

# CHAPTER ONE

## THE PRE-ISLAMIC EAST AFRICA

### THE POLITICAL SET UP

**Question:** Examine the political set up of East Africa prior to the coming of Islam.

Before the coming of Islam in East Africa, what is now called the demarcated region of East Africa comprising of countries like Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania (Tanganyika) was non-existent.

This region had people who lived in either segmentary or centralized societies like the Nandi, Kamba, Kikuyu and Masai in Kenya; Baganda, Banyoro, Iteso and Langi in Uganda and Nyamwezi, Chagga and others in Tanganyika.

Before the coming of Islam, the peoples of what came to be East Africa, had their own ways of life; and these ways were looked at in political, social, economic and religious circles.

1. Politically, there were two major systems of governance; that is the centralized and the segmentary systems.
2. Under the centralized system of governance, all political powers lay in the hands of the chief or king. The king owned every thing ranging from land to animals. For example the Kabaka (King of Buganda) is called Beene which is a Kiganda attribute for king, which means the absolute owner of everything in Buganda.
3. The Kings and Chiefs had absolute powers over their subjects to the extent that they could dictate death on their subjects. For instance, it was reported that when the Arabs introduced guns in Unyamwezi land, Mirambo ordered that some strong men be collected so that the power of the gun would be tested on them.
4. In centralized systems or societies, succession to the throne was hereditary where the son or brother of the reigning king would be chosen to succeed him in case the reigning king died
5. The majority of these centralized societies had tributary or vassal states which were directly answerable to the king and from which the king got tributes. For instance, Busoga was a tributary state of Buganda.
6. Power in the centralised societies was hierarchical or pyramidal, where there was only one top most official – king and very many officials as one descended to the grass roots.
7. The King had powers to appoint chiefs as he wished yet at the same time he had all the powers of dismissing them if he so wished. The chiefs were not hereditary and were chosen on merit or on the wish of the King.
8. In centralised societies, there was a well defined political structure, where power was centered on the already set person called the king assisted by several chiefs below him and was answerable to him.

9. Most centralised societies had a standing army which was used for security, trade purposes, conquests, expansion wars, protection of the king and many other purposes.
10. In centralised societies, the state was built around the ruler as a symbolic centre of power; exercising authority that embraced all the people that he ruled directly. Some women also had supreme authority on the basis of their marriage to the King or chief.
11. The King was always elected by an assembly of great chiefs, court Martials and clan or tribal heads. Usually the candidates from whom the new king was elected were the sons of the previous king.
12. When the election to the throne had been decided, the unsuccessful candidates were either imprisoned or executed. In fact, those who escaped imprisonment or execution lived as peasants or commoners.
13. The second system of governance in the East African political system was the segmentary societies. These included people like the Langi, Itesot, Masai, Kikuyu, Gishu and many others.
14. Under the segmentary rule, the state was divided into small political units. Different clans would come together to form a tribe, which was considered the largest political unit.
15. In segmentary societies, the political units therein had neither kings nor chiefs. Much of the political powers lay in the hands of the elders of these societies. The elders were regarded as the custodians of culture and wisdom because of their inherent experience.
16. The segmentary societies were egalitarian in nature, which meant that there was political and social equality for everybody. Every member of the segmentary society had the same social and political rights.
17. Segmentary societies had no standing armies and in case of any emergency, all able bodied people would mobilize to take part in solving the problem.
18. In case of any political or social problem, like quarrels among members of the society, councils of elders were always convened to look into the matter or problem. However, even the youth and women were allowed to take part in solving the problem.
19. In all the societies, however, the governments were set upon tribal grounds and not territorial tendencies. There was no society, whether centralised or segmentary which had more than one tribe.
20. Elders, in the pre-Islamic East Africa, served as leaders in the society and no society, whether centralised or segmentary, accepted to be ruled by a child. Even in centralised societies where a child could inherit his father, elders would serve as advisors or regents. In Buganda, Apollo Kaggwa, Zakary Kisingiri and Stanlas Mugwanya acted as regents to the young Kabaka Chwa II.

## THE RELIGIOUS SET UP

**Question:** Assess the religious situation in East Africa prior to the coming of Islam

East Africa, before the coming of Islam did not have demarcated zones of what we now know as East Africa that comprises of countries namely Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

During the pre-Islamic East African period the people that formed what later came to be East African sub-continent had their own ways of life - socially, politically, economically and religiously.

1. Religiously, the people of East Africa, before the arrival of Islam, had no revealed Divine law or religion to follow but they were following the customs of their kings or tribes.
2. The East African practiced African Tradition religion. It did not have founders like the case of Islam. The religion evolved slowly through centuries as people responded to situations of their life time.
3. Responding to situations in their experience or life, the East African people came to believe that items of nature like trees, rivers, earthquakes; and misfortunes like epidemics diseases and wars had a bearing on religion or their beliefs, that they started worshipping such items of nature.
4. The pre-Islamic East African religion had no revealed book; rather the religion was just embedded in their history, hearts and experience.
5. The peoples of East African believed in a Supreme Being or God, whom they called by various names and thought Him as living in the sky. The Baganda used to call God Katonda, the Banyankole call Him Ruhanga; among the Masai God is called Engai and the Kikuyu worshipped God they called Ngai.
6. The East African people conducted and observed several ceremonies and festivals through which beliefs about God were expressed. These ceremonies and festivals included Harvest time, start of the rainy season, Initiation rites, Birth of a child, victory over enemies and many others.
7. It was widespread feeling among many Africans that man couldn't approach God directly, but he must do so through mediation of special people or beings called intermediaries. These are spirits or items of nature that are thought to have special powers over some objects.
8. The position and functions of the intermediaries was central in African religious life. They formed bridges where they based to direct man's contact with God through the act of worship.
9. However, some societies like the Masai did not believe in spirits or souls, not even for the spirits of the departed; in fact they seemed to have no idea of future existence.
10. Elders in East African Societies also played an intermediary function; like among the Akamba and Kikuyu. These elders performed religious rituals for their homesteads;

either by officiating or helping the priests in making sacrifices, offerings and prayers.

11. East African traditional beliefs had special people called priests. These were ordained males and females, whose duties included making sacrifices, offerings, prayers conducting both public and private rites and ceremonies, giving advice and fulfilling other religious intermediaries between man and God.
12. Prayers in African Societies were accompanied by sacrifices and offerings. Sacrifices referred to cases where animal life was “destroyed” in order to present the animal, in part or wholly to spirits or God. The items of sacrifice included cattle, sheep, goats, chicken and, on a far smaller extent, human beings.
13. Offerings on the other hand referred to the cases which do not involve the killing of an animal, but the presentation of foodstuffs and other items to God or other supernatural beings. Items used for offerings included foodstuffs like fruits, maize, millets, eggs, milk, beer and blood of animals.
14. However, among the Akamba, God was thought as not bothering about what happened among men. They thought it was wasteful to give sacrifices to the creator who lived in the sky and was too far away to be influenced by man.
15. The Akamba, however, made their sacrifice to a man’s spirits who would go and live in a wild fig tree when man died. That was why small huts were often built close to fig trees.
16. East African peoples also worshipped God through songs and dances. Many of the religious gatherings and ceremonies were accompanied by singing which helped to pass on religious knowledge from one person or group to another.
17. Religious singing and dancing were always followed by musical instruments such as drums, flute, whistle and many others to express their religious practices.
18. Along with music and dancing, the East African people also used proverbs, riddles and wise sayings like those which spoke about God, the world, man and nature of things to express their religious feelings.
19. The East African people also believed that the universe was created by God, and some communities believed it as comprised of the heaven where God is thought to reside, the earth – where the living human beings and animals live and the underground where the dead are interred. The Baganda call those parts of the Universe as Ggulu, Ensi and Magombe respectively.
20. East African peoples set up places and official spots to be used particularly for public sacrifices and prayers. These places and spots were considered sacred and included shrines, alters, tree shades, rocks and caves. These sacred places and spots were highly preserved.

## **THE SOCIAL LIFE**

**Question:3** Examine the social conditions of East Africa before the coming of Islam.

Before the coming of Islam, what is now called the demarcated region of East Africa

comprising of countries like Kenya, Tanganyika (Tanzania) and Uganda was non-existent.

This region was known to have people who lived in either segmentary societies like the Gisu, Nandi, Akamba, Masai, Langi and many others; or centralised societies like the Baganda, Nyamwezi and many others.

During the Pre-Islamic East African period, the people that formed what later came to be East African sub-continent had their own ways of life socially, politically, economically and religiously.

1. Socially, most East African people lived in extended families which included the father as the head of the family, with the mother, children and many other relatives who lived a communal way of life.
2. There were taboos and customs as per communities containing many dos and don'ts and all people of the society were supposed to respect them because they carried a lot of meaning. So people were supposed to obey the rules and regulations embedded in their customs.
3. Under the centralised societies, there were social classes; where the royal – the king and his family and lineage – formed the highest social class. Next came the chiefs and the lowest social class comprised of the commoners, who are people with no close connection to the king or chiefs.
4. Some other centralised societies like the Banyoro had castes. Under the caste system, man's place in society is fixed and received at birth and it can never change. For instance, among the Banyoro, a person born a Mwiru (commoner) will remain a low class whether he becomes a chief and person born among the Babiito (rulers) will occupy a high social status whether he does not become a king.
5. Among the segmentary societies, all people were considered equal by the principle, all members of the society were supposed to have the same social rights, irrespective of sex or age.
6. There were a number of social initiation events and practices. These events and practices were meant to initiate, greet or grade the young into adulthood. Such practices included circumcision among the Gisu and Sabins.
7. Among the East African communities, marriage symbolized adulthood; and whoever reached the age of marriage was supposed to marry in whatever case it was. People practiced excessive polygamy.
8. In East African settings, successes were always celebrated. Such celebrations were witnessed in ceremonies like birth ceremonies; and in most of them, there was music and dancing to make such occasions joyful and merry.
9. Beer was so central in East African festivities and almost all ceremonies were accompanied by beer or alcohol. Alcoholism was so central and drinking habit was common. Alcohol was also a vital requirement during marriage proceedings.
10. In the East African Societies, the clan played pivotal role in cementing people's relationships, which were either marital or blood ties or maternal.

11. The clan heads and elders acted as the guardians of the clan lands and also formed an important class in Buganda. Their position was hereditary and not dependent on royal appointment like that of the chiefs.
12. The peasants or commoners used to attach themselves to chiefs in theory were allowed to change their service from one master to another if they so wished.
13. At the homes of the chiefs, the peasants' work consisted of cultivation and building houses. In return for his services, the peasant would be given one, or possibly two wives, than given permanently, and might be taken away by the chief at any time.
14. The chiefs and kings were allowed to accrue any number of slaves, who were mostly drawn from the raids on the neighbouring societies. The slaves had no rights and were used for cultivation and for service in the house of their masters.
15. Parents looked after their children and nurtured them as the environment and society demanded. This involved teaching the young the taboos and customs of the society; and this usually took place around the fire place after the evening meal.
16. The children were also communally nurtured; that is, any adult member of the society was supposed to exercise exclusive responsibility over any young people.
17. The Pre-Islamic East African people had two most usual articles of clothing. These were the bead necklet worked over with very small beads into beautiful patterns, worn by women only. The Baganda donned the backcloth from the outer covering of the Mutuba tree.
18. Other clothing consisted of cow, goat and antelope skins. The leopard was considered to be the royal animal, and for anyone other than the royals to wear a leopard skin was high treason.
19. The houses in which people lived were simply beehive-shaped structures of grass or mud supported by wooden poles, and the importance of the person to whom the house belonged could be estimated from its size.
20. Elders, in the pre-Islamic East Africa, served as leaders in the society and no society, whether centralised or segmentary, accepted to be ruled by a child. Even in centralised society where a child could inherit his father; an example of Buganda where the young Kabaka Chwa II had three regents.

### **THE ECONOMIC SET UP**

**Question:** Explain the economic setup of the East African people prior to the coming of Islam.

Before the coming of Islam, what is now called the demarcated region of East Africa; comprising of countries like Kenya, Tanzania, Zanzibar and Uganda was not existent.

This region was known to have a population of people lived in either segmentary societies like the Gisu, Nandi, Akamba, Masai, Langi and many others; or centralised societies like the Baganda, Nyamwezi and many others.

During the Pre-Islamic East African period, the people that formed what later came to be

East Africa sub – socially, politically, religiously and economically.

1. Economically, the people of the pre-Islamic East Africa lived by doing a variety of jobs that ranged according to the needs of the people in that area. These included cultivation, hunting, animal rearing, blacksmithing and many others, like bead work, which was exclusively a woman's occupation.
2. Another economic activity in the pre-Islamic East Africa was the production of labour. Families provided the development of the pre-Islamic East African States. Among the Baganda, for example, the Bakopi or peasants provided labour to the loyal clan.
3. Each family got involved in the production of food, both for consumption and sale. Among the trading communities like the Baganda and the Chagga, food production was for both subsistence and sale. Besides, they also ensured food security, where each family had a food store (granary) for storing food that could be used during times of famine or scarcity.
4. Tributes, foodstuffs, animals and, on a small extent, monetary money provided the source of revenue for the Pre-Islamic states. Each family was supposed to pay taxes and tributes to the rulers; which taxes were collected by chiefs or messengers assigned by the king.
5. In trade and commerce, age-sets facilitated the development of both internal and external trade, especially the long distance trade. Among the Nyamwezi, Akamba and Yao, the junior age sets served as guides, guards and porters to the caravan traders.
6. Land ownership formed the foundation of the economy of the people of East Africa. In segmentary societies, land was owned communally; while in centralised kingdoms like Buganda and Bunyoro, the king owned all the land resources.
7. Some societies like Bunyoro, Buganda, Kikuyu and others practised agriculture and grew crops like Banana, cassava, millet, sweet potatoes and others.
8. Some societies kept animals on both small scale like Ganda and Kikuyu; and on large scale by the Banyankole and Masai. Other animals that were kept in homesteads of the Pre-Islamic East African people included sheep, goats, chicken and dogs.
9. In addition to animal rearing, some societies of East Africa practiced hunting. Under this wild animals were sought for and killed for meat, hides and horns. Fishing was also done in some areas close to water bodies like lakes, rivers and streams.
10. East African interior societies practiced both local and long distance trade. Interior societies like Baganda, Nyamwezi, Yao and Akamba traded with the coastal people mainly Arabs and Swahilis.
11. Trade was an important economic activity at the coast. For a long time, there had been contacts between the coastal people with those from Arabia, especially Yemen and the people from Asia, especially Indians.
12. This kind of trade was highly facilitated by the presence of trading items at the coast for exchange for commodities like beads and cloth, metal and others. In those days,

spices were valued as preservatives as well as for the flavour they gave to food.

13. In addition, agricultural products like coconut palms and spices were brought to the coast for exchange for commodities like beads and cloth, metal and others. In those days, spices were valued as preservatives as well as for the flavour they gave to food.
14. The coastal people were at the same time pirates and they had boats. These people lived by raiding those moving on the Indian Ocean.
15. The art and craft industry was also well developed in both centralised and decentralized states. Iron implements like hoes, spears, arrows, knives and pangas were made by the Banyoro, a centralised society, just as they were made by the Kikuyu people, a decentralized society.
16. The Pre-Islamic East African economy was not based on monetary factors. Most of the produce was for local consumption of the produce was for local consumption purposes. Exchange relations were thus largely based on the barter system.
17. Labour in the Pre-Islamic East Africa was neither salaried nor for wages. The provision of ones labour was expected to be voluntary and for free, especially when it came to communal works. The provision and exploitation of labour was also divided, basing on sex and age, depending on roles and duties to be performed.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **ISLAM AND THE COAST OF EAST AFRICA**

#### **FACTORS THAT MADE ARABS INFLUX THE EAST AFRICAN COAST**

**Question:** "Both pushing and pulling factors made Arabs influx at the East African Coast inevitable." Discuss.

The Arabs were among the earliest visitors to the coast of East Africa. These visitors to the East African coast come from Asia; however, what is not known is the exact date these foreign visitors – the Arabs came to East Africa.

However, by 1100 AD the Arabs were frequent on the coast, and their coming was influenced by a number of factors pushing – originating from their home lands and pulling – influenced by the coast of East Africa.

1. The pushing factors included the effect of the Fitnah Period in the Arabian Peninsula. This was the period of civil wars in Arabia. Many Arabs who could not stand or were defeated, left their homeland and came to settle on the coast as



refugees and to seek safety from the prolonged civil wars.

2. The effects of the Fitinah led to the development of religious-political groups; thereby dividing the Muslim Community into groups. Some of these groups decided to establish new bases from where they would operate freely and peacefully. In their quest for new bases, many Arabs found their way to the coast of East Africa.
3. The split of the Arab Muslims into various sects and factions like the Sunnis and Shiites also facilitated the influx of Arabs at the coast of East Africa. These sects became warring and some Arabs found it almost impossible to stay in their homelands so they found their way to the coast of East Africa.
4. The rebellion led by two local chiefs Sulaiman and Said of Oman also account for the Arab influx at the Coast. These had refused to submit to the rule of Caliph Abdul Malik of the Umayyads. When they were fought and defeated by Abdul Malik's forces, they took sail from Oman with their families and supporters and finally settled at the coast of East Africa.
5. The insecurity in the Arab World was another factor that pushed the Arabs to settle at the coast. A group of followers of Amir Zaid led to a rebellion against Caliph Hashim of the Umayyad Dynasty around 740 AD at Kufah, Zaid was killed and some of his followers felt insecure and decided to seek refuge on the East African coast.
6. The need to spread Islam was also a factor that pushed Arabs to come on the East African coast. Some Muslim sects like Zaidiyyah and the Shiraz had wanted to spread their ideology and gaining rewards. So they moved far and wide, and in the end landed at the coast of East Africa.
7. During the early period of Prophet Muhammad's Mission, and due to Islam's growing strength, Muslims got persecuted by the Meccan Pagans. These Arab Muslims were at one time forced to migrate to Abyssinia for safety. However, those who felt insecure in Abyssinia because it was a Christian region moved farther southwards and found peace at the coast of East Africa.
8. The Arab occupation of the coast of East Africa was also instigated by the Crusade Movements of the 11<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> centuries. These were Christian movements from Europe meant to destroy the Muslim world. The Crusaders engaged the Muslims in several encounters that forced the weak Arabs that could not resist the attacks to seek refuge else where; and thus found their way at the coast of East Africa.
9. Another pushing factor for the influx of the Arabs at the coast of East Africa was their desire and need for adventure. For instance, a report from Ibn Battuta, when he visited the coast in the Fourteenth Century, only talked about how well they ate.
10. The nature of Arabia, being a desert, the Arabs were forced by circumstances to move to different areas for their survival. They had no taste for settled life; it is therefore in such movements for survival that they might have landed on the coast of east Africa.
11. The presence of Monsoon winds along the Indian Ocean and the Arab dhows enabled the Arabs to sail to and from Arabia without any interference. The Arabs had discovered that the Monsoon winds between November and April would blow their

dhows south-west wards to the coast of East Africa; then between May and October, the winds would blow them safely North-East wards home again.

12. Due to the nature of Arabia, being a desert the main stay of the Arabs was therefore trade. However, due to the political and religious differences in Arabia that resulted into Fitina wars, their trade was disrupted and their operational bases and many other valuable things destroyed. Therefore, trade was jeopardized due to insecurity and so the Arabs looked for trade opportunities elsewhere; hence their influx at the coast.

Despite the pushing factors, there were a number of other factors that facilitated the Arab occupation of the coast of East Africa.

13. The Arabs were attracted to the East African coast because of the presence of the profitable trade. They were attracted by the good and expensive items in East Africa like gold, copper, Ivory and later slaves. These items were highly demanded in Arabia and in many other parts of Asia.
14. There was an influx of Arabs on the coast of East Africa because the Arabs wanted to control trade at the coast, in which they had benefited a lot. The Arabs, therefore, occupied the coast so that they could be in centre of the supply of the merchandise.
15. The conducive environment at the coast also helps to explain why the Arabs came to the East African coast. Arabia being a desert with no clear rain patterns, made the environment there hot and harsh for human settlement. So the cool environment of East Africa attracted the Arabs to settle at the coast.
16. Other Arabs occupied the coast with political motives. Here some Arab leaders wanted to have control over the coast to extend their frontiers and powers of influence. Such leaders thought that by occupying the coast, they would become popular there. For instance Sulaiman of Oman wanted to control Pate and Lamu Archipelago.
17. The favourable climate of the East African coast as opposed to other regions like the North which is mainly a desert and the West occupied by dense Equatorial forest, influenced the Arabs to come to East Africa; in turn they took permanent settlements at the coast of East Africa.
18. The nearness of the East African coast to Arabia; whereby the Arabs could sail easily across the Indian Ocean to and from the coast of East Africa, also must have influenced the Arabs to influx the coast of East Africa.
19. Some African tribes that the Arabs found on the coast of East Africa were hospitable and readily accepted the Arabs. They created a strong relationship between them and the Arabs, which increased their interaction. Therefore, this hospitality became an incentive for the Arab visitors to come and settle at the coast.
20. Existence of fertile soils along the East African Coast and its hinterlands also contributed to the Arab occupation of the coast. The Arabs wanted to use such fertile soils to support cultivation of various crops they had come with to the coast. The crops such as cloves were much used in trade.

21. The Arabs were also attracted to the coast because of presence of fresh drinking water. This water could also be used in other various ways like in washing, irrigation of crops and many other uses. This was important because Arabia lacked such waters and could only be found in the Oases, which were difficult to find except for those who were daring and lucky.
22. The almost vacant lands at the coast of East Africa also attracted the Arab occupation. These large and apparently vacant pieces of land were needed by the Arabs who wanted permanent settlement and those who were interested in agriculture.
23. At the coast of East Africa, there was presence of natural harbours that could allow even big vessels like ships and dhows from the Far East to dock. This was so vital a factor since the Arabs would use the coast as rest places and yards where they could repair their vessels from.

## **EFFECT OF THE ARAB OCCUPATION OF THE EAST AFRICAN COAST**

**Question: Examine the effects of the Arab occupation at the coast of East Africa.**

The Arabs were among the earliest foreign settlers at the coast of East Africa. However what is not known was the actual date when they landed at the coast though their coming made a great impact on the lives of the people they found at the coast.

1. The most vital effect of the Arab occupation is the spread of Islam at the coast, which replaced the traditional beliefs. Islam became a source of political system and it gave rise to the revival of learning literature, science, law and philosophy.
2. Islam became a unifying factor at the coast. It united the tribes from Arabia, India, Persia and the coastal people. All these tribes and races were determined to use their strength to work together; and since they agreed in most of their principles they helped in converting a lot of people to Islam.
3. There was growth of Dynasties at the coast like the Shiraz Dynasty; and by the time the Portuguese arrived at the coast, they found Mombasa acknowledging the Mamluke Dynasty. The Mamlukes were originally slave-soldiers who converted to Islam and who advanced themselves to high military posts in Egypt, before they established there the Mamluke Dynasty.
4. There was growth of towns at the coast, which helped to improve the ways of life of the Arabs and the coastal people. The towns consisted of highly packed groups of buildings erected with stones and other temporary materials. Such towns included Mombasa, Kilwa, Pemba, Malindi, Sofara, Zanzibar and many others.
5. The Arabs introduced new methods of building; where flat-roofed houses were erected with stones and some having dome-shaped structures. These inherited the traditional ways of building.
6. Because of the influence of the Arabs, the rich people of the coast lived in a considerable luxurious life; dressing in silk and fine material and decorating the walls of their buildings with the carpets.

7. There was adoption of trade by the people at the coast. Trade flourished at the expense of traditional occupations. People at the coast became rich especially the Arabs and their middlemen. Therefore, trade became a major occupation at the coast.
8. Through trade, the coast of East Africa was connected to international world. The East African coast came to be known world-wide and this explains why the Portuguese, British and the Germans later came at the coast.
9. There was infrastructural development, where Arabs setup schools, Mosques, roads, shops among others. These replaced traditional huts and paths.
10. The Arab occupation at the coast of East Africa greatly influenced the cultures of the coastal people. For instance the local people adopted the Arabic ways of dressing. Men started wearing tunics (Kanzus), turbans, caps and sandals. Women started putting on silk dresses and veiled their heads.
11. There was introduction of new crops which had hitherto been unknown to Africans before; like spices, coconuts, cloves among others. These were used in barter trade for which the Arabs would usually trade beads and cloth.
12. The Arabs, especially the Muslims, changed the Africans' attitude towards religion. The Muslims came to believe that those who died fighting for their religion would go straight to paradise. So Africans fought bravely for their religion and with strict discipline.
13. Many coastal people changed their occupations from fishing, herding and farming to trade and turned to supplying items like ivory, gold and slaves which were very much needed by Arabs and other traders.
14. People at the coast also adopted Islamic practices like fasting, circumcision and praying five times a day. These replaced the local and traditional African customs and religions.
15. The Arab occupation influenced and strengthened the system of administration at the coast. The Islamic Law called the Sharia Law was introduced and used in politics and judiciary as well as in handling and trying cases.
16. The coastal rulers also adopted Arabic titles like Sheikh and sultan; yet Qadhi became the administrators of the Islamic law. These leaders were supposed to ensure that the principles of Islam were observed.
17. Mosques, Qur'an schools and Islamic monuments were established with Arabic words inscribed on them that had an Islamic bearing.
18. Arab occupation of the coast of East Africa influenced the eating and sitting etiquette of the coastal people. The coastal people started eating food of an Arab origin like chapattis, pilawo (fried rice) and also sitting cross-legged.
19. Arabic language was introduced as the official language at the coast to be used in administration, legal and religious circles. Arabic books were also availed to people to read.

20. The occupation of the Arabs of the East African coast resulted in intermarriage between Arabs and local coastal people that led to a new group of people and culture called Swahili; at the same time a new language Kiswahili developed. With time, Kiswahili became the official language at the coast.
21. The Arab settlement and occupation of the coast of East Africa gave the people who lived there a cosmopolitan character which distinguished them from most of the Africans in the hinterland.
22. There was establishment of trade routes from coastal areas like Mombasa, Kilwa, Zanzibar and others into the interior of East Africa. These routes were used to carry goods and other trade items from the interior to the coast of East Africa.
23. The Arab occupation of East Africa brought about the introduction of new methods of farming including large scale farming; like the clove plantations in Zanzibar for commercial purposes.
24. The presence of the Arabs and their subsequent control of the coast of East Africa, made the coastal people lose their independence and became Arab subjects.
25. The Arab commercial activities facilitated the development of slave trade in East Africa. This was due to the fact that the Arabs worked as agents to Europeans. Because of these commercial purposes, many areas of East Africa were depopulated as a result.
26. The Arab occupation of East Africa helped in the introduction of monetary economy at the coast which replaced the laborious and tedious barter system that had existed for long. This was because Arabs facilitated minting of coins that were used as a medium of exchange.
27. The Arab occupation of the coast of East Africa brought about the need for slave labour and slaves that resulted into warfare and introduction of the deadly gun which caused chaos and insecurity at the coast and later spreading to the interior.
28. The Arabs introduced new techniques and skills of boat building. This replaced the traditional canoes; thus transportation was eased and many people learnt better and more skills of navigation as most trade activities depended on movement on the Indian Ocean.

## INTRODUCTION AND SPREAD OF ISLAM AT THE COAST OF EAST AFRICA

**Question:** “The introduction and spread of Islam in East Africa by the Arabs, was an effect of the Arabs reaction to the situation in Arabia” Discuss.

The exact date for the coming of Islam in East Africa, and at the coast in particular, is not yet known. However, it was reported that both pulling and pushing factors were responsible for the coming and spread of Islam in East Africa.

1. The most important pushing situation in Arabia that facilitated the spread of Islam in East Africa was the Fitinah period. This was a period of civil wars and disputes in Arabia, that broke out as to who was the rightful caliph. These wars and disputes divided the Arab Empire and caused some of those who had been on the losing side to take refuge on the pleasant coast of East Africa; where they started spreading Islam.
2. After the death of the last successor of Prophet Muhammad – Ali, the Arab Muslims started splitting into various sects and factions like the Sunnis, Shiites, Ismaelites and many others. These sects became warring and those who found it impossible to stay in such difficult situations migrated to the coast of East Africa. Because these settlers were Muslims, they started spreading Islam.
3. The rebellion led by two local chiefs Sulaiman and Said of Oman, who had refused to submit to the rule of caliph Abdul Malik of the Umayyad Dynasty also facilitated the spread of Islam in East Africa. When they were fought and defeated by Abdul Malik's forces, they ran away from Oman and settled at the coast of East Africa, where they started spreading Islam.
4. The Zaidiyyah group led by Amir Zaid also rebelled against Caliph Hisham of the Umayyads toward 750 AD, but was not strong enough to fight Hisham's army. Zaid was killed; and his followers, feeling insecure, decided to seek refuge on the East African coast. Their stay at the coast facilitated the spread of Islam in East Africa.
5. The effects of the Fitina period in Arabia also led to the development of religious political groups; thereby dividing the Muslim community into groups. Some of these Muslim groups decided to establish new bases; like in East Africa, where they would operate freely and peacefully. With them, Islam spread.
6. During the early period of Prophet Muhammad's mission, and due to Islam's growing strength, the Muslims got persecuted by the Meccan Pagans. These Arab Muslims were at one time forced to migrate to Abyssinia for safety. Abyssinia being near East Africa, Islam started to spread there from.
7. The introduction and spread of Islam in East Africa was also instigated by the Crusade Movements of the 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> centuries that rose to destroy the Muslim World. The Muslims who could not resist the attacks were forced to seek refuge elsewhere and thus found themselves in East Africa, where they started teaching Islam.
8. At the close of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, there was an economic revival in Europe that forced Europeans to seek market for their goods. The Europeans, with their superior goods out competed the Muslims for market, which forced the Arabs to look for market

elsewhere and thus found themselves in East Africa; and with them Islam started spreading.

9. The nature of Arabia being a desert with no clear rain pattern, made the environment there hot and harsh for human settlement. So, this environment forced the Arabs to move in search of conducive atmosphere for survival like the coast of East Africa. Since these Arabs were Muslims, they helped to spread Islam to those areas where they went.
10. Driven by the urge to transmit the word of God to gain rewards, some Arab Muslims sects like the Zaidiyyah and the Shiraz had wanted to spread their Ideology. They moved far and wide; and in the end landed in East Africa where they settled and spread Islam.

Despite the Arab reaction to the various situations in Arabia that influenced them to come to East Africa where they introduced and spread Islam, there are other factors that facilitated the spread of Islam in East Africa:

11. The coming of the Arabs with their families in East Africa also helped to spread Islam. When the Arab Muslims arrived from various parts of the Arab world and settled at the coast, the Muslim population increased. This re-enforced the already existing manpower to spread Islam in a more organized way.
12. Arabs and other nationalities of Asia had been trading with the people of the coast since time immemorial. So when prophet Muhammad preached Islam, those Arabs who had embraced it and were traders are likely to have come at the East African coast where they spread Islam.
13. At the coast of East Africa, there existed trade items like Gold, slaves and agricultural items. The Arabs were attracted by these items of trade which they exchanged in return for manufactured goods. In the process of carrying out their trade, the Arab Muslims interacted with the local people whom they influenced to join Islam.
14. The Monsoon winds also played a great role in the introduction of Islam in East Africa. These winds enabled the Arabs to sail to and from Arabia. With the movement of Arabs to the coast, Islam had to be introduced in the process.
15. Acquisition of new lands in form of colonizing Africa was also another factor for the spread of Islam to East Africa. It is argued that some of the immigrants from Arabia came as colonizers. Because these people were Muslims, when they reached the coast of East Africa, they started spreading Islam.
16. Inter-marriage between Arabs and the local people with whom they stayed with in their settlements is another factor responsible for the spread of Islam in East Africa. Both the women who had married to the Arabs and their offsprings adopted the religion of Islam from the Arabs.
17. The inter-marriage between Arabs and the local people increased the population in places where they stayed as many relatives of these women married to Arabs started leaving their home areas to come and settle in towns. Hence, through interaction, Islam spread.

18. Some Arab scholars who visited the coast of East Africa for adventure , like Ibn Battuta, and had stayed at the coast for some time played a big role in the spread of Islam in East Africa. When these people returned home, they advertised East Africa to the Arab world. Hence, more Arabs Moslems came to East Africa and eventually Islam spread.
19. The favourable climate of East Africa as opposed to the harsh and hot climate of Arabia also influenced many people to come to the coast especially the Arabs to come to the coast of East Africa. In turn, they took permanent settlements and in the process they introduced and spread Islam in East Africa.
20. The proximity or nearness of East African coast with Arabia, gave the Arabs a chance to -sail to the coast of East Africa easily and fast across the Indian Ocean. Since the Arabs were Muslims, they helped to introduce and spread Islam.
21. Some tribes on the East African Coast were hospitable. They warmly welcomed and created a strong relationship between them and the Arabs which increased their interaction. With this interaction, Islam was introduced and spread among the people of the coast.
22. Many people at the coast of East Africa admired the Arab Culture, which was Islamic in nature. They came closer to the Arabs and adopted their culture which they considered superior as opposed to the traditional cultures; hence finding themselves converting to Islam.
23. After 813 AD, more Arabs who were more knowledgeable in Islamic science arrived at the coast of East Africa; and these did much to fuel the spread of Islam. For example, Muhammad Bin Idris el-Shafie founded the Shafite School in 813 AD and started teaching Islam.



## METHODS USED BY ARABS TO SPREAD ISLAM

**Question:** Examine the methods used by the Arabs to disseminate Islam.

1. The Arabs used intermarriage as a method through which they spread Islam. The Muslim Arabs married from the local people. In the process, both the women who had got married to the Arabs and their offsprings adopted the religion of Islam from the Arabs.
2. The intermarriage between Arabs and the local people also increased the population of Muslims in places where they stayed as many relatives of women married to the Muslim Arabs left their homes to come and live among their in-laws. These relatives ended up converting to Islam to win favour of their Arab in-laws.
3. Trade was also an important method that the Arabs used to win the hearts of Africans to Islam. The Muslim Arabs were essentially traders and the presence of trade opportunities made Arabs venture in Africa. In the process of carrying out their business, the Arabs spread Islam to the people they interacted with.
4. Through trade, also, the Arabs extended favourable trade terms and at many times gave big businesses to fellow Muslims. So, the Africans who wanted to gain such trade terms and benefits were attracted to Islam.
5. Provision of employment was also a method used to spread Islam. The Arabs offered employment to many Africans to work as middlemen and porters. So many Africans who worked under the service of the Arabs ended up being influenced to convert to Islam.
6. The establishment of mosques was yet another method to introduce and spread Islam to the local people of Africa. These mosques worked as coordination centres where people met and consequently Islam was passed over to the non-Muslims.
7. The establishment of Qur'an schools also helped in the spread of Islam. In these schools, the curriculum was basically Islamic and the Africans who joined these schools were taught Islam and many converted.
8. The Arabs set up mosques where periodical calls were made inviting people to come for prayer and Salvation. This invitation, with time, yielded fruits when many Africans honoured it and embraced Islam.
9. Domestic slavery was also one method the Arabs used to spread Islam to the people of Africa. The Muslim Arabs related well with their household slaves whom they treated well like members of their families. This friendly approach, helped in winning the slaves to Islam, the religion of their masters.
10. Liberation of slaves was also a method that won Africans to Islam. Many Muslim traders bought freedom of slaves. The liberated slaves were preached to and converted to Islam.
11. The liberated Muslim slaves when they were re-united with their people, they passed on the message of Islam to their people with pride; indeed many relatives to the ex-slaves embraced Islam.

12. The concept of slavery also worked as a method for the spread of Islam. Where slavery existed, among those people enslaved, were some Muslims who would lead others into prayers of deliverance. When such slaves would be set free, they would attribute their release to prayers and ended up converting to Islam.
13. The Arab culture of setting up Arab-Swahili villages was also one of the methods used to spread Islam. In these villages and other settlements, the Arabs exercised the basic principles of Islam, like brotherhood, sharing, endurance among others. These were admired by many Africans and on several occasions adopted Islam.
14. The Muslim Arab eating and sitting habits also helped win many Africans to Islam. The Arabs used to sit with Africans and ate together in circles. This level of togetherness and brotherhood attracted many Africans to Islam.
15. Introduction of plantation farming also made many Africans convert to Islam. The Muslim Arabs set up plantation farms where people of all walks of life were employed. The Muslims who worked on such plantations would preach to fellow workers whom they influenced to Islam.

## **FACTORS THAT HAD HINDERED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM AT THE COAST OF EAST AFRICA**

**Question:**      **Examine the factors that had hindered Islam to take root at the coast of East Africa.**

The conversion of the coastal people to Islam began some time after 813 AD when Muhammad bin Idris es Shafi, the founder of the Shafite School, started teaching Islam. After its introduction, however, Islam did not have a strong impact at the coast for some time. This was because of the following:

1. The work of converting people to Islam was solely the work of Isolated Arabs, Swahili and Somali traders, and their African converts. It was not directed by any missionary organization and lacked plan, money and literature.
2. The Arabs, who were supposed to champion the spread of Islam, devoted very little time to Islam simply because they were more concerned with trade; since the Arabs who came at the coast of East Africa were primarily traders. Therefore they attached very little importance to the spread of Islam.
3. Most Arabs who came to the coast of East Africa were traders and most of the time; they were carrying out their business. So some of the coastal people who joined Islam did so because they admired the Islamic culture but not because they were preached to.
4. The Arabs, who were interested in the spread of Islam at the coast in the initial years, did not have enough money to set up schools and to produce literature. This, too, hindered the quick spread of Islam at the coast.
5. The Arabs were very few in number and would not sufficiently cover the long strip of the East African coast in so small a time; hence the spread of Islam had to move on very slowly. The Arabs were also not settled. They were moving in different areas, from one place to another looking for trade items. So they couldn't settle in an area

for a long period of time; hence couldn't effectively spread Islam.

6. There had existed political conflicts and disputes between different Muslim families like the Busaid and Mazrui Arabs. These devoted most of their time in such conflicts and therefore couldn't get enough time to preach Islam.
7. The Arabs were also met with the hostility of the local tribes as the Segeju and Wazimba. These were very notorious to the Arabs; in addition, they were also feared to be cannibals. Therefore, due to the fear they had for these tribes, the Arabs had to confine themselves to their settlements. Islam, therefore, could not spread so fast.
8. Islam was also hampered by the coming of the Portuguese, who wanted to stomp out Islam. The Portuguese destroyed Arab Settlements at the coast leaving them homeless. With such a condition, Islam would not spread smoothly.
9. There was also a problem of language barrier. Though there was a multiplicity of languages at the Coast, the Arabs couldn't understand any of the local languages, as the local people didn't understand Arabic. This difficulty of communication hampered the spread of Islam at the coast.
10. The traditional beliefs of the people at the coast of East Africa also hampered the spread of Islam. At first, many coastal people could not abandon their beliefs easily because they looked at Arabs as the people who had come to wipeout their traditional ways of life since very many African practices contradicted with the Islamic faith and teachings.
11. The Arabs lacked backing from their home countries. This was due to the fact that most of them settled at the coast of East Africa as refugees. Therefore, they had no connection between them and their home area since it was not their wish to leave their home countries. This therefore meant that Islam lacked political will and support.
12. The faith of Islam lacked a missionary group to promote their cause. Arabs did not come as missionaries; thus they did not go out to the coast in a body highly bent to spreading Islam. Islam just spread naturally through interactions between Arabs and the local people.
13. In addition to the Islamic faith lacking Muslim missionaries, Muslim states in Arabia did not form Islamic organizations that would finance and send members of such an organization to East Africa to spread Islam. As a result, Islam did not have a big impact.
14. The participation of Arabs in slave trade also hampered the spread of Islam at the coast. So many local people feared to come closer to the Arabs for fear of being taken up as slaves. Arabs used to raid villages and homes looking for slaves. With this state of affairs, people had to keep themselves away from Arabs and would not accept their religion.
15. The reluctance of the early Arab traders to settle permanently at the coast also delayed the spread of Islam. The Arabs used to come for merchandise and then go away back to Arabia. Therefore, in the first days of Arabs arrival at the coast, they were not directly in touch with the people at the coast.

16. The Arabs preached against traditional African norms, such as polytheism. This annoyed the Africans, who started disobeying and not taking interest in whatever they preached.
17. The Bantu tribe that ate up their way through Africa from Zululand left the Arabs feeling insecure. They had captured Kilwa and turned against the inhabitants (the Arabs), many of whom flung themselves desperately into the sea; there again sharks were awaiting them. The few that remained could not do the work of spreading Islam effectively.
18. The Arabs also lacked the geographical knowledge about the East Africa coastline. The Arabs did not know the map of the coast and this made them reluctant to venture in unknown areas which delayed their movements along the coast. This affected the quick Islamisation process.
19. The coastal states also conflicted among themselves, which resulted into disunity among the coastal people. So, preaching to disorganized people wouldn't be easy; hence the Islamisation process was slowed.
20. The presence of tropical diseases like malaria also hampered the spread of Islam. These diseases killed many of the Arabs; and having been very few themselves, it reduced their number further; hence delaying the progress.
21. The Arabs themselves were arrogant, harsh and not friendly. They always kept themselves aloof from the Africans. These behavioral characteristics scared away East Africans from the Arabs, resulting into failure to convert them into Islam.
22. People who tried to spread Islam lacked incentives to attract the locals to Islam. They did not give rewards and gifts as a means of attracting people to their faith. If some gifts were offered to the converts, more people would have been attracted to Islam. But since no material goods were offered, Islam did not become popular.
23. Islam had complicated practices, which East Africans feared – like stoning to death and circumcision which are harsh and painful rituals respectively. Muslims were not to take alcohol yet many rituals in African cultures were accompanied with alcohol. All these limited African joining Islam.
24. Some African chiefs used their political authority to drive away Muslims. They looked at any foreign infiltration as a threat to their independence. Therefore, not many Muslims entered East Africa. As a result, Islam was not preached to many.
25. The different Islamic sects that existed like Zaidiyyah, Sunni, and Shiites destroyed the unity of Muslims. These sects were very antagonistic and also limited by political confusions prevailing both at the coast and in their metropolitan countries. For instance, the imam of Oman and Busaid conflicted for the control of the coast of East Africa. These conflicts retarded the Islamisation process.
26. Africans had their own traditional religion they were very attached to and not ready to compromise it with Islam. This resulted in the need to maintain and allow the continuity of the religion of their ancestors. As such, Islam was not readily taken up.
27. When the Christian missionaries came to East Africa, they out competed Muslims.

Muslims did not have a soft approach like that of the Christian missionaries, who were even philanthropists. The Muslims who had supposedly caused horror to Africans won very few people to the Islamic faith.

28. Many of the coastal areas were still bushy, forested with mangrove vegetation and with no safe pass ways which was a deterrent to the progress of Islam. Such an environment could not make movement and interaction easy, hence slowing the Islamisation process at the coast.

## **FACTORS THAT FACILITATED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM ALONG THE COAST OF EAST AFRICA.**

**Question:**      **Examine the factors that facilitated the spread of Islam along the coast of East Africa.**

Much as Islam had very low ebb at the beginning, it later gained momentum and took some root at the East coast of Africa; and by the close of the eighteenth Century; the whole of the East African coast line had been islamised. This was facilitated by several factors.

1. The proximity or nearness of the East African coast to Arabia where Islam came from made it easy for Islam to spread along the coast of East Africa. This short distance made it possible for the Arabs to reach the coast easily; and since the Arabs were Muslims, they helped to spread Islam at the coast.
2. After the first Arabs reached the coast, more started coming with their families from various parts of the Arab world. This increased the population of the Muslims at the coast and reinforced the already existing manpower; and hence the spread of Islam in a more organized way.
3. Establishment and construction of Qur'anic schools and mosques helped in training of the new preachers. The graduates from such schools were sent to different areas of the coast and pioneered the work of spreading Islam.
4. Islam was also further helped by the abolition of slave trade. Earlier on, Africans had feared Arabs due to their involvement in slave trade. After the abolition, however, Africans changed their attitudes towards the Arabs. They came closer to each other, hence Islam had to spread.
5. The Arabs captured the political power at the coast and established dynasties at the coast, like the Busaid Dynasty under Said Sayyid. This contributed much to the spread of Islam as leaders sent trade caravans along the coast. Since these traders were majority Muslims; they helped in the spread of Islam.
6. After 813 AD, more Arabs who were knowledgeable in Islamic Science arrived at the coast of East Africa and these did much to fuel the spread of Islam. For example, Muhammad bin Idris es-Shafi, founded the Shafite School in 813AD and started teaching Islam.
7. The defeat of the Portuguese at the coast increased the number of Muslims at the coast. This was because, Arab Muslims could now move freely from one place to another which wasn't the case before. The Arabs, at the time Portuguese were controlling the coast of East Africa, confined themselves in certain areas for fear of

their dear lives; so they could not carry out the mission of spreading Islam.

8. When the Portuguese arrived at the coast of East Africa, they destroyed Arab settlements and these forced some of them to penetrate into the interior, planting some seeds of Islam there. This helped Islam to spread in some places near the coast.
9. Intermarriage between the Arabs and the local people of the coast of East Africa facilitated the spread of Islam at the coast. In the process, half-cast sons and daughters were produced. Both the women who had married to the Arabs and their offsprings adopted the culture of the Arabs including their religion.
10. The intermarriage between Arabs and the coastal local people increased the population of Muslims at the coast. This was made possible because many relatives of these women married to Arabs started leaving their home areas to come and live with their married relatives. Hence, through interaction, Islam had to spread at the coast of East Africa.
11. The existence of trade activities at the coast of East Africa also facilitated the spread of Islam. With the demand for goods from East Africa increasing, some Arab traders opted to occupy the coast permanently. This paved way for the spread of Islam at the coast in that apart from their commercial activities, in their free time, Arabs preached Islam.
12. There was also the role played by the Ex-slaves. The life on the coast was dependent on slaves who had been captured in the interior. Those who served Arab master were fortunate for the Qur'an taught that kindness to slaves was a virtue and were treated as servants but not slaves. After sometime, the Ex-slaves started preaching to the local people what they had learned from their masters.
13. The existence of trade relations between the East Africa coastal people and the Arab Muslims brought about interaction between these two groups of people. So, those Arab Muslims must have influenced the coastal people to embrace Islam.
14. The presence of safe sailing water of the Indian Ocean made sailing of the Arabs and other people who spread Islam at the coast easy. They kept on moving forth and back to the coast using Indian Ocean waters, and in the process Islam spread at the coast.
15. The favourable climate of the East African coast as opposed to other regions like the North which is mainly a desert and the West occupied by dense equatorial forests, influenced many people especially the Arabs to come to East Africa. In turn, they took permanent settlements and in the process they spread Islam.
16. Some tribes at the coast of East Africa were hospitable and readily accepted the Arabs. They created strong relationship between them and the Arabs which increased their interaction. Since the Arabs were Muslims, they influenced the coastal people to convert to Islam.
17. The spread of Islam at the coast of East Africa was also spearheaded by the religious – political wars in Arabia (Fitina period). These wars made many Arab Muslims to leave their homeland and came to settle at the coast of East Africa as refugees and to seek safety from the prolonged civil wars. These Arabs interacted with the coastal people to whom they taught Islam.

18. The course of the monsoon winds at the Indian Ocean also helped in the spread of Islam at the coast of East Africa. The Arabs had discovered that the Monsoon Winds between November and April would blow their dhows South–West wards towards East Africa. As they waited the winds to blow North–East wards between May and October, they stayed at the coast, where they spread Islam.
19. The development of Swahili-Arab villages at the coast helped in the spread of Islam. These villages became centers from which the local coastal people observed Islamic cultural practices. In fact each Swahili-Arab village had a Mosque and Madarasa which were vehicles to the spread of Islam.

## THE ROLE OF TRADE IN THE ISLAMISATION OF THE COAST OF THE EAST AFRICA

**Question:7** Assess the role played by trade in the early spread of Islam along the East African coast.

The coming, introduction and spread of Islam at the coast of East Africa was largely a product of trade. For a long time, there had been contacts between the coastal people with those from Arabia, especially Yemen and Oman.

Trade as a factor, influenced the spread of Islam at the coast in the following ways:

1. Trade and commerce attracted Arabs from Arabia and Persia to the coast of East Africa. The Arab traders being predominantly Muslims, helped to spread Islam at the East coast of Africa.
2. Arab traders used Africans as middlemen who they influenced to Islam. These middlemen hunted and looked for trade items in the land behind and around the coast. In their transactions, they spread Islam to the people they interacted with.
3. Arab Muslims established trading centres along the coast of East Africa which became Muslim villages. The chief coastal settlements that became Muslim villages were Kilwa, Pemba, Zanzibar, Mogadishu and Lamu Archipelago.
4. After Said Sayyid's transfer of his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar, the Arab traders started carrying Islam along the coast of East Africa. At this stage, Islam took root in several places along the coast and secured some African followers.
5. Through trade and commerce, the monetary sector and activities attracted Africans from the interior of Africa resulting into a busy coastal area, and thus helped to spread Islam.
6. Because of Arab Muslim settlement and trade activities, intermarriage between Arabs and the local Africans took place. This resulted into multiplication of Muslim population at the coast.
7. The increase in the Muslim numbers at the coast meant that the Swahili population, who were Muslims, found openings as troops, traders or interpreters. These helped to spread Islam wherever they went.
8. Through trade activities, Muslim culture was exhibited by Arab traders to their African trade partners, thus influencing the spread of Islam and its principles.
9. Through trade, Asian and Arab Muslims acquired wealth which they used to help spread Islam through missionary activities, like building schools (Madrasas), Mosques and sponsoring Islam activities.
10. Trade opened up the East African coast to the outside World, particularly to the Arab Muslim world. Therefore, after 813 AD, more Arabs who were more knowledgeable in Islamic science arrived at the coast of East Africa and these did much to fuel the spread of Islam.



11. Through trade activities, there emerged an elite Muslim business group that became the owners of wealth. These worked for the spread of Islam by financing Islamic activities. Such elite groups included Indians, Arabs, Swahili, Somalis and African traders.
12. Trade accessed Muslim traders to African kings and chiefs; because the Kings and chiefs wanted to win favours from the Arabs, influenced their subjects to embrace Islam.
13. Some Arab Muslim traders acted as volunteer missionaries, and these helped very much in the spread of Islam. During some free time, some Arab traders got some time off their business to teach the people they related with the principles of Islam.

However, much as Islam was spread with the help of trade activities, trade had a negative effect on the spread of the religion.

14. Arab Muslim traders participated in slave trade, and this created a negative attitude on the local population at the coast against the Arabs. This negative attitude stagnated the spread of Islam.
15. When the Portuguese took over the East Africa coastal trade from the Arab Muslim, the prosperous trade decreased and the Arab traders were further discouraged. The spread of Islam, therefore, also got a setback.
16. Because of the profiting trade along the coast of East Africa, Arabs, who were the champions of Islam, were so much commercially oriented; and thus paid little significance to the spread of the mission of Islam.
17. Trade boomed along the coast because of the big profits the Arabs were getting from it. They did not take much initiative to spread Islam, despite their long stay at the coast, because they spent most of their time in trade activities.
18. In the beginning, the Arabs did not settle at the coast. They used to come and search for merchandise and then go away. Therefore, in the first days of the Arabs arrival at the coast, they were not directly in touch with the local people. This delayed the spread of Islam at the coast of East Africa.

## THE ROLE OF EAST AFRICAN COASTAL MARKETS TO THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

**Question:** Explain the significance of the East African coastal markets in the spread of Islam along the East African coast.

One of the impacts of the Arab occupation of the coast of East Africa was the establishment of markets and trade posts along the coast of East Africa.

With the coming of the Arabs, very many trade posts and markets were opened, prominent of which included those found in towns like Kilwa, Mombasa, Malindi, Zanzibar and Lamu Archeperago.

The establishment of markets at the coast was so vital and important that greatly contributed to the spread of Islam; as follows.

1. The East African coastal markets became meeting points between Muslim Arab traders and Africans; and through continuous interaction between Muslim Arabs and the local people, Islam was spread.
2. The East African coastal markets attracted many Africans traders from the interior to the coast. These traders from the interior interacted with the Muslim Arab traders who influenced them and consequently accepted Islam.
3. The East African coastal markets helped to unite people of different backgrounds together. The Muslim Arabs, Swahili, coastal and interior Africans all met at the coastal markets causing interactions that facilitated the spread of Islam.
4. The East African coastal markets provided Africans with wealth which made them become very rich. The wealth, Muslim traders accrued, was used partly for propagation of the faith through financing Islamic activities.
5. The East African coastal markets with time developed into towns like Kilwa, Mombasa and the like. The towns made convergence and divergence of Muslim Arabs and Africans easy. The Muslim Arabs then passed on Islam to those Africans who converged into these markets.
6. The East African coastal markets boasted the development of Kiswahili language which was a mixture of Arabic and African words. Kiswahili eased communication between Muslim Arabs and Africans and Islam was spread therefrom.
7. With Africans and Muslim Arabs meeting in these coastal markets, relationships developed that resulted into intermarriage between the two groups. The offsprings from such marriages were Muslims and this increased the Muslim population at the coast.
8. Some Muslim Arab traders who operated in the East African coastal markets acted as voluntary and volunteer missionaries. Though these Arabs were essentially traders, they could spare some time off their business to teach Islam.
9. The East African coastal markets led to the introduction of the gun as one of the commodities of trade. The introduction of the gun availed the Muslim Arabs with an

opportunity to reach those areas originally feared because of insecurity. Thus, Islam reached such areas.

10. To East African coastal markets boosted universal brotherhood at the coast between Africans and Muslim Arab traders. Arabs interacted with Africans; ate together and related well. Many Africans were overwhelmed by this brotherly attitude of the Arabs that they were influenced to Islam.
11. The establishment of the East African coastal markets boosted permanent settlement of the Muslim Arabs at the coast. From their settlements, the Muslim Arabs were able to teach Islam to those Africans they came into contact with.
12. With the establishment of the East African coastal markets, there developed a class of middlemen between the Muslim Arab traders and the local people at the coast. These increased attraction and Islam was spread.
13. The success of the East African coastal markets led to migration of many African and Arab kings and chiefs to the coast in order to have full control of the profitable trade. This boosted trade and increased interaction through which Islam spread. For instance, Sayyid Said transferred his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar.
14. In the vicinity of the established coastal markets, Muslim Arab traders put up Muslim quarters and settlements. These became centres of diffusion of Islam through interaction of the Muslim Arab traders and the Africans.
15. The volunteer Muslim Arab missionaries, when they returned home in Arabia, facilitated the coming of Muslim scholars and learned men in the field of Islamic disciplines; these helped a lot in the spread of Islam through teaching the faith in a more organized manner.
16. In order to boost trade and to get more profits, the Arabs set up plantations along the coast. Africans were employed on these plantations, Muslims inclusive. These might have facilitated the spread of Islam when they preached to their fellow workers.
17. As more and more commodities poured in the coastal markets, there developed industries which benefited Muslims. This was due to presence of plantations and raw materials. Muslim employed in these industries got money they used to finance Muslim activities.
18. The East African coastal markets made trade profitable and this made Arabs rich and were in position to set up infrastructure like mosques and Qur'an schools where people were preached to and taught Islamic virtues.
19. The East African coastal markets led to provision of employment to Africans. Africans were employed as porters, domestic servants, and the like. The Africans who worked for the Muslim Arabs ended up converting to Islam in order to win favour of their Arab employers and masters.
20. The coastal markets led to coastal chiefs and kings to become rich and prominent. They in turn used such wealth to set up Islamic infrastructures like Qur'an schools and mosques which helped propagate Islam.



## DISINTEGRATION OF THE EAST AFRICAN COASTAL MARKETS

**Question:** Account for the eventual disintegration of the East African coastal markets.

1. There arose political conflicts and disputes between different Muslim Arab families like the Busaid and Mazrui Arabs. These devoted much of their time in such conflicts and forgot their duty of maintaining the markets.
2. The emergency of insecurity on trade routes also led to the disintegration of the East African coastal markets. The Arabs were met with the hostility of local tribes like the Seguju and Wazimba. These limited the movement of traders looking for tradable items to keep the markets going on.
3. The disintegration of East African coastal markets also resulted from the Portuguese ruthless invasion and conquest of the coast. The Portuguese destroyed Arab facilities including their settlements and markets.
4. The East African coastal markets lacked proper management and administration as the main architects, the Arabs, were not settled. The Arabs were always moving around looking for trade items. So they could not settle in an area for a long time to foresee the management the markets.
5. As trade at the coast became more and more profitable, the African kings and chiefs resorted to imposing heavy taxes on the Arab and Swahili traders. The Arabs went out of business and thus abandoned the East African market and ventured in other areas like West Africa.
6. The Portuguese took control of the Indian Ocean trade which reduced the commercial prosperity of the coastal markets. Such trade was an important means through which the coastal markets developed.
7. The Arab participation in slave trade kept many people, especially the African local people, away from the Arabs. Therefore the coastal markets disintegrated due to lack of people coming to them.
8. The exhaustion of trade commodities in areas around the coast forced the Muslim Arab and Swahili traders to move deeper into the interior of East Africa to look for

these tradable items. This left the markets at the coast abandoned.

9. The East African coastal markets also disintegrated because of poor transport and communication. There were hardly any passable roads and because roads had not been set up, the traders could not easily access their goods to market.
10. The areas around the coast were covered by thick vegetations and infested with epidemic diseases and dangerous insects like tsetse fly. These claimed the lives of many people; and thus coastal trades feared to risk their lives looking for tradable items to deliver to the markets.
11. Language barrier also affected the East African coastal markets as it hindered quick business transactions. There had existed a number of languages at the coast which the Arabs didn't understand; yet Africans didn't understand Arabic.
12. The emergence of European imperialism also affected the coastal markets. The Arab traders faced stiff competition from chartered companies like the German East Africa Company and the Imperial British East African Company. These monopolized trade and kept the Arabs out of business.
13. The Arab dominancy of the coastal region of East Africa in all spheres of life sharpened hatred between Arabs and Africans. The Arab occupation of the coast made Africans lost their independence and became Arab subjects. So, the Africans turned to fighting the Arabs to regain their lost independence instead of uniting to develop the markets.
14. The disunity of the coastal people also accounted for the disintegration of the East African coastal markets. The coastal people were always at war with one another for the control of the coastal commercial activities and market. For example, the Sultan of Mombasa conflicted with that of Malindi.
15. With the desire to control the coastal markets, for example Kilwa for its gold advantage, wars erupted for the control of gold. This led to insecurity and decline of this coastal market was inevitable.

## **SAYYID SAID AT THE COAST OF EAST AFRICA**

Sayyid Said was born around 1791 to Seyyid bin Ahmad. He belonged to the Busaidi family of Oman in the Arabian Peninsular.

Oman is a land in the south east corner of Arabia and juts out into the Indian Ocean, with the Arabian Desert behind it. Those who lived in Oman were therefore in a very good position for trade.

Oman at one time became the centre of the valuable maritime trade and used to send a fleet of dhows down the east coast of Africa to carry out trade in ivory, slaves, spices and many other commodities which had attracted the Arab traders.

In 1804, Sayyid bin Ahmad died and was succeeded by his thirteen-year-old son Said as the

Imam of Oman. Since Said was still a minor, a regent was appointed to rule on his behalf. He established his capital at Muscat.

However, in 1806 at the age of fifteen years, Sayyid Said murdered the regent for fear that he would take over his throne. He then made an alliance with the British in his struggle against his enemies.

In 1822, Sayyid Said signed the Moresby Treaty, which, though limited his profitable slave trade, recognized his claim to overlordship in East Africa.

The Moresby Treaty, however, resulted in a struggle between Sayyid Said and the Mazrui of Mombasa, who had seized control of the town nearly a hundred years earlier. Thus Sayyid Said turned to capture Mombasa.

During the years in which Sayyid Said was concentrating on the capture of Mombasa, he had grown very attached to the Island of Zanzibar, which had loyally supported all his efforts, that he was more regular in Zanzibar than Muscat.

By 1830, Sayyid Said was spending as much time at Zanzibar as at his other capital, Muscat, thus he saw it fitting to transfer his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar.

### **SAYYID SAID'S TRANSFER OF HIS CAPITAL FROM MUSCAT TO ZANZIBAR**

Realizing the importance of Zanzibar, Sayyid Said decided to transfer his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar around 1830.

1. Sayyid Said saw the possibility of obtaining more real power in Africa than he had inherited as Imam of Muscat that he made Zanzibar his real capital in 1832.
2. Sayyid Said hoped to enhance his prestige and popularity by adding the control of Zanzibar to his overlordship of Muscat to which he was already being considered the Imam of Oman.
3. Zanzibar was a green and pleasant land with a delightful climate; yet Muscat reflected the fierce heat. Therefore Sayyid Said greatly admired the coastal climate was conducive for settlement.
4. Sayyid Said hoped to make Zanzibar his new capital to increase his wealth; since as the chief port, Zanzibar was a strategic trade market and controlling it would mean boosting his trade dealings.
5. Zanzibar was more advantageous security –wise than his former capital Muscat as Zanzibar could be easily protected against external enemies because it was an Island situated twenty miles from the mainland.
6. Zanzibar would give Sayyid Said more option to control the Indian Ocean trade himself rather than leaving it to be controlled by his representatives who were unreliable and had proved ineffective.
7. Sayyid Said had wanted to establish a spice plantation as spices had become a profitable item of trade. Zanzibar's climate and its fertile soil had rare qualities

needed for the cultivation of spices.

8. Sayyid Said also transferred his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar because of the hospitality of the coastal people. The coastal people from the towns of Malindi, Pemba and Zanzibar invited Sayyid Said and encouraged him to settle at the coast.
9. Using Zanzibar as his capital, Sayyid Said hoped to check on the activities of sea piracy on Indian Ocean. There had been pirate activities going on that had made trade across the Indian Ocean impossible.
10. Sayyid Said's transfer of his capital was also instigated by the political opposition he had in Oman. After taking over power, his enemies started to attack him and his relatives; and indeed at one time, his cousin was murdered. So settling at the coast of East Africa would reduce this opposition and pressure.
11. Sayyid Said looked at the people of the Coast of East Africa more loyal to him than those of Oman. Moreover, the people of the coast had invited him to settle at the coast; yet those in Oman opposed him.
12. Sayyid Said was also attracted by the maritime climate of Zanzibar with enough rainfall and fertile soils as compared to the yellow sand and scorching sunshine of Oman. He thus, wanted to exploit these opportunities to develop the clove industry, which cloves were on a very high demand.
13. The historical attachment of Zanzibar to Oman, and to Sayyid Said in particular, for a long time explains his decision to settle in Zanzibar paid allegiance to Oman and when Seyyid Said, himself, visited the town as early as the 1820s, he learned of its economic potentials.
14. Zanzibar had wide and deep natural harbours that were good enough for the dhows and other bigger vessels from Europe and America to anchor. With these good harbours, Sayyid Said was assured of increased interaction with European and American traders that would increase the volume of trade.
15. The transfer of Sayyid Said's capital to Zanzibar was also instigated by religious persecutions in Arabic following the Fitina Period that caused insecurity and instability. Because Seyyid Said was more concerned with commercial development, he preferred to settle in a relatively peaceful place like Zanzibar that would favour his activities.
16. Sayyid Said also settled in Zanzibar for security reasons. Zanzibar was strategically located as an island being protected against mainland rivals and attacks from the sea since enemies could be seen from a distance.
17. Sayyid Said hoped to use Zanzibar to exploit the trade opportunities that existed at the coast of East Africa. Using Zanzibar as his base, Sayyid Said wanted to control and participate in both the long distance trade going into the interior of East Africa and the Indian Ocean trade.
18. Sayyid Said wanted to build a powerful commercial empire in East Africa; indeed his influence was maintained by Arab and Swahili traders in trade posts along the caravan routes up to Lake Tanganyika in the West and Lake Nyasa (now Lake

Malawi) in the South. Political power was left to African chiefs and kings of such areas where the trade routes passed.

19. The alliance Sayyid Said made with the British also influenced him to settle in Zanzibar. The British had political ambitions through colonizing Africa using local chiefs to towards their indirect rule policy. Thus, the British took the lead in influencing Sayyid Said's East African ambition.
20. During the years in which Sayyid Said had been concentrating on the capture of Mombasa, he had grown much attached to the Island of Zanzibar, which had loyally supported all his efforts. So Said chose to shift the capital to Zanzibar where he felt much loved and where he had supporters.
21. In making Zanzibar his real capital, Sayyid Said knew that he risked loosening his hold on Oman, but he was a man with great commercial insight, and saw the possibilities of obtaining more real power in Africa than he had inherited as Imam of Muscat.

## THE ROLE OF SAYYID SAID TO THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN EAST AFRICA

Once Sayyid Said told a French visitor that

***"I am nothing but a merchant"***

Therefore, although his settlement at the coast of East Africa was commercial interest, Sayyid contributed a lot to the development and spread of Islam in East Africa.

1. The significant development and role of Sayyid Said to the rapid spread of Islam included the construction of mosques, Qur'an schools, unity the coastal people under the umbrella of Islam and the policy of encouraging interaction between Muslim Arab men with African ladies that led to increase of Muslim population through intermarriage.
2. Once in Zanzibar as his capital, Sayyid Said started organizing trade caravans and this saw the beginning of penetration of Islam into the interior of East Africa as Muslim Arab and Swahili traders interacted with the local people they traded with and with time, influenced many to Islam.
3. Sayyid Said contributed a lot to the development and diversification of agriculture at the coast encouraging Africans into commercial farming. Africans, consequently, took up the growing of rice, coconut and cloves that were on high demand. This helped Muslim farmers get a lot of income that they used to finance Islamic activities.



4. Sayyid Said established good diplomatic relations of East Africa and the Muslim world. These relations made many Muslim Arabs, scholars, teachers, architects and the like to flock into East Africa and increased Islamic awareness in the region.
5. Sayyid Said is also credited for having contributed to the urbanization of Zanzibar and other coastal towns under his jurisdiction with a rapidly rising population and good infrastructure like roads, schools and mosques. Thus, the many Africans that came to these towns interacted with the Muslim population therein and ended up converting to Islam.
6. Sayyid Said invited settlers and traders from India, Oman, Yemen and other areas of the Arabic peninsular to exploit the prevailing economic opportunities. Since the many people who responded to the invitation were Muslims, they helped a lot in disseminating Islam to the local population of East Africa.
7. Sayyid Said played a significant role in the struggle to abolish slave trade in East Africa for peace, security and stability of his dominion. Thus, Africans who had kept away from the Arabs for fear of being taken as slaves, started interacting and Islam started spreading therefrom.
8. Sayyid Said developed Zanzibar to the status of an international market which attracted many Muslim Arab traders at the coast. However, the Muslim Arab traders eventually learnt of the interior of East Africa where they flocked to for trading and other personal activities. In the process, they carried the message of Islam with them.
9. Sayyid Said also attracted the coming of Indian Banyans to the coast of East Africa, who served as money lenders to the Arab traders. This eased on the exchange relations and boosted their capital and so were their increased profits. Muslim Arab traders were then in position to finance Islamic activities and projects.
10. Sayyid Said was known to be a prominent farmer in cloves and coconut, who established forty-five commercial plantations in Zanzibar. He, thus, employed the necessary labour force of Africans to work on these plantations. The Muslims who also worked on the plantations got an opportunity to preach to the non – Muslims influencing them to Islam.
11. Sayyid Said fought and eliminated sea pirates who used to attack and rob traders on the Indian Ocean waters. With the Indian Ocean waters becoming safe and secure, many Muslim Arab traders were able to come to East Africa and facilitated the spread of Islam through interaction with the local people.
12. Sayyid Said's transfer of his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar led to influx of more Arabs at the Coast of East Africa. The Arabs, most of them being Muslims, helped a lot in the teaching of Islam to the Africans they interacted with.
13. When Sayyid Said settled at the coast, the volume of trade increased and this led to the coming of more Arab traders to the coast to participate in the lucrative trade. The Muslim Arab trades helped in the dissemination of Islam.
14. The increase in volume of trade also led to increase in demand for trade items. In order to satisfy this demand, Muslim Arab and Swahili traders penetrated the interior

where they carried the message of Islam with them.

15. Sayyid Said fought sea pirates and created a peaceful environment for trade dealings to take place across the Indian Ocean. This peaceful environment on the Indian Ocean encouraged more Muslim Arab traders to come at the coast and Islam benefitted.
16. Sayyid Said's commercial activities at the coast widened the scope of trade into the interior through development of Interior trade routes. The Muslim Arab traders who used these routes helped carry the message of Islam with them into the interior of East Africa.
17. Sayyid Said established a spice plantation on the Islands of Pemba and Zanzibar. The Spice plantations demanded for constant supply of labour from the interior of East Africa. The Africans who provided on these plantations were preached to and indeed many converted to Islam.
18. Sayyid Said fought for and indeed ensured unity of all the coastal towns by putting them under his control. The unity that was created made the coast more secure for Muslim Arab traders to stay in and worked for the spread of Islam.
19. Sayyid Said ended conflicts at the coast whose subsequent insecurity had retarded the progress of Islam. For example, the Sultan of Malindi once conflicted with the Sultan of Mombasa, which conflict broke the Muslim unity at the coast.
20. Though Sayyid Said was the Imam of Oman, when he transferred his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar, he invited more Muslim traders from India, Indonesia, Yemen and Malaysia to the coast of East Africa and their coming speeded up the spread of Islam.
21. Sayyid Said encouraged trade dealings between Muslim Arab traders and the East Africa interior tribes, like the Sukuma, Nyamwezi, Yao and others. The interaction between the Muslim Arabs and interior traders resulted in the spread of Islam in the interior of East Africa.
22. Sayyid Said encouraged monetary trade when he ordered for the use of Indian rupees as currency. With this reform, more Indian and Pakistan traders who use these currencies flocked to the coast and since the majority of them were Muslims, they helped a lot in the spread of Islam.
23. Sayyid Said used to send trade caravans from the coast into the interior. Wherever the caravans stopped for rest or refreshment, Islam was directly or refreshment, Islam was directly or indirectly spread to people of those areas.
24. When Sayyid Said settled at Zanzibar, he opened up several Qur'an schools and mosques which became centres for further instruction in Islam as the Africans who utilized these facilities were influenced to Islam.
25. Sayyid Said encouraged the application of Sharia Law in matters concerning trade and daily life. The application of Sharia Law helped to cement the faith of Islam in the hearts of many Africans.
26. Sayyid Said worked for the cooperation between Muslim Arab traders and the local

population that resulted into intermarriage. The children who were born of these relationships adopted Islam, the religion of their Muslim fathers.

### **THE IMPACT OF ISLAM ON LIVES OF THE COASTAL PEOPLE BY 1500 AD**

**Question:** Examine the influence / impact of Islam on the life of the coastal people by 1500 AD.

The exact date for the coming of Islam at the coast of East Africa is not yet known. However, when it was introduced and later spread along the coastline of East Africa, Islam had a great impact on the life of the coastal people.

1. When Islam was introduced to the coast and later into the interior of East Africa; many people abandoned their traditional religions and beliefs and embraced this new faith of Islam.
2. On the coast, the Arabs intermarried with the Africans. The result was the birth of the Swahili people, who shared the faith of Islam and much of the ways of life with the Arabs.
3. Islam fostered unity among the Muslims because they looked at each other as brothers and sisters. This level of togetherness had never existed at the coast before. This created peace and tranquility at the coast.
4. Mosques were built all over the coast to aid in the spread of this new faith – Islam. For instance, Al-Hassan Ibn Sulaiman built one of the greatest Mosques in Kilwa around 1270 AD.
5. There was introduction of Islamic Education at the coast. Qur’anic Schools (Madrasas) were set up along the coast and many people learnt to read and write; especially Arabic. This reduced on the level of illiteracy.
6. Islam greatly influenced the cultures of the coastal people; for instance, the local people adopted Arabic ways of dressing, men started wearing tunics (Kanzus), turbans, caps and sandals; the women , on the other hand, started putting on long silk dresses and veils.
7. Many towns developed along the coast as a result of their trading relations with the Muslim Arabs. Such towns included Kilwa, Mogadishu, Zanzibar and Mombasa. These towns became centres for imparting Islamic knowledge.
8. Islam also strengthened the system of administration at the coast. The Islamic law (the Sharia) was introduced and used in the handling of administrative matters and

cases.

9. Islam influenced people's moral standards by improving their behaviours because of the high level of discipline emphasized by the Islamic Code of Conduct.
10. With the birth of the Swahili people, the Swahili culture evolved at the coast. It was a mixture of Bantu and Arab cultures. This evolution, however, brought about a conflict between the local African and the Swahili cultures.
11. The new culture (Kiswahili culture) came with it a new language called Kiswahili; which is a mixture of Bantu and Arabic words. Kiswahili became a medium of communication at the coast.
12. Arabic was introduced at the coast of East Africa and became an official language to be used in administration, legal and religious circles. Arabic books were also availed to the people to read.
13. New ruling dynasties were also formed along the coast of East Africa. For instance, most of the coastal rulers had to be descendants of Arab or Persian ruling families.
14. Islam also exposed the East African coastal towns to the outside world especially Arabia, Persia and India. This was because most foreign traders and missionaries came from those countries.
15. Strong commercial links were also created with countries like Arabia, Persia and India. This brought in the rich money lenders called Banyans from India, who improved on trade at the coast.
16. Food and sitting etiquette of the local people were influenced and started basing on the Islamic ways. The local people started eating islamically slaughtered meat; they ate Arabic foods like Pilawo, Chapatti and at the same time sitting legs crossed.
17. People at the coast adopted Islamic practices like fasting, circumcision and praying five times a day. These Islamic practices replaced the African Traditional ways of praying and sacrificing to their gods.
18. The Arabs who came to spread Islam imposed themselves as the rulers over the local people. The presence of the Arabs and their subsequent control of the coast made the coastal people lose their independence and became Arab subjects.
19. In the field of architecture, the coastal people adopted Arabic styles of building. They started building flat-topped houses out of stones with arches and domes, similar to those in Arabia and now seen on Mosques with verses of the Qur'an inscribed on them as part of decoration.
20. During the period 1000 – 1500 AD, many coastal people converted to Islam. Mosques, Qur'an schools and Islamic monuments were built with Arabic words inscribed on them. Islamic teachers and judges (Qadhis) were also trained to help in the spread of the new faith – Islam.
21. The coastal rulers also adopted Arabic and Islamic titles like Sheikh and Sultan; yet Qadhis became the administrators of the Islamic Law. These leaders were supposed to ensure that the principles of Islam were observed.

22. Islam being a cosmopolitan belief, the people who lived at the coast were given a cosmopolitan character which distinguished them from most of the Africans in the hinterland.
23. Qur'an recitation became the basis of education people would acquire; and many people at the coast of East Africa were taught the Qur'an and other Islamic sciences.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **PORTUGUESE CONQUEST AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN EAST AFRICA**

**Question: 9 Account for the Portuguese conquest of the East African Coast.**

The Portuguese came from Portugal. They were reported to have landed on the coast of East Africa led by Vasco da Gama in 1493. They were received at Malindi by the Sultan; and this was the beginning of a long but unceremonial conquest of the Portuguese at the East African coast.

1. There are a number of reasons why the Portuguese had to conquer the coast of East Africa; among which included the search for a new sea route to India and the Spice Islands of the East, the old overland routes having been blocked by the Turkish, who had captured Constantinople in 1453.
2. The Portuguese wanted to gain control of three key places on the coast of East Africa: Sofala, Kilwa and Mombasa to guard the routes to India. Sofala was important to the Portuguese because it would give them control of the gold supply. Kilwa once claimed to rule over the coast; and Mombasa had by then secured a larger share of trade than Kilwa.
3. The warm reception accorded to Vasco da Gama by the King of Malindi was another cause for the Portuguese occupation of the coast of East Africa. The king proved helpful and supplied Vasco da Gama with a good pilot called Ahmed bin Majid to guide him across the Indian Ocean to Calcutta. This reception was the beginning of a long friendship between the Portuguese and Malindi.
4. The Portuguese also wanted to revenge on the Arab Muslims who had conquered and dominated Portugal and Spain between 711 – 1491 AD, until when they were expelled from there in 1491. So the Portuguese wanted to take over the coast of East Africa so as to regain their lost glory.
5. The Portuguese thought that if they had left the Arabs to control the Sea route to India, they wouldn't benefit from trade at the coast. Hence, backed by historical enmity between the Muslims and the Europeans, the Portuguese wanted to uproot the Arab Muslims from the coast before they accomplished their mission of finding the sea route to India.
6. The Portuguese were also interested in taking over the East African coast for strategic reasons. The coast of East Africa was very strategically located in terms of

good harbours that would assist them to get good water and refreshments. The Portuguese would also use the coast to channel their supplies and rest on their way to the far East.

7. Militarily, the Portuguese looked at the coast as a strategic base where they could base to control trade on the Indian Ocean and to exercise their imperialistic tendencies into the interior.
8. The Portuguese had interest in having a share in the lucrative (Profitable) trade at the East African coast and the Indian Sea Trade, which was owned and controlled by the Arabs. It was because of this trade that the Portuguese were attracted to come to the East African coast.
9. They also wanted to end the spread of Islam. This religion had been established at the coast by the Arabs; and the Portuguese, therefore, wanted to put a halt at its spread and replace it with Christianity which was their darling religion.
10. They also wanted to venture into the so many unknown areas on and around the coast of East Africa and probably to exploit them.
11. The Portuguese also wanted to establish a commercial empire in the East using the coast of East Africa as a fortress which would command the chief routes of the Indian Ocean trade, and cease to be dependant on an interloping commerce with a far distant base in Lisbon.
12. Another factor responsible for the Portuguese conquest of the coast of East Africa was the enmity between the Sultan of Malindi and that of Mombasa. Thus, when Vasco da Gama arrived at Malindi, he was welcomed by the Sultan of Malindi. The relationship that was created in between helped the Portuguese to conquer the East African Coast.
13. The Portuguese were looking for the Christian king called John Prester, who had mysteriously disappeared and was believed to be living in the interior of North-East Africa, probably around Abbyssinia. They expected help from him in their crusade against the Muslims. However, Prester was just a legend and therefore did not exist.
14. The Portuguese were also attracted by the coastal wealth such as minerals and other precious stones. So, controlling the coast would enhance the prestige of Portugal as a great imperial power with rich colonies.
15. Existence of fertile soils along the coast of East Africa facilitated the Portuguese occupation of East Africa. The Portuguese wanted to use such fertile soils to support cultivation of various food crops that would provide food to Portuguese sailors to India once the coast was conquered.
16. The Portuguese conquest of East African Coast was also intended to beat off any competition that would have come in the dire need to participate in the Indian Ocean trade. The Portuguese, by controlling the coast, hoped to prevent their European rivals from gaining control and access to the Indian Ocean trade.
17. By controlling the coastal areas of East Africa, the Portuguese wanted to deprive the Egyptians and Turkish forces of any base to help their fellow Muslims at the coast.

They thought that the Egyptians and Turkish would come out to rescue the Arabs from the Portuguese rule.

## **ROLE OF THE PORTUGUESE IN THE ISLAMISATION OF EAST AFRICA**

**Question: 10 "The coming of the Portuguese and their eventual conquest of the East African coast was a set back to the spread of Islam." Discuss.**

The Portuguese came to the coast of East Africa led by Vasco da Gama in 1498. On reaching the coast, the Portuguese took it over completely from the main actors who were the Arabs and ruled it for about two hundred (200) years.

During the 200 years (1498 – 1697) of the Portuguese control of the coast of East Africa, the development and spread of Islam got a set back; although the Portuguese conquest at the other hand was a blessing in disguise to the spread of Islam.

1. Negatively, the Portuguese occupation and rule at the coast brought to an end the rule of Oman who had contributed much to the spread of Islam. The expulsion of the Oman Dynasty meant the stagnation and collapse of Islam at the coast.
2. The period the Portuguese spent at the coast was characterized with wars, insecurity and rebellions, where a number of Muslims lost their lives; hence reducing the Muslim population and retarding the spread of Islam.
3. The insecurity brought about by the Portuguese on the east coast of Africa also hindered the spread of Islam as the Portuguese killed many Arab Muslims at the coast and the few that remained could not move safely and freely at the coast which affected their ability to spread Islam.
4. The Portuguese introduced Christianity as another religion at the coast. Many coastal people converted into Christianity. The main aim of the Portuguese Christians was to compete with Islam to get converts claiming that Christianity was laxer; hence managed to win more souls.
5. The Portuguese were interested in political as well as commercial dominance of the East African coast. So, they sabotaged Islam which had earlier dominated the coast by taking over trade.
6. The coming of the Portuguese at the coast greatly affected trade; yet it was through trade that Islam was spread. The decline in trade meant the decline in the spread of Islam.
7. People at the coast had become rich due to the high profits they got from trade activities. The Portuguese occupation of the coast led to the decline in trade. This made the Arabs poor and therefore couldn't finance their caravans nor Muslim activities; thus slowing down the spread of Islam.
8. The Portuguese destroyed many prosperous Arab Muslim villages and settlements like Kilwa and Mombasa. These towns were burnt down; and since they were used as centres and bases to the spread of Islam, there was slow down in the progress of

## Islam at the coast.

9. The Arab Muslim culture and ways of life which had flourished at the coast was destroyed and replaced by the Portuguese Christian and Western cultures which were contrary to Islamic Arab cultures; thus detrimental to the spread of Islam.
10. The Portuguese colonialists are further discredited for having disunited coastal Muslims by establishing friendship with the sultan of Malindi where they based and fought Mombasa. Such disunity contributed much to the slow development of Islam at the coast.
11. Muslim towns were forcefully captured and their wealth destroyed; Mosques and houses were set on fire and their inhabitants forced to embrace Christianity. Those who refused to convert to Christianity were imprisoned; hence could no longer do their work of spreading Islam.
12. Due to insecurity at the coast of East Africa, Arabs, who had championed the spread of Islam in East Africa, changed their trade to West Africa. The diversion of trade to West Africa, therefore, meant slowing down the spread of Islam in East Africa.
13. The Portuguese occupation of the East African coast led to the loss of Arab and Muslim revenue to the Portuguese. Inhabitants of the coast had acquired a lot of wealth but when the Portuguese controlled the coast, all these changed hands from Arabs to Portuguese, who overtaxed the coastal people in form of tributes; yet those affected were mostly Muslims.
14. The Portuguese subversive activities fuelled the divisions among the Muslim communities by creating hatred amongst themselves. The Portuguese conspired with some rulers against others. For instance they supported the Sultan of Malindi against that of Mombasa. This destroyed the brotherly relationship yet they were all Muslims.
15. The Portuguese fought the Arabs and drove them off the coast of East Africa. The wars which they waged on the rebellious coastal towns reduced the number of Muslims in towns; thus slowing down the Islamisation process.
16. The Portuguese also destroyed the Afro-Arab culture, which was by then flourishing; for instance, the Portuguese language was partly adopted in the Kiswahili language, yet Kiswahili was mainly dominated by Arabic words.
17. During the wars between the Portuguese and the coastal people to suppress the rebellions that had been staged by the Muslim coastal people, there was destruction of property; thereby reducing the economic base of Muslims. This meant that the Muslims could not finance their activities that retarded the spread of Islam.
18. The Portuguese were also blamed for the misery and suffering of the coastal people during their stay at the coast. They punished severely the towns, like Mombasa, that showed signs of rebellion, killed their inhabitants and destroyed property.
19. The Portuguese created tension at the coast when they forced the sultans of the coastal towns to pay a very high yearly tribute to the king of Portugal. The tribute was brutally demanded; and unless it was paid, the towns were destroyed.



20. The Portuguese occupation crippled the old Arab settlements, which had lost their wide trade interests and became decaying towns off the main shipping routes, whose only political link with the outside world was that with the Imam of Muscat who ruled Zanzibar.
21. The Portuguese control of the Indian Ocean trade reduced the commercial prosperity of the coastal towns. Such trade was an important means through which Islam spread at the coast; thus retarding the Islamisation process.
22. The Portuguese destroyed many religious centres such as Madararas (Islamic schools) and Mosques which had worked as dissemination centres of Islam. Therefore their destruction retarded the progress of Islam.
23. The Portuguese kept the coastal Muslims in poverty by imposing heavy taxes on them as well as denying them chance to participate in trade. With poverty striking, the spread of Islam could not be facilitated.

Despite all that the Portuguese did to retard the progress of Islam, they did not stop its onward march after all.

24. The existence of the Portuguese on the coast of East Africa facilitated the spread of Islam to other parts inside the East African coast. With the Portuguese invasion of East Africa, the Afro-Arabs ran away from the coast and some of them found themselves spreading Islam where they had gone to seek refuge.
25. The Portuguese brutal methods made the East African people to hate them together with their religion. Only very few people along the coastline of East Africa converted to Christianity. This partly explains why the coast of East Africa remained mostly Muslim dominated.
26. The Portuguese introduced new crops at the coast of East Africa; chiefly from America, which included maize, cassava, sweet potatoes, pineapples and Guava. Some of these crops since then have become staple diet of many Africans and were much used in trade conducted by the Arab Muslims.

## **ARAB WEAKNESS THAT PAVED WAY FOR THE PORTUGUESE CONQUEST OF EAST AFRICA**

**Question:** Examine the internal and external weaknesses of the Arabs that gave way to the Portuguese conquest of the East African Coast.

The Portuguese conquest of the East African coast began around 1498 AD when Vasco da Gama arrived in Malindi, took over control of the coast and ruled it for 200 years.

The Portuguese conquest of the coast of East Africa could be attributed to both the internal and external weaknesses of the Arabs.

1. The Arabs failed to unite under one umbrella of Islam which disunity resulted into enmity between different Sultans. The bad feeling that existed between Mombasa and Malindi, made the Sultan of Malindi to welcome Vasco da Gama and the relationship that was created in between helped the Portuguese to conquer the coast of East Africa.

2. The permission given by the Sultan of Malindi to the Portuguese to establish a base in Malindi with a pretext of fighting the Sultan of Mombasa was another factor that gave way to the Portuguese occupation. Once allowed in Malindi, the Portuguese started extending their influence to other areas of the coast. Thus, by 1530, the whole of the East African coastline was under the control of the Portuguese.
3. The Portuguese, at first, did not have the geographical knowledge of the coast. However, it was the Arab Sultan of Malindi who provided Vasco da Gama with a good pilot Ahmed bin Majid, who guided the Portuguese across and along the coast. This guidance helped the Portuguese so much in taking over control of the coast.
4. The inability of Arabs at the coast to consolidate their initial conquest and occupation of the coast also paved way for the Portuguese occupation of East Africa. Most Arabs who came to the coast of East Africa were traders and most of the time; they were carrying out their business. Thus, they were unable to consolidate their stay at the coast.
5. The Arabs were also not settled; they were moving in different areas, from one place to another looking for trade items. So, they couldn't settle in an area for a long period of time and did not claim any area at the coast. Therefore, when the Portuguese arrived at the coast, they easily overran it.
6. There had existed political conflicts and disputes between the different Arab families at the coast; like Busaid and Mazrui Arabs. These devoted most of their time in such conflicts; thus their unity was undermined and gave the Portuguese a fertile seed of conquering the coast of East Africa.
7. The participation of Arabs in slave trade alienated the local people from the Arabs. So many local people feared to come closer to the Arabs for fear of being taken as slaves. So, when the Portuguese arrived at the coast, many coastal people looked at the Portuguese as saviours and readily welcomed them. This opened the door for the Portuguese to occupy the coast of East Africa.
8. The Arabs themselves were arrogant, harsh and not friendly. They always kept themselves aloof from the Africans. These behavioral characteristics scared East African local people away from the Arabs, resulting in the local people hating Arabs and readily accepting the Portuguese.
9. The Arabs lacked backing from their home countries. This was due to the fact that most of them settled at the coast of East Africa as refugees; in other words had left their homelands as fugitives. Therefore, the Arabs had no connection between them and their home area. In fact, their occupation of the coast was much more accidental than an intended move.
10. The Portuguese had a fore laid desire and determination to conquer the coast of East Africa. With their conquest, the Portuguese thought to stop the spread of Islam, to revenge on the Muslims who had conquered and dominated their lands of Portugal and Spain between 711 – 1491 AD and for strategic reasons.
11. Some of the coastal people had lost power to Arabs. With the Arab occupation of the coast of East Africa, the Arabs imposed themselves as the rulers over the local people making them lose their independence. The local people developed hatred for

the Arabs and easily welcomed the Portuguese whom they saw as saviors to deliver them from the Arab rule.

12. The Portuguese were economically stronger than the people who had earlier inhabited the coast. Most of the coastal people were poor and could not finance the wars that the Portuguese had waged on them. They, thus, lost to the Portuguese and facilitated the Portuguese conquest and occupation of the East African coast.
13. The Portuguese used the divide and conquer policy that undermined the unity of the Arabs at the coast. The Portuguese conspired with some rulers against others. For instance they supported the Sultan of Malindi against that of Mombasa. This destroyed the brotherly relationship and unity the Arabs would have used to beat off any challenge from the Portuguese.
14. The Portuguese kept the coastal Arabs in poverty by imposing heavy taxes on them as well as denying them chance to participate in trade. With poverty striking, the coastal Arabs could not finance nor sustain the prolonged wars they fought with the Portuguese. Thus, they lost the coast to the Portuguese.
15. The Portuguese were tactical and brutal in invading and conquering coastal areas. For instance, the use of surprise attacks, being ruthless, looting and burning defeated towns scared the small and divided armies of the Arabs.
16. The Portuguese had the support of their home countries that they used to subdue and conquer many areas; the East African coast inclusive. Countries like Portugal and Spain supported the Portuguese financially and otherwise to acquire India, the Spice Islands and the coast of East Africa as Portuguese colonies.
17. The Portuguese had superior weapons that consisted of cannons; were not matched by the Arabs' one-bullet rifles. The Portuguese were also superior to the Arabs in terms of military warfare, training skills and armory.
18. The Portuguese came to the coast of East Africa after getting information about the nature of the Arabs. The Portuguese had got information about the Arabs by the early visitors like Henry the Navigator and more so, Vasco da Gama. So, they came prepared for any eventuality.
19. The Portuguese ensured their security by building a strong fort called Fort Jesus where they kept a strong military garrison to serve as a watch tower to all opposition. Therefore, with such a fort, once the Portuguese took over any area, it became difficult for the Arabs to reclaim it.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ISLAMISATION OF THE INTERIOR OF EAST AFRICA

#### FACTORS THAT HAD DELAYED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM INTO THE INTERIOR OF EAST AFRICA

**Question:** Account for the delayed spread of Islam into the interior of East Africa.

One impact of the Arab settlement at the coast of East Africa was the spread of Islam. However, not until after Said Sayyid transferred his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar did the effects of Islam start to be felt within the interior of East Africa.

There are a number of factors that can be advanced to explain why Islam took long to enter the interior of East Africa; hence Islam had little impact on the interior of East Africa before 1800.

1. Islam did not arrive in East Africa as a missionary religion. In fact, at no time was any organized effort made to convert African people to Islam on a large scale. Whatever gains made to spread Islam into the interior were as a result of personal contacts between the Arab traders or Swahili traders with the local people.
2. The Arabs who were responsible for the spread of Islam especially through trade did not go in the interior of East Africa mainly because almost all the trade goods which they needed were brought at the coast by the people from the interior.
3. The Swahili people, who had become Muslims and were used to fetch the trade goods from the interior, did not have enough knowledge regarding the new religion; hence they could not propagate it to the people of the interior where they often went to fetch the goods.
4. The Arabs who came to the coast of East Africa were essentially traders and not missionaries. This also meant that they had sketchy information about Islam. Therefore, what they propagated to the people who interacted with them that could be carried into the interior was not sufficient to spread Islam.
5. Since most of the Arabs, who had come to the East African Coast and were responsible for the spread of Islam, were refugees, immediately they got asylum at the coast, they settled and did not bother to advance into the interior; hence confining Islam only at coastal areas.
6. Many East African tribes did not allow Arab or Swahili traders to involve themselves in tribal affairs; rather restricted them to their trade activities if they were to keep their relationship with the interior tribes good. Thus, with this in mind, many Arabs or Swahili who ventured in the interior did only what they had gone for; hence limiting the spread of Islam into the interior.
7. The African Traditional Religion was also a delaying factor to the spread of Islam in the interior of East Africa. Africans felt that their religion was sufficient in delivering solutions to all their problems. For some time; therefore Islam could not make much sense to the people of the interior.

8. The Islamic practices which looked difficult and painful – like fasting and circumcision respectively – scared many adult Africans from converting to Islam. Hence, though the interior Africans were willing to yield and embrace Islam, they were limited by Islamic practices.
9. The very few people, who were interested in the spread of Islam, did not have enough geographical knowledge about the interior of East Africa and so could not move about effectively.
10. At the time when Islam reached the coast, transport and communication in the interior of East Africa was still poor. There were very few passable roads which at the time were still in a very poor state. Most of the journeys were made on foot and therefore very little work of spreading Islam into the interior could be done.
11. In the interior, there were thick vegetations infested with diseases and dangerous insects like tsetsefly and mosquitoes. So the coastal people feared to risk their lives yet there was no medicine or vaccine at the time.
12. In the interior, also, there lived some hostile tribes like the Nandi and Masai, whose areas wouldn't be penetrated for fearing to be attacked and killed by members of such tribes.
13. There were also wild animals found in many area of the interior of East Africa. For instance, the famous man-eaters of Tsavo – the lions – which had halted the movement of people through the area. Because of these animals, many Arab and Swahili Muslims feared to enter the interior.
14. The Arabs and Swahilis who introduced Islam in the interior of East Africa did not have the intention of spreading Islam. Their main interest was trade; Islam only coming second. So, Islam could only spread if the Arabs and Swahili had some free time.
15. Unlike Christian Missionaries, Arabs and Swahili who were responsible for spreading Islam lacked missionary incentives like food, clothes and the like, which would have incited people to convert to Islam in masses and at a high rate.
16. The interior of East Africa was isolated because travel from the sea into the interior was hindered by the scarp edge of the plateau and rapids in other areas. The Arabs were therefore unable to reach the interior in the way they were able to reach the coast.
17. The Swahili and Arabs who spread Islam in East Africa lacked enthusiastic organized missionary group that would have spread Islam in a much determined effort. In most cases, those who spread Islam would do it on individual basis.
18. The initial involvement of the Arabs and Swahilis in the slave trade business as agents to Europeans, also delayed the spread of Islam into the interior. Many people in the interior of East Africa kept away from Arab and Swahili traders for fear of being enslaved.
19. The small number of the initial Arabs and Swahili who got involved in the activity of spreading Islam also retarded the spread of Islam into the interior of East Africa. The

Arabs were very few and could not cover a wide area of the coast and then the interior; moreover they were further reduced by diseases and the climate of East Africa.

20. The problem of the language of communication also delayed the spread of Islam into the interior. There were so many ethnic languages in the interior which the Arabs didn't understand; yet on the other hand, Africans couldn't understand Arabic or Swahili.
21. In some areas, the African chiefs confined the Arabs and Swahili visitors to their palaces. This meant that interaction of the local people with the visitors was limited in scope to the people who lived near palaces. So those people who were far away from royal courts couldn't be reached.
22. Islam also faced very strong opposition and competition from the Christian missionary groups from Europe. These missionary groups penetrated into the interior and started preaching heavily against Islam.
23. The Arabs did not lay a firm foundation for the spread of Islam into the interior. They did not patrol the area as the Europeans did. Europeans first sent adventurers to prepare the place they were to operate in future.
24. Chartered companies like the German East African Company in Tanzania and the Imperial British East African Company also undermined the spread of Islam in the interior. These companies fought against any force that was against their designs. They also monopolized trade in the interior dispersing Arabs and Swahili from East Africa.
25. There was lack of financial support from the Arab countries to which the Arabs belonged. Arabia was not even aware that there was any Islamisation process in East Africa.
26. The delay to Africanise Islam also delayed the spread of Islam into the interior. The people in the interior did not perceive Islam in an African perspective. Islamic activities were conducted in Arabic and this gave the Africans the impression that Islam was for either Arabs or Swahilis.

## **FACTORS THAT FAVOURED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM INTO THE INTERIOR OF EAST AFRICA**

**Question:** Examine the factors which favoured the spread of Islam in the interior of East Africa.

Despite the delayed spread of Islam into the interior of East Africa, by mid Eighteenth Century, Islamic influence had been felt in the interior and there was wide spread of Islam in East Africa. This trend of events was facilitated by a number of factors.

1. The exhaustion of trade commodities and resources in areas around the coast forced the Arab and Swahili traders to move deeper into the interior of East Africa to look for these trade items. Since these Arabs and Swahilis were Muslims, they

helped in spreading Islam in those areas where they went to look for trade items.

2. The transfer of Said Sayyid's capital from Muscat to Zanzibar increased the volume of trade at the coast, leading to increase in demand for trade items. In order to satisfy this demand, the Arab and Swahili traders had to penetrate into the interior; and with them, Islam spread in the interior of East Africa.
3. The importation of the gun and other forms of ammunition guaranteed security to the Arab and Swahili traders. With the assurance of security, many Arabs and Swahilis were able to penetrate into the interior of East Africa; and these included those who had the interest of propagating Islam.
4. The establishment of trading posts in various places within the interior where supply of goods and merchandise would be channeled worked in favour of Islam. The Arabs permanently settled in some of those places and started interacting with the local community. Thus, conversion to Islam by the local people of the interior took place on account of such a man to man relations.
5. The accommodative nature of the kings in the interior of East Africa who welcomed the Arab and Swahili Muslims and also allowed them to pass through their lands also helped in the spread of Islam in the interior of East Africa. The Arab and Swahili interacted with the locals and influenced many to Islam.
6. Colonialism greatly enhanced the spread of Islam in the interior of East Africa. The colonialists created peaceful conditions that opened up the interior to the coast. This gave Arab and Swahili traders' access to the areas which had formerly been enclosed.
7. The colonialists and imperialists employed Muslims as official agents, soldiers, interpreters and domestic servants. These employed agents to the Europeans were influential in propagation of Islam, as they moved to different places with their masters.
8. There arose a conflict between Christian missionary groups for economic and political interests; for instance, the war between Fransa and Ingleza left the Christians divided. During such conflicts, the Muslims were busy spreading Islam.
9. Islam was also helped by the abolition of slave trade in East Africa. With the abolition of slave trade, the local African people changed their attitudes towards the Arabs. They came closer to one another and in the process; the local interior people found themselves converting to Islam.
10. The problem of language barrier, which existed before, was solved when the local interior people learned Swahili; no wonder Tanganyika and Kenya adopted Kiswahili as their national languages. The adoption of Kiswahili helped in the spread of Islam in the interior.
11. Improvement in the transport network by the colonialists especially after the construction of the Uganda-Kenya railway also facilitated the spread of Islam in the interior of East Africa. More good roads were also constructed which eased the Arabs movement into interior of East Africa. This facilitated the spread of Islam in the interior.

12. Establishment and construction of Qur'anic schools (Madrasas) and Mosques in various places of the interior helped in the spread of Islam in the interior. Muslim parents started sending their children to these centres, who after completion of their studies, went back to their home areas and helped in the progress of Islam.
13. The Portuguese conquest and occupation of East Africa also facilitated the spread of Islam into the interior of East Africa. With the Portuguese invasion of East Africa, the Arab and Swahili Muslims ran away from the coastal areas into deeper areas of the interior. These Muslim fugitives helped to spread Islam where they had gone to seek refuge.
14. The development of Swahili-Arab villages in the interior with a lot of Islamic culture helped in the spread of Islam in the interior. These villages became centres for furthering Islam, as they were set up with a mosque and a Qur'anic school.
15. Muslim ceremonies and festivals also helped in the spread of Islam into the interior of East Africa. During these ceremonies and festivals (Mauledis) people from different walks of life interact with Muslims. In the process many non-Muslims embraced Islam.
16. Similarity in practices between Islam and some African Traditional practices was also a factor in the spread of Islam in the interior. Practices like polygamy, circumcision and the like which Islam came with were not new to the people of interior. Thus, some tribes like the Gisu did not find any difficulty in embracing Islam.



## THE ROLE OF SOMALIS IN THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN EAST AFRICA

**Question: 14** Assess the role played by the Somalis in the spread of Islam in East Africa.

Around the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, a large number of Somalis converted to Islam. This was so after they were attacked by the Ethiopians and were forced to migrate southwards into the present day North-Eastern Kenya. They came into contact with Arab Muslims, who slowly influenced them to Islam.

After embracing Islam, the Somalis helped a lot in the spread of Islam in East Africa, and this they did in the following ways:

1. The Somalis were predominantly pastorists and moved from Somalia to the coastal areas of Kenya in search of pasture and water. In the process, they were taught Islam which in turn they spread to other parts of Africa where they went.
2. A section of Somalis comprised of coastal traders. Through trade activities, many Somali traders moved to Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. These Somali traders; and were Muslims, subsequently promoted the spread of Islam in those countries. For instance, the Somali traders put up a big Mosque in Mengo – Kisenyi area.
3. The majority of the Somalis, especially among the high level Somalis, are learned in Islamic studies and are qualified preachers (sheikhs). These Somali sheikhs helped to preach Islam.
4. The Somalis intermarried with other Africans in East Africa. Through such relations, interaction increased as relatives of the married couples came to live with the marital relatives. With such interactions, Islam was spread.
5. The Somalis had adopted Arab cultures with Islamic values, like the dressing code and other mannerisms. These directly or indirectly helped in the promotion of Islam.
6. Somalia has had a long war history, which has been regressive. This war has led to the dispersal of Somalis, many being Muslims, to many different parts of East Africa as refugees; hence spreading Islam to those particular area where they settled; an example is seen in Mengo in Uganda.
7. The Somalis have been sending their children to go and study Islam in Muslim countries of the Middle East. These students, on returning home after their studies, have helped in the teaching of Islam.
8. The Somalis adopted Arab-Muslim culture full of Islamic virtues. This has made Somalia to have a large population of Muslims of which many have helped in the spread of Islam.
9. The Somali community allowed Arabs to settle in Somali cities like Mogadishu. This enabled many Somalis to adopt Islam from what they learned from the Arab settlers to other people of the interior.
10. The wars that have existed for a number of centuries between the Somali Muslims and the enemy Christians of Ethiopia have also helped in the spread of Islam. This has been made possible because many Somalis have been displaced, moving to

various areas in East Africa. They ended up spreading Islam to those areas where they went to seek refuge.

11. Great Muslim leaders in Somalia, such as Saidi Muhammad, advocated for the spread of Islam within and outside Somalia. Saidi Muhammad being a respectable person and his words taken, the spread of Islam was conducted within Somalia and outside it as per his request.
12. The Somalis created permanent settlements and centres in East Africa, such as Isiro in Kenya and Mengo-Kisenyi in Uganda. In these centres, the Somali interact with other people of East Africa passing on Islamic culture to them.
13. Some rich Somalis have contributed materially to the spread of Islam. For instance, in Uganda, the Tawheed Association has helped in the propagation of Islam by constructing Mosques and Islamic schools and contributing to other Islamic programmes.
14. The Somalis have done a lot in organizing “Halka” programmes which stress spreading and teaching Islam. In addition, they have spread Islam through the ‘Sabiil-Ilah’ method where they spend a number of days in an area preaching Islam.

## **THE ROLE OF KINGS AND CHIEFS IN THE ISLAMISATION OF EAST AFRICA**

**Question:**     **Assess the role played by African kings and chiefs in the spread of Islam in East Africa.**

The introduction and spread of Islam in East Africa; especially in the hinterland, started at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century after Sultan Said Sayyid transferred his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar.

With Said Sayyid’s transfer of the capital, trade activities and the demand for trade items increased. The Arab and Swahili traders then penetrated into the interior and in the event of carrying out trade they spread Islam.

Despite the Arabs’ earlier trade contacts with the people of the interior, other factors also worked in favour or against the spread of Islam; among which the role of the African Kings and chiefs cannot be undermined.

1. The accommodative nature of the kings helped in the spread of Islam. The kings like Mirambo of the Nyamwezi, Muteesa I and Suuna I of Buganda welcomed the Arab Muslims to their lands and even allowed them to stay at their courts in addition to giving them places to stay in. For instance; Mirambo gave Arabs a place called Unyanyembe; from where they interacted with African whom they later influenced to Islam.
2. Some kings used forceful means to protect and propagate Islam. For instance, Kabaka Muteesa I and Kalema of Buganda and Mumia Nabongo of Mumialand forced their chiefs to convert to Islam and help teach their subjects the principles of Islam.
3. Some kings encouraged their subjects to embrace Islam. For instance, Kabaka

Muteesa I of Buganda called a congregation and read some verses of the Qur'an. He also encouraged fasting and performance of prayer.

4. Some chiefs who collaborated and served under colonialists used their influence to spread Islam. For instance, the majority of Akidas and Jumbes who acted under the Germans in Tanzania had converted to Islam. These used their offices to foster Islam to other people.
5. The chief who became Muslims, married many women and all became Muslims. In addition, many of the inlaws of the chiefs were, therefore, influenced to come to the palaces; thereby being influenced to Islam.
6. Some kings declared Islam as a state religion and forced their subjects to observe Islamic virtues. Foreinstance, King Nuhu Kalema of Buganda once declared Islam a state religion of Buganda Kingdom though this did not work for a long time.
7. Some kings and chiefs encouraged their people to move to other places to preach Islam. For instance, Muteesa I sent Muslim missionaries to Omukama Kabalega of Bunyoro to invite him to the folds of Islam.
8. Some chiefs put Muslims in key posts; for instance, during Mwanga's (Mwanga II) time, the post of the chief butcher of the king (Kawuuta) was given to a Muslim. Such people used their official positions to spread Islam.
9. Other kings and chiefs helped to promote Islam by destroying African Traditional beliefs. For instance, Kabaka Muteesa I barred the burying of kings and members of the royal family without jaw bones.
10. The kings, together with their chiefs, promoted trade in their areas of operation. In such trade, Arab Muslims took part; It brought them into close contact with one another (African and Arab Muslims) and in the process of interaction, Islam was spread.
11. Some kings and chiefs accepted and embraced Islam. Kings, like Muteesa I and Muhammad Nabongo of Mumialand, after converting to Islam, used their positions to promote the faith of Islam.
12. The kings and chiefs promoted and developed Islam by building some Islamic facilities like Mosques. In Buganda, as an example, Kabaka Muteesa I put up a mosque at his court in Nabulagala in which he even acted as the Imaam. He also ordered for the erection of other Mosques in other areas by chiefs.
13. Some kings and chiefs incorporated Arab and Swahili Muslims in their local affairs which helped very much in farthing the cause of Islam. For instance, Snay bin Amir and Ahmed bin Ibrahim discouraged Kabaka Suuna I of Buganda from killing his subjects. They told him about Allah. In this way, Islam was preached to Suuna and his officers.
14. Some kings, like Nabongo, took farther steps to invite Muslim scholars to their areas who helped much in the purification and clarification of Islam by teaching the real principles and contents of Islam like prayers, fasting, burial ceremonies and many other virtues.

15. They opened up links with the internal and distant Muslim communities. This intensified the flocking in of more Muslim teachers and traders, who helped much in the dissemination of Islam. For instance, Kabaka Suuna I opened friendly relationship with the Sultan Said in Zanzibar. From then onwards, more Arabs came into Buganda.
16. Some kings opened up several commercial centres in their areas. These commercial centres later acted as convergence and divergence areas. For instance, Mirambo opened up commercial centres in Unyanyembe and Ujiji; yet Suuna I established one in Mengo.
17. The kings promoted Islamic Education by establishing learning in their courts from where; even the kings and chiefs themselves were taught Islam. For instance, Muteesa I established a learning centre in Nabulagala, from where he learnt how to read the Qur'an. Suuna I had also done the same. It was, in fact, reported that by the time he died in 1856, Suuna I had learned four chapters of the Holy Qur'an by heart.
18. Some Kings like Muteesa I wanted to adopt new ideas; like writing, which could provide better methods of transmitting state intelligence and messages than the traditional ways of verbal communication. Thus, Arabs were invited and worked as clerks and secretaries to the king.
19. The submissive loyalty to some African kings was another important factor responsible for the introduction and dissemination of Islam in its early days in East Africa. When the king got interested in something, it was very hard for his subjects not to adopt it. So, the moment the king accepted Islam, all his subjects had to embrace it in order to curry favour of their master.
20. The expansion policy of the African Kings, led them to be at war with neighboring kingdoms. Thus when the Arabs came with guns, it became an opportunity to the kings to welcome them so that the kings would provide them with guns to win battles. This brought in the Arabs to relay behind the king ; and in the process they introduced Islam.

However, some kings and chiefs worked against the spread and progress of Islam in East Africa in general and their areas in particular.

21. They mixed Islam with African Traditional beliefs. Some kings refused to surrender completely their traditional virtues which made Islam Impure and contaminated; thereby retarding the total Islamisation process in East Africa.
22. Some kings turned against Islam; for example Mutesa I at one time killed about a hundred Muslims in his court and also went ahead to destroy and burn Islamic centres and structures. All these were detrimental to the progress of Islam.
23. Some chiefs levied very high taxes on the Arabs and Swahili traders in the areas where these traders passed. For instance, chief Mnuasera in Tanganyika made Arabs pay very high taxes which made business there very unprofitable. This made the Arabs abandon the area.
24. Some kings and chiefs restricted Arabs from moving freely through and around their kingdoms; and only kept them around their palaces. For instance, Muteesa I

restricted Snay bin Amir's movements by making him his advisor. This move prevented the Arabs from interacting with the people; hence Islam couldn't be propagated.

25. Some kings were of the view of freedom of worship. Such kings and chiefs allowed their subjects freedom to take on any religion of their choice. As such, the religious freedom introduced saw Christianity outcompeting Islam. For instance, although Islam was the first in Buganda, the Muslim population is the minority when compared to Christian counterparts.
26. Some kings invited Christian missionaries to their areas of influence which brought in stiff competition with Muslims for converts and hindered the spread of Islam. Kabaka Muteesa I, here acted as an example when he invited Christian missionaries to Buganda through Henry Stanley; and the first Christian group arrived in 1877.
27. Some kings accepted Islam, only by circumstance operating; and whenever circumstances turned against Islam; they opposed and worked against its progress. The case as this was seen with Muteesa I of Buganda who accepted Islam because he wanted help in form of guns from the Arabs. And when the Europeans arrived in Buganda with superior guns, he abandoned Islam and took on Christianity
28. Some kings, like Muteesa I, used forceful means and imposed Islam on their subjects without their conviction. Many of the people who seemed reluctant to practice Islam were rounded up on the order of the king and put to death. Such king's attitude made people to hate Islam.

## **ROLE OF SUDANESE SOLDIERS IN THE ISLAMISATION OF EAST AFRICA**

**Question:** Examine the role played by the Sudanese soldiers in the spread of Islam in East Africa.

In 1880s, a revolt broke out in the areas of Egypt and Sudan. This revolt came to be known as the Mahadist Revolt. Many Sudanese soldiers found their ways into the revolt as solders and most of them were influenced to convert to Islam. However, following the success of Mahadist Revolution, many Sudanese soldiers were demobilized.

In the late 1890's Captain Lugard was given a mission to colonise the areas along the River Nile basin which was important in the life of Egypt and Sudan they controlled. However, he did not have soldiers other than using those who had been cut off from the centre of operation in Egypt by the activities of Mahd.

The soldiers popularly known as Sudanese Muslim soldiers were now used to prepare Africans for colonialism. These soldiers played their political role positively to enhance the spread of Islam.

1. Captain Lugard used some of the Sudanese soldiers to administer some areas on

his behalf. These Sudanese soldiers used their positions to influence the local people under their jurisdiction into Islam.

2. The Sudanese Soldiers were used to bring down any resistance against the colonial masters. Incidentally, since these soldiers were Muslims, whenever they went, they influenced the local people into becoming Muslims.
3. The European control of the Equatorial Province which included Southern Sudan and covered Northern Uganda was facilitated by the use of Sudanese soldiers, who were basically Muslims. They influenced many Acholi chiefs to learn Arabic and adopted Islamic mannerisms; hence facilitating the spread of Islam.
4. Many Sudanese soldiers who came as soldiers of Emin Pasha married local women and produced many children as a result; hence increasing the number of Muslim population in East Africa.
5. With intermarriage between the Sudanese soldiers and local women, many relatives of the women married to these soldiers came to live with their in-laws. All these people ended up being influenced to convert to Islam.
6. Some of the Sudanese soldiers served as Muslim teachers who acted as volunteer missionaries instructing the East African people in the principles of Islam. This helped to increase the Islamic awareness to the local populace.
7. In Kenya, the Sudanese soldiers were stationed and deployed in different areas like Marchakos, Mombassa and Kibera. These troupes came with their families and settled in Kenya. During peaceful and resting periods, some of them got involved in Islamic activities that influenced many Kenyans to Islam.
8. After rendering their services to the British in many areas of East Africa, the Sudanese soldiers were demobilized. The majority of them got to areas like Kibera in Kenya and Bombo, Entebbe and west Nile in Uganda and settled there. They put up Mosques and a Madarasa was built adjacent to the Mosque to facilitate the impartment of the Islamic knowledge to the local people.
9. Some Sudanese soldiers after retiring got absorbed into the civilian life. Through interaction with the masses, they passed on the Islamic principles to the people they interacted with.
10. The Sudanese soldiers who served colonial governments and masters used the money they earned from the colonial government to finance Islamic activities like construction of Mosques, Islamic schools and organizing Mauledid gatherings.
11. Some Sudanese soldiers, after retiring or being demobilized, and using the money they earned from colonial government set up businesses in many big towns around East Africa. They employed many people whom they slowly influenced to Islam.
12. Some Sudanese were made chiefs in various areas of East Africa. For instance one Sudanese called Aringa was made a chief in West Nile. The made-chief Sudanese used their entire influence and status to spread Islam.
13. Because of the obedience the Sudanese Soldiers showed towards the colonial masters, the attitude of the colonialists started to change positively. The colonialists

encouraged the teaching of the basics of Islam and allowed the practice of the religion.

14. Many of the Sudanese soldiers were Muslims and held high places in the army; thus, they exercised their influence and led a number of people into converting to Islam.
15. In Buganda, the Sudanese helped Baganda Muslims in their struggle against Christian missionaries and their allies the British imperialists. For instance, they helped Muslims in their fight against the forces of Mac-Donald, an IBEA company official.
16. The Sudanese soldiers also tried to establish Islamic Kingdoms, especially in Uganda. For example, they made attempts to re-install Prince Nuhu Mbogo as a Muslim king even though Mbogo refused the offer.

## THE EAST AFRICAN INTERIOR TRADE ROUTES

### DEVELOPMENT OF INTERIOR TRADE ROUTES

**Question:** Describe the establishment and development of the Interior trade routes by Arab traders.

As trade boomed at the coast, the demand for tradable items also increased; and in order to maintain a continuous supply of commodities, the Arab traders ventured into the interior; thus the development of trade routes that ran into the interior from the coast.

Several trade routes developed; however the following were more profound;

One of these was the Southern trade route that began around the coastal towns of Kilwa and Sofala, and went westwards through Yao land to areas of Lake Nyasa. This route developed due to the availability of gold in that region and it was dominated by the Yao African traders.

The second interior trade route was the Central route which started from Bagamoyo on the mainland opposite Zanzibar Island and climbed from the coastal plain inland to Tabora, where it split into branches.

From Tabora, one route continued westwards towards Lake Tanganyika to Ujiji. This was famous for copper.

Another route ran northward, passed through Karagwe to the northern end of Lake Victoria, where it forked north to Bunyoro through Buganda. In fact, using this route, as early as 1852, an Arab trader Snay Bin Amir had reached the courts of King Suuna II of Buganda.

There was the Northern trade route which started around the coastal areas of Tanga, and struck inland past Mount Kilimanjaro towards Lake Victoria. This was famous for slave raiding and Ivory.

To the north, also there was one trade route that started around Pangani and Mombasa through the land of Kamba and Nyika plateau to Lake Victoria. This route was controlled by Akamba. However, this route was made dangerous due to presence of warlike Masai.

Another interior trade route was used by the Khartoumers and started from Sudan then Southwards to Northern Uganda, Turkana land, Via Masai land to the coast. This route was known for Ivory and Slaves.

With the establishment of interior trade routes, Muslim Arab and Swahili traders from the coast were able to penetrate the interior of East Africa and many settled there permanently.

The Arabs at the coast wanted to obtain interior goods like gold, Ivory and slaves; yet the interior people wished to get luxurious items that the Arabs had come with at the coast. This necessitated continuous movement to and from the coast; thus the development of trade routes.

Interior trade routes also developed due to failure of African traders like Nyamwezi, Kamba and Yao to satisfy the demand of goods the Arabs at the coast wanted. This made African traders penetrate the interior to get such items of trade.

The Southern trade route developed after the discovery of gold deposits around Lake Nyasa. Because of the gold advantage, many Arabs around Kilwa coastline started to move into the interior to have monopoly of gold.

## **FACTORS FOR THE EMERGENCE OF INTERIOR TRADE ROUTES**

**Question:** Account for the development of Interior Trade Routes in East Africa.

1. The need to explore opportunities for tradable items marked the beginning of establishment of interior trade routes. For example, the establishment of the southern trade route was due to presence of gold deposits around Lake Nyasa.
2. The transfer of Sayyid Said's capital to Zanzibar increased the volume of trade at the coast. In order to keep continuous supply of commodities, the Arab traders had to venture into the interior where the commodities were in plenty; thus the development of trade routes.
3. The existence of traditional small trade paths in the interior of East Africa helped in the development of interior trade routes. This was so because when the volume of trade increased, the existing trading paths eventually developed into major interior trade routes.
4. The need to facilitate movement of goods from the interior to the coast also facilitated the development of interior trade routes. The Arabs and Swahili traders used these routes to deliver trade commodities from the interior markets to the coast.
5. The rise of African traders was another factor for the development of interior trade



routes. The Nyamwezi, Akamba, Baganda, Yao and Banyoro among others increased exchange relations with the Arab and Swahili traders which automatically went with the development of trade routes.

6. The establishment of trading posts in the interior of East Africa meant the development of trade routes that would link up with such areas with the coast. Such trade posts included Ujiji, Tabora, and Kisumu among others.
7. The increased demand for slaves and other trade items by the coastal and Arab traders meant the need to penetrate the interior, which also necessitated the development of interior trade routes.
8. The presence of tradable items deep into the interior of East Africa, such as gold and Ivory which were got from as far as Congo, Bunyoro and Lake Nyasa. This increased penetration by Arab and Swahili traders and so was the development of the interior trade routes.
9. Many African kings and chiefs encouraged the establishment and maintained trade routes in their areas with the purpose of levying taxes on all these traders who passed through their territories. For instance, the central trade route was maintained by the Nyamwezi under Chief Mirambo and Nyungu ya Mawe.
10. The increased demand for foreign produced-manufactured goods by African also led to the development of trade routes. Goods like guns, gunpower, beads, household items and the like were highly needed in Africa. So Africans had to move to the coast using the trade routes to acquire those commodities.
11. East Africans who served as guides to Arab and Swahili traders moving in the interior helped in the establishment and development of the interior trade routes. The guides provided traders with information regarding East Africa that saved them from dangerous areas. It was in such areas that traders passed frequently and with time developed into trade routes.
12. The presence of ready market in some parts of the interior of East Africa also influenced the development of interior trade routes. East African kings and chiefs established market centres that made it easy for traders to acquire interior goods. Chiefs Fundikira established one at his capital Unyanyembe, Mirambo at Urambo and many others.
13. East Africans maintained the trade routes in safe and conducive conditions for traders to pass through into and out of the interior of East Africa. Some Africans served as guards to the traders moving in the interior; one of the factors that facilitated the rapid development of interior trade routes.

## THE EAST AFRICAN INTERIOR TRADE ROUTES AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN EAST AFRICA

**Question:** Examine the role played by interior trade routes in the spread of Islam in East Africa.

As trade boomed at the coast, the demand for tradable items also increased. The Arab traders then ventured into the interior; thus trade routes developed.

Therefore, trade routes developed from coastal areas like Mombasa, Kilwa, Zanzibar and Bagamoyo among others into the interior of East Africa. These routes though were used to deliver tradable items from the interior to the coast, helped a lot in the spread of Islam.

1. The trade routes helped people from the interior access the coast and also the coastal Muslim traders used the trade routes to access the interior. Thus, through continuous interaction, the Muslim Arab traders passed on Islam to the local people.
2. The trade routes helped Muslim Arab traders to reach courts and palaces of the interior East African chiefs and kings. For example, the route that originated from Bagamoyo through Tabora to Buganda brought in Arabs who introduced Islam to Buganda during Ssuuna II's reign as king of Buganda.
3. The interior trade routes unlocked the areas that were originally inaccessible due to the impassable escapements and bushy features. With the establishment of trade routes, the Muslim Arab traders were able to reach any area where they interacted with the local people and they passed on Islam to them.
4. The trade routes provided and ensured security to Muslim Arab traders. This was due to the fact that they were established in areas already declared peaceful zones, free of wild animals and hostile tribes. Using such routes, the Muslims reached many areas where they spread Islam.
5. The interior trade routes led to the development of the long distance trade which brought about contact between Muslim Arab traders and the people of East Africa. Indeed, the introduction of Islam in Nyamwezi land and Buganda was attributed to existence of trade routes that ran through these regions.
6. The interior trade routes linked the interior of East Africa to the coast where Islam had already taken root. Using the trade routes, Muslim Arab traders easily accessed the interior and were able to reach different areas where they took the message of Islam with them.
7. As a result of trade routes, there developed a number of trade posts. These trade posts became meeting points between Africans and the Muslim Arab traders and through continuous interaction, Islam was spread.
8. During their frequent movement through the interior of East Africa, Muslim Arab traders witnessed many Africans practicing pagan rituals. On their return to Arabia, they persuaded Muslim scholars and teachers to come to East Africa; and indeed Islam was taught.
9. The Muslim Arab traders organized long distance trade into the interior of East Africa. It was thus those people along the trade routes that first adopted Islam from

the Muslim Arab traders.

10. The existence of trade routes led to the progress of trade which in turn brought in more Muslim Arab traders. These traders increased Islamic awareness in the areas because they freely mixed with the local people whom they influenced to Islam.
11. The trade posts that developed courtesy of the interior trade routes grew into bigger markets. These markets became centres for further diffusion of Islam through interaction between Muslim Arab traders and local people who came into these markets.
12. With the establishment of trade routes, many centres of Islamic learning came up. Muslim Arab traders set up Qur'an schools and mosques where people in the interior went and they were taught Islam.
13. The local Africans who lived along the trade routes got employment as porters and middlemen to the Muslim Arab traders. The jobs put Africans in close contact with the Muslim Arab and Swahili traders and eventually they adopted Islam.
14. When the European Imperialists came to East Africa, they improved the existing trade routes into bigger road network. The Muslim also utilized these facilities to reach many areas where they spread Islam.
15. Along the trade routes, there developed important commercial towns like Tabora, Ujiji, Mwanza and Unyanyembe among others. These towns became centres of attraction and the relationship that developed therefrom between Muslim Arab traders and the local population resulted in the Islamization process.
16. Trade routes led to emergence of an elite Muslim business that owned wealth and used it in the dissemination of Islam. Muslim Arab, Indian, Swahili and African traders set up businesses along the trade routes and their interaction with the local people helped Islam to spread.
17. The interior trade routes became leading ways for the interior people to go to the coast where they studied Islam. For example, Prince Nuhu Mbogo was able to reach Zanzibar where he was exiled. While in Zanzibar (1893 – 1895), he learnt a lot more about Islam.
18. The role of trade routes can be attributed to African kings and chiefs who allowed these routes to pass through their territories. This free movement of Muslim traders followed the free dissemination of Islamic influence and civilization.
19. As a result of trade activities, there developed trade posts along trade routes. These became meeting points between Africans and Muslim Arab traders. Through continuous interaction between traders and Africans, Islam was spread.
20. The trade routes led to the discovery of tradable items which were found in many scattered areas in the interior of East Africa. For example, copper around Ujiji, salt from Bunyoro, slaves from Buganda. The Muslim Arab traders were able to reach those areas where they carried the message of Islam with them.

However, the existence of trade routes was deterrent to the spread of Islam.

1. The European traders and Christian missionaries used the interior trade routes to gain access to many areas where they competed with Muslims for both converts and trade opportunities.
2. The existence of the interior trade routes worked for the slow spread of Islam in the interior as many Africans moved to the coast where trade was more profitable and the standard of living seemed higher than the interior.
3. The interior trade routes heightened the conflicts between rivaling African communities in the interior. The introduction of fighting equipment, like the gun, fueled inter-tribal wars and the area became insecure for Muslim preachers to operate in.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## THE COMING AND SPREAD OF ISLAM IN TANZANIA

### ISLAM IN THE NYAMWEZI LAND UNDER CHIEF MIRAMBO

**Question: 1** Examine the factors that facilitated the spread of Islam in Nyamwezi land.

Around 1830, Muslim traders, Arabs and Swahilis penetrated the East African Hinterlands of which Nyamwezi land is part. Many people of the interior welcomed these traders and made them their right-wingers and close friends.

Many Muslim traders penetrated the interior of Tanzania using already existing trade routes formerly used by East African traders; like Akamba and Nyamwezi and finally reached Nyamwezi land, which was by then under Mirambo as its leader.

With the Arab Muslim and Swahili arrival in Nyamwezi land, a number of factors started operating that facilitated the spread of Islam in this land of the Nyamwezi.

1. On their settlement in the Nyamwezi land, the Arab and Swahili Muslims established and built a Swahili town near Mirambo's headquarters at Unyanyembe. This town also worked as the Muslim administrative and attractive trading centre.
2. The Arabs proved to be peaceful to Mirambo and his people, and because of their behaviour, Mirambo allowed them to operate in his area of influence. This peaceful environment that was created brought about interaction between the Arabs and the Nyamwezi people that facilitated the spread of Islam.
3. Due to the peaceful behaviour the Arab and Swahili Muslims exhibited towards the Nyamwezi, the Nyamwezi people welcomed and hosted them in their land. So, because of such hospitality of the Nyamwezi people and their king worked in favour of Islam.
4. The Nyamwezi's earlier participation in long distance trade, had brought them into close contact with the Arabs and Swahili Muslims at the coast. The coastal traders taught the Nyamwezi Swahili language and Islam. Consequently, the interaction that resulted there between led into conversion of the Nyamwezi to Islam.
5. Due to the Arab and Swahili trader's influence near Mirambo's capital at Tabora, the capital became not only an important economic centre but also a religious metropolitan. It was, in fact, from Tabora that the Arabs spread Islam all over the Nyamwezi land.
6. With the coastal traders teaching the Nyamwezi Swahili language, the Nyamwezi with time, adopted Swahili as their regional language, which had a bias towards Islamic culture. This move highly facilitated the spread of Islam in the region.
7. It was also through Arab-Swahili influence that many tribal chiefs in Mirambo's empire embraced Islam. Those chiefs, who had converted, in turn, influenced their subjects also to convert to Islam. With the passage of years, Islam had spread to the whole of the Nyamwezi land.

8. In order to strengthen trade relations with the Arabs, Mirambo sent his chiefs to collect Ivory and other trade items and exchanged them with the goods the coastal traders had bought. Wherever these chiefs went, they directly or indirectly passed on Islam to the local people.
9. The Nyamwezi were also used by the Arabs as porters, messengers and labourers in the trade mission. These employed Nyamwezi people became Islamised and therefore, it was not surprising that they played a leading role in the spread of Islam among the local people.
10. The Nyamwezi also intermarried with the Arabs during the course of conducting trade. Such intermarriages widened the scope of relationships; as their offsprings were converted to Islam and the interaction between all these people increased the Muslim population in Nyamwezi land.
11. The other event that facilitated the spread of Islam in Nyamwezi land was the Ngoni invasion of this region. The Ngoni had a habit of capturing people and taking them in camps. Many of the Nyamwezi who were taken as captives had already become Muslims. They mixed up with other people and influenced them to Islam.
12. The Ngoni invasion on the Nyamwezi land also led them (the Ngoni) to raid villages. In the process, many Nyamwezi people were displaced. However some of the Nyamwezi had already become Muslims and wherever they went, they facilitated the conversion of the people there to Islam.
13. The coming of the Germans in the Nyamwezi land also helped in the spread of Islam. The Germans used the Nyamwezi to foster their imperialistic tendencies like they were used as soldiers, guides, and junior officials among other jobs. The Nyamwezi, since many had become Muslims, influenced other people to embrace Islam.
14. The German imperialists also established many labour camps in and around the Nyamwezi land where they put people of different backgrounds including the already Islamised Nyamwezi. In these labour camps, which were set up deep in Nyamwezi land, many people became Muslims a result of interaction.
15. The presence of an inland market for the Arabs at Ujiji near lake Tanganyika, which was then under Mirambo's influence, also helped in the diffusion of Islam in Nyamwezi land. Ujiji had been developed into a big commercial town by the Arabs and therefore became a centre of attraction. So many people attracted to Ujiji found themselves converting to Islam.
16. The Arabs and Swahili traders carried out lucrative and prosperous business in the Nyamwezi land based at Ujiji, where Muhammad bin Hamid (Tipu – Tipu) became very popular and rich. With this trade flourishing at Ujiji, the coastal traders came into contact with the local people, many of whom they converted to Islam.
17. With the prosperity of Ujiji growing at very fast rate, many Muslim teachers (Sheikhs) and scholars (Ulamas) started flocking into Ujiji and many other parts of Nyamwezi land. These teachers and scholars put up Mosques and Madrasas (Qur'anic schools) where they conducted Islamic education.

## **FACTORS THAT HAD HINDERED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN TANZANIA**

**Question: Examine the factors that had hindered the spread of Islam in Tanzania.**

The faith of Islam penetrated Tanzania hinterland around 1830, when Sultan Said Sayyid transferred his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar.

Just as it could be expected, the spread of Islam in Tanzania had a number of deterring factors. The factors that had hindered the spread of Islam in Tanzania have been multidimensional; and include the following.

1. The influence of African Traditional religions in the country created ideological confrontation with Islam in Tanzania. Though the local people tended to embrace Islam, they did not convert completely; rather they continued to practice their traditional religion alongside Islam.
2. The coming and spread of Christianity by European missionaries was another hinderance to the progress of Islam. Unlike Islam that was spread unconsciously through trade activities, Christian Missionaries came with all the intention to stamp out Islam. Christianity competed with Islam for converts; thus becoming a hinderance.
3. Unlike Islam, Christian Missionaries provided several incentives that lured many people to Christianity. Christians provided incentives like health care, education, gifts; they also set up schools and hospitals that provide stiff competition to Islam. Hence Christianity won more converts than Islam.
4. Islam lacked conscious method of preaching in this area of operation. There was very little effort of trying to spread Islam in an organized form. Islam either spread through trade contacts or personal endeavours on voluntary basis because of interaction.
5. Christian Missionaries used the slave trade factor as a tool to demolish Islam; this was because Arabs had participated in slave trade in East Africa. Because of that, the Missionaries made people to believe that Islam was a religion of barbaric people who did not have any respect for human life. This scared many people from Islam.
6. By 1910, the Germans had intensified their Christian missionary work as a measure to counteract the threat of Islam. Education was put under the control of Christian missionaries to deny Muslims any chance for education. Muslims were magnalised which Muslim revolvers were either hanged, deported or killed.
7. After Said Sayyid's transfer of his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar, the Arab traders started carrying Islam inland of Tanganyika. However, converting people to Islam was solely the work of isolated Arabs, Swahili and traders. It was not directed by any missionary organization and lacked plan, money and literature.
8. Another factor that limited the spread of Islam in Tanzania was the concentration of Muslims in Urban areas. These included the traders and other agents who had to spread Islam. This meant that there were no close ties between the agents of Islam with the rural people who formed the majority of population.
9. Many Islamic schools have been established in Tanzania; together with Muslim hospitals, libraries and dispensaries after the First World War However, the forces

behind these establishments, like the Agha Khan did not support Muslim Missionary work for they believed that conversion should result from the activity of the individuals.

10. Muslims mostly conducted village Qur'anic schools, where the standard of religious and secular learning was low; and as Muslims were afraid of religious pressure if they sent their children to Christian Schools, therefore Muslim communities were apt to be backward and religiously handicapped.
11. The Christian Missionaries led by Rev. John Rebman, realized that Christian converts must be taught to read the Bible, which in future was to be their guide. Thus, they published a Swahili dictionary with a translated part of the Bible. This move was to counteract the spread of Islam which had not made any effort to translate the Qur'an into local or any language understood by the local people.
12. The German imperialists used the German East African Company (GEACO) to monopolise all trading activities in Tanzania, pushing the Arabs and Swahilis out of trade; yet it was through trade that Islam spread due to commercial interactions. This suffocated Arab – Swahili movement in Tanzania and Islam which had spread largely because of trade suffered as a result.
13. In the early years, communication and transport were still difficult. The Arabs who were the flag bearers in spreading Islam largely depended on caravan movements using unsurveyed and poor trade routes which were almost always impassable. This limited the movement of Arab Muslims; and thus the spread of Islam was compromised.
14. Islam has also been hindered by the delay by the stakeholders to establish in addition to having strong relations with the Islamic world especially the Middle East, where Islam came from.
15. Communism and socialist tendencies had kept the people of Tanzania in a closed society and Muslims from the Muslim world, the majority being capitalists were reluctant to come to Tanzania and spread Islam there.
16. In the early days, there were divisions arising from difference in Islamic doctrines; like the number of people to make congregation to pray Juma (Friday) prayers; whether or not to pray Dhuhr after Juma prayers; and many other doctrines. Such differences jeopardized the smooth spreading of Islam in Tanzania.
17. Many Arab and Swahili Muslims who penetrated into Tanzania in the early days were essentially traders and not missionaries and; thus, had sketchy if no information about Islam. Therefore, what the Arabs and Swahili Muslims knew about Islam was not enough to spread the faith effectively.
18. The Arabs and Swahilis who introduced Islam in Tanzania did not do it with the intention of doing so. Their main interest was trade and not to spread Islam. Therefore, the work of propagating Islam was only done if the Arabs or Swahilis got some free time off their trade business.
19. The problem of language barrier has also been on the forefront in hindering the spread of Islam in Tanzania. In Tanzania hinterland there are so many ethnic



languages which the Arabs and Swahilis didn't understand; yet, before the introduction of Swahili, Africans didn't understand Arabic and Kiswahili.

20. The delay by the Supreme Council of Tanzania to Africanise Islam also hindered the spread of Islam in Tanzania. People of Tanzania took long to perceive Islam in an African perspective; giving an impression that Islam was for either Arabs or Swahilis. This resulted from conducting Islamic activities in Arabic.
21. After independence, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere introduced the theory of Communism. This philosophy of African Communism emphasized uniformity of the people socially, politically and economically as they had to do every thing together. Hence, this weakened the religious base.

## **FACTORS THAT FAVOURED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN TANZANIA**

**Question: Assess the factors that facilitated the spread of Islam in Tanzania.**

Islam first spread in the Tanzania hinterland around 1830 when Arab and Swahili traders started penetrating the interior following the increase in demand for trade items.

When Islam penetrated the interior of Tanzania, it initially concentrated in Urban areas in the central areas of Tanzania and then upcountry. However, the spread of Islam in Tanzania was influenced by a number of factors some of which early and others recent.

1. The presence of trade routes that ran from the coast extending deep into the interior of Tanzania to the shores of lakes Victoria and Tanganyika helped the spread of Islam in Tanzania. The Arabs and Swahili traders, who used these trade routes, came into contact with the local inhabitants of the areas the routes passed. Through constant interaction, Islam was passed on to the local inhabitants.
2. Many people from the interior of Tanzania, especially from Nyamwezi land, found their way to the coast to work for the Arabs as labourers. Whenever they returned home, they would return as Muslims. They, therefore, spread the elements in their professions among their relatives; Islam inclusive. In fact, this influence was instrumental in the spread of Islam in Nyamwezi land.
3. When Said Sayyid transferred his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar around 1840s, trade activities increased at the coast. This also increased the demand for trade items at the coast. Thus, the new demand forced the Arabs to venture deep into the interior where the tradable items were got from. Arab traders carried with them their religion (Islam) inland; hence, at this stage, Islam took root in several places.
4. At the time of the spread of Islam in the very early days, the Arabs were seen to be having an exclusive civilization. Thus, Muslim civilization was identified as the best way of life as opposed to the African Traditional ways of life. This caused many Africans with a developed mind to associate themselves with Arabs in every aspect of their life and ended up embracing Islam.
5. Another factor was the ease with which Islam could be adopted. Many cultural values of the Africans were not changed by Islam. It either enriched or slightly modified them. Thus, when one converted to Islam, he was not seen as an alien. This can be evidenced by individual failure to establish the difference between a nominal

Muslim and a pure Muslim.

6. The Ngoni invasion of Tanzania also helped in the spread of Islam in the region. When the Ngoni attacked areas of Tanzania, they captured some people in Tanzania and put them in camps. Later, those who had already converted to Islam influenced their fellow captives to embrace Islam.
7. The Ngoni invasion on the central areas of Tanzania also led them (The Ngoni) to raid villages. In the process, many Nyamwezi people were displaced. However, some of the people, especially the Nyamwezi, had already become Muslims; and wherever they went, they facilitated the conversion of the people there to Islam.
8. The role of chiefs, with specific reference to Mirambo of the Nyamwezi is worth mentioning. Chiefs like Mirambo allowed the Arabs and Swahili Muslims to stay in their areas of control and they established trading centres therein. Due to Arab and Swahili trade activities, many local people were influenced to Islam through interaction.
9. Because of Mirambo's good relations with the Arabs, many of his chiefs embraced Islam. These were taught the principles of faith and the Swahili language. These chiefs were sent to different areas to collect trade items. So, wherever these chiefs went, they directly or indirectly passed on Islam to the local people.
10. Mirambo's need to fulfill his expansion motives brought him a need to invite the Arabs to his empire, who supplied him with guns. The Arabs, however, established permanent trade posts like Tabora, Unyanyembe, Ujiji, Nkota-Nkota, Bagamoyo and many others. Thus, as many people settled in these areas, basically because of trade, they were influenced by the Arab ways of life; which also included Islam.
11. The period of European occupation from 1885 onwards, was one in which the Muslim faith (Islam) spread to central and southern parts of Tanzania. European penetration of the interior meant that the Swahili and interior people who were Muslims, found openings as troops, traders, interpreters, servants and many more; thus helping to spread Islam.
12. Islam also spread in Tanzania due to personal contact between Muslims and indigenous people. The local tribesmen watched very closely every activity of the Muslims; like praying, dressing code, their dealings with fellow human beings and others. They admired such activities; thus some of these tribes lost their Pagan beliefs and embraced Islam without any active persuasion.
13. Tanzania's nearness to the coastal towns, like Zanzibar, along the East African coast where Islam had already flourished for many centuries also facilitated the spread of Islam in Tanzania. So, whatever the means, Islam easily penetrated the interior of Tanzania through trade relations between the coastal Muslims and the interior Tanzania people.
14. The development of Swahili-Arab villages in the interior of Tanzania; like at Ujiji and Unyanyembe also speeded up the islamisation process in Tanzania. These Swahili-Arab villages became centres of attractions; and since their cultural practices were largely Islamic, Africans who went to such areas were easily converted to Islam.

15. Islam also spread in Tanzania through the role of individual Muslim teachers and missionaries who kept on moving from one area to another. These put up simple Mosques and study centres from where they taught simple Islamic knowledge to people they came across.
16. The coming of the German colonialists in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century also helped in the spread of Islam in Tanzania. The Germans used many local people to impose their imperialistic tendencies. The local people who worked under German services influenced other local people to become Muslims in their areas of operation, since most of them had already become Muslims.
17. The Germans established many labour camps where they put people of different backgrounds, including Muslims. In these labour camps, many people became Muslims as a result of interaction.
18. In order to exploit the interior of Tanzania as well as facilitating German colonialism, the Germans put up a number of infrastructures, like good roads and railway lines, which eased movements. These facilities helped in the spread of Islam, as there was free movement of people from one region to another. The Muslim missionaries also took advantages of these facilities to spread Islam.
19. German imperialism brought about facilitation of Tanzania into one country. The official boundaries created due to ethnicity were all done away with. Law and order were established and all these brought about conducive atmosphere through which Islam spread.
20. The recognition of Swahili by the German imperialists as a lingua-Franca also facilitated the spread of Islam in Tanzania. The Germans made Kiswahili the official language of the whole territory of Tanzania. However, those who were well acquainted with the language, mainly the Arabs and Swahili people, were basically Muslims. These used this as an advantage to spread Islam.
21. The recognition of Kiswahili as the official language of Tanzania saw many Arab and Swahili Muslims working for the German imperialists as government officials. These officials (the Arab and Swahili Muslims) used the influence of their positions to spread Islam.
22. The Non – Governmental Organizations (NGO) have also greatly contributed to the spread of Islam in Tanzania in the recent days. A good example can be the Association of Muslim Students of the University of Dar es-Salaam, which has done a lot of propagation of Islam through publication of books, especially in Swahili language and conducting correspondence courses.
23. The role of the Ahmadiyyah Muslim Mission in the Islamisation of East Africa cannot be overlooked. The mission was opened in 1935 in Tabora. Its first task was to prepare a Swahili translation of the Holy Qur'an with a commentary. From then on, other Islamic literature is being produced.
24. The Ahmadiyyah Muslim Mission has also conducted village Qur'anic schools; has established schools, hospitals, dispensaries and libraries after the end of the First World War

25. Tanzania has of recent continued to boast of a very large Muslim population along the coastal areas, especially in Zanzibar. This has created an easy atmosphere for the diffusion of Islamic cultural values into Tanzania from the coastal area on a permanent basis.
26. Tanzania has also had a couple of Muslim presidents like Ali Hassan Mwinyi and Jakaya Kikwete, which move caused glory for Muslims in Tanzania. These presidents have indirectly or directly served as symbols of Islam and their inclination towards Islam has also had a positive contribution towards Islam.

## MUSLIM LIFE IN TANZANIA SINCE INDEPENDENCE

**Question:** Assess the life situation of the Muslims in Tanzania since independence.

**OR**

**Discuss the impact of Islam on the people of Tanzania since independence.**

Tanzania is one of the three countries that make up the East Africa Sub-continent; other countries being Uganda and Kenya. Tanzania is made up of the Tanzania mainland (formerly Tanganyika) and Zanzibar Island.

Islam first penetrated Tanzania around 1830 when Arab and Swahili traders started prying the interior following the increase in demand for trade items at the coastal areas.

Initially Islam concentrated in urban areas and around townships until later when it spread upcountry and deep in villages where it has influenced the lives of people politically, socially, economically and educationwise since independence in 1963.

1. Religiously, different people in Tanzania have had Islamic influence differently. Some people, mainly on the Tanzania mainland are generally nominal Muslims, who practice Islamic practices but at the same time observe their traditional rituals. Therefore, such people are Muslims in outlook and traditionalists in behaviour.
2. However, the people of the Island like Zanzibar and Pemba and the coastal areas like Dar es-Salaam are more serious Muslims. They perform the regular prayers, Adhan or a religious call to prayers is often heard at intervals. They also walk long distance to go for Friday prayers.
3. Religious Education is taught to young children especially through Qur'an schools called Madrasas, many of which are found in Mosques. The curriculum in Madrasas include reading the Qur'an, writing Arabic language, singing Swahili and Arabic songs and studying the life of the prophet.
4. The youth haven't been so active in religious activities until of recent when Youth clubs and movements have been established like the Muslim Students of the University of Dar-es-Salaam. Thus the old folk have been more conscious about their religion than the youth.
5. In early days, there were divisions arising from difference in doctrines of the Islam; like the number of people who are supposed to pray the Juma (Friday) prayer; others were based on whether to pray Zuhr (Midday) prayer after Juma prayers.
6. People are required to offer money especially on Friday after Juma prayers. This money is used to sustain the Imaam and the Muazin (Caller for prayers) and looking after the cleanliness of the Mosque.
7. Women rarely go to the Mosques for prayer or education. Usually, religious education for women is not emphasized. However, some women are usually taught the Qur'an and Maulel in their homes.
8. Iddi Days are celebrated with a lot of vigour. The Iddi that concludes the month of Ramadhan, Muslims buy new clothes, perform prayer in open, perform visits after

prayers and feasting marks the climax of the ceremony. The second Iddi is performed in the month of Dhul-Hajji on the tenth day. After prayers, family heads make the ritual of sacrifice.

9. There are a number of religious sects in Tanzania; the Sunnis are the majority of the people of Tanzania. The Shia and Ahmadiyyah sects also exist though in small numbers.
10. Over the years, Muslims in Tanzania have had no clear religious leadership because of divisions based on theological interpretations. The government used to choose her leader whom they recognized as the one leading Muslims. However, other Muslims who are conscious about their religious ideologies have their own leader.
11. Politically, in the early days of European imperialism, Muslims were found enlightened in Tanganyika. Thus, they were recruited in positions of responsibility, which increased their influence as holders of power.
12. However, with the coming of the German colonialism, the Muslims lost the political control as the German's taught their own people – the Christians; hence Muslims were pushed out of politics. The Christians thereafter surpassed and overtook Muslims in politics.
13. Though Tanzania has got more Muslims than Christians (75% in Tanzania main land and 90% in Zanzibar), most political positions are held by Christians except in Zanzibar. This is because Muslims had not accessed higher education so as to get higher government positions.
14. The Muslim status in Politics has just got elevated after the fall of socialism and coming to power of Muslim presidents like Ali Hassan Mwinyi and Jakay Kikwete; but their composition in politics is still very low.
15. The social life of the Muslim people of Tanzania has a close relationship with the religious life; since in Islam it is very difficult to demarcate between religion and social life.
16. The dressing code of the Muslims of Tanzania consists of a Tunic (Kanzu) and a Turban (Kilemba) for men. Women dress consists of two cotton sheets known as "kangas" one wrapped around the body and reaching to the ankles and another thrown over the head and shoulders.
17. Tanzania has continued to have a large Muslim population especially along the coastal areas. However, basing on estimates, it is substantial that in Tanzania, Muslims are said to be 75% on the main land and 90% in Zanzibar.
18. Muslims in Tanzania usually live in good houses built of stones and mortar surrounded by cultivated land. The knowledge of how to build in stone, curved wood and woven cottons seemed to have come from Persia.
19. In order to solve problems or cure sickness connected to African traditional beliefs, Muslims in Tanzania write some Arabic words on plates which are washed out to provide a form of syrup (Kombe).
20. When a child is born, a ceremony called 'Aqiqah' is conducted following the

slaughter of a specified animal. The significance of Aqiqah is to express gratitude to God happiness of the parents and to announce a newcomer in the society.

21. Another social gathering is witnessed when a new person converts to Islam. The magnitude of the ceremony depends on the status of the one who converts. For instance if it is the chief converting to Islam, the feasting is great.
22. Marriage is another aspect of the Muslim social life in Tanzania. The Islamic elements in marriage remain constant as a contract between the father of the girl and Groom to take the girl for marriage on payment of a dowry fee called "The Mahare"
23. Marriage is solemnized in mosques presided over by religious leaders such as a Sheikh or Qadhi. However in case the couple find life incompatible, they can divorce; though divorce procedures do rarely follow proper procedures as prescribed by Islam.
24. On the issue of death, the body is washed and wrapped up in fine white sheets called 'sanda' by Muslim brethren. It is then taken to the open for prayer before it is carried to the grave for burial.
25. Moaning session is arranged lasting for three days; every evening there's the reading of the Qur'an (Hatma). At the end of the three days, the supplication (Dhuwa) for the dead is made.
26. Tanzania has maintained Swahili as the official means of communication and the National language. This has facilitated the Arabic and Islamic cultural development.
27. In educational circles, Islamic education occupies an important place in Swahili culture. When a boy reaches the age of six or seven years, his father makes arrangements to take him to a Qur'anic school usually at the mosque or at the Mwalimu's residence.
28. Muslims of Tanzania have mostly conducted village Qur'anic schools called Madarasas. These schools have been maintained and highly regarded in Tanzania for the education of Muslim students and inculcating Islamic knowledge.
29. Teachers of the Madarasas are usually not paid but receive gifts which may not be regular. Thus, teaching at the first level of education in Tanzania is taken to be pious work, although students may help the teacher in his household duties like fetching water and firewood.
30. The curriculum of Madarasa consists of learning the Arabic alphabet, reading and writing Arabic and reciting the Qur'an. After the child has completed the Qur'an, a group of teachers (Mwalimu) are invited to test him. This occasion is followed by a feast if the father can afford it. Girls also attend these schools essentially to get knowledge of performing prayers.
31. Initially Muslims resisted secular education because it was introduced by Christian Missionaries branding it "Haramu" or anti-Islamic ideology. This made Muslims lag behind their Christian counterparts in secular education.
32. Disunity among the Muslims also made unified education difficult. Thus, the

resources could not be mobilized to a common cause.

33. Later on, the Muslims realized that they were lagging behind and so agitated and pestered government to put up schools for Muslims. The government was, however, reluctant until the Asian community came up and established secular Muslim schools.
34. The problem of Muslim education was also solved later when the government put up public schools in which even Islamic Religious Education and Arabic are taught; however, the problem remained of finding teachers for Islam and Arabic.



## GERMAN IMPERIALISM AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN TANZANIA

**Question:** Discuss the role of German imperialism in the spread of Islam in Tanzania.

The German imperialists started to take interest in East Africa, when they were sent in an expedition into the interior of East Africa in 1880 with the purpose of starting trading bases in Tanzania and obtaining a more official political position in Zanzibar.

The coming of the German imperialists in the Eighteenth century was a blessing in disguise for the spread of Islam in Tanzania. On one hand, they benefited Islam much as on the other hand they were disastrous to the spread of Islam.

1. On the positive side, German imperialism facilitated the spread of Islam in Tanzania when they involved themselves in preaching against and later stopping slave trade; something that eased tension on the Islamisation activities. The abolition of slave trade created grounds for Swahili and Arab traders to interact with Africans in Tanzania which helped much in the spread of Islam.
2. The Germans established many labour camps, where they put people of different backgrounds, Muslims inclusive, together. In these labour camps, many people were influenced to become Muslims as a result of interaction.
3. Germans used many people of Tanzania, like the then already Islamised Nyamwezi, as porters, guides, soldiers, junior officers. The Africans under the German service, influenced the local people to become Muslims in their areas of operation, since most of them had already converted to Islam.
4. In order to extend German imperialism to all parts of Tanzania, the Germans employed the services of Akidas and Jumbes, as the junior government officials to the Germans. However, the majority of the Akidas and Jumbes had converted to Islam; and thus used their offices to foster the spread of Islam to other people.
5. The Akidas and Jumbes' families' families exercised considerable power over their people. Therefore, when the people among them converted to Islam, they influenced most of their subjects to join Islam.
6. German imperialism brought about pacification of the whole of Tanzania to create one country. It, therefore, became very easy for Muslims who were interested in spreading Islam to move from one region to another.
7. The Germans established many crop plantations in Tanzania where many people were recruited and employed to work irrespective of their religious background. In these plantations, there were interactions between Muslims and other local people. At times, such interactions resulted into conversion of many people to Islam.

Nonetheless, on the other hand, German imperialism retarded the spread of Islam in Tanzania in a number of ways:

1. The Germans dismissed the Akidas and Jumbes then under the Nyamwezi rule as government officials and labourers respectively after learning that they were using their offices and influence to spread Islam instead, wherever they went. This action retarded the progress of Islam.

2. The German had used the Akidas and Jumbes to extend colonialism to many areas of Tanzania. However, the Akidas and Jumbes were brutal to the extent of being hated by the Africans whom they governed and had influenced to Islam. Their habit of resorting to oppression resulted into many people to denounce Islam.
3. Beginning by 1900, German imperialists intensified Christian Missionary work as a measure to counteract the threat imposed by Islam, especially at ideological level. This move by the Germans dented the spread of Islam.
4. The Germans introduced western education in Tanzania; however, its control was put in the hands of Christian Missionaries. This was a deliberate move to deny Muslims education and job opportunities. This was so because the majority of Muslims feared to get enrolled in such schools for fear of conversion of their children to Christianity.
5. With Muslims being denied education, they could not compete favourably with their Christian counterparts in accessing employment opportunities. This move made the Muslim lag behind in development and thus could not carry out Islamic activities effectively.
6. The German rule in Tanzania was oppressive to the Muslims and this resulted in Muslims to resist the Germans. However the resistors and revolvers were mercilessly fought and killed. For instance, Bushiri bin Salami of Pangani and Abdallah Mpanda were among those killed by German officials.
7. The Germans also introduced foreign language in order to counteract Arabic and Swahili languages which were being used as a medium of communication and through which Islam was spread.
8. The Germans also capitalized on the initial involvement of Arabs and Swahili in slave trade business to cover up their existence. The Germans portrayed the Swahilis and Arabs as people who would enslave Africans once they came into contact with them. This created in the Africans a negative attitude towards Arabs and Islam together.
9. The Germans, using the German East African company in their initial stages of colonization, interfered with Swahili and Arab trade. They monopolized it by sending away Arabs and Swahilis from the business; yet it was the main vehicle through which Islam spread.
10. The Germans discouraged and later completely abolished Sharia Law, which involved the use of the Qur'an and Hadith. Many Tanzanian chiefs had adopted the Sharia Law to be used in administration and in judging cases. It was instead replaced by anti-Islamic secular laws.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **THE COMING AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN KENYA.**

Kenya was among the first recipient of Islam on the continent of Africa. Islam entered Kenya from different directions and was mainly spread by foreigners. It spread in specific areas like North Eastern Kenya, Central Kenya and coastal.

## **ISLAMISATION OF THE COASTAL AREAS**

The arrival of Islam at the coast of Kenya is traced back as far the 7<sup>th</sup> century when the Fitinah period broke out in the Islamic Empire during the religious conflicts especially the dynastic rule of the Umayyads and Abbasids.

The refugees of such conflicts were forced to look for areas of settlement. Among such areas was the East African coast which present day Kenya has a portion.

Besides, the migrants were the Arab traders who had been attracted by the profitable trade that existed between the East African coast and Asian countries across the Indian Ocean.

These were the first areas to be influenced by Islamic culture at the coast. Their closeness made many people to become Muslims since Islam had been there for centuries.

The spread of Islam in Kenya, especially in the coastal areas was further facilitated by the trade contacts between the interior and the coast. Here, The Akamba played an important role. They were prominent during the long distance trade period.

When some of the Akamba converted to Islam, they spread it to the coastal areas of Kenya through interactions. There were intermarriages between the Swahili and Arabs with the local people.

The settlement of Indian/Arab Muslims and later on Swahili settlements in the coastal areas facilitated the spread of Islam there. The Arab and Swahili established Swahili Arab villages in coastal areas, put up Madrasas and Mosques. All these facilitated the spread of Islam.

## **ISLAM IN NORTH EASTERN KENYA**

Islam was spread in North Eastern Kenya in the following ways;

Around the 17<sup>th</sup> century a large number of Somalis converted to Islam. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century they were attacked by the Ethiopians and were forced to migrate southwards into North-Eastern Kenya. The affected groups included the Hawiya, the Sab, the Galla and the Boran. They settled in Northern Eastern Kenya mainly around River Tana which became the dispersal point. Continuous interaction; like through intermarriage facilitated the spread of Islam in that region.

The occupational nature of the Somalis also facilitated the spread of Islam in that region. The Somalis, like the Orgadens, practiced Nomadism. They were pastoralists and therefore moved from place to place looking for water and pasture. In all these movements, they were brought into contact with many local people and some of them were influenced to become Muslims.

The role played by Somali Sheikhs, influenced the number of Muslims to grow big. The Somali sheikhs visited this area from the coastal areas of Kenya and were paramount in the spread of Islam to the local people; thereby teaching Islam to the local people; thereby increasing their number.

The Somali Sheikhs built and opened up Madrasas and simple Mosques in which Islamic knowledge was imparted. They mobilized the local people and in turn many of the local

people became teachers and Islam spread to almost the whole region.

Unfortunately, between 1900 and 1909, the British colonialists halted the self teaching Somali group. They restricted the Somali teachers' movement southwards after realizing that they were spreading Islam.

Due to that, there was no more interaction; intermarriages stopped and the sheikhs could no longer move from one place to another hence there was slow down in the spread and development of Islam in North Eastern Kenya.

However, in the areas where the British used some Muslim Somalis as junior agents of the colonial government, such individuals used their positions to defend and spread Islam.

## **THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN WESTERN KENYA (MUMIALAND)**

The spread of Islam in Western Kenya especially Mumialand was largely as a result of trade activities between the interior people and the coastal traders – Arabs and Swahili.

Traders from the coast reached Western Kenya area using two major existing trade routes; that is, one route began from Tanga and entered Kenya. Another began from Mombasa via Akamba land and finally reached Western Kenya, before it passed through to Buganda.

The Arabs and Swahili with their trade Caravans brought goods such as Glassware, clothes, beads, guns, etc, which they exchanged for goods from the interior like slaves and ivory.

In Western Kenya, Islam first spread in Mumia land and later to other parts of the region. The Mumia in Western Kenya deserve a credit for their work; especially their chief Nabongo who had converted to Islam and led a good number of his chiefs and subjects also to embrace the faith.

The first Arab-Swahili trade caravan to this part of the country was led by Sharif Hassan Abdullah. He was responsible for the introduction of Islam to the area. Hassan's trade caravan and many more which came later, resulted into rapid spread of Islam in the area.

With the assistance of Sharif Hassan Abdullah, the Mumias mobilized missionaries who were sent to areas in and around Nabongo's area of influence like Kakamega, Kisumu, Kisakibere (Nairobi) and as far as Mbale in Uganda. Sharif's brother Said Ahmed Abdullah was also sent to Kericho.

Intermarriages between the coastal traders and the local interior people developed. This strengthened close ties between the two parties and facilitated the spread of Islam in Western Kenya.

The peaceful behaviour and good attitude which the Arabs displayed to Nabongo persuaded the latter to convert to Islam as well as welcoming more Arab and Swahili traders at his court. Nabongo and his subjects the Wanga people lived peacefully with the Arabs to the extent of forming Arab-Swahili villages in the area.

Hospitality and warm welcome either to traders or preachers at Nabongo's palace gave the Arabs more interest to visit the area. His subjects, the Wanga, were also hospitable as opposed to their neighbours – the Masai.

The warm welcome Nabongo extended to the Arabs was largely due to Nabongo's hope of

getting assistance from the coastal traders and fight his arch-enemies – the Masai. By then, the Arab and Swahili traders were the only source of supply of Guns to the interior people especially in Western Kenya. So it was due to political inevitability that Nabongo welcomed the coastal traders.

Due to the strong relationship that was created between the coastal traders and the Wanga people, the Arab traders gave military assistance in form of guns and at time fought on the side of the Wanga people. Nabongo's army grew stronger and even defeated their enemies, like the Masai. The assistance offered by the Arabs to the Wanga, strengthened the Wanga – Muslim relationship.

On submission to Islam, Nabongo was given the name Muhammad. His conversion was a blessing to Muslims and Islam. For instance, he encouraged his children and other members of his household to convert to Islam.

In the same way, he influenced his subjects to become Muslims. This he did by sending his chiefs around their areas of jurisdiction and indeed they carried the message of Islam to those areas. By 1880s, Islam had deeply entrenched the Western part of Kenya.

Islam also spread in Western Kenya as a result of new Muslim teachers' arrival from Tanzania. Muslim teachers arrived from many areas especially Tabora and some of them settled in the area. These helped in teaching the local people so as to fight ignorance by teaching them Islamic principles.

With Chief Nabongo embracing Islam, he started sending Swahili and Arab Muslim missionaries to other areas far and around Mumialand to teach the people there Islam. Some of the missionaries went as far as eastern parts of Uganda in areas like Busia and Mbale.

Chief Muhammad Nabongo also used his position as the chief of Mumialand to coerce many of his subjects to observe Islamic rituals like offering prayers, reading the Qur'an, observing the fasting period and other Islamic obligations.

Muhammad Nabongo went ahead to put up several mosques and Qur'anic schools around his court. He also encouraged his chiefs to do the same in their areas. These facilities were vital in propagating the faith of Islam.

The colonialists also helped in the spread of Islam indirectly. They some times appointed Muslims in important posts in order to foster colonialism. For example, at one time, Sharif Umar, who had worked as a kadhi among the Mumias, was employed as Muslim registrar of marriages and divorce. Muslims in important places during colonial times used their posts to facilitate the spread of Islam.

The arrival of the railway line in Western Kenya, added weight to the original momentum of the spread of Islam. Indians and their offsprings, who worked on the railway, settled in many areas like Kisumu, Nakuru etc. Because most of these Muslims, they spread Islam in areas where they settled.

Nabongo also helped to fight illiteracy in his area when he ordered that all youth and the young be taken to madarasas to acquire knowledge. However, the curriculum in these schools was Islamic in nature and those who joined, ended up converting to Islam.

## THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN CENTRAL KENYA.

In the central parts of Kenya, Islamic expansion was done through the following ways;

It was spread through immigration processes. The immigrants included Swahilis, Arabs and Indians; majority of whom were Muslims. They put up settlements and slowly mixed up with the local people, whom they slowly influenced to Islam.

The abolition of slave trade also facilitated Islam spread. When slave trade was stopped, the Swahili and other trade caravans stopped coming into the interior. Coastal traders especially Arabs and Swahili moved upcountry to begin commercial businesses. They put up several settlements in Central Kenya which came to be known as Swahili-Arab villages. This partly formed basis for the spread of Islam in central Kenya.

During their stay, the Arabs and Swahili traders interacted with the local people and passed their culture on to them and slowly Islam was assimilated to such people.

Further more, Swahili men married local women and such relationships facilitated the spread of Islam, as the offsprings and women in such marriages became Muslims.

The Swahili also employed members of the local community in their businesses which facilitated the spread of Islam. The local community, in order to win favour of their Swahili masters, chose to convert to Islam.

The construction of the Kenya – Uganda railway also helped in the spread of Islam in central Kenya. The British employed Indians to construct the railway. The majority of the Indians had converted to Islam. After their construction work, many Indians decided to stay in Kenya and put up several commercial units. They became wealthy and used part of their money to construct Muslim schools and Mosques.

Some Indians like Sheikh Bakalami and Juma Salim, carried out missionary activities in several parts of Kenya. They spread Islam in areas like Nairobi and their activities partly explain the presence of many Muslims in such areas.

Later on, several Sheikhs came and settled in Nairobi. Some of them were from Tanzania among the Nyamwezi and others were Somalis who left either Somalia or North Eastern Kenya and settled in central Kenya. These did a commendable job to teach Islam among town dwellers.

Another factor which helped in the spread of Islam in Central Kenya and other parts was the activity of the Sudanese soldiers. The British used Sudanese soldiers to pacify what came to be known as Kenya. Most of the Sudanese soldiers being Muslims, helped to spread Islam where they were stationed.

The Sudanese soldiers were stationed and deployed in different areas like Marchakos, Mombasa etc. These troupes came with their families and settled in Kenya. During peaceful and resting periods, some of them got involved in Islamic activities; others got deeply entrenched in the local communities through marrying local women. These brought them into close reach with the local community, whom they influenced to Islam.

After rendering their services to the British, the Sudanese were demobilized. The majority of them got to an area called Kibera and settled there. They put up mosques and facilitated

the spread of Islam. A Madarasa was built adjacent to the Mosque to facilitate impartment of Islamic knowledge to the local people.

## **CONFINEMENT OF ISLAM IN SPECIFIC AREAS OF KENYA**

**Question:** Account for the confinement of Islam only in specific areas of Kenya

Kenya was among the first recipient of Islam on the continent of Africa. However, when Islam was introduced to Kenya, it concentrated in specific areas of the country more especially the coastal areas like Mombasa, and Malindi, North Eastern Kenya, the Mumia-land and Central Kenya around Nairobi. The reasons that account for this are:-

1. Kenya got Islam quite early at its coastal areas. The Coastal area of Kenya had become a haven of many Arab refugees, who had fled their home areas during the Fitina periods. Once they were welcomed at the coast they never wanted to venture into other areas.
2. The presence of hostile tribes in many parts of Kenya such as Wazimba, Nandi and Masai hindered the Arab Muslims from leaving the Coastal areas. These tribes were unfavourable for Islam in that going through their areas was not easy.
3. Islam being the first international religion to operate in the coastal areas of Kenya overpowered the area without being antagonized by other religions. This was unlike the interior parts of Kenya where Islam and Christianity entered almost at the same time. The Arab Muslims fearing competition confined themselves at the coastal areas of Kenya.
4. The coastal areas of Kenya attracted much larger number of Muslim Arabs and Asians who settled there than its interior. So, Islam became stronger at the Coastal area than the interior of Kenya.
5. Unlike other areas of Kenya, the coastal area boasted of very many Muslim and Swahili settlements. These included among others Mombasa and Kilifi. In these areas, many people were attracted because of relatively better life.
6. Arabia, where Islam came from being nearer the Coast of Kenya explains why Islam is so much confined to the Coast of Kenya than the interior. The proximity factor gave opportunity to Muslim preachers to continue flocking the coast and Islam continue to spread there than the interior.
7. The Swahili culture and language with its Arab Islamic heavy inclinations were more pronounced at the coast of Kenya than its interior. This factor favoured the coastal areas much more than the interior.
8. The over-concentration of Islam at the Coast of Kenya was facilitated by the recuctancy of Arab and Swahili Muslims to penetrate the interior for fear of tropical diseases like malaria and wild animals like lions at Tsavo.
9. Lack of adequate knowledge of the interior of Kenya by the Arab Muslims facilitated the confinement of Islam more to the coast than the interior. Much as there were a few Arab and Swahili Muslims who were willing to spread Islam, they could not venture into areas off the Coast because they did not know the geography of the area.

10. Islam spread more on the coast of Kenya than other areas especially the interior due to the fact that, in the interior, there were physical features that made the movements of Muslims to some areas off the Coast difficult. Much of Kenya is highly bushy with heavy vegetation cover, thick forest, sharp escarpments and ragged lands. Reaching areas off the coast by Muslims was not easy partly because of such physical features.
11. The Arabs who introduced Islam in Kenya were basically traders. However, most of the areas they would have gone to look for trade goods especially Northern and Western parts of Kenya were inaccessible. The trade routes hardly reached such areas. So, Islam should not easily access these areas.
12. In Northern Kenya, especially North Eastern area, Islam took root there facilitated by the conversion of the Somali's to Islam. In the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the Somali's were attacked by the Ethiopians and were forced to migrate southwards into North Eastern Kenya. Here, they decided to inhabit the area permanently as they spread Islam.
13. In western Kenya, the role of Nabongo of Mumialand fostered the spread and development of Islam in the area. Nabongo welcomed the Arabs and he, together with his subjects – the Wanga people – collaborated with and lived peacefully with them. Through interaction, Islam took root in western Kenya.
14. The conflict between the Wanga and the Masai people also accounts for the confinement of Islam in Western Kenya. At the height of the conflict, the Arabs and Swahili's collaborated with Nabongo the chief of Mumia and fought on the side of the Wanga to defeat the Masai. The assistance the Arabs gave to Nabongo helped to strengthen the Wanga-Swahili – Arab Muslim relationship that furthered the cause of Islam in the area.
15. The conversion of Nabongo to Islam helped the faith to take root in Mumialand. When Nabongo converted to Islam, he encouraged his children and other members of his household and his chiefs to do the same. Thus, increasing the Muslim population in West Kenya; especially in Mumialand.
16. The conversion of Nabongo and many of his chiefs to Islam also accounts for the confinement of Islam in Mumialand. Their conversion brought in more other people to the faith of Islam. Thus, by 1880, many people of the area had embraced Islam.
17. With many people of Mumialand embracing Islam, many Muslim teachers and Sheikhs from Tanzania were attracted to Western Kenya. These Muslim teachers and Sheikhs helped in teaching the people of the area the principles of Islam.
18. The confinement of Islam in Central Kenya is attributed to Arab traders and merchants, who practiced commerce. The Arab traders and merchants interacted with people of Central Kenya and influenced many of their workmates to convert to Islam. This happened in trading centres; especially Nairobi.
19. Another factor for the confinement of Islam in Central Kenya was the development of major towns and urban centers along the trade routes. These major towns and urban centres were inhabited by Arabs and Asian Muslims, who fostered the spread of Islam.
20. Asian businessmen; particularly Indians, helped in the confinement of Islam only in specific areas in Kenya. These businessmen established residential areas, hotels and



commercial centres in specific areas of Kenya like Mombasa, Voi, and Nairobi, where they facilitated the spread of Islam.

21. Prominent Muslims of the Asia origin; like Aga Khan Group contributed greatly to the Islamisation of Central Kenya through their projects like education, health and religious support to local people. These projects are so much centred in areas like Nairobi.
22. The construction of the Kenya-Uganda Railway was a boost to the spread and confinement of Islam in Central Kenya where it passed. The Asian Muslims who participated in the construction of the Kenya-Uganda railway, later settled in Central Kenya and spread Islam within towns.

### **FACTORS THAT FACILITATED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN KENYA.**

1. Islam spread to Kenya with the help of Somali pastorists and traders. Somalia being nearer to Asia, where Islam came from, than other areas around like Kenya, those Somalis who had embraced Islam and they were pastorists or traders helped to spread Islam to people they associated with especially those of North-Eastern Kenya.
2. Islam was also spread to Kenya through the influence of individual local Muslim preachers or Sheikhs. These had migrated from Tanzania among the Nyamwezi or Somalia and settled in Kenya. Once in Kenya, they set up Qur'anic schools in their homes where they taught the fundamentals of the Holy Qur'an to young children. They also influenced other local elders to Islam through their behaviour.
3. The Portuguese conquest of the East African coast also facilitated the spread of Islam in Kenya. The Portuguese destroyed many Muslim villages and settlements at the coast in addition to killing the Arabs they came across. As a result many Arabs ran away from their homes to take refuge into the interior of Kenya where they found themselves spreading Islam.
4. At first the Arabs who were responsible for the spread of Islam feared to enter the interior due to the presence of wild animals and hostile tribes like Nandi and Masai. However, the Arabs later acquired firearms which boosted their entry into those areas they had originally feared to venture. In the event, Islam was also spread.
5. Another factor that helped the spread of Islam in Kenya was the activity of the Sudanese soldiers. The British had used Sudanese soldiers to pacify Kenya. They were deployed in different areas like Marchakos, Mombasa, and the like. They had already embraced Islam and settled in Kenya with their families. The soldiers got into Islamic activities like preaching to the local people, building mosques and marrying local women. All these activities by the Sudanese soldiers helped to impart Islamic knowledge to the locals especially in area called Kibera.
6. The existence of trade goods in the interior of Kenya made the Arabs at the coast start going deep inside Kenya to get items like ivory, slaves, animal skins, name them. The Arabs would move to the interior of Kenya to take the merchandise for sale like cotton cloth, iron ware, beads etc. Thus, the relationship that came up between the Arabs and the people of the interior of Kenya led to the spread of Islam in Kenya.

7. The role of colonialists also facilitated the spread of Islam in Kenya. In their need to exploit the protectorate, the British colonialists developed infrastructure like roads and railway lines (Kenya-Uganda Railway). These transport facilities eased movements from one place to another and interaction became easy. This free movement of people helped in the spread of Islam.
8. Islam also reached Kenya through the activities of some Indian missionary workers like Sheikh Bakarani Juma, Salim Barjadan, Sheikh Tayyib and others. These had come from Tanganyika while others from the coast. They spread Islam in areas like Nairobi, Machakos, Makindu and Pumwani. Their activities partly explain why there are many Muslims among the Wakambas and Kikuyus.
9. Kenya local chiefs also helped very much in the spread of Islam in Kenya. Such chiefs include Chief Muhammad Mumia Nabongo of Mumia in Western Kenya, who accorded a hospitable welcome to the Arabs, drew them nearer to the local population; and hence cultivated a fertile ground for the spread of Islam.
10. Islam also spread to Kenya through intermarriage between the Muslim Arabs and the local people. Most of Arabs who traversed the interior of East Africa, especially Kenya, did not have wives and so, they chose among the local population women for marriage. This spirit of integration between races helped to the spread of Islam as relatives to the married couples embraced Islam so as to win favours from the Arabs.
11. The adoption of Kiswahili as Lingua Franca of Kenya by the colonialists also facilitated the spread of Islam in Kenya. The colonialists found that Kiswahili had taken root in Kenya and it could be spoken by different tribes. Kiswahili which is a mixture of Arab and Bantu words indirectly helped in the spread of Islam.
12. Islam also spread to Kenya by the fact that some of the coastal towns where the Arabs settled, like Mombasa, are along the coastal areas of Kenya. The development of coastal towns led to the development of trade activities which attracted the interior people to the coast. With the increased interaction between Arabs and the people from interior through trade, many people were influenced to join Islam. This was because whenever the people from the interior would go back to their home areas, they would teach their relatives aspects of Islam.
13. The proximity of Kenya to Arabia where Islam originated also facilitated the spread of Islam to this area of East Africa. People from Arabia easily found Kenya as a place where they could get asylum; besides the monsoon winds also played a great role as Arab dhows could easily reach the Kenyan coast.

### **FACTORS THAT HINDERED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN KENYA**

1. The existence of such unfriendly tribes like the Nandi, Masai and Kikuyu affected the spread of Islam in the interior of Kenya. This was so because such tribes did not like to associate with or even allow strangers to pass through their lands.
2. The Imperial British East African Company (IBEACO) also hindered the spread of Islam in Kenya. When IBEACO took control of Kenya, the influence of the Arab rulers was suppressed together with their role in the spread of Islam.
3. When the British took over the control of Kenya, they fuelled conflict between one

Sultan and another, for instance, the conflict between the Sultan of Mombasa and Malindi. Such conflicts weakened the Arabs further and therefore the spread of Islam was also weakened.

4. The problem of language barriers also hindered the spread of Islam in Kenya. In the interior of Kenya, there existed a diversity of languages. It was therefore impossible for Arabs to venture into the interior where they would not communicate
5. There was little access of the interior by the people who championed the spread of Islam. This was because the Arabs were getting all the trade items they needed at the coast supplied by African middlemen. In turn, the middlemen carried to the interior the goods that the Arabs wanted to deliver into the interior. That is why Islam concentrated so much at the coast, where the Arabs settled.
6. Lack of transport facilities hampered the Arabs to penetrate into the interior of Kenya. There were no roads and the water bodies were not surveyed for purposes of navigation. There were dense forests, which would not allow the Arabs to cross from the coast to the interior. This, hence, hindered the spread of Islam in the interior of Kenya.
7. In the interior of Kenya, there existed dangerous and fierce animals like lions that hampered the Arabs from crossing into let alone entering the interior. Such areas include the Tsavo forests where a number of lions resided – hence the name “The Man Eaters of Tsavo”
8. The disunity of coastal people also accounted for the failure of Arabs and Islam to penetrate into the interior of Kenya. The coastal people were always at war with each other for the control of the coastal commercial towns. Oman fought with the Busaid for the control of the coast; Mombasa Sultan fought with the Sultan of Malindi. Hence, such disputes would not allow the spread Islam easily.
9. There were also civil wars in the interior of Kenya. Some Kingdoms in the interior of Kenya were at war with each other like the Galla were always fighting against the Masai. So the Arabs would not move to such areas which were politically insecure; thus risking their lives.
10. Most of the Arabs who came to East Africa were primarily traders. They were interested in business where they were earning a living and getting profits rather than spreading Islam. Since much of their time was consumed by business, the Arabs made little impact on spreading Islam into the interior of Kenya.
11. The role of the Christian Missionary Activities greatly hindered the spread of Islam in Kenya. These Christian missionaries would preach against Islam especially when they used slave trade as a tool to tarnish the name of Islam; as the Arabs had been involved in the slave trading activities. This propaganda against Islam helped Christianity to out compete Islam, especially in the interior where slave raiding took place.
12. The African Kenyans were so much attached to their traditional religions and cultures that they were at first not ready to compromise it with Islam. Thus this tended to hinder the spread of Islam, as Islam took time trying to break the ties between the Kenyans and their religion. Worth noting is that those Kenyans who

converted to Islam were nominal Muslims who ended up practicing Islam alongside their traditional religions.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### ISLAM IN UGANDA

At the time of Islamic inception in Uganda, there was no country called Uganda, but just a group of principalities and chiefdoms. Thus when Islam was brought to this region, Buganda Kingdom was the first to receive it.

This implies, therefore, that Islam was the first international religion to come to Uganda and this was introduced in Buganda by the Arab traders from the coast of East Africa around 1844.

Somewhere around 1844, in the reign of King Suuna II, an Arab half-breed named Isa bin Hussein, entered the country (Buganda) at Suuna II's palace. He was accompanied by a great Tabora trader, Snay bin Amir and later Ahmed bin Ibrahim

Having stayed for a few days at the palace, the Arabs witnessed Kabaka Suuna killing his people – sacrificing his subjects to honour his traditional gods. These Arabs questioned Suuna's action saying that it was a sin for a man to destroy God's creature in that way.

Ahmed bin Ibrahim told the Kabaka that it was not right for man to kill his fellowmen. He later told him about the Supreme Being called Allah, who had the supreme power over life and death.

Suuna and his subjects were surprised to hear that there was someone else greater than the king of Buganda. In this way, Suuna became inquisitive and demanded to know more about this Supreme Being.

When the Arabs had explained as much as they could, Suuna got impressed by the teaching of Islam. From then onwards, more Arabs came into Buganda – like Chera, Ali Nakatakula, etc. Thus, it is not surprising that by the time Kabaka Suuna II died in 1856, he had learnt four chapters of the Holy Qur'an by heart.

However, during the reign of Suuna II, the Arabs did not preach Islam seriously because their main concern was trade. They also feared that Suuna would one time turn against them.

The greatest achievement that Islam got, however, was its being introduced in Buganda and the great change it brought among the Baganda was the knowledge about the Creator of everything.

Suuna died in 1856 and was succeeded by his son Muteesa I.

## FACTORS THAT FAVOURED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN BUGANDA.

1. Trade goods in this part of the country which incited the Arabs to come laid foundation for the introduction of Islam in Buganda; for instance, there were slaves who were being sold by the chiefs to the Nyamwezi and Yao; thus Arabs might have found it fit to come to the source.  
  
Besides, the Arabs who brought Islam were looking for market for their goods like clothes from China, beads, etc.
2. Colonial rulers, to some extent, in Tanganyika contributed to opening up areas which originally considered difficult to penetrate by the Arabs. This helped the Arabs traders to travel up to this region with less fear.
3. Hospitality practiced by Baganda people created by favourable geographical environment which made them settled Agriculturalists. Thus when the Arabs came, hospitality was extended to them by both the Kabaka and his people of Buganda. This made them to stay for a long time which allowed them to teach Islam to the people of Buganda.
4. Kabaka Muteesa's readiness to adopt new ideas; for instance, the Kabaka wanted to learn writing which could provide better methods of communication and transmitting state intelligence, secrets and messages than the traditional methods of sending people verbally. Thus the Arabs worked as clerks and secretaries of the Kabaka Muteesa I. They further introduced new healing methods superior to that of local medical practitioners.
5. The Arabs also had skills of making guns, making soap, growing of a wide variety of food crops unavailable in the region before like rice, tomatoes, paw paws, etc.
6. The submissive loyalty of Baganda to their king was another factor. This was a very important factor responsible for the introduction of Islam in its early days as it came in. When the Kabaka got interested in something, it was hard for his subjects not to adopt it. So, as long as the king got interested in Islam, his subjects obviously had to adopt it.
7. When Kabaka got interested in relating with the Arabs and adopt their ways of living and beliefs, the subjects especially the chiefs had to follow suit in order not to be left behind in the fashion of behaviour and to get identified with the king.
8. The expansion policy of Buganda at that time which led Buganda to be at war with the neighbouring kingdoms like Bunyoro, with the intention of getting more land. Thus when the Arabs arrived with guns, it was just an opportunity for the rational king to welcome the Arabs and their readiness to relay behind him in persecution of his policy, made them to be friends of Buganda especially after the victory at the battles.
9. The courage which Ahmed bin Ibrahim possessed should not be under estimated. It needed the man of charisma to tell the king that killing his subjects was bad and that on top of him, there lived the almighty Allah while aware that the king presided over all religious rights in his kingdom. Ahmed bin Ibrahim's determination was a major turning point for the introduction of Islam in the region.

10. Another factor was the nature of the traditional religion. The traditional religion was part of the people's way of life. These people had some idea regarding the almighty God which people feared to approach as He was considered almighty. Thus coming of Islam met the people who had some little knowledge about God; hence the presence of such a seemingly related aspect of the religion in both traditional belief of Buganda and Islam facilitated the early introduction of Islam in Buganda.
11. By the time Islam reached Buganda there had not been any other foreign religion to poke its noses in Buganda. Thus the people had not yet seen any demerits of the foreign influence. The Muslims being the first to come provided Islam with the fertile ground for it to spread.
12. Many trading centres were set up which attracted many people from rural areas to come for employment. Through mixing with Muslims, who were basically urban centered traders, many urban immigrants have been influenced to convert to Islam.
13. During the colonial rule, Muslims were denied chances to work in public service and secular service or education. They resorted to trade through which they became rich and produced many children which has helped the development and spread of Islam in Uganda.

## **ISLAM DURING KABAKA SUUNA II'S REIGN (1844 – 1854)**

Before 1844, there were some Arabs who had visited Buganda with trade purpose. The date 1844 is believed by many historians to have been the time when the message concerning Islam was proclaimed to an African in Buganda.

### **FACTORS WHICH FAVOURED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM DURING SUUNA'S REIGN.**

The Arabs had been coming to these parts of the country for some time looking for trade goods which included slaves and ivory. So they had got to be familiar to the people they were associating with. Due to this interaction, they managed to preach to people about Islam.

At the time the Arabs reached Uganda, the kingdom of Buganda was in competition for land with neighbouring Kingdom – Bunyoro; thus the stronger of the two could expand at the expense of the other. Because of this, when the Arabs came with guns, which seemed to have capability of defeating the enemy, they were welcomed by the Kabaka. The Arabs introduced Islam in Buganda.

The existence of parent rights in the Ganda culture which empowered the Kabaka (King of Buganda) to execute his subjects in hundreds was indeed an important factor. On one occasion, with the presence of Ahmed bin Ibrahim at Kabaka's palace, Suuna carried out the execution of a number of people. It was so horrible that it forced Ahmed bin Ibrahim to talk about Islam. This situation showed that had it not been for Suuna's actions, may be, Ahmed bin Ibrahim wouldn't have preached Islam in the courts of the king.

Suuna's attitude towards Ahmed bin Ibrahim's words also acted as the stepping stone to the spread of Islam. Kabaka Suuna wanted to be informed of the mighty power – Allah Ahmed bin Ibrahim talked about. Ahmed bin Ibrahim explained to an attentive king. This marked the beginning of the spread of Islam in Uganda, in that, from that time on wards, the Arabs began to explain to Suuna II the principles of Islam.

It is said that they read to him from the Qur'an and that before his death he had completed last four chapters in the book. Among the Arabs who came to Suuna's court included Nakatukura, Magaziji and Zigeye.

There are number of factors that must have retarded the spread of Islam during the period of Suuna II's reign they include the following.

The indifference attitude of Arabs in converting other people to Islam retarded the spread of Islam during Suuna's reign. Like their leaders Sayyid Said at the coast the Arabs did not want to antagonize the social and cultural set up of the people where they went so that they could not be chased away to lose the trade spheres.

Thus they were always not telling people to become Moslems. Despite the interest showed by Suuna II to listen to Islam is not recorded anywhere that Arabs asked him to convert to Islam.

It had been reported that in 1852 – 1862 very few Arabs came to Buganda because of high taxes levied upon them in areas where they passed. This made their business unprofitable and hence the decline in the traffic of Arabs in Buganda, therefore the spread of Islam had



to decline.

However, though Islam did not pick up during Suuna II's reign two major achievements were registered in Buganda, the presence of the foreign ideals which could surplus theirs.

Secondly, by claiming that there is someone else greater than the Kabaka, Islamic ideals initiated psychological revolution that made possible for the Ugandans to listen to and later accept foreign religious beliefs.

## **MUTEESA'S PERIOD AND SPREAD OF ISLAM.**

Muteesa I became the king of Buganda after succeeding his father Suuna II, who had died in 1854. He ruled Buganda up to 1884.

As soon as Muteesa took over the throne, he showed keen interest in Islam. He welcomed more Arabs and Swahili Muslims to his palace though he restricted them.

The years between 1862 and 1875 are considered the Golden Age of Islam in Buganda. This was so because Islam reached its peak during this period.

## **ROLE OF MUTEESA I IN THE SPREAD OF ISLAM.**

### **POSITIVE ROLE**

1. Muteesa I welcomed more Arabs and Swahili Muslims to his palace with a hope of using them to solve his political problems, like assisting him to fight against the Khartoumers and Bunyoro who threatened Buganda's independence at the time. These Arabs and Swahili influenced very many people to Islam.
2. Having developed interest in the Arabs, Muteesa I requested them to teach him Islam. It's said that Ali Nakakutula was the first to instruct Muteesa I in Islamic principles. However, he began to be serious with Islam in 1862 and in 1864, he declared himself a Muslim. He learnt the Qur'an and Arabic in a short period that surprised his Arab teachers.
3. Having been impressed by the Arabs, he decided to employ a number of Arabs and Swahili in his court where they acted as clerks and secretaries. This made it easy for these Arabs to interact and influence the courtiers and local people to embrace Islam.
4. Muteesa I ordered his chiefs to read and learn the Qur'an (having learnt the reading of the Qur'an himself). Among the first to read Islam was his Katikiro (chief minister) Mukasa followed by chiefs and pages who lived in and around the court. Some of the chiefs were Musisi, the then Ssabakaaki (main gate keeper). It's said that Nuhu Mbogo, who later became the leader of Muslims began to read Islam at this time.
5. He also practiced Islam by learning Islamic ways of life (Mannerism). He further strictly observed the Islamic prayers. It was reported that crowds used to follow Muteesa I to the Mosque punctually before prayers.
6. Muteesa also declared that Stones for scrubbing of the feet in the process of cleaning before prayers be placed in the courtyard of every house hold. Later stones

became the sign of Muslim homes that observed the prayers.

7. He appointed pages and inspectors to see to it that water for ablution was brought punctually before prayers.
8. Muteesa I ordered for the building of Mosques both in the palace of the king and in the country side. This greatly enhanced the spread of Islam. He even established a full department to manage and be responsible for the Mosque affairs. He appointed Edward Mukasa (Mukasa later converted to Christianity and hence the name Edward) to head the department. Every Mosque had to have a flag bearing the crescent and the star which was always hoisted on Friday before Juma prayers.
9. Muteesa I also made the Muslim way of fasting to be strictly observed by his subjects, as he himself started to do so in 1864. He sent out inspectors to find out those who defaulted. Kakolokooto, who was sent to Buwaya in Busiro, was found eating and was punishing others for. From then onwards, whoever would be found eating during Ramadhan was called Kakolokooto as a sign of hypocrisy.
10. The Kabaka also placed it upon people to slaughter animals Islamically according to Sharia; unlike the brutal way of killing them as formerly practiced. During his time, only the circumcised were allowed to slaughter animals. Toli became Muteesa's official butcher and cook. From that day onwards, Muslims do not eat meat slaughtered by non-Muslims.
11. Muteesa I also abolished the hunting custom of the Buganda of using dogs. In the Islamic custom / culture, dogs are considered unclean.
12. In 1875, Muteesa I declared Islam the religion of the state. He decreed that all his subjects must embrace Islam. On this note, all pagans were rounded up and whoever rejected Islam was to be put to death. This threat made many people in Buganda to convert to Islam.
13. Muteesa I gave orders that the three Islamic rituals ie prayers, fasting and eating of lawful meat were also to be strictly observed. Whoever broke them was to be convicted of a criminal offence and would face a death penalty.
14. Muteesa I abolished the custom of the land requiring the separation of the Kabaka's jaw bone from the skull and using it for decoration and the enshrinement in a temple for adoration by his subjects. He said that he should be buried whole with his skull unmolested. This was because he hoped to resurrect after death. He also ordered that the remains of his ancestors be exhumed and get proper burial; and as such, the Muslim burial ceremony.
15. Muteesa I also tried to spread Islam beyond his kingdom. He sent missionaries to Kabalega – the king of Bunyoro – calling him to Islam. He sent him a mat for praying on, a kettle to carry water for ablution before prayer, a red flag to be hoisted by the mosque and sandals that are easily removable before entering the Mosque. However, Kabalega rejected the new faith and sent the gifts back to Muteesa.
16. Muteesa I put up a ruling to the effect that his subjects adopt the "Salaam" as the Kingdom salutation. In fact he ordered all his chiefs and near subjects to salute him Islamically using the "Salaam."

With the above factors, the period between 1862 – 1875 qualified to be called Golden period of Islam in Buganda. However, after 1875, there was a turn of events which disfavoured Islam; hence its decline.

### **FACTORS THAT HINDERED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM DURING THE LAST TEN YEARS OF MUTEESA I'S REIGN (1875 – 1884)**

1. Although Kabaka Muteesa I had accepted Islam, his acceptance of the faith might not have been genuine but only forced by circumstances like the need to get help from the Arabs as a way of maintaining his power and supremacy. In fact it's still unclear whether Muteesa I died a Muslim.
2. Muteesa I refused to be circumcised as the practice was against Buganda's traditions; that is, the Kabaka and other members of the royal family were not supposed to shed their blood as this was considered a bad omen.
3. Since the Muslims were not missionaries, when Muteesa I accepted Arabs and Islam, at that time, the Kabaka forced people in his territory to practice Islam without their conviction. Many people who seemed reluctant to practice Islam were rounded up on Kabaka's orders and put to death. Thus, when Muteesa's attitude towards Islam changed; they viewed it as a blessing.
4. In 1880, Muteesa I gave the Baganda freedom to take any religion of their choice. Thus, the protestants as well as the Catholic succeeded in converting important Baganda to their faith Islam, therefore, became just one and not only the world religion in Buganda.
5. Muteesa started hating Arabs and their Islam because of the fear that the Egyptian Arabs wanted to takeover the control of the Intercustrine Region. So he thought that after they had completed their tasks in Bunyoro, they would come to Buganda. This provided suspicion for the Egyptian Arabs' intention; hence tarnishing the image of Islam in the face of the king.
6. Muslims who had got Islamic Education from Egyptians and Sudanese became furious and refused to eat meat slaughtered by Muteesa's men and refused to rally behind him in prayers. This annoyed Muteesa as he felt much challenged. He, therefore, put a hundred Muslims to death in 1876; an action that slowed down Islam's progress in Buganda.
7. The massacre of about a hundred Muslim converts by Muteesa I which took place in 1876 at Namugongo, created fear among the people that they hesitated to become Muslims.
8. The coming of Henry M Stanley to Buganda in 1876 also slowed down the spread of Islam in Buganda. Stanley taught Muteesa an alternative World Religion that did not demand the difficult right of circumcision. At the same time, the Arabs had started questioning Muteesa's leadership both in Islam and in other temporal affairs.
9. Stanley, through the chiefs, also warned the Kabaka that Muslims could circumcise him by force. The chiefs fabricated false accusations against the Muslims because of the fear that if the king accepted to be circumcised, they would undergo the same practice. This accusation made Muteesa I lose trust in Muslims and Islam.

10. Muteesa I invited Christian missionaries to Buganda through Henry M. Stanley; and the first group arrived in 1877 (Church Missionary Society) yet others came in 1879 (White Fathers). So with the existence of Christianity and Islam, problems began to surface as these three religions were naturally against each other and could not peacefully co-exist.
11. During the Arabs' stay in Buganda, Muteesa I could not defeat Buvuma. But when Stanley came and helped him to defeat Buvuma, because of the superior guns, Muteesa was impressed. Thus, when Stanley mentioned Christianity, Muteesa was delighted; not only because he wanted to escape from Islam which demanded for circumcision, but also in the hope that the new religion would be a diplomatic cord in his favour.
12. When the Christian Missionaries arrived in Buganda, Islam could no longer monopolise the fields in Buganda. The three religious groups started opposing each other in a bid to influence political affairs in Buganda. On a sad note, by the time Muteesa I died, many of his chiefs and subjects had converted to Christianity.

Muteesa I died in 1884 when the influence of Islam had started declining. He was succeeded by his son Mwanga II

## KABAKA MWANGA II AND ISLAM.

**Question:** The years after 1875 were considered the period of Islamic stagnation in Buganda. Examine the validity of the statement.

When Muteesa I died in 1884, he was succeeded by his son Mwanga II – a youth of about eighteen years. Unlike his father, Mwanga II lacked the ability to control the three religious groups.

Islam during Mwanga's time was faced by some peaks of fortune especially in the early days of his leadership; for example, during Mwanga's reign, government posts were shared among the Muslims and Christians. However, basing on religious denominations, Muslims took the biggest share. The Muslims headed most departments; like the army, stores, etc.

Mwanga also replaced the old chiefs with young ones because he thought the old-guards (who the majority had converted to Christianity) could influence him, since they had worked with his father and had seen him run most of the departments.

Mwanga also had a big task before him as he was pressured by all religious groups. Each group wanted him to believe in their faith, but the King did not want to commit himself to any. Right from the onset, he put it clear that he was neither a Muslim nor a Christian.

Mwanga later started to lose trust in Arabs and Europeans, whose interests, he thought, were dangerous to his independence. He realised that the presence of these religions was a threat to his power. To make matters worse, the Muslims and Christians disobeyed the Kabaka due to his negative attitude towards foreign religions.

The Muslims hated Mwanga on grounds that he had forced them to eat meat slaughtered by his uncircumcised butchers. They also feared that he could kill them as he had done to the Christians at Nakivubo and Namugongo. The Muslims also resented working under an infidel king.

In order to contain these groups, he resorted to harsh measures. In 1886, Mwanga II killed several Christian pages on account of misbehaviour. He also ordered for the murder of Bishop Hannington, who was by then in Busoga asking to come to Buganda. The Arabs had earlier on told Mwanga that the people who will overthrow him will come from the East. So, on hearing this, he ordered for the death of the Bishop.

Then, in May 1886, he ordered for the murder of twelve Protestants and thirteen Catholics at Nakivubo and Namugongo. These later came to be known as Martyrs.

Mwanga continued to feel a lot of pressure from the three religious groups; and as such, in September 1888, he planned to get rid of the Muslims, Christians and their supporters. He wanted to maroon them to an Island in Lake Victoria so that he could kill them. However, the plot was discovered before it could be executed.

The Muslims, Catholics and Protestants made an alliance to defend themselves against Mwanga. All three parties combined to depose Mwanga, who fled to the south of Lake Victoria. His elder brother, Kiweewa, was made Kabaka in his place.

Freedom of worship was declared in Buganda and the most important official positions were shared among the three parties.

## KABAKA KIWEewa AND ISLAM

With the success of the Muslims and Christians to overthrow Mwanga, Mwanga's elder brother Kiweewa was made King (Kabaka) of Buganda.

After Kiweewa had been installed as Kabaka, it was the Arabs and Muslims who attempted to dominate him and drive out Christian missions. For a time, their method was most effective. They simply persuaded Kiweewa that Christians intended to depose him, and then secretly filled the royal enclosure with armed men and forced the Christian chiefs to leave the capital.

Meanwhile, the Catholics and Protestants were not satisfied with the developments especially when the Muslims continued to be influential. To this effect, they fled the capital hoping to come back as masters in Buganda. This was so because they realised that they were losing political influence to the Muslims. The Protestants fled to Usambiro while Roman Catholics to Bukumbi.

The Arab and Muslim party was left in complete control with Kiweewa as their figurehead. Most of the political posts in Kiweewa's reign went to Muslims as they played a prominent role in the plan.

Being at the lead of the overthrow of Mwanga, the Muslims asked Kiweewa to become a Muslim and be circumcised, but Kiweewa refused. When he refused to submit to the request, the Muslims decided to get rid of him.

In order to contain the Muslims, Kiweewa planned to kill all their leaders, so that he could consolidate his leadership. He organized a luncheon to which Muslim leaders were invited. In the middle of the luncheon, Kiweewa moved out making gesture to his axe men to kill all the Muslims. The Muslim leaders were killed except one Muguluma who managed to escape and he informed other Muslims about the new development.

In revenge, the Muslims, assisted by the Arabs, organized an army which not only deposed him but also later killed Kiweewa. After Kiweewa's death, his younger brother Nuhu Kalema was proclaimed the next Kabaka of Buganda. Buganda, in fact, became an Arab and a Muslim State.

## ISLAM DURING THE REIGN OF KABAKA NUHU KALEMA

Kabaka Kalema was instituted after the overthrow and death of his brother Kiweewa. As soon as Kalema became king, he converted to Islam. He was also circumcised by Mwalimu Kanatta who gave him Nuhu as his Muslim name. It was because of this that Kabaka Nuhu Kalema is regarded as the true and accepted Muslim king of Buganda.

Kabaka Kalema then wrote a letter to the Sultan of Zanzibar informing him about his conversion of Islam. He at the same time moved his capital to Lungujja. He also wished to be referred to as the Sultan of Buganda.

During his reign, he declared a Jihad-like policy in Buganda through which he imposed Islam on everybody and circumcision of every man. However, this policy was not liked by Christians who decided to fight Kalema and the Muslims.

During Kalema's reign, almost all political posts in Buganda went to Muslims, a process which made several people especially pagan chiefs to convert to Islam.

Several other events took place all of which were not in favour of the Christians. With such a state of affairs, many Christians were dissatisfied. The dissatisfied Christian chiefs and their supporters who had fled from the capital in October 1888 had taken refuge in Ankole to the west, where their numbers steadily increased. To them, the Muslim rule was intolerant and unpopular.

In 1889, the idea was put forward by the White Fathers that the Christians at Ankole, assisted by the protestant and Roman Catholic missions, should combine to drive out the Muslims from Buganda and restore Mwanga to his throne.

Meanwhile, Christian refugees in Ankole, supported by Pagans and missionaries who supported them with guns, came back led by the Protestant chief Apolo Kaggwa, fought the Muslims whom they defeated and overthrew Kalema. They re-installed Mwanga II they had overthrown a year back, with the help the Muslims.

Apollo Kaggwa was appointed Prime Minister (Katikkiro) in recognition of his leadership of the victorious Christian army; the chief offices of state were divided equally between the Catholic and Protestant chiefs; and Mwanga built for himself a new capital at Mmengo.

In the events that followed, the Christians who had been victorious set fire on Kalema's palace at Lungujja.

Then after fruitless encounters between Christians and Muslims, Kalema together with other Muslims went to Kijungute, the Muslims made an alliance with king Kabalega of Bunyoro. The Muslims, with support of Kabalega, made constant attacks to Mwanga but with very little success.

As a result of the changes that took place in 1890, Buganda was made a Christian state and all important posts went to Christians. Buganda since then lost her fame as an Islamic state. This partly explains why there are more Christians than Muslims in Uganda.

In 1890, Kalema died of small pox and was succeeded by Nuhu Kyabasinga Mbogo at the leader of Muslim community.

In the same year, Mwanga's Army with the support of captain Lugard, the representative of the IBEAco, stormed the Muslim base in Bunyoro. This was done purposely to weaken the Muslims by denying them any royal support.

The Muslims then sent a letter to the Sultan of Zanzibar for military aid. Unfortunately the letter landed into the hands of Lugard. Lugard then replied to the Muslims by deceiving them that the Sultan had sent him as his agent and with military aid and that the Sultan had told them to come back to Buganda as even Mwanga had fled again; and that Mbogo should hurry and take over the throne as Kabaka of Buganda.

Lugard had desired to weaken the Muslims so as to end religious conflicts in Buganda. After a long series of negotiations between the Muslims themselves, the Muslims agreed to come back to Buganda. Mbogo signed an agreement with Lugard in the same year 1890. The agreement had the following effects.

1. Mbogo and the two sons of Kalema surrendered and gave themselves to the colonial authorities.
2. Muslims were disarmed; a thing that weakened them politically and militarily
3. In the Buganda land distribution that followed, the Muslims were given three comparatively small, poor and lean counties of Busujju, Gomba and Butambala. This further weakened the economic position of the Muslims in Buganda.

The Muslims also got two principal appointments in the government in the years that followed this Agreement.

The terms of this forced Agreement were not favourable to the Muslims; and such, they rebelled again in 1893 with help of the Sudanese soldiers. Nevertheless, the Muslims were crushed completely.

As a result of this rebellion, the colonial government removed two countries from the Muslims; that is, Gomba and Busujju, and only remained with Butambala.

In the events that followed, Muslims were openly mistreated by the Christians and many of them were forced to go into exile.



## **POLITICAL – RELIGIOUS WARS IN BUGANDA (1888 – 1893)**

These were wars fought between Christians and Muslims in Buganda. These wars had political and religious overtones; and thus came to be known as Political – Religious wars.

There were a number of such wars in Buganda beginning with 1884 when the Muslims and Christians made a coalition to defeat Mwanga II.

Later in October 1888, during the Reign of Kabaka Kiweewa, the Muslims fought against the Christians. This time the Muslims were victorious and drove the Christians out of Buganda.

Shortly afterwards, the Christians regrouped, this time with Mwanga II to fight against the Muslims whom they defeated.

Another war was in 1893 when the Muslims revolted against the colonial authority (who were mainly Christians)

### **CAUSES OF THE WARS.**

1. There was long term rivalry between Christians and Muslims right from the time of Roman Empire and early Muslim Caliphate in the Seventh century. The rivalry was worsened by the Muslims' occupation of Europe, which culminated into the Crusade of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries. Thus even when the Muslims and Christians met in Buganda, that enmity was still influencing their thinking.
2. Struggle for converts was another cause of the wars; since the Muslims as well as Christians wanted to win the hearts of the local people towards their religion. Though the Muslims were less ambitious in this line, the Christians usually blackmailed the Muslims so as to win more people. In the process, the two groups became aggressive towards each other.
3. The Arabs and Christian Missionaries had all along struggled to extend their spheres of influence in Buganda. The Sultan of Zanzibar had economic interest in the interior as it was a source of tradable goods such as ivory; at the same time the market for their goods, which were got from the Asian continent. Yet the British had occupied Egypt and were interested in controlling the source of River Nile, which was a basis of the economy of Egypt. These competing interests to some extent must have facilitated to break up of some wars in Buganda at that time.
4. The Political-Religious wars in Buganda were also caused by each of the religions wanting to have absolute influence of the most influential people in the Kingdom in addition to struggling to win more converts to its block. The struggle led to bitter conflicts between the foreign religions that resulted in wars.
5. The Ganda Culture with the Kabaka as the central focal point who could not be disobeyed – when the Muslims disobeyed Muteesa I in 1875 – 1876 he massacred them and later, in the reign of Kabaka Mwanga II in 1887, Christians were massacred for allegedly disobeying him. This culture forced the two groups to fight Kabaka Mwanga; though at different occasions.
6. The Muslims had grievances towards Mwanga in that he had refused to allow them the monopoly to slaughter animals and his favourable Kaggula Ndikumulaga had publicly humiliated an important Muslim chief Muguluma. They also feared that the

fate which befell their co-religionists in Muteesa's reign might be repeated by Mwanga.

7. The Christians and Muslim groups each wanted to have full control over Buganda in terms of religious and political powers. These religions were struggling for domination and supremacy. The Christians wanted to be the key players and be the most dominant religions. This was quite similar to what Muslims were struggling for. As each of these saw other as a competitor, they tried to weaken the opponents by use of a gun.
8. The religious groups not only wanted to influence the kings but also chiefs. They were both aware that should they succeed in influencing the king, then their faith was to flourish in Buganda. It was partly because of this tension which existed between the Christians and Muslims that later resulted in these wars in Buganda.
9. Both Muslims and Christians were struggling for political prominence in Buganda which resulted into these wars. For instance, they struggled for the office of Kawuuta (Head of Royal cooks). The Christians went ahead to detest the Muslims taking most important positions in government; likewise, the Muslims who were the majority resented giving way to minority Christians whom they could easily remove from positions of power.
10. Naturally, the Christians and Muslims could not co-exist peacefully due to differences in theological and ideological issues and as such these wars were expected and by that time, both groups had acquired guns and felt strong enough to fight against the other.
11. The failure of the King of Buganda to ultimately identify themselves with either Christianity or Islam brought confusion; and hence these wars were to occur. For example, if Muteesa I had fully supported Muslims up to the end of his reign, perhaps Christianity wouldn't have had an influence in Buganda. Because of such, these wars were expected.
12. These wars began when the alliance which the Muslims had made with the Christians to overthrow Mwanga collapsed. Thus in 1888, the Muslims defeated the Christians and drove them out of Buganda's capital. The Christians as a result went to Ankole; but vowed to fight the Muslims. Such determination between both parties resulted into several battles. This explains why the whole of Kalema's reign was punctuated with wars.
13. The changes in Kabaka Mwanga's administration policies where he demobilized the old chiefs and replaced them with young ones (Muslims and Christians) also resulted in wars. The old guards created a lie that the confronted was plotting to kill them, so they confronted him; hence beginning of the wars.
14. The poor distribution of spoils of the war between the Muslims and Christians after the overthrow of Kabaka Mwanga was another factor for the breakout of the wars; the Muslims are said to have got a lion's share compared to Christians. Thus the Christians were dissatisfied and decided to fight the Muslims.
15. The need for the exiled Baganda to come back to their motherland was another factor that sparked off these wars. When the Christians ran to Ankole, they mobilized

themselves aided by Mwanga and defeated the Muslims. When Muslims were defeated and exiled to Bunyoro they also felt a need to come back; hence in the same way as the Christians in Ankole, they started waging a war to come back from exile. This was around 1888 – 1890.

16. The attempts to win the Kabaka to their own religions caused the wars. Each of these religious groups wanted to have the most important man in the kingdom to be of their own religion. This was made complicated by Mwanga's failure to identify himself with one religion but was always changing time and again. This was the main reason why Muslims murdered Kiweewa for failure to become a Muslim and replaced him with Kalema, a Muslim. This caused a war of 1888 October when Christian missionaries reacted to this.
17. Each of the foreign religion looked at itself above other beliefs .They started undermining other beliefs, especially the traditional religions, whose nature of worship and leaders were severely attacked. This annoyed those who were still strong and faithful to their mother religion. Catholics also undermined protestants and vice versa. Some of these wars began as converts conflicted and fought; and the war would attract most people who would try to defend their religious family members.
18. All the foreign regions were operating and confined in the same place. They were all operating in Kabaka's place where they looked at each other with jealous and askance. Because of some differences in their doctrines, they caused conflicts amongst themselves and their converts; hence leading to wars.
19. The wars were also sparked off by the colonialists interests in Buganda which they had wanted to take on as their colony. In order to do this, their agents who were missionaries needed to do the groundwork like winning the Kabaka and the key Chiefs to their religion. They also needed to have a large following that would support the colonialists or even weaken the local warriors so that they get crippled militarily. This then became a hidden motive for these missionaries that led to many wars.
20. Traditional religious leaders and other masses that still believed in traditional beliefs hated foreign religions. They feared a possible annihilation of their religion and culture. The Kabaka was no longer respected and the traditional religion was slowly losing its popularity. The Baganda withdrew their loyalty from the Kabaka and turned down his orders. Thus, when these were properly weighed, they were to inevitably tantamount into war.
21. The support captain Lugard gave to the Protestants also accounted for these wars. Lugard, an agent of the Imperial British East African Company (IBEAcO) favoured fellow Protestants and Britons in these wars. He supplied them with 500 rifles and two maxim guns. He brought in Sudanese mercenaries commanded by Salim Bey. They mainly encouraged Protestants to fight wars of 1892 otherwise known as the battle of Mengo.
22. The killings that Mwanga made also resulted into religious wars. He killed Bishop Hannington in 1885 and had Massacred Christians at Namugongo on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1886. Some missionaries attempted to overthrow him so that a repeat of the Namugongo incident is foiled while in offing.

23. The spark of the most serious war, the battle of Mmengo, was an incident where Mugolooba, a Catholic killed a protestant in self-defence. Mwanga arbitrated the case and gave punishment to Mugolooba. But Lugard claimed that the punishment was light and requested to be given Mugolooba for another punishment. When Mwanga refused, Lugard led the Protestant attack against the Catholics in a war that broke out on 24<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1892 commanded by mercenaries and Protestants.
24. The action of the Kabaka of Buganda to keep the leaders of the three religious groups at the king's court always fuelled the existing enmity among them. The leaders of the three religions, each of them talked ill of the others. The clash of interests paved way for wars.
25. The death of Kabaka Muteesa I in 1884, a mature, experienced and tactful leader in his dealings with the foreign religions left a vacuum in the kingship. The death of Muteesa I brought in Mwanga II; only 18-years of age and inexperienced, who failed to manage the affairs of the Kingdom. Being young, Mwanga was surrounded by poor advisors, who poisoned Mwanga's mind against the Christians. This resulted in the killing of Christians in 1885 – 1886 at Nakivubo and Namugongo.
26. The autocracy instituted in Buganda kingship, in which authority of the king was unquestionable, including one's life just by the mere orders of the king accounted for the cause of the religious wars in Buganda. Mwanga, using his powers, killed the so-called Uganda Martyrs in 1886. He also forced Muslims to eat meat not slaughtered islamically. The Muslims and Christians made a coalition and fought Mwanga.
27. Buganda's political nationalism; the need to preserve their independence against European Imperialism, too, explains the conflicts. Because of the need to preserve Buganda's independence, Mwanga planned to chase away all foreigners and their supporters from Buganda. When they learnt of the deal, advocates of the foreign religions hastened to fight and over throw Mwanga.
28. Buganda's cultural nationalism also explains the 1888 – 1892 religious wars in Buganda. The Baganda traditionalists were party in the wars simply because of their dissatisfaction with the foreign religious beliefs and practices, which were imperial and opposed to many African cultural beliefs and practices. For example, the Muslims refused to eat meat slaughtered in unislamic way.

## **EFFECTS OF RELIGIOUS WARS IN BUGANDA.**

1. The wars affected the traditional political institution of Buganda. The Kabaka for the first time was violently overthrown, moreover by the foreigners who disrespected Buganda's political culture and appointed their own choices. This happened in 1888, when Mwanga was replaced by Kiweewa. Mwanga had been overthrown by the Protestants who had the support of Lugard. This was the main reason why Muslims murdered Kiweewa for failure to become a Muslim and replaced him with Kalema, who was a Muslim.
2. These wars brought about chaos and conflict among the Baganda. Baganda had had no history of internal wars, but when missionaries came, they began religious wars that caused insecurity in the kingdom; where even people of the same house but of different religions could not see eye to eye.

3. The unity that had existed in Buganda following, the coming of Islam was affected. The various religions (Protestants and Catholics) that came afterwards started to compete with Muslims for converts to their faith; and when wars began, they started fighting against one another. Sometimes real brothers fought each other because of religious differences. This divisionism was to the detriment of Islam because the imperialists sided with other religions and the Muslims were thus marginalized.
4. During these wars, many Muslims were forced to flee to other parts of Uganda. Thus they had chance, though in disguise, to spread their religion Islam to the areas where they lived as refugees. For instance, Islam spread to Ankole when the Muslims fled to Ankole and began spreading their faith in this region.
5. Because of the religious wars, some people developed a negative attitude and a dislike towards all foreign religions, which they associated with a sword and labeling them hostile. They weighed these religions with their traditional religion that was peaceful. So many people strengthened their faith in the traditional religions; and in this case, many Muslims denounced Islam in favour of the traditional religions.
6. As the wars were fought, many people were displaced. The Muslims, who had lost in the wars, had to desert the battle fields and fled beyond their own kingdom. This disrupted the family life of Muslims and dented their economic base.
7. Like any other war, Religious wars in Buganda led to many deaths, most especially to the Muslim converts who were armed without the skills of war. The biggest casualties were those Muslims who had no superior guns and only used spears, arrows and the so called one-bullet guns brought by the Arabs. These were no match to machine guns brought by the Europeans.
8. These wars led to the coalition between Protestants and Catholics against the Muslims. After the war, Buganda was divided up among three religious groups in Buganda. The Protestants took a large share of 71.3% of the whole of Buganda. The Catholics were given the fertile county of Buddu while the Muslims were given only three small lean counties of Busujju, Butambala and Gomba.
9. In these wars, Mwanga who was once overthrown by the Protestants who had the support of Lugard, accepted to be faithful to Lugard and as Kabaka replacing the Muslim king Kalema. With this state of affairs, most important Muslims were left aside.
10. These wars led to the eventual loss of power by a Muslim king. This was when the protestants from Buganda defeated Kalema. This defeat meant that Muslims lost any chance of ever getting a king from their faith.
11. There was loss of life; many Muslims compared to Christians died. For instance, after the return of Mwanga with the support of the Christians massacred sixty one (61) Arabs by putting them on fire. A clean-up process was started by Christians, hunting Muslims from house to house. Many who were caught were killed.
12. These wars forced Muslims into exile; for instance, many went to neighbouring countries never to return like Kiziba in Tanzania, Tooro, Busoga, Ankole, Bunyoro and Bukedi. Thus they were alienated from their relatives.

13. The wars had an effect of facilitating the spread of Islam to where the refugees went. In areas like Bunyoro, Tooro, Busoga, Ankole etc, Muslim refugees had a remarkable influence in the spread of Islam.
14. Muslims were reduced to second class citizens; this was because, after their defeat, they were exiled and when they came back, they were a compromised group. Many people did not want to associate with them; they were denied of all positions of responsibility and they could do nothing in terms of earning income other than petty jobs like fetching water, collecting firewood, etc. They were referred to as Muslims but not Baganda.
15. These wars changed the customs of the kingdom. The Kabaka could now be deposed by the Bakopi. In earlier cases, the Bakopi (ordinary people) had no say in determining the person to rule them.
16. For the first time, a Muslim king sat on the Buganda throne. As soon as Kalema became the Kabaka, he converted to Islam. He is also referred to as the true and accepted Muslim King of Buganda.
17. The religious wars put the Muslims and Islam in a very weak position. The Muslims could no longer convert people in top positions as had been the case before they were defeated.
18. After the defeat of Muslims, Islamic influence moved away from capital and further gains in country side were made difficult by the social position Islam occupied.
19. After the wars, Islam was looked down upon and it was not seen as a source of good morals. Thus Euro-Christian ideas became the symbols of sophisticated gentlemanship in Buganda.
20. Muslims were totally defeated and as a result, the then Muslim leader Nuhu Mbogo was hoodwinked in 1889 into signing an agreement with Lugard, which resulted into the Muslims moving away from the positions of power.
21. Muslims developed an inferiority complex where they started to feel unfit to participate in politics. They even feared to be seen associating with those who had strong courage to stand in positions of politics. This attitude overtook Muslims until 1971 when Idi Amin took over power as president of Uganda.
22. The Religious wars widened the relationship between Muslims and Christians. Because of the wars, Muslims and Christians started killing one another. This increased enmity between them and the grudge has come to live to date.
23. Muslims were deliberately marginalized economically. Thus in 1890, the colonial government distributed land and the Muslims were allocated Butambala, Busujju and Gomba counties – very lean countries. Later on when the Muslims complained, Busujju and Gomba were taken away from Muslims. Gomba was given to the Protestants and Busujju to the Catholics.
24. After these wars, Religion became the basis of political platform in Uganda. This was when the Protestants became leaders and administrators and Catholics became Government officials. The Muslims, on the other hand, were politically

weakened and became mere spectators.

### **WHY MUSLIMS WERE DEFEATED IN THE POLITICAL – RELIGIOUS WARS.**

1. At the beginning of these wars, Christians did not have enough weapons but they later got large quantities of arms especially with the coming of Christian Missionaries. This greatly strengthened their position against Muslims.
2. For a long time, the Muslims had controlled Lake Victoria, but when the Christians gained control over it, they captured an Arab vessel full of Arms and Gun powder which were being brought to the Muslims. This reduced Muslims' military strength, hence their defeat.
3. Many strong men among the Muslims were killed like Lubanga, Muguluma, and Kapalaga etc. This greatly weakened the Muslims; yet strong men at the Christian side like Apollo Kaggwa and Semei Kakungulu commanded their army.
4. The long distance from Kijungute to Buganda made the Muslims unable to fight the Christians. This was so because when the Muslims ran from Buganda to Kijungute, they couldn't fight from all that far.
5. The Christians used propaganda to win the people to their side. It was true that during Muteesa 1's regime many people had been forced into Islam. So the Christians with their leader Mwanga told the ordinary people that if they did not join Mwanga, Muslims would circumcise everybody by force if they won.
6. Whereas most men in the Muslim army were chiefs and prominent men who lived near the Kabaka's courts and couldn't easily fight, the Christians used majority of the local people who had been frightened that Kalema would circumcise them by force.
7. By the time of these wars, the majority of the Muslims had yet joined Islam whole heartedly; so during the wars, many of them crossed over and joined Christian circles.
8. In some cases, Muslims were disorganized as they did not have a clear military strategy and only put their faith in God. They advanced to battle fields hoping that God would strengthen them to fight and also deliver them from the disbelievers.
9. The colonial forces always fought side by side with the Christians against the Muslims. They usually used deadly maxim guns and greatly defeated the Muslims, who used less sophisticated one-bullet guns.
10. The loss of their leader greatly demoralized the Muslims. In April 1890, while in exile in Bunyoro, Kalema (the leader of Muslims) was seized with small pox and died. The Muslims were left with no courageous leaders and the Muslims got tired of war. A young nephew of Kalema – Nuhu Mbogo – never wanted to fight and later on concluded a treaty with the Christians which put the Muslims in a position of weakness up to date.
11. The death of Batuma who was the Muslim drummer (Omugoma) was also another setback on the side of the Muslims. The sounding of the drum always organized and mobilized the Muslims for war. When he died, Muslims lost their confidence to fight.
12. The final blow on the Muslim side came when Mbogo signed an agreement with

Lugard in 1890. This agreement was fatal on the side of Muslims and hence they surrendered.

13. The marginalisation of the Muslims weakened them economically; for example when they were deprived of fertile lands. They also lost political power and could not be appointed in high government posts moreover they had been disarmed by Lugard.
14. Some Baganda kings and chiefs played double standards and this affected the Muslim position. The Muslims had put their confidence in their chiefs like Kiweewa, Katikkiro Mukasa and the like. These kings and chiefs, however, betrayed the Muslims by either refusing to embrace Islam or converting to Christianity.
15. The cunning move by Fredrick Lugard to sign an agreement with the Muslims in 1890 accounts for the Muslim defeat in the wars. In the agreement, Muslims were disarmed and they too lost their political powers.
16. The Muslims were defeated in the wars when the Christians gained control of Lake Victoria. With the control of the lake, the Christians captured an Arab vessel full of arms and gun power being taken to Muslims. With lack of ammunition, the Muslims lost in the wars.
17. The deprivation of the Muslims of high posts in the colonial government left them politically and economically incapacitated. Muslims thus turned to hewing and fetching firewood and drawing water for the rich Christians. With this state of affairs, the Muslims did not have the resources to finance them in wars.
18. The exile of Muslims to Ankole and Kijungute in Bunyoro decreased the Muslim number in Buganda. Yet those who remained behind were persecuted by Christians who had become victorious. The few Muslims in Buganda were no match to the already determined Christians.
19. The composition of the Muslim army also accounts for the Muslim defeat in the wars. The Muslim army largely comprised of chiefs, pages (Kabaka's servants in the royal residences) and prominent men who lived in or near the King's palace. These considered their social status with high esteem and so could not fight vigilantly.
20. The Christians together with their European counterparts used the circumcision factor to discredit the Muslims. The Christians spread propaganda that king Kalema was forcing the non-Muslims to be circumcised. Many non-Muslims turned all their support against Islam and the Muslims.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### ISLAM DURING COLONIAL RULE (1890 – 1962)

The influence of colonialism started with the time when Europeans arrived in Buganda led by Henry .M. Stanley, who was a political forerunner in Buganda. He had come to Buganda as an explorer to find the possibility of the British takeover of River Nile which was important in the life of Egypt and Sudan they controlled.

In the late 1890's Captain Lugard was given a mission to this region, but did not have soldiers other than to use those who had been cut off from the centre of operation in Egypt by the activities of Mahdists (Mahdist Revolution).

The soldiers popularly known as Sudanese Muslims were now used to prepare Africans for colonialism. These soldiers played their political role positively to enhance the spread of Islam contrary to the wish of the colonialists.

In 1890, Muslims, who had exiled in Kijungute, signed an agreement with captain Lugard, whereby they were allowed to come back and settle in Buganda. This happened after a letter which Muslims had written to the Sultan of Zanzibar asking for help fell in the hands of Lugard.

Lugard sent to the Muslims Salim Bey and Achmet Offendi, the white Nubians to pretend as representatives of the Sultan of Zanzibar. By this time, Kalema – the leader of Muslims had died, and Mbogo had succeeded him. They convinced Mbogo and his party to return to Buganda, where Lugard forced them into signing an agreement with him under the following aspects;

1. That the Muslims would not fight the Buganda government again. This led to the Muslim to surrender their guns.
2. That Mbogo shall never put up any claim on the throne of Buganda Kingdom. He also surrendered the royal drums the Muslims had captured.
3. That Mbogo would be honoured.
4. Mbogo was to be given material benefits such as Kibuli Hill land and 250 pounds per annum as pension throughout his life. He was given a house in the prienex of Kampala.
5. The Muslims were also to be given three countries of Gomba, Busujju and Butambala.
6. That the Muslims were required to offer labour to Kabaka Mwanga.

This agreement saved the Muslims from continued fighting which they were not bound to win because of lack of logistics. It also put Mbogo in position of honour which helped him to be able to know important issues deliberated upon. Muslims were also given a right not to put off their caps in Kabaka's court.

However, this denied Muslims political leadership of this country and they could not participate in decision making. They became a compromising group; thus they were always marginalized.

Some Muslims rejected the signing of the agreement and even ran back to exile. The colonialists called this inconsistency of the Muslims and decided to exile Mbogo to Zanzibar where he stayed for three years.

However, this was a blessing in disguise as it helped Mbogo to learn more of his religion and to be exposed to the outside world.

However, because of discontents of the Muslims as a result of the 1890 agreement, they resolved to revolt.

## **MUSLIM'S REVOLT OF 1893.**

For a number of reasons; Muslims decided to revolt; detesting the oppressive tendencies in the protectorate. The following were the explanations of the revolt;

1. The replacement of Fredrick Lugard on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1892 with Captain Macdonald primarily sparked off the revolts. Lugard had provided Muslims with absolute freedom of worship, had considerable respect on their leader and had provided them with amicable settlement. But with the coming of Macdonald, the situation changed and Muslims found themselves in bad situations.
2. Muslims were dissatisfied with the small share of chieftainship relative to other religious denominations. They in sense had three chiefs, representing the three counties that had been given to the Muslims by the Colonial government.
3. Muslims were dissatisfied with small share of land they were given and wanted more land. The land they were given was very lean and by no means as valuable as Buddu; for the two – Gomba and Busujju, had largely been devastated by the war.
4. Macdonald had suggested that Muslims should have a judge of their own to deal with purely Muslim cases and that Muslims should have a half way (Shamba) to the capital but his successor Portal dismissed that.
5. They were forced to offer free labour to Kabaka Mwanga. The Muslim had refused to serve Mwanga. They believed that it was a taboo to work for a pagan or infidel king.
6. The presence of the Sudanese soldiers in their midst was also a source of encouragement to the Ugandan Muslims to revolt. The Sudanese soldiers were always showing sympathy to their co-religionists. Besides, Salim Bey had insisted that Muslims were not compelled to carry out their promises regarding building for the king and paying taxes.
7. They were also inspired by the uprising in Sudan by the mahadist in the 1880s which was successful in suppressing the colonialists.

## **RESULTS OF THE REVOLTS**

1. Muslims lost many of their ardent leaders and staunch followers of Islam in Uganda.
2. The Sudanese Muslim soldiers were dropped from the government enlisted forces in Uganda.

3. Prince Mbogo and Ramadhan, the son of Kabaka Kalema were deported to Zanzibar and Juma, the Muslim ring leader was deported to Kikuyu; thus the Muslims remained without leadership.
4. The two counties of Busujju and Gomba were taken away and those who had not participated in the war were left with only Butambala. The two counties were given to Christian factions. Thus Muslims remained with only one chief who was also a subordinate to the Kabaka.
5. A fixed policy was also adopted to expel the rebel Muslims from the country. The colonialists made contact with Captain Lengheld of Germany Territory to offer land to the Muslims to the South of Lake Victoria at Karagwe.
6. Owing to what happened, Captain Lugard criticized Macdonald for having been a poor administrator. He emphasized that there should be important toleration and absolute freedom of religion to be granted for all.
7. The revolt led to another uprising in 1897 which led to divisions in the Muslim community with some Muslims led by Mbogo choosing to be loyal to the government, while others led by Sudanese soldiers chose to fight.

### **THE ROLE OF COLONIALISM IN THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN UGANDA.**

1. In the process of facilitating the exploitation of the country, the colonialists decided to improve on the communication system by constructing roads and railway lines. This helped in the opening up of new lands and making many areas accessible even for the Arabs Muslims to come in large number in Uganda; hence the spread of Islam.
2. The colonialists also used some Muslims to administer some areas on their behalf. These Muslims usually used their positions to influence the local people under their jurisdiction into Islam.
3. The use of the Sudanese Muslim Soldiers by the colonialists facilitated the spread of Islam. These soldiers were used to bring down any resistance against the colonial masters. Incidentally, whenever the Sudanese Muslim soldiers went, they influenced the local people into becoming Muslims.
4. Some of the Sudanese officers served as Muslim teachers, instructing the Muslim princes in the principles of Islam and many of these soldiers married from the local people; hence increasing the number of Muslim converts.
5. Because of the obedience of the Sudanese Muslim Soldiers rendered to the Colonialists, the attitude of the colonialists seemed to have changed positively towards the position of Islam. Because of this, the colonial Governor Major Rigby encouraged the teaching of the basics of Islam and allowed free practice of the religion.
6. The colonial Government also re-established the status of Mbogo, the religious leader, when they chose him to act as one of the three regents in 1897 to bring up the young Daudi Chwa II, who had replaced Mwanga II as the Kabaka of Buganda.

This status uplifted the position of Islam in the face of the Baganda and brought him near the source of decision making. Thus, many decisions which would have affected Islam were avoided because of his presence.

7. The 1990 agreement between the British government and the Baganda chiefs seemed to have favoured Islam to some extent. In the agreement prince Mbogo was awarded 250 pounds per year as pension. He also got 24 square miles of land in Buganda for himself. Much of this land, schools and other social institutions have been built on it – eight acres of land at Kibuli, a hospital, two schools, one teacher college (PTC) and a university campus have been established.
8. Mbogo also tried to ask for land on which Muslims would build schools and other social institutions from the colonial government and the offer was granted but never actualized because the Muslims themselves could not agree on how to share it.

### **CAREER OF PRINCE NUHU MBOGO (1890 – 1921)**

Prince Nuhu Mbogo was born around 1835 to King Suuna II of Buganda. He acquired Islamic knowledge and he later during the reign of Kabaka Kalema converted to Islam. Right from his conversion, Mbogo fully supported Islam and his contribution to Islam were quite commendable.

1. He fully participated in all religious wars between Muslims and Christians in Buganda and out at Kijungute in Bunyoro.
2. With the death of Kalema, Nuhu Mbogo became the leader of the Muslims. Under his leadership, he struggled to unite Muslims who had gone to Kijungute and after they had been disarmed by Christians and Lugard.
3. When the situation in Buganda became unbearable for Muslims to live in, Mbogo led a group of Muslims into exile first to Kijungute and later to Zanzibar.
4. Mbogo signed the Buganda Agreement for himself and followers. In the Agreement, he was granted land and pension of 250 pounds; all of which were used to promote Islam.
5. He was always opposed to the discrimination of Muslims in Buganda by Colonial forces and always tried to ensure that Muslims' welfare improved during the colonial period.
6. He influenced the colonial masters to allow Muslims to put on their caps in all public places; and the request was granted.
7. Due to his struggle, Muslims were also granted freedom of worship in addition to protecting and preserving their rights.
8. Due to Mbogo's effort, the colonial government accepted that all animals in Uganda be slaughtered in the Islamic manner; and to a larger extent, this has continued to present.
9. In 1910, he pestered the colonial government to consider Muslims for appointment in government; and this worked to some degree. For instance, Ali Kadogo was made

a chief in Busoga.

10. He also asked the colonial government to offer money and land to Muslims for the construction of Schools and Mosques.
11. Following the agreement signed between Fredrick Lugard and the Muslims, the Muslims were left in an insecure position in Buganda; being reduced to second-class citizens and were the most sufferers in the hands of the Europeans. However, it was Mbogo who tried to negotiate peace and safety of Muslims.

Nuhu Mbogo, however, died in 1921 and he was succeeded by his son Prince Badru Kakungulu.

### **THE CAREER OF PRINCE BADRU KAKUNGULU (1907 – 1991)**

He was born in 1907 to Prince Nuhu Mbogo and Amina Nantume. He acquired religious knowledge under Sheikh Kalifan from Zanzibar; but his education was interrupted by the death of his father.

Kakungulu acquired Semi–secular education after completing Kibuli P.S. He joined King's College Buddo for further studies. He left Buddo at the age of 21 years in 1928 ready for active life.

When his father died, Muslim leadership was passed over to him and he was by then 13 years old. However, proper leadership of Kakungulu began after completion of his education in 1928. During his time, Kakungulu contributed to the development of Islam and Muslims in the following ways:

1. He united Muslims by forming Muslim organisations, like The Young Men's Muslims Association which was formed in 1932 and is still existing to date.
2. He promoted education by donating land (80 acres) on Kibuli Hill on which a primary and Secondary Schools, a Primary Teachers College, a hospital and a Mosque were built.
3. He was the founder member of Uganda Muslim Education Association (UMEA) which aimed at promoting education through construction of schools and provision of teachers. He also acted as president general of UMEA for sometime.
4. He promoted fundraising efforts aimed at the development of education of Muslims in Uganda. He always encouraged Muslim businessmen to emulate him.
5. He established good relationships with the outside Muslim World. For example, he was the fore–runner of the East African Muslim Welfare Society, to which he served as the first vice president of the entire society.
6. He also worked as representative of African Muslims to the Muslim World League and World Muslim Congress.
7. He organized The Mawuledi functions on which many people congregated. This helped to increase the number of Muslims as many people converted to Islam in the process.

8. He always invited people to his house to share views and they feasted together. He also organised Idd parties on which Muslims were called to feast.
9. Kakungulu lipped upwards and threatened Obote who imprisoned him in 1965 and was only released by Amin in 1971. Obote was trying to suppress the Muslim development activities.

In 1979, when Amin was overthrown, Muslim leadership in Uganda was left at bay. Kakungulu, a man of foresight, moved in quickly and re-organized the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council. From then, he continued to try to keep it up until when died in 1991. He was buried at Kibuli Mosque on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1991.

## **CONCENTRATION OF ISLAM IN BUGANDA**

**Question: Account for the concentration of Islam more in Buganda than in any other region in Uganda.**

Islam was said to enter Uganda around 1844; being introduced by the Arab traders from the East African Coast led by Ahmad bin Ibrahim accompanied by Snay bin Amir.

When Islam was introduced in Uganda, it first centred in Buganda where it had its initial and real pronouncement and influence. In fact, Islam concentrated more in Buganda than any other region, this being influenced by a number of factors.

1. The proximity factor; where Buganda is closer to areas that had got Islam earlier like the Nyamwezi land in Tanzania accounts for the concentration of Islam in Buganda. From such areas, Islam was easily introduced to Buganda
2. The presence of trade routes and network linking Buganda to other trade areas is another factor for the concentration of Islam in Buganda more than any other region of Uganda. The trade routes from the Coast of East Africa passed through the Nyamwezi land and reached Buganda. The Nile Valley-Mediterranean Sea Trade Route that was used by the Khartoumer traders branched to Buganda before it ended in Bunyoro. Most of the traders who used these routes were Muslims. These played a big role to plant a seed of Islam in Buganda.
3. The presence of the trade goods such as slaves and ivory in Buganda kept the Arabs and Swahili Muslim traders flocking Buganda area much more than any other area of Buganda. In the process of carrying out their trade, they interacted with the people of Buganda to whom they slowly passed Islam.
4. The luxurious tendencies of the Baganda also accounted for the concentration of Islam more in Buganda than any other area in Uganda. The luxurious tendencies of the Baganda provided opportunities to the Arabs and Swahili traders to sell their commodities in Buganda. The Arabs and Swahili presence in Buganda helped Islam to take root in the area.
5. Another factor for the concentration of Islam in Buganda more than any other region of Uganda was the fact that when the Arabs and Swahilis came to Uganda, they first settled in Buganda in areas; like Mengo, where they set up Arab-Swahili settlements. These settlements became centres for diffusion of Islam in Buganda.

6. The hospitality and accommodative nature of the Baganda to the Arab and Swahili visitors explains why Islam concentrated more in Buganda than any other region of Uganda. The Baganda welcomed Arab and Swahili Muslims to Buganda. These Arab and Swahilis introduced Islam in Buganda. The security granted to the Arabs and Swahilis kept moving in and out of Buganda than other areas.
7. Because of the conflict between Buganda and Bunyoro, the Baganda collaborated with the Arab traders from whom they expected to get guns to suppress the threat poised by Bunyoro. This collaboration and alliance made the Arabs to flock Buganda as they spread Islam.
8. The conversion of some Baganda kings and chiefs also favoured the concentration of Islam in Buganda more than any other region of Uganda. The people of Buganda also wanted to emulate their kings by doing whatever their king did. Thus, the conversion of kings like Muteesa I and Nuhu Kalema largely influenced the Islamisation of Buganda and the presence of more Islamic influence in Buganda than other areas of Uganda.
9. The readiness of Baganda to absorb any change explains the concentration of Islam in Buganda. The Baganda were always eager to take on any new development and in fact, they adopted new architecture, style of dressing and the Arabic culture including Islam.
10. Unlike other areas of Uganda, there was direct enforcement of Islam and its principles on people by the Kings in Buganda. For Instance Muteesa I ordered his chiefs to read and learn the Qur'an as he ordered for the building of mosques in the country side. Kabaka Kalema declared a Jihad-like a policy war against all those who stood in the way of Islam.
11. Islam came to Buganda earlier than other international religions. Therefore, when Islam was introduced to Buganda, it took root without any competition. In fact, Christianity came to Buganda 30 years later when Islam had already been planted. In other areas of Uganda, Islam was introduced almost at the same time with Christianity.
12. The fact that, in Buganda the Traditional religion was not politically and centrally controlled by the kings is a factor for the concentration of Islam in Bganda than other areas. The traditional religions were overseered by local priests and diviners. With this state affair when the Muslims chose to destroy the traditional religion, the king did not intervene. With this, Islam enjoyed monopoly in Buganda.
13. The concentration of Islam in Buganda was also favoured by the adoption of Swahili and Arab Muslims as soldiers, interpreters and domestic servants by the Europeans in their scramble for Buganda. The Swahili and Arab Muslims influenced many Baganda to Islam.
14. By the time Arabs reached Buganda, they had changed in their ways of bahaviour. They easily mixed with the Baganda, ate together and gave Baganda many luxurious items. The behaviour of the Arabs gave Buganda a much more Islamic influence than other areas of Uganda.
15. The courageous and brave attitude the Arabs exhibited before the King of Buganda helped Islam to take root in Buganda. The Arabs talked ill of the evils that the kings committed to their people. The Baganda therefore accommodated the Arabs together with their religion because they saw them as saviours. For instance Ahmad bin

Ibrahim stopped Suuna I who was going to kill his people.

16. The fact that Buganda was more civilized than other areas of Uganda accounts for the concentration of Islam in Buganda more than any other region of Uganda. Because Islam represented a superior civilization, was welcomed to Buganda. This explains why Suuna I pestered the Arabs to teach him how to read and write.
17. Another factor for the concentration of Islam more I Buganda than other areas of Buganda was the establishment of Muslim organizations and non-government organisations in the area. Many Muslim organizations have their headquarters in Buganda. These include African Muslim Agency, Islamic Call Society and many others. This gives Buganda an opportunity to receive Islamic activities more easily than other areas of Uganda.
18. When Islam was introduced in Buganda, Sunna I who by then was the Kabaka of Buganda became inquisitive and demanded to be taught Islam. He also encouraged his chiefs to learn about Islam. With many Baganda embracing Islam, they became missionaries who taught the faith to other people. Many people who were instructed in the religion chose to stay in Buganda.
19. Many of the first Qur'anic schools that were established in Buganda were built in Buganda. This included schools like Bilal Islamic in Bwaise, Katuumu in Buleemeezi and Lukalu in Butambala. These schools were used to instruct many people of Buganda in Islamic faith.
20. The Muslims Supreme body for Uganda - the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council has its headquarters in Buganda at Kampala. Yet, the majority of the leaders since its inception have been from Buganda. This facilitated the presence of much Islamic influence,

### **THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN OTHER PARTS OF UGANDA.**

**Question: Examine the factors that facilitated the spread of Islam in the western parts of Uganda.**

### **ISLAM IN ANKOLE**

Ankole was a Kingdom in Uganda in South West part of Uganda; bordering with Bunyoro and Tooro in north and Western parts respectively. In the South, it was bordering with Karagwe, Ruhinda, Rwanda and Mboga Zaire in the west. Today, Ankole is made up of Bushenyi, Mbarara, Rukungiri, Kabale and Ntungamo districts.

Though this country was near Karagwe than Uganda, Islam did not arrive there earlier, may be because people were pastorists and therefore not as hospitable as the Baganda were. Besides, their kingdom was not as centralised as Buganda and there was a strong division of people on the line of their pre-occupation. The Bahiru were basically farmers while the Bahima were cattle keepers.

This relationship did not create a homogenous society which would entice a foreigner to stay; besides, much of the area was mountainous and with a lot wild animals like lions, buffaloes and elephants.

1. Much of Islam is likely to have reached Ankole after 1890 when the Muslims were defeated in the Religious – Political wars in Buganda. Thus those who went there



and eventually spread Islam were refugees seeking asylum.

2. The majority of the refugees settled in Bukanga. The leader Kahaya allowed them to settle and cultivate as the Baganda were having a good relationship with Banyankole as explained by their earlier keeping of Mwanga and the Christian exiles after the earlier victory of the Muslims. The Muslim refugees were led by Kauzi; other includes Sabiiti Ssebalamu, Yahya Nyengere, etc.
3. Having stayed there for a long time, the Muslim got integrated in the lives of Banyankole though they retained Luganda as their Language. They married to Banyankole and as such the Muslim community increased.
4. Because of the good environment in Ankole backed by the segregation of those who had remained in Buganda, those in Ankole encouraged more muslims to join them from Buganda. Those who came mainly settled in Itendero, Kabohe, Bunyaruguru, Kajara, Kaboka and Nyamitanga.
5. As European colonial power extended, sub-imperialists were used to implement colonial policies in areas where they went. Thus in Ankole, some Muslims had chance of being chosen by Sub-imperialists to lead the county of Bukanga as Saza chiefs. Kawuzi and Offendi ruled one after the other. Because of the influence the chiefs had as people of high status, they contributed a lot to the spread of Islam in Ankole as people always wanted to associate with chiefs, hence embracing Islam.

## ISLAM IN TOORO

Tooro was one of the Kingdoms that existed in this region before the present Uganda was made. It lies in the Western part of Uganda just Northwest of Ankole.

6. Islamic influence was first taken to this region by the Sudanese soldiers working under the colonialists. Many of these soldiers were Muslims and held high places in the army thus they exercised their influence and led a number of people into conversion to Islam.
7. Strong Islamic influence was taken to Tooro by Baganda Muslim refugees who had been defeated in Buganda during the political Religious wars. Such people who did enormous work included Abdallah Gabungo, Amir Mbuga and Aziz Abdallah. These Muslims taught the local people and influenced them to convert to Islam. They even built many Mosques; like that of Kalambi, Nabukala, Bwengaju, Kyenjojo, etc.
8. Another Islamic influence was brought to Tooro by the former Batooro captives who had been taken to Buganda in about 1893. Those who became Muslims included Hassan Kamihanda, Sowedi Manyigeeka, Said Nyakamura and Kibika. When peace was restored through the establishment of colonial rule in Uganda. These Batooro were repatriated but some of them had embraced Islam. Hence started spreading it among their people.
9. Colonialists, though not consciously of their policy, also helped to spread Islam in Tooro. Their taking over of the region greatly enhanced the spread of Islam in that there was peace replacing the inter kingdom aggressiveness which made people captive of the invaders. There was freedom of movement including Muslims who

eventually settled in many areas causing the spread of Islam through interaction with the non-Muslims.

10. The role of Sheikhs and individuals in the spreading Islam should not be underrated; for instance Sheikh Swaibu Ssemakula sent Sheikh Salim Kirimiro to Tooro to act as the Kadhi and a teacher replacing Aziz Kamihanda. Thus during his time of stay in Tooro, Salim Kirimiro preached in several areas of the region although his influence was not as much as the one he replaced.
11. Another factor responsible for the spread of Islam in Tooro, like in other areas, was the inter personal relationships. This is true in that Muslims associated with other members of the society in day to day activities and in marriages; thus other people, through this influence ended up converting to Islam.

## **THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN BUNYORO**

Bunyoro is situated in the Western part of the present day Uganda. It boards with the Democratic Republic of Congo in the west, Tooro in the South, Buganda in the East and River Nile which divides it from the Northern parts of Uganda.

12. It's not very clear when Islam first reached Bunyoro. However historical sources show that by 1885, Muslims influence in both social and political spheres was strong in Bunyoro. At this time, Abdul Rahman had been installed as Kabalega's chief Advisor.
13. The Arabs' contact with the king of Bunyoro was due to the need for the guns. Thus the Arabs were welcomed and Kabalega encouraged them to trade with Zanzibar Merchants and those from Khartoum. The items of trade which the Arabs got from Bunyoro were slaves and ivory. Though the Arabs arrived in this place early, there's no evidence that they tried, neither did they preach Islam to the local people.
14. Another Muslim contact with Bunyoro was through the transport system offered by River Nile. This enabled the Arab from Egypt to establish contacts with the people of Bunyoro; hence some people became Muslims.
15. Later on, by about 1880s when the Mahdist Revolt broke out in Sudan, the fortunes of Islam in Bunyoro increased. This was because Kabalega had learnt that the Mahdists were able to fight the white men and so he promised a big present if they would come and help him to overcome those he was at war with in Bunyoro. Therefore, though not a Muslim himself, Kabalega made use of Islamic movements of the Nineteenth century.
16. The Europeans used Sudanese soldiers in the process of executing their colonial program in Bunyoro. These soldiers influenced many people to convert to Islam.
17. The Baganda used to raid Bunyoro and took many captives whom they used as slaves. Some of them arrived in Buganda at a time when Islam was influential. So they ended up converting to Islam.
18. Muteesa I of Buganda also played a role in the spread of Islam in Bunyoro. This was so in that when he was convinced of the new religion, he decided to send a missionary party to Kabalega of Bunyoro. He sent him a mat for praying on, a kettle

to carry water for ablution before praying, a red flag to be hoisted on the Mosque and sandals that are easily removed before entering the mosque. Though Kabalega turned down the request to embrace Islam, at least the message had reached Bunyoro.

19. As colonialism and Christianity intensified their missions, there arose religious wars of 1888 which eventually resulted in the defeat of the Muslims; hence running to Bunyoro at a place called Kijungute. During their stay in Bunyoro, these Baganda Muslim refugees influenced a number of people to become Muslims.
20. Some personalities like Hajji Umar Kanyabuzaana also played a great role in the Islamisation process in Bunyoro. They always preached, built Mosques and sacrificed efforts and money.
21. The Islamic fraternity (brotherhood) practiced by the Sudanese soldiers explains their role in the spread of Islam in Bunyoro. This was articulated by their wishes to assist the Muslims who had run from Buganda to Bunyoro as a result of religious wars in 1892. This assistance and brotherhood were also extended to Banyoro who were influenced to Islam.

## **ISLAM IN EASTERN REGION.**

**Question: Account for the spread of Islam in eastern and northern parts of Uganda.**

1. Islam spread to the Eastern parts of Uganda mainly through Western Kenya from the Mumia kingdom. The Mumia people were very hospitable towards the Arabs from the East African coast. Thus, many Arabs from the East African coast settled in Mumias and eventually many of them started moving out to the North and to the West. The Western route led them into Uganda. Though their major purpose was trade, they ended up spreading Islam.
2. Another factor responsible for the spread of Islam to the Eastern part of Uganda was the Baganda refugees who came in the years between 1889 and 1897. This was after they had been defeated by the colonialists in Buganda in the early days of colonizing Uganda. The Baganda refugees interacted with the people of Eastern Region whom they influenced to Islam.
3. The Baganda refugees made a commendable work for Islam. The first group is said to have been led by Ali Lwanga. This group introduced Islam in the area. Lwanga is also said to have married many wives and was very generous. Thus he attracted many people at his home; hence popularizing Islam.
4. Another factor responsible for the spread of Islam in the Eastern region was that of the chiefs; among them was Munulo who had converted to Islam in Buganda. Chief Munulo was a hereditary of Bugweri; thus when he embraced Islam, his faithful followers also followed suit. These included Adam Bwire, Ziad Kalanzi and Abdu Walangalira.
5. When Munulo converted to Islam, he was opposed by his uncles and brothers who were supposed to share power with him because Islam contradicted their traditional practices like burial, where the dead had to face Bunyoro where their ancestor are said to have come from, but to Islam the dead had to face Kibrah. Thus Munulo's

uncles and brothers rebelled which resulted into their killing and their houses were burnt down. However, those who feared death, converted to Islam to win sympathy of Munulo.

6. The Sudanese soldiers are also responsible for the spread of Islam in the Eastern region. The colonialists used them as means of quelling down resistance. In the camps where they stayed, they were usually chosen to command others; hence influencing their subordinates to Islam.
7. Baganda Muslim missionaries were also another factor responsible for the spread of Islam in the region. In the later days around 1915, people like Ibrahim Muyinda followed by Jumah Begulumye, Adam Kakeeto and Amir Luwalala, all from Buganda, went to Busoga as religious teachers.
8. The role of Baganda sub-imperialists was also another factor for the spread of Islam in the region. These were people who planted British rule. In the Eastern part, the Muslims went with Semei Kakungulu, though not a Muslim, he was friendly to Muslims. Thus he moved with Baganda Muslim subordinates who spread Islam without Kakungulu noticing it.
9. Their role in the spread of Islam was possible because Kakungulu had nominated some of them as chiefs. For instance, Jafar Mayanja who ruled South Bugishu, Sali Lule ruled Northern Bugishu and Abdallah Makubire was in Bunyole.
10. The role of European colonialists in the spread of Islam cannot be under-estimated, in that, though not interested in the spread of Islam, the colonialists employed many Muslims as clerks, cooks and interpreters, which jobs gave Muslims a status which improved their influence among other people later on improving their income; hence looking after their families who later became Muslims. Such people included Abdallah Mukubire who worked as an interpreter at Budaka Mbale.
11. Cultural norms of the people in the area also helped in spreading Islam in the eastern part of Uganda. Perhaps one of the reasons why Islam did not easily spread to many parts of the country was the factor of circumcision. However, in this part of Uganda circumcision is a cultural practice among the Bagweri and Bagishu. This therefore may explain why many people converted to Islam in its early days and Muslims continued to constitute a large number up to date in those areas.
12. The completion of the first railway line in 1912, when the Busoga line was opened, was important to the economic status of the country. To Islam, it was also a great relief. Many people, especially the Arabs, found their way to Uganda because of easy transport. Trade was boosted and many trading centres developed along the line. These centres like Iganga and Jinja became settlement areas of the Arab traders and later on Asians who had been formerly employed on the railway line construction and many of whom were Muslims. Thus the building of the Uganda railway facilitated the spread of Islam in Eastern region.
13. The appointment of Ali Lwanga as an interpreter to the white colonialists and serving as a chief in Busoga helped in the development of Islam in Eastern Region. Lwanga used his position to influence many people to become Muslims.
14. While serving as a chief in Busoga, Ali Lwanga married many wives from among the

Basoga and other Eastern Region tribes. This gave him opportunity to interact with many people whom he influenced to become Muslims.

15. The exclusive skills in workmanship that were exhibited by the Muslim refugees in the Eastern Region were a vital role in the spread of Islam in the region. For instance, Ali Lwanga was good at soap making and repairing guns which people of the region had started using. The people of the region admired the Muslims for their special qualities and skills so much that they drew nearer to them (Muslims) who influenced them to Islam.
16. The conversion of some Eastern Region chiefs, especially in Busoga, to Islam also contributed greatly to the spread of Islam in the area. For instance, in Bugweri, chief Munuto converted to Islam. The converted Muslim chiefs used their positions to influence the sub-chiefs and to convert to Islam.

### **THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN NORTHERN UGANDA.**

17. Islamic influence first reached the northern districts of modern Uganda from the North around 1830s. It was a result of Muhammad Ali's influence in Sudan which he had conquered in around 1820. The conquest of Sudan was basically for trade. Many roads were opened which led to Northern Uganda. The first trading post in Northern Uganda was established in Falaro on the northern boarder of Uganda in Acholi land.
18. The composition of traders who came to Northern Uganda that time was made up of Egyptians, Turkish and Sudanese soldiers and nationals of Muslim states; thus easily brought Islamic influence in the North. E.g an agent of Abu Sudi went East wards to Lango county and obtained large presents of Ivory and cattle.
19. Apart from the administrative influence of Egypt, the trade influence was also important in the spread of Islam in Northern Uganda. This was because of the existence of the wanted resources; the slaves and ivory in Northern Uganda. Many young people who were taken as slaves to Khartoum, when they intermarried, they eventually became Muslims and their return to Northern Uganda, influenced the local people into Islam.
20. Another factor was role of imperial British East African Company (IBEAcO) which later culminated into the protectorate government. They recruited many Sudanese soldiers from their former Equatorial province in the colonization process of East Africa. Many of these soldiers were put at the government stations both civil and military. These centres attracted many people who visited them for various reasons; hence were influence into Islam.
21. The European control of the Equatorial Province which incidentally included Southern Sudan and covered Northern Uganda whereby the Turkish and Sudanese Soldiers were used and were basically Muslims. They influenced many Acholi chiefs to learn Arabic and adopted Arabic dress and manners; hence facilitating the spread of Islam.
22. Many Sudanese soldiers who came as raiders or Soldiers of Emin Pasha were also responsible for the spread of Islam in Northern areas. This was done through marrying local women; they produced many children as a result and even brought their relatives with them to where they got married. All these people ended up becoming Muslims.

23. The Muslim priests of the time also greatly contributed to the Islamisation of the people in Northern Uganda. This was because they took advantage of the practice of amulets and divination that were prevalent in the society. They were wearing charms and amulets as a protection against the evil deities and certain supernatural powers. These priests used the Qur'an which seemed more superior to the traditional charms; hence it appealed to many people who were later lured to embrace Islam.
24. The declaration by Khedive Ismail (1863 – 1879) of all areas around the Nile valley up to Northern Uganda as part of Egypt helped in spread of Islam in Northern Uganda. Khedive Ismail used Sudanese traders and adventurers to run the administration of this area which came to be known as the Equatorial Province. Many of these traders had already become Muslims, and worked hard to spread Islam in Northern Uganda.
25. The success of the Mahdist Revolution in Sudan in 1885 also accounts for the spread of Islam in Northern Uganda. With the success of the Mahdist Revolution, many Sudanese Soldiers who had served in the revolution became idle. These, however, were taken over and used by Fredrick Lugard. Since the Sudanese Soldiers were Muslims they influenced many people to Islam.

## **ISLAM AND THE 1900 BUGANDA AGREEMENT**

The 1900 Buganda Agreement was signed between the British government and the Buganda Kingdom. The British Government was represented by Sir Harry Johnston while the Buganda Kingdom was represented by the three regents; that is, Sir Apollo Kaggwa, Stanislaus Mugwanya and Zakaria Kisingiri. The Agreement affected the Muslims of Buganda in the following ways;

1. The kingdom was sub-divided into twenty counties and the Muslims got only one; thus they got only one Ssaza chief. The Protestants got eleven while the Catholics got eight. This meant therefore that, Muslims were deprived of their benefits accrued out of chiefship.
2. The Lukiiko (parliament) was to consist of three ministers and 20 Ssaza chiefs, all their deputies together with 60 other members appointed by the Kabaka; 3 from each Ssaza and 6 notable persons appointed by the Kabaka. Two ministerial posts went to Protestants and one to Catholics and none to Muslims. 49 Protestants and 45 Catholics and only 3 Muslims were to be members of the Buganda Lukiiko.
3. Apart from the land which was allocated for the Protectorate use, all the remaining land was to be allocated as free hold plots (Mailo land) to the chiefs and sub chiefs of Buganda. Thus only one Muslim was to get a share of such land. Mbogo and his family members got 24 miles of land and 250 pound pension for life.
4. In order to meet some of the Protectorate expenses, a hut tax of some amount was imposed. But this meant that Muslims were to suffer a lot as the would be source of income (land) had been largely distributed to other religious groups leaving Muslims destitute.
5. From the 1900 Buganda Agreement, the British assumed control over Buganda. This in essence meant to the Muslims that they were to be suppressed forever, as they were now being subjected to Christianity since Britain where they came from was a backbone of Christianity. Thus, this Agreement just helped the British to get local

allies (Baganda Christian Chiefs).

6. Other aspects in the society at that time influenced the political positions of Muslims. Such aspects like the role of chiefs were very important since throughout human history chiefs – have been men of power and status; and therefore people who could influence changes. When they got land, they became politically and economically powerful. But for Muslims, obviously benefited little from this institution as they had only one Ssaza (County) chief. In other areas of the country where Muslim chiefs were instituted, they played a great role in uplifting Islam e.g Munulo Menya in Busoga.
7. Some Muslims who were employed in key sectors of the colonial administration helped Islam in quite a number of ways. The British employed a number of Muslims in security forces, police and as interpreters of Kiswahili. Many of them used their influence to soften the stand of the colonial officials on Islam.
8. In 1955, Kassim Male was made the first Muslim to be put on the Kabaka's cabinet as a minister. Later on Abubaker Mayanja and Ntege Lubwama took over as Ministers of Education.

## CHAPTER NINE

### MUSLIM CONFLICTS AND FACTIONALISM IN UGANDA (1921 – 2001)

A faction is a group of people working for a common cause against other such groups or against the main body. Factionalism in this case is the disunity or divisionism among the Muslims of Uganda. On the other hand, conflicts are the wrangles which have existed among Muslims for years.

The Islamic faith therefore has been a centre for Muslim misunderstanding, conflicts and leadership struggle for years. These conflicts, however, have been caused and facilitated by a number of factors and these included the following:

- The struggle for leadership.
- Differences in the interpretation of the Qur'an and regarding certain Islamic aspects.
- The existence of corrupt, dishonest and greedy leaders.
- Lack of enough secular and religious education.
- Interference of political influence in Islamic affairs.
- Existence of uncoordinated foreign influence of the Muslim World; for example, between Libya and Arabia.
- Lack of Universally accepted leaders like in case of other faiths.
- Tribal differences like those that existed between Buganda against other tribes.
- Struggle for economic gains coupled with high rates of Unemployment Muslims.
- There are also Non – Muslim forces from outside Uganda.

Muslim conflicts in Uganda started as far back as 1913 when Muslims started to use politicians to achieve their objectives and often times they would also be used in order for the politicians to achieve what they wanted.

For instance, by 1913, Taibu Magatto the Ssaza chief of Butambala, together with Muslims from Butambala tried to challenge the leadership of Prince Nuhu Mbogo. At the time, Magatto was being supported by Sir Apolo Kagga – Katikiro of Buganda Kingdom.

However Magatto and his men did not succeed in taking over as they lacked support from the then Kabaka Chwa II and the Protectorate Government as Mbogo was a member of the Royal family. Moreover, the majority of the Muslims in Uganda supported Mbogo; Mbogo learnt of it and accused Magatto of hypocrisy planning with the non Muslims to unseat him.

Magatto, however, maintained his claims in the Muslim leadership until the death of Nuhu Mbogo in 1921. When Prince Badru Kakungulu succeeded Mbogo, Sheikh Ssekimwanyi opposed the idea and was later joined by Magatto to form the Butambala Group in 1924.



As a result, the Muslim Community got divided into basically two groups; The Kibuli group – Uganda Muslim Community and the Butambala Group which became the African Muslim Community.

There was another conflict among the Muslims regarding offering Zuhuri prayers alongside Juma. Some Muslims supported the idea of praying both yet another group reasoned that Juma prayers couldn't suffice on Friday. This issue brought disunity among Muslims and worried Daudi Chwa II the then Kabaka of Buganda.

Because of the fear that revolts like those of 1890s would happen again, Kabaka Daudi Chwa II and the colonial Government took initiative to solve the problem. They immediately sought solution from Tanzania. As a result, in 1926, Ibrahim from Tanzania arrived to try and solve this contradiction. His attempt didn't do much because he advised Muslims to offer two prayers on Friday. This was, however, rejected by some Muslims and the problem continued to exist.

In 1947, the problem was taken to the judge of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. He recommended that the Muslims in Uganda should build a big Mosque where Juma prayers could be conducted. He also said that there was no reason for conducting Zuhuri and Juma prayers where there is a big congregation which has turned up for Juma prayers. However some Muslims were not satisfied with this recommendation.

In the same year, 1947, a group of Muslims held a meeting at Kibuli where many Muslims turned up and were led by Prince Badru Kakungulu and Sheikh Swaib Ssemakula. They came to be known as JUMA Mpya (New Juma) and their association was called Uganda Muslim Community (UMC) led by Prince Badru Kakungulu with its headquarters at Kibuli.

At this moment, two groups opposed to UMC emerged. One was led by Sheikh Abdul Rahman Mivule, who started Juma-zukuli faction at Kawempe Kyaddondo. The second group never liked matari and fasting after sighting the new moon. These were following the Islamic calendar. They were to be known as Bukoto – Nateete Faction as their Headquarters are at Bukoto and had a branch at Nateete. Later it came to be known as African Muslim Community (AMC).

**Note:**

These two groups of Juma-Zukuli and Bukoto-Nateete never wanted Muslim leadership to be hereditary under Mbogo's House.

These two groups also led Muslims to miss land which Mbogo had asked for in 1913; for they failed to agree on how to divide it among the warring groups.

Because of the politics of disagreements, Muslims usually took their cases to civil courts presided over by Christians. For instance, in 1951, Sheikh Mugenyasooka took Sheikh Nsambu to court for retaining files of the former Butambala Faction when he crossed to Kibuli Faction in 1947. Sheikh Nsambu had crossed to Kibuli Faction because Kibuli had accepted to drop the Zuhuri issue; that is, performing Zuhuri prayers after the Juma prayers.

In 1950s, after the World Wars and towards independence, there was need to agitate for independence, thus, political parties were formed. Muslims got divided up one group joining the Catholics and another joining the Protestants. The Juma-Zukuli sect plus African Muslim community took up Democratic party (DP) which was basically Catholic, formed as a result of Mugwanya Matayo being denied Katikkiroship of Buganda because he was a

catholic. Thus, it was formed to challenge the Protestants. DP was also against Monarchism which some Muslims also stood against.

When Uganda Peoples Congress (UPC) and Kabaka Yekka (KY) allied against DP, the UMC and their supporters went on their side which essentially was Protestant in nature since Kabaka was a Protestant.

On the Independence Day celebrations, Sheikh Swaib Ssemakula one of the bosses of UMC was called upon to represent the Muslims. He blessed Uganda's newly acquired community. From that day, the Government recognized UMC leadership as the true leadership of Muslims in Uganda.

# ISLAM AFTER INDEPENDENCE

## MILTON OBOTE'S REGIME (1962 – 70)

This period saw non-Muslim leaders manipulating Muslims to meet their desired ends. These politicians utilized the divisions already in the Muslim community to their benefit.

In 1962, after independence, Kabaka Muteesa II was installed as the President and Milton Obote as Prime Minister. However, in 1967, the UPC government found itself threatened by the monarchists and as a result, UPC fought them and isolated Muslim leadership from the members of the royal Family.

From that time, Obote started undermining Muteesa II. One way of doing it was to destroy KY-UPC Alliance. This was done through dividing Buganda. Obote also tried to divide Muslims along tribal lines; thus through his tribesmen, he created another group of Muslims which he could easily manipulate to his advantages. His party (UPC) was made up of people like Akbar Adoko Nekyon, Shaban Nkutu, Balunywa from Busoga, Abaas Balinda in Ankole, Awusi Rwakaikala in Bunyoro, Haji Badru Wegulo in Bukedi and many others from allover the country.

To weaken Muslim leadership, which was inclined on leadership of the Royal Family, Obote formed a faction and named it National Association for Advancement of Muslims (NAAM) . He reasoned that it was to unite all Muslims of Uganda.

The formation of NAAM was very easy because most of the Muslims in other parts of Uganda readily joined it. It was formed in 1965 with its president as Adoko Nekyon a Langi related to President Obote, Shaban Nkutu as its chairman, Hamad Mwanga from Bukedi its secretary, Abaas Balinda from Ankole was publicity Secretary and Aziz Mitha from Bugishu was its Treasurer. The only Muganda on the executive was Sheikh Obeid Kamulegeya as its vice president.

Government usually favoured NAAM; hence many Muslim elites (educated) joined it. Later on in 1968, the government backing NAAM assumed the position of sole Muslim representative body. They made a constitution with the position of Supreme Mufti who would be the leader of Muslims religiously. However the Kibuli Group (UMC) did not support this arrangement.

In 1968, the Government announced that it supported NAAM representative Sheikh Swaib Ssemakula as Mufti. Thus Sheikh Ssemakula was nominated the first Supreme Mufti though in objection from other members.

After its formation, (NAAM) since it was an arm of the the government, the old structure of chiefs was destroyed by the central government. In order to reward the Muslims, instead of having two Ssaza chiefs, they got seven who were sympathetic to NAAM. Many other supporters were appointed as sub-chiefs.

NAAM started organising Mauledis on which government officials were invited to deliver speech on government policy issues.

NAAM, using government machinery, started taking over mosques which were formerly of UMC-supporters. This caused chaos among Muslims and led to many deaths; like in Shema Mbarara, two people died. Many Muslims decided not to perform prayers in Mosques taken

over by NAAM.

As a result of their services to government, many NAAM supporters were recruited in the notorious general Service Unit (GSU) – the intelligence Organ of the government of the day. This created sharp divisions among Muslims.

It was at the height of confusion that Amin Dada took over power later in 1971. He was supported by several Muslims but him being an enemy of Obote, he (Amin) at the beginning harassed the supporters of NAAM whom he believed were Obote's diehards.

### **ISLAM DURING IDI AMIN DADA'S PERIOD (1971 – 1979)**

The upheavals that had taken place in 1960s within the Muslim community transformed themselves in 1970s into the government steered by Muslims. What was important during this period was that all Muslim Factions were brought together by a political decree under one central authority.

This marriage of convenience was so fragile that any slight change of political structure would lead to an automatic divorce. Thus, the 1979 coupe-de-tat brought about the collapse of Muslims' central authority and created a vacuum in Muslim leadership.

The coming of Idi Amin to power annulled the concept of Muslims being only drivers of vehicles. Muslims emerged from the position of priority relative to their fellow citizens to a position of normal citizens. Besides, it's apparent that Amin also, like his predecessors looked for the support of Muslims. Muslims reaped in the politics of this country which they had been denied by the past regimes especially the colonial rule. Thus, Amin's coming to power made the Muslims divorce the imagination that they would never be politically active.

However, his rule did not go well to the Muslims because he could not get people of quality except for some few like Jumba Masagazi and Abu Mayanja. In his early days he recruited many Muslims to enter civil service as it had never been, though many of them proved inefficient because of their Educational background.

After realizing the problem of Muslim Education, he appointed a Muslim Minister of Education. In this period, the number of Muslim children entering schools increased. Abubaker Kakembo who was appointed chief Education Officer, helped much in the construction of new schools for Muslims like Namasumbi and Bwikya.

On the economic front, many Muslims were appointed in many positions of responsibility which boosted their income. In order to benefit from the international economy, Amin registered Uganda as a Muslim country by becoming a member of Organisation of Islamic conference (OIC) in 1974.

Since that time, Uganda has benefited a lot from that membership especially from that financial institution of the organisation. In that respect, it was Amin's regime that requested for an Islamic University In Uganda which is a party in educating many Ugandan Children and Muslims have benefited a lot.

On realizing the impact of divisionism among Muslims, which included sects like Kibuli, Bukoto-Nateete, Juma-Zukuli, etc, Amin took an initiative using his power to unite Muslims by creating the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council.

Non-Muslims' hatred for Amin barked by his character which was not so good as he abused

human rights, Christian leaders came out openly to fight the regime. As a result, Arch Bishop of the Church of Uganda who was an active supporter of Guerilla War from Tanzania was killed. This instigated many Non-Muslims into thinking (and still think) that Amin's leadership was Muslim leadership. The effect of this can be seen in our day to day life.

## **THE FORMATION OF THE UGANDA MUSLIM SUPREME COUNCIL (UMSC)**

This is a Muslim Organisation which works as an umbrella of all Muslim organisations and sects. It has a constitution with a supreme body called General Assembly. It has two committees namely;

- The Executive committee for secular and Administrative matters and College of Sheikhs for religious matters.
- The management consists of the Mufti and his deputy as Spiritual leaders, a secretary General and his council of treasurer, Religious Affairs, Education and Director of Sharia.

The UMSC is a central focal point for all 30 Muslim districts with 180 counties and 500 sub-counties allover the country. Its Headquarters are at Old Kampala Hill in Kampala City.

The UMSC was established in May/June 1971 when the then president Idi Amin Dada organized a conference at Kabale town in South Western Uganda in an attempt to end confusion and factionalism among Ugandan Muslims. His main idea was to put all Muslims groups under one leadership. This was done after realizing that Muslims were disunited.

A constitution was written and adopted to guide the activities of the council. Immediately after its formation, Prince Badru Kakungulu declared his support and retired as a leader of the largest Muslim group in Uganda.

Sheikh Abdul Razak Matovu was elected as the chief Kadhi and Sheikh Ali Kulumba was elected as the Deputy chief Kadhi. The Council was formally inaugurated in June 1972. Visitors from many countries were invited to attend.

## **OBJECTIVES OF UMSC**

1. To promote the Welfare of Muslims and other members through construction of schools, hospitals and other social institutions.
2. To unite all Muslims of Uganda into one body.
3. To properly teach and train believers in the proper interpretation of he Quran and Islamic principles.
4. To educate and train Sheikhs for preaching Islam and for performance of Islamic rights (rituals) such as marriage, etc. as taught by the Qur'an and Hadith.
5. To work as a mouth piece of Muslims to the government.
6. To relate Muslims to the outside Muslim World. One way of achieving this was to

secure scholarships for Muslims to study from abroad in the Arab World.

At first, Basiima House in Mengo acted as UMSC Headquarters until when Asians were expelled and the UMSC Headquarters were transferred to Old Kampala in Aga Khan Mosque. They continued to operate from there until 1991 when the Asians reposited their property.

## **SUCCESSSES / ACHIEVEMENTS OF UMSC**

1. The council has succeeded in inviting international Muslim agencies which has helped in the development of Islam. Such agencies include African Muslim Agency (AMA), Islamic International Relief organisation (IIRO) and many others.
2. As regards healthy services, the Council had by mid 1973 improved on and enlarged the Old Kampala Hospital to 100 beds and with two doctors. In other areas like Masaka and Mbarara, council clinics were set up. Unfortunately, however, these facilities were mismanaged due to constant Muslim wrangles.
3. The council also acquired modernized five nursery schools to boost the education of infants. This helped so much to improve on the education of Muslim children as parents could take their children to those nursery schools.
4. Before 1972, there had been disunity among the Muslim community resulting from various conflicts between various groups and personalities. However, after the formation of the UMSC, some unity among the Muslims in Uganda was registered; especially for atleast seven years; that is, between 1972 – 1979.
5. The council has afforded to protect the rights of Muslims. For instance, the council has managed to uphold the monopoly enjoyed by Muslim men as to the slaughtering of animals; the right of Muslim men to put on caps and turbans etc.
6. For the case of women, they enjoyed the right of putting on Hijab dress and veils. Further still, for the case of marriage, Muslim men enjoy the right of marrying up to four wives as stipulated in the Holy Book – the Qur'an.
7. The council bought eighteen (18) beautiful bungalows from Walusimbi Mpanga at Najjanankumbi, three miles on Entebbe Road. This boosted the revenue and income of the council.
8. The council also did a great work in the field of spreading Islam. This was largely done through conducting Duwas (supplications) and Mauledis, with the influence of the council, which many people attended. In the process, many non-Muslims converted to Islam; and the already converted Muslims had their faith strengthened.
9. The council has helped to educate several Sheikhs both locally and abroad. These Sheikhs were later employed in various Qur'anic schools to teach the basics of the Qur'an and other Islamic principles. The sheikhs also acted as a basis for the introduction of Islamic Religious Education in secular schools. This helped a lot in the development of Muslim Education and Islam in Uganda.
10. With the influence of UMSC, also, Uganda was admitted to the Organisation of Islamic Conference (IOC) as a full member in 1974. This was achieved with the help of President Idd Amin Dada. Uganda as a state benefited in terms of getting

scholarships from the organisation. Muslims, in particular, have greatly benefited because their standards of living have improved due to the financial support from this organisation.

11. The council has helped to coordinate the activities of the Muslim Non Governmental Organisations – including the International Islamic Charitable Organisation (IICO), whose headquarters are in Kuwait; the international Islamic Relief Organisation (Kampala and Arua), African Muslim Agency (AMA), which was also found in Kuwait and the Muslims World League. Some of the activities which are carried out by these organizations include Dawa Activities in which many teachers are brought in to teach Muslims about their faith and to eradicate innovations (Bid'a) that might have come in the Faith because of ignorance.
12. In the field of healthy services, also the UMSC has helped to strengthen the Uganda Medical Bureau which now has its headquarters in Kampala. This has helped to unite all medical practitioners in addition to facilitating and coordinating their activities in Uganda.
13. The UMSC succeeded in organizing free and fair elections of the Muftiship of Uganda, the first ever in the history of Uganda. In these elections, Sheikh Shaban Ramadhan Mubajje was elected as the Mufti, Sheikh Twaib Mukuye as his deputy, Sheikh Idris Kaseenene as the secretary General and Sheikh Kakooza as the Director for Sharia. After these elections, which were carried out in the year 2000, all Muslims united under one umbrella of UMSC with no serious factions appearing.
14. The UMSC, through its leaders headed by Sheikh Ramadhan Mubajje and his cabinet have managed to travel round the whole country to visit Muslims. This has encouraged Islamic activities to take place. This, therefore, acted as a clear manifest that there is no imbalance in terms of carrying out the activities of the Supreme Council as it used to be before.
15. The relationship between the Supreme Council and the home government has been improved and streamlined. This is because it is possible now for one leader to coordinate with another party or faction without raising an accusing finger towards the possibility of the politicians manipulating one group against the other to achieve their selfish end.
16. There has been an improvement in the working relationship between the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council and Uganda Muslim Education Association (UMEA) which close working relationship has empowered UMEA to concentrate on the management of the Muslim Schools which has boosted the education sector.
17. There has been transformation of UMSC offices in terms of equipment especially at the UMSC headquarters. The council offices are now more organized and equipped. Proper office management is now being followed in addition to the offices now being equipped with computers.
18. HIV/AIDS sensitization programmes have been strengthened, where various counselors have been brought in to counsel people about AIDS; and medical research centres have been established in Muslim hospitals like Kibuli hospital, Old Kampala hospital, and Islamic Medical Association hospital at Wattindo – Matugga etc.

19. With the influence of the UMSC, Muslim heads of state like King Faisal and president Muamar el-Ghadhaf visited Uganda. King Faisal made a couple of donations which helped in the construction of King Faisal Plaza to generate money for the Islamic University In Uganda; and the building of dormitories at Kibuli Primary Teachers' College. President Gadhafi of Libya paid for the completion of the UMSC building at Old Kampala.
20. The UMSC has encouraged the construction of Muslim schools; both secular and religious. As a result of such, several schools have sprung up. These schools include among others Gombe Secondary School, Kibibi Secondary School and Kawempe Muslim Secondary School. These schools have been maintained on an Islamic foundation and are highly regarded in whole of Uganda for the education of Muslim students.
21. At the Lahole conference of the Muslim heads of state that sat in Lahole – Malaysia in 1974, Uganda was admitted to the organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). In the Conference, two countries were selected in which Islamic Universities are to be built in Africa. Uganda was selected to act as a host for Islamic University for the English speaking countries – the other country being Niger to serve the French speaking countries.
22. The building of the new UMSC mosque and headquarters at Old Kampala Hill had started; however, after the overthrow of Idd Amin, the construction stopped. The governments that followed threw a cold ice on the project as their relationship with the UMSC wasn't all that good. It wasn't until 2002 when the Libyan government donated money for its completion.
23. The Uganda Muslim Supreme Council managed to secure donations from the Arab World especially Libya, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. These donations were meant to improve Muslim infrastructures though these donations over time have been misused.
24. With the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council in place, Muslims have proven themselves capable of living and working with non-Muslims to create a united progressive nation – Uganda. Of late, there hasn't been any feud in Uganda; not between Muslim and non-Muslims. Religious festivals of different faiths are celebrated by everyone together.
25. The Uganda Muslim Supreme council has succeeded in making the Muslim fraternity observe the Islamic calendar which makes the Muslims in Uganda move at par with other Muslims in the world. There was a time ( in 1984) when the UMSC announced end of the Holy month of Ramadhan the following day when the rest of the countries world wide had celebrated the same a day before.
26. The Uganda Muslim Supreme Council has succeeded in agitating for Muslim schools where Muslim children could learn secular education without being converted to Christianity or discriminated against because of their creed. The result of this was the establishment of Government Muslim Schools include Kibuli Secondary School, Nabisunsa Girls School, Gombe Secondary School, Masaka Secondary School (former Agha Khan) , Kawempe Muslim Secondary School to name but a few. These schools have produced best students in the national examinations.



## FAILURES OF THE UMSC.

1. The council has failed to dissociate itself from political interference right from the time of Idd Amin's regime, through Obote's regime to National resistance Movement government. This government interference in the day today running of the council was observed in one incidence when President Idd Amin took the council as his own property.

In 1975, he dismissed the then chief – Kadhi Sheikh Abdallah Razak Matovu without any consultation to the supreme council. Sheikh Abdallah Razak was replaced by Sheikh Sulaiman Matovu, who also later dismissed.

2. There has always been power struggle in the council right from its formation. Conflicts arose between Sheikh Rajab Kakooza and Sheikh Saad Ibrahim Luwemba as to who was the right Mufti. The Tabliq Youth faction once stormed the UMSC headquarters and controlled it for some days. This followed the declaration of Luwemba as Mufti of Uganda by the Supreme Court.
3. The council has failed to mobilize funds locally and always depend on foreign donations For instance, various Muslim programmes; like for the case of the construction of the national Mosque at Old Kampala, financial support had to be sought from the government of Libya.
4. Tribalism has also been a failure of the UMSC – a problem that began right from the time of the council inspection. The council leadership and activities have been dominated by mostly Baganda. For example the first Mufti Sheikh Abdul Razak Matovu was a Muganda.

After the overthrow of Amin, the head of the military commission Paul Muwanga sent a message to Prince Badru Kakungulu to organize the Muslim leadership. However, Kakungulu almost presented Baganda Sheikhs only. For instance Sheikh Kasim Mulumba was the Acting Chief Khadhi, Sheikh Muhammad Semakula and Ali Kivumbi

5. The UMSC has suffered from foreign interference, especially from the Arab World countries like Saudi Arabia, Libya, Iran and Egypt. Each of those countries has been rivaling with another to control the Muslim community affairs.
6. There has been struggle among members and leaders of the UMSC to control funds from housing departments where the annual revenue from rent has been in millions of shillings.
7. The council has always lacked sincere leaders. The majority have been staffed in embezzlement accusations. For instance Sheikh Ramadhan Mubajje and Hajj Kaseenene were dragged to court for allegedly selling the Council property (land) without consulting the Muslim community. Some other leaders have been accused of embezzling the funds which had been donated by foreign Arab states and the proceedings from Zakat collections.
8. The council lack properly qualified leaders. The majority have been substandard and not qualified as to manage the affairs of the Council. Though most of them were qualified in Sharia Law but their qualification and academic standards could not be

interpreted to match the leadership standards of a non-Muslim state like Uganda. This is one of the reasons why the council matters have been mishandled.

9. Due to problems and lack of cooperation in the council that came up after the overthrow of Amin, the council hasn't been able to work as a mouth piece of the Muslims to the government; as it is not respected by the government.
10. The council has also failed to rescue Muslims from political imprisonments, detentions without trial and tortures. In 1995, a number of Muslim Youth especially belonging to the Tabliq and Spidiqa sects were arrested reportedly to have been involved in rebel activities in the famous Baseruka Rebel activities in Western Uganda.

Many of the arrested Youths are still languishing in various prisons around the country under untold sufferings.

11. Since the overthrow of Amin in 1979, the council has failed to unite Muslims under one umbrella and in fact several sects have always existed among the Muslim community; yet one of the aims of the UMSC was to unite Muslims together.

Several sects have continued to exist including Juma-Zukuuli sect, Bukoto-Nateete sect, Spidiqa, Tabliq Muslim Youth and many others. In the process where these sects continued to exist, conflicting activities arose and this farther led to disunity among the Muslims.

12. Several Muslims in Uganda especially in rural areas are still ignorant about Islam and its practices. This is because there has been less work done in conducting Dawa activities by UMSC Sheikhs. For instance; most Muslims are still ignorant concerning the payment of Zakat; in that they do not know what should be paid and when.
13. The council has failed to improve on the welfare of the Muslims in Uganda, where the majority of the Muslims are economically poor. Most of them are unemployed and this has affected their standards of living.
14. UMSC has of recent been emphasizing Religious Education ignoring secular education, which they associated with Christianity. This type of education has proved to be half baked and dangerous as far as the development of Islam is concerned. For example, many Muslim graduates are unable to calculate simple fractions involved in the distribution of property to the heirs only because they did not study Mathematics; as mathematics is not among the disciplines in religious education. Many have called in Christians to make calculations for them – something absurd.
15. The UMSC has failed to draw up a preaching programme to suit the Muslim community. This is because the people concerned with drawing the programme did not study disciplines like philosophy, psychology, sociology and other related disciplines, which help one get insight into the society and what is appropriate to it. As a result of this, most Muslim preachers have failed to distinguish between the people they preach to and to choose appropriate topics for them.
16. The UMSC has also failed to relate the bureaucracy at the council to the level of one's education. This has led to crash of interests and power struggle in the council.

People lack respect to those who are more advanced in certain disciplines and allow them to make judgments for them in their disciplines of specializations rather than contradicting each other on issues some of which are above their understanding

17. On National Issues, the UMSC has failed to call together Muslim intellectuals, social and political leaders to hold consultations and meetings in order to assess the Muslim position. For instance, in case of elections, no effort has been made to make the Muslim electorate to cast their votes untimely in favour of such candidates who are ready to respond to Muslim grievances. As a result, the Muslim vote has been divided among all candidates even if there is a Muslim standing.
18. The UMSC has failed to create a relationship, between religion and secular education where most of the so called educated Muslims pay little or no attention to their religion. Ignorant of the teachings of Islam and frustrated by the apparent failure of Muslim leaders, some Muslim elites have ended up becoming secularists and even atheists. For example, Professor Yusuf Kironde Lule was born a Muslim but died a Christian.
19. The UMSC has failed to shoulder the responsibility of emancipating the Ugandan Muslims. This they could have done by forming small organizations based on Muslims' professions. For instance, the Muslim lawyers could group under the Association of Ugandan Muslim lawyers. These associations could act as strong bases for coordinating and monitoring religious, curricular and moral education among Muslim community.

## **SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS**

- The council should spread up its training and education programmes.
- The council should ask for more scholarships not only from the Arab World but should also consider secular education.
- The council should establish more schools and technical should be started.
- The council should ask for more aid from Muslim countries but this should be properly channeled; at the same time, plans should be made to establish more and permanent money generating projects.
- The council should also encourage Muslims to put factories and industries. This will provide employment to Muslims who may appear idle.
- The council should try all means possible to unite Muslims through drafting a fair constitution which will address all issues from different sects. This has, however, been started especially with the 2001 general elections.
- An inspectorate department intended to look into the management of council affairs should be established.

## **MUSLIM CONFLICTS AFTER UMSC FORMATION**

Such conflicts sprung up around 1973 when some Muslims and the then President Amin claimed that Hijrah finances had been misused. Amin dismissed the existing executive of the UMSC as a result. The chief Kadhi Sheikh Abdul Razak Matovu and his executive was dismissed by the state without consulting the Muslim council. A new chief Kadhi Sheikh Sulaiman Matovu was nominated by the Head of state.

Due to what had happened the previous year, during the Hijrah of 1974, there were two groups of Pilgrims led by UMSC and another by the dismissed executive. However, on coming back, the Muslims led by Khamish Safi complained to Amin that Hijra finances had again been misused.

Accordingly Amin expelled some UMSC officials including the Chief Khadhi Sheikh Sulaiman Matovu and the late Khasim Mulumba. He put up a caretaker committee to run the UMSC.

Amin then appointed a Non-Muslim army man colonel Mondo to chair the commission of inquiry to look into the UMSC affairs. So, by 1979, most of the officials of the UMSC were Amin's appointees.

When Sheikh Sulaiman Matovu was dismissed, the council stayed without a chief and it was being administered by an acting secretary General Haji Ahmed Mufanjala – not elected by council members. Thus, between 1975 and 1979 the council was being run by the Head of State until his overthrow.

When Amin fell in 1979, there was a leadership vacuum in the UMSC. Amin would make and unmake leadership which worsened the situation so much that by the time of his overthrow, the council had no leadership.

The coming into power (Amin) and eventual going into exile meant that all that was done by Amin (due to his personal behaviours) was to be blamed on Muslims and Islam but not the personality of Amin. Thus, the champions of the Anti-Amin (and therefore Anti-Islam) crusade wanted Amin and the UMSC plus the Muslims to be dismantled and silenced.

Therefore, following their coming in 1979, the so called "Liberators" had been given orders that whoever is identified as a Muslim should be killed. In Ankole, hundreds of Muslims were butchered and thrown in River Rwizi and their property destroyed. In Bombo, almost all houses were destroyed. In West Nile, many Muslims suffered in the hands of Liberators and in the government that was formed after the fall of Amin, there wasn't a single Muslim name in the cabinet.

## **ISLAM AFTER THE FALL OF IDI AMIN**

After the fall of Idi Amin, a delegation was sent to Badru Kakungulu by Paul Muwanga to organize Muslim leadership under Uganda Muslim Community at Kibuli because he had hated the UMSC, considering it to be an organisation of Idi Amin.

Kakungulu at first refused to honour the idea but later succumbed to the pressure from Muwanga. He called a meeting at his Kibuli home where about fifty leading Sheikhs were invited to attend.

During the meeting, Prince Badru Kakungulu was proposed as the leader of the Muslims but

he pulled down in favour of Sheikh Khasim Mulumba whom he said would not let them down; besides, he was fluent in both English and Arabic. Dr. Abdul Kasozi was elected as acting General Secretary and later on the executive committee with Prince Badru Kakungulu as the chairman was constituted. It was supposed to serve for three months only and thereafter organize general elections.

Sheikh Mulumba started operating from Kibuli but later transferred and settled at Old Kampala where he acted a chief Kadhi.

After the Liberation of the whole country, a group of Muslims most of whom were former Non-members of UMSC started questioning the Kadhiship of Khasim Mulumba. Prince Badru Kakungulu advised him to conduct elections of the whole country as early as possible to avoid conflicts. But before this happened, Professor Yusuf Lule fell from power.

Binaisa who took over power was informed by Sheikh Obeid Kamulegeya about the dissatisfaction of Muslims. The propaganda was that the Muslims were being mistreated and discriminated.

On 14<sup>th</sup> January 1980, a delegation of seventeen members led by Sheikh Khasim Mulumba, Obeid Kamulegeya and Abu Mayanja was chosen to go Saudi Arabia to find out the truth of the matter and to establish the method of elections, to harmonise the Muslim community and to draft a new constitution of UMSC.

However, a day before they left for Saudi Arabia, at a Mauled in Iganga, Mulumba declared himself the undisputable chief Kadhi of Uganda. This brought confusion and controversy among Muslims. Mulumba however promised to organize elections as the situation was now tense; and a date for the elections was fixed.

On the Election Day, Mulumba ordered the UMSC Headquarters to be locked up and circulated news within his supporters that elections had been suspended. He even expelled his executive together with his secretary General.

Meanwhile, other groups re-instituted in their old factions. With what Mulumba had done, Prince Badru Kakungulu withdrew his support and shifted to Kamulegeya group.

When the delegates from all over Uganda came for elections, they were surprised to hear that elections had been suspended. They together with the dismissed executive organized a General Assembly at Makerere Main Hall where they elected Prince Badru Kakungulu as Chairman of UMSC, Sheikh Obeid Kamulegeya as Chief Kadhi, Anas Kinyiri as Deputy Chief Kadhi and Sheikh Abdul Razaq Matovu as Mufti.

## **ISLAM DURING OBOTE II REGIME (1980 – 1985)**

The political life of Muslims during this period took another dimension. Originally, the politicians acted aggressively towards the Muslims until the period of elections when they changed their tactics because they wanted Muslim support in order to win elections.

Meanwhile during this time, the majority of the Muslims and Mulumba's group had chosen to identify with political forces that were opposed to Obote's return. In fact, most of them identified themselves with DP. However, the capture of political power by UPC changed the political forces in favour of a small pro-Obote Muslim faction headed by Sheikh Obeid Kamulegeya. NAAM ideas were revised, this time, with more emphasis on trade. Thus the

programme was more attractive than that of Khasim Mulumba.

Thus, when Obote was elected as the President in 1980, he supported and sided with the Kamulegeya Group, for they had identified with and supported him during the election, period; while Paulo Muwanga, Obote's Vice President, backed up Mulumba's group.

Muslim leadership was therefore divided up, creating strong factions. As a result, many Muslims were arrested during this time for allegedly conspiring with Amin to overthrow the government. The situation was only saved by intensified rebel activities of the different groups of which none of their leaders was a Muslim.

However, although some Muslims participated in 1980 elections, no Muslim was put in the government as a minister. The only one they had put in was resented by Non-Muslims. Thus Ntege Lubwama who was a minister of Tourism by 1982 ran for his life when his home was damaged, his child killed in the house and his wife raped.

In the meantime, the leaders of the two main factions (Mulumba and Kamulegeya) were at loggerheads and counter quarrels ensued.

Conflicts went on up to 1983 when the Muslim World League intervened by sending a revolutionalist called Sheikh Kassamallah Mubarak Zaid.

## **THE KASSAMALLAH ACCORD**

In 1983, the World Muslim League (RABITA) attempted to mediate into the Uganda Muslim conflict by sending Sheikh Kassamallah Mubarak Zaid.

It was agreed upon under this accord that the constitution of UMSC remained Supreme and that the UMSC representatives who were elected before the General Assembly at Makerere were legitimate. Therefore, there was no need for re-election.

In that accord, Mulumba was to remain the chief Kadhi and Kamulegeya his deputy; and that all other officials elected during Makerere General Assembly apart from that of chief Kadhi were confirmed to be the new executive of the UMSC.

However, this could not work because most of the people on the executive were Pro-Kamulegeya. Hence Mulumba found himself isolated as most fat posts were held by Kamulegeya's supporters and was therefore bound to fail.

At that time, Mulumba was hospitalized at Mulago. He wrote a resignation letter from the advice of the doctor but without first consulting his supporters. His resignation was a blessing for Kamulegeya's faction.

On the other hand, under pressure from his supporters, who didn't want him to resign, Mulumba, in a dramatic change of events, withdrew his resignation letter. But this was rejected by the chairman of UMSC and Kamulegeya was elected Chief Kadhi and Anas Kinyiri his deputy in an emergency General Assembly convened.

Mulumba refused to recognize Kamulegeya's leadership. Mulumba insisted that he was the legitimate Chief Kadhi and was supported by his sympathizers led by Vice President Paulo Muwanga. He established his headquarters at former Masjid Noor on William Street in Kampala, but was later evicted by Kamulegeya's faction supported by the government.

Mulumba then established his headquarters at Rubaga road.

Mulumba – Kamulegeya conflict dragged on and government officials always took sides to weaken the Muslims. With time, however, the government decided to give an overwhelming support and recognition to Kamulegeya's group. This situation continued until 1985 when Milton Obote was overthrown.

In 1985 when Obote was overthrown, Paulo Muwanga supported Khasim Mulumba to unseat Kamulegeya while he was in Bangladesh on an official visit, and he (Mulumba) declared himself Chief Kadhi. Mulumba had identified himself with the new military junter of Tito Okello Lutwa. Mulumba was favoured because Muwanga, his long time sympathizer, had been appointed as the Prime Minister of the Military Government.

Once again, confusion ensued with pressure from Kamulegeya's group. Because of this pressure, (from Kamulegeya's group and the youth), Mulumba accepted another mediation from Muslim World League, in the famous Mecca Agreement.

## **THE MECCA AGREEMENT**

This was a meeting convened in Mecca; where Kamulegeya and Mulumba together with some of their supporters were invited. The two conflicting groups were invited on the round table chaired Dr. Umar Ahmed Nasiim, the then Secretary General of the Muslim World League.

At the end of it all, it was agreed that Mulumba, Kamulegeya and Abdul Razak Matovu step down for the good of Islam and Muslims. In this conference, an interim Administration was set up led by Sheikh Hussein Rajab Kakooza as chief Kadhi and Sheikh Saad Ibrahim Luwemba as his deputy. These were believed to be neutral as they had never taken sides in the conflicts.

This interim Administration was charged with the duty of drafting a new constitution and organizing elections in one year. Apparently, Mulumba and Kamulegeya signed a treaty of Unity. In this agreement, it was agreed that the council will run in accordance with the Meccan conference resolutions of 1986.

This however left the factions intact hence no work was done.

Meanwhile, Kamulegeya was made chief Advisor of RABITA – Kampala Office, which was the major financing body of the UMSC. Mulumba was made the Secretary General for the then newly created Union of Muslim Councils of East, Central and Southern Africa.

## **ISLAM DURING MUSEVENI'S PERIOD (1986 – TO DATE)**

In the struggle which was intended to return the democratic governance in Uganda, many Muslims participated e.g Abbey Mukwaya, etc. After the struggle, some Muslims were made Ministers and Kigongo was made the Vice chairman of the Movement Government.

Despite these, in Government, Muslims have continued to be marginalized by Museveni's

Government. E.g in the structure of the Adjustment programme, many Muslims in key places in civil service were demobilised and in their places Non – Muslims were installed. Given that the Muslims are the minority in the civil service because of historical facts, the retrenchment of Muslims set up a negative signal for the Muslims.

When Resistance councils were introduced, some Muslims tried to participate, but were sometimes marginalized on basis of the religion.

In 1992, constituency Assembly elections were carried out to make a new constitution for the country. Many Muslims participated but the Tabliqs sect shunned the elections but was such a miscalculation of the side of the Muslim Community that even when it came to support the inclusion of some parts of Sharia to defend it, since the majority of the C.A delegates were Non – Muslims.

By the 1996 General elections, Muslims' attitude towards politics had changed though some of them still resisted participation on assertion that the elections were not Islamic.

Muhammad Kibirige Mayanja came out as a candidate for presidency but the majority of the fear to be identified voting for a Muslim. Apart from that, other candidates pointed on him as a man who had come to represent Muslims only but not Ugandans. However, this showed the political awareness the Muslim community had reached.

When the Islamic University Bill was tabled in the Parliament in 1987, it was resisted so much that many people felt it should not be set up or its name should not read Islamic. The Bill was, however, greatly supported by the parliamentarians like Abu Mayanja, Muhammad Mayanja from Pallisa, Hajati Yasimin Kitunzi Moses Ali and Moses Kigongo. Without their presence, the University would not have been established. This therefore showed the significance of Muslim participation in politics against all odds.

## **MUSLIM CONFLICTS DURING MUSEVENI'S REGIME.**

With the drafting of the new constitution in 1986, elections of various office bearers of UMSC were organized on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1987 at Kibuli Teachers College. 118 representatives from 28 districts gathered at Kibuli Teachers College. The elections were presided over by Sheikh Hussein Rajab Kakooza.

Sheikh Ali Ssenyonga was elected chairman of the U.M.S.C to replace Prince Badru Kakungulu. Ssenyonga was to preside over the proceeding elections. However, the following day, Abu Mayanja the then Minister of information in the NRM Government ordered Sheikh Kakooza to adjourn the meeting claiming that the person elected as a chairman of the council had a case to answer in court; therefore the elections were not in order.

Kakooza and his supporters left the meeting leaving 64 members only. Kakooza had postponed the elections through a radio announcement, but members loyal to Sheikh Ali Ssenyonga decided to continue with the elections in which Sheikh Saad Ibrahim Luwemba was declared the new Mufti.

To Kakooza and his supporters the elections were regarded as unconstitutional and therefore they could not recognize the outcome and legitimacy of Luwemba as Mufti of Uganda.



Abu Mayanja also issued a government statement desolving the Kibuli elections and recognizing Sheikh Kakooza with his interim Administration until further notice.

This brought more confusion and as a result, conflicts emerged again within the Muslim community resulting into Kakooza and Luwemba factions.

Luwemba's group established their headquarters at Lubaga Road and through Sheikh Senyonga, opened up a case against Kakooza's administration for their refusal to handle over power and unlawful being in power.

The High court, in 1988, ruled that the elections were unconstitutional and therefore declared them null and void. This was in favour of Sheikh Kakooza.

Luwemba's group were not satisfied with the High court ruling and so made an appeal in the supreme court of Uganda.

Meanwhile, on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 1990, the Tabliq sect – the youth then belonging to Nakasero and William Street section stormed the Old Kampala Mosque and held it for some days until they received a presidential order to vacate the premises. While at Old Kampala, the youth named their interim administration which was to manage the U.M.S.C for 36 months while planning for fresh elections.

This group was led by Sheikh Jamir Alirabaki Kyagulanyi Mukulu. The youth accused Kakooza's Administration of inefficiency and corruption. Apparently, at the time, there were three major Muslim factions; that is, the Luwemba faction, Tabliq sect and Kakooza's Administration.

The Muslim state of Affairs remained at stake and Muslims frequently quarreled and insulted each other in Mosques and on Mauledis.

However, on 19<sup>th</sup> March, 1991 the long awaited appeal which was filed by Luwemba's group against Kakooza was disclosed by the Supreme Court. The court declared the Kibuli elections this time, lawful and valid.

With the courts' judgement, Sheikh Kakooza's group refused to recognize the legitimacy of Luwemba as Mufti, arguing that the court wasn't fair. Sheikh Kakooza continued to call himself Mufti. He first temporarily operated from Bilal Islamic institute but later shifted and established his Headquarters at Kibuli Mosque.

The declaration of Luwemba as Mufti of Uganda by the Supreme Court inspired resentments from the Tabliq Youth circles. As a result, they stormed the U.M.S.C Headquarters once again and controlled it for some days. However, the Government was forced to intervene.

There followed a scuffle between the Youth police, that resulted into the death of one Tabliq Youth and three policemen. The Tabliq Youth were later overpowered by the military police. Many youth were arrested and taken for imprisonment in Luzira and were only released later in 1992 when they were proved innocent by the High court.

Meanwhile, in 1993, there were some moves of government to unite the Muslims though many Muslims looked at it with reservation. Muslims convened a meeting at the institute of Teachers Education Kyambogo in which representatives from allover the country attended. It was resolved to call for unity meeting. The president (Museveni) requested Colonel

Kahinda Otafiire to meet several interest Muslim groups in Uganda including MUMSA, UMYA and officials from Islamic University In Uganda. After those meetings, Professor George Kanyeihamba was nominated to lead the reconciliation Committee.

The committee proposed of prominent Scholars from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Sudan, who passed many resolutions among which that the President would call the General Assembly of the U.M.S.C within 80 days.

The meeting was called between 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> July 1993 and held in Mbarara. The majority of the Assembly delegates attended, with the exception of some few who said were supporting Luwemba.

At the climax of the conference, it was resolved that both Kakooza and Luwemba step down or dropped. In their place, Sheikh Ahmad Mukasa was elected as the new Mufti and Sheikh Zubair Kayongo as his deputy. It was to be an interim Administration to last for two years.

During the two years, the interim Administration was to review the constitution and organize General Elections for all U.M.S.C posts from grassroots. However, this could only be possible if Muslims were united.

Sheikh Kakooza accepted to stepdown but Luwemba, who thought he would die a Mufti and chief Kadhi of Uganda refused to stepdown. He argued that before he approaches seventy years, the idea of him stepping down was a mere illusion.

Luwemba remained at the Supreme council and the interim Administration operated at Kibuli. In fact, on one NRM day at Kololo Airstrip, the leader of the Muslim community was invited by the master of ceremony Mr. Kintu Musoke to bless the day; only for Mukasa and Luwemba to crash at the Microphone. The conflict was disgusting to watch in the presence of several Heads of state.

However, after all these arrangements and incidences, the President who had masterminded the conference, kept himself liberal neither recognizing Luwemba nor Mukasa as chief Kadhi.

Tension between Luwemba and Mukasa continued until Luwemba died in 1997. The Old Kampala leadership was passed over to Sheikh Muhammad Ssemakula as acting Mufti. Disunity among Muslims continued with the Mukasa Group sitting at Kibuli and the Ssemakula group at Old Kampala. There was another group led by Sheikh Abdul Rahman Ssekimpi sitting at Market Street.

However, during his time in office, Sheikh Ssemakula worked hard to see to it that Muslims unite. He visited all Muslim interest groups emphasizing that he was just a caretaker who wanted to see the Muslim as one unit. Among the groups he visited, included the Tabliqs at Nakasero and those of Market Street and the Kibuli Group.

After seeing his determination, the Muslims joined him and elections were organized in 2000 from Grassroots.

On 8h December, 2000 the General Assembly convened at Hotel Africana in Kampala saw Sheikh Shaban Ramadhan Mubajje elected as Mufti of Uganda, Sheikh Twaibu Mukuye do the Deputy Mufti and Hajj Kasenene was elected General Secretary of U.M.S.C.

This time and for the first time since 1920s Muslims seem to be united than ever before without considering their theological difference in fact, the Mufti is recognized by all Muslims in Uganda irrespective of their background.

## THE EMERGENCE OF SPIDQA

The term Spidqa refers to the Society for the Propagation of Islam and Denouncement of Qadianism (innovation) and Atheism. It was started in around 1979 by Sheikh Muhammad Kizito Zziwa as its Mufti and Sheikh Idris Lutaaya as chief Kadhi.

They first operated from former Bilal Mosque then shifted to Kamwokya Mosque and later to Nakasero. Spidqa was formed by those Muslims, who thought that the leaders of the U.M.S.C had deviated from path of Allah.

The reason why they started this society was due to the discontent which they had with the U.M.S.C and the power greed in the council. Initially, the society spokesmen concentrated much on accusing the U.M.S.C leaders of mismanagement and embezzlement of Muslim funds.

As time went on, the society officials preached against Mauledis, last funeral rights, shirk, the saying of tahalil and Talakin, the drumming of Matali, etc.

Sheikh Zziwa condemned the U.M.S.C officials for not telling Muslims the truth about the above and religion as a whole. He later compromised with the U.M.S.C. He then went to Buziga and established there Buziga Islamic Theological institute.

The climax of spidqa conflict took place in 1984 on a certain day after Zuhri prayers when Zziwa stood to preach and was accused of being drunk. He was denied a chance to preach any more from Nakasero Mosque.

Sheikh Zziwa and the late Hussein N separated from Nakasero and first to William Street Mosque where they operated for some time until they bought land in Kisenyi and built their own Mosque.

However, due to misunderstandings, Njuki separated from Zziwa and began the Shariat News paper. But by the time of this death he had quit Shariat and started another Newspaper called "SALAAMA".

In conclusion, spidqa revolutionised the Muslim Youth are prepared them for what they are today.

Today, the group that remained at Nakasero is referred to as the "Salaf" or the Tabliq Youth Movement.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF SPIDQA

1. To revive the spirit of Islam in Uganda as after the overthrow of Amin people's attitude to Islam changed negatively.

2. To purify Islam which had been mixed with several unIslamic practices and basic Islamic practices were being ignored.
3. To teach and to preach pure Islam in Uganda.
4. Spidiqa was also started to propagate Islam to those people who did not know what Islam was all about.
5. Spidiqa was established for the Ugandan Muslims to denounce all innovations from Islamic worship.
6. Spidiqa was also started to fight Qadianism, which the Sunni Muslims refer to as anti-Islamic and non-Muslims.
7. Spidiqa was established to fight atheism and all forms of Shirik, which had become part and parcel of the Muslim life in Uganda at the time.
8. Spidiqa was also established to mobilize the Ugandan Muslims because its founders felt the Ugandan Muslim Supreme Council had become ineffective following the overthrow of Idi Amin.
9. Spidiqa hoped to act as the Muslim mouth piece to the government – it hoped to speak to the government on issues concerning the progress of the Muslim community.
10. The ambitious Sheikhs who were greedy for power but could not obtain any post in UMSC started their own organization.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS OF SPIDQA**

1. The Spidiqa activities brought many Muslims of Uganda back to the mosques for the performance of prayers in congregation.
2. Many mosques that used to open only on Fridays for Juma Prayers or on Idd days started being active as many people moved in to perform the daily prayers in congregation.
3. Spidiqa is credited for having been the first Muslim group in Uganda to preach against innovation.
4. Spidiqa also brought to the open the teachings of Islam for public consumption.
5. Spidiqa encouraged and succeeded in making Muslims of Uganda observe the Islamic code of dressing without feeling out of place.
6. Spidiqa managed to denounce Qadianism by referring to the teaching anti – Islam and the Qadians as opportunists and enemies of Islam.
7. Spidiqa managed to publish a weekly newspaper As – Shariat which used to remind Muslims about the teachings of Islam and their duties as Muslims.
8. Spidiqa revolutionised the Friday sermon where many mosques started to translate it in local languages.

9. Before the advent of Spidiqa, the Friday sermon was said purely in Arabic which the majority of Ugandans didn't understand.
10. Spidiqa tried to give the Muslim leadership to the Youth which encouraged them to study Islam so as to get positions of responsibilities.
11. Spidiqa was successful in constructing mosques in several parts of the country – among which was one in Mengo – Kisenyi which acted as their headquarters.
12. Spidiqa was credited for encouraging Muslims to take their children to schools to acquire secular education.
13. Spidiqa also encouraged Muslims to start schools in Uganda; subsequently Buziga Theological Institute started by Sheikh Idris Lutaaya owes its establishment to Spidiqa.
14. Spidiqa helped to show that Muslims of Uganda are also part of the Uganda Community when they (spidiqa) openly criticized the government about marginalising Muslims.
15. There had been a period of Islamic stagnation following the overthrow of Idi Amin; so spidiqa succeeded in reviving the spirit of Islam in Uganda.
16. It was spidiqa that revolutionarised people's views and attitudes towards Islamic growth in Uganda.
17. Spidiqa helped to redefine a true Muslim and indeed it laid background to the revival of Islam in Uganda.

### **WEAKNESSES OF SPIDQA**

1. Spidiqa initiated the habit of fighting in mosques in case there would be any disagreement on religious issues.
2. Spidiqa led to more divisions among Muslims of Uganda; more especially among the youths and the elderly.
3. Spidiqa publicly attacked and insulted non – Muslims; and this escalated the enmity between Muslims and non – Muslims.
4. Spidiqa Sheikhs used threatening language characteristic of intimidation which made many Muslims hopeless.
5. Spidiqa's open criticism of the government led to the government to develop a bad attitude towards the Muslims and Islam.
6. Spidiqa was started by members of varying backgrounds and interests; consequently conflicts started to rise from within the society.
7. Some members of Spidiqa played double standard roles; like when Sheikh Lutaaya broke away from the society and compromised with UMSC.
8. No distinction was made between the society and its leaders; that a crime committed by a leader was attributed to the whole society.

9. Spidiqa leaders always indulged themselves in excessive womanizing and alcoholism. For instance, Sheikh Zziwa was expelled from Nakasero Mosque for allegedly smelling alcohol.
10. Spidiqa committed past mistakes they claimed they were fighting for. For example on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2013, the Spidiqa mosque in Kisenyi was demolished and Muslims evicted because the land had been sold off by Spidiqa leaders.

## **THE TABLIQ MOVEMENT IN UGANDA**

The term Tabliq technically means "To propagate Islam". However it has acquired another meaning and it seems to mean Fanatics and Fundamentalists, but this depends on one's conviction. Some people have on the other hand taken it to mean those Muslim Youths who stress the growing of the beards, shortening of trousers and even live according to the teachings of the Holy Prophet.

Non-Muslims have taken the Tabliqs to be the most deadly, quarrelsome and cruel Muslim Youth, who are identified by their shorting of the raiment.

The Tabliq Muslims became more pronounced especially when they reached climax in the 1990s especially when they stormed the Old Kampala U.M.S.C Headquarters and killed three policemen.

Several factors are said to have influenced the emergency of these movements;

1. The desire by the Muslims to revive Islam and live by the teachings of Quran and Hadith.
2. It was partly influenced by the teachings and activities of the spidqa society which prepared them for what they are today.
3. Some people think that the Tabliq movement was inspired by other Muslim countries like Pakistan, Sudan, Egypt, Algeria, etc where Muslim fundamentalism is profound.
4. The coming of several Sheikhs from around the World who preached in a new fashion also inspired the Muslim Youth to develop what they are now.
5. Most Muslim Youth have been unemployed therefore had time to listen to sermons and such inspirations influenced them to begin the Tabliq movement.
6. Others say that it was because of the mistreatment of Muslims by the Government that drove the Tabliq to come together to fight for their rights.
7. It has also been said that the movement began due to the mismanagement and power greed in the U.M.S.C especially at the beginning of 1980s.
8. Some people wanted to become leaders since they hadn't been given chance in the

Uganda Muslim Supreme Council.

Today the Tabliq Movement has split into several factions and the major ones are those based at Nakasero and one at Market Street led by Sheikh Sulaiman Kakeeto and Sheikh Abdul Rahman Ssekimpi respectively.

### **CONTRIBUTION OF THE TABLIQ MOVEMENT IN UGANDA.**

1. The Tabliq movement hoped in the revival of Islam; this was done through preaching.
2. They have also helped in the spread of Islam in the several areas in all parts of Uganda e.g in Northern Uganda, they have achieved this by moving to such areas and preaching. As a result, many converts are won towards Islam.
3. The movement also helped to purify the Islamic Religion e.g fighting innovations and other things like Shrik. As a result of its activities, the numbers of Muslims offering prayers in congregation increased.
4. The Tabliq has also helped in showing that Muslims are part of Ugandans and their propaganda has gone a long way to influence different aspects of life.
5. The movement has helped in the teaching of Quran and Hadith as well as other principles of Islam. This has been done by arranging classes every after prayers and every weekend and going out to preach.
6. They hoped to reform Islam through preaching against innovation in Islamic rituals and practices.
7. They helped in the spread of Islam in many parts of Uganda by moving far and wide while preaching the word of God.
8. They encouraged Muslims to attend Islamic study circles which increased Islamic awareness.
9. The movement has helped in the teaching of the Qur'an, Hadith and other principles of Islam.
10. They have helped in showing that Muslims are also part of the Uganda Community.
11. As a result of their activities and teachings, the number of Muslims offering prayers in congregation increased.
12. They have promoted the spirit of brotherhood by encouraging study circles.
13. They influenced the Friday sermon to be delivered in local languages for easy understanding.
14. They influenced Sheikhs and the general Muslim community to be cautious while practicing certain rituals.
15. They influenced Sheikhs to start delivering well researched sermons backed by sources of Islamic knowledge.



16. They have tried to fight ignorance as Muslims became anxious to learn more about Islam.
17. They cultivated the spirit of courage and bravery in Muslims when fighting for their rights.
18. They maintained Islamic principles, which, has resulted to nominal Muslims to be brought to proper folds of Islam.
19. They have led to emergence of self- moving missionary groups which moved from one place to another preaching Islam.
20. They promoted awareness in religion by organizing classes every after prayers and going out to preach.

### **THE TEACHINGS OF THE TABLIQ.**

1. They emphasized cleanliness by performing prolonged ablution and brushing teeth regularly.
2. They encouraged using wooden tooth brush frequently.
3. They made shaking of hands with opposite sex unlawful except with close relatives.
4. They preach against taking snaps or possessing photographs.
5. They don't allow listening to Music which they regard as transgression.
6. They consider Mauleedi, last funeral rites, Burda among other as innovation in Islam.
7. They emphasized the shortening of clothes on the side of male Muslims.
8. Muslims may opt to leave on their shoes when conducting funeral prayers.
9. They put strong emphasis on the Islamic Dress for both Muslim men and women.
10. They stress the growing of long beard and those who shave are castigated.
11. That the dead must be taken to the grave yard quietly.

### **WEAKNESSES OF THE TABLIQ MOVEMENT**

1. In some areas, the Tabliqs have tarnished the name of Islam especially when they

instigate fighting among Muslims. E.g when they used to go and took over Mosques by force which didn't belong to them.

2. Their activities have some cases led to death of people e.g police officers who were killed in the scuffle at Old Kampala Mosque in 1991.
3. The Tabliq movement has led to more divisions among Muslims.
4. The rate of development of Muslims has also been slowed down due to wrangles partly instigated by the Tabliqs.
5. In some cases, they created an impression to some Muslims to begin thinking that the cardinal principle of Islam is to grow beard and shorten trousers which is detrimental to Islam.
6. The Tabliq have also sharpened the enmity of Non-Muslims especially when they abuse them calling the "Kafir" or disbelievers in broad day light.
7. The Tabliq are rude and many of them don't respect the use of reasoning; they are militant in nature and have always used an abusive language.
8. In most cases the movement is not based on highly learned men among Muslims.
9. They somehow exhibit inappropriate behavior like being very cruel to fellow Muslims, being arrogant, proud and again branding themselves as the only righteous.
10. They developed a proud attitude branding themselves as the only righteous people.
11. Their preaching affected Muslims brotherhood by discouraging social gathering and feasting.
12. Many of the Tabliqs take themselves holy and other Muslims who do not follow their teachings non-believers.
13. Their attitude of branding others disbelievers makes people whom they want to call to their way hate them.
14. Their focus is mainly put on Muslims they found in Mosques, leaving the non-Muslims out.
15. Many of the Tabliqs were self-seekers and opportunists who turned out to be government spies to fellow members.

## **EFFECTS OF FACTIONALISM IN UGANDA**

### **NEGATIVE EFFECTS**

1. Disagreement between Muslims was sometimes fatal; some times, people would go by force and close Mosques which resulted into fatal fighting.
2. Generally Muslims have failed to join hands to promote Islam and Muslim institutions e.g in the industrial sector, health and education. In fact by 1972, there was no single Muslim hospital in Uganda.

3. Muslims have failed to put up a joint council to find solutions to their problems; as a result, they have always resorted to civil court action.
4. Factionalism has tarnished the name of Islam in the sight of other religions and the populace in general.
5. Factionalism has also given way to government political opportunists to hatch plots into Muslim affairs, thereby dividing them.
6. Little time has been reserved for propagation of Islam as people waste too much time in quarrels and conflicts.
7. It has been because of these divisions that the Muslim community has been endangered by Muslims themselves popularity with the Youth as fundamentalists and rebels; hence the constant arrests of Muslims
8. Muslim conflicts have promoted further divisions among the Muslims community.
9. These conflicts resulted into death of people. For example, three policemen were killed when the Tabliq Sect invaded Old Kampala mosque.
10. Muslim conflicts have promoted hatred and enmity among Muslims.
11. Muslim disunity and conflicts have led to sabotage of foreign donations from the Muslims World.
12. Muslim conflicts have fueled up tribal differences among Muslims when Muslims from one tribe oppose leaders if they don't come from their tribes.
13. They have resulted into misinterpretation and manipulation of Islamic Laws to suit ones interests.
14. Muslims conflicts have also promoted Da'awah programmes and activities where each sect intensifies their programmes to win more supporters.
15. They have increased on the interference in the Muslim affairs when non-Muslims are called upon to mediate between conflicting grows.
16. Muslim factionsim has paved way for government interference in Muslim affairs; thus manipulating them the more.
17. Muslim conflicts widened the social gap among Muslims of Uganda especially when different factions insult and slander one another.
18. Muslims conflicts have hindered jointed development of Islam especially in spheres of education, politics, health etc. For example, there is no single Muslim political party in Uganda
19. Because of the conflicts, Muslims have failed to put up a joint council to find solutions to their problems.
20. The conflicts have farnished the image of Islam before members of other faith; especially when they choose to fight among themselves on petty issues.

21. The conflicts led to disagreement between Muslims; for example, Muslims of one sect would attack others, take over mosques by force and serious fights resulted.
22. Muslim conflicts have hindered Muslims from attaining political rights, because of the disunity. Muslims are not given political posts in government

### **POSITIVE EFFECTS**

1. The conflicts have led to development of Islamic infrastructure; as different sects labour to put up structures like schools, mosques etc.
2. Different sects organize seminars, workshops and Da-awah activities which have led to propagation of Islam.
3. There has been increased research on knowledge of certain sensitive Islamic issues that bring about misunderstandings.
4. The conflicts earned Uganda Muslims international recognition from the Arab World; for instance, the Juma Zuhuli issue brought Kasmallah Mubarak to Uganda to arbitrate.
5. The conflicts have revived the teaching of Islam through Darasa programmes organized by the different sects.
6. The Muslims conflicts have led to Islam to spread to many areas as each sect penetrates deep in villages to spread their teachings.

### **MUSLIM EDUCATION IN UGANDA.**

Unlike their Christian counterparts, Muslims in Uganda have lagged behind in education especially as regards secular education. This has been coupled with low standards and levels of development as compared to the Christians. This can be seen by the small numbers of Muslims in Senior Government posts.

Matters have been worsened by the imbalance in our Education System where the Muslims initially emphasized religious Education at the education of Muslim girls has for long been neglected and if Muslims are to realise any development in Education this must stop.

As regards secular education, the first Muslim founded schools were Kibuli and respectively. In 1935, the first Muslim Teacher Training College was opened up at Kasawo and later transferred to Kibuli. Following that, a number of Muslim Primary Schools were opened in other districts.

Muslim Education gave a pace in 1944 when an association called U.M.E.A (Uganda Muslim Education Association) was formed with Prince Badru Kakungulu as its president and Ramadhan Gava as its secretary. Other trustees of U.M.E.A included Juma Mugerwa, Sheikh Mivule, Amir Malende, among others. By 1963, UMEA had acquired one secondary school at Kibuli, one Teacher Training College and about eight Junior Schools and about 170 primary schools.

In the field of Religious Education, initially the teaching was done in vernacular. Schools based on this framework were opened up at Lukalu in Mpigi, Kabigi in Masaka, Mende Kalema in Busiro and Bwayise in Kampala. However, for long, the management of these

schools has remained poor due to lack of competent administration and curriculum.

On several occasions, steps to improve them have always failed.

The ever increasing number of sheikhs graduating from the Arab World has led to improvement to Muslims in their religion. Today most of the former Quranic schools have incorporated secular studies in their curriculum though the system of conducting them is still poor due to inefficient management.

Today, there are very many Muslim primary schools, secondary and Technical schools; and an Islamic University which have done much in ensuring that the education of Muslims is realised. Muslim students are now graduating in big numbers thereby increasing their professional manpower in the country. Today, Muslims have many graduates, master Degree holders and even those with PHDS.

### **WHY MUSLIMS HAVE LAGGED BEHIND IN SECULAR EDUCATION.**

1. The colonial government discouraged the growth and development of Muslim Education in Uganda e.g Muslims were denied chance and white Fathers.
2. Muslim parents feared that their children would be converted to Christianity if they went to schools controlled by Non – Muslims, e.g when Yusuf Kironde Lule denounced Islam, hesitated taking their children to such schools.
3. After losing in the political – Religious wars of 1890s, Muslims found it difficult to set up secondary schools as well as vocational institutions, yet the colonial government didn't want to promote Muslim Education.
4. The divisions and quarrels among Muslims that have existed for long also explain why Muslims have lagged their counter parts. For so long, each of the factions has been having different schools. Parents of one sect didn't want to send their children to a school of another sect. Besides, resources have been always divided up. In fact such divisions couldn't allow Muslims to form pressure groups to advocate for their rights from the government.
5. There is also a high level of ignorance in the Muslim community which makes it difficult for some people to realise that with the increasing number of dropouts at quite an early age to begin business.
6. The imbalance between female and male Muslims in education where less emphasis is put on Education of Muslim girls is also a problem. This has been brought about by the increase in number of early marriage of Muslim girls. So in this respect, an educated mother has very little or no advice for her children and the children may lack academic aspirations from such a home.
7. The tendency of having many children due to polygamy where many Muslims have produced many children more than they can afford. Parents of such children have found it difficult to educate them.
8. Mismanagement of funds especially by those entrusted by the U.M.S.C; in this way the funds which would have been used to develop Muslim Education have been embezzled by the irresponsible council officials.

9. For long, there has been lack of technical assistance and advice from charitable and donor organizations. So the little funds the Muslims have locally wouldn't enhance them for in Education
10. The Muslims have mostly conducted village Quranic schools (madaras) where the standard of religious and secular learning is low.

## SECTION B

# ISLAM IN THE ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE PRE- ISLAMIC WEST AFRICA

#### BACKGROUND

The study of Islam in West Africa is intended to cover the region historically referred to as the Western Sudan Zone. It is the region that is historically divided into the Senegalese chieftainance, Soninke and Mande states between the Niger and Senegal and the Songhai Region of the Upper Niger.

Before the coming and introduction of Islam in this region of West Africa, the people who occupied this region had their own ways of life; and these ways were looked at in political, social, economic and religious circles.

#### THE POLITICAL SET UP

**Question:** Examine the political set up of West African peoples prior to the introduction of Islam in the region.

1. Before the coming of Islam, the people who later formed what came to be West African Sub-continent lived either in segmentary or centralized societies or communities. The segmentary societies are sometimes called stateless or decentralized or egalitarian. These included the Ibos of Yorubaland in Nigeria. The centralized communities include the Tekrur, Asante, Fulani, and Hausa among others.
2. Under the segmentary system, there was nothing like a central focus or authority of operation. Power was put in hands of all people particularly the elders. The elders were taken as custodians of power and knowledge or wisdom.
3. Circumstances would make it imperative for a number of communities to come together for military action or for other purposes. But such groupings – like alliances between sovereign states were temporary phenomena and did not alter the fact that local communities were basically independent.
4. The nature of governance of the segmentary societies also varied from one society to another; but in most of such societies, it would be the elders that would give direction to the community. In other circumstances, it would be the clan heads who would be at

the helm of the political and social cohesion of these institutions.

5. There were councils of elders (Called Ama-ala), which were attended by the heads of families and the village assembly, which was attended by all the men of the village. Village problems were considered by the council of elders and then put before the village assembly. The people at the assembly would sort out their agreement or disagreement with a proposal.
6. In segmentary societies, there was no dictatorship by any individual. Talented and farsighted youths also took part in decision making process, though in most cases their ideas were guided by elders, who had enough experience.
7. Segmentary societies exercised an egalitarian system of governance where power was diffused in the populace. They were, therefore, characterized by not having a single accepted leader; instead there were social and political equality.
8. Every member of the society policed law and order. Disputes were always solved by elders and directly involved clans or families in question. These societies, therefore, had the highest order of democracy, where every member had freedom of expression, speech and political participation.
9. Segmentary societies had no standing army. Security was organized at local levels of the clan. It was a duty of every member of the society to promote law and order and to ensure security for his institution. Therefore, in case of any emergency, all able-bodied men were called up for purpose of offensive; raising a full force of an irregular army. This army would be demobilized when the war ended.
10. In segmentary societies, all the youth had to go through military training in preparation for offensive and defensive wars. Sometimes, training was arranged for raiding purposes. The Ibo of Nigeria used to set up mock battles as drills in such training.
11. People in the non-centralized societies lived by organizing raids against their neighbours. These raids were mainly for the purpose of acquiring foodstuffs, cattle, goats and even for girls and women.
12. There were political rivalries in many areas among segmentary societies. For example, the Asante people rivaled with the Fante and other members of the confederate system there. These rivalries were mainly as a result of desire by some political entities to expand for political, social and economic benefits.
13. On the other hand, centralized societies were governed by an individual or an association of individuals who formed a ruling class or monarchy. In such societies there was a hierarchy of administration with the king or queen at the top. The chain of command would flow from top to the bottom; that is, from the king or Queen to minor chiefs and then to the common man.
14. Most kingdoms or states had standing armies for security, trade purpose, conquests, expansions of such kingdoms, protections of the king and many others. Such kingdoms included the Asante, Tekrur among others. The army was equipped with traditional weapons like arrows, bows and spears.
15. In centralized states or kingdoms, succession to the throne was hereditary; where the

son or brother of the reigning king would ascend to the throne once the king died. The king had all the power to dismiss or appoint government officials. However, measures were put in place to avoid succession disputes. For instance, in Asante Kingdom, disputes to the office of Asantehene were prevented through a system where the new Asantehene was appointed by the queen mother.

16. The majority of centralized societies had tributary or vassal states from which they received tributes. For examples, the Asante Kingdom had tributary states like Fante, Asin, Akyem and Denkyra.
17. The centralized societies had wider political units which were further divided into more units for easy administration. These administrative units included levels like provinces and districts under effective administrators. For example, the metropolitan Asante was divided into administrative parts each under a ruler called Omanhene.
18. In centralized states, ordinary people were denied freedom. This meant that there were dictatorial tendencies in these states and the king could never be challenged. The members of the society were, thus, divided into strata or castes with the ruling class at the top enjoying all privileges.
19. In centralized states, power was hierarchical or pyramidal where there was one top most official; who in most cases was the king, and below him were very many officials as one descended to the grassroots.

## **THE SOCIAL SET UP**

**Question:**      **Examine the Social set up of West African peoples prior to the introduction of Islam in the region.**

1. The people of the area were rich in the typical African culture such that even though they had earlier contacts with foreigners like the Romans and the North African tribes, they remained deeply rooted in African traditions and norms.
2. The custodians of this rich culture were the tribal or village leaders who were the authorities in the political and religious issues. Being religious leaders, therefore, their people accorded them much respect and saw in them a lot of hope.
3. Each individual in the pre-Islamic West African society had a role to play for the growth and development of such a society. This was based on age, sex and occupation. People were, therefore, to be respected basing on the above; that is, whereas one would be respected for being a cultivator, others would be respected for their being traders, wizards, fishermen etc.
4. The system of age-sets was important in a number of non-centralized societies. People were organized in terms of age-sets. For instance, people with ages between 12 and 17 would form one age-set, 18 and 25 would form another; 26 and 35 would form another and 35 and above would form the highest age-set called the elders. People in each age-set were expected to perform specific duties in their societies.
5. Members in segmentary societies were bound together by kinship ties or blood relations of lineages or clans. Under this arrangement, members from the same clan looked at each other as brothers and sisters.



6. Generally, segmentary societies were egalitarian in nature. This meant that members of a given segmentary society were all considered socially equal. Under this principle, all members of the society were supposed to have the same social rights, irrespective of sex or age. So everyone was free to participate in the process of decision-making.
7. Marriage ties were stressed in the Pre-Islamic West African societies. For instance, among the Ibo, men were usually encouraged to have wives but not from members of the same clan. Marriage was generally exogamous; were men were supposed to have wives from outside their own village, group or community.
8. Through marriage ties, law and order were enhanced. For instance, except in rare cases, no one was allowed to marry from his lineage as it was practiced among the Ibos. Consequently, this reduced the chances inter-village conflicts as a member feared to fight the relatives of his wife or in-laws.
9. The Pre-Islamic West African societies ensured high and sound moral values among the youth and the society. For instance, members in segmentary societies encouraged sex education for the youth. Guidelines were set out to deter them from pre-marital sex; yet extra-marital sex was also discouraged.
10. The idea of age sets created unity and a sense of belongingness within lineages, families and clans as well as those members across their borders. They also acted as means of forging unity as they defined people's duties and responsibilities.
11. The West African people also encouraged cooperation and unity by holding family, lineage and inter-clan and clan competitions. There were regular wrestling and mock battles, which kept the people vigilant all the time.
12. West African people had customary laws, which brought about law and order. They were derived from the experience of the ancestors. For examples, Ibo customs forbade them to marry from within their lineages. They were required to marry from neighbouring lineages, clans or communities, which created complex relationships.
13. There was a principle of respect for age by the young to the elders; though some West African societies like the Ibo were egalitarian in nature and individualistic. Every member considered himself as good and important as everyone else.
14. West African people spoke various languages, which created homogeneity; and hence unity. In Nigeria, the Fulani Hausa had their own languages. The Ibo, however, spoke the same languages, yet they were divided into five cultural groups the Western Ibo, Northern Ibo, Oweri Ibo, Cross-River Ibo and the Ogoja Ibo.
15. There was the practice of giving special titles to encourage handwork and competition to all freeborn males. The most vital titles were Ozo and Ama. These titles created strong relationship among members who held them within and across societies. They were supposed to be hospitable to each other.
16. The pre-Islamic West African people organized and conducted joyful ceremonies and festivals. These included harvest time, Birth of child, victory over enemies, to mention but a few. For example among the Asante, there was an Annual Odwira Festival, an occasion where people came together, dances were held and people entertained.

17. The elders, especially in non-centralized societies, were also important and highly respected. Apart from their cultural roles, they at times helped in resolving political and social conflicts.
18. The West African people also cherished unity through markets, which were attended in common. These markets brought neighbouring villages and people of different groups together and served not only as places of business but also as social centers, which people were provided with an opportunity to discuss common problems.

## **THE RELIGIOUS LIFE**

**Question:**      **Examine the religious life of West African peoples prior to the introduction of Islam in the region.**

1. The people of West Africa believed in the Supreme Deity and Creator whom they called by different names. For example, among the Ibo, this supreme Deity is referred to as Chineke.
2. Much as the people of West Africa had a belief in and an idea of the Supreme God, they held a belief in small gods. These small or lesser gods were thought of as residing in trees, caves, rivers and other elements of nature. The small or lesser gods acted as agents of the Supreme Deity.
3. The people of West Africa also believed in life after death and the presence of the spiritual world. Domestic animals like goats, sheep, hens and to a small extent cows were sacrificed to their god or departed ancestors to appease them.
4. West African people, especially those in segmentary societies, had a claim of an assuming ancestor who was not common for members who feared to be subjected to the tortures of the spirits of those assuming ancestors.
5. There was strong attachment to religion which believed in oracles of Agbala and Chuku; yet, other societies also had their own forms of religions. However, whichever the forms, the most vital aspect of religion was that it defined the dos and don'ts of society.
6. Religion was also an important instrument of creating law and order; in that variety of religious beliefs were professed by the West African societies. For example, the belief in the spirits of ancestors and those of the living dead, helped to keep people within the dimensions of law.
7. There were religious leaders and diviners who acted as mediators or intermediaries between masses and their God. These leaders and diviners had many powers and people feared them.
8. They believed in ancestral spirits which were believed to reside in holy places or shrines referred to as Oracles. The spirits would advise people on political, social and economic problems on being consulted. Likewise, the spirits punished anybody who violated the governing customary laws. Such was common among the Ibo.
9. In centralized societies, religion was highly respected, and originally it was under the control of the king. For instance, among the Asante, people were religious and their

king- the Asantehene was the religious head as well as the guardian of the golden stool. The golden stool was the greatest symbols of Asante's cultural and religious unity and bound people together.

10. In non-centralized societies, people attached much importance to the traditional religious beliefs. As a result, some of the traditional religious authorities or diviners occasionally played a role in political matters.
11. People of West Africa had religious places and objects; which included hills, mountains, trees, rivers, caves, lakes, shrine and worshipping was done there from
12. The Pre-Islamic West African people used certain art pieces and symbols to express their religious practices and ideas such as sticks, pots and calabashes, paintings on pieces of wood and many others. For instance, among the Asante, the Golden stool was the symbol of their cultural and religious unity.
13. There were religious components, which were used to regulate relations among people and then between them and the world around. These formed the moral and value system which included justice, promise, respect for people and many others.
14. Many societies were superstitious and practiced superstition, magic and witchcraft. People with magic and witchcraft were feared very much. Certain things or objects of nature were considered as carrying bad omens; like giving birth to twins in Nigeria was considered a bad omen, therefore twins were killed.
15. Among other religious practices, was the belief in spirits which they said formed part of the unseen part of the universe. They believed that the sprits had a special position between man and God.
16. In centralized societies, the kings and chiefs were the religious heads. They had the duty of conducting activities; like ceremonies, sacrifices, formal prayers and divination. For example, the Asantehene was the religious head in Asante.
17. Religion in West Africa was also expressed through myths and legends. Religion was, thus readily taught and spread through stories, legends and myths.

## **THE ECONOMIC LIFE**

**Question:**      **Examine the economic set up of West African peoples prior to the introduction of Islam in the region.**

1. The economic organization of the people of West Africa demonstrated that they were able to adapt to the challenges of the environment and satisfy their needs through exchange of goods and services among themselves, with neighbouring communities as well as with Europeans and North African traders.
2. The system of 'Barter' was used to facilitate the exchange of goods and services. People in various parts of the West African region would mainly exchange foodstuffs. The necessary commodities were usually exchanged on basis of barter trade.

3. Much as the greatest part of West Africa is covered by tick forests, but by the nineteenth century, the Ibo had cleared a large part of the forest. They did this in order to cultivate crops like yams and palm oil. Yams served as food while palm oil was one of the important commodities of trade.
4. Agriculture was another important economic activity. This involved both cultivation and pastrolism. The Ibo, for instance grew yams and palm oil, while the Fulani were essentially pastrolists. However, Agriculture was primarily for subsistence.
5. The pre-Islamic West African societies carried out a variety of activities, determined by their historical and geographical forces that they were subjected to. For instance, people who lived along the shores of rivers Niger, Senegal and the like, carried out fishing as their main economic activity
6. Taxation also formed the basis for people's revenue. Income tax from different personalities was charged depending on the citizen's rank. Taxation system considered livestock and crops one had as an important yardstick to explain how much tax one would pay.
7. Trade was also a very important economic activity in the Pre-Islamic West Africa. People depended on trade especially with North Africa. The main exports in this field were Kolanuts, gold, salt and ivory. These commodities were exchanged for a variety of European goods like cloth, firearms; etc.
8. The Pre-Islamic West African people cherished the socio-economic circles; in that one worked for other in expectation of a return in a related service to him or her if need arose in future. For example, peasant helped one another during harvest time.
9. In addition to other economic activities that generated the societies a lot of revenue, the West African societies' economic sector was made up of tributes and taxes obtained from tributary states. These tributes were charged from cattle and imported clothes, food and gold dusts.
10. The economy would also be boosted by booty that would be brought in after raids, wars or ransoms.
11. Art and craft were also part of the economic activities in West Africa. It centered on construction of buildings made up sun-dried bricks, decorated with vaults and arches. Weaving of cotton, lust-wax costing in bronze and brass, ornaments of silver and gold were done.
12. West African societies also survived on raids and drew items like animals, men and women whom they sometimes sold into slavery. For example, the Hausa would raid the Fulani and the Asante raided the Fante.
13. Fishing was also carried out by some West African societies, especially the Oweri, Western and Onitsha Ibo on River Niger and its tributaries. Fish was used to supplement on the diety and trade.
14. Iron smelting was also carried out. It was facilitated with fair smithing practices. These were done in many centres that developed in areas between the savannah and Forest Zone.

15. Tending to animal was also done; for instance by the Wolof and Serer of Senegal and in Nigeria. Cattle were kept for portage, meat and milk. Hides and skins were used for manufacturing leather.
16. Some societies imposed unfair taxes on others; for instance, the Berbers did so to many people as they settled in many areas in West Africa. These taxes were paid in form of tributes and giving in slaves.
17. The economy of centralized societies was centralized in that it was controlled by the king who had powers over all the economic activities; like trade and agriculture. The economy would be boosted by booty that would be brought in after raids.
18. The segmentary societies did not have centralized control of economy. Land, for instance, was communally owned and production was based on the family. Each family was expected to be self sufficient in terms of food production and provision of other needs. For example, everybody was free to participate in major items of trade such as gold, salt and ivory.
19. Communal work and working together in provision of labour services was common among the Pre-Islamic West African societies. This was not a sign of primitivity by the nature economic development in those societies. Work was not for earning but rather for glorification of the whole society.
20. The Pre-Islamic West African segmentary societies did not have extensive industrial undertakings; rather they dealt in small scale indigenous industrial undertakings like bronze works, cotton weaving, iron works and pottery.
21. West African societies carried out trade on both local and wide scale levels. There existed trade links between North Africa and West Africa, commonly referred to as the Trans-Saharan Trade. The societies that participated in this trade included the Fulani, Hausa, Ibo, Asante, and Fante among others. The commodities which were used in this include minerals like gold, iron and silver; crops like yams, kolanuts among others.
22. West Africa being blessed with abundant mineral deposits like copper and gold in Ghana, mining was another economic of the Pre-Islamic West Africa people; especially those near and around the mineral deposits. The minerals produced were important trade items that were exchanged for other items.
23. Many Pre-Islamic West African people were mixed farmers who kept animals like goats, sheep and cattle for domestic food, hides, prestige and trade. At the same time, they were crop cultivators, growing yams, potatoes and the like. These produced commodities of livestock and harvest facilitated exchange relationship among the people of West Africa.
24. Another aspect that boosted the economic life of the Pre-Islamic people was their involvement in raiding their neighbours. These raids enabled kingdoms to acquire great wealth in form of cattle and food that strengthened the more the kingdoms' treasury
25. The Pre-Islamic West African people operated storage facilities in their homes where they kept the surplus from their harvest. These storage facilities helped a lot as they kept the supply of food stable and constant throughout the year.

26. The artisan section of West African people made different commodities using their physical skills and talents. They produced iron implements like hoes, spears, knives and axes. These were important for hunting, digging and for other domestic services and activities.

## CHAPTER TWO

### INTRODUCTION AND SPREAD OF ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA.

#### FACTORS THAT FACILITATED THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA.

**Question:** Examine the factors that facilitated the rapid spread of Islam in West Africa.

Islam is said to have been introduced in West Africa in the Eighth century around 738AD when trade Caravans from North Africa began to extend trade tentacles into Western Sudan, commonly known as West Africa. Historians have advanced a number of factors that facilitated the spread of Islam in West Africa.

1. One view suggests that Islam was introduced by conquests right from Arabia to North Africa especially Egypt around about 640AD. The advocates of this view argued that making Egypt their base, the Arab Muslims began to extend their conquests westwards consuming a vast area, West Africa inclusive.
2. The most important single factor that helped to introduce and later spread Islam in West Africa was trade. The commercial links that had existed between West and North Africa for many years; coupled with rich history of trade commodities like gold and ivory, made the Arabs Muslims from North Africa to venture in West Africa. In the process of carrying out their business, they spread Islam to the people they related with.
3. The establishment of trade routes courtesy of the Trans-Sahara Trade opened up West Africa to the already Islamised North African Regions like Morocco, Tripoli, Egypt and Tunisia. The trade eased the hardships of crossing the desert, after realizing that beyond the Sahara lay a number of Empires with large supplies of gold and other items. These trade routes brought in Arab Muslims, who helped to spread Islam.
4. West African kings and chiefs, such as Mansa Musa, Mansa Sulaiman, Askia Muhammad Toure and many others helped to spread Islam by welcoming Arab Muslim traders into their kingdoms. The kings and chiefs had expected benefits from the Arabs in forms of guns and ammunitions. So many kings and chiefs embraced the religion of the visitors and the Islamised kings helped very much to spread Islam.
5. The kings and chiefs of West African states, like Mansa Musa helped in establishing Islamic schools where everyone was free to go and get instructions. From such schools, many West African people were taught Islam.
6. Some West African kings like Askia Muhammad took initiative by carrying out missionary work when they invited their neighbours to the folds of Islam. For example, Askia Muhamad Toure invited the powerful king of Mossi in the South of his empire to embrace Islam.
7. The islamisation of the Berbers also contributed to the spread of Islam in West Africa. The Berbers came into contact with the Arab Muslims from North Africa. The

Islamised Berbers helped to spread Islam to those West Africans they interacted with.

8. The permanent settlement of the Berbers, who had already converted to Islam, also facilitated the spread of Islam in West Africa. The Berbers settled in areas like Ghana where they established centers like Wallata in which Islamic culture was fostered. Indeed, they taught Islam to the local people they came into contact with; who in turn also taught it to others.
9. The Islamic movements and brotherhoods, like Tijaniyyah, Qadariyyah and others, also helped to spread Islam in West Africa. They spread Islam in wide areas by organizing gatherings in different centers, where they praised Allah and also carried out teaching to the believers and later influenced many people to Islam.
10. The introduction of the camel accelerated the spread of Islam in West Africa because it made communication and transport into the interior easy. Muslim traders and scholars of high eminence were able to flood West Africa where they taught Islam.
11. The proximity of West Africa to the already Islamised North Africa and to Arabia, the center of Islam, made the West African peoples close to the Arabs. This closeness and interaction led to development similar cultures and ways of life between the Arabs and West African local people resulting in Islamisation of the region.
12. There was absence of a strong Christian influence in West Africa which otherwise would have counterbalanced and contradicted Islam. This made it easy for the spread of Islam without much opposition or conflict.
13. The role of the 19<sup>th</sup> century West African Jihad movements was also great in the Islamisation of West Africa. The success of the Jihads, like the Sokoto Jihads of Uthman Dan Fodio, Maccina Jihads of Sehu Ahmadu and the Tijjan Jihads of al-Hajj Omar cultivated fertile grounds for the formation and creation of theocratic states which played a great role in the dissemination of Islam.
14. The expansion of the Islamic Caliphate, especially during the caliphate of Umar bin al-Khattab and that of Uthman bin Affan and later during the reign of Muawiyah bin Abu Sufyan saw the Islamic Empire expand to areas of North Africa like Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria and Morocco from where the faith of Islam crossed over to West Africa.
15. The role of imperialists and some of their policies indirectly helped to spread Islam. The imperialists established agricultural plantations where people were grouped together. As a result, Muslims interacted with other people and in the process, the Muslims influenced others to Islam.
16. The colonialists and imperialists put up a number of infrastructures like constructing roads through the area. This eased movement from one place to another and interaction between one person and another. Therefore, there was free movement of people; and thus the spread of Islam was inevitable.
17. With the establishment of colonial rule in West Africa, insecurity and intertribal wars stopped. This eased movement of Muslims into areas, which hadn't been accessed



before; hence, they spread Islam in such areas.

18. The emergence of kingdoms in Western Sudan was another explanation for the rapid spread of Islam in West Africa. The emergence of Empires like Ghana, Mali, Songhai and Kanem-Bornu ensured safety and security of the traders. In addition, rulers guaranteed absolute freedom of worship to the incoming Muslim Berbers and Arabs, who in turn helped in the spread of Islam
19. The flexibility of Islam towards the culture of West Africa also facilitated the spread of Islam in the region. For Islam to accommodate elements of West African culture, like circumcision among the Asante, meant that Islam was not alien to the practices of the people. Therefore, the West Africa local people accepted Islam with ease.
20. The hospitality shown by some West African Kings to the Muslim Arab and Berber traders greatly facilitated the spread of Islam in West Africa. The traders were welcomed in many states like Ghana where they put up Muslims settlements and villages like that of Kumbi in Ghana. From these centers, many Arabs and Berbers interacted with Africans influencing them to become Muslims.
21. The establishment of the Almoravid Dynasty by Abubakr Ibn Umar in 1069; a man of exceptional ability, rendered a great service to Islam. The leaders of the Almoravid Movement succeeded in driving out the ruling dynasty in Ghana and established a totally Muslim empire of Ghana.
22. The result of the emigrants from Arabia to North Africa was essential to the rapid spread of Islam in West Africa. The migration of the Banu Hilal clan from Western Arabia to North Africa and some to West Africa led to the conversion of many people, especially the Berbers to Islam. The Berbers being great travelers when searching for trade items introduced Islam to West Africa, where they had gone to look for such goods

# ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANS-SAHARAN TRADE

**Question:** Examine the origin and organization of the Trans-Saharan trade system.

The Trans-Saharan Trade was a commercial phenomenon that involved trade dealings between the people of West Africa and those of North Africa and the Mediterranean world across the Sahara Desert.

At first, the Trans-Saharan Trade was called the Silent or Dumb trade because of lack of a common language that would be used between West Africa and North African traders. As such trade commodities were exchanged in silence.

The commercial links that had existed between West Africa and the people around the Mediterranean basin for more than a thousand years back resulted into trade dealings across the Sahara Desert; thus the name the Trans-Saharan Trade.

The origin of the Trans-Saharan Trade is not known; however it is said that this trade started around the third century when the Berber nomads discovered gold deposits beyond the Sahara in the West Sudan region.

The Berber nomads used to cross the desert to look for pasture for their camel flocks. The Berber nomads came to learn about the great value of gold in West Africa. It was from this time that they loaded a lot on their camels which they traded with the Arabs from the north.

The Berber utilized the camel because of its perseverance through harsh conditions of the desert, walking long distances without food or water and their cushion – like nature of the two toes which enable them not sink in Sand.

However, the real trade across the Sahara Desert was said to have started around the Fourth Century when the Arabs occupied North Africa. The Arabs, basing on information they got from the Berber nomads, moved southwards to West Africa where they discovered valuable trade commodities.

The Trans-Saharan Trade was conducted along well defined trade routes that originated from North Africa around Libya across the Sahara Desert through West Africa to countries of North West Africa like Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia and across the Mediterranean Sea to Europe.

The principal people who got involved in this trade included the Arabs, Berbers, Soninke, Hausa, Fulani and Tuaregs among others.

During the Trans-Saharan Trade dealings, the camel, which had been introduced by the Berbers, bullocks, asses and human porters, were used as the chief means of transporting trade commodities to either side.

This trade was able to develop in West Africa because the Tuaregs were employed as guides and guards for the traders from North Africa across the harsh and risky Sahara Desert.

In the course of trade, the North African traders crossed the Sahara with their goods like clothes, mirrors, guns, gun powder, beads, silk, glass ware, carpets, paper and religious books like the Qur'an which they exchanged for African commodities like gold, Ivory, hides

and skins and slaves.

The trade journey across the Sahara Desert was very long and it would take traders between two to three months. This meant, therefore, that the Trans – Saharan Traders dealt only in imperishable commodities.

Because of their earlier knowledge of West Africa and possession of camels, the Berber nomads became middlemen between the Muslim Arab traders from the north and the gold and ivory producers of West Africa.

In the initial stages of the Trans-Saharan Trade, the medium of exchange was barter system but later cowrie shells were introduced.

As a result of the Trans-Saharan Trade activities, Arab and Berber towns developed. The most prosperous, among others, Walata, Gao, Timbuktu, Jenne and Kumbi Saleh.

The Trans – Saharan Trade persisted through many centuries until the 18<sup>th</sup> Century as a result of the Moroccan Moors invasion on West Africa that led to the collapse of Songhai Empire and brought about insecurity along the trade routes.

## **THE ROLE OF TRADE IN THE ISLAMISATION OF WEST AFRICA.**

**Question: Assess the role of trade in the spread of Islam in West Africa.**

The introduction and spread of Islam in West Africa was largely a product of a number of factors, however the role-played by the trade was really immense and can be looked at in the following ways:

1. Trade opened up West Africa to the Muslim world, like Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. West African being rich in trade commodities like gold, attracted traders from North Africa to trade in such commodities. And because these traders were Muslims, they helped to spread Islam in those areas where they went for trade.
2. Many Africans like the Ghanaians became intermediaries or middlemen between the Berbers and the Arab traders from the North and the gold and ivory producers of the West Africa. This brought the Ghanaians to interact with the Berbers, who had already become Muslims and the Muslim Arab traders. Hence, the traders attracted the Ghanaians to become Muslims,.
3. Trade led to the growth and development of kingdoms in West Africa; like Ghana, Mali and Songhai. These kingdoms ensured safety and security of traders. In addition, rulers guaranteed absolute freedom of worship the incoming Muslim Berbers and Traders. This encouraged the coming of Muslim Merchants who helped much in the spread of Islam.
4. Through trade between the West and North Africa, many Africans such as the Tuaregs got employment as they had to move from one place to another in search of trade items. This brought them nearer to the Arab Merchants, who influenced them to convert to Islam.
5. Through trade, also, many West African chiefs who had become Muslims became rich and prominent. These included Mansa Musa of Mali and Askia Muhammad of

Songhai who were always busy convincing Arab traders and merchants to visit this great region of West Africa. Through this trade, therefore, Islam was spread.

6. The Trans-Saharan Trade greatly accelerated the spread of Islam in West Africa, in that the Berbers and Arab Merchants involved in the trade were Muslims. These Berbers and Arab merchants spared no effort to spread Islam. It's no wonder that today West Africa is predominantly Muslim partly because of this trade.
7. The increase in volume of trade was boosted by the introduction of the camel in about the fifth Century. The use of the camel made travel across the Sahara Desert much easier. This facilitated easy and free movement of the Berbers and Arabs to western Africa; hence the spread of Islam.
8. The conquest of North Africa by the Arabs between 641 and 708 AD, coupled with the increased use of the camel also led to the spread of Islam in West Africa. With their desire to explore the vast area beyond the desert; Arabs found themselves crossing the Sahara Desert to West Africa; and with this, they spread Islam.
9. Trade led to opening of trade routes that linked West Africa to the already islamised North Africa. Using the trade routes that emerged, Muslim traders from North Africa easily accessed West Africa and were able to reach different areas where they took Islam with them.
10. As a result of trade activities between West Africa and the already islamised North Africa, there developed trade posts along the trade routes. These trade posts became meeting points between Africans and Muslims traders. Through continuous interaction between traders and Africans, Islam was absorbed in West Africa.
11. The trade posts later developed into towns and cities, like Audaghost, Timbuktu, Jenne and many others; which made convergency and divergence by both Africans and Muslim traders easy. Traders who stayed in such towns spread Islam to those Africans who either diverged or converged in these towns.
12. The Muslim traders came with their own ways of life and virtues that African longed to copy and attracted them together. These included the dressing code, way of praying and the type of food they ate. These became sources of attraction, which facilitated the spread of Islam.
13. The simplicity in character of most of the Muslim traders and the accommodative and hospitable nature of many Africans made the two groups to stay together and eat in circles. Since the morals and general conduct of the Muslim Traders reflected the teaching of Qur'an and Hadith, Many Africans were persuaded to convert to Islam as a result.
14. Through their frequent movement through West Africa, Muslim traders witnessed many African leaders and their subjects practicing pagan rituals, which were contrary to the teaching of Islam. On their return to North Africa and the Muslim Worlds, the traders persuaded Muslim scholars to go to West Africa and teach people Islam.
15. Many of the Muslim traders from North Africa intermarried with the local West African People, which increased the Muslim population in places where they stayed

as many relatives of the women married to the Muslim traders left their home areas to come and settle among the in-laws. Hence many ended up being influenced to Islam.

16. The coming of the Arab traders to West Africa gave an insight to the people of the region that the traders were representing a larger Muslim world with better civilization, administrative practices, modern ideas and so on. The Africans, therefore, decided to identify themselves with the Arabs by copying their ways of life, including their religion.
17. Trade resulted into commercial wars from which Islam benefited indirectly. The traders among the Muslim Berbers in West Africa always desired to move and control all those areas where trade was doing well. It was through this continuous exercise that they confronted the Muslim Soninke of Ghana. The Soninke were forced to move to other areas of West Africa where they spread Islam.
18. Trade led to the rise of Islamic Jihadists and Islamic empire builders like Samori Toure of the Mandinka state, who used all the available means to spread Islam. This was partly because out of trade, they acquired knowledge, skills, wealth and weapons with which they supported themselves to build their states.
19. The changes in West African ways of life more especially the dressing code from the African traditional way to an Arab style encouraged trade in Arabic textiles. African started adopting Arab styles of dressing, and with time, they also adopted their religion. In fact, the mode of dressing that was introduced together with Islam is now considered traditional in West Africa.
20. Through trade, much of the Islamic culture such as dressing, keeping of written records, ways of doing business and marketing organization were adopted. These, too, facilitated the spread of Islam in the region.
21. Because of trade, Berber and Arab caravans crossed the Sahara to the state of Ghana to exchange Mediterranean goods for gold and other goods. In the process, they introduced Islam there. In Ghana, the kingdom allotted a special mosque quarter for the Muslim merchants from North Africa. Special Muslim settlements were also put up; like in Kugha.
22. The Muslim Arab traders came to West Africa with an Islam civilization, better administrative practices, scholars and jurists with modern ideas. The Arab scholars and jurists together with their practices and knowledge were used by kings, leaders and chiefs of the West Africa kingdoms and empires in various capacities, which was to the advantages of Islam.

## **THE ROLE OF SLAVE TRADE IN THE ISLAMISATION OF WEST AFRICA.**

**Question: To what extent was slave trade a barrier to the spread of Islam in West Africa?**

The spread of Islam in West Africa was much attributed to the presence of trade in region. Trade in West Africa, developed quite early and it had far reaching impact on the West Africa region in general and Islam in particular. Nevertheless, trade had its negative elements and limitations; for some Muslim traders got involved in slave trade, which had a

deterrent impact on the spread of Islam.

1. The involvement of some Muslim traders in slave trade and slavery deterred the spread of Islam in West Africa. This was due to the fact that the Africans who had not yet converted to Islam feared to associate with Muslim traders for fear of being taken up as slaves.
2. Slave trade reduced the spread of Islam through insecurity, which was created by the slave raiders. It therefore became insecure to the preachers to traverse such land while not sure of ever returning home.
3. Slave trade depopulated West Africa by robbing it of its energetic population. Thus, the economies of these regions, which were mainly controlled by the Muslims, could not progress at a rate they should have if the population had been left intact.
4. The Muslim chiefs, having been involved in the raiding of the West African citizenry, made the people to resent them and this affected the religion which they professed because people could not emulate them for they appeared barbaric.
5. Slave raiding by the Arabs affected the fundamental teaching of Islam especially that on sanctity of human life which had no boundary and does not discriminate against tribes, religion and sex. This meant that the Arabs involved in slave raiding could not have been serious Muslims and therefore were useless towards the spread of Islam in West Africa.
6. Slave raiding made many youth to run away from their families. This in turn led to the breakdown of the cultural ties and the belief in the elders and cultures. Hence, such youth could not be guided. Therefore the method of spreading Islam through cultural hierarchy; for instance, the father embracing Islam with all his people, was antagonized.
7. The emergence of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade diverted much of the trade, which used to take place within the desert of the Sahara. This broke the contact between the Muslim-Arabs and the people who preached Islam in West Africa. Yet this was the major source of supply of people who preached Islam to West African people. This inevitably meant the decline in the spread of Islam from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
8. The emergence of slave trade was partly responsible for the collapse of West Africa theocratic states, which had been developed and ruled by Muslims and partly on Muslim principles. The trade encouraged the Europeans to venture into the interior and eventually decided to colonize the region. When the states were fought and their leaders like Samori Toure captured, the spread of Islam was retarded.
9. The Christian Missionaries in West Africa used slave trade factor in which the Muslim traders had participated in to discredit Islam among the peoples of West Africa. This naturally influenced the people's attitude against Islam.
10. The abolition of slave trade came with European imperialism in West Africa. This was because the agitators against slave trade felt that it had to succeed; thus followed it up by practical supervision on the ground though with other hidden intentions. The result of European imperialism therefore retarded the spread of

Islam.

11. Where slave trade was exercised, there was a problem of insecurity and Islam could not thrive or spread smoothly in such areas. The people who would convert to Islam were always kept on the run or in hiding.

Nevertheless, despite the negative role slave trade played in the spread of Islam in West Africa, on a far small extent it helped in the islamisation of West Africa.

1. Where slavery and slave trade existed, among those people who were enslaved, there were some Muslims and these helped to spread Islam indirectly or directly, wherever they were taken.
2. Some Muslim traders liberated slaves buying their freedom. These liberated slaves were later persuaded to convert to Islam. The Muslim traders did this as they regarded liberating slaves a noble act that would enable the doer to enter Paradise.
3. On domestic slavery viewpoint, the Arab Muslims related well with their household slaves whom they treated like people of their families. This friendly approach helped in winning the slaves to the religion of their masters.
4. The domestic "slaves" who worked for the Arabs masters would sometimes be allowed to marry the daughters of their masters; thus, becoming inlaws of the Arabs. Whenever these slaves would return home, for example for a visit, they would come back with their relatives to the Arabs homes. These relatives, with time, embraced Islam.

## THE ROLE OF KINGS AND CHIEFS IN THE ISLAMISATION OF WEST AFRICA.

**Question:** Assess the role of king and chiefs in islamisation of West Africa.

Many views have been put across as factors that contributed to the spread of Islam in West Africa; among which included the role played by West African kings and chiefs. With the introduction of Islam in West Africa, the kings and chiefs became champions of the religion in the following ways:-

1. With the spread of Islam in West Africa, especially by the Arab Muslim traders from the North, many chiefs and kings welcomed it and others embraced it.  
  
The fact that the kings and chiefs embraced Islam greatly facilitated the spread of Islam. They did this in the sense that when they converted, even their subjects did so in a way of strengthening their relationship with the kings. A case in this point was Samori Toure who ordered all his people to become Muslims.
2. In some areas, the kings were known to have practiced polygamy; and in so doing, the relatives of the many wives they married, ended up becoming Muslims as they needed to be identified with the kings.
3. The kings helped to put Sharia Law into practice, which no one could have done. For

example, Samori Toure made Sharia the law of his land; whereas some kings employed Kadhis (judges) to administer Islamic law in their land.

4. The kings also helped in putting up infrastructures that the Muslims required in the dissemination of Islam, like schools and mosques. They also invited teachers and scholars from Muslim World.
5. Some kings also kept the Muslims of West Africa in close contact with the outside Muslim World like the Maghrib region, Egypt and Arabia. This was done through sending ambassadors and students to those areas. This contributed much to the spread of Islam through visits of Muslim scholars.
6. Some West Africa kings declared Islam a state religion. This enabled Islam to dominate and at the same time made Muslims to dominate key posts and as such, used their positions to spread Islam.
7. Some chiefs that had already embraced Islam were used as sub-imperialists of the European colonialists because they were at least literate. Such people used their influence to spread Islam among the people they governed.
8. Some of the kings and chief fought against imperialists who had come with a new religion of Christianity. For instance, Samori Toure of the Mandinka Empire, at one time fought against the French. These helped to keep the flag of Islam high.
9. Some kings mobilized their people against the Europeans who had started spread Christianity For instance, Samori Toure mobilized the Mandinka, who vowed to fight up to the last man rather than accept to be ruled by the French they considered to be infidels.
10. Some kings like Samori Toure and Mansa Musa overthrew the existing religious and political structures in their areas of influence by destroying pagan shrines, symbols and priesthood. They would then erect mosques and appoint Imams to each village. This helped to promote Islam in their areas of jurisdiction.
11. Some kings and chiefs took initiative and requested scholars from North Africa and the Muslim world to the Empire. This intensified the flocking in of Muslim teachers and more traders into West Africa from either North Africa or Middle East. Therefore, great scholars of great reputation and fame went to West Africa and helped in the purification and clarification of Islam.
12. Some West African Kings opened up several commercial centres in their areas, which created many convergence and divergence points for people. In such centres, Muslims interacted with non-Muslims. In the process of interaction, Islam was passed on to other people who even transferred it to others in distant places.
13. Some kings sent Muslim missionary groups to their neighbours to invite them to Islam. A case here was Askia Muhammad of the Songhai Empire who sent missionaries to invite the king of Mossi and his people to the folds of Islam.
14. Some kings and chiefs like Mansa Musa, Askia Muhammad, Samori Toure and others enforced and encouraged the performance and observance of Islamic practices, which helped much in the dissemination of Islam. For instance, Mansa



Musa and Askia Muhammad opened the way for the masses to go for pilgrimage, which they themselves blessed and braved.

15. The chiefs and kings boosted learning and education through fighting illiteracy, which helped in better understanding of Islam. For instance, the Jihad leaders put up several libraries, which boosted research in the field for Islamic principles.
16. Some kings and chiefs, especially Samori Toure and the 19<sup>th</sup> century Jihad leaders, removed trade custom barriers which had made movements of Muslim traders in West Africa difficult. After their removal, movement became easy. The more the traders moved from one place to another, the more they speeded up the spread of Islam, through interaction with other people.
17. Some kings financed Muslim activities and projects which boosted the speed at which Islam was spread. For instance, wherever Mansa Musa stopped on Friday during his pilgrimage to Mecca, he paid for the construction of a mosque in the area.
18. Some kings took time to assess the spiritual welfare of the subjects. For instance, Mansa Musa made a ruling to the effect that all the five daily prayers be conducted in congregation (Jamah). This greatly increased the sense of brotherhood among his people; as it also helped to cement their faith in respect of Islam.
19. Nevertheless, some acts committed by kings and chiefs undermined the progress of Islam. For instance, Sunni Ali II of Songhai tortured Muslims scholars; he was indifferent towards Islam and also supported African traditionalism to rival against Islam.
20. With the kings embracing Islam, some people developed an attitude that Islam was a religion of the kings. In this respect, some kings practiced Islam along side traditional beliefs and their subordinates also felt like doing the same.
21. Some Muslim chiefs having been involved in raiding of West Africa citizenry, made the people to resent them and this affected the religion which they professed because people could not emulate them for they appeared barbaric.

## **THE ROLE OF THE BERBERS IN THE ISLAMISATION OF WEST AFRICA.**

**Question:** Examine the contribution of the Berbers in the spread of Islam in West Africa.

The Berbers were of the Negro origin who came to West Africa from North African areas like Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. Their areas were conquered and taken control over by Arab Muslims from Arabia. These Arab Muslims influenced many Berbers to become Muslims.

After embracing Islam, the Berbers contributed to the spread of Islam in the Western Sudan region the following ways:

1. The Arabs in the move to take full control of the areas formerly occupied by Berbers, forced the Berbers to move southwards into West Africa region especially western Sudan. Here, they came into contact with the people of West Africa, whom they influenced to convert to Islam.

2. The Berbers from the very beginning were basically traders and thus organized Trans-Sahara caravans for trade. They dealt in gold and salt between North Africa and Western Sudan; and since the Berbers had become Muslims; they influenced many people they interacted with to become Muslims.
3. The commercial links that had existed between West and North Africa for many years, coupled with the Arabs pressure on Berbers, who had lived in Morocco, Libya, Tunisia and Algeria led to the initial penetration of Islam into West Africa.
4. The Berbers gained control of many towns in West Africa like Audaghost, which had terminals for Caravan routes linking North and West Africa. These towns became center of attraction for many West African people who were influenced to Islam through the activities of the Berbers.
5. Almost in every Berber trade caravan, there was a group of clericals or Muslim teachers who either helped the traders to be fair in their trade dealings or kept on instructing Islam to one another. Africans who interacted with them were taught the religion; and indeed many West Africans converted to Islam.
6. The Berbers traders did and also came with many new things that attracted many West African people to them. For instance, they came with a new code of dressing, new type of food and new civilization. The attraction facilitated the spread of Islam in West African region.
7. The Berbers were also accredited for having started the Almoravid Movement in Western Sudan. The Almoravids Movement was a confederation that comprised of the Godala, Massuja and Lemtuna people. The Almoravid Berbers preached strict Sufi practice and exercised the true and pure Islamic worship; thus helping to strengthen Islam in West Africa.
8. The coming of the Berbers in Western Africa increased the Islamic awareness among the peoples of West Africa. They built a town of their own with a mosque and many local people who freely mixed with Berber Muslims ended up embracing Islam.
9. The Berbers, together with their Muslim Arab counterparts, established Islamic centers and towns that developed into Muslim quarters and settlements. These became areas for further diffusion of Islam through convergence and divergence of the indigenous people.
10. The permanent settlement of the Berbers, who had already converted to Islam also facilitated the spread of the faith. These people settled in areas like Ghana, where they established centers like Wallata, from which they taught the faith to those they came into contact with; who in turn also taught it to the rest.
11. The Berbers and their Almoravid Movement mounted pressure on the Fulanis and subjected them to forceful migrations which dispersed them throughout the vast Sudan Belt. The Muslim Fulani in this movement spread Islam wherever they went or settled.
12. The Berbers launched an attack on the ancient Empire of Ghana in 1076. They seized the capital Kumpi–Saleh and gave its inhabitants options of either accepting to become Muslim converts or face death. Some Soninke inhabitants, who wanted to

save their lives, ended up converting to Islam.

13. In order to strength their governments, the West African kings and chiefs appointed the Muslim Berbers and Arabs clericals in positions of governance as interpreters, ministers or treasurers. These Muslim Arabs and Berbers used their positions to spread Islam.
14. The Muslim Berbers and Arab trader counterparts also organized Trans-Saharan caravans into Ghana. It was thus those people along the trade routes down to the forest zone of the Ghana Kingdom that first adopted Islam from the Muslim Berbers and Arab traders.
15. The leaders of the Old Kingdom of Ghana offered a special section of the capital Kumbi - Saleh to the Muslim Berbers and Arab traders. It was from this section that the traders based to conduct their business as they spread Islam through interaction with the local community.
16. Some Muslim Berbers acted as voluntary and volunteer missionaries, who preached and taught Islam using clerical sheikhs among them. Though these sheikhs were essentially traders, they could spare sometime off their business to teach Islam.
17. Many Berber Muslims became middlemen between the Muslim Arab traders and the gold and ivory producers of Ghana. This brought the Ghanians to interact with the Berbers who had already become Muslims whom they influenced to Islam.
18. Many of the Muslim Berbers who permanently settled in West Africa, especially in Ghana, intermarried with the local West African people. This increased the Muslim population in places where they stayed as many relatives of the women married to the Berber Muslims left their home areas to come and settle among the in-laws. Thus, many in-laws ended up converting to Islam.
19. Many of the Muslim Berbers intermarried with the local West African people. This increased the Muslim population in places where they stayed as children born out of such marriages adopted the faith of their Muslim fathers.
20. The Muslim Berbers established settlements along the Trans-Saharan routes which with the passage of time became trading centres. The local West African people who moved to these centres were either preached to or were impressed by the Berber ways of life; like dressing code, morals and the spirit of Islamic and universal brotherhood. All these influenced the local Africans to convert to Islam.
21. The Berbers founded many important trading posts which later developed into big towns. They included Audaghost and Walata. Africans who converged in these towns were preached to and indeed many of them converted to Islam; and when they diverged from the towns, they carried the message of Islam to whenever they went.
22. The Muslim Berber traders established and put up several mosques which boosted the spread of Islam. The Berbers put an Imaam in each mosque to teacher people the basics of Islam and the call for prayers was always made as loud as possible. This increased the Islamic awareness in West Africa.



## THE ROLE OF THE FULANI IN THE ISLAMISATION OF WEST AFRICA

**Question:** Examine the role played the Fulani in the spread of Islam in West Africa.

The Fulani are said to have originated from Futa-Toro in the present day Senegal around the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. They were largely pastoralists and used to move from one area to another in search of pasture and water for their animals.

It was said that at one time in their movement, they came into contact with the Muslim Berbers from the north who influenced them to change their lifestyles to emulate the Berbers; and thus many of them converted to Islam.

1. These converted Fulani pastoralists helped in the spread of Islam, in that, whenever they went, they took Islamic influence with them, and thus taught it to people they associated and interacted with.
2. With the passage of time, due to external and internal pressure and their subsequent movements, the Fulani broke into two groups; the first group remained pastoralist another group was the Sedentary Fulani.
3. The Sedentary Fulani were generally better educated as individuals, more sophisticated as politicians and they became Muslims than the pastoral Fulani. These helped much to teach Islam to many people of West Africa.
4. The Sedentary Fulani spread over the Western Sudan region in the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century; and because they were better educated as individuals and staunch believers in Islam, they took with them books on Islamic Law and Theology, which they used to teach Islam the people of the area they went.
5. The Sedentary Fulani always provided the required political and military leadership for any resistance encountered by the Fulani in general. This helped the Fulani to win many battle against the pagan Hausa people, which leveled the ground for the rapid spread of Islam in Hausaland.
6. By the time the Fulani reached Hausaland, Islam had already been introduced a century earlier by the Wangaraawa traders. However, the Hausa mixed Islam with African Traditional religion. So, the arrival of the Fulani who had become Muslims, helped to reduce on the blend of beliefs; and Islam dominated the area.
7. In Hausa land, the Fulani made scholarly contacts with North African scholars and learning centers in Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. These scholarly contacts facilitated the arrival of many Muslim scholars in Hausaland, who helped propagate Islam.
8. The Fulani influenced many West African rulers and leaders to invite Muslim scholars from North Africa to come and write for them formal Islamic laws that helped in the governance of their government.
9. The Fulani also persuaded scholars from Timbuktu always make a stop-over in Hausaland whenever they were coming back from pilgrimage to Mecca. The scholars accepted and they flocked many Hausa states where they taught Islam.
10. The Fulani mounted too much pressure on West African leaders in Empires like Mali,

Songhai and many others to embrace Islam. These leaders became vigilant in professing and fostering Islam. Thus, by second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, many African leaders had become Muslims.

11. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jihad Movements were led and influenced by the people of the Fulani origin; as such, the Jihads came to be known as the Fulani Jihads. The Islamic governments that were established after the success of these Jihads were all manned by the Fulani. These Jihads saved Islam from decadence through reformation.
12. The Fulani planned, organized and led to the commonly known 19<sup>th</sup> Century West Africa Jihads against the Pagan Hausa leaders. The activities of the Fulani against the pagans in Hausa helped very much in propagation, purification and strengthening of Islam in West Africa region.
13. With the passage of the time of the Fulani occupation of West Africa, they became conquerors and rulers of their former hosts like the Hausa, racially and culturally. The Fulani then used their good position to facilitate the spread of Islam in West Africa.
14. The Fulani strictly adhered to Islamic values and teachings; therefore, as staunch Muslims, they kept the spirit of Islam high in Western Sudan. Indeed one of the reasons why the Fulani launched the 19<sup>th</sup> century Jihads was to propagate, purify and strengthen Islam in West Africa.
15. The Fulani were also influenced by traders who had passed Islam onto them. The Fulani being pastoralist and nomadic, always on the move, took Islam to other areas where they went.
16. The Berbers, and their Almoravid Movement, mounted pressure on the Fulani's and subjected them to forceful migration, which dispersed them throughout the vast Sudan Belt. The Muslim Fulani in this movement helped to spread Islam wherever they went or settled.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **ISLAM AND THE OLD POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS OF WEST AFRICA.**

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Ancient Empire of Ghana Empire was several hundred kilometers northwest of the modern Republic of Ghana. It was one of the most important and certainly the best known of the early West African Iron Age states.

The principal people and founder of the Ancient Empire of Ghana were the Soninke who were a branch of the Mande- speaking people.

The original name of Ghana was Wagadu; and the word Ghana was originally used as the title of the King. It meant a war chief. The capital of Ghana was Kumbi–Saleh.

Kumbi-Saleh was composed of two towns lying about six miles apart. One was known as Al-Ghaba (the forest) because of a very thick bush that looked like a forest which surrounded that town. This was the seat of government and the king.

The second section was the Muslim section and this was where the Muslim population lived and where the most Arab Muslim traders conducted the business.

#### **INTRODUCTION AND SPREAD IF ISLAM IN THE ANCIENT EMPIRE OF GHANA**

**Question:**     **Examine the factors that facilitated the spread of Islam in the ancient Empire of Ghana.**

The Empire of Ghana is said to have started in the Fourth Century A.D though the introduction of Islam in this Empire is not clearly known. What is known, however, is that by the Eighth Century, Islam had already been introduced in the region.

1.     Islam is said to have started extending its influence into Ghana by 700AD being introduced by Arab and Berber traders who visited the region for the Purpose of trade. They were welcomed by the Soninke leaders of Ghana and soon Islam was passed on to both leaders and their subjects.
2.     Islam is thought to have reached Ghana through trade activities, using the two major existing trade routes of the Trans-Saharan Trade; that is, the western route linking the Niger and Senegal Rivers to Morocco; and the Central route linking Niger bend and Lake Chad with Tunisia and Tripoli.
3.     Islam in this region was spread mainly by indigenous people through their personal contact with those who had already adopted it from the Berbers and Arab traders. It was manily those along the Trans-Saharan routes down the forest zone that were the first to adopt Islam.
4.     The existence of tradable goods, more so gold attracted many more Muslim traders to Ghana Consequently, the administrators of Ghana offered a special section of the capital Kumbi- Saleh where the Muslim population lived and conducted their

business as they spread Islam through interaction with the local community.

5. The progress of trade brought in more Arab traders and Berbers who increased the Islamic awareness among the populace. These Muslims were welcomed by the Emperor of Ghana, who though was not a Muslim, allowed them to build a town of their own with a mosque; and many local people freely mixed with the Arab traders who influenced them to Islam.
6. As more Muslim traders flocked the empire, they founded important trading posts which later developed into big towns like Audaghost and Watata. Several mosques were put up which boosted Islam. Each mosque had its Imaam, the call for prayers were heard and the Qur'an was recited.
7. In the Islamic centers or towns that developed from trading posts, the traders put up special Muslim quarters and settlements, which were meant exclusively for Muslims. These became areas for further diffusion of Islam into Ghana through convergence and divergence activities of both Muslim traders and the indigenous people of Ghana after interaction.
8. The traders in Islamic towns were allowed full liberty to practice and propagate their religion freely while mixing with the local people. Through this peaceful atmosphere in such towns, the Soninke people adopted the Islamic faith. The Soninke, in turn passed on Islam to the neighbouring tribes with whom they traded.
9. Some of the Muslim traders in Ghana acted as volunteer missionaries who preached and taught Islam using the clerical sheikhs among them. Though sheikhs were essentially traders, they could spare some time off their business to teach Islam.
10. As trade boomed in Ghana and as Muslim Arab traders from the Muslim world moved in and out of Ghana, more learned men in the field of Islamic disciplines came up as voluntary Muslims missionaries. These were also helpful in the spread of Islam through teaching and reciting the Qur'an among other activities.
11. Although a great number of the Soninke embraced Islam, their king did not and indeed remained pagans. This perhaps explains why the Almoravids invaded the king of Ghana. The Almoravids were not happy with Ghana's persistent pagan practices by its kings; yet a good number of the inhabitants were Muslims. Thus, the Almoravids attack, though later led to the collapse of Ghana helped to strengthen Islam in the area.
12. In spite of the king's attachment to their traditional religions, the king of Ghana allowed complete freedom of worship to the incoming Arab Muslims. The kings went ahead and provided a mosque in their own part of the city. From such a mosque, the propagation of Islam began.
13. Ghana was a centralized empire headed by an elected king from the line of the Soninke. The king was responsible for organizing trade and for maintenance of good relations with the Saharan traders, who also formed the king's advisory council. These used their positions to spread Islam.
14. Another factor that facilitated the spread of Islam in Ghana was its sound economy where most of its revenue was from her participation in Trans-Saharan Trade. The



people of Ghana directly involved in the trade of Gold with North African Arabs and Berbers. These set up Islamic trading towns; like Sijilmasa, from where Islam got to be spread.

15. The invasion of the Almoravids, a fanatic Muslim group, was another factor for the spread of Islam in the Ancient Empire of Ghana. The inhabitants of the empire were given two options of either accepting Islam or be killed. So, some Soninke who wanted to save their lives, converted to Islam.
16. With the passing years of the presence of Muslim traders in Ghana, several chiefs converted to Islam. Many of them desired to belong to the larger body of the political environment, which was Islamic in nature and where they hoped to benefit politically and economically. These chiefs, in turn influenced people that worked or served under them to become Muslims.
17. In its expansion engagements, Ghana conquered the Berbers and Arab Muslim town of Audaghost and added it to its territory. The Muslims therein interacted with the indigenous people of Ghana and furthered the spread of Islam.
18. To strengthen his government and with the presence of Muslim traders, the king of Ghana used such traders in positions of governance as interpreters, ministers or treasurers. These Muslim Arab traders used such positions to spread Islam.

## **THE ROLE OF TRADE IN THE ISLAMISATION OF GHANA**

**Question:** Discuss the role of trade in the spread of Islam in the old kingdom of Ghana.

The Old Kingdom of Ghana came into existence as an empire around the Fourth century being founded by a group of people called the Soninke.

Islam is said to have started extending its influence into Ghana around 700AD, introduced by Arab and Berbers traders, who visited the area for the purpose of trade. Indeed trade played a major role in the spread of Islam in the Empire of Ghana.

1. The Muslim Berbers and Arab traders organized trans- Saharan caravans into Ghana. It was thus those people along the trade routes down to the forest zone of the Ghana Empire that first adopted Islam from the Muslim Berbers and Arab traders.
2. As Muslim Berbers and Arab traders reached the Empire of Ghana, they were welcomed by the leaders of Ghana. This hospitality shown to the traders helped them to pass on Islam to both leaders and the subjects; more so to the indigenous people through their personal contacts.
3. The existence of tradable goods and commodities more so gold in Ghana attracted many Muslim traders who interacted with the local indigenous people whom they slowly influenced to Islam.
4. The leaders of the Old Kingdom of Ghana offered a special section of the capital Kumbi-Saleh to the Muslim Berbers and Arab traders. It was from this section of Kumbi-Saleh that the traders lived and based to conduct their business as they spread Islam through interaction with the local community.

5. The progress of trade brought in more Muslim Arab traders who increased the Islamic awareness in the area by establishing Islamic facilities like mosques. Many local people freely mixed with the traders who influenced them to Islam.
6. The Trans-Saharan Trade brought in merchants of Berbers stock who settled permanently in some parts of Ghana. Several Muslim settlements and villages were set up which became areas for further diffusion of Islam into Ghana.
7. As more Muslim traders flocked the empire, they founded important trading posts which later developed into bigger towns like Audaghost and Walata. Several mosques were put up which boosted the spread of Islam.
8. Some of the Muslim traders in Ghana acted as voluntary missionaries, who preached and taught Islam using the clerical sheikhs among them. Though these sheikhs were essentially traders, they could spare some time off their business to teach Islam.
9. As trade boomed in Ghana and as Muslim Arab traders from the Muslim world moved in and out of Ghana, more learned men in the field of Islamic discipline came up as voluntary Muslim missionaries. These were very helpful in the spread of Islam through teaching and reciting the Qur'an.
10. With passing years of the presence of Muslim traders in Ghana, many chiefs converted to Islam as they desired to belong to the larger body of political and economic environment, which was Islamic in nature. These chiefs, in turn, influenced people that worked or served under them to become Muslims.
11. To strengthen the government, the kings of Ghana took advantage of the presence to learned Muslim traders, as the kings used them as interpreters, ministers and treasurers. These learned Muslim traders used their positions to spread Islam among the people of Ghana.
12. Many people of Ghana became middlemen between the Berbers and Arabs traders and the gold and ivory producers of Ghana. This brought the Ghanaians to interact with the Berbers, who had already become Muslims; and the Muslim Arab traders. These attracted the Ghanaians to Islam.
13. Trade led to the growth and development of Ghana as a commercial empire. Ghana ensured safety and security of traders. The Ghana rulers also guaranteed absolute freedom of worship to the incoming Muslim Berbers and Arabs. This encouraged the coming Muslim Merchants who helped much in the spread of Islam in Ghana.
14. Trade generated wealth for the chiefs and kings of Ghana. The chiefs who had become Muslims became rich and prominent. They used such wealth to construct Islamic infrastructures like Quranic schools and mosques. These helped to propagate Islam.
15. Many of the Muslim Berbers and Arab traders who permanently settled in Ghana intermarried with the local Soninke People which increased the Muslim population in places where they stayed as many relatives of the women married to Muslim traders left their home areas to come and settle among the in laws. Hence, many ended up being influenced to Islam.

16. The prosperity of trade in Ghana led to the invasion of the Empire by the Almoravid Movement. The Almoravid, though were politically and economically motivated, helped to spread Islam in Ghana as they gave the people they came into contact with two options of either converting to Islam or face death. Those who feared death ended up converting to Islam.
17. The over concentration of the Arab and Berber Muslims on trade, on the other hand, retarded the spread of Islam in the old kingdom of Ghana. For instance, the involvement of the Arab and Berber Muslims in slave trade scared many people away from them. Thus Islam was not spread.
18. The Muslim Arab traders and their Berbers counterparts limited their operations to areas where there were tradable goods and commodities. Therefore, the areas without such commodities remained alien to the influence of Islam.
19. The lucrative trade in the Empire of Ghana and the subsequent empires attracted European imperialist who became a manace to Islam. The European shifted the trade activities to the West Coast of Africa; thus Ghana lost its status as commercial Islamic Empire.
20. Through trade and the desire to provide security to the traders, dangerous weapons like guns were introduced in Ghana. These facilitated intertribal wars; and eventually led to the collapse of Ghana. For instance, the people of Mali fought and conquered Ghana around 1240AD to establish the Mali Kingdom.

# THE ALMORAVID MOVEMENT

## ORIGIN AND BACKGROUND OF THE ALMORAVID MOVEMENT

**Question:** Examine the origin of the Almoravid movement

The Almoravid Movement was a confederation started by the nomadic Saharan Berber tribes of the Sanhaja Confederation in Western Sudan consisting of the Lemtuna, Goddala and Massuja people. This confederation sprang up in Sahara Desert during the Eleventh Century, around 1050 and survived up to 1145 AD.

It happened that, in the Eleventh century, a Lemtuna leader called Tarsina went to Mecca for pilgrimage. On coming back, Tarsina declared a Jihad for vigorous propagation of Islam among the pagan cultivators along River Senegal, but he was killed in the first year of his struggle.

Tarsina was succeeded by Yahya, who also went for pilgrimage. On his return, he brought with him one North African preacher called Abdallah bin Yasin, who preached Islam among the Goddala though with little success to his endeavours.

On the death of Yahya, the Goddala turned firmly against Abdallah, who decided to retire to a fortified retreat; called Ribaath in Arabic. This was on an island said to have been on the mouth of the Senegal River and operated from there.

This time round, Abdallah bin Yasin vowed to come up with a more strategic plan for the pagan Goddala people. It was on this island that Abdallah started recruiting courageous Muslims who were sent out to preach Islam among the West African tribes.

These men of 'Ribaath' led by Abdallah bin Yasin and his discipline came to be called 'The people of the Hermitage' or '**Al- Murabitun**' and were later referred to as **Almoravids** by the European when they came to West Africa.

Abdallah and his men felt that the way Islam was being practiced in the already islamised states of Maghrib, North and West Africa and Spain was not in accordance with Sharia in administering their state affairs. They complained that the adulterous people were not killed by stoning and thieves were not amputated; in fact, they believed that people who were against the Sharia were given light sentences.

Abdallah, thus, wanted to purify Islam of infidelity and to promote moral values in society by strictly enforcing the Sharia based on the Holy Qur'an. They also wanted to spread Islam in areas where it had never existed before and to those areas that were occupied by the people they referred to as infidels.

Abdallah and his men also aimed at controlling the Trans-Saharan Trade; thus the movement was based on a mixture of religious sentiments and economic consideration.

It was said that in their movement, peaceful methods failed to yield results that Abdallah and his men, then launched an open war. This was because of the persistent exercise of paganism in the region; more so in the neighbouring area of Ghana Kingdom.

The Almoravids established a dynasty which linked the North and West Africa and facilitated the spread of Islam in most parts of West Africa; the kingdom of Ghana inclusive.

The Jihad by the Almoravids (Al-Murabitun) was very successful and soon the Almoravids controlled all the Western Sahara including the two terminals of the Caravan routes, Sijilmasa and Audaghast. Audaghast had at one time been conquered from the Berbers by Ancient Ghana Empire.

At its climax, the Almoravid Movement split into two; one branch pushed northwards to Morocco and Spain and the other branch turned to Western Sudan for vigorous activities of conquest. In fact, they caused the collapse of the ancient kingdom of Ghana which they conquered in 1076 AD.

Nevertheless, the Almoravids were later conquered by people of Mali, who incorporated the former territories of Ghana Empire and the lands of Susu people into the growing Empire for Mali around the year 1240.

## **FACTORS FOR THE EMERGENCE OF THE ALMORAVID MOVEMENT**

**Question:** Explain the factors that influenced the emergence of the Almoravid movement in West Africa.

The Almoravid (Al-Murabitun) Movement was started by the nomadic Saharab Berber tribes belonging to the Sanhaja Confederation that sprang up in Sahara Desert during the Eleventh Century around 1050. The Sanhaja confederation consisted of Lemtuna, Goddala and Massufa people.

1. The Almoravid Movement came as a result of one of the leaders of the Sanhaja confederation called Tarsina going for pilgrimage to Mecca. Tarsina was greatly influenced by the way Islam was practiced by the pilgrims that when he returned home, he embarked on a vigorous propagation of Islam that resulted into the formation of the Movement.
2. The Almoravids started their movement to enforce Islamic practice. They felt that the way Islam was being practiced in the already Islamised states, especially in West Africa was not according to Sharia in administering their states.
3. The Almoravids also started their movement in order to purify Islam of infidelity and to promote moral values in the society by strictly enforcing the Sharia Law based on the Holy Qur'an and the teaching of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H).
4. The Almoravids also had a desire of spreading Islam in areas where it had never existed before and to those areas that were occupied by the people they referred to as infidels or non-believers.
5. The Almoravids were inspired by the religious, literary and military training they received while they were still in the Ribaats. They wanted to exercise and put what they had learnt in the Ribaats in practice; thus emerging out with the Movement.
6. There was presence of charismatic and able leadership within the Almoravid ranks. Leaders like Abdallah bin Yasin, Yahyah Ibn Ibrahim, Yusuf bin Tashfin were able to mobilize wide support from a number of Muslim areas. With this support, the Movement started.
7. The Almoravids also got distant foreign support from Arab states. Many Arab

Muslims from Baghdad and Egypt contributed to the cause of the Almoravids morally, materially and otherwise, which subsequently influenced the emergence of the movement.

8. There was also the threat of Christianity; which Christians wanted to repossess the areas that the Muslims had conquered from them. Such areas included Spain. So, the need to overcome the threat of Christianity and do away with their dominance, led to the emergence of the Almoravid Movement.
9. There was also a need to reform Islam. Many people, who had converted to Islam, especially in the Kingdom of Ghana, were also practicing Paganism alongside Islamic faith. The Almoravids who by then were being driven by religious zeal moved in to stop the prosperity of paganism by launching the Almoravid Movement.
10. The Almoravids laboured economic motives and they wished to realize them by capturing the Trans-Saharan Trade system and its center. Thus, the desire to have control over Trans-Saharan Trade inspired them to create the Movement.
11. The Almoravids were also driven by political motives to form the Movement. They wanted to put up a government, which would dominate events in the region. This they hoped to achieve by launching the Movement that would help them to do away with the political dominance of the Soninke of Ghana.

## **COURSE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ALMORAVID MOVEMENT**

**Question:** Explain the course and development of the Almoravid Movement (Al-Murabitun)

After its introduction in Ghana, Islam did not have an immediate influence on the peoples of the region. Its spread and development was indeed very slow.

It was, however, during the 11<sup>th</sup> Century that the Islamic influence was seriously felt after the invasion of the revolutionary movement of the Almoravids (Al-Murabitun) that swept across the vast Ancient Empire of Ghana and others such as Mali, Hausa states and Songhai.

The Almoravids came to limelight in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, that is, around 1050 and survived up to 1147 when it finally collapsed. The Almoravids established a dynasty, which linked the North and West Africa and facilitated the spread of Islam in many parts of West Africa; Ghana inclusive.

The Almoravid Movement came as a result of the preaching of Abdallah Ibn Yasin, a strict Muslim, who aimed at purifying Islam of infidelity, and also spreading it in areas where it had never existed before.

Ibn Yasin had established himself on an island on the Senegal River and preached a religious war against paganism. It is said, in their movements, peaceful methods had failed to yield result, as there was persistent exercise of paganism in the region more so in the neighbouring area of Ghana Kingdom. Abdallah and his men therefore decided to launch an open war.

The Almoravids combined both religious and military fervor in the advancement of Islam. To

them, force was employed by declaring a Jihad to whoever failed to follow and respect the teaching of Islam. This case was seen in Ghana when they attacked the pagan king.

The followers or disciples of this movement were greatly inspired by the teachings of the great teachers at the Ribaats (monastery) learning centers on an Island on River Senegal.

While in the Ribaats, the disciples received both military instructions and religious teaching. It was from here that they spread to other parts of West Africa and influenced others to convert to Islam.

In 1054 AD, the Almoravids, led by their spiritual leader Abdallah bin Yasin and their supreme Military commander Yahya captured the town of Audaghast from the Soninke rulers of Ancient Ghana. This town lay about 200 miles northwest of Kumbi –Saleh and it was a major source of conflict between the Soninke ruler of Ancient Ghana and the Berber of the Sahara Desert.

Gradually, Abdallah Ibn Yasin brought the Berber communities of the Western hands and his authority. At the same time, his disciples began a campaign of converting the rulers of those states in far Western Africa especially in Futa Toro.

In 1056, the Almoravids moved northwards into Morocco and captured the great city of Sijilmasa, the main northern trading center for West African Gold. From there, they went further north, conquering the rest of Morocco and part of Spain.

One group of the Almoravid Movement moved and invaded the empire of Ghana. Its leader Abubakr Ibn Umar put himself at the head of the Berber people and made an alliance with the Tekrur people who assisted him to wage a war against Ghana.

In 1069 AD Abubakr Ibn Umar established the Almoravid Dynasty which rendered a great service in the name of propagating Islam in Spain and other parts of the Sahara and greatly disseminated Islam in the Western Sudan region.

In the 1076 AD, the Almoravids launched another attack on the ancient Empire of Ghana. This time, they attacked and seized the capita Kumbi-Saleh. They also completely destroyed it in addition to giving its inhabitants options of either accepting to become Muslim converts and save their lives or refuse to do so and face death.

Some Soninke who wanted to save their lives converted to Islam; and this was the first time that forced islamisation was used on the people of the Ancient empire of Ghana. Those who refused to be islamised were killed by the Almoravids and the rest escaped into exile to the neighbouring states. The entire empire of Ghana was, thus captured by the Almoravids. The Berber Muslim leader, therefore, replaced the Soninke king as the ruler of Ancient Ghana.

Hence, the period between 1076 and 1087 saw the Ancient Ghana being administered by the Muslim Berbers; and in this period, too, the process of Islamisation was aggressively promoted.

However, in 1087 AD, the Soninke indigenous people organized a successful rebellion against the Berbers. They fought and defeated the Almoravids and also killed their king Abukbkr Ibn Umar. The Berbers were driven about of Ghana and the Soninke regained their independence.

This takeover, however, was a short period of political autonomy for the Soninke as the Successor of Abubakr Ibn Umar- his cousin Yusuf bin Tashfin - the second ruler of the Almoravid Dynasty, relentlessly carried the movement forward. He did his utmost in converting many pagan natives of the Sudan in Senegal and Niger to Islam.

During this period of the Berber rule, the Soninke people lost touch with the tributary states; as such states started challenging the Soninke authority. This in the long run led to the collapse and downfall of the Ancient Empire of Ghana.

Nevertheless, the empire later came under control of the Susu people who lived to the south of Ghana. In course of time, the Susu were also conquered by the people of Mali, who incorporated the former territories of Ghana empire and the Susu lands into the growing Empire of Mali around the year 1240 AD. This, therefore, marked the end the Almoravid Movement in West Africa.

## **FEATURES OF THE ALMORAVIDS MOVEMENT**

**Question:** Explain the features of the Almoravids in West Africa.

1. They greatly contributed to the spread of Islam in West Africa, more so in the ancient kingdom of Ghana by helping reduce on rampant pagans practice in some areas of Ghana.
2. During their activities, they recruited Muslim clerical trading classes, which preached and spread Islam as they traded and at the same time as conquests are carried out.
3. The Almoravids, while still in the Ribaath (monastery) on an Island on River Senegal, received religious and literary training. Indeed, they used the two aspects coupled with military skills to spread Islam in several areas of West Africa.
4. The Almoravids mode of work was based on a monastery through, which they got information and learning. They were later told to get out, act peacefully first and then apply force where they encountered danger.
5. The Organization system of the Almoravid Movement was largely based on Islamic principles of the Qur'an and Hadith, though in some areas they were ruthless.
6. Though they had some weaknesses, the Almoravids emphasized the concept of Tawheed; that is, the unity of God – Allah and practice of the nature and pure worship of God.
7. The Almoravids had an organized political administrative, social and economic order which was headed by a common leader in their midst. For instance, when they captured Ghana, they made the Berber Muslims as leaders to replace the Soninke kings.
8. The Almoravids used the 'Ribaath' system, which in the early days of their operation meant the act of dedicating oneself to the holy war and frontier defence. Yet among the Sufis, it meant a place in which a man confines himself for purpose of worship.
9. The Almoravids harboured economic motives and they wished to realize them by capturing the Trans-Saharan trade system and its centers.



10. The Almoravids wished to conquer people and subject them to paying tributes or taxes. This helped to boost their economic base in Western Sudan.
11. The Almoravids had political motives. These were geared at doing away with the political dominance the Soninke had in Ghana.
12. The Almoravids established fortified retreats (Ribaats) in isolated places, which made them feel secure to operate. This enabled them to fulfill their desires.

## **ROLE OF THE ALMORAVIDS IN THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA.**

**Question: Assess the contribution of the Almoravid Movement to the development and spread of Islam in West Africa.**

1. The Movement succeeded in reforming Islam in many parts of North and West Africa. They established monasteries (Ribaats) which became centers of learning and Propagation of Islam. As a result of the Almoravids, therefore, Islam was purified and strong emphasis was put on the observation of Islamic laws.
2. Since the Almoravids strictly followed Sufi doctrines, the Movement played an important role in spreading Sufi practices in the Maghrib and some parts of West Africa. As a result of their preaching, many people left their homes and went to live a life of seclusion in the monastery (Ribaats).
3. The Movement succeeded in capturing two major trading centres in Trans-Saharan Trade, Audaghost and Sijilmasa, which greatly facilitated the spread of Islam. These two centers had declined as commercial centers and centers of Islamic culture and learning. The Almoravids rejuvenated them to become centres of Islamic learning and culture.
4. The Almoravids contributed to the enhancement of the Maghrib culture by introduction of Islamic culture from the North. Under the Almoravids rule, Spain was reconnected to the Maghrib; thus opening the way to the new influence to North Africa, especially in the field of Art and architecture.
5. The Almoravid Movement succeeded in establishing a dynasty, which was Islamic in nature and the whole area of jurisdiction extended as far as Ghana Kingdom in the south.
6. It was the Almoravids who saved the Muslims of Spain at the time when they were threatened by Christian rules. The Christians had taken advantage of the weak leadership to overrun Spain.
7. The Almoravids successfully overran the Kingdom of Ghana, whose rulers had encouraged animism and other pagan activities. The entire empire of Ghana was, thus, captured by the Almoravids and Muslim Berber leaders were installed. In this period, the process of Islamisation was aggressively promoted.
8. As a result of the Almoravid activities several Muslim states emerged in the region of Western Sudan and such Muslim states included Mali under Mansa Musa, Songholi under Askia Muhammad Toure and much later, the Mandinka under Samori Toure.

9. The Almoravids improved on education in various areas through establishing Qur'anic schools, mosques and Islamic learning centers. In these centers, Islamic knowledge was heavily taught. For instance, they established a university at Timbuktu.
10. The Almoravids crushed the enemies of Islam through collaboration with other Muslims in the Muslim world. For instance, King Alfonso VI of Spain, who had captured a number of Muslim states, was defeated by this Movement when they collaborated with the Umayyads in Spain led by Abdul Rahman al-Dakhir.
11. The Almoravids maintained Islamic principles, which resulted in massive conversion of people to Islam; and in some areas, the nominal Muslims were brought back to the proper folds of Islam.
12. They also provided West Africa with Islamic sensitivity and hence prepared it for the future upheavals and movements; like the 19<sup>th</sup> century Jihads which did a lot to spread, purify and strengthen Islam in West Africa.
13. The Almoravids discouraged slave trade and all other forms of oppression in the areas they conquered or captured. This brought about sanity in the area that were affected by slavery.
14. They also created a peaceful atmosphere for the spread of Islam in West and North African Region. This was done by removing all those obstacles that hindered the spread of Islam, like slave trade.
15. They greatly participated in Trans-Saharan trade which took them to Ghana for the Trade in Gold and other ornaments. In the process of this trade, they spread Islam to the people of Ghana whom they associated with.
16. The Almoravids constructed several mosques and learning centres in areas of their operation; like Timbuktu and Audaghost. These infrastructures and centres helped very much in the teaching and spread of Islam.
17. The Almoravids established monasteries (Ribaats) in many areas around West and North Africa. These monasteries became centre of learning and dissemination of Islam; as they very many people who were trained in these Ribaats were later sent to other areas where they taught Islam.
18. The weakening and destruction of the Ghana Empire by the Almoravids led to the dispersal of some of the Muslim Soninke to other areas as refugees. These were responsible for the spread of Islam to those areas where they sought refuge.
19. The Almoravids promoted international relations and the image of Islam in West Africa by establishing links with distant countries. These were mainly Egypt and Abbasids in Baghdad. The impact of the Abbasids on the Almoravids was so great to the extent that the Almoravids mentioned the names of Abbasid caliphs during Friday sermons.
20. The Almoravids succeeded in capturing and restoring to themselves the two most important trading posts in the Trans-Saharan trade. These were Audaghost and Marrakesh. Through trade activities, they managed to spread Islam since, as

Muslims, wherever they went for trade, they carried the influence of Islam with them.

21. With their increased activities, especially in trade, several towns sprang up in the areas controlled, and Muslim scholars settled therein; and these towns turned out to be vital centres of Islamic learning and culture.
22. By enlarging their operational area in West Africa, the Almoravids helped in extending the scope in which Islam would flourish in terms of spreading.

## **WEAKNESSES OF THE ALMORAVID MOVEMENTS**

**Question:** Explain the weaknesses of the Almoravid movement.

The Almoravid was begun by the desert nomadic Berber tribes of the Sanhaja confederation in Western Sudan around 1050AD. Nevertheless, during the period of their existence, the Almoravids were marked with both failures and weaknesses.

1. The Almoravids doctrines lacked an appeal in the Maghrib. They failed to introduce their doctrines to the nomads in West Africa and also failed to establish effective control over the large area they had conquered.
2. The failure of the Movement was also attributed to their reluctance to integrate other people into the positions of power. This made them unpopular to their subjects; hence also contributing to their decline.
3. The Almoravids did a lot to extend their influence as far as Spain in Europe. However, when they annexed Spain, the Almoravids were captured by Western civilization which affected their ability to defend the state they created as they loved living a luxurious life.
4. The emergency of the Al-Mohad Movement in the Atlas region gave direct challenge to the Almoravid Movement; and with the support of other discontented group, the Al-Mohad Movement became an important factor in the fall of the Almoravids.
5. Some of the Almoravids were trade and pleasure motivated and at times forgot the true Islamic principle; probably that's why the Dynasty they created together with their Movement eventually collapsed.
6. The Almoravids exhibited the weakness of repeating past mistakes; for example after capturing power, some individuals among the Almoravids repractised slave trade; something that tarnished the name of Islam and their image as Muslims. This affected the rapid spread of Islam.
7. The Almoravids also exhibited a weakness of reciting the names of Abbasid caliphs in prayers, a practice which wasn't in accordance with the teachings of Islam.
8. Through their invasions and wars, many inhabitants of West Africa were killed as they attempted to revolt against them. For instance, many Soninke in the Ancient Empire of Ghana who were not Muslims, were either forced to become Muslims or else were put to death.
9. The Almoravids led to the collapse of some states in the Western Sudan region, like the Ancient Empire of Ghana. They also devastated agriculture in the region when

they burnt crops belonging to those people who opposed their movements.

10. The Almoravids also created division among the people of West and North Africa. This made people vulnerable to European colonialism, as Europeans used such divisions to forward their colonialistic tendencies.
11. The Almoravids failed to establish a long lasting dynasty. This was due to the fact that they failed to make a follow up of their conquests; in fact, their activities would not foster the fortunes of Islam for many centuries.
12. The Almoravids never followed up their conquests; and hence left many places uncontrolled. For instance, when they took over the control of Ghana, the Almoravids left the empire under the control of the Susu people. The Susu were later also conquered by people of Mali; hence the Movement and their Dynasty gave way to the rise of the Empire of Mali

## ISLAM IN THE EMPIRE OF MALI

**Question:** Describe the origin of the empire of Mali.

The Empire of Mali started as a small Mandingo state or kingdom known as Kangaba. This kingdom of Kangaba lay along and near the junction of Rivers Sankarani and the Niger. It was located in the southern part of the modern state of Mali.

With the appearance of the Almoravids in the West African region, the fall of the Ancient Empire of Ghana was inevitable. This was because the Almoravid Movement was destructive. The Soninke leaders of Ghana, because weak and now the Mandingo became powerful instead and founded the state of Kangaba.

The Almoravids had left their dynasty under the control of the Susu people. However, with the decline of Ghana, Sumanguru Kante, the king of the Susu conquered what had remained of Ghana around 1203 AD and reduced it to a tributary state of his empire.

Sumanguru also conquered and annexed Kangaba murdered eleven of twelve heirs to the Kangaba throne and spared the twelveth crippled brother who later came to be known as Sundiata Keita. Sumanguru Kante then forced Sundaita into exile.

By 1230, Sundiata had recovered from his deformity and had regained the use of his legs. He returned from exile, and with the band of well wishers and with assistance of local chiefs he fought and defeated Sumanguru in the famous battle of Kirina. Sumanguru Kante was also killed.

Sundaiata Keita then captured the Susu state, annexed what had remained of Ghana and moved his capital to Niami and renamed his state Mali Empire.

In the Mandingo language, which was spoken by the Mandika people, Mali means the king's palace and in the same Language, the king was called Mansa. So, Sundiata Keita became first Mansa of Mali.

Unlike, Ghana the rulers of Mali were all Muslims. The reason being that at the time of

founding of the kingdom, Islam was the major civilization that one could boast of. The Berber Muslims from the north had taught Islam to people like the Soninke and the Mandingo.

By the 10<sup>th</sup> Century, the rulers of Kangaba had converted to Islam. The conversion of the King of Mali (Mali) who later came to be called Al- Muslimani came after witnessing a number of hardships in his realm.

History has it that the Empire of Mali was often at times befallen by calamities such as drought and famine; and people tried to obtain rain through sacrifice to traditional gods. Despite all such efforts, this time, nothing would come forth with the exception of death and distress.

The King then consulted a Shiekh who was a guest in the Empire and who had spent much of his time reciting in the Qur'an and learning Hadith to assist in this predicament. The Sheikh told the king that everything would be possible only if he believed in the Unity of Allah and the Mission of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H).

The Sheikh then taught the king some simple passages of the Qur'an which they recited together in a continuous prayer. Early in the morning, unusual and abundant rains descended from the clouds and engulfed the whole Empire.

The king's faith in Allah was, thus, cemented. He immediately ordered for the destruction of idols, traditional shrines and expulsion of the magicians from his country. It was at that time of happiness that the king got the title of Al- **Musliman**.

Since that time, all the kings of Mali became born with the title of 'Al-Musliman' and all of them embracing Islam. Famous of such kings included Sundiata Keita, Mansa Wali Mansa Khalifah, Abubakar II, Mansa Musa, Mansa Maghah, Sabakhura and Mansa Sulaiman.

The fact that all these kings were Muslims in one way or another fostered the spread of Islam in West Africa - indeed, this accounts for its prosperity and development in the region.

Most of these kings performed pilgrimage to Mecca, which move advertised Mali to the outside world, which also aroused people's interest of visiting the Empire. They established the rule of justice; thus making Mali the most powerful Empire in the region.

At the climax of Mali's existence, the rulers (Mansas) had promoted the teaching of Islam and established many Islamic centers of Learning; famous among them were those at Timpuktu, Goa, Naimi, Jenne, and many others. However, the most important of these kings who made significant impact in the spread of Islam and promotion of Islamic activities in West Africa include Mansa Musa and Mansa Sulaiman.

## THE REIGN OF MANSA KANKAN MUSA (1307- 1337)

**Question:** Assess the role played by Mansa Kankan Musa in the spread of Islam in West Africa.

Mansa Kankan Musa was a grand son of Mansa Sundiata Keita, the founder of the Mali Empire. He is considered to be one of the greatest and most famous kings and rulers of Mali Empire, as he tried his utmost to make the empire of Mali reach its greatest glory and fame worldwide.

Not much is known about his childhood or youth, but what is known is that he grew up in a home that practiced African Traditional Religion. However, when he later became the king of the great Empire of Mali, he devoted so much to the spread and development of Islam; in the following ways

1. Mansa was said to have been a man of virtue, tolerance and a blessed Muslim. He didn't only care for the political and material welfare of his people but also took part in assessing their spiritual side. All these helped to cement the faith of his subject in respect of Islam.
2. He promoted the spread of Islam in his kingdom by making Islam the major and state religion of the empire of Mali. He used Islam as a 'cement' of social order in Mali Empire and at the same time as a religion, which governed relations among the people. This helped to reduce on the influence of traditional practices.
3. Mansa Musa took time to persuade and invite eminent scholars like Abu Ishaq, Ibrahim Al- Sahiih, who were both poets and architects to teach his people the religion of Islam.
4. He also reinforced the spread of Islam by putting up many Qur'anic schools and encouraged many students to attend. He also sent his students abroad, in areas like Morocco, for further instruction in Islamic sciences. When such students returned home as great scholars, there was no doubt, they spread the faith of Islam here and there.
5. In matters of infrastructure, Mansa Musa set up many schools; he even invited a Spanish school and architect called Al-Sahiih to design the mosques of Timbuktu and Gao. This made Timbuktu to become a great center of trade and learning. Mansa Musa is also remembered for establishing the Sankore University.
6. Between 1324 and 1325, Mansa Musa made his famous pilgrimage to Mecca; which pilgrimage was undertaken on a scale unheard of before in history. The wealth and splendour which he displayed on this pilgrimage was the talk of the Middle East and Europe many centuries after. He took with him 60,000 beautifully dressed attendants and 100 camels loaded with gold.
7. Mansa Musa's pilgrimage brought great fame to Mali in Europe and Arabia; and earned Mali a place on the world map. He carried with him a lot of gold, which he gave away to the poor in Egypt and Arabia that caused inflation in the areas he visited.
8. It was also reported that wherever Mansa Musa passed during his pilgrimage,

people there admired the wealth of Mali and wherever he stopped on Friday, he paid for the construction a mosque in the area and he also gave alms to the poor.

9. It is on record that on his way to Mecca in 1324 – 25, Mansa Musa gave all his wealth to the poor, orphans and the disabled, so much that he had to borrow money for his return journey to Mali. Some of the people he had borrowed from accompanied him in order to collect their loans. These never desired to return home, and since many of them were Muslims, they helped to teach the people of Mali Islam.
10. On his return pilgrimage, Mansa Musa brought with him a large number of distinguished Muslim scholars, architects and technical experts who helped in constructing mosques and teaching Islam.
11. After his pilgrimage to Mecca, Mansa Musa devoted most of his time in purifying, strengthening and spreading Islam. He built many mosques and also worked an example by strictly observing the Islamic code of conduct. By doing so, his fame increased in the Muslim world.
12. In the field of education, Mansa Musa encouraged and promoted, Islamic education. From his pilgrimage in Mecca, he came with many scholars who helped in developing Islamic education. They later settled in Mali Empire and helped to transform Timbuktu into a great centre of learning. Mansa Musa is also remembered for establishing the Sankore University.
13. Mansa Musa made a ruling that all the five daily prayers and Juma prayers be conducted in congregation (Jamah). This greatly increased a sense of brotherhood among his people; and hence creation of Unity. Further still, this act displaced Musa as a pious Muslim and a lover of virtue.
14. Being a pious and devoted Muslim, Mansa Musa was so tolerant to other religious beliefs. In this way, he did not interfere with the non-Muslims in the empire. Thus, he displayed a good example of a religious as well as a political leader in West Africa. This created unity among his people and also attracted many pagans to convert to Islam.
15. Mansa Musa built a very strong standing army for effective security of Mali Empire. With the army, the Empire was well defended and complete security was given to travelers who were in most cases Muslims traders and also to the citizens. With a peaceful environment created by Mansa Musa, the spread of Islam in Mali was like bush fire.
16. In matters of judiciary, Mansa Musa employed judges on merit and instructed them to be fair in their dealings basing on the Qur'an and Hadith in passing their judgments. These judges were handsomely paid so as to avoid corruption. This further cemented the development of Islam in Mali.
17. He centralized the administration of the government with himself as the overall ruler but was assisted by a council of ministers who were largely Muslims. This encouraged the development of Islam in the empire. The ministries must have used their good office to attract others to the house and fold of Islam.
18. Mansa Musa's pilgrimage in 1324 -1325 AD was copied by other West African

people who also wanted to make a name and leave a mark in history. This helped to develop and spread Islam as everything was done in the name and the spirit of the religion.

19. Mansa Musa made attempts to do away with some traditional pagan practices that had polluted Islam. For instance, he put up a limitation to the number of wives one should have at a time. Such a move helped to purify Islam.
20. Mansa Musa boosted religious knowledge and the spread of Islam, by sending students to study abroad; like in Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. Whenever these students returned to Mali, they clarified many issues, which had been misunderstood in the past.
21. Mansa Musa made efforts to ensure that Mali is heard of outside Africa, particularly in the Middle East and Arab world. It was through his diplomatic moves that relations were established with Tunis and Egypt; which relations increased the flow and visits of Arab Muslims to West Africa. These Muslim Arabs helped to further the spread of Islam.
22. Mansa Musa's vigorous Islamic and trade activities enabled the city of Timbuktu to become a convergence and divergence centre for the people of West and North Africa. The more people converged in Timbuktu, the more they learnt Islam; and when they diverged, they spread Islam to many areas of West Africa.

By the time of Mansa Musa's death in 1337, Mali was at the zenith of its power and prosperity. He succeeded in establishing peace, order and prosperity; promoting trade and commerce, purifying and spreading Islam and earning Mali a place on the World map. Most of what he did was admired and cherished many centuries after his death.

### **MANSA MUSA'S WEAKNESSES**

1. Mansa Musa is said to have overexpanded the Empire of Mali which eventually led to problems like lack of effective administration at provincial level especially after his death. This led to the decline of Mali Empire in the subsequent years.
2. Mansa Musa was insensitive to nationalism; like he conquered many states and put them under his control. However, the chiefs in conquered areas were left in charge of their respective areas that led to many uprisings and revolts as they desired to win back their independence.
3. Mansa Musa failed to completely stamp out traditionalism; as traditional beliefs continued to coexist with Islam. Indeed many people of Mali who converted to Islam remained nominal Muslims.
4. Mansa Musa allowed the over-exploitation of Mali resources. He is said to have spent a lot on his pilgrimages which led to the decline of Mali's economy because his subjects also desired to emulate him.
5. He never put up measures that would ensure the continuity of Mali; indeed his death was one of the factors that led to the collapse of the Islamic Empire of Mali.



## THE REIGN OF MANSA SULAIMAN (1341 – 1360)

Mansa Musa died in 1337 after ruling Mali Empire for a period of about 30 years. He was succeeded by Mansa Maghan, who reigned between 1337- 1341. His reign was short lived and almost nothing was registered towards Islam.

Mansa Maghan was succeeded by Mansa Sulaiman, who was described as a competent ruler worthy succeeding Mansa Musa. Mansa Sulaiman reigned between 1341- 1360 A.D. He was Mansa Musa's brother, who even kept the throne when Musa had gone for pilgrimage to Mecca.

Like his brother (Mansa Musa), Mansa Sulaiman was a pious man and did his utmost in the progress and development of Islam in Mali. His contribution could be seen as follows:-

1. He established justice in Mali that was steadily declining especially after the death of Mansa Musa. He always encouraged fair play in the courts of law and his officers were asked to be just to their subjects as taught by the Qur'an and Hadith.
2. He improved security in the Empire as his brother Musa had done. Security and peace had been shuttered after the death of Mansa Musa. This was because after Musa's death and during the reign of Mansa Maghan, the Mossi of Yatenga attacked Mali and burnt down Timbuktu. When Mansa Sulaiman came to the throne, he reorganized the state by building an army; hence peace and security were improved.
3. Racial tolerance was also displayed in Mali during Mansa Sulaiman's reign. Ibn Batutta, while praising the order and racial tolerance in Mali, wrote that people of different background were given much care.
4. Mansa Sulaiman was also a just ruler who showed a lot of mercy to all his people and the foreigners as taught by Islam. This helped to create a peaceful Empire of Mali, where all its inhabitants lived in harmony with each other.
5. Mansa Sulaiman's tolerance and strictness in creating security, attracted people of different backgrounds to Mali. To this, Ibn Batutta said that even foreigners had no fear from robbers or men of justice in Mali. This created a peaceful environment, which culminated into the spread of Islam in Mali.
6. Mansa Sulaiman built more mosques in Mali decorated with minarets and the call for prayers was always made for people to gather for congregational (Jamah) prayers in the mosques as it was done during the reign of his brother Musa. With this, therefore, Mansa Sulaiman kept the flag of Islam in Mali high.
7. Mansa Sulaiman promoted the study of Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) when he invited scholars in the same field to teach his people. He, himself, became a student of Fiqh and the ideas of Imam Malik were taught in Mali under his instructions.
8. Mansa Sulaiman was a financial organizer and always tried to stop the extravagancy of his people and as had been laid by Mansa Musa. His financial policy enabled him to secure some finances that he used to solve domestic problems such as construction of schools and mosques and also paying his officers.
9. He maintained cordial relationship with the Sultan of Morocco by the name of Marivid.

This cemented the sense of Islamic fraternity between the two areas.

10. He established several measures for the administration of justice and the rule of law. As a student of Islamic law, he helped in the development of the Malikite thought and canons of Islamic jurisprudence.
11. He promoted and emphasized Islamic brotherhood in Mali which helped a lot to unite the people of Mali to the conquered peoples around the empire.
12. He promoted the growth of Islamic education by giving jobs to many Muslim scholars. These helped teach Islam at a more advanced level and many people who were either taught or preached to and ended up converting to Islam.
13. Mansa Sulaiman encouraged people of Mali to take on the study of Islamic law to occupy the jobs he had created by establishing sharia courts which required judges, lawyers and prosecutors.
14. Mansa Sulaiman promoted financial organization in the Empire. He emphasized and supervised the payment and distribution of Zakat; yet at the same time taught his people how to invest and how to save from their earnings.
15. Mansa Sulaiman established a very good foreign policy by promoting diplomatic ties with outside states, especially with Sultan of Morocco. This helped in the movement of Muslim scholars from Morocco to Mali with a lot of Islamic materials which promoted Islamic Heritage in Mali.
16. Mansa Sulaiman appointed Muslim scholars and traders to big administrative and political posts. The appointed officers accrued a lot of economic benefits to Mali and also used their offices to advance the cause of Islam.
17. Mansa Sulaiman put great emphasis to the Islamic dress. He improved on the traditional dress (the Agbada) to accommodate the requirements of Islamic code of dressing. Indeed the code of dressing in West Africa today owes its prominence to the role of Mansa Sulaiman.
18. In the field of trade and commerce, Mansa Sulaiman encouraged his subjects to give correct weights and measures. In so doing, trade boomed in Mali as many Muslim traders flocked the Mali, who in turn taught Islam to the locals.
19. He was very tolerant, just and he promoted security and freedom of worship and his administration was characterized by peace, justice and tranquility.

### **MANSA SULAIMAN'S WEAKNESSES**

1. Mansa Sulaiman had accrued a lot of riches from the proceedings of trade; however, with all the facilities at his disposal; he never performed pilgrimage to Mecca and he never encouraged his subjects to do so.
2. Mansa Sulaiman failed to do away with traditional and pagan practices. Paganism continued to exist in Mali; and in fact many Muslims continued to be titular (nominal – in name only).
3. He never put up measures that would ensure the continuity of Mali; indeed his death

was one of the factors that led to the collapse of the Islamic Empire of Mali.

4. During his reign, there was veneration of the ancestral tombs. Graves of respectable figures like that of Mansa Musa became religious places of worship. This was against the teachings of Islam.
5. He never punished those who did not respect the Islamic norms and practices as it was with his brother Musa. For example he modified the Aqbadu wear to accommodate the requirements of the Islamic dress but never enforced it.
6. Mansa Sulaiman led to growth of the traditional religions of the Mandinka. Although he expelled diviners, foretellers and traditional priests from his palace, he allowed their practices at the country side in order for him to gain political support of these traditionalists.
7. Mansa Sulaiman's financial policy of taxation made him fail to control alcoholism in Mali. He only instituted taxes over intoxicants but never abolished them.

### **COLLAPSE OF MALI EMPIRE**

1. The death of Mansa Musa in 1337 marked the beginning of the collapse of Mali Empire. The Empire fell into the hands of weak and incompetent leaders; like Mansa Maghan, who could not shoulder the burden of the Empire.
2. Mansa Musa had kept two Songhai princes in captivity; that is Ali Kalan and Sulaiman Nar. Following Musa's death, they escaped and went to their home area Gao where Ali Kalan proclaimed himself independent and started to work for the downfall of Mali Empire.
3. One king of Mali called Malijata II (1360 – 1374) ruled the empire with great cruelty and did not care for the welfare of the empire. When Ali Kalan declared himself independent, he was greatly supported by the masses at the expense of their empire.
4. Malijata II sold off the gold deposits that were the basis of Mali's economy and revenue. This state of affair crippled the economy of the Empire; and thus, could not finance its projects like wars.
5. The role of the Mossi of Yatenga also accounted for the collapse of Mali Empire. The Mossi attacked Mali and conquered many parts including the northern parts and Timbuktu, which were trade route terminals. With such conquests, Mali began to phase off the map of West Africa.
6. There was disunity among the citizens of Mali on basis of religion. Leaders who came after Mansa Musa allowed Islam to co-exist with traditionalism. This brought about conflicts that held the future of Mali at bay.
7. The rise of nationalism under the banner of vassal states also led to the decline of Mali Empire. Mansa Maghan gave freedom to people. With time, people like the Gao, Wolof and Berbers agitated for self rule, which move compromised the future of Mali Empire.
8. The rise of Songhai Empire under Ali Kalan (Sunni Ali) presented the final blow to the success of Mali. Sunni Ali, through his commanders, like Muhammad Toure attacked

Mali in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century; fought and defeated it. In its place, he established the Songhai Empire.

9. Corruption and extravagancy also dealt a death blow to the existence of Mali. Kings, like Mansa Malijata II, in order to emulate Mansa Musa, made expensive pilgrimages to Mecca and other journeys that drained the state treasury.
10. Mali as an empire lacked a clear system of bringing leaders into power; and this led to outbreak of succession disputes. These disputes were characterized by revolts and uprisings which weakened the political setup of Mali and its collapse was inevitable.
11. Mansa Musa had done a lot to expand Mali Empire far and wide; however, following his death, the empire fell into hands of weak leaders like Mansa Maghan, who could not manage it. In fact, many vassal states like Gao broke off to establish the Songhai Empire.
12. Neglect of the army also accounted for the collapse of Mali Empire. The kings who came after Mansa Musa and Mansa Sulaiman did not cater for the welfare of the army. The army lost morale and was easily defeated by the enemies.
13. Mansa Musa failed to put up strategies which would ensure the continuity of Mali Empire. In fact after his death, the great empire started moving in a reverse gear and although Mansa Sulaiman tried to revive it, his death marked the final collapse of the empire.

## THE EMPIRE OF SONGHAI AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA

**Question:** Examine the events that preceded the rise of the Empire of Songhai as an Islamic state in West Africa.

The empire of Songhai replaced Mali during the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. It started as a small principality of Gao around the Nineth Century on the banks of the Niger and Senegal River.

Gao was and remained part of Mali Empire until 1375 when it finally broke away and declared its independence. It remained a small principality until the coming to the throne of Sunni Ali Kalan, who transformed this small principality of Gao into a powerful Empire of Songhai.

Following the death of Mansa Sulaiman, Mali was attacked by the Tuaregs from the north. The Tuaregs were, however, oppressive and exploitative to the extent that the people of the region longed for a saviour. For instance, the people of Timbuktu extended an invitation to Ali Kalan to come and rescue them.

Ali Kalan launched a series of attacks on several areas in and outside the Niger Delta. In his vigorous activities, and with the support from the local population, he captured Timbuktu; thus, liberating the town from the hostile Tuaregs of the deserts. This became a boost for the progress of Islam in the region.

Ali's real name was Ali Kalan. He organized a nationalistic movement which expelled the

Malian troops from Gao and declared himself the ruler of the independent Gao under the name of Songhai Empire, and he ruled under the title of Suuni – meaning ‘the liberator’. Thus, Ali Kalan became the founder of the Sunni Dynasty in Songhai and also the first ruler of that Dynasty which he ruled as Sunni Ali I

During the reign of Sunni Ali I, through effective teaching, a good number of people in the area converted to Islam. He was the first Muslim ruler of Songhai and he encouraged the spread of Islam in the Empire by contributing towards the construction of mosques and Qur’an schools where Islam was preached and taught.

When Sunni Ali I died in 1464, the main imperial succession of Songhai fell in the hands of the long reign of Sunni Ali II, who ascended to the throne in 1464 and remained the ruler of Songhai until his death in 1492.

Although the ruler was referred to as Sunni Ali, he was a nominal Muslim who did not strictly follow the cardinal pillars of Islam. For instance, he observed the fasting of the Holy month of Ramadhan; he gave contribution to mosques and Qur’anic schools, but the same time, he remained a follower of the traditional religion of Songhai.

Sunni Ali II did this because he knew that his political power partly depended on his position as the head of the traditional religions of Songhai; and since some of his subjects were traditionalists and others were Muslims, he had to win the support of the two groups.

Sunni Ali II, however, after some time, he stopped to advance the cause of Islam during his leadership. He used Islamic religion according to his own dictates and interests of the state. Consequently he was greatly criticized by Muslim scholars for his actions.

Sunni Ali II considered the views of the Muslim scholars a threat to his own authority, which was mainly based on his role as a traditional king. In response, he put up repressive measures and persecuted them.

For instance, using his efficient army, Sunni Ali II attacked Timbuktu in 1468 and massacred the inhabitants of the town especially the Ulamas (Muslim intellectuals) who had opposed his action of fronting the traditional religion. He seemed not to have wanted to be loyal to anybody who was below him; thus, he became a tyrant, ruthless, cruel and ungodly person.

He also fought against the rising force of Islamic pressure from both within his empire and from the surrounding territories whose ruler had become Muslims. Most of the great teachers at the time were from Arabia and they referred Sunni Ali II as a Kharijite (Separator from the Muslims)

Sunni Ali II died in November 1492 under mysterious circumstances probably believed to have occurred as a result of the Niger River when he was returning from a military expedition against the Fulani. He had ruled Songhai for 28 years.

Soon after his death, Sunni Ali II was succeeded by his son Abubakar Dao who ascended to the throne as Sunni Baru. Unlike his father, Sunni Baru refused even to become a protest Muslim and declared himself a stronger follower of the traditional religions of Songhai.

Because of that, the Muslims in Songhai became annoyed; and fearing that they would lose their political power, took power through a coup d’état with the assistance of a Pro-Muslim faction led Muhammad Toure, who was one of Sunni Ali’s trusted general in the army, a

provincial governor and a chief minister.

Muhammad Toure was not a Songhai rather a Soninke belonging to the Toure clan of foreigners. He, therefore, didn't have a legal basis to the throne. He used Islam to win him support for his regime. In fact, his support relied heavily on the Ulama and the Muslim traders of the cities of Timbuktu, Jenne and Gao.

Muhammad was recognized as the new leader; and thus turning Songhai into Islamic Empire. After acquiring power, he added on his name the title "Askia the Great", the he embarked on consolidating his position on the throne.

## **ISLAM DURING THE REIGN OF ASKIA MUHAMMAD TOURE**

**Question: Explain the contribution of Askia Muhammad Toure to the spread of Islam in Songhai Empire.**

Although Askia Muhammad Toure was considered the most outstanding ruler of the Songhai Empire, he himself was not a Songhai rather a Soninke belonging the Toure clan (or clan of Foreigners). He was originally called Muhammad Toure Ibn Abu Baker, only assuming the name "Askia" as a dynastic title, after he acquired power as leader of the great Songhai Empire.

1. His contribution to the Songhai Empire and Islam started before his ascension to power when Sunni Ali II recruited him into the army because of his outstanding military qualities. Toure served the army efficiently and competently and helped to protect Islamic interests at the time Sunni Ali II was terrorizing Muslim.
2. To attain power, Askia Muhammad solicited the support of the masses that saw in him the element of reforming Islam. He then fought and defeated Sunni Barou, who had refused to make a public acceptance of Muslim faith.
3. After consolidating himself in power, Askia Muhammad embarked on the duty of advancing and strengthening the cause of Islam. In fact, right from the start of his leadership, he hated and castigated the practices of traditional religion, more so being mixed with Islam.
4. Askia Muhammad tried to win support and allegiance from the people of Songhai by using Islam as a unifying factor. He invited devoted Muslim scholars from Wallata and Timbuktu his palace and gave them gifts. He appointed many of them as his advisors and courtiers.
5. To remove any doubts about his transformed attitude and strong inclination to Islam, Askia Muhammad made a pilgrimage to Mecca in the 1479. This pilgrimage was very significant as he secured respect and legitimacy for his Dynasty that won himself the title of "Caliph of the Blacks" and thus, became the acknowledged Islamic leaders of the Western Sudan.
6. During this pilgrimage, Askia Muhammad was accompanied by 500 horesemen and 1000 foot soldiers and he took with him 300,000 pieces of gold to meet the expenses of his journey and to give alms to the poor of the cities they passed through.

7. Askia Muhammad used part of the gold he went with to buy land in Cairo where he constructed a hostel for Western Sudanese pilgrims going to and from Mecca.
8. While in Mecca, the Abbasid ruler at the time gave him a sword a turban as well as conferring upon him the title of **"Caliph of Western Sudan."** In addition, he made Askia Muhammad his deputy in the same area.
9. Askia Muhammad used the position conferred upon him to open up links with Arab world from which Muslims and Islam in West Africa benefited. This was through many Muslim scholars and other Arabs of mixed talents flocking West Africa. This facilitated the spread of Islam.
10. The pilgrimage to Mecca also had a positive impact on him as a person; as it enhanced him to a high and respectable position among his people in addition to equipping him with adequate knowledge about Islam. His people gave him the title **"Pilgrimage King,"** which title he used as a basis for his power and promoting Islam.
11. From Mecca, Askia Muhammad came with Muslim scholars, who served the empire not only as scholars but also as administrators; advisors and judges.
12. On his return from Mecca, Askia Muhammad undertook a series of military campaigns to extend the empire and to further the cause of Islam. For instance, he declared a holy war (Jihad) against the Mossi of Yatenga, the pagan Mandigo and Fulani to the West. These jihads helped to strengthen his grip on the southern state.
13. Askia Muhammad was an excellent and shrewd administrator. He altered the existing traditional political system by dividing the empire into provinces, each governed by a governor who was normally an Ullama (Learned Muslim).
14. For easy management and revival of Islam, Askia Muhammad appointed able governors to man the administration of important towns like Taghaza , Jenne , Maccina and Timbuktu. This arrangement helped in the restoration of Islamic discipline and security in the empire.
15. Askia Muhammad made attempts to ensure that Islamic law worked in day-to-day life of Songhai Empire. In this, he requested scholars from North Africa to write for him a treatise in form of Islamic law best for his area. Several copies were then produced and circulated all over the Empire. This treatise was used in matters of administration.
16. In the field of commerce and trade, Askia created a stable and peaceful atmosphere which attracted many traders. He unified and standardized the system of weights and measures based on Qur'anic teachings. Many Arab Muslim traders flocked Songhai without fear of exploitation. The Muslim traders spared some time off their business to teach Islam
17. In the field of Education, Askia Muhammad made positive developments. He encouraged many Muslim scholars to come to his empire, built 150 Qur'anic schools in Timbuktu alone, improved Sankore University and made Timbuktu the center of Islamic scholarship in Western Sudan.
18. Being a pious Muslim, Askia Muhammad made sure that all Muslims in his empire

strictly observed the principles of Islamic practices and duties like fasting, alms giving and performing prayers.

19. He made a ruling to the effect that all women and grown up girls should put on islamically by veiling themselves during their interaction with the public. He began with his own family so as to set a good example to the rest. This move done, the modesty of women was cherished.
20. Askia Muhammad made Songhai both a great intellectual center and a stable Islamic nation by extending financial assistance to men of learning. He also invited teachers of high eminence to come and teach his people.
21. Askia made sure that his governors and lower officers did not impose illegal and oppressive taxes to his people. This, he did because he wanted his people to enjoy peace and to avoid exploitative tendencies which were against the noble teaching of Islam.
22. Askia Muhammad laid a foundation for establishing Sharia Law in West Africa region by supervising the judiciary and making sure that judges were well paid so as for them not to be corrupt. He encouraged them to give judgment according to the laws of the Holy Qur'an.
23. Askia displayed the principle of justice among his people, when he made appointments and promotions of his officers basing on someone's talent and not relation in blood. This he did as a Muslim leader and as taught by the Qur'an and Hadith. This move helped him build a mercenary of central government stronger and more detailed in its work than any known in Western Sudan.
24. In addition to ensuring that no illegal taxes were imposed on any individuals, Askia Muhammad made sure that judges were charged with the duty of carrying out full judgment without discrimination of religion, colour, race, sex etc. In fact they were supposed to follow the Qur'an and Hadith.
25. Askia Muhammad Toure did not only care for the spiritual welfare of himself but also that of his neighbours; like when he invited the powerful king of Mossi in the South of his empire to embrace Islam. Though the king of Mossi rejected the invitation, Askia Muhammad is credited for his efforts towards Islam.
26. Askia Muhammad Toure showed respect to the scholars by offering them wealth in order to ensure their interest towards the spread of Islam. In turn, the scholars also increased their effort in disseminating the faith.
27. Askia Muhammad was very charitable and his open generosity comforted the poor. He also supported other forms of Islamic development in all ways. He greatly supported Muslim projects like erection of Mosques and Qur'anic schools.
28. Askia Muhammad used his own personality to promote Islam. Through being exemplary for the masses to emulate. He did this by exercising both major and minor. Islamic rituals and practices such as prayers, fasting; alms giving and many others.
29. He ended the foreign Shia practices that were being done in the name of Islam.



These included the killing of people and cutting of their bodies. He, thus, emphasized exercise of Islamic orthodoxy

30. Askia Muhammad's administration of justice brought about peace and security for almost everybody. This was enjoyed in almost all parts of the Songhai Empire. Hence, his rule was firm and respected.
31. Askia Muhammad promoted higher education by providing university education in the city of Sankore. Professors and Muslim scholars of higher eminence from North Africa came in to do the work of disseminating knowledge. This drew students from different regions into Songhai Empire.
32. He forbade all innovations from African traditionalism, like bloodsheds; and as such, he established Islam on a pure religious foundation.

However, despite his outstanding contribution to Islam in particular and Songhai Empire in general; Askia Muhammad became blind and physically weak. In 1528, at the age of 70 years, he was disposed by his son Musa who took him and imprisoned him on an Island on River Niger under untold misery.

However, ten years later, in 1538, Askia Muhammad's other son, who was kind to him, delivered his father from imprisonment and took him back to Gao where he died in that same year.

In conclusion, Askia Muhammad Toure's contribution towards Islam, education, political, economic and social unity and stability could not be matched with any other leader in the history of the empire; indeed it won him the title "The Great."

## **CHALLENGES ASKIA MUHAMMAD FACED AS A KING OF SONGHAI EMPIRE**

1. Although Askia Muhammad Toure was considered the most outstanding ruler of the Songhai Empire, he himself was not a Songhai rather a Soninke belonging the Toure clan (or clan of Foreigners). Therefore, he had a challenge of winning the allegiance of the people he was going to rule.
2. He had a challenge of winning the allegiance of the people of Songhai Empire that saw in him the element of reforming Islam. He fought and defeated Sunni Barou, who had refused to make a public acceptance of Muslim faith.
3. After consolidating himself in power, Askia Muhammad faced a challenge of advancing and strengthening the cause of Islam. In fact, right from the start of his leadership, he hated and castigated the practices of traditional religion, more so being mixed with Islam.
4. He also had a challenge of removing any doubts about his transformed attitude and strong inclination to Islam. He invited devoted Muslim scholars from Wallata and Timbuktu to his palace and gave them gifts. He appointed many of them as his advisors and courtiers.
5. He set precedence in Songhai when he made a pilgrimage to Mecca in the 1479. This pilgrimage was very significant as he secured respect and legitimacy for his

Dynasty. He, however, had a challenge of putting up structures to make pilgrims of his empire to undertake the journey. So, he had to buy land in Cairo where he constructed a hostel for Western Sudanese pilgrims going to and from Mecca.

6. Askia Muhammad had a challenge to ensure that Islamic law worked in day-to-day life of Songhai Empire. In this, he requested scholars from North Africa to write for him a treatise in form of Islamic law best for his area.
7. Askia Muhammad faced a challenge of nominal Muslims in his empire. The last kings of Mali Empire had failed to do away with traditional and Pagan practices. In fact, many Muslims remained nominal, practicing Islam alongside their traditional beliefs and Askia Muhammad had to bring them to the proper folds of Islam.
8. Askia Muhammad did not feel at peace in his empire surrounded by Pagan neighbours. So, he declared a holy war (Jihad) against the Mossi of Yatenga, the pagan Mandingo and Fulani to the West. These Jihads helped to strengthen his grip on the southern state.
9. Askia Muhammad Toure did not only care for the spiritual welfare of himself but also that of his neighbours; like when he invited the powerful king of Mossi in the South of his empire to embrace Islam, but the king of Mossi rejected the invitation.
10. Askia Muhammad had a challenge of ending the foreign Shia practices that were being done in the name of Islam. These included the killing of people and cutting of their bodies. He wanted to exercise of Islamic orthodoxy
11. The expulsion of the Moroccan Moors from Spain was also a challenge to Askia Muhammad. With the expulsion, they decided to turn to West Africa where they conquered the Empire of Songhai where they disorganized the political setting of Songhai.
12. Despite his outstanding contribution to Islam in particular and Songhai Empire in general, Askia Muhammad became blind; and thus, he was unable to carry out his duties efficiently and effectively.
13. Askia Muhammad also became physically weak. Indeed, in 1528, at the age of 70 years, he was disposed by his son Musa who took him and imprisoned him on an Island on River Niger under untold misery.
14. Askia Muhammad had spend ten years in prison where he was deposited by his son Musa until later, in 1538, when his other son, who was kind to him, delivered him from imprisonment and took him back to Gao where he died in that same year.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ISLAMIC STAGNATION**

#### **FACTORS THAT LED TO STAGNATION OF ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA**

**Question:** Account for the stagnation of Islam in West Africa in period between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Islamic Stagnation refers to the period when there was a decline in the spread and development of Islam in Western Sudan region.

The period during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries was a time of Islamic stagnation. This was at a time when Islam got a set back after many empires that had an incline on Islam and had worked for the successful spread of Islam collapsed.

1. The period of Islamic stagnation started with the death of Askia Muhammad Toure of the Songhai Empire. After the death of Askia Muhammad, there followed turmoil as people started fighting for the throne. In this situation the spread and development of Islam were compromised.
2. The collapse of the Kingdom of Songhai began a long period of Islam Stagnation. Islam started to move in a reverse gear; this was because there was revival of paganism.
3. When Askia Muhammad Toure died, the Kingdom of Songhai also moved to a collapse and luminous Islamic culture that had subdued almost the entire Western Sudan Region started on a serious journey of decline. It was at this time that paganism revived.
4. The rulers who came after Askia Muhammad did very little to advance the cause of Islam, while others mixed Islam with their traditional beliefs and customs.
5. Following the collapse of Songhai and Mali Empires, also, the regions split into warring small sections and chieftainances, each one of them struggling to maintain its independence by attacking its neighbours. The situation became quite unfavourable that it barred the effective spread of spread.
6. The expulsion of the Moroccan Moors from Spain also led to Islamic Sragnation. With the expulsion, they decided to turn to West Africa where they conquered the Empire of Songhai. However, the newcomers were brutal and disorganized the political setting of Songhai which was Islamic in nature; Islam also had to deteriorate in the process.
7. Islam had spread in West Africa through trade; yet in the period of stagnation' security on trade routes deteriorated; disrupting the movement of goods. This discouraged and kept Arabs away, besides West Africa became a land of warfarers as normad tribes competed for pillaging and levying tolls on caravans. This state of affair also affected the spread of Islam.
8. The period of Islamic stagnation followed the replacement of Muslim kings by pagan chiefs which created an unfavourable climate for the spread of Islam. For instance, in Zaria Jatou (1780- 1802) was a Muslim, but his son Makau was a pagan and demolished the mosques his father had built. During his reign, too, Zaria was captured by the Fulbe expedition, during which many people were completely converted to paganism.
9. During the period between the seventeenth and eighteenth Century, the whole of Western Sudan was hit by Fulbe normads. These people were indifferent and very often hostile to Islam. So, when they took over power especially in Futa Toro, they oppressed the people; so, those who had just converted to Islam or were weak in

faith, had either to give up Islam or become nominal Muslim.

10. Islamic Stagnation was also caused by the outbreak of civil wars in Arabia. Such wars led to loss of contact between the people of West Africa and the rest of the Muslim world; yet it was through such contacts that Islam spread.
11. The resurfacing of small independent segmentary and centralized states also contributed to the stagnation of Islam. These states agitated for their self rule and they were no longer using Islam to unite people of various political backgrounds.
12. The outbreak of civil wars in West Africa also led to Islamic stagnation. The wars were sparked off when the nomadic tribes like the Tuaregs competed for supremacy. The wars made the area insecure; thus, Muslim visitors from North Africa who were responsible for spreading Islam were kept away.
13. The emergence of the Bambara states of Segu and Kaarta also led to Islamic Stagnation. The Bambara states dominated many parts of West Africa which had been predominantly Muslim; and thus the influence of Islam was reduced.
14. The Bambara States also dominated a wide area forcing Islamic centres like Timbuktu and Jenne to pay tribute; hence weakening their economic base and decreasing their influence, yet these were centers for scholars who preached Islam in West Africa region.
15. The collapse of Muslim empires like Mali and Songhai meant that Islam was no longer the unifying factor of many ethnic groups of West Africa. In its place, local religions of African traditionalism rose up; thus, this affected the spirit of Islamic universalism.
16. The collapse of Muslim empires severed the diplomatic relations with the Muslim world in the north like Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt and the independent chieftainances that replaced them did foster the spread and development of Islam.
17. The outbreak of famine and plague in West Africa also contributed to Islamic Stagnation. The two wavers of calamities led to death of many Muslim scholars; yet others left the area to save their lives. This barred the effective spread of Islam.
18. The transition from Middle Ages to Modern times worldwide, affected Islam and thus led to stagnation of Islam. This was because many people in West Africa started looking at Islamic principles as ancient and outdated.
19. The destruction of Muslim Dynasties and empires that had been established by strong Muslims like Askia Muhammad also accounted for Islamic Stagnation. These Dynasties were replaced by states whose leaders mixed Islam with traditional cultures.
20. The collapse of Muslim Empires and Kingdoms brought about insecurity, especially along trade routes. Traveling by people in West Africa and the Muslim visitors from North Africa became insure which discouraged the coming of the Arab traders in West Africa; yet their contact with the local people was instrumental in the development of Islam. The spread of Islam in such an environment, therefore, became too difficult.

21. Islamic Stagnation was also sparked off by development of the Trans-Atlantic Trade. This trade became more profitable than the Trans-Saharan Trade which had benefitted Islam in West Africa. The Muslim Arabs and Berbers turned their attention to Trans-Atlantic Trade and ignored Western Sudan area.
22. The period of Islamic Stagnation followed a period of small chieftainships each struggling to maintain its independence by attacking its neighbours. This situation was quite unfavourable for Islam to propagate smoothly.
23. The fact that in the early days of introducing Islam in West Africa, the faith did not appeal to the people who converted to it, also led to the stagnation of Islam around the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The faith of Islam was not deeprooted into the hearts of the Muslims and thus the majority ended up becoming nominal Muslims.
24. The stagnation of Islam was also brought about by the decline of the Trans-Saharan Trade. Islam had developed with the influence of trade; especially the Trans-Saharan Trade; but when the trade declined due to a number of factors like Moroccan Moor and Fulbe invasions, there had also to be a setback in Islamic influence.

## **IMPACT OF STAGNATION OF ISLAM IN WESTERN SUDAN REGION**

1. Islam had united people of various political backgrounds into one big empire, but with the collapse of Songhai, the small independent segmentary and centralized states that had characterized much of West Africa resurfaced.
2. During this period of stagnation, Islam suffered for it was no longer the unifying factor of many ethnic groups of West Africa. In its place, local religions of Africa traditionalism rose up.
3. During the period of Islamic Stagnation, Islamic faith lost the capacity to challenge Africa ways of life; instead Muslims were absorbed into Africa traditional beliefs and practices.
4. Islamic stagnation brought about insecurity in that traveling by people in West Africa and the Muslim visitors from North Africa became insecure. The spread of Islam in such an environment, therefore, became too difficult.
5. Wars started erupting whereby the nomadic tribes like the Tuaregs competed for supremacy. They destroyed many areas including many Islamic symbols like mosques as well as causing terror to the caravans that moved to and from West Africa.
6. The religious revolution that had been carried out in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries and had oriented the people of West Africa towards Islam declined. People turned to innovations; they had Muslim names but they were not practicing Islam (nominal Muslim).
7. Again, with Islamic stagnation, the ruler stopped seeking advice and counsel of the Muslim scholars and jurists; instead, they sought to accommodate local customs and practices, which were paganism in nature.
8. Islam was no longer established as the state religion and mode of governance. Many

people no longer observed Islamic rituals and many Muslim Dynasties that had been established by strong Muslim personalities like Askia Muhammad were destroyed.

9. Due to the Chaos that characterized the period of stagnation, famine and diseases set in and continued to stagnate Islam. Fields went out of cultivation because of the insuring wars and people were reduced to eating carcasses of dead beasts.
10. With Islamic stagnation, West Africa lost strong attachment to the rule of Islam. Many people no longer observed Islamic rituals and principles of Islam; like praying the five daily prayers, paying Zakat and the like.
11. With Islamic stagnation, Western Sudan suffered from a state of anarchy, which retarded the progress of Islam. Small chieftainships like Bambara, Segu and Kaarta emerged and dominated a wide area forcing Islamic centres like Timbuktu and Jenne to pay tribute; hence decreasing their influence, yet these were centers for scholars who preached Islam in West Africa region.
12. Educational levels in Islam went down scale, since scholars feared to visits the troubled empire.
13. Following the period of stagnation, there was hardly any political unit that united the existing different African groups. The areas formerly united by Muslim states like Mali and Songhai Empires were all split into warring small sections that barred the effective spread of Islam.
14. Islamic stagnation led to the collapse of the Islamic legal system. Strong Muslim Empires like Mali and Songhai had declared Islam as a state religion; however, this stopped and Sharia Law was no longer the law of the land.
15. Islamic Stagnation led to the launching of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century West African Jihad Movements as strong Muslim revolutionalists like Uthman Dan Fodio came out to revive the glory of Islam.
16. Islamic Stagnation witnessed the Muslims losing many Muslim lands like Spain. Many areas which used to be the strongest Islamic states in the region started tolerating pagan rites. This situation definitely did not favour the progress of Islam.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### ISLAMIC REVIVAL

#### THE SUFI TARIQAS

**Question: Examine background, growth and feature of the Sufi Orders.**

Sufism or Ascetism is a doctrine where many pious people practice the fear of God mainly as individuals by carrying out meditation. The doctrine involves not allowing oneself physical pleasure, especially for religious reasons.

Sufism also refers to the attempt of a believer through inner meditation or other acts of worship to come closer to God and achieve direct and personal experience of Him.

The Sufis based their doctrines on the Qur'an. They emphasized the temporality of this world and hence took their stay on it, just as a means of preparation for permanent life after death.

They, therefore, abandoned their homes in search of puritanical perfection. Many lived in celibacy and even didn't care about their bodies since they took bodies to be materials to be left while going in eternal life.

The Sufis argued that all Muslims or true believers had to emulate the examples of Prophet Ibrahim, who was ready to sacrifice his son Ismail in order to fulfill his promise with God. Therefore, much of the Sufi's teachings were based on readiness to sacrifice and the denouncing of worldly affairs in order to attain perfection.

The purpose of the Sufi practices was to attain a stage whereby the mind is taken away so that direct communication is established with God. This, according to the Sufi's, means that one has to lose one's consciousness to God up to such a time when God incarnates Himself into the worshipper.

Whereas Sufism started as an act of individual worship, it developed into a theosophical stage that had been defined by the Western scholars as Mysticism.

Later on, as a sign of advancing their cause, they developed collective places of meditation and practice of devotion which they called Dhikr; meaning remembrance of Allah. The settlements where they practiced Dhikr or worship came to be referred to as Zawiyas or Houses of retreat for meditation.

Sufi acts of worship could also be carried out in a group or individually in mosques after congregational prayers or individually at home without the necessity of prolonged retreat.

The leader of the Sufi orders in some cases, came to be regarded as Saints, and gave rise to a cult of Saints in North and Western Sudan, whose tombs would be respected after their death. The Saint's tomb was believed to be a source of blessing (Baraka) on those who paid there a visit.

Saints' order grew into brotherhoods or affiliations which greatly helped in the spread of Islam in West Africa.

Sufism or Islamic Brotherhoods spread to West Africa from Spain where it had been introduced from the East in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century AH (10<sup>th</sup> Century A.D), through the Maghrib where it greatly influenced the Berbers.

In West Africa, Sufism is said to have been introduced by the Berber Sufis. With its inception, a number of orders were formed, with the Qadiriyyah, Tijaniyyah and Shadhiliyyah as the most profound.

Muslim Brotherhoods trained several followers to propagate pure and vigorous Islam got from the teachings of a saintly founder. The Qadiriyyah, for example, established itself smoothly, peacefully and along trade routes of Western Sudan. The Tijaniyyah on the other hand were forceful and violent.

At the time of their climax, the Brotherhoods had brought about social, political and cultural success in many parts of Western Sudan, where they replaced the Pagan animist rulers with Muslim Imaams, who ruled as the agents of the will of God on earth.

However, it was not the founders of the Tariqas that formed the organization of the Tariqa circles personally; rather their descendants did so using the personal piety and power the founders had instilled in them to start the practice in the Zawiyyahs following the founders' death.

## **SUFI ORDERS IN WEST AFRICA**

**Question: Give an account of the Muslim Brotherhoods became prominent in Western Sudan region.**

The Muslim brotherhoods or commonly known as the Sufi Tariqas were Muslim fraternities which emphasized the worship of God through meditation and practise of devotion they called a Dhikr.

The Tariqas came as a result of the teachings and influence of Sufism put in traditional Islam by teachers like Imaam al – Ghazaali and popularized by people like Abdul al- Qadir al -Jilaani.

Sufism or Muslim Brotherhood spread to West Africa from Spain by the Berbers through the Maghrib. With its inception, a number of Brotherhoods were formed, with the Qadiriyyah, Tijaniyyah and Shadhiyyah as the most prominent.

### **THE QADIRIYYAH ORDER.**

The Qadiriyyah Muslim Brotherhood was established by the Twelveth Century by Abdul al-Qadir al-Jilaani in Baghdad; hence the name Qadiriyyah.

The Qadiriyyah Order reached West Africa in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century through Timbuktu, near which a centre was established for the order. It was introduced by Umar al-Shaikh of the Arab Kunta tribe, when he made pilgrimage to Mecca and got initiated into the order.

Qadiriyyah Brotherhood developed itself into an organized and persuasive movement bent on the work of converting people in West Africa to Islam by means of peaceful preaching.

The Qadiriyyah Brotherhood first spread among town dwellers, traders of the desert, Negroid Normads and eventually among the village clergy.



The Qadiriyyah order agents, being in trading areas, opened up Qur'an schools which helped to spread Islam in the pagan regions of Maccina, Sokoto, Hausaland and others.

The Qadiriyyah order produced scholars and missionaries who struggled for the cause of Islam. The prominent scholars and missionaries included among others the important Jihad leaders, Sheikh Ahmadu Lobbo of Maccina and Uthman Dan Fodio of Sokoto, Sheikh Mukhtar al-Kunti, Muhammad al-Faadil and Ahmad Bamba.

In their teachings, the Qadiriyyah stressed that spiritual fulfillment could only come through study and intellectual activity. Thus, since few men were born with great intellectual powers, only a few among the elite could ever approach the ideal.

As a brotherhood, Qadiriyyah teachings were favoured by the chiefly classes and scholars because of its intellectual emphasis. This means that it spread widely among lower-class Muslims.

During the Qadiriyyah Dhikr sessions, its disciples recite the following statement a hundred times:

***"I ask pardon of the Almighty Allah. Glorified be Allah; May Allah bless Muhammad and his household and the companions; There is no god, but Allah."***

## THE TIJJANIYYAH ORDER

The Tijaniyyah Muslim Brotherhood or order was begun by Sheikh Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Tijjan (born 1737 and died in 1815) in Morocco; hence the name Tijjaniyyah.

After his death in 1815, missionary activities for the order were undertaken by his followers like Al-Hajj Umar, who carried the teachings of the order across the caravan routes to West Africa.

The Tijaniyyah Order gained considerable popularity after 1830 following Al-Hajj Umar's pilgrimage to Mecca, where he was initiated into the Tijaniyyah Brotherhood. On his return from Hijjah, Al-Hajj forced the order on the newly converted people in the Tokolor Empire which he had founded.

The religious and political success of the Order in the Tokolor Empire resulted in many Tokolor people into joining the Tijaniyyah Muslims Brotherhood. Indeed the present influence of the Tijaniyyah order in West owes its existence from Al-Hajj Umar and his followers.

The Tijaniyyah Order was more forceful in outlook in the beginning and willing to expand the influence of Islam vigorously. However, it adopted peaceful preaching and propaganda that helped the order to acquire a considerable following in the Northern Nigeria, Kanem and Bagirm.

Right from the start, the Tijaniyyah Order highly competed with the Qadiriyyah; the influence of Tijaniyyah being spread rapidly along the paths and ways already prepared the Qadiriyyah Brotherhood. Therefore, the Tijaniyyah Order was ready to expand at the expense of the Qadiriyyah order

Al-Hajj Umar, being a Khalifah and head of the Tijaniyyah Sufi Order in Western Sudan, made extensive tours to several places between 1839 and 1848, preaching Order activities in

Tokolor and urging people to turn to pure Islam.

The Tijaniyyah Brotherhood brought political success in Futa region when it replaced the pagan animist rulers with Muslim Imaams.

In its operation, the Tijaniyyah order rejected Qadiriyyah ideas and stressed that the Islamic way was basically simple and easy to understand by all men and not only by intellectuals as member of Qadiriyyah Brotherhood preached.

The Tijaniyyah teachings also stressed that salvation did not come through the intellect but through action, strict observation of the moral code of Islam and courage for the spread of the faith.

In the Tijaniyyah teachings, there was no class of elites and all members of Tijaniyyah were regarded as equal and brothers as long as they obeyed the moral code and spread of the faith of Islam.

The beliefs of Tijaniyyah highly appealed to the common men, the youth and the warrior classes to whom action was more attractive than what they considered the tiresome study which the Qadiriyyah emphasized.

## **THE SHADHILIYYAH ORDER.**

The Shadhiliyyah Order was started by Al-Shadhil in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. He had settled in Alexandria, where circles of pupils gathered around him.

Al-Shadhil had no monastery and no set forms of rituals; and he discouraged his adherents from giving up their trade and professions for the sake of contemplative life.

However, the common practice was that the ordinary people used to visit the founder for blessings (Baraka) which created a big following and bonds for them.

After the death of Al-Shadil and burial in a protected area, in the Zawiyyah, the practice of visiting the tomb to get blessing continued by the descendants of the founder of the Tariqa. In the process, it led to the emergence of an assumed "Holy Family" – the Shadhiliyyah Order.

Little more than a generation later, the disciples adopted the normal organization of the Tariqa which spread out in North Africa and the passion of their teaching reached West Africa.

The Shadhiliyyah Order was in general more extravagant in rituals and more static than the Qadiriyyah. For instance, people like Al – Jazuuli (1465- 1470) came out with features which to present day characterize its followers and popularized them on the claim that he belonged to it.

The Shadhiliyyah Order spread among the Berbers of North Africa and, during the time when the Trans-Saharan Trade was on its apex, traders and those other Sufis who had taken to serious Sufism.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUFI ORDERS IN THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA.**

**Question: Examine the role played by the Sufi Orders in the spread of Islam in West Africa.**

The Sufi Orders in West Africa were religious Brotherhoods or fraternities which emphasized the worship of God through meditation and practise of devotion in settlements they called Zawiyas.

In West Africa, the most influential Orders that emerged were Qadiriyyah, Tijaniyyah and Shadiliyyah. Whether they were members of Qadiriyyah, Tijaniyyah or Shadiliyyah, the Sufis contributed to the spread of Islam in several ways:-

1. The Shadiliyyah and Tijaniyyah Brotherhoods helped much in the spread of Islam in Tokolor area, while the Qadiriyyah largely spread Islam in Sokoto and Maccina areas through organizing preaching activities.
2. The Brotherhoods unified West African people around one ideology; in the process, they helped in creating people's allegiance for both spiritual and political purposes.
3. There had been a long period of Islamic stagnation in West Africa following the collapse of the Mali and Songhai Empires. However, the emergence of Sufi Orders and their activities kept Islam surviving and enabled the faith to enter the 19<sup>th</sup> Century when Jihads were declared.
4. At the time of their climax, the Brotherhoods brought about political, social and general cultural success in the West African region. Therein, they replaced the pagan animist rulers with Muslim Imaams. They also put up clerical kings who ruled as the agents of the will of God on earth.
5. The Sufi Brotherhoods helped in the enhancement of learning and education in general. They opened up Qur'an schools which developed into training and learning centres where people acquired Islamic knowledge.
6. The Sufi orders contributed to the bringing of peace among the warring tribes of West Africa; the peace that transcended tribal boundaries. The Brotherhoods lessened the hostility; hence creating peace among the people which was necessary for the spread of Islam.
7. The Brotherhoods led to putting up many infrastructures like Zawiyah, mosques and Islamic schools. Many West African people visited these structures to get blessing (Baraka) and many of them were taught Islam.
8. The Sufi orders led to the emergence of great Muslim scholars like Uthman Dan Fodio, Al-Hajj Umar and many others. Many of these scholars were staunch Muslims and they helped to produce revolutionary tendencies which fostered Islam in West Africa.
9. The Sufi Orders created unity in the areas of their operation. People of different backgrounds were bound together by the Tariqas irrespective of their former tribal loyalties. The unity created helped in the spread of Islam as members of a given fraternity worked together for the cause of Islam.
10. The Sufi orders led to emergence of self-moving missionary groups which moved from one place to another preaching and urging people to turn to pure Islam. In the

long run, many West African people converted to Islam.

11. The Sufi orders carried Missionary work so well that their brotherhoods became influential and vital in spreading Islam. People even regarded belonging to either Qadiriyyah or Tijaniyyah or any other brotherhood as equivalent to being a Muslim.
12. Clerics (religious leaders) in any Sufi Order had to name the people they initiated into their fraternities reflecting the order the person belonged to. In the process, the Sufi Orders helped in getting followers who were eventually converted to Islam.
13. The Sufi groups in West Africa were commercially oriented and thus controlled trade routes. From the proceedings of trade; they got money which they used to finance several Islamic activities.
14. The Sufi Tariqas formed the basis on which the 19<sup>th</sup> Century West African Empires and Caliphates were built. They provided ideologies that enabled the Empires to thrive. For example, the Sokoto and Maccina Caliphates followed the Qadiriyyah teaching while in Tokolor Empire, Tijaniyyah Brotherhood was dominant.
15. Some Sufi Tariqas liberated slaves converted them to Islam and later used them to promote Islam. The Sufis made it a policy to liberate slaves; the liberated slaves were sent to the Zawiyyahs and taught Islam. Thereafter, they were sent back to the interior to establish their own Zawiyyahs.
16. The Sufi succeeded in reforming Islam in many parts of North and West Africa. During their operation many nominal Muslims were preached to and became practicing Muslims.
17. The Orders promoted and consolidated the security of an individual in the society. Many Muslims felt secure being in the brotherhoods. The bonds of fraternity the brotherhoods created were conducive in strengthening Islam among members of a given order.
18. The Orders helped the formerly nominal Muslims to achieve spiritual advancement, which led to behavioural change among the people of West Africa as an individual was required to identify himself with a particular brotherhood. This also protected people from committing sins.
19. The Sufi orders in West Africa contributed to the 19<sup>th</sup> century Jihads by teaching people asceticism and character training (Taribiyyah); thus raising a brotherhood of men who were ready to endure hardships for the sake of lofty ideals of Islam.
20. The Sufis also contributed to literacy levels in West Africa. They developed a group of Ulamas (Muslim Elites) like Uthman Dan Fodio who wrote pamphlets both in Arabic and in the local Hausa and Fulani languages that spread Islamic religion.
21. The Sufis invited teachers and scholars of high eminence to teach people Islamic sciences like Theology, History, Jurisprudence and the Qur'an. These designs and campaigns against illiteracy accelerated the progress of Islam.
22. The Sufis used to organize some religious ceremonies in which Muslims and non-Muslims, young and old, could converge to celebrate and praise the Name of Allah and prayers to the Prophet (P.B.U.H). Through such gatherings, many non-Muslims

got attracted to Islam.

Despite the role of the Sufi Orders in the spread of Islam in West Africa, the Orders had some weaknesses:

23. The emergence of one Sufi Order one after the other brought about conflicts due to ideological differences. For instance, the Qadiriyyah conflicted with the Tijaniyyah on issue concerning salvation. The Qadiriyyah taught that salvation comes through intellect yet the Tijaniyyah stressed action as a basis for salvation.
24. There was loss of unity among the West African Muslims. Right from the start and at the climax of its operation, the Tijaniyyah highly competed with Qadiriyyah Brotherhood. Muslims were, therefore, disunited and were no longer a unified group loyal to Islam.
25. In many of the Tariqas, there was veneration of the tombs of the departed Tariqa leaders in anticipation for blessings (Baraka). This was against the teachings of Islam which stressed visiting the tombs for purposes of praying for the departed.

## THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY JIHADS IN WEST AFRICA

A Jihad is a holy defensive war waged by Muslim reformers against injustices in the society, aimed at protecting the wronged and oppressed people together with their property and at the same time, spreading, purifying and strengthening Islam.

In the Nineteenth Century, West Africa saw a wave of Jihads; however, three were more profound:

1. The Jihads that broke out in Hausaland in 1804 under the leadership of Uthman Dan Fodio. These took place in Sokoto area; and thus came to be known as the Sokoto Jihads.
2. In 1818, another Jihad was conducted in Massina under the headship of Seku (Sehu) Ahmadu. These came to be known as the Massina Jihads.
3. In Futa-Jallon and Futa-toto, another Jihadist called Al-Hajj Umar carried out a Jihad in 1851. This was known as the Tokolor or Tijjan Jihad.

All these Jihads were led by members of the Fulani Muslims and carried out by people of Fulani origin; as such, the Jihads came to be known as the Fulani Jihads.

### CAUSES OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY JIHAD MOVEMENTS IN WEST AFRICA.

**Question:** Account for the outbreak of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jihad Movement in West Africa.

Although the Nineteenth Century Jihads were religious movements, they had a mixture of political, economic and intellectual causes; and a number of factors accounted for their outbreak in West Africa.

1. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jihads aimed at spreading Islam to the people who had not been converted to it. There were areas which had not been touched by Islam such as Mossi, Nupe, Borgu and Adamawa. Therefore, using the umbrella of Jihads, The Jihadists hoped to spread Islam in the whole of Hausaland.
2. The Jihad movements aimed at the purification and strengthening of Islam in Hausaland and the Hausa society itself. After the collapse of Mali and Songhai Empires, there was decline in Islamic faith in West Africa as it was mixed with pagan practices. Therefore, the Jihadists wanted to eliminate nominal and non-Islamic practices and ending paganism in the Hausa Land.
3. It was the desire of the Jihadists to free and protect the Muslims of West Africa against the oppressive tendencies and mistreatment of the ruling pagan regimes. For example, in Segu, Massina and Futa-Toro the non-Muslim leaders openly attacked men putting on the turbans and women with veils. To this, therefore, the Jihads were a movement for political reforms and promotion of Islamic sanctity.
4. The Hausa states of Gobil, Katsina and Kebbi which were the most powerful states by then in Hausa land were ruled by either pagans or nominal Muslims, who mixed Islam with paganism with the aim of satisfying Muslims and non-Muslims. Thus, such ugly situation could not be left to go unchallenged; hence cultivating fertile grounds for the Jihads.

5. In Hausaland, the few Muslims who practiced total Islam were oppressed by the rulers to the extent of being recruited in the army by force to fight fellow Muslims; a practice that Muslims greatly resented. Other Muslims were sold in slavery by these Hausa kings, a practice that contravened the teaching of the Qur'an.
6. The Jihadists thought that in order for them to achieve religious objectives and goals, political activities in the area had to be cleansed, simply because religious reforms would not succeed in an unfavourable political environment, where the Hausa states were constantly at war with each other.
7. The Hausa rulers had become more dangerous to the development of Islam in West Africa. They censured Islamic Literature and also limited the number of preachers not only to a few people but also to only in a few areas. So, an attempt to reverse such decision culminated into Jihads.
8. The Hausa and Fulani Muslims hated the evil practice of selling Muslims into slavery to the European traders during the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade as was done by the very Hausa leaders. To the Muslims, this act was not only sinful but also an evil against humanity. They, therefore, saw the urgency of getting rid of this social evil and were to wage war against their leaders.
9. The attempt to stop further conversion of people to Islam also caused Jihad movements. For instance Sultan Nafata of Gobir openly declared that there should not be any more conversion to Islam and that those who had not been born Muslims should denounce Islam immediately. Therefore, the Jihadist had to wage a Holy war against such irreligious leaders who had proved to be deterrent to the spread and progress of Islam.
10. The Hausa courts were being conducted in a sinful manner; punctuated with high levels of corruption and bribery. Judgments for cases tried were always unfair and depended on someone's economic status. To end all these evils, Jihads movements became inevitable.
11. Another factor was the activities of the landlords who had denied other people land yet the poor were forced to pay heavy sums of money; rendering them poorer. Therefore, jihads had to be waged to rescue people from unfair government policies.
12. The West Africa Jihad Movements were influenced by other Islamic Movements, like the Wahabiyyah Revolution of Arabia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Wahabiyyah Revolution, thus spread its influence to West Africa only to inspire revolutionary leaders to wage Jihads against their leaders who were busy pushing Islamic religion to a periphery.
13. The Jihadists were encouraged by wide spread belief throughout the Muslim world of the expected saviour (Al- Mahdi) who was supposed to come during the thirteenth century of the Islamic calendar. This belief raised general air of expectation among the Muslim world and made them ever ready to accept anyone who would convince them that he was either the expected Mahdi or his fore-runner.
14. The Jihads were also aimed at overthrowing pagan governments and establishing theirs run on Islamic lines. Strict Muslims in West Africa could not tolerate to be ruled by pagans, who at one time forced Muslims to go to war against fellow Muslims.

15. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jihads also aimed at creating religious, political, economic and intellectual revolution in Western Sudan by establishing Islamic education. By removing pagan rulers who were against Islamic education, Muslim hoped to create an ideal Islamic society through education.
16. The Fulani also felt that their wealth was insecure under the Hausa rulers, who were openly jealous of the Fulani wealth. The Fulani had amassed a lot of wealth from the proceedings of trade and as a result, they constructed mosques, schools and the like. They, therefore, thought to establish a government, which would guarantee security of their property.
17. The collapse of the Muslim empires of Songhai, and Mali led to the collapse of the Islamic faith in the region. New leaders of the small chiefdoms in the Hausa land failed to maintain Islamic faith and principles. They actually allowed Islam to co-exist with paganism and yet the two are incompatible and against the Islamic Code of Law. The Jihads were therefore waged to cleanse the society, get rid of nominal or pagan leaders and get a ground for creating pure Islamic states.
18. The fanatic Muslims hated living in a society where there were pagans. They felt that it was their duty to convert these people. To them, conversion by persuasion was too slow especially when there was no political will. In order to get mass conversion into Islam, force in form of Jihads needed to be applied.
19. The need to control and counteract the spread of Christianity in West Africa prompted Jihad movements. European Missionaries had established themselves on the southern coast of West Africa. They were entering the interior spreading Christianity with them. Thus, cleric and fanatic Muslims were prompted to carry out Islamic revolutions and force many people into their faith before they took up Christianity.
20. Muslims and Jihadists got inspired to start Jihads in this region of West Africa in order to gain the political force that would effectively hamper Christian missionaries from entering their states; since Islam and Christianity were always on parallels.
21. Most West African leaders of the time were very corrupt, took bribes and promoted injustices. There was open favouritism and the poor could not litigate the rich. The only way to do away with such evils was to overthrow the existing governments as Uthman Dan Fodio, Al-Hajj Umar ad Sehu Ahmadu did.
22. The threat of the imperialists caused Muslims to fight wars of Jihads. Some Muslim nationalists like Samori Toure and Al- Hajj Umar began Jihads as a way of uniting their people into a strong army and formidable force to face the European colonialists. Indeed Samori Toure was able to resist the French because he had been able to consolidate himself in Mandinka using Jihads as a tool of state formation.
23. In Hausa, the discrimination and overtaxation of the Fulani became a strong cause for the outbreak of the Jihads. The Fulani pastorists hated the way they were being taxed and denied crossing to some areas for pasture. These readily and enthusiastically joined the Jihads to solve the problem of taxation and grazing land.
24. Many Muslims, especially the Fulani Jihadists staged Jihads to address the problems of discrimination in leadership. They were denied the right to hold any



political office; yet they were highly educated in Islamic law and philosophy. They were only employed as clerks, interpreters and teachers - moreover serving pagan rulers.

25. The emergence of Muslim fanatics, with unreserved determination accounted for the outbreak of Jihads. Most of such leaders like Uthman Dan Fodio, Al-Hajj Umar, Sehu Ahmadu and Samori Toure were Muslim clerics and highly learned in Islamic Law. They were able to capitalize on various grievances in their societies to win a lot of support and sympathy to stage Jihads.

## THE SOKOTO JIHADS OF UTHMAN DAN FODIO

### CAREER OF UTHMAN DAN FODIO

**Question:** Examine the career of Uthman Dan Fodio.

Uthman Dan Fodio was born in 1754 at Maratta in the state of Gobir. He belonged to the Gidda group of the Fulani Tribe, particularly to a sub-group called Toronkawa, which was strongly a Muslim group and many of its members were Muslims teachers and preachers.

During his youth, his father, who was himself a Muslim scholar and a teacher taught him to read the Qur'an.

When he left his father's home, he studied under different Ulamas (Muslim intellectuals) and finally ended up in Agades under a famous teacher called Jibril Umar, who belonged to the Qadariyyah Muslim sect or brotherhood. This sect believed in the strict observation of the Orthodox principles of Islam.

Uthman learnt Islamic Law, Theology and Sufism and at an early age of twenty years, he started his career as a teacher, writer and Islamic preacher at Dengel, where many young men flocked to his base to study under him.

Uthman was concerned and alarmed by the falling standards of Islamic culture following the death of Askia Muhammad Toure. He surfaced so as to revive the religious situation in society that was becoming nasty.

Uthman Dan Fodio preached to his students the need to purify Islam and the need to spread Islam in their own states, especially the Hausaland. Because of his will and zeal to purify Islam, Uthman Dan Fodio came to be known as a puritan Muslim. His students started referring to him as "Sehu" meaning a religious reader equivalent to a "Sheikh" in Arabic.

Uthman Dan Fodio also went on several missionary tours throughout Hausaland especially in Zamfara, Kebbi and Daura. He also wrote many books in Arabic, Hausa and Fulani Languages that carried a message of reform.

In his preaching and writings, also, Uthman Dan Fodio attacked all unreligious practices. He condemned corrupt and unjust governments, illegal taxation and insisted on complete acceptance of spiritual and moral values of Islam.

As a man of great eloquence and learning, Uthman soon built a large number of followers around him; some of whom referred to this great religious leader as Dan Fodio – meaning son of the learned father; while others believed he was the Mahdi or the expected saviour.

His face also attracted the admiration of Sultan Bawa of Gobir, who wanted to employ him at his court; something that Uthman rejected to honour arguing that this would deny him freedom of spreading the word of Allah.

Later in 1780's he got some contacts with Hausa rulers and in this, he visited Bawa, the Sultan of Gobir to explain to him the teaching of Islam. At this level, people started to see him as a person of high status, which increased his prestige among them.

Uthman Dan Fodio's influence and prestige also increased greatly when he successfully negotiated an agreement with Sultan Bawa to release Muslim Prisoners, granting of freedom of worship to all people and exemption of Muslims from unIslamic taxes.

Sultan Bawa had given Uthman a go ahead to preach to people; and indeed, he taught many people. Many students got attracted from far and wide. They gathered around him and they became to be known as a community (Jama'a) meaning and referring to those who were convinced and prepared to accept his religious leadership.

Consequently, constant preaching earned Uthman Dan Fodio a big following but on the other hand this fame and support angered the Hausa rulers. They saw him as a threat to their power and authority. They tried to bribe him but instead he got an opportunity to reach an understanding with Bawa to preach freely.

However, with the death of Bawa, the pagan aristocracy persuaded Nafata (Bawa's successor) to withdraw the privileges given to Muslims by Bawa. Nafata also took several measures to curtail Uthman's Islamic revolution by ordering that nobody else, save Uthman was to preach, and that there should be no further conversion to Islam. The sultan also ordered that all those who were not born Muslims should denounce Islam with immediate effect and return to paganism.

Nafata died shortly in 1802 and was succeeded by Sultan Yunfa, who was one time a student of Dan Fodio. Many Muslims had thought that Yunfa would restore their privileges. However, Yunfa was surrounded by pagans who were jealous of Uthman's great influence, achievements and radical ideas of reforms which he was spreading.

Faced with the division of the kingdom between Muslims and pagans, Sultan Yunfa decided to strengthen himself and solve the problem of division by assassinating Uthman in Alkalawa the capital of Gobir. However, Uthman got prior information and escaped unhurt.

Following this attempt on his life, Uthman decided to withdraw from Gobir to Gudu, which was outside Gobir territory, in 1804. This withdraw was a sort of Hejira in imitation of Prophet Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medinah. Dan Fodio made Hejirah with his brother Abdullahi, his son Muhammad Bello and members of his Jama'a.

As a person, Uthman Dan Fodio was a scholar and a teacher who belonged to a mystic-Sufi Order of the Qadariyyah Brotherhood. So, at the age of 40 years, following his long years of meditation, he claimed to have received a vision ordering him to fight evil in Hausaland.

Thus, in June 1804, Uthman declared a Jihad against Yunfa and his forces. Based in Gudu, Uthman was joined by many Fulani clansmen who started arriving from different parts of Western Sudan.

On hearing that Dan Fodio had declared a Jihad on him, Yunfa sent an army to attack Dan

Fodio and his supporters. However, despite Yunfa's forces looking more superior in terms of military warfare and weaponry, they were defeated by Dan Fodio's forces.

Uthman's victory increased the number of his supporters, though most of them were his Fulani tribesmen. Thus from then onwards, Dan Fodio's struggle was referred to as the Fulani movement. Supporters from other states asked for flags from Uthman to show that they had his support in carrying out the Jihad; and thus, a wave of Jihads swept Hausaland.

In December 1804, Uthman Dan Fodio sent troops to Kebbi and Gobir led by Jedo and Muhammad Bello respectively. He also made Contacts with the Muslim leaders of Katsina, Daura, Kano and Zamfara who also lent a hand in the Jihad.

In 1808, Sultan Yunfa was captured and killed and the capital Alkalawa fell into the hands of the Jihadists. With the elimination of the Sultan, serious resistance against the Jihadists also collapsed.

The major areas of the Hausaland were captured and this weakened any serious resistance against Uthman Dan Fodio in Hausaland; while at the same time marking the end of the Jihad. Dan Fodio then established his capital at Sokoto in 1809; thus, achieving his objectives.

In 1812, after establishing the Islamic Empire in Western Sudan, Dan Fodio appointed his general to take over the administration of the areas that had been conquered. For example, Muhammad Bello was given the region covering Zamfara, Katsina, Daura and Katagwona. He established his headquarters at Sokoto. Abdullah was given the region of Nupe, Dendi, Liptaka, Illorin and Bongo. His headquarters were at Bondinga.

Uthman Dan Fodio was given the title of **Amir Al- Mu'miniin** by his followers as a sign of respect and honour for the good job he had done to bring back Islam to life and not showing any interest of ruling of a large empire.

Uthman Dan Fodio died in 1817, but at the time of his death, the frontiers of the Sokoto Caliphate had firmly been established under the string of Islamic influence. It was indeed the largest state in Western Sudan. Uthman Dan Fodio was succeeded by his son Muhammad Bello.

## SUCCESS OF THE SOKOTO JIHADS

**Question: Account for the success of the Sokoto Jihads**

Uthman Dan Fodio's Jihad - the Sokoto Jihads - was successful and by 1810, his Jihadists had defeated all the Hausa rulers and captured their states. Reasons for the success of Dan Fodio's Sokoto Jihads that enabled him to establish the Sokoto caliphate included the following:-

1. Uthman Dan Fodio used Islam as a unifying factor that united all his supporters. All Jihadists including the Hausa, Fulani and Tuaregs regarded each other as brothers in Allah because Islam did not recognize ethnic boundaries.
2. Islam also provided courage and inspiration to the warriors. The jihadists felt that they were fighting for a justified cause and they had a belief that if they died fighting, they would have to pass straight to paradise. Because of that belief, the warriors fought

with determination and therefore won a number of battles.

3. The Jihadists also had a belief that God was on their side as Allah's soldiers. This enabled them to fight courageously and won over their enemies and rivals.
4. The fact that Dan Fodio and his followers opposed the heavy taxes that were imposed on the cattle keepers of Hausa land drove many pastoralists Fulani to join the Jihads. This made Dan Fodio's forces even stronger.
5. Dan Fodio's warriors and supporters were also encouraged by the spiritual guidance provided by Uthman himself. He did not actively participate in the wars but instructed his generals and warriors to do the work following the principles of Islam.
6. The issue of ethnic unity also contributed to Dan Fodio's success. The majority of warriors belonged to the Fulani Ethnic group. So this kind of solidarity encouraged the warriors to fight with determination against other ethnic groups; because they felt that if they were defeated, the entire Fulani group would be wiped out.
7. The Sokoto Jihads had very important religious causes. It was started by Muslim intellectuals who had a gift and talent of publicizing and popularizing the reforms they wanted to carry out.
8. The intellectual factor also enabled the Fulani to succeed. Most of the Jihad leaders were great-learned men in Islamic disciplines, unlike their Hausa counterparts. This enabled the formers to be eloquent and persuasive to the masses.
9. The Fulani possessed the two essential qualities of a good army, that is, intelligent leadership and high morality of the troops. These two enabled Uthman Dan Folio and his warriors to win the war.
10. The other Hausa forces lacked all disciplines of a strong army; they were not well trained; they were not committed to their work nor were they united. Therefore, the pastoralists Fulani deserted the Huasa army and joined Uthman's ranks. This weakened the Hausa army and Uthman exploited the weakness to win the war.
11. The Tuaregs, who at first fought on the side of the Hausa, also lacked commitment; they were power hungry and were after material world gains. During the war, the Tuaregs looted property of the ordinary people. This annoyed the local people, who stopped supporting the Hausa and this led to their defeat.
12. The behaviour of the Hausa rulers also led to their defeat and the success of Uthman Dan Fodio. During the war, the Hausa rulers persecuted the Fulani because they regarded them as possible rebels since they belonged to the same ethnic group as Dan Fodio. Because of the persecution, many Fulani crossed over and joined Dan Fodio's forces.
13. The Fulani in the Hausaland army played a double standard role. This they did by revealing the military secrets and strategies of the Hausa rulers to Uthman Dan Fodio. So, using the revealed secrets, Dan Fodio was able to defeat the Hausa forces with ease.
14. There was also lack of unity among the Hausa rulers. The Hausa failed to form a joint army to fight Uthman Dan Fodio. Each state fought separately on its own; and because

of that, Dan Fodio and his warriors defeated one state after the other and eventually won the war.

15. The popularity of Uthman's revolution also led to its success. Besides his clansmen, Dan Fodio also organized other discontented and oppressed groups who saw him as a liberator who could deliver them from the unpopular and aggressive Hausa Kings.
16. Uthman Dan Fodio used high quality tactics that won him the admiration and confidence from his generals. For instance, he did not participate in the general administration of the empire but assured his followers who had political ambitions that they would become Emirs when they won the war. Thus, this was an incentive to his flag bearers to fight courageously. In fact, after the war, he appointed his officers to lead and govern the empire.
17. Uthman's personality was yet another factor for his success in the war. He was a fine teacher and preacher. He could hold and win attention of the many. For instance, when he criticized the Hausa for their unreligious practices, he was supported by many people.
18. The Jihadists had a widespread belief that the end of the world was near and they expected a Savior (Mahd) to come and prepare the way for the end of the world. This belief raised the general air of expectation among the Muslims and made them readier to accept anyone who would convince them that he was either the Mahdi or his forerunner. So when Uthman Dan Fodio declared the Jihad, many people readily joined him.
19. The success of the Sokoto Jihads can also be attributed to the support given to the Jihadists by the magnalised Hausa peasants. The magnalised peasants had vested all their hopes in Islam to liberate them from oppression and magnalisation.
20. The Hausa rulers had resorted to unwanted detentions; oppressive taxation and what the Jihadists termed as un-Godly practices against the masses. This kind of mal-administration gave the Jihadists courage and determination to fight as masses had got tired of them.
21. Uthman was a reknown propagandist, who had made enough campaign by issuing pamphlets and preaching to the people such that by the time the Jihads broke out, people were aware of the Movement. This inspired people to fight and defeat the Hausa.
22. The systematic persecution of the Fulani by the Hausa rulers was an inspiration for the Fulani to take revenge on their tyrants and for self defence. The Fulani vowed to fight against racial injustices even if it needed dying to the last man.
23. Uthman Dan Fodio adopted a strategy of isolating the various Hausa states and conquering them one by one. He appointed representatives whom he instructed to carry out Jihads in their respective areas of his authority and power.
24. The Fulani also had another strategy of attacking Hausa states in such a way that war broke out at the same time in Hausaland. This made it difficult for the Hausa to mount a united campaign against the Fulani

25. Uthman's action of appointing flag bearers and promising them political rewards once they succeeded in carrying out Jihads in their areas, led to the success of the Sokoto Jihads. This was an incentive to the Jihadists who fought courageously expecting to be made Emirs.

## **MUHAMMAD BELLO AND THE SOKOTO JIHADS**

**Question: Explain Muhammad Bello's contribution to the success of the Sokoto Jihads**

Muhammad Bello was the son and successor of Uthman Dan Fodio. He occupied a very important place in the History of West Africa in general and Islam in particular. However, his importance was profound in his contribution to the foundation and success of the Sokoto Caliphate and its Jihad.

1. Muhammad Bello accompanied his father Uthman Dan Fodio and his uncle Abdullahi in a kind of Hejirah to Gudu. This Hejirah was organized for Uthman to run away from the attempted murder by Sultan Yunfa of Gobir. It was during this Hejira that the Sokoto Jihads were launched.
2. After establishing the Islamic empire in the names of the Sokoto caliphate, Uthman Dan Fodio appointed his generals to take over the administration of the areas that had been conquered. Bello was given the charge of region covering Zamfara, Katsina, Daura and Katagwona. He discharged his administration at Sokoto as his capital.
3. Bello was a brilliant and successful soldier. Right from the beginning of the Jihad, he was left to lead the Holy war (Sokoto Jihad) together with his uncle Abdullahi. Under his military leadership, the whole of Hausaland was conquered and brought under the Sokoto caliphate.
4. With the death of Uthman Dan Fodio in 1817, it was Bello who succeeded his father as the caliph of the Sokoto Caliphate. In fact it was during the regime of Muhammad Bello that the frontiers of the Sokoto caliphate were firmly established under strong Islamic influence.
5. Through his able and wise military leadership, Muhammad Bello saved the Sokoto Caliphate from an internal Hausa rebellion and external attacks from the people of Gobir and Kanem- Bornu. So, although Uthman Dan Fodio founded the Sokoto caliphate, Muhammad Bello ensured its survival.
6. Muhammad Bello is also credited for organizing and consolidating the empire. Through his mature, tact leadership and diplomacy, Bello was able to keep the empire united by reconciling Abdullahi to his leadership and winning over some Hausa people to support his administration.
7. Bello introduced the policy of replacing military leaders in the local administration with Ulama (Muslim scholars) who were more popular and acceptable to the people.
8. Bello tried to bring a just administration free from corruption, introduced good laws and unfair taxation policy based on Qur'an and Hadith. This was the direct opposite of the ousted Hausa leadership, which was very corrupt and inefficient.
9. Bello made important contribution to Islam, culture and education of Sokoto caliphate.

He continued to promote Islamic religion by laying emphasis in the reformist ideas of the Jihads and attached much importance to an administration run on Islamic lines.

10. Muhammad Bello gave great encouragement to education as a means to convert people into Islam. He made Sokoto a great center for Islamic education; above all, he made a personal intellectual contribution by writing more than 70 books which have remained a valuable asset and source of historical information in Western Sudan.
11. Bello supervised and regulated appointments of Emirs, who paid half yearly tributes to the Sokoto Caliphate.
12. Bello built Ribaats (Monasteries) in the caliphate and on the caliphates frontiers where his army was stationed. He then persuaded the Hausa peasants and Fulani herdsman to settle down around these Ribaats and were taught agriculture and Islamic education to their children.
13. Bello was careful not to enforce Islam as this might have caused rebellion. According to normal Islamic practice, traditionalists Hausa peasants were allowed to pay special taxes, in return for protection against conversion to Islam by force.
14. Muhammad Bello weakened the power of the Fulani military leaders and thus strengthened his own power. Military chiefs were gradually replaced in the local administration by the well respected Mallam or great scholars in Islamic law.
15. Muhammad Bello made sure there was an important administration of justice. Islamic courts of Law were established and Bello himself checked the courts and frequently over-ruled decisions which he believed were unfair or were against the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith.
16. Muhammad Bello improved relationship with other states. For instance, he took care that there were good relations between Sokoto and the other emirates and did not interfere much in their internal affairs.
17. Bello made sure there was an important and greater link between the Fulani and Hausa, and he himself married one of Yunfa'a's wives, and entrusting her son with the command of a Ribaat on the Northern frontier.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOKOTO JIHADS**

**Question: Examine the effects or significance of Uthman Dan Fodio's Sokoto Jihads on the development of Islam in West Africa.**

The Sokoto Jihads were launched in 1804 under the able leadership of Uthman Dan Fodio, who belonged to the Gidda clan of the Fulani Tribe. These Jihads went on until 1808 with the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate.

The Sokoto Jihads were religious movements though they had a mixture of political, economic, social and intellectual significances that affected the people of West Africa.

1. Uthman Dan Fodio and his followers under the banner of the Sokoto Jihads succeeded in creating a vast empire, the largest political entity ever in West Africa, occupying the northern parts of modern Niger and Cameroon.

2. The Sokoto Jihads gave rise to committed leaders who were faithful, sincere and committed to the worship of Allah and the administration of His laws as revealed through Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). As such, people like Uthman Dan Fodio Succeeded in establishing a theocratic state in the names of Sokoto Caliphate.
3. Through the Jihads, many Muslims who had been practicing Islam alongside traditional practices became serious Muslims and those who were not Muslims converted to Islam. Therefore, the Sokoto Jihads created a cultural revolution through teaching and preaching.
4. The Sokoto Jihads brought together different people who had hitherto been enemies. People like the Hausa, Fulani, Nupe , Yoruba and many others were for the first time brought together within a single state under Amir- al- Mu'miniim (Commander of the faithful ones)
5. Islam became a missionary religion as such, when one converted to Islam; he was expected to convert other people. Thus, because of this Jihad, Uthman Dan Fodio's mission of Jihads inspired other people like Sehu Ahmadu, al- Hajj Umar and Samori Toure to continue with the Jihad even after the death of Dan Fodio.
6. Sokoto Jihads facilitated the spread of learning throughout the Sokoto caliphate. This was because Islam as a religion of the book - the Qur'an – upheld the virtue of literacy so that its converts would read the sacred text. Since Uthman Dan Fodio himself was a fervent advocate of education, the Sokoto Jihads represented an intellectual revolution.
7. The teaching of Uthman Dan Fodio and his men belonging to the Jama—a group influenced and inspired the creation of large political units. These replaced the several rivaling and completing ones that existed before the Jihad.
8. The teaching and success of the Jihadists of Sokoto Jihad Movement led to the spread and revival of Islam. This helped to reduce on the widespread moral decadence and animism
9. Due to the increased intellectualism brought about by the success of the Sokoto Jihads, there was widespread learning and education. This in turn improved on the standards of living and development to the people of West Africa.
10. Peace, unity and large political operational areas the Sokoto Jihads brought about, led to expanded trade dealings and prosperity. The trade tariffs and custom duties that had barred prosperity of trade were reduced or done away with by the Jihad policies.
11. The creation of the Mandinka state by Samori Toure was consciously or unconsciously attributed to the success of the Sokoto Jihads. Samori Toure's policies and career were said to have been indirectly influenced by Uthman Dan Fodio's Sokoto Jihads.
12. The Sokoto Jihads stimulated scholarly activities, whereby the Jihad leaders produced several works in form of books that boosted learning and education in general. Dan Fodio alone is said to have written many books covering subjects like poetry, Arabic, Literature, Jurisprudence and many other disciplines.



13. The success of the Sokoto Jihads and establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate led to development and using of Sharia Law. Legal issues were simplified through discussing the views of the four schools of law. Therefore a universal law was enacted to govern the newly created Sokoto Caliphate.
14. Due to the success of the Sokoto Jihads, Arabic did not only spread, but it also became the official language of Literature and correspondence. This also promoted the spread of Islamic culture in much of West Africa.
15. The Sokoto Jihads undermined tribes and tribalistic loyalties and sentiments. These were replaced by loyalties to brotherhood that had emerged. After the Sokoto Jihads, Qadariyyah was the dominant brotherhood in Sokoto caliphate.
16. There was revival of Islamic morals. This was through doing away with bribery, corruption and many social vices that had swept throughout the whole of the Hausa land before the Jihad.
17. The Sokoto Jihads also led to social reforms, which were aimed at raising the moral tone of the society and providing a social ideology in accordance with Islamic ideals. This mainly rotated around equality and brotherhood which facilitated in the integration of the "Ummah"
18. The Sokoto Jihads had the psychological effect of instilling hope at a time when the old ways no longer worked. As a man of inner belief and conviction, Uthman Dan Fodio instilled confidence with which people felt strong and confident to fight against the oppressors.
19. The Sokoto Jihads made Islam to overtake all cultures of the people in the Sokoto caliphate, who finally adopted it as their culture. People's behaviours therefore changed from traditionalism to Islamism.
20. The caliphate that was formed after the Sokoto Jihads was maintained on Islamic principles which resulted in massive conversion of West African people to Islam, and in some areas, the nominal Muslims were brought back to the proper folds of Islam.

Despite the great contribution of the Sokoto Jihads to the development of Islam in West Africa, they had a negative significance to the lives of people of West Africa.

21. Much as reform of the Hausa system of administration was carried out, some of the evils of the old Hausa dynasties continued under the new Fulani aristocracy. This was because there were people who joined the Jihad with hidden evil motives that were difficult to eliminate.
22. Some less devout Muslims used the Sokoto Jihads to fulfill their ambitions; for instance some hid under the umbrella of the Jihad as an excuse for slave raiding.
23. The social set up of the people of West Africa was interrupted because of the migrations of the people from one area to another. For instance, the Muslims migrated from Degel to Gudu beyond the borders of Gobir.
24. The Jihads led to the loss of lives of many people especially those who stood to oppose the policies of the Jihadists. There was also destruction of property during the time when the Jihads were going on.

25. The fact that the jihad was largely led by the Fulani, the non-Fulani took it as struggle for the Fulani only and thus, remained skeptical of its aims. This belief created a group of dissatisfied people who went as far as welcoming the British colonialists.
26. The inclusion of the non-Muslim Fulani in the Sokoto army, gave the Jihadists hard task of re-asserting the influence of the scholars and Islamic principles on such people. This brought in internal sectarian tendencies.
27. The Sokoto Jihadists failed to consolidate their goals; in that much as they tried to eliminate non-Islamic practices and ending paganism in the Hausa society, in some areas, Islam continued to be mixed up with animism.

## **THE MASSINA JIHADS OF SHEIKH AHMAD**

### **CAREER OF SEHU (SHIEKH) AHMAD**

**Question:**     **Examine the career of Sheikh (Sehu) Ahmadu of Maccina**

Sehu Ahmadu was a great scholar, Muslim leader and reformer. He became reknown when he led the second Jihad in Western Sudan in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Sehu Ahmadu was born in 1775 to a Mullah (Muslim teacher). He belonged to the Bari family of Songare clan of the Fulani tribe. He received much of his earlier education from his father and many scholars who including Uthman Dan Fodio. He was, thus, moulded into a great scholar in Islamic science.

Sehu Ahmadu became determined as his teacher to revive and purify Islam in accordance to the teaching of the Qur'an. He, therefore, traveled widely searching for more Islamic knowledge, especially in the Hausaland. It was during one of these travels that he came into contact with Uthman Dan Fodio and his disciples.

Uthman Dan Fodio and his disciples very much influenced Ahmadu to carry out a Jihad to purge the society of infidelity as Dan Fodio himself had done. Sehu Ahmadu's Jihad took place in Maccina, where the Muslim Fulani and Soninke lived side by side with pagan Bambara, Bozo and pagan pastoral Fulani.

It so happened that by the time Uthman Dan Fodio declared his Jihad in 1804, Sehu Ahmadu was in Hausaland and must have watched its development keenly. This provided him with the inspiration to challenge the leaders of his own area and later to declare his own Jihad.

After his travels in Hausaland, Sehu Ahmadu returned to his native Massina area and he settled in a small village near the busy commercial and religious town of Jenne, where he started teaching and preaching. He accused the Hausa leaders of unIslamic practices and promised the exploited and oppressed a new and just society based solely on the rule of Islamic law.

Sehu Ahmadu's teaching, preaching and activities won him accolade of the local population; the popularity that antagonized him with the Arma (leaders of the day). He was thus expelled from Jenne.

Ahmadu, like Dan Fodio performed a Hejira in 1818 and moved to a town called Sono in the district of Sebera where he settled down to teaching. He opened a Qur'anic school near Massina in which he taught people Islam and argued them to turn to pure Islam. He soon drew around him a big following of enthusiastic disciples.

In the meantime, the Muslim population in Jenne called upon Sehu Ahmadu to come and deliver them from the oppressive rule of the Arma rulers. Ahmadu sent a representative to the city to rule over them.

However, the king of Massina called Ardo Diko and the Bambara chief called Dadyara opposed Sehu Ahmadu's representative. They then declared a war on Sehu Ahmadu by plotting to arrest and imprison him.

It was this act of the two rulers of plotting to stop the Islamic revolution and the Massina king, who happened to be a Muslim, calling upon a pagan Bambara chief to help him against a Muslim that forced Sehu Ahmadu to declare a Jihad on the Massina authorities.

With determination, Sehu Ahmadu besieged Jenne, supported overwhelmingly by the Muslim population of Jenne and captured it in 1819. This earned him popularity among the local populace, who decided to join him in a fight against the rest of the oppressive regimes of Bambara rulers. He registered success after success, conquering and annexing Segou, Kaarta, the Tuareg principalities and Timbuktu in 1828.

By 1830, Sehu Ahmadu had converted all the conquered states into a new empire of Massina. He went ahead to conquer other areas such as Kowari on the banks of River Bani where he established his capital, which he named Hamdallahi.

At Hamdallahi, Sehu Ahmadu became the master of the empire which engulfed the region lying between Jenne and Timbuktu, and like Dan Fodio, his followers granted him the title "Amir-al- Mu'miniinah" or leader of the faithful. He also got many visitors including al-Hajj Umar, who was on his way home from Hajji.

By the time of his death in 1844, Sehu Ahmadu had extended his authority and influence of Islam to over the eastern and western regions of the Niger and the banks of the Volta River and the Suru in the south up to Timbuktu.

After his death, Sehu Ahmadu was succeeded by a string of rulers, who did not hold the Empire together as Sehu Ahmadu had done. Thus, the influence of Islam again went down scale until the empire fell into hands of another religious reformist Al-Hajji Umar. Al-Hajj Umar waged a Jihad against the Massina authorities and captured Hamdallahi.

## **EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MASSINA JIHAD OF SEHU AHMADU**

**Question:     Assess the effectiveness of the Jihad of Sehu Ahmadu.**

Sheikh or Sehu Ahmadu's Jihad was the second in Western Sudan in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century after the Sokoto Jihads of Uthman Dan Fodio. Sehu Ahmadu's Jihad took place between 1818 and 1844 in Massina where the Muslim Fulani and Soninke lived side by side with pagan Bambara, Bozo, and pastrolists Fulani; hence the name Massina Jihads.

The Massina Jihads were considered effective because of the success the jihadists registered and because of the positive reforms that were instituted in the Islamic Empire

after the Jihad.

1. After the success of the Massina Jihads, Sehu Ahmadu was able to build an empire based on Islamic lines that were planned by God, implemented by the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) and perfected by the four rightly guided caliphs. The features of the established Islamic state made historians regard it as the most genuine Islamic state ever established in West Africa.
2. Before his death in 1844, Sehu Ahmadu was able to establish a well-organized administration based on firm Islamic principles. He was the head of the empire and was assisted by a council of 40 governors who were mainly scholars in Islam. His administration was indeed largely guided by the teachings of Islam.
3. For effective administration, Sehu Ahmadu divided the empire into five provinces he called emirates and appointed a governor or Emir as the head of each province, assisted by a judge (Qadhi). The two, together, were assigned with establishing law and order along the Islamic lines based on the Qur'an and Hadith. They were able to ensure that fair play and justice prevailed on the land.
4. The appointed Emir was an inspector of public morals who was to promote honesty and morality of the people. He was also to administer the taxation system; that is; the Zakat by making sure that it was properly collected without inflicting any harm on the people.
5. Sheikh Ahmadu reinforced the administration of Zakat by establishing the Bait ul-Mal in each province, which became the state bank. The tax was divided according to Islamic teaching and portion of it was used to maintain the poor and the needy. No one of his predecessors had organized and administered Zakat as he did; thus the effectiveness of his Jihad.
6. Sehu Ahmadu succeeded in creating a theocratic government based on the laws of God as laid in the Qur'an and Hadith. He also centralized the state with a supreme body which governed the whole nation.
7. Sheikh Ahmad also succeeded in creating a genuine Muslim state which unified a number of small Bambara, Arma and Songhai kingdoms into a single highly centralized Fulani Islamic Empire of Massina which lasted up to 1862.
8. Unlike Uthman Dan Fodio, Sheikh Ahmadu was actually involved in the direct supervision of the affairs of the people in the Empire. He also actively participated in Jihad and commanded his forces. After his success, Ahmadu established the Islamic state that had all the characteristics of the Islamic state.
9. Sheikh Ahmad also paid attention to military matters that he established a military force in each province. The army ensured security of the empire and facilitated further dissemination of Islam among the natives.
10. The judges or Qadhis from the different provinces of the empire formed a council of state of the Shura council kind and chaired by Sheikh Ahmad himself. This was a sort of parliament of the state responsible for designing policies and implementing them. Thus all the Islamic Affairs of Massina were planned by this supreme organ of the state.

11. Following the Jihad, the dissemination of Islam was held with high esteem in Massina as it became the primary goal of the Amir al- Mu'miniinah. Islam was systematically preached and many pagans of Bozo, Sono and Bambara got immersed into the Islamic faith and culture.
12. In Matters of infrastructures, Sehu Ahmadu built many mosques and schools to promote education. These mosques and schools were fully funded by the government and the students who graduated from these schools helped to keep the flag of Islam up.
13. Shiekh Ahmadu succeeded in improving the moral life of the people of Massina based on Islamic principles. On the moral aspect of the people, an official was appointed to oversee public moral so that people caught drinking alcohol, smoking, dancing and committing adultery would be severely punished.
14. Sheikh Ahmad also passed a ruling to the effect that alcoholic drinks and smoking were totally prohibited in the Empire. Music was also unheard of in the Massina Empire.
15. Sheikh Ahmad also succeeded in making people accept the strict code of Islam because Ahmadu himself was a humble and pious man. He obeyed the laws of the faith of Islam just like other pious people before him and listened to the opinions of great and learned men.
16. Sheikh Ahmad succeeded in setting up a fund to support and cater for the widows, orphans, the aged and the pilgrims to Mecca. From this fund also, Sehu was able to pay pensions of the military personnel and other state officials.
17. After the Jihad, towns in the whole of the Massina state were cleansed up of the vices that had been brought about by unlawlessness in the pagan Bambara and pre-jihad Massina communities.
18. With the jihad, Sheikh Ahmad was able to do away with the oppressive chiefly classes of the pagan Bambara states. He provided his supporters with the necessary religious zeal and commitment which enabled them to overthrow the bad and pagan rulers in Bambara and Massina.
19. Sheikh Ahmad also succeeded in bringing up a just administration free of corruption, introduced good laws and fair taxation policy based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. This was the direct opposite of the defeated Bambara and Massina leadership which was very corrupt and inefficient.
20. Shiekh Ahmadu made an important contribution to Islamic Culture and education in the Massina Empire. He promoted Islamic religion by laying emphasis of the reformist ideas of the Jihad and attached much importance to an administration run on Islamic lines.

## THE SUCCESS OF MASSINA JIHADS

**Question:** Account for the success of Sehu Ahmadu's Massina Jihads.

Sehu Ahmadu's Massina Jihads were the second of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jihads in West Africa.

They were staged between 1818 in Massina; and led to the establishment of the Massina Empire that engulfed the whole of the river region of West Africa between Jenne and Timbuktu.

The reasons for the success of the Massina Jihads that resulted in formation of Sehu Ahmadu's Massina Empire included the following: -

1. Sehu Ahmadu's participation in the early stages of the Sokoto Jihads in Gobir under Uthman Dan Fodio, enhanced and inspired him to go and stage another Jihad in Massina. In fact, he had witnessed how the Sokoto Jihad had been staged.
2. There was also the continued influence of Sokoto scholars and Jihadists on Massina. These scholars and Jihadists influenced both Sehu Ahmadu and his followers by giving them the necessary encouragement and tactics that helped them overcome their pagan counterparts.
3. The coalition made between King Ardo Diko of Massina who happened to be a Muslim and a pagan Chief Dadyara of Bambara also accounted for the success of Ahmadu's Jihad. This was due to the fact that most of the fighters of King Ardo Diko later left the coalition and joined Sehu Ahmadu. This broke down the coalition and the pagan forces led by chief Dadyara were defeated by the Massina Jihadists.
4. Sehu Ahmadu received blessings from Uthman Dan Fodio by posting to him flags to declare the Jihad. This moral support inspired and made Ahmadu feel morally obliged to act and win the war staged against the Massina and Bambara pagans.
5. The presence of oppressive rulers to the people of Bambara states also accounted for the success of the Jihad. The people of Jenne and the Bambara states rallied behind Sehu Ahmadu to fight and defeat the oppressive regimes of the Bambara rulers. So, the success of the Massina Jihad was a result of getting massive support from the discontented elements of the people.
6. Muktar, one of the 18<sup>th</sup> century scholars in Massina belonging to Qadiriyyah Brotherhood, through his teachings had prepared grounds for the success of Ahmad's Jihad. His teachings left the masses aroused and ready for revolutionary tendencies, which Sehu Ahmadu exploited to carry out successful Jihad.
7. Sehu Ahmadu's personality as a scholar and teacher also helped him to succeed in his Jihad. He used his teaching to enlighten the masses of what was taking place in Massina. This enlightenment, in turn provided his supporters with the necessary zeal and commitment with which they fought a successful Jihad.
8. Sehu Ahmadu launched propaganda throughout the Massina land that was instrumental to the success of his Jihad. He traveled widely while at the same time sent missionaries far and wide promising reforms to the masses if the Jihad succeeded. The masses overwhelmingly supported Ahmad in carrying out a successful Jihad.
9. Sehu Ahmadu was a charismatic and able leader, who frequently interacted with the victorious Sokoto Jihadists; who provided him with the necessary military knowledge and tactics in mobilizing the masses. He indeed used these leadership qualities to launch a successful Jihad.

10. Sehu Ahmadu and his men got inspired by the Sokoto Jihad. Ahmadu himself had been in Sokoto before the declaration of his Jihad. He and his men learnt several tactics as well as acquiring the necessary military knowledge that was needed for the success of the Massina Jihad.
11. The Massina Jihadists had very strong military personnel and also had an outstanding army that was unmatched and would not be compared to a generally weak and disunited Bambara and Massina warriors who could not put up stiff resistances against Ahmadu and his men.
12. The Massina Jihadists were well organized as opposed to the people they were fighting against. Such brilliant element of organization in addition to a high degree of unity exhibited by the Jihadists was vital in propelling them to success. For instance, at one time King Ardo Diko of Massina broke off from a coalition with chief Dadyara of Bambara rendering their ranks very weak.
13. The Massina Jihadists had an overwhelming vigour and determination to conquer Massina that they portrayed themselves as reformers; people of Massina area were waiting for. This religious zeal enabled the Jihadists to overthrow the Pagan rulers of Bambara and unIslamic leaders of Massina.
14. In the process of fighting, Sehu Ahmadu attacked Massina states at once. This worked to the advantage of the Jihadists as the disorganized Bambara pagans were isolated and could not help each other as they were all engaged.
15. Sehu Ahmadu also had a chance of being called upon by the people of Jenne and Massina to take over their areas and protect them from the oppressive rule of their rulers. This goodwill of the people helped to lead the Massina Jihadists to success.
16. The fact that Sehu Ahmadu easily re-asserted the influence of the scholars following period of Islamic stagnation accounted for the success of Massina Jihad. He supported them, and hence they helped guide the Jihad with uniform ideals with which people struggled for.
17. The role of the Qadiriyyah brotherhood which Sehu Ahmadu cherished cannot be overlooked. The Massina Jihadists used the Qadiriyyah teaching to cement people's relationships through bringing them together for a common cause. The Jihadists felt obliged to cause change and reformation of the society through launching a successful Jihad.
18. Sehu Ahmadu carried out a Hejirah, when he migrated to Sebera. With this Hejira, he managed to escape the plots which Ardo, the Massina king had planned against him. This enabled his movement to continue existing with strong leadership in the person of Sehu Ahmadu.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF MASSINA EMPIRE UNDER SEHU AHMADU.**

**Question:** Describe the administration of the Massina Empire under Sehu.

Sehu Ahmadu was a great scholar, Muslim leader and reformer. He became reknown when he led the second Jihad in Western Sudan in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century after the Sokoto Jihad by Uthman Dan Fodio.

Sehu Ahmadu's Jihad took place in Massina where the Muslim Fulani and Soninke lived side by side with the Pagan Bambara, Bozo and pagan pastoral Fulani. Thus, Ahmadu's Jihad came to be known as the Massina Jihads.

Using the Massina Jihads, Sehu Ahmadu was able to create a new empire of Massina covering the eastern and western regions of the Niger, the banks of the Volta River and the Suru in the south up to Timbuktu. He established his capital at Hamdallahi.

After establishing the Massina Empire, Sehu Ahmadu built a well organized administration based on the firm Islamic principles and lines that were commanded by Allah, implemented by the Prophet (P.B.U.H) and perfected by the four rightly guided caliphs.

Sehu Ahmadu was the head of the Massina Empire and he was assisted by a council of 40 governors, who were mainly Muslim scholars. His administration was indeed largely guided by the teachings of Islam.

For effective administration, Sehu Ahmadu divided the empire into five provinces he called Emirates. He went on to appoint a governor or Emir as the head of each province, assisted by a judge. (Qadhi)

The Emir and Qadhi, together, were assigned the duty of establishing law and order along the Islamic lines based on the Qur'an and Hadith. They were also entrusted with ensuring that fair play and justice prevailed in the land.

The appointed Emir was also to act as an inspector of Public morals, who was to promote honesty and morality of the people. He was also to administer the taxation system; that is, the Zakat, by making sure that it is properly collected without inflicting any harm on the people.

The Massina state was governed by a grand council of forty scholars. This council had executive, legislative and judicial powers for the state. There was also a secret or privacy council consisting of three people – Ahmadu himself and two other members from the grand council.

In case the grand council conflicted with the privacy council of the three, a council of 40 people from the sixty members and independent scholars chosen at random sat as arbitrators and their decision was taken as final.

Sehu Ahmadu passed a ruling to effect that all councilors to the governing councils must have reached a mystic (Sufi) age of forty (40) years.

Sehu Ahmadu paid great attention to military matters that he established a military force in each province of the Empire. The army ensured security of the empire. With security guaranteed, Islam spread.

The judges or Qadhis from the different provinces of the empire formed a council of state of the Shura council kind and chaired by Sehu Ahmadu himself. With this council, law and justice were observed in the Empire.

The Council of state was also a sort of state parliament and was responsible for designing policies and implementing them. Thus, all the Islamic affairs of the Massina empire were planned by this supreme organ of the state.



Sehu Ahmadu created a genuine Muslim state which united a number of small Bambara, Arma and Songhai kingdoms into a single highly centralized Fulani Islamic empire of Massina.

Sehu Ahmadu set up an efficient system of administration highly observing Islamic law based on the Qur'an and Hadith. This meant that he succeeded in establishing a theocratic government.

Sehu Ahmadu ensured loyalty of his people by ruling the empire with the title of "Amir al-Mu'miniin, which meant "Leader of faithful." With this title, all members of the ruling councils closely respected his orders and guidance.

He instituted an organized state treasury. The basis of the income of this treasury was the taxes that were raised within the state. The sources of income were taxes raised from harvests, war booty, fines, confiscation and legacies.

Sehu Ahmadu reinforced the administration of Zakat by establishing the Bait ul-Mal in each province, which became the state bank. The tax was divided according to Islamic teachings and a portion of it was used to maintain the poor and the needy.

Sehu Ahmadu held the dissemination of Islam with high esteem in Massina as it became the primary goal of the Amir al- Mu'miniin. Islam was systematically preached and many pagans of Bozo, Sono and Bambara embraced Islam.

Sehu Ahmadu also succeeded in making people accept the strict code of Islam because he himself was a humble and a pious man. He obeyed the laws of the faith just like other men and listened to their opinions.

Sehu Ahmadu set up a fund to support and cater for the widows, orphans, the aged and the pilgrims to Mecca. From this fund, also Sehu was able to pay pension of the military personnel and other state officials.

Sehu Ahmadu organized official spies with the intention of freeing his administration of corrupt members and officials. Indeed he set up a just administration free of corruption. He also introduced good laws and fair taxation policy based on the teaching of the Qur'an and Hadith.

Sehu Ahmadu established state controlled granaries throughout the state. These granaries were intended to provide food during hard times like drought seasons and during times of war. He also ordered his people to set up granaries in their homesteads.

Sehu Ahmadu created a strong education system and an Islamic culture in Massina Empire based on Islamic discipline. He promoted Islamic religion and education by laying emphasis on the reformist ideas.

The features of the Islamic state that Sehu Ahmadu established made historians to regard Maccina Empire as the most genuine Islamic state ever established in West Africa.

## THE TOKOLOR OR TIJJAN JIHADS OF AL-HAJJ UMAR

## THE CAREER OF AL-HAJJ UMAR

**Question:** Examine the career of Al- Hajj Umar.

Al- Hajj Umar was a Tokolor, born in Futa-Toro in 1794. He was born in a well educated family and his father was a Tokolor Scholar .Umar himself was a well educated scholar in Islamic science; though he got his elementary education from his family.

Al-Hajj Umar was a much traveled man who visited many places like Turkey and Egypt. He also made pilgrimage to Mecca in 1826, where he was initiated into the Tijaniyyah Sufi Brotherhood, which was one of the Muslim factions determined to spread and strengthen the Islamic faith.

Due to his movements, he witnessed two of the greatest Islamic movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These were the Wahabi struggle in Arabia and the revolution of Muhammad Ali of Egypt against the Turkish.

Later, Umar returned from Pilgrimage to his home making a stopover for some time in Sokoto, spending several years with Muhammad Bello, son and one of the top commanders of Uthman Dan Fodio. He even married one of the daughters of Bello; therefore, Umar was a disciple of Dan Fodio.

While in Sokoto, Al-Hajj Umar assisted Bello in the campaign against evil. This greatly influenced the personality of Umar and prepared him to revolutionise Islam against evil in Western Sudan as he was exposed to the methods of carrying out a Jihad while in Sokoto.

Because he had been a Khalifa and head of Tijaniyyah Sufi Order in Western Sudan, Umar made extensive tours to several places between 1839 and 1848, preaching Islam in Tokolor and Mandinka states, urging people to turn to pure Islam.

He preached equality and justice, attacked Muslims and non-Muslim chiefs who oppressed their subjects and condemned them of mixing Islamic practices with paganism. Indeed, he influenced many people to convert to Islam; especially to his Tijaniyyah order. His fame too, increased as he initiated the former members of the Qadiriyyah into his Tijaniyyah Brotherhood.

This move strengthened him and made him more obliged to declare a Jihad. Basing in Segu, he was expelled in 1848 by the leaders of the Qadiriyyah Brotherhood who had ruled since the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and regarded Umar's preaching and activities as a direct attack on them.

Like the previous leaders – Dan Fodio and Sehu Ahmadu – Al-Hajj Umar also resorted to performing Hejira; first to Kangaba, before he settled in Dinguiray. He continued teaching Islam and also stressing the importance of his Tijaniyyah Brotherhood. He received disciples and students from many parts of West Africa whom he gave good training and armed them with guns.

Having carefully prepared himself and filling his soldiers with religious propaganda, he first turned to meditation for forty days asking Allah for His vision and assistance before he declared a Jihad against all infidels in 1852.

Using Dinguiray as his headquarters, Al-Hajj Umar attacked the northern areas and conquered Tamba, then took over the states of Bambuku in 1854 and Kaarta in 1857. He

then turned his Jihad to the French imperialists who were viewed as more dangerous than the black pagans, but Umar's forces were defeated at the battle of Medinah in 1857.

Having been defeated by the French, he turned his attention eastwards and attacked the powerful town of Bambara state of Segou which he overran in 1861. He then advanced to the Fulani state of Massina created twenty years earlier by Sehu Ahmadu in spite of it being a Muslim state.

Umar justified his actions and attack against Massina by claiming that they were hypocrites. Ahmadu III of Massina had made an alliance with the pagan rulers of Segou and therefore deserved to be treated like a pagan. He also wanted to spread his Tijaniyyah Brotherhood and end the Qadiriyyah teachings there.

However, his attempt to introduce the Tijaniyyah Brotherhood in an area that was dominated by Qadiriyyah came to no avail as it was resisted by the Massina authorities. In the struggles that ensued between Tokolor and Massina in 1864, Al-Hajj Umar was killed.

Before his death, Al-Hajj Umar had nominated his son Ahmadu as his successor. At the time, the Tokolor Empire covered a very large territory around Niger and Senegal Rivers. It also had all the qualities of a modern state and an Islamic culture.

Ahmad, Umar's successor, faced many difficulties throughout his reign of power. His own brother and other governors waged a war against him perhaps aiming at regaining the states Umar had conquered so as to become independent rulers.

Ahmadu was also disturbed by the French when they incessantly attacked the Empire and finally defeated him. He fled to Nyoro in 1884, then to Sokoto where death claimed him in 1893. The Tokolor Empire continued to exist until 1898 when the French overran it.

## EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TIJJAN/TOKOLOR JIHADS.

**Question:** Assess the effectiveness of the Tokolor Jihads under the leadership of Al-Hajj Umar.

Al-Hajj Umar was born in 1794 in Futa Toto in Tokolor, where there were several pagan states like Segu and Kaarta which lived along side the Tokolor Muslim states of Futa-Toro, Futa-Bondu and Futa-Jalon.

The existence of the Muslim states along side the pagan ones inspired Al-Hajj Umar to carry out an Islamic revolution. This revolution or Jihad took place in Tokolor; and hence, came to be known as the Tokolor Jihads of Al-Hajj Umar. They were also called the Tijjan Jihads because their leader Al-Hajj Umar was also the head of Tijaniyyah Sufi Brotherhood.

The Tokolor Jihads could be considered effective basing the following reasons.

1. Al-Hajj Umar was successful in launching the Jihad and subsequently establishing the Islamic Empire that emphasized strict observance of the teachings of Islam.
2. Between 1839 and 1848, using Futa-Jalon base Al-Hajj Umar made a number of preaching tours among the Mandinka and Tokolor. In his preaching, he initiated the former members of the Qadiriyyah into his Tijaniyyah Brotherhood.
3. Al-Hajj Umar's preaching of equality and justice, attacking Muslim and non-Muslim chiefs who oppressed their subjects and condemned mixing Islamic practice with paganism, helped to increase his fame and converted many people to Islam.
4. Al-Hajj Umar succeeded in establishing a capital at Dinguiray where he based to conquer Bambuku and Kaarta. He also captured Segu and the Fulani state of Massina.

However, on a far greater extent, the Tokolor Jihads cannot be considered effective because of the problems the Jihadists encountered in executing their Jihad: -

1. Al-Hajj Umar tried to extend his Jihad to the Fulani state of Massina after accusing the Muslims there of being hypocrites. He was however resisted by the Massina authorities.
2. Al-Hajj Umar also made attempts to impose his Tijaniyyah beliefs and practices in Massina; an area dominated by Qadiriyyah. He also wanted to end the Qadiriyyah teaching there. However, his attempts came to no avail as he was resisted by the Massina authorities. In fact, Umar lost his life in the struggle that ensued.
3. At one time during his Jihad, Al-Hajj Umar turned against the French imperialists, who he had viewed as being more dangerous than the black pagans, but his forces were defeated at the battle of Medinah in 1857.
4. At one point, also, Al-Hajj Umar's Tokolor Empire covered a very large territory around Niger and Senegal Rivers. The Empire had all the qualities of a modern Islamic state. However, Al-Hajj Umar was killed as he was attempting to impose his Tijaniyyah doctrines over the people of Segu in 1864.
5. Although Al-Hajj Umar succeeded in establishing the Tokolor Empire having the qualities of an Islamic state, his successor Ahmadu did not consolidate it as his own

brothers and other governors waged a war aiming at creating independent empires.

6. The death of Umar did not spare his charismatic nature and ability, which left the Tokolor Empire in a state of anguish. He died when he was still struggling to combat evil in Massina and their pagan allies.
7. There was a problem of the local chiefly classes who were opposed to Al-Hajj Umar's Tokolor expansionist policies. As opponents to Umar, the chiefly classes allied with the French in order to crush the Tokolor Empire.
8. Al-Hajj Umar did not succeed in doing away with the nominal Muslims, who continued to exist throughout his lifetime. These played a double standard role behaving like Muslims in the open but when they were away from the public, they allied with pagan chiefs to oppose Islamic movements.
9. The Tokolor or Tijjan Jihads brought about with them ideological conflict between the Qadiriyyah scholars and Tijaniyyah Brotherhood which was the major order for Tokolor. This conflict therefore hindered a united action.
10. The Jihadists who staged the Tokolor Jihads were divided regarding their attitudes towards Umar. Some were scholars of Qadiriyyah order yet others were believers in Tijaniyyah brotherhood. The Qadiriyyah leaders and followers were often Umar's strongest opponents.
11. Al-Hajj Umar was fooled into accepting cooperation with the French that enabled him to further his territorial expansion with minimal barrier. However, his principle of equality of man as laid in the Tijaniyyah order scared the French. The French broke the initial cooperation with Al-Hajj Umar, who they considered worse living with ruling chiefly classes in the area.

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY JIHAD MOVEMENTS.

**Question:** Examine the relationship between the 19<sup>th</sup> century Jihad movements in West Africa.

A Jihad is a holy defensive war waged by Muslim reformers against injustices in the society aimed at spreading purifying and strengthening Islam.

The Nineteenth Century saw a wave of Jihads in Western Sudan region, however, three were more profound. The 1804 Sokoto Jihads of Uthman Dan Fodio, the 1818 Maccina Jihads of Sehu (Sheikh) Ahmadu and the 1851 Tokolor or Tijjan Jihads of Al-Hajj Umar.

Although the 19<sup>th</sup> century Jihads in West Africa took place at different times of the century, they had several similarities and differences between their mode of operation and the way they were carried out.

### SIMILARITIES

The 19<sup>th</sup> century Jihads in West Africa had areas in which they were similar.

1. The Jihadists of the Sokoto, Maccina and Tokolor Jihads had similar aims; that was to purify and strengthen Islam that had been greatly adulterated with evil practices. They also aimed at spreading Islam to the people who had not been converted to it.
2. Though Sehu Ahmadu created the most genuine Islamic state ever established in West Africa, his government and that of Al-Hajj Umar copied the examples of Uthman Dan Fodio of dividing their empires into provinces or emirates, each under a governor or Emir to administer law and order.
3. All leaders of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century West African Jihads were Fulani; that is why their movements are commonly known as the Fulani Jihads. However, much as all leaders were Fulani their uprisings were not driven by ethnical prejudice.
4. The Maccina and the Tokolor Jihads were influenced by the Sokoto Jihads. For instance, Sehu Ahmadu, while searching for more knowledge on Islamic science, he got into contact with the disciples of Dan Fodio, who taught and stimulated him into starting a Jihad.

Likewise, Al-Hajj Umar of the Tokolor Jihad made a stopover in Sokoto, as he was returning from Mecca for Pilgrimage, spending several years with Muhammad Bello, son and one of the commanders of Dan Fodio.

5. The spirit of the three Jihads was killed by the imperialist's designs, who were fighting tooth and nail to uproot the Islamic systems and establish the colonialist influence in West Africa. The Sokoto Jihads were dominated by the British; while the Massina and Tijjan systems were dominated by the French.
6. The leaders of Jihads used the influence and participation of their tribesmen to gain success in their endeavours. For instance and in fact, the Fulani greatly participated in the Sokoto, Maccina and Tokolor Jihads. Thus, the success of these Jihads was greatly attributed to the support rendered by their kinsmen.
7. All the 19<sup>th</sup> Century religious movements resulted in creation of a uniform system of

administration based on Islamic culture. For instance, in all empires – Sokoto, Massina and Tokolor were purely Islamic states built on a firm foundation of emirates under Emirs, Qadhis and consultative councils, which were Islamic in nature and of a Shura system.

8. In all the three Jihads, the attack was first directed to animists, pagans and nominal Muslims and then to the Muslims who allied with pagan leaders against the Jihadists.
9. In all the three jihads, their leaders used the idea of Hejira as a method of avoiding danger of persecution by the then pagan leaders. Uthman Dan Fodio made Hejira from Gobir to Gudu; Sehu Ahmadu moved from Jenne to Sebera; while Al-Hajj Umar moved from Futa Jalon to Dinguiray.
10. All the three Jihads took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century; as such, they came to be known as the 19<sup>th</sup> Century West African Jihads. This state of affair showed that evil was rampant in West Africa in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

## DIFFERENCES

However, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Jihads in West Africa had a number of differences:-

1. After completion of the Jihad, Uthman Dan Fodio retired to his home and never participated in the administration of the empire apart from giving advice to his officers. Sehu Ahmadu and Al-Hajj Umar actively participated in the general administration of their empires as leaders.
2. The Massina and Tijjan (Tokolor) Islamic empires were completely eroded away by French imperialism which was fighting to wipe out Islam in West Africa and replace it with Christianity. The Sokoto Empire, though dominated by the British, had no direct confrontation with the imperialists. In fact the British hoped to use the Sokoto leaders to foster the British indirect rule system of administration.
3. The leaders of the Jihads belonged to different Islamic brotherhoods and this made their Jihads follow their lines of thinking. Uthman Dan Fodio and Sehu Ahmadu belonged to the Qadiriyyah Brotherhood whereas Al-Hajj Umar belonged to the Tijaniyyah Brotherhood. In fact at one time Al-Hajj Umar attacked the Maccina state trying to influence people there to his Tijaniyyah Brotherhood.
4. Uthman Dan Fodio never commanded his force in the battlefield but simply gave advice through writing pamphlets. On the other hand, Umar and Ahmadu were real commanders of their forces in the battlefield; actually Al-Hajj Umar died while fighting against the Maccina state.
5. Whereas Uthman Dan Fodio and Sehu Ahmadu never used force to turn people to Qadiriyyah Brotherhood, Al-Hajj Umar at one time employed force to seize Hamdullahi and turn people there to Tijaniyyah Brotherhood. In fact, he died in the battle field unlike the first two Sheikhs.
6. Unlike Dan Fodio, who was an intellectual and spiritual guidance ruler, Sehu Ahmadu and Al-Hajj Umar were militants in their organization which explains the success and failures of these Jihads.
7. The Sokoto and Maccina Jihads accorded the scholars much more prestige than

warriors. In Tokolor Jihads, the warriors stood in higher prestigious positions in the face of the Jihadists than the scholars.

8. The Sokoto Jihad was largely an intellectual movement where Uthman Dan Fodio, Abdallahi and Muhammad Bello acted as idealists, poets, historians, writers and thinkers. Umar stressed continued warfare while Sehu Ahmadu combined both intellectual and military operations to advance his cause.
9. Both Maccina and Tokolor Jihads had something to copy from the Sokoto Jihads; yet the latter did not copy anything from the former. Both Al-Hajj Umar and Sehu Ahmadu visited Sokoto before they declared Jihads in their areas.
10. Al-Hajj Umar of the Tijjan Jihads directly clashed with the colonialists; that is; the French imperialists that were seriously advancing in the area in a bid to conquer Africans. Uthman Dan Fodio and Sehu Ahmadu never had such direct clashes although the French contributed to the collapse of the Massina Empire.

## **IMPACT OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY JIHADS**

**Question:** Discuss the impact of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jihads on the people of West Africa.

The 19<sup>th</sup> Century West Africa Jihads were declared against all those who stood in the way of Islam like the nominal Muslims and the pagan leaders. They were fought between 1800 and 1880 and had a great impact on the peoples of West Africa.

### **POSITIVE EFFECTS**

1. The Jihads led to the formation of large powerful political states or empires in West Africa, comparable to the ancient glorious empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhai. Small states and principalities were converted into large empires like the Sokoto Caliphate of Uthman Dan Fodio, Sehu Ahmadu's Maccina Caliphate, the Tokolor Empire of Al-Hajj Umar and the Mandinka Empire of Samori Toure.
2. The Jihads led to the extensive conversions of the pagans to Islam and at the same time strengthening the faith of those nominally attached to Islam. Furthermore, Islam was spread to areas where it did not exist before. The dominance of Islam in West Africa today is largely a result of these Jihads.
3. The Jihads led to the revival and purification of Islam. The teachings of the Qur'an of equality justice and helping the poor were greatly encouraged by the governments established by Jihadist. Thus, true Islamic Judicial, political and institutions were established.
4. The success of the Jihads accounted for the decline of the African traditional religions. Leaders of the traditional religion and other people who refused to embrace Islam were executed. Idol worshipping and shrines were demolished and replaced with mosques.
5. The West Africa Jihads controlled the spread of Christianity in West Africa. That is why over 60% of West African population are Muslims. European Christian missionaries were deterred from entering the Muslim controlled and dominated areas. Christianity mainly operated at the coast where the influence of Jihads had not been felt.



6. The political units which were established; like Sokoto, Maccina, Tokolor and Mandinka Empires had better administrative machinery than the old regimes. These political units were more just, peaceful, orderly and less corrupt. This was a remarkable achievement for the Jihadist government.
7. The Jihads came with them a new blood of political leaders. Uncommon and disregarded men like Uthman Dan Fodio, Samori Toure of the Mandinka, Sehu Ahmadu of Massina and Al-Hajj Umar of Tokolor were able to replace the old hated corrupt pagan rulers.
8. Another impact of the Jihads was the formation of states that became formidable enough to resist European infiltration. Jihads united the masses behind their leaders and they also became a tool for the defence of their territories against the imperialists. That is why Samori Toure was able to give a resounding challenge and resistance to French.
9. As a result of the Jihad movements, a new order of administration was created in West Africa. Jihadists created centralized system of administration and ruled in accordance to the requirements of the Qur'an. In Sokoto caliphate, provinces called Emirates and ruled by Emirs were created for efficient governance. When the British took over this land, they maintained the emirates in their indirect rule system.
10. After the Jihads had ended, peace, tranquility, unity and stability flourished in West Africa. Interstate wars were brought to an end as the smaller states were merged to form bigger ones. Thus, there was internal security in the Islamic government states and empires.
11. Another effect of the Jihads was in the field of education. The Jihads greatly expanded and cherished Islamic literacy especially in Hausa and Fulani speaking areas. This was due to the fact that the leaders of these Jihads were Muslim scholars who wanted very much Islam to be taught.
12. In the field of education, also, Islamic schools were built especially in Southern areas of Western Sudan. Islamic education became very strong and prevented the spread of Western education into West Africa until recently.
13. The Jihads led to the undertaking of education in Muslim beliefs which led to intellectualism. The once closed Islamic universities of Gao, Timbuktu and Sankore were re-opened. Many other Islamic and Qur'anic institutions that emphasized Islamic Law and philosophy were also established.
14. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jihads produced the first elite group of Africa in Western Sudan. Men like Al-Hajj Umar, Uthman Dan Fodio and Muhammad Bello wrote numerous books on Islam and Muslim beliefs to justify their activities and aims of educating people.
15. Because Muslims of West Africa were always associated with Arabia and Muslim North Africa, Arabic culture and language easily spread in the region. Books written by Muslim scholars in Arabic were distributed in schools and Arabic language became the official language and Linguafranca for the created Islamic states.
16. Many libraries and learning centers in areas like Sokoto and Segou were built; as Qur'anic schools were widely spread to cater for the education of the children. Through this

education, Islam was able to spread.

17. With peace prevailing in the Sokoto Caliphate, commercial and industrial activities boomed. For instance, the growing of cotton, Kola nuts, palm oil etc, were greatly supported and encouraged. This greatly boosted agriculture in the region which in turn supported the lucrative industry.
18. The Jihads helped the new empires to restructure their economy, whereby the new leaders revived the Trans-Sahara trade that had declined. They, however, chose to have trade links with fellow Muslim North Africa traders rather than trading with the predominantly pagan south where European Christians were based.
19. The new economic order encouraged the Islamic state to develop agriculture, pottery and industries. For instance, cotton and textile industries were established in Kano; while the city of Zaria became famous for pottery.
20. In the Sokoto Caliphate, the triumphant Jihadists encouraged the Fulani pastoralists to carry out settled agriculture. Since it was the Fulani who played a key role in the Jihads, when they succeeded, government revenues were used to settle the Fulani.
21. The Jihads led to the stabilization and efficient management of the economy in the Islamic states. These Islamic states started abolishing the unlawful taxes and levied taxes that were stipulated in the Holy Qur'an. Corruption and mismanagement of the state funds that had characterized the pagan regimes were also stopped.
22. With the booming trade and other commercial activities and establishment of market centres, there was development of new towns and commercial centres like Kano, Sokoto, Katsina, Hamdullahi and many others. These towns improved people's social well being in the area.
23. There was improvement on the moral standards of the people; and this opened up a new chapter to the good social behaviour based on Islamic doctrines and principles. In the post Jihad states, immorality like drunkardness, prostitution and other social evils were strongly condemned and severely punishable under strict measures designed to purify Islam.
24. The Jihads led to better moral behaviours because of the punitive measures and punishments that were administered for some crimes. There was a tremendous reduction in adultery, fornication, taking alcohol and smoking. Veiling by women and putting on turbans by men became mandatory.
25. Tribalistic loyalties were replaced by loyalty to Muslim brotherhoods based on showing good qualities of a Muslim; like moral uprightness; no matter how much one was learned, popular or wealthy. The Jihads, therefore, created cohesion among the West African populace.
26. Non-Muslims, though always influenced to Islam, were accorded due respect and were allowed to pray according to their traditions. They were, however, supposed to pay a certain tax called Jiziya for protection. It was because of this gesture that the great shrine at Choko for non-Muslims remained intact even after the Jihads.
27. The Jihads, further led to the overthrow of the formerly despotic and inefficient rule

of Hausa aristocracy and led to the creation of a better administration based on Sharia. In this case, oppressive taxation system, arbitrary arrests and unfair laws especially those against the noble teaching of Islam, were stamped out.

28. The Jihad movements also gave birth to Africa Nationalism in West Africa. The spread of Islam led to the emergence of revolutionary people, like Samori Toure, who instilled a sense of brotherhood and belongingness among his people. This cemented unity within people of different cultural groups and against colonial intrusion in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.
29. The success of the Jihads in some parts of West Africa encouraged; yet other Jihads to break out. For instance when Uthman Dan Fodio's Jihad that began in 1804, was heading for success, it encouraged yet other Jihads to be fought among the Bambara, Illorin, Maccina and Mandinka.

### **NEGATIVE EFFECTS**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century Jihads had some negative effects of the people of Western Sudan as follows:

1. The Jihads led to the destruction of many kingdoms and states. Where these new empires and states were formed, the old states and kingdoms were destroyed; for instance, the Hausa states were destroyed and replaced by the Sokoto Caliphate.
2. The Jihads created some divisions among the people of West Africa, even within the Muslim ranks. This could particularly be seen in Al-Hajj Umar's Caliphate, who made no distinction between outright non-Muslims and Muslims who did not belong to the Tijaniyyah brotherhood.
3. In their zeal to convert to Islam, the Jihadists sometimes used force which brought misery and untold suffering especially to those who were reluctant to join Islam.
4. The Jihads led to massive destruction of life and property during their course. Because of the continuous insecurity, the Trans-Saharan Trade and Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade were disrupted and were partly brought to a halt.
5. During the course of the formation of the Islamic states, there was chaos, turmoil and unrest. This political instability was witnessed in all territories that underwent Islamic revolution like in the Hausaland, Kanem-Bornu and Oyo.
6. The Islamic basis of the Jihads provided the states with Arabic as a national language and an Islamic culture. Though many Muslims from Muslim World flocked to the post Jihad caliphates and established learning centres for Islamic learning to improve intellectual awareness, the imperialists used this as a weakness. They translated many books of Christian religion to local languages understood by many people. Thus, some of the locals took to Christianity in favour of Islam.
7. There was revival of slave trade, where Muslims captured non-Muslims and sold or used them as slaves; yet the Islamic Law does not allow slave trade and slavery by the Muslims whether they dealt in pagans or non-Muslims. The slaves were sold to North Africa. This created enmity and, therefore, people were not willing to join Islam.
8. The Jihad movements also influenced Europeans to quickly take over the African

territories. The Missionaries serving in West Africa and European traders were alarmed of such revolutions. They called upon their home governments to give them protection. The European powers responded by fighting and defeating the Jihadists as a means of protecting and defending their nationals in West Africa.

9. The Jihads caused economic slump in some ways. At the time when the wars were going on, trading activities could not be carried out. Some businessmen pulled out or lost their merchandise. The new Islamic leaders discouraged having trade with the South Coast Merchants because they were European infidel merchants or pagan Africans, who were their enemies.
10. The Jihads resulted into a number of deaths, as many people were killed during the wars. Both pagan and Muslim in the forces were killed in the wars. Some civilians also died. After the establishment of the Islamic states, many people were executed for refusing to change to Islam or killed for breaking the laws governing Islamic principles.
11. There was the destruction of property and disruption of the family life. Some settlements and crops were destroyed. People fled their homes, which resulted into family break down. Famine also set in because crops had been destroyed and wartime could not allow normal cultivation to go ahead.
12. The Jihads resulted into antagonistic brotherhoods; like the Qadiriyyah and Tijaniyyah, that played to the disadvantages of Islam. They were irreconcilable and often quarreled with each other. The Tijaniyyah Brotherhood was mainly of highly educated members who under looked the Qadiriyyah who were less learned. Thus, these divisions accounted for easy defeat of the Muslims by European colonialists.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE INFLUENCE OF EUROPEAN OCCUPATION OF WEST AFRICA ON THE SPREAD OF ISLAM.

**Question:** Assess the impact of European occupation of West Africa on the spread and development of Islam in the region.

Because of the lucrative trade and the desire to get for themselves colonies, the Europeans took interest in occupying and exploiting West Africa. The European occupation of West Africa started during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in what came to be known as the scramble for Africa. It was basically the French and British who occupied West Africa; however their occupation had a great impact on the spread of Islam.

After the establishment of colonial rule in Africa, the colonial powers devised systems on which to govern their colonies. The British used Indirect Rule and the French used Assimilation Policy.

#### THE INDIRECT RULE SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION

The Indirect Rule is the system of administration under which traditional or local rulers were allowed to rule their people under the supervision of British officials. To the British point of view, the Indirect Rule system had an advantage of being inexpensive.

This system was devised by Fredrick Lugard because after reaching West Africa, he found out that he had an acute shortage of European trained personnel from home who could come to Africa to help him run the administration.

After a ruler had accepted the over-lordship, the British would confirm him in his position and let him continue to govern as before although they did restrict him to some extent.

#### EFFECT OF THE INDIRECT RULE SYSTEM TO SPREAD OF ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA

Despite Europeans going to West Africa to stamp out Islam from the region and replace it with Christianity and to foster their colonialistic tendencies, many things they did to promote colonialism in some ways favoured the spread of Islam.

1. In their early days of colonialism, the Europeans confirmed Muslim chiefs over the states their predecessors had conquered and placed others over the disorganized people. This was because Europeans had not yet understood the nature of authority Africans used among themselves. The chiefs the colonialists used helped in the rapid Islamisation of many pagan areas like Nupe, Illorin and Nigeria.
2. The Europeans pacified many areas by creating peaceful stable conditions free of slavery, interstate conflicts and civil wars. The peace created in the region enabled free movement of people from one area to another. The Muslims, too, exploited this chance to spread Islam to those areas where they went.
3. Europeans established free markets in Western Africa in which interaction between Muslims and other people became easy. These free markets became converting centers as Muslims and other people interacted freely and in the process Islam was

disseminated.

4. The European occupation of West Africa followed an Islamic revolution in form of Jihads in which Islam was spread, purified and strengthened. When the Europeans introduced Christianity, the Muslim agents moved to other regions which had been formerly isolated. In the process, Islam was spread to such areas.
5. The Europeans used chartered companies and commercial companies, like the Royal Niger Company, to colonise parts of West Africa. The Arab Muslim traders for fear of competing and antagonizing with the Europeans penetrated the region which had formerly been closed out of trade activities; in the process, Islam also spread in those areas.
6. The Europeans colonialists developed transport and communication by building roads, railways and ports. These facilities were intended to facilitate the movement of their troops, officials, traders and transportation of goods to and from the colonized countries. Nevertheless, the Muslims also used these facilities to spread Islam.
7. In the social field, the European colonialists finally laid to rest the evil trade in slaves that had labeled Arabs and Muslims a bad tag. The situation and environment created later showed the masses that Islam does not accept slavery. Therefore, the name of Islam that had been tarnished earlier on was improved.
8. The British imperialists were not fluent in speaking local languages of West Africa, yet the implementation of their policies needed people who knew the local languages and the African system of administration very well. Therefore the British resorted to indirect rule where African chiefs were left to govern their people. Many chiefs had converted to Islam; thus they used their positions to influence their subjects to Islam.
9. Similarly, when the colonialists arrived in West Africa, they found centralized states headed by Emirs (Muslim Governors). The British took advantage of the existing political setup to apply Indirect Rule. Accordingly, their powers were strengthened. These Emirs and Muslim chiefs used their positions to influence the locals to Islam.
10. Furthermore, the Emirs were allowed to continue collecting taxes for the treasury and to keep part of the taxes for local development. Emirs, thus, used some of the proceedings from taxes to fund Muslim activities like building mosques and schools.
11. The British system of Indirect Rule brought with it what the British colonialist desired. First, it was cheap; and secondly, it brought peace, order, harmony and development. The system stopped slave trade, wars and raids. Thus, people settled in peace. With peace prevailing; people interacted freely and in one way or the other, Muslims influenced others to Islam.
12. Some colonial masters were against Christian influence in Muslim dominated areas of West Africa; in fact they had warned scramblers to be very careful not to antagonize with Muslims. Captain Lugard, the then governor of Northern Province, also restricted missionaries from operating in predominantly Muslim areas of Northern Nigeria. This was a hindrance to Christianity and a blessing to Islam.
13. In demarcating areas of Influence for themselves, Europeans put people together in labour camps and in the same protectorates. This made interactions between

Muslims and other people easy. Muslims, who already knew that it was incumbent on them to pass Islam onto others, started preaching the faith to the non-Muslims.

14. The British established plantations of various crops such as rubber, groundnuts and palms. Many West Africans went to work on such projects in order to earn a living. Therefore, many young men got converted to Islam when they interacted with the Muslims they found there.
15. The secular forces which the Europeans went with in West Africa weakened the power of African traditional religious knowledge and their beliefs which were discredited as being un-Godly. This gave Islam a chance to penetrate pagan societies with much ease.
16. Where the British put up courts of Law, Muslims were employed in lower administrative positions; like being interpreters. This brought Muslims into contact with other people. Slowly, the pagans got used to the outward beauty of Islam and later accepted the faith.
17. The British applied very little supervision to the African chiefs who had accepted to work under the system. In this way, the British were able to govern huge areas using very few European officers. This was advantage to Islam because the already Islamised Chiefs continued to advance the cause of Islam.
18. Since the traditional rulers were generally allowed to continue ruling, there was very little change in day to day administration and so the spread and development of Islam in the already Islamised areas were not antagonized with.
19. Because the traditional political system was largely maintained, colonial conquest did far less damage to community life. This means that those Muslim scholars who were found on the work of spreading Islam continued doing so in broad daylight.
20. Indirect Rule was based on the belief that the already existing civilization was to be valued in its own right. This belief made it easier for the British to work with the local rulers as colleagues than superiors. This good relationship between the British and local chiefs made it easier for Islamised chiefs to use their positions to continue spreading Islam.
21. The system entrusted colonial administration to the native chiefs whose positions were rooted in people's customs and therefore commanded the loyalty of their people. This was good to Islam because the local people continued following the ways of their native chiefs.

## THE FRENCH SYSTEM OF COLONIAL RULE AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA

The French in governing Africa did favour direct control from Paris because they wanted to turn the people they ruled into Frenchmen and ultimately make colonies an integral part of France. Thus, the cornerstone of French colonial administration was **assimilation**.

**Assimilation** is derived from French verb “**Assimiler**” meaning to **cause something to resemble**. Therefore, this policy was designed to transfer to the French West African colonies all aspects of French political, social and economic organization or administration.

The Assimilation Policy aimed at turning people of the French colonies into French citizens by substituting their indigenous culture with French culture, language, law, civilization and religion.

The French, inspired by their republican slogan of liberty, equality and fraternity, presumed that all people were equal and those who were not equal to the French had to be assisted to reach that level.

To the French, their civilization was considered the best in the world and felt that it was their duty to extend it to their colonial subjects. Thus, the French regarded their areas of occupation as overseas provinces rather than areas for imperial exploitation.

### **EFFECT OF THE ASSIMILATION POLICY SYSTEM TO SPREAD OF ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA**

1. The ideals of equality, liberty and fraternity (brotherhood) which were the products of the French revolution of 1789, made the French recognize Africans as equal human beings. So, the French had to assimilate Africans so as to help them be like the French. However, the ideals that the French were preaching were no better than the Islamic ideals of equality and brotherhood. So, many people ignored the French ideals and continued with Islam.
2. The French occupation of West Africa followed an Islamic revolution in form of Jihads in which Islam was spread, purified and strengthened. When the French introduced Christianity, the Muslim agents moved to other regions which had been formerly isolated. In the process, Islam was spread to such areas.
3. The French also used chartered companies and commercial companies like the French traders to colonise parts of West Africa. The Arab Muslim traders for fear of competing and antagonizing with the French penetrated the region which had formerly been closed out of trade activities. Hence in the process, Islam also spread in those areas.
4. With European colonialism and colonization of West Africa, peaceful and friendly relationships between tribes that had conflicted for some time were established. For instance, the French harmonized the relationship between the Muslim Mandinka and the pagan Sikasso. The Mandinka started interacting with the Sikasso, whom they influenced to Islam.
5. To get assimilated fully, it needed Muslims and other people where the policy reached to become Christians. To the Muslims, this was impossible and People were not ready to surrender to it ; thus, opposed the policy.
6. Most people in West Africa were either Muslims or traditionalists and therefore could not yield to the demands of the Assimilation Policy. For instance, the French were monogamous while Muslims and Africans were polygamous and the Qur'an was not so strict on polygamy. So Africans chose to oppose the French who wanted to erase their culture.



## **NEGATIVE IMPACT OF EUROPEAN OCCUPATION OF WEST AFRICA ON THE SPREAD AND DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAM IN THE REGION.**

1. European colonialists were stimulated by the desire to stop the spread of Islam in West Africa. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, following the success of the Sokoto, Maccina and Tokolor Jihads, Islam was spreading very fast. The Europeans came out to put a halt on the further spread of Islam in West Africa.
2. Before colonization, some West African states had achieved a measure of political interactions. They were united under one entity led by their spiritual leader. Such political unity, which was Islamic in nature, however, collapsed in the hands of the colonialists, and hence there was a slow down in the spread of Islam.
3. Colonial intrusion in West Africa led to the destruction of Many Muslim states. For instance, the French destroyed Muslims Kingdoms and chieftainances like the Tokolor State of Al-Hajj Umar and the Mandinka State of Samori Toure. These states had fostered the progress of Islam, but their being conquered by Europeans was a set back for Islam and Muslims.
4. The policy of divide and rule which the Europeans applied in West Africa undermined the progress of Islam. For instance, they would ally with one state against another. This could be illustrated when the French allied and support chief Tieba of Sikasso against Samori Toure.
5. European imperialism came with a new ideology which stressed secular and material values. As a result, Islamic ideals and principles which West African religious leaders had inculcated in the people could no longer be strictly upheld by the people of West Africa.
6. There was a general decline in the Islamic culture which had been adopted by the people of West Africa. The Europeans introduced a moral code of conduct that contradicted that of Islam; for instance, the dressing style. So since religion and culture are closely linked, Western cultural changes led to a break in Islamic norms in West Africa.
7. European occupation of West African led to a breakdown in the long time contacts between the then people of West Africa and the Muslim of the North. For long, Islam had spread in the region through such contacts which were mainly maintained through trade relations.
8. As a result of trade, a number of Muslim scholars and traders had been attached to West Africa; who in turn had preached Islam. When trade activities shifted to the southern coast of West Africa and were dominated by Europeans, the Arab Muslim influence in West Africa was greatly affected.
9. The European introduced and supported Christianity which competed with Islam for converts. Christianity became a stronger rival to Islam than paganism. The rivalry created unnecessary tension that at times resulted into wars. Such a tension could not favour the propagation of Islam.
10. The Colonial powers were instrumental in establishing ethnic and geographic boundaries which distorted the unity and brotherhood that Islam had come up with. With the establishment of these boundaries; Muslims states were separated and

political theocracy which the Islamic revolutionary movements had inspired to achieve, collapsed and Muslims were divided.

11. The European occupation of West Africa made some societies and people to become lax towards Islam. Some people had joined Islam to avoid confrontation with the Jihadists. Thus, when the Europeans colonized the land, those African who were weak in faith, readily went back to their traditional beliefs.
12. The colonialists waged outright attack on Muslim institutions which led to a lot of valuable property to be destroyed while others were looted. They destroyed mosques and Muslims Arab settlements. They also looted high value Afro-Arab works of Art which they scattered in various Museums in Europe.
13. The Europeans established secular schools that contributed to the decline in importance of the Qur'an school systems through which Islam had greatly spread. The Europeans made sure that the Qur'anic schools and their types of education died away and theirs that fostered secularism were favoured.
14. The Europeans introduced French and English languages in West Africa which were adopted in place of Arabic previously brought by the Arabs. Arabic had been widely used in West Africa as the language of learning and education and had promoted the spread of Islam. The frequent use of French and English in West Africa suffocated Arabic and with it Islamic progress was also undermined.
15. The Europeans introduced Western culture in Muslim dominated areas which resulted into the emergence of neo-Muslim (secularists). These were Muslims who mixed Islam with Western style of life. They happened to be more on the sides of protecting Western civilization in their ways of life and mannerism. This created a set back for Islam
16. The European introduced ideas and practices regarding administration, democracy, political system, leadership and ruling systems contrary to what Islam stood for. The Islamic system that was guided by the Sharia laws was dropped and post colonial states in West Africa started following European styles of governance.
17. The Colonialists brought Western education that was rejected and opposed by the Muslims northerners like the Hausa and Fulani, while the southerners accepted it. So, the recruits in the civil services and political posts by the Europeans went to southerners who were predominantly non-Muslims. This affected the social life of the Muslim and Islam.
18. The colonization and subsequent European occupation of West Africa was accompanied by disappointing, confronting and elimination of Muslim leaders through death or deportation. For instance, they exiled Samori Toure to Gabon in 1900, where he met his death. This brought Islam to a temporary halt.
19. The European imperialists used Muslim chiefs of West Africa states to hunt for slaves. The Christian Missionaries, later exploited this as a weakness to tarnish the name of Islam to the effect that the promoters of Islam were suspected to be slave traders. The local populace started looking at Christian Missionaries as saviours to deliver them from Muslim slave traders.

20. The French colonialists did not favour the use of African chiefs in areas of their operation; they insisted on using French nationals. The few Africans and other people who were not French and were appointed, had less powers and they were appointed either because they were able to speak French or were loyal to the French government. Therefore the role of chiefs in the spread of Islam was undermined.
21. The French assimilation policy was run on conditions that were difficult to and did not favour Islam. For instance, for one to be assimilated they had to be fluent in French possess a good means of livelihood, be a catholic and monogamous. All these were undermining the existence of Islam because they promoted Catholicism at the expense of Islam.
22. The Western education the Europeans introduced, by its secular nature, produced literates who were too liberal and in many instances indifferent towards the demands of Islam. Many of them just practiced Islam for personal convenience and they were not in any way religious.
23. The Europeans, in establishing colonial rule in West Africa, brought about a brand of people called collaborators, who undermined Islam. The Europeans exploited the traditional enmity between West African states to get willing collaborators undermined Islam was chief Tieba of Sikasso, who allied with the French against Samori Toure and his Muslim Mandinka state.

## **MUSLIMS' RESISTANCE TO COLONIAL RULE – A CASE STUDY OF SAMORI TOURE**

### **THE CAREER OF SAMORI TOURE OF THE MANDINKA EMPIRE**

**Question:** Examine the career of Samori Toure.

Samori Toure was born in 1830 at Manyambaladugu in Duila, which is now in the present day Guinea. His father was called Lafiya of the Soninke family among the Mandinka. His family lived in Sanankoro, a village south-east of Kankan and were strong believers of Traditional African Religion.

Samori Toure was not born a Muslim; rather, he only converted to the faith during one of his trade journeys. At his mature age he became a long distance trader, dealing in gold and cattle from Futa -Jalon.

In his trade journeys, he visited many areas of West Africa, where he came into contact with Muslim scholars. He was introduced and initiated to the teaching of Al-Hajj Umar; and therefore, he was influenced to become a member of the Tijaniyyah Brotherhood.

During one of his trade journeys, he learnt that his mother had been taken captive by the neighbouring chief Sori Birama of Sise. So, because of the love he had for his mother, Samori Toure offered himself to the Sise chief to be a replacement for his mother. The mother was set free and Samori Toure kept as a slave and captive.

In his captivity, Samori Toure joined Sori Birama's army and because of his courage and brilliance, the chief of Sise shortly appointed him as the commander of one of the units of the army. Samori distinguished himself as an able and intelligent soldier and commander;

he was therefore promoted from one rank to another.

In 1857, Samori broke away from the army of Sise and declared himself independent and went with the whole unit he was commanding. He went to Diula, his home area, where he pulled a big support and began the struggle of Empire building.

Samori had dreamed of building an Empire from any small hostile chieftainships in upper Guinea. Therefore by breaking away from the Sise army with a band soldiers, he became an independent warlord. He won support of his traditionalists, tribesmen and fellow Muslim traders.

Samori was not a Muslim priest, teacher nor a moral and spiritual reformer, but was interested in bringing together the originally conflicting small states and form them into a big state. However, using Islam as a weapon, he started uniting the small disunited Mandinka chieftainships.

In 1866, Samori Toure invaded a neighbouring state of Kamadugu, defeated its chief and annexed it. He also tried as much as he could to win people there to Islam. However, unlike other West African Jihadists, Samori Toure did not use utter force in winning people to Islam.

By 1870, with surprising speed, Samori had brought the various Mandinka states under his authority. He established his capital at Bisandugu and took the title of Al-Imaam. He succeeded in achieving political unification and revival of the Mandinka greatness based on Islam; though the traditionalists were never rejected.

However, his expansionist policy led him to conflict with the neighbouring rulers, like Chief Tieba of Sikasso, who then allied with the French to fight Samori. Samori had opposed the French penetration into the Mandinka hinterland. This alliance, therefore, strengthened the French advance in the region.

1886, after realizing that the French were determined to take over his empire, Samori decided to enter into an alliance with other Africa resistors like Ahmadu of Tokolor and Prempe of Asante, though the alliance failed.

When Samori Toure saw that he could not resist the French any longer in his capital Bisangudu he decided to transfer his capital to Dabakala in 1891, where he founded and ruled the second Mandinka Empire.

From his new capital, Samori furthered the teaching of Al-Hajj Umar based on Tijaniyyah Brotherhood, putting emphasis on human equality and many people among the Mandinka were attracted to it.

Being a common man and born poor, Samori managed to get support of the masses, whom the majority were also commoners. Samori heavily attacked and destroyed the worldly positions of the chiefly classes which had oppressed people.

In order to enforce the Islamic principles, Samori put special emphasis on education and at times applied force to effect his requirement. His type of education comprised of Islamic disciplines which promoted the spread of Islam and creation of a uniform culture.

In a move to protect Islam and strengthen it, Samori destroyed animism to some degree. He was supported in his actions by a cross-section of Muslims although the believers in

animism left angered. They sought assistance from the French who rose with determination to conquer Samori's land.

Nevertheless, Samori Toure's ideals, ambitions and thoughts could not agree with those of the French. Thus, the French opened war against Samori between 1891 and 1898. His new location with Dabakara as his capital also worked to his disadvantage. He failed to get support to the local people and the supply of guns from the coast was also not possible. He thus, lost his gold fields and wealth.

It was on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1898 that Samori Toure was captured when he fell in an ambush of the French. He was deported to the French territory of Gabon on the Island of Ugowé where he died in 1900 at the age of 70.

Thus, the death of Samori Toure robbed Islam of a great fighter and promoter of the Faith. However, his name will remain in the books of great African nationalists. He had succeeded in creating the Mandinka Empire, which was actually the third largest empire in the region following the Sokoto Empire of Uthman Dan Fodio and the Tokolor Empire of Al-Hajj Umar.

### **METHODS USED BY SAMORI TOURE TO RESIST THE FRENCH**

**Question:** Discuss the methods used by Samori Toure to resist the French penetration into his empire.

1. Samori Toure used the method of mobilizing his people against the French. Samori Toure mobilized the Mandinka, who vowed to fight up to the last man rather than accept to be ruled by the French they considered to be infidels.
2. Samori Toure used the method of entering into alliance. 1886, after realizing that the French were determined to take over his empire, Samori decided to enter into an alliance with other Africa resistors like Ahmadu of Tokolor and Prempe of Asante, though the alliance failed.
3. When Samori Toure saw that he could not resist the French any longer in his capital Bisangudu he decided to transfer his capital to Dabakara in 1891, where he founded and ruled the second Mandinka Empire.
4. Samori Toure used Islam as a weapon to unite the small disunited Mandinka chieftainships. He was not a Muslim priest, teacher nor a moral and spiritual reformer, but was interested in bringing together the originally a conflicting small states and form them into a big state.
5. During the French occupation of West Africa, Samori Toure resisted their rule using the banner of Islam. Thus, the French who were majority Catholics could not have any good feelings for Islam, a religion which had been the engine of the Mandinka's resistance.
6. Samori Toure succeeded in keeping the people of his empire solidly behind him throughout his long struggle with the French. This was a tribute to his genius character in statesmanship.
7. Samori Toure used a tactic of retreating. This time of retreat would give him time to organize and reconsolidate himself, train more force and try to acquire more weapons. His subjects would use the time of peace to grow crops that would

sustain their defence forces.

8. Samori Toure copied tactics from other greatest West Africa leaders. He was so greatly moved by the way the great leaders like Uthuman Dan Fodio and Al-Hajj Umar that he stood for political unification, revival of Islam. He used these tactics which helped him fight a prolonged war against the French.
9. Samori Toure based his resistance on the teachings of Al-Hajj Umar of the Tijaniyyah Brotherhood, which emphasizes Islamic reformation, equality and dignity of all people. This policy earned him the support of the Muslim community to keep his rule moving on..
10. His belonging to Tijaniyyah Tariqa, which emphasized equality of all people, helped Samori Toure to prepare for the struggle against the French invasion. Thus, the struggle represented the role of Islam against any foreign oppression.
11. Samori Toure is credited for having resisted the French colonization of West Africa using Islam as a tool to fight the colonialists. He used Islam to unite the Mandinka and as a tool of mobilizing the population against the French who were Christians. The Mandinka decided to fight up to the last man rather than accept to be ruled by the French who they considered infidels.
12. Samori Toure set up a powerful, disciplined, professional army which he trained in modern day warfare. The army composed of the infantry with about 35,000 men and the calvary of 3,000 men; both equipped with modern weapons of the time. Using this army, Samori Toure defeated the French several times between 1885 and 1889.
13. Samori Toure also concluded and signed a treaty with the British in Sierra Leone from whom he obtained modern weapons. Using the weapons and tactics he got from the British, he was able to resist the French for some time.
14. Samori Toure led the famous scorched earth policy, which involved burning and destroying every piece of land he evacuated. Although this tactic cut him from his source of ammunition supply, it still managed to delay the French.
15. Samori Toure employed the "Hit and run" policy which helped him to avoid direct confotation with the French. Using this method, he engaged the French in about thirteen battles and he managed to defeat them.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF SAMORI TOURE'S RESISTANCE**

**Question:** Discuss the effect / significance of Samori Toure's resistance of the French imperialism in Western Sudan

Samori Toure was born in 1830 in Diula in the Soninke family of the Mandinka Tribe. He succeeded in creating a big empire that was located in an area which is today known as Guinea.

It was unfortunate for Samori Toure that the time of his empire building coincided with the time of European infiltration and colonization of West Africa. The confrontation that Samori had was with the French imperialists around 1882.

The French were set and determined to take over Mandinka Empire and Samori Toure was ready to defend his founded empire against the French; thus the resistance. This state of affair brought about clash of interests in which wars were fought; which resistance and the subsequent wars had a number of significances to Islam and the people of West Africa.

1. Samori Toure was a Muslim and Jihadists. He knew that the French were infidels. Like any other strong Muslim of the time, he could not have allowed the French Christians to take control of the area that was predominantly Muslim. So, Samori's cause of conflict was religious differences.
2. During the French occupation of West Africa, Samori Toure resisted their rule using the banner of Islam. Thus, the French who were majority Catholics could not have any good feelings for Islam, a religion which had been the engine of the Mandinka's resistance.
3. There was loss of lives; as during the time Samori's resistance, he lost many fighters because his arms were no match to those of the French. Besides, the French had cut off his arms supply from the coast; thus affecting his capacity to resist.
4. His resistance was responsible for the depopulation of West Africa. During his resistance, many people lost their lives, as thousands of people died, especially the Muslims who constituted the majority of those in resistance.
5. There was also destruction of property in his famous scorched earth policy. For instance, whenever Samori Toure would retreat, he would burn up shambas and food granaries. This obviously affected the social well-being of the Mandinka as his subjects and warriors died of starvation, thirst and lack of shelter because they had been destroyed by retreating Samori's forces.
6. Samori Toure started the so-called scorched earth policy where he used to fight the French and his African neighbours were affected. This made him lose support of his own people and neighbours. For instance, in 1898, Chief Kong became desperate and abandoned his Islamic support to Samori Toure and joined the French to fight Samori Toure.
7. With the resistance, economic activities of the Mandinka were disrupted. Trade was no longer possible because of the instability; and trade routes were cut off. Yet Islamic activities were financed from the proceedings of this trade. Thus the spread of Islam was also affected.
8. Samori's resistance also led to betrayal by African collaborators and opportunists, like Tieba of Sikasso, who allied with the French to fight Samori. The king of Tokolor also preferred having an alliance with the French rather than an African Muslims warlord. With this betrayal, the spread of Islam was retarded; yet at the same time Samori was defeated.
9. The scorched earth policy employed by Samori Toure against the French worked to the detriment of his force, subjects and to Islam in general, in other hands it did not make the French to give up. The crops burnt affected his people and warriors who died of starvation and lack of shelter. The French who had been tipped to suffer the consequence of the policy were, meanwhile, getting supplies from other areas they controlled and from France.

## **POSITIVE EFFECTS.**

10. However, on the positive side, Samori's resistance of the French made him to have led to the banner of the Africans towards protecting their sovereignty. It opened up a series of resistances, which Africans staged against the colonialists.
11. Samori's resistance makes him the greatest warrior in modern African history. He was the first African ruler to fight a modern war with modern military equipment and tactics against European imperialists.
12. Samori's use of Islam in his struggle, made him look more nationalistic as his performances transcended tribal lines. Thus, he was a fine example of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century African Nationalists.
13. As a great administrator, Samori Toure's empire was perhaps the most effectively governed of all the larger empires of 19<sup>th</sup> century Western Sudan.
14. Samori Toure succeeded in keeping the people of his empire solidly behind him throughout the long struggle with the French. This was a tribute to his genius character in statesmanship.
15. Samori's resistance made him look a skilled diplomat and charismatic leader. This helped him increase his popularity among his people.
16. The resistance gave Samori Toure time to reconsolidate himself, train more force and try to acquire more weapons. His subjects would use the time of peace to grow crops that would sustain their defence forces. During this time also, Islam was spread.
17. Samori's Toure's resistance helped him to make friendship with the British in Sierra Leone, which enabled him to fight a prolonged war against the French.

## **SAMORI TOURE AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN WEST AFRICA.**

**Question:**      **Examine the role played by Samori Toure to the spread and development of Islam in West Africa.**

Samori Ibn Lafiya Toure was born between 1830 and 1835 in Diula. He belonged to the Soninke family of the Mandinka tribe. He was not born a Muslim but only converted to Islam during one of his trade expeditions, when he was introduced to the teaching of Al-Hajj Umar; and therefore, he joined the Tijaniyyah Brotherhood. His contribution to the spread and development of Islam can be looked at as follows:-

1. Samori Toure came to limelight about 1870 when he fought and brought the various Mandinka states under his authority; as such he established the Islamic inclined Mandinka Empire, whose capital was Bisandugu before he transferred it to Dabakala following the invasion of the French colonialists.
2. Samori Toure and his actions greatly improved the general picture of Islam in West Africa. He was more than ready to spread and develop Islam, which had gone down scale following the collapse of the Tokolor Empire. Indeed, he did it after taking the title "Almami (Al-Imaam).



3. Samori Toure promised to do what some of the greatest West Africa leaders did. He was so greatly moved by the contribution of great leaders like Mansa Musa, Askia Muhammad, and Uthuman Dan Fodio and to a far less extent Al-Hajj Umar that he stood for political unification, revival of Islam and the greatness of the Mandinka which he did and Islam benefited.
4. Samori Toure used the Islamic religion to establish the Mandinka state. He knew that behind Islam, stood the majority, and hence he had the desire to create a state run on Islamic principles. This earned him the support of the Muslim community.
5. Samori Toure also used Islam to destroy traditionalism; thereby creating a uniform culture based on Islamic principles. Muslim teachers were sent to different areas to replace traditional diviners. Then, in the places of traditional shrines, he built mosques to facilitate the spread of Islam.
6. Samori Toure was both a civil and religious chief of the entire state and as such he came to be referred to as the "Amir al-Mu'miniin" or the "Imaam" of the believers.
7. He centralized the Mandinka Empire headed by the king with the title of Al-Imaam, who was the supreme political, judicial, religious and military head of the empire. The Imaam was assisted by a state council composed of provincial heads; the majority of whom were Muslims.
8. Samori Toure divided the empire into ten provinces, each headed by a provincial governor. Governors were normally former fellow Muslim traders, Muslim military generals or his close relatives and friends. In every province, there was a military attaché and an Islamic religious leader.
9. Samori Toure governed his empire on three lines of authority. These were the traditional, military and religious leaders. All these were responsible to his state council and him as the top most religious leader, Almami, in addition to being the top most political and military leader.
10. Samori Toure was not only interested in the political unification of the Mandinka but also their social well being. He encouraged the spread of Islam and used it as a bond for uniting the Mandinka or as a "Cement" of a social order.
11. Samori Toure took personal interest in education in the newly conquered villages; his first concern being a mosque, a Qur'anic school and a teacher. He made education compulsory for the children to all state officials. In the army, faith of Islam and basic literacy was also taught.
12. The real authority below Samori Toure lay with the professional military officers, administrators and Muslim judges (Qadhis) at all levels. These officers used their positions of status to spread Islam.
13. In the administration of Justice, Samori Toure established Islamic courts of law to govern relations among the Mandinka. He appointed a Qadhi (judge) in each province to make sure that cases were fairly tried basing on the Qur'an and Hadith.
14. Samori Toure promoted harmony, peace, law and order among the Mandinka. He destroyed tribalism and promoted national unity based on Tijaniyyah brotherhood. He

also abolished distinctions between privileged and non-privileged classes, since Islam does not allow social stratification.

15. Samori Toure ran his state based on the teachings of Al-Hajj Umar of the Tijaniyyah Brotherhood, which emphasized Islamic reformation, equality and dignity of all people. This policy earned him the support needed in the creation of a very strong Muslim state.
16. His belonging to Tijaniyyah Tariqa, which emphasized equality of all people, helped Samori Toure to prepare for the struggle against the foreign invasion. Thus, the struggle represented the role of Islam against any oppression.
17. Samori Toure overthrew the existing religious and political structures in conquered territories by destroying pagan shrines, grooves, symbols and priestries. He would then erect mosques and appoint an Imam for each village. He did this with the aim of promoting Islam and used it as a bond of unity in the empire in general and specifically the political unification of the Mandinka people.
18. Samori Toure used Islam as a tool to instill unity, courage and order among his people. He convinced his people that the infidel French wanted to destroy Islam. So he turned his wars against the French into a Jihad movement and he got the overwhelming support of the Muslim community as people regarded him as a saviour from God and sent to the remove evil and establish moral order.
19. Samori Toure fought against tribalism by emphasizing national interests, discipline and education. He also encouraged intermarriages and national loyalty.
20. Samori Toure boosted trade by destroying several custom charges and duties imposed by the small states. The removal of custom duties persuaded many Muslims to come and trade in Mandinka area. Many Muslims became very rich and in turn helped to finance Muslim activities.
21. Samori Toure is credited for having resisted the French colonization of West Africa using Islam as a tool to fight the colonialists. He used Islam to unite the Mandinka and as a tool of mobilizing the population against the French who were Christians. The Mandinka decided to fight up to the last man rather than accept to be ruled by the French who they considered infidels.
22. Samori Toure's expansionist policy while fronting Islam helped in the spread of Islam among the traditionalists. Thus, the area he conquered, remained mainly Muslim dominated. Even in the second empire which existed for only five years, about 40% of the people accepted Islam as a result of Samori's rule.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### IMPACT OF ISLAM ON THE LIVES OF PEOPLE OF WEST AFRICA.

**Question:** Examine the impact of Islam on the lives of people in West Africa.

Islam is said to have been introduced in West Africa in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century around 738AD. Since its introduction in West Africa, Islam has influenced and in fact transformed the lives of people of West Africa.

#### ECONOMIC IMPACT

1. Islam exposed the West Africa region to the outside world especially Arabia, Persia, Baghdad and Egypt. This was because most foreign traders were Muslims and came from those countries. Therefore, trade provided useful connections between the people of West Africa and the rest of the Islamic World.
2. Islam led to the development of many Muslim towns along the northern borders where the Savannah meets the desert. In these towns, caravans would rest and unload after crossing the Sahara Desert. Such important trading Muslim cities were Gao, Audaghost, Kumbi-Saleh, and Timbuktu, which became a great center for Islamic teaching.
3. As a result of trade relations between the North African traders, who were mainly Arabs and Muslims Berbers, Muslim economic ethics were introduced in West Africa. Thus, Islamic principles of market organization, inspection of goods weights and measures and fair means of buying and selling were introduced.
4. Islam helped to make trade relationships in West Africa harmonious and beneficial to both the buyer and seller by prohibiting interest, hoarding of goods, and exploiting the buyers. Islam also emphasized keeping of promises during trade dealings.
5. Islam brought in by Muslim traders from North Africa, came into West Africa with trade commodities such as salt, silk, metal ware, and Muslim adornments. These commodities helped to facilitate trade as they were exchanged with local West African commodities like gold.
6. The coming of Islam in West Africa stimulated the coming of many more Muslim traders which increased the intensity and competitiveness of trade in West Africa. In fact at one time, the whole of northern part of West Africa sub-continent became a trade route network.
7. Islam came with many Muslim settlers in West Africa and there was competition for land. This was evidenced when the king of Ancient Ghana gave the Muslim Berbers and Arab traders a section about six miles from his capital Kumbi-Saleh where they built a town of their own
8. Islam led to the removal of harsh taxes and custom barriers and were replaced with charges of zakat or other fair taxes prescribed by Islam. The trade tariffs and customs duties that had barred prosperity of trade were also removed or at least reduced.

#### SOCIAL IMPACT

1. Before the spread of Islam in West Africa, there were several ethnic groups. When

Islam was introduced urban centers were created and Muslims lived side by side the pagan population. Therefore, the spread of Islam did not divide the West African people along religious lines.

2. Islam influenced the social life and custom of the people of West Africa. The culture of the people changed to adopt the Islamic ways; for instance, many people of West Africa adopted the loose and dignified Islamic styles of dressing in place of semi-nude dress common in pagan societies.
3. Because of the close relationship with Islam as a religion, many people of West Africa adopted greater cleanliness of clothing and body and encouraged the use of soap and perfumes. This impact was all embracing to the society in that even those who are not Muslims subscribed to it up to this date.
4. People's moral standards greatly improved with the spread of Islam. This was because of the high level of discipline emphasized by the Islamic code of conduct. For example, Islam abolished the use of alcohol on public ceremonies where libation of alcohol had been a common feature of the traditional social activities.
5. There were intermarriages between the local people of West Africa and the Muslim Arabs and Berbers from the North, leading to the birth of a new group of people of a mixed race of Negroid and Hermitic people in West Africa. These shared the Islamic ways of life with the Berbers and Arabs; thus the increase in Muslim population in the area.
6. Islam fostered unity among the Muslims in particular and the people of West Africa in general; because people started looking at one another as brothers. This brotherly attitude was facilitated by the emergence of Sufi Muslim Brotherhoods like Tijaniyyah and Qadiriyyah. This level of togetherness had never existed in West Africa before. This in turn created peace and tranquility.
7. Islam became a unifying factor of many ethnic groups in the region because it put Muslims in West Africa in a kind of Islamic universalism which included the rest of the people in the Muslim world. The Muslims in West Africa became part of the rest of the Muslim wherever they were.
8. Islam also enlarged and broadened the idea of community relations based on family and clan to a much wider concept through the sharing of common rituals like Juma prayers, which brought people under one roof. Besides, people as Muslims, whenever they were looked at each other as members of the same community.
9. The frequency of religious rituals and practices changed with the introduction of Islam in West Africa. African used to worship on family or clan basis in their homes or certain places and circumstantially. Islam brought in, community and societal congregational religious practices like "Juma," "Iddi" and "Jama" prayers; and circumstantial African traditional worship was replaced with regular prayers to Allah, like the five daily prayers.
10. Islam brought security and peace in many areas by largely reducing intertribal conflicts in many areas. Traveling by people became easy, and that explains why the people in West Africa easily linked up with North African areas.

## **INTELLECTUAL IMPACT**

1. There was introduction of Islamic education. Qur'anic schools were set up for children and Ilim schools for grown ups. This reduced the level of illiteracy – in fact Timbuktu and Sankore reached the status of the university.
2. The spread of Islam brought with it Arabic language which later became the official language to be used in administration, legal and religious circles. Arabic books were also availed to the people of West Africa to read.
3. The coming of Islam also brought with it many Arab loan words particularly those related to religion and education which were incorporated into the local languages of West Africa. The Hausa Languages for instance, are particularly rich in such Arabic loan words; like Sehu, Caliph, almaami and many others.
4. Islam brought with it arabisation in some areas of West Africa, where the Arabs transmitted their Arab heritage, language, social patterns and ethics to the people of West Africa. In fact Arabic substituted itself easily for some local languages.
5. Some people in Western Sudan region started to speak Arabic languages, as many of them took the language to be holy. In the end, Arabic stimulated Africans to begin writing their own languages in Arabic characters. In addition, some people adopted Arab-Muslim names.
6. The spread of Islam in many parts of West Africa in itself, affected African traditional cults. Islam stressed the belief in one God and this went a long way in reducing and weakening the power of traditional African cults that people professed.
7. Islam introduced Africans to the idea of the time. This is because acts of worships like prayers always followed fixed times of the day; and by getting adapted to prayer, many people started respecting the idea of time.
8. In the field of architecture, the West African people adopted Arabic style of building and art. Art developed from the former making of idol, statues, carvings, masks and human representation art forms to abstract and stylized designs like flat-topped houses out of stones with arches and domes similar to those in Arabia and now seen in mosques.
9. During the period between 300 and 1900 AD, many West African people converted to Islam. It is no wonder that today West Africa is predominantly a Muslim region.

## **POLITICAL IMPACT**

1. Sharia Law courts were established in West Africa and the Islamic judges were held with high respect. Leaders like Askia Muhammad of Songhai, Mansa Musa of Mali, Uthman Dan Fodio of Sokoto and Samori Toure of Mandinka made comprehensive attempts to islamise their administration.
2. Islam, and for that matter, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jihads, brought about more far reaching attempts to reform the political and legal systems in line with the Qur'an and Hadith. Thus, evil practices in the political system like corruption, mistreatment of people and the like were eradicated or somehow minimized.

3. Islam influenced leaders like Uthman Dan Fodio, Sehu Ahmadu, Al-Hajj Umar and others to introduce consultative councils which would advise the Caliph on matters concerning the state. However, members of the consultative councils were basically Muslims who replaced traditional elders in advising the chiefs and kings.
4. Islam helped in eradicating the warring tribes and ethnics groups, especially in the Hausa land. Hence the political system that Islam brought about in West Africa helped to bring all ethnic groups together.
5. West Africa states acquired better weapons from Arabs in the north, and hence states started expanding from tribes to principalities. In fact, the army became composed of mainly Muslims basically with the aim of clearing the way for the spread of Islam.
6. The impact of Islam in West African political system prepared the West African people to resist the spread of colonialism in the region. These resistances were championed by people like Samori Toure of Mandinka, who managed to win the majority of the population in West Africa to Islam. It is no wonder that today West Africa is predominantly a Muslim region.
7. Islam led to emergence of theocratic states in West Africa which overhauled the traditional African principles for Islam. The leaders of these states used Islam to reinforce their authority. The Muslim theocratic states that were established in West Africa included Songhai Empire under Askia Muhammad, Mali under Mansa Musa, Sokoto caliphate under Uthman Dan Fodio, Mandinka Empire of Samori Toure and many others.
8. The introduction of Islam into West Africa led to the creation of strong Islamic nationalism which was used to fight European colonialism, like among the Mandinka people against the French. Islam gave the African fighters courage, unity and a sense of direction and nationalism during their struggles.