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‘That Ye May Know Each Other’: Late Victorian Interactions between British and West African Muslims

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Abstract

From the early 1890's to 1908 members of the Liverpool Moslem Institute led by Sheik William Henry Abdullah Quilliam had extensive contacts with their West African Muslim counterparts. This era was marked by several trends including the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, European colonialism, extensive overseas Christian missionary activities as well as the vast expansion of Islam in West Africa. In this milieu, the British and West African Muslims built a mutually beneficial relationship with equality, respect, and brotherhood as its cornerstone. Their contacts developed and flourished quickly, leading to extensive correspondence, visits, and general support for one another's causes. Some results of these interactions included the Turkish Sultan and West African Muslims entering each other's consciousness, acceptance of English education among West African Muslims, and creating a bulwark against Christian missionaries.

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).” *Al-Qur'an, Surah Al-Hujraat (49:13)*¹

Introduction

Islam in the British Isles had been primarily an immigrant religion until the conversion of prominent Liverpool solicitor William Henry Abdullah Quilliam in the late 1880s. He had traveled to North Africa around 1882 and was introduced to Islam in Morocco, where he studied the religion and Arabic for several months.² For many years after returning to England, he lectured on Islam and gathered together like-minded countrymen with an interest in the faith.³ The exact date of his conversion is unknown, but he publicly declared his belief in Islam on June 17, 1887, after his lecture on “Fanatics and Fanaticism.”⁴ A month later, a cohort of three converts formed the Liverpool Moslem Institute at Vernon Hall with Quilliam as its president. In 1889, the Institute was moved to its permanent location at 8 Brougham Terrace, West Derby Road.⁵ Quilliam's name began to spread across the Islamic world as news of the British Muslim community leaked out. In 1890, the Institute attracted foreign-born Muslims and the Turkish Sultan officially recognized the group.⁶ Upon a return visit to Morocco in early 1893, Quilliam was honored as an *'alim* (Islamic scholar) by the University

of Al-Qarawiyyin (Islamic University of Fez) and a year later the Sultan of Turkey named him the Sheik-ul-Islam of the British Isles, head of the British Muslims.⁷

Quilliam had a lifelong fascination with Africa. He once began a lecture about the continent with, “Africa! What an interest that name has ever had for me from the time when, as a little boy, I heard of the snatching of its dusky sons and daughters, and carrying of them across the great Western Ocean, in order that they might become the slaves of the white man in America!”⁸ He later noted that Africa was very dear to him because on that continent “the light of Islam first shone upon him.”⁹ In 1892, he dedicated a considerable portion of his work “Faith of Islam” to Africa and Africans.¹⁰ He even went so far as to name one of his sons Bilal in honor of Bilal ibn Rabah, the first *muezzin* (caller to prayer) in Islam and a freed slave of Ethiopian extraction. Quilliam’s focus on Africa continued to grow in parallel with the expansion of the Liverpool Moslem Institute.

During the early formation of the Liverpool Moslem Institute, Africa was in the midst of an era of exponential increase in the number of Muslim converts, particularly in West Africa. Colonization by European powers in the second half of the nineteenth century had touched off a surge of interest in Islam, largely in response to Europeanization and Christian missionary efforts. Islam had maintained a strong presence in the region for a millennium, influencing many of the great West African states such as Mali, Songhay, Kanem-Bornu, and Sokoto. Nevertheless, Islam’s appeal to the masses during the Victorian Era was unprecedented. In this milieu, the British Muslims and African Muslims first made contact beginning in 1892. With each succeeding year, the ties binding the Liverpool Moslem Institute with West Africa strengthened, reaching maturity by the end of the Victorian Era and continuing until the demise of the organization in 1908. This paper will explore the relationship between the Liverpool and West African Muslims during the late Victorian Age and analyze the benefits each group realized from this interaction.

Islam vs. Christianity in Africa

During the waning years of the nineteenth century, Muslim and Christian missionaries were at loggerheads competing for souls. It can be argued that this time period represented the second “Scramble for Africa.” For their part, the Liverpool Muslims were unambiguous about their racial views and appeals to convert the African continent to Islam. One editorial castigating Christian racism simply declared, “Islam knows no such race prejudice and declares that the Negro and the white man are equal in the sight of God, and have equal privileges in the State. Negroes, which is the better religion? Christianity which preaches, but fails to practice what it preaches, or Islam which practices all that it preaches?”¹¹ Several years later another editorial opined, “Before another fifty years have passed away we believe that (Insha-Allah) we shall see the whole of Africa Islamized.”¹² These were not isolated instances, but rather part of a concerted ongoing effort to stake a claim in Africa for Islam. Despite their contacts with many corners of the old and new worlds, Quilliam and his Institute continually put Africa at the center of its attention and efforts.

In *Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race*, Edward Wilmot Blyden, noted pan-Africanist and associate of Quilliam, expressed many views on African Christians and Muslims just as colonialism was taking root. This work was widely circulated in Britain and the United States. Blyden surmised that African Christians were cheap imitators of white men, rejecting their very Africanness; while African Muslims were self-reliant, independent and most assuredly African. He explained,

To be as like the white man as possible — to copy his outward appearance, his peculiarities, his manners, the arrangement of his toilet, that is the aim of the

Christian Negro — this is his aspiration...The Mohammedan is a much better Mohammedan than the Christian Negro is a Christian, because the Muslim Negro is a learner, is a disciple, not an imitator.¹³

The book contained numerous examples of this line of argumentation and provided fodder for Muslim missionaries.

Blyden and the Liverpool Muslims' views on Africa were certainly in the minority among all sections of British society. According to Kenneth Dike Nworah, there were two main constituencies in nineteenth century British colonial circles, and the general public divided itself mainly along their lines. The first was the racist school, which believed Africans were inferior beings, the wealth of Africa belonged exclusively to the white race, and Africans were only useful for labor. The second school was the alliance of missionaries and philanthropists, a likely well-meaning, yet destructive force desiring to "civilize" the Africans strictly through Christianity and Europeanization. The few voices against such policies were mainly from the Liverpool Moslem Institute and from the "Third Party" led by Mary Kingsley, John Holt, and E.D. Morel. The Third Party advocated for the study of Africa, slow integration of European values and society, and justice for the Africans.¹⁴ The Liverpool Moslem Institute, although initially unaffiliated with the Third Party, held similar ideas, but saw Islam as the means to move Africa forward and retain its Africanness.¹⁵

A main target of the Liverpool Muslims' editorials and lectures were Christian missionaries who sought to convert all Africans, whether practitioners of traditional African religions or Muslims, to Christianity. The British Muslims drew upon a general sentiment among many Christians that European missionaries were wasting their efforts in trying to convert African Muslims. One report in a colonial African newspaper read, "It is well known that the task of converting Moslems to European ideas of Christianity especially in Moslem communities is hopeless...they may preach for fifty years and they will never make half a dozen converts, even by profession."¹⁶ Another editorial stated,

We are sorry and are ashamed to be caught singing the praises of Islam. But truth seldom fails to compel utterance...Islam has become indigenous, it has allied itself to and become a part of and a power in Africa. Christianity has been and is yet a foreign plant. After one hundred years it is still the 'white man's religion'.¹⁷

Quilliam could not have agreed more and stressed these very points as often as possible. Some African Christians, such as Mojola Agbebi, took note and founded indigenous African-based Christian movements. Agbebi noted that Europeans were pushing Africans toward Islam, stating, "In European missionary centers of work I find Christianity has amply and effectively prepared the way for Islam."¹⁸

The African Muslims held particular disdain for the duplicity displayed by some missionaries' racial views and tolerance for alcohol. An African Muslim noted,

The English have thought fit to name Africa the 'Dark Continent.' Their reason for so doing is very feeble, and is only to the effect that Africa is 'dark,' because the light of European civilization has not flooded the land. Be that as it may, it is certain that Africa, if dark, has been made so by the introduction of civilization and Christianity, with their cursed accompaniments—intoxicating liquors.¹⁹

Another commentator remarking on the predilection of missionary societies to send Americans to Africa from states where lynching was commonplace quipped,

They were all going out to Africa to teach the poor black man about Jesus! What a farce! Missionaries to be sent from the state where they torture the Negro to death to teach the Negroes in Africa about 'the love of Jesus!'...these people who atrociously murdered and mutilated this poor Negro in Tennessee were not 'unspeakable Turks,'...They were every one of them White men and Christians!²⁰

The combustible mixture of race, religion, and colonialism caused an inevitable harsh tone that marked this period of widespread proselytization of both religions.

First Contacts

In October 1891, a notice published in the *Lagos Weekly News* announced the receipt of Quilliam's pamphlet *The Faith of Islam*. This was likely the first time that most West African Muslims had had an opportunity to learn about the budding English Muslim community.²¹ Two months later, the first reported interaction between the Liverpool Muslims and their African brethren occurred on a cheerless occasion. Sergeant Bukhari of the Gold Coast Constabulary died of an accidental shooting during musketry training in England, and his body was brought to the Brougham Terrace mosque. Quilliam, acting as *imam*, presided over the performance of Muslim funeral rites.²²

The following year, Quilliam led a delegation of Liverpool Muslims to meet Liberian minister Dr. Edward Wilmot Blyden, and thus began an acquaintance that would last for the remainder of Blyden's working life. The English Muslims were familiar with Blyden's work *Islam, Christianity, and the Negro Race*, and its favorable view of the spread of Islam among Africans. Blyden seemed taken aback by the genuine friendship offered by the European Muslims and their hope to increase the bonds of fraternity with their African brothers. Blyden responded to Quilliam's hospitality by stating,

I hope that the Moslem Institute under your guidance, with the co-operation of your friends, will increase in influence and usefulness and furnish the means of enlarged education to West African Moslem youth, whose parents are unwilling to entrust them to the unqualified influence of western civilization.²³

The theme of educating West African Muslims would remain the hallmark of the two men's relationship.

There was some debate at the time and still today as to whether Blyden ever converted to Islam, while ostensibly remaining a Christian. In an 1891 letter, he clearly denied being a Muslim himself, but also denied that Islam was outside of the divine inspiration. In denying the rumors he noted, "I believe Christianity to be the ultimate and final religion of humanity." He continued,

I believe that Islam has done for vast tribes of Africa what Christianity in the hands of the Europeans has not yet done. It has cast out the demons of fetishism, general ignorance of God, drunkenness, gambling, and has introduced customs which subserve for the people the highest purposes of growth and preservation. I do not believe that a system which has done such things can be outside of God's beneficent plans for the evolution of humanity.²⁴

Blyden's correspondence and frequent personal encounters with Quilliam increased both men's favor for one another. News of Blyden's work, visits to Liverpool, and general travels, as well as his correspondence, were continuously reported in the Institute's newspapers as late as August 1907.²⁵

An African Muslim in Liverpool

The first West African Muslim to broadly participate in the Liverpool Moslem Institute was Alhaji Harun-ar-Rashid of Foulah Town, Freetown, Sierra Leone. Ar-Rashid was educated in law and received a degree from Al-Qarawiyyin, the same Moroccan university that had honored Quilliam.²⁶ After reading newspaper accounts and receiving issues of the Liverpool Moslem Institute's news organs, the *Crescent* and *Islamic World*, the Muslim leaders of Freetown were convinced of the sincerity of the English Muslims and were eager to communicate with Quilliam's group. Ar-Rashid later recounted,

Upon the arrival of the news on the west coast of Africa that a Mosque had been established in England...the chief leader of Muslims of Sierra Leone made it a duty on the Imams of every Mosque to offer prayers for the worthy president and members of this institute, always after service.²⁷

Ar-Rashid took it upon himself to travel to England in the summer of 1893. He was a stranger with little more than letters of introduction from the Muslim leaders of Sierra Leone.²⁸ This was not the first time he had traveled uncharted waters; he is said to have been the first member of the Sierra Leone Aku community to make the pilgrimage to Mecca.²⁹

During his six-month stay, Ar-Rashid became a full member of the community. He attended most events held by the Institute, served as interpreter when Arabic-speaking Muslims visited the mosque, led daily prayers, acted as examiner for the mosque school's Arabic lessons, and gave several lectures, including a well-received and widely covered lecture on Islam in Africa. Ar-Rashid traveled to the Isle of Man, Quilliam's native land, as well as to Ireland, Scotland, and London.³⁰ Upon his leaving, the whole community of Muslims in Liverpool, including dignitaries from India, South Africa, Afghanistan, and Turkey, bid him farewell.³¹ The farewell address stated, "during the time you have been amongst us you have endeared yourself to all of us, and greatly assisted in the noble work of spreading the cause of Islam in this country."³² Ar-Rashid continued correspondence with Quilliam until the former's death in 1897; many of his letters were reproduced in the *Crescent* and *Islamic World*.³³

Upon returning to Sierra Leone, Ar-Rashid hand-delivered a letter from Quilliam to the West African Muslim leaders. Apparently, the main thrust of the letter, beyond salutations and prayers, was to invite African boys to the Liverpool mosque school. On behalf of Muslims in Sierra Leone, Lagos, and Gambia, Al-Imaum Amara, the revered Foulah Town Muslim leader, replied, "We are therefore particularly grateful that, as Mahomedans, we can now work with Englishmen on the lines of our religion: that we shall now hear in the English language something besides abuse of our holy religion."³⁴

Another consequence of the budding relationship between West African and English Muslims was the Turkish Sultan's more direct and active interest in the progress of Islam in sub-Saharan Africa. This newly acquired interest came directly through Quilliam, who had been cultivating his relationship with the Sultan for years. The first tangible effect of Turkish interest in West Africa came in the form of the Ottoman Order of Medjidie 3rd class (the highest class for a civilian) and title of Bey being conferred upon Lagos businessman and

philanthropist Mohammed Shitta for constructing a mosque in that city with his own funds. Lagos Muslims petitioned Quilliam requesting that he contact the Sultan's representatives and send representatives to the official consecration.³⁵ In response, the Sultan sent Quilliam to West Africa to act as his representative at the event.

The West African Journey

Around June 6, 1894, Quilliam departed from Liverpool on the ship *Cabenda*. As he traveled down the coast of Africa he stopped in the Canary Islands, Senegal, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and the Gold Coast before arriving in Lagos.³⁶ At Goree Island, Senegal, the ship picked up 200 African laborers, half of whom were Muslim. Quilliam prayed with these men at the appointed times, as he describes it, "much to the astonishment, and, I daresay, to the disgust of some of my fellow-Europeans *voyageurs*."³⁷

On June 20, the *Cabenda* arrived in Bathurst, Gambia, where Quilliam was mobbed by well-wishers wanting to shake the hand of the English Muslim. He was removed to the residence of Mohammed Davies, one of his correspondents, where once again there was a multitude of Muslims gathered inside and out. Quilliam spoke for an hour about his conversion and the Liverpool Muslims.³⁸ Though his visit was only a few hours in duration, the impact on some of the local Muslim leaders was nothing less than the fulfillment of prophecy. Imam Omar Gay avowed his belief that the Prophet Muhammad foretold Quilliam's preaching in the West. Another *imam*, an elderly blind man, embraced Quilliam and studied the Englishman's face with a caress and began weeping when he heard his white brother speak. The *imam*, completely affected by the encounter, declared,

I have now heard the voice and been in the company of the white man who is preaching the true faith of God and His prophet to the great English nation...And now Allah, Most Merciful and compassionate thy servant is ready to depart this life in peace, whenever Thou shalt call him home, for his ears have listened to the voice Thou has inspired to be the revealer of the truth to the white men, and to be the proclaimer of Islam in the midst of its enemies.³⁹

On June 22, Quilliam's ship arrived in Freetown, Sierra Leone at 2.00 pm, and once again a large crowd of curious locals and exuberant Muslims greeted him on his disembarking. He wore a fine suit, his head crowned with a turban, as he shook hands for fifteen minutes. The crowd streamed to Wilberforce Hall, where Mohammed Gheirawani read an address of welcome and presented the illuminated document. In part, the address spoke of the many white men that had come to the shores of Sierra Leone for their own enrichment and benefit, merchants, liquor peddlers, soldiers, and missionaries. But of Quilliam, they prayed his presence would generate a religious and intellectual uplifting among the African Muslims. Quilliam spoke to an overflowing crowd for nearly an hour. Then a thousand-strong parade headed by drums and instruments made its way to a Foulah Town mosque, where he was presented an address in Arabic by Mohammed Sanussi. After a short visit, the procession made its way down streets lined with well-wishers to the Fourah Bay mosque. The remainder of Quilliam's whirlwind tour included visiting another mosque, the home of Gheirawani, and the offices of the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* before departing at 6pm.⁴⁰ The *Cabenda* next made port in Accra, Gold Coast, where Mohammed Bayloo Davies boarded the ship to offer a welcome on behalf of the thousand Muslims of that town.⁴¹

On June 28, the Sultan's representative landed in Lagos. The anticipation of Quilliam's arrival was an exceptional occasion in the history of the Lagos Muslim

community. The scene was described as follows: “Thousands of Muslims on horse back, in carriages and on foot, lined the marina from one end to the other. Mr. Quilliam’s failure to land that day kept the crowd there for the rest of the day. The next morning, at dawn, the people had gathered again only to have to bear torrents of rain that met the arrival of the distinguished guest who had been feted all the day down the coast.”⁴² Quilliam was greeted by his friends Alhaji Harun-ar-Rashid and Mohammed Shitta. The throngs followed the guest of honor to the Government House where the Governor, Sir Gilbert Carter, paid his respects.⁴³

The consecration of the Shitta Bey Mosque on July 5 was attended by Muslims from across West Africa, as well as non-Muslim dignitaries and prominent members of society, including Governor Carter and Dr. Blyden. The event was significant in the history of the Yorubaland Muslims, marking a high point in unity, development, and prestige. The building was of architectural significance, “the finest specimen of ecclesiastical architecture in West Africa.” Designed by two Black Brazilian repatriate Muslims, the mosque was constructed by Africans, for Africans, and solely funded with African monies.⁴⁴ The feeling of pride was reinforced through the recognition given by the Sultan. The Muslims of Epe expressed the delight that most West African Muslims felt in response to the Sultan sending a representative. Their address to Quilliam stated,

We rejoice to have been able to see with our own eyes the messenger of the Commander of the Faithful...To you our white brother we have not said much, but what we have said is from the bottom of our heart and is not only to you as the honoured bearer of the Sultan’s decoration to Africa but also to His Imperial Majesty himself.⁴⁵

The Governor’s attendance and speech also delighted the Muslims for its thoughtfulness and focus on religious tolerance, a fact that riled many staunch African Christians in Lagos. Quilliam was pleased by the Governor’s participation; he was convinced that the gesture would increase the Muslims’ “love and loyalty to the British throne.”⁴⁶

Quilliam’s speech was conciliatory toward the Christian Africans and European missionaries, claiming common ground and religious heritage between Islam and Christianity. At the same time, he excoriated the practitioners of traditional African religion, stating, “In Africa fetishism and ignorance had to be destroyed, superstition to be dispelled and the hearts prepared to become the living temples of the Eternal God. Islam and Christianity were endeavouring to accomplish this noble work.”⁴⁷ In addition, he spoke about the need for the introduction of English education among the West African Muslims. The Governor’s speech echoed Quilliam’s sentiments concerning English education. After commending the teaching of Arabic and the Qu’ran, he declared of Quilliam, “I can only hope his advocacy will be more effectual than mine has been to induce you to extend the scope of your educational sphere.”⁴⁸

Quilliam’s encouragement of English education among the West African Muslims was not in order to benefit the British Empire; rather, it was purely a practical stance, in his worldview. He sought to assist his brothers “to avoid the mistake, or rather misfortune, of their co-religionists in India, who having refused to enter Government schools where their religion was not taught, deprived themselves of those qualifications which made them eligible for Government positions.”⁴⁹ To this end, the colonial authorities later assisted the cause by creating and promoting schools that combined Islamic teaching with Western education. In 1896, the Liverpool Moslem Institute hosted George W. Neville, member of the Legislative Council of Lagos, showing him the Islamic school on their premises.⁵⁰ According to Titilola Euba, Quilliam’s endorsement of English education directly led to the formation of

the Killa Society, a group of young Muslims that accepted the concept that Western education increased opportunities for “success”.⁵¹

On July 25, Quilliam briefly returned to Freetown onboard the *Matadi* in the company of Dr. Blyden. He spoke once again in Wilberforce Hall and departed the same day.⁵² Quilliam’s African travels bolstered his esteem and dedication towards the African Muslims. Although he cherished his time in Africa, he was also badly stricken with malaria.⁵³ This too brought the Africans closer to the English sheik. Many correspondents had suffered the ill effects of the disease and let it be known that his health was prayed for in congregations after Friday prayers as well as by individual supplicants in West Africa.⁵⁴

A Flowering Brotherhood

After Quilliam’s visit to Africa, there was an escalation in contacts between the English and West African Muslims. The Liverpool Moslem Institute’s weekly and monthly newspapers, the *Crescent* and *Islamic World*, played a significant role in facilitating the relationship. By the mid to late 1890s, more news on West African Muslims could be found in the *Crescent* than in any of the major regional newspapers of Freetown and Lagos. The *Crescent* not only reprinted nearly every story of consequence on Muslims from these local sources, but also special correspondence, news of visitations, lectures, and general African news written specifically for the paper. West African Muslims even used the papers to communicate to one another. For instance, Mahamad Belo Davies of Accra used the *Crescent* to convey a message of gratitude to Shitta Bey for donating roofing materials for a mosque in that city.⁵⁵ In 1906, the *Crescent* was the first newspaper used by steamship operators Messrs. Elder Dempster and Co. to try to gather support for an annual West African pilgrimage steamer to stop in the major West African ports to the Mediterranean.⁵⁶ Mohammed Sanussi referred to the two Muslim papers as “the fraternal cord which binds the English and African Muslims together.” He went on to state that the papers had also made Quilliam a household name in Sierra Leone.⁵⁷

Correspondence began flowing in from all corners of Muslim West Africa, including Bathurst, Gambia; St. Louis, Senegal; Porto Novo, Benin; Accra, Gold Coast, Freetown and Sherbro, Sierra Leone; and Lagos and Epe, Nigeria. The correspondence included letters from new converts, people Quilliam had met in Africa, prominent Muslims, and non-Muslims seeking an understanding of Islam. To this end, a man named John Thomas Brimah claimed to have been converted to Islam solely on the basis of reading Quilliam’s book *The Faith of Islam*.⁵⁸ The news that righteous Englishmen were holding out their hands in brotherhood and equality to the African Muslims invigorated the latter. Non-Muslim sources took notice. The *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, which rarely published a positive word about Islam, noted, “The existence of Islam in Liverpool with its Mosque and College and its weekly and monthly periodical seems to have inspired the West African Mohammedans with new life.”⁵⁹ Sierra Leone Muslim leader Mohammed Gheirawani expressed his feelings more candidly: “We were often told...that Islam was the religion only of inferior races—that it could be received only by the black man. Ah! What will they say now when great Englishmen are bowing down under the rays of the Crescent?”⁶⁰

However, not all of the news coming from Africa was celebratory. Two significant deaths occurred in the early years of contact between the groups. Mohammed Shitta Bey died of influenza in Lagos on July 4, 1895, and Alhaji Harun-ar-Rashid succumbed to dysentery in Freetown on March 2, 1897.⁶¹ While Shitta Bey’s death at the age of 65 was lamented in Muslim and non-Muslim circles alike, Ar-Rashid’s death at the age of 33 startled his friends and colleagues in both Africa and Europe. For the Liverpool Muslims, Shitta Bey was known

mostly by reputation, but Ar-Rashid's travels made his death more personal to his British associates.

The deaths of these integral links in the relationship between West African and English Muslims could have caused the endeavor to wither, but the maturing bond had grown strong enough to withstand these losses. In fact, the mutual love and respect shown during these periods of grieving appeared to have bolstered the cause. The *Crescent* published a message to the West African Muslims upon Shitta Bey's death: "The deepest and most fraternal sympathy of the English Muslims is hereby extended to their African brethren at this great loss they have sustained."⁶² Over the next month and a half, several long obituaries from the African press were reprinted in the *Crescent*.⁶³ Even more was written of Ar-Rashid. The *Crescent* noted,

The manner in which he recited the Koran was the admiration and delight of all who were privileged to hear him...He was a true Muslim, kind and faithful, honest and true, and we are sure his loss will be greatly felt by the Muslims at Sierra Leone.⁶⁴

Ar-Rashid's friend, Mohammed Omar Dollie of London, wrote to the *Crescent*, "West Africa has been deprived of one of its flowers; Islam of one of her teachers and truest followers; the learned one of their patrons; the literary world of one of its companions, and the musician of one of his friends."⁶⁵ The kind, sincere, brotherly outpouring from England was appreciated in West Africa.⁶⁶

In 1894, prior to his death, Shitta Bey was named an honorary vice-president of the Liverpool Moslem Association. In succeeding years, Shitta Bey's brother Yusuffu (Lagos) and Mahomed Sanussi (Sierra Leone) were similarly honored.⁶⁷ Sanussi was an Arabic teacher at Fourah Bay College, a long-time government translator, interpreter for Dr. Blyden, and one of Alhaji Harun-ar-Rashid's teachers.⁶⁸ The Association's honor was given to various personalities across the Muslim world who had materially or spiritually enhanced the Liverpool Muslims' cause. Upon his donation of 20 shillings to the Institute's orphanage, Quilliam wrote of Mohammed Sanussi, "Bro. Sanussi is not a wealthy man...but he is a true and sincere Muslim, a truly noble specimen of the West African Negro, uncontaminated by so-called Christian civilization."⁶⁹

Visitors from Africa to Liverpool

Reports of African Muslim visitors to Liverpool continued to grow in the succeeding years. In April 1896, Alfa Hamid Denbah, in possession of letters of introduction from the prominent Muslims of Lagos, arrived in Liverpool and was met by several members of the Liverpool Moslem Institute whom he had wired announcing his imminent arrival. He was taken on a tour around Liverpool and the Institute, his native attire causing a stir on the streets of the city. He was in Liverpool only briefly on his way to Mecca for the pilgrimage. A half dozen Institute members saw him off, and Quilliam plied him with letters to various Muslim officials that Denbah would likely encounter on his journey.⁷⁰

In September of the same year, two pilgrims, Abu Bekr bin Mahomed and Abu Bekr bin Cassim, arrived in Liverpool nearly destitute after an unintended circuitous voyage from Senegal took them to Brazil and Portugal, losing their baggage and the life of one of their friends along the way. Finding the pair unable to speak English, the police brought them to Quilliam, who provided them with rooms at the mosque and put forth a call for *zakat* (alms) to send the men to Mecca as they had planned.⁷¹ They stayed at the mosque for six weeks until a group of North African merchants in Manchester raised the requisite funds to send the pilgrims on the rest of their journey.⁷²

Non-Muslim West Africans also came to visit and corresponded with the English Muslims. In late 1898, distinguished doctor J.A. Abayomi Cole visited the Liverpool mosque for Friday prayers and dined with Quilliam.⁷³ Rev. Dr. Mojola Agbebi, a Yoruban Baptist, subscribed to the *Crescent*, and had also been in contact with an Islamic movement in the United States.⁷⁴

The highest-level relationship between the Liverpool Muslims and their West African counterparts was with Alimami Mahomed Gheirawani. Quilliam met Gheirawani in Sierra Leone on his trip in 1894 and had corresponded with him prior to that meeting. In 1893, Gheirawani wrote an autobiographical letter and call to Islam published in *The Islamic World* entitled "Twelve Reasons for Being an African Muslim."⁷⁵ A year later, Gheirawani was named the headman of the Fourah Bay Aku community, a position his father Alimami Haruna had held before him.⁷⁶ In June 1902, Gheirawani came to England at the behest of Colonel King-Harman, Governor of Sierra Leone, to represent the Muslims of West Africa at the coronation of King Edward VII. He also planned an extensive visit with the local Muslim community and solicit funding for Muslim education in his country.⁷⁷ He led the *Jumma* (Friday congregational) prayers and gave the *khutba* (sermon) on several occasions during his stay.⁷⁸ This was a significant aspect of his stay that the local press noticed; Blyden even alluded to it in an unrelated scholarly article on the progress of Islam in Africa.⁷⁹

Soon after his arrival in Liverpool, Gheirawani lectured on "Islam in West Africa" at the Institute. Quilliam and Gheirawani dined at the residence of Sir Alfred Jones, a shipping magnate with ties to West Africa.⁸⁰ Gheirawani traveled to London for the coronation and then returned to Liverpool a week later. Quilliam called an emergency meeting of his secret society, the Ancient Order of Zuzimites, and they initiated Gheirawani into the Order.⁸¹ After a three-month stay, Gheirawani returned to Sierra Leone on September 4, 1902.⁸² Less than a year later, Gheirawani died on July 26, 1903, when he took ill with fever. It was reported that on the day of his death he could be heard saying, "Oh, my kind friend and brother, Sheikh Abdullah Quilliam."⁸³

In 1908, Kelfallah Sankoh of Sierra Leone spent several months visiting the Liverpool Mosque and delivering a series of lectures. Twenty years earlier Sankoh had been a prominent member of the Dress Reform Society of Freetown, an Afro-centric organization whose members took African names and dressed in local African garb.⁸⁴ His first two speeches were entitled "Evolution of the Negro Race" and "The Struggles of the Negro Races," both of which were reprinted in *The Crescent*.⁸⁵ A third was announced, but no record of the title or subject matter has been preserved.

Visitors from Liverpool to Africa

The travel did not flow only one way. After a few years, some Liverpool Muslims began visiting West Africa. Yehya H. Duckworth departed for Sierra Leone in late 1897, but no further account of his travels were published save for a letter two years later.⁸⁶ In it, he related that the Muslims of Gambia and Sierra Leone had fond memories of Quilliam's visit and offered their greetings and congratulations for his continued efforts.⁸⁷ In 1899, Yusuff Nunan departed for a three-year business opportunity and Islamic missionary effort on the island of Fernando Po, a Spanish possession off the coast of Cameroon.⁸⁸ His steamer the *Niger* made a stop in Freetown, where Mohammed Sanussi arranged a welcoming party, a tour of a mosque, and a reception at his home. As with Quilliam's visit, Nunan's stay was a mere few hours, but he was affected by the "fraternal welcome" of the local Muslims.⁸⁹

Nunan spent two years at Fernando Po before returning to Liverpool. During his stay, his contempt for missionaries and African converts to Christianity reached a vitriolic apex. During a lecture on the island, he extolled the virtues of Islam in Africa and cursed the Christian African, stating,

There is, in my opinion, nothing more repelling than the Christian Negro, who fancies himself educated...They imagine themselves paragons of all the virtues, speak bad English, air what little education they have, and take care to let you know that they are Christian gentlemen.⁹⁰

Two months later, Nunan departed for Africa again. His destination this time was Old Calabar, Nigeria. On his journey he hoped to encounter Mohammed Sanussi and Alimami Mahomed Gheirawani one more time in Sierra Leone.⁹¹

Although the African Muslims rejoiced on every occasion of hosting European Muslim visitors, they were keen to have Quilliam himself make a return visit. A typical letter ended with the question, “Your brethren here ever remember with feelings of grateful pleasure your visit to Lagos eight years ago. Cannot you come over here again?”⁹² However, with the ill effects of his encounter with malaria fresh in his thoughts, Quilliam declined all invitations until he reconsidered around 1906. He had planned to visit Senegambia late that year, but he was unable to make the trip.⁹³ At around the same time, it was announced that Quilliam intended to perform the Hajj and wanted to be “accompanied by thousands of his African brethren.”⁹⁴ Through the years, his feelings and support for the African Muslims remained strong, particularly concerning to matters of education.

English Education for African Muslims

As discussed above in regard to Quilliam’s first meeting with Blyden and his stay in Lagos, the introduction of Western liberal education was a continuing theme in Quilliam’s interactions with West African Muslims. Virtually every school opening or mention of education among the Muslims in West Africa was reported in the *Crescent*. For decades, the Muslims of Freetown had largely disenfranchised themselves from participating in the government by refusing to allow their children to attend colonial schools. Fearing the conversion of their children to Christianity, the Muslims sent them to traditional Qur’anic schools or to West African centers of Islamic learning such as Futa Jalon. The trepidation of the elders was well founded; the few prominent Muslims who attended colonial schools were forced to use Christian names (Mohammed Gheirawani and Alhaji Harun-ar-Rashid became Thomas George and Henry Valesius King, respectively). However, in 1890, the Muslims of Freetown were actively encouraged by the colonial government to accept education funds. The Muslims finally acquiesced, opening a government funded school at Pratt’s Farm later that year.⁹⁵ The same fear of Christian proselytizing was present throughout colonial West Africa; in Lagos, it was not until the mid-1890s that Muslims formed their own English-model school.⁹⁶

After the creation of these English Muslim schools, the Liverpool Institute began receiving requests for English-language instructional materials suitable for Muslim children. In response, the West Africans were sent hymnbooks and basic primers on Islamic teachings that the English Muslims had been using in their schools.⁹⁷ In 1900, when he received notice that Liberia College was undergoing repairs, Quilliam advocated for special facilities to be constructed for Muslim students to receive a Western education, but secluded from the vices of Western society.⁹⁸ A few years later, writing to Sir Alfred Jones, Gheirawani related, “The Muslims here are now waking up to the importance of education, and they look for great results from my recent visit to England.”⁹⁹ In 1906, due to Quilliam's efforts in West Africa and his scholarly pursuits, Liberia College bestowed on him an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.¹⁰⁰

Quilliam's Greater Ambitions

Quilliam's work in Africa appears to have been based on a sincere desire to assist his West African coreligionists and spread Islam throughout the continent. Nonetheless, his work must be viewed in the broader context of his ardent support of a pan-Islamic philosophy, seeking the united brotherhood of Muslims with the Caliph (Sultan of Turkey) as their leader. Moreover, according to Eric Germain, in general Quilliam's international contacts were a means of fund raising, both from merchants trading with the areas he made contact as well as from the Sultan and other pan-Islamic supporters.¹⁰¹ Of course, fundraising calls went in both directions, with Africans asking for contributions to various projects. For example, in 1907, a request from the Lagos Muslims to help expand and refurbish the Jumma Mosque was published in the *Crescent*.¹⁰² The Liverpool Mosque had significant contacts across the Muslim world and with minority communities as far a way as Australia, South Africa, and North and South America. None of the contacts were as widespread and deep as in West Africa.

Quilliam acted as the gatekeeper between West African Muslims and the Sultan of Turkey, which gave him more prominence in Constantinople. The Sultan's dominions were being assaulted on all fronts as he fought to hold on to the diminishing Ottoman Empire, and Quilliam gave him a foothold in Africa with its ever increasing legions of Muslims. The Africans responded to Quilliam's overtures by taking a firmer stance in conceding the Sultan's role as Caliph and Commander of the Faithful. On the occasion of the Turkish military defeat of the Greeks, Mohammed Sanussi wrote to Quilliam, "We hereby most humbly and respectfully beg to tender our feeble but most sincere congratulations and felicitations to our dear Caliph, his August Majesty Sultan Abdul Hamid Khan, Emir-ul-Mouimineen."¹⁰³ In the same letter, Sanussi alludes to Quilliam's call a year before to rally around the Caliphate, which had been announced in communities around Sierra Leone. In the proclamation, Quilliam challenged the Muslims worldwide:

O Muslims, do not be deceived by this hypocrisy. Unite yourselves as one man. Let us no longer be separated. The rendezvous of Islam is under the shadow of the Standard of the Khalifate...We fraternally invite these brethren to return to their allegiance, and call them in the sacred name of Islam to reunite with the faithful. Muslims all! *Arsh* is under the standard of the Khalifate. Let us unite there, one and all, and at once!¹⁰⁴

The Sultan had firmly entered the consciousness of the West African Muslims through Quilliam's efforts.

Further evidence of Quilliam's role as middleman for Africa and Constantinople appeared in 1902 after a mass conversion to Islam of 600 inhabitants of Ijebu Ode near Lagos prompted an excited letter from the locals to Quilliam. The dispatch stated, "Kindly transmit this joyful intelligence, with our dutiful loyalty, to our glorious Caliph, Sultan Abdul-Hamid Khan, Emir-ul-Mooneen!"¹⁰⁵ Again, in 1905, Quilliam traveled to Constantinople and during his visit presented a report concerning the progress of Muslim education in West Africa and the role Dr. Blyden had played in expanding the educational opportunities for the Muslims during his career as an official in several West African regions and more recently as Superintendent of Muhammedan Education in Sierra Leone. The Sultan asked Quilliam to inform Blyden that he was being honored with the decoration of the Imperial Order of the Medjidieh, as had Shitta Bey a decade earlier.¹⁰⁶ In May of that year, a large gathering of Muslims witnessed the presentation ceremony. In his speech Quilliam related, "I know no other person who is better entitled to receive such a decoration than my dear old friend Dr.

Blyden.”¹⁰⁷ At the conclusion of the ceremonies Dr. Blyden humbly responded, “Tonight’s proceedings are unique. Here you have a body of British Muslims assembled in the second city of the British Empire congratulating an African Negro on being decorated by the Sultan of Turkey. This event will live in history.”¹⁰⁸ Many Muslim communities in West Africa responded with illuminated addresses of congratulations and thanks to Dr. Blyden.¹⁰⁹

Another issue for the Liverpool Muslims was proving to their countrymen that Muslims could straddle the line between being loyal subjects of the British Empire, but also living under the religious guidance of the Turkish Sultan. The argument was akin to the duality of Catholics in the Empire and their relationship to the Pope. Quilliam’s sensitivity to the loyalty question was acute at times, and he often balanced criticism of British foreign policy and war efforts with heaps of praise for the then Queen Victoria. This was particularly evident during the British reconquering of Sudan (1896-1899), when Quilliam forcefully objected to the invasion and desecration of the Sudanese Mahdi’s tomb. He went as far as to issue several *fatwas* hostile to the British army warning Muslims against assisting them. In the midst of the vociferous criticism of the Army, the Liverpool Moslem Institute offered special prayers for the Queen’s birthday and sent her a telegram stating that they “pray to Allah to give you length of years and every blessing.”¹¹⁰ The kind response from the Queen’s private secretary regarding the telegram proved that on some level Quilliam was able to maintain his balancing act of loyalty and harsh criticism of British foreign policy. The explicit role the British Muslims carved out for themselves was “not only to establish harmony between the mother country and her Islamic subjects, but to bring about friendly relations between Britain and the various Muslim States.”¹¹¹

While this duality may have been a tough sell to Muslims in some parts of the British Empire, many of the Muslims of Sierra Leone and other West African communities in the coastal areas had high esteem for the British. As Mohammed Gheirawani related in a speech celebrating Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee, “As African Moslems, sons of liberated Africans, rescued from the barbarous and cruel hands of slavery by British valor and philanthropy, we have reason for praying God’s blessing on the English throne today.”¹¹² The Muslims of Bathurst, Gambia, on the same occasion presented an address with effusive praise and called her “Most Gracious Majesty our Sovereign Queen, the possessor of truthful words, praise-worthy deeds and action.”¹¹³ A decade later, the Muslim chiefs of Isale Gangan celebrated the opening of a government Muslim school, promising to send their children to become “useful citizens and loyal subjects of the King.”¹¹⁴

Quilliam’s prestige spread beyond the English colonies into the French. Blyden, lecturing in Liverpool, reminisced about his travels in Senegal and French Guinea and how from the interior to the coast Muslims inquired about Quilliam and whether it was true an Englishman was a Muslim. Blyden noted,

Mr. Quilliam himself hardly understands the unique character and importance of his position...It is a curious thing that the two English names most extensively known among West and Central African Muslims are Liverpool men –the Sheik-ul-Islam of the British Isles, W.H. Abdullah Quilliam, and Sir Alfred Jones.¹¹⁵

Furthermore, in reference to Rev. James Johnson speaking to a group of missionaries in Liverpool about the progress of missions in Lagos, it was dejectedly noted, “the progress of Muhammedanism had been very rapid...a Liverpool man, had contributed very largely to strengthen Muhammedanism in Lagos and West Africa.” The Lagosians tell the missionaries, “Here is a white man from England. He is a Muhammedan, and he has been a Christian and has abandoned Christianity.”¹¹⁶ Quilliam was nowhere more esteemed and universally hailed than in West Africa.

Conclusion

At a time when most interactions between British religious bodies and Africans were tainted with colonial paternalism, West African and British Muslims developed a fraternal bond of mutual respect and admiration. For the better part of fifteen years, the two groups maintained extensive contacts and supported one another's efforts, both materially and spiritually. Each visit, correspondence, or honor bestowed, further solidified the relationship. In the end, William Henry Abdullah Quilliam and the Liverpool Moslem Institute played a significant role in establishing stronger ties between Africa and the Turkish Sultan and helping colonial and African authorities convince local Muslim populations to adopt and support English-modeled schools. As well, in Quilliam the West African Muslims retained a powerful lever against the Christian missionaries. With a community of European Muslims thriving in the British Empire's second city and Quilliam continually nipping at the missionaries' heels, the West Africans felt fortified against the onslaught of Christian dogma in the region.

For their part, the African Muslims provided Quilliam with an expanded front from which to draw international respect, particularly from the Ottoman government and supporters of the pan-Islamic viewpoint. He truly believed that Africa was on the verge of tilting completely towards Islam and must have seen that he was in a position to continue as a gatekeeper between the Sultan and sub-Saharan Africa. On the home front, Quilliam and the Liverpool Muslims were keen to prove that Islam and loyalty to the Queen were not mutually exclusive. The West African Muslims were particularly well suited for proving their case. Without question, the relationship between the British and West African Muslims proved to be mutually beneficial.

Very little scholarly research has been published concerning Quilliam's band and even less on discrete topics such as this paper has touched. Further studies regarding how this group communicated with other Muslim populations outside of Europe would shed more light on their place in the pan-Islamic movement and how they might have affected or been affected by these interactions with their far-flung brethren.

NOTES

¹ Yusuf Ali translation of the Holy Qu'ran.

² Most accounts of Quilliam's travels to North Africa list the date as 1882, but the earliest published biographical work consulted put the year at 1884. John J. Pool, *Studies in Mohammedanism: Historical and Doctrinal with a Chapter on Islam in England*, London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1892, p. 395.

³ John Wolffe, ed., *Religion in Victorian Britain*, Vol. 5, *Culture and Empire*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997, pp. 247-248.

⁴ "A Short History of the Progress of Islam in England," *Crescent*, January 19, 1898, p. 35.

⁵ *Ibid.* Most works put the date of the move to Brougham Terrace as 1891; however Pool's earlier cited work corroborates the 1889 date (see Pool, *Studies in Mohammedanism*, *op. cit.*).

⁶ "A Short History," *op. cit.*

⁷ "Departure of Brother Quilliam for Morocco," *Crescent*, February 25, 1893, p. 43; Wolffe, *Religion in Victorian Britain*, *op. cit.*, pp. 247-248.

⁸ "A Visit to West Africa," *Crescent*, December 7, 1898, p. 339.

⁹ "Mr. Quilliam at Sierra Leone," *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, July 7, 1894, p. 3.

¹⁰ W.H. Quilliam, *The Faith of Islam*, Liverpool: Willmer Bros. & Co., 1892.

¹¹ "Christian Love for the Negro," *Crescent*, April 3, 1895, p. 111.

¹² "A Mosque at Old Calabar," *Crescent*, January 30, 1901, p. 75.

¹³ Edward W. Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1994.

¹⁴ Kenneth Dike Nworah, "The Liverpool 'Sect' and British West African Policy 1895-1915," *African Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 281, 1971, p. 350.

¹⁵ Quilliam was acquainted with the "Third Party" and later became a member of the group's affiliated Royal African Society in April 1903. "News Notes," *Crescent*, April 15, 1903, p. 234.

¹⁶ "Africa and Mohammedanism," *Lagos Weekly Record*, March 11, 1893, p. 2.

- ¹⁷ "Our Islamic Prospects," *Lagos Weekly Record*, August 26, 1893, p. 2. This article was republished under the same title in the Liverpool Moslem Institute's monthly paper *The Islamic World*, October 1893, pp. 23-26.
- ¹⁸ "A Native African Christian's Views of Islam," *Crescent*, July 9, 1902, p. 30.
- ¹⁹ "Islam in Africa," *The Liver*, October 14, 1893, p. 6.
- ²⁰ "Christian Love for the Negro," *Crescent*, November 20, 1895, pp. 323-324.
- ²¹ "The Faith of Islam," *Lagos Weekly Record*, October 3, 1891, p. 3.
- ²² "A Mahomedan Funeral," *The Times*, December 2, 1891, p. 13.
- ²³ "The Liverpool Mahomedans," *Times of India*, October 3, 1892, p. 6.
- ²⁴ "Dr. Blyden and Mohammedanism," *Lagos Weekly Record*, December 13, 1892.
- ²⁵ "News Notes," *Crescent*, August 14, 1907, p. 105. Quilliam and others saw Blyden off as he boarded his steamer for Africa.
- ²⁶ David E. Skinner, "Islam and Education in the Colony and Hinterland of Sierra Leone (1750-1914)," *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1976, p. 515.
- ²⁷ "Islam in Africa," *The Liver*, October 14, 1893, p. 6.
- ²⁸ "The Late Al Hadj Haroun Al-Rashid," *Crescent*, June 9, 1897, p. 357.
- ²⁹ Skinner, "Islam and Education," *op. cit.*, p. 515. 'Aku' refers to descendents of liberated slaves, usually of Yoruba heritage.
- ³⁰ "Death of Bro. Hadji Rashid," *Crescent*, May 8, 1897, p. 283.
- ³¹ "Distinguished Arabs in Liverpool," *Crescent*, October 7, 1893, p. 301; "Editorial Notes," *Crescent*, October 14, 1893, p. 307. Text of lecture in "Islam in Africa," *The Liver*, October 14, 1893, p. 6; "Farewell to a Distinguished African Moslem," *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, February 3, 1894, pp. 2-3.
- ³² "Copy of Address Presented by the Liverpool Moslem Society to Bro. Raschid on His Departure for Sierra Leone," *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, February 17, 1894, p. 6.
- ³³ Letters included: "Failure of Christian Missions in West Africa," *Islamic World*, April 1894, pp. 13-15.
- ³⁴ "Interesting Letter from the Chief Imaum of Sierra Leone," *Islamic World*, March 1894, pp. 7-8.
- ³⁵ "The Sultan of Turkey and West African Muslims," *Lagos Weekly Record*, May 19, 1894, p. 2; "A New Departure in the Moslem World," *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, June 9, 1894, p. 3.
- ³⁶ Abdallah Quilliam, "A Chapter in the History of Sierra Leone," *Journal of the African Society*, Vol. 3, No. 9, 1903, p. 83.
- ³⁷ "A Visit to West Africa," *Crescent*, December 7, 1898, p. 347.
- ³⁸ "Mr. Quilliam's Visit to West Africa," *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, July 7, 1894, p. 2.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ "Mr. W.H. Quilliam," *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, June 25, 1894, p. 5; "Arrival of Mr. W.H. Quilliam," *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, June 25, 1894, p. 5; "Mr. Quilliam at Sierra Leone," *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, July 7, 1894, p. 3.
- ⁴¹ "The Outward Voyage of the Cabenda," *Lagos Weekly Record*, July 14, 1894, p. 3.
- ⁴² Titilola Euba, "Shitta Bey and the Lagos Muslim Community 1850-1895 (Part II)," *Nigerian Journal of Islam*, Vol. 2, No. 2, June 1972-June 1974, p. 13.
- ⁴³ "The Arrival of W.H.A. Quilliam, Esq.," *Lagos Weekly Record*, June 30, 1894, p. 3.
- ⁴⁴ "The Consecration of Mr. Shitta's Mosque," *Lagos Weekly Record*, July 7, 1894, p. 2; Euba, "Shitta Bey and the Lagos Muslim Community," *op. cit.*, p. 14.
- ⁴⁵ "Translation of an Arabic Address from the Muslims of Epe (West Africa) to Sheikh Abdullah Quilliam," *Crescent*, August 14, 1895, p. 107.
- ⁴⁶ "Mr. Quilliam's Speech at the Opening of the Mosque," *Lagos Weekly Record*, July 21, 1894, p. 2.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁸ "Address of His Excellency Sir Gilbert T. Carter K.C.M.G.," *Lagos Weekly Record*, July 7, 1894, p. 3.
- ⁴⁹ Quilliam, "A Chapter in the History," *op. cit.*, 92-93.
- ⁵⁰ "News Notes," *Crescent*, June 24, 1896, p. 825.
- ⁵¹ Euba, "Shitta Bey and the Lagos Muslim Community," *op. cit.*, p. 14.
- ⁵² "Sierra Leone," *Lagos Weekly Record*, August 18, 1894, p. 3; "General News," *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, July 28, 1894, p. 5.
- ⁵³ "The English Muslims and the Widowed Princess," *Crescent*, January 29, 1896, p. 492.
- ⁵⁴ "Kind Letter from Lagos," *Crescent*, February 2, 1895, p. 46; "News From the Gold Coast," *Crescent*, April 10, 1895, p. 119.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁶ "Pilgrimage to Mecca from West Africa," *Crescent*, August 1, 1906, p. 494. A similar appeal appeared in virtually every issue of the *Crescent* for the remainder of 1906.
- ⁵⁷ "Interesting Letter from West Africa," *Crescent*, October 21, 1896, p. 1093.
- ⁵⁸ "Converted to Islam through Reading One of Mr. Quilliam's Books," *Islamic World*, July 1894, pp. 95-96.
- ⁵⁹ "Sierra Leone Mohammedan in Liverpool," *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, February 3, 1894, p. 5.

- ⁶⁰ “Twelve Reasons for Being an African Muslim,” *Islamic World*, December 1893, pp. 6-8.
- ⁶¹ “The Late Mohammed Shitta Bey,” *Crescent*, August 21, 1895, p. 119 (reprinted from *Lagos Weekly Record*); “Death of Bro. Hadji Rashid,” *Crescent*, May 8, 1897, p. 283; “The Late Alhaji Harun-Ar-Rashid,” *Lagos Weekly Record*, May 15, 1897, pp. 2-3.
- ⁶² “Death of Shitta Bey,” *Crescent*, July 10, 1895, p. 24.
- ⁶³ “Death of Mohammed Shitta Bey,” *Crescent*, July 31, 1895, pp. 71-72 (reprinted from *Sierra Leone Weekly News*); and “The Late Mohammed Shitta Bey,” *Crescent*, August 21, 1895, p. 119 (reprinted from *Lagos Weekly Record*).
- ⁶⁴ “Death of Bro. Hadji Rashid,” *Crescent*, May 8, 1897, p. 283.
- ⁶⁵ “The Late Hadji Rashid,” *Crescent*, May 19, 1897, p. 311.
- ⁶⁶ “A Voice from Sierra Leone,” *Crescent*, December 1, 1897, p. 765.
- ⁶⁷ “Annual Meeting of the Liverpool Muslim Association,” *Crescent*, August 21, 1895, pp. 115-116. Sanussi sent a letter of gratification that was published in the *Crescent*, “Kind Letter from Sierra Leone,” *Crescent*, October 30, 1895, p. 284.
- ⁶⁸ Skinner, “Islam and Education,” *op. cit.*, p. 515.
- ⁶⁹ “Annual Meeting,” *Crescent*, June 22, 1898, p. 389.
- ⁷⁰ “An Equatorial African in Liverpool,” *Crescent*, April 29, 1896, p. 701.
- ⁷¹ “West African Muslims in Liverpool,” *Crescent*, September 23, 1896, p. 1035.
- ⁷² “News Notes,” *Crescent*, October 21, 1896, p. 1097.
- ⁷³ “A Distinguished African in Liverpool,” *Crescent*, January 4, 1899, p. 23.
- ⁷⁴ “Subscribers,” *Crescent*, November 28, 1900, p. 345. Writing under his former name, David Vincent Brown, Agbebi corresponded with Mohammed Alexander Russell Webb and once wrote about Islam in Webb’s newspaper *The Moslem World*, “a religion which has dominated a large portion of my country, which has improved the condition of millions of my countrymen and afforded proper objects of aspiration to many—I shall always welcome with delight *The Moslem World* on my table. I wish you success in your efforts.” See “News Notes,” *Moslem World*, January 1895, p. 3.
- ⁷⁵ “Twelve Reasons for Being an African Muslim,” *Islamic World*, December 1893, pp. 6-8.
- ⁷⁶ David E. Skinner, “Islam in Sierra Leone during the Nineteenth Century”, unpublished PhD dissertation, University of California, 1971, p. 179. Gheirawani’s appointment as headman was not without controversy due to unease about his young age and European education. His tenure caused a schism in the community, splitting his supporters from those of the elder Suleimana Johnson. Christopher Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962, p. 609.
- ⁷⁷ “The British Press on the Visit of the Alimanni,” *Crescent*, June 18, 1902, p. 396 (reprinted from the *Daily Dispatch*, June 10, 1902).
- ⁷⁸ “Distinguished West African Mussulman in Liverpool,” *Crescent*, June 11, 1902, p. 378.
- ⁷⁹ “The British Press on the Visit of the Alimanni,” *Crescent*, June 25, 1902, p. 413; Edward W. Blyden, “Islam in Western Soudan,” *Journal of the Royal African Society*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 1902, p. 27.
- ⁸⁰ “News Notes,” *Crescent*, June 18, 1902, p. 394. Sir Alfred Jones was the owner of a well-known steamship company in West Africa and also participated in several other significant colonial ventures in the region.
- ⁸¹ “News Notes,” *Crescent*, July 9, 1902, p. 26.
- ⁸² “News Notes,” *Crescent*, September 10, 1902, p. 170.
- ⁸³ “The Late Alimanny Mohamed Gheirawanni of Sierra Leone,” *Crescent*, September 9, 1903, p. 166.
- ⁸⁴ Akintola J.G. Wyse, *The Krio of Sierra Leone: An Interpretive History*, Washington D.C.: Howard University Press, 1991, p. 52. Sankoh was formerly known as Isaac Augustus Johnson; Edward W. Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, *op. cit.*
- ⁸⁵ “Evolution of the Negro Race,” *Crescent*, April 22, 1908, pp. 262-264 and 266-270. Continued on April 29, 1908, pp. 275-278; “Struggle of the Negro Race,” *Crescent*, May 20, 1908, pp. 323-327.
- ⁸⁶ “Members of the LMI are Scattered in Various Parts of the World,” *Crescent*, December 1, 1897, p. 761.
- ⁸⁷ “Islam v. Christianity in West Africa,” *Crescent*, March 22, 1899, p. 186.
- ⁸⁸ “Departure of a British Muslim for the West Coast of Africa,” *Crescent*, March 22, 1899, p. 186.
- ⁸⁹ “A British Muslim at Fernando Po,” *Crescent*, June 21, 1899, p. 391; “Bro. Yusuff Nunan at Sierra Leone,” *Crescent*, May 3, 1899, p. 279.
- ⁹⁰ “Fernando Po,” *Crescent*, August 27, 1902, p. 140.
- ⁹¹ “Editorial Notes,” *Crescent*, October 22, 1902, p. 265; “Another Letter from Bro. Yussuf Nunan,” *Crescent*, November 12, 1902, p. 314. Nunan gave a lecture on his impressions of Northern Nigeria at the Liverpool Mosque in 1906; see “Northern Nigeria,” *Crescent*, May 16, 1906, pp. 307-311.
- ⁹² “Glorious News from West Africa,” *Crescent*, March 19, 1902, p. 187.
- ⁹³ “The Haj,” *Crescent*, January 30, 1907, p. 909.
- ⁹⁴ “Editorial Notes,” *Crescent*, October 10, 1906, p. 649.
- ⁹⁵ Christopher Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, *op. cit.*, p. 498.

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- ⁹⁶ “The English Mahommedan School in Lagos,” *Crescent*, August 11, 1897, p. 506.
- ⁹⁷ “Interesting Fraternal Letter from West Africa,” *Crescent*, January 17, 1900, p. 45.
- ⁹⁸ “Editorial Notes,” *Crescent*, August 29, 1900, p. 137.
- ⁹⁹ “Interesting Letter from the Alimanni Mohamed Gheirawani,” *Crescent*, October 15, 1902, p. 253.
- ¹⁰⁰ “The Sheik’s Liberian Degree,” *Crescent*, May 22, 1907, p. 1164.
- ¹⁰¹ Eric Germain, “Southern Hemisphere Diasporic Communities in the Building of an International Muslim Public Opinion at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 2007, p. 129.
- ¹⁰² “An Appeal from Lagos,” *Crescent*, October 16, 1907, p. 253.
- ¹⁰³ “A Voice from Sierra Leone,” *Crescent*, December 1, 1897, p. 765.
- ¹⁰⁴ “Proclamation,” *The Crescent*, April 22, 1896, p. 681-82. *Arsh* refers to the throne of God.
- ¹⁰⁵ “Glorious News from West Africa,” *Crescent*, March 19, 1902, p. 187.
- ¹⁰⁶ “A Turkish Decoration for Dr. Blyden,” *Crescent*, February 15, 1905, p. 109.
- ¹⁰⁷ “Dr. Blyden’s Turkish Decoration,” *Crescent*, May 24, 1905, p. 323.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 326.
- ¹⁰⁹ “The West African Muslims and Dr. Blyden’s Turkish Decoration,” *Crescent*, June 21, 1905, p. 398. Provides the text of an illuminated address from the headmen of the Sierra Leone Muslim communities.
- ¹¹⁰ “British Muslims and the Queen’s Birthday,” *Crescent*, May 31, 1899, p. 346.
- ¹¹¹ “British Muslims’ Foreign Policy,” *Crescent*, July 25, 1906, p. 467.
- ¹¹² “An Address,” *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, July 10, 1897, p. 6.
- ¹¹³ “Translation of an Arabic Address...,” *Crescent*, September 1, 1897, p. 557.
- ¹¹⁴ “Opening of the Moslem School at Isale Gangan,” *Crescent*, January 2, 1907, p. 843.
- ¹¹⁵ “Some West African Problems,” *Crescent*, June 24, 1903, p. 389.
- ¹¹⁶ “The Triumph of Islam in West Africa,” *Crescent*, May 24, 1899, p. 323.