proven to us beyond doubt that the friendship was consummated without preference to ethnic or tribal consideration. It is also discovered that friendship through scholarship may be lasting as that between Parakoyi and Seedu Ogun grew to fruition. The information that Alfa Seedu Ogun and Alfa Salahuddeen Parakoyi studied together in Ilorin further confirms the established fact of Ilorin being a Haven of Knowledge. Thus, different authorities in Nigeria who are concerned with the unity of the nation could borrow a leaf from the Ilorin model, by stressing and enforcing ideas and ideals that promote unity. From the information presented above, it is crystal clear that the establishment of Islam in Ijesaland like in many other Yoruba towns and cities was not without the influence of Ilorin city and scholars, as great proselytizers of Islam, as a religion and culture. The relationship, which formally began with Islam, has eaten deep into the socio-economic and political spheres and is growing day by day.

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Appendix (Photograph of Alfa Salahuddeen Agunbiade, The Parakoyi of Ilesha d. 1959).