Africa Development, Vol. XXX, Nos. 1 & 2, 2005, pp. 53–67
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(ISSN 0850-3907)

The Growth of Islamic Learning in Northern Ghana and Its Interaction with Western Secular Education

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Abstract

This paper examines the growth of Islamic learning in northern Ghana and its interaction with western secular education. It argues that colonial policies and practice had far-reaching implications for Islamic learning, stifling attempts at growth, and suggests that the contemporary situation with regard to Islamic learning in Ghana cannot be properly understood without an appreciation of the historical forces that have helped fashion this system of learning. It concludes that there is need for a meaningful and sustainable interaction between Islamic and Western secular education, especially in the era of decentralisation and increased demand for new competence at local levels.

Résumé

Cette communication porte sur le développement de l'apprentissage islamique, au Nord du Ghana, ainsi que les interactions de cette forme d'apprentissage avec l'éducation occidentale laïque. Cet essai affirme que les pratiques et politiques coloniales ont eu de profondes conséquences sur l'apprentissage islamique, étouffant ainsi ce dernier. L'on ne peut donc comprendre la situation contemporaine au Ghana, relative à cette forme d'apprentissage, sans tenir compte des forces historiques qui ont façonné ce système d'éducation. Cette communication conclut en affirmant qu'une forte interaction doit s'instaurer entre l'éducation islamique et l'éducation laïque occidentale, particulièrement en matière de décentralisation; en outre, il existe une demande croissante en matière de compétences nouvelles, au niveau local.

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Introduction

It is interesting to note that Islam and the cultures that come with it were often overlooked even in the most authoritative works on culture contact in Ghana. Ward's *A History of Ghana* (1967) has no single statement on Islam or its modes of education. During the colonial period a work published by A.W. Cardinal, *In Asante and Beyond* (1927:107–8), could not discern any progress ever made by Islam. Cardinal asserted that the cluster of Dagomba-speaking people in the north had constituted a strong bulwark against the influence of Islam. In the 1960s, Trimingham (1962:7) was to consider the Guinea states, constituting present day northern Ghana, as having had no contact whatsoever with the Sudan states and thus were uninfluenced by Islam. Recent authors whose work concern specifically education in Ghana like R.B. Bening (1990), MacWilliam and Kwamena-Poh (1978) and B.G. Der (1983) have found nothing of interest in Islamic education to write about.

Despite this utter neglect, some European travellers and anthropologists scouting the then Neutral Zone[1] often made references in their reports on the state of Islam and Islamic education in the Gold Coast. Dupuis, writing about Salaga and Asante in the 1820s, fondly referred to the Neutral Zone as a Mohammedan power and describes Salaga as '...the chief city of these districts... and the population, of whom nearly one-sixth part are Moslems, to be about four hundred thousand souls...' (1984: xxxix). David Asante, an early African clergyman of the Basil Mission, was also to report in 1877 of the existence of many private and public schools, where children numbering between 15 and 20 recited Arabic and learn to read and write and pay school fees (Johnson nd). Theophilus Opoku on his preaching journey also saw private schools '...where only a few children are entrusted to the care of a teacher... Several Arabic prayers and the Mohammedan creed are chiefly taught' (Johnson nd). These eye-witness accounts confirm that Islam, which penetrated the Volta Basin through migration and trade as early as the last decades of the fourteenth century, but most significantly after the nineteenth century, was accompanied by a literary tradition that was to be found not only useful in first the communities but also in the chiefdoms in both present-day southern and northern Ghana (Iddrisu 2002a).

Historical Background

Ivor Wilks (1964) has identified a Wangara substratum and a Hausa overlay as the two basic sources of Islamic learning in Ghana. The Wangara, a Muslim merchant group from Mali, migrated in significant numbers after the fifteenth century and built a network of trade that included Begho, on the fringes of the Akan forest, in order also to participate in the exploitation of the gold resources in the Volta Basin. The Hausa for their part were closely

associated with the Kola trade from the North East.[2] From the sixteenth century onwards these traders spread into other centres and animist communities, and then later into the chiefly houses spreading Islam and its modes of education along the way. Following the collapse of Mali the Wangara moved into the Savannah hinterland, along the trade routes where they helped in the founding of states like Yagbum and Nasa in Gonja and Wa respectively. Within these states they constituted a merchant class and small scholarly elite (Hunwick 2004).[3]

The rise of a trading network between the people of the Middle Volta and the Hausa and Wangara was nourished by caravan leaders, the Madugu,[4] and also saw the emergence of the Maigida,[5] the Muslim traders, as well as literate assistants who performed various tasks at the established trade centres and trade settlements. The Holy Men and other itinerant mallams also closely followed them. It was within these scattered trade settlements that the very seeds of Islamic education were sown, with the establishment of Qur'an schools to train the young and to direct the religious lives of the faithful to prevent a situation of relapsing into 'mixing', especially after the nineteenth century Jihad movements.

Translations of letters of some powerful Madugu like Issa Na Garahu, who lived in Kano and became famous in the last decades of the nineteenth century for his successful expeditions from Kano to the Middle Volta, are available to us. His correspondence constitutes one of the few written sources concerning the trade (Johnson nd). The existence of these letters indicates the extent of literacy during this period. This is not to suggest that all Madugu were literate, but most of them could write. Newcomers to any caravan group, usually called an asali, could learn much about the tenets of the faith by basic instruction from the literate members of the caravan. These persons, together with the Maigida,[6] were to constitute the first teachers or Mallams of the settler communities in the Middle Volta. Salaga for instance emerged as a very important centre of learning, where several short pieces in khabar form of writing progressed into what John Hunwick refers to as the Gonja tradition of historical writing. Mahmud Ibn Abdullah's Qissat Salaga Tar'ikh Ghunja[7] is an example of this form. These writers no doubt were familiar with the Timbuktu Chronicles and used them as models. From the 1890s people like Mallam Al-Hassan, from Bornu and later of Salaga translated the Qissat Salaga Tar'ikh Ghunja into Hausa and also compiled histories of the Mossi, Dagomba, Mamprusi and the Grunshie people.[8] In the Yendi area there was Yaqub Ibn Khalid who recorded parts of the Dagomba drum histories in Arabic as Tar'ikh Dagbanbawi.[9] There was also the illustrious al-Haj Umar of Salaga who later moved to Kete Krachi after the 1894 Salaga civil war. He was probably the most read among his contemporaries.[10]

This tradition of learning was firmly rooted by the mid-eighteenth century. The widespread nature of this form of learning is evidenced by the fact that after the 1774/45 Asante invasion of Dagomba many plundered Arabic books were taken to Accra (Hunwick 2004).[11] These were also in the form of the Gonja Khabar tradition of short stories, or historical in nature like that of Tar'ikh al-Shaykh Sulayman. Ivor Wilks has ably collected and donated some of the copious writings of this period to the Melville Herskovits Africana section of Northwestern University Library. This collection is still to be fully accessed and analysed. John Hunwick's writings on the Sudanic Region are one attempt at documenting this sort of work. K.O Odoom and J.J Holden's *The Arabic Collection* (year 1962) also contains a checklist of the Arabic literature of this region. David Owusu-Ansah (1984) has also analysed an aspect of these writing, relating to the Talismanic tradition within the colonial period. There is also The Yendi Project, which was undertaken in the 1960s by the Institute of Africa Studies of the University of Ghana in collaboration with Northwestern University.[12] However much work still awaits the scholars in this regard.

This tradition of learning survivedup to the present, and every child in the Muslim community is required to attend the *ZongKarim*[13] or other forms of Islamic learning institutions like the Qur'anic School or *Makaranta*. A child, usually between the ages of four and six, started school under a Mallam in what was usually the Zong and progressed through the elementary stage to the Ilm and then the most talented to the advanced levels, where the study of the Islamic sciences was taught. These students upon completing their studies embarked upon Master-seeking, travelling to study under learned Mallams in particular aspects of the Islamic Sciences, while others returned to their localities to found new Qur'an Schools or ZongKarima. Most of these new Mallams named their Schools after their alma mater. This explains the preponderance of such names as Anbariyya, Nurriya and Nah'da or Nurul-Islam Arabic Schools in the Region. The description of Salaga in the last decades of the eighteenth century therefore, as a town where every one could read and write in Arabic, is a striking example of the state of learning that the British colonisers met with in the area that was to become the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast.

The colonial encounter

The state of Islamic learning was to be altered greatly with the advent of colonisation. The encounter no doubt rendered Islamic learning a weak partner in the later attempt at integration. There was however a conscious effort by the colonial administration at restricting Christian Missionary effort in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, beginning first with the Catholic

White fathers and later the Wesleyans, which were the precursors in the establishment of Western secular education in much of British controlled territories (Holmes 1968). The reasons often given are fascinating. While some have argued that the British bar on Christian proselytising was to prevent a clash between the two religions, others held that it was an attempt to hold back the clock of progress in accordance with the designs of the colonisers.[14] What is clear is that the exclusion was not used to further the development of Islamic or Muslim education as happened elsewhere. In Nigeria, for example, the Christian Missionary Society (CMS) was allowed into some Muslim areas, which led to the establishment of what became the mallamai schools.[15]

Instead, the formation of Boys' Brigades was encouraged. Ironically a Muslim, Amadu Samba, started the first of such[16] with the intention of drafting the most intelligent into the first primary school. But this first appearance of secular education did not hold anything of special appeal to Muslims and the intention of transforming the Boys' Brigade into schools fizzled out because no provision was made for teachers.[17] The boys did an hour's drill and an hour's lesson but spent the greater part of the day idling or doing odd jobs for the Limam.[18] One result was that some parents refused to allow their children to return to school after the Christmas vacation of 1914, arguing that secular education rendered the children lazy and reasoned that it were better to have them help in keeping horses and on the farm.[19] The Brigades were thus disbanded, having proved especially unpopular in the Muslim settlements of Bawku and Gambaga.[20] This series of events discouraged people from accepting secular education, and the very foundation of Muslim resistance to secular education in Ghana was established.

What came close to official policy was the determination to allow the Muslims to find out by comparison of the two systems of education, Islamic and western secular, which had the most to offer.[21] The suggestion was that the Muslims, being from a more advanced civilisation, would all the more realise the benefits arising from secular education.[22] Thus there arose three basic challenges for Islamic learning and Muslim education in Ghana. First, the effective exclusion of Christian Mission effort in the north, an area with the highest Muslim population, was to constitute the very first challenge. The mission effort elsewhere was bound to challenge Islamic learning to reform to meet colonial standards of functional education. The second was the half-hearted introduction of secular education with the expressed instruction that progress would only be up to standard three, educating only sons of chiefs in the direct line of inheritance, to allow for the effective running of the Indirect Rule system. Since the majority of Muslims were commoners, it stands to reason that access to such education was very limited (Iddrisu 1998).

The most important challenge that colonial rule presented for Islamic education, however, was the attempt to maintain the status-quo in the Muslim-dominated area, in order to create the enabling environment for effective exploitation. The collapse of hopes of finding exploitable minerals, the later failure of mechanised farming, and the decline of the caravan trade (Yakubu 1972), rendered the North an area lacking the resources for development present in the south (Kimble 1963). The North was rather to serve as a provider of cheap labour for the plantations and mines in the south (Iddrisu 1998:13). There was an overriding need therefore to prevent the acquisition of new ideas, and Islam and its modes of education were viewed as '...eminently suited to the native' (Kimble 1963:79), making them easier to deal with than their compatriots at the Coast (Kimble 1963:535).[23]

The stage was then set for the recruitment of labour from the Muslim-dominated areas to work in the south on plantations. Later some Northerners were to participate in the Imperial forces in the First World War. Starting from 1907, a labour camp was set in Tamale for the recruitment of energetic and intelligent youth who also formed the cream of the ZongKarim and the Qur'anic Schools. As a result of this recruitment the Salaga area for instance was said to be devoid of skilled and healthy men.[24] Such a situation did not encourage Islamic education, which was based upon continuous learning. It also prevented the boys from progressing to advanced studies. Again, since it was these graduates who would have been the founders of new schools, a further brake on Islamic learning occurred. Muslim education and Islamic learning therefore could not make any appreciable progress in the face of these challenges. What actually happened was a sharpening of the suspicions of Muslims, who were thus later less willing to see any advantage in the integration of the Islamic and western heritages.

Integration: Islamic and Western secular education

In the first half of the 20th century, thus, Muslims continued to practice their tradition of education without any help from the colonial administration. At best Guggisberg declared his distaste for the spread of Islam and indicated in1925 the desire of the Colonial administration to help the Christian Missions against the advance of Islam.[25] The provision of secular education was held back for almost three decades. So that when the Ahmadiyya Mission first appeared on the scene in 1928 with the intension of arousing 'more interest in government schools on the part of the Muslims',[26] many Muslims believed that schooling equated to becoming Christian (Iddrisu 2002a). The Mission's attempt to start a school was frustrated until in 1932. Even then, the school was closed down almost immediately because of financial constraints. The Ahmadiyya Mission's first real success came 1940 with the establishment of

the Ahmadiyya Primary School at Zogbeli in Tamale. Later the school shed its religious character, adopted a secular curriculum, and the basic attraction became not the religious subjects but the religious ethos under which the school operated (Iddrisu 2002c). The Ahmadiyya initiative was rather conservative, for there was still the fear of instituting a radical change in the type of traditional Islamic education known to the people. Western secular education was still considered a preserve of the 'infidel Christian' and the Ahmadiyya attempt was further weakened by doctrinal differences.[27]

Any further attempt at integration had to wait till the 1960s when some leading Mallams were employed to instruct Muslim students for about thirty minutes at the mainstream secular schools. Issues of faith and how to recite a selected number of Surahs from the Qur'an needed in the daily prayer activity were taught, but the lack of authority of these Mallams over the pupils and the inability of some of the Mallams to communicate in Arabic, using the requisite pedagogical approaches, led to the failure of this attempt to generate the needed interest in secular schools.

A more modern attempt at integration was adopted in 1974 with the establishment of what became known as the Islamic Schools. These were Makaranta that had been persuaded to accept secular subjects and secular teachers in their schools. The first four that accepted this programme were the Anbariyya Islamic Institute, the Nurul Islam Islamic School, the Nah'da Islamic School, and the Nurriya Islamic Institute. In order to convince the Mallams that Islamic education was not going to be pushed to the background and that the Government had no intention of taking over these institutions, the Ministry of Education vested ownership of these schools in the proprietors and started the practice of paying the Arabic/Islamic instructors the equivalent of a Pupil Teacher's Salary, after they had sat an exam and been issued with certificates. By the end of 1976 many Makaranta had agreed to join the Islamic Schools system. The first group of secular teachers were basically untrained. An educational Unit was also established in 1980 and properly constituted in 1986 with the National Headquarters in Tamale.

Despite this modern development, the Islamic School system is still beset with problems that render the interaction impracticable. There is no single Senior Islamic Secondary school to absorb students from the forty-two Junior Islamic Secondary schools with an enrolment figure of 6,943 in the Northern Region. Furthermore space for only around 15 percent of all primary school leavers is available at the Islamic Junior Secondary schools. The students are therefore made to compete, rather unfavourably, with their colleagues from the mainstream primary schools, who have had more instructional time, more trained teachers and less intervening activity in their studies for admission.

Table 1: Number of Islamic schools and enrolment figures for Northern Region, 2001–2002

	Number of Schools	Boys	Girls	Trained Teachers	Untrained Teachers
KG/Nursery	159	10,249	8,070	128	268
Primary	265	28,694	5,861	1,507	324
Junior Secondary School	42	4,712	2,231	246	87
Total	465	43655	16162	1881	679

Source: Islamic Education Unit, Tamale.

This no doubt leads to wastage in the system, as could also be inferred from Table 1 above. From the figures collated only 20 percent of pupils from primary school can be admitted into the Islamic Junior Secondary schools. Thus most pupils end their studies here, in both secular and Islamic learning as well. Parents find it difficult to understand why their wards at the Islamic Schools can not compete favourably with their counterparts at the mainstream schools. This situation has led some to withdraw their children, and either to send them to the secular schools directly or to work on their farms or in other jobs.

The Islamic Schools are allowed only two Arabic/Islamic Instructors between them, with the exception of the Islamic Schools in the Tamale Municipality which have about five Arabic Instructors. The figures in Table 1 show the number of secular teachers allowed at the Islamic Schools. Each school has six teachers and a Head teacher. But then there is a perpetual fear since 1990 of government attempts at reducing even the small number of Arabic Instructors on the official payroll. There are a few Islamic Instructors in the system who still have the Arabic Instructor's certificate but cannot obtain employment at the only place where their certificates are recognized, the Islamic Schools. Any other Mallam who comes around to teach will have to be sustained by the small contributions of those who receive a salary. Those without salary therefore choose to come to school at their leisure and are frequently absent.

None of the Islamic Schools has a syllabus to guide its teaching and learning activity and no particular text book is in use. Only personally owned books from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya, Iran and Nigeria are in use.[28] From Table 2, it can be seen that there are twelve Islamic Junior secondary schools that are supposed to be fed by 162 Islamic schools with a total population of 27,843 pupils in the Tamale Municipal area, the capital of the Northern Region. Therefore only 13 percent of space is available to accommodate all

pupils from the Islamic Primary schools and only 8.7 percent of students from the primary schools can be admitted into the Islamic Junior Secondary schools. There is no doubt that most of the students would not find placement at the mainstream Junior Secondary School, since the schools do not even have enough vacancy for their own students, never mind Islamic school leavers.

Table 2: Number of Islamic schools and enrolment figures for Tamale Municipal, 2001–2002

	Number of Schools	Boys	Girls	Total Boys & Girls	Trained Teachers	Untrained Teachers
KG/Nursery	76	5832	5681	11513	61	134
Primary	86	9188	7142	16330	489	78
JSS	12	1003	432	1435	64	19
Total	174					

Source: Islamic Education Unit, Tamale.

The schools are also still looked upon as the property of the Proprietor and the problem as to who really is in charge, the Proprietor or the Secular Head Teacher, is still an everyday confusion with regard to admissions into the Islamic Schools, and the class into which the pupil be placed. Proprietors also check on secular teachers and report directly to the Islamic Unit teachers with whom they feel they can no longer work. This exerts a serious limiting effect on the performance of secular teachers in some Islamic Schools. As a result, the communal spirit that used to characterise the earlier centres of Islamic learning is lacking. A further consequence is that interest in Islamic learning is beginning to wane and Islamic learning is progressively been turned into a weaker partner in the integration of the two systems. Those who attend the Islamic Schools are finding difficulty in competing favourable with their counterparts in the mainstream schools.

There is also the problem of the relegation of Islamic subjects to a mere shadow of its former strength in the teaching timetable. Some Islamic Schools are known to be teaching as much as thirteen subjects at their schools. These subjects are taught in the afternoon at the close of school when certainly both students and instructors are very tired and can no longer settle down to any effective teaching and learning activity. The efficiency of the Arabic instructors is greatly compromised as a result of these extended hours. Some parents who not aware of these problems become worried that their wards at the Islamic Schools are not able to read even at primary level six while their counterparts in the mainstream schools, the Catholic Education Unit and the

Local Authority Schools, are able to do so. This situation has contributed greatly to wastage in the system, with students dropping out quite early from school, while those who do complete are not able to progress into either the Senior Secondary schools or other Vocational Institutions.

Conclusion

There is an overwhelming need for a meaningful and sustainable interaction between Islamic and Western secular education, especially in this era of decentralisation and increased demand for new competence at local levels. Local businesses, communities, associations and individuals are required to assume new responsibilities for which their Qur'anic education has not equipped them. Western secular education has no doubt become the de facto medium of commerce and of business. Yet the numerous Makaranta still enjoy a higher enrolment in some communities. For beneficiaries of Qur'anic education and the recently established Islamic Schools to meet these new responsibilities it is imperative that the Islamic tradition of education and Muslim education generally be reformed meaningfully and made much more sustainable.

The very first issue should be the training of Arabic/Islamic Instructors up to a standard that would make them capable of teaching both secular and Islamic Subjects. Those who already have had some Makaranta and secular education could be constituted as this new crop of teachers. This could be done with the establishment of a training college with such a mandate. The Rashidiya Islamic University College, located in Tamale, was established to fill this vacuum. But without support from government and the community, Rashidiya is bound to face problems as witnessed today. The school has no approved site of its own; it is funded from voluntary contributions of the faithful - but for how long will such contributions continue to flow and for how long will the lecturers continue to sacrifice? The Islamic Republic of Iran has also established the Islamic University College of Ghana which according to the Registrar has a 'Strong academic and spiritual background',[29] beginning with two courses, Business Administration and Religious Studies. Admission is opened to all irrespective of religion because the question as to how many qualified Muslim applicants are applying does exist. But a much greater need now is to be able to train a crop of teachers capable of transforming the numerous Islamic Schools in the country into institutions capable of contributing students not only to the traditional Universities in Ghana but also feeding the Islamic University Colleges. This is the surest way to putting Islamic education and the education of the Muslim on a better footing in any attempt at fostering meaningful integration.

One start could be made with the introduction of Arabic/Islamic Studies department in one or two of the already existing teacher training Schools in

Ghana. These could be developed into the proposed Islamic Training School. Here refresher courses or workshops could be organised to help upgrade or sharpen the skills of selected Proprietors and Arabic instructors already in the system.[30] Then teachers solicited from the Islamic or Arab countries to help in turning the Islamic School system into an equal partner in the ceaseless search for a meaningful interaction. Such Islamic training schools or the Arabic/Islamic Studies departments would be the appropriate places to help develop or redesign the curriculum of the Islamic Schools to include the teaching of science, mathematics and geography so as to eliminate duplication. Subjects such as Ha-t, writing, and Sira, history, could also be encouraged and taught here. Other subjects like Arabic grammar could start from the lower primary but graded in such a way as to take into consideration the pedagogical needs of the students while the more complicated ones like Tajweed (Phonetics) reserved for those interested in them in the higher classes. Nigeria was aided in floating a similar idea during the colonial era. At that time the Muslim education systems of the Sudan and of the then Gold Coast were studied and teachers brought in from the former and these helped greatly in reforming and standardising the Muslim education system in Northern Nigeria. With such a redefinition therefore the integration in Ghana could be made more meaningful.

In the light of the colonial encounter it is pertinent to observe that the stagnant character of Islamic and Muslim education in Ghana is largely a reflection of the policies and practices initiated by the colonial administration, which resulted in stifling any significant growth and left Islamic education an underdog in the later integration with western secular education. An integration therefore that seeks to take into account these long-standing deficiencies as suggested here is imperative to any meaningful but sustainable interaction between Islamic and Western secular education in Ghana.

Notes

1. The Neutral Zone was an area defined by the Colonial Powers of Britain, Germany and the French to include areas lying between Salaga and Kete-Krachi, within which each one of them could have access to trade. For a fuller discussion of the Neutral Zone see R. B. Bening, 'Definition of the International Boundaries of Northern Ghana 1888-1904', *Journal of the Historical Society of Ghana*, vol. I., (ii).
2. A detailed discussion can be found in Ivor Wilks's two part- essay 'The Wangara, Akan and Portuguese in the fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries. I. The Matter of Bitu', *Journal of African History*, vol. 23.issue 3, 1982, 332-249 and also 'The Wangara, Akan and the Portuguese in the fifteenth and sixteenth Centuries. II. The Struggle for Trade', *Journal of Africa History*, vol. 23, 4, 1982, 465-472.

3. Hunwick (2004), 'Writers of the Great Voltaic Region', Chapter Twelve. I am grateful to Professor Hunwick for showing me this manuscript while it was still in the final stage of publication.
4. The Madugu was usually the leader of the caravan, responsible for the administration and security of the expedition. He was most often a literate Muslim, who, acting alone or with the assistance of specially employed persons, kept records of accounts of the caravan from the Hausaland to the Middle Volta and back. All goods were treated in common with the Madugu and his assistants keeping records, managing accounts and directing sales. For more discussion see P. E. Lovejoy, 'The Hausa Kola Trade 1700-1900', Unpublished d PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1973.
5. This is a Hausa word, which could used as (i) an affectionate way the wife refers to the husband; (ii) the respectful way of addressing one's Mallam; (iii) the householder or landlord.
6. The maigida, the Hausa for landlord, was most often resident in the trade town and provided accommodation to the stranger Muslims and traders. But most important of all, they served as brokers in the exchange trade and carried out research on market conditions and also offered translating services. It is important to note that the maigida together with the merchants served were both Muslims and some were highly learned in the Islamic Sciences, like the Madugu Issa Na Gahanna. Hausa therefore became the first language of these communities. Most often the maigida had a school at his house which was a sort of a community centre, housing so many people. This school trained not only the children in the tenets of the religion but also in Arabic literacy.
7. The Arabic Text and English Translation of the work appeared in a two-part publication of Mahmoud El Wakkad in the Ghana Notes and Queries, September–December 1961 and January-June 1962.
8. Some of his works were translated by J. Withers-Gill as *A Short History of the Dagomba Tribe*, Accra, nd. See also his *A Short History of Salaga*, Accra 1924.
9. *Tar'ikh Dagbanbawi*, Arabic MS, IAS/AR/24241, University of Ghana. A Hausa version of this work is also credited to Khalid Ibn Yaqub of Yendi.
10. Stanislaw Pitaszewicz, 'The Arrival of the Christians': A Hausa Poem on the Colonial Conquest of West Africa by Al-Haji Umaru', *Africana Bulletin*, Warszawa, Nr.22, 1975.
11. See also Nehemiah Levtzion, 'Early Nineteenth Century Arabic Manuscripts from Kumasi', 1965, p. 99.
12. This project was intended to examine the madrasas in Yendi but it focused rather on the teachers in these schools, the learning they had acquired, their teachers and their libraries. They also collected manuscripts which are now deposited at the Institute of African studies, UG, Legon.
13. Zong is the entrance hut to the compound in Dagbani and Karim also means school. The hut was in most areas used as a classroom.

14. R.B Bening argues in The Development of Education in Northern Ghana, (op. cit.) that it was to prevent a clash between the two religions that led to the progressive restriction of Christian missionary effort in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. But Abdulai Iddrisu holds the view that it was to uphold the status-quo, for Islam as the British reasoned had rendered the people amiable and much more easy to deal with than their counterparts in the south. See my 'British Colonial Response to Islamic Education: A Case Study of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, 1890-1940', Journal of the Institute of Education, UCC, Vol. 4, No. 2, July 1998.
15. This was the place where Muslim young men were given education in both secular and Islamic subjects so that they could become the future teachers in the Muslim dominated areas in Northern Nigeria. See my 'Colonial Control and Muslim education in northern Ghana, 1900-1925', Paper presented at the International ISITA Colloquium, Harris Hall, Northwestern University, Evanston/Chicago, USA, 15-19 May 2002.
16. The association of Amadu Samba (*Samba* is a Dagbani word meaning 'Stranger') with Islam is often not mentioned in the history of education in Northern Ghana. His association with Islam was disclosed in an interview with the grand daughter, Madam Balchisu Wemah at GDCP, Dalon, 19 October 2002. Amadu Samba's father was a soldier in the Gold Coast Constabulary Force. He started by assembling children for classes. These classes later became the boy's brigade that the colonial administration intended to transform into a school. He later became a teacher at the Tamale Premier School and was to convince the authorities to allow him instruct the Muslim students for 30 minutes a day in the tenets of the Islamic Faith.
17. Letter from Commissioner, North-eastern Province to Chief Commissioner, NTs, 16th December 1910, Public Records and Archives Administration Department, (PRAAD)-Accra ADM, 56/1/86.
18. Letter from Provincial Commissioner, Gambaga to Ag. CCNT, Tamale, 16th August, 1909, Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD)- Accra, ADM 56/1/86.
19. Letter from Provincial Commissioner North-Eastern Province, Gambaga to Ag. CCNT, Tamale,19th November, 1915, PRAAD-Accra ADM 56/1/86.
20. Ibid.
21. Letter from Ag. CCNT, Tamale to Provincial Commissioner North-Eastern Territories, 16th November, 1915, PRAAD-Accra, ADM 56/1/86.
22. Letter from Ag. CCNT, Tamale to Provincial Commissioner North-Eastern, 16th November, 1915, PRAAD-Accra, ADM 56/1/86.
23. The products of Islamic education were viewed better than the very first products of secular education. This was typified in the caracter of the late Tolon Na who was the first to be sent to Achimota in the South to attend school. He returned to taunt the colonial administration, for he had learnt to think for himself and continually condemned colonial policy in the Northern Territories. He came to be looked upon as the first case of the disease, which

appears to have attacked the Northern territories boys at Achimota School. This was to determine the acceptance or not of the Christian missionary effort and later Ahmadiyya Mission in the Muslim dominated areas of Colonial Ghana.

24. Letter from CCNT, Tamale, Watherston, 1st February, 1909, PRAAD-Accra, ADM 56/1/84.
25. Memorandum by the Governor, Guggisberg, 23rd February 1925, on 'Education in the Northern Territories', PRAAD-Accra, ADM 56/1/305.
26. Letter from Local head of Ahmadiyya Mission at Saltpond, Mr. M. Nazir to CCNT, Tamale, FW K. Jackson, 25 June 1931 PRAAD, Tamale NRG 8/19/1.
27. This doctrinal difference had to do with the messianic figure of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadiani.
28. Interview with Afa Sulemana Alhassan, Proprietor of Sobriya Islamic School, Kobilmahgu, Near Tamale, 4th November, 2002.
29. Alhaji Rahim Gbadamosi, Registrar of the Islamic University of Ghana, in a Matriculation Speech, Accra. October, 2002.
30. Recently an Islamic NGO, Muslim Relief and Assistance Group, organised a Workshop in Kumasi to discuss some of the problems of Islamic Education in Ghana and to help the Proprietors better distinguish their role from that of the Secular Head teachers.

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