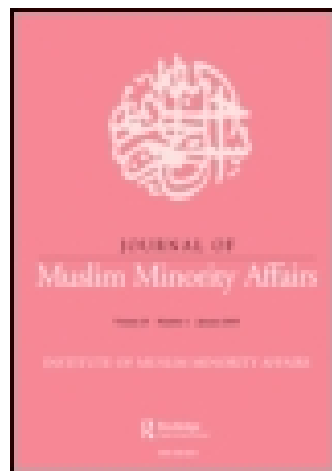


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## **The Uganda Muslim Supreme Council: An Experiment in Muslim Administrative Centralisation and Institutionalisation, 1972-82**

*Abdu B. K. Kasozi*

### **Introduction**

The creation of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council in 1972 gave Muslims hopes that for the first time their affairs which were formerly administered by a collection of organisations and individuals each in competition with the other, would not only come under one administrative umbrella, but would also promote firm institutional principles and procedures.

The first preachers of Islam in these African parts were often traders who propagated the faith in their spare time or as a means to attaining other diplomatic objectives. They did not bequeath administrative institutions to their converts, or prepare them to generate such activity. Nor did they remain in contact with them with the purpose of guiding them in ways of managing Muslim affairs.<sup>1</sup> As a result, Muslims in sub-Saharan Africa have had no viable administrative institutions national in scope and well organized that are a key to the proper direction of the community.<sup>2</sup>

It is true that in many areas, a jihad leader, a reformer, a *sheikh*, a sharif, a learned cleric or a Muslim with a large following developed an administrative structure which in some cases survived the death of the founder.<sup>3</sup> Such examples are however not only few, but are restricted to areas of complete Islamic influence where such structures were created to cater to the mainly mundane affairs of the leader.<sup>4</sup> The major cause for this lack of institution formation was that Islam did not have full time and well paid missionaries spending all their energies to the preaching of the word.<sup>5</sup>

When therefore the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council was created, very few Muslims, if any, had an idea of how it should function. The government under Idi Amin which did so much to help in the creation of this body visualised it as an organ to implement religio-political policies necessary for his survival in power; the Sheikhs (the religious establishment in Uganda) saw it as an opportunity to gain employment; the Muslim elite educated in the Western tradition saw it as a vehicle of order versus chaos and the Christians saw it as a Pan-Islamic organisation preparing a *jihad* in Africa which they had to contend with. No wonder the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council encountered a number of obstacles in the difficult road to institutionalisation.

### **The Nature of Ugandan Islam**

The process of integrating Islam in the daily lives of ordinary Ugandans is still underway and many new adherents are daily entering the fold. But unlike the Bilad-as-Sudan, the East African Coast, Zanzibar, Somalia or the Nilotic Sudan, Islam in Uganda, except in the urban areas where the Nubian or Swahili

communities live, is still a religion and not yet a culture.<sup>6</sup> Ugandans Muslims are very dedicated Muslims. Between 1888-1897, they fought the so-called religious wars to make Uganda a Muslim State, and though they failed they nourished the idea until the coming of Idi Amin when many of them felt their hopes had finally been fulfilled.<sup>7</sup> But Islam in Uganda does not still determine the daily actions of the Muslims. Islamic law except in matters of divorce and marriage is not operative.<sup>8</sup>

The Gregorian and not the Hijri calendar is in force according to which work and holidays are determined. The few Muslims who speak Arabic do so only at religious ceremonies; in their official and personal interaction they use vernacular Kiswahili or English. Islam is therefore a religion and not as yet a culture of the majority of Ugandan Muslims. Again it must be emphasised that they are dedicated believers: they say their prayers without fail, they fast, many make it to Makka and they observe Islamic ceremonies like Maulid an-Nabbi.<sup>9</sup>

And I have no doubt that given another fifty years and the intensity of Islamisation and self identification that is now going on amongst Ugandan Muslims, the process of Islamic acculturation would have reached an irreversible state.

Since no census giving accurate figures for the various religions has been conducted, any attempt to break down Ugandan population on a religious basis is futile.<sup>10</sup> We can only say with certainty that the majority of Uganda Muslims live in urban centres of Kampala, Jinja, Entebbe, Soroti, Bombo, Fort Portal, Arua, Gulu, Mbale, Moroto, etc. Because of lack of educational opportunities, Muslims sought livelihood in urban areas as traders, taxi drivers, lower government workers especially in the lower ranks of the police, army or prison guards and as petty unskilled labourers.<sup>11</sup> In the rural areas, Muslims are found mainly in Butambala county of Buganda, Bugweri county of Busoga, Bukanga-Shema counties of Ankole and above all in West Nile and Madi Districts.<sup>12</sup> In these areas they are more than 60% of the population. In fact in West Nile and Madi, the degree of Islamisation is far higher than in many parts of Uganda.<sup>13</sup> Generally, however, Ugandan Islam is still in a precarious state because the process of Islamisation despite its successes has still not been consolidated.

### **The Coming of Islam to Uganda**

Islam spread to Uganda as a result of contact between Islamised peoples from the East African Coastal (or Swahili) zone and from the Nilotic Sudan.<sup>14</sup> By far the most well documented springboard for Islam was the East African Coast. It is now ascertained that Islam came to the East African Coast as far back as the first or the second century of the Islamic calendar. But it remained in the coastal zone and did not reach the far interior. According to our knowledge, it was not until the early nineteenth century that Islamised coastal peoples began to come into the interlucustrine areas of East Africa.

Coastal goods began to seep in Buganda in the reign of Ssemakokiro, becoming more plentiful in the reign of Kamanya. The first recorded preaching of Islam is supposed to have taken place at the court of the Kabaka (King) of Buganda, Suna II in 1844 by an Arab trader named Ahmed ibn Ibrahim.<sup>15</sup> Islam increased substantially in the reign of Suna's son, Mutesa (1854-1884). Mutesa who was head of a centralised authority with complete political, economic and

social power used this position to Islamise his kingdom.<sup>16</sup> Islam was declared the state religion and efforts were made to establish an Islamic polity.<sup>17</sup> Around 1869, Mutesa decreed that his subjects were to be good Muslims; they had to believe in God, pray five times daily, fast the month of Ramadan, greet one another in the Arabic fashion of “Aslaam alaikum” and abstain from alcohol.<sup>18</sup>

The breakdown of this central authority in the reign of Mutesa’s son, Mwanga II, freed the minds of the people to make individual decisions regarding matters of belief. Islam, however, remained in the lead in this social and later political and military revolution.<sup>19</sup>

The failure of Baganda Muslims to seize and keep power in Buganda in the period 1888 to 1894 resulted in their dispersal throughout Uganda and in their taking Islamic influence to all parts of the country. Many were employed as minor chiefs, agents or interpreters in the four provinces and their Islamising influences proved vital. Thus coastal Islam radiated from Buganda to the rest of Uganda between 1894 and 1910.

The second Islamising influence came from the Sudan in the form of traders who sought products such as ivory and later on slaves. Trading between the southern parts of the Sudan (parts of which are now areas of northern Uganda) have been going on for a very long time.<sup>20</sup> It became more intensified when the Khedive of Egypt claimed the administration of the area. With the collapse of Egyptian control of the south, a number of their employees were recruited for work by Lugard and succeeding administrators of East Africa.<sup>21</sup> Ibrahim Zein Soghayroun has traced the activities of these employees and their role in the Islamisation of Uganda.<sup>22</sup> Here suffice it to say that by 1925, Muslim peoples from the Sudan were found in almost every town of Uganda and their impact on Ugandan Islam was enormous.<sup>23</sup>

During the colonial period 1900 to 1960 Islam faced numerous obstacles in Uganda but it increased despite these. Firstly, the colonial officials were very much opposed to the spread of Islam. The first Commissioner for Uganda, Johnston, wrote that he was “doggedly opposed” to the spread of Islam because Muslims “were proverbially difficult to manage and are always in their hearts opposed to the administration of a Christian power.”<sup>24</sup> He advised his subordinates to discourage Islam by not appointing Muslims as chiefs, agents and imprisoning those Muslim chiefs who encouraged the spread of Islam. Muslims were not provided with secular schools to which they could send their children and when they tried to bring in Indian teachers to teach their children, they were discouraged from doing so.<sup>25</sup> In the Eastern Province, the Provincial Commissioner recommended that missionaries must rush into the area to counter Muslim influence. Although it was Johnston’s idea that Islam should be “pushed as far as possible into the Sudan,” the British Southern Policy also limited the extension of Islam in the animist southern provinces of that country.<sup>26</sup>

Secondly, the colonial social structure that the British built in Uganda based on a peasant economy rewarded members of the tiny upper servicing strata that processed the export of coffee and cotton and import of manufactured goods from the metropolitan countries. To get into this upper strata, one had to acquire education and this education was received only through Christian

schools. Muslims were thus condemned to the lowest strata of society.

Thirdly, the Muslims were neither united as one group to overcome their inconvenience nor did they have a central organisation to articulate their problems. Reading through the Entebbe Secretariat Archives, one finds numerous letters from various Muslim groups, individuals or chiefs, complaining of their lowly position to the British colonial administrators.<sup>27</sup> But little was ever done.

Despite all these problems, Islam increased substantially in the colonial period. In the late 1950s one colonial official writing in the *Uganda Journal* pointed out that Islam was increasing far more than any other religion.<sup>28</sup> Mosques were built in almost every town of Uganda with Kampala, a small city of less than a half million, having more than forty big mosques and about ten Friday *jamias*.<sup>29</sup> Under the leadership of Prince Badru Kakungulu and with help from Asian Muslims, Muslims founded the Uganda Muslim Education Association which built hundreds of primary schools all over the country by upgrading former madrasah schools and grafting secular Western education in their curricula.<sup>30</sup>

This success was not due to colonial paternal protection of Islam as is often believed. Rather it were the unintended forces that colonialism ushered into traditional society that helped foreign monotheistic religions to capture the minds of the people. The shattering of traditional social forces either by physical defeat or through introduction of better (and scientific) ways of controlling and explaining natural phenomena broke the backbone of traditional society. This gave room for foreign religions to take root. Besides, colonialism promoted peace, communications and health, all of which helped foreign religions. As indicated by one source, Islam gained a lot of converts in sub-Saharan Africa during the colonial period. Although in all these areas, including Uganda, Christianity gained far more converts than Islam,<sup>31</sup> yet, by the time Uganda attained political independence in 1962, Muslims were a substantial and self-confident section of Uganda's population playing a vital role in its social, economic and political life.<sup>32</sup>

#### **Evolution of Muslim Administrative Institutions**

As indicated above, Islamic pioneers did not create administrative institutions to cater to the welfare of the converts. Day to day problems of the Muslim community were solved by certain individuals who happened to be influential in one way or the other. This was the case up to the late 1910s when the amount of work came to exceed the individualised methods of operation. By 1947, there were already a number of registered organisations catering to Muslim needs.

In the earliest stages of Islamic influence in Uganda, Islamic affairs were administered by the King, Kabaka Mutesa I. Both at Banda and Nakawa, Mutesa created a Department of the Mosque (*Ekitongole Ekizikiti*), and Apolo Kagwa, who later became a prominent Christian worked there.<sup>33</sup> Affairs concerning the fast of Ramadan were put under Kakolooboto.<sup>34</sup> Mutesa I maintained that he was the head of Islamic religion and his interpretation was the correct one. That is why when a group of youngsters tried to oppose his special position, he had them executed.<sup>35</sup> Kabaka Kalema who briefly ruled Buganda before he was forced into exile in Kijungute maintained a personal guardian-

ship over religious affairs. He had a committee of religiously learned people who interpreted religious dogma. Mu'allim Kamatta was one of these prominent men. Before Kalema's flight to Kijurgute, the centre of Islamic influence and the place where consultations were referred to was at Natete near Kampala. Here resided many prominent Arab traders and a few teachers. A madrassah to train Africans in Islamic studies was built and there was a big mosque. But when the Muslims were defeated, Apolo Kagwa ordered the execution of more than a hundred Arabs who were burnt alive in the enclosure that was their residence.<sup>36</sup> At Natete those local learned Muslims who were trapped like the Arabs were also burnt to death. This robbed Uganda of a whole generation of learned Muslims. It was not until the 1910s that we begin to hear again of local Muslim teachers.<sup>37</sup>

Mbogo who succeeded Kalema as "Muslim Kabaka" compromised with the British administrators and agreed to give up all temporal powers and became a leader of Muslims.<sup>38</sup> At first, the British were suspicious of him and exiled him to Zanzibar but on his return, he accepted British authority wholeheartedly. In the 1900 Agreement, he was given twenty four square miles of land and became one of the influential decision makers at Mengo during the minority of the Kabaka Daudi Chwa II.

As the colonial government began to assume power after pacifying all opposing forces, the Muslims realised that the society being built was inimical to their interests. Hence they were forced to do a number of things in order to survive. First of all, Muslims needed an influential protector who would speak for them at the government level. Mbogo fulfilled this role most admirably. He pleaded with the central government, with local authorities, not to mistreat Muslims, to respect Muslim rights, to allow them to apply Islamic law of marriage, succession and divorce. He pleaded with Christian chiefs to allow Muslims to build mosques. In this, he succeeded for the colonial government trusted him and he was a member of the royal family. This often brought him into conflict with Apolo Kagwa, Katikiro of Buganda from 1888 to 1926, who undermined Mbogo's influence by encouraging an alternative authority based on Muslim chiefs of Butambala led by Magatto.<sup>39</sup> But as long as Mbogo lived, he exercised almost complete authority and the Butambala faction did not loudly voice its opposition.

But after the death of Mbogo in 1921, the Butambala faction led by Sekimwanyi and Magatto supported by Apolo Kagwa and other non-Muslim chiefs, refused to accept the leadership of Prince Badru Kakungulu who had been confirmed as leader of Muslims by the Kabaka Daudi Chwa and a number of leading Muslims.<sup>40</sup> However, a big section of the Muslim community accepted his leadership and they had their headquarters at Kibuli. Thus two organisations, the Butambala and the Kibuli administered the affairs of Muslims after 1921. What had started as a division of leadership later received doctrinal support to solidify the divisions. The Butambala section led by Ssekimwanyi insisted on the omission of the al-Zuhur prayer on Friday while the Kibuli group insisted that al-Zuhur had to be performed after the Juma prayer on Friday.<sup>41</sup> The Kibuli group was soon called the *Zukhuli* group while the Butambala group the *Juma* sect. Other points such as the use of the calendar by the Butambala group

and the insistence on sighting the moon before the start of a month by the *Zukhuli* section further widened the divisions. But it must be noted that the real question causing division was over leadership not doctrine.

After various attempts at unity some instigated by the colonial government, the Muslims in 1946 decided to consult the Mufti at Makka. Each group sent two representatives and this resulted in an agreement that (i) a large unitary Friday mosque where all Muslims could pray on Friday should be built; (ii) there was no need to say the al-Zuhur prayer on Friday; and (iii) Prince Badru Kakungulu should be kept informed of the deliberations.

The Mufti did not address himself to the crucial question of leadership, consequently immediately after the delegates reported their decisions further subdivisions occurred in the Muslim community.

The majority of Muslims met at Kibuli in 1947 and accepted to suspend the al-Zuhur prayer on Friday. These included Prince Badru Kakungulu, Swaibu Ssemahula, Mohammed Lubowa and others. They formed a "sect" known as the "New Juma." They headquartered themselves at Kibuli as the Uganda Muslim Community. However, a section of the Kubuli group led by Abrahamani Mivule refused to abandon the al-Zuhur and remained as the *Zukhuli* sect. They built their headquarters at Kawempe.

A third group composed of the remnants from the Butambala faction refused to accept the leadership of Prince Badru Kakungulu and constituted themselves into the *Juma, Bukoto-Natete*. They were led by Z. Mugemiasooka and registered as the African Muslim Community Natete-Bukoto.

These three bodies administered Muslim affairs fairly smoothly, each of course competing with the other vigorously, until 1965 when NAAM, the National Association for the Advancement of Muslims was founded. This body was found by non-Buganda Muslim politicians who wanted to undermine the socio-political base of Prince Badru Kakungulu and to move the centre of activity of Muslim affairs away from Buganda.<sup>42</sup> With the support of the government, these politicians exploited the discord within the Kubuli Muslim community by attracting old respectable sheikhs like Swaibu Ssemakula, Ahmad Nsamu, Obedi Lutale, Abrazaake Matonu and above all, Abdu Kamulegeys. They also attracted a number of Western educated elites. They used government communication facilities like radio, television and security forces to promote their association. But it faced such fierce resistance especially from the Uganda Muslim community (Kibuli faction) that most of its gatherings had to be protected by civil authority. In 1969 in Mbarara District, an incident relating to control of a mosque led to violence which resulted in loss of life. The Kubuli group alleged that NAAM supporters ordered the killings.

Besides these four groups, there were other Muslim organisations of a special nature. The students had in 1963 formed the Uganda Muslim Students Association and they held annual conferences.<sup>43</sup> Even earlier young educated Muslims had formed the Youngmen's Muslim Association with the aim of promoting youth activities. This latter body had the blessing of Prince Kakungulu. Muslims of Asian extraction who resided in Uganda had their own organisations on ethnic and sectarian bases. There were five such groups, namely the Khoja Shia Ishnasir Jamat, the Dawoodi Bohara Jamat Corporation, Dawoodi

Bohora Limited, the Muslim Sunni Association and the rich well organised Aga Khan Ismailia Community. Each of them was legally constituted and looked after the affairs of its members.

Thus on the eve of Idi Amin's assumption of power in Uganda, there were numerous Muslim organisations administering the affairs of distinct Muslim groups. There was no central planning, coordination or administration. Each group operated for itself and only God was for them all. The only exception was the Aga Khan sponsored East African Muslim Welfare Society that brought together Muslims of all races from Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. But it was banned in Tanzania where its head, Chief Fundikira resided. This gave it a death blow.

### **The Creation of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council: 1971-1972**

Before Amin asked the Muslims to resolve their differences, there were many other Muslims, especially, from the educated groups, who were calling for unity. One of the aims of the Uganda Muslim Students Association was to "convince our elders of the dire necessity of unity."<sup>44</sup> Abaasi Balinda acting on an individual basis drew up a constitution of a united Muslim community in Uganda. But the Sheikhs told him they only respected the Quran, not a constitution. Before NAAM became partisan, it had very strong unitary aims. Amin therefore appealed to sentiments that were already latent in the Muslim community of Uganda. Thus in May/June 1971 a Religious Conference was organised in Kabale. Its aims was to resolve differences between the religious communities of Uganda. The Catholics with their well-defined administrative institutions had a mechanism for resolving their problems and so to them the Kabale conference was a waste of time though they attended. The Anglican Protestants, however, had divisions arising from a desire by the Diocese of Namirembe and West Buganda to secede. After the conference, Amin strongly encouraged them to stay together. Thus, although most writers see Amin only as a Jihad leader with a golden sword to "Moslemise" Uganda<sup>45</sup> to him goes the credit of saving the Anglican Church from schism.

The Muslims who were the most divided came up with a suggestion for a united administrative body that had a unitary constitution. Most of the Muslim delegates agreed that Islamic unity in Uganda was long overdue. They gave suggestions of how their administration should be constituted.

The constitution adopted provided for a Supreme Council of eleven directly elected representatives from each of Uganda's 21 civil administrative districts. Every male Muslim in Uganda was eligible to vote or to be voted for. The Council was to serve for five years and had to meet at least once a year. At its first annual meeting the Council was to elect its officials and two high powered administrative bodies which would serve for five years. The officials were (a) the Chief Kadhi and his deputy who were to be in charge of all religious affairs and the well-being of all Muslims. The Kadhi was also to be the Chairman of the College of Sheikhs; (b) the Chairman of the Executive Council who would preside over meetings of the Supreme Council and of the Executive Council; (c) the Secretary-General who was to be the nerve centre of the administrative activities of the Council.



The two bodies which were to be elected and to run the Council's business for five years were:- (a) The Executive Council: This consisted of the Chairman, the Chief Kadhi, the Secretary General and eleven other members elected by the Council. It was to be responsible for the administration of the Council. (b) The College of Sheikhs: This was a religious body consisting of the Chief Kadhi, his deputy and all the twenty one district Kadhis plus a few elected Sheikhs. This body was to be supreme in all religious affairs of the Muslim community in Uganda.

At the district level, Councils of Representatives from all the counties of a district were to be constituted. The district bureaucracy was to be headed by a district Kadhi whose manner of appointment was not clearly defined in the constitution. Most people desired that he should be locally elected at the district level but in practice the Chief Kadhi nominated his favourites to these positions.

Nevertheless, the constitution created a number of problems due to certain inherent contradictions. First of all the equal district representation was a clause unfair to districts with huge Muslim populations. Thus Kigezi district with about 2,000 Muslim was given the same number of representatives as Busoga that had almost a quarter of a million Muslims.<sup>46</sup> The demarcation of powers between (i) the Executive Council and the College of Sheikhs, (ii) between the Secretary General and the Chief Kadhi was vague. It merely stated that the Chief Kadhi and the College of Sheikhs were supreme on religious matters while the Executive Council, the Chairman and especially the Secretary General were supreme on secular administrative matters. No attempt was made to precisely define "religious" or "secular" matters. As a result conflicts always arose between the Sheikhs and the "secular" administrators of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council on practical interpretations of the constitution. This hindered progress toward institutionalisation of the Council. The constitution did not draw up administrative procedures (or Standing Orders as they are locally called) which would guide officials in the difficult process of decision making and implementation. And finally, the relationship between the new body and the government was not defined. True, the body was independently incorporated as a company with limited liabilities but this did not stop the government from interfering in its affairs "to restore order."

#### **The Functioning of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council: 1972-1979**

The new body received immediate support after the election of the various officials both from the Uganda Muslims and their sympathisers abroad. Enormous sums of money for the functioning of the Council were donated by Saudi Arabia, Libya, the Central African Republic as well as individual benefactors. Prince Badru Kakungulu declared his support of the new body by giving it twenty acres of land at Kawempe and by declaring his retirement as leader of the largest Muslim group in Uganda.<sup>47</sup> The body was officially inaugurated on 1st June 1972 and visitors from many Muslim countries were invited to attend.

During the first year of operation, work was smooth and a number of achievements went on record. The Council established its headquarters by renting Basiima House (the former private residence of Apolo Kagwa) but later moved to old Kampala Jamat-Khan mosque after the Asian exodus. Later

in the year, it bought a huge estate of eighteen executive bungalows from Walusimbi Mpanga, and started the difficult task of registering land in its name. The aim was to transfer all land owned by the "Muslim mission" on which mosques and Muslim schools were built to the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council. When the Asians were forced to leave Uganda, the government decided that "properties belonging to religious missions of departing Asians will go to African religious missions of the same creed."<sup>48</sup> As the majority of Asian properties were registered under their religious organisations and as the majority of them were Muslim, the Supreme Council by 1973 became the richest landlord in the country.<sup>49</sup> By any standards, its properties were enormous.

The year 1973/4 was a year of success. Many people joined the fold of Islam;<sup>50</sup> Muslim Heads of States like King Faisal and Kadhafi visited Uganda. At the Lahore Conference of the Muslim Heads of States, Uganda was admitted to the Islamic Conference.<sup>51</sup> The building of new mosques and headquarters of the UMSC at old Kampala was started. It was contracted to ConCorp Ltd., a company owned by Muslims. There was smooth cooperation between the State and the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council till mid-1974.

After this date the organization encountered a number of problems that delayed its development. There were three major reasons for this. First of all, the USMC centralised constitution was not wholly welcomed by the vested interests of the former Muslim organisations. Many of them would have preferred a body that was an umbrella in which each of the old factions was allowed some degree of independence. Sheikh Zaidi Mugenyiasooka insisted (and still insists) that his body, the Natete Bukoto group, continued to exist as a distinct entity. The Asian Muslim groups were not willing to surrender their property to an apparently amorphous body until they were forced out of the country. The Kibuli group that was rich in land did not willingly surrender the few land titles that it released to the central body and various keepers of *Waqf* adopted a wait and see attitude. Yet officials of the UMSC insisted that all old Muslim bodies were to cease to exist and their properties were to be taken over.

Secondly, there were conflicts in the administrative machinery owing to the inherent contradictions in the constitution. This coupled with lack of rules of procedure within the organisation often caused heated arguments. Conflicts arose mainly on financial matters and how the system of authority to withdraw funds would work. Many Sheikhs objected to signing vouchers, to strict accounting systems and to taking responsibility for money that was given them for official use. Each of the top officials wanted to control the Housing Department where the annual rent was about two million shillings.

But the greatest problem that the new body faced in its institutionalisation was government interference in its day to day operation. True, the body was a child of the government but the father did not give the child the chance to develop in its own way. There were many instances when state directives paralyzed decisions. We can only mention a few instances. In 1975, after the Colonel Khamis Inquiry into the affairs of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council, the Chief Kadhi, Sheikh Abdul Razak Matovu, and his executive were dismissed by the State without consulting the Supreme Council. The proper procedure would have been to call all representatives, let them constitute into a

council and have the Executive dismissed by the whole Council. A new chief Kadhi, Sheikh Yusuf Sulaiman Matovu was selected, not by the Council but by the Head of State. He was later dismissed by the same authority, he thus went out through exactly the same back door that he had come in. After threatening that he would ask Christians to run the affairs of Muslims if they failed to live up to the standards he required of them, Amin appointed a non-Muslim army man, Colonel Mondo to chair an inquiry into the operation of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council especially the Mosque Building Committee headed by Brigadier Moses Ali. On the completion of the inquiry an official of the Ministry of Finance had to countersign all cheques of the UMSC. He was not a Muslim. These actions upset many Muslims. When Yusuf Sulaiman Matovu was dismissed, the UMSC was without an executive officer and was being administered by an Acting Secretary General, Mufanjara, who was not elected by the Council of Representatives. Thus between 1975 and April 1979 the UMSC was an organisation in name; it was run by the Head of State and all major decisions were referred to him. The Council met neither at the General nor at the Executive level; and district Kadhis were directly appointed from the headquarters. In these circumstances, accounting of the finances became impossible. Neither could criticisms of the body be voiced. For everyone was afraid to question the authority of the Head of State.

#### **April 1979 to September 1981: Two Difficult Years**

However the greatest threat that the UMSC faced came after the fall of Idi Amin from power. Most of the exiled Ugandans or "liberators" who fought Amin understood the Ugandan social and political reality only superficially. They believed that the greatest danger to peace in Uganda was Islam and that Amin was the main agent operating through the Ugandan Muslim Supreme Council. Thus both him and the body had to be dismantled and all fanatical Muslims had to be silenced. Way back in 1972 when the first attack on Amin was launched, the commander of invading forces gave an order that all people wearing a cap (a sign of a Muslim) or having a *gurrāh* on the forehead (called a *sijida* in Uganda) were to be killed.<sup>52</sup> This was essentially a declaration of war on Muslims in Uganda. When the successful invasion of Uganda was launched in 1979, there was a great deal of evidence to show its anti-Islamic bias. In Ankole where the first successful incursion took place, hundreds of Muslims were butchered, their property destroyed and the district Kadhi, Sheikh Kaduyu, was put in prison for no apparent crime except that he was a Muslim.<sup>53</sup> In the new government that was formed, not a single Muslim was named as minister. Various local politicians gave inflammatory speeches. One Robert Munyagwa claimed that Islamic rule was synonymous with chaos, ignorance and dictatorship; while Gusto Nsubuga suggested that the new mosque being built at old Kampala should be demolished and a memorial to Nyerere be built instead. It was a difficult period for Muslims in Uganda.

However, those who understood the social reality in Uganda knew that the factors causing violence, dictatorship and instability had their origin in the whole society. This is not the place to go into details but Ugandan society is not a homogeneous society. It is characterised by lack of a common language, lack

of a common religion, tribal hostility, unequal development between north and south, politicisation of competing religious groups, elite exploitation of the masses, concentration of military skill in the minority northerners to the disadvantage of the majority southerners, and above all by underdevelopment at all levels of the social structure.<sup>54</sup> Elimination of Muslims could not solve Uganda's problems.

There was, however, a group of exiles that was sympathetic to Muslims. This was the UPC group led by Paul Muwanga. While still in Tanzania, Muwanga commissioned Sheikh Ali Ssenyonga, (or Sheikh Muzaffar Mukasa as he was code-named) to defend Islam and Muslims in Uganda while attacking Amin as an individual on Radio Tanzania. And many Muslims who remained in Uganda agreed that Muwanga softened the mind of many anti-Islamic militants. But even these people wanted to work with subservient and not out-spoken Muslims (*Omusiramu Wange Sāla erkoko* type).

When Kampala fell, a message was sent to Prince Badru Kakungulu through the late Sheikh Muhammad Bbira that the government looked favourably to his leadership of the Muslim community, that he should select Muslim leaders and that he should work through the Uganda Muslim community at Kibuli. He was also told that almost all government officials were against dealing with "something called the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council." They considered it to be an organ of Amin's dictatorial system. Muslims were asked to revert to their old separate administrative institutions.

Uganda Muslims were divided over the issue. Prince Badru Kakungulu was 73 then and his health was getting weaker each day. He did not wish to take on such heavy duties. The Muslims who had fled Uganda after the fall of Amin were demanding that all Muslims should follow suit and leave the country and not deal with the new government. The question was how could over three million people leave their country? where would they go? and who would look after them? But if they stayed behind, as over eighty percent decided to, then some form of organisation was needed to articulate and protect their interests. The problem was made more critical by the fact that most of the senior officials of the UMSC had fled. Only Sheikh A. Mukasa who was Secretary for Religious Affairs was available. The UMSC was a body without personnel.

A number of educated young men around Prince Badru Kakungulu, along with some Sheikhs, approved of the government stance to dismantle the UMSC and work through their former several organisations. A degree of opportunism was evident in this because some of these people wanted "some form of appointment" in the new government. It was difficult to get the opinions of the Sheikhs in the first critical week (11th to 18th April) when all these decisions were to be made for many of them were in hiding.<sup>55</sup> Prince Badru on the other hand had lived through sixty years of Muslim disunity and did not want to dump the UMSC just like that; he wanted to reform it by making it operate better. But it was unpolitical to announce such a decision at that early moment.

Later in the month when many of the Sheikhs had returned from hiding and when travelling was somehow safe, Prince Badru called a meeting of about fifty leading Sheikhs at Kibuli and asked them to select a temporary leader amongst

themselves who would look after the affairs of Muslims until the whole country was "liberated" when fresh elections of permanent leaders could take place. The Sheikhs decided to nominate a panel of three names from which Prince Badru could choose one name. The three names were Sheikh Ssemakula (22 votes) Sheikh Abdulzaak Matovu (22 votes) and Sheikh Kassimu Mulumba (11 votes). Of these despite certain reservations Sheikh Kassimu Mulumba was eventually selected. His credentials were that he was very fluent in both Arabic and English and was educated in both the Western and Quranic systems. At that time he was working in the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Makerere University, Kampala. He, like his two Deputies, Sheikh Ssemakula and Ali Kivumbi, were all from the Kibuli group.

The next step was to call a press conference and announce the names of the new leaders. But it was a crucial step, that could not be lightly taken. Already there were serious signs of division amongst Muslims. The Wandegeya group represented by Sheikh Kyazze, Abaasi Balinda and Sheikh Kaliisa went to the Headquarters of the UMSC and threatened to occupy them unless democracy was allowed to prevail. Musa Sebirumbi claiming to represent the Uganda Muslim Congress also claimed the Keys of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council. At Bukoto, Zaidi Mugenyiasooka announced that Natete-Bukoto was reborn. Islam in Uganda was disintegrating from within and from without. Responsibility for Amin's supposed errors was being blamed on Muslims as collaborators. The situation was critical for the survival of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council, and Islam in Uganda as a whole.

But Prince Badru handled the situation very ably. He sought out Sheikh Abdu Kamulegeya, who was his arch-rival in the 1960s, for consultations. Kamulegeya had a very large constituency in the Muslim community leading almost all elements that belonged to NAAM and many non-Baganda Muslims. He was resting after coming out of Luzira maximum security prison where Amin had thrown him without trial. These two leaders with two assistants met all night and reached agreement that the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council must be preserved at all costs, and that no fresh elections for office need be held, rather Mulumba together with his assistants (all of whom came from the Kibuli faction) should be confirmed as temporary leaders of Uganda Muslim Supreme Council. Further, that a press conference announcing this must take place at the Headquarters of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council and not at Kibuli. Kamulegeya agreed to reassure his group of these decisions. It was agreed that a full Interim Executive with a Chairman and Mulumba as Acting Chief should be constituted and serve for three months. Subsequently, Muslims throughout Uganda should be given a chance to elect a new UMSC according to the constitution.

The following morning a press conference was held in which Prince Badru Kakungulu presented Mulumba as Acting Chief Kadhi with Ssemakula and Sheikh Ali Kivumbi as the two Deputies. He move swiftly and presented these officers to the President of the country whom he also informed that Muslims had decided on retaining the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council. Later on an Executive Committee with Prince Badru as Chairman, Haji Asumani Mbuubi as his Deputy and Kamulegeya as a prominent member was constituted. This

would also serve for three months only. Following these steps, Mulumba gave a very impressive television interview and after his famous speech at Wandegeya Mosque where he criticised the government for not protecting Muslims, a speech broadcast live by Radio Uganda, Muslims felt more united than ever before. The Uganda Muslim Supreme Council had survived the fall of Amin. This was an achievement for the organisation. It was also an achievement for Islam in Uganda, though, of course as we shall see later, many problems would still crop up.

From May to December 1979, the organisation worked very well though there were many problems to take care of. Almost all Muslim places of worship, schools and administrative facilities including the UMSC headquarters had been targets of looting and destruction. Officials of UMSC had to start from scratch. But gradually they picked up the pieces and rebuilt the administration. An Executive was constituted and district Kadhis were appointed or confirmed in cases where they had not run away to hide or were not killed.<sup>56</sup> From October to December, the UMSC organised a very successful pilgrimage to Makka of 1,000 Ugandans though over 10,000 had actually applied.

Meanwhile, there were grumblings that the Executive, which was given a mandate of only three months had stayed for six and was not preparing to organise the election of permanent officials. A group of Muslims led by Ali Mugambe and Musa Sebirumbi filed a case against the Interim Executive. But after a meeting with Sheikh Abdul Razaake Matovu, who was suspected of being behind the filing of the case though his name did not appear on the register, it was decided that steps to elect permanent officials must be taken immediately and that the case must be withdrawn from the Court.

A Task Force Committee chaired by Asumani Mbuubi with Dr. Sulaiman Kigundu as Secretary was selected to collect suggestions throughout the country on how a permanent Executive should be constituted. They did their work well, for not only did they collect a lot of data from the districts but also recommended substantial changes in the UMSC constitution. Their suggestions were approved in July 1980 and they were given the extra task of organising elections of officials.

The process of voting started very smoothly at the village mosques where representatives were selected who would go to the sub-county mosques. From the sub-county divisions elections were held for delegates who would participate in elections at the district level. At the district level, voting was also smooth and members of the Supreme Council were duly elected throughout Uganda. The next stage was the convening of the Council Representatives who would constitute the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council.

Before this step could be taken, there came a quite unexpected announcement from the government on radio, television and official newspaper warning Muslims from introducing politics into religion.

The following day, the Acting Chief Kadhi announced that he had suspended sections of the constitution dealing with elections, and expelled the Executive and the Acting Secretary General. He gathered any Sheikh he could find plus his loyal supporters and these together constituted themselves as the College of Sheikhs. This group also took over all responsibilities of the Council.

The Executive ignoring these developments and claiming to be working within the constitution further aggravated the Acting Chief Kadhi by dismissing him. They also called for a meeting of the Council in the main hall of Makerere University and about 96% of the newly elected members of the Supreme Council turned up. This was very heartening to the Executive considering that the government favoured Mulumba's faction. The new Executive that was elected by the Supreme Council was headed by Prince Badru Kakungulu as Chairman, Sheikh Abdul Razzake Matovu as Mufti and Sheikh Abdu Kamulegeya as Chief Kadhi. They took all legal steps to register with the Registrar of Companies. But the government gave radio, television and mass coverage to Mulumba. When the Executive tried to go to the UMSC headquarters, they were prevented by security forces and for a second time there was a fight between the two Muslim groups.

This was a bad time for the Muslims of Uganda. Apparently, Muslims had two chief Kadhis, Sheikh Mulumba and Abdu Kamulegeya. And because of the overall political situation in the country Muslims, particularly the educated, were subject to many difficulties. Some of them went into exile while others restricted their movements within the country.<sup>57</sup> Most of these problems had been brought upon them by Muslims themselves.

This time the situation was saved by the Makka-based Rabitat-al-Alam al-Islami. It sent a mediator, Mubarak Gasmallah Zayd, to try to resolve Muslim differences in Uganda. A number of factors helped him achieve this objective. First of all, the new government of President Obote was tired of antagonising Muslims. Obote himself was known to be more sympathetic to Muslims than many of his colleagues. Secondly, the government wanted a leverage in the Arab money markets, success in which was supposed to depend on how Muslims were treated in the country. Thirdly, Mubarak Gasmallah Zayd was the right choice for mediation in Uganda. He was a man of impressive intellectual abilities, politically skilled and had lived in Uganda for over three years. Finally, Ugandan Muslims both inside and outside the country were tired of divisions in their ranks.

The long series of discussions initiated by Zayd culminated in agreement among all Muslims that i) the UMSC constitution would remain supreme; ii) UMSC representatives who were elected and convened at Makerere were legitimate members of the Supreme Council and there was no need of fresh elections; iii) it was agreed to allow Mulumba to remain the Chief Kadhi while Kamulegeya became his Deputy; this was all that Mulumba wanted; iv) all other officials elected at Makerere were confirmed as bonafide officials of the organisation. A few of Mulumba's people were incorporated into the structure of the organisation.

The two groups met and endorsed the agreement. It was a victory for the UMSC; it had survived again! This was 21 September 1981 and up to now the body has been functioning well though due to shortage of funds the Council has not met as often as it should.

### Conclusions

The creation of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council is a good example of experimentation in administrative centralisation and institutionalisation. Dur-

ing its ten years of operation the body has encountered numerous problems largely arising out of discords from within that have been exploited by social forces from outside the Muslim community. Yet due to the determination of Uganda Muslims helped by their brethren abroad the body has overcome many of its problems and has gone a long way to being accepted as the sole administrative structure of Muslim affairs in the country.

In areas where Muslims are in a minority or do not control the social and political system, the importance of such a body is paramount. It helps Muslims articulate, organise and implement their plans for social services like education, health, youth activities besides being a watchdog for the preservation of their identity in a pluralistic environment.

### Notes

1. In the East African interior, few scholars ever came to teach religion following the path of traders. West Africa on the other hand has had a tradition of scholars from the Muslim world. Names like Abu Ishaq al Saheil, Abd al-Rahman Sugain, Makhluf al-Balbali testify to this. Look at J.S. Trimingham, *History of Islam in West Africa*, London: 1952. Also John Ralph Willis's new series on the History of Islam in West Africa, especially Vol. I, *Cultivators of Islam*, Frank Cass, P. Marty. *Etudes sur l'Islam et les tribus du Soudan*, Paris: 1920, 4 Vols, V. Monteil, *L'Islam Noir*, 1964, Paris. But these religious scholars did not build administrative institutions either that survived for a long time.
2. One must make an exception of Muslims of Indian and Pakistan origin residing in East and Central Africa. These formed very viable administrative institutions from the start. The Aga Khan community of Ismailis are particularly outstanding. But their institutions were restricted to their own affairs and not to African converts. Secondly, the Ahmaddiyya Muslim mission has also created administrative institutions. But it is bitterly opposed by orthodox Muslims.
3. Examples of Muslim leaders who created administrative institutions or to put it more correctly who were survived by administrative institutions resulting from their work and inspiration are:
  - (a) The Mahdi in the Sudan: (in the Sudan see:- P.M. Holt, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan 1881-98*, Oxford, 1958.
  - (b) The leaders of the Fulani jihad, see:- M. Hiskett, *The Sword of truth: the life and times of the Shehu Usman dan Fodio*, NY, OUP, 1973. Murry Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, London 1967. H.A.S. Johnston, *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, London, 1967.
 But Ahmed Gran in Northeast Africa was not survived by an administrative institution.
4. Strictly speaking there is no such clear cut separation between the secular and sacred affairs of a Muslim State as in the Christian sense. But there are those aspects of the physical welfare of the faithful that a leader of an Islamic community must address himself to.
5. There is a common tradition that there is no "monkery" in Islam, i.e. that there is no established set of ordained establishment with an articulate system of organisation set apart to administer, preach and live a life of religion
6. This is a controversial point which needs more thorough research but anyone who has been an observer of East African Islam cannot fail to identify these zones of Islamic integration. Look at:- J.S. Trimingham, *Islam in East Africa*, OUP, 1964. L.P. Harries, *Islam in East Africa*, London, 1954.
7. For the so-called religious wars in Buganda, there is now enormous literature available. S.M. Kiwanuka, *History of Buganda to 1900*, London, 1971. Ham Mukasa, *Simudda Nyuma*, 2 Vol., 1938. J.V. Taylor, *The growth of the Church in Buganda*, SCM Press, London 1958.  
 Without mentioning local writers like A.Kagwa, Zimbe, Bakale Mukssa ibn Mayanja, Ssekimwanyi and others. But one of the most interesting interpreters of the period is Michael Twaddle "The Muslim Revolution in Buganda", *African Affairs*, Vol. 71, No. 282, January 1972, pp. 54-72. It is worth reading him for the analysis of the forces at work during



- that crucial period in Uganda's history.
8. Muslims were allowed to conduct marriages and divorce according to Islamic Law by the British in 1906 by the "Marriage and Divorce of Mohammedan Ordinance." African Muslims leaders in each locality were registered as Registrars of marriage and divorce. Besides this there were no other important aspects of Islamic law in force in Uganda.
  9. For a description of how Maulid an-Nabbi is celebrated in Uganda, see my article "Maulid an-Nabbi in Uganda", *Dini na Milla*, 1974, Dept. of Religious Studies, Makerere.
  10. The population figures of 1959 gave Muslim population as 5.6%. But this is not acceptable for a number of reasons.
    - (a) It fell far below the numbers of previous census when according to observers and writers, Islam was increasing far faster than any other religion. See T.W. Gee, "A century of Muhammedan Influence in Buganda 1852-195", *Uganda Journal*, Vol. 22, 1958.
    - (b) Many Muslims at the time feared to confess that they were Muslims because in colonial Uganda Muslims occupied the lowest strata of society.
    - (c) Sample censuses of Muslims were conducted in March 1980 at the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council of 100 sample "villages" or settlements which gave the figure of 15%. But claims that Uganda Muslims are over fifty percent of the population are gross errors also.
  11. Muslims in Uganda lag far behind education because Western education was given to Africans through Christian missionaries and Muslims were afraid that if they sent their children to these schools, they would be converted. See F. Carter, "The Education of African Muslims in Uganda", *Uganda Journal*, Vol. 29, No. 2, 1965.  
 Ahmed Abdalla "Ambivalence of Muslim Education", *East African Journal*, February, 1965.  
 M. Musoke, "Muslim Education in the Uganda Protectorate", *Uganda Teachers' Journal*, 1939, pp. 242-3.  
 Amin Mutyaaba, *Muslim Education in Uganda*, An unpublished graduate research paper, Makerere University, 1974.  
 Ibrahim Zein Soghayroun, "Educational status of Uganda Muslims : A Historical Note", *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Winter 1979 and Summer 1980, pp. 115-125.
  12. The employment of Muslim peoples in the armed forces by the British in Uganda resulted in their retiring in some of these areas. Few works have been published on Swahili and coastal functionaries but on the Sudanese there is plenty of material: Ibrahim Zein Soghayroun, *The Sudanese Muslim Factor in Uganda*, 1981, Khartoum.  
 O. W. Furlley, "The Sudanese Troops in Uganda", in *African Affairs*, 58, No. 223, October, 1959, pp. 311-329.  
 -- "Kasagama of Toro", *Uganda Journal XXV*, No. 2, 1961.
  13. It is in these Districts that many of the Sudanese troops settled; those who were not recruited took up residence and some of those who retired settled in here. Again here Soghayroun is the best source. But due to the current instability in the area many have escaped into southern Sudan.
  14. Although the exact dates of the initial Islamisation of the East African Coast is not exactly known, there is plenty of literature on the History of Islam on the coastal zone and how it was carried to the interior a thousand years later:-  
 G.S.P. Freeman Grenville, *Medieval History of the East African Coast*, OUP, 1962.  
 A.H.J. Prins, *The Swahili-Speaking Peoples of Zanzibar and the East African Coast*, Nairobi, 1961.  
 N. Chittick, "The Shiraz colonisation of East Africa", *Journal of African History*, Vol. X, No. 32, 1969, pp. 375-391.  
 N.R. Bennet, *The Arab Power of Tanganyika in the nineteenth century*, Ph.D. Thesis, 1961, Boston University Graduate School.  
 R. Oliver and G. Matthew, *History of East Africa*, Vol. I, Oxford, 1963, pp. 94-196.
  15. Sir John M. Gray, "Ahmad bin Ibrahim: the first Arab to visit Buganda", *Uganda Journal II* (1949), pp. 80-97 gives 1844 as the earliest date. But other historians give different dates: Ssekimwanyu gives 1850, Ham Mukasa in *Simudda Numa* gives 1855 (by which date Suna had died anyway), Miti gives 1850. But it would seem Gray's date of 1844 is the nearest one.
  16. Ayre Oded, *Islam in Uganda: Islamisation through a centralised state in pre-colonial Africa*, Jerusalem, 1974.  
 A.B.K. Kasozi, "The Process of Islamisation in Uganda" *Uganda Journal*, September, 1976.

- Ham Mukasa, *Simudda Nyuma, Ebiro bya Mutesa*, London, 1938.
17. Apolo Kagwa, *Ekitabo Ky'Abasekabaka be Duganda*, London and Kampala, 1953. Most of the early authorities on Buganda History such as Simbe, Ham Mukasa, Ddiba agree on this point.
  18. Mutesa became the leader in Islamic observances. he learnt to read, fasted, prayed and for some time abstained from drink. But later on he became lukewarm towards Islam though he never renounced it. In fact at his death according to Muslim authors, Mutesa died a Muslim. See Sheikh Ali Kulumba's *Ebyafayo*, p. 3. Kulumba was quoting *Sehimwanyani* and "other elders" who informed him of this.
  19. Michael Twaddle, *op. cit.*
  20. R. Gray, *A History of the Souther Sudan 1839-1889*, Oxford, 1961.  
R. Gray, and D. Birmingham, (edt.) *Pre-Colonial African Trade*, London, 1970.  
Sir S.W. Baker, *The Albert Nyanza*, 2 Vol., London, 1866.
  21. O.W. Furley, *op. cit.*  
J.A. Meldon, "Notes on the Sudanese in Uganda" *Journal of the Royal African Society*, (Later *African Affairs*) Vol. 7, 1907-8.
  22. Ibrahim Zein Soghayroun, *The Sudanese Muslim Factor in Uganda*, Khartoum, 1981.
  23. Most Muslims in Uganda and East Africa follow the Shaffii school of law. However, the Sudanese troops followed the Maliki school and the mosque at Bombo with a particular minaret rising from the ground and a Madrasa in it was a centre for the spread of Malikite doctrine through the many students who graduated from there.
  24. Johnston to Busoga, 3rd December 1900, Busoga Correspondences, Item 1/53 A 11/1/53 Entebbe Government Archives. Also Johnston to Bishop Tucker, 1st December 1900, Entebbe Archives A 23.
  25. W.F. Gowers to the Secretary of State for Colonies, 5th October 1925, Entebbe Government Archives, S.M.P. 6900/54.
  26. Mudathir Abd Al-Rahim, *Imperialism and Nationalism in the Sudan. A Study in Constitutional and Political Development 1899-1956*, 1969 London, pp. 70-85; 244-9.
  27. For example the Mohammedan Meeting at Nzine; 15th May, 1945, S.M.P. R51/2/19. E.G.A.
  28. T.W. Gee, "A century of Mohammedan Influence in Buganda" 1852-1951", *Uganda Journal*, Vol. 22, 1958.
  29. Friday mosques within the geographical boundaries of the city of Kampala are: Kibuli, Wandegeya, Old Kampala, Nakasero, Bilal Mosque, Katwe Mosque, Makerere mosque, Kawempe, Bukoto and Naguru. Smaller Friday mosques like Ndeeba, Mengo, Bwaise are also within Kampala.
  30. Almost all the Muslim intelligentsia of Uganda passed through schools run by that body. Its chief Ramathan Gava worked hard to build the Association and when he died in 1982, many educated Muslims missed him.
  31. *Focus*, Islamic Foundation, Leicester, UK, 1979. These figures show that between 1910 to 1980, Muslims increased from 37 million to 190 million whereas Christians increased from 5 million to 141 million in the same period. The percentage growth of Islam was therefore 172% and that of Christianity was 414%. However, though the general trend might be correct, the correctness of these figures is doubtful. First, in many parts of Africa censuses are not held often. Second, where they are held they are not often broken down to religious components for political reasons; Uganda and Ethiopia being the best examples. And thirdly, they need to be thoroughly cross-checked with other figures.
  32. Since the 1950s Muslims have played an increasing role in politics. As shrewd businessmen with money, their impact on politics has been vital. But most importantly they have exploited or to put it more correctly they have played a political balancing role between Protestants and Catholics in their struggle for control. Religion in Uganda permeates politics and it is not my intention to narrate it here, but See:  
F.B. Welbourn, *Religion and Politics in Uganda*, Nairobi, 1963.  
Akiiki-Mujaju "The Political Crisis of Church Institutions in Uganda," *African Affairs*, Vol. 75, No. 298, January, 1976.
  33. Abdalla Ssekimwanyani, *Ebimu Ku By afayo By'Omu' Buganda Ebitonotono*, 1947, p. 3.  
Bakale Mukasa bin Mayanja, *Akatabo Ke Ebyafayo by'Entalo za Kabaka Mwanga, Kiwewa, ne Kalema*, Kampala, 1947, p. 1.  
Edward Mukasa was the head of the Department of the Mosque. He later converted to Christianity. Kagwa and Yona Wassawa worked there too.

34. Unfortunately, Kakoloboto who had been given the duty of supervising the fast of Ramadan was found eating in the Holy month. Hence the nickname Baganda give to any Ramadan defaulter, the call him Kakoloboto.
35. Ahmed Katumba and F.B. Welbourn, "Muslim Martyrs of Buganda" in *Uganda Journal*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 2, (1964), pp. 151-165.
36. Abdalla Ssekimwanyi, *Eby afayo by'obusiramu Ebitonotono mu Uganda*, Kampala, n.d. p. 3.
37. Mbogo sent for religious teachers and the most famous was Khalifan iban Mubarak who was a teacher to Kakungulu. In Mbale there resided up to 1930s, one Sheikh Abdu Samudu who taught many local Muslims. At Bombo, teaching children of soldiers and the Nubian community was Sheikh Haji Muhammad Abdallah. But they have left no record of their teaching activities except what we get from their students.
38. T.W. Gee, *op. cit.*
39. The extent to which Apolo Kagwas worked with Magatto has yet to be unearthed. But Magatto was one of the Muslim "Yes-men" who accepted Christian defeat and betrayed Muslim secrets. No wonder he was rewarded by being made a Ssaza chief. But old Muslims I talked to agree that Kagwa penetrated the Muslim community through Taibu Magatto.
40. Shurrak (Ag. Provincial Commissioner, Buganda) to chief Secretary, 28th May 1921, Entebbe Government Archives S.M.P. 6900/1921/1.
41. The Kibuli Section insisted that Shafii authorities lay down very strict regulations for the omission of the *al-Zuhur* prayer on Friday some of which are:  
 (a) Not less than forty permanent members of the congregation who are well versed in the Quran must be present.  
 (b) If members of another mosque within the sound of the muezzin's voice are in attendance, they also count towards forty.  
 These points were articulated by the late Sheikh Swaibu Ssemakula.
42. It is interesting to note that late 3r on Prince Badru was arrested for "political security" though in fact his activities were concerned with Muslim affairs. He was later released by Idi Amin.
43. *Uganda Muslim Students' Association Report*, 1963, in Makerere Main Library.
44. *Ibid.*
45. Edward Bakaitwako Muhima "*The Fellowship of Suffering*" *A theological interpretation of Christian Suffering under Idi Amin*, Ph.D. Thesis, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, USA, June 1981, pp. 35-42; 49-55, etc.  
 The work is really an emotional rather than a rational "theological" interpretation of events. Dan Wooding and Ray Barnett *Uganda Holocaust: They faced Amin's terror machine undaunted*, Grand Rapids, Michigan Zondervan Publishing House, 1980.
46. As I said in Footnote 10, the population figures of Muslims in Uganda have no reliably scientific source. Below are figures of five Districts with least Muslims using 1959 census returns with a hope that their general trend can indicate demographic concentrations of Muslims.
- |          |        |          |       |
|----------|--------|----------|-------|
| Busoga   | 53,000 | Karamoja | Nil   |
| W. Mengo | 35,000 | Kigezi   | 1,000 |
| E. Mengo | 31,000 | Acholi   | 1,000 |
| W. Nile  | 19,000 | Mubende  | 1,000 |
| Masaka   | 19,000 | Bunyoro  | 2,000 |
47. Minute 33/72 of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council Executive Committee Meeting on 18th December 1982 — available at UMSC headquarters.
48. This was contained in a Presidential Circular given to the head of Muslims within the armed forces. Since the UMSC was the major beneficiary because the majority of department Asians had registered their properties in their Islamic administrative institutions. There was much indignation from the Christian bodies. The only group's property that could be turned to the Christians were the Goan's especially their clubs called Goan Institutes.
49. Paradoxically, although the UMSC gained out of the Asians' plight, their exodus reduced Islamic influence in Uganda especially in urban areas where they lived and the help they often turned to African Muslims was lost.
50. UMSC Report, 1973, p. 8.
51. Essentially a Muslim state should be that country governed according to Islamic Law. In practise, however, it has come to include:  
 (a) States whose constitutions are modelled on the principles of Islam.  
 (b) States where the heads of the government are Muslims (just as in Medieval Europe at

the height of Reformation, the head of state determined the religion of that state).

(c) States where the majority of the people are Muslims.

(d) States with traditional association with Islam. After the exit of Amin, Uganda has decided to remain a member of the Islamic community for obvious economic reasons. The Islamic Conference has committed millions of dollars for many development projects in the country and it would be naive to abandon them. Likewise, Islam has got a key interest in this strategic country in the heart of Africa. For theories on the above subject look at:-

Majid Khadhuri, *War and Peace in the Law of Islam*, Baltimore, 1955.

Shaybanis Siyar, *The Islamic Law of Nations*, (translated by Majid Kadhuri), Baltimore, 1966.

52. Information provided to me by Adoko Nekyon in 1981. He was the President of NAAM and was a participant in preparations to invade Amin in 1972.
53. For the atrocities against Muslims in Ankole, see Ag. Secretary General of UMSC report, 7 July 1979. The UMSC has details of each District. West Nile suffered most due to the extra factor of tribal animosity. Mazrui and other writers had predicted this reaction against Muslims, see "Religious strangers in Uganda: from Emin Pasha to Amin Dada", *African Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 302, January 1977, pp. 21-39.
54. S. Karugire in his *Political History of Uganda*, Nairobi, 1980, has tried to highlight these factors. See also Cherry Gertzel "Uganda after Amin: The continuing search for leadership and Control", *African Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 317, October 1980. But Uganda politicians and intellectuals seem not to have the breadth of mind necessary to conceive the totality of the social origins of the political instability, the recurrence of dictatorship and the failure of the creation of a viable political community in their land.
55. Mosques were deserted on the first Friday of the first week after the fall of Amin. At Kibuli Mosque we almost failed to get a reader of the Kutba until Sheikh Ahmad Mukasa miraculously appeared on the scene.
56. The hiding was justified for the District Kadhi of Kampala Sheikh Hussein Rahmutu-allah was picked and killed later in the week. Muslim leaders in the North just fled.
57. People like Abu Mayanja, Dr. Sulaiman Kigundu; Azia Kasujja, Dr. Badru Kateregga and the writer and others fled the country.