

THE IMPACT OF MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD SOCIETY ON THE MUSLIM ORGANIZATIONS IN YORUBALAND

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ABSTRACT

The Muslim Brotherhood Society in Egypt was founded by Hassan al-Banna^ˆ in 1928 as a revivalist movement aimed at tackling the westernization syndrome and installing the Islamic supremacy through the reinstatement of Islamic system in the polity. The movement from its inception has assumed the most influential Islamic movement in contemporary time. The intent of the study is to explore the impact of the movement on Muslim organizations in Yorubaland of Nigeria. Field and library research methodologies were adopted. Findings of the research show that the Brotherhood-oriented organizations in Yorubaland are classified into the affiliate and influenced groups. The aspects in which the impacts are felt include the mission, organizational structure, methodology, and syllabus. The study concludes that unlike the affiliate Muslim Brotherhood organizations in the Arabia countries that have been mischievously declared as terrorist elements, the Brotherhood-oriented organizations in Yorubaland have not posed any threat to the security of their host localities.

KEYWORDS: *Impact, Muslim Brotherhood, Muslim Organization, and Yorubaland*

Article History

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INTRODUCTION

Prior to the creation of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1928, the Muslim world in general, and Egypt, in particular, were in a mournful state that called for the urgent address. Generally, the whole Muslim territories except Saudi, Yemen, and Najd, were under the colony of the west which had replaced Islamic values with her own world-views in philosophical, moral, social, political, economic and educational aspects. (Qarda^ˆwi,1999, p.13). This was followed by the unprecedented tribulation in the fall of caliphasy which was the only umbrella for the Muslim unity. The Muslims throughout the globe wept over the fall and various conferences aimed at strategizing ways of reclaiming the lost glory were held. The Muslims had not overcome the trauma experienced in the fall of caliphasy when the Ummah was visited with another tribulation manifested in the rise of Israel state in the Muslims' domain of Palestine. Now, there was no leadership that would speak for the Ummah and that would assume the forefront role in the ensuing battle. The aforementioned was the general status of the Muslim world. Coming back to Egypt which is an ancient Muslim nation that has had contact with Islam right from the Islamic first century during the reign of Umar bn al-Khattab (d. 644C.E), the story is more mournful. The orbit around which the major misfortune of the Egyptian Muslims revolved was the British occupation. The history of the British occupation in Egypt started in 1882CE. (Yusuf,2009, p.53). Although not only Egypt was a victim of British westernization, unlike other countries

where westernization only affected their ruling or civilized class, Egypt shared the same encounter with Turkey in the sense that westernization drove out Islam entirely from the socio-political terrains and confined the Islamic thought to mosques and religious gatherings. (Al-Banna^ˆ, 2011, p.67). Being a student in Da^ˆru^ˆl ‘Ulu^ˆm, an affiliate of Al-Azhar University, and uncomfortable with the current scene, Hasan al-Banna^ˆ thought that disseminating the teachings of Islam could not continue to be restricted to only mosques. Hence, he converged some of his mates for the task of disseminating Islam through the channels of mosques, coffee restaurants, and public gatherings.

He also went on in collaboration with Shaykh Dajawi to found the Jamciyyatash-Shubba^ˆn al-Muslimm^ˆ in (Muslim Youth Society) which had as members notable scholars such as Rashid Rida^ˆ, Muhammad Khidr Husayn, ‘Abdul-Aziz Ja^ˆwish, AbdulWahhab an-Najja^ˆr, Muhibbudeen Khatib and host of others. (Ibid). It should be noted that Al-Banna^ˆ was doing all these as a final year student in Da^ˆru^ˆl ‘Ulu^ˆm. On completing his study, he was posted by the government to ‘Isma^ˆ’iliyyah a village in Egypt, as a primary school teacher. Al-Banna^ˆ relocated to Isma^ˆ’iliyyah, with his high ambition to provide a formidable response to the current problem of the Ummah. It took him half of a year to keenly observe the determinants of influence in that vicinity and discovered that the major channels of influencing the populace are four namely: the Muslim scholars, the leaders of Sufi groups, the figure personalities and places of assembly. He decided to go for the fourth one as he had confirmed its effectiveness in Da^ˆwah when he was staying in Cairo. Al-Banna^ˆ raised followers and adherents in the assembly of workers, artists and common people and in March 1928 was visited by six of those who had been influenced by his sermons namely: Ha^ˆfith ‘Abdul Hamid, Ahmad Al-Husuri, Fua^ˆd Ibrahim, ‘Abdur-Rahman Hasbullah, ‘Isma^ˆ’il ‘Izzu and Zakariyya al-Maghribi, purposely to take off an organization that would reclaim the lost glory of Islam and they all gave their allegiance (Bay^ˆ’ah) to Hassan Al-Banna^ˆ. The event marks the beginning of Muslim Brotherhood in current time.

The seven basic objectives of the organization are given by Al-Banna^ˆ (2002) as follow: producing sound Muslim individual whose creed, ideology, conduct, mentality, and attitude would be influenced by Islam; producing Muslim family that will be influenced in those aspects early mentioned above; producing Muslim citizens; producing Islamic government that will shape the lives of the Muslim citizenry; unification of all Muslim territories that had been divided by the western political policies and European colonial interventions; reclaiming the lost presence of Islam in some territories that have had contact with Islam and saw its fortune in previous centuries, but later lost Islam to other faiths; finally, declaring the message of Islam to the global world and subjecting all tyrants to its rules.

Against this background, this study intends to examine the manifestation of the orientation of the Muslim Brotherhood and its impact on the Muslim organizations in Yorubaland. The Yoruba estimated to be about 28 million people, unquestionably constitute one of the major Nigerian ethnic nationalities among which Islam receives wide acceptance. (Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette, 2009, vol.2, p.96). They live in the country’s southwestern states of Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo as well as the North Central States of Kogi and Kwara. The Yoruba had their earliest contact, according to a narration, with Islam through the itinerant Arab Muslim scholars who visited the area in the 15th century; dominant Islamic influence was not recorded until the Hausa-Fulani penetrated the region from the second half of the 18th century. (Gbadamosi, 1978, p.76).

Historical Development of Muslim Brotherhood Orientation in Yorubaland

The first contact of Yorubaland to the call of Muslim Brotherhood was in 1949 when Shaykh Adam Al-Ilori (d.1992) visited the founder of the movement in Cairo shortly before his death. (Al-Ilori, 2014, p.218). One cannot confidently assert with the visit that Al-Ilori was initiated into the apparatus of the group, but it is glaring that the contact had an influence and bearing on the subsequent missionary journey of his. One of those traces is visible in the first work published by Al-Ilori after his return from Cairo. He strongly advocated in that work for the total reversal from the status quo in the practice of Islam and inscribed the *Al-Wasa'ya al-cAshr* (Ten admonitions) by Al-Banna' at the end of the work. (Al-Ilori, n.d).

Another influence of that Sojourn on Al-Ilori is that somewhat in the 60s of last century, he was a party to the creation and operation of a Brotherhood's apparatus for training youths in Nigeria under the auspice of Kamil Shar'if, Jordan Ambassador to Nigeria at that time and a prominent leader of the Muslim Brotherhood who led one of the military battalions in the 1948 Palestine – Israel war. Al-Ilori contributed to the success of the Brotherhood training apparatus in Nigeria by sending some of his direct students to partake in the training exercise. Prominent among them were Dr. Mu'min Omolaja who asserted that they were being trained by one Engineer Abdul Mu'ti Bahjat in 1967. (Omolaja, 2011, p.53).

From all indications, it is obvious that Al-Ilori could not commit all efforts to the sustenance of the apparatus due to factors unknown to us, but probably it appears that the task of spreading the knowledge of Arabic education which was then scanty in Yorubaland was too noble to Al-Ilori more than any revivalist thought which implementation was not only ripe, it might also not be relevant to the local setting of his. Hence, the attempt to launch a Brotherhood apparatus in Nigeria was not sustainable due to the lack of local mouthpiece that could endure the stress thereof. However, the Brotherhood training apparatus in the 60s had the credit of exposing the trained youths to the new trend in modern Islamic thought. It also served as an instrument for those youths to link with Brotherhood apparatus outside Nigeria as some of them with the established orientation they had had before traveling to Saudi Arabia for study helped them to be easily conscripted into the structure of the *Ikhwa'n* at the kingdom.

Among those who might be billed to have built on the training of the 60s in linking with the mainstream Muslim Brotherhood scholars were Shaykh Mustapha Zhuglul (d. 2017) and Shaykh Abdur-Razzaq Iwo. The former was reputable to the international apparatus of *Ikhwa'n* and have been recommended by it for Shaykh Abdulfatai Tha'ni who was to be among the flag bearers of full-fledged apparatus of the *Ikhwa'n* in Yorubaland. (Shaykh Sha'fi'1, 2018).

It should be noted that the foregoing account only indicates the traces of the thought of the Muslim Brotherhood in Yorubaland. The advent of full-fledged and organized structure for the Muslim Brotherhood in Yorubaland was at the beginning of 80s of last century. It took two various forms. Before 1980, the Muslim Brotherhood had formed an unofficial structure and apparatus at various universities' campuses in Saudi Arabia. The structures assumed the platforms upon which foreign students including Nigerians were being trained. Virtually all the students from Yoruba who were students in the 70s and 80s were produced by this system.(Bidmus, 2018). In 1980, there was an initiative of forming a similar Brotherhood structure in Yorubaland by the students who thought that it would not be proper that the religious zeal in them should die after returning home. Hence, they converged at Madinah in 1980 to inaugurate a Brotherhood structure that would serve as a uniform platform for *Da'wah* in Yorubaland for the returning graduates. The name *Tada'mun al-Muslimin* was adopted.

Prominent among those who were present in the inauguration were now Professor Sulaiman Rabiū, Professor Ade Bello, Professor Yushau Sadiq, Professor Zubair AbdulQādir, Dr. Qasim Badamasi, Dr. Rashid AbdulAzeez, Dr. Sirajudeen Al-Asra' and hosts of others. (Bidmus, 2018).

The second form through which the advent of Muslim Brotherhood structure got its way to Yorubaland is that at the heel of 1979 Iranian revolution, there was a wide acceptance and inclination of Muslim youths and students to the thought of Islamic movement. The success of the revolution has sold out the twin thoughts of the Shiah and Muslim Brotherhood to the zealot youths. Hence, the books of the two trends constituted the hot cakes in the market for consumption. The Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria paid host to the thought of Muslim Brotherhood from the beginning of the 80s.(Abdur-Rahim, 2018). The ideological tendency of the Muslim Brotherhood in the MSSN was fanned by the arrival of Shaykh Abdulfattahi Thāni to the society in 1985. Thāni was trained by the Ikhwān structure in Kuwait. The training of Kuwait was different from the Brotherhood training of Saudi according to Shaykh Dhikrullahi Shafi'i in three ways: first, freedom and independence characterized the training of Kuwait unlike that of Saudi which was operating in secrecy. Also, the Kuwaiti apparatus of the Ikhwān was the platform of elites and political leaders which at then had control over various international organizations for Muslim youths such as Islamic World Federation of Student Organizations (IWFSO). The MSSN was also under the organization. Another difference was that the Saudi training was a merge of Salafiyyah elements with Brotherhood thought, while that of Kuwait was devoid of any Salafi element.(Shaykh Shāfi'i, 2018). Hence, Abdulfattahi Thāni major mission from Kuwait was to launch and inaugurate a full-fledged Brotherhood apparatus in Yorubaland using the already established structure of MSSN. He had been empowered fully with the control over Baytu Zakaat and Jam'ciyyat ʿAbdullahi Nuri Al- Khayriyyah (Abdullahi Nuri Philanthropic foundation) which would be used to fund and mobilize interested students. The mission was resisted by some members of MSSN who didn't want the society which is an umbrella body for all Muslim students regardless of their affiliation to turn into the platform for recruiting members for a foreign ideology.(Gidado,1997, 65). The commitment of Abdulfattah Thāni to realizing his mission through the instrumentality of Islamic Centre of Nigeria which he established and the resistance of some members of MSSN marked the beginning of un-ending crisis within the society. Hence, in 1994, those members of MSSN who were convinced with the training brought by Thāni converged in Lagos to takeoff an organization with the title of The Muslim Congress (TMC). Hence, Gidado has considered The Muslim Congress as one of the secessionist groups from the Muslim Students' Society.

It is deducible from the above that there are two factions of Muslim Brotherhood apparatus in Yorubaland namely: the Saudi and the Kuwaiti apparatus. Thusthey went into the merger in 2011 with the two other apparatuses of the Ikhwān in the Northern part namely: the Tajd̄id in Kano and Jama'atal-Muslim̄in in Sokoto.

It is worthy of note that beside the Organization of Tadāmun al-Muslim̄in and The Muslim Congress which are the affiliates of the Muslim Brotherhood main international apparatus, there are also organizations in Yorubaland that belong to the orientation of the Ikhwān both in ideology and methodology. They include The Islamic Movement (TIM), Tacawunu al-Muslimeen and the Islamic Youth Organization (IYO). The Islamic Movement was established in 1984 by Muslim personalities such as Dr. Muhammad Ali Olukade (d. 2008), Architect Sayfullahi Alege and Alh. Abdur-Razzaq Al-Ameen.(Gada, 2018). Tacāwun was founded by Shaykh Daud in 1994, at Iwo Osun State.(Molaasan,2018). The Islamic Youth Organization was created in 1997 in Ilorin. (Abdul Malik, 2018).

From the above discussion, it is apparent that the Muslim Brotherhood-oriented organizations in Yorubaland are of two categories: the affiliate and the influenced. The affiliate comprises Organizations of Tadamun al-Muslimin and The Muslim Congress while the influenced comprises of The Islamic Movement, Taawun al-Muslimin, and the Islamic Youth Organization.

Impact of Muslim Brotherhood Orientation on the Muslim Organizations in Yorubaland

Many Muslim organizations in Yorubaland are highly influenced by the methodology of the Muslim Brotherhood.

The areas which such impacts are felt include the missions, organizational structure, methodology, and syllabus.

Starting from the mission, Muslim organizations such as the Islamic Youth Organization, Ilorin, Jama'atu Taawunil Muslimeen, Iwo and The Muslim Congress in Yorubaland share the same or some of the missions of the Muslim Brotherhood. For Islamic Youth Organization, there are no objectives other than the seven laid down basic missions of the Muslim Brotherhood. (Abdul-Malik, 2018). The vision of the Jama'at Taawunil Muslimeen is Islamic propagation, establishment, and caliphacy. (Malaasan, 2018). The vision remains the final destination of the Brotherhood as explained earlier on. The Muslim Congress defines its mission and vision as to set agenda for societal reformation in line with Qur'an and Sunnah and to set the agenda for repositioning of the Ummah. (The Constitution of The Muslim Congress, p.1). Organization of Tadamun al-Muslimin also has the same mission. Hence, it can be submitted in view of the above that the Muslim Brotherhood has impacted some Muslim organizations in Yorubaland through pursuing uniform missions.

The organizational structure of many Muslim organizations also attests to the impact of the Muslim Brotherhood on them. The existence of Shura Council as the apex entity in the structural arms of many organizations; the division of the structure into regional, state, local and Usrah hierarchical patterns and the use of titles such as Amir, Naqib and others are the glaring impacts of the Muslim Brotherhood on the organizational structures of many Muslim organizations in Yorubaland. Among such organizations that are operating on the aforementioned structures are the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria, The Muslim Congress, Jama'at Taawunil Muslimeen, Organization of Tadamun al-Muslimin, The Islamic Movement and Islamic Youth Organization.

Muslim organizations in Yorubaland share some of the methodologies adopted by the Muslim Brotherhood. The most apparent among the shared methodologies are Bay'ah (Oath of allegiance to the group leadership) partisanship, dedication to the course of Palestine, protest and demonstration against the tyranny of the government, comprehensiveness, Jiha-orientation, and preparation. Bay'ah has become the conventional phenomenon among the Muslim Brotherhood-oriented organizations in Yorubaland. Dr. Qaasim Badmus, who is the foremost leader of Organization of Tadamun al-Muslimin has justified the exercise by arguing that a Muslim must have someone to give his allegiance. According to him, the government of the day, Islamically, does not qualify to be given such noble allegiance, hence the resort to create an alternative means. He supported his argument with the directive of the Prophet that when Muslims are in the journey, they should appoint one of them to be the leader to whom allegiance is given. The Muslim Congress has stated in its constitution that one of the duties of every member is to obey the leadership of the Congress.

It should be noted that the said 'allegiance' has given birth to what the opponents of the organizations referred to as Hizbiyyah (partisanship). This indicates blind followership and adherence to the leadership of a group at the expense of clear truth in the possession of opponents.

The showing of concern to the affairs of the Quds mosque and Palestine is another impact of the Muslim Brotherhood on the Muslim Organizations in Yorubaland. For instance, The Islamic Movement usually organized annually Quds Day to rallying support for the case of Palestine. Also, Jama'at Ta'awun al-Muslimeen often does that. Among the Muslim organizations in Yorubaland that always show support for Quds, Ta'awun is the most prominent. Its efforts in that aspect have earned it an international reputation of being a member of the International Foundation for Quds, Lebanon, and the International Forces Against Tyranny, Egypt. (Malaasan,2018). Another way of showing concern for the affairs of Quds, aside from organizing Quds day, is a demonstration against any attack by Israel against the Muslims in Palestine. One of the features that often appear in such rally or demonstration is burning the flag of America by the angry Muslims of those organizations. The researcher has witnessed such rally by The Islamic Movement in Ilorin.

A peaceful protest against the oppression of the government is another impact of the Brotherhood on Muslim organizations in Yorubaland. The Muslim Congress leaders were a party to the deal that eventually gave birth to the unprecedented 2011 massive rally at Ojota, Lagos against the increase in the pump price of petrol by President Goodluck Jonathan. Jama'at Ta'awunul Muslimeen staged in 2005 a peaceful protest that shook the city of Iwo over the unfriendly attitude to the use of Hijab in the government-owned schools in Osun State. The Islamic Movement led the Muslim Students' Society in Kwara State led the peaceful protest against the injustice done by the Nigeria Law School to Firdaus Amasa.

The comprehensiveness in the thought of Muslim Brotherhood has also featured in the peculiar nature of the objectives and activities of some Muslim Organizations in Yorubaland. For example, all the aforementioned Muslim Brotherhood-oriented organizations in Yorubaland have had their positive marks on the missionary, educational, political, economic, social and ideological spheres of humankind as they shall be elaborated.

Finally, the Jiha'd orientation of the Muslim Brotherhood has appeared in the thoughts and activities of the oriented organizations. They normally show solidarity for the symbols of Jiha'd in the contemporary world, such as Ahmad Yasin, the great Muja'hid of Palestine, Osama bn Laden, and Abdullahi bn 'Azzam. Another instance where the Jiha'd orientation features in them is that the oriented organizations have an arm that focuses on training youths for sports activities, crowd management, ushering and tips of gallantry and fighting. Although from my finding, the arm has not been exposed to using arms, due to government policy, it is glaring that the arm is tipped to be the reminder for Muslims that Jiha'd spirit should not die in Muslims. The Muslim Congress has the Congress Guards, the Ta'awun has Al-Jaysh al-Isla'mi, the Tadamun has Al-Kasha'f and The Islamic Movement has Junud ar-Rahman. Hence, these organizations remain the hope of the Muslims in Yorubaland if any exigency of Jiha'd arises.

The literature by the scholars of Muslim Brotherhood has remained one of the syllabuses for the oriented organizations in Yorubaland. My finding shows that the books often studied by those organizations include Majmu'at Rasa'il al-Imam, Mudhakkirat ad-Da'iyah both by Hasan al-Banna', Jundullahi and Al-Madkhal ila' Da'awat al-Ikhwan both by Sa'id Hawwa, fiqh as-Sunnah by Sayyid Sa'biq and various works by Qardawi.

CONCLUSIONS

From the fore-going, it is obvious that the full-fledged orientation of the Muslim Brotherhood got its way to Yorubaland via the links of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait respectively. The Brotherhood-oriented organizations in the region are classified as an affiliate which includes The Muslim Congress and Organization of Tadamunul Muslimeen, and the influenced which comprise of Jamacat Tacāwun al-Muslim in, Islamic Youth Organization, and The Islamic Movement.

The difference between the two classes is that while the affiliate groups have a direct link and are recognized as an associate by the international structure of the movement, the influenced organizations only got their orientation from the literature of the movement.

All the Brotherhood-oriented organizations in Yorubaland share the same mission of setting the direction for repositioning the Ummah. Apart from the organizational structures of the Muslim Brotherhood which are manifest in the adoption of terms such as Shūra, Am̄ir, Naq̄ib, Usrah and others by some organizations in Yorubaland, the impact of the former is also visible in the methodology of the latter which comprises the practice of Bayaah, Jihād orientation, partisanship, dedication to the course of Palestine, protest against tyranny of the government and others. The literature of the scholars of Muslim Brotherhood has also remained the syllabus for the oriented organizations in Yorubaland.

From the study of all the Brotherhood-oriented organizations in Yorubaland, there has not been a conspicuous threat to the security and peace of their host localities. This feature has made them different from their peers in Arabia countries who have been subjected to political persecution that later snowballed into declaring them as a terrorist group by the Arabia tyrants and agents of western domination.

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