

**Mobilizing the Hajj in Southwest Nigeria:
Pilgrims, Technologies, and State Regulation 1914–1980**

by

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Note on Terminology

There are a few specialized terms that will be used throughout the dissertation. They will also be defined the first time I mention them, but they are also all defined here:

alfa: learned Muslim

alhaja: female pilgrim

alhaji: male pilgrim

baraka: blessing

bid'ah: illegal innovation in Islam

daw'ah: proselytizing

hajj: pilgrimage to Mecca

Hejaz: a mainly historical designation of the region containing Jeddah, Mecca and Medina. In 1925, this region was conquered by the House of Saud, and only became Saudi Arabia in 1932. Thus, this term is preferable when referring to the Holy Lands pre-1932.

ihram: a sacred state Muslims are required to enter before performing the hajj or umrah.

imam: religious head of a mosque

purdah: female seclusion (can take on a variety of forms and degrees)

shari'a: Islamic law

Takruni: West African pilgrim.

ummah: community of believers

umrah: lesser hajj, can be performed at anytime, though most frequently done during
Ramadan.

Abstract

My project utilizes archival and ethnographic methods to trace the significance of the hajj—the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca—at the personal, state and global scale, primarily from the perspective of southwest Nigeria, a region relatively ignored by Islamic studies. It particularly pays attention to debates over the hajj in the press, practices of prestige, affect, and the regulatory involvement by the British colonial state and then the independent Nigerian government. By tracing the tension between pilgrim mobility and state regulations, I am able to show that policies of population management are always in dialogue with elite and non-elite citizens alike. The dissertation moves between scales to demonstrate that the hajj—as an international journey that all Muslims aspire to—leads to entanglements across regional, ethnic, national, and even religious lines in an interfaith nation like Nigeria. Such an observation is important because it disrupts the pernicious colonial myth that Nigeria is split between a “Muslim north” and a “Christian south.” Technological developments are also considered, in terms of how they magnified the scale and bureaucratic strains of the hajj, and destabilized its meaning. One of the dissertation’s insights is that technologies alone have rarely disrupted the religious meaning and practice of the hajj, unless they tap into broader societal anxieties.

In Chapter One, I consider the evolution of the colonial hajj bureaucracy in the 1920s-40s, while listening to Nigerian reactions and memories that reveal how pilgrims evaded colonial surveillance through their own informal hajj travel network. In Chapter Two, I investigate how

during the rise of nationalist politics in the 1950s, both Muslim and Christian politicians made hajj reform a priority. I continue this analysis of the Nigerianization of the hajj in Chapter Three, by detailing the ideological, sartorial, and spiritual underpinnings of official involvement in the hajj by the post-colonial state. While tensions surrounding the meaning and practice of the hajj are intermittently discussed in Chapters Two and Three, it is in Chapter Four where these tensions take center stage as I examine how increased global connectivity and capital injected the Nigerian hajj with sectarian debate and a sense of moral instability during the oil boom of the 1970s. Two interludes, one pilgrim homecoming celebrations and the other about pilgrims' dreams of Mecca, capture the intense affective quality of the hajj on pilgrims and their communities. Varied sources such as cartoons, music, advertising, fashion, and over a hundred recorded interviews with pilgrims and clerics allow me to foreground the popular Nigerian experience of the hajj, even when attending to state policies.

Introduction

Alhaji Farouk departed Kaduna, once the headquarters of the British colonial government in northern Nigeria, for Mecca in September, 2003. Unlike most Nigerians that undertook the hajj that year, Farouk traveled not by plane but by road, and mostly eschewed cars, trains, and other types of modern transportation. The reason had to do with the spiritual convictions of Farouk and his two travel companions. As members of the Tablighi Jamaat, they aimed to practice Islam as was done during the time of the Prophet Muhammed. Farouk, as a Hausa and a northerner, was unusual for a Nigerian member of Tablighi, since this minority sect is mostly found in the predominately Yoruba southwest. Neither of Farouk's parents belonged, but he took to it "vehemently" and for twenty years followed Tablighi's emphasis on *daw'ah* (proselytizing), at times leaving his family for forty-days at a time.

But in 2003 he set out on a decidedly longer trip, with two Yoruba Tablighi members from southwestern Nigeria; the trio bridged their linguistic differences with English. They originally planned not to stop at Mecca, but to continue to India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, the region where this Hanafi sect of Sunni Islam was founded. The Tablighi Jamaat in Nigeria did not approve of their trip, given its illegality; they left without passports or any other ID, carrying only a small amount of cash and just enough items to fill a small bag each. While on the face of it Farouk's story is incredible, its significance lies not just in its novelty but for what it reveals about the past overland hajj route across the Sahel, from Nigeria to Saudi Arabia, and the space it holds in the memories of thousands (if not millions) of those that reside there.

For one thing, his journey would have been impossible without the help of many people along the way. As Farouk pointed out, nostalgia motivated this generosity:

on that route there is the history of people who have did [a] similar journey, maybe fifty, one hundred years ago. Ok? And when they saw you, and you share your experience with them, people feel like you are bringing those moments back, and they say Oh! We used to, we used to see people like this, but not this time, not this age.¹

As this dissertation will detail, Nigerian Muslims have been undertaking the hajj for centuries, and until the 1960s did so primarily overland. They also traveled for other reasons, such as trade and Islamic scholarship, and paid little heed to the various borders constructed by British and French empires. This history benefited Farouk and his friends on more than one occasion. The first time was as soon as they reached the northernmost border-checkpoint of Nigeria and Cameroon, where they told the immigration officials that they were headed to N'Djamena, a Chadian city just past Cameroon. Though they had no passport or visa, Farouk explained how the officials “know that there is this tradition between Maiduguri and N'Djamena [formerly Fort-Lamy], scholarly people used to trek between them, the scholars used to and the students. So they quickly accepted and said okay.” Later, upon leaving Nyala in Sudan, they met a train station manager who insisted they stay with him in his mosque because they reminded him of “the same kind of people his father,” a Nigerian cleric who had settled there, used to accommodate before his death. When they left, the train station manager “was crying” and presented them with cash and train tickets to El Obeid, and thus resulted in one of the few instances they broke their commitment to trekking.

As this last example evidences, Farouk’s journey revealed enduring connections across the region, regardless of previous colonial or current national boundaries. On the way to Nyala the trio found themselves in trouble when the Sudanese police arrested them. This was after all

¹ Farouk, Interview with Farouk in Kaduna, Nigeria, August 2015.

during the War in Darfur, and the police worried that the men might be there to join the rebels. Yet what could have been a prolonged detour proved to be a blessing, because the deputy commandant of the prison had schooled at the Nigeria Defense Academy in Kaduna. When he learned Farouk was from Kaduna, “that changed everything.”² After Farouk skillfully read the Qur’ān for the deputy commandant, he not only arranged for their release but later gave them 90,000 dinar, or roughly \$350, to assist their journey. Later in Jeddah, Farouk met a Nigerian who helped him get back to Khartoum. And it was another Nigerian who sold him a plane ticket back to Nigeria from Khartoum.

By the time Farouk was busy arranging the final leg of his journey, he neither identified as Tablighi or Muslim. Though Farouk generously talked with me for over an hour and a half, he was reticent to discuss religion, explaining towards the beginning of the interview:

I view religion as a personal thing and I don’t really want to talk about religion, because after that expedition I came out to be a different person completely. It turns me around and I see the world as one, I see humanity as one... when I came out of that expedition I see God in every living soul... The way I used to believe, before, that salvation, everything ends with religion, ah, I think I have a different understanding after that expedition.

And later, when I asked if his life had changed after completing the hajj:

I used to have this sort of one-way view, that my religion is the ultimate. The God I worship is the ultimate God. But after that trip, I now discover, God is not just for you alone. And it is not about Islam. Even in Christianity you have people that believe, Christian is just the only way. Some Muslims believe Islam is just the only way. But to me, I believe there are so many ways to God.

Thus, Farouk’s story provides a bit of caution: despite the general assumption that becoming an *alhaji* or *alhaja* (a man or woman who has completed the pilgrimage) makes one a more devout Muslim, Farouk responded by developing a more capacious, less dogmatic understanding of his

² It also helped that Farouk told him that their destination was the Tablighi headquarters in Khartoum, since Sudanese government respects the sect.

relationship with God.³ As this dissertation will describe, assumptions made about what happens to people when they undertake the hajj—as well as anxieties over what *might* happen—have long motivated and informed policies of hajj control and reform, first by the British colonial state and later by various Nigerian political leaders in the postcolonial period. Like Farouk, Nigerians have long set out on the hajj motivated by deep convictions, but these can shift or change as a result of experiences, often quite intense, on the road and in the Hejaz (region containing Jeddah, Mecca, and Medina). As such, national, regional or even more local policies only tell one piece of the history of the hajj in Nigeria.

Whereas Farouk’s journey was largely personal, Nigerians have often mobilized their hajj to make demands upon the state, their community, or family members. Such was the case of Dr. Bashir Isyaku, who had likewise undertaken the overland hajj journey from Kaduna at an unusually late date, in his case in the early 1990s. Also like Farouk, Dr. Isyaku ended up meeting a number of Hausaphone people of Nigerian origin scattered along the pilgrimage route in Sudan. But if Farouk’s decision to travel by road was a rejection of modern comforts based on theological reasoning, Dr. Isyaku’s trip was a rejection, in protest, of the state’s orchestration of the hajj.⁴ According to Isyaku, his main grievance was the rapidly rising cost of the state-run hajj in the late 1980s during the military rule of Ibrahim Babangida. Worse, these costs had not resulted in improved services, and Nigerians were frequently stranded for prolonged periods in airports—Isyaku himself had gone by air in 1987, only to wait for about thirty-days in the Jeddah airport, which he remembered as “very cold” and without clean toilets. It was these conditions of the state-run hajj that motivated a number of Muslim groups to get together in 1989 to brainstorm how they might put pressure on Babangida’s government to reform the hajj.

³ It is perhaps worth pointing out that his description of God as being everywhere is similar to what many sufi Muslims told me, and thus is perhaps not entirely without influence from Islam.

⁴ Interview with Dr. Bashir Isyaku in Kaduna, Nigeria, Recording, August 2015.

And so, Isyaku and others launched their Hajj by Road project as a type of pilgrim-advocacy work. They planned to undertake the overland hajj using a 4x4 vehicle, to demonstrate the route as a viable, cheaper option with no more discomfort (if not less) than the current hajj by air. In that vein, their main goal was to prompt the government to improve their hajj services. Additionally, the Hajj by Road group hoped that by establishing a standard overland route they might bolster trade relations between Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia. The trip also addressed Christian Nigerians. As Isyaku lamented to me:

There were lot[s] of bickerings and sometimes competitive tendencies from the non-Muslims that, why should the government even pay attention to Muslims because they are going on a religious, what they call, holiday. And we wanted to make the point that hajj is not a religious holiday...it is a prescribed act...so we drew a line between the Muslim hajj and the Christian hajj, which is not prescribed.

What Isyaku refers to here is that fact that in the 1980s, after decades of complaints and periodic privately-organized tours for Christians to Jerusalem or Rome (or both), the Nigerian government launched an official “Christian pilgrimage,” as it is still called today.⁵ Beyond the similar name (and adoption of an honorific title),⁶ politicians and the press used language that equated the trip with the hajj. For example, in 1986 the Military Governor of Oyo State instructed Christian pilgrims “that pilgrimage to holy places was a **sacred duty** of true Christians who must not engage themselves in such things that was a negation of their **sacred duty**.”⁷ [emphasis added] The idea that an elective tour could be compared to the hajj, “a prescribed act,” concerned the Muslims involved in the Hajj by Road project (and is a sentiment that some

⁵ “Pilgrimage to Holy Land Postponed,” *Morning Post*, July 6, 1966, 2; Aremu Lateef Olanukanoni, Recording, August 2015. The 1966 trip, organized by the Nigeria Christian Pilgrimage Association, was “postponed indefinitely” due to lack of interest. The article does note a successful past Christian pilgrimage in 1963. However, this appears to be somewhat of an anomaly.

⁶ Interview with Tasleem Adedokun in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, June 2015; Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015. Christian pilgrims take the title of “JP” short for Jerusalem pilgrim. Adedokun related that he knew a woman who went by this title of address.

⁷ “Be Good Ambassadors, Pilgrims Advised,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 30, 1986, 8.

Yoruba informants in the Southwest expressed to me with little to no prompting),⁸ and they wished to demonstrate to Christians that their pilgrimage was not leisure travel. Thus, the Hajj by Road project addressed a Muslim and Christian audience, albeit for different reasons. The project also attempted to involve Yoruba Muslims in the southwest of the country, though they opted instead to undertake a parallel alternate hajj by boat. As this dissertation will show, these interreligious and interethnic entanglements are not unique to the Hajj by Road project; the hajj in Nigeria has long connected people of different ethnicities, as well as Muslims and Christians.

Like Farouk, the Hajj by Road project benefited from historical residues of the overland hajj. For starters, their lead driver was a Sudanese Nigerian fluent in Hausa and Arabic, who had traversed the route himself in the past for his own hajj, and easily navigated without a map. The label on their car (in English and Arabic) announced them as Nigerian pilgrims, prompting many people along the route to eagerly greet them and offer free food, escort, and accommodation. On a personal level, Isyaku delighted in corroborating stories of the past he had long heard, and in meeting many settled Nigerians in Sudan and learning their histories.

With financial support from the Military Governor of Sokoto State and the Sultan of Sokoto, the project was by and large a success. The trip took sixty-seven days (only fifteen days more than Isyaku's hajj by air in 1987), and would have been faster had they not needed to take a circuitous route to avoid armed conflict in Chad. Per person, the cost was a third of that spent by air pilgrims. The project received positive attention in the press, and the participants submitted a report to the Federal Government. One of their central complaints was that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs oversaw the hajj, which might assign a Christian employee to a task that they strongly felt required a learned Muslim administrator. Within a year the National Hajj

⁸ Dr. Abdul Wahid Afolabi Ahmad Rufari, Recording, December 12, 2014; Aremu Lateef Olasunkanoni.

Commission of Nigeria Act (1990) set into motion the current National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON, est. 2006), which employs only Muslims who are knowledgeable about the hajj and Islam.⁹ As for the Hajj by Road project, largely thanks to political instability along the overland route, this method of travel never developed into a viable official alternative to airline travel. But for Isyaku and his collaborators, it didn't have to—they had mobilized their hajj by road to effectively make demands upon their government for hajj reform.

I begin with Farouk and Isyaku because, though their narratives take place decades after the chronology of this dissertation, they highlight the contours of the Nigerian hajj, and its contradictions. Mainly, they point to an enduring tension between actions by individual Muslims and the state. While the annual circulation of Muslim pilgrims is foremost an expression of devotion to God, it has always been entwined with varied material concerns, modes of belonging, and intense emotional states. In the twentieth century, political concepts particular to modern states—national borders, citizenship, and the scope of welfare services—have often stood at odds with pilgrims' transnational mobility and their identification with a non-territorial *ummah* (Islamic community of believers). This dissertation traces how governments in the colonial and post-colonial periods attempted to regulate the hajj to protect their internal security and international reputations, as well as how pilgrims and clerics pursued their own agendas, both within and outside the constraints of the state. Like the case of Farouk, sometimes tensions resulted from decisions made by pilgrims out of necessity or piety rather than politics; under colonialism thousands of Nigerian pilgrims worked to evade the imperial system of quarantine and passports to reduce the cost of their hajj. Other times, like Isyaku, pilgrims mobilized their hajj to make political demands, whether on the scale of their local community or the nation. By

⁹ Elisha P. Renne, *Veils, Turbans, and Islamic Reform in Northern Nigeria* (Bloomington, Indiana : Indiana University Press, 2018), 143. Before NAHCON, the 1990 Act first established the Nigerian Pilgrims Commission.

attending to the shifting parameters of the tension between Muslims and the Nigerian state, my dissertation explores how national policies of population management are often contingent on the interplay between regulatory anxieties and the desires of individuals. This focus on statecraft and nationalism, while keeping awareness of the affective qualities of hajj, also sheds light on questions surrounding the legacies—or perhaps better, “recursions”—of colonial rule.¹⁰

Farouk and Isyaku also demonstrate that the hajj—as an international journey that all Muslims aspire to—leads to entanglements across regional, ethnic, national, and even religious lines. Outside of Nigeria, the hajj gave way to communities of Nigerians in Chad, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia.¹¹ As Farouk and Isyaku found, even generations born and raised along the hajj trail maintained an affinity with Nigeria and the history of overland travel that had brought their ancestors to a far-off land. Debates about the hajj lay bare the connections between Muslims across the country, perhaps more than any other Islamic practice; the hajj, after all, is the only pillar of Islam regulated by the state at the national level, and the only pillar that leads all Muslims to converge in the same bounded geography. Though Britain’s failure to standardize the hajj kept debates surrounding its meaning local, in the 1950s when aviation allowed the state to regulate the movement of pilgrims from the moment of liftoff, tensions concerning the hajj—whether state policies or its practice—could easily ripple across the nation and ethnicities. And like Isyaku’s desire to show Christians that the hajj was no mere tourism, Nigeria’s status as an interfaith nation has meant that discussions about the hajj are rarely limited to Muslims. Thus, the dissertation addresses the extent to which the hajj has contributed to national identity

¹⁰ Ann Laura. Stoler, *Duress Imperial Durabilities in Our Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 26–27.

¹¹ Christian. Bawa Yamba, *Permanent Pilgrims: The Role of Pilgrimage in the Lives of West African Muslims in Sudan*, International African Library ;15 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press for the International African Institute, London, 1995); John A. Works, *Pilgrims in a Strange Land: Hausa Communities in Chad* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

formation in Nigeria.

Technological innovations—including the printing press, passports, transportation, and radio—enabled new forms of state control over the hajj and facilitated public debate about its meaning. But as Farouk and Isyaku demonstrate, “technological breakdown” has been equally important to the history of the hajj;¹² train tracks in rural Sudan disappear under sand, planes become delayed (or worse, crash), passports get lost, inoculations are administered incorrectly. The scale of the Nigerian hajj—both in terms of distance and number of pilgrims—has routinely aggravated these breakdowns in big and small ways. My research identifies the rise of aviation in the 1950s and Nigeria’s oil boom in the 1970s as key events that transformed the hajj. I show how each development magnified the scale and bureaucratic strains of the hajj, and destabilized its meaning. How such destabilizations played out varied. Some, like air travel, produced anxieties that soon received resolutions based in Islamic theology (Chapter 2). Others, like the figure of the “corrupt” pilgrim, which emerged during Nigeria’s oil boom in the 1970s—a time of apprehension around “quick wealth” and bureaucratic malfeasance—proved more enduring (Chapter 4). Thus, at least for the hajj, technologies alone have rarely disrupted its religious meaning and practice, unless they tap into broader societal anxieties.

Islam in Yorubaland, Islam in Nigeria: Questions of Scale

Islam first arrived in Yorubaland (southwest Nigeria) by the seventeenth century, and by the nineteenth century it was well established in several cities and towns. The source of Islam is generally accepted to be twofold: from Mali and elsewhere in West Africa, and from the Sokoto

¹² Brian Larkin, *Signal and Noise: Media, Infrastructure, and Urban Culture in Nigeria* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 233.

Caliphate, located to its north, which Usman dan Fodio established in 1804.¹³ More or less around the same time (depending on which part of Yorubaland), Anglican missionaries arrived. They brought print technology and soon standardized Yoruba orthography.¹⁴ The city of Ibadan (the main site of my fieldwork) formed in 1829, rapidly expanding with a diverse population and a Muslim majority, and became a noted center of Islamic learning by the century's end.¹⁵ Islam was still a minority religion among the Yoruba, though by 1877 Ibadan had twenty-four mosques and the Sabo (Hausa) Quarter, which was established in 1916, housed a sizable contingent of Muslims of Northern origin.¹⁶ The first six Chief Imams of Ibadan were Hausa who arrived from the North, as did many scholars who the local Muslim population welcomed, as was true elsewhere in the region.¹⁷ Given the longer presence of Islam among Fulani, Hausa, Kanuri and other ethnicities in Northern Nigeria, their clerics possessed deeper chains of Islamic knowledge transmission than most Yoruba clerics. As a result, the Ibadan Muslim community initially perceived Northern Muslims as superior to Yoruba Muslims in terms of Islamic knowledge and prestige. This privileged status of Northern Muslims in Ibadan started to shift in the 1940s when more Yoruba had achieved advanced learning from new Islamic schools that stressed Arabic literacy. Claims to prestige by Yoruba Muslims further increased in the 1950s, when air travel swelled the number of Yoruba pilgrims to Mecca and studying abroad in established centers of Islamic learning in the Middle East. The maintenance of the city's Hausa quarter relied on the

¹³ T. G. O. Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841-1908*, Ibadan History Series (Harlow, England) (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1978), 4–6.

¹⁴ J. D. Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, African Systems of Thought, xi, 420 p. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).

¹⁵ Razaq D Abubakre and Stefan Reichmuth, "Arabic Writing between Global and Local Culture: Scholars and Poets in Yorubaland (Southwestern Nigeria)," *Research in African Literatures* 28, no. 3 (1997): 183.

¹⁶ David D. Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture : Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba / David D. Laitin*. (University of Chicago Press, 1986), 39; Abner. Cohen, *Custom & Politics in Urban Africa; a Study of Hausa Migrants in Yoruba Towns.*, xii, 252 p. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841-1908*, 52.

¹⁷ Geoffrey. Parrinder, *Religion in an African City*, 211 p. (London ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 64; Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841-1908*, 64.

colonial premise that religious and cultural differences between Hausa and Yoruba required separate urban spaces to prevent disturbances. Thus, the growth of Yoruba Muslims combined with new national political parties that attempted to cut across Nigeria’s ethnic divisions (Chapter 2), threatened the basis for the economic and political autonomy of the Hausa quarter. Hausa Muslims (who were by then mostly Tijaniyya) responded by ceding from the Central Mosque (as did Yoruba Tijaniyya adherents).¹⁸ This was in part to maintain their distance from Yoruba Muslims, but also due to frustration that only two indigenous *Yoruba* family lines could hold the Imamship.¹⁹ Today, the line between Yoruba and Hausa Muslim urban geographies has blurred, and Yoruba Muslim merchants often interact with their co-religionists.²⁰ Additionally, the rise of anti-Sufism among more affluent Yoruba Muslims provides an ideological standpoint for some to critique what they see as the laxity and corruption of the Hausa community.²¹

As this brief overview of Islam in Ibadan demonstrates, though Ibadan is a Yoruba town and most of its Muslim population identities as Yoruba, the history of Islamic practice in the region has fostered links with Northern Nigeria since the nineteenth century. As several of the following chapters will explore (Chapters 3–5), the international travel of the hajj illustrates these interregional connections. In the first half of the twentieth century, this was largely due to

¹⁸ Cohen, *Custom & Politics in Urban Africa; a Study of Hausa Migrants in Yoruba Towns.*, 141–60; J. D. Y. Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, The Anthropology of Christianity ;18 (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016), 275n28. Cohen’s argument was that the Hausa inhabitants of Ibadan joined the Tijaniyya in order to remain distinct from the Yoruba majority. Peel recently took this line of argument to task, pointing out that it failed to take into considering the fact that Hausas all over the country were joining the Tijaniyya—regardless of whether they were in a Yoruba town—as were Yoruba members of the town. Rather, as Peel corrects, their act of differentiation was to pray only within the Saba quarter, a practice that continues today.

¹⁹ Patrick Ryan, “Imale : Yoruba Participation in the Muslim Tradition : A Study of Clerical Piety” (Harvard, 1978), 124.

²⁰ Interview with Idris Adeniran in Ibadan, Nigeria., May 2013.

²¹ Interview with Idris Adeniran in Ibadan, Nigeria., October 2014. In this sense, today the view of some Yoruba Muslims towards Hausa Muslims has completely flipped. Among the anti-Sufi Yoruba Muslims I have met, a few warned me—when they heard I was also speaking with Hausas—that Sufis are “not proper” Muslims, but do *bid’ah* practices like putting their sheikh above Allah—an accusation surely any Sufi would reject as baseless.

the fact that, besides elites who could afford to travel by steamship, any pilgrims in the southwest would trek through the northern cities of Kano and Maiduguri before joining the same pilgrimage routes trafficked by pilgrims from the North (Chapter 1). Once the Nigerian hajj largely transitioned to air travel, it nationalized in more ways than one. Not only did this technological development roughly correspond with the nationalist fervor in the 1950s and Nigeria's independence in 1960, but the bureaucratic complexity of air travel—negotiating landing-rights with Saudi Arabia, chartering aircraft, regulating luggage restrictions—necessitated greater state involvement. Thus, while the practice of the hajj before aviation greatly varied from individual to individual, and community to community, by 1960 the hajj had become a *national* practice, problem, and symbol of prestige—even if this national scale merely overlapped rather than eclipsed enduring localized practices, problems, and understandings of prestige (Chapters 2–4). Correspondingly, the category of “*Nigerian pilgrim*” gained analytic purchase in government policy and popular debates. The dissertation thus explores the extent that the hajj contributed to Nigerian national identity formation for Muslims, as well as what this history can contribute to the literature on nationalism(s) more broadly.

When Islam gets discussed on the national scale in Nigeria, it is most frequently in regard to debates and policy surrounding religious conflict,²² particularly recently since Boko Haram began in the early 2000s.²³ Yet, as Nolte and Ogen have recently pointed out, much of this scholarship (especially that produced by those in the US and Europe) is influenced by understandings of religious conflict and tolerance based on histories in the West, which then gets

²² A. R. I. Doi, *Islam in Nigeria* (Zairia [Nigeria]: Gaskiya Corporation, 1984). This work by Doi, based on his PhD thesis, serves as an important exception.

²³ Toyin Falola, *Violence in Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1998); Akintunde E. Akinade, *Fractured Spectrum: Perspectives on Christian-Muslim Encounters in Nigeria* (New York: Peter Lang, 2013).

“transposed somewhat uncritically to different African contexts.”²⁴ The problem with this, Nolte and Ogen explain, is that it ignores intra-religious conflict and diversity (such as the fact that most of Boko Haram’s victims have been Muslim), as well as cultures that go beyond fostering religious tolerance (an activity reserved for beliefs that are neither good nor bad, but simply tolerable) to include “mutual fascination” or enthusiastic accommodation.²⁵

Instead, studies of Islam in Nigeria (and religious practice more broadly) tend to focus on a region, ethnicity, or an even more bounded locality. The majority of this scholarship concerns the Northern Region of the country (though the imbalance is not as stark as some scholarship makes it out to be),²⁶ a logical outcome given that it was in the North where a number of Islamic polities, most notably the Sokoto Caliphate and Borno Empire, dominated the region from the sixteenth century through colonial conquest in the late nineteenth century. A comprehensive review of scholarship on Islam in the North is outside the bounds of this dissertation. Briefly, Boko Haram²⁷ has resulted in much recent scholarship, as has work on salafism or other types of

²⁴ Insa Nolte and Olukoya Ogen, “Chapter 1: Beyond Religious Tolerance: Muslims, Christians and Traditionalists in a Yoruba Town,” in *Beyond Religious Tolerance: Muslim, Christian and Traditionalist Encounters in an African Town* (Woodbridge, Suffolk (GB) : James Currey, an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2017, 2017), 1.

²⁵ Nolte and Ogen, 1–4.

²⁶ Nolte and Ogen, 14; Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, 8. The introductory chapter by Nolte and Ogen is perhaps the most recent example of this, which calls the literature on Yoruba Islam “shockingly under-researched.” This is certainly true of work produced by foreign scholars, however I’d argue it’s a somewhat unfair assessment of work produced by Nigerian scholars. As mentioned elsewhere in my introduction (and by Peel in the introduction of his last book), the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Ibadan regularly produces BA papers, and MA and PhD theses on either Yorubaland or more specific localities in the region. Moreover, there are a number of works published in Nigeria that do not receive much circulation outside of the country, yet have much to offer to any study of Islam in Yorubaland. Regardless, it is certainly fair to say that the study of Islam has gotten less attention than Christianity or African Traditional Religion (ATR) in Yorubaland.

²⁷ Edlyne Eze Anugwom, *The Boko Haram Insurgence in Nigeria: Perspectives from Within* (Cham, Switzerland : Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Alexander Thurston, *Boko Haram: The History of an African Jihadist Movement* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 2018); James J. Hentz editor. and Hussein Solomon editor., *Understanding Boko Haram: Terrorism and Insurgency in Africa* (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY : Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, 2017, 2017); Andrew Walker, *‘Eat the Heart of the Infidel’: The Harrowing of Nigeria and the Rise of Boko Haram* (London : Hurst & Company, 2016); Helon Habila, *The Chibok Girls: The Boko Haram Kidnappings and Islamist Militancy in Nigeria* (New York : Columbia Global Reports, 2016); Mike Smith, *Boko Haram: Inside Nigeria’s Unholy War* (London : I.B. Tauris, 2015).

Islamic reform.²⁸ Relatedly, *shari'a* (Islamic law) has also garnered scholarly attention, at times with particularly focus given to gender, or either politics of the colonial period or democracy.²⁹ Education and topics concerning feminism(s), women and sexuality are another two, at times overlapping, growing literatures.³⁰ With a few exceptions, much of this work focuses on the postcolonial period, and comes from the disciplines of religious studies, anthropology, and political science—though the Sokoto Caliphate has also received recent attention from

²⁸ Renne, *Veils, Turbans, and Islamic Reform in Northern Nigeria*; Thurston, *Salafism in Nigeria: Islam, Preaching, and Politics*; Ramzi Ben Amara, “We Introduced Sharia’-the Izala Movement in Nigeria as Initiator of Sharia-Reimplementation in the North of the Country : Some Reflections,” in *Sharī’a in Africa Today Reactions and Responses*, ed. John (John A.) Chesworth and Franz. Kogelmann (Leiden, The Netherlands : Brill, 2014); Ousmane. Kane, *Muslim Modernity in Postcolonial Nigeria: A Study of the Society for the Removal of Innovation and Reinstatement of Tradition*, Islam in Africa ;v. 1 (Boston, MA: Brill, 2003); Roman. Loimeier, *Islamic Reform and Political Change in Northern Nigeria*, Series in Islam and Society in Africa (Evanston, Ill. : Northwestern University Press, 1997); Elisha P. Renne, “Educating Muslim Women and the Izala Movement in Zaria City, Nigeria,” *Islamic Africa* 3, no. 1 (2012): 55–86.

²⁹ Yushau Sodiq, *A History of the Application of Islamic Law in Nigeria* (Cham : Springer International Publishing : Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Brandon Kendhammer, *Muslims Talking Politics : Framing Islam, Democracy, and Law in Northern Nigeria* (Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 2016); Amara, “We Introduced Sharia’-the Izala Movement in Nigeria as Initiator of Sharia-Reimplementation in the North of the Country : Some Reflections”; Ricardo René. Laremont, *Islamic Law and Politics in Northern Nigeria* (Trenton, N.J. : Africa World Press, 2011); Margot. Badran, “Shari’a Activism and Zina in Nigeria in the Era of Hudud.,” in *Gender and Islam in Africa: Rights, Sexuality, and Law*, ed. Margot. Badran, x, 324 p. (Washington, D.C. : Stanford, Calif.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press ; Stanford University Press, 2011); Gunnar Jochen. Weimann, *Islamic Criminal Law in Northern Nigeria Politics, Religion, Judicial Practice* (Amsterdam : Amsterdam University Press, 2010); Rüdiger. Seesemann, “Politics and Sharia in Northern Nigeria,” in *Islam and Muslim Politics in Africa*, ed. Benjamin F. Soares and René. Otayek, 1st ed. (New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Muhammad Sani. Umar, *Islam and Colonialism: Intellectual Responses of Muslims of Northern Nigeria to British Colonial Rule*, Islam in Africa, 1570-3754 ;v. 5 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2006).

³⁰ Hannah Hoechner, *Quranic Schools in Northern Nigeria : Everyday Experiences of Youth, Faith, and Poverty* (London : International African Institute ; Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY, USA : Cambridge University Press, 2018); Alexander Thurston, “Colonial Control, Nigerian Agency, Arab Outreach, and Islamic Education in Northern Nigeria, 1900-1966,” in *Islamic Education in Africa : Writing Boards and Blackboards*, ed. Robert Launay (Bloomington ; Indianapolis : Indiana University Press, 2016); Chikas Danfulani, “‘Education Is Education’: Contemporary Muslim Views on Muslim Women’s Education in Northern Nigeria,” in *Sharī’a in Africa Today Reactions and Responses*, ed. John (John A.) Chesworth and Franz. Kogelmann (Leiden, The Netherlands : Brill, 2014); Elisha P. Renne, “Educating Muslim Women and the Izala Movement in Zaria City, Nigeria”; Shirin. Edwin, *Privately Empowered Expressing Feminism in Islam in Northern Nigerian Fiction* (Evanston, Illinois : Northwestern University Press, 2016); Jean. Boyd and Beverly. Mack, *Educating Muslim Women : The West African Legacy of Nana Asma’u 1793-1864* (Leicestershire : Kube Publishing Limited, 2013); Beverly B. Mack, “Muslim Women’s Knowledge Production in the Greater Maghreb: The Example of Nana Asma’u of Northern Nigeria,” in *Gender and Islam in Africa : Rights, Sexuality, and Law*, ed. Margot. Badran (Washington, D.C. : Stanford, Calif. : Woodrow Wilson Center Press ;, 2011); Rudolf Pell. Gaudio, *Allah Made Us: Sexual Outlaws in an Islamic African City*, New Directions in Ethnography ;3 (Chichester, U.K. ; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009); Beverly B. Mack and Jean. Boyd, *One Woman’s Jihad: Nana Asma’u, Scholar and Scribe*, xv, 198 p. (Bloomington ; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2000).

historians.³¹ In any case, these works inhabit either a regional or more local scale.

The same point about scale can be said for scholarship on Islam in southern Nigeria. Gbadamosi's seminal 1978 work on the spread of Islam in the region during the second half of the nineteenth century remains the definitive source on the topic, though its chronology cuts off in the early twentieth century.³² Patrick Ryan's PhD thesis on Islam in Yorubaland, published the same year, goes up until the 1970s.³³ Much existing scholarship focuses on Ilorin, the one major Yoruba city to have been incorporated into the Sokoto Caliphate and became a major center of Islamic learning in the nineteenth century.³⁴ As in the literature on Islam in the north,

³¹ Stephanie Zehnle, "'Where Is My Region?' Geographical Representation and Textuality in Sokoto," *Islamic Africa* 9, no. 1 (2018); Paul Naylor, "Abdullahi Dan Fodio and Muhammad Bello's Debate over the Torobbe-Fulani: Case Study for a New Methodology for Arabic Primary Source Material from West Africa," *Islamic Africa* 9, no. 1 (2018); Mohammed Bashir Salau 1966- author., *Plantation Slavery in the Sokoto Caliphate: A Historical and Comparative Study* (Rochester, NY, USA : University of Rochester Press, 2018, 2018); Kota Kariya, "Muwālāt and Apostasy in the Early Sokoto Caliphate," *Islamic Africa* 9, no. 2 (2018); Paul E. Lovejoy author., *Jihād in West Africa during the Age of Revolutions* (Athens, Ohio : Ohio University Press, 2016); Jennifer Lofkrantz, "Intellectual Discourse in the Sokoto Caliphate: The Triumvirate's Opinions on the Issue of Ransoming, ca. 1810," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 45, no. 3 (2012): 385–401; Jennifer Lofkrantz, "Protecting Freeborn Muslims: The Sokoto Caliphate's Attempts to Prevent Illegal Enslavement and Its Acceptance of the Strategy of Ransoming," *Slavery & Abolition* 32, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 109–27; Mary Wren. Bivins, *Telling Stories, Making Histories : Women, Words, and Islam in Nineteenth-Century Hausaland and the Sokoto Caliphate* (Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann, 2007); Sean Arnold. Stilwell, *Paradoxes of Power : The Kano "Mamluks" and Male Royal Slavery in the Sokoto Caliphate, 1804-1903*, Social History of Africa Series (Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann, 2004).

³² Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841-1908*.

³³ Ryan, "Imale : Yoruba Participation in the Muslim Tradition : A Study of Clerical Piety."

³⁴ Abdur-Razzaq Mustapha Balogun Solagberu, "The Historical Development of the Tijaniyyah Sūfī Order in Ilorin, Nigeria and Challenges for Survival," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 38, no. 4 (February 10, 2018): 537–50; Amidu Olalekan Sanni and Yunus Alade Salman, "From the Intellectual Powerhouse of Ilorin (Nigeria): Elegy in the Work of Adam 'Abdallah Al-Iluri (1917-1992)," in *The Piety of Learning Islamic Studies in Honor of Stefan Reichmuth*, ed. Stefan. Reichmuth, Michael. Kemper, and Ralf. Elger (Leiden ; Boston : Brill, 2017); Abdur-Razzaq M. B Solagberu, "The Impact of Sufism on the Culture of the People of Ilorin, Nigeria," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 32, no. 3 (January 9, 2012): 400–410; Ibrahim Abdul Ganiyu Jawondo, "Architectural History of Ilorin Mosques in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Social Dynamics* 38, no. 2 (January 6, 2012): 303–13; Graziano. Krätli, Ghislaine. Lydon, and Stefan Reichmuth, eds., "Literary Culture and Arabic Manuscripts in 19th-Century Ilorin," in *The Trans-Saharan Book Trade Manuscript Culture, Arabic Literacy, and Intellectual History in Muslim Africa* (Leiden ; Boston : Brill, 2011); Musa Ali Agetunmobi, "Islamic Scholars of Ilorin and Their Place in Yorubaland," *Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs. Journal* 12, no. 1 (1991): 135–47; H. C Danmole, "Islam, Slavery and Society in Nineteenth Century, Ilorin, Nigeria," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 42, no. 4 (January 10, 1994): 341–53; H. C Danmole, "The Frontier Emirate : A History of Islam in Ilorin" (PhD, University of Birmingham, 1981).

applications of *shari'a* and overviews of scholarly production have also attracted notice.³⁵

Unique to the literature on Islam in the southwest is its attention to different non-sectarian Muslim associations that bare the influence of Christianity in their approach to education and religious reform.³⁶ The fact that Islam is not the majority religion in the southwest, but exists more or less equally alongside Christianity—and has long interacted with orisha-worship—has given way to a number of works which situate Islam with either of these religious traditions,³⁷ or more recently, scholarship that places all three into conversation.³⁸

One great strength of much of this scholarship has been to constructively rethink the

³⁵ Isiaka Raifu, “Interrogating Shariah Practice in Yoruba Land, 1820-1918,” *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science* 21, no. 12 (December 2016); Abdul-Fatah Kola Makinde, “The Evolution of the Independent Sharia Panel in Osun State, South-West Nigeria,” in *Shari'a in Africa Today Reactions and Responses*, ed. John (John A.) Chesworth and Franz. Kogelmann (Leiden, The Netherlands : Brill, 2014); Philip Ostien and Abdul-Fatah 'Kola Makinde, “Legal Pluralism in Colonial Lagos: The 1894 Petition of the Lagos Muslims to Their British Colonial Masters,” *Die Welt Des Islams* 52, no. 1 (2012): 51–68; I. A. Jimoh, “Arguments and Counter-Arguments in Selected Works in Arabic by Nigerian Authors” (PhD, University of Ibadan, 2005); Wahab Oladejo Adigun Nasiru, “Islamic Learning Among the Yoruba 1896-1963” (University of Ibadan, 1977), University of Ibadan, Dike Library.

³⁶ Benjamin Soares, “An Islamic Social Movement In Contemporary West Africa: Nasfat Of Nigeria,” in *Movers and Shakers: Social Movements in Africa*, vol. 8, 2008, 178–96; Yahya Oyewole Imam, “Religious Organizations and Progressive Social Change: A Case Study of Ansar-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria,” *Islamic Studies* 43, no. 4 (January 12, 2004): 631–51; Stefan Reichmuth, “New Trends in Islamic Education in Nigeria: A Preliminary Account,” *Die Welt Des Islams* 29, no. 1–4 (1989): 41–60; Stefan Reichmuth, “Education and the Growth of Religious Associations Among Yoruba Muslims—the Ansar-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 26, no. 4 (1996): 365–405; T. G. O. Gbadamosi, “The Establishment of Western Education among Muslims in Nigeria,” *Journal of The Historical Sociey of Nigeria* 4, no. 1 (1967): 89–116.

³⁷ Jacob K Olupona, “Odu Imole : Islamic Tradition in Ifa and the Yoruba Religious Imagination,” in *Ifa Divination, Knowledge, Power, and Performance*, ed. Jacob K Olupona and Rowland. Abiodun (Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 2016); Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu, “The Earliest Yoruba Translation of the Qur'an: Missionary Engagement with Islam in Yorubaland,” *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 17, no. 3 (October 1, 2015): 10–37; Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu and Abdulganiy Akorede Abdulhameed, “Christian Translations of the Qur'an into Yoruba and Their Historical Background,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 26, no. 4 (February 10, 2015): 465–81; Ogunnaike Oludamini, “Sufism and Ifa: Ways of Knowing in Two West African Intellectual Traditions” (Harvard University, 2015); James Lorand. Matory, “Rival Empires - Islam and the Religions of Spirit Possession among the Oyo-Yoruba,” *American Ethnologist* 21, no. 3 (August 1994): 495–515; T. G. O. Gbadamosi, “‘Odu Imale’: Islam in Ifa Divination and the Case of Predestined Muslims,” *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 8, no. 4 (January 6, 1977): 77–93; A. R. I. Doi, “An Aspect of Islamic Syncretism in Yorubaland,” *Orita: Ibadan Journal of Religious Studies*, no. 1 (1971): 36–45.

³⁸ Insa Nolte, Olukoya Ogen, and Rebecca Jones, eds., *Beyond Religious Tolerance : Muslim, Christian and Traditionalist Encounters in an African Town* (Woodbridge, Suffolk (GB) : James Currey, an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 2017, 2017); Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Orisha Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*; Lydia Bosede Akande, “The Practice of African Religion, Islam, and Christianity in a Globalized Nigerian Society: Points of Cordiality,” in *Contextualizing Africans and Globalization : Expressions in Sociopolitical and Religious Contents and Discontents*, ed. Gbola Aderibigbe, Rotimi Williams Omotoye, and Lydia Bosede Akande (Lanham : Lexington Books, 2016, 2016); Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture : Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba / David D. Laitin*.

standard approach to religious geography in Nigerian studies, which (as already noted) has generally concentrated the study of Islam to the north, while scholars of the southwest focus on Christianity or so-called traditional Yoruba religion. This stark split in scholarship has perhaps inadvertently reified the image of Nigeria's conflicts as waged between a Christian south and Muslim north, from the Biafran War in the 1960s to the rise of Boko Haram in the 2010s. Instead, work on Islam in the southwest demonstrates its rich historical entanglement with and tolerance for (or even celebration of) Christianity, oriṣa worship and Ifa divination.³⁹ While less common in scholarship on the north, recent path-breaking work by Shobana Shankar has worked to question an oft-teleological framing of Boko Haram as a direct link to the Sokoto Caliphate, by recovering a period when Northern Muslims not only tolerated Christians in their midst, but converted or displayed genuine curiosity.⁴⁰

There are, of course, a number of good reasons for regionally-focused (or even more local) scholarship, most obviously being that it allows for a more in-depth richness of the complexities in any given culture or place than is possible at the national scale. And yet, while I embarked on my dissertation research with the intention to write about the hajj in Ibadan, a dynamic megacity that could easily generate enough material, I kept finding the scale of the city—or even Yorubaland—to be limiting when it came to understanding the hajj and its place in Nigerian politics, social practice, and cultural production. Though the first hajj policies came from what is now northern Nigeria in the pre-colonial period (Chapter 1), this shifted with

³⁹ Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, 172–91; Nolte, Ogen, and Jones, *Beyond Religious Tolerance: Muslim, Christian and Traditionalist Encounters in an African Town*; Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba* / David D. Laitin.; Olupona, “Odu Imole: Islamic Tradition in Ifa and the Yoruba Religious Imagination”; Gbadamosi, “‘Odu Imale’: Islam in Ifa Divination and the Case of Predestined Muslims.” Although unfortunately, Peel also glosses Boko Haram as an “outcome of this [‘jihadist’] tradition” of the North (p.170)

⁴⁰ Shobana Shankar, *Who Shall Enter Paradise?: Christian Origins in Muslim Northern Nigeria, ca. 1890-1975*, New African Histories (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2014).

colonial conquest. Though, as we will see, hajj policies still largely developed regionally, these regional developments were always in conversation with what was being debated or implemented elsewhere in the country. Moreover, actual practice by Nigerian Muslims often pushed against the regionalist assumptions of colonial bureaucrats, who consistently found they needed to expand hajj schemes for northerners to include their southwestern co-religionists (Chapter 1). And in the 1950s, while politics broke down largely along regional and ethnic lines, Islam provided a vocabulary and a reason for interethnic mobilization, particularly in the southwest (Chapter 2). Perhaps because the colonial state had conceived and treated the hajj a national problem, in the 1950s the hajj and its reform became a point that both the North and the Southwest could rally around. By the 1960s, Ahmadu Bello, the Premier of the Northern Region and an active participant in hajj reform, was admired (and contested) by many Muslims, whether Hausa, Kanuri, Fulani, or Yoruba, etc., northerner or southerner (Chapter 3). Then came Bello's assassination in 1966 and the Biafran War (1967–1970). In the wake of the war ethnic tensions were palpable, and this perhaps impacted interregional Muslim relations. For example, when a northern-dominated Islamic council banned the Ahmadiyya sect from hajj, a group mainly active in the southwest, ethnic divisions heightened the event (Chapter 4). And yet by the 1970s, the proliferation of literacy and communication technologies—TV, radio, newspapers—meant that the experiences and practices of prestige related to the hajj had become increasingly national, as did the debates it inspired (Chapter 4). A project focused solely on Ibadan and its environs would have missed some of these broader connections.

Because the Nigerian hajj has long been defined by the connections it engenders between different regions and ethnicities across the nation, it is a rich point of entry for exploring enduring impacts of colonialism. Understanding how colonial legacies underpin persistent

problems across the African continent has deservedly garnered much scholarly attention, whether it be forms of state violence and inequality,⁴¹ ethnic strife,⁴² environmental toxins,⁴³ the codification of culture,⁴⁴ or knowledge production.⁴⁵ Generally, scholars have approached the topic of colonial legacies through case studies of a colony and its transition to an independent nation (or a given tribe, ethnicity or kingdom within it), or work comparatively to provide a model for the African continent more broadly.⁴⁶ Within Nigerian studies, the fact that the British split the protectorate into three, semi-autonomous regions (each to inherit its own colonial archive) has likewise made most explorations of colonialism and its aftermath take place at the local or regional (if not national) scale. Would a topic such as the hajj, which contains local practices, national policies and bureaucratic oversight, and transnational forms of belonging and travel itineraries, reveal something different in terms of how colonial legacies played out? Over the course of the dissertation I will argue that the answer to this question in brief is yes, and that Nigerian Muslims' ties to the Middle-East—material, religious, and affinitive—pushed against

⁴¹ Nobuhiro Mizuno, "Political Structure as a Legacy of Indirect Colonial Rule: Bargaining between National Governments and Rural Elites in Africa," *Journal of Comparative Economics* 44, no. 4 (November 1, 2016): 1023–39; Hannah Whittaker, "Legacies of Empire: State Violence and Collective Punishment in Kenya's North Eastern Province, c. 1963–Present," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 43, no. 4 (August 8, 2015): 641–57; Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, Studies on the History of Society and Culture ; 41 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001); Mahmood Mamdani 1946-, *Citizen and Subject : Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).

⁴² Mahmood Mamdani 1946-, *When Victims Become Killers : Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*, xvi, 364 p. : vols., xvi, 364 p. : (Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 2001).

⁴³ Sharad Chari, "Chapter 4: Detritus in Durban: Polluted Environs and the Biopolitics of Refusal," in *Imperial Debris : On Ruins and Ruination*, ed. Ann Laura. Stoler (Durham ; London : Duke University Press, 2013), 39–66; Gabrielle. Hecht, *Being Nuclear: Africans and the Global Uranium Trade* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2012).

⁴⁴ Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival : A History of Dissent, c. 1935-1972* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

⁴⁵ David Chidester author., *Empire of Religion : Imperialism and Comparative Religion*, xx, 377 pages ; vols., xx, 377 pages ; (Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 2014, 2014); Olufemi Taiwo, "Colonialism and Its Aftermath: The Crisis of Knowledge Production," *Callaloo* 16, no. 4 (January 10, 1993): 891–908; Jeremiah O Arowosegbe, "African Scholars, African Studies and Knowledge Production on Africa," *Africa: The Journal of the International African Institute* 86, no. 2 (2016): 324–38.

⁴⁶ Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival : A History of Dissent, c. 1935-1972* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Peterson's scholarship on ethnic patriots and the East Africa Revival is a notable exception, as he carefully shows how both phenomena were cosmopolitan in outlook.

ethnic divides in colonial hajj policy (while occasionally exacerbating inter-religious relations), and meant that elites prioritized hajj reform in ways that marked a real change from the past, even if some colonial echoes persisted.

Though this project occasionally analyzes the hajj on a national scale, it has a southwestern bias. Of my fourteen months of fieldwork, I spent twelve in the southwest, mainly Ibadan, with a couple months in Lagos. Accordingly, the majority of the interviews, archival research and participant observation I conducted took place there. One advantage to this was that early into fieldwork, my geographic position highlighted the contentious nature of the hajj today, and quickly informed my historical research. Specifically, everyday conversations with Christians about my research led me to check for tensions and debates in the contemporary press, which proved easy to find (as did those between Muslims).⁴⁷ Reading through archival newspapers in the southwest provided more non-Muslim perspectives on the hajj and Islam's presence in public life and politics, compared to newspapers based in the North.

Here it is worth returning to the point made earlier that the literature on Muslim-Christian relations overemphasizes conflict over "accommodation." I agree with Nolte et al. that Yoruba Muslims and Christians often do not just tolerate each other but actively support the other faith—during fieldwork I attended Ramadan and Eid-ul-Adha festivities that drew

⁴⁷ Emma Amaize and Samuel Oyadongha, "MEND Threatens to Kill Muslim Clerics, Bomb Mosques from May 31," *Vanguard*, April 15, 2013, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/04/mend-threatens-to-kill-muslim-clerics-bomb-mosques-from-may-31/>; Sophie Mongalvy, "Nigeria Subsidizes Hajj Pilgrims With Preferred Dollar Rate," *Bloomberg*, August 6, 2016, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-08-06/nigeria-subsidizes-hajj-pilgrims-with-concessionary-dollar-rate>; Joshua Bassey and Lolade Akinmurele, "Fx Subsidy for Pilgrimage Is Misuse of National Resources, Say OPS, Others," *Nigeria Today*, August 8, 2016, <http://www.nigeriatoday.ng/2016/08/fx-subsidy-for-pilgrimage-is-misuse-of-national-resources-say-ops-others/>; Obo Effanga, "Nigeria and the Pilgrims' Retrogress," *Punch*, August 8, 2016, <http://punchng.com/nigeria-pilgrims-retrogress/>; Akintayo Eribake, "Clerics Express Mixed Feelings on Govt. Sponsorship of Pilgrimage," *Vanguard*, February 28, 2016, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/02/clerics-express-mixed-feelings-on-govt-sponsorship-of-pilgrimage/>.

Christian visitors, and many of my informants came from interfaith families.⁴⁸ (Though I also encountered a fair bit of a criticism too).⁴⁹ Similarly, one of the central arguments of Peel's *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion*—which examines the rich interplay between these three religions in Yorubaland—is that this interfaith society has managed to peaceably co-exist because its members share “a framework of shared community values” that exceed religious commitments.⁵⁰ But again, scale matters. Studying the hajj reveals that even in a region where Christianity and Islam coexist at the level of daily life, this changes when one religion receives more state resources. In other words, a Yoruba Christian might not mind too much if their daughter marries a Yoruba Muslim, particularly if he does not force her to convert, and yet still feel aggrieved by government sponsorship and subsidization of the hajj. And a Yoruba Muslim can invite their Christian neighbors to their Eid-al-Adha celebration, yet also scoff at the idea that Christians now have their own state-supported pilgrimage. When the British colonial power began ceding authority to Nigerian politicians in preparation for independence in 1960, they bequeathed to this Nigerian elite a belief that the hajj was a matter the Federal government (Chapter 2). Yet while the British considered the hajj a problem of control and policing their

⁴⁸ “Field Notes,” October 5, 2014; Interview with Alhaji Abiola Adeniran in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, October 2014; Interview with Alhaji Ismaila Olaseae Abiona in Ibadan, October 2014; Interview with Alhaja Rofiah Sanni in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, May 2015; Interview with Chief Alhaji Imam Thompson in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, February 2015; Interview with Anifowoshe Rukayat in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, January 2015; Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015; Interview with Alhaji W O Raji in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, July 2015; Interview with Saheed Olayiwola in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, June 2015; Interview with Dr. Rasheed in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, July 2015; Alhaji Chief Imam Bar Sanni abd Rahman, Lagos, Voice Recording, June 2017; Alhaja Fadhilah Omotunde Balogun, Interview in Ibadan, Recording, 2015.

⁴⁹ Interview with Tasleem Adedokun in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, June 2015; Interview with Idris Adeniran in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, January 2015; Aremu Lateef Olanakanoni; Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, July 2015; Interview with Sariyu Adeniran in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, June 2015; Interview with Alhaji Amo Waheed in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, February 2015. Of these, Adedokun was not critical himself, but claimed that his generation (he was born in 1991) faced more pressure from their parents to marry someone within the religion. While some of the criticism these informants voiced was general, such as how Christians flocked to churches on New Year's Eve, much of it had to do with memories of maltreatment by Christians (and these examples do not include people who felt pressured to convert when attending a Christian-run school).

⁵⁰ Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, 2, 133–35.

imperial boundaries, the Nigerian elite (and popular opinion and debate) now added to this politicized concerns over whether Nigerian pilgrims were making an impression as “good” or “bad” Muslims on the global stage of hajj, as well as tensions over Islam’s place in the Nigerian secular state. Thus, the hajj had now become a potentially contentious issue, both within the broader Nigerian Muslim community as well as between Muslims and non-Muslims. One advantage of examining the hajj at multiple scales is that it captures religious tensions that might be absent on the level of daily life.

Not that you need to go to the national scale to find religious tensions in Yorubaland’s past. In contrast to Peel’s recent claims that religious conflict in Yorubaland did not breakout until the late 1970s, my interviews with a variety of Muslims suggest that while this is true in terms of interfaith relationships (familial and otherwise), earlier tensions did exist in terms of access to state resources.⁵¹ Peel’s argument is based on his related claim that Yoruba Muslims were “relatively unengaged...with colonialism” and not “intrinsically hostile to it,” and thus had no religious motive for nationalism in the 1950s, unlike Muslims in the north.⁵² While Yoruba Muslims perhaps never engaged in armed resistance to colonialism, this argument ignores real tensions over their treatment in the education system. Though not my research topic, several informants related to me, often with bitterness, their experience in mission schools during the colonial period.⁵³ Perhaps the most striking example comes from Dr. Noibi, professor emeritus of the University of Ibadan and current Executive Secretary at the Muslim Ummah of South West Nigeria (MUSWN). In 1956–57 he served as the student imam at the Muslim Teacher

⁵¹ Peel, 9, 126.

⁵² Peel, 126–27, 155–56.

⁵³ Peel, 132; Interview with Alhaji Abdu Waasin Aiyepola in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015; Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria.; Interview with Dr. Barihi Adetunji in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, January 2015; Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., Voice Recording, November 2014. Peel claims that with only “some exceptions,” Muslims avoided Christian schools. While certainly many did, the experience does not seem unusual.

Training College in Ijebu Ode, and yet despite his position, his housemaster and teacher, a Christian, fervently tried to convert him, and punished Noibi the more he resisted.⁵⁴ And countless informants, whether or not they attended a mission school, grew up believing that the colonial state had failed to provide Muslims with education free of prejudice. Still others believed the British promoted Christian missionaries and conversion to make Nigerians subservient and loyal to the state.⁵⁵ At the local level, occasional tensions arose when Yoruba Muslims perceived the colonial state to be obstructing their ability to undertake the hajj (Chapters 1-2). One of the more colorful examples is when in the 1930s the British, at least within Ibadan Division, would stop pilgrims at their point of departure and demand they prove that had paid their head-tax. As a result, enough pilgrims ended up in jail and a protest erupted, with the Olubadan (the highest chieftaincy title in Ibadan) intervening on the Muslims' behalf, successfully.⁵⁶ It is perhaps little wonder that the few Islamic political parties that emerged in the 1950s ran on platforms that targeted Muslim access to education and hajj reform (Chapter 2).⁵⁷

A final point on scale concerns the relationship between Yoruba Muslims and their Northern co-religionists. When Yoruba Muslims or Muslims in the North are discussed, it's often with either the implicit or explicit implication that these represent two discrete communities. Perhaps the most extreme example of this is Peel's most recent book, which frames Islamic practice in the Southwest as one of "Yoruba Islam" rather than Islam in

⁵⁴ Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., November 2014.

⁵⁵ Interview with Alhaji Amo Waheed in Ibadan, Nigeria. Alhaji Waheed, who was born in the outskirts of Ibadan in 1943, explained to me that he doubted the British even believed in heaven, since he found it impossible to believe they'd willingly want black people to populate their afterlife.

⁵⁶ Dr. K. K. Oloso, June 2017.

⁵⁷ Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, 144–46, 156. Peel mentions one such party, and downplays it as quickly squashed.

Yorubaland, removed with few exceptions from Muslims in the North.⁵⁸ As Scott Reese argues (as have others), the problem with a term like “Yoruba Islam,” and the way that Peel frequently employs it, is that suggests the Muslims in question engage in some practices outside of Islam, rather than in articulation within the religion, a worrisome trend in the literature of Islam in Africa.⁵⁹ Not only is this often not how the Muslims in question understand what they are doing, Reese explains, but it often privileges the assumption that reformist visions of Islam, particularly those practiced in Saudi Arabia, are the “real” Islam. To give just one example of where Peel does this (and there are several), take his description of what happened when Sheikh Ibrahim Niass (a prominent Tijaniyya leader from Senegal) prayed at the Central Mosque in Ibadan. Reportedly, people crowded Niass to capture castoff water from his ablutions “as a medium of his *baraka*” (blessing), a decision that Peel argues “lay much more in Yoruba than in Islamic culture.”⁶⁰ While water possesses spiritual power in Yoruba Aladura churches or orisha worship (examples for which Peel provides), so too does water have the ability to possess *baraka* in Islam, the most obvious example being the Zamzam Well in Mecca. Additionally, throughout West Africa (and elsewhere in the Islamic world), part of a Muslim’s education includes writing verses of the Qur’an on boards with ink, which is often washed off and drunk in order to embody the *baraka* of the verse.⁶¹ And if we open up our analysis to include examples of *baraka* passing from one human to another through touch, al-Naqar provides the example of two Shehus of Borno, one in the nineteenth and one in the twentieth century, who sent a slave to undertake the hajj on their behalf. In each case, the Shehu instructed the slave to wrap his hand with cloth after

⁵⁸ Peel, 151, 159–60, 179–80, 184, 186; Scott Steven. Reese, “Islam in Africa/Africans and Islam,” *Journal of African History* 55, no. 1 (2014): 17–26.

⁵⁹ Reese, “Islam in Africa/Africans and Islam.”

⁶⁰ J. D. Y. Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Orisha Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, The Anthropology of Christianity ;18 (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016), 179–80.

⁶¹ Rudolph Ware, *The Walking Qur’an: Islamic Education, Embodied Knowledge, and History in West Africa* (University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 9–10.

he had touched the holy sites and keep it wrapped until he returned so that the Shehu could be the first person to touch his hand, thus receiving the *baraka* from the Hejaz directly.⁶²

The history of the interplay between Yoruba Muslims and their northern co-religionists has yet to be written. Certainly, Peel is not wrong to place emphasis on the historical and current tensions between these two broad groups, as they do (and have) exist. While I did not set out to record tensions and differences between Yoruba and northern Muslims, this topic occasionally arose during own fieldwork, most notably in the presence or absence of a celebration for a pilgrim's return (Interlude 1).⁶³ But, a presumption of difference can cloud the ability to see mutual appreciation and influence, which also came up in fieldwork, such as the number of Yoruba Muslims who now wear clothing embroidered in a Hausa style.⁶⁴ Moreover, tensions, difference, and even judgment are different than separation. What a topic that concerns all Muslims in Nigeria (such as the hajj) does, is to draw attention to interactions and collaborations between Muslims (especially elite ones) in the Southwest and the North. While these linkages are a relatively minor part of this dissertation, it suggests the value of more research on this topic.

Religion and Politics in Nigeria:

It is hard to read a Nigerian newspaper today without finding a story where religion and politics somehow intersect. This was glaringly true during my fieldwork, which overlapped with the run up to the Nigerian presidential election in 2015. The race boiled down between the then current president, Goodluck Jonathan of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Muhammadu Buhari, of the All Progressive Congress (APC). Jonathan, a Christian from Delta State, kept his

⁶² Umar Abd al-Naqar, *The Pilgrimage Tradition in West Africa an Historical Study with Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century* (Khartoum, Sudan: Khartoum University Press, 1972), 79–80.

⁶³ Interview with Hussein Adams in Ibadan, Nigeria., October 2014. The general claim is that the Yoruba celebrate their hajj, while northerner do not.

⁶⁴ Interview with Hussein Adams in Ibadan, Nigeria., October 2014; "Field Notes," June 26, 2017.

2011 running mate Namadi Sambo, a Muslim from Kaduna State. Whereas Buhari, a Muslim from Katsina State, picked as his running mate Oluyemi Osinbajo, who besides being on the law faculty at the University of Lagos was a pastor of the Lagosian Ikoyi branch of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, the largest Pentecostal church in Nigeria. The parallels with the 2011 election were hard to miss; it was the same cast of characters sans Osinbajo, with Buhari's running mate instead Tunde Bakare, a pastor from Abeokuta (as members of Congress for Progressive Change). It's hard to imagine a Christian and a Muslim will not share any presidential ticket in the near future.

Of course, religion in Nigerian politics extends beyond split presidential tickets. Just before his re-election in 2019, Buhari felt the need to put down rumors that if elected again, he'd move to "impose Islam" on the country.⁶⁵ Nor did such accusations stop after Buhari's re-election; in late May, former President Olusegun Obasanjo alleged the greatest problems Nigeria faced were its "Fulanisation" and "Islamisation."⁶⁶ And while explanations for Boko Haram, the terrorist group in Northeastern Nigeria that emerged in 2002, that rely primarily (or exclusively) on its profession to Islamic holy war have been rightly labeled an oversimplification, Boko Haram is also undoubtedly part of contemporary religious debates in Nigeria.⁶⁷ Perhaps inspired by this contemporary focus on religion and politics within the Nigeria, a few historians have published works in recent years that address the place of Islam as well as Christianity in Nigerian politics. This consideration of Christianity together with Islam is relatively new; with a couple

⁶⁵ "Buhari to Opposition: Your Allegations of Islamization Wicked, Deceptive, Ungodly," *Pulse*, February 22, 2019, <https://www.pulse.ng/news/politics/buhari-to-opposition-your-allegations-of-islamization-wicked-deceptive-ungodly/vet6860>.

⁶⁶ "Obasanjo's 'Fulanisation' 'Islamisation' Statement Is Diversionary Tactics- UPN," *The Guardian*, May 24, 2019, <https://guardian.ng/news/obasanjos-fulanisation-islamisation-statement-is-diversionary-tactics-upn/>. Thanks to Elisha Renne for pointing this out to me.

⁶⁷ Shobana Shankar, "Long before Boko Haram, Dissenters Were Driven to the Brink in Northern Nigeria," *Africa at LSE* (blog), January 14, 2015, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2015/01/14/long-before-boko-haram-dissenters-were-driven-to-the-brink-in-northern-nigeria/>.

exceptions,⁶⁸ scholarship that looked at both major religions collectively did not begin until the early 2000s, and even then these were mainly edited volumes with chapters addressing wither Christianity or Islam.⁶⁹ Part of the reason for this might be that while Islam in the North has long been analyzed as deeply imbricated with the region's politics (understandably, given that British indirect rule co-opted the emirate structure of the Sokoto Caliphate for its own purposes),⁷⁰ scholarship on Christianity in Nigeria has tended to frame religion as giving form to ethnic politics rather than religious ones.⁷¹ While Christianity in the Middle Belt has gotten some attention,⁷² it's been the rise of neo-Pentecostalism⁷³ that has firmly placed Christianity within the realm of politics in Nigerian studies.⁷³ Olufemi Vaughan's recent ambitious monograph reads two centuries of Nigerian history through the lens of competition between Islam and Christianity (and to a lesser degree, "indigenous religious structures"), arguing that this tension has been

⁶⁸ Patricia Williams, "The State, Religion and Politics in Nigeria" (University of Ibadan, 1989), Deke Library; Patricia Williams and Toyin Falola, *Religious Impact on the Nation State : The Nigerian Predicament*, The Making of Modern Africa (Aldershot, Hants, England ; Brookfield, Vt.: Avebury, 1995). That perhaps the first example of this, Williams' PhD thesis, would come out of Ibadan, is not surprising given the political importance of the city, as well as its long history of being interfaith.

⁶⁹ Julius Adekunle, ed., *Religion in Politics : Secularism and National Integration in Modern Nigeria* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2009); Ogbu. Kalu et al., eds., *Religion, History, and Politics in Nigeria : Essays in Honor of Ogbu U. Kalu* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2005); Akintunde E. Akinade, *Fractured Spectrum : Perspectives on Christian-Muslim Encounters in Nigeria* (New York: Peter Lang, 2013); Adekunle, *Religion in Politics : Secularism and National Integration in Modern Nigeria*.

⁷⁰ John N. Paden, *Religion and Political Culture in Kano* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); Roman. Loimeier, *Islamic Reform and Political Change in Northern Nigeria*, Series in Islam and Society in Africa (Evanston, Ill. : Northwestern University Press, 1997); Philip. Ostien, Jamila M. Nasir, and Franz. Kogelmann, eds., *Comparative Perspectives on Shari'ah in Nigeria* (Ibadan, Nigeria : Jersey, Channel Islands, UK: Spectrum Books, 2005); Muhammad Sani. Umar, *Islam and Colonialism: Intellectual Responses of Muslims of Northern Nigeria to British Colonial Rule*, Islam in Africa, 1570-3754 ;v. 5 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2006); John N. Paden, *Faith and Politics in Nigeria : Nigeria as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World* (Washington, D.C. : United States Institute Of Peace Press, 2008).

⁷¹ J. D. Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba*, African Systems of Thought, xi, 420 p. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).

⁷² Niels Kastfelt, *Religion and Politics in Nigeria : A Study in Middle Belt Christianity* (London ; New York: British Academic Press, 1994).

⁷³ Segun Ajanaku, *Christians in Participatory Politics : An Insider's View* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Ebony Bookmakers, 2004); Ruth Marshall 1964-, *Political Spiritualities : The Pentecostal Revolution in Nigeria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Ebenezer Obadare author., *Pentecostal Republic : Religion and the Struggle for State Power in Nigeria* (London, UK : Zed Books, 2018). Ajanaku's book does not concern Pentecostalism, just Christianity more broadly.

instrumental in the formation of Nigerian politics.⁷⁴ Vaughan's treatment of how both religions have intersected with politics throughout the nation since the nineteenth century is detailed and complex, and easily the most comprehensive treatment on the topic to date. Yet, even though he refers to the southwest as "the Yoruba Muslim-Christian crossroads," elsewhere in the book he frames religious tensions and differentiation as between a Muslim North and Christian South, a simplification often repeated in other texts that tackle religion in Nigeria on the national scale.⁷⁵

This dissertation takes Vaughan's claims that the intersection of religion has been "decisive in the making of modern Nigeria" as a call for more in-depth studies that consider the histories of specific religious topics on the national scale.⁷⁶ One advantage of the history of the hajj is that it demonstrates that while British colonialism has had a lasting influence on the religious contours of Nigeria, religious practice by Nigerians often pushed against British understandings of their subjects. For while the British imagined themselves as ruling a Muslim North and a Christian South—and made hajj policy to match—the presence of Yoruba pilgrims consistently necessitated adjustments to colonial policies by officials (Chapter 1). Thus, like Umar's masterful demonstration that indirect rule in the North reflected competing interests among political leaders, clerics, and Western-educated elites,⁷⁷ the hajj—though much more modest in scope—provides yet another example of British officials facing (and largely failing) a steep learning curve as they tried to bring this international mobility under their control. Thus, colonization did not so much determine the practice of the hajj as it did its scale as a national problem to be tackled by the state. This contributed to the prominent position of the hajj in

⁷⁴ Olufemi Vaughan, *Religion and the Making of Nigeria* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2016), 1.

⁷⁵ Olufemi Vaughan, *Religion and the Making of Nigeria* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2016), 2, 8, 224; Julius Adekunle, ed., *Religion in Politics: Secularism and National Integration in Modern Nigeria* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2009), 7.

⁷⁶ Olufemi Vaughan, *Religion and the Making of Nigeria* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2016), 1.

⁷⁷ Muhammad Sani. Umar, *Islam and Colonialism: Intellectual Responses of Muslims of Northern Nigeria to British Colonial Rule*, *Islam in Africa*, 1570-3754 ;v. 5 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2006).

national politics in the 1950s-1960s (Chapters 2–3). When national attention turned to Nigeria’s oil wealth in the 1970s—and the corrupt practices this sometimes engendered—so too did the national conversation around the hajj focus a critical eye on pilgrim behavior and comportment (Chapter 4). Today the hajj remains a contentious topic in debates around the appropriate place of religion in Nigeria’s secular democracy.⁷⁸

The Nigerian Hajj in a Global Frame

Of all the national contingents that travel annually to Mecca for the hajj—the Islamic pilgrimage—Nigeria’s is the seventh largest in the world. Within Africa, it is second only to Egypt’s. This demographic distinction is not new. Nigeria ranked third globally in the mid-1970s, and colonial officials estimated in 1955 that half a million Nigerians resided in Sudan, traveling to or from Mecca. The most extensive academic treatment of the hajj in Nigeria is a rich PhD dissertation by Dr. K. K. Oloso, which mainly covers the 1950s–1970s.⁷⁹ Given Oloso’s own involvement in the Oyo State Pilgrims’ Welfare Board, his thesis focuses on government policy, complemented by ethnographic details captured from numerous interviews Oloso conducted throughout the Southwest.⁸⁰ Indeed, government policy has generally attracted the most attention of scholarship on the Nigerian hajj,⁸¹ as well as how the hajj has intersected with Nigeria’s

⁷⁸ “Hajj Subsidy,” *The Nation*, March 6, 2016, <http://thenationonline.net/hajj-subsidy/>; Akintayo Eribake, “Clerics Express Mixed Feelings on Govt. Sponsorship of Pilgrimage,” *Vanguard*, February 28, 2016, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/02/clerics-express-mixed-feelings-on-govt-sponsorship-of-pilgrimage/>; Sophie Mongalvy, “Nigeria Subsidizes Hajj Pilgrims With Preferred Dollar Rate,” *Bloomberg*, August 6, 2016, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-08-06/nigeria-subsidizes-hajj-pilgrims-with-concessionary-dollar-rate>.

⁷⁹ Dr. K. K. Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980” (PhD, University of Ibadan, 1984).

⁸⁰ Interview with Dr. K. K. Oloso in Ibadan, May 2013. The same year Oloso finished his PhD, he was appointed as Chairman of the Board.

⁸¹ Jonathan Reynolds, “Stealing the Road: Colonial Rule and the Hajj from Nigeria in the Early Twentieth Century,” *Journal of West African History* 1, no. 2 (2015): 27–44; Matthew M. Heaton, “Globalization, Health and the Hajj: The West African Pilgrimage Scheme, 1919-1938,” in *HIV/AIDS, Illness, and African Well-Being*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matthew M. Heaton (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2007); Terence Walz, “Trans-Saharan

modern economy.⁸² Scholarship from anthropology has complemented this focus on statecraft with examinations of how undertaking the hajj can be leveraged within social and economic relationships, and on how the flow of materials (whether memorializations or textiles and clothing) from Saudi Arabia intersect with Islamic practices in Nigeria.⁸³

West Africa has been the topic of more scholarship, and Nigeria—being the source for the most West African pilgrims for centuries (Chapter 1)—often figures into this research, particularly that which concerns the hajj by road; a perhaps unexpected outcome of air travel is that, at least for the West African hajj, it has made the hajj an acutely *less* international experience since it has facilitated the containment of pilgrims by nationality even after they land in Jeddah. For earlier history, al-Naqar consulted numerous Arabic manuscripts to piece together a history of the hajj in pre-colonial West Africa.⁸⁴ A few other monographs and articles examine the mobility and migratory settlements engendered by the West African (mainly Nigerian) hajj across Chad, Sudan, and elsewhere in the Middle East.⁸⁵ As in the literature on Nigeria, work on

Migration and the Colonial Gaze: The Nigerians in Egypt,” *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, no. 26 (January 1, 2006): 94–127. Walz’s article is not explicitly about the hajj but rather concerns Nigerians living in Cairo (and the anxiety this inspired in the British Empire), a development linked to the hajj since many Nigerian pilgrims would combine the arduous journey to Mecca with a trip to study at al-Azhar mosque, a famous center of Islamic learning.

⁸² O.E Tangban, “The Hajj and the Nigerian Economy 1960-1981,” *Journal of Religion in Africa* 21, no. 3 (1991): 241.

⁸³ Elisha P. Renne, *Veils, Turbans, and Islamic Reform in Northern Nigeria* (Bloomington, Indiana : Indiana University Press, 2018), 125–52; Elisha P. Renne, “Photography, Hajj Things, and Spatial Connections Between Mecca and Northern Nigeria,” *Photography and Culture* 8, no. 3 (February 9, 2015): 269–95; Susan O’Brien, “Pilgrimage, Power, and Identity: The Role of the Hajj in the Lives of Nigerian Hausa Bori Adepts,” *Africa Today* 46, no. 3/4 (1999): 11; Misty Bastian, “Female ‘Alhajjis’ and Entrepreneurial Fashions: Flexible Identities in Southern Nigerian Clothing Practice.,” in *Clothing and Difference: Embodied Identities in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa*, ed. Hildi Hendrickson, Body, Commodity, Text, viii, 268 p. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 97–132.

⁸⁴ Umar Abd al-Naqar, *The Pilgrimage Tradition in West Africa an Historical Study with Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century* (Khartoum, Sudan: Khartoum University Press, 1972).

⁸⁵ Christian. Bawa Yamba, *Permanent Pilgrims: The Role of Pilgrimage in the Lives of West African Muslims in Sudan*, International African Library ;15 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press for the International African Institute, London, 1995); John A. Works, *Pilgrims in a Strange Land: Hausa Communities in Chad* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); J. S. Birks, *Across the Savannas to Mecca: The Overland Pilgrimage Route from West Africa* (London: C. Hurst, 1978); Jonathan Miran, “‘Stealing the Way’ to Mecca: West African Pilgrims and Illicit Red Sea Passages, 1920s–50s,” *The Journal of African History* 56, no. 3 (November 1, 2015): 389–408; Irit Back, “From West Africa to Mecca and Jerusalem: The Tijāniyya on the Hajj Routes,” *The Journal of the Middle*

the colonial era tends to tackle questions of statecraft.⁸⁶ One key finding of this research is the degree to which French West Africa colonial government succeeded in curtailing the hajj in comparison to that of British Nigeria, at first restricting it to a reward for select elites and civil servants. Though a number of French colonial subjects, like Nigerians (Chapter 1), evaded the French system of control, their numbers paled in comparison to those from Nigeria, perhaps due to the greater distance. It was only after WWII that French West Africa opened the hajj up to a greater number of colonial subjects, a move that went hand-in-hand with increasing their surveillance on the hajj as well as returned pilgrims.⁸⁷ As in the literature on the Nigerian hajj, research from anthropology and women's studies supplements this scholarly focus on bureaucracy with studies on shifting, at times gendered, registers of prestige and "spiritual" capital.⁸⁸

Elsewhere within the British Empire, the hajj has been the topic of much research, particularly India.⁸⁹ The reason for this is perhaps archive-driven—a cursory look through the

East and Africa 6, no. 1 (February 1, 2015): 1–15; James L. A Webb, "The Evolution of the Idaw Al-Hajj Commercial Diaspora," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 35, no. 2 (January 1, 1995): 455; James Webb, "On Currency and Credit in the Western Sahel, 1700-1850," *Nordiska Afrikainstitutet*, 1999, 38–55.

⁸⁶ Baz Lecocq, "The Hajj From West Africa from a Global Historical Perspective (19th and 20th Centuries)," *African Diaspora* 5, no. 2 (2012): 187–214; Jean Sebastian Lecocq and Gregory Mann, "Between Empire, Umma, and the Muslim Third World: The French Union and African Pilgrims to Mecca, 1946-1958," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 2 (2007): 367; Marieme Diawara, "Islam & Public Health: French Management of the Hajj from Colonial Senegal & Muslim Responses Beginning in 1895" (PhD, Michigan State University, 2012).

⁸⁷ Lecocq and Mann, "Between Empire, Umma, and the Muslim Third World: The French Union and African Pilgrims to Mecca, 1946-1958."

⁸⁸ Erin Kenny, "Gifting Mecca: Importing Spiritual Capital to West Africa," *Mobilities* 2, no. 3 (2007): 363; Barbara MacGowan Cooper, "The Strength in the Song: Muslim Personhood, Audible Capital, and Hausa Women's Performance of the Hajj," *Social Text* 17, no. 3 (1999): 87; Mariane Ferme, "What 'Alhaji Airplane' Saw in Mecca, and What Happened When He Came Home: Ritual Transformation in a Mende Community (Sierra Leone)," in *Syncretism/Anti-Syncretism: The Politics of Religious Synthesis*, ed. Charles Stewart and Rosalind. Shaw (London ; New York: Routledge, 1994).

⁸⁹ Saurabh Mishra, *Pilgrimage, Politics, and Pestilence: The Haj from the Indian Subcontinent, 1860-1920* (New Delhi ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Nawab of Bhopal Sikandar Begum, *A Princess's Pilgrimage : Nawab Sikandar Begum's A Pilgrimage to Mecca*, ed. Siobhan Lambert-Hurley (Indiana University Press, 2008); Rishad Choudhury, "The Hajj From India In An Age Of Imperial Transitions, 1707-1820" (2015); Caleb Elfenbein, "Contingency in the Age of Religion: The Hajj and Religion-Making in Colonial and Postcolonial India," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 27, no. 3 (January 1, 2015): 247–77; M. N. (Michael Naylor) Pearson 1941-, *Pious*

archival holdings in the British Library and the British National Archives demonstrate a relative abundance of source material on the Indian hajj, which the British Raj undertook organized by steamship.⁹⁰ Like scholarship on other steamship routes, such as Southeast Asia,⁹¹ the literature on the Raj includes works focused on imperial concerns over the potential for pilgrims to act as vectors of disease.⁹² Easily the most ambitious monograph on the hajj in the British Empire has been Slight's recent book, which examines imperial hajj policy, particularly India, Malaysia, and Nigeria.⁹³ By considering the hajj from this perspective, Slight reveals patterns across the British Empire. For example, he argues that rather than fears of Pan-Islam, a greater motivator for British involvement in the hajj was their participation in military operations in the Gulf during WWI.⁹⁴ According to Slight, this made the British consider themselves to be running a "Muslim Empire," and decide that they'd benefit from the optics of increasing their facilitation of their

Passengers : The Hajj in Earlier Times / M.N. Pearson. (Sterling Publishers, 1994); Martin Thomas, "Managing the Hajj: Indian Pilgrim Traffic, Public Health, and Transportation in Arabia, 1918–1930," in *Railways and International Politics: Paths of Empire, 1848–1945* (London: Routledge, 2006), 173–91; Nile. Green, *Bombay Islam : The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840-1915* (Cambridge, UK ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2011); William R Roff, "Sanitation and Security: The Imperial Powers and the Nineteenth Century 'Hajj,'" *Arabian Studies* 6 (January 1, 1982): 143; Michael Christopher Low, "'The Infidel Piloting the True Believer':," in *The Hajj and Europe in the Age of Empire*, ed. Umar Ryad (Brill, 2017), 47–80; Michael B. Miller, "Pilgrims' Progress: The Business of the Hajj," *Past & Present* 191, no. 191 (January 5, 2006): 189–228. Choudhury's thesis admittedly is focused on India before British imperialism, though it does consider the period of transition.

⁹⁰ This is based on keyword searching. To just compare with Nigeria, searching "Hajj + India" in the British Library turned up 32 search results, whereas "Hajj + Nigeria" resulted in 4. Likewise, searching "Mecca + India" resulted in 373 hits, whereas "Mecca + Nigeria" resulted in 2. Searching the collection at the National Archive at Kew turned up slightly less lopsided results, but "India + (hajj or Mecca or Pilgrimage)" turned up 17 hits vs. 13 when "India" was swapped out for "Nigeria."

⁹¹ Eric. Tagliacozzo, *The Longest Journey : Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (New York : Oxford University Press, 2013); William R. Roff, "Patterns of Islamization in Malaysia, 1890s–1990s: Exemplars, Institutions, and Vectors," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 9, no. 2 (January 7, 1998): 210–28.

⁹² Roff, "Sanitation and Security: The Imperial Powers and the Nineteenth Century 'Hajj'"; Mishra, *Pilgrimage, Politics, and Pestilence: The Haj from the Indian Subcontinent, 1860-1920*.

⁹³ John Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865-1956*, 440 pages (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2015). Unfortunately, Slight does not actually consult any archival sources in Nigeria and instead relies on archives in the UK, unlike his research on India and Malaysia.

⁹⁴ Michael Christopher Low, "Empire and the Hajj: Pilgrims, Plagues, and Pan-Islam under British Surveillance, 1865-1908," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 2 (2008): 269. This is a dig against the focus of Low's article. Though to be fair to Low, these were concerns of Empire, if not the only concerns. (See: Chapter 1)

colonial subjects' hajj.⁹⁵ (This mix of public relations and hajj organization and control is perhaps a common imperial logic, as suggested by Kane's recent work on Tsarist Russia.⁹⁶) Another contribution of Slight's book is to document the labor, across the Empire, by Muslim subjects in the planning, guidance, and operation of the colonial hajj.

As is perhaps already clear, much existing scholarship on hajj concerns its organization and oversight by the state (imperial or otherwise), or the practice and impact of travel itself, whether in terms of developing tourist industries, transportation technologies, etc. With perhaps the exception of the topic of migrant communities along various hajj routes,⁹⁷ these topics are reliably available in state archives. In the case of Nigeria, both the Kaduna and Ibadan branches of the National Archive are rife with files on pilgrims' passports, hajj policy and annual reports, repatriation, public relations campaigns, airline contracts, travel agent license applications, etc. The available documentation in archives held in the UK tells a similar story, if a bit less detailed. Generally absent from these archival collections, except towards the end of colonization and afterward, are any indications of what the experience of the hajj meant for Nigerian Muslims, or how it changed their lives, Muslim communities, or Nigeria as a country.

Though not solely dedicated to the hajj, a few monographs stand out for their success in tracing how Islamic forms of travel, whether the hajj or for Islamic learning, were instrumental to developments in the travelers' country of origin in terms of either culture, religion, politics, or a combination of the three. In Green's *Bombay Islam*, he explores how this cosmopolitan city proved fertile ground for a number of competing approaches to Islamic practice, both from

⁹⁵ Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865-1956*, 6, 16, 168–220. While Slight is able to provide a number of examples of British officials who frame the British Empire as a “Muslim Empire,” which is certainly interesting in and of itself, it is less clear how wide-spread this conceptualization of the British Empire really was.

⁹⁶ Eileen M. Kane, *Russian Hajj: Empire and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (Ithaca, New York; London, [England]: Cornell University Press, 2015, 2015).

⁹⁷ Yamba, Works, and Birks all had to rely on generating their own archive with interviews and at times, surveys.

residents' own circulations as well as numerous other Muslims who passed through this busy port.⁹⁸ In terms of the hajj, the development of steamship travel in the nineteenth century led Muslims from the hinterland as well as other locations (particularly Africa, Central Asia, and Iran) to pass through this busy port city and leave their mark.⁹⁹ One of Green's more interesting findings is that, contrary to colonial fears over the spread of Wahhabism, the growth of the Indian hajj mainly benefited Sufism; the numerous ordinary pilgrims embarking on their first steamship voyage increased the demand for services provided by Sufi shrines and holy men (and print literature describing and advertising), and the hajj brought Iranian Sufis into the urban mix of visitors and practitioners.¹⁰⁰ On the scale of the modern nation state, Laffan's *The Making of Indonesian Islam*, explores the influence of Muslim mobility on conceptions of politics and statecraft, among other topics. By tracing the travels of Muslim pilgrims and scholars throughout the Middle East, Laffan is able to convincingly argue that the ideas they brought back with them influenced the dynamics of Indonesian law, nationalism, and Islamic reform.¹⁰¹ And in terms of Nigeria, though his focus is on those that study abroad in Saudi Arabia rather than the hajj, Thurston's *Salafism in Nigeria* examines how Nigerians, upon returning from their studies there, introduce the Salafist cannon into education, media and politics, including clerical argumentation against Boko Haram.¹⁰² Ahmed's *West African 'ulama' and Salafism in Mecca and Medina*, meanwhile, insightfully traces how West African clerics who left their homes around the turn of

⁹⁸ If there is a potential Nigerian equivalent to Mumbai, it undoubtedly would be Kano. An historical study on the various global networks—trade, scholarship, pilgrimage—that intersect with Kano, and how they have influenced the Islamic practice in this city, has yet to be written.

⁹⁹ Green, *Bombay Islam : The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840-1915*, 3–4, 71, 126–27.

¹⁰⁰ Green, 108–17, 126–37. Relatedly, Green also notes that it gave ordinary pilgrims the chance to achieve fame, as a number of pilgrims involved in miracles as sea returned to Mumbai as heroes, with hagiographies documenting (and promoting) their spiritual abilities.

¹⁰¹ Michael Francis Laffan 1969-, *The Makings of Indonesian Islam : Orientalism and the Narration of a Sufi Past*: (Princeton [N.J.] : Princeton University Press, 2011), 40–64, 177–89, 234–35.

¹⁰² Alexander Thurston, *Salafism in Nigeria : Islam, Preaching, and Politics* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 2016).

the twentieth century to flee colonial rule proved fundamental to the development of modern Wahhabism in Medina, as well as its circulation back throughout West Africa.¹⁰³

Though this dissertation examines how Nigerians have experienced the hajj, its principle interest is in how the hajj—as a marker of prestige and piety, as well as a political demand—has articulated with local, regional, and national debates over what constitutes “proper” Islamic practice and the place of Islam within the secular state (colonial or postcolonial). While several chapters provide a perspective from the Yoruba southwest, as already mentioned, the topic of hajj allows for occasional jumps in scale since it is a desire that all Muslims share and thus provided an impetus for Nigerian Muslims separated by geography and ethnicity to collaborate. As the postcolonial state became more involved—bureaucratically and financially—the hajj also increasingly brought Christian and Muslim Nigerians into debates over the place of religion in their government. The dissertation traces how national hajj policies developed, and how these policies have been interpreted and discussed by a range of Nigerian citizens.

An Affective Register:

It is worth pausing to consider what the hajj commemorates: the Prophet Muhammed’s return to his home of Mecca to carry out a series of rites in praise of God. Though much has changed since the time of the Prophet (architecture, technology, population and demographics of Muslims), pilgrims enjoy a sense of continuity and connection to the Prophet and Islam’s past as they carry out the same rites in the same location as Muhammed. Perhaps especially for Muslims at the geographic periphery of Islam, the hajj is experienced as an emotional homecoming to God, capable of producing extrasensorial experiences and visions. Among the Nigerians I interviewed,

¹⁰³ Chanfi Ahmed, *West African ‘ulamā’ and Salafism in Mecca and Medina Jawāb Al-Ifriqī-the Response of the African* (Brill, 2015).

for many their hajj remained a clear memory, and their ability to join the ranks of *alhujaj* (plural for pilgrims) provided them access to prestige and community.

Much like the multiscalar quality of the hajj, the ability of the hajj to provoke intense emotions and bonds of affinity add depth to understandings of colonialism's legacies. Often when scholars think about continuity between the colonial and postcolonial, the emphasis is on systems, bureaucracies, and infrastructures (police, law, prisons, hospitals, schools). Scholars have revealed how, most infamously through the British approach of indirect rule, precolonial structures of governance got appropriated (and constructed) by colonial officials, which then maintained authority after colonialism's end. If the more obvious structural legacies have garnered the most attention in studies of colonialism and postcolonialism, other scholars have sought to recover "the less perceptible effects of imperial interventions."¹⁰⁴ Several scholars have noted that state archives are adept at obscuring—either by lies of omission or their temporal or spatial categorization of people and events—the colonial situation and its aftershocks.¹⁰⁵ Some have turned to re-reading the archive with attention to seemingly unimportant affective details, like a nervous (or sadistic) laughter, when seeking to address such omissions.¹⁰⁶

Much of the scholarship on colonial legacies focuses attention on detrimental structures and their recursions. The central reason for this is obvious; colonialism—in its initial conquest and on-going execution—was rooted in racism and violence. Accordingly, much of the infrastructures imposed by colonialism aimed to maintain order or to extract wealth. The hajj is a bit unusual in this sense—though the colonial bureaucratization of the hajj aimed to control it,

¹⁰⁴ Ann Laura. Stoler, "Introduction: 'The Rot Remains: From Ruins to Ruination,'" in *Imperial Debris : On Ruins and Ruination* (Durham ; London : Duke University Press, 2013), 4.

¹⁰⁵ Ann Laura. Stoler, *Duress Imperial Durabilities in Our Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 5; Derek R. Peterson, *Ethnic Patriotism and the East African Revival : A History of Dissent, c. 1935-1972* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 25–26.

¹⁰⁶ Nancy Rose Hunt, "Chapter 1: An Acoustic Register: Rape and Repetition in Congo," in *Imperial Debris : On Ruins and Ruination*, ed. Ann Laura. Stoler (Durham ; London : Duke University Press, 2013), 50–54.

the practice of the hajj did little to serve colonial interests—rather, it challenged them. Moreover, Nigerians got caught up in the colonial hajj bureaucracy doing an act that they desired (and desired for their co-religionists) to do for reasons largely outside of any colonial logic or value. Perhaps because of this, the hajj and its infrastructure was a subject Nigerians eagerly and passionately celebrated, critiqued, often in emotional detail. What we can learn from colonial infrastructures that addressed African priorities? Do their colonial legacies unfold differently?

Methods and Sources:

The conceptualization of this project began in the winter of 2013. The following summer, I spent a month in Ibadan and Lagos, where I surveyed the Ibadan branch of the Nigerian National Archives and conducted some preliminary interviews in both cities. The initial trip made me aware of colonial archival densities around passports, repatriation, and hajj control.

Most of the research took place from September 2014–November 2015, in part sponsored by a Fulbright Hayes DDRA Fellowship. The Fulbright came with the stipulation that I not split my residence in Nigeria with my research in the UK, a requirement I ultimately appreciated. Staying put in Ibadan (besides a couple trips to Lagos) for eleven months helped me build trust with a number of Nigerians who kindly agreed to meet several times for interviews, as well as shared their family photos and other ephemera. The Nigerian National Archive branch in Ibadan contained numerous files on the hajj at the scale of the colony and Western Region. My final month in Nigeria was spent in Abuja, the headquarters of the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON). A follow-up visit to Nigeria in the summer of 2017 allowed me to re-interview a few key informants in Lagos and Ibadan, as well as visit the Kaduna branch of the Nigerian National Archives.

The question of shifting repertoires of prestige among Muslims in southwest Nigeria organized my approach in both oral interviews and in the archives. The files I consulted included not only those focused on the hajj, but also files on Muslim social associations and political groups, Islamic schools, and on Muslim traditional rulers. Similarly, my interviews reached beyond memories of Mecca to include those of graduation, marriage, childbirth, etc. My interest in colonial anxieties about mobility led me to archival files on Muslim travel linked to trade and education, and to collect personal travel-histories that revealed Islamic networks beyond the hajj. Historical newspapers in English and in Yoruba, the dominant language in the southwest, allowed me to recover both popular and official discourse surrounding the hajj. While I occasionally read entire years of a given paper, my readings concentrated around the months of pilgrim departures and arrivals, as well as Ramadan, from the 1910s until the 1980s. I found Yoruba newspaper articles by scanning for key words, and then translated these with a research assistant. Whether published in English or Yoruba, newspapers helped get at popular debates concerning Islam and the hajj, as well as practices and memorializations of prestige, whether it be obituary photography, advertisements, or public parades to celebrate a pilgrim's return.

Beyond the colonial archive, a number of reservoirs of information proved useful. At the University of Ibadan (UI), the library maintained by the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies houses B.A. and M.A. theses that represent one of the most extensive collections on Islam in Yorubaland.¹⁰⁷ The Deke Library at UI contained a number of useful PhD theses, as well as more archival materials than I had a chance to examine. The personal library of Professor K. K. Oloşo, a senior faculty member in UI's Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, was also a valuable resource. Reading contemporary newspapers made me aware of current debates

¹⁰⁷ I have not visited the University of Ilorin, so I cannot compare what is available at UI with the scholarship housed in its Department of Religions.

surrounding the hajj, which proved a useful avenue for accessing historical tensions.

Outside of Ibadan but still in the southwest, the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs in Lagos houses a well-maintained collection of newspaper clippings from the 1960s until today, on a large number of topics including the hajj and Islam more broadly. The headquarters of the Ansar-Ud-Deen Society in Surulere, a neighborhood in the mainland of Lagos, has a library with materials about the group's history. In Northern Nigeria, the library maintained by NAHCON and especially the newspaper collection at the National Library in Abuja proved useful for materials in the post-colonial period.

Outside of Nigeria, during three months in the UK I collected materials from colonial period. In London, I visited The National Archives (TNA) at Kew and the British Library. In Birmingham, I accessed the Church Missionary Society (CMS) archive. In Durham, the Sudan Archive helped provide a broader imperial perspective outside of Nigeria. And finally, Oxford's library contained useful collections of officials who had served in Nigeria, often directly concerning the hajj.

I conducted over a hundred interviews with eighty-seven individuals. Most of these interviews took place in Ibadan, a large sprawling city of over two million residents. I also conducted several interviews in Lagos, as well as in Abuja and Kaduna. Some interviews were one-offs, other informants generously agreed to meet me again and again. In Ibadan and Lagos, I made a point of going around to mosques, and starting with an interview with the Chief Imam or Deputy Imam. I visited neighborhood mosques and Central mosques, mosques of different sects, and in a range of neighborhoods, including the Hausa quarter in Ibadan. Sometimes, the Imams would then direct me to other people affiliated with the mosque. I also attended the Friday prayer several times at the Central Mosque in Ibadan, and the UI mosque. Not only did it allow me to

view people celebrating their return from hajj, but it also provided an easy way to meet people (as a white outsider, I attracted a certain amount of attention) as well as eventually gain an audience with the Chief Imam of Ibadan. Given that where one prays in a mosque is segregated by sex, this method was also especially helpful in meeting women. The faculty at the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at UI also provided interviews and introductions to other important Ibadan Muslims. A few enduring relationships led to various invitations to weddings, funerals, and holiday celebrations. I conducted most interviews in English, though occasionally used a research assistant or, in a few cases where an informant introduced me to a non-English speaker, they acted as translator for Yoruba or Hausa. Additionally, my ability to explain my project in Arabic helped convince more than a few skeptics to lend their time to a white outsider.

As is often the case in fieldwork, there were also some failures and dead-ends. While the Chairman of the Pilgrim Welfare Board of Oyo State agreed to be interviewed, getting access (or even getting a sense of what there was to be accessed) of their archival files proved fruitless (save for a few odd annual reports) despite going through a circuitous bureaucratic process of getting government approval to see the documents. A similar story played out in the Ministry of Information in Oyo State, and the Federal Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Information, as well as the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Abuja. Finding government archival sources from the 1970s–1990s is particularly difficult in Nigeria, and certainly depends on a combination of luck and personal connections.

Ultimately these methods allowed me to collect information on four, interrelated threads of the past: the state, print culture, experience, and affect. Of the four, the state was easiest to access. Like any topic that sparked colonial anxieties, the hajj (and other forms of Muslim mobility) generated numerous files in colonial archives. As just alluded to, the postcolonial state

proved more evasive. The archive in Ibadan stops at independence, while the Kaduna branch starts to dwindle after the start of the Nigerian Civil War (1967). Here, newspapers proved essential, though admittedly political speeches and official statements can obscure state logics that are made available in the types of documents found in state archives (official correspondence, reports and their marginalia, file minutes, etc.) Newspapers were more valuable in terms for seeing how Nigerians experienced and responded to state directives, whether it be on-going debates in op-ed sections, or noticing which stories editorial staff deemed worthy of a bold front-page headline. Newspapers also were an entryway into exploring Muslim engagements with print culture, through Islamic news columns, obituaries, as well as observing when op-ed contributors wrote “as a Muslim.” Newspapers additionally acted as a record of experience, both in text and in photographs of pilgrims, prayer grounds, and Muslim elites. Experience, albeit to a lesser extent, also surfaced in the archive. However, the archive privileged either that of elite Muslims whose hajj was sponsored by the colonial state, or the poor who were required to narrate the tale of their destitution in order to receive state assistance. Experience was best recovered through interviews, though finding people who had traveled to Mecca before 1960 proved difficult: memories of older family members who had traveled and returned in the colonial period, a bit easier. My final thread, affect, was an unexpected development. During my fieldwork, I first started to think about affect as a result of observing how pilgrims’ language would change when discussing their hajj. Several informants described, with little to no prompting, their emotional states in the holy land. Over the course of my fieldwork, this became a line of questioning I developed, and I inquired about whether pilgrims had experienced changes in their perception of the five senses, if anything in Saudi Arabia had “surprised” them, what moments they remembered the most clearly, and if they had ever seen Mecca in a dream

(whether before or after their hajj). Becoming aware of the affective weight of the hajj through interviews helped me see it elsewhere: in archived requests by Nigerian pilgrims stranded in the Middle East to contact their families back home, in Nigerian-authored reports on the hajj that recorded the emotions of pilgrims, in newspaper reports of celebrations of pilgrims' homecoming celebrations, etc.

Chapter Outlines:

Chapter One considers the evolution of the colonial hajj bureaucracy in the 1920s-40s. It listens to Nigerian reactions and memories and shows that pilgrims evaded colonial surveillance through their own informal hajj travel network. Soon after conquest, migratory patterns created by the hajj produced imperial anxieties. In 1931 the Nigerian colonial state began to use passports and medical forms to make the hajj safer, and pilgrims easier to trace. Despite collaboration with clerics and "traditional" rulers, this surveillance system failed; most Nigerians risked their health and criminalization and avoided the measures and costs of hajj bureaucracy. An informal Nigerian network of hajj agents spread along pilgrim routes from Nigeria to Mecca, facilitated travel instead. Equally key, Nigerian communities in Sudan and Saudi Arabia circulated information that helped pilgrims locate enslaved family members, find work, and evade British and Saudi travel restrictions. Though the colonial state failed to control the hajj, its framing of this as a problem of the state would be inherited by the postcolonial government.

Chapter Two examines the hajj in the period of nationalism leading up to independence in 1960. The three major political parties that emerged by the 1950s roughly aligned with three regions—North, West, and East—each containing a large ethnic group. None were explicitly religious, though religion rested close to the surface of the politics of decolonization. In the

Western Region, a region with an even split between Christians and Muslims, prominent clerics as well as Muslim and Christian politicians made hajj reform a priority. This agenda connected Yoruba Muslims with their co-religionists in the North. The ongoing perils and discomfort of the road formed the primary concerns of these reformers. At the same time, the roll-out of “the flying hajj” was rocky, spurring more calls for reform. This chapter illustrates how the main benefit of aviation—its ability to condense time and space—produced an acute bureaucratic challenge that paved the way for a new centralization of hajj bureaucracy in the postcolonial years. Related to this development, the state regulation of the hajj shifted from one solely concerned with control to one concerned with religious practice and reputation. Whereas before the colonial state just wanted Nigerians to travel with paperwork and vaccinations, Muslim politicians now demanded proper Islamic comportment abroad. Meanwhile, the fact that the state was involved in the hajj at all started to become contentious, particularly among non-Muslims.

Chapter Three looks at the years surrounding independence, when the postcolonial state quickly centralized hajj operations and tightly regulated independent pilgrim agents. Politicians framed these interventions as the protection of ordinary pilgrims, and began sponsoring citizens to go on hajj as a form of spiritual patronage. At the same time, journalists, politicians and citizens advanced the idea that a strong nation required a solid religious foundation and pious leaders. This line of thinking framed the quality of hajj operations as a matter of national health or decay. The logic went: the more Nigerian pilgrims, the greater the nation. Political power and hajj prestige became acutely linked through the sartorial. Politicians engaged in official business adorned in “pilgrim uniform,” a white robe and headscarf held by a black cord from Saudi Arabia. Newspapers amplified this visual trend by pairing stock photos of politicians in pilgrim uniform with articles mentioning them. Business owners, musicians, and other public figures

adopted the uniform as well. The Nigerianization of the hajj was neither a complete rupture nor continuity of the colonial hajj bureaucracy. On the one hand, much like the colonial state, Nigerian politicians crafted hajj policies that belied their distrust of the masses. They blamed the hajj-by-road for producing throngs of destitute pilgrims who required costly repatriation and damaged Nigeria's global image, and restricted it despite its popularity. Yet reading government documents for affect reveals a new concern for the emotional and spiritual well being of pilgrims, which produced a new set of hajj policies in the postcolonial era.

Chapter Four examines the 1970s, when increased global connectivity and capital sowed division by injecting the hajj with sectarian debate and a sense of moral instability. The chapter examines this tension through two events: the Saudi Arabian Embassy's refusal to give passports to members of the Ahmadiyya sect in 1973 and the emergence in Nigerian popular culture of the "corrupt pilgrim." The Ahmadiyya sect had sparked controversy in Nigeria since its arrival in 1908. In the past, conflicts pertained to specific locales, but the Saudi injunction lifted debates over Ahmadiyya to an unprecedented scale. A mood of spiritual insecurity suggests why this event proved so divisive. To explore this phenomenon the chapter traces the emergence of the "corrupt pilgrim" idiom in political commentary and popular cultural forms, like cartoons, music, advertising and fashion. Whereas a successful hajj once bestowed unqualified prestige upon Nigerians, the "corrupt pilgrim" was greedy, impious, and tarnished Nigeria's reputation abroad. Acute public scrutiny addressed the activities of returned pilgrims back in Nigeria, accusing them of dirty politics, crime, and amoral behavior. The idiom surfaced in Islamic newspaper columns, which shifted from instructing aspiring pilgrims how to properly carryout hajj rites, to explicitly laying out a code of conduct for all returning pilgrims. Politicians responded to this new discursive context by foregoing pilgrim uniforms, though cultural brokers and ordinary

Nigerians continued to wear this symbol now loaded with ambivalence.

Chapter 1

Colonial Surveillance and the Perils of the Road: 1914–1945

In June 1951 a British court convened in Eritrea to hear a case unusual for its scale if not its subject.¹ Though accounts varied, three months before some 22 to 46 Nigerian pilgrims embarked in a *dhow*—a sailing vessel—from the Eritrean coast near Massawa, headed to Saudi Arabia. Hassan Shaibu, the Chief of Takruri [plural: West African] who had lived in Massawa for seventeen years, had made the arrangements. He belonged to a sizable network of Nigerians living in places where pilgrims—often illiterate in English and only conversant in their native tongue—had to negotiate with state bureaucracy or local transport providers. As was typically the case with these Nigerian middlemen, Hassan had charged the pilgrims a commission. Hassan was well known in town, and many of the passengers had been referred to him by other Nigerians. Hassan felt that the Eritrean captain had overloaded the *dhow*; at his urging, the captain made six passengers disembark, and then his concerns faded. At the start, the voyage appeared typical.

The Nigerians on the boat came from few families. They had left Nigeria at different times but had ended up raising the fees required for this penultimate leg of their hajj at the same moment. Some had crossed paths earlier in the Sudan, while others first met within the hull of the *dhow*. Though in some places the court documents describe the passengers as all Hausa, one

¹ “Death Sentences Passed on Silmi Musslem and Mahmud Omar Allasi for the Murder of Pilgrims,” n.d., FO 1015/783, Kew Archive.

of the passengers testified that some “were not of my tribe.” Only one could speak Arabic, the language of the captain and his one crewmember. All had undoubtedly struggled to get this far, given that “all were of extremely moderate means.” One passenger had been on the road for as long as eight years, slowly earning his way across the continent. As the law forbade the transport of humans by *dhow* to Saudi Arabia, they left in the cover of night to avoid detection.

On the first night the passengers prayed, ate and slept on the island of Harat. On the second night they began a similar routine on the small island of Kaddu. Except this time as the passengers prayed, the *dhow* began to sail away while the captain's parting words carried across the water. Two men who witnessed the departure invoked the name of God, pleading the Captain to return. He never did. Those on the island only had about half a pint of water per person and enough food for the night. The rest of their rations, money, and sundries remained on the *dhow*.

The account of what happened on that exposed island comes from the testimonies of the four Nigerians who managed to survive the eight days before another *dhow* discovered and rescued them. Khadija Mohamed was eight months pregnant, and on the eighth day on the island she delivered a stillborn baby. She told the court how others died trying to dig for water, while some went "angry" under water to flee the sun and never resurfaced. Of her family, only her husband's mother, and her step-father survived the ordeal. Though Khadija could barely walk for seventeen days after her rescue, her step-father, Mohamed Magaji, fared worse, as he told the court: "On the fourth day I went blind temporarily and could see nothing. On the fifth day I could not move. And so for three more days. All I could do to sit on the shore throwing water over myself." At some point Mohamed lost consciousness and awoke fourteen days later in the Massawa prison, confused at the sight of soldiers and police. The most recent images in Mohamed's mind would have been the dead bodies he helped to cover before he became too

weak to do so.

The eventual rescue was a matter of chance. Issa Idris, a Hausa Nigerian working as a sailor in Eritrea, overheard the captain say to another “I have thrown it [firewood] away.” Three days later, while fishing in the area Issa came across the four survivors and “many dead bodies laying about,” and “at once realized that by 'wood' they [the captain] were referring to the takrunis.” The defense of the accused captain and his only crewmember hinged on the claim that they intended for a larger boat to take the Nigerians the rest of the way. To this they added that the Nigerians were not abandoned for as long as the survivors claimed; they attributed this discrepancy in their accounts to “the well-known ignorance of certain natives.” Though this racialized trope of ‘the ignorant native’ avoided blame by naturalizing the death of pilgrims, it was well entrenched in colonial thinking by this time. Regardless, the British court rejected the defense unconditionally, refusing the accused’s appeal and sentencing both to death by hanging. A year later, the British Secretariat in Eritrea would reference the case in a letter to the Foreign Office when remarking that heavy sentences, including capital punishment “upon unscrupulous skippers...who left them [illicit pilgrims] marooned on islands in the Red Sea” had helped decrease the number of West Africans arriving in Eritrea.²

Even placing human decency aside, if colonial hajj oversight had succeeded, this event should not have happened. By this time, decades of British colonial policy in Nigeria and Sudan had sought to decisively curtail poor Nigerians from embarking on the hajj as well as their illicit crossings through Eritrea to evade quarantine camps and Saudi hajj fees. Pragmatic reasons of imperial self-interest underpinned these policies, though British officials tended to publicly couch them in a language of humanitarianism, a moral lexicon later absorbed by the Saudi

² Secretariat, British Administration, Eritrea, “Registration of Dhows,” July 2, 1952, FO 371/98847, Kew Archive.

Arabian government as well.³ Regardless of motivation, the policies failed more than they succeeded. Thus, this event, which falls slightly after the temporal frame of this chapter, aptly sets its stakes. For all the efforts made by multiple colonial governments to control the movements of Nigerian pilgrims, such illicit travel and pilgrim suffering continued into the 1950s. Economic growth, air travel, and Nigerian independence would later provide the conditions necessary for hajj control, as later chapters will discuss.

Slavery, Subversive Propaganda, and Hajj Control in the 1910 and 1920s

H. R. Palmer, Resident of Bornu Province, published the first official report on Nigerian pilgrims in 1919. Bornu, located at Nigeria's northeastern edge, served as the chief entrepôt for Nigerian pilgrims embarking on the hajj by road. Previous reports on the hajj or the Hejaz tended to be produced by British or Indian officials stationed there or independent travelers to the region. At times, the presence of black Africans is glaringly absent in these reports.⁴ When black Africans do appear, it is often as slaves or as workers with demeaning labor and living conditions.⁵ Thus, the earliest imperial knowledge of the hajj framed Nigerians and other Africans as marginal to the region and Islam. On the rare instances that reports acknowledged black Africans as pilgrims, they provided not ethnographic descriptions but admonishments of their 'improper' behavior. For example, one official report by an Indian member of the Indian hajj

³ "Telegram from the British Legation, Jedda to the Governor General, Khartoum.," June 29, 1953, FO 371/104884, Kew Archive. A translation of an attached announcement of new regulations of the coastline by the Saudi government reads "some persons have discarded the sentiments of religion and humanity and are undertaking to smuggle in people who wish to make the Pilgrimage, bringing them in dhows from the African coast...resulting in the death of hundreds of innocent[s]."

⁴ Hussein Effendi, "Report on Mecca," October 1916, IOR/L/PS/11/113, British Library, London.

⁵ Abdur Ruzzack, "Report," 1879, 16–17, IOR/V/27/844/1, British Library, London. Ruzzack describes the Takruni neighborhood as located literally at the margins of Mecca and as marginal, resting beside the city trash dump. He claims no pilgrims live there, though this claim seems to be contradicted elsewhere in his report where he acknowledges the existence of black pilgrims. Finally, another rare instance of black Africans appearing in his report is when he explains it is they who are tasked with the removal of human waste from Mecca.

medical team in 1879 lamented how the "wild Takroories" attempted to preserve the meat of the slaughtered animals for Eid al-Adha, resulting in "the odor of putrefying flesh."⁶

One early intriguing exception to this trend occurred somewhat by accident. In 1906 Hanns Vischer, Assistant Resident of Bornu Province, received permission to return from Tripoli via the Sahara "with a view to obtaining fuller information regarding the caravan trade between the Mediterranean and Nigeria."⁷ Though this trade first piqued his interest, Vischer soon informed the Colonial Officer that he attached "considerable importance to the beneficial results which will accrue from his accompanying a number of Nigerian Mohammedans returning from Mecca in his official capacity as a British officer."⁸ The pilgrims he encountered in Tripoli consisted of "Hausas, Yorubas, Fulanis and men from Bornu."⁹ Vischer's proposal to aid these pilgrims aimed to capitalize on their earned spiritual prestige: "These people once back in Nigeria will all have considerable moral influence in the Mohammedan communities and a service rendered to them in these circumstances by their own Government will tend to render them more loyal and enthusiastic subjects."¹⁰ The archival record does not disclose the outcome of Vischer's efforts, but it does make clear that he safely returned to Bornu Province, from where H. R. Palmer would depart twelve years later to conduct his study of the Nigerian hajj.

The exact motives behind Palmer's report remain unclear.¹¹ The number of pilgrims

⁶ Ruzzack, 23.

⁷ "From Secretary of State, C.O. to Secretary of State, F.O.," April 14, 1906, FO 371/149/90, British National Archives, Kew.

⁸ "From Secretary of State, C.O. to Secretary of State, F.O."

⁹ "From Mr. Vischer to Secretary of State for the Colonies, UK.," April 2, 1906, FO 371/149/90, British National Archives, Kew.

¹⁰ "From Mr. Vischer to Secretary of State for the Colonies, UK."

¹¹ John Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865-1956*, 440 pages (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2015), 274. This differs from Slight, who claims that demographic changes and fear of lost labor was the main impetus behind Palmer's report. However his only footnote for this claim is Palmer's report, which though it mentions concerns over population loss resulting from the hajj, it by no means frames this as his main concern nor motive for undertaking the report.

leaving on hajj from Nigeria markedly increased at the moment of colonial conquest, as if a form of anti-colonial protest. Fear of a diminishing labor pool certainly provided one reason behind Palmer's report. In 1912, the administration estimated that 30,000 Nigerians were in transit for the hajj, an estimate that Palmer doubled by the time of his report in 1919.¹² Yet the breadth of his report suggests that questions beyond this swell in mobility structured his research. Palmer's background and skills made him suitable for the task. He had worked in Northern Nigeria since 1904, knew Arabic, Hausa and Fulfulde, and had published ethnographic research on the region. As he traversed the landscape between Maiduguri in northeast Nigeria to the Hejazi port city of Jeddah, this intellectual background informed his investigation.

Based on his interviews with Nigerians met while journeying, the problems Palmer identified can be divided into two categories: pragmatic and ideological. For the first, he detailed the challenges and discomforts Nigerian pilgrims faced, particularly within the Hejaz. He assessed that though the risk of enslavement had declined with the end of Ottoman rule in 1918, it remained, and inhabitants in the Hejaz treated West Africans "with the utmost scorn."¹³ He visited the West African quarter outside Jeddah several times, describing it as "squalid and dirty, most of the huts being built of any old odds and ends."¹⁴ Residents complained of financial inability to leave the Hejaz, and said even worse conditions existed for West Africans in Mecca and Medina. Palmer concluded that West Africans felt "piety and reverence for the sacred soil . . . with hatred of the Arab" and felt the latter's "racial contempt" intensely.¹⁵

However, the primary concern of Palmer, like the British Empire, was not the living conditions of Nigerians but the motivations for their movements and the ideologies they

¹² H. R. Palmer, "Report on a Journey from Maiduguri, Nigeria, to Jeddah in Arabia," 1919, 15, CO 879/119/10, British National Archives, Kew.

¹³ Palmer, 9.

¹⁴ Palmer, 9.

¹⁵ Palmer, 9.

encountered en route. Foremost of concern was the fact that “the head of nearly every Fellata [a Nigerian ethnicity] village from Suwakim [Suakin, Sudan] to Fort Lamy [N’Djamena, Niger] belongs to the more fanatical element in the Sokoto Fulani,” the same who actively resisted British colonial conquest in 1903.¹⁶ These “very firm adherents of the Sokoto regime as it existed before 1903” now enjoyed “a good income out of their position as go-betweens between the pilgrims and the Government.”¹⁷ The continued allegiance to the Sokoto Caliphate registered in pilgrim record books in the port city of Suakin, which Palmer found full of names of Nigerians claiming Sokoto as their home, contrary to the new colonial geography that split the region into provinces.¹⁸ In Sudan, the cities of Mai Wurno and Mai Ahmad were “great centres of attraction for natives of Nigeria” who were “discontented.”¹⁹ Thus, the new pilgrimage trail aligned with a anti-colonial disaffection and provided fertile ground for imaginations stirred by pre-colonial place names by Nigerian pilgrims.

The policies that Palmer proposed—soon to be addressed at greater length—would not be enacted by the Nigerian colonial administration before another report on Nigerian pilgrim mobility appeared, this time by G. T. Lethem. A meeting of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Eastern Unrest, held at the India Office in London on November 7, 1924, laid out the importance for more research on Nigerian pilgrims. Palmer attended, and the minutes noted his claims that “West Africa could no longer be considered as apart from the East.” Rather, according to Palmer, the al-Azhar University in Cairo was “the present centre of influence” and

¹⁶ Palmer, 13.

¹⁷ Palmer, 12.

¹⁸ Palmer, 12. According to Palmer, all of the names of Nigerians recorded listed Sokoto as their home, regardless of whether they were from the new colonial geographic understanding of Sokoto.

¹⁹ Palmer, 12.

to a lesser extent the Hejaz,²⁰ since “African Mahomedans were more in sympathy with the Wahhabis than with any other sect of Muhammedans.”²¹

On what basis Palmer came to his conclusions is unclear, but they suggest that by this time the British Empire imagined Nigeria to be closely linked to the East. The same meeting discussed material in a report by C.A. Willis, director of the Intelligence Department in Khartoum, on Mahdist and other kinds of religious propaganda circulating in Nigeria.²² (While these fears were overblown, the existence of Mahdist literature and communication between Nigerians and prominent Mahdist figures continued to be well documented;²³ similarly, so too were anti-British sentiments emanating from Nigerians studying at the al-Azhar mosque in Cairo.²⁴) The Committee concluded that it would be impossible to obtain more information on

²⁰ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to G.T. Lethem,” November 29, 1924, FO 686/141, British National Archives, Kew.

²¹ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to G.T. Lethem.”

²² “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to G.T. Lethem.”

²³ “From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” June 27, 1922, CSO 26/1 03061: Intelligence From Sudan and Egypt affecting Nigeria., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Reports about Mallam Sa’id’s Conspiracy (According to Information Derived from Various Informants).,” 1923, CSO 26/1, File No. 09374 Vol VII, Islamic Political Movements 1927-30, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Statement of Mallam Shuaibu,” June 19, 1925, CSO 26/1, File No. 09374 Vol VII, Islamic Political Movements 1927-30, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; G J F Tomlinson, “History of Islamic Political Propaganda in Nigeria [Draft],” 1926, CSO 26/1, File No. 09374 Vol VI, Islamic Political Movements 1927-30, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; Captain G. Callow, “Notes on Muhammedanism in Adamawa,” August 20, 1926, CSO 26/1, File No. 09374 Vol VI, Islamic Political Movements 1927-30, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Raid on Tassawa in French Territory. Report Attached to Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” July 20, 1927, CSO 26/1, File No. 09374 Vol VI, Islamic Political Movements 1927-30, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “‘Note on Millennialistic Beliefs Recently Brought to Light among Fellata in the Sudan.’ Attached to a Letter from the Director of Intelligence, Sudan to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” May 20, 1928, CSO 26/1, File No. 09374 Vol VII, Islamic Political Movements 1927-30, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Mr. Arnett, Resident Cameroons Province, to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” July 30, 1928, CSO 26/1, File No. 09374 Vol VII, Islamic Political Movements 1927-30, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” November 23, 1928, CSO 26/1, File No. 09374 Vol VII, Islamic Political Movements 1927-30, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁴ “From the Intelligence Department, Sudan to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” January 22, 1925, CSO 26/1 03061: Intelligence From Sudan and Egypt affecting Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Untitled Note [p.1124],” 1927, CSO 26/1: 09374 Vol VI: Islamic Political Movement, Mahdist Tarika, Malam Sa’id: Deportation of, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; G.J. Lethem and G. J. F. Tomlinson, “History of Islamic Political Propaganda in Nigeria,” 1927, 54, MSS Brit. Emp. s. 276 Box 7, Oxford University Archives; “From the Colonial Department, Downing St. to the Government of Nigeria,” July 18, 1928, CSO 26/1, File No. 09374 Vol VII, Islamic Political Movements 1927-30, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” September 24, 1929, CSO 26/1, File No. 09374 Vol VII, Islamic Political

this issue “unless an officer well acquainted with Nigerian Moslem politics and languages were to be stationed for some months in Egypt and the Sudan, and possibly Jeddah, with the object of getting into close contact with the Nigerian theological students and other Nigerians resident in those areas.”²⁵ The Committee believed that if the investigating officer “could give them [Nigerians] recent information about their own country” Nigerians in the East would reveal “a great deal of information regarding subterranean ant-British movements” of use “to both the Nigerian and the Sudan Governments.”²⁶ Thus, the British thought that officials could manipulate to their advantage the relative isolation of Nigerians in the East.

The Foreign Office in London asked the Governor of Nigeria to nominate Palmer or Lethem.²⁷ Lethem already had plans to travel on leave through Sudan, and so the Governor appointed him. Additionally, the Governor penned explicit instructions:

The principle object of your journey is to ascertain as far as may prove to be practical the extent, nature and origin of any religious or political propaganda that may at the present time be being spread through the countries which you will visit; the aims and objectives of such propaganda; the various means whereby it is disseminated; the effects which it has produced and is producing and the reactions which it is occasioning.²⁸

The Governor also instructed Lethem to collect geographical and ethnographic information on tribes, economies and trade, and politics. He also gave Lethem leeway; not only was Lethem permitted to spend as much time as he wanted, but he was allowed to employ a few Nigerians and could supplement this labor as needed.²⁹ Finally, though the Governor instructed Lethem to focus on the Nigerian community in Egypt, he added that Lethem “should note with particular

Movements 1927-30, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. One of the more intriguing rumors includes a notice about one “Fulani from Sokoto...said to have been employed by a Nigerian Subject in El Azhar University to incite the natives of the Sudan against the British.”

²⁵ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to G.T. Lethem.”

²⁶ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to G.T. Lethem.”

²⁷ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to G.T. Lethem.”

²⁸ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to G.T. Lethem.”

²⁹ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to G.T. Lethem.” He also instructed Palmer to brief Lethem before he departed.

care all matters relating to the pilgrim traffic between Nigeria and the Holy Places in Arabia or to an intermediate Muhammedan shrines.”³⁰

The Lethem report was dense with ethnographic data affirming and expanding on the Palmer report, including the worrying presence of Islamist and anti-British ideologies in the East. Lethem concluded that the risk of these ideologies from the East destabilizing Nigeria was slight. Yet he cautioned that their “most obvious and widest channel” was the hajj, a topic that deserved continued colonial surveillance.³¹ Like Palmer he met Nigerians abroad who identified with the Sokoto Caliphate or who held strong anti-imperial views, especially in places of Islamic learning like the Al-Azhar mosque in Cairo.³² He found “striking” the “extent of criticism of European Government” among Nigerians abroad. While he found “resentment of European Christian domination” as well as its corollary, a “vision of an independent Northern Nigeria under Muslim Sultans,” to be “confined—normally—to very limited classes” within Nigeria, he found the opposite to be true among Nigerians in “Sudan, the Hejaz, and Egypt.” To what did he attribute the difference? He mostly blamed Mahdism and propaganda emanating from Egypt.³³

Lethem’s report recorded a mixture of suffering and success by Nigerians abroad, often baring the influence of his imperial position. Though Lethem attended a meeting in Khartoum on

³⁰ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to G.T. Lethem.”

³¹ “From Mr. G J Lethem to the Secretary of the Northern Provinces,” April 20, 1927, MSS Brit. Emp. s. 276 Box 7, Oxford University Archives.

³² G.J. Lethem, “Report on a Journey from Bornu, Nigeria to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Jeddah and Cairo,” 1927, 39, 47, 53–54, 59, MSS Brit. Emp. s. 276 Box 7, Bodleian Library, Oxford, UK.; Moses E. Ochonou, *Colonialism by Proxy: Hausa Imperial Agents and Middle Belt Consciousness in Nigeria* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2014), 225. Among these included relatives of the Emir of Kano in the Sokoto Caliphate at the time of British occupation, who had ended up in Egypt, and Mai Wurno, who liked to claim that if he were in Nigeria, he’d be the Sultan of Sokoto (though Lethem found this to be a bit of self-aggrandizement given his place within the family). He also found that the sheikh of the Takarir quarter at Port Sudan was “an ex-Sokoto ‘jekada,’” meaning a messenger and/or middleman between a ruler and his subordinates. [see Ochonou for translation of this term]

³³ Lethem, “Report on a Journey from Bornu, Nigeria to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Jeddah and Cairo,” 59, 61–79.

the enslavement of Nigerian pilgrims in the Hejaz,³⁴ his report provides scant description of the actual practice of slavery,³⁵ besides arguing that passports could prevent it.³⁶ Domestic spaces of Africans, on the other hand, garnered description. As if relegating African pilgrims to a less advanced time, Lethem described one Takarir quarter in Sudan “like a village of Troglodytes” during the season of sandstorms, when some houses became “almost buried and the inhabitants crawl into their compounds through small holes.”³⁷ And Lethem claimed that for most pilgrims, their living conditions abroad represented a sharp decline from their life in Nigeria, citing the case of a Bornu man in Jeddah whom he had previously known of as “a respectable merchant,” but who was now renting “a crazy shelter of old grass, matched on one side with an old pair of trousers and on the other with pieces of rusty kerosene cans.”³⁸ Yet he also encountered Nigerians who had managed to flourish in their new surroundings, particularly in Medina where they lived “in the town and not in an outside quarter” as in most of the cities along the pilgrimage trail.³⁹ And while it is hard to know how exceptional he was, the Sheikh of all Nigerians of Bornu origin in Mecca (who was born in Mecca himself) had managed to travel to Java, Penang, Singapore and throughout Sudan. Somewhat less impressive if also well adjusted were the Takarir officers of the Hashimite army who “entertained” Lethem with a dinner, and claimed “they numbered about 60 all told in the Hejaz forces,” and enjoyed payment “fairly

³⁴ “From G.J. Lethem to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” August 28, 1925, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Khartoum, to High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan to The Residency, Ramleh,” September 26, 1925, FO 141/640/2, Kew Archive; G.J. Lethem, “Memorandum: Pilgrims Passports,” 1927, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, National Archive, Ibadan. This was in response to a report published by Bullard, then the British Consul in Jeddah.

³⁵ Lethem, “Report on a Journey from Bornu, Nigeria to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Jeddah and Cairo,” 32. A small exception is that he reports rumors that some African “professional pilgrims’ agents” were involved in the sale of child slaves.

³⁶ G.J. Lethem, “History of Islamic Political Propaganda in Nigeria: Appendices To,” 1927, 60, MSS Brit. Emp. s. 276 Box 7, Oxford University Archives.

³⁷ Lethem, “Report on a Journey from Bornu, Nigeria to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Jeddah and Cairo,” 47–48.

³⁸ Lethem, 48.

³⁹ Lethem, 49.

regularly” and “expressed themselves quite happy.”⁴⁰ Thus, though many Nigerians struggled with life in Sudan and the Hejaz, success was certainly not impossible, particularly for those of Nigerian origin born abroad, with a native fluency in Arabic.

For all of these reasons—the risk of radical Islamist or anti-imperial ideology, the general poor living conditions and the possibility of enslavement (however slight)—the increased number of Nigerian pilgrims drew Lethem’s attention, though this wasn’t the focus of his assignment.⁴¹ Lethem linked this uptick mainly to the fact that since British occupation of Nigeria “the route has become safer and easier” as well as to some Muslims fleeing colonial rule.⁴² Lethem estimated that currently 80,000 Takarir, most of which were Nigerians, lived in Sudan, with about another 10,000 spread over the rest of the East. This population was joined by an “average annual exodus” of eight thousand pilgrims, who would take an average of seven years to complete their journey, if they completed it at all.⁴³ No doubt the great scale of this human movement, significantly more than Palmer’s earlier calculations, encouraged Lethem to conclude that “the improvement of the arrangements concerning the pilgrimage is a matter which must be dealt with in considerable detail.”⁴⁴

At the same time that Lethem gathered data for his own report, the Sudan colonial state tasked C. A. Willis to investigate the extent of slavery along the Red Sea. The League of Nations had recently requested the Sudan government to look into the matter, and so the Governor informed Willis towards the end of 1925 that he had “decided to appoint you as a Special Commissioner to collate information on this subject” as a primary goal, but also “of examining

⁴⁰ Lethem, 49.

⁴¹ “Annual Report, Bornu Province,” 1922, 33, CSO 26/1: 09378, National Archive, Ibadan. This observation is affirmed by the 1922 report on Bornu Province, noting that 190 more passports were issued in 1922 compared to 1921.

⁴² Lethem, “Report on a Journey from Bornu, Nigeria to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Jeddah and Cairo,” 31.

⁴³ Lethem, 56.

⁴⁴ Lethem, “History of Islamic Political Propaganda in Nigeria: Appendices To,” 59.

the conditions under which pilgrims from the Sudan visit the Holy Places.”⁴⁵ Given that the majority of pilgrims crossing the Red Sea from the Sudanese port of Suakin to Jeddah originated from Nigeria,⁴⁶ Willis’ research naturally implicated Nigerians as well.

Before launching into a discussion of the trans-Saharan slave trade and slavery in the Hejaz, it is important to take seriously McDougall’s argument that “our understanding of the Saharan slave trade has been shaped by two nineteenth-century discourses: ‘abolitionism’ and orientalism,” which have continued to resurface in twentieth century Africanist historiography.⁴⁷ As she details, nineteenth century research on slavery in the Sahara and the Swahili coast framed these trade networks as commensurate with the horrors of the Atlantic trade, and conjured the concept of “Muslim slavery” as an inevitable part of any Islamic society, errors that continued to be replicated in the twentieth century.⁴⁸ Among the negative side effects of abolitionism and orientalism, McDougall argues, is that they inflate trans-Saharan slavery’s scale and exaggerate its cruelty, among other distortions.⁴⁹ Indeed, in the case of slavery connected to the hajj, the orientalist trope of helpless “women and children” often arose in colonial reports,⁵⁰ as well as the

⁴⁵ “Letter from Sir Geoffrey Archer, the Governor General of Sudan, to C.A. Willis,” November 30, 1925, FO 141/640/2, British National Archives, Kew.

⁴⁶ C.A. Willis, “Report on Slavery and the Pilgrimage,” 1926, 3, SAD 212/2/1-94, Sudan Archive, Durham. Willis estimated that 90% of those crossing the Red Sea from the Sudan for the hajj came from the “West,” which would have meant mostly Nigerians.

⁴⁷ E. Ann McDougall, “Discourse and Distortion : Critical Reflections on Studying the Saharan Slave Trade,” *Outre-Mers. Revue d’histoire* 89, no. 336 (2002): 195.

⁴⁸ McDougall, 197–98, 202–3, 209–24.

⁴⁹ McDougall, 198, 227. Among other problems that concern McDougall is how the literature turns the trans-Saharan trade into a ‘white Muslim Arab’ vs. ‘black non-Muslim slave’ story, and frame Islam’s main contribution to African history one of enslavement.

⁵⁰ G.W. Webster, “Extract from Annexure to Confidential Memorandum No. 99/- of 14.2.22, Forwarded from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos,” February 14, 1922, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Summary of Views of Residents’ Attached to Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” September 12, 1922, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, National Archive, Ibadan; “From British Agency, Jeddah to Governor of Nigeria,” May 28, 1923, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Colonial Office to the Foreign Office,” September 6, 1927, FO 141/571/7: Slavery, Kew Archive. In the case of Nigeria, this also gave rise the advocacy to deny pilgrim passports to anyone under the age of fifteen.

assumption that slavery and Islam went hand-in-hand,⁵¹ even if this last point was occasionally debated by officials.⁵² Thus, in the discussion that follows, I emphasize Nigerian descriptions of their conditions of enslavement wherever possible.

However much some British officials distorted the risk of enslavement for Nigerians and other black Africans, it did exist, even if the danger decreased over the nineteenth century (as even some colonial officials admitted).⁵³ The significance of British efforts to curtail the slave trade in the Hejaz during the early 20th century is three-fold: first, the problem of slavery provided an impetus for British officials to continue studying the hajj by black African Muslims; second, the production of this knowledge served to bolster the construction of black Africa as untrustworthy and amoral and in need of British protection ; and finally, this knowledge underpinned an extensive new regime of passport control by the colonial government in Nigeria. However, other sources reveal a narrative at odds with that contained in official reports.

The tone and framing of the report by C. A. Willis on slavery in relation to the hajj constructed black Africans as in need of British protection,⁵⁴ and at fault for their enslavement. In the first pages of his report Willis lamented the difficulty of determining which migrants were “genuine pilgrims” and which merely used the hajj as excuse to leave a difficult situation at home.⁵⁵ Racism underpinned Willis’ explanation for this challenge. The fact that Africans were “lacking in stability of purpose” meant that even “genuine pilgrims” undertook migratory labor,

⁵¹ Andrew Ryan, “Memorandum on Slavery in Saudi Arabia,” May 15, 1934, FO 141/497/6, Kew Archive; “Minute by Arthur Wiggin, Cairo Residency,” June 1926, FO 141/640/2, Kew Archive; Willis, “Report on Slavery and the Pilgrimage,” 53.

⁵² “FO 686/103,” 1924 1922, Kew Archive.

⁵³ Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865-1956*, 269; “From the Governor General, Sudan to High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan, Cairo,” February 13, 1927, FO 141/571/7: Slavery, Kew Archive; “From the Governor General, Sudan to High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan.,” August 20, 1927, FO 141/571/7: Slavery, Kew Archive; “From the Colonial Office to the Foreign Office”; Ryan, “Memorandum on Slavery in Saudi Arabia.”

⁵⁴ Willis, “Report on Slavery and the Pilgrimage,” 58.

⁵⁵ Willis, 4.

and “the secretive nature of their type” caused both “migrants and pilgrims do their utmost to avoid Government posts and the control that the Government posts represent.”⁵⁶ Though Palmer employed a more measured tone, he too placed the blame of slavery on “Fellata Sheiks” in the East, and like Willis, credited efforts by Sudanese colonial state for the decrease of slave traffic between East Africa and the Hejaz.⁵⁷

Though colonial claims of African culpability in enslavement should be scrutinized, some official evidence suggests that perhaps Nigerians did occasionally enslave others or in great desperation sold off a family member or other dependent, like Palmer, Willis and other colonial officials claimed.⁵⁸ Additionally, imperial knowledge of the Hejaz slave trade frequently acknowledged Nigerians as victims, particularly of Bedouin raids during the period of Hashemite rule.⁵⁹ Yet in colonial reports Nigerians were always just that—victims, conveniently in need of British aid. The historiography on slavery has astutely detailed how the abolitionist movement intersected with and amplified liberal justifications of colonialism, a logic that officials in Nigeria occasionally utilized even after the practice had largely ended.⁶⁰ Such justifications were hypocritical, since throughout the British Empire colonial states prioritized economic and

⁵⁶ Willis, 4.

⁵⁷ Palmer, “Report on a Journey from Maiduguri, Nigeria, to Jeddah in Arabia,” 15; Willis, “Report on Slavery and the Pilgrimage,” 13.

⁵⁸ “From the Sudan Government to the Resident of Bornu,” July 8, 1921, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, National Archive, Ibadan; “To the Government of Nigeria from the British Agency, Jeddah,” May 28, 1923, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, National Archive, Ibadan; Ryan, “Memorandum on Slavery in Saudi Arabia.” In the first instance, a Nigerian from Bornu claims that he traveled with “two boys” who were his “friends,” who he left in Fort Lamy at their request. The second blames Nigerian sheikhs in Jeddah for having a reputation of corruption and slave-dealing.

⁵⁹ “Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria,” 1922-1925, p.230-242, CSO 26/1 File No 06790, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

⁶⁰ Suzanne Miers, *Slavery in the Twentieth Century: The Evolution of a Global Pattern*, xx, 505 p. (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003), 21; Suzanne Miers, “The Anti-Slavery Game: Britain and the Suppression of Slavery in Africa and Arabia, 1890-1975,” in *Slavery and the Suppression of the Slave Trade, 1807-1975*, ed. Keith Hamilton and Patrick Salmon (Brighton [England] ; Portland, Or.: Sussex Academic Press, 2009), 198; T. Hoskyns-Abrahall, “From T Hoskyns-Abrahall to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos.,” October 31, 1942, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

political stability over abolition.⁶¹ Nor was Britain unique for its manumission efforts. Both Islam and British-colonized African societies had pre-existing systems of manumission.⁶² What these valuable critiques fail to include a discussion of the fact that parallel to British policies against slavery in the Hejaz,⁶³ were grassroots efforts by black Africans to seek their own freedom or the freedom of their kin. This alternate, black African abolitionist labor is absent from official reports, and rejects Britain's self-image as the moral compass in the region. Instead, the manumission cases compiled by the British Legation in Jeddah reveal how Nigerians in the Hejaz fought to restore their fractured families. Correspondence over individual cases of escaped slaves seeking refuge at the Legation allows for the recovery of this more complex history.

The struggles of Abdel Gader Mohamed, "a native of Nigeria," to recover his son reveals the great lengths families of victims went to reunite their families.⁶⁴ Abdel Mohamed lost his son to a kidnapper during his hajj. Fifteen years later in 1937 Mohamed appeared in Sudan and informed one District Commissioner that he learned "that his son has been recovered by the Saudi Arabian authorities" and he hoped the British Legation there would facilitate his reunion.⁶⁵ Though it is unclear how he spent the years since the kidnapping, what is clear is that Mohamed remained diligent in his efforts to investigate the whereabouts and wellbeing of his son. Similarly, in 1935 the British Legation in Jeddah reported that Hassana binti Tahir, a Hausa from Nigeria, "from time to time, during the last ten years or more, on pilgrimage, in the hope of tracing her

⁶¹ Matthew S. Hopper, *Slaves of One Master: Globalization and Slavery in Arabia in the Age of Empire*, xv, 302 pages (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 148; Miers, "The Anti-Slavery Game: Britain and the Suppression of Slavery in Africa and Arabia, 1890-1975," 196, 201. Miers call this duplicity the "Anti-slavery game."

⁶² Hopper, *Slaves of One Master: Globalization and Slavery in Arabia in the Age of Empire*, 133; Jerzy. Zdanowski and Inc. ebrary, *Slavery and Manumission British Policy in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf in the First Half of the 20th Century*, xxxiii, 474 p. (Reading, U.K.: Ithaca Press, 2013), 65.

⁶³ "Telegram from H.M. Minister, Jeddah to Foreign Office," February 3, 1935, FO 905/27: Slaves. Manumissions. General Questions, British National Archives, Kew. According to this source between 1926 and 1935 the British Legation manumitted and repatriated 212 slaves to Africa.

⁶⁴ "Letter from District Commissioner, Wad Madani, Blue Nile Province, Sudan to British Legation, Jeddah.," September 22, 1937, FO 905/61, British National Archives, Kew.

⁶⁵ "Letter from District Commissioner, Wad Madani, Blue Nile Province, Sudan to British Legation, Jeddah."

son” who she had lost to kidnapping during the hajj twelve years ago.⁶⁶

The information brought to light once the son of Abdel Mohamed arrives additionally pokes holes in another stereotype in colonial discourse about African pilgrims—“the enslaved native” as weak and in need of British protection. Though his father sought help from colonial authorities in Sudan and Saudi Arabia, ultimately it was the Crown Prince “who set him free.”⁶⁷ By the time his father saw him, he “had weapons etc. worth perhaps 60 pounds,”⁶⁸ a wife and a job as the Crown Prince's personal bodyguard,⁶⁹ and “was pretty comfortable...and very emphatic in his determination to stay in Nejd.”⁷⁰ So “prosperous”⁷¹ was the son that he “gave the old man a present of money and clothes.”⁷² Though most enslaved Nigerians did not experience such luck, others managed more modest success. Take one sixty-year-old Nigerian woman who, enslaved since the Hashemite period, had achieved a type of independence living and working in Jeddah making straw fans and brooms, at the cost of sending regular payments to her owner in Mecca.⁷³

A common theme in the stories of escaped Nigerian slaves is that the efforts on the part of their kin to recover them relied on the extensive network of Nigerians living throughout the Hejaz and along the coastline from Sudan to Eritrea. In 1935 the efforts of a Hausa man to locate his daughter, who had been kidnapped from him while on the hajj four years ago, finally paid off thanks to information that circulated through other Hausas. Specifically, the granddaughter of the Sheikh of the Tarkunis at Massawa had recently traveled from Massawa to Mecca and had by

⁶⁶ “Letter from British Legation, Jeddah to Governor of Kassala Province, Sudan.,” September 15, 1935, FO 905/28: Slaves. Manumissions. Individual Cases., British National Archives, Kew.

⁶⁷ “Minute, Reference 535/13,” June 14, 1938, FO 905/61, British National Archives, Kew.

⁶⁸ “Minute, Reference 535/13.”

⁶⁹ “Letter from British Legation, Jeddah to District Commissioner, Wad Madani, Blue Nile Province, Sudan,” June 19, 1938, FO 905/61, British National Archives, Kew.

⁷⁰ “Minute, Reference 535/13.”

⁷¹ “Letter from British Legation, Jeddah to District Commissioner, Wad Madani, Blue Nile Province, Sudan.”

⁷² “Minute from C.O. to B.J.,” July 6, 1938, FO 905/61, British National Archives, Kew.

⁷³ “Letter to Mr. Judd (Jeddah Legation),” September 14, 1938, FO 905/61, British National Archives, Kew.

chance run into the enslaved girl on the road to Mecca. Their families had once lived together in Sudan and the girl recognized her and called out to her. The woman carried the news of her enslavement to a Hausa leather-dyer living in Mecca, and he passed this information along to a Hausa pilgrim who happened to know the father, and so the information finally found its way back to him.⁷⁴ Though the paths of information did not always take such a circuitous route, they often relied on a bit of good luck. By the time Surur ibn Osman, a Hausa man from Sokoto, arrived at the British Legation in 1935 he had endured roughly two decades of enslavement since Bedouins kidnapped him at the age of five.⁷⁵ Not surprisingly he did not know the whereabouts of his family, but by chance the Takruni milk delivery-man to the British Legation recognized him, and informed him the current location of his father.⁷⁶ Around the same time a Hausa woman living in Sudan stated that Surur was her nephew, and that his father had told her about his kidnapping on his return from the hajj and had asked her to search for him.⁷⁷ Though she was unclear as to the location of his parents, she offered that his brother currently resided in Tokar.

Part of the procedure of processing escaped slaves by the British Legation involved inquiring how exactly they managed to flee. These escape narratives further reveal the importance of the network of Nigerians in the Hejaz, as well as the ingenuity of the slaves themselves. To return to Bakur ibn Hamza, the son of Hassana binti Tahir who spent twelve years searching for him, he found inspiration to escape “after overhearing a conversation between Ali Misaad [his master] and his wife to the effect that his (Bakur’s) parents were in

⁷⁴ “Letter from Governor of Kassala Province, to Civil Secretary, Khartoum, Sudan.,” July 26, 1935, FO 905/28: Slaves. Manumissions. Individual Cases., British National Archives, Kew; “Minute to Mr. Oppenheim,” August 29, 1935, FO 905/28: Slaves. Manumissions. Individual Cases., British National Archives, Kew.

⁷⁵ “Questionnaire for Slaves Who Take Refuge in the British Legation, Jeddah: Surur Ibn Osman.,” January 22, 1935, FO 905/28: Slaves. Manumissions. Individual Cases., British National Archives, Kew.

⁷⁶ “Letter from British Legation, Jeddah to The Commissioner, Port Sudan, Sudan.,” February 2, 1935, FO 905/28: Slaves. Manumissions. Individual Cases., British National Archives, Kew.

⁷⁷ “Handwritten Note,” January 23, 1935, FO 905/28: Slaves. Manumissions. Individual Cases., British National Archives, Kew.

Mecca” looking for him.⁷⁸ At multiple legs of his escape he took advantage of the five daily prayers as a time to move undetected, and was able to find the house of an uncle in Mecca and the house of an aunt located along the main Mecca-Jeddah road where he managed to safely rest during his journey to the British Legation.⁷⁹ Surur ibn Omar also owed his freedom to his wit. When he arrived at the coastal city of Dahban after his escape, he feared that if he traveled by land his master would catch up to him. Instead he approached a fisherman, claiming he needed to settle an account with a friend in Jeddah, and offered to exchange his labor for a lift.⁸⁰ The fisherman agreed, and once they finished selling the fish in the Jeddah market Omar casually inquired where he could find the British Legation, so not to arouse suspicion.

Not surprisingly, the vast majority of manumission cases compiled by the British Legation concern Africans seeking its aid. However at least one case reveals that at times the enslaved and their kin addressed their grievances to Saudi authorities directly. The case surfaced in 1934, and concerned a Takruni young man who had been stolen in Jeddah roughly seventeen years previous.⁸¹ Though she eventually sought the aid of the British Legation through the assistance of the Takruni Sheikh in Mecca, his aunt first took the matter to a Saudi court. According to her, “the Qadi [judge] having heard the witnesses was in their favor, but he was reminded by the rival party of the royal proclamation, which prohibited the dealings of slavery cases after the expiry of the period of twenty years.”⁸² Thus, the judge claimed he could not interfere. To this the young man’s aunt “remonstrated that the shari’a laws are above the Kings,

⁷⁸ “Questionnaire for Slaves Who Take Refuge in the British Legation, Jeddah: Bakur Ibn Hamza Alias Faraj.,” September 11, 1935, FO 905/28: Slaves. Manumissions. Individual Cases., British National Archives, Kew.

⁷⁹ “Minute to A.C.O.,” September 11, 1935, FO 905/28: Slaves. Manumissions. Individual Cases., British National Archives, Kew.

⁸⁰ “Letter from British Legation, Jeddah to The Commissioner, Port Sudan, Sudan.”

⁸¹ “Minute to H.M. Minister,” January 16, 1934, FO 905/10: Slaves. Manumission. Individual Cases, British National Archives, Kew.

⁸² “Minute to H.M. Minister.”

which the King himself also admit[s]. Consequently, she expressed her inability to understand the Qadi how could the royal order be taken above the shari'a laws in a particular case."⁸³

Though the judge still ultimately dismissed the case, the confidence and knowledge of Islamic law demonstrated by this one Nigerian woman implies a very different picture of black Africans in Arabia than that typically found in colonial reports and travelogues. Furthermore, given the focus of the colonial archive, that this example managed to be included suggests a strong possibility that other similar cases existed, but simply never entered British bureaucratic memory.

Finally, the actions and narratives of individual slaves push against a common sentiment in colonial British reports that "Arab slavery" (as though there existed one such practice) was relatively benign.⁸⁴ As the case of Abdel Gader Mohamed demonstrates, at times this could be a fair assessment. However, other cases of enslaved Nigerians suggest that slavery in the Hejaz could just as easily be brutal, particularly for black Africans. Harun bin Hayu took refuge at the British Legation in Jeddah in 1931. Hayu represents a rare archival example of a Nigerian who went on the hajj as a slave, as he accompanied his Nigerian owner from Yola.⁸⁵ At least according to the British Legation, not once in the journey from Nigeria to Saudi Arabia, which took over a year, did Hayu attempt an escape. After both men performed the hajj, Hayu's owner sold him to a Nejdi sheikh. Hayu successfully escaped just three months later, suggesting that he found the conditions of his new enslavement much less tenable.⁸⁶ And Surur ibn Omar, the Hausa kidnapped at age five, claimed "that he was brutally treated, overworked and half starved."⁸⁷ While it is not surprising that escaped slaves seeking refuge at the British Legation

⁸³ "Minute to H.M. Minister."

⁸⁴ Miers, *Slavery in the Twentieth Century: The Evolution of a Global Pattern*, 89.

⁸⁵ "Letter from Jeddah Consul to Governor of Nigeria," December 18, 1931, CSO 26/1 03028/S.835: Harun Bin Hayu: Repatriation of, from Jedda, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

⁸⁶ "Letter from Jeddah Consul to Governor of Nigeria."

⁸⁷ "Questionnaire for Slaves Who Take Refuge in the British Legation, Jedda: Surur Ibn Osman."

would relate histories of maltreatment, the fact that Omar endured roughly two decades of enslavement before his escape suggests that, contrary to some British assumptions,⁸⁸ much suffering by black African slaves in the Hejaz remained invisible to British bureaucracy.

The slave trade in the Hejaz, while less extensive in the early twentieth century than sensationalist articles in the British press claimed, impacted Nigerian pilgrims. Official reports compiled by colonial officials from Nigeria, Sudan and Saudi Arabia on the hajj contain a wealth of ethnographic detail, including on slavery. In these official reports, Nigerians appeared either as perpetrators or helpless victims of slavery. Yet as the above discussion details, Nigerians also negotiated the terms of their enslavement, and went to great lengths to win the freedom of enslaved relatives. Though the British Legation in Jeddah's power of manumission—at least until 1936—freed and repatriated numerous Nigerians, without the ingenuity of slaves to escape or the significant network of Nigerians in Sudan and Saudi Arabia that carried information and provided safe haven, the Legation's power of manumission would have achieved little. In part acknowledging this bureaucratic impotence, one consequence of these reports on slavery (as well as anxiety over Mahdism) was that the Nigerian colonial state expanded its efforts to control the movement of pilgrims over the following decades. Here lies an interesting contradiction: though the length of time most Nigerians took to complete the hajj presented great hardships and opportunities for enslavement, it had also created the conditions necessary for the formation of an extensive network of Nigerians living in Sudan, Eritrea and the Hijaz that proved crucial to the eventual manumission of many enslaved Nigerians.

The Nigerian Repatriation Fund and the Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme

⁸⁸ Miers, *Slavery in the Twentieth Century: The Evolution of a Global Pattern*, 89. According to Miers, the fact that relatively few Africans sought manumission from the British Legation in Jeddah bolstered the British view that “Arab slavery” was benign.

An event that prompted reform and regulation was the pilgrimage by the Emir of Katsina in the 1921-1922 hajj season. The colonial state orchestrated the event, and paired the Emir's hajj with a visit to London, where he met the royal family and received "the King's medal for Native Chiefs."⁸⁹ The entire journey, particularly his time in England, garnered extensive coverage in the Lagosian press⁹⁰ with articles often highlighting the Emir's naïve fascination with English modern life⁹¹ or his professions of loyalty and gratitude toward the crown.⁹² Whether this news coverage, largely culled from either English newspapers or international wire services, reflected the actual viewpoint of the Emir remains unclear. Some Nigerian newsmen used the event as an opportunity to champion their own agenda. *The Times of Nigeria* (owned the elite Muslim, Adamu Animashaun) took advantage of the publicity to "remind the Authorities that the promise of extending English Education to those places [the northern provinces] must not be forgotten."⁹³

While the Emir enjoyed his experience of the hajj, the conditions in which he found other Nigerians living in the Hejaz concerned him. G.W. Webster, the Senior Resident of Sokoto Province who accompanied the Emir throughout his journey and penned a report on the trip, claimed that "the Emir was asked if he had brought no children for sale, and I met a string of some forty to fifty Hausa and Fulani girls carrying water who, I learned had recently been bought

⁸⁹ G. J. F. Tomlinson, "Letter to the Editor," *The Times of Nigeria*, June 12, 1921.

⁹⁰ "We Hear," *The Times of Nigeria*, July 25, 1921; "News, Notes and Comments: The Emir of Katsina," *The Times of Nigeria*, August 29, 1921; "News, Notes and Comments: Return of Emir of Katsina from Mecca," *The Times of Nigeria*, October 31, 1921; "News, Notes and Comments: Arrival of Emir of Katsina," *The Times of Nigeria*, November 21, 1921; "News Items," *The African Messenger*, June 2, 1921; "The Emir of Katsina," *The African Messenger*, June 16, 1921; "The Emir of Katsina: Adventures on the Way from Mecca," *The African Messenger*, November 24, 1921; "News," *The African Messenger*, December 1, 1921; "Untitled," *The Lagos Weekly Record*, June 11, 1921; "The Emir of Katsina," *The Nigerian Pioneer*, June 17, 1921; "Reuter's Telegrams," *The Nigerian Pioneer*, July 8, 1921.

⁹¹ "News, Notes and Comments: The Emir of Katsina in London," *The Times of Nigeria*, August 1, 1921; "Emir of Katsina," *The African Messenger*, August 18, 1921.

⁹² "News, Notes and Comments: The Emir of Katsina and H.M. the King Emperor," *The Times of Nigeria*, August 8, 1921; "News Items," *The African Messenger*, October 27, 1921.

⁹³ "News, Notes and Comments," *The Times of Nigeria*, June 12, 1921.

by various Notables” and that the scale of slavery in the Hejaz “greatly shocked the Emir.”⁹⁴

Among those not enslaved, Webster claimed a large portion of Nigerians lived in a state of “practical slavery.” Webster explained that most either “earn money by acting as porters or ‘servants’ to Arab notables. In the former case they may preserve their independence, in the latter they probably find that when they wish to leave, there is some technical difficulty and they are forced to enter on another contract of service.”⁹⁵

In response to these conditions, the Emir of Katsina personally paid for the repatriation of four-hundred Nigerians.⁹⁶ Previous to this, the British colonial state had occasionally paid for the repatriation of stranded Nigerians, but only in a very piecemeal fashion of questionable efficacy (though not without expense).⁹⁷ For his part, in his report Webster suggested that, much like the system in place for destitute Indian and Javanese pilgrims, “a fund might be started by the [Nigerian] Native Treasuries to assist in the repatriation of stranded pilgrims, or perhaps it might be suggested to wealthy Moslems that they might follow the example of the Emir of Katsina and that part of the Zakkat.”⁹⁸ In response, the Secretary of the Northern Provinces elicited feedback

⁹⁴ Webster, “Extract from Annexure to Confidential Memorandum No. 99/- of 14.2.22, Forwarded from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos.”

⁹⁵ Webster.

⁹⁶ Hugh Clifford, “From the Governor of Nigeria to the Lord Duke of Devonshire, Secretary of State for the Colonies,” January 13, 1923, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

⁹⁷ “From the Residency, Cairo to the Government of Nigeria,” December 4, 1919, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), National Archive, Ibadan; “From H.R. Palmer, Resident of Bornu to the Secretary of the Northern Provinces,” February 21, 1922, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Minute 50, Handwritten by SMG [Grier] to YE,” January 4, 1922, 50, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. In 1919, the Nigerian government repatriated roughly seventy pilgrims, at the request of Jerusalem. Palmer reported that he later met some of these in his travels, and claimed most (if not all) of them had no intention of returning to Nigeria. While not much archival material about repatriations prior to 1922 exists, Minute 50 reports that the Nigerian government spent £317.11.4 on repatriations in 1921, by no means a negligible sum.

⁹⁸ Webster, “Extract from Annexure to Confidential Memorandum No. 99/- of 14.2.22, Forwarded from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos.”

from all Residents in the North.⁹⁹ Most supported the idea of a relief fund, and several suggested a deposit scheme, something that Palmer had proposed in his report. A couple Residents also advocated ramping up efforts of warning prospective pilgrims of the perils of the road, suggesting the Emir of Katsina as the ideal spokesman.¹⁰⁰ Other Residents worried over the potential cost. The Resident of Bornu expressed concern that many of those stranded “may be undesirables and their return to Nigeria at the expense of the Native Treasuries, or from funds provided by ‘Zakkat,’ would give them a prestige on their return here to which they cannot be entitled and would doubtless encourage similar undesirables of the semi-mendicant class to make the pilgrimage who would otherwise not have done so.”¹⁰¹ Webster was similarly concerned the prestige of the hajj. He stressed that like the Indian Fund, it would be best if the money came from “private subscription” as “help from official [i.e. Christian] sources might detract from the virtue to be acquired by the pilgrimage.”¹⁰² However, most Residents argued that any “so-called voluntary collection” could easily “lead to abuse” and extortion, and thus the fund was better left to the responsibility of the Native Authorities (NAs).¹⁰³

This initial debate over the fund for destitute pilgrims reveals a few key points. First, though a few Residents felt the colonial state had “a certain obligation for the protection of the

⁹⁹ “From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos, Nigeria. With ‘Summary of Views of Residents’ Attached.,” October 24, 1922, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁰⁰ “From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos, Nigeria. With ‘Summary of Views of Residents’ Attached.” Resident of Yola and the Resident of Kabba suggested the Emir “should write a letter” describing the dangers and conditions of the hajj to be distributed widely. The Resident of Yola pointed out this would be especially valuable as “Muhammedans are inclined to suspect ulterior motives in our advice.”

¹⁰¹ “From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos, Nigeria. With ‘Summary of Views of Residents’ Attached.”

¹⁰² “From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos, Nigeria. With ‘Summary of Views of Residents’ Attached.”

¹⁰³ “From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos, Nigeria. With ‘Summary of Views of Residents’ Attached.” The quoted text comes from a summary of the Resident of Munshi’s remarks, though several Residents expressed similar sentiments.

Natives of Nigeria abroad,” most saw this obligation as limited.¹⁰⁴ Whether through a warning from the Emir of Katsina or increased passport restrictions, many Residents hoped the problem of destitution could be solved by discouraging Nigerians to depart on the hajj. Second, several Residents understood the great prestige that completing the hajj afforded pilgrims.

Ultimately, the Governor of Nigeria announced the creation of the fund to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in January of 1923, which only Muslim NAs in the North would finance the fund.¹⁰⁵ Clifford outlined a plan to contact British administrators in Cairo, Jeddah, Sudan, and Palestine to obtain their feedback. Based on the relatively low numbers of destitute Nigerians seeking assistance outside of Sudan and Jeddah, in the end these two locations split the fund.¹⁰⁶ Colonial officials agreed that Nigerians were most vulnerable within the Hejaz, whereas most could find work in Sudan and gradually fund their return, and so the fund allocated a larger share to Jeddah to pay for one-way steamer tickets across the Red Sea.¹⁰⁷ Only NAs with significant Muslim populations bore the cost.¹⁰⁸ In July of 1923 the Secretary of State for the

¹⁰⁴ “From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos, Nigeria. With ‘Summary of Views of Residents’ Attached.” The quoted text is direct speech of the Resident of Bornu, but several other Residents expressed similar sentiments.

¹⁰⁵ Clifford, “From the Governor of Nigeria to the Lord Duke of Devonshire, Secretary of State for the Colonies.”

¹⁰⁶ Arthur Alban, “From Consul General, Alexandria to First Secretary, Residency, Cairo.,” May 24, 1923, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; Donald C. Cameron, “From the Governor of Nigeria to the High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan, Residency Cairo,” July 30, 1923, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁰⁷ “From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos, Nigeria. With ‘Summary of Views of Residents’ Attached.”; “From the British Agency, Jeddah to Unknown,” October 18, 1923, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From British Agency, Jeddah to Governor of Nigeria.”

¹⁰⁸ “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary, Lagos.,” June 26, 1923, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Secretary of the Southern Provinces.,” September 3, 1935, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol II: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. The exact amount each NA paid depended entirely on what they felt appropriate, at least until 1936 when the donation became proportional to each NA’s annual revenue. Sokoto, Kano, Katsina, Zaria, Bornu, and Ilorin made up the majority of the contributions.

Colonies officially approved the new scheme, just in time for that year's hajj.¹⁰⁹ The acute need for the fund quickly became apparent, with 299 Nigerians assisted in 1923, and 1,201 in 1924.¹¹⁰

The establishment of the repatriation relief fund additionally generated colonial knowledge of the Nigerian hajj and brought about mild passport reforms. In that request for feedback from the Residents, the Secretary of the Northern Provinces created the first centralized record of pilgrim numbers by Province, and how different Provinces filed passport records. This gave way to centralized policies. The Secretary mandated that all passports be numbered serially to support tracking Nigerians abroad.¹¹¹ Some Residents suggested placing age restrictions on pilgrim passports to prevent child slavery, but others worried this would achieve little more than provoke local outrage.¹¹² No official change occurred, but several Residents pledged to provide greater scrutiny and surveillance of pilgrims traveling with children on the hajj.

The implementation of the new repatriation relief fund brought several challenges of translation that would plague attempts to regulate the hajj in the decades to come. One idea the Nigerian government floated was for Jeddah to compile lists of the name and origin of all pilgrims that received aid. The purpose of such a list was two-fold: first, it would allow the Nigerian state to make sure they did not pay for the repatriation of non-Nigerians, and second they could use the lists to track how many Nigerians receiving assistance eventually made it home. However the British Agency in Jeddah remarked the benefit of such a list would likely not justify the effort, since pilgrims appeared to register with "four names only, and those who are

¹⁰⁹ "From the Lord Duke of Devonshire, Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Governor of Nigeria.," July 23, 1923, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹¹⁰ "Report on the Pilgrimage of 1924," March 23, 1925, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹¹¹ "From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary, Lagos."

¹¹² "From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary, Lagos, Nigeria. With 'Summary of Views of Residents' Attached."

not called Abu Bakr or Osman are generally Taher and Mohammed.”¹¹³ Relatedly, the fact that pilgrims and colonial officials knew different languages prompted spelling variations or abbreviations that made tracing individuals highly complicated if not impossible.¹¹⁴ After the first year of administering the fund, the Vice Consul in Jeddah remarked a further problem in generating useful data was that “the majority of pilgrims are content to emit simple and familiar sounds like ‘Kano’ or ‘Sokoto’ while in fact their homes may be twenty days’ journey from these comprehensive places.”¹¹⁵ When he pressed pilgrims for more precise locations, these could only be spelled phonetically, and thus lacked accuracy. Palmer had previously remarked on a similar phenomenon, when he encountered a group of pilgrims claiming to be from Bornu, yet none spoke Kanuri, the main language of the Province. To this Palmer remarked that “the inhabitants of the Eastern Sudan very commonly speak of Nigeria as ‘Bornu’—and I have no doubt many of these people said they came from Bornu to make themselves intelligible to some Egyptian or Syrian Officer who probably took the names.”¹¹⁶

The impermanence of institutional memory presented another challenge to the administration of the Nigerian Relief Fund. After a fire decimated the Takruni village outside Jeddah in 1934 and placed great demands on the Fund, a broader discussion arose over the recent use of this financial resource.¹¹⁷ The Secretary of the Northern Provinces circulated to all

¹¹³ “From British Agency, Jeddah to Governor of Nigeria.”

¹¹⁴ T.H. Wilson, “Memo from the Commissioner of Police [T.H.Wilson] to Senior Commissioner of Police, Lagos Colony,” October 3, 1927, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Handwritten Note from PRI[?] To [?],” December 24, 1930, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol III: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹¹⁵ “Report by Mr. Vice Consul Grafftey-Smith, Sent from British Agency, Jeddah to Governor of Nigeria,” February 12, 1924, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹¹⁶ “From H.R. Palmer, Resident of Bornu to the Secretary of the Northern Provinces.”

¹¹⁷ “Paraphrase of a Cypher Telegram from H.M. Minister, Jeddah to Governor, Lagos,” July 5, 1934, CSO 26/1 File No. 06790 Vol V: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

Residents a minute by G.J. Lethem that remarked that lately he “notice[d] that little care is taken to avoid unnecessary expenditure on repatriation of Nigerians in the Near East,” noting he had seen one case from Cairo where the Consul spent one hundred pounds on just one man.¹¹⁸ Lethem had brought up the issue in 1928,¹¹⁹ but it was only in 1934, with an estimated 1500 destitute Nigerians in Jeddah, that the Governor of Nigeria reminded the British Agency in Jeddah that the Fund was to be used only to allow destitutes to cross the Red Sea.¹²⁰

The fire of 1934 also raised the question of what to do about destitute pilgrims from the Southern provinces or the Lagos Colony, though debates on the issue can be traced to the Fund’s beginning. In 1923 S.M. Grier, then Secretary for Native Affairs and previously stationed in Ibadan, noted to the Governor before he finalized any logistics that “there are a considerable number of Muhammedans in the Oyo Province” and thus perhaps the southern provinces should also be included in the scheme.¹²¹ Ultimately however, the Chief Secretary in Lagos decided that the likelihood of pilgrims outside of the Northern provinces needing overland repatriation was “so remote at present” that it made little sense to include the Southern provinces in the Relief Fund, though he did ask the Secretary of the Southern Provinces to start collecting pilgrim statistics.¹²² This decision was based on the assumption that most pilgrims from the South traveled by boat, in contrast to the tendency of Northern pilgrims to travel overland.

A different safety net for pilgrims traveling by sea developed roughly the same time as

¹¹⁸ “Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Residents of All Provinces,” October 15, 1934, CSO 26/1 File No. 06790 Vol V: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹¹⁹ “Typed Note by G.J. Lethem, Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” July 10, 1928, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol II: Pilgrim etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹²⁰ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to British Agency, Jeddah,” February 7, 1935, CSO 26/1 File No. 06790 Vol V: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹²¹ “Note from S.M. Grier (Secretary for Native Affairs), to Your Excellency,” January 5, 1923, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹²² G. J. F. Tomlinson, “From Chief Secretary, Lagos to Secretary of the Southern Provinces.,” January 16, 1923, CSO 26/1 File No 06790: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

the Nigerian Repatriation Relief Fund. Starting in 1924, the Nigerian Government required all sea-pilgrims to deposit twenty pounds before departing Lagos.¹²³ This policy resulted from the Egyptian visa requirement for a deposit of this amount.¹²⁴ By 1930, two problems with this arrangement emerged within the colonial bureaucracy. First, a number of pilgrims who traveled overland managed to become destitute in Egypt without having paid the twenty-pound deposit. They neither qualified for the Nigerian Repatriation Fund, limited as it was to destitute pilgrims in Jeddah and the Sudan, nor could they draw upon a personal deposit. These cases presented a quandary for colonial officials. They tried to obtain funds from both the family and NA of the destitute Nigerian, but when these requests for money were denied, as frequently happened, the official response was to leave the destitute pilgrim stranded.¹²⁵ However in at least a couple instances colonial officials arranged a loophole to allow access to the Fund,¹²⁶ in large part

¹²³ "Circular from Civil Secretary, Sudan Government to All Governors and Sudan Agent, Cairo.," November 6, 1932, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹²⁴ "From Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos to French West Africa Lines.," October 30, 1929, CSO 26/1 06692 Vol III: Passport Requirements for Egypt, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Typed Note to Chief Secretary, Lagos from [Illegible Signature]," March 9, 1933, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol III: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹²⁵ "From Secretary for the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," April 9, 1925, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol III: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Handwritten Note from [?] To Mr. Hett," June 10, 1925, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol III: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Sudan Agent to British Consulate Cairo.," April 27, 1926, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol IV: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Secretary for the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," July 30, 1926, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol IV: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From British Consulate Cairo to Governor of Nigeria," January 2, 1928, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol VI: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos to British Consulate Cairo.," May 28, 1928, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol VI: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Secretary for the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," December 17, 1930, CSO 26/1: File No. 03028/795: Abdallah Dandanbi- Repatriation from Cairo, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos to British Consul, Addis Ababa.," June 10, 1926, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos to British Consulate, Cairo.," March 27, 1926, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹²⁶ "From the Resident of Zaria to the Secretary of the Northern Provinces.," December 22, 1926, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," January 31, 1927, CSO 26/2: File No.

because the Emir of Katsina and the Shehu of Bornu knew the destitute pilgrims in question and used their political clout to critique these limits to the current system.¹²⁷ Relatedly, a second problem only gained visibility when it affected a Nigerian elite. In 1930 the Attah of Igbirra, a traditional ruler in Kabba Province, traveled to Mecca by sea. Most of the journey went smoothly, however Egyptian authorities forced him to pay an additional twenty-pound deposit per person.¹²⁸ In response, the Treasurer in Lagos remarked that the current practice of collecting deposits and keeping the receipt “without giving any document in return is the cause of unnecessary inconvenience and expense to the pilgrim.”¹²⁹ This problem likely existed for Nigerian pilgrims well before the Attah encountered it—but it was only then that it came to the attention of the colonial state. At the Treasurer’s urging, the Nigerian colonial state revised the Lagos-issued passports.¹³⁰ Besides providing clear proof of any deposit, the new arrangement made it easier for pilgrims to draw on their deposit while abroad, initially with deposit slips inserted as extra passport pages, and after that method proved to lack durability, by 1933 room was made to paste the slips directly onto the passport.¹³¹

These changes to the passport for pilgrims traveling by sea still did not, of course, address the fact that a number of Southern pilgrims opted to travel overland, a reality raised by the fire of the Takruni village outside Jeddah in 1934. Previous to this, when Nigerians from the Lagos Colony or Southern Provinces applied for an overland passport in Lagos, they received

15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos to Secretary of the Northern Provinces.,” February 15, 1927, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹²⁷ “From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos.,” January 27, 1927, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹²⁸ “From Treasurer to H.S.N.A.,” July 22, 1930, CSO 26/1 06692 Vol III: Passport Requirements for Egypt, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹²⁹ “From Treasurer to H.S.N.A.”

¹³⁰ “From Treasurer to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos.,” July 25, 1930, CSO 26/1 06692 Vol III: Passport Requirements for Egypt, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹³¹ “Circular from Civil Secretary, Sudan Government to All Governors and Sudan Agent, Cairo.”

one without having to make a deposit.¹³² (The fact that enough colonial officials between Nigeria and Jeddah remained unclear on hajj policy occasionally meant such southern pilgrims gained access to the Fund.¹³³) This had occasionally presented a problem even before 1934. When pilgrims from Lagos or the Southern provinces became destitute in Jeddah or Sudan, colonial officials either refused to help or advanced them a loan, though these funds often proved impossible to recoup despite the fact officials formalized them through legal contracts.¹³⁴ Though the Nigerian colonial state thought it was “not very probable” that “many of the persons rendered destitute by the fire” came from the Southern provinces, concern for this occurrence helped expand the Fund’s reach.¹³⁵ The Governor of Nigeria officially announced early in 1935 that a few Southern provinces would join the Fund, though pilgrims from the Lagos Colony remained ineligible.¹³⁶ To start, only Oyo, Abeokuta, Ijebu-Ode, Ondo and Benin Provinces joined,¹³⁷ contributing just slightly over four pounds combined the following year.¹³⁸ The

¹³² “From Inspector-General of Police, Lagos to Chief Secretary’s Office,” October 23, 1935, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol II: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. It’s unclear how long this particular practice was in place as the Inspector-General here had only taken over passport control in June of 1933, and he was not even aware of “the existence of this special pilgrim’s passport.”

¹³³ “From British Legation, Jeddah to Governor of Nigeria, Lagos,” September 8, 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol IV: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. These examples might be anachronistic.

¹³⁴ “From Chief Secretary, J R Patterson to Secretary of the Southern Provinces,” October 10, 1930, OYO PROF 2/1: File No. 1495 Vol I: Pilgrims to Mecca From Oyo Province. Enquiries Regarding., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Commissioner of the Colony, Lagos to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” January 14, 1935, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol IV: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Residents of All Provinces.” In this last source, Lethem remarked that these contracts were “a document probably valueless in most cases.”

¹³⁵ “Memo by Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” January 4, 1935, CSO 26/1 File No. 06790 Vol V: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Note by Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos To [?],” November 16, 1934, CSO 26/1 File No. 06790 Vol V: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹³⁶ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to British Agency, Jeddah.”

¹³⁷ “From Secretary of the Southern Provinces to Secretary of the Northern Provinces.,” March 21, 1935, CSO 26/1 File No. 06790 Vol V: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Secretary of the Southern Provinces.,” April 24, 1935, CSO 26/1 File No. 06790 Vol V: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Secretary of the Southern Provinces to Secretary of the Northern Provinces.,” February 18, 1935, CSO 26/1 File No. 06790 Vol V: Pilgrims

contributions from the Southern provinces remained slight until 1940, when roughly 7000 Nigerians, most of whom had arrived via Eritrea, ended up destitute in Jeddah.¹³⁹ Out of a total cost of £1,510 the Southwestern provinces paid £60, or roughly four percent.¹⁴⁰ The Ibadan Native Authority paid roughly 40% of the Southwest's obligation, though the District Officer begrudgingly noted that the fee appeared high given that they had issued overland passports to only five pilgrims in 1940 and three in 1939.¹⁴¹ Thus, though the Southern provinces successfully integrated into the Repatriation Fund, their involvement was low.

In contrast to colonial rhetoric, sources suggest pragmatism, rather than humanitarianism, motivated the Nigerian Repatriation Fund, and ambivalence marked much of these efforts. Perhaps the most striking bit of evidence comes from the official *Report of the Pilgrimage of 1933*. The report, compiled by the British Agency in Jeddah, stated that 250 West Africans had applied that year to be repatriated, and of those the Agency repatriated none, but "assisted" twelve in crossing the Red Sea to Suakin.¹⁴² The report provided a somewhat indirect explanation for this discretion, noting that "owing to the depressed labor market," "much poverty" afflicted West African pilgrims, but that luckily "measures were successfully taken this year to discourage hopes of any mass repatriation."¹⁴³ This fits with the periodic excuses the British Agency in Jeddah issued to avoid responsibility for repatriating or assisting destitute Nigerians.

etc. Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. Initially it was proposed to make the deposit twenty pounds.

¹³⁸ "From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Secretary of the Southern Provinces.," September 3, 1935.

¹³⁹ "Telegram from Jeddah to the Governor of Nigeria, Lagos," March 9, 1940, CSO 26/2: 15685 Vol V: Pilgrims Repatriation and Relief of (individual cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁴⁰ "From Secretary's Office, Western Provinces, to Resident, Oyo Province," February 10, 1941, OYO PROF 1 1024 Vol III: Destitute Nigerian Pilgrims, Repatriation and Relief of, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁴¹ "From Senior District Officer, Ibadan District to Senior Resident, Oyo Province," February 15, 1941, OYO PROF 1 1024 Vol III: Destitute Nigerian Pilgrims, Repatriation and Relief of, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁴² Andrew Ryan, "Report on the Pilgrimage of 1933," July 29, 1933, 37, CO 323/1216/13: Mecca Pilgrimage, British National Archives, Kew.

¹⁴³ Ryan, 37.

As the section on the Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme will discuss, many poor pilgrims detoured through Italian Eritrea in order to avoid quarantine and passport control in Sudan. Britain tried, with general success, to force Italy to accept full responsibility of repatriating all destitute Nigerians that arrived in the Hejaz from Eritrea.¹⁴⁴ Even if Nigerians traveled via Sudan, Britain found other reasons to deny culpability for their wellbeing. In 1941, a telegram from Jeddah informed the Nigerian colonial state that roughly 2,000 destitute Nigerian pilgrims currently resided in Jeddah.¹⁴⁵ In response, the Secretary of the Northern Provinces argued that a “considerable number” must be “pilgrims or emigrants of whom left Nigeria many years ago and have settled or lived in the Hejaz,” and therefore Nigeria should not “take responsibility” except for those “who can prove that they left Nigeria on or after 1st Jan 1938.”¹⁴⁶ A month later another colonial official responded similarly, stating, “This government cannot possibly accept an indefinite liability of this nature.”¹⁴⁷ Thus, from the 1920s and into the 1940s the colonial state restricted assistance to destitute pilgrims to those who had traveled according to British preferences. It is therefore not surprising that desire to not burden other British colonies, such as Sudan, often appears as a primary motive to undertake the costly task of repatriation.¹⁴⁸

Moreover, it is worth noting that despite all the above-mentioned efforts by the Nigerian colonial state, the financial burden and arrangements for a pilgrim’s repatriation often rested on Nigerians. While the relatives of stranded pilgrims who did not qualify for the Relief Fund often

¹⁴⁴ F.H.W. Stonehewer Bird, “From British Consul, Jeddah to Secretary of State, UK.,” April 24, 1928, CO 583/155/10: Pilgrimages to Hedjaz, British National Archives, Kew.

¹⁴⁵ “Telegram to Lagos from Jeddah,” June 24, 1941, CSO 26/2: 15685 Vol V: Pilgrims Repatriation and Relief of (individual cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁴⁶ “Handwritten Note from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary, Lagos,” June 30, 1941, CSO 26/2: 15685 Vol V: Pilgrims Repatriation and Relief of (individual cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁴⁷ “Handwritten Note from EAR[?] To DCS,” August 9, 1941, CSO 26/2: 15685 Vol V: Pilgrims Repatriation and Relief of (individual cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁴⁸ “Typed Note to C.S. from [Illegible Signature, Maybe HCS],” March 8, 1933, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol III: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

could not contribute themselves,¹⁴⁹ when they could they either deposited with the colonial government the money required to help their kin or agreed to pay off the debt in monthly installments.¹⁵⁰ At other times, it was Nigerians and not the colonial state who initiated a pilgrim's repatriation. In most cases, prestigious members of the pilgrim's community, whether an Emir,¹⁵¹ a chief Imam,¹⁵² elders of a mosque¹⁵³ or the local "leader of the al-hadjis,"¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ "From the British Consulate, Cairo to the Governor of Nigeria," November 14, 1922, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Memo from the District Officer, Oyo District to the Resident, Oyo Province," December 8, 1925, OYO PROF 2/1: File No. 1495 Vol I: Pilgrims to Mecca From Oyo Province. Enquiries Regarding., Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; "From Secretary for the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," April 9, 1925; "From the Secretary for the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," February 7, 1926, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos to British Consulate Cairo.," "Note from GHT [?] To Y.E.," October 4, 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol IV: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Letter from the Commissioner of the Colony to the Chief Secretary's Office.," November 6, 1934, ComCol I, 235 Vol. II "Pilgrims to Mecca- Individual Cases," Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office.," July 13, 1937, CSO 26/1 01920/s.270: Mohamed Said Gibril: Identification and Repatriation of, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Letter from the British Consulate General, Jerusalem to the Chief Secretary's Office.," September 17, 1954, CSO 26/1 03028/S.1118: Al Haj Abdullah Ibn Aikan: Repatriation of, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁵⁰ "From Secretary for the Southern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," October 12, 1922, CSO 26/1 File no. 03028 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Secretary for the Southern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," October 31, 1922, CSO 26/1 File no. 03028 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Secretary for the Southern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," October 15, 1924, CSO 26/1 File no. 03028 Vol III: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the Acting Resident of the Colony to the Secretary to the Southern Provinces," May 5, 1926, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the Secretary of the Southern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," August 16, 1927, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Secretary of the Southern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," January 30, 1928, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Administrator of the Colony to Chief Secretary's Office.," January 10, 1933, CSO 26/1 03028/S.826 "Huseynato: Repatriation of from Jedda," Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office.," May 25, 1933, CSO 26/1 03028/S.838: Adam Bawuro [Malum] Repatriation of, from Jedda, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; "Telegram from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office.," June 22, 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol IV: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Telegram from Secretary of the Southern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office.," August 15, 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol IV: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Typed Note from the Commissioner of the Colony to H.C.S.," August 4, 1938, ComCol 1: 1493/S.21: Alhaji Kansul Brimah Okuseyinde- Repatriation of, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; "From the Commissioner of the Colony, to the Chief Secretary's Office.," April 25, 1939, CSO 26/2: 15685 Vol V: Pilgrims Repatriation and Relief of (individual cases), Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

¹⁵¹ "From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos.," August 18, 1927, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

approached the colonial government requesting they assist as a middleman to transfer money raised by either the family or local community. At other times the family of the destitute pilgrim approached a colonial official directly.¹⁵⁵ And when Nigerians in need of aid could find no source of assistance, some agreed to enter into contracts of debt with the colonial state.¹⁵⁶ Meanwhile, returned Nigerian pilgrims relayed information about who from their communities needed help returning home.¹⁵⁷ Thus, similar to abolition labor, Nigerians (particularly those with political and economic clout) contributed to the effort of repatriation.

One (perhaps unintended) consequence of the Repatriation Relief Fund was that it increased the amount of interaction between Nigerian Muslims and colonial officials. Clearly the British Empire achieved a reputation as a source of aid, since colonial archival files are thick with examples of Nigerians seeking out help from British Consulates at different points along pilgrimage routes to gain assistance to make their way home.¹⁵⁸ To succeed in doing so, the

¹⁵² "From the Personal Clerk to the Oni to the District Officer, Ife," November 12, 1941, IFE DIV 1/1: File No. 135: Pilgrims to Mecca, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

¹⁵³ "From Secretary of the Southern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," October 2, 1925, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁵⁴ "From Hadji M J Imam, 'Leader of the Al-Hadjis at Ijebu-Ode,'" July 29, 1935, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol IV: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁵⁵ "From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," January 11, 1928, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," December 18, 1929, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol III: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁵⁶ "From the Secretary to the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office.," April 27, 1928, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol VI: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Commissioner of the Colony, Lagos to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos"; "Handwritten Letter by Alhaji Okuseyinde, to the Commissioner to the Colony," July 26, 1939, ComCol 1: 1493/S.21: Alhaji Kansul Brimah Okuseyinde- Repatriation of, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; "Letter from O.O. Alakija, Solicitor for Alhaji Mokadam, to the Commissioner to the Colony," January 29, 1946, CSO 26: 40978: (1) Mohammed Mudashiru Alhaji (2) Liamin Haji, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

¹⁵⁷ "From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," January 11, 1928; "From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," December 18, 1929; "From G.K. Okunwobi of Lagos to the Commissioner of the Colony, Lagos," March 23, 1946, ComCol I, 235 Vol. III, Pilgrimage to Mecca 1937-1955, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁵⁸ "From Mahammed Allam Abubaki, in Lower Egypt, to Governor in Kano," 1923, CSO 26/1: File No. 03028 Vol II: Repatriation of Destitutes of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; "From the

colonial hajj bureaucracy required Nigerian pilgrims to narrate the cause of their misfortune, leaving behind a record of scripts on the perils of the road. Robbery was a common plight:¹⁵⁹ so was the death of a relative en route.¹⁶⁰ Some, like Alhaja Huseynato bint Saliho Ariho, managed

Consulate Cairo, to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos [and Appended Letter from Mohamed Sarkenfelang, to British Consul, Cairo],” September 12, 1925, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From Battoora Gibril to the British Consulate, Cairo,” September 19, 1925, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From the British Consulate, Addis Ababa to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos,” October 23, 1925, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Haj Mohamed Adam to British Consul, Cairo, Forwarded to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos,” November 11, 1925, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos,” November 10, 1925, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Forwarded Petition from Haj Abu Bakr Muhammad Datti Fulati Kashnawi, by the Government Offices, Jerusalem to the Officer Administering the Colony, Lagos,” September 2, 1926, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the British Consulate, Marseilles to the Government of Nigeria,” May 16, 1927, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the British Consulate, Cairo to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos,” November 16, 1927, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the British Consulate, Cairo to the Government of Nigeria,” January 2, 1928, CSO 26/1 File No. 03028 Vol VI: Repatriation of Destitute Natives of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

¹⁵⁹ “From the British Consulate, Marseille to the Governor of Nigeria,” May 28, 1937, CSO 26/1 01920/s.270: Mohamed Said Gibril: Identification and Repatriation of, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “Fom Alpha Bisiriyu Idris to the Secretary of State for Colonies, London, c/o Suakin, Sudan,” July 20, 1948, CSO 26/4: File No. 35422/S.2 Vol I: Passports: Miscellaneous Correspondence (Natives and Native Foreigners), Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos,” July 20, 1948, CSO 26/1 1024 Vol. 3 Destitute Nigerian Pilgrims: Repatriation and Relief of, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From Assistant District Officer, Ilesha Division to the Senior Resident, Oyo Province,” October 22, 1949, OYO PROF 2/1: OY 2435: Repatriation of British Protected Persons, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

¹⁶⁰ “From the Resident of Zaria to the Secretary of the Northern Provinces”; “From the British Consulate, Cairo to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos”; “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos,” September 11, 1928, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos,” July 15, 1929, CSO 26/1: 01920 Vol III: Natives of Nigeria Residing Abroad: Identification of, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Adam El Dein to the British Consulate, Cairo,” October 20, 1931, CSO 26/1: 01920 Vol III: Natives of Nigeria Residing Abroad: Identification of, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the British Legation, Jeddah, to the Governor of Nigeria,” October 7, 1932, CSO 26/1 03028/S.826 “Huseynato: Repatriation of from Jedda,” Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From Awad Osman Ahmad to the British Consulate, Alexandria,” October 20, 1932, CSO 26/1, File No. 01920/S.31: Awad Osman Ahmad: Identification of, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “Statement Made by Imam Ligali before the Honourable the Commissioner of the Colony,” October 29, 1934, ComCol I, 235 Vol. II “Pilgrims to Mecca- Individual Cases,” Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From the Daughter and Nephew of Alhadji Tarheru Gudoos (Dead), to the Commissioner of the Colony,” May 21, 1935, ComCol I, 235 Vol. II “Pilgrims to Mecca- Individual Cases,” Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

to be unlucky enough to suffer both fates.¹⁶¹ When Nigerian pilgrims did die on the road, at times their relatives sought assistance from the colonial state to recover the belongings of the deceased,¹⁶² and the inclusion of the names of two relatives in each pilgrim passport was designed to make this retrieval automatic¹⁶³ (though more frequently whatever little the deceased left behind was either entrusted to another pilgrim¹⁶⁴ or absorbed into the coffers of the Charity Fund administered by the British Legation in Jeddah¹⁶⁵). Regardless, the fact that pilgrims approached various tendrils of the British Empire as responsible for their well-being, safe return, and return of deceased pilgrims' estates does mark an innovation, and one that would further calcify in the Nigerianization of the hajj.

Complementing the Repatriation Fund, albeit established later, was the Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme. Previous scholarship frames the Scheme as the first formal attempt of the British colonial state to regulate the Nigerian hajj in response to international pressures and Lethem's 1927 report.¹⁶⁶ Yet though the Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme was the most

¹⁶¹ "From the British Legation, Jeddah, to the Governor of Nigeria"; "From the Civil Secretary to the Sudan Government to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," September 5, 1934, ComCol I, 235 Vol. II "Pilgrims to Mecca-Individual Cases," Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan. In Huseynato's case, she and her husband (who had departed in 1927) were first robbed of L30, three donkeys and their loads in French Equatorial Africa. There the authorities detained them for "months during the enquires," eventually apprehending the thieves but not any of their property. After six years of undoubted struggle, Huseynato and her husband managed to make it to the Sudanese port of Suakin, but they did not manage to cross the Red Sea together; Huseynato's husband died shortly after arrival, but she managed to complete her hajj five months later.

¹⁶² "From the Daughter and Nephew of Alhadji Tarheru Gudoos (Dead), to the Commissioner of the Colony"; "From Alhaji Tiya miyu Kadiri and Abdul Salami Kadiri for the Odosinusi Jamat, to the District Officer, Ijebu Division," July 5, 1954, Ije Prof 1: 803 Vol II, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

¹⁶³ "From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," May 4, 1929, CO 583/155/10: Pilgrimages to Hedjaz, Kew Archive.

¹⁶⁴ C. R. Niven, "Report on a Visit to the Sudan and Saudi Arabia, in Connection with Pilgrimage Arrangements," 1950, 15, FO 371/82698, Kew Archive.

¹⁶⁵ "From the Foreign Office to the Secretary to the Treasury," April 11, 1930, T 161/300/5: Arabia (1) Jeddah Charity Fund (2) Provision for maintenance and repatriation of slaves, Kew Archive.

¹⁶⁶ Matthew M. Heaton, "Globalization, Health and the Hajj: The West African Pilgrimage Scheme, 1919-1938," in *HIV/AIDS, Illness, and African Well-Being*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matthew M. Heaton (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2007), 252-55; Jonathan Reynolds, "Stealing the Road: Colonial Rule and the Hajj from Nigeria in the Early Twentieth Century," *Journal of West African History* 1, no. 2 (2015): 35-36; Jonathan Miran, "Stealing

notable and comprehensive attempt to regulate hajj traffic from Nigeria, it was by no means the first policy developed to regulate and monitor this mobility. As with the issue of repatriation, the Control Scheme relied on the labor and knowledge of Nigerians, particularly elites. Also like the system of repatriation, the correspondence between colonial officials within and outside of Nigeria was marked with confusion over protocol, particularly in the beginning. The eventual implementation of the scheme in 1933 sought to standardize the hajj, but again like the Repatriation Fund, an initial bureaucratic split between the Northern and Southern provinces poorly fit the mobility of Nigerian Muslims.

Though existing scholarship generally ignores or discounts the policy impact of Palmer's 1919 report,¹⁶⁷ it sparked the process of imperial regulation of the hajj. First, though the report focused on the hajj as it affected Nigeria, once it was filed with the Foreign Office in London colonial officials in Sudan, Egypt, and the Admiralty and War Office obtained copies,¹⁶⁸ which continued to circulate into the 1920s.¹⁶⁹ This early imperial correspondence reveals an increasing conception of Islamic mobility—whether itinerant preachers, expanding Sufi orders, or trekking pilgrims—as a problem of Empire to be tackled collaboratively by all affected British colonies and outposts. Secondly, even if initially the general reaction to Palmer's recommendation was skepticism and caution, most of his suggestions got incorporated into the Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme. Among these include Palmer's idea for a deposit scheme between Nigeria,

the Way' to Mecca: West African Pilgrims and Illicit Red Sea Passages, 1920s–50s," *The Journal of African History* 56, no. 3 (November 1, 2015): 395–96.

¹⁶⁷ Heaton, "Globalization, Health and the Hajj: The West African Pilgrimage Scheme, 1919-1938," 251; Reynolds, "Stealing the Road: Colonial Rule and the Hajj from Nigeria in the Early Twentieth Century"; Miran, "'Stealing the Way' to Mecca: West African Pilgrims and Illicit Red Sea Passages, 1920s–50s."

¹⁶⁸ "From Milner, Downing Street, to Governor Hugh Clifford, Nigeria," September 16, 1919, CSO 20/7/85: File No. NC 96/1919: Report by Mr. H. R. Palmer of journey to Arabia, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁶⁹ "From Chief Secretary's Office to Director of the Sudan Government," October 12, 1922, CSO 26/1 03061 "intelligence From Sudan and Egypt affecting Nigeria.," Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From Director of Intelligence, Sudan Government to Chief Secretary's Office, Nigeria," November 18, 1922, CSO 26/1: 06915: Correspondence Between The Sudan & The Nigerian Government (ii) Exchange of Publications Between the Two Governments, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

Sudan, and the Hejaz, and his conviction that all Nigerian pilgrims should be required to get approval by either their Emir or Chief in order to obtain a passport.¹⁷⁰ Additionally, his sense that the materiality of the pilgrim passports needed improvement and his opinion that passport distribution ought to be centralized in Maiduguri, also eventually came to fruition.¹⁷¹ Certainly it helped that Lethem, in his own report, made similar recommendations.¹⁷²

Though the Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme was the first colony-wide policy to regulate the hajj, the colonial state had begun issuing pilgrim passports as a basic form of hajj bureaucracy soon after its formation in 1901. Early evidence is sparse, but we know that the Northern provinces issued pilgrim passports as early as 1910, and there is some evidence that the recipients of these included Muslims from the Southwest.¹⁷³ However in the early 1920s a discussion arose that made clear that the policies surrounding pilgrim passports varied. Perhaps reflecting the influence of orientalism that McDougall warns about, the topic that instigated an examination (and ultimately centralization) of pilgrim passport policy in the North was concern over the vulnerability of women and (especially) children to enslavement in the Hejaz.¹⁷⁴

Already official policy required that Residents could only issue passports to pilgrims from their Province, and the individual's NA had to confirm the accuracy of their application,¹⁷⁵ though not

¹⁷⁰ Palmer, "Report on a Journey from Maiduguri, Nigeria, to Jeddah in Arabia," 15–16.

¹⁷¹ Palmer, 16.

¹⁷² Lethem, "History of Islamic Political Propaganda in Nigeria: Appendices To," 59–60; G.J. Lethem, "Extracted from 13249 p. 76-77," 1925, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; G.J. Lethem, "Extracted from 13249 p. 79-80," 1925, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁷³ "Report No. 21 for the Katagum Division, Kano Province by Assistant District Officer I/C Katagum Division," June 30, 1915, 21, MSS. Afr. s. 230, Oxford University Archives; E. J. Arnett, ed., "Nigeria, Northern Provinces: Gazetteer of Sokoto Province" (Waterlow and Sons Ltd., 1920), Item 1b in MSS. Afr. s. 952 Box 9, Oxford University Archives. According to the Gazetteer of Sokoto, in 1910 the Province issued sixty-six passports. The report from Katagum in 1915, noted that among the pilgrim passports issued from this northeastern district, many applicants were either from Sokoto (northwest) or "the West" more generally.

¹⁷⁴ "From the Sudan Government to the Resident of Bornu."

¹⁷⁵ "From Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos to Secretary of the Northern Province, Kaduna," November 15, 1921, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

all Provinces adhered to this policy.¹⁷⁶ A few cases of suspected child-slave dealing by Nigerian pilgrims in 1921,¹⁷⁷ prompted government officials in Lagos to inquire into what “safeguards” the different northern Provinces had in place to prevent such confusion.¹⁷⁸ The response from the Residents revealed a wide range of policies, and several admitted to having no formal application process.¹⁷⁹ Palmer, then Resident of Bornu, took this opportunity to once again advocate for making the pilgrim passports “more complete” with economic incentives for returning passports “for cancellation” so that “reliable statistics and records of the Pilgrim traffic could be kept.” He also again urged that the passports be made more “durable” and to increase the cost since “the benefit in status etc. to pilgrims from these passports is considerable.”¹⁸⁰ Instead, the Governor of Nigeria opted for Bauchi Province’s policy, which enlisted the services of the Emirs and District Heads to interview and interrogate each applicant, adding only that now “each passport should describe all the members of the party for whose use it is issued.”¹⁸¹

Problems with the efficacy of pilgrim passports arose again in 1927 in response to Lethem’s report, and set in motion the bureaucratic gears that resulted in the Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme. Lethem outlined the expenses pilgrims faced, the largest being quarantine

¹⁷⁶ “Annual Report, Bornu Province,” 33. This report claimed that only in the last two months of 1922 did the Province stop issuing passports to pilgrims of other origins.

¹⁷⁷ “From the Sudan Government to the Resident of Bornu.” In these cases the children traveling with a pilgrim did not match the description of the dependents listed on the passport.

¹⁷⁸ “From Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos to Secretary of the Northern Province, Kaduna,” November 15, 1921.

¹⁷⁹ “Precis of Replies Received from the Residents,” exact date unavailable 1922, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁸⁰ “From Resident Bornu to Secretary of the Northern Province, Kaduna,” February 7, 1922, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Secretary for the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” March 16, 1927, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. Though no immediate response to Palmer’s suggestion to raise the passport fee exists in the archival record, the price raise he suggested clearly was in effect by 1927, if not sooner.

¹⁸¹ “Precis of Replies Received from the Residents”; “From Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos to Secretary of the Northern Province, Kaduna,” June 14, 1922, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

charges, Red Sea steamship tickets, and hajj fees.¹⁸² Lethem based his calculations on the route through Suakin that the British preferred¹⁸³ since it kept pilgrims within imperial territory and surveillance,¹⁸⁴ with quarantine measures in compliance with international health regulations and Red Sea crossings limited to steamships.¹⁸⁵ Of course, bureaucracy and medical attention cost money, and so many Nigerians opted for the circuitous route through Massawa in Eritrea,¹⁸⁶ where quarantine could be evaded and inexpensive, albeit illegal and dangerous, sambuk or dhow crossings could be arranged, which had the added advantage of avoiding Jeddah and its additional set of fees and quarantine.¹⁸⁷ The other principal problem Lethem sought to address was to speed up the Nigerian hajj; the longer Nigerians stayed abroad, the greater the likelihood they could fall victim to enslavement, dangerous ideologies, or destitution in Saudi Arabia (embarrassing to the British Empire).¹⁸⁸

At the abstract level of colonial policy, the new Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme bore the influence of officials based throughout the British Empire, and faced delays and conflicting interests as a result. After “detailed discussion” among the Residents of the Northern provinces and consultation with hajj bureaucracies recently set up in India, Malaya and Java, the

¹⁸² Lethem, “Extracted from 13249 p. 76-77.”

¹⁸³ “Telegram from the Secretary of the Southern Provinces to the Resident, Oyo Province,” December 9, 1926, OYO PROF 2/1: File No. 1495 Vol I: Pilgrims to Mecca From Oyo Province. Enquiries Regarding, National Archive, Ibadan. As this file evidences, at least by the mid-1920s colonial officials in both Southern and Northern Protectorates of Nigeria were instructed to urge pilgrims to adhere to the Suakin route.

¹⁸⁴ “From the Governor General, Sudan to High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan, Cairo,.”

¹⁸⁵ Willis, “Report on Slavery and the Pilgrimage,” 18–19, 28.

¹⁸⁶ “From G. T. Lethem to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” January 31, 1928, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, National Archive, Ibadan.

¹⁸⁷ G.J. Lethem, “Memorandum ‘Pilgrims Passports’ Attached to Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to All Residents,” September 22, 1927, 65, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Sudan Government to the British Agent, Jeddah,” September 6, 1926, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, National Archive, Ibadan.

¹⁸⁸ Lethem, “Memorandum: Pilgrims Passports,” 46.

Governor of Nigeria proposed the new scheme to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.¹⁸⁹ The plan suggested that the Nigerian hajj could be “speeded up” by introducing a new pilgrim passport requiring a deposit, which would pre-pay the cost of discounted steamship tickets across the Red Sea, railway tickets across Sudan, quarantine fees, Saudi Arabian hajj fees, and even leave over a small amount for pilgrims to withdraw in Sudan and Jeddah to cover miscellaneous expenditures.¹⁹⁰ Maiduguri would issue all these passports, keep passport records, and send copies to Sudan.¹⁹¹ Thus, the new system would not only expedite travel by Nigerian pilgrims, but it would narrow their path and coordinate surveillance between British colonies.

The Governor of Sudan proved to be the most intractable critic of the plan, issuing a rather striking response to the Nigerian Government’s proposed scheme:

I view with considerable measure of misgiving the introduction...of a system involving numerous artificial minutiae of a bureaucratic nature. Such a form of control, by tin discs worn round the neck, by finger prints and photographs, by counterfoils to be torn from a passport at three different stages of the journey, appears to me alien to the whole age-old spirit of the pilgrimage—that long, drawn-out religious adventure of which the pilgrim embarks without too much thought for the morrow, relying on the opportunities of earning the wherewithal which the journey itself provides, ignorant of when or where these will occur and of how long the quest may take, but happily untroubled by these uncertainties.¹⁹²

Following up his romanticized depiction of human suffering dripping with racist imaginings, the Governor revealed perhaps the main motive for his disapproval—that the scheme would prevent Nigerians from spending time in “the good wage-earning areas of the Gezira, the Gash Delta, and Tokar”¹⁹³ as laborers.¹⁹⁴ This echoed earlier disapproval from the Sudanese Intelligence

¹⁸⁹ “From Thompson, Governor of Nigeria to the Secretary of State for the Colonies,” August 20, 1928, CO 583/155/10: Pilgrimages to Hedjaz, Kew Archive.

¹⁹⁰ “From Thompson, Governor of Nigeria to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.”

¹⁹¹ “From Thompson, Governor of Nigeria to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.”

¹⁹² “From Governor of Sudan, Khartoum to the High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan, the Residency, Cairo,” May 28, 1929, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁹³ “From Governor of Sudan, Khartoum to the High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan, the Residency, Cairo.”

Department to Lethem in regards to his “sinister intention to facilitate the quick return of your pilgrims from our cotton fields.”¹⁹⁵ Geographic realities provided further ammunition. The Governor of Sudan argued that forcing all Nigerian pilgrims to participate in the new passport scheme would be impossible due to “the length of the western frontier of the Sudan over which pilgrims unfurnished with passports may come, the ease with which such pilgrims can become dispersed and absorbed among the very numerous West African colonies in the country.”¹⁹⁶ Not entirely contrarian, the Governor promised to waive or reduce the Sudan visa fee for Nigerian pilgrims and allow money wires of pilgrim deposits.¹⁹⁷ As for train tickets, the Governor noted that pilgrims already benefited from half-price fourth-class tickets, and argued perforated tickets in a passport rather than direct payments “would inevitably involve a great deal of accountancy work.”¹⁹⁸ Though colonial officials in Cairo and Jeddah found the Governor of Sudan’s nostalgia for hajj by road both risible and pernicious,¹⁹⁹ the Minister in Jeddah suggested perhaps it made sense to regulate the hajj only “between Suakin and the Hedjaz,”²⁰⁰ to which the Nigerian government ultimately agreed.²⁰¹

Even if the version of the Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme that the Nigerian

¹⁹⁴ “From Khartoum to the Residency, Ramleh [Ramallah?],” July 22, 1929, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. In this later letter, the types of labor is specified: “Between the Western boundary of the Sudan and railhead at El Obeid, the pilgrims fulfill a useful function as purveyors of wood, grass and water, for which there is a steady demand at all the main stations on the route, while at a later stage of their journey they provide a valuable proportion of the seasonal labour regularly required on the cotton-fields.”

¹⁹⁵ “From the Intelligence Department, Sudan Government, Khartoum to G. J. Lethem, Nigeria.”

¹⁹⁶ “From Governor of Sudan, Khartoum to the High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan, the Residency, Cairo.”

¹⁹⁷ “From Governor of Sudan, Khartoum to the High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan, the Residency, Cairo.”

¹⁹⁸ “From Governor of Sudan, Khartoum to the High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan, the Residency, Cairo.”

¹⁹⁹ “From the Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State for the Colonies,” September 10, 1929, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Residency, Cairo to the Governor of Sudan, Khartoum,” July 4, 1929, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁰⁰ “From the Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.”

²⁰¹ “Note from [?] To CS,” 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol II: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Handwritten Note from WW[?] To HSC,” July 9, 1931, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

government represented a compromise, it remained ambitious.²⁰² Linen, which had to be sourced from England, now lined the passport to give it stiffness and durability.²⁰³ A central office in Maiduguri each passport, which cost £0.16 (including application and photography fees) plus a required £5 deposit, which covered all charges at Suakin (quarantine, round-trip steamship tickets, and Hejaz government fees), and allowed the pilgrim to withdraw roughly £1 in Jeddah after completing the hajj for incidental costs.²⁰⁴ Colonial distrust of Nigerian pilgrims, which greatly influenced the design of the scheme, guaranteed a future of substantial paperwork. Firstly, pilgrims were not trusted to retain their return steamship ticket or their passport, and so the return ticket got affixed to a duplicate of the pilgrim passport kept by the British Legation in Jeddah.²⁰⁵ Secondly, the passport office in Maiduguri mailed to Port Sudan monthly lists of every passport issued along with duplicates of every passport photo, in case pilgrims lost their original passport.²⁰⁶ In 1934, the first hajj season the scheme could be used, forty-six Nigerian pilgrims, “nearly all” of a “well-to-do-class,”²⁰⁷ availed themselves of the scheme.²⁰⁸ While fluctuations in exchange rates and fees produced minor tensions and tweaks to the system, the basic mechanics remained the same throughout the decade.²⁰⁹ One slight exception occurred in 1936, when the

²⁰² “From Andrew Ryan, British Legation, Jeddah to Sir. John Simon,” April 26, 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol II: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁰³ “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” September 25, 1931, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁰⁴ “Schedule: The Nigerian Pilgrims Progress,” 1931, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” July 7, 1932, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. Of course, ever-changing rates of exchange meant that the final withdraw could end up less than one pound.

²⁰⁵ “Schedule: The Nigerian Pilgrims Progress.”

²⁰⁶ “Circular from the Civil Secretary’s Office, Sudan to All Governors,” January 22, 1933, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

²⁰⁷ “From Andrew Ryan, British Legation, Jeddah to the Governor of Nigeria, Lagos,” July 10, 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol II: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁰⁸ “From Andrew Ryan, British Legation, Jeddah to Sir. John Simon,” April 26, 1934.

²⁰⁹ “From British Legation, Jeddah to the Civil Secretary, Sudan,” February 24, 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol II: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From J.A. Gillan, Civil Secretary, Sudan,”

colonial state decided that the new scheme would be “compulsory for all Native Administrations,” including those of Southern Nigeria.²¹⁰ This was at least in part the result of actions by “the Mohammedans of Ibadan” who had “asked that the advantages of the scheme for the control of Pilgrim traffic...be extended to the Mohammedans of the Southern Provinces.”²¹¹ Muslims in Ibadan were aware of the new passport because, they along with other Southerners had long circumvented the £20 deposit for passports issued in Lagos by “represent[ing] as natives of Ilorin...to qualify for a Pilgrims’ passport.”²¹² Thus, once again practices of Nigerian Muslims drove the conjoining of Southern and Northern hajj policy.²¹³

The colonial state anticipated that this more expensive option with stricter quarantine measures (a result of the International Sanitary Convention of 1926)²¹⁴ would be a hard sell to most prospective pilgrims, particularly since a much cheaper passport for 10/6d remained an officially viable option,²¹⁵ at least until May 1938.²¹⁶ To attempt to overcome this resistance,

April 3, 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol II: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Andrew Ryan, British Legation, Jeddah to Sir. John Simon,” April 26, 1934; “From Andrew Ryan, British Legation, Jeddah to the Governor of Nigeria, Lagos”; “Note from Unknown to CS,” 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol II: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; ““New Passport Scheme for Pilgrims Proceeding by the Overland Route,” Attached to Letter from Secretary to the Southern Provinces, to Oyo Resident, Ibadan,” May 11, 1936, IFE DIV 1/1: File No. 135: Pilgrims to Mecca, National Archive, Ibadan. Matters of finance attracted the most minor modifications, such as switching the point of the final withdrawal to Suakin rather than Jeddah, unless pilgrims applied for the balance of their deposit in Jeddah.

²¹⁰ “From Secretary to the Southern Provinces, to Oyo Resident, Ibadan,” May 11, 1936, IFE DIV 1/1: File No. 135: Pilgrims to Mecca, National Archive, Ibadan. The arrangement stipulated that the Southern Provinces would pay a share of the costs to run the scheme based on the estimated proportion of pilgrims originating from the South.

²¹¹ “From Secretary of the Southern Provinces to Secretary of the Northern Provinces.,” August 14, 1935, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol II: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²¹² “From Secretary of the Southern Provinces to Secretary of the Northern Provinces.”

²¹³ “From Inspector-General of Police, Lagos to Chief Secretary’s Office.” When contacted about the matter, the current Inspector-General of Police in Lagos admitted that since he had taken over in June, 1933, he had issued twenty-eight overland passports to intending pilgrims without requiring any deposit at all! Which highlights the problem of institutional memory in the British hajj policy, particularly in the South and Lagos colony.

²¹⁴ Heaton, “Globalization, Health and the Hajj: The West African Pilgrimage Scheme, 1919-1938,” 257.

²¹⁵ “Memorandum from Secretary to the Northern Provinces to All Residents,” April 13, 1933, OYO PROF 2/1: File No. 1495 Vol I: Pilgrims to Mecca From Oyo Province. Enquiries Regarding., National Archive, Ibadan.

²¹⁶ “Memo from Secretary to the Northern Provinces, to All Residents,” April 14, 1938, IFE DIV 1/1: File No. 135: Pilgrims to Mecca, National Archive, Ibadan. Of course, cheaper travel documents intended only for frontier trade continued to be unofficially used for the hajj.

British officials employed three tactics (in addition to a somewhat sneaky design element of the deposit system);²¹⁷ involvement and support by the Emirs and other prominent Nigerian Muslims, outreach to Nigerians, and pressuring Italy to curb the illegal traffic through Eritrea.

The colonial state elicited and received input and help by the Emirs and other prominent Muslims in order to encourage pilgrim participation. Even before the introduction of the new scheme, in many provinces Emirs and District Heads had facilitated passport oversight,²¹⁸ a practice that the Residents of the Northern provinces agreed to standardize in 1926.²¹⁹ The Residents acknowledged that changing the hajj bureaucracy would require consulting the Emirs and “well known personages who had been on the pilgrimage,” since as Lethem argued, “definite assurance of the support to this scheme of Emirs and of leading public opinion” was vital.²²⁰ The Emirs lent their support by interviewing prospective pilgrims,²²¹ providing feedback on Lethem’s proposed schemes,²²² and later, supported the “abolition of the 10/6 pilgrim’s passport,” a fact which the colonial state gave “the fullest possible publicity.”²²³ And while the colonial state did not heed all of the Emirs’ suggestions, it did concede to their wish to allow adults to take children on the hajj as long as their NA approved.²²⁴

²¹⁷ “Memorandum from Secretary to the Northern Provinces to All Residents.” Prospective pilgrims had to pay their deposit to their Local Treasury, rather than Maiduguri. The reason being that since “the applicant may not understand the conditions fully when he starts,” the prospective pilgrim would be more likely to opt for the new passport scheme—whereas “on arrival at Maiduguri may decide to purchase a 10/6d passport in preference to the more expensive one.”

²¹⁸ “Precis of Replies Received from the Residents.”

²¹⁹ “Residents’ Conference 1926,” n.d., CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, National Archive, Ibadan.

²²⁰ G.J. Lethem, “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to All Residents,” September 22, 1927, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²²¹ Lethem, “Memorandum ‘Pilgrims Passports’ Attached to Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to All Residents.”

²²² “From the Secretary to the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” May 17, 1928, CSO 26/1 01179 Vol. I Pilgrims From Nigeria to Mecca: Passports for Vol I, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²²³ “Memo from Secretary to the Northern Provinces, to All Residents.”

²²⁴ “From the Secretary to the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” May 17, 1928; “Memorandum from Secretary to the Northern Provinces to All Residents”; ““New Passport Scheme for Pilgrims

Perhaps the most impressive coup of the colonial state was to get the Emirs to codify a version of Islamic law (*sharia*) in regards to the hajj that benefited British interests. As Lethem rightly pointed out, in the *hanafi*, *shafi'i*, and *hanbali* schools of Sunni law, only pilgrims with the financial means to afford the journey and sustenance of any dependents left behind were obligated to undertake the hajj, a point the Sherif of the Hejaz “strongly expressed” to him during Lethem’s visit.²²⁵ Certainly, if thousands of poor Nigerians could be prevented from undertaking the hajj on the basis of Islamic law, this would be an ideal resolution for the colonial state. Though Lethem thought it worth making this point to the Emirs, he cautioned that the *maliki* school of law, which predominated in West Africa, “scarcely condemns the pilgrimage of the destitute so strongly as the other schools do and, in practice, destitute West Africans have been going on the ‘Haj’ for many decades.”²²⁶ In 1928, the Emir and Council of Kano was said to “support the principle that a pilgrim should have sufficient funds to enable him to undertake the journey.”²²⁷ When the colonial state abolished the cheaper 10/6d pilgrim passport in 1938 in attempt to make the new expensive passport mandatory, it justified this by pushing their

Proceeding by the Overland Route," Attached to Letter from Secretary to the Southern Provinces, to Oyo Resident, Ibadan." "The Sultan and Council of Sokoto and the Emirs of Gwandu and Argungu" spoke against the requirement of photographs, though it is unclear why. Regardless, the colonial state disregarded this feedback.

²²⁵ Lethem, "Memorandum 'Pilgrims Passports' Attached to Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to All Residents."

²²⁶ Abu-Bakr Imam Ali-Agan, *The Concept of Al-Istita'ah and Hajj Sponsorship in Nigeria*, 2011, 3–4; Joseph Kenny, trans., *The Risala: Treatise on Maliki Law of 'Abdallah Ibn-Abi-Zayd Al-Qayrawani (922-996)* (Minna, Nigeria: Islamic Education Trust, 1992), 92; Umar Abd al-Naqar, *The Pilgrimage Tradition in West Africa an Historical Study with Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century* (Khartoum, Sudan: Khartoum University Press, 1972), 47. Lethem, "Memorandum 'Pilgrims Passports' Attached to Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to All Residents." Though all Sunni schools of law require prospective pilgrims to fulfill certain conditions of "ability" before leaving, the wording of Maliki law is more flexible and open-ended when it comes to economic requirements, though the historical record does contain at least one example of a West African scholar issuing a *fetwa* against the hajj on this basis. According to Ali-Agan, the ways in which *maliki* law is more flexible in defining the concept that pilgrims must have the means to undertake the hajj include 1) it considers having a skill that allows one to make money en route to be sufficient means and 2) it is more flexible (or at least less clear) for what the departing pilgrim must provide to the dependents they leave behind. As one treatise on *maliki* law reads "To make the hajj... is an obligation binding every free adult Muslim who is able to get there. Being able to get there includes having a route open, provisions to reach Mecca, the power to arrive there, whether riding or on foot, and bodily health." As for the exception, according to al-Naqar in the 17th century one scholar issued a *fetwa* that said that West Africans should not undertake the hajj if it would intrude on their ability to carryout the five-daily prayers.

²²⁷ "From the Secretary to the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," May 17, 1928.

preferred interpretation of Islamic law in regards to the hajj. The claim “that it is an injunction of the Koran that a person about to set off on the pilgrimage must have the means to undertake the journey as well as to make provision for those dependent on him,”²²⁸ spread between colonial officials in the North and South, who then forwarded this claim to traditional leaders and asked them to “instruct” their local Imams “to make it known among the Mohammedan community.”²²⁹ The immediate response to these efforts is unclear, but within a few years the dominant pilgrim society in Ibadan and Lagos had adopted a rhetoric that bore a striking resemblance to that of the colonial state. In 1941 the Zumratul Hujaj [pl. alhaji] Society of Ibadan declared its desire that all pilgrims be required to apply to their president for a passport, because “many persons eager to know Mecca are running the risk of doing so **without sufficient means** thereby got stranded on the road; many became beggars bringing disgrace and dishonor to our country on the one hand and sorrow to their family [emphasis added].”²³⁰ Though the colonial state refused to cede this authority over to any non-governmental organization,²³¹ their language, along with the president of the Zumratul Hujaj Lagos Branch wishing Muslims to “be blessed with sufficient money”²³² for the next hajj in his 1942 Eid message, is significant. So too is the fact that in 1945, a meeting with eight Northern Emirs revealed that “some...had refused to

²²⁸ “From Secretary to the Southern Provinces, to Oyo Resident, Ibadan,” April 22, 1938, OYO PROF 2/1: 1495 Vol II: Pilgrims to Mecca. Transport of Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the District Officers, Ife/Ilesha Division to the Oni of Ife, the Owa of Ilesha, and the Oran Gun of Illa, Illa,” May 9, 1938, IFE DIV 1/1: File No. 135: Pilgrims to Mecca, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²²⁹ “From the District Officers, Ife/Ilesha Division to the Oni of Ife, the Owa of Ilesha, and the Oran Gun of Illa, Illa.”

²³⁰ “From Alhaji Aminu Mogaji Onisiniyan, President, Zumratul Mujaj Society, Ibadan Section, to Resident, Oyo State c/o the Sr. Distirct Officer and Olubadan-in-Council,” November 14, 1941, OYO PROF 2/1: 3286: Zumratul Hujaj Society, Ibadan, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²³¹ “From the Olubadan-in-Council, Ibadan to the Distirct Officer, Ibadan.,” March 10, 1942, OYO PROF 2/1: 3286: Zumratul Hujaj Society, Ibadan, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Distirct Officer, Ibadan to the Resident, Oyo Province.,” March 12, 1942, OYO PROF 2/1: 3286: Zumratul Hujaj Society, Ibadan, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. However the Olubadan, the traditional ruler of Ibadan, welcomed the idea.

²³² “Message from Alhaj A L Olorun-Nimbe, President, Zumratul Hujaj, Lagos,” *Daily Comet*, December 8, 1943, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

recommend people for passports” based on the “Koranic injunction” that people ought not to depart “without sufficient means.”²³³ And as later chapters will discuss, Nigerian politicians would uphold and amplify the colonial silencing of the *maliki* interpretation of economic means.

Besides involving the Emirs and other prominent Muslims, the colonial state put some effort into marketing the scheme to prospective pilgrims. One element of Lethem’s plan even displayed a consideration of Islamic practice. To address the problem of pilgrims losing their passports, Lethem advocating giving pilgrims metal identification discs that could be “stitched inside the leather covered charm usually worn by Nigerians.”²³⁴ Otherwise, the colonial state promoted and explained the scheme in newspapers.²³⁵ Though English literacy rates meant that only an elite subset of the population could access such articles, the state made an effort to reach a broader readership by translating the information into Arabic, Hausa and Yoruba.²³⁶ Similar efforts were made to explain changes to the scheme.²³⁷

Officials who designed the Pilgrimage Control Scheme knew that even if prominent Muslims lent their support and the scheme’s advantages garnered publicity, it would fail as long as Nigerian pilgrims could circumvent Suakin and Port Sudan by crossing into Eritrea, then an Italian colony.²³⁸ Moreover, as Lethem and others realized, most Nigerians requiring repatriation

²³³ “Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” June 19, 1945, SAD.933/3/1-365, Sudan Archive, Durham.

²³⁴ Lethem, “Memorandum ‘Pilgrims Passports’ Attached to Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to All Residents.”

²³⁵ “The Pilgrimage to Mecca,” *Northern Provinces News*, April 9, 1932, MSS. Brit Emp s. 276 Box 19, Oxford University Archives; “From the Resident, Oyo Province to Mr. Obasa, Printer, Ibadan,” May 26, 1936, OYO PROF 2/1: File No. 1495 Vol I: Pilgrims to Mecca From Oyo Province. Enquiries Regarding., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Secretary of the Southern Provinces to the Resident, Oyo Province,” November 27, 1935, OYO PROF 2/1: File No. 1495 Vol I: Pilgrims to Mecca From Oyo Province. Enquiries Regarding., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Memo from Secretary to the Northern Provinces, to All Residents.”

²³⁶ “The Pilgrimage to Mecca”; “From the Resident, Oyo Province to Mr. Obasa, Printer, Ibadan.”

²³⁷ “Memo from Secretary to the Northern Provinces, to All Residents.”

²³⁸ Lethem, “Memorandum ‘Pilgrims Passports’ Attached to Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to All Residents”; “From G. T. Lethem to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos.”

up to then had arrived via the Massawa route.²³⁹ Thus, removing any economic incentive for pilgrims to take the route would help the Control Scheme succeed and reduce repatriation costs. Diplomatic efforts began in earnest at the start of 1928.²⁴⁰ After a frustrating amount of misinformation from the Italians²⁴¹ (and a number of threats made by the British²⁴²), Rome issued a Note Verbale that October.²⁴³ In it, Italy promised to make sure all pilgrims embarked at Massawa, where they would undergo quarantine and vaccinations and be required to purchase round-trip steamer tickets along with making a deposit “sufficient to cover his expenses for forty days.”²⁴⁴ Despite what seemed a promising outcome, the existence of Massawa as a means to escape control remained a thorn in the side of the British Empire.²⁴⁵ In practice, Italian Eritrea

²³⁹ “From the Intelligence Department, Sudan to G. T. Lethem,” November 17, 1927, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, National Archive, Ibadan; “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Government of Sudan,” January 19, 1928, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, National Archive, Ibadan.

²⁴⁰ “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Government of Sudan,” January 19, 1928; “From the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, London to the Governor of Nigeria,” January 27, 1928, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; Stonehewer Bird, “From British Consul, Jeddah to Secretary of State, UK.”; “From the Residency, Cairo to Sir Austen Chamberlain,” March 31, 1928, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, London,” April 24, 1928, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Downing St. to Governor of Nigeria,” April 30, 1928, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Governor-General of Sudan to High Commissioner in Egypt, Cairo,” March 24, 1928, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Residency, Alexandria to C.H. Summerhayes, Esq., M.B.M.’s Acting Consul-General,” July 12, 1928, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol III: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁴¹ “Handwritten Note from G. T. Lethem,” January 12, 1928, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Downing St. to Governor of Nigeria”; “From the Residency, Cairo to Sir Austen Chamberlain”; “From the Governor-General of Sudan to High Commissioner in Egypt, Cairo”; “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, London.” Briefly, the Governor of Eritrea and other top officials initially claimed that their regulations were just as strict as that by the British in Sudan, information which later turned out to be false.

²⁴² “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, London.” The main threat was economic, arguing that Italy would be required to pay the repatriation costs for any destitute Nigerian with papers suggesting they had passed through Eritrea.

²⁴³ “‘Note Verbale’ Copy of Note from Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to British Representative in Rome,” October 20, 1928, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol III: Pilgrims etc. : Repatriation and Relief of: General Question, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁴⁴ “‘Note Verbale’ Copy of Note from Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to British Representative in Rome.”

²⁴⁵ “From the Foreign Office to the Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office,” May 13, 1931, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Governor-General, Sudan

proved more committed to keeping bureaucratic loopholes open than to closing them,²⁴⁶ though the British did periodically manage to get Eritrea to admit responsibility and pay the cost of repatriating destitute Nigerians in Jeddah back to Massawa.²⁴⁷ Regardless, even after Britain took control of Eritrea in 1941, the now well-entrenched practice of Nigerians departing off remote spots off the Eritrean coast continued to thwart the Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme.²⁴⁸

To date, all previous scholarship on the Scheme has highlighted the failure of the colonial state to make most Nigerian pilgrims participate.²⁴⁹ Indeed, as late as 1940 the British Legation in Jeddah estimated that only three percent of Nigerian pilgrims participated.²⁵⁰ Though participation reached twenty-one percent in 1944, temporary automobile shortages caused by

to the High Commissioner, Cairo,” March 31, 1931, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Kew Archive; Foreign Office, “Dispatch No.80. Dhow Pilgrim Traffic, Massawa to Hejaz,” March 10, 1933, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Andrew Ryan, British Legation, Jeddah to Sir. John Simon,” May 22, 1934, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol IV “Pilgrims Etc., Repatriation and Relief of, General Question. Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From British Legation, Jeddah to Governor of Nigeria, Lagos”; “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” October 5, 1934, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol V: Pilgrims Etc., Repatriation and Relief of, General Question. Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Jedda Report, March 1940 [Extract],” 1940, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. To give a sense of how this problem increased, in 1931 colonial officials alleged that 500 destitute Nigerians in Jeddah had come via Massawa, in 1934 1,359 and in 1940, the majority of 7,000 Nigerians that required repatriation.

²⁴⁶ “From Andrew Ryan, Jedda to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,” July 5, 1932, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Secretary for the Southern Protectorates to the Resident Oyo, Ibadan.,” November 27, 1935, OYO PROF 2/1: File No. 1495 Vol I: Pilgrims to Mecca From Oyo Province. Enquiries Regarding., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. The main loophole here was that Italian Eritrea enforced quarantine law for pilgrims as stipulated by the International Sanitary Convention of 1926, but only if pilgrims self-identified themselves as pilgrims. Thus, Nigerians could claim they were embarking simply for travel, and avoid all quarantine.

²⁴⁷ “From the Government of Sudan to the British Legation, Jeddah,” September 14, 1931, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol IV “Pilgrims Etc., Repatriation and Relief of, General Question. Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,” December 21, 1931, CSO 26/1 06790 Vol IV “Pilgrims Etc., Repatriation and Relief of, General Question. Cost of Living in the Hejaz, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Telegram from Jeddah to the Governor of Nigeria, Lagos.” They did so by making the case that Italy had broken the agreement the resulted from the International Sanitary Convention in 1926. However, they failed to get Italy to accept responsibility in 1940.

²⁴⁸ “Handwritten Note to Ad Sec from BLPL [?],” August 30, 1946, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁴⁹ Heaton, “Globalization, Health and the Hajj: The West African Pilgrimage Scheme, 1919-1938”; Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865-1956*; Reynolds, “Stealing the Road: Colonial Rule and the Hajj from Nigeria in the Early Twentieth Century”; Miran, “‘Stealing the Way’ to Mecca: West African Pilgrims and Illicit Red Sea Passages, 1920s–50s.”

²⁵⁰ “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Governor of Nigeria, Lagos,” January 23, 1940, CSO 26/3: File No. 36292: Pilgrimage; Miscellaneous Correspondence, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

WWII likely contributed to this,²⁵¹ and in 1943 and between 1946-1948, the percent of participating Nigerian pilgrims averaged out at around six percent, figures that do not include those traveling illicitly to avoid the Jeddah port.²⁵² When positing why this was the case, previous scholarship points to the relatively high cost of the special pilgrim passport as well as the cost of the route through Suakin, as opposed to Eritrea (as discussed above). (Nor did it likely help that periodically those that did use the scheme were unable to withdraw their deposit.)²⁵³ These certainly were major deterrents, and archival evidence is rife with examples of Nigerians in the 1940s continuing to use other temporary travel documents designed for frontier trade rather than the hajj (or traveling with no documents), even into the 1950s,²⁵⁴ despite coordinated

²⁵¹ “Telegram from the Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” October 28, 1942, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos to Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna,” November 5, 1942, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Note from J.C. Drummond-Hay to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” October 28, 1943, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. During WWII, the Nigerian colonial government prevented automobiles from leaving Nigeria to be used on the hajj trails, citing military needs such as transporting export goods to the Lagos port. Colonial officials also discussed the need to “tacitly” discourage the hajj during the war, and the resulting build-up of intending pilgrims.

²⁵² C. R. Niven, “Report on a Visit to the Sudan and Saudi Arabia, in Connection with Pilgrimage Arrangements,” 10–11; “Annual Report for 1943 on Hejaz Pilgrimage,” n.d., 3, 13, Folder E 5118 in FO 371/40253, Kew Archive. These calculations are based on Niven’s report (except 1943, which comes from the annual hajj report by the British Legation), which provides annual numbers of “Westerners,” of which he estimates that 70% are Nigerians. Thus, these numbers should be understood as rough estimates, and are likely higher than the real figure, since they only reflect Nigerians traveling through Jeddah. Those that avoided Jeddah would have almost certainly not used the scheme.

²⁵³ “Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary’s Office.,” July 28, 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol IV: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Letter from Secretary of the Southern Provinces to the Chief Secretary’s Office.,” August 7, 1936, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol V: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary’s Office.,” May 6, 1938, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol V: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Resident Bornu, to the Commissioner of Port Sudan,” May 7, 1945, OWO DIV 1: 392: Pilgrims to Mecca, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

²⁵⁴ “From Inspector-General, Lagos to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” November 24, 1936, CSO 26/0: File No. 01920/S.244: Ali Ben Alua: Identification of, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” April 30, 1940, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Letter from Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” October 23, 1941, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Telegram from WAGON Lagos, to Governors of Ghana, Freetown, and Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” June 19, 1942, CSO 26/4: File No. 36083/S.16 Vol I: Travel Documents for Africans, National Archive, Ibadan; “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Government of

efforts between the Sudan, Nigerian, and French West African governments in the 1940s to turn back pilgrims who attempted to so.²⁵⁵ Less discussed is the fact that likely many Nigerians avoiding the colonial hajj bureaucracy because there already existed, and continued to exist, a patchwork system of pilgrim agents spanning from Nigeria to Mecca, run by Muslim individuals who spoke Hausa, Fulfulde, Arabic, Yoruba, and other Nigerian languages.

Perhaps because the British colonial state refused to take seriously the organizational capabilities of black Africans, colonial officials never devoted the same zeal to documenting the existence of an alternative, African-run hajj administration as they did to the Red Sea slave trade or Mahdist propaganda. Instead, references to this alternate travel surface briefly in dozens of archival files, making it possible to garner the general gist if not an exact blueprint of its workings. As already mentioned, in the nineteenth century prominent figures would solicit and receive letters of introduction from the ruler of their state, both in what would become Nigeria²⁵⁶

Sudan,” July 14, 1946, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Note from Unknown to AdSec,” July 30, 1953, Premier’s Office: 4/1: 2nd Collection: Secret: PM 18/S.10: Pilgrims Passports and Travel Arrangements Policy and Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “[File, 1946-1950] Namalla Taha Application for Passport,” n.d., CSO 26/1 01920. C.817, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From British Consulate Jerusalem, R N Dawson to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” February 5, 1953, CSO 26: File No. 35422/S.3 Vol II: Passports: Application by Persons outside Nigeria, National Archive, Ibadan; “From Resident Bornu Province, to Secretary for the Northern Provinces, Kaduna,” April 13, 1954, CSO 26/4: File No. 35422/S.2/C.124: Hadji Muhammed el-Amin Kudaisi: Passport of, National Archive, Ibadan; “Letter from the Government-General’s Office Khartoum to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” July 14, 1954, Premier’s Office 2/1: AS I/213: Pilgrims Transit Facilities, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “Letter from the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos to the Government-General’s Office Khartoum,” December 29, 1954, Premier’s Office: 4/1: 2nd Collection: Secret: PM 18/S.10: Pilgrims Passports and Travel Arrangements Policy and Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²⁵⁵ “From the Governor’s Deputy Nigeria to Governors, French Cameroons, Duala and Chad, Fort Lamy,” November 3, 1941, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Civil Secretary, Sudan to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” January 31, 1942, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” December 24, 1946, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos to the Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna,” April 3, 1947, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁵⁶ “Translation of an Arabic Proclamation of the Sultan of Borno,” October 17, 1891, SAD 255/1/135-152, Sudan Archive, Durham; Wingate, “Memo on the Western Sudan,” March 5, 1893, SAD 255/1/135-152, Sudan Archive, Durham.

and Sudan.²⁵⁷ Intriguingly, this practice appears to have endured as late as 1935, when the British Legation in Jeddah complained that that “during each pilgrimage season a certain number of notables and officials arrive in Jedda with letters of recommendation to use from their home authorities,” expecting this paperwork to entitle them to “financial assistance.”²⁵⁸ Along the pilgrim trail a network of Nigerian communities facilitated the hajj. As already discussed, many Fulani subjects of the Sokoto Caliphate fled colonial conquest and the imposition of Christian rule,²⁵⁹ which had given rise to Fulani settlements “from Suwakim [Suakin, Sudan] to Fort Lamy [Niger]”²⁶⁰ controlled by Fulani Sheikhs (some even on the payroll of the colonial Sudan government).²⁶¹ In key locations, these sheikhs performed the work of travel agents. For example, in 1926 Willis observed that when Nigerians reported to the police station at the Sudanese port of Suakin, the “Sheikh of Fellata” assigned them to either a “Fellata, Hausa or Borgu” sheikh, as appropriate. These sheikhs compiled lists of all pilgrims, which they would present to the police station before escorting their pilgrims to the hospital for vaccinations.²⁶² As this suggests, the colonial hajj administration depended on the labor and expertise of these West African sheikhs. Not only did they provide oversight of deposit withdrawals (and making sure pilgrims spent it “on the purposes for which it is intended”),²⁶³ but they also compiled lists and demographic data

²⁵⁷ “Letter of Recommendation by Ishāq Sulṭān Muḥammad, Sultan of Dar Sula,” February 28, 1892, SAD 101/13/1-4, Sudan Archive, Durham.

²⁵⁸ “From the the British Legation, Jeddah to the Secretariat, Lagos,” October 17, 1935, ComCol I, 235 Vol. II “Pilgrims to Mecca- Individual Cases,” Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

²⁵⁹ “Fellata Chronology,” n.d., SAD 65/5/96-107, Sudan Archive, Durham; “Reports by El Bimbashi Percival, Inspector Western Bahr El Ghazal, October 1908,” October 1908, SAD 66/1/56, Sudan Archive, Durham.

²⁶⁰ “Extracts from M.P. Conf. 91/20, Makwar Dam-Sudan - Recruiting of Labour in Nigeria For.,” 1920, 13, CSO 26/1 03061: Intelligence From Sudan and Egypt affecting Nigeria, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁶¹ Palmer, “Report on a Journey from Maiduguri, Nigeria, to Jeddah in Arabia,” 12.

²⁶² Willis, “Report on Slavery and the Pilgrimage,” 18.

²⁶³ “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,” May 8, 1931, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Schedule: The Nigerian Pilgrims Progress”; “Circular from the Civil Secretary’s Office, Sudan to All Governors”; “From J.A. Gillan, Civil Secretary, Sudan.”

on Nigerians requiring repatriation,²⁶⁴ traced Nigerians to deliver them the money that their relatives had deposited to assist them,²⁶⁵ and provided intelligence to colonial authorities of those engaged in illicit Red Sea crossings.²⁶⁶ The colonial hajj bureaucracy even hoped, a bit naively, that the Nigerian Sheikhs in Eritrea would help identify and document all British subjects that used that route.²⁶⁷ In addition to these sheikhs, colonial authorities also relied on the labor of temporary messengers, West Africans hired to provide assistance with “interrogation, interpretation, and general control of the pilgrims.”²⁶⁸ Thus, the “colonial” hajj administration was, in fact, a collaborative effort with Nigerians residing abroad.

By the 1930s (though quite possibly before this too) various individuals, beyond the semi-official sheikhs, saw that pilgrimage could be a source of profit. Some rented lodging to Nigerians along the pilgrimage trail.²⁶⁹ The number of those engaged in the business of hajj travel also began to increase within Nigeria. In 1938, one enterprising Lagosian founded the “Lagos—Mecca Transport Syndicate” after traveling all over the Southwest to gauge and drum up interest,²⁷⁰ along with newsprint advertising.²⁷¹ At times Nigerian efforts to facilitate the hajj

²⁶⁴ “From the Intelligence Department, Sudan to G. T. Lethem”; “From Andrew Ryan, British Legation, Jeddah to Sir. John Simon,” May 22, 1934.

²⁶⁵ “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Government of Sudan,” March 1930, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol III: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁶⁶ “Memorandum Attached to a Letter from the British Legation, Jeddah to the Government of Sudan,” July 14, 1946, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁶⁷ “From Andrew Ryan, Jeddah to the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.”

²⁶⁸ “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Government of Nigeria,” October 30, 1931, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Government of Nigeria to the British Legation, Jeddah,” April 9, 1932, CSO 26/2: File No. 15255 Vol I: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Treasurer, Lagos to the Crown Agents, London,” August 17, 1932, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol III: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

²⁶⁹ “From the Administrator of the Colony, Lagos to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” December 17, 1932, CSO 26/1 01077/S. 2 Alhaji Lawani Okunade: Enquiry Regarding Whereabouts of., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁷⁰ “From the Lagos—Mecca Transport Syndicate to the Commissioner for the Colony,” May 23, 1938, ComCol: 2147: Lagos--Mecca Transport Syndicate, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan. According to the founder, he had already visited Porto-Novo, Badagry, Ilaro, Oshogbo, Ede, Iwo, Iseyin, Oyo, Ibadan, Abeokuta, Ijebu-Ode, and Epe.

²⁷¹ “[Ad for Lagos-Mecca Transport Syndicate],” *West African Pilot*, April 7, 1938.

competed with the colonial hajj bureaucracy. As already noted, in 1941 the Ibadan branch of Zumrat-ul-Hujaj, an Islamic welfare society composed entirely of alhajis, petitioned the colonial state to request that they control who received a hajj passport, as a form of pilgrim quality control. Though their petition failed, they did help prospective pilgrims through the process of their hajj preparation.²⁷² As for outside Nigeria, in 1946 the colonial state received a letter from the Ifelodun Society in Khartoum, a pilgrims' union that used voluntary weekly subscriptions to pay for burials, provide lodging and food, and pay for a P.O. box that Nigerians could use to send and receive letters and money transfers.²⁷³ Though available information of the society's president is somewhat conflicting, he originated from Abeokuta (Southwest) and had left to go on hajj ten or so years ago, and long before forming the Ifelodun Society had settled in Khartoum where he was "said to be helpful to all Nigerians going to Mecca" and ran a hotel and canteen for Nigerian pilgrims.²⁷⁴ The colonial state met news of the Ifelodun Society with hostility, requesting the Sudanese state to not give them "any official recognition" to avoid the "increased opportunities this would undoubtedly give to its members to obtain what may become an undesirable hold on the pilgrim traffic."²⁷⁵ Regardless, the next chapter will discuss, Nigerian involvement in the organization of hajj would significantly increase throughout the 1950s.

If the Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme failed to engage pilgrims, what did it accomplish? Like Ferguson's study on the unintended consequences of development in Lesotho,

²⁷² Zumrat-ul-Hujaj Group Interview, Ibadan, Voice Recording, March 2015.

²⁷³ "From Alhadji Ismonu Bolusodun House, Khartoum, Sudan to the Government of Nigeria," April 19, 1946, ComCol I, 235 Vol. III, Pilgrimage to Mecca 1937-1955, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; "From the Secretary for the Northern Protectorates, C. W. Michie to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," September 15, 1947, Ije Prof 1: File No. 3287: Ifelodun Society, Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. One of the sources for this information, a pilgrim that had recently returned to Ilorin, reported that he had successfully received a L30 money transfer this way.

²⁷⁴ "From I., Branch Office, Ijebu-Ode, to Asst. Supt of Police, Ijebu-Ode," August 1, 1946, Ije Prof 1: File No. 3287: Ifelodun Society, Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the Secretary for the Northern Protectorates, C. W. Michie to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos."

²⁷⁵ "From the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos to the Chief Secretary's Office, Khartoum," November 11, 1947, ComCol I, 235 Vol. III, Pilgrimage to Mecca 1937-1955, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

analysis of the Nigerian Control Scheme can benefit from Foucault's observation that though prisons failed to achieve their stated objective (reforming criminals and ending crime), they succeeded in "producing delinquents...as a pathologized subject."²⁷⁶ Likewise, if the Control Scheme failed to induce most pilgrims to participate, it succeeded in framing the hajj as both a state and a bureaucratic problem, and cemented the idea that a state bore responsibility for the general wellbeing of their pilgrims, even if the distance between the state and Mecca spans over two-thousand miles. Though examples of state-sponsorship of the hajj in West Africa can date back to at least the infamous hajj caravan from Mali by Mansa Musa in the fourteenth century, in Nigeria the hajj, previous to colonial rule, had mainly relied on the patchwork informal economy discussed above. Though the first decade of the Sokoto Caliphate (formed by Uthman dan Fodio's jihad) was unique for producing an official and supportive hajj policy, dan Fodio eventually reversed his position, which his son and successor in 1817, Muhammed Bello, upheld in writings that argued that jihad representing a worthier pursuit than the hajj.²⁷⁷ Though data on how many ordinary subjects went on hajj is unknown, no Sokoto Caliph ever embarked on the hajj. Even as late as 1928, colonial officials noted the "discreet but constant discouragement of Haj by the Sultans of Sokoto."²⁷⁸ Meanwhile as far as Southern Nigerians, very few embarked on the hajj before the twentieth century.²⁷⁹ The Kanem-Borno serves as a slight exception—many rulers during the Kanem period sponsored large pilgrim caravans, and in 1575 a ruler during the Kanem-Borno period constructed a hostel in the Hedjaz for subject of the Empire.²⁸⁰ Yet even

²⁷⁶ James Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development," Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*, 320 p. (Cambridge [England] ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 20.

²⁷⁷ al-Naqar, *The Pilgrimage Tradition in West Africa an Historical Study with Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century*, 49–60.

²⁷⁸ "From Mr. Arnett, Resident Cameroons Province, to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos."

²⁷⁹ Dr. K. K. Olosio, "Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980" (University of Ibadan, 1984), 117.

²⁸⁰ al-Naqar, *The Pilgrimage Tradition in West Africa an Historical Study with Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century*, 31.

here, the hajj does not appear to be a tradition among royals in Kanem-Borno,²⁸¹ though oral testimonies claim Shehu Omar sent one slave to undertake the hajj on his behalf, after which he granted him his freedom and the prestige of an alhaji.²⁸² However, scant archival evidence suggests that even if the state did not organize hajj caravans, the Shehu of Bornu would interview prospective pilgrims (including those from neighboring polities) and issue them with letters of recommendation that acted as a type of passport, though it is possible this practice was restricted to elites.²⁸³ Thus, those that the British declared to be Nigerian subjects in 1901 largely comprised of people who had grown up in political states with either no formal hajj bureaucracy or merely a partial one, if not under one that downright discouraged the practice. Even if most Nigerians avoided the Control Scheme, many other Nigerians did apply for the new passport or another type of travel document. And, Nigerians increasingly sought out the colonial state for help in their hajj preparations and in resolving conflicts that arose during their travels to Mecca.

Just as Nigerians sought assistance in sending or receiving money for repatriation, they also increasingly identified the colonial state as a source of guidance and aid. In part, this resulted from the imposition of colonial state borders; Nigerians who had departed on the hajj either before or shortly after the legal category of “Nigerian” existed, found on their return

²⁸¹ Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 124.

²⁸² Capt. P A Tegetmeier, A.D.O., “Notes on Town Life and Customs, Attached to Report on the Town of Yerwa, Bornu Province,” 1925, 38, CSO 26/2: File No. 15644: Special Report on Yerwa Town, Bornu Province, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. While no dates are given for when this occurred, Umar ruled from 1837-1853, and again from 1854-1880. According to the report, the Shehu gave “the family the privilege of wearing head gear,” which presumably means the typical alhaji uniform, consisting of the headdress worn in Saudi Arabia.

²⁸³ Wingate, “Memo on the Western Sudan”; “Translation of an Arabic Proclamation of the Sultan of Bornu.” The example these documents contain an interview with one individual who stated that “I left Kano on 5th July 1890 in company with about 300 pilgrims men, women and children. We reached Kuka in Bornu in August 1890 and were interviewed by the Sultan of that country.” The size of his company and the fact that the Sultan reportedly gave him a horse (as well as the numerous people in Sudan he appears to have known) suggest he was far from an ordinary figure. While Wingate, the general administrator of Egypt and Sudan, refers to his letter of introduction as a “passport,” there is no evidence that this was an emic category. An excerpt of the letter in question reads: “This [the letter] is to inform you that if the bearer, our guest El Haj Isa, should come to you bearing this letter it is my order that you should look after him & treat with kindness during the whole time of his stay with you, and no one should wrongly interfere with him until he join his companions.”

journey (often undertaken over a decade later) that they faced a very different travel requirements.²⁸⁴ Such was the case of Abd-el-Rehim Taher, born in Kano, who had left sometime at the start of the twentieth century and in 1925 requested a passport from the British Consul in Cairo because, “I find it difficult for a man to go any where without having authorization from his Government.”²⁸⁵ The bureaucratic process of verifying the nationality of an applicant (particularly if that nationality only came into existence after their departure) could be long. For example, Abu Bakr bin Osman bin Abu Bakr had to wait roughly eight months for his identity to be confirmed when he applied for a passport from the British Legation in Jeddah in 1933 after having left his home over thirty years ago.²⁸⁶ Pilgrims that left well after the establishment of colonial Nigeria often found it easier to travel to Mecca without proper identification than it was to return;²⁸⁷ others had to seek help after their passports were lost or

²⁸⁴ “From Mahammed Allam Abubaki, in Lower Egypt, to Governor in Kano”; “Enquiry of Nationality from Abd-El-Rehim Taher, Attached to Letter from British Consulate Cairo to the Governor of Nigeria,” January 8, 1924, CSO 26/1: File No. 03028 Vol II: Repatriation of Destitutes of Nigeria (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From Battoora Gibril to the British Consulate, Cairo”; “From the British Consulate, Tunis to the Governor of Nigeria,” May 16, 1927, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “Letter from the British Consulate, Cairo to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” December 5, 1929, CSO 26/1: 01920 Vol III: Natives of Nigeria Residing Abroad: Identification of, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “Letter from the British Consulate, Alexandria to the Governor of Nigeria, Lagos,” April 30, 1930, CSO 26/1: 01920 Vol III: Natives of Nigeria Residing Abroad: Identification of, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “Letter from the British Consulate, Alexandria to the Governor of Nigeria, Lagos,” January 22, 1931, CSO 26/1: 01920 Vol III: Natives of Nigeria Residing Abroad: Identification of, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “Letter from the British Consulate, Cairo to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” October 23, 1931, CSO 26/1: 01920 Vol III: Natives of Nigeria Residing Abroad: Identification of, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From Mr. Haroun, Cairo to the Governor of Nigeria c/o the British Consulate, Cairo,” May 12, 1933, CSO 26/1: File No. 01920/S.74: Salih Haroun: Application for Passport, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Governor of Nigeria, Lagos,” July 20, 1933, CSO 26/1 01920/S.79: Abu Bakr bin Osman bin Abu Bakr: Application for Certificate of Nationality and Identity, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From the Resident, Katsina Province to the Secretary of the Northern Provinces.,” July 29, 1935, CSO 26/1 01920/S.188 “Alhaji Adamu Ibrahim: Application for Passport,” Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²⁸⁵ “Enquiry of Nationality from Abd-El-Rehim Taher, Attached to Letter from British Consulate Cairo to the Governor of Nigeria.”

²⁸⁶ “From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Governor of Nigeria, Lagos,” July 20, 1933; “From the the Secretary for the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” February 9, 1934, CSO 26/1 01920/S.79: Abu Bakr bin Osman bin Abu Bakr: Application for Certificate of Nationality and Identity, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

²⁸⁷ “Letter from Ismail Ibrahim to the British Consulate, Cairo,” December 10, 1935, CSO 26/1: File No. 01920/S.206: Ismail Ibrahim Application for Certificate of Nationality and Identity, Nigerian National Archive,

stolen.²⁸⁸ Thus, the ever-increasing value and necessity of passports, in Nigeria and elsewhere, increasingly brought Nigerian pilgrims into contact with British bureaucracy.

Nigerians also approached the colonial state to request help locating their relatives or to send them letters. It is worth reflecting on why pilgrims and their families might value this service. When pilgrims trekked by land, the hajj could take over a decade.²⁸⁹ As evidenced by the Nigerian communities that spanned pilgrimage routes, many Nigerians never returned, and started new lives abroad.²⁹⁰ Farewell parities for departing pilgrims often included tears,²⁹¹ and today it is recalled that in the past when a pilgrim bid farewell he or she would say, “I’m going to heaven.”²⁹² The case of Alhaji Salisu illustrates the social impact of this uncertainty; his return to Lagos in 1911 after a seven-year absence sparked shock, his friends and relatives having assumed he had died. Shock quickly gave way to admiration. The fact he returned with a camel earned him the nickname Onirakunmi (*owner of a camel*), which today still graces the mosque

Ibadan; “From Muhamed Ma’alam Maikarifi, Jerusalem to the District Officer, Kano District,” February 11, 1936, CSO 26/1: File No. 01920/S.225: Mallam Muhamed Maikarifi: Application for Passport, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. This was due either to requirements of national identification in order to gain employment (needed to raise money to fund return travel) or perhaps because passport enforcement increased over the time of their journey.

²⁸⁸ “Letter from the British Consulate, Alexandria to the Governor of Nigeria, Lagos,” August 13, 1930, CSO 26/1: 01920 Vol III: Natives of Nigeria Residing Abroad: Identification of, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From the British Consulate, Alexandria to the Officer Administering the Government, Lagos,” June 11, 1936, CSO 26/1: File No. 01920/S.230: El Hag Issehak Tangala: Application for Passport, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

²⁸⁹ Interview with Alhaji Hussein Ahamed Rufai in Ibadan, Recording, May 2015; “From the Resident, Kano Province to the Secretary to the Northern Premier, Kaduna,” June 23, 1959, Premier’s Office: AS 1/207 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From the Commissioner, Oyo Province, Ibadan to the Secretary for the Southern Provinces,” May 29, 1916, OYO PROF 2/1: File No. 1495 Vol I: Pilgrims to Mecca From Oyo Province. Enquiries Regarding., Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan. In 1916, two pilgrims from Iseyin were reported to have been gone for twenty years. In 1959, when 840 Nigerians in Khartoum and Jeddah were set to be repatriated, a Nigerian Assistant District Officer, M. Haruna bin Musa, gathered demographic data on the pilgrims. He found that among those stuck in Sudan, the average time spent in Sudan was 5-7 years, and fifty-eight of them had been in Sudan for over ten years. As for those stuck in Saudi Arabia, over sixty had been there for more than 10 years.

²⁹⁰ Christian. Bawa Yamba, *Permanent Pilgrims: The Role of Pilgrimage in the Lives of West African Muslims in Sudan*, International African Library ;15 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press for the International African Institute, London, 1995).

²⁹¹ Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 134.

²⁹² Interview with Dr. K. K. Oloso in Ibadan, May 2013.

on Lagos Island for which he became the namesake.²⁹³ Anxiety mixed with hope impelled pilgrims' relatives to inquire if the colonial state could trace an absent loved one, one offering "to pay any amount...if he [the pilgrim] can only be traced."²⁹⁴ Others used Britain's imperial bureaucracy as an informal postal service. An especially touching example is Haj Mohamed Adam, who in 1925 told the British Consulate in Cairo that he hailed from "Sokoto, of Kano"²⁹⁵ and had left Nigeria twenty years ago for the hajj. In his letter to his family he inquired, "who is dead and who is alive" and who had given birth since his departure, as he recalled all the relatives he had left and missed.²⁹⁶ The news he received highlighted the distance between him and his home; among the dead included one sister and two of his children.²⁹⁷ Personal updates and requests for the same also accompanied pilgrims' requests for money or letters concerning other business matters.²⁹⁸ The geographic reach of Empire made it the perfect mode to transmit communication, a fact pilgrims quickly realized. Nigerians also sought out the state as a source of information about the hajj. At times this meant direct requests for instructions on how to obtain a passport,²⁹⁹ at other times these requests traveled through traditional rulers.³⁰⁰ And

²⁹³ Interview with Alhaji Abdulateef Atanda in Lagos, Nigeria., Notes, May 2013.

²⁹⁴ "From the Commissioner, Oyo Province, Ibadan to the Secretary for the Southern Provinces"; "From Abudu Kadirir, Clock Repairer, Lagos, to the Administrator of the Colony, Lagos," November 2, 1932, CSO 26/1 01077/S. 2 Alhaji Lawani Okunade: Enquiry Regarding Whereabouts of., Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan. The quoted text comes from the letter of Abudu Kadirir, a clock repairer in Lagos who was hoping to find his brother who had left "over six years ago."

²⁹⁵ Given the dates, it is possible this phrasing indicates he considered himself to me from the Sokoto Caliphate.

²⁹⁶ "Haj Mohamed Adam to British Consul, Cairo, Forwarded to Cheif Secretary's Office, Lagos."

²⁹⁷ "From the Secretary for the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," February 7, 1926.

²⁹⁸ "From the Secretary for the Northern Provinces to the Secretary for the Southern Provinces," May 4, 1925, OYO PROF 2/1: File No. 1495 Vol I: Pilgrims to Mecca From Oyo Province. Enquiries Regarding., Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; "From the Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," June 15, 1927, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol I: Pilgrims and Repatriation and Relief of (Individual Cases), Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

²⁹⁹ "From Asani Mogaji, 6 Lemomu Lane, Lagos, to the District Officer, Maiduguri," July 27, 1937, MAI PROF 2: 896: Pilgrims Misc. Correspondence, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From Shehu Ahamad Tijani, Alias Alfa Shaki Awelemje, 1 Fakolujo St. Lagos, to the Commisioner of the Colony, Lagos," November 14, 1938, ComCol I, 235 Vol. III, Pilgrimage to Mecca 1937-1955, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; "From the Orangun and Council Office to the District Officer, Ife/Ilesha Division," March 1, 1943, IFE DIV 1/1: File No. 135: Pilgrims to Mecca, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; "From Malam Abudul Raufi to Clerk, Dos Office," January 8, 1945, IFE DIV

sometimes officials consulted with local Muslims to answer these questions.³⁰¹

Like letters, international disputes crossed geographic and political borders, and drove Nigerians to seek assistance from the colonial state. Most examples highlight the vulnerable position of Nigerians abroad, cut off from their social support networks. Colonial officials had long suspected that those in the business of providing pilgrimage-related transportation services preyed on Africans,³⁰² and the archive provides a couple illustrative cases. The first occurred in 1928, and concerned “12 Hausas” from Nigeria who alleged that they had booked and paid for third class steamer tickets from Marseilles to Accra on the Fabre Fraissinet Line from a third-party agency in Alexandria, but were issued with forth-class tickets.³⁰³ The different in cost was significant, totaling roughly £108.³⁰⁴ Though efforts to right this wrong, however substantial, ultimately failed,³⁰⁵ the colonial state successfully recovered money a group of Lagosian pilgrims paid to a lorry driver in Sudan, who then failed to transport them.³⁰⁶

Some of these disputes reveal challenges of making informal transnational financial arrangements. Such was the case of two women from Katsina who used a gold chain, worth

1/1: File No. 135: Pilgrims to Mecca, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From the Missioner, Y.A.D.S. Lagos (Ansar-Ud-Deen Alakoro School) to the Commisioner of the Colony, Lagos,” January 24, 1949, ComCol I, 235 Vol. III, Pilgrimage to Mecca 1937-1955, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

³⁰⁰ “From the Olukare, Ikare, to the District Officer, Owo Division,” March 13, 1944, OWO DIV 1: 392: Pilgrims to Mecca, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From the Olukare, Ikare, to the District Officer, Owo Division,” July 10, 1944, OWO DIV 1: 392: Pilgrims to Mecca, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

³⁰¹ “Letter from Sheikh Kaka Mallam for Waziri’s Office to the D.O.E.,” August 11, 1937, MAI PROF 2: 896: Pilgrims Misc. Correspondence, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

³⁰² Lethem and Tomlinson, “History of Islamic Political Propaganda in Nigeria,” 32.

³⁰³ “From Secretary for Native Affairs, Lagos to Agent, Fabre Fraissinet Line,” August 16, 1928, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol II: Pilgrim etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From [Unknown] to Zehil and Co.,” December 13, 1929, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol III: Pilgrim etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

³⁰⁴ “From Secretary for Native Affairs, Lagos to Agent, Fabre Fraissinet Line.”

³⁰⁵ “From Secretary of the Northern Provinces to Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” September 13, 1930, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol III: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. As the dates indicate, from the time the colonial state first became aware of the matter to when they finally gave up, spans twenty-five months. The agent accused of fraud stuck to his claim that the inflated price represented his commission fee.

³⁰⁶ “From Khartoum, Sudan to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” June 21, 1945, ComCol I, 235 Vol. III, Pilgrimage to Mecca 1937-1955, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

roughly £6, as collateral to receive a £1 loan from an alhaji in Contonou.³⁰⁷ Though the lender acted honorably, confusion between the two postal systems required colonial intervention.³⁰⁸ Less honorable was an alternate banking option in Sudan that Alhaji Yusufu and Bello dan Baki offered Alhaji Dawaki of Bauchi Emirate in 1951. Alhaji Dawaki deposited money with Yusufu and Baki for safe-keeping, and to be delivered to him when he returned after completing the hajj.³⁰⁹ When this failed to happen, Dawaki sought help from British authorities in Sudan, who managed to locate and send him his savings.³¹⁰ And at least once, another colonial government victimized pilgrims. In 1943 a representative of the Lagos-Mecca Transport Syndicate brought to the attention of the Passport Office the fact that the authorities in French Equatorial Africa had started “to compel them [all returning pilgrims] to work 15 days FREE LABOUR [sic].”³¹¹ The representative noted the irony of this, given that the British passports in possession of the victimized pilgrims stated on their first page that the document guaranteed the owner to “pass freely” through international territories.³¹² A petition from one of the pilgrims affected highlighted the extent of the suffering:

³⁰⁷ “From the Secretary to the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” June 7, 1928, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol II: Pilgrim etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Governor’s Deputy, Nigeria to the Lieutenant-Governor, Dahmoney,” July 10, 1928, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol II: Pilgrim etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

³⁰⁸ “From the Resident, Zaria Province to the Secretary of the Northern Provinces, Kaduna,” June 29, 1928, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol II: Pilgrim etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos to the Secretary of the Northern Provinces,” September 25, 1928, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol II: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

³⁰⁹ “From the Resident Bauchi, to the Secretary for the Northern Provinces, Kaduna,” November 20, 1951, CSO 26/1: 06915: Correspondence Between The Sudan & The Nigerian Government (ii) Exchange of Publications Between the Two Governments, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

³¹⁰ “From the Secretariat Khartoum, Sudan to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” March 30, 1952, CSO 26/1: 06915: Correspondence Between The Sudan & The Nigerian Government (ii) Exchange of Publications Between the Two Governments, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

³¹¹ “From A. Longe of The Lagos-Mecca Transport Syndicate, Lagos to the Immigration Officer, Passport Office,” April 22, 1943, CSO 26/3: File No. 36292: Pilgrimage; Miscellaneous Correspondence, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

³¹² “From A. Longe of The Lagos-Mecca Transport Syndicate, Lagos to the Immigration Officer, Passport Office.”

was forced to do manual works, carrying bricks and clods of dilapidated buildings, fetching water for mudding and woods for roofing, in twelve consecutive days without food supply.

Most of the returning pilgrims were absolutely penniless and those who were well equipped gave monetary support, mainly to avoid starving destruction of lives.

Apart from the terrible starvation to which your petitioner was subjected and endured, all the works exerted there were gratis, and luggages were additionally charged heavily, for payment.³¹³

Inquires made by the Nigerian colonial state met with denials, and assurances that Nigerians abroad would receive fair treatment.³¹⁴ What this case and the others illustrate is that the reach of the colonial hajj bureaucracy was greater than simply the Control Scheme. Particularly when Nigerian pilgrims faced problems abroad, they turned to colonial authorities to bear responsibility and provide them with assistance.

Conclusion

This chapter opened with a tragic vignette. Despite sustained official efforts, most Nigerians continued to undertake the hajj by road without proper paperwork, despite legal and physical risks. These risks were great. Nigerian pilgrims fell victim to dehydration, starvation, animal attack, theft, forced labor, conscription, and occasionally enslavement. Even those pilgrims who managed to traverse the great distance with few problems still experienced discomfort. As we will soon see, the introduction of air travel and the Nigerianization of the hajj after independence enhanced the ability of the postcolonial state to control pilgrim movement, reduce their number, and commodify the hajj.

³¹³ “From Alhaji Salau c/o The Illiterate Executive Documentary Office, Oshele Market Square, Ikare to the Governor of Nigeria,” May 22, 1943, CSO 26/3: File No. 36292: Pilgrimage; Miscellaneous Correspondence, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

³¹⁴ “From the Governor of Nigeria to the British Consul, French Equatorial Africa, Brazzaville,” May 13, 1943, CSO 26/3: File No. 36292: Pilgrimage; Miscellaneous Correspondence, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan; “From Consulate, Brazzaville to the Governor of Nigeria,” October 6, 1944, CSO 26/3: File No. 36292: Pilgrimage; Miscellaneous Correspondence, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

The Nigerian Pilgrimage Control Scheme failed; few Nigerians participated. It was costly while the existence of an alternate, West African-run hajj operation existed alongside and intersecting with the British colonial hajj bureaucracy. This failure does not mean that British colonial rule had little impact on the Nigerian hajj. Rather, I agree with Heaton that the “Nigerian Pilgrimage Scheme of the colonial era gave way to state-sponsored Muslim pilgrimages.”³¹⁵ Yet while Heaton focuses on the Control Scheme as the impetus for “the expectation that the government should be responsible for facilitating the pilgrimage,”³¹⁶ this chapter has demonstrated that the Control Scheme not all encompassing nor operated in a bubble. Nigerians interacted with colonial hajj bureaucracy when repatriated, when the state tried to force them to pay repatriation costs, when they sought information about relatives abroad in quarantine camps, and when they sought justice for a crime committed against them while abroad. The reach of imperial hajj bureaucracy was far greater the Control Scheme alone.

The Control Scheme’s failure also illuminates alternate, more popular orchestrations of the Nigerian hajj. Like the African abolitionist labor absent from official reports but present in archival traces, the Nigerian-run hajj apparatus might not have generated archive files devoted to documenting its genesis and implementation, but it can be pieced together from passport requests, personal letters, advertisements, etc. Thus, what is often glossed as a colonial undertaking—the regulation and organization of the hajj—in fact bore the influence of Nigerians, both elite and non-elite alike. With the intensification of Nigerian nationalism in the 1950s, the hajj became a topic of political debate. At the same time, Nigerian involvement in hajj operations intensified. We turn to this subject now.

³¹⁵ Heaton, “Globalization, Health and the Hajj: The West African Pilgrimage Scheme, 1919-1938,” 260.

³¹⁶ Heaton, 261.

Interlude 1:

Hajj Celebrations and Memorializations, 1890–1950

If control and regulation were the focus of the colonial state's hajj policy, for most Nigerian Muslims such changes brought few immediate effects since, as we just saw, most pilgrims evaded the Control Scheme. Significant were the development of roads, railways, and cash crops. These allowed pilgrim numbers to rise by the late 1930s.¹ Regardless, to become an alhaji or alhaja in the first half of the twentieth century represented a rare and prestigious accomplishment. This was especially true in the more distant southwest, where a minority of pilgrims originated. Based on articles in southwest newspapers, celebrations and memorializations of prestige garnered the most attention among Yoruba Muslims.

This interlude describes these in detail. The affective qualities of achieving a pilgrim's identity as alhaji or alhaja will become clear, as will the filtering of ideas about the hajj through print and non-print based communities. That the hajj commanded attention of southwestern print culture makes sense for two, starkly different reasons. The first is that the comings and goings of ships (and the important people on them) was an established type of content in the Lagos colonial press by the late nineteenth century.² Tellingly, the earliest reporting on the hajj all concerns arrivals or departures by steamship. The second reason the hajj entered Nigerian print

¹ John Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865-1956*, 440 pages (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2015), 234–44. Slight provides estimated pilgrim numbers from 1921 to 1943. Of course, the most specific category for this time period is “West Africans,” of which officials claimed most were Nigerians. These numbers show occasional ebbs and flows, and then a gradual strengthening of pilgrim numbers starting in 1937.

² Categories of people whose arrivals and departures were often reported included colonial officials, school teachers, and missionaries.

culture had to do with the agenda and activities of the Nigerian elite. As Karin Barber has argued, during the 1920s print culture in Lagos blossomed, and celebrated both elite and vernacular culture in order to cultivate a broader audience.³ As we will see, the elite accomplishment of the hajj and its localized celebrations were well suited to this agenda.

Homecomings

One of the earliest ways that the press recorded the existence of Nigerian pilgrims from the southwest was in announcements of their departures and arrivals, much like that of various notables. While slight changes to these celebrated homecomings occurred over the first half of the twentieth century, descriptions of them from the late nineteenth century through the 1940s bear much similarities. The events began with the arrival of the pilgrim at the wharf,⁴ train station (more common by the 1940s),⁵ or by the late 1940s, the airport.⁶ Facilitated by advanced notices carried through newsprint⁷ or cable wires,⁸ vast crowds often greeted these returned pilgrims (so much so that police might patrol the festivities),⁹ particularly if they were notable

³ Karin Barber, *Print Culture and the First Yoruba Novel I.B. Thomas's "Life Story of Me, Segilola" and Other Texts* (Brill, 2012), 27–29.

⁴ "Epitome of News: Local Coastwise and Foreign," *The Lagos Weekly Record*, May 23, 1896, 6; Olakunle Lawal, "Islam and Colonial Rule in Lagos," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 12, no. Spring (1995): 70; "News, Notes, and Comments," *The Lagos Standard*, June 5, 1907, 3; "Return of the Pilgrims," *The Nigerian Pioneer*, November 24, 1922, 8; "Alhaj Balogun Returns from Mecca Pilgrimage," *West African Pilot*, April 4, 1938, 1.

⁵ "Pilgrims Return Home: The Arrival of Four Alhajis in Abeokuta from Their Pilgrimage to Mecca," *The African Messenger*, May 5, 1921, 2; "Alhaji Molade Returns from Mecca," *West African Pilot*, December 21, 1937, 8; "Large Crowd Welcomes Alhaj Sheikh Abdul Guaniyi Lawal Back to Lagos," *West African Pilot*, March 27, 1940, 6; "Six Muslims Return From Holy Pilgrimage," *West African Pilot*, April 2, 1940, 8; "Alhaj Calfoes Will Arrive Tomorrow at 10 A.M.," *Daily Comet*, February 24, 1945, 1; "New Alhaja Arrives," *Daily Times*, December 14, 1948, 10; "News from the Provinces: Ibadan," *Daily Times*, December 30, 1948, 3; "Zaria Day by Day," *Daily Times*, October 28, 1949, 7.

⁶ "News from the Provinces: Epe," *Daily Times*, November 7, 1949, 2.

⁷ "Our New Alhajis," *The African Messenger*, November 9, 1922, 3; "Who's Who," *West African Pilot*, March 28, 1940, 2; "Alhaj Calfoes Will Arrive Tomorrow at 10 A.M.," 1.

⁸ "Pilgrims Return Home: The Arrival of Four Alhajis in Abeokuta from Their Pilgrimage to Mecca," 2.

⁹ "Epitome of News: Local Coastwise and Foreign," May 23, 1896; "Return of the Pilgrims," 8; "Six Muslims Return From Holy Pilgrimage," 8; "Five Alhujaj Return from Mecca and Medina," *Daily Comet*, February 23, 1945, 1; "Social News: Pilgrims to Mecca Return," *Southern Nigeria Defender*, December 24, 1948, 4; "News," *The African Messenger*, December 1, 1921, 3.

figures.¹⁰ Music, whether songs, drums, or a popular band often accompanied a pilgrim's return,¹¹ at times to the annoyance of their Christian neighbors.¹² From the point of arrival, the jubilant procession would wend its way to the Central Mosque for a special thanksgiving prayer,¹³ after which (particularly by the 1940s) the pilgrim often entertained family and friends at their home with refreshments and more music.¹⁴ Horses, and later cars, could be hired for the day to give the pilgrim an elevated perch above the crowd of well-wishers.¹⁵ By at least 1940, pilgrims also began arriving adorned in what might be called the Mecca uniform (discussed more in Chapter 2), a long white robe and head covering with a black cord resembling that of Saudi royalty.¹⁶ Thus, similar to a rented horse or car, sartorial distinction helped indicate to all who in the crowd was the pilgrim, whether they knew them personally or not. Another visual practice of distinction began in the 1940s thanks the growing presence of photographs in newspapers; now formal studio portraits could accompany the announcement of a pilgrim's imminent arrival.¹⁷

A pilgrim's accomplishment was never singular—community members and family often contributed financially to their journey. Similarly, the celebrations emphasized neighborhood, familial, and group affiliations. The pilgrim's neighborhood or mosque might be “decorated with

¹⁰ “Alhaj Balogun Returns from Mecca Pilgrimage,” 1.

¹¹ “News, Notes, and Comments,” 3; “Return of the Pilgrims,” 8; “Alhaji Molade Returns from Mecca,” 8; J.F. Adewumi, “Vox Pop: Alhajis and Sundays,” *Southern Nigeria Defender*, December 31, 1947, 3; “New Alhaji at Thanksgiving Service,” *Daily Times*, December 31, 1948, 10; “News from the Provinces: Epe,” November 7, 1949, 2.

¹² Adewumi, “Vox Pop: Alhajis and Sundays,” 3.

¹³ “Our New Alhajis,” 3; “Alhaji Molade Returns from Mecca,” 8; “Six Muslims Return From Holy Pilgrimage,” 8; “Alhaj Calfoes Will Arrive Tomorrow at 10 A.M.,” 1; “Five Alhujaj Return from Mecca and Medina,” 1; “Alhaji Adelakun Feted on Return from Mecca,” *Daily Service*, January 22, 1948, 4.

¹⁴ “Six Muslims Return From Holy Pilgrimage,” 8; “News from the Provinces: Kano,” *Daily Times*, September 30, 1948, 2; “News from the Provinces: Ibadan,” 3; “News from the Provinces: Badagry,” *Daily Times*, December 31, 1948, 3; “New Alhaji at Thanksgiving Service,” 10; “Zaria Day by Day,” 7.

¹⁵ Lawal, “Islam and Colonial Rule in Lagos,” 70; “Alhaj Balogun Returns from Mecca Pilgrimage,” 1; “New Alhaja Arrives,” 10; “Social News: Pilgrims to Mecca Return,” 4.

¹⁶ “Large Crowd Welcomes Alhaj Sheikh Abdul Guaniyi Lawal Back to Lagos,” 6; “Six Muslims Return From Holy Pilgrimage,” 8; “News from the Provinces: Badagry,” 3.

¹⁷ “Alhaj Calfoes Will Arrive Tomorrow at 10 A.M.,” 1; “Williams Returns from Mecca,” *Daily Comet*, December 13, 1947, 1; “Alhaji Bushura Shekoni,” *Daily Comet*, December 10, 1948, 1; “Alhaji Bakrin Ottun,” *Daily Comet*, December 30, 1948, 1. Admittedly the example from 1947 is the announcement of a return that happened.

buntings and flags and illuminated with mutli-colored globes,”¹⁸ traditional rulers would receive the pilgrims,¹⁹ and especially by the 1940s various Islamic societies and schools would arrive en masse.²⁰ Homecomings could be forums for popular history. When a pilgrim from the Faji neighborhood of Lagos Island returned in 1948, the chairman of his reception gave a speech that “traced the history of Mohammedanism in Lagos with particular reference to Faji Area.”²¹ Other times reference to a community’s history was more symbolic; also in 1948, nine “descendants of the late Ogunelu an illustrious titled warrior of Ibadan, who together with others road on horse back to settle here in the good old days of inter-tribal wars” returned to Ibadan together, riding warhorses themselves.²² The *baraka*, or blessings accrued to the pilgrim were also shared through physical touch (see Introduction), vividly described in an article from 1922:

The Pilgrims were welcomed very cordially by brother worshippers. Many of those who gained access to them shook hands with them, embraced them, touched their turban, and then rubbed their own faces with the hands which have touched the pilgrims.²³

Homecomings also drew participation across generational divides, such as “the children of the Muslim schools...formed a procession chanting Arabic songs” in honor of four returned pilgrims in 1907.²⁴ As we will see (Chapter 4), when pilgrim behavior and prestige began to be associated with greed and individualism rather than just community, the morality of these festivities became under scrutiny as well.

¹⁸ “Alhaj Balogun Returns from Mecca Pilgrimage,” 1.

¹⁹ Lawal, “Islam and Colonial Rule in Lagos,” 70.

²⁰ “Large Crowd Welcomes Alhaj Sheikh Abdul Guaniyi Lawal Back to Lagos,” 6; “Six Muslims Return From Holy Pilgrimage,” 8; “Alhaj Calfoes Will Arrive Tomorrow at 10 A.M.,” 1; “Five Alhujaj Return from Mecca and Medina,” 1; “New Alhaja Arrives,” 10; “New Alhaji at Thanksgiving Service,” 10. Whether the increased frequency of the mention of specific Islamic societies reflects a change in practice or just visibility, it is true that the number of different Islamic societies grew substantially over the 1930s–1940s.

²¹ “Alhaji Adelakun Feted on Return from Mecca,” 4.

²² “Social News: Pilgrims to Mecca Return,” 4.

²³ “Return of the Pilgrims,” 8.

²⁴ “News, Notes, and Comments,” 3.

Pilgrims returned with knowledge of travel conditions and the hajj. Records from the turn of the century often reveal the severity of the journey. When one Lagosian pilgrim returned in 1896, it was noted that all seventeen others that had set out with him twelve years ago had perished in transit.²⁵ Even over ten years later, when a group of stranded pilgrims finally made it back to Lagos in 1909, *The Lagos Standard* claimed that “the account they gave of their experiences...no doubt served to deter many an aspirant to the title of El Hadj from rashly undertaking the venture.”²⁶ Yet as time progressed, information shared by pilgrims addressed local curiosities about “Oriental life” and the experience of Mecca.²⁷ Thus, several generations grew up learning about Mecca and the hajj mostly by word of mouth, in addition to the Qur’an.

Living Memorializations of Hajj

The ability of a pilgrim to celebrate and mark their status did not end with the thanksgiving ceremony made for their return. Muslim holidays and lifecycle events provided opportunities for pilgrims to again demonstrate and perform their identities as alhajis and alhajas. These recurring celebrations of one’s pilgrim status were a way for alhajis to commemorate their hajj, not only as individuals, but through producing recognition among their communities.

The annual cycle of the hajj itself offered a series of moments for pilgrims to commemorate their own hajj. Of the celebrations to mark a pilgrim’s homecoming discussed above, pilgrims from previous years might attend collectively to welcome the new members of

²⁵ “Epitome of News: Local Coastwise and Foreign,” *The Lagos Weekly Record*, May 16, 1896, 6.

²⁶ “Lagosian on Dits,” *The Lagos Standard*, June 16, 1909, 4. Given that this example comes from a colonial newspaper, and the British at the time viewed the hajj with concern, it’s plausible that this negative spin was the work of a pro-British writer.

²⁷ “Abeokuta Pilgrims,” *The Times of Nigeria*, May 24, 1920, 4; “Six Muslims Return From Holy Pilgrimage,” 6; “New Alhaj Is Given Grand Reception,” *Daily Times*, December 14, 1948, 2; “Social News: Pilgrims to Mecca Return,” 4.

the alhaji title.²⁸ A similar act could occur at farewell ceremonies for intending pilgrims.²⁹

Besides events linked to other pilgrims, like birthdays or marriages, the anniversary of one's return from hajj could be a reason for communal celebration.³⁰

Muslim holidays provided another setting for pilgrims to demonstrate their pious accomplishment. Similar to homecoming celebrations, at times such practices linked alhajis with traditional authorities. For example, "the alhajis" were reportedly among the important people that visited the Eleko of Lagos on the Friday after Eid al-Adha in 1932.³¹ Alhajis also received attention from newspaper reporters, such as when the *Daily Times* included photos of "some prominent Alhajis" in its coverage of the end of Ramadan in 1949.³² Being an alhaji could also bridge sectarian divides, such as when all pilgrims, whether "old and new...irrespective of Colour and denomination" were invited to coordinate the upcoming celebration of the Prophet's birthday in 1945.³³ Alhajis also acted as patrons for holiday celebrations put on by various Islamic associations.³⁴ Relatedly, special events within Islamic communities such as the opening of a new mosque in Lagos in 1893 or the installation of a new Chief Imam in 1949 would be graced by the presence of pilgrims among other categories of "prominent Moslems."³⁵

An alhaji's status became visible during lifecycle events. In newspaper reporting of funerals and weddings, the alhajis in attendance were often listed in their own category,³⁶ and by

²⁸ "News from the Provinces: Epe," November 7, 1949, 2; "Social News: Pilgrims to Mecca Return," 4; "Great Rejoicing Marks Celebration of Annual Ramadan Festivals in Lagos," *Daily Comet*, July 28, 1949, 1.

²⁹ "2,000 Muslim Men and Women Bid Farewell to Members on Pilgrimage to Mecca," *Daily Comet*, July 23, 1948, 4.

³⁰ "News from the Provinces: Zaria," *Daily Times*, February 26, 1948, 3.

³¹ "A Mighty Avalanche of Moslem Visitors at Iga Idunganran," *Lagos Daily News*, April 23, 1932, 2.

³² "Idul-Fitr Told in Pictures," *Daily Times*, July 29, 1949.

³³ "Zumratul Hujaj Will Hold Meeting," *Daily Comet*, February 9, 1945, 3.

³⁴ "YNS Celebrates Birthday of Prophet Mohammed," *Daily Comet*, February 21, 1946, 1.

³⁵ "Sir Gilbert Carter at the Mosque of Shitta," *The Lagos Weekly Record*, December 16, 1893, 2; "New Chief Imam Installed," *Daily Times*, October 12, 1949, 2.

³⁶ "Brimah the Lemomu," *The Nigerian Pioneer*, October 26, 1923, 8; "Iyawo Yio Se Anfani O!," *Akede Eko*, June 21, 1930, 5; "Alhaji S. Kosegbe Dies in Accident," *West African Pilot*, March 26, 1940, 1; "Mr. Julius O. Adebisi Fetes Friends In Honour Of His Marriage," *Daily Comet*, January 31, 1942, 6; "Alhaj Hamzat's Daughter Marries

the 1940s started attending adorned in the Mecca uniform.³⁷ At times their presence explicitly served to establish the prestige of the deceased, such as one report remarked how “The cream of the Alhujajis of Lagos and the mainland” occupied the front of a funeral procession.³⁸ Pilgrims often took on important roles in such events, whether performing ceremonies at the gravesite, leading the service, or giving a lecture.³⁹ At least one example from the north suggests that the timing of marriage might be coordinated with one’s hajj; Alhaji Kassim of Kano (who would go on to be involved in the hajj travel industry) went on the hajj with his future father-in-law, and not long after they returned hosted a wedding with approximately ten thousand attendees.⁴⁰ A Yoruba Lagosian informant related to me a similarly timed wedding of his in 1963, suggesting this one example is perhaps not anachronistic.⁴¹ When an alhaji was the groom, a wedding could serve to celebrate both his marriage as well as the prestige of his title. A particularly vivid example of this comes from 1924 when Alhaji Danmegoro, the groom, invited all the alhajis in Abeokuta (his current home) and all the alhajis of Lagos (his hometown) to two separate parties. The description of the party in Abeokuta stressed Danmegoro’s generosity:

All the Alhajis then prayed for the groom, astonished by the extent of the feasting as everyone of them was filled to the brim with food. They expressed surprise that a single individual could spend so much money and so lavishly too. Our prayer is that God will protect and bless Alhaji Danmegoro and grant him both male and female children of

Mr. Yussuph Ayobiojo,” *Daily Comet*, December 29, 1943, 3; “Imam Sulaiman Shitta Bey Dies at the Ripe Age of 83,” *Daily Comet*, December 3, 1945, 1; “Seventy-Year-Old Father of Dr. the Hon Ibiyinka Olorun-Nimbe Laid to Rest,” *Daily Comet*, August 20, 1948, 1; “Lagos Chiefs Attend Big Muslim Wedding,” *Daily Times*, September 3, 1948, 8; “Seliya Balogun Dies,” *Daily Comet*, September 20, 1948, 3; “Two Thousand Watch Late Mr. S Ottun to Rest: Tejan-Cole Delivers Funeral Oration,” *Daily Comet*, December 6, 1948, 4; “News from the Provinces: Epe,” *Daily Times*, November 22, 1949, 2.

³⁷ “[Photo],” *Daily Comet*, January 22, 1945; “[Photo],” *Daily Comet*, January 22, 1945.

³⁸ “Large Number of Muslims Bury Late Madam Daniel: Chief Imam of Lagos, Heads Procession,” *Daily Comet*, December 16, 1948, 4.

³⁹ “Large Number of Muslims Bury Late Madam Daniel: Chief Imam of Lagos, Heads Procession,” 4; “Brimah the Lemomu,” 8; “Alhaj Hamzat’s Daughter Marries Mr. Yussuph Ayobiojo,” 3; “Seventy-Year-Old Father of Dr. the Hon Ibiyinka Olorun-Nimbe Laid to Rest,” 1.

⁴⁰ “Alhaji H Kassim Weds Miss Hilma,” *Daily Comet*, December 15, 1949, 3.

⁴¹ Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015.

excellence. Amen. A lot of people also turned up at the party, stuffing themselves and singing the praises of Alhaji Danmegoro.⁴²

Not only did Alhaji Danmegoro receive prayers from his guests as thanks for his lavish spending, but the author of the article additionally weaves a prayer for him in thanks of his communal spending. Thus, practices of prestige and celebration connected to the hajj can reveal broader values of Muslim communities.

Islamic groups in the southwest were a venue for expressing the significance of becoming and being an alhaji. The most significant was Zumratul Hujaj. As we saw in Chapter 1, it was a society open to all alhajis with branches in Lagos and other major cities in the region. Besides providing sociality for its members, Zumratul Hujaj organized special events for Islamic holidays⁴³ and participated in the weddings and funerals of their members.⁴⁴ Other groups or sects hosted special hajj-related events. In 1948, the Lagos branch of the Ahmadiyya welcomed three Ahmadis from Ghana, who also happened to be recent alhajis. The event included a lecture on the hajj and speeches by all three alhajis with a “lively description of their journey and stay at Mecca and Medina.”⁴⁵

This interlude, albeit brief, has suggested the importance of print culture, pilgrim identities, and honor in the orchestration of a successful and enduring hajj. With these affective and practical aspects of pride and performance in mind, we turn now to the emergence of the hajj in Nigerian politics during the nationalism period in the 1950s.

⁴² Atolugbokun, “Alhaji Abudu Salami S. Danmegoro Kudus,” *Eko Akete*, January 19, 1924, 2–3.

⁴³ “Message from Alhaj A L Olorun-Nimbe, President, Zumratul Hujaj, Lagos,” *Daily Comet*, December 8, 1943, 16, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Zumratul Hujaj Will Hold Meeting,” 3; “Announcements,” *Daily Comet*, January 29, 1948, 2, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

⁴⁴ “Seventy-Year-Old Father of Dr. the Hon Ibiyinka Olorun-Nimbe Laid to Rest,” 1; Interview with Dr. K. K. Oloso in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, February 2015.

⁴⁵ “Lagos Muslims Receive Gold Coast Members of Ahmadiyya Movement,” *Daily Comet*, December 24, 1948, 4.

Chapter 2

“Our Own Britain is Mecca”: Hajj Reform and the Rise of Nationalism

Alhaja Oyero has been to Mecca six times, and in 2015 she could remember a few conversations with fellow pilgrims in Mecca, though not all of them were positive. Take the one woman who in 1995 inquired about the “FOMWAN” label visible on Oyero’s clothing. After learning that this was a national Muslim organization for Nigerian women she asked,

'how do you choose your *daw'ah* officer?' And I said, 'Ah, you see FOMWAN does a lot in people's lives in Nigeria, that the last *daw'ah* officer we got didn't know the Qur'an but since becoming *daw'ah* officer she started reading, she does *tasfir*.' And she became angry, you know, when I thought I was talking something positive, she saw it as a negative thing that if your child is sick, would you look for cure from a teacher rather than going to a doctor? Why don't you take *daw'ah* position to people who are versed in the knowledge of the Qur'an and Islam. She became angry. And I became angry. That look, she doesn't know the condition of my country. She doesn't know the position of women in Islam in my country. She doesn't know that we don't have many women who are this versed in the Qur'an and Islamic knowledge, that we are trying to groom ourselves, to build ourselves.¹

As this vignette indicates, though pilgrims come to the holy land to worship God as individuals, this mass gathering is a place where Muslims can see and be seen, compare notes on their homelands, and perhaps judge the Islamic practice of others. This has of course been true for centuries. But in the 1950s, political, technological, and economic factors converged to make the dimensions and stakes of these comparisons gain an unprecedented prominence within Nigeria, and brought debates about the hajj to regional and national scales. These developments fit within

¹ Alhaja Sururah Oyero, Interview in Ibadan, Recording, March 2015.

the larger trend of Nigeria's increased connectivity with the Middle East, which likewise generated religious tensions in the years leading up to Nigeria's independence from Britain.

A number of factors coincided to direct public attention to the hajj. For one thing, by the early 1950s more Muslims undertook the hajj than ever before.² While this increase was not quite so dramatic as what would occur during Nigeria's oil boom in the 1970s (Chapter 4), it likewise had a capitalistic underpinning; as recorded in memories³ and newspaper notices,⁴ the development of cash crops not only funded farmers' travel but also that of traders, produce merchants and other entrepreneurs able to benefit from the growing market economy. While in the Western Region of Nigeria this particularly meant cocoa and palm oil,⁵ other crops produced a similar phenomenon in the North,⁶ as well as French West Africa.⁷ Though less significant, another economic event conducive to the hajj occurred in 1952. The King of Saudi Arabia

² Dr. K. K. Oloso, "Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980" (PhD, University of Ibadan, 1984), 153; "Pilgrims to Have New Camp," *Daily Times*, December 30, 1948, 5; C. R. Niven, "Report on a Visit to the Sudan and Saudi Arabia, in Connection with Pilgrimage Arrangements," 1950, 10, FO 371/82698, Kew Archive.

³ Interview with Alhaji Tunde Bello-Bello in Lagos, Nigeria., Notes, May 2013; Interview with Idris Adeniran in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, February 2015; Interview with Dr. Rasheed in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, July 2015.

⁴ "Issa Williams For England and Mecca," *Daily Comet*, August 15, 1947, 1; "Veteran Trader Flies to Mecca," *Daily Times*, October 12, 1949, 6; "Woman Trader of Edidi Lane Goes on Pilgrimage by Air," *West African Pilot*, September 7, 1950, 1; "Alhaji M Etiko to Leave on Pilgrimage," *West African Pilot*, August 1, 1952, 3; "Alhaji Adesina Is Back from Mecca," *West African Pilot*, October 10, 1952, 1; "Alhaji L. R. Ajagbe Back from Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, October 3, 1952, 4; "On Pilgrimage to Mecca," *Daily Times*, July 25, 1953, 4; "Two Moslem Leaders Will Fly to Mecca," *Daily Times*, July 23, 1953, 7; "U.A.C. Storekeeper Will Fly to Mecca," *Daily Times*, July 30, 1953, 9; "Farewell Parties Held for Mecca Pilgrim," *Daily Times*, August 4, 1953, 10; "Alhaji Bombatta Returns from Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, September 9, 1953, 4.

⁵ Sara. Berry, *Cocoa, Custom, and Socio-Economic Change in Rural Western Nigeria*, Oxford Studies in African Affairs. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); Ezekiel Ayodele Walker, "The Changing Patterns of Labor Relations in the Cocoa Farming Belt of Southwestern Nigeria, 1950s to 1990s," *African Economic History*, no. 28 (2000): 123.

⁶ "Holy Land Pilgrims Will Be a Record," *West African Pilot*, May 29, 1952, 1; "600 Northerners for Mecca," *Nigerian Citizen*, June 5, 1952, 4.

⁷ Baz Lecocq, "The Hajj From West Africa from a Global Historical Perspective (19th and 20th Centuries)," *African Diaspora* 5, no. 2 (2012): 187-214.

abolished the hajj dues pilgrims had previously paid to the state, a value of £20, though admittedly a fee that Nigerians had been exempted from paying until 1949.⁸

Technological developments eased and accelerated the speed of travel; these provided another key reason pilgrim numbers began to increase in the late 1940s. First, the end of WWII made lorries available for overland travel to Saudi Arabia.⁹ But it was the introduction of flights to Jeddah from Kano and Lagos in 1948 and 1957, respectively, that made the hajj significantly faster.¹⁰ Though initial tickets sales were low,¹¹ 1,321 Nigerians undertook the hajj by air in 1951, a number that would gradually increase over the decade.¹² Air travel would radically transform the hajj and allow for the Nigerian state to exercise control over pilgrim mobility, topics that will be covered in the following two chapters. Relevant to how the hajj became a topic of debate and a key political demand by elite Muslims in the Western and Northern Regions was the fact that the growth of the hajj operation (both official and informal) transpired with most of the problems of the previous decades unresolved (Chapter 1). Among those pilgrims included elites, such as

⁸ “Intending Pilgrims to Mecca Relieved,” *West African Pilot*, July 24, 1952, 1; “Saudi Arabian Govt. Abolished Haji Dues,” *Daily Times*, August 6, 1952, 11; C. R. Nivin, “Report on a Visit to the Sudan and Saudi Arabia, in Connection with Pilgrimage Arrangements,” 1950, 7, FO 371/82698, Kew Archive.

⁹ “Telegram from Secretary of the Northern Provinces to the Chief Secretary’s Office.,” June 22, 1934, CSO 26/2: File No. 15685 Vol IV: Pilgrims etc. Repatriation and Relief of Individual Cases., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁰ “Pilgrimages Now by Air,” *Daily Times*, September 6, 1948, 5; “Plane Service Plan for Pilgrims,” *Daily Comet*, September 7, 1948, 1; “[Ad by Messers Akoshile Brothers],” *Daily Times*, August 13, 1949, 10; Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 135; “1,000 Pilgrims Will Fly to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, June 5, 1956, 1; “1,700 Pilgrims to Be Flown to Mecca: Highest Figure Ever Recorded in Recent Years,” *The Daily Times*, June 21, 1957, 2. Area for more research: While there is the Akoshile Brothers ad from 1949 for a direct flight from Lagos to Mecca, this appears to be an anomaly. No mention of direct flights is listed until 1957, and in his dissertation on the hajj, Oloso claims that a majority of air pilgrims departing from Kano were Yoruba Muslims.

¹¹ “News from the Provinces: Kano,” *Daily Times*, September 30, 1948, 2.

¹² “1,000 Pilgrims to Travel by Air,” *Daily Times*, August 29, 1952, sec. Public Opinion: Views from Readers, 2; “1952 Mecca Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, July 31, 1952, sec. Public Opinion: Views from Readers, 2; “Flying Pilgrims Are Reported Increasing,” *Daily Comet*, October 8, 1953, 3; “900 Moslems Go on Pilgrimage,” *Daily Times*, August 22, 1953, 6; “800 Pilgrims on Way to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, July 26, 1954, 2; “5,000 West African Moslems Will Go on Pilgrimage,” *Daily Times*, May 28, 1955, 12; “Pilgrimage by Air Completed,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 25, 1956, 12; “1,700 Pilgrims to Be Flown to Mecca: Highest Figure Ever Recorded in Recent Years,” 2; “616 Destitute Pilgrims Repatriated,” *West African Pilot*, July 25, 1958, 1; “1,254 Flown to Jeddah,” *West African Pilot*, June 20, 1959, 1. This is not say that the rise was entirely linear, but by 1956 most years (with the exception of 1959, when only 1,254 flew) over 1,700 pilgrims went by air.

politicians and journalists, who for the first time could go on hajj without leaving their important jobs, thanks to the speed of air travel. And when these elites gained an intimate and publicized awareness of the suffering Nigerian pilgrims endured, they now had the ability to reform the Nigerian hajj to protect their national reputation within the Muslim world—an act their new constituents likewise desired.

Suffering and bureaucratic hassles alone do not explain why the hajj became a target of Muslim nationalists; increased pilgrim numbers also meant that significantly more Nigerian Muslims could compare themselves to Muslims of other countries. Such acts of comparison—in Saudi Arabia and Nigeria, also motivated reforms. Improvements to the quality of pilgrim preparation and conditions in Saudi Arabia aimed to enhance Nigeria’s international reputation among other Muslim nations. Within Nigeria, the hajj represented the chance for Muslims to be equal to their Christian peers in terms of cosmopolitanism, particularly in the Western region where the two religions accounted for roughly even populations but vastly uneven *elite* populations.

Christians retained control of the Western Regional government throughout the decade, but they capitulated to Muslim demands. In 1954 the Action Group (AG), the major political party of the Western Region, was led by a Christian, Chief Awolowo, and had only two Muslims among its inaugural executive membership of sixty-two.¹³ Regardless of its lack of representation, their official manifesto that year promised “a new scheme...to ease the difficulties which Nigerians desiring to go on pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina suffer.”¹⁴ In fulfillment of this promise, in March of 1958 Awolowo introduced a bill to the Western House of Assembly that established a Pilgrims’ Welfare Board for the Western region, which passed

¹³ David D. Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture : Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba / David D. Laitin.* (University of Chicago Press, 1986), p.128.

¹⁴ “Action Group Manifesto,” *Daily Times*, August 17, 1954, 6–7.

unanimously. Though members of the main rival party, the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) supported the bill, several were quick to claim it as an accomplishment of efforts by the NCNC rather than the AG.¹⁵ This mild political squabble is indicative of the fact that in the 1950s, Muslims had become an important political bloc in the Southwest, even if few held elected positions.

The 1950s were also the first time that Nigerians participated in Federal elections. Though the major political parties broke down along ethno-regional lines, the NPC, the main party of the North, tried to recruit support among Yoruba Muslims based on shared religion (even if the NPC officially claimed to represent all Northerners, regardless of religion). Attention to the place of hajj reform in Nigerian nationalist discourse contributes to the existing literature on Nigerian nationalism, which mainly addresses the role of religion as it pertained in the predominately Muslim North, if at all.¹⁶ Scholarship specific to the Western Region has generally focused on Awolowo's masterful ability to harness ethnic nationalism and Yoruba origin myths to build popular support across most Yoruba ancestral cities, even if divisions within the region remained.¹⁷ Though Laitin and others are correct that during the 1950s (and onwards) Muslims failed to politically organize their co-religionists on the basis of their shared

¹⁵ "West Govt. to Establish Pilgrims Board," *Daily Times*, March 28, 1958, 7; "Pilgrims' Welfare Bill Passed Unanimously," *West African Pilot*, March 28, 1958, 1.

¹⁶ James Smoot Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*. (University of California Press, 1958); Henry L. Bretton 1916-, *Power and Stability in Nigeria; the Politics of Decolonization*. (F. A. Praeger, 1962); John P. Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government and Politics*, by John P. Mackintosh. (Allen & Unwin, 1966); Elizabeth Allo Isichei, *A History of Nigeria / Elizabeth Isichei ; with a Contribution by Peter Uche Isichei*. (Longman, 1983); Toyin Falola, *The History of Nigeria / Toyin Falola*. (Greenwood Press, 1999); Toyin Falola and Matthew M. Heaton, *A History of Nigeria / Toyin Falola and Matthew M. Heaton*. (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

¹⁷ Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture : Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba / David D. Laitin.*, 121–25, 154; J. D. Y. Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, *The Anthropology of Christianity*; 18 (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016), 144–45. The main exception here was Ibadan.

faith,¹⁸ as other scholars counter, elite efforts to mobilize Yoruba Muslim voters through the formation of Muslim political parties *did* impact the mainstream political discourse.¹⁹ To this I add the point that the hajj—as a form of global travel and consumption—became a target of reform by elite Muslims, which gave way to collaboration with Northern politicians and a new aesthetics of political power and prestige in the West and North.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: First, it examines how the development of roads and later the introduction of air travel presented attractive economic opportunities to a growing number of Nigerian hajj travel agents. Though these independent Nigerian hajj operations had for decades served as alternative options to that offered by the colonial state, in the 1950s this divide began to crumble. With the expanded potential economic gain of the hajj came unscrupulous agents who either prioritized their profits over pilgrim comfort or engaged in fraud, behavior that before long prompted regulation. Next, the chapter examines how international events and developments outside of Nigeria placed additional pressure on the state to reform and nationalize the hajj in the decade. Nigerian officials became increasingly concerned with pilgrim comportment in the 1950s, while simultaneously adopting a pilgrim-aesthetic that melded their political power with piety. The chapter then focuses on the hajj in relation to Muslim political organizations during the 1950s in the Southwest. It explores the proliferation of information about the hajj that publicized the sufferings of Nigerian pilgrims. Finally, the chapter traces the life of the hajj as a topic of debate and claims-making by elite

¹⁸ Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture : Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba / David D. Laitin.*, 130; Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, 144–45; Ken Post 1935-, *The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959: Politics and Administration in a Developing Political System*. (The Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Oxford University Press, 1963), 96–97; Frederick A. O. (Frederick August Otto) Schwarz 1935-, *Nigeria: The Tribes, the Nation, or the Race; the Politics of Independence* (M.I.T. Press, 1965), 51.

¹⁹ H. D. Danmole, “Islam and Party Politics in Lagos: A Study of the United Muslim Party 1953-1966,” *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* 11, no. 2 (July 1990): 334; M. H. Kukah and Toyin Falola, *Religious Militancy and Self-Assertion : Islam and Politics in Nigeria* (Avebury, 1996), 82–92.

Muslims and politicians (Muslim and non-Muslim), giving way to increased religious tensions. In doing so, it seeks to complicate the scholarly literature on Nigerian nationalism by demonstrating how the Western and Northern regions of the country, though ethnically distinct, became linked by the new pilgrim aesthetic developed by political elites, as well as hajj reform. Of course, regional difference did influence how the hajj factored into local politics. In the Western Region, Muslim subjects had been relatively excluded from a new middle-class lifestyle afforded by Western education and civil service positions, and hajj reform became a potent symbol of a future where Muslims would equal the cosmopolitanism and political capital of their Christian counterparts. This future was one that these Muslims adamantly demanded.

The Growth of the Hajj Business

As we saw in the previous chapter, a Nigerian-run hajj administration existed at varying degrees complimentary or alternate (at times with tension) to the colonial hajj administration, with Nigerian travel companies beginning in the late 1930s. Though the use of lorries in Nigeria was earmarked for military demands during WWII, the war's end allowed the network of roads to cater to Nigerian pilgrims once again. With the Lagos–Mecca Transport Syndicate (which had branches throughout the West and North)²⁰ as an important exception, most overland hajj agents had their headquarters in the North, particularly the commercial hub of Kano.²¹ The majority of pilgrims that traveled by road were likewise of Northern origin, though Yorubas and other southerners regularly headed to Kano to join one of the available operations.²² Almost all

²⁰ “From the Lagos-Mecca Transport Syndicate, with Hadji A Osho Longe ‘Effendi’ as Works Manager,” June 14, 1943, CSO 26/3: File No. 36292: Pilgrimage; Miscellaneous Correspondence, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan.

²¹ “From the Acting Administrator of the Colony, to the Civil Secretary, Western Region, Ibadan,” 1954, ComCol I, 235 Vol. III, Pilgrimage to Mecca 1937-1955, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

²² “[Photo],” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 15, 1956; “Off to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, August 4, 1952; “News from the Provinces: Ibadan,” *Daily Times*, December 30, 1948; “News from the Provinces: Badagry,” *Daily Times*, December

pilgrims traveling by road passed through Maiduguri, a Nigerian city close to the Chad border. There they would stay in the *zongo*²³ that developed in the late 1940s on the outskirts of town, where, if they had not already paid a hajj agent to take care of their travel arrangements, a variety of middlemen would offer their services.²⁴ For intending-pilgrims unable to pay all their travel expenses up-front, throughout the hajj trail existed *zongos* filled with various agents, who would assist pilgrims with the next leg of their journey once they had saved the required money.²⁵

Those able to save up the cost of the entire journey before departing Nigeria could enlist the services of a hajj travel company. The earliest detailed description of how such companies operated comes from a 1956 report by Alhaji Metteden, then the Assistant Nigerian Pilgrim Officer in Khartoum.²⁶ At that time, the newly-established West African Pilgrims Association (WAPA), the Nigerian Pilgrims Society, and three independent agents handled most of the land pilgrimages booked in Kano.²⁷ Pilgrims would pay a flat fee to their agent, who would then either arrange the pilgrims to be carried by their own private fleet of lorries, or would contract other lorries to do so. Large organizations like WAPA employed agents across the pilgrimage trail, whose job it was to greet pilgrims as they arrived at different rest spots and guide them

31, 1948; "New Alhaji at Thanksgiving Service," *Daily Times*, December 31, 1948; "New Alhaja Arrives," *Daily Times*, December 14, 1948. Though not all of these examples explicitly mention this, given the time of arrival or departure it is fair to assume that they traveled by road. While it is of course possible they did so independently, independent travel by road would be significantly harder for a Yoruba unless they spoke Hausa, the lingua franca of the pilgrimage trail.

²³ Zongo in Hausa means "strangers quarter" and along the pilgrimage trail is the term used for encampments for land pilgrims. As Birks explains, each zongo would have a sarkin (chief), who would act as an agent to help the pilgrims. Often, zongos were planned either by a benefactor or an agent seeing it as an investment, as the sarkins often charged pilgrims. Other zongos developed organically based on pilgrim movements.

²⁴ J. S. Birks, *Across the Savannas to Mecca: The Overland Pilgrimage Route from West Africa* (London: C. Hurst, 1978), 45.

²⁵ Birks, 45; "Script Sent from District Officer, Kano Division to the Regional Public Relations Officer, Kaduna," October 20, 1948, Min of Info, PRE/40 Vol I: Pilgrimage To Mecca, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. The zongos were additionally a source of information on where to find work. In the case of Sudan, Nigerians were known for doing work that Sudanese felt was "beneath them."

²⁶ Alhaji M Abdullah Ahmed Metteden, "Report: Nigerian Road Pilgrims," July 1956, Premier's Office: Secret: 4/1: PM 18/S.9 Vol I: Pilgrims Affairs Stafford Report Converted from D.G.N. 8406, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²⁷ Most if not all also arranged air transportation for pilgrims as well.

through any transportation transfers, border crossings, and quarantine stations. Though they operated independently from the state, the colonial government required that they submit an annual report as a form of accountability.²⁸ In addition to these official hajj agencies, individual alhajis might informally rely on their experience to guide a small group of Nigerians.²⁹

Though steamship travel continued to offer a relatively relaxing option, for reasons of geography and cost it remained limited to a niche population of Lagosian elites. Moreover, the introduction of air travel in the late 1940s provided a much easier option at little to no greater cost.³⁰ Some Muslims conceptualized suffering as an accrual of blessings, making the acute comfort of air travel produce theological anxiety.³¹ Regardless, air travel soon became the preferred transportation method for Nigerian Muslims of means, and religious concerns proved fleeting.³² Structurally, the main difference between overland and aviation travel was that while overland mobility could rely entirely on the privileges provided by a passport, the latter required intense negotiations with Saudi authorities over landing rights at the Jeddah airport.³³ Initially the

²⁸ Alhaji A. A. Metteden, "Report for the Period of October-December, 1956 by the Nigerian Pilgrim Officer, Khartoum," n.d., Premier's Office, 2/2: AS IV/141: Nigerian Pilgrim Office in Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²⁹ "From the District Officer, Oyo Division to the Resident, Oyo Province," July 1, 1950, OYO PROF 2/1: 1495 Vol II: Pilgrims to Mecca. Transport of Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the District Officer, Oyo Division to the Resident, Oyo Province," July 12, 1950, OYO PROF 2/1: 1495 Vol II: Pilgrims to Mecca. Transport of Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. These are two instances of a group of intending pilgrims submitting an application for passports together, in which one of the group members is an alhaji.

³⁰ "From the British Embassy, Cairo to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," March 5, 1951, ComCol 2819: Alhaji Mohammad Mudashiru Mokadam and Liamin Halji - Students at El Azhar University, Cairo., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Mecca Pilgrimage: New Regulations Issued," *Nigerian Citizen*, June 19, 1952, 4. For example, in 1951 the cost of a one-way ticket from Cairo to Lagos would have cost between forty-fifty pounds, plus whatever expenses were incurred during the stop at Marseilles. And then there would be the travel cost to get from Cairo to Jeddah. Whereas a round-trip plane ticket from Kano to Jeddah in 1952 cost one hundred twenty pounds.

³¹ C. R. Niven, "Report on a Visit to the Sudan and Saudi Arabia, in Connection with Pilgrimage Arrangements," 10.

³² Interview with Alhaji Lo Yusuf in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, December 2014; Zumratul Hujaj Group Interview in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, March 2015. Elderly members of the Zumratul Hujaj branch in Ibadan went so far as to position reforms against the overland hajj as in accordance to Islam, given that people were dying on the road.

³³ G. B. Barnard, "Confidential: Memorandum by the Civil Air Attache, Middle East, on Visits to Jeddah Made in February and March, 1953," March 27, 1953, WAATA 1/1: ATA 101/3 Vol I: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. A simplified explanation is that Saudi Arabia required 50% "traffic sharing," which

imperial West African Airways Corporation (WAAC) possessed a monopoly on the business, though they relied heavily on Nigerian pilgrim societies and agents to recruit and process prospective pilgrims.³⁴ Eventually dissatisfaction with the quality of WAAC's service would give way to competition, but this would not happen before the Nigerianization of the hajj bureaucracy accelerated, as will be soon discussed.

International Pressures and the Start of the Hajj's Nigerianization

As the Nigerian hajj business expanded, external pressures emanating from Saudi Arabia and Sudan spurred the Nigerian colonial state to ensure that most pilgrims traveled with some form of documentation, however minimal. Essentially, the increased number of pilgrims after WWII magnified existing problems, such as illegal dhow voyages across the Red Sea (Chapter 1). Within a few months in 1946, two hundred and fifty-two Nigerians landed on Saudi Arabian shores illegally, of which only four had valid identification documents.³⁵ Events such as this led the Saudi Arabian government to enact measures to curb the flow of poor Nigerian pilgrims and put pressure on Sudan to tighten up their ports. The key policy by Saudi Arabia in regard to the former was to abolish in 1949 the so-called "Takruni privileges" that exempted overland West Africans from paying hajj dues to the Saudi government, and often even the *mutawwif* fee.³⁶ This

meant that they reserved the right for their airline to return all pilgrims flown into the country. However, since their national airline did not have capacity to fly back every pilgrim, this could lead to delays and/or WAAC being forced to quickly figure out how to fly back thousands of Nigerian pilgrims.

³⁴ [illegible signature], "Note of Action," March 31, 1953, WAATA 1/1: ATA 101/3 Vol I: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

³⁵ "From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Government of Sudan," July 14, 1946, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

³⁶ "From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Government of Nigeria," January 23, 1940, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Government of Nigeria," March 26, 1945, ComCol I, 235 Vol. III, Pilgrimage to Mecca 1937-1955, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the British Legation, Jeddah to the Government of Sudan"; "Circular from the Secretary for the Northern Provinces to All Residents," June 11, 1949, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. As the letter from March 26, 1945 evidences, the "Takruni

dramatically increased the cost of the overland hajj, and the Sudanese government understandably feared that its territory might soon be filled with Nigerians unable to afford the hajj but unwilling to return home. Accordingly, in 1949 Sudan instated minimum amounts of money that any Nigerian entering the country needed to have in their possession,³⁷ and expelled over three hundred impoverished Nigerians before they had the chance to complete their hajj.³⁸

This turn of events produced genuine, albeit self-interested, unease within the Nigerian colonial government. For one, the British protested the removal of the so-called Takruni privileges, and succeeded in delaying the implementation of this policy, which Saudi Arabia had originally intended to start in 1947.³⁹ The impact this would have on the cost of the pre-paid overland passport was significant; it jumped to over £50 from the previous cost of £15.⁴⁰ In anticipation of blowback, colonial authorities decided to publicize their efforts in fighting this development,⁴¹ which they did through notices in the press.⁴² That same year, the Nigerian colonial government also pushed back against efforts by British authorities based in Saudi Arabia to repatriate impoverished Nigerian pilgrims before they completed the hajj rites.⁴³ In

privilege” was limited to those arriving overland, and perhaps also to Northern ethnicities, though how Saudi authorities determined this remains unclear.

³⁷ “From Dakhila Khartoum, to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Nigeria,” June 22, 1949, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

³⁸ “Telegram from Hakimian Khartoum to the Government of Nigeria,” June 9, 1949, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From K M Walmsey to F. S.,” July 19, 1949, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the Civil Secretary, Khartoum, to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Nigeria,” February 14, 1950, CSO 26/2: File no. 15255 Vol III: Nigerian Pilgrimage Control., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

³⁹ “Telegram from Jeddah to Khartoum, Lagos, F.O., the British Middle East Office, and Port Sudan,” May 29, 1947, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

⁴⁰ C. R. Niven, “Report on a Visit to the Sudan and Saudi Arabia, in Connection with Pilgrimage Arrangements,” 6, 17; “From R. J. Vile, C.O., The Church House, London to J. R. Cotton, F.O.,” October 28, 1950, FO 371/82698, Kew Archive.

⁴¹ “Note from M J Hollis to PAS (Pol),” June 2, 1947, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

⁴² “75 Pilgrims Perished on the Way: Warning Issued,” *Daily Times*, May 29, 1948, 5; “All Pilgrims Now to Pay L35,” *Daily Comet*, May 29, 1948, 1.

⁴³ “Telegram from H.M. Minister, Jeddah c.c.’d to the Governor of Nigeria,” February 24, 1947, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Letter from the Secretary for the Northern

both cases, the colonial state, as the Governor of Nigeria explained in regards to the latter issue, wanted to avoid appearing “as unduly supporting the Saudi-Arabian Government in making it difficult for Takrunis to complete the pilgrimage.”⁴⁴ The problem, the Governor continued, that this not only posed a risk to their authority in Nigeria, but also that “considerable political capital could be made in Nigeria of such misapprehension by those who seek to discredit the Mohammedan Emirs,”⁴⁵ a concern shared by prominent Northern Emirs.⁴⁶ These fears were perhaps not entirely unfounded; one Nigerian colonial official in 1949 reported rumors that the removal of the Takruni privileges was a conspiracy between the British and Saudi Arabia to “endanger the souls of Nigerian pilgrims by hindering them from going on the pilgrimage.”⁴⁷ And the following year, a North African Tijaniyya sheikh visiting Nigeria reported to the colonial government on “the resentment felt by Nigerian...pilgrims” over the high costs.⁴⁸

The colonial state’s act to raise the overland passport’s price soon proved unnecessary when the Saudi Arabian government ended the hajj tax in 1952.⁴⁹ That same year Saudi Arabia announced a new set of policies to prevent the entry of poor and undocumented pilgrims as well as deporting any undocumented pilgrims currently residing in Saudi Arabia.⁵⁰ The threat of

Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” April 24, 1947, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Confidential Letter from Governor of Nigeria to H.M. Minister, Jeddah,” June 11, 1947, CSO 26/4: File No. 37549: Pilgrimage in Wartime, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

⁴⁴ “Confidential Letter from Governor of Nigeria to H.M. Minister, Jeddah.”

⁴⁵ “Confidential Letter from Governor of Nigeria to H.M. Minister, Jeddah.”

⁴⁶ C. R. Niven, “Report on a Visit to the Sudan and Saudi Arabia, in Connection with Pilgrimage Arrangements,” 7. The Emirs that expressed this concern to Niven in 1949 were the Emirs of Gwandu, Kano, Katsina, and the Shehu of Bornu.

⁴⁷ C. R. Niven, 9.

⁴⁸ “From R. J. Vile, C.O., The Church House, London to J. R. Cotton, F.O.”

⁴⁹ “Letter from the Secretary for the Northern Provinces, Kaduna to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos”; “Circular from the Secretary for the Northern Provinces to All Residents,” May 19, 1950, Min of Info, PRE/40 Vol I: Pilgrimage To Mecca, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁵⁰ “From the British Embassy, Jeddah, to the Foreign Office, London,” November 19, 1952, FO 371/98846, Kew Archive; Joseph Karam, George S. Rentz, and Homer C. Mueller, trans., “Translation of Residence Regulations of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,” September 1952, FO 371/98846, Kew Archive.

deportation impacted over a thousand British subjects,⁵¹ mostly Nigerian, who remained after the hajj in order to earn the cost of their trip home. The Sudan colonial government was once again worried about the potential influx of destitute Nigerians. The need for the Nigerian colonial state to stem the movement of undocumented pilgrims gained momentum as 1956, the year of Sudan's independence, approached (as did their efforts against Fulani herdsmen).⁵² This marked a distinct change from the past, for though tensions between the two colonial states had occasionally arisen, for the most part the two British colonies had worked collaboratively to enact surveillance and provide medical assistance to all British subjects making their way to Mecca. Yet as a new nation, Sudan took a more nationalistic approach to the hajj, which caused the Nigerian hajj to begin to nationalize as well.

The principal problem was that thousands of pilgrims entered Sudan annually, which burdened officials in Sudan with the bureaucratic hassle of issuing pilgrim passports to all these Nigerians.⁵³ In large part, the overwhelming number of undocumented Nigerians was due to the cost of the pilgrim passport. Even though Saudi Arabia abolished the hajj tax, other prices

⁵¹ "Circular Dispatch from the British Embassy, Jeddah, to the Governors of Sudan, Aden, Nigeria, and Somaliland," November 19, 1952, FO 371/98846, Kew Archive.

⁵² "From the Office of the United Kingdom, Trade Commissioner, Khartoum to the Foreign Office," November 12, 1954, CO 554/1319: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca Via the Sudan, Kew Archive; "Cypher from Governor-General's Office, Khartoum, to the Foreign Office," February 16, 1955, CO 554/1319: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca Via the Sudan, Kew Archive; "'Fallatas' Not Granted Sudanese Nationality," *El Ayam*, May 18, 1956, CSO 26: 55495/S.7: Nigerian Pilgrim Office Arabic News Digest, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "25,000 Nigerians in Kordofan Refuse to Return to Nigeria," *El Ayam*, May 19, 1956, CSO 26: 55495/S.7: Nigerian Pilgrim Office Arabic News Digest, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. The other economic motive was that in contrast to the past, there was far less of a labor shortage in Sudan in the 1950s.

⁵³ "From the Governor-General's Office, Khartoum to the Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos," July 14, 1954, Premier's Office 2/1: AS I/213: Pilgrims Transit Facilities, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From the Office of the United Kingdom, Trade Commissioner, Khartoum to the Foreign Office"; "Note from [Illegible Signature] to Perm. Sec. M L G," December 30, 1954, Premier's Office 2/1: AS I/213: Pilgrims Transit Facilities, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From the Government House, Nigeria to Secretary of State for the Colonies, London," July 14, 1955, CO 554/1319: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca Via the Sudan, Kew Archive. To get a sense of the scale, in 1954 the Sudan Government estimated that "15,000 pilgrims and other travelers now enter the Sudan each year," of which "the vast majority of arrivals" were Nigerians, and often as little as 1% had pilgrims' passports. And in terms of numbers of Nigerian pilgrims still in Sudan attempting to earn their way to Mecca, one 1955 estimate put the Nigerian population in Sudan at roughly half a million.

increased, and the cost of the passport was a little over £41 in 1954.⁵⁴ In a meeting held in Khartoum the April before Sudan's independence with officials from Nigeria and French Equatorial Africa (FEA),⁵⁵ Sudanese officials stuck to an earlier announcement that they would no longer issue Sudanese pilgrim passports to non-nationals after 1956.⁵⁶ Instead, both FEA and Nigeria would be required to issue travel documents to their subjects by setting up Pilgrim Offices in Sudan. As a concession, Sudan would continue to allow anyone with a basic travel certificate to enter the country without making a deposit.⁵⁷ Thus, the independence of Sudan meant that the Nigerian colonial hajj bureaucracy needed, for the first time, to follow the pilgrims themselves, rather than relying on Empire's international tendrils of power.

Now that they risked being on the receiving end of thousands of undocumented pilgrims in Sudan, the Nigerian colonial state aimed to considerably raise the percentage of pilgrims traveling with identification. Racism required the continuation of a special category of passports for pilgrims; as the Chief Secretary in Lagos put it, British passports were "a valuable document" only to be given to "a proper person" since it allowed entry to the UK, where a pilgrim could

⁵⁴ *The Pilgrim Passport for Overland Travel: Instructions* (Zairia [Nigeria], 1954).

⁵⁵ "From the Office of the United Kingdom Trade Commissioner to H Phillips, Jeddah," April 20, 1955, CO 554/1319: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca Via the Sudan, Kew Archive. Three British colonial officials represented Nigeria. Other attendants included the French Liaison Officer, a member of the Administration of FEA, and a team of Sudanese officials.

⁵⁶ "Documentation of Pilgrims: Draft Recommendations," April 17, 1955, Premier's Office, 2/2: AS IV/141: Nigerian Pilgrim Office in Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Visit of Mr. Field, Deputy Chief Secretary, Nigeria, to Leopoldville," April 26, 1955, CO 554/1319: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca Via the Sudan, Kew Archive; "From Elhag A.R.Y. Dabiri (Astrologer), Sheikh Yoruba Pilgrims (In Sudan), P.O. Box 403, Khartoum Sudan, to the Sardauna of Sokoto, Nigeria," December 19, 1954, Premier's Office 2/1: AS I/213: Pilgrims Transit Facilities, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. Specifically, the past standard procedure was that officials at Port Sudan would issue a special pilgrim laissez passer to any West African pilgrim without identification who wished to cross the Red Sea to Jeddah.

⁵⁷ "Documentation of Pilgrims: Draft Recommendations"; "From the Chief Secretary's Office, Nigeria, to the Colonial Office, London," July 23, 1955, CO 554/1319: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca Via the Sudan, Kew Archive. At the April meeting, Sudan had originally pushed for requiring all Nigerians entering Sudan to be able to prove they had deposited £30, but the British officials representing Nigeria managed to convince them this would prove impossible to enforce.

become “a liability.”⁵⁸ Broader patterns of Nigerian mobility also influenced the bureaucratic future of the hajj; the inability of officials to distinguish pilgrims from frontier traders required a multipurpose document, and the increasing volume of each type of traveler required the state to prioritize popularity over control.⁵⁹ Thus, a document with restricted geographic applicability (similar to that used for air pilgrims) was desirable. To ensure its popularity, the Chief Secretary remarked it “must be easily obtained, without formalities or delay, and it must be very cheap.”⁶⁰ Since Nigerian officials successfully persuaded Sudan to accept travel certificates, the colonial state revised the original form of this document, first set up in 1942 to restrict the mobility of Nigerian seamen from England.⁶¹ Printed in English, French, and Arabic, valid only for FEA and Sudan, and only costing two shillings with expanded issuing-offices, the new travel certificate applied to all Nigerians crossing the northern border, whether traders or pilgrims,⁶² and proved successful in the 1956 hajj.⁶³

⁵⁸ “From the Chief Secretary’s Office, Nigeria, to the Consulate General, Brazzaville,” March 5, 1955, CO 554/1319: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca Via the Sudan, Kew Archive.

⁵⁹ “From the Government House, Nigeria to Secretary of State for the Colonies, London.”

⁶⁰ “From the Chief Secretary’s Office, Nigeria, to the Consulate General, Brazzaville.”

⁶¹ “From the Principal Immigration Officer to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” September 24, 1942, CSO 26/4: File No. 36083/S.16 Vol I: Travel Documents for Africans, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. The original travel certificate was valid for only one year, compared to British passports that were valid for five years. It also featured a simpler design.

⁶² “From the Chief Secretary’s Office, Nigeria, to the Colonial Office, London”; “Note of a Visit to Kaduna by Mr. E J V Williams, Acting Senior Assistant Secretary, External Affairs, on the 20th October to Discuss Arrangements for the 1956 Pilgrimage Arising from a Meeting at Khartoum in April 1955,” n.d., Premier’s Office, 2/2: AS IV/141: Nigerian Pilgrim Office in Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “From the Civil Secretary, Northern Region to the PermSect, Ministry of Local Government,” May 15, 1956, Premier’s Office 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/223 Pilgrims Passports Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “Warning! Travellers to the Sudan,” 1956, Premier’s Office, AS 1/215: Travel Certificate - Printing and Distribution of, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. Interestingly, the Arabic was originally printed in Ajami, but changed to its standard form in 1956 on the advice of the British Nigerian Pilgrim Officer in Khartoum. In terms of availability, unlike the pilgrim passport, one could apply for a travel certificate at any District Office.

⁶³ “From the Resident, Bornu Province to the Civil Secretary, Northern Region, Kaduna,” May 29, 1956, Premier’s Office 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/223 Pilgrims Passports Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. By the end of May, still months before the hajj, the Maiduguri office had already issued 2,200 travel certificates, with over three hundred applications still pending.

While British officials orchestrated the revamped travel certificate, the extension of the Nigerian hajj bureaucracy provided an opening, in part out of necessity and practicality, for its Nigerianization. Not that it was the first time that a Nigerian politician had tried to instigate improvements. In 1953, Abubakar Imam, a member of the Federal House of Representatives, had raised a motion to establish a Nigeria Office in Jeddah in service of pilgrims.⁶⁴ The motion got adopted, and Imam undertook the hajj that year and submitted an official report to the government on his experience,⁶⁵ which advocated for the appointment of a Nigerian “Pilgrims Commissioner.”⁶⁶ Imam rooted his proposal in comparison, noting that nearly every Muslim country enjoyed a similar representative.⁶⁷ British officials in the Colonial and Foreign Office, as well as the Embassy in Jeddah, responded with sympathy but not urgency, and expressed concern over the costs and optics of having a Nigerian subject posted in what could be perceived as a diplomatic role.⁶⁸ Whether or not this entirely caused the delay, in any case initially nothing happened.⁶⁹ But the demand by Sudan that Nigeria set up a Pilgrim Office in Khartoum combined with the ever-increasing number of Nigerian pilgrims,⁷⁰ changed matters.⁷¹ For one

⁶⁴ Alhaji Abubakar Imam, *The Abubakar Imam Memoirs* (NNPC, 1989), 191.

⁶⁵ Imam, 195–203.

⁶⁶ “From N. B. J. Huijsman, Colonial Office, to W M Hillier-Fry, African Department, Foreign Office,” June 14, 1954, FO 371/110130, Kew Archive.

⁶⁷ Imam, *The Abubakar Imam Memoirs*, 200.

⁶⁸ “From N. B. J. Huijsman, Colonial Office, to R. C. Blackham, Foreign Office,” July 13, 1954, FO 371/110130, Kew Archive; “From Mr. H. Phillips, British Embassy, Jeddah to A. C. I. Samuel, Eastern Department, Foreign Office,” September 8, 1954, FO 371/110130, Kew Archive. Admittedly Huijsman from the Colonial Office actually thought the idea sounded wise, however British officials posed in Nigeria were more cautious, and he willingly ceded to them as experts.

⁶⁹ Ibrahim Kaita, “Letters to the Editor: It’s Your View: Pilgrimage to Mecca,” *Nigerian Citizen*, March 3, 1955.

⁷⁰ “From N. B. J. Huijsman, Colonial Office, to W M Hillier-Fry, African Department, Foreign Office,” June 1, 1954, CO 554/1318: Appointment of a Pilgrim Commissioner for the Welfare of Nigeria Pilgrims to Mecca Via Jeddah, Kew Archive.

⁷¹ Admittedly, more research will be required to make this claim stronger—for now, it is simply clear that attempts by Nigerian politicians to bring about hajj reform only gain traction in 1955. Sudan makes clear its intentions at the very end of 1954.

thing, the colonial state needed current information on the conditions of the hajj.⁷² Meanwhile, the Premier of the Northern Region and Sardauna of Sokoto, Ahmadu Bello, “felt that it was important” for himself and other Muslim elites “as Muslims, to investigate for ourselves” the Nigerian hajj.⁷³ Thus, while three British officials met in Khartoum to negotiate the future terms of the Nigerian hajj in regards to Sudan’s independence, Bello, the Emir of Kano, and Alhaji Musa Gashash, a Northern House of Assembly member involved in the Nigerian Pilgrims Society, departed for Mecca via Libya and Cairo. The trip, sponsored by the Northern Regional government, sparked a fair bit of imperial anxiety and facilitation⁷⁴ and received extensive coverage and praise in newspapers based in North and West.⁷⁵ Significantly, the editorial column of the Lagos-based *Daily Service* claimed that “Nigerian Muslims” would be grateful for Bello

⁷² Ahmadu Bello, *My Life: The Autobiography of Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto* (Cambridge [Eng.]: University Press, 1962), 172. The last report, by C. R. Niven, was from 1949.

⁷³ Bello, 172.

⁷⁴ “From the Colonial Office, to the Foreign Office,” February 25, 1955, FO 371/114903, Kew Archive; “From the Foreign Office to the British Embassy, Jeddah,” March 18, 1955, FO 371/114903, Kew Archive; “Minutes by L S Ross of the Foreign Office,” April 21, 1955, FO 371/114903, Kew Archive; “From the African Department, Foreign Office, to the Chancery, British Embassy, Tripoli,” March 30, 1955, CO 554/1318: Appointment of a Pilgrim Commissioner for the Welfare of Nigeria Pilgrims to Mecca Via Jeddah, Kew Archive. The Chief Secretary’s Office in Lagos, having declared that Ahmadu Bello and the Emir of Kano had “recently shown certain signs which might be interpreted as symptomatic of Anti-British feeling,” caused imperial authorities to worry that this “feeling” might be magnified by contact with officials in Cairo and Saudi Arabia, and moreover, that if they were to meet the King of Saudi Arabia, he might attempt to bribe them. Rather, they wanted to make sure the trip gave the impression that the British were helpful, and instructed officials in Jeddah that “no suspicion whatsoever should fall on the United Kingdom” should a meeting with the Saudi king be preventable. British officials also made to make sure that they enjoyed their visits to Libya and Egypt, as a means of PR for the Empire.

⁷⁵ “Sardauna Goes to Libya on April 15,” *Daily Times*, April 7, 1955; “Sardauna to Go to Mecca,” *Nigerian Citizen*, April 7, 1955; “Sardauna to Interview Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, April 12, 1955; “North Premier Probes Pilgrims’ Problems,” *Daily Times*, April 15, 1955; “Sardauna Leaves for Mecca,” *Daily Times*, April 18, 1955; “Sardauna off to Mecca,” *Daily Service*, April 18, 1955; “Sardauna and Emir Received in Cairo,” *Daily Times*, April 23, 1955; “Sardauna Thanks King of Libya,” *Daily Service*, April 23, 1955; “Talks on Pilgrims’ Problems Begin,” *Daily Times*, April 25, 1955; “Sardauna on Way Home,” *Daily Service*, April 27, 1955; “Sardauna and Party Due Kano Next Saturday: Huge Crowds Cheer Them in Cairo,” *Nigerian Citizen*, April 28, 1955; “Sardauna in Cairo,” *Daily Service*, April 28, 1955; “[Photos],” *Daily Service*, April 29, 1955; “Sardauna Is Due in Kano Today,” *Daily Times*, April 30, 1955; “Sardauna Returns Today,” *Daily Service*, April 30, 1955; “Editorial: The Sardauna’s Mission,” *Daily Service*, May 2, 1955; “My Trip Was a Success,” *Daily Times*, May 2, 1955; Penpusher, “Dots-and-Dashes,” *Daily Service*, May 3, 1955; “North Premier in Tripoli,” *Daily Service*, May 3, 1955; Hadji A F Masha, “Public Opinion: Hard Road to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, May 4, 1955; “We Enjoyed Our Visit to Saudi Arabia, Says Sardauna,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 5, 1955; “Pilgrims’ Plight,” *Daily Times*, May 9, 1955; “Sardauna’s Mission,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 12, 1955; Hadji A F Masha, “Readers’ Views: Nigerian Pilgrims in Mecca,” *Daily Service*, May 16, 1955.

and his mission to Saudi Arabia, since “nobody can be better qualified than the Sardauna” and the Emir of Kano for the task of improving the hajj.⁷⁶ Previously, the term “Nigerian Muslim” was rarely used in the press, and even then, often only in reference to one region of the country.⁷⁷ But the issue of hajj reform, as a concern increasingly viewed as a problem shared by “Nigerian pilgrims,” helped bring the concept of Nigerian *Muslims* into being within the press.⁷⁸

In concrete terms, the main outcome of this initial visit by politicians was to initiate an annual Nigerian hajj mission consisting of welfare agents and medical professionals.⁷⁹ After getting approval from the Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs and verbally agreeing that the posts would carry no diplomatic authority, British officials now conceded the development was unavoidable, and as some admitted, likely even beneficial.⁸⁰ The first hajj mission was an early example of collaboration between the Western and Northern Regional governments, with the

⁷⁶ “Editorial: The Sardauna’s Mission.”

⁷⁷ “New Muslim Body Is Inaugurated in Lagos,” *Daily Times*, June 15, 1948; “Nigerian Student in Cairo,” *Daily Service*, March 5, 1955. For example, in 1948 Alhaji A K Belo, who had spent time in Egypt, formed a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in Lagos with the goal of bringing “Nigerian Muslims into closer contacts with those in Egypt.” However, given that the group never expanded beyond Lagos, its efforts were largely contained to Yoruba Lagosian Muslims. Also in 1955, a Nigerian student studying at Al-Azhar mosque was reported to be the first representative of “Nigerian Muslims” to attend the International Congress of World Muslims, that year held in Karachi.

⁷⁸ “Welfare of Our Pilgrims,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 23, 1955; “Air Pilgrims Leave,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 9, 1951; “Young Zumral Will Keep Layilat Vigil,” *West African Pilot*, June 23, 1952; “Nigerian Pilgrims Are Not Satisfied with Welfare Arrangements: Observations by M Isa Kaita,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 12, 1954; Masha, “Readers’ Views: Nigerian Pilgrims in Mecca”; “Sudan Govt. Investigating Nigerian Pilgrims’ Difficulties,” *Daily Service*, January 17, 1955; Hadji A F Masha, “Public Opinion: View from Readers: The Pilgrimage without Tears,” *Daily Times*, July 4, 1955; “Govt. Appoints Envoys to Assist Nigerian Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, June 22, 1955; “Babatunde Jose Cables--Things Are Better Now than in the Old Days,” *Daily Times*, July 27, 1955; “‘Nigeria House’ for Mecca?,” *Daily Times*, August 30, 1955; “My Mission Opens Road to Welfare of Pilgrims—Alhaji Isa Kaita,” *Daily Times*, September 2, 1955. So too can be said for the term “Nigerian pilgrims,” which also only became common, and increasingly so, in the 1950s.

⁷⁹ “From Mr. H. Phillips, British Embassy, Jeddah to the Foreign Office,” April 30, 1955, FO 371/114903, Kew Archive; Mr. H Phillips, “Record of Conversation [between the Nigerian Mission and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Saudi Arabia] by H. M. Charge d’Affaires, Jeddah,” April 25, 1955, FO 371/114903, Kew Archive. They also tried to negotiate the mutawwif and transport fees, but these proved nonnegotiable. They were however able to register a complaint against the mutawwif assigned to Nigeria, and were assured that in the future he would be more attentive to Nigerian pilgrims.

⁸⁰ “From Mr. H. Phillips, British Embassy, Jeddah to A. C. I. Samuel, Eastern Department, Foreign Office”; “From Mr. H. Phillips, British Embassy, Jeddah to the Foreign Office.” Mr. Phillips, in reflecting on Abubakar Imam’s request for the creation of a Nigerian Pilgrims Commissioner post, remarked that it certainly would help matters, but that his Sudanese clerk of twelve-years employment was sufficient and more cost efficient. After the visit by Bello, the Emir of Kano, and Alhaji Gashash, his position changed.

North nominating two officials to join the one nominated by the West,⁸¹ despite some Northern elites arguing that Yoruba representation was unnecessary.⁸² Alhaji Isa Kaita, the Northern Regional Minister of Works who had published a scathing description his pilgrimage in 1954 in the *Nigerian Citizen*,⁸³ led the mission. The nominee from the West, Alhaji Y. S. Ola Ishola, had likewise publicized his own difficult hajj in 1951.⁸⁴ Additionally, Ahmadu Bello returned with the Emir of Kano to undertake his first hajj in a plane especially chartered for him and other “VIPs,”⁸⁵ which again captured the attention of the Nigerian press.⁸⁶

Among the key recommendations in the 1955 Nigerian Mission’s report, was to establish a Nigeria Office in Jeddah with a rotating staff of dedicated Nigerian welfare and medical officers.⁸⁷ Thus, 1956 saw the culmination of two initiatives to expand the Nigerian hajj bureaucracy, one in Khartoum resulting from Sudan’s independence and one in Jeddah resulting from efforts by Nigerian elites. In both cases, prominent Nigerian Muslims pushed against imperial concerns over diplomatic hierarchy as they sought to Nigerianize the hajj. As for the office in Jeddah, British officials based in Lagos doubted the requested size of the medical team

⁸¹ “From the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos to the Colonial Office, London,” June 17, 1955, FO 371/114903, Kew Archive; “Isa Kaita Leads Muslim Pilgrims,” *Daily Service*, June 25, 1955; “Govt. Appoints Envoys to Assist Nigerian Pilgrims”; Masha, “Public Opinion: View from Readers: The Pilgrimage without Tears.”

⁸² “Note of a Visit to Kaduna by Mr. E J V Williams, Acting Senior Assistant Secretary, External Affairs, on the 20th October to Discuss Arrangements for the 1956 Pilgrimage Arising from a Meeting at Khartoum in April 1955.” In fact, this was voiced by Alhaji Isa Kaita, who would lead the mission. He would, however, later praise the representative from the West.

⁸³ “Nigerian Pilgrims Are Not Satisfied with Welfare Arrangements: Observations by M Isa Kaita.”

⁸⁴ Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 160–61. Ishola, in an interview with Dr. K. K. Oloso, expressed his belief that it was his critical reporting on his 1951 hajj that earned him his nomination.

⁸⁵ “Over 5,000 West African Pilgrims for Mecca,” *Daily Times*, May 30, 1955, 3.

⁸⁶ Aiyekoto, “Comments: ‘Sardauna a Pilgrim’ and ‘First Thing First,’” *Daily Service*, June 30, 1955; “North Leaders Fly to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, July 20, 1955; “Sardauna to Go on Pilgrimage,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 30, 1955; “Sardauna Sees Arrangements for Pilgrims at Kano,” *Nigerian Citizen*, July 14, 1955; “Sardauna and Party Leave on Pilgrimage,” *Nigerian Citizen*, July 21, 1955; “Sardauna Leaves,” *Nigerian Citizen*, July 28, 1955; “Sardauna Returns Tomorrow,” *Daily Times*, August 3, 1955; “Sardauna Returns,” *Daily Times*, August 5, 1955; “[Photo],” *Daily Times*, August 10, 1955.

⁸⁷ Alhaji Isa Kaita, “Report and Account of Stewardship as ‘Pilgrims Representatives’ During the Pilgrimage Season of 1955,” 1955, FO 371/114903, Kew Archive. The other main recommendation that resulted in change was their suggestion that banks ought to issue pilgrims drafts in Saudi riyals rather than British sterling, since Nigerian pilgrims often fell victim to dishonest money changers.

was necessary, and wanted to keep the mission a temporary operation overseen by the British Embassy in Jeddah,⁸⁸ a fact that caused some grumbling in the press.⁸⁹ Meanwhile, imperial officials in the metropole were often more concerned about potential inconvenience for British embassy officials than the wellbeing of pilgrims.⁹⁰ However, visible strains to the colonial hajj bureaucracy again led to further Nigerianization; the volume of work the 1956 mission faced caused British officials in Lagos to change their minds and propose that the Nigeria Office in Jeddah be open year-round.⁹¹

The Khartoum Office, however, took slightly longer to undergo Nigerianization. Initially British officials reasoned that even though it “considered that the post...should in principle be filled by a Nigerian official,” a British Administrative officer with knowledge of the North and Arabic was best for the first year or two. He did however have a Northern Nigerian assistant,⁹² who briefly took over after the 1956 pilgrimage season finished.⁹³ However it was not until June of 1958 that a Nigerian held the post, a fact that incited protests against the efficacy of J. N.

⁸⁸ R. E. Greswell, “Pilgrimage Arrangements, 1955: Record of Discussions at Lagos on 27th May, 1955,” May 30, 1955, Premier’s Office 2/1: AS I/213: Pilgrims Transit Facilities, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “Note of a Visit to Kaduna by Mr. E J V Williams, Acting Senior Assistant Secretary, External Affairs, on the 20th October to Discuss Arrangements for the 1956 Pilgrimage Arising from a Meeting at Khartoum in April 1955”; Kaita, “Report and Account of Stewardship as ‘Pilgrims Representatives’ During the Pilgrimage Season of 1955,” 5. **This is something I need to do more research on**—admittedly, Kaita’s report does recommend it only be opened for three months, but in the notes by E J V Williams a few months previous, he implies this result came out of a fair bit of negotiation between British and Nigerian officials.

⁸⁹ “Nigeria Office in Arabia,” *West African Pilot*, June 2, 1956; “Citizen Post: It’s YOUR Feature and They Are YOUR Views: A Nigerian Should Man Our Jeddah Office,” *Nigerian Citizen*, September 12, 1956.

⁹⁰ “From M G Smith, Colonial Office, to J B Denson, the Foreign Office,” July 25, 1956, CO 554/1318: Appointment of a Pilgrim Commissioner for the Welfare of Nigeria Pilgrims to Mecca Via Jeddah, Kew Archive.

⁹¹ “From E J V Williams, the Chief Secretary’s Office, Nigeria, to W S Ryrie, the Colonial Office, London,” September 22, 1956, CO 554/1318: Appointment of a Pilgrim Commissioner for the Welfare of Nigeria Pilgrims to Mecca Via Jeddah, Kew Archive.

⁹² “From the Government House, Nigeria to Secretary of State for the Colonies, London”; “From the Chief Secretary’s Office, Nigeria, to the Colonial Office, London.” **I need to do more research here**, but based on first letter cited, while it is clear that Nigerian Ministers ultimately signed off on the plan, it does to say whose idea it was that a British official ought to serve the post.

⁹³ “From A.A. Metteden, Nigerian Pilgrim Officer, Khartoum, to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos, Nigeria,” January 5, 1957, Premier’s Office, 2/2: AS IV/141: Nigerian Pilgrim Office in Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

Lawrence, then the Nigerian Pilgrim Officer, by Nigerian politicians and subjects.⁹⁴ And even then, the Foreign Office and British officials within the Khartoum Embassy refused to give the Nigerian officer permission to directly approach the Saudi Ambassador to Sudan, since as one official put it, “once it starts we cannot be sure where it will end.”⁹⁵

The initial missions by these elite Nigerian Muslims proved that, contrary to skepticism by some British officials,⁹⁶ Nigerian officials were more efficient in addressing the needs of pilgrims than the current bureaucratic arrangement, in part because of their intimate relationship with fellow Nigerian Muslims at home and abroad.⁹⁷ For example, in 1956 one hajj agent in Kano petitioned Ahmadu Bello against a more centralized system of passport application on the basis that this would negatively impact women in *purdah* (female seclusion).⁹⁸ While British officials supported centralization, Bello took the issue seriously, and relaxed the restrictions.⁹⁹ Within Saudi Arabia, it took the Nigerian Mission in 1955 to realize that pilgrims would benefit from receiving bank drafts in riyals rather than sterling, thus avoiding predatory money

⁹⁴ “Pilgrim Office,” *West African Pilot*, April 23, 1958, 2; Ahmadu Bello, Emir of Kano, and Minister of Local Government, Western Region, “Nigerian Pilgrim Officer in Khartoum,” 1958, Premier’s Office, 4/1: PM 18/S.7: Pilgrim Affairs Nigeria mission to Saudi Arabia and Sudan, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “From the British Embassy, Khartoum to the Foreign Office,” June 24, 1958, CO 554/1990: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca, Kew Archive.

⁹⁵ “Cypher from Sir E. Chapman Andrews, Khartoum Embassy, to the Foreign Office and Cc’d the African Dept., Eastern Dept and South East Asia Dept.,” June 7, 1958, FO 371/131752, Kew Archive; “Moslem Delegation to Saudi Arabia and the Sudan,” 1958, Premier’s Office, 4/1: PM 18/S.7: Pilgrim Affairs Nigeria mission to Saudi Arabia and Sudan, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “From the British Embassy, Khartoum to the Foreign Office.” Providing further evidence of British colonial reluctance to cede control, the British Ambassador to Sudan reportedly felt the need to tell the Nigerian delegation that visited Khartoum in early 1958 that whoever replaced Lawrence would need to “understudy Mr. Lawrence and not just to come and boss him.”

⁹⁶ “From Mr. H. Phillips, British Embassy, Jeddah to A. C. I. Samuel, Eastern Department, Foreign Office.”

⁹⁷ “Talks on Pilgrims’ Problems Begin,” 6; Kaita, “Report and Account of Stewardship as ‘Pilgrims Representatives’ During the Pilgrimage Season of 1955”; “Babatunde Jose Cables: Just 44 Miles From Mecca,” *Daily Times*, July 7, 1955, 1; “From A.A. Metteden, Nigerian Pilgrim Officer, Khartoum, to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos, Nigeria.” It is worth noting that these the Nigerians of the initial missions and welfare offices spent considerable time interviewing and assisting pilgrims to better understand their problems.

⁹⁸ “Note from Perm Sect to Secretary to the Governor,” May 5, 1956, Premier’s Office 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/223 Pilgrims Passports Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “Handwritten Note to PermSect from M J Bennion,” May 8, 1956, Premier’s Office 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/223 Pilgrims Passports Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “Fom the Permanent Secretary, Kaduna, to the Resident of Kano,” May 9, 1956, Premier’s Office 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/223 Pilgrims Passports Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁹⁹ “Handwritten Note to PermSect from M J Bennion.”

exchangers.¹⁰⁰ The Mission also easily identified several applicants for British passports as Nigerians, whose nationality the British Embassy had been unable to determine.¹⁰¹ Perhaps most impressive, they also successfully negotiated for any pilgrim arriving with less than £50 to be exempted from the *mutawwif* fee.¹⁰² Even if greater sensitivity at times proved insufficient,¹⁰³ Nigerian gratitude for it registered in colonial paperwork—after the 1956 hajj, the British Embassy in Jeddah praised the work of the new Nigeria Office and remarked that Nigerian pilgrims appreciated “that their welfare was being cared for by fellow Muslims.”¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile, the press, particularly papers based in the North, lionized Ahmadu Bello and the Emir of Kano for their efforts, stressing their humbleness—how they slept in the desert one night, set off to Medina “with the minimum necessities of food and water” and were “bareheaded and wearing only the pilgrim’s simple seamless shroud”—and their tenacity for working “tirelessly” with little rest.¹⁰⁵ Though such renouncement of hierarchy is intrinsic to the hajj—male all pilgrims dress identically when in the state of ihram—the sight of ‘big men’ inhabiting the lifestyle of the poor, however temporarily, bolstered their national reputation—a phenomenon enjoyed by generations of Nigerian elites to come.¹⁰⁶ Thus, especially in the age of mass media, even the benefactors of ceremonial classlessness are often those already at the top (at least in Nigeria).

¹⁰⁰ Kaita, “Report and Account of Stewardship as ‘Pilgrims Representatives’ During the Pilgrimage Season of 1955,” 4.

¹⁰¹ Kaita, 7.

¹⁰² “Babatunde Jose Cables: Just 44 Miles From Mecca,” 1.

¹⁰³ Phillips, “Record of Conversation [between the Nigerian Mission and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Saudi Arabia] by H. M. Charge d’Affaires, Jeddah.” For example, Ahmadu Bello protested to the Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs that not all Nigerian pilgrims going by air could be assumed to be wealthy (and thus should potentially be exempt from the hajj taxes), since some passengers may have spent years saving for the cost of the ticket, and with no savings remaining. However the Minister did not budge from his position on this.

¹⁰⁴ “From the British Embassy, Jeddah to Eastern Department, Foreign Office,” August 20, 1956, CO 554/1318: Appointment of a Pilgrim Commissioner for the Welfare of Nigeria Pilgrims to Mecca Via Jedda, Kew Archive.

¹⁰⁵ a Special Correspondent, “Pilgrims Plight Prompted This Flying Visit,” *Nigerian Citizen*, January 11, 1956.

¹⁰⁶ [This might be in an interview I’ve yet to transcribe—know I have a story of a woman tripping over a chief in Mecca and yelling at him]

As the previous example about *pardah* suggests, the initial Nigerianization went hand in hand with a closer relationship between the official government hajj bureaucracy and the alternate hajj run by local agents, particularly in the North. Whereas once hajj agents often helped pilgrims circumvent the colonial state, now they helped pilgrims navigate it. Several of the most prominent Nigerian hajj agents converted their expertise into positions within the official hajj bureaucracy or even went on to get elected into office. From the North, Musa Gashash started as a director of the Nigeria Pilgrim Society in the early 1950s,¹⁰⁷ voluntarily assisted Abubakar Imam on his hajj in 1953,¹⁰⁸ and then, having been elected to the Northern House of Assembly, joined Ahmadu Bello in his fact-finding mission in April, 1955.¹⁰⁹ Haruna Kassim, a well known trader in Kano,¹¹⁰ entered the hajj business as a prominent figure within the Nigeria Pilgrim Society and later as a founding director of Hajair.¹¹¹ Through both ventures he sought government support¹¹² and was likewise sought out by the government for his knowledge of current hajj conditions.¹¹³ From the West, T. S. Calfoes and M. M. Dindey, two prominent Lagosian Muslims,¹¹⁴ served as middlemen on behalf of the West African Airways

¹⁰⁷ C. W. Michie, "Minute Note," October 23, 1952, CSO 26/2: File No. 16652/S.1044: Sheikh Omar Fye, O.B.E., J.P.: Visit of, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "More Air Pilgrims Leave," *Nigerian Citizen*, August 16, 1951, 15.

¹⁰⁸ Imam, *The Abubakar Imam Memoirs*, 198.

¹⁰⁹ Bello, *My Life: The Autobiography of Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sarkauna of Sokoto*, 171.

¹¹⁰ "Alhaji H Kassim Weds Miss Hilma," *Daily Comet*, December 15, 1949, 3.

¹¹¹ "5,000 West African Moslems Will Go on Pilgrimage," 12; "Notes of Meeting Held in the Office of the Minister of Communications and Aviation on the 9th of September, 1955," n.d., WAATA 1/1: ATA 101/3 Vol I: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹¹² "Notes of Meeting Held in the Office of the Minister of Communications and Aviation on the 9th of September, 1955"; Imam, *The Abubakar Imam Memoirs*, 192.

¹¹³ "Nigerian Pilgrims Are Not Satisfied with Welfare Arrangements: Observations by M Isa Kaita," 5; "Note from [Unknown] to AS (PM)," December 14, 1956, Premier's Office, 2/2: AS IV/141: Nigerian Pilgrim Office in Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹¹⁴ "Muhammed Mudashiru Dindey Names His New Born Babe," *West African Pilot*, August 25, 1950, 3; "Alhaji A T S Calfoes Will Arrive next Sunday," *Daily Comet*, February 20, 1945, 1; "Five Alhujaj Return from Mecca and Medina," *Daily Comet*, February 23, 1945, 1; "Alhaji A T S Calfoes Will Arrive next Sunday," 1. Alhaji Calfoes was, like many agents, originally a trader before becoming a hajj agent. He was also a member of the Islamic

Corporation (WAAC), preparing passport applications (and their official Arabic translations) and facilitating inoculations.¹¹⁵ And Y. O. Salawu, a prominent member of the pilgrim society *Zumratul Hujaj* (which also made travel arrangements), was appointed by the Prime Minister to be the deputy leader for official hajj operations in 1959.¹¹⁶ While it would not be long before Nigerianization of the hajj led to its centralization, which largely squeezed agents out (see Chapter 3), for now the relationship between government and agents was largely copacetic, though, as will be discussed towards the end of this chapter, the government did begin to regulate agents by the mid-1950s.

Pious Reputations and the Sartorial

At the moment of Sudan's independence, there was a growing sense among Nigerians that effective hajj reform would hinge on their ability to engage in diplomacy and resuscitate their image within Saudi Arabia. Such optics concerned the Nigerian hajj bureaucracy and individual pilgrims. Among the elite, Isa Kaita clearly stated this sentiment to a British official when he explained to him "how important it was that the King of Saudi Arabia and other important persons should see that there was a Nigerian of high standing leading the pilgrimage each year."¹¹⁷ Ordinary Nigerians agreed. One editorial, after recalling that "the traditional Middle Eastern view of Nigeria has been at best, that it is a source of cheap labor and, at worst, the traditional supplier of slaves," suggested that one benefit of a Nigerian "with some

Society of Nigeria, the Muslim Cricket Club, and *Zumratul Hujaj*. Less is known of Alhaji Dindey, but he was an Arabic teacher who provided the needed Arabic translations of the English sections of the pilgrim passports.

¹¹⁵ "From West African Airways Corporation (WAAC) to the Commissioner of the Colony, Lagos," June 8, 1953, ComCol I, 235 Vol. III, Pilgrimage to Mecca 1937-1955, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the Administrator of the Colony to the Civil Secretary, Western Region," August 6, 1953, ComCol I, 235 Vol. III, Pilgrimage to Mecca 1937-1955, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹¹⁶ "Govt. Appoints Leader for Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, May 21, 1959, 6.

¹¹⁷ "Note of a Visit to Kaduna by Mr. E J V Williams, Acting Senior Assistant Secretary, External Affairs, on the 20th October to Discuss Arrangements for the 1956 Pilgrimage Arising from a Meeting at Khartoum in April 1955," 5.

diplomatic status” in Jeddah would be that he could “be able to make Nigeria...known to the local people” and thus “the knowledge and prestige of Nigeria would be greatly enhanced.”¹¹⁸ Concerns for national reputation at times gave way to calls for reform—one op-ed writer, responding to reporting on stranded pilgrims, argued that the government should be stricter about who got a passport, since “our passport in the hands of a stranded pilgrim only helps to ridicule our country.”¹¹⁹ As will be clear in later chapters, this concern over the link between pilgrim behavior and national reputation would endure.

If some pilgrim behavior threatened the prestige of hajj, Nigerian Muslims (and even many Christians) still widely perceived its completion as a mark of honor.¹²⁰ Affirming this prestige, as the hajj Nigerianized, the political elite linked themselves to its undertaking in the public sphere. Starting at the end of the 1940s when air travel allowed elites to leave their duties for weeks rather than months (or even years) to complete the hajj, many took advantage of this new possibility, and the press began to frequently report the departure and arrival of politicians and traditional authorities.¹²¹ At the same time, a new aesthetic of power among politicians emerged. The entanglement of these developments was made explicit when each member of the first official Nigerian Mission to Saudi Arabia in 1956 received from King Saud a “complete

¹¹⁸ “Pilgrims’ Plight.”

¹¹⁹ “Soapbox: It Is the Voice of the People: Bring Our Brothers from Mecca,” *Daily Times*, August 7, 1955, 6.

¹²⁰ “W.A.A.C. Certificate for Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, September 2, 1953, 11; “From the Nigerian Pilgrim Society Ltd, Kano to the Regional Public Relations Office, Kaduna,” October 23, 1952, Min of Info, PRE/40 Vol I: Pilgrimage To Mecca, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. Besides the fact that Nigerians marked the return of pilgrims with great celebration, another bit of evidence of this is the fact that when WAAC began issuing certificates of completion to all pilgrim, the Nigerian Pilgrim Society quickly requested permission from the government to issue similar paperwork.

¹²¹ “Pilgrims Return to Kano,” *Daily Times*, October 29, 1949, 3; “Shehu of Bornu Welcomes Alafin of Oyo Going to Mecca,” *West African Pilot*, October 12, 1950, 4; “Emir of Kano to Fly to Mecca,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 23, 1951, 1; “Emir of Kano Returns,” *Nigerian Citizen*, September 27, 1951, 15; “Emir of Kano to Leave for Mecca,” *Daily Comet*, August 30, 1951, 1; “Chief Scribe Ahman Returns from Mecca,” *West African Pilot*, November 8, 1952, 3; “Chief Rabi Iyalode Back from Mecca,” *Daily Times*, October 21, 1952, 6; “Holy Land Pilgrims Will Be a Record,” 1; “Off to Mecca,” August 4, 1952, 6; “Bale Leaves for Mecca,” *Daily Times*, July 24, 1953, 3; “Bale of Ipaja Honored on Return from Mecca,” *Daily Times*, October 27, 1953, 9; “Hausa Chief Goes on Pilgrimage,” *Daily Times*, September 6, 1954, 9; “Maiduguri Highlights: Warm Welcome,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 11, 1955, 9; “These Items Made News in the Northern Region: Gwandu,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 25, 1955, 12.

Saudi outfit comprising of 'iqāl...the black coil worn on the head by Saudi nobles.’¹²² While the exact time the practice started is unclear, Nigerian pilgrims had been dressing like Saudi royalty since at least the 1940s. If newspaper evidence is any indication, from the 1940s through 1954, the practice was most common among Muslim elites, though occasionally regular Muslims wore the ensemble.¹²³ Though depictions of men sporting Saudi styles were more common, women too dressed akin to Saudi royal men,¹²⁴ a fact which at least in one case was used to argue that women ought to be allowed to wear other forms of male dress.¹²⁵ Initially less common than regular Nigerians in Meccan garb was the sight of a politician in it, and even then it appears to have been almost exclusively done by members of the Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC).¹²⁶ However, starting in 1955 more politicians began to don this distinctive attire,¹²⁷ as well as Nigerian welfare and medical officers in the government missions.¹²⁸ This visible link between the prestige of the alhaji title and political authority greatly increased as the decade progressed [see Figure 1], not only in the North¹²⁹ but also in the Western Region.¹³⁰ This occurred in a

¹²² Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 164. Additionally, in a bit of unbridled egotism, each received a wristwatch featuring the king’s photograph.

¹²³ “Alhaji Garba Served 30yrs Without Break,” *Daily Comet*, December 16, 1949, 1.

¹²⁴ “[Obit],” *West African Pilot*, December 11, 1951, 4; “Chief Rabi Iyalode Back from Mecca,” 6; “[Photo],” *Daily Times*, October 13, 1954, 9; “Alhaji Weds Alhaja,” *Daily Times*, October 31, 1954, 7; “[Photo],” August 15, 1956, 7.

¹²⁵ “Letters in Brief: Idirisu Maigano of Zaria,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 22, 1956, 4.

¹²⁶ “Alhaji Sanda Na Alhaji,” *Daily Comet*, December 28, 1949, 1; “[Ad],” *West African Pilot*, January 28, 1950, 3; “Eid-UI-Kabir Messages,” *Daily Times*, August 10, 1954, 6–7.

¹²⁷ “Federal Govt. Faces Crisis,” *Daily Times*, August 18, 1955, 1; “In Parliament This Week,” *Daily Times*, August 21, 1955, 8–9; “[Photo],” *Daily Times*, November 3, 1955, 12.

¹²⁸ “Dr. Salawu Returns,” *Daily Times*, August 24, 1956, 6; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 18, 1957, 1.

¹²⁹ “Makurdi’s New Councillors Accept New Responsibilities,” *Nigerian Citizen*, January 18, 1956, 1; “NPC Still to Decide on SG,” *Daily Times*, April 11, 1956, 1; “District News in Brief,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 2, 1956, 4; “North House to Be Dissolved This Year,” *Daily Times*, June 7, 1956, 1; “Sardauna Urges Leaders to Fear God,” *Daily Times*, June 30, 1956, 2; “Northern Officials in United Kingdom,” *Daily Times*, July 5, 1956, 8; “[Photo],” *Daily Times*, August 4, 1956, 8; “Northern House to Be Dissolved on Monday,” *Daily Times*, August 25, 1956, 1; “‘Big Three’ Meet in London Today,” *Daily Times*, May 21, 1957, 1; “Big Reception for Our Delegates,” *Daily Times*, May 27, 1957, 6–7; “Nigeria’s First Prime Minister,” *Daily Times*, August 31, 1957, 1; “Record Crowd Cheers the Prime Minister,” *Daily Times*, September 3, 1957, 1; “Distinguished Guests Greet Prime Minister,” *Daily Times*, September 3, 1957, 8–9; “[Photo],” *Western News*, September 11, 1957, 1; Ayo, “Accent on Kaduna,” *Nigerian Citizen*, September 25, 1957, 6; “New Private Secretary for Ribadu,” *West African Pilot*, February 6, 1958, 1; “[Photo],” *West African Pilot*, February 7, 1958, 1; “[Photo],” *West African Pilot*, March 21, 1958, 3;

number of contexts where previously either suits or so-called “native attire” would have been the dress code; carrying out official government business,¹³¹ political party organizing,¹³² and in the stock images paired with news articles.¹³³ And when Alhaji Adegoke Adelabu, the opposition leader in the Western House of Assembly, died in 1958, the press ran with images of him in what by then could perhaps be considered the Mecca uniform,¹³⁴ and a commemorative cloth design honored him with a similar depiction.¹³⁵ Complementing this visual display, several politicians

“Ranka....De....De....,” *West African Pilot*, May 28, 1958, 3; “Independence in 1960: Abubakar’s Recipe,” *Daily Times*, January 2, 1958, 1; “Nigerian Conference Beginning Today,” *Daily Times*, September 29, 1958, 1; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 4, 1958, 1; “News in Brief: Keffi,” *Nigerian Citizen*, July 12, 1958, 10; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 27, 1958, 7; “It Is Visiting Day for Our Delegates,” *Nigerian Citizen*, October 25, 1958, 7; “Dr. Kwame Nkrumah Visits Kaduna Textile Factory,” *Daily Times*, January 31, 1959, 8–9; “Sardauna Addresses Red Cross Society,” *Daily Times*, July 6, 1959, 3; “Prime Minister’s Farewell Remarks,” *Daily Times*, August 18, 1959, 16; “Sardauna Back from Ghana Today,” *Daily Times*, September 29, 1959, 1.

¹³⁰ “[Photo],” *Daily Times*, October 2, 1957, 1; “Western House Meets,” *Daily Times*, October 2, 1957, 8–9; “NCNC and NEPU Hold Procession,” *Daily Times*, October 2, 1957, 8; “Adelabu Challenges West Govt. on Rights of Obas,” *Daily Times*, October 3, 1957, 1; “[Photo],” *Daily Times*, October 3, 1957, 6; “Adelabu Denounces National Govt.,” *Daily Times*, October 12, 1957, 1; “Foot Seeks Wider Powers for Minorities Commission,” *Daily Times*, November 30, 1957, 1; “Minorities Commission in Pictures,” *Daily Times*, December 2, 1957, 12–13; “Minister Prays in Mosque,” *Daily Times*, December 7, 1957, 9; “Party Offices Are Not Hereditary: Adelabu,” *West African Pilot*, March 4, 1958, 1; “[Photo],” *West African Pilot*, March 4, 1958, 4; “Over 200,000 Sob as Adelabu Was Laid to Rest,” *West African Pilot*, March 27, 1958, 1; “[Photo],” February 7, 1958, 1; “‘British Created Minority Problem’ Ex-Alafin, Adelabu Testify at Inquiry,” *Daily Times*, January 3, 1958, 1; “Western House in Pictures,” *Daily Times*, March 15, 1958, 8; “[Photo],” *Daily Times*, March 27, 1958, 4; “[Ad],” *Daily Times*, April 8, 1959, 2; “Adegoke Adelabu Is Remembered Today,” *West African Pilot*, March 25, 1959, 1.

¹³¹ “Federal Govt. Faces Crisis,” 1; “In Parliament This Week,” 8–9; “Makurdi’s New Councillors Accept New Responsibilities,” 1; “Northern Officials in United Kingdom,” 8; “[Photo],” August 4, 1956, 8; “Northern House to Be Dissolved on Monday,” 1; “‘Big Three’ Meet in London Today,” 1; “Big Reception for Our Delegates,” 6–7; “Nigeria’s First Prime Minister,” 1; “Record Crowd Cheers the Prime Minister,” 1; “Distinguished Guests Greet Prime Minister,” 8; “[Photo],” September 11, 1957; “Western House Meets,” 8; “NCNC and NEPU Hold Procession,” 8; “Adelabu Challenges West Govt. on Rights of Obas,” 1; “Foot Seeks Wider Powers for Minorities Commission,” 1; “Minorities Commission in Pictures,” 12–13; “Minister Prays in Mosque,” 9; “New Private Secretary for Ribadu,” 1; “[Photo],” February 7, 1958, 1; “[Photo],” March 21, 1958, 3; “[Photo],” February 7, 1958, 1; “Ranka....De....De....,” 3; “Independence in 1960: Abubakar’s Recipe,” 1; “‘British Created Minority Problem’ Ex-Alafin, Adelabu Testify at Inquiry,” 1; “Western House in Pictures,” 8; “[Photo],” June 4, 1958, 1; “News in Brief: Keffi,” 10; “[Photo],” August 27, 1958, 7; “It Is Visiting Day for Our Delegates,” 7; “Dr. Kwame Nkrumah Visits Kaduna Textile Factory,” 8; “Sardauna Addresses Red Cross Society,” 3; “Prime Minister’s Farewell Remarks,” 16; “Sardauna Back from Ghana Today,” 1.

¹³² “[Photo],” November 3, 1955, 12; “District News in Brief,” 4; “NCNC and NEPU Hold Procession,” 8; “[Photo],” October 3, 1957, 6; “Party Offices Are Not Hereditary: Adelabu,” 1; “[Photo],” March 4, 1958, 4.

¹³³ “NPC Still to Decide on SG,” 1; “North House to Be Dissolved This Year,” 1; “Sardauna Urges Leaders to Fear God,” 2; “Northern House to Be Dissolved on Monday,” 1; “‘Big Three’ Meet in London Today,” 1; “Adelabu Denounces National Govt.,” 1; “Nigerian Conference Beginning Today,” 1.

¹³⁴ “Over 200,000 Sob as Adelabu Was Laid to Rest,” 1; “[Photo],” February 7, 1958, 1; “Adegoke Adelabu Is Remembered Today,” 1.

¹³⁵ “[Ad],” April 8, 1959, 2.

declared that the hajj, as a source of moral of uplift, improved their ability (and those of others) to govern, with Ahmadu Bello even going so far as to sponsor Adelabu's hajj in 1957.¹³⁶

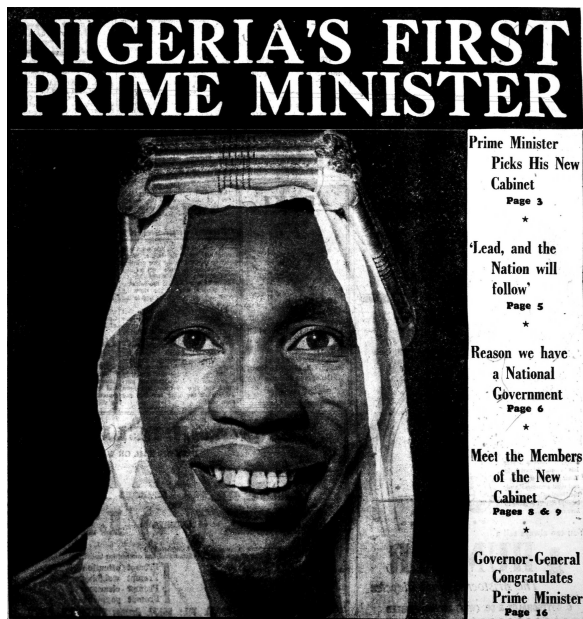


Figure 1. Front Page of the *Daily Times*, August 31, 1957¹³⁷

The 1950s also marked the first time that the practice sparked discussion and concerns over its authenticity. When a Yoruba journalist from Lagos undertook the hajj via Kano in 1955, he reported on how he was “amazed” when he spotted a hawker outside the Airways Office selling the “Mokawiya (popularly regarded as the official headgear of Alhajis).” He explained this was because “Since my childhood, it had been impressed upon me that any person who wore the 'Mokawiya' without having performed the pilgrimage would suffer acute headache until death overtook him.”¹³⁸ Two years later, a journalist based in the North accused people who put on “Mecca Wears” without having gone to Mecca as being “supremely irresponsible,” and the

¹³⁶ “Waziri Says Mecca Symbolizes Moslem Unity,” *Daily Times*, August 23, 1955, 1; “Sardauna Urges Leaders to Fear God,” 2; “Leaders Urged to Keep up the Spirit of Mecca,” *Daily Times*, July 18, 1957, 2; Babatunde Jose, “My Friend, Adelabu,” *Daily Times*, March 27, 1958, 5; Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba* / David D. Laitin., 131. To this, Laitin adds that at the time of his hajj, Adelabu was in a weakened position, and aimed to revive his political career through becoming an alhaji.

¹³⁷ “Nigeria’s First Prime Minister,” 1.

¹³⁸ Babatunde Jose, “Traders, Farmers, Students and Lame Man for Jedda,” *Daily Times*, July 5, 1955, 1.

type of person “you see in the pubs.”¹³⁹ Given the mythical threat (at least among Yoruba Muslims), the concern over limiting the use of the Mecca uniform to bonafide pilgrims was at least decades old; what was new was its dismissal. Still, compared to the mid-1960s and onward, the Mecca uniform in the 1950s retained its prestige.

Hajj Reform and Nationalism in the Western Region

Thus far, I have been focusing on efforts to reform the hajj at either the Federal level or in the Northern Region. The impression of non-involvement (or even, irrelevance) of Yoruba Muslims in the Western Region was occasionally voiced by Northern politicians and newspapers.¹⁴⁰ Of course, Northern leaders like Ahmadu Bello and the Emir of Kano, played a crucial role in the early phase of Nigerianization of the hajj. Yet Yoruba Muslims—clerics, politicians, hajj agents, and journalists—actively sought to collaborate with Northern efforts, or acted autonomously. This section will narrow in geographic scale to examine how Muslim engagement with politics in the Western Region catalyzed around the hajj, as well as sought to build ties with their coreligionists in the North.

In the Western Region, Islamic associational life instigated the Nigerianization of hajj bureaucracy as more Muslim horizons (or at least desires) expanded to include the Middle East, desires which influenced the evolution of Muslim party politics. As discussed in the previous chapter, the earliest attempts by Yoruba Nigerians to reform the hajj began in the 1940s and

¹³⁹ “Accent on Kaduna,” 6.

¹⁴⁰ “Note of a Visit to Kaduna by Mr. E J V Williams, Acting Senior Assistant Secretary, External Affairs, on the 20th October to Discuss Arrangements for the 1956 Pilgrimage Arising from a Meeting at Khartoum in April 1955”; a Special Correspondent, “Pilgrims Plight Prompted This Flying Visit”; Kaita, “Letters to the Editor: It’s Your View: Pilgrimage to Mecca”; “Arrangements Made for Welfare of Nigerian Pilgrims,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 23, 1955. While at times explicit, such as Isa Kaita’s claim the Western Region need not send a representative as part of the Federal hajj delegation, other times this was more implicit, with articles giving all credit to Ahmadu Bello for hajj reform efforts by the Federal Government.

came from local organizations for pilgrims within and outside Nigeria. These efforts continued in the 1950s. Zumratul Hujaj, the society that (unsuccessfully) petitioned the colonial government in 1941 to allow them to be the arbiter of who received a hajj passport, in 1952 held a fundraiser to build a hostel in Sudan for Nigerian pilgrims.¹⁴¹ Alhaji Y. S. Ola Ishola, the Western Region governmental nominee to join the official welfare mission in 1955 had served as the groups' secretary and president.¹⁴² In the late 1940s, two organizations with global agendas began in the West. One was the Society for Promoting Muslim Knowledge (SPMK), formed in 1947 in Lagos by Mr. M R B Ottun,¹⁴³ someone who had been formally pursuing the growth of Islam and education in the West since the early 1930s.¹⁴⁴ While initially the SPMK's efforts to foster ties with the Middle East centered on securing scholarships for Nigerians to study in Cairo (which the colonial state actively fought),¹⁴⁵ in the 1950s they began representing the concerns of pilgrims as well.¹⁴⁶ Meanwhile the Muslim Congress began in 1948 in Ijebu-Ode, founded by Alhaji Mohammad Effendi al-Amin with the expressed goals of uniting Muslims across all of Nigeria, strengthening ties with other Muslim countries, and building a hotel in Jeddah for Nigerians.¹⁴⁷ Their meetings over the next couple of years reflected these original goals: though held in the West, all Northern Emirs and titled rulers routinely received invitations,¹⁴⁸ they set

¹⁴¹ "Young Zumral Will Keep Layilat Vigil," 1.

¹⁴² Zumratul Hujaj Group Interview in Ibadan, Nigeria.

¹⁴³ "The Society for Promoting Muslim Knowledge," *The Yoruba News*, April 26, 1947, 1.

¹⁴⁴ "Young Muslim Society: First Anniversary Celebration: (Concluded from Saturday's Issue)," *Daily Times*, December 19, 1933, 3.

¹⁴⁵ T. I. Lawal, "Nigerian Muslims Are Determined to Improve," *Daily Times*, July 16, 1948, 4, 8; "Government Refuses Passport to Muslims for Study in Egypt," *West African Pilot*, May 16, 1952, 1.

¹⁴⁶ "Government Protection For Pilgrims to Mecca Sought," *West African Pilot*, November 24, 1952, 1.

¹⁴⁷ "Egyptian Founds Congress to Merge Islamic Elements of Nigeria," *Daily Comet*, May 7, 1948, 1.

¹⁴⁸ "Muslim Congress of Nigeria Propose First Annual Parley: Alafin in Favor," *Southern Nigeria Defender*, July 27, 1948, 1; "Muslims Will Hold Congress at Oyo," *Daily Comet*, December 16, 1948, 1; "Muslims Will Meet to Probe Problems," *Daily Comet*, July 30, 1949, 4.

Eid dates according to Egypt,¹⁴⁹ and discussed scholarships for study in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, hotels for pilgrims and the need for Nigerian representation in Jeddah.¹⁵⁰ And they printed and distributed pamphlets about the hajj to educate intending pilgrims.¹⁵¹ Though one newspaper reported al-Amin as Egyptian, this appears to have been a miss-identification, whether because of the Turkish “Effendi” title or the number of his contacts in Cairo, both a result of his eighteen-month overland hajj between 1945-47.¹⁵² Though neither group evolved into a political party, both tussled with the colonial state over their plans to send Nigerian students to Egypt, and to uplift their co-religionists both sought and secured support and guidance outside the colonial state, which they viewed as having failed the Muslim population in comparison to their Christian peers.¹⁵³ One striking example is al-Amin’s visit to Egypt in 1953, to study the “organization of government...to adopt a similar system” in Nigeria, in addition to studying Egyptian education methods and securing sixteen scholarships for Nigerians from the Egyptian government.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ “Muslim Congress Fixes Id-Il-Fitr,” *Daily Comet*, July 20, 1949, 1.

¹⁵⁰ “Muslim Congress of Nigeria Propose First Annual Parley: Alafin in Favor,” 1; “Muslims Will Meet to Probe Problems,” 4.

¹⁵¹ “Note on Muslim Congress of Nigeria [n.d. but Based on Nearby File Contents, Likely 1950],” n.d., CO 583/316/10: Moselm Affairs, Kew Archive.

¹⁵² “Egyptian Founds Congress to Merge Islamic Elements of Nigeria,” 1; “From Hadji Muhammed Effendi El-Amin Kudaisi & Co, Import --Export & Commission Agent, Ijebu-Ode to the Public Relation Officer, Lagos,” July 21, 1947, ComCol 9/3, CRBD/P/24, Hadji Muhammed Effendi El-Amin Kudaisi & Co., Application From., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Note on Muslim Congress of Nigeria [n.d. but Based on Nearby File Contents, Likely 1950]”; the Nigerian Secretariat, “A Note on Islam in the Western Region of Nigeria [n.d. but Likely 1952 or 1953 Based on Nearby Documents in the File],” n.d., CO 554/744: Muslim Influence and Problems in Nigeria, Kew Archive; “From Hadji Muhammed El-Amin El-Kudaisi to the Chief Secretary’s Office,” November 11, 1955, CSO 26/3: File No. 23178/S.92: Hadji Muhammed El-Amin el-Kudaisi: Petition for Free Pardon., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. Due to various imperial anxieties, various officials looked into Al-Amin, but none of the colonial reports mention him being Egyptian, which were it true, would have been of concern to the colonial state. Additionally, in his letter asking for a formal pardon from the Queen of England in 1955 for a previous forgery conviction, it is revealed that he joined the P&T department in 1922

¹⁵³ “From the Royal Egyptian Embassy to the Foreign Office,” June 20, 1950, FO 371/80201, Kew Archive; “Extract from Nigeria PIS,” 1951, CO 554/520, Kew Archive; “Savinggram from the Government of Nigeria to the Secretary of State, London,” August 25, 1951, CO 554/520, Kew Archive; the Nigerian Secretariat, “A Note on Islam in the Western Region of Nigeria [n.d. but Likely 1952 or 1953 Based on Nearby Documents in the File]”; “Egyptian Varsities Have World Wide Recognition,” *Daily Comet*, November 9, 1951, 1; “Moslem Congress Will Not Contest Federal Election,” *Daily Times*, October 20, 1954, 1; “From British Embassy, Cairo to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” February 2, 1954, FO 371/108566, Kew Archive.

¹⁵⁴ “From British Embassy, Cairo to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos.”

Then in 1953 the United Muslim Party (UMP), which like the SPMK was founded by M. R. B. Ottun, marked the first formal Islamic political party based in the West. It quickly found support from Muslim elites who felt disenfranchised by “the ‘discriminatory attitude of Christian politicians in the West.’”¹⁵⁵ Initially, it focused on galvanizing Nigerian Muslims to work towards closing the opportunity gap between Muslims and Christians in terms of education and threatened that it would not support self-rule in 1956 if improvements did not follow.¹⁵⁶ The UMP resembled recent Islamic associations in terms of its outreach to other parts of the Muslim world in trying to secure scholarships for Nigerians to study abroad and by inviting foreign Muslims to participate in their programming.¹⁵⁷ However, the UMP stood out for its willingness to work through the current system, evidenced by its volume of direct appeals to the colonial state. Besides education,¹⁵⁸ other sources of prejudice against Muslims that it tackled early on included the lack of representation of Islam in official government ceremonies¹⁵⁹ and parity of Islamic programming on the Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS),¹⁶⁰ the latter of which found

¹⁵⁵ “Moslems Threaten Not to Support Self-Rule in 1956,” *Daily Times*, August 14, 1953, 3. This quote comes from Chief Imam Y P O Shodinde.

¹⁵⁶ “Moslems Threaten Not to Support Self-Rule in 1956,” 3; “Moslems to Meet on Demand for Recognition,” *Daily Times*, August 7, 1953, 9.

¹⁵⁷ “Resolution on Muslim Education in Nigeria, Sent to the Ministry of Education in Western, Eastern, and Northern Regions, the Central Minister of Education in Lagos, the Chief Secretary’s Office, Daily Service, Daily Times, Daily Success, West African Pilot,” February 1, 1954, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the United Muslim Party to the Chief Secretary’s Office,” June 10, 1954, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁵⁸ “Moslems to Meet on Demand for Recognition,” 9; “Moslem Party Wants Schools Attached to Mosques,” *Daily Times*, February 1, 1954, 1; “Resolution on Muslim Education in Nigeria, Sent to the Ministry of Education in Western, Eastern, and Northern Regions, the Central Minister of Education in Lagos, the Chief Secretary’s Office, Daily Service, Daily Times, Daily Success, West African Pilot”; “From the United Muslim Party to the Minister for Education, Western Region,” March 10, 1954, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the United Muslim Party to the Central Minister of Education,” April 29, 1954, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁵⁹ “Moslem Party on State Services,” *Daily Times*, August 31, 1954, 2; “From the United Muslim Party to the Chief Secretary’s Office,” August 18, 1954, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁶⁰ “United Muslim Party Protests to Govt [Clipping],” *West African Pilot*, October 8, 1954, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From the United Muslim Party to the Chief

notable support within the editorial pages of newspapers based in the West.¹⁶¹ The UMP also soon announced that it would contest in the Federal 1956 elections in Lagos.¹⁶² The backlash against the UMP was swift, and like the UMP's own rhetoric, it leaned on global reference points. Some critics balked against what they saw as an attempt to make Nigeria a religious state, citing the partition of India as a troubling precedent.¹⁶³ An attempt to collect election campaign funds at the Lagos Central Mosque in 1954 sparked protests and raised voices among Muslims with different political allegiances.¹⁶⁴ Still, even those that largely dismissed the UMP judged their ability to make trouble too risky to ignore.¹⁶⁵

In terms of the hajj, 1955 proved a pivotal year for its politicization in the West. Evidencing the UMP's global outlook, in 1955 they visited the Chief Secretary's Office in Lagos to express their concern over a report they had read in a Sudanese newspaper about the changes Sudan planned to impose after their independence against Nigerian pilgrims.¹⁶⁶ In the realm of regional politics, the disposition of the Alafin of Oyo in 1954 gave way to a sense that the ability of Yoruba Muslims to take pride in their alhaji status was under attack from the AG. Though the

Secretary's Office," September 17, 1954, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁶¹ "Public Opinion: Views from Readers: Introducing Moslem Friday Prayer," *Daily Times*, October 14, 1953, 2; "Public Opinion: Views from Readers: N.B.S. Unfair to Moslems," *Daily Times*, September 8, 1954, 4; "Public Opinon: Increase Time for Moslem Sermon," *Daily Times*, December 23, 1955, 4; R. Abolabi Sule, "Letters to the Editor: By What Standard?," *Daily Service*, January 1, 1955, 4; B. Y. Babs Adele, "Public Opinion: More N.B.S. Time for Moslems," *Daily Times*, May 6, 1955, 4.

¹⁶² "Moslems to Contest in Lagos," *Daily Times*, November 4, 1954, 1; "Manifesto of the UMP," *Daily Times*, November 4, 1954, 6.

¹⁶³ "Countries Not Run on Religious Basis," *Daily Times*, August 11, 1954, 12; "Need for Religious Tolerance [Clipping]," *West African Pilot*, October 11, 1954, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁶⁴ "Election Campaign in Lagos Mosque," *Daily Times*, November 20, 1954, 6.

¹⁶⁵ Leslie Perowne, "Letter to the Editor[Clipping]," *West African Pilot*, October 12, 1954, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the Nigerian Broadcasting Service, Leslie Perowne, Controller (National Programme), to the Chief Secretary's Office," October 12, 1954, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. Though NBS did not feel that UMP represented the Muslim majority (which was likely true), they still felt it best to take the time to address in the press the complaint against them.

¹⁶⁶ "Sudan Govt. Investigating Nigerian Pilgrims' Difficulties," 3.

conflict between the Alafin and Chief Awolowo, resulting first in a salary reduction and then his removal, was mostly the result of intra-Yoruba tensions,¹⁶⁷ because the Alafin was Muslim and an alhaji, several Muslim groups (including Zumratul Hujaj) interpreted the event as one more indication of the AG's hostility towards Islam and actively came to his aid.¹⁶⁸ The Muslim Central Council in Lagos even went so far as to command Muslims to disengage from any organization that supported the ex-Alafin's continued exile.¹⁶⁹

While it should be noted that not all Muslims agreed,¹⁷⁰ the interpretation that religion impacted the Alafin's dismissal was not entirely speculative; for while politicians throughout Nigeria and traditional rulers in the North increasingly donned the Mecca uniform, the Alafin's change in dress after his hajj in 1950 sparked condemnation. Awolowo had allegedly "rebuked" the Alafin when he attended a meeting of Obas wearing the Mokawiya,¹⁷¹ and in 1953 the government demanded that the Alafin only wear an Islamic headdress when "attending a Muslim function."¹⁷² At the root of the disagreement lay two diverging views on the separation of

¹⁶⁷ "From the Resident, Oyo Province, to the Secretary for the Western Region, Ibadan," November 2, 1953, OYO PROF 1, File No. 6054 Vol I: Disturbances in Oyo, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Typed Note by the Resident, Oyo Province," 1953, OYO PROF 1, File No. 6054 Vol I: Disturbances in Oyo, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba* / David D. Laitin., 155.

¹⁶⁸ "Resolution Passed at an All-Muslim Mass Meeting Held under the Auspices of the Muslim Welfare Association, Sent to the Lieutenant-Governor, Western Region," May 27, 1953, OYO PROF 1, File No. 6054 Vol I: Disturbances in Oyo, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "Moslems Intervene in Alafin's Case," *Daily Times*, September 24, 1954, 1, 16; "Moslem Council Gives Ultimatum for Alafin's Release from Exile," *Daily Times*, June 3, 1955, 1; "Moslem Congress Demands Return of Exiled Alafin," *Daily Times*, November 18, 1955, 16; "Alhajis to Meet over Ex-Alafin," *West African Pilot*, July 19, 1956, 1; "Moslems Appeal for Return of Alafin," *Daily Times*, May 16, 1956, 1; "Moslems Carry Alafin Issue to London," *Daily Times*, August 3, 1956, 12; "Alafin of Oyo Issue: Moslems Plan 15-Man Delegation to UK," *Daily Times*, August 21, 1956, 16.

¹⁶⁹ Kenneth W. J. Post and George D. Jenkins, *The Price of Liberty: Personality and Politics in Colonial Nigeria* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 396.

¹⁷⁰ "Moslems Urge Restraint in Alafin Issue," *Daily Times*, September 20, 1954, 1; "'Moslem Council' Is Disclaimed," *Daily Service*, June 4, 1955, 1; "Moslem Congress Denounce Activities of Moslem Council," *Daily Service*, June 8, 1955, 15; "Religion and Politics," *Daily Service*, June 4, 1955, 4; "Oyo Moslems Split over Alafin Issue," *Daily Times*, July 20, 1956, 3.

¹⁷¹ Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Orisa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, 161.

¹⁷² "Resolution Passed at an All-Muslim Mass Meeting Helder under the Auspices of the Muslim Welfare Association, Sent to the Lieutenant-Governor, Western Region."

religion and politics. While colonial officials felt the two never overlapped,¹⁷³ the Muslim Welfare Association of Nigeria retorted that this “definition of religious and political functions” was “not acceptable to the Muslim Community.”¹⁷⁴ In a plea for his restoration two years later, the UMP similarly lamented the prejudice against the Alafin for “wearing a turban or the Meccan pilgrim head-dress,”¹⁷⁵ and memories by current elderly members of the Zumratul Hujaj branch in Ibadan continue to emphasize this sartorial censure.¹⁷⁶ In response, the hajj and Mecca became a symbol and an idiom of defiance during the inquiry into the riots that broke out amid the tensions surrounding the Alafin’s removal. The Alafin himself appeared in the courtroom “fully clad in an Alhaji dress” and at least once brought up this title to deflect a claim made against him.¹⁷⁷ But perhaps most striking was an exchange between one of the Alafin’s supporters and the British prosecutor:

Sabiganna: We are asking for your support. Oyo is our Mecca.

Moore: Mecca is a holy place?

S: Yes.

M: And if Oyo is your Mecca it should be clean and not have a bad Alafin?¹⁷⁸

¹⁷³ “From the District Officer, Oyo to the Resident Oyo Province,” August 8, 1953, OYO PROF 1, File No. 6054 Vol I: Disturbances in Oyo, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁷⁴ “From the Muslim Welfare Association of Nigeria, to the Resident Oyo Province,” August 18, 1953, OYO PROF 1, File No. 6054 Vol I: Disturbances in Oyo, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁷⁵ “From the United Muslim Party to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” June 24, 1955, CSO 26/6: 54704 Vol I: United Muslim Party, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁷⁶ Zumratul Hujaj Group Interview in Ibadan, Nigeria.

¹⁷⁷ “‘Bashorun Complained,’ Says Alafin,” *Daily Service*, November 23, 1954, 1, 2, OYO PROF: FILE No. 6054/3 Vol II: Lloyd Commission of Enquiry into Oyo Riots., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Alafin Gives Evidence at Inquiry,” *Daily Times*, November 23, 1954, 2–3, OYO PROF: FILE No. 6054/3 Vol II: Lloyd Commission of Enquiry into Oyo Riots., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. Though not a key part of his testimony, he denied his ability to be part of the Ogboni society due to being an alhaji.

¹⁷⁸ “‘Come and Rescue Us,’” *Daily Times*, November 4, 1954, 17, OYO PROF: FILE No. 6054/3 Vol II: Lloyd Commission of Enquiry into Oyo Riots., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “‘Aremo Assaulted Laguna in Open Court,’” *Daily Service*, November 4, 1954, 4, OYO PROF: FILE No. 6054/3 Vol II: Lloyd Commission of Enquiry into Oyo Riots., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Oyo, as Mecca, Must Be Set Clean, Parapo Witness Admits,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 6, 1954, 2, OYO PROF: FILE No. 6054/3 Vol II: Lloyd Commission of Enquiry into Oyo Riots., Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. While this presented as an exact quote, two other newspaper articles provide slight variations, so the exact language is unclear, and perhaps due to differing translations.

Clearly, by the mid-1950s Mecca had become broadly intelligible as a symbol of piety, and could be strategically referenced with sincerity or not, by Muslims or colonial officials.

Pilgrim Suffering in the Public Sphere

The most significant event in 1955 had nothing to do with any political party or association. Rather, it was a well-distributed hajj narrative. The *Daily Times* published and fiscally sponsored a sixteen-part series by Babatunde Jose about his hajj, from his preparations in Nigeria to his return, which drew national and regional attention to the continued sufferings of Nigerian pilgrims.¹⁷⁹ Despite incremental improvements of the hajj by the colonial state, problems remained into the late 1950s regardless of how Nigerians traveled, though the overland hajj presented the greatest risk and discomfort. Particularly unlucky pilgrims traveled with fraudulent agents who promised to take them to Khartoum or Jeddah, but instead abandoned them in some remote village near the Nigerian border.¹⁸⁰ While many avoided this con, none could avoid the conditions of overland travel. A report based on the 1958 hajj observed that sections of “the road” disintegrated into drifts of sand, with telephone wires like a modern starry night providing navigation.¹⁸¹ Moreover, pilgrims often traveled in uncovered vehicles with no respite from the Saharan sun, and which were over-packed and liable to break down.¹⁸² The infrastructure in *zongos* and other rest stops likewise provided little comfort. For example, in 1957 one Nigerian politician described the pilgrim camp at Khartoum as resembling “a small market stall or animal slaughter slab surrounded by a dilapidated old wall which looks like a

¹⁷⁹ Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 162.

¹⁸⁰ Abubakar Maigari Gwamba, “My Short Visit to Khartoum in January, 1957 for Pilgrimage Discussions,” 1957, Premier’s Office, 2/2: AS IV/141: Nigerian Pilgrim Office in Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁸¹ B. C. J. Stafford, “Report on the Overland Pilgrimage from Nigeria to Mecca,” 1958, 35–36, Ministry of Information, 3RD COLLECTION MOI/48: Film of Hajj, 1960-61, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁸² Stafford, 36.

cemetery.”¹⁸³ Pilgrims who continued to cross the Red Sea illicitly (Chapter 1) risked falling prey to unscrupulous captains who robbed them and then dumped them to perish on islands.¹⁸⁴ Though pilgrims going by air fared better, they might face delays of multiple weeks, which in Saudi Arabia could result in death if they ran out of money for food and housing.¹⁸⁵ And regardless of their mode of transportation, dishonest hajj agents often overcharged pilgrims for passports and inoculations.¹⁸⁶

Once pilgrims arrived in Saudi Arabia, they faced another set of obstacles. The medinatul-hujjaj (pilgrims’ city) in Jeddah, where pilgrims had to pay for at least one night’s stay, was overcrowded and unsanitary.¹⁸⁷ Housing outside Jeddah was no better, with often over ten people to a small room with little ventilation, if that; the cheapest housing option in Mecca in 1955 was £3 a night, which provided a shared luggage storage room and space to sleep outside on sand, not far from all-night traffic that covered the resting pilgrims with dust.¹⁸⁸ Finally, the combination of rising costs and pilgrim numbers resulted in thousands of Nigerians stuck in Saudi Arabia without funds, unable to return.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸³ Gwamba, “My Short Visit to Khartoum in January, 1957 for Pilgrimage Discussions.”

¹⁸⁴ “75 Pilgrims Perished on the Way: Warning Issued,” 5; “Death Sentences Passed on Silmi Musslem and Mahmud Omar Allasi for the Murder of Pilgrims,” n.d., FO 1015/783, Kew Archive; “Letter from British Consulate-General, Asmara Eritrea to Harold Macailian,” May 28, 1955, CO 554/1319: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca Via the Sudan, Kew Archive; “Some Pilgrims Die on Red Sea Islands,” *Daily Times*, January 14, 1958, 12.

¹⁸⁵ “550 Pilgrims Go By Air,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 30, 1951, 1; “Government Protection For Pilgrims to Mecca Sought,” 1; “From ‘All the Hajjis and Hajjas Detained at Jeddah’ to the Senior Traffic Superintendent, WAAC Kano,” September 18, 1952, Min of Info, PRE/40 Vol I: Pilgrimage To Mecca, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “Babatunde Jose Cables: Just 44 Miles From Mecca,” 1.

¹⁸⁶ “Alhaji Babatunde Jose Cables: It Is Maddness to Go to Mecca without Funds,” *Daily Times*, August 13, 1955, 12; “Extracted from File No. PM.37 p. 9,” 1957, Premier’s Office 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/223 Pilgrims Passports Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁸⁷ “Nigerian Pilgrims Are Not Satisfied with Welfare Arrangements: Observations by M Isa Kaita,” 5.

¹⁸⁸ “Babatunde Jose Writes of The Mosque Where Mohammed Lies,” *Daily Times*, July 30, 1955, 5; “Alhaji Babatunde Jose Tells of—The Difficulties and the Joys of Mecca,” *Daily Times*, August 16, 1955, 5.

¹⁸⁹ Babatunde Jose, “4,000 Nigerians Are Stranded in Mecca: They Have No Hope of Returning Home,” *Daily Times*, July 31, 1955, 1.

Thus, at the time of his 1955 hajj, Jose had plenty to present critically to his readers. Jose's series was particularly significant in the context of the predominately-Yoruba Western Region, for as he explained in his first article, since "the old days" Mecca was translated to "Ma'aka" or "Reveal not what thou seest" in Yoruba while Medina became "Madina" meaning "Be thou not a stumbling block in the way of others."¹⁹⁰ The combined effect of these two mistranslations was that many "who went to Mecca and Medina returned with sealed lips, saying not one word to their fellow believers, not even to their friends and relations" for fear of discouraging them.¹⁹¹ For Jose, providing his Yoruba Muslim readers "the whole truth about Mecca" so that it was no longer "a mythical place" was a moral project, for he argued that the paucity of information about hajj conditions in the past had aggravated pilgrims' suffering, and was antithetical to Islam's emphasis on "the pursuit of knowledge."¹⁹² Recent public lectures by newly returned pilgrims about their hajj experience suggest this was not always the case,¹⁹³ some readers confirmed Jose's claims.¹⁹⁴ One reader's response notes the various myths that had flourished in the silence maintained by some pilgrims, such as that Mecca was literally part of heaven,¹⁹⁵ tales of a "miraculous moving mountain, the invisible hand that shakes pilgrims and the hole (the size of a human head) that takes them in, provided they possess clean minds, to see

¹⁹⁰ Babatunde Jose, "What the Journey to Mecca Means to Me," *Daily Times*, July 2, 1955, 5. Alternatively, in a personal conversation, Benson Eluma suggested that these would be Maa kà or Má kà: Do not reveal (or confess) what you see, and Má dínà: Do not obstruct (or block).

¹⁹¹ Jose, 5.

¹⁹² Jose, 5.

¹⁹³ "New Alhaj Is Given Grand Reception," *Daily Times*, December 14, 1948, 2; "Social News: Pilgrims to Mecca Return," *Southern Nigeria Defender*, December 24, 1948, 4; "Alhaji Shittu Honored on Return from Holy Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, October 27, 1952, 7; "Moslems Will Have Watchnight Service," *West African Pilot*, November 8, 1952, 1.

¹⁹⁴ N. A. Lawal, "Public Opinion: View from Readers: On the Road to Mecca," *Daily Times*, July 9, 1955, 4; S. Ola Salvador, "Soapbox: It Is the Voice of the People," *Daily Times*, November 13, 1955, 6; Mrs. Mercy Weregba, "Public Opinion: Build a 'Nigeria House' in Mecca," *Daily Times*, August 30, 1955, 4.

¹⁹⁵ Oloso, "Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980," 221. Interestingly, this claim was maintained by Alhaja Humani Alaga, a prominent Ibadan Muslim, who when Oloso interviewed her for his dissertation [c.1984] responded to his attempts to explain to her that this was not actually the case with the retort "I pray to God to prevent you from polluting religion with your civilization."

the unbelievable miracles of Paradise.”¹⁹⁶ Indeed, if accurate depictions of the overland route were lacking, fantastic warnings of what *jinn*s and demons might do to one within the Hejaz had long been a key part of the instructions Yoruba clerics proffered during the farewell parties held for pilgrims before their departure.¹⁹⁷ At times these myths obscured the source of culpability for pilgrim suffering, such as the attribution of pilgrim deaths to *jinn*-abductions. As a testament to the power of engrained narratives, myth could occasionally color how even a discerning man like Jose experienced the hajj. For example, when “an influential Arab” instructed his son to take Jose sightseeing in Mecca, Jose confessed he became anxious: “I started to remember tales of woe which many Alhajis in Lagos had told us when we were little boys, there were supposed to be certain places—they almost called them shrines—where certain people have been destined to perish. That there are unseen spirits—not God, the Merciful—who shake hands with people and who would not hesitate to drag an unholy man or woman into its shrine. It was with some of these fears...that I followed the Arab boy.”¹⁹⁸

If local myths informed Jose’s experience of Mecca, observation and comparison with other Muslims informed his prescriptions and judgment of the Nigerian and hajj administration. Some comparisons were neutral, such as his description of the different clothing styles on

¹⁹⁶ Dada Ogunbiyi, “Alhaji Jose Explodes Mecca Myths,” *Daily Times*, August 29, 1955, 5; H. Afinni Rose, “Muslim Tradition and Ka’aba,” *Daily Times*, September 27, 1952, 10. However, as the article from 1952 evidences, this wasn’t the first time an alhaji sought to dispel a myth about Mecca, in this case the tale that the ka’aba got its black color from tears shed by pilgrims for their sins.

¹⁹⁷ Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 290–92. According to Oloso, such tales include descriptions of “Arafat as a slippery mountain which all pilgrims must climb and in an attempt of which many fall and get trampled to death,” and “the constant missing of many pilgrims” got attributed to “jinn who according to the Mallams usually disguise as human-beings and also come for pilgrimage!” Similarly, some claimed that when pilgrims attempted the rite of stoning the devil at Mina sometimes “the demons returned back to the senders pebbles thrown at them and when that happens, they add[ed], such senders become possessed by the devils!” Finally, another risk was that if pilgrims miss their way to the central abattoir at mina “they change miraculously to sacrificial animals themselves and get slaughtered by their fortunate co-pilgrims!”

¹⁹⁸ “Babatunde Jose Tells of—My First Glorious Day in Mecca,” *Daily Times*, August 1, 1955, 5.

display by Africans, Middle Easterners, and Asians.¹⁹⁹ Others drew inspiration from different countries, such as his recommendation that Nigeria should copy Pakistan's annual medical mission.²⁰⁰ Jose also juxtaposed the past with the present when he toured Nigerian settlements in Saudi Arabia, where he found nothing to praise besides the "native chop" available. Instead, he focused on describing "dilapidated buildings," their "discomfort," his "disgust" and "pity," and the "unhealthy" conditions.²⁰¹ Though these were sights before him in the present, he relegated the settlements to "the old days," that the Nigerian state was thankfully moving beyond with the reforms initiated by Northern politicians.²⁰²

The British Chief Secretary dismissed Jose's report that four thousand Nigerians remained stranded in Saudi Arabia as inaccurate and "irresponsible," whereas Nigerians responded to Jose's series with appreciation and trust.²⁰³ Thanks to his reporting, many Yoruba Nigerians became more knowledgeable of Mecca and the suffering of pilgrims caused by ill governance. One reader even went so far as to claim that by "informing the public" Jose had achieved "more than even the team of Nigerian leaders who recently went to Arabia."²⁰⁴ While previously it was rare for a reader to submit a letter to the editor advocating for hajj control,²⁰⁵ now several readers responded with calls for reform and greater government oversight of the hajj.²⁰⁶ Jose's report about the four thousand Nigerians stuck in squalid conditions in Saudi

¹⁹⁹ "Babatunde Jose Writes of The Mosque Where Mohammed Lies," 5.

²⁰⁰ "Babatunde Jose Cables--Things Are Better Now than in the Old Days," 5.

²⁰¹ "Babatunde Jose Cables--Things Are Better Now than in the Old Days," 5.

²⁰² "Babatunde Jose Cables--Things Are Better Now than in the Old Days," 5; Jose, "4,000 Nigerians Are Stranded in Mecca: They Have No Hope of Returning Home," 1.

²⁰³ "Protect Pilgrims," *West African Pilot*, January 15, 1958, 2.

²⁰⁴ Sammy Ade Akins, "Public Opinion: Views from Readers: Babatunde Jose's Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, August 9, 1955, 4.

²⁰⁵ Alhaji M. A. Opeloyeru, "Readers' Views: More Protection for Alhajis," *Daily Times*, May 23, 1955, 4. And notably, this is after the April mission led by Ahmadu Bello.

²⁰⁶ "Soapbox: It Is the Voice of the People: Bring Our Brothers from Mecca," 6; Akins, "Public Opinion: Views from Readers: Babatunde Jose's Pilgrimage," 4.

Arabia proved particularly concerning to readers,²⁰⁷ and the Zumratul Hujaj society in Lagos approached the colonial government and British Consul in Jeddah to see how they could assist in their repatriation.²⁰⁸

The Global Frame for Religious Friction

The next few years bore momentum for hajj reform in the Western and Northern Regions, increased public animosity between Muslim and Christian elites in the West, and greater political activity by Yoruba Muslims, either for their own political parties or to support the NPC. This section will begin with an overview of the Suez crisis and political organizing in the West since both provide important context for the hajj reforms to come.

The Suez crisis of 1956 brought a sense of urgency to the Nigerianization of the hajj, and prompted bureaucratic changes that allowed both politicians and hajj agents to accelerate this process. The principle development in terms of the Nigerian hajj was that all diplomatic ties between Britain and Saudi Arabia ended, and the British Embassy in Jeddah closed. Ahmadu Bello worriedly asked colonial officials whether this could either curtail or end the Nigerian hajj, and rumors surfaced in the North that the crisis “portend[ed] Armageddon” since this had “been prophesied...for 1956.”²⁰⁹ Though colonial officials felt the rumors did not go beyond some “elderly mallams in Kano and Zaria,”²¹⁰ to avoid accusations that they were impeding the hajj officials quickly sought an alternate arrangement. The Pakistani Embassy in Saudi Arabia agreed

²⁰⁷ “Soapbox: It Is the Voice of the People: Bring Our Brothers from Mecca,” 6; Jose, “4,000 Nigerians Are Stranded in Mecca: They Have No Hope of Returning Home,” 1; Michael Anak, “Public Opinion: Pilgrimages Need to Be Controlled,” *Daily Times*, August 14, 1955, 4.

²⁰⁸ “Move to Repatriate Stranded Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, August 11, 1955, 12; Ogunbiyi, “Alhaji Jose Explodes Mecca Myths,” 5.

²⁰⁹ “Letter from the Acting Governor, Northern Region of Nigeria to the Secretary of State for the Colonies,” November 23, 1956, CO 554/1318: Appointment of a Pilgrim Commissioner for the Welfare of Nigeria Pilgrims to Mecca Via Jeddah, Kew Archive.

²¹⁰ “Letter from the Acting Governor, Northern Region of Nigeria to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.”

to help and provide office space for the annual Nigerian mission and for a Sudanese official who had previously worked for the British Embassy.²¹¹ Significantly, Nigerian pilgrims and officials no longer had to use British officials as middlemen. And when it became clear that the Pakistani Embassy lacked enough personnel to take care of Nigerian pilgrims in addition to its own citizens, both Northern and Western politicians protested the failure of the colonial state to look after their needs in regards to the hajj, and demanded that more diplomatic authority be transferred to Nigerians.²¹² As already mentioned, this gave way to two Nigerian “Embassies in embryo”; the Nigerian Pilgrim Office in Jeddah started to maintain a small permanent staff in 1957, and in 1958 a Nigerian took over the position of Nigerian Pilgrim Officer in Khartoum.²¹³

Focusing back on the Western Region, the presence of religious friction intensified between 1956 and independence in 1960 as Yoruba Muslims continued to mobilize. In early 1957, the UMP embarked on a tour across the region, meetings of which were attended by various Muslim elites.²¹⁴ Later that year, three such elites across the region—Alhaji R. A. Smith of Ilesha, Alhaji Inakoju of Ibadan, and Y. P. O. Shodeinde of Lagos—collectively founded the National Muslim League (NML), drawing on their backgrounds of sustained involvement in

²¹¹ “Telegram to the Secretary of State for the Colonies from the Federation of Nigeria,” November 23, 1956, CO 554/1318: Appointment of a Pilgrim Commissioner for the Welfare of Nigeria Pilgrims to Mecca Via Jedda, Kew Archive; “From O E B Hughes to J B Denson,” November 29, 1956, CO 554/1318: Appointment of a Pilgrim Commissioner for the Welfare of Nigeria Pilgrims to Mecca Via Jedda, Kew Archive; “From M G Smith, Colonial Office, to A A Golds, Commonwealth Relations Office,” December 17, 1956, CO 554/1318: Appointment of a Pilgrim Commissioner for the Welfare of Nigeria Pilgrims to Mecca Via Jedda, Kew Archive; “Sir James Says in Kano: ‘Middle East Crisis Shouldn’t Affect Mecca Pilgrims,’” *West African Pilot*, November 30, 1956, 2; “Sir James on Mecca Pilgrims,” *West African Pilot*, December 1, 1956, 3.

²¹² “Cypher from the Foreign Office to Khartoum cc’d to African, Eastern and Protocol Departments.,” June 7, 1958, FO 371/131752, Kew Archive; Bello, Emir of Kano, and Minister of Local Government, Western Region, “Nigerian Pilgrim Officer in Khartoum.” The most explicit example was this comes from the report by the Nigerian Mission that visited Khartoum in early 1958, which said of Lawrence: “To be honest we find that the relationship between him and the Arabs (particularly Saudi Arabians) and, in fact, all the British, is not as good as it should be. Therefore, we suggest he be withdrawn for service in Nigeria for the aforesaid reason. His continuance in the office is no longer conducive to the welfare of Nigerian pilgrims.”

²¹³ “Secret: Note on Pilgrim Affairs,” 1958, Premier’s Office, 4/1: PM 18/S.7: Pilgrim Affairs Nigeria mission to Saudi Arabia and Sudan, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²¹⁴ Post and Jenkins, *The Price of Liberty: Personality and Politics in Colonial Nigeria*, 396.

different regional Muslim organizations.²¹⁵ Within days, the backlash began, at times by Muslim politicians aligned with other political parties.²¹⁶ The most vocal censure against the NML came from Chief Awolowo, perhaps not surprising given that the NML's criticism often targeted the AG. In a speech that Awolowo gave the following October (and which circulated in the press and the airways),²¹⁷ he announced that he wished to "publicly call upon all lovers of united Nigeria to speak out and act now in relentless opposition to, and unqualified condemnation of this new-fangled party known as the National Moslem League."²¹⁸ After these harsh words, Awolowo threatened that if the AG had "to retaliate, we would carry the battle not only to the meeting[s] of the League, but also into the various mosques where the leaders of the organization worship."²¹⁹ And, based on various newspaper reports and allegations by several who attended NML meetings around that time, this was not an empty threat. In at least two instances, AG politicians trailed by jeeps packed with "hooligans" surrounded and disrupted NML meetings, and instructed those gathered "that it was not necessary for Muslims to be organized as a political body."²²⁰ In one case they even planned a violent ambush against those leaving a meeting.²²¹ The following April, one NML leader was hospitalized after AG "thugs" reportedly

²¹⁵ "Ilesha Muslims Ban Secret Cult," *Daily Times*, June 10, 1949, 1; "Oba Adele, Alafin and Chief Imam Send Eid Messages," *Daily Times*, May 23, 1955, 1, 6, 7; "Minorities Commission: Minutes of the Proceedings of the Minorities Commission's Sitting at Lagos," January 1, 1958, 2, MSS. Afr. s. 2013 Box 2, File 1, Item 16, Oxford University Archives; Post and Jenkins, *The Price of Liberty: Personality and Politics in Colonial Nigeria*, 396. Y P O Shodeinde was the Chief Imam for the Ahmadiyya Mission in Ebute Metta and was also a journalist in Lagos. Alhaji A. R. Smith was the Chairman of the Abeokuta-based Nawair-ud-Deen Society in 1949, and was the President General of the Muslim Congress in 1955. Less is known of Alhaji Inakoju's previous activities.

²¹⁶ "Minister Condemns New Moslem Political Party," *Daily Times*, August 3, 1957, 7.

²¹⁷ "Minorities Commission: Minutes of the Proceedings of the Minorities Commission's Sitting at Lagos," 4.

²¹⁸ "Foreign Capital Must Be Protected—Awolowo," *Daily Times*, October 14, 1957, 10.

²¹⁹ "Foreign Capital Must Be Protected—Awolowo," 10.

²²⁰ "Minorities Commission: Minutes of the Proceedings of the Minorities Commission's Sitting at Lagos," 3.

²²¹ "Minorities Commission: Minutes of the Proceedings of the Minorities Commission's Sitting at Lagos," 2–4; "Moslem Party Accuses AG of Molestation," *Daily Times*, November 28, 1957, 4. Not surprisingly, the AG denied these allegations. However, two witnesses to the disturbance at a meeting at Ode Omo testified, one of whom also claimed to have witnessed a similar event at a meeting in Ogbomosho as well.

beat him up at a political meeting.²²² Other Muslims alleged that AG-members would harass them during prayer time, forcing them to employ police protection at their mosque and prayer ground during Eid.²²³ In addition to physical intimidation and violence, the AG continued to attack the NML and the UMP in the press, including threats to ban them.²²⁴ The AG also managed to poach one of the founders of the NML, Alhaji Inakoju, to form the United Muslim Council, which would act as a rival organization by funneling Muslim support to the AG.²²⁵ Inajoku's defection also helped make the NML look in disarray by fueling rumors of its dissolution in the *Nigerian Tribune*, a paper owned by Awolowo.²²⁶ Clearly, even if the AG declared the NML illegitimate, they took the risk that it might drain Muslim votes away from their party very seriously.

While official AG rhetoric advocated for the separation of religion and politics, at times Christian politicians dipped into what might be considered proto-Islamophobia. For example, a little over a month after Awolowo's biting speech, the Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources for the Western Region said that the UMP was clearly getting "inspiration from outside...possibly from a territory where it is fashionable to subject decent citizens to canning in market places."²²⁷ Whether the "outside" referenced Saudi Arabia or Northern Nigeria,²²⁸ his

²²² "Muslim Chief Beaten Up by AG Thugs," *West African Pilot*, April 15, 1958, 1.

²²³ "Minorities Commission: Minutes of the Proceedings of the Minorities Commission's Sitting at Lagos," 1; "Victimization of Oyo NCNC Muslims Alleged," *Daily Times*, March 21, 1958, 3; "AG Role Condemned," *Nigerian Citizen*, July 8, 1959, 5.

²²⁴ "United Moslem Party May Be Banned," *Daily Times*, November 8, 1957, 1; "Moslem Party: Deko Fears Islamic Crusade," *Daily Times*, November 27, 1957, 2; "'Ban Religious Parties' —West Govt. Told," *Daily Times*, March 17, 1958, 16; "Muslims vs. Muslims," *West African Pilot*, January 15, 1958, 2; "Muslim Council against Religion in Politics," *Daily Times*, February 25, 1958, 16; "Minister Warns against Religious Politics," *Daily Times*, September 3, 1959, 3; Kukah and Falola, *Religious Militancy and Self-Assertion: Islam and Politics in Nigeria*, 90.

²²⁵ Post and Jenkins, *The Price of Liberty: Personality and Politics in Colonial Nigeria*, 397.

²²⁶ Bankole, "Shodeinde a Coward?," *Nigerian Tribune*, January 6, 1958, 2; Bankole, "Muslim League Was Unanimously Dissolved—Says Prince Odedina," *Nigerian Tribune*, January 8, 1958, 2.

²²⁷ "Moslem Party: Deko Fears Islamic Crusade," 2.

²²⁸ "Uncalled For," *Daily Times*, November 28, 1957, 5. This defense of UMP interprets it has in reference to the North, though the original article is never explicit.

accusation points to a tension that underlined much political debate in the country; from where would independent Nigeria model its political and social institutions—Britain or the Middle East? In the North the stakes of this question were perhaps most obvious in discourse over the place of *shari'a* (Islamic law). While government officials and elites studied its implementation elsewhere in the Muslim world,²²⁹ non-Muslims in the North feared they might be forced to comply in the future, and alleged that *shari'a* courts inappropriately campaigned for the NPC.²³⁰ Though the use of *shari'a* in the West occurred informally through customary courts,²³¹ this wider context helps explain why the same Western Minister (an AG member) who accused the UMP of having external influences, stoked fears about a possible “Islamic crusade.”²³² Nor did such hateful vocabulary remain limited to the mouths of politicians—one journalist lamented in 1958 that, “On the pulpit, out of it, one hears of the menace of our Muslim brothers.”²³³

Though the AG remained the primary party of the Western region (and certainly, not all relations between Muslims and Christians were characterized by aggression),²³⁴ their strategy of hostility against the NML and the UMP largely backfired. For one thing, it gave ammunition to both parties when making claims about Muslim persecution,²³⁵ with the UMP going so far as to

²²⁹ “North Govt Mission Off to Sudan,” *West African Pilot*, May 17, 1958, 2; “Distinguished Muslim Pilgrim Back from Cairo University,” *West African Pilot*, November 11, 1950, 3.

²³⁰ “Commission Reviews Islamic Law,” *West African Pilot*, August 23, 1958, 3; “Movement Wants Maliki Law to Be Codified,” *Daily Times*, February 22, 1958, 4.

²³¹ the Nigerian Secretariat, “A Note on Islam in the Western Region of Nigeria [n.d. but Likely 1952 or 1953 Based on Nearby Documents in the File]”; “Letter from the Civil Secretary, Western Region, to the Chief Secretary’s Office, Lagos,” January 10, 1953, FCO 141/13367, Kew Archive. Though one report found that members of the Muslim Congress were in support of *shari'a* in the West, other colonial officials denied this, and claimed *shari'a* only informally existed in some customary courts.

²³² “Moslem Party: Deko Fears Islamic Crusade,” 2.

²³³ Ejon’Gboro, “Why Put Religion in Politics?,” *Nigerian Tribune*, April 28, 1958, 2.

²³⁴ “Open Letter to Alhaji Y P O Shodeinde: A Christian Greets Muslims During Ramadan,” *Daily Times*, March 21, 1958, 11. Though the majority of reporting during this time was on tensions, this article serves as one exception, and certainly many families contained both Muslims and Christians. However a sense of structural persecution by Christian elites clearly was felt by many Muslims.

²³⁵ “Moslem Party Chief Replies to Awolowo,” *Daily Times*, November 11, 1957, 4; “Moslem League Spurns Talks with Awolowo,” *Daily Times*, November 14, 1957, 2; “Moslem Party Accuses AG of Molestation,” 4; “Leaders

advocate for the “creation of a Muslim State” within Western Nigeria.²³⁶ This sense of discrimination likely contributed to various regional Muslim organizations passing resolutions to support the UMP and the NML.²³⁷ In terms of popular opinion, though some letters to the editor supported the AG’s position against religious-based political parties, including an article by Babatunde Jose,²³⁸ an equal number wrote to express the opinion that the AG had come to resemble a bully.²³⁹ Awolowo gave a nod to these sentiments by attending a ceremony in the Lagos Central Mosque in honor of the Western Region attaining self-rule, and afterwards hosted a party “in honor of several Moslem leaders and Imams” from all over region.²⁴⁰ Regardless, his attacks on the two parties (and the still-raw memory of the dismissal of the Alafin)²⁴¹ served as an entry point for the NPC to voice support for the Western region’s Muslim population while attacking the AG.²⁴² And as the 1959 Federal elections neared, the NML and the UMP returned the favor by publically backing the NPC,²⁴³ and warning their fellow Muslims in the North against the AG.²⁴⁴ That said, one clear impact from the AG’s aggression was that in early 1958

Defend Moslem League,” *Daily Times*, December 20, 1957, 3; “Muslim Party Accuses Chief Awolowo of ‘Hostility,’” *Daily Times*, December 30, 1957, 2; “Muslims vs. Muslims,” 2.

²³⁶ “Moslems Reply to Awolowo: Right to Form Political Party Defended,” *Daily Times*, October 16, 1957, 1.

²³⁷ “Congress Official Removed,” *Daily Times*, August 26, 1957, 16.

²³⁸ “It’s Your View: Letters to the Editor: Religion and Politics -and- Parties Based on Religion Ought to Be Banned,” *Daily Times*, November 12, 1957, 23; Babatunde Jose, “The Moslem Party Row: How Not to Kill an Evil,” *Daily Times*, November 16, 1957, 5; “It’s Your View: Letters to the Editor: Muslim League Should Not Mix Politics With Religion,” *Daily Times*, December 9, 1957, 14.

²³⁹ “It’s Your View: Letters to the Editor: Don’t Ban Moslem Party,” *Daily Times*, November 18, 1957; “It’s Your View: Letters to the Editor: Why Ban This Party?,” *Daily Times*, November 20, 1957, 27; “Uncalled For,” 5.

²⁴⁰ “West Celebrates Self-Rule,” *Daily Times*, November 16, 1957, 1.

²⁴¹ Mohammed King, “Citizen Post: YOUR Feature, YOUR Views: ‘AG Has Dug Its Own Political Grave’,” *Nigerian Citizen*, September 19, 1959, 4; Balarabe T. Balewa, “Citizen Post: YOUR Feature, YOUR Views: AG Is the Last Party to Rule Nigeria,” *Nigerian Citizen*, November 7, 1959, 4.

²⁴² “AG Role Condemned,” 5; “Terrible: Muslims’ Plight Under Action Group,” *Nigerian Citizen*, October 14, 1959, 12.

²⁴³ “Cause of Islam Fostered Alliance,” *Daily Times*, June 18, 1958, 8; “Muslim Party Backs NPC Move on Lagos Boundary,” *Daily Times*, September 11, 1958, 7.

²⁴⁴ M R B Ottun, “Citizen Post: YOUR Feature, YOUR Views: President, UMP, Says: No Iota of Truth in Rewane’s Allegation,” *Nigerian Citizen*, September 24, 1958, 4; M R B Ottun, “Citizen Post: YOUR Feature, YOUR Views: It’s Tour to Run Down Our Cherished Ideals,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 3, 1959, 4.

the NML changed its name to the National Emancipation League (NEL) and appealed to Christians to join, though its leadership and agenda remained the same.²⁴⁵

Islam entered the space of political rivalry beyond parties dedicated to the uplift of the region's Muslims. Sensing an opportunity to make inroads among Muslim voters, the NCNC—already popular in Ibadan thanks to the Muslim-politician Adegoke Adelabu's success in 1954 in gaining support of the *Mogajis* (Ibadan chieftaincy title: head of a family compound)²⁴⁶—began to position itself as more pro-Islam than the AG by supporting the reinstatement of the Alafin in 1955.²⁴⁷ Muslim elites scoffed at this agenda as merely opportunistic, including the ex-Alafin himself.²⁴⁸ Regardless, evidence suggests the NCNC managed to be perceived by some as a friend of Islam. Rumors started shortly after the Alafin affair that the Muslim Congress was a secret wing of the NCNC,²⁴⁹ and in 1958 the *Daily Times* reported that Muslim NCNC-members in Oyo had become targets of harassment during prayer time.²⁵⁰ And in 1957 the NML announced that in the absence of any NPC candidate, its members would support the NCNC.²⁵¹ However even Adelabu appeared to have his doubts—shortly before his death he expressed his frustration “as a Muslim” that the NCNC was ruled by “tribalism” just as much as the other parties, and suggested he might join the NML instead.²⁵² Regardless, in the aftermath of his death, Muslim NCNC members in Ibadan refused to pray under the Chief Imam the following

²⁴⁵ “[Ad],” *Daily Times*, February 1, 1958, 4; “[Ad],” *West African Pilot*, January 31, 1958, 1.

²⁴⁶ Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, 144.

²⁴⁷ “Religion and Politics,” 4.

²⁴⁸ “Bid to Go Back to Oyo: Alafin Denounces the NCNC: Says ‘I Am Father of All,’” *Daily Service*, June 28, 1955, 1; “Alafin of Oyo Issue: Moslems Plan 15-Man Delegation to UK,” 16.

²⁴⁹ Aiyekoto, “Comments: N.C.N.C. Wing,” *Daily Service*, June 29, 1955, 4.

²⁵⁰ “Victimization of Oyo NCNC Muslims Alleged,” 3.

²⁵¹ “Cause of Islam Fostered Alliance,” 8.

²⁵² “Adelabu May Quit NCNC – Says It’s a Tribal Party,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 3, 1958, 1.

Eid on account of his support for the AG,²⁵³ a decision that many Muslims attacked for politicizing Islam.²⁵⁴ The AG also tried to capitalize off of Adelabu's death by running a "good Muslim" in the special election to fill his seat in the House of Assembly.²⁵⁵

It was within this social space of rising religious tensions²⁵⁶ that hajj reforms gained momentum in the Western Region during the late 1950s. Though many Muslim politicians did not rush to join either the UMP or the NML (and in fact, some spoke out against them),²⁵⁷ the vocal presence of these two parties evidenced the need to appeal to Muslim voters. The key development in hajj reform during this time was the formation of the Western Region Pilgrims Welfare Board, the result of a bill put forward in the Western House of Assembly by Chief Awolowo and the AG in 1958. The bill tasked the Board to aid pilgrim welfare by arranging accommodation, and providing assistance with immigration, medical requirements and currency exchange; hajj agents would have the option to make arrangements on behalf of the board.²⁵⁸ Not surprisingly, Awolowo and the AG took credit for the bill, and presented it as proof that they cared for *all* of their constituents.²⁵⁹ Equally not surprising, the NCNC, while supporting the bill, claimed the AG government had been previously "cold to the request," and were only acting now because they were under pressure to do so.²⁶⁰

²⁵³ "NCNC Muslims Pray near Late Adelabu's Residence," *Daily Times*, June 30, 1958, 3; "Rift Among Muslims of Ibadan Causes Separate Friday Prayers," *Daily Times*, July 5, 1958, 16; "NCNC to Get Own Mosque," *Nigerian Tribune*, July 1, 1958, 2.

²⁵⁴ R. O. Olayiwola, "An Open Letter to All Ibadan Muslims: Be Warned or We Epose You All," *Nigerian Tribune*, July 4, 1958, 2; Alhaji M. Bashir, "Eid-UI-Kabir Celebration: The NCNC Is Planning Another Trouble--Will the Government Wait until It Is Too Late?," *Nigerian Tribune*, July 4, 1958, 2. Their main complaint was the common one that religion should not mix with politics.

²⁵⁵ "Akande's Selection Is a Challenge to Muslims"—Bashir," *Nigerian Tribune*, June 14, 1958, 1.

²⁵⁶ Ejon'Gboro, "Why Put Religion in Politics?," 2. And, as this article suggests, Christians were also at times criticized for doing this too, not just Muslims.

²⁵⁷ "Western Minister to Visit Mecca and Medina," *Daily Times*, April 23, 1957, 2.

²⁵⁸ "Report of the Pilgrims Welfare Board for the Period 1st October, 1958 to 31st March, 1959," n.d., University of Ibadan, Dike Library; "They'll Look after Pilgrims," *Nigerian Tribune*, November 27, 1958, 1.

²⁵⁹ "Pilgrims' Welfare Bill Passed Unanimously," 1; "West Govt. to Establish Pilgrims Board," 7.

²⁶⁰ "Pilgrims' Welfare Bill Passed Unanimously," 1.

Regardless, the AG continued to push their narrative about the Pilgrim Welfare Board to deflect any accusations that they were anti-Islam. Alhaji Inajoku, the NML founder that defected (and tellingly one of the first Welfare Board members appointed by the AG),²⁶¹ publicly praised the AG on behalf of “the entire Muslims of the Western Region” for setting up the Board and caring about the region’s Muslims.²⁶² And during an early meeting of the Welfare Board, Alhaji Adegbenro reminded the board members “that his government decided to set up the board” because they wanted to protect the region’s pilgrims.²⁶³ Relatedly, Awolowo’s *Tribune* touted the fact that the AG allowed its Muslim members leave to undertake the hajj as further proof that accusations against the party for being anti-Islam were mere “wicked propaganda.”²⁶⁴

While it is true that Alhaji Adegbenro, the AG Minister who had traveled to Mecca to study the problems pilgrims faced, did significantly contribute to the creation of the Board,²⁶⁵ the official narrative by the AG elides the instigation for hajj reform by Muslim organizations. Interviews with regional Muslim elites claim the Board came about as a tactic by the AG to quell Muslim political agitation in the region. According to this counternarrative, Chief Awolowo sent his deputy, Chief Akintola to go to a rival Muslim political party, and asked what the AG could do to get them to disband.²⁶⁶ In response, the Muslim leadership retorted that the AG government had done little for Muslim education, and most government scholarships to study abroad went to Christians to study in the UK, whereas, according to the memory of one elite Yoruba Muslim,

²⁶¹ “Report of the Pilgrims Welfare Board for the Period 1st October, 1958 to 31st March, 1959,” 1.

²⁶² Alhaji A. B. Inajoku, “Many Many Thanks,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 2, 1958, 2.

²⁶³ “Body to Promote Pilgrims Welfare,” *Daily Times*, January 28, 1959, 4.

²⁶⁴ “Off to Mecca,” *Nigerian Tribune*, June 12, 1959, 1.

²⁶⁵ “Western Minister to Visit Mecca and Medina,” 2; “West Govt. to Establish Pilgrims Board,” 7; Inajoku, “Many Many Thanks,” 2; Tajudeen Gbadamosi, Lagos, Voice Recording, June 2017. This is also how some Muslim elites remember it.

²⁶⁶ Olosolajo, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 169–70; Interview with Dr. K. K. Olosolajo in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, July 2015; Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., Voice Recording, November 2014. Something for more research: it is unclear which party this refers to—Olosolajo claims the Muslim Congress, but this doesn’t entirely make sense since the Congress never ran candidates against the AG.

“our own Britain is Mecca.”²⁶⁷ Thus, once again Nigerian Muslims affirmed their desire to be equal to their Christian peers in terms of cosmopolitanism. They agreed to support the AG in exchange for the ability to foster ties with the Middle East through study abroad and the hajj.

During hajj reforms in the West, the Northern Regional government likewise passed policy to address pilgrims’ concerns, specifically in terms of regulating hajj travel agents. That the West focused on developing state infrastructure, while the North focused on the activities of agents, reflects a general disparity in the hajj travel economy between the two regions. In the Western Region, though hajj travel agents and Islamic organizations helped facilitate the hajj,²⁶⁸ this was mainly limited to a number of prominent agents that sold tickets for WAAC. The same could not be said for Northern Nigeria, where most of the pilgrim traffic departed (including some Westerner) and a few major hajj agencies successfully competed as an alternative to WAAC, and at times contributed to the Nigerianization of the hajj. Whereas in the West government policy was in large part a response to various individual complaints by Muslims, in the North government policy was in conversation with these commercial developments.

The key problem with Northern hajj agents in the late 1950s was greater fraud as more individuals and more greed entered the hajj travel business. Though the Northern Regional government regularly used the press to publicize reports of untrustworthy agents, no story compared in terms of its scale and infamy to that of Alhaji Mahmoud Dantata. Though ultimately convicted on fraud, Dantata was no ordinary crook. Rather, he had impressive family connections that likely helped him win the trust of prospective pilgrims. His brother, Ahmadu Dantata, was an established businessman himself, and an NPC member of the Northern House of

²⁶⁷ Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria.

²⁶⁸ “[Ad],” *Daily Times*, January 20, 1959, 7; “Society Picks Two Members to Aid Nigerian Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, May 26, 1958, 7; “[Ad],” *Daily Times*, April 7, 1956, 6.

Representatives.²⁶⁹ Mahmoud Dantata became involved in the hajj business when he established WAPA, mentioned earlier, in 1956.²⁷⁰

Dantata's illicit activity became public knowledge soon after WAPA's founding, garnering much attention in the press in the North and Lagos; news of the investigation and the subsequent trial frequently generated front-page headlines,²⁷¹ and additional articles within the papers' interior pages.²⁷² To state the facts briefly, the Nigerian government caught Dantata printing forged currency, and the Sudan government further charged him on counts of smuggling and illegally trading currency.²⁷³ Many Nigerians who had enlisted his services found themselves stranded by his financial misdeeds. Similar to the colonial Pilgrimage Control Scheme, WAPA

²⁶⁹ "Alhaji Mahmud Dantata Is Charged," *Daily Times*, July 23, 1957, 1.

²⁷⁰ "New Venture for Pilgrims," *Nigerian Citizen*, February 25, 1956, 3.

²⁷¹ "Alhaji Mahmoud Dantata's Trial: 'That 2 British Queen's Counsels Will Join Me for the Defence Is All Greek to Me' —Nwajei Speaks on Lagos Papers' Report," *Daily Comet*, July 26, 1957, 1; "Dantata P. I. Today?," *Daily Comet*, August 19, 1957, 1; "Alhaji Mahmud Dantata Is Charged," 1; "Dantata Now in Special Prison," *Daily Times*, August 29, 1957, 1; "L20,000 Bail of Mamud Dantata Revoked," *Nigerian Citizen*, July 27, 1957, 1; "Why Judge Refused Bail of Alhaji Mamuda Dantata," *Nigerian Citizen*, August 10, 1957, 1; "Dantata Case P I Begins and Bail Once More Refused: 'Victory' Greeting from Crowd," *Nigerian Citizen*, August 21, 1957, 1–2; "Mamud Dantata Set Free on One of Four Counts," *Nigerian Citizen*, November 16, 1957, 1–2, 10; "Judgement Today in Sensational Dantata Trial," *Nigerian Citizen*, November 20, 1957, 1, 12; "Mamud Dantata Sent to Prison for Eight Years," *Nigerian Citizen*, November 23, 1957, 1; "At P. I. Into Dantata's Charges: Defence Counsel Objects to Portion of B.W.A. Officer's Evidence: Says' Tis Inadmissible: Hearing Adjourned Aug. 30," *Daily Comet*, August 20, 1957, 1; "Mamud Dantata Again Committed for Trial," *Nigerian Citizen*, July 19, 1958, 1; "Six Years More for Mamuda Dantata," *Nigerian Citizen*, October 29, 1958, 1; "Dantata in Again for Forgery," *Nigerian Tribune*, July 16, 1958, 1.

²⁷² "Dantata Must Remain in Kano Prison," *Daily Times*, September 2, 1957, 16; "Dantata Sued," *Daily Times*, September 4, 1957, 3; "Dantata Must Remain in Jail until Trial," *Daily Times*, September 13, 1957, 16; "Dantata Hearing Resumes Today," *Daily Times*, November 11, 1957, 16; "ASP Says He Found Press in Dantata's House," *Daily Times*, November 12, 1957, 32; "Dantata Offered Me L18,000 Bribe' Witness Says," *Daily Times*, November 13, 1957, 16; "Dantata Defence Opens Today," *Daily Times*, November 14, 1957, 32; "Dantata: I Didn't Offer L18,000 Bribe," *Daily Times*, November 15, 1957, 6; "Alhaji Mamuda Dantata Offered Be L18,000 to Destroy Handbag, Witness Tells Kano Magistrate," *Nigerian Citizen*, August 7, 1957, 12; "Dantata Verdict on Wednesday," *Daily Times*, November 16, 1957, 16; "Mamuda Dantata to Remain in Custody Kano Judge Rules," *Nigerian Citizen*, September 18, 1957, 12; "Trial of Mamuda Dantata Resume in Kano Assizes," *Nigerian Citizen*, November 13, 1957, 12; "Mamud Dantata Appears in Court Again," *Nigerian Citizen*, June 11, 1958, 12; "Bank Drafts Theft Charge: Dantata, Three Others Committed," *Daily Times*, July 17, 1958, 2; "Mamuda Dantata Says WAPA's Financial Chaos Was Caused by His General Manager," *Nigerian Citizen*, October 29, 1958, 8.

²⁷³ "Alhaji Mahmoud Dantata's Trial: 'That 2 British Queen's Counsels Will Join Me for the Defence Is All Greek to Me' —Nwajei Speaks on Lagos Papers' Report," 1; "From the Governor's Office, El Obeid, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Interior, Khartoum," November 20, 1958, Premier's Office, 4/1: PM 18/S.7: Pilgrim Affairs Nigeria mission to Saudi Arabia and Sudan, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

arranged for pilgrims to deposit money with them, which they would then withdraw in stages.²⁷⁴ However once Sudan and Nigeria closed in on Dantata, the Nigerian government froze his assets, and both governments took legal action that threatened significant fines. At the time, most of the pilgrims under his care were traveling through Sudan, and subsequently became stranded there when they could not access their deposits.²⁷⁵ News of their plight spread quickly through informal channels. By the time reports of Dantata's misdeeds surfaced in the press, a report claimed that "Kano abounds with rumors" of pilgrims stranded thanks to untrustworthy hajj agents.²⁷⁶ News of the fraud traveled as far south as Lagos, and created enough concern that the general secretary of Zumratul Hujjaj in Lagos felt the need to state that their organization had no connections to any "pilgrim agencies outside Lagos."²⁷⁷ The national attention given to Dantata reveals how despite regional divisions—ethnic, cultural, and structures of governance—the movement of pilgrims across the two regions had connected the West and North.²⁷⁸

Though Dantata's crime generated the most uproar, he was by far the only Northern hajj agent accused and prosecuted in the latter half of the 1950s for maltreatment of pilgrims. More often than not, these crimes involved hajj agents taking advantage of the relative ignorance of most intending pilgrims in regards to pricing. Agents would charge fees for passport applications or medical documentation (which were free),²⁷⁹ or they would greatly overcharge pilgrims for

²⁷⁴ "From the Governor's Office, El Obeid, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Interior, Khartoum."

²⁷⁵ "From Ahmadu Bello, Premier of the Northern Region To [?]," 1958, Premier's Office, 4/1: PM 18/S.7: Pilgrim Affairs Nigeria mission to Saudi Arabia and Sudan, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²⁷⁶ the Stroller, "In and Around Kano: Stranded Pilgrims?," *Nigerian Citizen*, July 24, 1957, 6.

²⁷⁷ Alhaji A R Laguda, "Your Letters: Mecca Pilgrims," *West African Pilot*, February 26, 1958, 2.

²⁷⁸ B. Umaru Audi, "Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1959 at Kano Airport," July 1959, Premier's Office 2/1: AS I/216: Pilgrim Officers Air Traffic Report: Kano, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. In the report Audi notes that while most of the pilgrims passing through the Kano airport were from the Northern Region, "a considerable number" hailed from other parts of the country, particularly Lagos and Ibadan.

²⁷⁹ "Maigani Says...Passport," *Nigerian Citizen*, February 23, 1957, 5; "Agent for Pilgrims Imprisoned," *Nigerian Citizen*, February 22, 1958, 12.

their transport.²⁸⁰ Even more flagrant was the growing frequency in which agents absconded with pilgrims' money collected on the pretense of providing services,²⁸¹ a fact that led the government to print warnings in newspapers based in the North and West.²⁸²

The Nigerian colonial state considered the problem of hajj agents' malfeasance to be an issue for the courts, not the state.²⁸³ Meanwhile, the Nigerian elites already involved in the hajj took a more proactive approach to the matter of corrupt agents, particularly spurred by Dantata, which went beyond printed warnings. In response to a report on the 1957 hajj by the Pilgrim Liaison Officers in Kano, Ahmadu Bello's secretary urged him that "Every effort must be made to cut out the activities of the various agents. This cannot be done while the whole pilgrim traffic organization is left in the hands of private enterprise. It is, of course, unfortunate that the traffic this year should have fallen into the hands of such a man as Mahmoud Dantata," adding that the Northern Regional government ought to make sure that no agents similar to him were allowed to operate "with equally disastrous consequences."²⁸⁴ Within roughly six-months, the solution developed by Bello and the Northern Regional government was to pass a bill that established the Northern Region Travel Agency Licensing Board (NRTALB), which required all agencies providing international travel services to apply for a license from the board. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the second direct response to the Dantata fiasco by the Northern Regional government was to create its own travel agency.

²⁸⁰ "Pilgrims Are Alleged Over-Charged," *Nigerian Citizen*, March 19, 1958, 11.

²⁸¹ "Sanitary Chief Demanded L125: Ilorin Court Told," *Nigerian Tribune*, April 30, 1958, 4.

²⁸² "Warning to Pilgrims to Be," *Nigerian Citizen*, August 30, 1958, 12; "Pilgrims Warned of Unscrupulous Agents," *Daily Telegraph*, September 2, 1958, 1.

²⁸³ "From Williams, Chief Secretary's Office, Lagos to R W Bailey, British Embassy, Khartoum," January 10, 1958, CO 554/1990: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca, Kew Archive. Even in the case of Dantata, British officials felt the best method for those seeking justice was to sue Dantata in court, and not a matter for state intervention.

²⁸⁴ "Note to the Premier, Northern Region, from the Permanent Secretary," August 27, 1957, Premier's Office: 2/2 2nd Collection: AS IV/152: Pilgrims Liaison Officers in Kano, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

Though hajj policies developed differently in the Northern and Western regions in the 1950s, they provided an impetus for collaboration between Muslim politicians in the Southwest and the North. As already mentioned, the original Nigerian hajj mission sent in 1955 included two Northerners and one Westerner.²⁸⁵ Though the leader of this mission, Alhaji Isa Kaita, recommended that in the future a representative from the West would not be necessary because Yoruba pilgrims constituted a minority,²⁸⁶ Muslims based in the West participated in the 1956 and 1957 missions, whether as medical experts or as political agents.²⁸⁷ By 1958, Northern civil servants involved in hajj administration took a more inclusive stance towards the involvement of Western Muslims. A report that year by Ngileruma, a Northerner, advised that while a Northerner should run the Nigeria Office in Jeddah, a Yoruba Muslim ought to be Secretary.²⁸⁸ He also advised that a Muslim from the Western Region should join three Northerners in the annual Nigerian hajj mission.²⁸⁹ Besides collaboration over policies and on missions, at times the hajj facilitated expressions of affinity between politicians across ethnicity and regional-loyalties. As already mentioned, a prominent example is that Ahmadu Bello suggested to Adegoke Adelabu, then the leader of the NCNC opposition party in the Western House of Assembly, that he undertake the hajj and went so far as to sponsor the full cost.²⁹⁰

The hajj generated transregional connections beyond bureaucrats and politicians. That travel itineraries took Southern elites through the North provided opportunities for Northern

²⁸⁵ "Isa Kaita Leads Muslim Pilgrims," 12.

²⁸⁶ "Note of a Visit to Kaduna by Mr. E J V Williams, Acting Senior Assistant Secretary, External Affairs, on the 20th October to Discuss Arrangements for the 1956 Pilgrimage Arising from a Meeting at Khartoum in April 1955," 5.

²⁸⁷ Oloso, "Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980," 163; "[Photo]," May 18, 1957.

²⁸⁸ Alhaji Muhammed Ngileruma, "Report on Moslem Delegation to Saudi Arabia and the Sudan," February 15, 1958, 41, Premier's Office, 4/1: PM 18/S.7: Pilgrim Affairs Nigeria mission to Saudi Arabia and Sudan, National Archive, Kaduna.

²⁸⁹ Alhaji Muhammed Ngileruma, 42; "Telegram from the Government of Nigeria to the Colonial Office," February 3, 1958, CO 554/1990: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca, Kew Archive.

²⁹⁰ Jose, "My Friend, Adelabu," 5.

elites to host their Yoruba brothers-in-Islam. In 1950 the Shehu of Bornu welcomed the Alafin of Oyo during his stop at Maiduguri, with “Yoruba native dances” staged in his honor.²⁹¹ The same held for non-elite pilgrims, whose travel occasionally registered on the pages of newspapers in the North and West.²⁹² Though this did not necessarily involve cross-ethnic sociality (even though there were Yoruba neighborhoods in Northern cities, and Hausa neighborhoods in Western cities), the emergence of cross-ethnic relations cannot be discounted. Yoruba overland pilgrims had long passed through Kano, and Yoruba air-pilgrims were a sizable minority of hajj departures from Kano’s airport, until direct flights from Lagos to Jeddah became available in 1957.²⁹³ Knowledge about hajj reform in the North and West circulated between the two regions via articles in the press.²⁹⁴ Northerners commented positively on hajj reforms and Islamic policies developed in the West²⁹⁵ and vice versa.²⁹⁶ Tensions between Muslims in the North and the West remained, but Western and Northern Muslims united in the 1950s around their shared interest in hajj reform.

Conclusion

The focus of this chapter was the drive for hajj reform and the Nigerianization of the imperial hajj bureaucracy. The rise of aviation and international travel allowed more Nigerians to

²⁹¹ “Shehu of Bornu Welcomes Alafin of Oyo Going to Mecca,” 4.

²⁹² “Alhaji Dindey Goes to Kano to Bid Mecca Pilgrim Adieu,” *West African Pilot*, August 28, 1950, 1; “[Photo],” August 15, 1956.

²⁹³ “Pilgrimages Now by Air,” 5; “1,000 Pilgrims Will Fly to Mecca,” 1; Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 135; “1,700 Pilgrims to Be Flown to Mecca: Highest Figure Ever Recorded in Recent Years,” 2. Oloso even goes to far as to claim that the evidence suggests that in 1956, a majority of air pilgrims were from outside of the North.

²⁹⁴ “High Powered Mission for Saudi Arabia,” *West African Pilot*, January 30, 1958, 4; “Sardauna Names Members of Travel Agency Board,” 4; “Northern Govt. Plans Board to Control Pilgrim Traffic,” *Daily Times*, January 17, 1958, 1; “Western House of Assembly Okays Pilgrims’ ‘Relief’ Bill,” *Nigerian Citizen*, April 5, 1958, 3.

²⁹⁵ “Letters to the Editor: It’s Your View: Egyptian Universities,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 13, 1954, 2; “Radioview and Programmes,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 24, 1958, 15; Muhtar Kura, “Citizen Post: YOUR Feature, YOUR Views: More Moselm Schools!,” *Nigerian Citizen*, September 27, 1958, 4.

²⁹⁶ “Northern Govt. Plans Board to Control Pilgrim Traffic,” 1.

be able to observe and compare themselves with people from other countries. This coincided with nationalist politics and thus the stakes of such comparisons were on the verge of becoming the reputation of Nigeria and Nigerians, as opposed to the British and their colonial state. Such global comparisons were not always religious. Ebenezer Williams, a prominent Nigerian journalist, described his “pride as a West African” at the sight of an African steward and “African engineers service the plane” in Lagos.²⁹⁷ Yet this pride mixed with shame when he compared the Lagos airport to the airports of Abidjan and Dakar, “worthy advertisement[s] for the countries in which they are built.”²⁹⁸

During 1950s, increased pilgrim numbers meant more Nigerians experienced Islamic practice elsewhere, which led to an array of new developments. Topics as diverse as female suffrage, *shari'a*, cigarettes, and Islamic higher education, raised comparisons with Islamic practice found in the Middle East.²⁹⁹ Though Saudi Arabia was the obvious place for such observations, in the 1950s the Nigerian hajj was not yet standardized, and a number of pilgrim itineraries included Cairo, Jerusalem, or other Middle Eastern countries.³⁰⁰

At the same time that many Muslims built ties and connections between Nigeria and the Muslim world, many non-Muslim Nigerians in the West and North began voicing fears of a potential Muslim takeover of their country. These anxieties often referenced the hajj. Sometimes they pivoted around it. This trembling was not Islamophobia in a contemporary sense: non-Muslims by no means viewed *all* Muslims with suspicion. The orientation of some Muslims

²⁹⁷ “From Lagos to Dakar with the West African Airways Corporation,” *Daily Times*, October 17, 1956, 8.

²⁹⁸ “From Lagos to Dakar with the West African Airways Corporation,” 8.

²⁹⁹ “Should Women Drink and Smoke?,” *Daily Times*, September 19, 1954, 7; “Northern Women Should Have Their Voting Right,” *Daily Times*, June 23, 1957, 7; “Moslem University for Nigeria Discussed,” *Daily Times*, July 22, 1957, 2; “Commission Reviews Islamic Law,” 2.

³⁰⁰ “[Ad for Air Liban],” *Daily Service*, May 23, 1955, 3; “Off to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, July 13, 1955, 8; Babatunde Jose, “My Feet Stood within the Gates of Jerusalem,” *Daily Times*, August 30, 1955, 5; “Distinguished Muslim Pilgrim Back from Cairo University,” 3.

towards the Middle East instead of the colonial Metropole, especially among political and cultural elites, caused Christians to worry. Some began to produce rumors suggesting the nightmarish contours of a Muslim-ruled Nigerian state. These Christian elites sometimes constructed an image of the Middle East as oppressive and backward. My term “proto-Islamophobia” is thus warranted. This initial distrust of Muslims’ connections with the East, a sentiment now of non-Muslim Nigerians (previously of British colonial officials), became the basis for religious tensions to come.

One of the most widespread rumors concerned the Islamic Congress, an international organization founded during the 1954 hajj at the instigation of Egypt, with financial support from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.³⁰¹ The self-proclaimed Ambassador to Nigeria for the Congress, a title that the Congress would later deny and clarify, was Alhaji Deke, a Nigerian from Benin Province in the South.³⁰² Though he succeeded in courting interest in the West and the North,³⁰³ he dramatically quit his post in 1956, claiming that the Congress had been “using him” to spread “Egyptian communistic propaganda throughout Northern Nigeria,” and alleged that Ahmadu Bello and the NPC were on board with their plans to build “a Muslim Empire” with Abdel

³⁰¹ “From the British Embassy, Cairo to the Foreign Office,” April 21, 1955, DO 35/6305: Islamic Congress, Kew Archive.

³⁰² “From the Chief Secretary’s Office, Nigeria, to the Chief Administrative Officer,” March 15, 1955, ComCol 1/1: 3910: Islamic Congress, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Dupe or Duped? :The Sorry Story of a Bogus Doctor Who Is Frightened: He Invited the Press; He Fought the Press; Now He Is Begging the Press,” *Sunday Times*, March 27, 1955, ComCol 1/1: 3910: Islamic Congress, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “‘Dr.’ Deke’s Post Now Defined [Clipping],” *Daily Times*, April 30, 1956, ComCol 1/1: 3910: Islamic Congress, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Deke a Doctor? ‘Not as Far as We Know’ Says Islamic Delegations. Nor Is He an Ambassador [Clipping],” *Daily Times*, April 29, 1956, ComCol 1/1: 3910: Islamic Congress, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “From Prof. Mahmud Brelvi to Dr. Deke,” March 12, 1956, CSO 26/2: File No. 16652/S.1311: Cultural Delegation of the Islamic Congress, visit of, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

³⁰³ “Islamic Congress to Train Nigerians,” *Daily Service*, April 24, 1956, 12, ComCol 1/1: 3910: Islamic Congress, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Muslim Leader to Meet North Premier,” *Daily Service*, February 5, 1955, 10; “Dr. Alhaji Deke in Audience with Emir of Kano,” *Daily Service*, February 14, 1955, 3; “Islamic Congress Representative Touring North,” *Nigerian Citizen*, July 7, 1955, 5; “Islamic Centres May Be Opened in North,” *Nigerian Citizen*, July 21, 1955, 4; “Islamic Congress Forms New Jos Branch,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 25, 1956, 12.

Nasser at the helm.³⁰⁴ He additionally accused the UMP of surreptitiously petitioning leaders of the Arab bloc.³⁰⁵ Whether Deke left because of this or because he felt slighted by critical public statements the Congress made,³⁰⁶ the Congress' activities provoked concern in the West and among Northern Christians,³⁰⁷ even if most in the North readily dismissed Deke's allegations.³⁰⁸

Nor was this the first or last time Ahmadu Bello and the NPC received accusations of conspiring with Nasser to put Nigeria on track to becoming an Islamic nation. The first came a handful of months previous to Deke's allegations during Bello's travels for the hajj. Bello had decided to visit Egypt before traveling to Saudi Arabia, and while in Cairo he met with Nasser and Sadat, and invited Nasser to visit Nigeria, at least according to front-page reports in southern newspapers.³⁰⁹ Though the story got little to no attention in the Northern press,³¹⁰ in the Lagosian press it stoked concerns that Bello held greater allegiance to Islam than to the nascent Nigerian nation, even after Bello claimed the invitation was friendly, not official.³¹¹ One editorial in the *Daily Times* mused on the difficulty of knowing "where the private pilgrim ends and the Premier begins,"³¹² and another accused him of breaching the Federal hierarchy.³¹³ And even if the

³⁰⁴ "Islamic Rep. Quits Post," *West African Pilot*, September 29, 1956, 1; "Alhaji Deke Attacks Islamic Congress and Resigns Post," *Nigerian Citizen*, October 3, 1956, 8; "Strong Egyptian Influence Alleged in North: NPC Leader Accused of Fostering Move: Alleged Bid to Create Muslim Empire," *West African Pilot*, December 6, 1956, 1.

³⁰⁵ "Strong Egyptian Influence Alleged in North: NPC Leader Accused of Fostering Move: Alleged Bid to Create Muslim Empire," 1.

³⁰⁶ "Deke a Doctor? 'Not as Far as We Know' Says Islamic Delegations. Nor Is He an Ambassador [Clipping]."

³⁰⁷ "Citizen Post: All We Want Is Unity—and Freedom of Religion," *Nigerian Citizen*, June 9, 1956, 2; "Religion and Politics," 4.

³⁰⁸ "NPC Denies Intention of Joining Islam Bloc," *Nigerian Citizen*, October 3, 1956, 1; "Citizen Post: It's YOUR Feature and They Are YOUR Views: Alhaji Deke's Statements Fantastic," *Nigerian Citizen*, October 13, 1956, 10.

³⁰⁹ "Nasser Invited to Nigeria: Sardauna Asks Him to Come," *West African Pilot*, July 3, 1956, 1; "Sardauna Invites Nasser to Visit Nigeria," *Daily Times*, July 3, 1956, 1.

³¹⁰ I have only checked the *Nigerian Citizen*.

³¹¹ "Alleged Invitation to Egyptian President Denied," *West African Pilot*, July 4, 1956, 1; "Nasser Not to Visit Nigeria," *West African Pilot*, July 14, 1956, 1.

³¹² "Just How Private?," *Daily Times*, July 6, 1956, 5.

³¹³ "On Whose Behalf?," *Daily Times*, July 7, 1956, 5.

Northern press did not report on it, nine months later Bello explained his motives for the visit to the Northern House of Assembly.³¹⁴

With the approach of the Federal 1959 elections, which would determine the makeup of the post-independence government in 1960, apprehensions of the foreign resurfaced. In September of 1958 the Political Secretary to Chief Awolowo alleged that the NPC and Nasser had “concluded an agreement to install a pro-Arab government in an independent Nigeria,” with Egypt “bankrolling” the NPC. He further claimed that Nasser would send political agents “under the guise of being employ as Arabic teachers” to Northern Nigeria “for the purpose of indoctrinating the people of the area with Arab nationalism.”³¹⁵ Moreover, he emphasized that the deal took place in Saudi Arabia, where some NPC leaders “under the pretext of ‘Holy Pilgrimage’ met Nasser’s representatives.”³¹⁶ With this language the AG amplified anxieties of what a Muslim-led Nigeria might resemble, and in so doing called into question the motives of Northern politicians undertaking the hajj. Two newspapers reported the story, and the NBC broadcasted it.³¹⁷ Ahmadu Bello swiftly denied it, and accused the AG of “again seeking to bring the faith of Islam into disrepute and to insult the Holy Pilgrimage,” and reiterated his commitment to the Commonwealth.³¹⁸ The NPC similarly asked James Robertson, then the Governor-General of Nigeria, to conduct an investigation into the AG’s allegations to protect the

³¹⁴ “In the Northern House: Sardauna Tells How and Why He Met Colonel Nasser,” *Daily Times*, March 8, 1957, 3.

³¹⁵ “NPC—Nasser Pact Alleged,” *Daily Times*, September 8, 1958, 3.

³¹⁶ “NPC—Nasser Pact Alleged.”

³¹⁷ “NPC Protest to Sir James on Nasser Story,” *Daily Times*, September 13, 1958, 1.

³¹⁸ “‘NPC—Nasser Pact Allegation False’ ‘We Believe in Membership of Commonwealth’ —Sardauna,” *Daily Times*, September 11, 1958, 3; “Sardauna Denies Any Agreement with Nasser,” *Nigerian Citizen*, September 13, 1958, 1. Interestingly, Bello claimed such anti-hajj propaganda would rather provide an “incentive to all Muslims including those of the West,” to undertake the hajj.

reputation of the party, Islam, and the hajj.³¹⁹ Nonetheless, “Nasserist” became shorthand to explain actions by the NPC that appeared authoritarian or deceitful.³²⁰

Once again, attacks by the AG against Muslim politicians confirmed suspicions held by some that the party was anti-Islam. For the UMP, the allegations proved another chance to reiterate past examples of hostility toward Islam by the AG, and to gesture toward pan-Islamic solidarity between the West and the North. For example, in a letter to the editor published in the *Nigerian Citizen*, a paper based in the northern city of Zaria, Ottun wrote that Bello’s denial “expresses full the point of view of all Moslems throughout the Federation of Nigeria” and then went on to plead for “the few misguided Western Region’s Moslems” still supporting the AG out of “fear” to switch to the NPC.³²¹ Ottun’s rhetoric became more explicit after Awolowo toured the North in 1959, gleefully declaring Awolowo’s attempt to win votes a failure, which

has gladdened the hearts of all true sons and daughters of Islam in Western Nigeria. For what benefits have the sons and daughters of Islam gained from the Action Group as to warrant confidence that the sons and daughters of Islam in Northern Nigeria could expect in the same or any measure of attention and consideration? The population of Western Nigeria is predominantly Moslem just in the same way as the population of Northern Nigeria.³²²

For its part, the NPC regularly tried to present itself as a party of all Northerners, regardless of faith. However in the West, where the Christian half of the population largely monopolized political power, some Muslim elites, spurred by proto-Islamophobic charges by the AG, emphasized Muslim dominance in the NPC as a tactic to build support for the NPC among Muslims in the West.³²³ Significantly, this was not a mere battle of words traded between elites across newsprint. During a Minorities Commission hearing in Jos in 1958, the president of the

³¹⁹ “NPC Protest to Sir James on Nasser Story,” 1.

³²⁰ “Mock Inquiry,” *Nigerian Tribune*, June 4, 1958, 1.

³²¹ Ottun, “Citizen Post: YOUR Feature, YOUR Views: President, UMP, Says: No Iota of Truth in Rewane’s Allegation,” 4.

³²² Ottun, “Citizen Post: YOUR Feature, YOUR Views: It’s Tour to Run Down Our Cherished Ideals,” 4.

³²³ “AG Role Condemned,” 5.

Geoman Youth Movement expressed his concern over “strong rumors” among his people “that non-Muslims in the North would be sent to do menial jobs in Saudi-Arabia after Nigeria had attained independence.”³²⁴ Thus, while for Nigerian Muslims increased ties and travel to the Middle East represented an alternative prestige to that offered by scholarships to the UK (which mainly benefited Christians), imagined futures of what might result from links to the Middle East haunted the Christians living among them, and at times gave rise to proto-Islamophobia.

Beyond concerns of potential political influence by Middle Eastern states, as the process of Nigerianization accelerated and the government at the federal and regional level became more intimately involved in orchestrating the hajj and underwriting pilgrim welfare, some non-Muslims began to question the fairness of this use of tax-payer money. This sense of injustice gave way to published critiques particularly after the Nigerian state, in part in response from pressures from Saudi Arabia and Sudan, began to repatriate destitute Nigerians from Jeddah and Khartoum. Though the Northern-based *Nigerian Citizen* claimed after the 1958 hajj season that all opponents to the repatriation scheme were “now satisfied” of the scheme’s necessity,³²⁵ a couple of articles published in Lagos-based newspapers begged to differ.³²⁶ After listing out the different forms of government involvement in the hajj, including repatriation, one author wondered aloud “whether the Muslim faith has become State religion where all its needs must be provided by the Government.”³²⁷ Framing the practice of the hajj by those without adequate savings as a “colossal drive of escapism from the full force of the difficulty of responsible living,” the author concluded that the Nigerian government “has become over generous to the pilgrims”

³²⁴ “Non-Muslims Fear Being Sent to Saudi Arabia,” *Daily Times*, February 20, 1958, 4.

³²⁵ “Our Pilgrims,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 14, 1958, 8.

³²⁶ Udo U. Mbat, “Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, June 17, 1958, sec. Letters to the Editor, 11; Ian Heiz Eual, “When Religion Becomes State Liability,” *West African Pilot*, July 3, 1958, 2.

³²⁷ Eual, “When Religion Becomes State Liability,” 2.

at the expense of “taxpayer” money.³²⁸ As will be evident in the following chapters, this concern over the place of the Nigerian state in the hajj exercise (particularly in terms of religious equity) would only increase as its scale expanded in the postcolonial period.

Despite this animosity, Nigerian politics in the 1950s, organized in a Federal system divided into three semi-autonomous regions, included collaboration between politicians across regional divisions. A shared devotion to Islam motivated politicians of different geographic, ethnic, and political backgrounds to enter into conversations and partnerships when gathering intelligence regarding the hajj. The capacity for collaboration— for thinking as *Nigerian* Muslims—would continue into the early years of Nigeria’s independence.

³²⁸ Eual, 2.

Interlude 2:

Dreams of Mecca

The Prophetic Healing Property of Dreams: K.K. Oloso

In his office within the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, K.K. Oloso, an esteemed Professor at the University of Ibadan and highly respected member of the Muslim Community—not only in Ibadan and Oyo State, but on a national-scale¹—narrated one of his dreams of Mecca at my request in February 2015.

Though he never saw Mecca in a dream before he experienced the city directly during his first hajj, like many Muslims this sacred place occupied his daydreams from any early age. As the son of an important cleric who in his village, located on the outskirts of Ibadan, commanded the presidency of the local *Zumratul Hujaj*,² K.K. Oloso explained it was “natural that a son will like to take after his father, so right from the youth I've been saying that one day I will become, I shall perform hajj and become an alhaji,” adding with emphasis that “the last hajj I performed was the 42nd one.”³

Mecca has appeared in K.K. Oloso's dreams “several times,” with varying levels of significance. Most frequently these dreams are fragmentary—a conversation inside the Ka'aba, observing *Nawafil prayers*, or shopping in the mall. Other dreams revisit a memorable event. In Oloso's most recent dream of Mecca, he met and embraced the Imam of Mecca, which is

¹ Could list various organizations (local/state/national) he's a member of

² Society of alhajjis (pilgrims to Mecca)

³ Interview, K.K. Oloso, February 2015

“precisely what happened” during his hajj in 2014.⁴

Asked if one dream of Mecca stood out for its significance, Oloso responded quickly and decisively:

I had a problem one day...I fell sick and it was too much. And I had my physicians, physicians who were my students, who learned Arabic under me before they became doctors, medical doctors. So I have more than five doctors at my take. All of them examine me, they said they couldn't find [anything wrong], then they said this thing is spiritual, what is happening to you is spiritual. So I said well, I will be praying to God and I began to pray. Then I dreamt. I dreamt that I was inside the Ka'aba, and it was after the night prayer. I thought I should rest, and allow the crowd to leave. So that I don't [pause] that I was sick, and it was because of that sickness that I wanted the crowd to leave before I leave. And then I fell into a trance. And in that trance somebody, I saw a hand. The hand gave me a bucket, a packet of ajwa dates. And he said take seven of these every day, after which you should lick three teaspoons of pure honey.⁵

Though Oloso did not explicitly mention this to me, given his level of scholarship he was undoubtedly aware of the several hadiths that specify a daily regime of seven ajwa dates, the variety found in Saudi Arabia, as an antidote against poison, magic and sickness.⁶ While a few hadiths mention the curative power of honey, the quantity specified is usually “a gulp” rather than teaspoons. Add to this the fact that in Nigeria today pure locally produced honey is often used for its medicinal benefits,⁷ Oloso's dream appears to mix two, admittedly overlapping, regimes of medicine.

When Oloso awoke he immediately looked for ajwa dates in his house, and with dismay realized his supply from his last visit to Mecca had been depleted. But then his phone rang, and it

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Among these hadiths are: “He who ate seven dates (of the land situated) between these two lava plains [roughly, the area between Mecca and Medina] in the morning, no poison will harm him until it is evening.” **Sahih Muslim 2047** (Book 23, Hadith 5080). “He who ate seven 'ajwa' dates in the morning, poison and magic will not harm him on that day.” Sahih Muslim (Book 23, Hadith 5081). “The 'ajwa' dates of 'Aliya' contain healing effects and these are antidote in the early morning.” Sahih Muslim (Book 23, Hadith 5083). “He who eats seven 'Ajwa dates every morning, will not be affected by poison or magic on the day he eats them.” (Sahih Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 65, Hadith 356)

⁷ When I burned my leg in the process of getting off a motorcycle, a number of people advised me to cover the blister with some local pure honey.

was

a friend of my Sheikh, and he said I just returned from hajj, what do you want me to give you? Do I bring you zamzam water? I said I have zamzam water, but if you have Ajwa. He said I have just one packet, I will take from it and send the rest. I said don't take anything, send the whole thing to me, you're my friend! You and I go to hajj, go to Mecca often, maybe between now and three months we will go. Agreed. He brought the whole thing. I used it and got better.⁸

While Oloso avoided speculation as to why God embedded this therapeutic advice in a dream set in Mecca, he expressed confidence that this dream came about because “God wanted me to heal.”⁹

This recollection of Oloso reveals several examples of how personal networks among Muslims in southwestern Nigeria arise and are maintained. First, Oloso notes he has “more than five doctors,” a privilege few Nigerians enjoy, which he implies is linked to the fact that he taught them all Arabic in the formative years of their education. Second, when the friend of Oloso's Sheikh initially balks about giving him the entire packet of ajwa dates he brought back from Mecca, Oloso reminds him that “You and I go to hajj, go to Mecca often,” and thus uses their shared memories of hajj as a tactic to convince this man to take his request seriously. The fact that this strategy succeeds suggests that many Nigerian Muslims regard social ties formed during hajj as special, a claim made by several other informants.

Dreams as Directives from God: *Alhaja Fadhilah Omotunde Balogun*

After a career in education, Alhaja Fadhilah Omotunde Balogun started a charity for widows in Apata, Ibadan. Nestled in a plaza that also hosts a variety of shops and a daycare center, her organization provides widows with spiritual guidance and helps them learn employable skills, like sewing, so that they will not “become miscreants” or “promiscuous,” to

⁸ Interview, K.K. Oloso, February 2015

⁹ Ibid.

support themselves.¹⁰ Balogun links her motivation to undertake such work with her hajj, explaining that after her return to Nigeria: “Everything in my life changed. I just saw the need to be totally obedient to God. That is how I find myself in this work now.”¹¹

To a lesser degree Balogun’s life also changed after her hajj as a result of a dream. Though not the first time she dreamed about Mecca, this dream was by far the most memorable and consequential:

The one I dreamt that really terrified me...five years ago, my own mother was preparing to go for hajj. I do see myself in this dream. You see all this [pause] there are bridges there, there are, what do you call them, embankments [pause] beautiful things, I do see myself flying like a bird, and then I'm flying in the midst of other people, like I'm diving. Then my mom grabbed my leg. So I was behaving like a bird now, that was propelling my mother. So, because there were so many people I was hearing, oh you know on the bridge when people are walking down there are many [makes a loud noise GHRE-GHRE-GHRE like a panting person, also stomps] the thing was, I was just going flying, and my mummy did, the leg she hooked onto, she did not pull off...I was driving her. When I woke up I was seriously afraid that what could be happening, I just saw that the place I saw was Mecca. Because the environment, because the world was so WHITE [emphasis in her speech], that there were no vehicles, people were moving, diving, in my dream-o. So, I just knew, I drove my mother on that journey. So when I now woke up, she has been telling me about her wish for this hajj, it was then that I realized that my God is telling me you are the one that is going to pilot your mother on that journey. So that was why I intensified fundraising to sponsor her, and she went.¹²

In Balogun’s dream, Mecca is both beautiful yet able to induce terror with its crowds and brilliant white intensity. Like Oloso, the dream’s setting in Mecca caused Balogun to interpret it as a directive from God that left her little option but to follow it.

Dreams and the Call of Hajj: *Alhaja Sidiqat*

I met Alhaja Sidiqat at the Central Mosque in Oja-Oba in Ibadan, which is located in one of the oldest parts of town and houses the Olubadan’s (*King of Ibadan*) palace as well as many of

¹⁰ Alhaja Fadhilah Omotunde Balogun, Interview in Ibadan, Recording, 2015.

¹¹ Balogun.

¹² Balogun.

the poorest residents of the city.¹³ Based on her dress and eagerness to pray for me and to demonstrate her ability to recite Qur'an for a "gift," Sidiqat likely was of a similar socioeconomic background as that of the neighborhood. Similar to Alhaja Balogun, a dream where whiteness provoked awe and fear had resulted in a pilgrimage, in this case her own. Before she went to Mecca she saw in a dream "a man in pure white clothes, and he was so white" that she became frightened. When she woke up in fear, she prayed to God and told people around her of what she had dreamed. Her husband's children, who would elect to sponsor her, told her that this was a call for her to go to Mecca, and she should not worry.¹⁴

¹³ Paul Francis et al., "State, Community and Local Development in Nigeria (World Bank Technical Paper No. 336)," Africa Region Series, 1996, 48. According to this report, "local government officials" claimed that the Ibadan South-West LGA, which includes Oja-Oba, was "among the 6 poorest communities in the city."

¹⁴ Alhaja Sidiqat, Interview in Ibadan, Recording, May 2015.

Chapter 3

Emotions, National Honor, and the Nigerianization of the Hajj

Historians are generally reticent, and for good reason, to impute contemporary categories and logic into the past. I position the interlude of three pilgrim dreams before this chapter not to imply that they directly reflect how Nigerians experienced and conceived of Mecca in the years surrounding independence, but as way of explanation for my own unconscious bias when I read through the paperwork generated by the Nigerianization of the hajj from the late 1950s into the 1960s. For it was narratives gleaned from interviews such as these, as well as the number of informants who claimed to have a variety of extrasensorial experiences on their hajj (the most common being the reported ability to taste the ka'aba by pointing a wet finger in its direction),¹⁵ that made me question the emphasis in the existing literature on how the hajj policy of the postcolonial state was a continuation of the British colonial apparatus of hajj regulation and surveillance.¹⁶ Certainly, the regulatory tools of the colonial state—passports, inoculations,

¹⁵ Alhaji Alhaji Muftar Abubakr, Interview in Lagos, Recording, April 2015; Alhaji Ayo, Interview in Ibadan, Recording, February 2015; Alhaji Otun Abdul Gamy, Interview in Ibadan, Recording, November 2014; Sheikh Alhaji Muhammed Omar, Interview in Ibadan, Recording, March 2015; Alhaji Hussein Ahamed Rufai, Interview in Ibadan, Recording, May 2015; Alhaja Teslimat Oduntan, Interview in Ibadan, Recording, 2014. The first four, whose pilgrimages' dates ranged from 1982–2014, all described the same phenomenon: that they were unable to touch the ka'aba with their hand, and so instead they wet one finger with spit and then pointed it towards the ka'aba, which allowed them to literally “taste” it. As for Alhaji Rufai, he witnessed the ka'aba changing colors, and Alhaja Oduntan was led to a spring for zamzam water by a jinn, or spirit.

¹⁶ Matthew M. Heaton, “Globalization, Health and the Hajj: The West African Pilgrimage Scheme, 1919-1938,” in *HIV/AIDS, Illness, and African Well-Being*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matthew M. Heaton (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2007), 260; Jonathan Reynolds, “Stealing the Road: Colonial Rule and the Hajj from Nigeria in the Early Twentieth Century,” *Journal of West African History* 1, no. 2 (2015): 40. While Reynolds merely notes

quarantine, and limits on foreign exchange—continued to be practiced by the postcolonial state. Yet given that most Nigerian politicians involved in the Nigerianization of the hajj were alhajis themselves, and thus intimately aware of the spiritual stakes and emotional intensity of the hajj, it seemed odd that independence from British rule would not have had more of an impact. Thus, interviews and fieldwork primed me to read the archive for discontinuity from the colonial period in how the postcolonial state regulated and oversaw the hajj.

To be fair, not all scholarship emphasizes continuity between the colonial and postcolonial hajj bureaucracies. Though not the focus of her article on Nigerian *bori* adepts in Saudi Arabia, Susan O'Brien discusses how in the late 1950s Abubakar Gumi, then an Islamic teacher and advisor to Ahmadu Bello, sought to increase the level of scrutiny and requirements for prospective pilgrims in response to his dismay over Nigeria's poor reputation.¹⁷ In a similar vein, in his book on Islam and political legitimacy in Northern Nigeria, Jonathan Reynolds claims that the NPC greatly improved and streamlined the hajj operation once given the chance by the colonial state. Reynolds argues that the NPC undertook this reform to "create an image of itself as a provider of religious services to the Muslim populace of the North."¹⁸ Though I agree that the NPC and its leader, Ahmadu Bello, demonstrated their political savvy by publicly taking credit for hajj reform, in this chapter I argue that Muslim politicians—in the West as well as the North—held sincere concern for the emotional wellbeing of Nigerian pilgrims, and viewed mass participation in the hajj as a means for moral uplift for individuals as well as the nation. This in turn better explains why the public, as Reynolds claims, increasingly turned to the state as a

that it was only the postcolonial state that was able to successfully regulate the hajj, Heaton makes this point directly, stating: "The Nigerian Pilgrimage Scheme of the colonial era gave way to state-sponsored Muslim pilgrimages."

¹⁷ Susan O'Brien, "Pilgrimage, Power, and Identity: The Role of the Hajj in the Lives of Nigerian Hausa Bori Adepts," *Africa Today* 46, no. 3/4 (1999): 22.

¹⁸ Jonathan Reynolds, *The Time of Politics (Zamanin Siyasa): Islam and the Politics of Legitimacy in Northern Nigeria, 1950–1966*. (San Francisco, California: International Scholars Publications, 1998), 139.

potential intimate patron to sponsor their own hajj.¹⁹

In order to understand what represents a continuity, and what changed, it might help to recall the policies of the colonial state. As discussed in Chapter 1, the colonial state framed its management of hajj in terms of providing welfare for its subjects. At the same time, Nigerian pilgrims did on occasion turn to the colonial state for assistance, particularly when the perils of the road had swindled or enslaved them. Additionally, the colonial state marketed its passport scheme as in service to pilgrim welfare. Thus, the postcolonial state's utilization and emphasis on 'welfare' built on an established lexicon surrounding hajj bureaucracy. However, the central argument of this chapter is that if we read the archives with an attention on affect, the hajj bureaucracy after Nigerianization presents as a radical change from the colonial past. For the colonial state, references to welfare primarily served to market the passport control scheme—officials, though well aware of the adverse conditions of the road, made no attempts to change them but rather offered the pre-paid passport to allow pilgrims to navigate the discomfort quicker. Likewise, the British designed pilgrim quarantine camps to prevent disease, not comfort pilgrim fears about inoculations. However, as this chapter will demonstrate, the Nigerian elites took the problem of pilgrim physical and emotional wellbeing seriously, and this in turn changed Nigerian pilgrims' perceptions of their relationship with the state. One way that this shift registered was in the number of intending Nigerian pilgrims who looked to the political elite to assist them in realizing their dreams of hajj. Whereas before the colonial state would occasionally be contacted as a source of information regarding the rules and conditions of travel, the post-colonial state quickly entered the national public imagination as a benevolent and pious provider of the hajj.

Concurrent to their efforts to improve pilgrim wellbeing, Nigerian elites increased

¹⁹ Reynolds, 139–40.

regulations and restrictions on the hajj. Though it could be tempting to see this as a continuation of colonial policy, the motives and anxieties propelling these reforms bore little resemblance in their substance to those of the former British colonists. As discussed in Chapter 1, the spread of radical Islam and infectious disease were the primary concerns of the British, while the number of destitute Nigerians in Saudi Arabia exposed the hollowness of the British Empire's civilizing mission. Thus, even when British officials observed the suffering endured by pilgrims, their focus was less in the suffering in and of itself, and more on how the ever-growing number of destitute Nigerians might impact Britain's diplomatic standing in Saudi Arabia, and the potential cost of their repatriation. The new Nigerian elite also cared about repatriation costs and their relationship with Saudi Arabia. However for Muslim politicians, motives rooted in Islam and a desire to hold a prominent position within the broader Muslim world underpinned their reform policies. Even at the scale of the individual, the stakes of a successful completion of the hajj were no less than spiritual renewal and the improvement of the nation, two achievements that their rhetoric often linked. At the scale of the nation, at stake was the nation's unity and morality, as well as its global reputation among other Muslim nations.

The chapter begins by examining the rhetoric of the Nigerians most intimately involved with the Nigerianization of the hajj, and reveals how for the first time the emotional wellbeing of Nigerian pilgrims registered in bureaucratic documents. It also observes how this same Nigerian elite argued that the Nigerian hajj had the capacity to improve the nation by strengthening its moral fiber. Politicians in turn used this line of argument to justify the expenditure of time and government funds on the hajj, as well as increased restrictions on prospective pilgrims in order to protect the image of Nigerian pilgrims abroad. The chapter then turns to the meat of the primary reforms that took place in the years surrounding independence. First, the chapter looks at how

the hajj by road, up until now the most common pilgrimage route from Nigeria, was vilified and structurally attacked. This is related to a point raised by Cooper, that Gumi, Bello and others sought to justify restrictions on the overland hajj by reinterpreting *maliki* law in regards to how it defines the conditions a Muslim must meet before they undertake the hajj. Next, the chapter outlines how the tense relationship between independent hajj agents and the government, as mentioned in the previous chapter, continued to fracture even if some agents shared the political elite's priorities and viewpoints. In all of these efforts, politicians, clerics, and civil servants aggressively used print and audiovisual media to inform, affect, and influence the Nigerian public. From here the chapter explores how the Nigerianization of the hajj affected the relationship between Nigerian Muslims and the postcolonial state. Its key finding is that Nigerian Muslims felt a genuine affinity with the Nigerian politicians most prominent in hajj reform, an affinity that often crossed ethnic boundaries.

Affected Bureaucracy

When reading through the various government reports compiled by Nigerian political elites on the hajj, starting in the 1950s and continuing into the 1960s after independence, a fair bit appears similar to the British colonial reports penned in the previous decades. Passports, quarantine, quantifying the number and demographics (gender, age, hometown) of pilgrims, various diplomatic arrangements with Sudan and Saudi Arabia—all of these concerns and bureaucratic knowledge continued seamlessly. What struck me—after having spent months reading through colonial British reports—was a shift in the vocabulary: words like “happiness,” “anxiety,” “sadness,” “embarrassment,” and so forth kept popping from the page. For example, in 1956 Alhaji Metteden, the Assistant Pilgrim Officer for Nigeria in Sudan, noted “the pitiable

spectacle of pilgrims looking for jobs” in El Obeid to earn money for their passage across the Red Sea, and the “anxiety” generated by the lack of bureaucratic support for them.²⁰ B. Umaru Audi, the Assistant District Officer in Kano, praised the return airlift by Sabena Airlines for producing a collective feeling that was “exceptionally happy.”²¹ Similarly, Alhaji Sule Lapai, serving in his role as Pilgrim Liaison Officer in Kano, reported in 1962 that pilgrims returned “happier than last year.”²² Whereas in 1964, a co-authored report complained that the pilgrims’ airlift experience was “far from being a happy one,”²³ and the following year pilgrim welfare officials reported that when mutawwifs demanded unexpected charges, it “leaves most of the pilgrims depressed and embarrassed.”²⁴ This language and awareness of pilgrims’ emotive states stands in stark contrast to the vocabulary once favored by colonial officials (even if it did, perhaps, start to rub off on them towards the end of British rule).²⁵ Thus, for the first time, hajj officials had begun to regard the emotional temperature of pilgrims as a valuable metric in evaluating the effectiveness of the Nigerian hajj. And while the British antidote to suffering was an expansion of surveillance and control measures, to this Nigerian officials added policies for the sole purpose of improving pilgrim morale.

One problem made visible through an attention to pilgrim emotions was homesickness,

²⁰ Alhaji M Abdullah Ahmed Metteden, “Report: Nigerian Road Pilgrims,” July 1956, 4, Premier’s Office: Secret: 4/1: PM 18/S.9 Vol I: Pilgrims Affairs Stafford Report Converted from D.G.N. 8406, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²¹ B. Umaru Audi, “Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1959 at Kano Airport,” July 1959, 5, Premier’s Office 2/1: AS I/216: Pilgrim Officers Air Traffic Report: Kano, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²² Alhaji Sule Lapai, “Report on Holy Pilgrimage 1962,” 1962, 4, Min of Info, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²³ “Report on 1964 Pilgrimage by the Nigerian Government Representatives,” 1964, 1, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²⁴ Alhaji Yaya Salau and Alhaji M Mukhtar, “Report on the Hajj Season 1965,” 1965, 4, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²⁵ “From Mr. H. Phillips, British Embassy, Jeddah to A. C. I. Samuel, Eastern Department, Foreign Office,” September 8, 1954, FO 371/110130, Kew Archive. Commenting on a report about the hajj by the Nigerian politician, Abubakar Imam, Phillips remarked that it appeared to him that Nigerian pilgrims “suffer, I think, from homesickness,” and suggested some steps ought to be taken so that Nigerians “would not feel that” Britain was “neglecting them.”

which generated efforts to allow overland pilgrims to maintain affective ties with their family and homeland that frequently relied on various communication technologies. For example, when the Northern Regional government sent Abubakar Gwamba to observe the pilgrim camp in Khartoum—a major stop along the overland route—on the first page of his report he noted that pilgrims suffered from homesickness and anxiety over not knowing when they’d be able to return to Nigeria, and argued that “something interesting must be done to enable them to feel as if they are at home.”²⁶ Gwamba pointed to mass media as one method to achieve this, suggesting that “cinema shows of various films on Life in Nigeria” could be shown, and claimed the British Embassy in Khartoum would be happy to loan a projector “to assist our Pilgrims in becoming happier.”²⁷ Additionally, he suggested that a publicly accessible radio could allow pilgrims to stay informed of current events in Nigeria. Gwamba also argued that government officials needed to help pilgrims with navigating the postal service, since many pilgrims provided incorrect addresses on their letters. To facilitate these efforts to maintain and cultivate pilgrims’ emotional ties to home, Gwamba suggested that a public collection could in part be used for “making our pilgrims happier.”²⁸ Gwamba’s recommendations appear to have gained traction, since in 1959 the Nigerian Pilgrim Officer in Khartoum requested films about Northern Nigeria to be screened using a projector at the British Embassy.²⁹ Similarly, the Nigerian Consulate in Port Sudan requested in 1962 press releases, books, “photographs on the progress of the region,” and films, to sate the desires of the “thousands of Nigerians living here and elsewhere in the

²⁶ Abubakar Maigari Gwamba, “My Short Visit to Khartoum in January, 1957 for Pilgrimage Discussions,” 1957, 1, Premier’s Office, 2/2: AS IV/141: Nigerian Pilgrim Office in Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

²⁷ Gwamba, 2.

²⁸ Gwamba, 2.

²⁹ “From the Principal Assistant Secretary, External Affairs Branch, Lagos to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Kaduna,” March 10, 1959, Min of Info, PRE/40 Vol I: Pilgrimage To Mecca, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

Sudan who are keen to learn something about their home.”³⁰ And further afield in Jeddah, in 1961 the Nigerian Ambassador thanked the Ministry of Information in Kaduna for all the films on Nigeria they had sent over the years before requesting they send more, since in Saudi Arabia there were many pilgrims “who have been away from home for a considerable time and are very enthusiastic about new developments and progress in Northern Nigeria.”³¹ In addition to films, the regional Ministry of Information in Kaduna also sent photographs of Ahmadu Bello depicting him in transit for the hajj.³² As discussed in Chapter 1, British colonial officials also trafficked in information from home—but while they did so to entice Nigerians abroad to divulge “a great deal of information regarding subterranean ant-British movements,” Nigerian officials were motivated to engender good feeling and national pride among the Nigerian diaspora in the East.³³

The new attention to affect brought by the Nigerianization of the hajj also impacted the arrangements of the hajj itself. The success of the hajj operation was now measured not simply on how efficiently pilgrims traveled and their maintenance of physical health, but also on how the experience of the hajj made them feel. When officials observed negative emotions or mental states, they sought an underlying cause and offered potential solutions. For example, a report from 1963 blamed cramped hostels in Mecca for the “mental disruption” suffered by some

³⁰ “From the Nigerian Consulate, Port Sudan, to Alhaji Ahmed Joda, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information, Kaduna,” June 17, 1962, Ministry of Info, PRE/139 Vol I: The Embassy of Nigeria, Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

³¹ “From the Nigerian Embassy, Jeddah to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information, Kaduna,” November 22, 1961, Min of Information, PRE 141: The Nigerian Embassy, Jeddah, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

³² “From Ministry of Information, Kaduna to the Nigerian Embassy, Jeddah,” May 5, 1962, Min of Information, PRE 141: The Nigerian Embassy, Jeddah, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “From the Information Officer, Overseas and Publication, for Chief Information Officer to the Nigerian Embassy, Jeddah,” May 11, 1962, Min of Information, PRE 141: The Nigerian Embassy, Jeddah, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

³³ “Letter from Governor of Nigeria to G.T. Lethem,” November 29, 1924, FO 686/141, British National Archives, Kew.

pilgrims, and recommended the Nigerian government buy land to build more suitable housing.³⁴ Similarly, the Welfare Team leader in 1965 advised that moving the Nigerian pilgrim camp in Muna closer to the site of the ritual stoning of the devil would “reduce the strains on the nerves of Pilgrims.”³⁵ Another report that same year observed the anxiety inflicted on both pilgrims and their families due to not knowing their return flight schedule, and urged that this information needed to be arranged well in advance.³⁶

As the previous example touches on, another contrast to the colonial state was that Nigerian politicians expressed more concern with how pilgrims experienced their interactions with the hajj bureaucracy and their agents, and took this into consideration when making policy recommendations. For example, that 1959 report by Audi on the hajj also lamented the “preposterously heart-breaking” atmosphere in the airport.³⁷ For this Audi blamed the fact that few hajj travel agents actually accompanied their pilgrims to the airport, where confusion often arose over flight schedules, luggage weight, etcetera. Audi also suggested the West African Airline Corporation—an imperial enterprise—lose its monopoly on hajj flights, given that some of its staff indulged in the “habit of rough-handling of the pilgrims,” a fact that had compelled Audi to try “to comfort the frustrated pilgrims involved.”³⁸ The Pilgrim Liaison Officer in Kano reported similar severe “and” disturbing treatment against pilgrims by custom pilgrims in 1962.³⁹ As will be discussed later, Nigerian agents did end up being required to be present in the airport—however some agents continued to engage in less than ideal treatment of their pilgrims

³⁴ “Recommendations by Nigeria Government’s Pilgrims Representatives for 1963 Hajj,” May 13, 1963, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

³⁵ Salau and Mukhtar, “Report on the Hajj Season 1965,” 6.

³⁶ “From Hamzat Ahmadu, Min of Ex Affairs, Lagos to Perm Sec Min of External Affairs, Lagos,” May 12, 1965, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

³⁷ Audi, “Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1959 at Kano Airport,” 4.

³⁸ B. Umaru Audi, “Secret: Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangements 1959. At Kano Airport,” 1959, 1, Premier’s Office, 2/1: AS I/212: Control of Travel Agencies, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

³⁹ Lapai, “Report on Holy Pilgrimage 1962,” 6.

or fail to demonstrate adequate empathy for them, behavior that informed official evaluations of agents and their recommendations of whether or not they should be re-licensed.⁴⁰ Audi's suggestions in relation to airlines proved harder to enforce than those regarding agents. Though the government had moved on from WAAC, in 1967 the Pilgrim Liaison Officer in Kano critiqued Nigeria Airways for being "unsympathetic to pilgrims" and claimed to have warned them that they needed "a real change of heart."⁴¹ Another official that year remarked that he was "sad to observe" that Nigeria Airways was "indifferent to the welfare of the pilgrims."⁴² And while by 1967 the recommendation by Audi that all airlines announce flight schedules well in advance was finally done, the years of previous uncertainty meant that "some pilgrims worried" and continued to show up to the airport early, indicating a need for more pilgrim education efforts.⁴³ Thus, while the Federal Military government reportedly "stressed the great importance [it] attached to the welfare and happiness of Pilgrims" in 1967, attention to affect did not necessarily translate to an improved mood among Nigerians.⁴⁴

As will begin to be explored in this chapter (and detailed in Chapter 4), consideration for pilgrims' emotions did not preclude the Nigerianization of the hajj from also placing restrictions on Muslim mobility and could even be used as a basis for criticizing pilgrims' behavior. But it does point to the fact that even if certain bureaucratic aspect of the hajj looked the same on paper after Nigerians took over from the British, the motivations and logic behind hajj policies were

⁴⁰ Alhaji Garga Ali Diwar, "Pilgrim Liaison Officer's Report on the 1966 Pilgrimage," 1966, 10–12, Premier's Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; Alhaji Garga Ali Diwar, "Report on the 1967 Pilgrims' Operations by the Pilgrims Liaison Officer, Kano," 1967, 8–12, Premier's Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁴¹ Diwar, "Report on the 1967 Pilgrims' Operations by the Pilgrims Liaison Officer, Kano," 3–4.

⁴² Umaru B Ali, "Proposals for New Pilgrimage Arrangements," July 5, 1967, 2, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/218 Vol II: Pilgrimage Arrangements [1967], Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁴³ Commercial Manager's Office, Nigeria Airways, "Nigeria Airways: Report on Pilgrimage Operations—1967," August 30, 1967, 3, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/218 Vol II: Pilgrimage Arrangements [1967], Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁴⁴ "Minutes of the Meeting of Pilgrimage Flight Committee Held in the Federal Ministry of Transport on Thursday, 31 of August, 1967," 1967, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/218 Vol II: Pilgrimage Arrangements [1967], Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

often different, and bore the influence of intimacy and empathy for pilgrims' experience (and even perhaps started to rub off on some British officials in the final decade of colonialism).⁴⁵

The Vilification of the Hajj by Road and Adjusting Maliki Law

The centralization of the hajj allowed the Nigerian state to better control, streamline, and nationalize it. One of the earliest hajj policies implemented by Muslim politicians towards the end of the 1950s was the aggressive repatriation of destitute Nigerian pilgrims from Saudi Arabia and Sudan (See Chapter 1 for description of destitute pilgrims). The scale of the operation was considerable; from 1958 to 1963, the state had repatriated an estimated 4,360 pilgrims.⁴⁶ Though the state used planes returning from transporting pilgrims to Saudi Arabia (which otherwise would have been empty) at a relatively low cost, arrangements for processing repatriated pilgrims on their arrival in Nigeria were complex and costly, requiring temporary housing, medical screenings, and lorries to take the returnees to their place of origin.⁴⁷ Not surprisingly, the fact that these costs were borne by the government continued to be a point of contention, particularly for Christians.⁴⁸

Once again, officials paid close attention to pilgrim emotions when crafting policies and plans for repatriation, even when those being repatriated had run afoul of Saudi Arabian authorities. For example, when Saudi Arabia forced the repatriation of forty-six Nigerians in

⁴⁵ "From Mr. H. Phillips, British Embassy, Jeddah to A. C. I. Samuel, Eastern Department, Foreign Office." Partly in a response to a report by Abubakar Imam, a member of the Northern House of Assembly, the British Embassy in Jeddah suggested that there perhaps ought to be efforts to improve the hajj and thus make sure Nigerians "would not feel that" the British were "neglecting them."

⁴⁶ "Questions and Answers in North House," *Nigerian Citizen*, March 23, 1963, 6.

⁴⁷ "Letter from the Resident Kano to the Secretary to the Premier," March 9, 1960, Premier's Office: AS 1/207 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Letter from the Resident Kano to the Secretary to the Premier," June 23, 1959, Premier's Office: AS 1/207 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, 25th May - 8th June, 1959," 1959, Premier's Office: AS 1/207 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁴⁸ S. Aderibigbe, "These Pilgrims," *Nigerian Tribune*, August 26, 1959, 2; "What the People Say: Warn the Pilgrims," *Lagos, Nigeria*, April 26, 1965, 9.

1963, the response from Northern Nigeria was to advocate for “a vigorous protest” against the fact that many were “extremely upset at the separation from their families.”⁴⁹ While the staff at the Nigerian Embassy in Jeddah were a bit more measured—they pointed out that Saudi Arabia did have legal grounds against the impacted pilgrims, after all—they impressed upon Saudi Arabian authorities to avoid this in the future.⁵⁰ As for planning out their own repatriation efforts, one Nigerian official’s attention to emotion led them to point out that the “emotional desire to come home” might cause even some legally settled and thriving Nigerians in Saudi Arabia to try to take advantage of the government’s repatriation scheme as a free trip to Nigeria.⁵¹

Yet even Muslim politicians had limited goodwill towards these destitute pilgrims. By the end of 1961, the ongoing costs of repatriating stranded impoverished pilgrims prompted the Nigerian state to take stock of the situation. Though the number of land pilgrims who passed through Maiduguri had decreased somewhat since 1958, the annual number remained at over eight thousand in 1960.⁵² And the Federal government estimated in 1961 that despite the repatriations since 1958, around ten thousand pilgrims remained stranded, and officials expressed fears that this number would remain alarmingly high as long as Nigerians continued to embark on the hajj without enough funds.⁵³ Not only did the cost of repatriations worry the government, but so did the impact of this “embarrassment” on Nigeria’s global reputation.⁵⁴

Moreover, both the Sudanese and Saudi Arabian governments, in hopes of preventing additional

⁴⁹ “From A. Akilu, Secretary to the Premier, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Lagos,” January 27, 1964, Premier’s Office: AS I/207 Vol II: Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁵⁰ “From the Embassy of Nigeria, Jeddah to the Consular and Treaties Division, Ministry of External Affairs,” March 18, 1964, Premier’s Office: AS I/207 Vol II: Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁵¹ “From the Premier’s Office, Kaduna, to the Ministry of Information, Kaduna,” April 16, 1964, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁵² “Letter from the Secretary to the Premier, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,” November 16, 1960, Premier’s Office: 2/1: 3rd Collection: AS I/229: Pilgrim Centers - Kano and Maiduguri, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁵³ “Letter from the Secretary to the Premier, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information,” November 16, 1961, Ministry of Information, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁵⁴ “Letter from the Secretary to the Premier, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information.”

poor Nigerians from entering their countries, increased passport and deposit requirements on overland pilgrims in the early 1960s.⁵⁵ In response, the Nigerian Federal government instated policies to curtail the overland hajj by increasing its difficulty, and sought to replace (or at least reinterpret) the standard of ability to undertake the hajj as determined by *maliki* law.

As for making the overland hajj more difficult, the Federal government moved to increase the costs of the overland hajj dramatically towards the end of 1961. Though no officials protested the changes, they were counter to recent efforts by the Northern Regional government and the Northern Regional Travel Agency Licensing Board (NRTALB), which in 1960 had worked to standardize motor fares to the pilgrims' advantage.⁵⁶ Now, despite past advocacy to keep Travel Certificates as valid international documents,⁵⁷ the Federal government caved to requests from Sudan and Saudi Arabia to ban Travel Certificates and instead require pilgrims to carry passports.⁵⁸ The cost hike was dramatic. While in 1961 the cost for the overland hajj was well under £50, in 1962 land pilgrims had to deposit £125 with the Nigerian government, £100 with Saudi Arabia, and pay a number of fees and transport costs upfront.⁵⁹ As a result, just to apply to get an overland passport required £286, a sum over double than a round-trip airline

⁵⁵ "Letter from the Secretary to the Premier, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information"; "Draft Press Release on Pilgrim Affairs," 1962, Premier's Office 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/223 Pilgrims Passports Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁵⁶ "Copied from File ASI/369/23 to File ASI/360: Land Pilgrims Fare 1961," 1961, Premier's Office: PRE, 2/1: AS I/360: Pilgrim Arrangements 1961, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Minutes of the Meeting of Pilgrimage Arrangements Committee Held in Maiduguri on 13th August, 1960 at the Provincial Office, Maiduguri," 1960, Premier's Office: PRE, 2/1: AS I/360: Pilgrim Arrangements 1961, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁵⁷ "Copy: Moslem Delegation to Saudi Arabia and the Sudan," 1958, Premier's Office, 4/1: PM 18/S.7: Pilgrim Affairs Nigeria mission to Saudi Arabia and Sudan, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁵⁸ "Letter from Secretary to the Premier to Mallam Momodu Olukoko," December 11, 1961, Premier's Office, AS 1/215: Travel Certificate - Printing and Distribution of, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁵⁹ "Letter from the Passport Officer, Kano (K. A. Price) to All Residents, Northern Region," November 29, 1961, Premier's Office 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/223 Pilgrims Passports Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Draft Press Release on Pilgrim Affairs."

ticket that year.⁶⁰ A number of hajj agents (unsuccessfully) protested claimed the new costs would decimate their livelihood, and cause some pilgrims to be “forced to travel surreptitiously.”⁶¹ At the same time, the NRTALB began rejecting applications from agents who proposed to only organize the overland hajj.⁶² The restrictions had a dramatic impact; in 1962 as few as two Nigerian pilgrims arrived by road.⁶³ Regardless, some Nigerians continued to arrive in Sudan without adequate paperwork as late as 1965, often with Travel Certificates endorsed by more remote Native Authorities, perhaps evidencing the difficulties of centralizing bureaucracy in a large country still bound by some of Indirect Rule’s political infrastructure.⁶⁴

Though Muslim politicians did not protest this change, they did express concern about how these policies might be interpreted by their constituents, and sought to ground the new policies in Islamic law. As the secretary to Ahmadu Bello warned all Residents of the Northern Provinces in 1961, “there are obvious dangers of disaffected persons stirring up trouble over the new conditions regarding the land pilgrimage.”⁶⁵ The “dangers” here referred to Muslims interpreting these policy changes as evidence that the government interfering with a fundamental part of Islamic practice, something the colonial state had feared as well. As discussed in Chapter 1, of the four main schools of Islamic law, that most commonly followed in West Africa, *maliki*

⁶⁰ “Minutes of the Meeting on Pilgrim Affairs Held in the Secretary to the Premier’s Office on Saturday, 19 January, 1963,” 1963, Premier’s Office, 2/7: 3rd collection: AS IV/174 Vol II: Pilgrims Arrangements 1963, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁶¹ “From Alhaji Adam Ali (and signed by Alhaji Bala Kano, Alhaji Habu Kano, Alhaji Dori Maiduguri, Alhaji Maisalati Maiduguri, Alhaji Baba Maiduguri),” December 23, 1961, Premier’s Office 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/223 Pilgrims Passports Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “Handwritten Note to the Secretary to the Premier, Northern Region, From [?],” January 8, 1962, Premier’s Office 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/223 Pilgrims Passports Instructions, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁶² “From the Secretary, NRTALB to Alhaji Bala Adam Ali,” December 8, 1962, Premier’s Office: 2nd Collection 2/2: AS I/219 Vol I: Northern Region Travel Agency’s Licensing Board Application for License, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁶³ “Typed Note from Wali, ASIV, to the Secretary to the Premier, Northern Region,” December 15, 1962, Premier’s Office: AS 1/207 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁶⁴ Hamzat Ahmadu, “Report on the 1965 Pilgrimage,” May 1965, 3–4, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁶⁵ “Letter from Secretary to the Premier to All Residents, Northern Region,” December 22, 1961, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

law, has the most capacious definitions of “the means” required for a person to meet the conditions of “ability” that thus obligates them to undertake the hajj, allowing for pilgrims to leave behind dependents and to earn the costs for hajj gradually, en route to Mecca. Efforts by the colonial state to alter this relatively lenient interpretation of “ability” harkened back to 1938, and as discussed, a number of Nigerian pilgrim societies and Muslim elites lent their support to this legal shift. In the 1950s, Babatunde Jose’s sixteen-part series in the *Daily Times* (see Chapter 2) frequently gave voice to this argument,⁶⁶ as did advice printed in the *Daily Times* Islamic news column during the late 1950s–early 1960s.⁶⁷ Yet as evidenced by the thousands of Nigerians in need of repatriation from Saudi Arabia and Sudan, many Muslims had not heeded this reinterpretation, and at the eve of independence, Muslim officials launched efforts to establish and propagate this new evaluation of *maliki* law.⁶⁸ In 1959, a British official recommended in his report on the overland hajj that a committee of clerics specializing in Islamic law should be asked to issue *fatwas* that defined “the means” needed as a condition of the hajj in terms of cash, and prohibiting the route to children, pregnant women, the elderly, and the infirm.⁶⁹ Not long afterward, the Northern Regional government enlisted a panel of Islamic scholars in 1961–1962, who eagerly agreed to help them make the case for the new policy since they saw the imposed

⁶⁶ Babatunde Jose, “What the Journey to Mecca Means to Me,” *Daily Times*, July 2, 1955, 5; “Alhaji Babatunde Jose Cables: It Is Madness to Go to Mecca without Funds,” *Daily Times*, August 13, 1955, 1; “Alhaji Babatunde Jose Tells of—The Difficulties and the Joys of Mecca,” *Daily Times*, August 16, 1955, 5.

⁶⁷ Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, “Calling All Moslems: Pilgrimage to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, January 17, 1958, 9; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, “Calling All Muslims: In the Name of Allah: Importance of Pilgrimage,” *Daily Times*, March 7, 1958, 5; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, “Calling All Muslims: Pilgrimage,” *Daily Times*, April 7, 1960, 23.

⁶⁸ “Note by Mr. Barder,” September 2, 1959, CO 554/1990: Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca, Kew Archive. This of course was not the first time that colonial officials had impacted the practice and interpretation of *maliki* law. The Nigerian Pilgrim Office in Jeddah, Alhaji Ngileruma, in conversation with a British official in 1959, framed this fact as useful precedent, arguing that given the colonial state had previously fought against injunctions against shaking hands, there was no reason new hajj controls could not be instated.

⁶⁹ B. C. J. Stafford, “Report on the Overland Pilgrimage from Nigeria to Mecca,” 1958, 16, Ministry of Information, 3RD COLLECTION MOI/48: Film of Hajj, 1960-61, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

restrictions as essential “to preserve the good name of the country.”⁷⁰ Additionally, they affirmed the importance of preventing the public from concluding the changes were “an attempt by the rich to prevent the poor from performing their religious obligations.”⁷¹ Though the British had perhaps been motivated to restrict the overland hajj more by practical concerns related to repatriation as opposed to Nigeria’s reputation in Mecca and the greater Islamic world, this was an instance where policy promoted by the colonial state easily aligned with the interests of the Muslim elite, both during the colonial period and afterward.

To popularize knowledge of the increased costs, challenges, and legal obstacles against the overland hajj, Muslim officials turned to mass media. Easily the most ambitious prong in this public relations campaign was a film project in 1961 that was never completed, owing to the unwillingness of Saudi Arabia to grant permission of Nigerian film crews to capture footage of the hajj.⁷² Had it been successful, the film would have depicted the overland route with “the contrasting ease of the air route.”⁷³ Despite this failure, within a couple of years another the Northern Ministry of Information proposed another propaganda hajj film, this time to discourage potential poor pilgrims by “depicting the living conditions of destitute pilgrims in Saudi Arabia.”⁷⁴ Radio offered another venue to discourage the overland hajj. The aforementioned panel of Islamic scholars, in addition to pledging to spread the message among their communities, agreed to each prepare a message that explained why the new restrictions by the

⁷⁰ “Minutes of the Meeting of the Panel of Islamic Scholars On the Control of Destitute Pilgrims,” 1961, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁷¹ “Minutes of the Meeting of the Panel of Islamic Scholars On the Control of Destitute Pilgrims”; “Minutes of Meeting of Panel of Islamic Scholars,” January 15, 1962, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. The degree to which the provincial scholars supported the measure was noted with some surprise by the officials based in Kaduna.

⁷² “From the Secretary to the Premier to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Info, Kaduna,” January 26, 1961, Ministry of Information, 3RD COLLECTION MOI/48: Film of Hajj, 1960-61, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁷³ “From the Film Director to the Chief Information Officer, Northern Region,” January 20, 1960, Ministry of Information, 3RD COLLECTION MOI/48: Film of Hajj, 1960-61, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁷⁴ “Minutes of the First Meeting of the Publicity Campaign Committee Held at the Ministry of Information on August 23, 1963,” 1963, PRE 2/1: AS I/202: Pilgrimage Publicity, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

Federal government were in accordance with Islam's conditions for hajj, which they then recorded with the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC),⁷⁵ a strategy repeated the next year.⁷⁶ Other radio programs in the North, at the direction of the regional government, promoted a similar message about the *non*-obligatory nature of the hajj for those without the means.⁷⁷ Officials also used radio to circulate information about required preparations and documentation for pilgrimage, and various warnings against illegal actions, like traveling without a passport.⁷⁸ Similarly, print provided a third means of communication, from government warnings and instructions published in the newspapers⁷⁹ and tacked on notice boards translated into up to eight vernacular languages, in a variety of public places like motor parks, markets, cinemas, etc.⁸⁰ The scale of some of these campaigns is worth noting: at the end of 1961 when new policies increased the cost of the overland hajj, the Northern Regional Government erected one thousand notice boards in heavily-trafficked areas to explain the changes.⁸¹ Though these annual publicity campaigns also contained practical information like the cost of airplane tickets or which hospitals would provide vaccinations, they frequently made a point of stressing the dangers,

⁷⁵ "Minutes of Meeting of Panel of Islamic Scholars."

⁷⁶ "Typed Note by Assistant Secretary IV to the Secretary to the Premier, Northern Region," January 4, 1963, PRE 2/1: AS I/202: Pilgrimage Publicity, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Note from Wali to the Secretary to the Premier, Northern Region," January 22, 1963, PRE 2/1: AS I/202: Pilgrimage Publicity, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁷⁷ "Minutes of the Meeting on Pilgrimage Affairs, in Premier's Office, 23 Nov 1961," 1961, Min of Info, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁷⁸ "Note from C. I. O. to Permanent Secretary, Kaduna," November 22, 1961, Ministry of Information, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From the Secretary to Premeir, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information," October 28, 1961, Premier's Office, AS 1/215: Travel Certificate - Printing and Distribution of, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From A.A. El-Miskeen of Bornu NA and K. Alakali of Kano NA, 'Northern Regional Reps of Pilgrims' to the Permanent Secretary, Kaduna," June 18, 1962, Min of Info, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁷⁹ "Mecca Pilgrims Warned Against Illegal Routes," *West African Pilot*, January 14, 1958, 1; "Some Pilgrims Die on Red Sea Islands," *Daily Times*, January 14, 1958, 12; "Pilgrims Warned," *Daily Times*, April 7, 1962, 1; "Pilgrimage," *Nigerian Citizen*, April 4, 1962, 1.

⁸⁰ "Control of Destitute and Sick Pilgrims," November 21, 1961, Ministry of Information, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Letter from the Senior Superintendent, Public Enlightenment Center, Sokoto to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information, Kaduna," January 4, 1962, Ministry of Information. PER 163 Vol I: Siting of Notice Boards for Intending Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁸¹ "Minutes of the Meeting on Pilgrimage Affairs, in Premier's Office, 23 Nov 1961."

discomforts, and impracticalities of undertaking the overland hajj, and often pointed out to cost to Nigeria's national reputation caused by destitute pilgrims.⁸²

The combination of the new restrictions and aggressive publicity campaign against the overland hajj significantly and briskly decreased the annual number of Nigerians traveling to Mecca by road. This is perhaps best illustrated by how quickly infrastructure developed for the overland hajj became unnecessary. While a new Immigration Center in Maiduguri had been designed in the late 1950s to accommodate up to fourteen thousand pilgrims moving through its facilities each year, by the time it was getting close to opening in 1963, officials estimated that only four-hundred Nigerians had departed for hajj by road that year.⁸³ New restrictions and publicity campaigns could not entirely stop pilgrims from undertaking the overland hajj, but they did result in the Immigration Center in Maiduguri being repurposed before it even had the chance to open.⁸⁴ Pilgrims who continued to opt for the overland route had to do so illicitly, without the support of government infrastructure; at least until 1970, intending pilgrims could still apply for Travel Certificates to enter Cameroon or Chad, from where they would enter Sudan illegally.⁸⁵

Though pilgrim emotions were not the driving force of these policies, the publicity campaigns often justified these policies through the language of emotion, and they aimed to provoke emotional responses among their Muslim audience. Their ability to do so resided in the

⁸² "Pilgrims Advised," *Nigerian Citizen*, January 28, 1959, 1; "Note from C. I. O. to Permanent Secretary, Kaduna"; "From the Secretary to the Premier to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lagos," November 26, 1962, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places in 1963 [Press Release]," 1963, Ministry of Info, 3rd collection, vol I, 2/14 FTS 12: 1963 Pilgrimage Campaign, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From the Secretary to the Premier to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lagos," September 13, 1963, PRE 2/1: AS I/202: Pilgrimage Publicity, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁸³ "From the Secretary to the Premier to the Provincial Secretary, Bornu Province," May 11, 1963, Premier's Office: AS I/208: Immigration Centre Maiduguri, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁸⁴ "From the Secretary to the Premier to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Northern Region," June 8, 1963, Premier's Office: AS I/208: Immigration Centre Maiduguri, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁸⁵ J. S. Birks, *Across the Savannas to Mecca: The Overland Pilgrimage Route from West Africa* (London: C. Hurst, 1978), 43–44, <http://mirlyn.lib.umich.edu/Record/000302218>.

intimate knowledge Muslim officials held of the hajj and their constituents. At times, the notices to pilgrims were clearly phrased to provoke fear among potential overland pilgrims. For example, one newspaper notice emphasized the dangers inherent in “unknown countries.”⁸⁶ Likewise, a pamphlet detailing the reasons that one should not undertake the overland hajj invited the reader to think of how unpleasant it was to be forced to “sleep in some untidy shack in the market place or lorry park” when their bus broke down in Nigeria, and then asked them to consider how much worse this would be in a foreign land.⁸⁷ Another pamphlet invited empathy by describing newly arrived repatriated pilgrims as “bedraggled, dirty, dejected and sad,” and compared the sight of them to mourners, which, it went on to argue, was fitting given that “they were mourning the end of a great dream, the death of a beautiful vision,” i.e. “of returning home joyfully” after the successful completion of the hajj.⁸⁸ This pamphlet too worked to conjure fear, describing the road to Mecca as “littered with the skeletons of broken pilgrimage dreams.”⁸⁹ This affective description was then used to support the government: “To take the **heartbreak** out of pilgrimage and make the trip the sort of **happy** religious experience it is intended to be, it was decided to tighten up the regulations governing the pilgrimage.”⁹⁰ [Emphasis added] And, similar to discussions of Nigeria’s world reputation in the 1950s (see Chapter 2), the publicity materials on the hajj from the early 1960s requested Muslims to consider the “humiliation” that would be brought to them as individuals and to the nation if they became stranded in Saudi Arabia.⁹¹ Similar to the policies to combat homesickness already discussed, at times officials envisioned added affective benefits to informing pilgrims of the dangers of the overland hajj; officials

⁸⁶ “Pilgrims Advised,” 1.

⁸⁷ “Holy Pilgrimage to Mecca—Should Go by Land,” 1963, Ministry of Info, 3rd collection, vol I, 2/14 FTS 12: 1963 Pilgrimage Campaign, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁸⁸ “Pilgrimage to Mecca,” 1963, 1–2, Ministry of Info, 3rd collection, vol I, 2/14 FTS 12: 1963 Pilgrimage Campaign, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁸⁹ “Pilgrimage to Mecca,” 3.

⁹⁰ “Pilgrimage to Mecca,” 3.

⁹¹ “Holy Pilgrimage to Mecca—Should Go by Land,” 1.

imagined that one value of the never-completed hajj film would be that would allow those who could not afford the hajj to experience “the happiness of seeing exactly what is undertaken by the pilgrim.”⁹²

Centralization and “Bad” Agents:

Centralization not only allowed the government to tighten its control over *how* pilgrims traveled, but also over *who* got to be involved in hajj travel arrangements. As discussed in the previous chapter, the main development in the Western Regional government during the late 1950s in regards to the hajj was the establishment of the Western Region Pilgrims Welfare Board in 1958. While institutionalized support was the main concern in the West, in the North the Dantata scandal amplified existing criticisms over the conduct of the ever-growing number of hajj agents. Under the oversight of Ahmadu Bello, in the years surrounding independence the Northern Regional government attempted to address this problem in three ways; first, by creating a government-affiliated hajj agency, second, by establishing regulatory infrastructure for all hajj agents, and third, expanding government resources devoted to facilitating the hajj. These policies, particularly the oversight of hajj agents, not infrequently gave rise to tensions and protests, which the government at times defended by referencing how regulatory practices stood to preserve the emotional wellbeing of pilgrims. Ultimately the government and a few established agents prevailed, and one of the main outcomes of these regulatory policies was that by the mid-1960s, the Nigerian hajj had become drastically more centralized.

Early into 1958, the Northern Regional government attempted to solve the problem of corrupt agents by creating its own agency Alharamaini, and thus circumventing them altogether.

⁹² “Memorandum by the Minister of Internal Affairs: Film of the Holy Pilgrimage,” January 6, 1960, 2, Ministry of Information, 3RD COLLECTION MOI/48: Film of Hajj, 1960-61, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

Though it was to be privately owned, with the possibility of investment by Northern elites, the regional government owned a substantial amount of its shares, and provided the company with an initial £5000 interest-free loan and another £5000 with four-percent interest.⁹³ The original goal for Alharamaini was ambitious, with the government hoping that it would eventually organize the entire hajj, not only arranging flights and overland transport but providing for pilgrim comfort in Kano and within Saudi Arabia.⁹⁴ Meanwhile, British colonial officials supported the venture as well, since they hoped that the corporation's agents would be able to do administration work along the hajj overland route with government oversight, without the optics of Nigerians doing actual diplomatic work before independence.⁹⁵ By way of support, B J C Stafford, the Assistant District Officer in Kano was loaned out for a couple of months to investigate (though his research was on Alharamaini's dime) the overland route on their behalf.⁹⁶ Around the same time, Ahmadu Bello went on his own mission to Sudan and Saudi Arabia, where he negotiated on behalf of Alharamaini to get them operation rights.⁹⁷ While Bello succeeded, Stafford's report painted a grim picture. To facilitate the overland hajj would, he

⁹³ "Secret: Note on Pilgrim Affairs," 1958, Premier's Office, 4/1: PM 18/S.7: Pilgrim Affairs Nigeria mission to Saudi Arabia and Sudan, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Pilgrims' Transport Services," *West African Pilot*, January 23, 1958, 3; "Govt. Plans New Company to Aid North Pilgrims," *Nigerian Citizen*, January 25, 1958, 1; "Note from ASI to DSP," September 5, 1959, Premier's Office: 2/1: 3rd Collection: AS I/229: Pilgrim Centers - Kano and Maiduguri, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁹⁴ "From Alharamaini Limited, % Ministry of Trade & Industry, Kaduna, to the Secretary of the West African Air Transport Authority, % Nigerian Secretariat, Lagos," October 6, 1958, WAATA 1/1: ATA 101/3 Vol III: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From H.C. Brilliant, Secretary of WAATA, to the Secretary of Ministry of Communications and Aviation," October 17, 1958, WAATA 1/1: ATA 101/3 Vol III: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

⁹⁵ "Secret: Note on Pilgrim Affairs."

⁹⁶ "From the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Northern Region, to the Permanent Secretary," March 25, 1958, Premier's Office, 2/1 4th Collection, ASI/179: Pilgrimage Arrangement, 1958, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Trade and Industry, "Note for Premier Regarding the Pilgrim Situation and the Formation of Alharamaini Limited," February 13, 1958, Premier's Office, 4/1: PM 18/S.7: Pilgrim Affairs Nigeria mission to Saudi Arabia and Sudan, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; Stafford, "Report on the Overland Pilgrimage from Nigeria to Mecca"; "From the Resident, Kano to the Secretary to the Premier, Kaduna," October 1, 1959, Premier's Office: 2/1: 3rd Collection: AS I/229: Pilgrim Centers - Kano and Maiduguri, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

⁹⁷ "Note from the Permanent Secretary to the Premier," March 31, 1958, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/233: Appointment of Members of Northern Regional Travel Agency Licensing Board, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

argued, require company agents in ten major stopping points, with reception units for up to five-hundred pilgrims in order to avoid inflated lodging prices. Moreover, consular services would be needed.⁹⁸ Given the high costs all of this would entail, he ultimately recommended Alharamaini focus solely on aviation, which they did.⁹⁹

In addition to the loans, government documents reveal that officials were greatly biased against Hajair (perhaps understandable since Dantata had largely taken over the operation), and early into 1958 the company was denied the ability to participate in that year's hajj, despite previous promises to the contrary, thus removing one potential rival to Alharamaini.¹⁰⁰ The government also arranged for every agent to pay a fee of £2 per pilgrim to the company.¹⁰¹ Regardless, the venture proved a bit of a flop. In its first year it made a net profit of a mere £83, and 1959 was the last year the company acted in the capacity of a hajj agent.¹⁰² Yet despite one government official's recommendation to liquidate Alharamaini that year, the company continued to operate as a semi-autonomous arm of the government, ostensibly using the £2 per pilgrim fee to provide services for pilgrim welfare.¹⁰³ Yet by 1966, the main job Alharamaini was tasked with, to build a shelter for pilgrims waiting for their airlift in Kano, had yet to materialize, much to the annoyance of the Northern Regional government.¹⁰⁴ Nor was this the

⁹⁸ Stafford, "Report on the Overland Pilgrimage from Nigeria to Mecca."

⁹⁹ "4,000 to Go on Pilgrimage," *Nigerian Citizen*, May 7, 1958, 2; "Two Appointed Pilgrim Agents," *Daily Times*, January 13, 1959, 12.

¹⁰⁰ "From Y Abdullahi, Secretary of Hajair to the Secretary of WAATA," May 17, 1958, WAATA 1/1: ATA/101/3 Vol II: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From DCA to the Secretary of Hajair," June 5, 1958, WAATA 1/1: ATA/101/3 Vol II: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "From the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Northern Region, to the Permanent Secretary."

¹⁰¹ "Note from ASI to DSP"; "From Leslie Evans, WAAC, Lagos HQ to the Premier's Office, Kaduna," January 6, 1959, Premier's Office, Secret: 4/1: PM 18/S.6 Vol II: Pilgrim Affairs: Pilgrimage Arrangements for 1959, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁰² "From the Resident, Kano to the Secretary to the Premier, Kaduna."

¹⁰³ "Note from ASI to DSP"; "Annual Meeting of Pilgrimage Arrangements Held at the Residency on 7th April, 1961," 1961, Premier's Office: PRE, 2/1: AS I/360: Pilgrim Arrangements 1961, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁰⁴ "From the Secretary to the Regional Military Government to the Provincial Secretary, Kano," April 27, 1966, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/218 Vol I: Pilgrimage Arrangements [1966], Nigerian

first time anyone involved in the hajj had found the company lacking.¹⁰⁵ After the 1967 hajj, once again an official suggested Alharamaini be liquidated, which, based on its absence in the archival record after this point, appears to have happened.¹⁰⁶

Around the same time as the founding of Alharamaini, the Northern Regional government sought to bring oversight to hajj agents. Whereas the colonial state had attempted (and failed) to encourage all pilgrims to participate in the government-run Pilgrimage Control Scheme (see Chapter 1), and largely ignored Nigerian hajj agents, the Nigerian political elites who oversaw the Nigerianization of the colonial hajj bureaucracy in the Northern Region sought to reign-in this alternative hajj structure by bringing it into the fold of government oversight by founding the NRTALB in 1958 (Chapter 2). Drawn from all over the region and appointed by Bello, the chairman and board members did so for the position's prestige, since they received no compensation beyond incurred expenses.¹⁰⁷ From the start, one goal of the NRTALB was to reduce the number of hajj agents, and a desire to make the hajj industry more elite was baked into the Board's framework. To this end, Bello's secretary recommended that the annual license fee be, "fairly high in order to discourage the small man with inadequate resources," which Bello

National Archives, Kaduna; "Note from ASI to SECMILGOV," January 24, 1967, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/218 Vol I: Pilgrimage Arrangements [1966], Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁰⁵ "Annual Meeting of Arrangement of Pilgrimage Held at the Residency at 10:15am on 3rd March, 1962," 1962, Premier's Office, 2/2: AS IV/174: Pilgrimage Arrangements 1962, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁰⁶ Ali, "Proposals for New Pilgrimage Arrangements," 4. [**Admittedly, this is an archival gap I just became aware of, and will try to fix next time I'm in Nigeria**]

¹⁰⁷ "Sardauna Names Members of Travel Agency Board," *Daily Times*, April 15, 1958, 4; "Northern Regional Public Notice: Control of Travel Agencies Law, 1958: Membership of Licensing Board," 1958, Premier's Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection ASI/233: Appointment of Members of Northern Regional Travel Agency Licensing Board, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Note from ASI to the Premier," August 29, 1963, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/233: Appointment of Members of Northern Regional Travel Agency Licensing Board, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Note from A.S.I. to the Premier, Northern Region," August 29, 1963, Premier's Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection ASI/233: Appointment of Members of Northern Regional Travel Agency Licensing Board, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From the Secretary to the Premier to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Lagos Affairs," January 5, 1966, Premier's Office, 2/1: AS I/212: Control of Travel Agencies, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. The Chairman served for three years, the members two years. While initially only members could be reappointed, eventually so too could the chairman.

approved.¹⁰⁸ The annual fee of £25 applied to both the primary agent as well as any of his sub-agents, those who sold tickets on the agent's behalf for a cut of the profit. In addition to the license fee, agents now had to deposit £10 and £5 for every pilgrim they intended to transport by air and land, respectively.¹⁰⁹ The absence of adequate capital proved one of the most common reasons for the NRTALB to reject an agent's application, and kept the number of primary agents down to handful or less.¹¹⁰ Given all they stood to gain financially, the few hajj agents permitted by the government proved eager collaborators with the state, reporting the names of anyone collecting hajj fares without the NRTALB's sanction.¹¹¹ The state further tried to prevent unofficial agents from operating by publishing warnings against them in the press (both in the North and West), along with the names of the state-sanctioned agents.¹¹²

Agents, accustomed to operating autonomously for decades, proved impervious to control, necessitating further reforms. Much of the on-going problems traced back to the fact that though the source of licenses had been centralized, the structure of hajj agents remained "amorphous."¹¹³ While the main agents tended to be based in the metropolitan city of Kano, in order to reel in as many interested pilgrims as possible they maintained a wide web of sub-agents and sub-sub-

¹⁰⁸ "Note from the Permanent Secretary to the Premier of the Northern Region," March 31, 1958, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS 1/233: Appointment of Members of Northern Regional Travel Agency Licensing Board, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁰⁹ "Note from D.P.S. Premiers Office to H.A.G.," October 16, 1958, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS 1/233: Appointment of Members of Northern Regional Travel Agency Licensing Board, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹¹⁰ "Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: ASI/219 Vol II: Applications for and Issue of Pilgrim Agency Licenses," n.d., Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹¹¹ "Minutes of the Meeting of Pilgrimage Arrangements Committee Held in Maiduguri on 13th August, 1960 at the Provincial Office, Maiduguri"; "From Alhaji Haruna Kassim to the Permanent Secretary, Northern Region," February 27, 1963, PRE 2/1: AS 1/202: Pilgrimage Publicity, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹¹² "4,000 to Go on Pilgrimage," 2; "Three Agents to Handle Transport of Pilgrims," *Daily Times*, May 3, 1958, 4; "Two Appointed Pilgrim Agents," 12.

¹¹³ "From Haji Mabur Travel Agency to the Secretary, NRTALB, Kaduna," November 17, 1964, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS 1/219 Vol II: Applications for and Issue of Pilgrim Agency Licenses., Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

agents, which steadily grew after independence.¹¹⁴ These sub-agents scoured not just cities but towns and villages for potential pilgrims, and collected hajj fees, passport photos, and facilitated various required paperwork, all of which would be handed over to the main agent in Kano to be finalized (at least when the system worked).¹¹⁵ The behavior of some sub-agents was a persistent thorn in the side of the state, the main problem being either overcharging, absconding with pilgrims' money or essentially using the money as a personal loan only to be paid forward to their main agent at the last minute, as well as poor communication with their main agent.¹¹⁶ Little could be done besides deny offending agents or sub-agents licenses in the future, or fine them.¹¹⁷ Additionally, the maximum fee for the pilgrimage was given publicity to prevent overcharging.¹¹⁸ Such notices, as well as general warnings about how to avoid unscrupulous

¹¹⁴ "Names of Pilgrim Agents and Sub-Agents and Their Addresses," 1960, Premier's Office: 4/1: PM 18/S.12 Vol I: Pilgrim Affairs 1960-61 Arrangements, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Premier's Office: 3/1: ACC 38: Alhaji Haruna Kassim Applications [File]," 1963, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From Nurul Hujaji to the Secretary, NRTALB, Kaduna," September 27, 1965, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/219 Vol II: Applications for and Issue of Pilgrim Agency Licenses., Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From Mecca and Medina Traveling Agency Director to the Secretary, NRTALB, Kaduna," October 4, 1965, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/219 Vol II: Applications for and Issue of Pilgrim Agency Licenses., Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "List of Sub-Agents," December 1965, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/219 Vol II: Applications for and Issue of Pilgrim Agency Licenses, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Note by ? To NB," December 22, 1965, Military Governor's Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/219 Vol II: Applications for and Issue of Pilgrim Agency Licenses, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. By 1965 there were 117 sub-agents for four agents. Sub-sub agents were not recorded.

¹¹⁵ Dr. K. K. Olosio, "Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980" (PhD, University of Ibadan, 1984), 158.

¹¹⁶ "Press Release," September 2, 1958, Premier's Office, 2/1 4th Collection, ASI/179: Pilgrimage Arrangement, 1958, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; Abubakar Maigari Gwamba, "Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1958 at Kano Airport," April 19, 1958, 4, Premier's Office, 2/1 4th Collection, ASI/179: Pilgrimage Arrangement, 1958, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Typed Note by A.S.I., 28 July to D.S.P.," 1959, Premier's Office 2/1: AS I/216: Pilgrim Officers Air Traffic Report: Kano, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Note to the Secretary to the Premier, from AS IV," October 26, 1962, PRE 2/1: AS I/202: Pilgrimage Publicity, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; Audi, "Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1959 at Kano Airport"; "1965 Pilgrimage Report by the Pilgrims' Liaison Office, Kano," May 1965, Premier's Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹¹⁷ "Note to the Secretary to the Premier, from AS IV"; Gwamba, "Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1958 at Kano Airport," 4; "Press Release."

¹¹⁸ "From the Resident Kano, to the Secretary of the NRTALB," September 19, 1960, Premier's Office: 4/1: PM 18/S.12 Vol I: Pilgrim Affairs 1960-61 Arrangements, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

agents and news reports on their punishment by the government,¹¹⁹ undoubtedly provided evidence to Muslim citizens of the state's commitment to improve the hajj.

Occasionally agent behavior, in Nigeria or in Saudi Arabia, necessitated new laws and regulations. During the 1964 pilgrimage, one rumor among staff of the Nigerian Embassy in Jeddah had it that some pilgrim agents actively conspired with the *mutawifs* (Saudi hajj guides) to split the pilgrims' hajj fee without rendering the required services, in a bid to milk them for more funds.¹²⁰ The Northern Region ultimately did not take up one report's suggestion to mandate pilgrims cut out agents by paying the *mutawifs* directly, but it did give pilgrims the choice to pay it to their agent on arrival in Jeddah as opposed to Nigeria, and it vowed to increase education efforts about what services pilgrims could demand from their *mutawif*.¹²¹ As already alluded to, at times additional regulations reflected the new consideration of pilgrims' emotions by the post-Nigerianization hajj bureaucracy. One example comes from a report on the airlift of pilgrims at the Kano airport in 1959 by B. Umaru Audi, the Assistant District Officer. In his report, Audi devotes a fair amount of time to cataloguing the suffering many pilgrims faced before they even entered an airplane. Mainly, sub-agents typically sent pilgrims to Kano long before their scheduled departure, if they even *were* scheduled—more often than not, agents provided pilgrims with merely a vague sense of when they would embark to Mecca. Audi found that in the time between when pilgrims departed their hometown to when they boarded a plane, they became vulnerable to hustlers of various stripes, who knew that pilgrims without family in Kano (and often still with some paperwork to finalize) made for easy marks. Even once a pilgrim

¹¹⁹ "Agent for Pilgrims Imprisoned," *Nigerian Citizen*, February 22, 1958, 12; "Sanitary Chief Demanded L125: Ilorin Court Told," *Nigerian Tribune*, April 30, 1958, 4; "Warning to Pilgrims to Be," *Nigerian Citizen*, August 30, 1958, 12; "Pilgrims Warned of Unscrupulous Agents," *Daily Telegraph*, September 2, 1958, 1.

¹²⁰ "Report of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Pilgrim Affairs," April 1964, MOI/137, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹²¹ "From the Premier's Office, Kaduna, to the Ministry of Information, Kaduna."

was issued a ticket, navigating rules like baggage allowance restrictions proved confusing to many pilgrims. Audi lamented that of the 21 sub-agents operating that year, only two accompanied their pilgrims to Kano, and even then, only for a brief appearance. As a solution, Audi proposed requiring sub-agents and agents alike to assist their pilgrims until the moment of their departure, which, beyond lessening confusion in the weeks before their departure would “produce [a] certain amount of psychological effect in that the pilgrims will come to develop a feeling that they are properly looked after by their Agents.”¹²²

Other desired regulations of agent behavior proved more difficult to enforce, despite ongoing pressure by the state. The problem of agents and pilgrims bribing West African Airline Corporation (WAAC) clerks or sub-agents being susceptible to bribes themselves, though thoroughly discussed in 1958 and at least somewhat successfully combatted the following year thanks to increased vigilance by the Kano Pilgrim Officer and his assistants, occasionally reappeared in later reports.¹²³ Relatedly, getting agents to keep adequate records of pilgrims and their flight schedule presented a more intractable problem. While agents who did keep complete records enjoyed praise from the colonial state, and others were encouraged to follow suite, throughout the early to mid 1960s officials were wary of exercising too much control over the affairs of what was ultimately private enterprise.¹²⁴

Though there were a number of losers in the process of centralization, for the few agents on the receiving end of the NRTALB’s blessing, the new policies helped them consolidate a monopoly over what had once been a more competitive economy. As a government official

¹²² Audi, “Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1959 at Kano Airport.”

¹²³ Gwamba, “Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1958 at Kano Airport”; Audi, “Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1959 at Kano Airport”; Abbas Dabo Sambo, “1964 Pilgrimage Report by Pilgrims Liaison Officer, Kano,” 1964, 2, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹²⁴ Audi, “Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1959 at Kano Airport”; “Note from A.S.I. to the Premier, Northern Region,” June 15, 1964, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

explained to one prospective hajj agent in 1961, the job required “well known and efficient sub-agents to collect pilgrims, pay deposits, etc.,” and a staff on the ground of two countries “to cope with documentation, accommodation and financial problems in Kano or Maiduguri and in Jeddah,” not to mention the required capital for the deposits.¹²⁵ Perhaps no businessman benefited more, both in terms of finances and prestige, than Alhaji Haruna Kassim. Like many who went on to enter the hajj travel business, Kassim started his professional life as a trader in Kano. By the late 1940s he had begun to informally accompany people on their hajj by road, including the father of the woman he intended to marry, the lavish ceremony of which occurred shortly after their return to a crowd of ten thousand guests.¹²⁶ By 1953, Kassim had become deeply involved in the hajj, negotiating with the Northern Regional government to establish a hostel for Nigerian pilgrims in Jeddah, in his role as secretary of the Nigerian Pilgrims Society.¹²⁷ Then, towards the end of 1955, Kassim (along with another Nigerian and a Saudi Arabian) partnered with Mr. de Graaff Hunter, previously the General Manager of Aden Airways and a recent convert to Islam, to form Hajair.¹²⁸ The new company aimed to undercut the West African Airline Corporation’s (WAAC) domination of the hajj by air by offering significantly cheaper fares, thanks to de Graaff Hunter’s connections with the Saudi Arabian government, and by offering the advantage of services provided by Muslims, since WAAC was a British imperial

¹²⁵ “From the Secretary to the Premier to the Aviation Manager, Dundas Ltd.,” February 3, 1961, Premier’s Office: PRE, 2/1: AS I/360: Pilgrim Arrangements 1961, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹²⁶ “Alhaji H Kassim Weds Miss Hilma,” *Daily Comet*, December 15, 1949, 3.

¹²⁷ Alhaji Abubakar Imam, *The Abubakar Imam Memoirs* (NNPC, 1989), 192; “Over 5,000 West African Pilgrims for Mecca,” *Daily Times*, May 30, 1955, 3.

¹²⁸ “Notes of Meeting Held in the Office of the Minister of Communications and Aviation on the 9th of September, 1955,” n.d., WAATA 1/1: ATA 101/3 Vol I: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Proposed Visit to Nigeria Postponed,” *Daily Comet*, April 24, 1956, 1, 4; “From C. Dello Strologo, to the Secretary of WAATA,” September 13, 1956, WAATA 1/1: ATA/101/3 Vol II: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Note from the DCA to Secretary of WAATA,” March 15, 1956, WAATA 1/1: ATA/101/3 Vol II: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “We Are Grateful,” *Daily Comet*, April 26, 1956, 1.

company (two tactics that Dantata's WAPA introduced that same year).¹²⁹ Though Kassim's relationship with Hajair soured the next year, in 1958 he was one of three agencies licensed by the NRTALB, and ended up carrying roughly a little over half of all pilgrims departing from the North (which included several southerners),¹³⁰ and eighty percent of those traveling overland.¹³¹ In 1960 he was the only official hajj agent in Northern Nigeria, and while he soon had some competition, his dominance in the hajj travel market continued well into the 1960s.¹³² In addition to the fact that he was consistently one of the few agents to be licensed by the NRTALB, the government aided Kassim by referring international airlines to make deals with him, Ahmadu Bello directed him to oversee the entire *umrah* (lesser hajj) operation, and of all agents it was Kassim who got to regularly make announcements concerning hajj flights.¹³³ Before long, this prestige and preferential treatment gained Kassim competition and enemies.¹³⁴ In 1966, the General Manager of Sabena Airlines remarked that the reason for the recent uptick in hajj agents was that "they wish to destroy the kudos derived out of these operations by Alhaji Haruna

¹²⁹ "Notes of Meeting Held in the Office of the Minister of Communications and Aviation on the 9th of September, 1955"; "From WAPA Ltd to the Minister of Communications and Aviation," January 3, 1956, WAATA 1/1: ATA 101/3 Vol I: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. Admittedly, WAPA stated the importance of this the most explicitly, noting that all of their planes would have Muslim pilots, with at least one Muslim leader on board who would be able to instruct the pilgrims on how to enter the state of *ihram* while in flight, a practice that is now common for Nigerian pilgrims.

¹³⁰ "News in Brief: Kano: More than 2,000 Pilgrimage Have Left Kano," *Nigerian Citizen*, April 27, 1963, 2. At least at this point in the 1963 hajj cycle, out of the 2,140 pilgrims that had departed from Kano, 90 came from Lagos (so, 4.2%). Presumably, still overs came from other southern cities.

¹³¹ "Director Quits," *Daily Times*, May 18, 1957, 3; "Alhaji Haruna Attacks 'Hajair' Policy," *Nigerian Citizen*, May 18, 1957, 1; "Three Agents to Handle Transport of Pilgrims," 4; "4,000 to Go on Pilgrimage," 2. The reason Kassim quit was mainly because he felt de Graaff Hunter spent money recklessly, and because he wanted to raise the fare price after offering a cheaper rate the initial year.

¹³² "From the Secretary to the Premier to the Aviation Manager, Dundas Ltd."; "News in Brief: Kano: More than 2,000 Pilgrimage Have Left Kano," 2; "Typed Note from ASI to the Secretary to the Premier," September 22, 1965, Premier's Office, 2/1: AS I/212: Control of Travel Agencies, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹³³ "From the Secretary to the Premier, Northern Region, to Mallam Mahmoud Taher, UAR Embassy, Lagos," March 7, 1961, Premier's Office: PRE, 2/1: AS I/360: Pilgrim Arrangements 1961, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Sardauna for Mecca," *Nigerian Citizen*, March 14, 1964, 14; "First Pilgrim Aircraft Leaves Kano April 18," *Nigerian Citizen*, April 12, 1961, 1; "From Alhaji Haruna Kassim to the Secretary to the Military Government, Kaduna," November 23, 1966, Premier's Office, 2/1 ASI/234 3rd Collection: Umura (Lesser Hajj), Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹³⁴ Diwar, "Pilgrim Liaison Officer's Report on the 1966 Pilgrimage," 10. According to Diwar: "He [Kassim] tends to be arrogant at times and this has given cause to his being hated by the other agents. The more successful he is, the more they attribute all evils to him."

Kassim.”¹³⁵

Of course, Alhaji Kassim did not simply benefit from the government’s good graces based on his dedication and ability to shepherd Nigerian pilgrims to and fro the holy land;¹³⁶ despite occasional tension, the government relied and benefited from his expertise as well.¹³⁷ The government regularly turned to Kassim for advice and information about passport policies, records of deceased pilgrims, and illicit activity on behalf a minority of pilgrims.¹³⁸ And it was Kassim who facilitated the repatriation of the so-called “destitute” pilgrims throughout the early 1960s.¹³⁹ Though admittedly self-serving, Kassim’s also assisted the NRTALB by occasionally ratting out those who operated as agents without a license.¹⁴⁰

Kassim’s prestige as the most established hajj agent intersected with Ahmadu Bello’s prestige in a form reminiscent of the past. Similar to the nineteenth century and earlier, when individuals throughout West Africa could purchase the ability to enjoy the comforts and safety afforded by joining the hajj caravan of an important ruler, Nigerians could opt to apply to Bello to join one of the “VIP” planes, perhaps being even lucky enough to be on the very same plane

¹³⁵ C. Dello Strologo, “Report on Pilgrimage Operations – Nigeria,” July 1966, 3, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹³⁶ Gwamba, “Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1958 at Kano Airport”; Audi, “Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1959 at Kano Airport.” In 1958, Kassim is noted as providing free transport to pilgrims in medical need, and in 1959 he was among the few agents Audi praised for being present in Kano for the entire airlift.

¹³⁷ “Typed Note from Wali, ASIV, to the Secretary to the Premier, Northern Region.”

¹³⁸ “Notes on above Report [Pilgrim Air Traffic Arrangement 1958 at Kano Airport] by the ASI to the Premier, Northern Region,” August 4, 1958, Premier’s Office, 2/1 4th Collection, ASI/179: Pilgrimage Arrangement, 1958, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “From the Sr. Immigration Officer, Kano to the Secretary to the Premier,” March 10, 1961, Premier’s Office: PRE, 2/1: AS I/360: Pilgrim Arrangements 1961, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “From Alhaji Haruna Kassim to the Secretary to the Premier,” June 2, 1962, PRE 2/1: AS I/202: Pilgrimage Publicity, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “Note from ASI to Y.E.,” October 12, 1966, Military Governor’s Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/218 Vol I: Pilgrimage Arrangements, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹³⁹ “Telegram from [?] To the Secretary to the Premier, Kaduna,” May 5, 1960, Premier’s Office: AS 1/207 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; Alhaji Sule Lapai, “Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims 20th April - 16th May 1961,” July 1961, Premier’s Office: AS 1/207 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “From Alhaji Haruna Kassim to the Secretary to the Premier.”

¹⁴⁰ “Minutes of the Meeting of Pilgrimage Arrangements Committee Held in Maiduguri on 13th August, 1960 at the Provincial Office, Maiduguri”; “From Alhaji Haruna Kassim to the Permanent Secretary, Northern Region.”

as the illustrious Northern Premier (as mentioned briefly in the previous chapter). Yet even those VIPs not on Bello's flights were still privileged, a fact that Bello himself took seriously and guarded; even in 1962, when a pre-trip to Cairo meant that Bello would not personally board any of the VIP flights, he demanded to oversee the composition of their passenger lists.¹⁴¹ While first overseen by Hajair and then WAAC, Kassim soon took over in handling both the VIP flights as well as the accommodations of those political, religious, business, and social elites privileged enough to join Bello's annual entourage.¹⁴² Though Northerners predominated the passenger lists, Southerners too got to join.¹⁴³

Ahmadu Bello's VIP companions corresponded with a broader trend made possible by the rise of air-travel: more and more elites were undertaking the hajj. In 1961, one government official estimated that the number of distinguished Nigerians "like Ministers, natural rulers,

¹⁴¹ "Typed Note from the AS IV to the Secretary to the Premier," March 16, 1962, Premier's Office, 2/2: AS IV/174: Pilgrimage Arrangements 1962, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Note from AS IV to the Secretary to the Premier," February 11, 1963, Premier's Office, 2/7: 3rd collection: AS IV/174 Vol II: Pilgrims Arrangements 1963, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. And when in the next year, it was suggested that VIP status be opened up to anyone falling into certain criteria, this was vetoed by the Premier's office.

¹⁴² "From the Secretary, Hajair [Erica S. G. Wilkin] to the DCA and Secretary of WAATA," May 21, 1957, WAATA 1/1: ATA/101/3 Vol II: Mecca Pilgrimage Flights, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; "1,300 Pilgrims to Pass Through Kano," *Nigerian Citizen*, May 28, 1958, 2; "From Alhaji Haruna Kassim to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Transport and Aviation," November 21, 1960, Premier's Office: PRE, 2/1: AS I/360: Pilgrim Arrangements 1961, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "First Pilgrim Aircraft Leaves Kano April 18," 1; "Pilgrim Flights from Kano," *Nigerian Citizen*, April 21, 1962, 1; "From the Secretary to the Premier, Kaduna to Alhaji Haruna Kassim," March 1, 1964, Premier's Office, 2nd Collection, PRE/240/S.1: Pilgrimage Arrangements 1964, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁴³ "Sardauna Back from Mecca," *Nigerian Citizen*, July 27, 1957, 6; "VIP Plane for Mecca Leaves Kano Today," *Daily Times*, May 26, 1960, 1; "From Alhaji M L Bello and Sons, General Contractor, Builders, Transporters, Importers and Exporters, Agodi St. Ibadan to the Secretary, Pilgrims Welfare Board, PO, Kaduna," January 1, 1961, Premier's Office: PRE, 2/1: AS I/360: Pilgrim Arrangements 1961, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From Julius B Layeni, Estate Agent, Ibadan to Ahmadu Bello, Northern Premier," April 5, 1963, Premier's Office: PRE/240: Vol 1, Second Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "Honorable S. A. Olukotun, M.P. of Isanlu, to Ahmadu Bello, Northern Premier," March 4, 1963, Premier's Office: PRE/240: Vol 1, Second Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From I.A.S. Adewale, Chairman, Lagos Race Club, to Kabiyesi," January 21, 1964, Premier's Office, 2nd Collection, PRE/240/S.1: Pilgrimage Arrangements 1964, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From F. M Anifowoshe, to the Premier, Northern Region," February 1, 1964, Premier's Office, 2nd Collection, PRE/240/S.1: Pilgrimage Arrangements 1964, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; "From the Permanent Secretary, Western Region, Ibadan to the Permanent Secretary, Northern Region," April 6, 1964, Premier's Office, 2nd Collection, PRE/240/S.1: Pilgrimage Arrangements 1964, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

religious leaders,” had “more than doubled in the last three years.”¹⁴⁴ Likewise, while Bello arranged for just one sixty-six seat plane in 1959, by 1965 his list of VIPs reached four hundred and four.¹⁴⁵ As the name suggests, to be a VIP conferred both material and intangible benefits onto the honored pilgrims. As for the intangible, newspapers regularly published partial yet extensive lists of those traveling with Ahmadu Bello, serving as a public notice of which individuals possessed the required political, social or economic capital.¹⁴⁶ Similarly, the VIPs got to join the large receptions that greeted Ahmadu Bello at the airport, often including “distinguished personalities” and a line of fifty-car entourages accompanying him from the airport to the city center.¹⁴⁷ Within the Kano Airport, officials gave special care and attention to processing the VIPs’ luggage (and excused it from close scrutiny).¹⁴⁸ Within Saudi Arabia, special courtesy cards prepared for all VIPs by the Embassy of Nigeria ensured them preferential treatment and access, as did the detailed preparations (and protections against imposter VIPs) by the Nigerian state.¹⁴⁹ Though finding enough suitable accommodation for the VIPs frequently presented an obstacle, government officials tasked with VIP arrangements went to great efforts to make sure that the VIPs’ experience of the hajj proved smooth and comfortable. Besides hotel

¹⁴⁴ “From the Permanent Secretary, J.T.F. Iyalla, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, to the Secretary to the Premiers of the North and West Region,” September 8, 1961, Premier’s Office: 4/1: 2nd Collection: PM 18 Vol II: Pilgrim Affairs, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁴⁵ “Pilgrims Begin to Leave,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 27, 1959, 1; “1965 Pilgrimage Report by the Pilgrims’ Liaison Office, Kano.”

¹⁴⁶ “Sardauna off to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, June 21, 1958, 3; “Pilgrims Begin to Leave,” 1; “VIP Plane for Mecca Leaves Kano Today,” 1; “Sardauna Returns from Mecca,” *Daily Times*, June 18, 1960, 1; “Northern Leaders off to Mecca,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 17, 1961, 1; “Sir Ahmadu Leaves for Jeddah,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 5, 1962, 1; “Sardauna Takes 200 Men to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, April 26, 1963, 2; “Successful Holy Pilgrimage to Mecca,” *Nigerian Citizen*, April 29, 1964, 1.

¹⁴⁷ “Sardauna Back from Mecca,” *Daily Times*, July 4, 1958, 1; “Sardauna Back in Kaduna from Holy Pilgrimage,” June 24, 1959, 1; “Holy Pilgrimage 1961: Report by Alhaji Sule Lapai: Pilgrims Liaison Officer, Kano,” 1961, Premier’s Office: 2/2 2nd Collection: AS IV/152: Pilgrims Liaison Officers in Kano, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “Premier Returns from Pilgrimage,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 23, 1962, 1; “Sardauna Returns from Mecca,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 11, 1963, 1.

¹⁴⁸ “From the Resident Kano to the Secretary to the Premier,” March 20, 1962, Premier’s Office, 2/2: AS IV/174: Pilgrimage Arrangements 1962, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; Muhammadu Maigari, “Pilgrims Ruffled and Insulted!,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 2, 1964, 16, Serials, Abuja National Library.

¹⁴⁹ “Report on 1964 Pilgrimage by the Nigerian Government Representatives.” This report noted that not all claiming to be VIPs on arrival in Jeddah were true VIPs, and advocated for better oversight in the future.

bookings, this might include being prioritized to get seated on the first return flights, taxis waiting to pick them up at the Jeddah airport, and special tents by Mount Arafat located near the Nigerian Embassy staff and medical mission (as well, of course, other VIPs, including Ahmadu Bello).¹⁵⁰ Nationalism at times motivated these honors, such as when in 1963 the Nigerian Embassy made a special arrangement to allow VIPs to avoid the *mutawwifs* services, which the Embassy staff justified as necessary to “safeguard the Nigerian prestige in the eyes of the outside world.”¹⁵¹ There were, however, limits to these VIP-privileges. When in 1961 there was some discussion among government officials of building housing for VIPs to use, Ahmadu Bello rejected the proposal, arguing that VIPs should continue to pay for their accommodations.¹⁵²

What the discussion above on the rise of VIP travel and the structural support it received from the Nigerian government indicates, in the 1960s perhaps no Nigerian politician was more associated with hajj than Ahmadu Bello, the Northern Premier. As already discussed in Chapter 2, Bello made hajj reform one of his priorities starting in the mid-1950s. In addition to improving the infrastructure and experience of the Nigerian hajj for pilgrims, Bello was central to changing public perception and ideas about the hajj, which, as the next chapter will demonstrate, would long outlive his tragic death.

¹⁵⁰ “From A.A. El-Miskeen of Bornu NA and K. Alakali of Kano NA, ‘Northern Regional Reps of Pilgrims’ to the Permanent Secretary, Kaduna”; “From the Permanent Secretary, J.T.F. Iyalla, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, to the Secretary to the Premiers of the North and West Region”; “Telegram from the Pilgrims Officer, Embassy of Nigeria, Jeddah to the Secretary to the Premier, Northern Region,” December 1, 1962, Premier’s Office: AS 1/207 Vol I: Repatriation of Destitute Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “From the Permanent Secretary to the Pilgrim Officer, Embassy of Nigeria, Jeddah,” March 25, 1964, Premier’s Office, 2nd Collection, PRE/240/S.1: Pilgrimage Arrangements 1964, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “From the Permanent Secretary to the Pilgrim Officer, Embassy of Nigeria, Jeddah,” April 9, 1964, Premier’s Office, 2nd Collection, PRE/240/S.1: Pilgrimage Arrangements 1964, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁵¹ “From the Embassy of Nigeria, Jeddah to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lagos,” March 3, 1963, Premier’s Office: PRE/240: Vol 1, Second Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

¹⁵² “From the Secretary to the Premier, Northern Region, to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations,” September 29, 1961, Premier’s Office: 4/1: 2nd Collection: PM 18 Vol II: Pilgrim Affairs, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

Bello: An Elite National Reputation

To understand how Ahmadu Bello came to be seen by some as the father of all Nigerian Muslims, it will help to first appreciate the scale and quality of press coverage he received in regards to the hajj. In both newspapers based in the North as well as the South, every year reports glowingly detailed the honors bestowed upon Bello by the Saudi Arabian royal family, whether it was the gifts he received, speeches he made, or his special accommodations.¹⁵³ While most of these stories highlighted Bello's close relationship with several individuals, others noted Bello's prominent role within the broader Muslim world.¹⁵⁴ And lest anyone get the impression Bello went on hajj merely to hobnob or engage in politics with various Muslim elites, the press coverage also regularly included photos of Bello in the *ihram*, the simple white cloth worn during the hajj, undertaking various rites.¹⁵⁵ Even the most casual newspaper-reader in the 1960s would have a hard time being unaware of Bello's engagement with the Muslim world during his annual travel to Mecca.

Though much of this press coverage appears to be unscripted, Bello occasionally did play a hand in orchestrating this image of himself as an elite and prestigious pilgrim. In 1964, Bello arranged for the Northern Regional government to sponsor Alhaji Usman Mairiga, then editor of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, the oldest Hausa language newspaper in the country. Mairiga's itinerary ensured he would witness Bello in his best light, to be reported back in his press dispatches, of course. For example, though Mairiga "would have preferred flying in the Premier's" plane, "it

¹⁵³ "Sardauna Thanks King Saud...But I Caught Influenza," *Daily Times*, August 12, 1957, 5; "Saudi Arabia Books Gift for North," *Nigerian Citizen*, June 24, 1959, 1; "Sardauna Back from Mecca," *Daily Times*, June 22, 1959; "Welcome," *Nigerian Citizen*, June 3, 1961, 6; "Islam Aims at Equality—Sardauna," *Daily Times*, May 21, 1962, 8; "Sardauna Honored," *Daily Times*, May 10, 1962, 16; "[Photo]," *Daily Sketch*, April 23, 1965, 2; "Light Islam Torch: Bello," *Morning Post*, April 20, 1965, 6; "Feisal Fetes Bello," *Morning Post*, April 9, 1965, 1; "Ahmadu Backed at Mecca Talks," *Morning Post*, April 21, 1965, 10; "My First Glimpse of the Holy City and Ka'aba," *Morning Post*, April 28, 1965, 5.

¹⁵⁴ "Islam Aims at Equality—Sardauna," 8; "Light Islam Torch: Bello," 6; "Ahmadu Backed at Mecca Talks," 10.

¹⁵⁵ "[Photo]," *Nigerian Citizen*, July 1, 1959, 1; "[Photos]," *Nigerian Citizen*, May 15, 1963, 8; "Postman Akintola Cables from Mecca: 9,000 Nigerian Pilgrims Are Hale and Hearty," *Morning Post*, April 22, 1964, 4.

was required that we become an eye witness and see for ourselves the grand reception which is always accorded our beloved leader...on his arrival at Mecca” and so he flew out the day beforehand.¹⁵⁶ According to Mairiga, despite his initial disappointment, he ultimately thanked God that he got “to witness this matchless reception so that I may report it to you people.”¹⁵⁷ His article in the *Nigerian Citizen* went on to detail several examples of honors enjoyed by Bello, and by the time he reached Medina he remarked that “I became more impressed with the prestige that the Sardauna had. I became more aware that Sardauna was a great gift of God.”¹⁵⁸ Besides his utilization of the press, Bello gave talks about the hajj on radio and TV,¹⁵⁹ and continued to don the Mecca uniform as discussed in the previous chapter¹⁶⁰ (the same was true of other politicians).¹⁶¹ Ceremony provided one more avenue for Bello to insert himself into the Nigerian hajj. For example, Bello frequently came to the Kano airport to see off the first pilgrim flight, sometimes even making the effort to inspect the plane and deliver a farewell speech to the excited passengers.¹⁶² Bello had become so linked to the Nigerian hajj that in 1965 a government

¹⁵⁶ “Pilgrimage--at the Ka’aba,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 13, 1964, 7, Serials, Abuja National Library.

¹⁵⁷ “Pilgrimage--at the Ka’aba,” 7.

¹⁵⁸ “Pilgrimage--at the Ka’aba,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 13, 1964, 13.

¹⁵⁹ “Premier on TV—Farewell Message,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 9, 1962, 1; “Premier Returns from Pilgrimage,” 1; “Sardauna Takes 312 to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, April 29, 1963, 3.

¹⁶⁰ “Hammaraskjoeld to Meet Sardauna,” *Daily Times*, June 18, 1960, 1; “Minister Says Govt. Will Help Farmers,” *Daily Times*, April 27, 1960, 3; “Our Leaders Say London Talks ‘Unqualified Success,’” *Daily Times*, May 20, 1960, 1; “News in Pictures: Nostalgic Moment When Premier Meets Teachers,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 4, 1962, 7; “News in Pictures,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 15, 1962, 10; “Zik in North,” *Nigerian Citizen*, April 17, 1963, 1.

¹⁶¹ “New L50,000 G. Gottschalk Building Opened in Kaduna,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 3, 1961, 12; “News in Brief: Lafia,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 21, 1961, 14; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Citizen*, July 8, 1961, 7; “PM Appeals to Nigerian Labor Leaders ‘Close Ranks,’” *Daily Times*, May 4, 1962, 1; “Mid-West Talks Begin in Benin Today,” *Daily Times*, May 5, 1962, 16; “Before and After the Big Riots,” *Daily Times*, May 26, 1962, 10; “Brochure for Awujale in Israel,” *Daily Times*, June 18, 1962, 4; “Officer Cadet Parade,” *Nigerian Citizen*, March 14, 1962, 12; “News in Pictures,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 23, 1962, 7; “News in Brief: Okene: Urges Women Students to Cultivate Good Manners,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 9, 1962, 10; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 1, 1962, 1; “Northerner Gets UAC Top Post,” *Morning Post*, June 5, 1963, 7; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Citizen*, March 9, 1963, 7; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 1, 1963, 16; “Picture Album,” *Nigerian Citizen*, July 3, 1963, 9; “The ‘Citizen’ Picture Gallery,” *Nigerian Citizen*, August 7, 1963, 8; “Adegbenro Fights On,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 20, 1963, 1.

¹⁶² “1,300 Pilgrims to Pass Through Kano,” 2; “Pilgrim Officers Appointed,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 24, 1958, 1; “Journey to Mecca,” *West African Pilot*, May 24, 1958, 1.

report claimed that his name “has become almost a visa for all Nigerian pilgrims,”¹⁶³ and his image was used in an ad campaign for the Belgium Sabena Airlines.¹⁶⁴

Even though Bello paid for his own hajj expenses, he took pains to make the case to his constituents, and Nigerians more generally, that all Nigerian citizens stood to benefit from his dedication to the hajj. For one thing, he occasionally pointed out the material and moral support the Saudi Arabian government gave to Nigeria through himself.¹⁶⁵ Bello also frequently publicized the fact that he prayed on behalf of the Nigerian nation while in Mecca,¹⁶⁶ a claim occasionally made by other Northern and Western elites about their own pilgrimage,¹⁶⁷ which Bello himself at times praised on their behalf.¹⁶⁸ More broadly, Bello argued that the act of the hajj, by providing him with a chance of renewal, increased his energy and mental acuity, therefore making him a better statesman. This argument fit with Bello’s broader views about religion (which he made public in speeches), such as that a good government was a God-fearing government,¹⁶⁹ and that the more Nigerian citizens went on the hajj, the better it would be for the nation.¹⁷⁰ As for the latter point, one of the reasons Bello cited for why he and other Nigerian elites decided to undertake the hajj on an annual basis was “to encourage their brethren to go on pilgrimage,”¹⁷¹ a claim he oft repeated.¹⁷²

In addition to his extensive work on the hajj, Bello dedicated much time to fostering ties

¹⁶³ Ahmadu, “Report on the 1965 Pilgrimage,” 9–10.

¹⁶⁴ “What the People Say: Advert with Sardauna,” *Morning Post*, March 8, 1965, 8.

¹⁶⁵ “Saudi Arabia Books Gift for North,” 1; “Sardauna Back from Mecca,” June 22, 1959, 16; “Sardauna Returns from Mecca,” June 18, 1960, 1.

¹⁶⁶ “Sardauna Back from Mecca,” June 22, 1959, 16; “Premier on TV—Farewell Message,” 1; “Sardauna to Visit Shehu,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 9, 1962, 1; “Sardauna Returns from Mecca: He Prayed for the Nation,” *Nigerian Citizen*, February 12, 1964, 16; “Successful Holy Pilgrimage to Mecca,” 1.

¹⁶⁷ “News in Brief: Bida: Bisu Nupe Back,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 10, 1961, 10; “Huge Welcome for Emir,” *Nigerian Citizen*, June 14, 1961, 10; “Oluwo’s Plea to Alhajis,” *Daily Sketch*, May 1, 1965, 4.

¹⁶⁸ “Premier on TV—Farewell Message,” 1.

¹⁶⁹ “Sardauna Urges NPC Officials to Be God-Fearing,” *Daily Times*, July 29, 1958, 3; “Sallah Celebrations: The Nation Rejoices in ‘Work and Worship’ Sardauna Says,” *Nigerian Citizen*, February 19, 1964, 8–9.

¹⁷⁰ “Full Text of Acting Premier’s Message,” *Nigerian Citizen*, April 25, 1964, 2.

¹⁷¹ “Premier on TV—Farewell Message,” 1.

¹⁷² “Premier Returns from Pilgrimage,” 1; “Sardauna Takes 312 to Mecca,” 3.

with Islamic countries in the Middle East, as well as working to establish pan-Islamic collaboration. Similar to the coverage of his pilgrimages, the Nigerian press generally reported positively on this diplomatic work, noting the gifts and monetary donations Bello received on behalf of Nigerian Muslims, as well as the personal honors bestowed upon him.¹⁷³ Most prominent was his role as Vice President of the World Muslim League, which he assumed in 1962.¹⁷⁴ For this labor, as well as his work on the hajj, Bello received praise from Muslim organizations and titled Muslim rulers.¹⁷⁵ Nationally, Bello spearheaded efforts to convert Nigerians to Islam,¹⁷⁶ and occasionally received letters from interested citizens as far as Eastern Nigeria.¹⁷⁷

Though the majority of coverage from newspapers based in the North covered Bello's Islamic networking in a positive light, the same was not always true with newspapers in the West, particularly those owned by rival politicians. Particularly controversial was his Middle East tour in 1961. While the Northern Regional government defended the tour as motivated purely by Bello's desire for Muslim unity in terms of spiritual matters, critics (including Chief Awolowo) voiced fears that Bello sought to create a political confederation of Muslim states, and to bring Nigeria into it.¹⁷⁸ Clearly, the proto-Islamophobia prompted by Bello's connections with the Middle East in the 1950s (See Chapter 2) continued after independence. But, in this case, tensions cut on regional as well as religious lines. According to a British intelligence report,

¹⁷³ "Koran Gift from Jordan," *Daily Times*, April 10, 1960, 1; "Sardauna Invited to Jordan," *Nigerian Citizen*, April 8, 1961, 12; "UAR Donates L10,000 More towards Sokoto Mosque Appeal Fund," *Nigerian Citizen*, April 8, 1961, 12; "Sardauna to Visit Sudan after Holy Pilgrimage," *Nigerian Citizen*, May 13, 1961, 1; "North Premier Is Back....," *Nigerian Citizen*, July 22, 1961, 1; "Busy Time for the Premier in UAR," *Nigerian Citizen*, July 15, 1961, 1, 6; "Sardauna Appeals to Muslims," *Daily Times*, June 4, 1962, 10; "Dr. Ahmadu," *Nigerian Citizen*, June 16, 1962, 12; "[Photo]," *Morning Post*, January 1, 1964, 1.

¹⁷⁴ "Pilgrimage--at the Ka'aba," May 13, 1964, 7.

¹⁷⁵ "Knowledge Seekers Greet Sardauna," *Nigerian Citizen*, June 17, 1961, 12; "Sardauna to Visit Shehu," 1.

¹⁷⁶ "Sardauna Preaches: 800 Converted to Islam," *Nigerian Citizen*, February 26, 1964, 8.

¹⁷⁷ "News in Brief: Gboko: Becoming Moslem," *Nigerian Citizen*, September 18, 1957, 10.

¹⁷⁸ "Govt. Explains Purpose of Sardauna's Tour," *Nigerian Citizen*, July 1, 1961, 1; "Not Clear Yet....," *Nigerian Citizen*, July 5, 1961, 1; "Islamic Bloc?," *Nigerian Tribune*, June 26, 1961, 1; "Plan on Moslem Commonwealth 'Very Wrong' Awo Hits Sardauna--And Exposes NCNC Leaders," *Nigerian Tribune*, June 29, 1961, 1.

Muslims in the southwest were “uniformly hostile” to Bello’s efforts to establish a Muslim Commonwealth, out of concern this would result in an alliance with Wahhabism.¹⁷⁹ Given that the British likewise held such concerns, this information could be at least somewhat tainted by confirmation bias. Regardless, while I argue that Bello was embraced by Muslims beyond the North, it would certainly be an overstatement to suggest that no dissent existed among Muslims. (including in the North),¹⁸⁰ particularly Yoruba Muslims.

As the above discussion demonstrates, from the mid 1950s to the mid 1960s, Bello had established himself as a significant Muslim leader, whether through hajj reform and oversight, or in his contributions to Pan-Islam.¹⁸¹ While, as indicated, it is possible to get some sense of Nigerians reacted to Bello’s Islamic activities from the press, another source for tracing how ordinary Muslim Nigerians perceived Bello comes from two archival files that record letters he received from 1962-1965. The topic of these letters concerned requests to Bello for hajj sponsorship. (Interestingly, this was perhaps another divergence from *maliki* law, which opposed *zakat*, or charity, for hajj sponsorship.¹⁸²) Though most requests met with rejection they were not entirely inappropriate; Bello annually sponsored people to go to Mecca, a fact publically advertised in the Nigerian press and radio.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ “Extract: ‘Ibadan Fortnightly Summary, No. 20,’” June 23, 1961, DO 177/14: Islam as a Political Force, Kew Archive.

¹⁸⁰ John N. Paden, *Muslim Civic Cultures and Conflict Resolution : The Challenge of Democratic Federalism in Nigeria* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2005), 59.

¹⁸¹ “From Elhag Dabiri (Astrologer), Sheikh Yoruba Pilgrims in Sudan, Khartoum to Sardauna,” May 28, 1955, Premier’s Office 2/1: AS I/213: Pilgrims Transit Facilities, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. This is an example that doesn’t quite fit with the other material, but it is particularly striking. In the letter Dabiri requests that Bello appoint him as the Pilgrim Officer in Khartoum, ending by praising Bello in this fashion: “With an infinite confidence now, I assume you to serve the two Regions of Nigeria, both Western and the Northern Regions at any hour of call.”

¹⁸² Abu-Bakr Imam Ali-Agan, *The Concept of Al-Istita’ah and Hajj Sponsorship in Nigeria*, 2011, 5.

¹⁸³ Julius B. Layeni, January 21, 1964, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Mallam D. S. Bello, January 21, 1964, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Lasisi Atanda, n.d 1964, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Alfa Lawal Adeyemi, January 20, 1964, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive,

Nor was Bello the only elite engaging in hajj-sponsorship—significantly, his willingness to sponsor individuals fit within a broader trend that emerged during the years leading up to and following independence. Sponsorship was not limited to political elites; trade unions and corporations likewise increasingly underwrote the cost of hajj as a reward to their leadership or long-time employees, respectively.¹⁸⁴ In the West, the regional government sponsored pilgrims through the established Pilgrims Welfare Board.¹⁸⁵ In contrast, government sponsorship in the North was largely channeled through an illustrious individual.

While the vast majority of the letters to Ahmadu Bello in these two archival files failed to result in sponsorship, their content reveals the shifting national religious landscape, how individual Muslims imagined Mecca and the hajj, and a range of motives behind pilgrims' desire to embark on the journey. Perhaps one of the most striking aspects of these letters is that they suggest the consolidation of a national Nigerian Muslim identity. Despite the fact that Bello was a politician of the Northern Region, he received many letters from Muslims outside the North, especially from the Western Region. Admittedly, part of this had more to do with Bello's regional if not global reputation, with some letters coming from Ghana,¹⁸⁶ Dahomey (Benin)¹⁸⁷

Kaduna; Salisu Ayinde Animashaun, January 19, 1964, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Mallam Saolabiu Barwa, January 19, 1964, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

¹⁸⁴ "ANTUF Official for Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, June 20, 1958, 3; "President for Mecca on Union's Ticket," *Morning Post*, March 8, 1965, 1; "Veteran Trader Flies to Mecca," *Daily Times*, October 12, 1949, 6; "Directors Sanction Visit of 4 to Mecca," *West African Pilot*, August 9, 1952, 1; "All These Men Have Performed Their Holy Pilgrimage—and Free," *Nigerian Citizen*, April 8, 1959, 12; "A.T.M.N. Men off to Mecca," *New Nigerian*, April 18, 1964, 2, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos. As the examples from 1949 and 1952 show, it was not the practice that was new, but its frequency.

¹⁸⁵ "Ilaro Muslims Thank West Government," *Nigerian Citizen*, May 17, 1961, 3; "Ilaro Muslims Thank Government," *Nigerian Tribune*, May 9, 1961, 2; "Ila Muslims Say Thanks to S.L.A.," *Nigerian Tribune*, May 8, 1961, 2; "84 Pilgrims for Mecca," *Daily Times*, April 28, 1962, 11; "Are Wants Direct Flight to Mecca," *Morning Post*, May 2, 1964, 2; "Two Pilgrims Die in Medina," *Daily Sketch*, April 5, 1965, 1; "Vote for NNDP Call by Alhaja," *Daily Sketch*, May 8, 1965, 5, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; "She'll Go to Mecca," *Morning Post*, March 6, 1965, 2.

¹⁸⁶ Mallam Musa Yusufu, March 1, 1963, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

¹⁸⁷ Lasisi Adeniyi, December 28, 1962, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

and even Senegal.¹⁸⁸ Regardless, many writers from Southern Nigeria used a range of tactics to emphasize that though they belonged to a different ethnicity and region than Bello, “we are much bound by chord or religion [more than] any other aspect of life.”¹⁸⁹ At times those writing from outside the North favorably compared Bello with politicians of the South, making clear their allegiance to Bello. One example is Chief Lamidi Oluwole of Ibadan, who wrote to Bello to request hajj sponsorship in February of 1963:

I have come to realize that Sir Ahmadu Bello is more of a Muslim leader than a political leader. He unlike any Nigerian leader devotes nearly all his time to Muslim religious build-ups, spending his money, knowledge and energy...perhaps I would be a laughing stock if I should attempt any Nigerian leader here in the South for such a help.¹⁹⁰

Other requests for hajj sponsorship from Southern Nigerians referred to Bello as the spiritual and political “Father” of the nation,¹⁹¹ a tactic also employed by some Northerners.¹⁹² One Lagosian even went so far to refer to Bello as “the Prophet of Nigeria,”¹⁹³ and another man from Ibadan praised Bello as “Godly” and “our savior,”¹⁹⁴ though this tactical flattery surfaced more in letters from Northerners.¹⁹⁵ Also like Northerners, if possible Southerners would note their involvement with NPC, Bello’s political party.¹⁹⁶ Strikingly, more letters from the South¹⁹⁷ asked for

¹⁸⁸ Madam Dioulde Ba, February 21, 1964, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

¹⁸⁹ Alfa Mustafa Aberuagba, January 17, 1964, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

¹⁹⁰ Chief Lamidi Oluwole, February 28, 1963, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

¹⁹¹ Aberuagba, January 17, 1964; Buliyaminu Oladiti Fadairo, January 21, 1964, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Kadiri Mohammadu, January 21, 1964, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

¹⁹² Mallam Shaiku Musa, July 20, 1963, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Hassan O Amadu, July 16, 1963, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

¹⁹³ Animashaun, January 19, 1964.

¹⁹⁴ Fadairo, January 21, 1964.

¹⁹⁵ Mallam Buhari Edun, November 27, 1963, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Abdul Rasaki Oyewo, November 12, 1963, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

¹⁹⁶ Abdul-Rahman O. Olayinka, July 20, 1962, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Mallam Murana Amoo, February 27, 1963, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Atanda, n.d 1964.

sponsorship in the name of Uthman dan Fodio, Bello's ancestor and leader of the Sokoto jihad, than did those from the North.¹⁹⁸ Finally, another tactic particularly prominent in letters from Southern Muslims was to sign off with some variation of "your brother in Islam."¹⁹⁹ Thus, while Nigerian politics in the 1960s was strongly organized along regional and ethnic divisions, these letters suggest that from the perspective of the Muslim population in the South (particularly the West), their faith bound them to Muslim politicians like Bello.

Though these Nigerian letter-writers felt able to request hajj sponsorship from Bello, many of the letters belie discomfort in making such a request. Several of the letters start by way of apology for the bold entreaty that follows. A striking example comes from M. Rasaki Aremu Ilo, an employee of the Accounts Branch of P&T in Lagos, who wrote to Bello in January, 1963. After showering Bello with a bit of praise, he expressed his regret "for the undignified way with which I think to approach your honorable position and status." So regretful, that at first he is only able to refer to his desire for sponsorship obliquely:

it is a religious obligation that I am seeking from you Sir. I cannot now say what kind of religious obligation I seek Sir as my hand shakes and my heart beats very fast. I will hold on a little while and make a little introduction before I make the issue known.²⁰⁰

Besides such explicit verbal prostrations, many of the writers deflected full agency in their request by claiming that either a dream or vision, in which they saw Bello sponsor them, had

¹⁹⁷ Aberuagba, January 17, 1964; Alfa Kaumu Sunmonu, December 5, 1962, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Muhammadu, January 21, 1964.

¹⁹⁸ Imam Aruna, January 21, 1963, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

¹⁹⁹ Amadu, July 16, 1963; Alufa Lawani, July 24, 1963, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Sufuyamu Abasi, November 14, 1963, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Shaeu Ahmadu Rufai Abonko, January 21, 1964, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Sariyu Olorunmoenitire, February 26, 1964, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Mallam Sakariyou A. Jimoh, June 30, 1964, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

²⁰⁰ M. Rasaki Aremu Ilo, January 10, 1963, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

compelled them to contact him.²⁰¹ These narrations of dreams could be highly specific, such as the one by Mallam Musa Yusufu of Ghana in March of 1963:

I hope you will not be surprised with the contents of this letter as that was how I was directed in a dream to do. The whole thing is for a very long time I have been thinking of how I will one day see the tomb of the HOLY MOHAMMED but have nothing to go with. Then one night in my dream someone I did not recognize suggested your name to me, to request your help for my ambition. I have been thinking of it for a very long time but I feel shy to inform you.²⁰²

These dream narrations often cite prayer as somehow linked to their dreams, emphasizing both the writer's piety and the veracity of their dream. For example, Yusuf Salami of Benin City in October of 1962 wrote:

on Friday night, when I finished the Tilaulati-Kuriani around three thirty am, I dream that you will be the person to send me on pilgrimage to Mecca this year.²⁰³

Mallam Shaiku Musa of Ojoku-Okaba meanwhile explained to Bello that "Sir, I have dreamed that you have just take me to Mecca for saying my prayer for the full year."²⁰⁴ Thus, while clearly these Nigerians felt able to request hajj sponsorship from a government official for the first time, for many this new development provoked anxiety and uncertainty of how exactly to proceed.

If some writers claimed a dream inspired their request, others framed their education and Islamic knowledge—as well as the desire to know more—as their primary motivation for contacting Bello. Thought most did not make any specific claims about their education, a substantial number of the writers listed their education level in their letters,²⁰⁵ perhaps hoping

²⁰¹ M. Issa Alhaji Balogun Alanamu, January 9, 1964, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Yusufu, March 1, 1963; Yusuf Salami, October 10, 1962, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Musa, July 20, 1963.

²⁰² Yusufu, March 1, 1963.

²⁰³ Salami, October 10, 1962.

²⁰⁴ Musa, July 20, 1963.

²⁰⁵ Aruna, January 21, 1963; Raimi A. Salami, January 20, 1964, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Sulaimon Adeoti, September 14, 1962, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Oseni Ayinla Opawole,

this would improve their chances given Bello's pride in his own education.²⁰⁶ Among those that made the link between learning and desire for hajj explicit was Kadiri Mohammadu in 1964 who claimed that "since my school time and up to this time, I have been highly interested to go far in knowledge of Mohammadanism," particularly to travel to Mecca.²⁰⁷ Likewise, Ramonu Aremu from a town outside Ilorin wrote that he had placed the intention to go on hajj "in my uppermost mind since I have started to learn the Holy Koran."²⁰⁸ Still others noted they hoped to use the hajj as an opportunity to learn more about Islam, like Lasisi Motoso of Surulere explained he wished to go to Mecca so "that I may be able to know further the greatness and differences explained in the life of the field of Islamic Religion."²⁰⁹ Likewise, Alhassan Sule of Kaduna stated that,

I have got an interest in visiting Muslim countries to see how Muslim customs are working and to compare with the unknown mistakes which I might have been indulged in my home country.²¹⁰

This sentiment was echoed by another Kaduna resident, Sule Adamu, who expressed that he hoped that hajj would give him the chance "to reform the system of my former actions towards my religion."²¹¹ As discussed in previous chapters, the connection between hajj and learning has a long tradition (and the connection between travel and scholarship is intrinsic to Islam); what is significant is that these letters suggest that even with increasing number of Nigerian pilgrims and

October 4, 1962, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Alanamu, January 9, 1964; Sule Adamu Abawa, January 20, 1964, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna; Mohammadu, January 21, 1964; Ramonu Aremu, June 20, 1965, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

²⁰⁶ Ahmadu Bello, *My Life: The Autobiography of Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto* (Cambridge [Eng.]: University Press, 1962), 20–34.

²⁰⁷ Mohammadu, January 21, 1964.

²⁰⁸ Aremu, June 20, 1965.

²⁰⁹ Lasisi Motoso, July 13, 1965, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol II: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

²¹⁰ Alhassan Sule, January 20, 1964, Premier's Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

²¹¹ Abawa, January 20, 1964.

newspaper articles conveying information from Mecca, the knowledge gleaned from the hajj was still understood by many as something that required direct experience, a sentiment still commonly expressed up until the present.²¹²

The letters further reveal that even if air travel was gradually making the status of alhaji become less rarified, in the 1960s it still possessed considerable prestige, not merely for the individual but for the family. Several of the letter writers trace their own desire to become an alhaji with the previous generations of their family. Chief Lamidi Oluwole of Ibadan noted that though both his parents were Muslim, if he went on hajj he would be the first in his family to do so.²¹³ Other writers penned more explicit yearnings to fulfill the ambitions of their ancestors. Another “native of Ibadan” lamented to Bello that both his deceased father and grandfather wanted to go to Mecca but lacked the funds. He went on to conclude that “I, their descendant who is now 58 years of age has been trying to meet up their plan but it is still the same thing.”²¹⁴

Wahabi Ramoni of Ede traced a similar heritage in his plea to Bello:

My father who would have been an Alhaji died on the way while coming home from Mecca some fifteen years ago and to dig out the good name from the mud I have been trying to go to Mecca myself but I am financially very weak.²¹⁵

Others aimed to uphold their family’s prestige garnered from previous pilgrimages. Mallam Muhamed Muibi Said of Kano bemoaned the fact that his brother, “the only Alhaji” in the family had recently died before requesting that Bello sponsor him so that “I shall replace my brother as Alhaji in the family.”²¹⁶ Likewise, Mallam Murana Amoo of Ibadan followed-up his request for

²¹² Interview with Aremu Lateef Olujukanoni in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015; Professor Malik, University of Ibadan, 2014; Professor Noibi, Ibadan, October 2014.

²¹³ Oluwole, February 28, 1963.

²¹⁴ Yusufu Balogun, May 23, 1963, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

²¹⁵ Wahabi Ramoni, July 12, 1963, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

²¹⁶ Mallam Muhamed Muibi Said, July 29, 1963, Premier’s Office, PRE/240 Vol I: 2nd Collection: Matters Affecting Pilgrims, National Archive, Kaduna.

sponsorship from Bello with this grievance:

For your information Sir, I am the son of the late Leader of all Ibadan Alhadjis, and inherited his Hadji's properties,²¹⁷ but as I am not yet an Alhadji (due to want of money to go to the Holy Place) I cannot use them.²¹⁸

Clearly, at the time that the hajj went under significant change by the new post-colonial state, many Nigerian Muslims conceived of the status and prestige of the alhaji title in terms of their family. Any obstruction or assistance provided by the government would impact far more people than the individual pilgrims themselves.

Conclusion:

Obsessions to go on hajj, desires to further one's Islamic education and bring honor to oneself and family—these were the emotional stakes of any new hajj policy introduced in the process of Nigerianization in the early post-colonial years, as demonstrated by the above letters to Ahmadu Bello. However as this chapter has demonstrated, emotional stakes did not always align with the political stakes held by the new independent Nigerian nation. In the process of Nigerianization of the hajj Nigeria's politicians were forced to balance these concerns and the interests of local and regional businesses—a balancing act made ever more fraught from the fact that Nigerians increasingly understood the state as culpable for the quality of the hajj, or even perhaps as their hajj patron.

But if Nigerian Muslims were having higher expectations of their government, the government started to place higher demands upon them as well. New government policies placed obstacles in the way of pilgrims desiring to undertake the overland hajj, making the pilgrimage start to be relegated to an elite class. Moreover as discussed, they used the language of

²¹⁷ Presumably this refers to items of clothing that alternatively are referred to as a “Mecca uniform” that in Nigeria are only to be worn by alhajis to symbolize their status.

²¹⁸ Amoo, February 27, 1963.

nationalism to justify these regulatory restrictions. Nigerian officials also began to occasionally critique individual pilgrim behavior, and actively sought to correct it. As early as 1956 the government sent a few clerics to accompany Nigerian pilgrims to quote “better educate them...in their religious ceremonies” and subsequent state-produced pamphlets, films, and radio programs aimed to prepare pilgrims.²¹⁹ Likewise, the panel of clerics convened to advise the government about restricting the overland hajj reportedly claimed that quote “the ignorance of some Nigerian pilgrims in matters of the faith as displayed in the Hijaz was a disgrace to the nation.”²²⁰ Attention to pilgrim conduct not only related to religious matters, but also to their behavior at spaces of interaction with officials in Sudan and Saudi Arabia. To return to Gwamba’s report, he lamented that pilgrims were “impatient and rather disobedient,” and thus needed to be told behave as quote “public-spirited citizens.”²²¹ More critical was the report in 1953 by Abubakar Imam, the member of the Federal House of Representatives discussed in Chapter 2, who couched his demand for the expansion of Nigerian staff in Saudi Arabia in his description of his fellow Nigerians as “miserable and so uncultured, displaying such a savage conduct” which “goes a long way to spoil the good name of the black race.”²²² However it would not be until the mid-1960s, and especially the 1970s, that the discourse around individual pilgrim behavior really gained momentum, as the next chapter will explore.²²³

²¹⁹ Metteden, “Report: Nigerian Road Pilgrims,” 3.

²²⁰ “Minutes of the Meeting of the Panel of Islamic Scholars On the Control of Destitute Pilgrims.”

²²¹ Gwamba, “My Short Visit to Khartoum in January, 1957 for Pilgrimage Discussions,” 4.

²²² Imam, *The Abubakar Imam Memoirs*, 198.

²²³ “From the Permanent Secretary, to the Director, Regional Information Service, Kaduna,” November 1, 1956, Premier’s Office, 2/2: AS IV/141: Nigerian Pilgrim Office in Khartoum, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; Metteden, “Report: Nigerian Road Pilgrims,” 3.

Chapter 4

Nigeria's Oil Boom, Spiritual Insecurities, and the "Corrupt Pilgrim"

By the 1970s, increased global connectivity and capital sowed division by injecting the hajj with sectarian debate and a sense of moral instability. This chapter examines this tension through two events: the Saudi Arabian Embassy's refusal to give passports to members of the Ahmadiyya sect in 1973 and the emergence in Nigerian popular culture of the "corrupt pilgrim" around the time of Nigeria's oil boom. The Ahmadiyya's provision of schools blending Islamic and 'Western' education in the early twentieth century won them respect, but the sect had sparked controversy in Nigeria from its arrival in 1908. Past conflicts had pertained to specific locales, but the Saudi injunction lifted debates over Ahmadiyya to an unprecedented scale. A mood of spiritual insecurity suggests why this event proved so divisive. To understand this broader context this chapter traces the emergence of the "corrupt pilgrim" idiom in political commentary and popular cultural forms, like cartoons, music, advertising and fashion. Whereas a successful hajj once bestowed unqualified prestige upon Nigerians, the "corrupt pilgrim" was greedy, impious, and tarnished Nigeria's reputation abroad. Acute public scrutiny addressed the activities of returned pilgrims back in Nigeria, accusing them of dirty politics, crime, and amoral behavior. The idiom surfaced in Islamic newspaper columns, which shifted from instructing aspiring pilgrims on how to properly carryout hajj rites, to explicitly laying out a code of conduct for all returned pilgrims. Politicians responded to these developments by foregoing pilgrim

uniforms, though cultural brokers and ordinary Nigerians continued to wear this symbol now loaded with ambivalence.

Ahmadiyya and Who Gets to be a Muslim

On July 4 1974, G. A. Amauda, a Nigerian member of the Ahmadiyya Movement-in-Islam sent a letter to Dr. Bhutto, the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Located at the margins of Islamic Nigeria¹ as an employee of the Federal Crop Research Station in Umuahia (Eastern Nigeria), Amauda's letter first passed through the Ahmadiyya Mission Headquarters in Lagos and then the Pakistani Ambassador's Office in Lagos before traveling to Islamabad. In it, he recalled that people throughout time have been warned "against disturbing the course of Allah," such as Pharaoh in the bible, Pontius Pilate, and Julius Caesar. This scholarly sketch of the fates of past transgressors serves as a springboard for a remarkable threat against Bhutto:

God of the weak will avenge the inhuman treatment meted to the Ahmadis in your domain for I saw in my dream of Tuesday 2nd July 1974 some birds with fire at their [b]eaks perching on tops of the roots of the houses of your men ready for action and one of them, perhaps the leader, struck you on the head with its fiery [b]eak. And I saw a group of people, perhaps the Ahmadis, being led away peacefully from your country and it appeared there was a curfew in your country. In conclusion, you should be good enough as a 'true Muslim' to tell us the result of the dastardly action of your men and its effect on Islam generally.²

The "inhuman treatment" Amauda alludes to concerned almost daily acts of violence against the Ahmadiyya in Pakistan that started in late May of that year, and would lead to Pakistan's Parliament officially declaring Ahmadiyya to be "non-Muslim" on September 7 1974. While perhaps the only Nigerian who wrote directly to Bhutto, Amauda was far from the only Nigerian

¹ Egodi Uchendu, *Islam in the Niger Delta 1890-2017: A Synthesis of the Accounts of Indigenes and Migrants*: (Berlin : KS, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2018). This provides a comprehensive overview of the history of Islam in the Eastern Region.

² Ismail A. B. Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria*. (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1977), 108–10. As Balogun remarks, some elements of the dream bare a close resemblance to The Story of the Elephant in the Qur'an.

to voice outrages over the persecution of Ahmadiyya in Pakistan. Several individuals wrote concerned op-eds³ and the Ahmadiyya Mission in Nigeria appealed to the Federal Government to use international diplomacy to address the issue,⁴ and requested permission from the Pakistani government to send a delegate and press representative to observe and document the violence.⁵ Illustrating increased ties between the two countries, the Pakistani government responded to these articles with explicit denials of any anti-Ahmadi violence.⁶ They perhaps convinced at least one southern daily of their counterfactual version, since the *Daily Express* branded the situation an “imagined plight” whose real significance was as “a smear campaign against Pakistan.”⁷

Before going further, it is necessary to briefly explain the theological basis for the attacks on the Ahmadiyya. The case against the Ahmadiyya hinged on their interpretation of the concept of *Khatam-Nabiyyin*, which literally translated means “seal of the prophets” and describes the Prophet Muhammad. The most controversial element of the Ahmadiyya since its founding in the late nineteenth century in the Punjab, this part of Ahmadiyya doctrine interprets “seal” not in terms of chronology (as do most Sunni Muslims) but in terms of quality. Muhammad was therefore not the last of the prophets in history, but the highest realization of prophethood and one who could imprint upon others, like a seal, the status of prophethood. It was on this basis that the Movement’s founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, claimed the status of prophet, albeit subservient to Muhammad.⁸ In 1914, tensions arising after Ahmad’s death split the sect into two

³ “Public Forum: Stop This Religious Intolerance,” *Nigerian Observer*, September 10, 1974; Rizwan A. Muhammed, “Public Forum: Denials About Ahmadiyas’ Muslims,” *Nigerian Observer*, September 25, 1974; Alhaji Z O Elias, “Letters...Letters...: Why Persecute Ahmadies,” *Daily Express*, August 14, 1974.

⁴ “Ahmadis Appeal to Fed Govt,” *Nigerian Observer*, August 23, 1974.

⁵ “Ahmadies Protest to Pakistani Govt,” *Nigerian Observer*, September 2, 1974.

⁶ “Pakistan Denies Attack on Ahmadies,” *Nigerian Observer*, September 10, 1974.

⁷ “The Ahmadies Problem,” *Daily Express*, September 11, 1974.

⁸ Adil Hussain Khan, *From Sufism to Ahmadiyya: A Muslim Minority Movement in South Asia* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2015); Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria.*, 65–77; Zafrullah Elias, “Where Dr. Balogun Went Wrong,” *Daily Times*, February 10, 1974. This is by no means the only part of their

factions, Qadiani and Lahore. Whereas the Qadiani continued to believe that Ghulam was a prophet, the splinter Lahore branch rejected this and declared him to be a *mujaddid* (reformer) only, aligning themselves more with mainstream Sunni Islam.⁹

Saudi Arabia's ban of the Ahmadiyya was not the first time the sect had attracted controversy or that Nigerians had critically engaged with their doctrine. When the Qadiani branch first arrived in the early twentieth century it stirred tension in every town it entered in the Southwest.¹⁰ The most prominent founding member, Lawal B. Augusto, broke from the sect in 1924 to form the Jamat-ul-Islamiyya when he discovered that the Qadiani rather than the Lahore branch had arrived.¹¹ Regardless, through its educational activities and semiotics of prestige, the Ahmadiyya managed to carve out a respectable niche in towns throughout the region. By 1940 tensions within the sect lead the Nigerian Ahmadiyya branch to officially split in two, with the Ahmadiyya Mission referring to the original group, and the Ahmadiyya Movement referring to the new splinter group. Though the dissenting Movement rejected Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claim to prophethood, reporting and memories of the split explain that the dissenting Ahmadis resented the foreign Indian missionaries' control of the Mission, often with a pernicious air of racial superiority, and suggest that mainly administrative tensions rather than theological disputes

doctrine that orthodox Muslims critique. Generally, they are seen as wrongly incorporating some Christian doctrines, reincarnation, etc. For a more detailed overview of their beliefs, see Khan.

⁹ Valentine, S. R., "Prophecy after the Prophet, albeit lesser prophets? The Ahmadiyya Jama'at in Pakistan," *Cont Islam*, vol. 8, 2014, p.101; Valentine, S. R., *Islam and the Ahmadiyya Jama'at: History, Belief, Practice*, Columbia University Press, NY, 2008, pp.55-58; Burhani, Ahmad Naji, "Conversion to Ahmadiyya in Indonesia: Winning Hearts through Ethical and Spiritual Appeals," *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, Vol. 29, No. 3, 2014, pp.658-660. As Valentine outlines, there were a few reasons for this besides the dispute over Ghulam.

¹⁰ "Letter from District Officer, Ibadan to Senior Resident, Oyo Province," November 30, 1923, OYO PROF I: 1153/1: Ahmadiya Movement in Islam. Local limitations upon movements of its members., National Archive, Ibadan; "Letter from Imams and Representatives of the Al-Quranic Section [Imam Alliu of the Brazzilian Mosque, Imam Sonni of Epetedo, Imam Musa Amode of Atinni, Imam Salu of Oke Popo, Imam Abari of Epetedo, Abdul Kadiri, Sulu Olori Omokewu, Sunmonu Balogun, Mutairu Pasi, Kasunmu Otun, Bakare, Amodu Aga.] to Abdul Rahim Nayyar," February 6, 1922, CSO 26/1: 01012: Ahmadiya Movement, Moulvie Abdur-Rahim Personal, National Archive, Ibadan; "Letter from Oni of Ife to District Officer, Ife/Ilesha Divison," February 2, 1934, IFE DIV 1/1: 1751: Disputes Between Ife and Modakeke Muslims, National Archive, Ibadan.

¹¹ "The Truth About Augusto," *Daily Times*, February 10, 1974.

underpinned the split.¹² However, the controversial doctrines of the Ahmadiyya did receive more public attention after the split, most notably a public debate in Lagos attended by roughly “2,000 Muslims of all sects” between the Ahmadiyya and “an Arab preacher from Medina” on whether Mirza Ghulam Ahmad could have been a prophet.¹³ The difference between the split in 1940 and the events of the 1970s was that the former aroused animosity mainly between the two resulting factions of the Ahmadiyya¹⁴ and both survived the split relatively intact,¹⁵ whereas the events of the 1970s generated attention and debate from Nigerians on a national scale and significantly decreased the Ahmadiyya’s membership.

The violence of 1974 marked the culmination of global and national tensions surrounding the Ahmadiyya. The first major strike against the Ahmadiyya came in October 1970, when the World Muslim League passed a resolution declaring that the Ahmadiyya’s “beliefs and practices” were “clearly contradictory to the well-known viewpoint of Islam” and thus disqualified them as Muslims.¹⁶ This decision came after the League had examined an English Qur’an published by the Ahmadiyya headquarters in Pakistan, which they found “false” and an “evil onslaught”

¹² Interview with Mutiu Oladele in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, December 2014; “Judgement: Ife Ahmadiyya Mosque,” *The Daily Comet*, November 24, 1947, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; Balogun, “The Ahmadiyya Problem in Nigeria,” 10; Humphrey J. Fisher, *Ahmadiyyah; a Study in Contemporary Islam on the West African Coast.*, 206 p. ([London]: Published for the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research [by] Oxford University Press, 1963), 108–14.

¹³ African News Agency, “Debate on the Advent of Mahdi Got up by Ahmadiyya Ends in Noise-Making,” *Daily Comet*, May 14, 1948, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁴ A. R. Balogun, “Letter to the Editor: Mr. Hakeem and the Ahmadiyya Movement, a Rejoinder.,” *Daily Comet*, December 4, 1943, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Indian Missioner Alhaj F R Hakeem Defends Ahmadiyya,” *Daily Comet*, February 6, 1946, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Judgement: Ife Ahmadiyya Mosque”; A Young Muslim, “A Challenge to the Ahmadi,” *The Nigerian Daily Times*, May 10, 1948, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Debate on the Advent of Mahdi Got up by Ahmadiyya Ends in Noise-Making”; N. M. Naseem Saifi, “Reader’s Platform: To Jibril Martin,” *Daily Comet*, December 7, 1948, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁵ “Alhaj F R Hakeem Goes to India,” *Eletí-Ofe*, November 1, 1947, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Alhaji Hakeem Will Lecture on ‘Usury or Interests’,” *The Daily Comet*, January 30, 1945, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan.

¹⁶ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria.*, i.

against the true meaning of the holy book.¹⁷ The League advised that they be banned from Mecca and Medina, which the Saudi Arabian government did shortly afterward. It appears that this international ruling did not immediately register in Nigeria, for Ahmadiyya members continued to embark on the hajj¹⁸ and it was not until December 1972, roughly one month before Nigerians would start departing for the hajj in 1973, that the Embassy of Saudi Arabia announced that it would no longer issue visas to Ahmadiyya members.¹⁹ Even then, beyond a public notice in the *Daily Times* by the Ahmadiyya Movement clarifying their distinction from the Mission,²⁰ this declaration appears to have had little practical impact until the following year, when the Embassy of Saudi Arabia denied visas to the roughly 200 aspiring pilgrims traveling with a travel agency owned by the Ahmadiyya Movement.²¹ Significantly, an ex-president of Ahmadiyya, Alhaji B. D. Oshodi took matters into his own hands by placing a public notice in the *Daily Times* to declare his renouncement of Ahmadiyya.²² Intervention by the Lagos State Commissioner for Information and Tourism resulted in individual meetings of affected Nigerians with the Saudi Council, and reduced the number of denied pilgrims to ninety-three.²³ However, the event did not pass without incident. With around a hundred Ahmadis milling in the courtyard of the Saudi embassy in Lagos, one particularly angry thwarted pilgrim entered “and attempted

¹⁷ A. R. I. Doi, “Islam in Nigeria since Independence,” in *Christianity in Independent Africa*, ed. Edward W. Fasholé-Luke, [x], 630 p. (London : Bloomington, IN: R. Collings ; Indiana University Press, 1978), 352.

¹⁸ Alhaji F. M. Quraishy, “Islam and You: Pilgrims’ First Experience at the Sacred House,” *Nigerian Observer*, January 28, 1972, Serials, Abuja National Library.

¹⁹ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria.*, ii; Syed Alhaji Y. K. Yakub, “Islamic Platform: In the Name of Islamic Unity,” *Daily Express*, December 15, 1972; Ismail A. B. Balogun, “The Ahmadiyya Problem in Nigeria,” *The Sunday Times*, January 20, 1974, 10; “Public Notice,” *Daily Times*, December 14, 1972. My date is somewhat at odds with Balogun’s claim that this happened in 1973, however the article by Yakub proves this, as does an article that Balogun himself refers to his article in January, 1974. That said, it did not seem to have much impact at first, though it did generate a defensive public notice from the Ahmadiyya Movement, that declared they did not agree with the Ahmadiyya Mission in terms of the founder being a prophet.

²⁰ “Public Notice,” December 14, 1972.

²¹ “200 in Visa Trouble,” *Daily Times*, December 19, 1973.

²² Alhaji B. D. Oshodi, “I Renounce Ahmadiyya,” *Daily Times*, December 11, 1973.

²³ “Pilgrim in Visa Dilemma at Ikeja Airport,” *Daily Times*, December 27, 1973.

to assault the consul in charge of visa[s].”²⁴ The “commotion” generated became so great that embassy officials called in two Nigerian officials and the President of the Ahmadiyya Movement-in-Islam “to come to appease the angry pilgrims.”²⁵ Despite these protests, the Saudi Arabian Embassy continued to enforce its new policy that required all intending Nigerian pilgrims to obtain a signature from their Imam testifying that they were not an Ahmadi.²⁶

If the 1970 ruling by the World Muslim League went relatively unreported, the event of 1973 and its fallout sparked an intense debate, despite the fact that the Ahmadiyya’s membership was relatively small compared to other Islamic sects in the country (though the Nigerian branch represented one of the largest in the world).²⁷ In contrast to the eventual backlash against the sect, initially the public in the Western Region largely sided with Ahmadiyya, though the tension surrounding Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s status as a prophet occasionally surfaced.²⁸ Calls “for Muslim unity” aligned with critiques against “Saudi intolerance” as unwanted foreign meddling in Nigerian Islamic practice.²⁹ Undoubtedly, the strong presence of prominent Ahmadiyya members in the Nigerian press influenced this initial response—for example, the President of the Ahmadiyya Movement was also the Chairman of the *Daily Times*, arguably the premier paper in Lagos. Yet early support for Ahmadiyya reflected their sustained involvement in the Yoruba Muslim community. Certainly, the Ahmadiyya’s activities in the years immediately preceding the ban did not suggest a sect under fire; they donated two hundred copies of the Qur’an to an

²⁴ “Ahmadiyyas Storm Saudi Embassy,” *Daily Times*, December 20, 1973.

²⁵ Doi, “Islam in Nigeria since Independence,” 352. The quotes are from a *Daily Times* article from December 20 1973, p.2 that Doi excerpts.

²⁶ Doi, 352.

²⁷ Doi, 350.

²⁸ A. R. A. Oladimeji, “Letter....Letter: Ghulam Ahmad a Prophet?,” *Daily Express*, November 2, 1972.

²⁹ Yakub, “Islamic Platform: In the Name of Islamic Unity”; Hadji Major Akanbi Giwa, “Need for Muslim Unity in Nigeria,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 26, 1973; “Front Page Comment: Year of Peace,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 31, 1973; “Daily Express Opinion: The Voice of the People: Check This Arrogance,” *Daily Express*, January 3, 1974.

elite Lagosian hotel to celebrate their anniversary in 1972,³⁰ proudly opened an exhibition of Qur'an translations at the Central Library in Lagos in 1973,³¹ and received gratitude for their work from Muslims in the South and the North.³² The branch in the Eastern city of Port Harcourt were even so bold as to urge the Federal Military Government in 1972 to set up a social court to punish "unfaithful" pilgrims.³³ Moreover, Ahmadiyya members played a central role in the hajj administration of the Southwest during the early 1970s. In fact, the refusal of visas to anyone traveling with the Ahmadiyya-owned travel agency proved so chaotic because it implicated thirty-two officials of the Lagos State Pilgrims Welfare Board.³⁴ Plus, the Nigerian Pilgrims Welfare Board used the grounds of an Ahmadiyya college as a pilgrim camp for those departing from the Ikeja airport in Lagos,³⁵ and both the Chairman of the Lagos State and Western State Pilgrims Welfare Board belonged to the Ahmadiyya sect.³⁶ And it would be the acutely public defection of the later of the two that would shift the tide of public opinion on the matter.

Besides being the Chairman of the Western State Pilgrims Welfare Board, Dr. Ismail Balogun taught for the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Ibadan. The ban against the Ahmadiyya from Mecca naturally upset him. Reflecting in 1975 soon after the crisis, he narrated the genesis of the controversy:

I started to weigh the beliefs and practices of the Ahmadis against the widely accepted teachings of Islam as contained in the authoritative books of Islam. I compared also the Ahmadiyya interpretations of certain Islamic precepts with the orthodox interpretations. I discovered a basic incongruity between Islam and Ahmadiyya, and also between the Muslims and the Ahmadis. Then the problem arose in me as to how to put forward my findings, after having been a professed and active Ahmadi for over forty years...I was

³⁰ "Federal Palace Gets Quran," *Daily Express*, December 1, 1972.

³¹ "Translations of the Holy Quran on Show," *Nigerian Tribune*, May 3, 1973.

³² "Yakasai Grateful to Ahmadiyya Mission," *Daily Express*, January 31, 1973.

³³ "Create Special Court for Unfaithful Pilgrims," *Nigerian Tribune*, December 19, 1972.

³⁴ "200 in Visa Trouble."

³⁵ "Aminu Kano Calls on Pilgrim Agents to Cooperate with Govt," *Nigerian Observer*, January 13, 1972, Serials, Abuja National Library.

³⁶ Syed Alhaji Y. K. Yakub, "Islamic Platform: Welfare of Pilgrims," *Daily Express*, December 22, 1972; "West Alhajis Thank Governor," *Nigerian Tribune*, October 18, 1971.

engaged in Tahajjud/Istikhārah prayer one night when it occurred to me to go straight to my desk, immediately after the prayer, and start writing.³⁷

This late night drafting resulted in a lengthy article published in the *Sunday Times* in January 1974. The weight of the article was great, and it still registers in the personal archives and memories of current and past members of the Ahmadiyya,³⁸ so much so that one member told me that the *article* was the source of the crisis and the ban, not Saudi Arabia.³⁹ After providing a historical overview of the Ahmadiyya in Nigeria, Balogun claimed it was only “when stiff opposition to Ahmadiyya started to rear its head in this country, that certain high ranking Ahmadis knew for the first time that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed to be a prophet.”⁴⁰ During my fieldwork in 2014–15, other former Ahmadis provided similar narratives of discovery linked to Middle Eastern sources of knowledge.⁴¹ The majority of the article outlines the controversial aspects of the Ahmadiyya doctrine as reasons for Balogun’s departure from the sect. Though Balogun made clear his article mainly addressed “the two Ahmadiyya groups in Nigeria,”⁴² in several instances he framed the Ahmadiyya problem as a global one, and addressed a hypothetical international audience.⁴³

³⁷ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria.*, ii–iii.

³⁸ Interview with Mutiu Oladele in Ibadan, Nigeria.; Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, May 2015. Mutiu Oladele was also my first source for the article published by Alhaji Ismail Balogun. As of 2014–2015 he was the Archivist and Secretary of the Ahmadiyya Missionary Board in Ibadan, and he owned an original hard copy of the article.

³⁹ Interview with Alhaji Abdulraheem Akintoye in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, November 2014. Mutiu Oladele also linked the ban to activities in the press, though he cites Alhaji Babatunde Jose as the main culprit. Given that Oladele was born in 1969, it’s possible his memory of Jose, a Muslim journalist aligned with the group that branched off of the Ahmadiyya mission in 1940 and that would rename itself in response to the events of 1970s, is eliding memories of Ismail Balogun.

⁴⁰ Balogun, “The Ahmadiyya Problem in Nigeria,” 10.

⁴¹ Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., May 2015; Interview with Alhaji Otun Abdul Gamy in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, October 2014. In the case of Professor Noibi, this discovery came a decade earlier, and formed the basis of his Masters research in Cairo, which, somewhat ironically, was sponsored by an Ahmadiyya scholarship.

⁴² Balogun, “The Ahmadiyya Problem in Nigeria,” 20.

⁴³ Balogun, “The Ahmadiyya Problem in Nigeria.” In terms of framing the problem as global: “Both in this country and all over the world, Ahmadiyya is at a crossroad,” and “It is, indeed, high time that the top-notchers of Ahmadiyya made their stand unmistakably clear to the world at large.” In terms of explaining his own obligation: “I

Ironically, before the 1970s the Ahmadiyya had benefited from Nigeria's connection to Saudi Arabia. This was because the most visible difference between Ahmadis and other Nigerian Muslims was that the Ahmadiyya folded their arms during prayer rather than letting them hang to the side, as most Nigerian Muslims did.⁴⁴ According to Balogun, when non-Ahmadi Nigeria Muslims performed the hajj "they [would] discover most Muslims the world over fold their arms at prayer" and therefore believed that the Ahmadis were "correct in their mode of prayer, hence Ahmadiyya was right."⁴⁵ The official Ahmadiyya Mission rejoinder to Balogun's article would draw on this favorable optic when defending their claim to be rightful members of Islam.⁴⁶

Balogun's article precipitated a debate that got so heated that eventually some dailies began to reject further related op-eds, claiming they had been "warned" to stop publishing on the matter.⁴⁷ The first response came from the Ahmadiyya Mission itself, first in *The Sunday Times*, and then with an extended article in their serial *The Truth*.⁴⁸ In the year that followed numerous Nigerians weighed in on the issue with articles of their own. Besides its scale, the debate was noteworthy for; one, how much detailed Islamic exegesis it generated in the primarily secular space of the Nigerian press; two, how each side drew on claims to being more inline with global practices of Islam; three, how it revealed growing (albeit at times resented) influence of Islam in the North on Islamic practice in the Southwest; and finally the fact that it ultimately turned popular opinion in the Southwest against the Ahmadiyya.

By the 1970s most southern Nigerian dailies contained both Islamic and Christian

have stated my point of view...purely because of my awareness of the responsibility incumbent on me towards my fellow Nigerian Muslims in particular and the world Muslims at large."

⁴⁴ Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., May 2015. This was because the Ahmadiyya did not follow Maliki law (that most common in West Africa).

⁴⁵ Balogun, "The Ahmadiyya Problem in Nigeria," 10; Doi, "Islam in Nigeria since Independence," 353. Doi affirms this claim.

⁴⁶ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria.*, 29.

⁴⁷ Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., May 2015.

⁴⁸ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria.*, iii.

columns that dispensed with religious instruction and moral advice. Thus, while not an entirely secular space, the press compartmentalized its theological content. Occasionally op-eds by readers would touch on religious topics, but these were usually short and discrete—ongoing religious debates rarely played out in this space, with the exception of the perennial problem of whether or not to fix Eid dates. Yet since the controversy over the Ahmadiyya hinged on a translation of Arabic, the debate exposed the reading public to an academic discussion of Arabic grammar and Islamic exegesis. Critiques of Balogun—and his eventual rejoinders—explored what was lost in Arabic to English translations in terms of the definitive, superlatives, possessive constructions,⁴⁹ and other technical aspects of Arabic grammar.⁵⁰ In addition to the Qur’an and numerous *hadiths*, these same articles pulled quotes from several collections of exegesis authored by clerics across the Muslim World as far back as 1241 CE.⁵¹ In doing so the articles encouraged readers, at times explicitly,⁵² to look up the cited passages and come to their own conclusions. This tactic, once relegated to Islamic columns written by prominent Muslim clerics, now permeated op-ed letters by more ordinary Muslims.⁵³ These more humble sources of Islamic knowledge introduced a concern of reaching a broader public, with one Ahmadiyya op-ed writer advocating a public debate to prevent the discussion from remaining a “mere newspaper campaign” that “cannot benefit millions of illiterate Muslims of this country.”⁵⁴ While this no doubt true, the level of Islamic learning—especially in the Southwest—had risen significantly in

⁴⁹ This refers to the *Idaafa*.

⁵⁰ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria*, 56–100; Elias, “Where Dr. Balogun Went Wrong.”

⁵¹ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria*, 56–100; Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Lagos, “Public Forum: Islam Is Not for Aggression,” *Nigerian Observer*, September 16, 1974; Elias, “Where Dr. Balogun Went Wrong”; S. O. Bakare, “Ahmadies Are Muslims,” *Daily Times*, March 19, 1974; S. B. Giwa, “The Ahmadiyya Crisis: Let All Critics Meet Us at a Public Debate,” *Daily Times*, March 24, 1974; Alhaji Zaffar Elias, “We Are the True Moslems,” *Daily Times*, March 24, 1974.

⁵² Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria*, 60–61.

⁵³ A R A Apampa, “Your Views: The Case for Moslem Unity,” *Daily Express*, March 29, 1974; Alfa Arimiyan Abdus-Salam, “Public Forum: Only Allah Knows the Real Muslims,” *Nigerian Observer*, October 12, 1974; Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria*, 78–82.

⁵⁴ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria*, 82.

the previous decade, knowledge that was now on display within the press.

Besides the fact that a ruling by the World Muslim League and subsequent action by Saudi Arabia sparked the crisis, the debate that followed evidenced increased connectivity between Nigeria and the greater Islamic world. For starters, it circulated between Nigeria and Pakistan. In addition to the transnational discussion concerning anti-Ahmadi violence in Pakistan, Balogun's defection garnered replies from prominent members in Pakistan.⁵⁵ Both sides of the debate in Nigeria referred to international Islamic practices and clerics to support their argument, with the Ahmadiyya's critics relying heavily on the World Muslim League and Saudi Arabian government.⁵⁶ Both sides framed the crisis as a global, however they did so in contradictory ways, demonstrating the variation in how Nigerians experienced the rise of global Islam. As already mentioned, from the start supporters of the Ahmadiyya framed the crisis as a "Nigerian problem,"⁵⁷ caused by unwanted foreign interference that was Islamically unjustified—a position they maintained over the following years.⁵⁸ Some Ahmadis alerted Muslim readers that they could easily be the next target of Saudi "intolerance," reminding them that anti-Tijaniyya texts and sentiments also circulated the Holy Land,⁵⁹ and warning that soon Saudi Arabia "will insist that all intending pilgrims to Mecca must enroll in the Wahhabi sect."⁶⁰ Underpinning this claim was an argument that Islamic authority resided only in the Qur'an, not any Muslim organization or individual, and that only God could determine who was a Muslim.⁶¹ Balgoun denied this

⁵⁵ Balogun, 104.

⁵⁶ Alhaji Saka Fagbo, "The Ahmadiyya Crisis: Ghulam Ahmad Was a False Prophet and a Sinner," *Daily Times*, March 17, 1974; Suleiman Quadri, "The Ahmadiyya Crisis: Why Ahmaddies Are Rejected," *Daily Times*, March 10, 1974.

⁵⁷ L. A. Buari, "What All Ahmadiyyas Must Do," *Daily Times*, February 10, 1974.

⁵⁸ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria*, 58; "Daily Express Opinion: The Voice of the People: Check This Arrogance."

⁵⁹ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria*, 47–48.

⁶⁰ Elias, "We Are the True Moslems," 15.

⁶¹ Giwa, "The Ahmadiyya Crisis: Let All Critics Meet Us at a Public Debate"; Elias, "We Are the True Moslems"; H. O. Sumonu, "Public Forum: Muslim Authority Should Be From The Holy Quran," *Nigerian Observer*,

interpretation by arguing that the “Ahmadiyya presents a universal problem to all the Muslims of the world.”⁶² Another critic of the Ahmadiyya similarly claimed that “the public has a right to know” that the Ahmadiyya crisis was “not a Nigerian affair,” but situated in the greater Muslim world.⁶³ If the relevant *‘umma* (Muslim community) was global rather than national, then the Ahmadiyya’s notion of ‘political interference’ became illogical.

The Ahmadiyya crisis in Nigeria also suggests that the emergence of a global Islam *‘umma* in the 1970s often resulted in increased sectarian tensions, at times in racial terms. Several of the defensive Ahmadi voices that emerged after Balogun’s initial article claimed that at the root of the attack on the Ahmadiyya was a false sense of superiority by Saudi Arabia and more generally, Arab Muslims. After asserting that the World Muslim League did not speak for all Muslims in the world, one Ahmadiyya member proudly reminded readers that the Ahmadiyya had successfully brought Islam to “England, France, Germany, Russia, Spain, Holland, America; in fact we are covering the world with the teaching of Islam.”⁶⁴ This global success, he reasoned, had spurred the hostility towards the Ahmadiyya emanating from the Middle East since Arabs “feel Islam is their national religion” and were thus “protective” of it.⁶⁵ Likewise, another member argued that Saudi Arabia felt “disturbed by the growing influence of Ahmadiyya the world over,” particularly since “they could not make such universal impact in spite of their oil wealth.”⁶⁶ However, though the Ahmadiyya did establish branches throughout the globe, their membership constituted a relatively small fraction of the Muslim world. And yet, the fact that the authors made them, and at least some Nigerian readers appeared receptive to their arguments,

November 6, 1974; “Ban on Ahmadies from Hajj Decried,” *Daily Times*, January 14, 1974; Mrs. Hidayat Habeebu, “Your Views: Ahmadies Are Moslems,” *Daily Express*, March 27, 1974.

⁶² Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria*, 58.

⁶³ Quadri, “The Ahmadiyya Crisis: Why Ahmadies Are Rejected.”

⁶⁴ Giwa, “The Ahmadiyya Crisis: Let All Critics Meet Us at a Public Debate.”

⁶⁵ Giwa.

⁶⁶ Elias, “We Are the True Moslems.”

does indicate that even if Saudi Arabia and the Middle East had emerged by the 1970s as a dominant Islamic voice, this had not solidified, at least in Nigeria, to the extent that it would later.

Moreover, some critics of the Ahmadiyya (as well as those who reappraised their beliefs in light of the crisis), did not uniformly turn towards a Saudi vision of Islam, even if this was the more common response.⁶⁷ For example, L. A. Buari, a Nigerian member of the Ahmadiyya Mission, confessed that the information Balogun presented in his article necessitated some reforms by the Mission. Though he did not renounce his membership, he did suggest Nigerian members should reject the Ahmadiyya's brand of modernism, and stop the

ignorant imitation of Pakistan mode of appearance... We should wear our traditional costume, speak and read the Quran in a typical African tongue... We should be more social, dance at respectable parties and coo at naming ceremonies and drink moderately... we must stop deceiving ourselves that 'drinks' is totally forbidden. Let us shake hand with our women. Men must interact (with reasonable reservations) with women. Excessive veiling has nothing to do with religion.⁶⁸

If Buari saw a need to reform the Ahmadiyya, for him it was not towards a fundamentalist vision of Islam but rather a reclamation of the right of Yoruba cultural practices to exist within Islam.

The geography of the Ahmadiyya debate reflected the fact that though new Muslim organizations formed since independence connected the Southwest to the North, this occasionally amplified ethnic tensions. In part, this was because many national organizations lacked equal representation, such as the recently formed Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA). Though the NSCIA presented itself as the first truly national voice for Islam in Nigeria, the North dominated it: the Sultan of Sokoto was the President, his relative Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki the secretary-general. The highest post given to a southerner was the role of "legal advisor" to Dr. Adegbite, a prominent Yoruba Muslim and founder of another group with

⁶⁷ J. D. Y. Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, *The Anthropology of Christianity*; 18, xii, 296 pages (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016), 158.

⁶⁸ Buari, "What All Ahamdis Must Do."

national ambitions, the Muslim Students Society.⁶⁹ In March 1974, less than two months after Balogun's initial *Sunday Times* article, the Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI), the main regional Islamic organization of the North, issued a publication provocatively titled "Is this not a new Religion against Islam?" in reference to the Ahmadiyya.⁷⁰ That same month, the NSCIA followed suit, declaring allegiance with Saudi Arabia on the issue of the Ahmadiyya and instructed its members to not to fraternize with nor give any assistance to the sect.⁷¹ This was thus a largely Northern ruling—and one that reformist Abubakar Gumi would later take full-credit for⁷²—against an Islamic sect largely confined to Yoruba Muslims.⁷³ Defenses of the Ahmadiyya quickly surfaced in southern dailies.⁷⁴ Some referenced all of important work done by the Ahmadiyya in Nigeria particularly in the realm of Islamic education,⁷⁵ while several—perhaps reflecting more general national concerns after the Biafran war—framed the campaign against Ahmadiyya as dangerously detrimental to Muslim unity in Nigeria,⁷⁶ some even going so far as to call the attacks contrary to the Qur'anic message of Muslim brotherhood.⁷⁷ And a few framed the crisis as between the Northern Muslim establishment creating strife in the Southwest,⁷⁸ a notion that drew on a sense of Hausa and Fulani Islamic haughtiness and persists

⁶⁹ J. D. Y. Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Orisha Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, The Anthropology of Christianity ;18, xii, 296 pages (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016), 159.

⁷⁰ Apampa, "Your Views: The Case for Moslem Unity."

⁷¹ "Ahmaddies Recognize Only Prophet Mohammed," *Daily Express*, March 15, 1974; Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria.*, 116.

⁷² Loimeier, "Islamic Reform and Political Change : The Example of Abubakar Gumi and the Yan Izala Movement in Northern Nigeria," in *African Islam and Islam in Africa: Encounters between Sufis and Islamists*, ed. Eva Evers. Rosander and David. Westerlund (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1997), 160.

⁷³ Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Orisha Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, 158.

⁷⁴ "Ahmaddies Recognize Only Prophet Mohammed"; Syed Alhaji Y. K. Yakub, "Islamic Platform: The Holy Prophet as a Symbol of Islamic Unity," *Daily Express*, March 15, 1974; Habeebu, "Your Views: Ahmadies Are Moslems"; Apampa, "Your Views: The Case for Moslem Unity"; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, "Muslim Digest: Ahmadiyya Is God-Inspired Name," *Daily Express*, March 30, 1974.

⁷⁵ Habeebu, "Your Views: Ahmadies Are Moslems."

⁷⁶ Yakub, "Islamic Platform: The Holy Prophet as a Symbol of Islamic Unity"; Apampa, "Your Views: The Case for Moslem Unity."

⁷⁷ Habeebu, "Your Views: Ahmadies Are Moslems."

⁷⁸ Apampa, "Your Views: The Case for Moslem Unity."

in the memories of Ahmadiyya adherents I interviewed in 2014–15.⁷⁹

The Ahmadiyya Movement, the off took action to resolve the matter. First, the Movement attempted to have “a round table conference” with the Saudi Arabian government to explain why they ought to be considered Muslims, but the embassy in Lagos refused to grant any of the members’ visas.⁸⁰ By the end of Ramadan on October 16, 1974, the Movement announced that it had changed its name to Anwar-ul-Islam, a symbolic gesture that conveyed distance between them and the Ahmadiyya Mission.⁸¹ The Chief Imam of the new sect used the occasion of his Eid sermon to publicly urge all remaining Ahmadis to join them, affirming that their beliefs were ignorant and “noted with delight” Pakistan’s recent declaration that Ahmadiyya was not Islam.⁸² The tactic worked: Anwar-ul-Islam gained recognition from the World Muslim League and the Saudi Arabian embassy granted their members visas for the 1974 hajj.⁸³ Some criticized this move as insincere and merely pragmatic. In response, the vice-president of Anwar-ul-Islam publicly remarked “even if the movement decided to change its name in order that its members might be able to fulfill one of the five pillars of Islam, they were following the footsteps of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.”⁸⁴ Those maintaining affiliation with the Ahmadiyya Mission remained banned from traveling to Saudi Arabia, a fact that extends to the present. The Nigerian hajj administration responded as well, stating that they would reject the application of “any person believed or otherwise confirmed to be an Ahmadi” unless the application included “a newspaper declaration that he is not an Ahmadi” and “a testimony by the Imam or Alkali (Khadi,

⁷⁹ Interview with Mutiu Oladele in Ibadan, Nigeria.

⁸⁰ Alhaji S. L. Edu, “Letters: Pilgrimage to Mecca: Case of the Ahmadiyya Movement,” *Daily Times*, March 3, 1974.

⁸¹ “Anwar-Ul Islam: The New Name for Ahmadiyya,” *Daily Express*, November 25, 1974.

⁸² “Moslems Celebrate End of Ramadan Again,” *Daily Times*, October 18, 1974; “Sunny Hours Grace the Final Day of Moslems Fiesta--Lagos Aglow with Eid!,” *Daily Express*, October 18, 1974.

⁸³ “Anwar-Ul Islam: The New Name for Ahmadiyya.”

⁸⁴ Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria.*, 123.

Shariah court judge) of his town” affirming that the applicant was not an Ahmadi.⁸⁵

Though the Ahmadiyya Mission remained in operation after the crisis, their reputation did not escape unscathed, and the Saudi Arabian embassy continued denying Ahmadis visas,⁸⁶ even occasionally those that went to great lengths to deny this identity.⁸⁷ In 1976 the Ahmadiyya Mission was banned from the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC),⁸⁸ a decision that prompted one Nigerian to wonder if the sect still even existed,⁸⁹ much to the chagrin of at least one prominent Ahmadi.⁹⁰ Though the crisis tarnished the Ahmadiyya’s national image, even its critics did not always embrace the injunction against them. Dr. K. K. Olosolajo, then and now one of Ibadan’s most prominent Muslims, agreed that the Ahmadiyya held “extraneous ideas” at odds with Islam.⁹¹ Yet he also recalled that while the Chairman of the Oyo State Pilgrims Welfare Board (1984–1994), he saw “many Ahmadis perform hajj” by lying on the form.⁹² As Olosolajo explained, as long as they could pass the screening interview that tested applicants’ Islamic knowledge, “Who am I to deny them?”⁹³ This ambivalence perhaps reflects the fact that, as several supporters of the Ahmadiyya during the crisis emphasized,⁹⁴ many Nigerians owed their

⁸⁵ Dr. K. K. Olosolajo, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980” (University of Ibadan, 1984), 203; “Public Notice,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 24, 1978.

⁸⁶ “3,000 Ahmadis May Not Go to Mecca,” *Daily Express*, October 18, 1978, Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

⁸⁷ “10 Pilgrims Who Can’t Go to Saudi Arabia,” *The Punch*, October 14, 1979. In this case, the Saudi Embassy told the alleged Ahmadis to swear before the Chief Imam of Lagos at the Central Mosque that they were no Ahmadis. This they did, and in return the Chief Imam issued them a letter adorned with the official stamp of the Central Mosque to present at the Saudi Embassy. Regardless, their application remain denied.

⁸⁸ Alhaji B. A. Ogunbambi, “Your Letters to the Editor: NBC Also Discriminate Against Us,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 22, 1976.

⁸⁹ Alhaji Mohammed Okanlawon, “Your Letters to the Editor: Ahmadiyya: No More Existence,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 2, 1976.

⁹⁰ Hadji Major Akanbi Giwa, “Your Letters to the Editor: Ahmadiyya Still Exists,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 25, 1976.

⁹¹ Interview with Dr. K. K. Olosolajo in Ibadan, Nigeria, June 2017.

⁹² Interview with Dr. K. K. Olosolajo in Ibadan, Nigeria.

⁹³ Interview with Dr. K. K. Olosolajo in Ibadan, Nigeria.

⁹⁴ Habeebu, “Your Views: Ahmadies Are Moslems”; Sumonu, “Public Forum: Muslim Authority Should Be From The Holy Quran.”

Islamic education to the sect and remained grateful for this even after they disavowed the sect.⁹⁵

Perhaps because by the 1970s the sect represented a relatively small part of the Nigerian Muslim community, and primarily concentrated in the Southwest at that, the Ahmadiyya crisis has been relatively understudied. Of those that have addressed it, Loimeier framed the crisis as significant for how it revealed the growing influence of Saudi Arabia in Nigeria with the support of prominent Northern clerics like Gumi.⁹⁶ Though not contradicting this, Peel emphasizes that this was the first time the Middle East “intervened directly and decisively in Yoruba Muslim affairs.”⁹⁷ What the next section argues is that—in addition to this analysis—the national scale of the Ahmadiyya crisis resulted from a broader climate of spiritual insecurity among Nigerian Muslims, a fact that Ahmadiyya members themselves implied at the time. As already mentioned, after the ban several pointed out that many of the criticisms flung against them—such as their preference to pray behind an Ahmadiyya Imam, their cultivation of a distinct Islamic community, and accusations of adding *bid’ah* (illegal innovations) to their Islamic practice—could just as easily be applied to Sufis.⁹⁸ And more explicitly, one member warned that the ban against the Ahmadiyya set a dangerous precedent, and invited readers to contemplate a future where Saudi Arabia only permitted Wahhabis to undertake the hajj.⁹⁹ It was an imagined future conceivable to many Nigerian Muslims across the nation, since the 1970s were a time of increased Wahhabi-inflected anti-Sufi hostility emanating from the North,¹⁰⁰ and more generally when who or what represented true Islamic piety was becoming increasingly opaque.

⁹⁵ Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., May 2015.

⁹⁶ Loimeier, “Islamic Reform and Political Change : The Example of Abubakar Gumi and the Yan Izala Movement in Northern Nigeria,” 160.

⁹⁷ Peel, *Christianity, Islam, and Oriṣa Religion: Three Traditions in Comparison and Interaction*, 158.

⁹⁸ Elias, “Where Dr. Balogun Went Wrong,” 14; Balogun, *Islam Versus Ahmadiyya in Nigeria.*, 47–48.

⁹⁹ Elias, “We Are the True Moselms.”

¹⁰⁰ Ousmane. Kane, *Muslim Modernity in Postcolonial Nigeria: A Study of the Society for the Removal of Innovation and Reinstatement of Tradition*, Islam in Africa ;v. 1 (Boston, MA: Brill, 2003), 65–66, 70–75, 82–87.

A Transformed Experience:

Before examining how the meaning of the hajj changed during the oil boom, it is worth considering the extent to which the basic pragmatics of the hajj radically transformed during this period. The greatest change to the hajj in the 1970s its scale:¹⁰¹

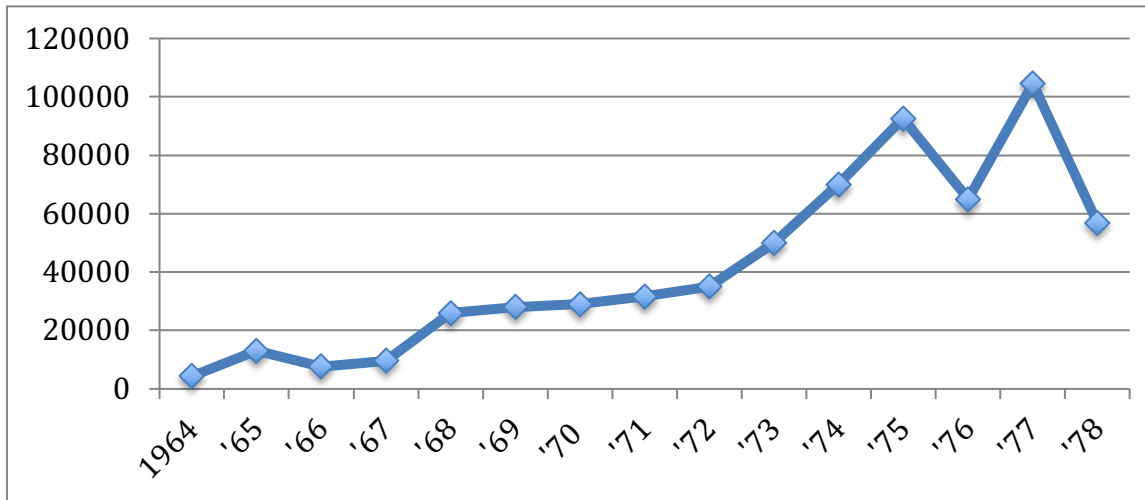


Figure 2. Annual Pilgrim Numbers [Nigeria], 1964–1978

As the above table indicates, by 1968 the ease of air travel caused annual number of pilgrims to markedly increase, and by 1973 the oil boom allowed this figure to almost double.¹⁰² As the rest of this chapter will demonstrate, this increase in Nigerians traveling to Mecca strained on the hajj bureaucracy and enabled the emergence in Nigerian popular culture of the “corrupt pilgrim.”

The period was also a time of transformation in terms of Saudi Arabia’s level of

¹⁰¹ “Advances in Islam, 4344--A Record for Nigerian Pilgrims to Mecca,” *Nigerian Citizen*, April 18, 1964, Serials, Abuja National Library; “7,623 Nigerians Performed Hajj,” *Daily Sketch*, April 21, 1966; “Mecca: Symbol of Man’s Brotherhood,” *Morning Post*, May 5, 1967; “After 22 Days Wait for Flight to Mecca: Pilgrim Dies at Ikeja Airport,” *Daily Times*, February 5, 1971; Alhaji Lateef Jakande, “The Unstoppable Agents: 1977 Hajj Reports,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 8, 1977; “Sketch Comment: Needless Deaths,” *Daily Sketch*, December 22, 1977, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Govt to Get Hajj Report Soon,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 30, 1978; Olosoto, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 199. The rounded figures came from Olosoto’s dissertation. While fairly accurate, when I could find more exact numbers I used these instead.

¹⁰² Interview with Dr. Barihi Adetunji in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, January 2015. This sudden injection of money into the national economy particularly benefited any Nigerian on the government payroll. For example Dr. Adetunji recalled to me he was able to go on hajj in 1975 because as a public school teacher he received in 1975 (along with all government employees) a raise and six months arrears. As he put it, “Instead of saving, I went to Mecca.”

influence within Nigeria and collaboration between the two governments. As already discussed, (Chapters 2–3), Ahmadu Bello prominently dedicated much of his political career to strengthening Nigeria’s relationship with Saudi Arabia until his assassination in 1966.¹⁰³ Meanwhile, with their own rising oil wealth, Saudi Arabia now had surplus funds to devote to propagating Islam all over the world. In terms of Nigeria, Saudi Arabia donated money for building new mosques and Islamic centers,¹⁰⁴ scholarships for Nigerians to study in Saudi as well as Saudi Islamic tutors sent to Nigeria,¹⁰⁵ and for the general promotion of Islam.¹⁰⁶ Though, as previous chapters have mentioned, there was nothing new about Nigerians studying Islam in the Middle East, the substantial subsidization of this education by the Saudi state (and other Gulf states)¹⁰⁷ was new.¹⁰⁸ In part a result of this strengthened circulation of scholars and pilgrims, Nigerians increasingly turned to Saudi Arabia in questions of Islamic comportment and society. For example, Nigerians praised the efficacy of Saudi legal practices of physically mutilating

¹⁰³ “Pilgrimage--at the Ka’aba,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 13, 1964, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Sardauna Meeting King Faisal,” *Nigerian Citizen*, April 7, 1965, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Ahmadu Backed at Mecca Talks,” *Morning Post*, April 21, 1965; “Sardauna Back from Saudi,” *Nigerian Citizen*, April 21, 1965, Serials, Abuja National Library; “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, April 23, 1965.

¹⁰⁴ “L2,000 Gift for Nsukka Mosque,” *Daily Sketch*, April 17, 1965; “New Modern Home to Promote Islam,” *New Nigerian*, March 14, 1966, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Providing a Modern Central Mosque for Lagos,” *Daily Express*, November 30, 1972; “L400 Donation for Islaudeen Mosque,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 24, 1972.

¹⁰⁵ “More Arabic Tutors Soon,” *Daily Express*, September 14, 1972; “Nigerian Students Get Saudi Arabian Awards,” *The Punch*, August 2, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; Interview with Alhaji Abdwaheed Abdhamid in Muslim, Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, November 2014; Interview with Alhaji Adeleke Abdul Kareem Lasun in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, November 2014; Interview with Alhaja Sururah Oyero in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, August 2015; Olosolajo, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 333–34. Alhaji A. Abdhamid, who studied abroad in Saudi from 1980-1986, also noted that Saudi would pay the expenses for all Nigerian students to complete the hajj during their stay. K. K. Olosolajo cites that at the time of 1980, there were over 300 Nigerians currently studying abroad in Saudi Arabia, and that many of these students, once they returned to Nigeria as Islamic teachers, remained on the Saudi payroll. Finally, as Alhaja Oyero recalled and the 1978 article in *The Punch* confirms, it was men rather than women who mostly benefited from these scholarships.

¹⁰⁶ “Muslim Dons Form Body,” *Daily Sketch*, January 12, 1969; “Moslems to Get Hausa Version of Holy Koran,” *Nigerian Observer*, February 13, 1973, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Aid for Our Pilgrims,” *Nigerian Observer*, January 31, 1973, Serials, Abuja National Library.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Alhaja Bushra Bisi Olosolajo in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, June 2015.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Sheikh Ajala in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015. These Islamic intellectual networks are also well remembered by Nigerian Muslims today.

criminals,¹⁰⁹ of their practice of *purdah*,¹¹⁰ and, particular the younger generation, called for a strict adoption of the Eid dates as determined by Saudi Arabia,¹¹¹ a practice which appears to have been adopted throughout the southwest soon afterward.¹¹² Awareness of Saudi Arabia also filtered through pilgrims' celebrations. For example, when Alhaji Adamson returned in 1963 and rode around Lagos on horseback, people called out a Yoruba saying that he translated as "you should put your hands up, to see that it is not cut from Mecca."¹¹³ The reason for this was that Lagosian knew that if an alhaji stole in Saudi Arabia, he would return with a hand missing. Thus, pilgrims raised their hands on their return to prove their piety to the Muslim community.

Smugglers, Dealers, and Hustlers

The dominant image of pilgrims as pious and ideal citizens worth emulation (Chapters 2–3) shifted during Nigeria's oil boom in the 1970s. Though there were earlier antecedents for this development, only in the 1970s did many Nigerians begin to consider the alhaji title as nearly synonymous with drug peddling, currency smuggling, and various "quick wealth" schemes. As we will soon see, perhaps in response to this degradation of the alhaji title, government officials appear to have stopped carrying out official duties while adorned in pilgrim regalia, as did the

¹⁰⁹ Olaoye Obisesan, "I Support Death by Slicing," *Morning Post*, March 5, 1967; "Panorama of Nigeria's Problems: Foreign Culture and Our Social Ills," *Nigerian Tribune*, November 30, 1971. Admittedly, the second of these does not make the link to Saudi explicit, as the first does, but the author cites a sermon for Eid at the University of Ibadan, where the preacher claimed that a better punishment for criminals would be cut off their arm.

¹¹⁰ "Bisi's Sketch Housewives' Special," *Daily Sketch*, April 28, 1968; Laraba Daggash, "Purdah, Part of Religion of Islam," *Daily Express*, November 24, 1972. In the first citation, five people (two of which were Christians) were polled on their opinion of purdah and the veil. Of the Muslims, it is important to note that none unconditionally embraced either practice, and one strongly condemned both. However Alhaja Humani Alaga, though neither for nor against purdah, claimed that in Mecca, where the practice originated, the women were "enviable" and well cared for.

¹¹¹ "Readers' Opinion Galore: Open Letter to Olubadan and the Chief Imam of Ibadan," *Daily Sketch*, March 27, 1967; "Eid-El-Kabir Plea," *Daily Sketch*, March 7, 1968. The first article is critical of the Olubadan and the Chief Imam of Ibadan, for being stubborn in not following the global Eid date set by Saudi Arabia. In the second, the Muslim Students Society of Nigeria urges all Nigerian Muslims to follow the Eid date announced by Saudi Arabia.

¹¹² "Muslims Go-Gay in Lagos: Eid-El Kabir Marked in a Peaceful Way: But Stay Away till Today.," *Daily Sketch*, February 27, 1969.

¹¹³ Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015.

habit of national newspapers using images of politicians in pilgrim regalia as stock images.¹¹⁴

Who instigated this sartorial rejection is unclear, but given that corruption, crime and oil wealth loaded these symbols of hajj with contradictory meaning, it is not hard to imagine why Nigerian politicians would seek to distance themselves from these symbols.

The most common accusation launched against pilgrims in the 1970s concerned smuggling—particularly pharmaceutical drugs illegal in Saudi Arabia.¹¹⁵ The public link between pilgrimage and smuggling was so strong by this time that it is striking that as late as 1964, the very notion that pilgrims could be capable of such a crime remained inconceivable to some. A cartoon accompanying the article “Pilgrims Ruffled and Insulted!”¹¹⁶ in the *Nigerian Citizen* graphically depicted the insult for the paper’s readers:



Figure 3. “Pilgrims Ruffled and Insulted” Political Cartoon, 1964

¹¹⁴ “Alhaji Momoh Retires,” *Nigerian Observer*, January 19, 1971. This claim is based on reading several newspapers from 1970-1979, and only finding the one example cited. Even this is of a retirement party of a government official in pilgrim regalia, and not conducting official government business.

¹¹⁵ “Alhaji Ade Thanni Reports from Saudi Arabia: Arrested Nigerian Pilgrims Released,” *Daily Sketch*, April 5, 1965; Muhammed Dungus, “Names of Pilgrims Who Brought in ‘Dexdrine Tablets,’” April 16, 1967, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1, AS 1/232 Vol I: Trade by Nigerian Pilgrims in Saudi Arabia, National Archive, Kaduna; “Mecca Pilgrims Warned over Drug Racket,” *Daily Times*, January 9, 1971. Though most articles do not name specifically what types of drugs were smuggled, these three are exceptions, and all mention specifically that the drugs smuggled were tablets of amphetamines like Dexedrine.

¹¹⁶ Muhammadu Maigari, “Pilgrims Ruffled and Insulted!,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 2, 1964, Serials, Abuja National Library.

In the cartoon the beard indicates the pilgrim's piety, and the luggage on his head suggests humbleness. Meanwhile, the customs officer—baring rather grotesque features—incredulously receives the pilgrim's claim that no illicit goods hide in his luggage filled with clothes and prayer beads. The accompanying article accused the customs officials of being "over zealous" and an editorial elsewhere in the newspaper that day expressed a similar opinion, claiming "It would be certainly out of place to suggest that some people go on pilgrimage to cover up an illegal deal abroad. This would never be the case."¹¹⁷ Yet the following year an editorial lamented that those who "hide under the deceptive cloak of pilgrimage" to commit crimes were "tarnishing the good name of this nation" and Islam.¹¹⁸ The event that sparked this complaint?; Saudi Arabia had arrested twenty-two Nigerians for smuggling on arrival in the Jeddah airport.¹¹⁹ The main items confiscated by Saudi customs officials were kola nuts and drugs outlawed by the Saudi Arabian government, such as "sleeping tablets."¹²⁰ Similar incidents surfaced in the latter half of the decade,¹²¹ though on the whole the image of pilgrims remained positive, and these reports were framed as the actions of a few 'bad Muslims.' Nonetheless, the Nigerian government promised that customs officials' luggage searches would be more meticulous.¹²²

If pilgrims occasionally engaged in smuggling before the oil boom, what changed in these years was its scale and the discourse surrounding it. Annual notices surfaced in the press that warned future pilgrims that customs officials would be exercising stricter measures against

¹¹⁷ "Pilgrim's Plight," *Nigerian Citizen*, May 2, 1964, sec. Editorial, Serials, Abuja National Library.

¹¹⁸ "Editorial: Smuggling to Mecca," *Morning Post*, March 19, 1965.

¹¹⁹ "Warning to Pilgrims: Get Valid Certificates," *Morning Post*, March 19, 1965.

¹²⁰ "Pilgrims Held at Jeddah: Smuggling Is Alleged," *Morning Post*, March 17, 1965.

¹²¹ "Editorial: To the Unholy Pilgrims," *Morning Post*, March 7, 1966; Dungus, "Names of Pilgrims Who Brought in 'Dextrine Tablets'"; "Two Pilgrims Turned Back," *Daily Sketch*, February 21, 1968; "3 Alhajis Convicted for Smuggling," *Morning Post*, March 13, 1969; "Pilgrims Detained," *Daily Sketch*, March 20, 1969.

¹²² "Pilgrims Urged Not to Trade in Saudi Arabia," *New Nigerian*, March 8, 1966, Serials, Abuja National Library; "Mecca Pilgrims Warned: Don't Trade," *Morning Post*, March 7, 1966.

smugglers.¹²³ This reporting quickly took a toll on pilgrims' reputation. In 1973 one Muslim op-ed writer from Ibadan claimed that the "majority" of pilgrims went to Mecca not for hajj but to trade or smuggle,¹²⁴ and a cleric used his Islamic news column to decry the "smuggler alhaji."¹²⁵ This discourse was not limited to Muslims. In 1974 a Christian remarked in the press that the alhaji title meant "'there goes a smuggler.'"¹²⁶ Federal and regional (Southwest and North) government officials and 'traditional' authorities publically warned intending pilgrims not to engage in smuggling during their upcoming hajj.¹²⁷ Prominent Muslim clerics wielded Qur'anic citations in their Islamic newspaper columns to alert pilgrims that to be an alhaji required "much more than mere dressing" and that engaging in such activities negated the spiritual value of their hajj;¹²⁸ regular Muslim citizens used a similar tactic in letters to the editor.¹²⁹

The emergence of a new convention of news reporting amplified the sense that the alhaji title had lost some of its prestige. In the 1970s, headlines concerning anonymous alhajis committing crime became commonplace within the Nigerian national press. Though this genre of headline existed by the 1960s¹³⁰ it appeared rarely compared to the early 1970s.¹³¹ In fact, almost

¹²³ "New Bid to Curb Smuggling by Mecca Pilgrims: Crucial Meeting Today," *Daily Times*, December 23, 1970; "Nine Nigerians Held in Mecca for Smuggling: Tighter Security Measures," *Daily Times*, February 4, 1971; "Drug Peddling to Mecca to Be Checked," *Nigerian Tribune*, August 4, 1972; "Extra Vigilance at Airport: Pilgrims Warned," *Daily Times*, December 15, 1973; "Hajj: Tight Security At Airport," *Nigerian Observer*, November 26, 1974; Alhaji Ahmed Alao, "Pilgrims Beware!," *Daily Express*, September 25, 1974; "West Pilgrims Project Nigeria's Image," *Daily Express*, January 20, 1975.

¹²⁴ S. Bhadmus, "What the People Say: Stop These Unholy Pilgrimages," *Nigerian Tribune*, November 9, 1973.

¹²⁵ Alhaji H. T. Dada, "Muslim Sermon: Islam Detests Squandermania," *Nigerian Tribune*, January 26, 1973.

¹²⁶ Toyin Johnson, "When an Alhaji Is Not an Alhaji," *Nigerian Tribune*, January 17, 1974.

¹²⁷ "Sir Abubakar's Charge to Intending Pilgrims to Mecca: Smuggling Condemned," *Nigerian Observer*, January 11, 1972, Serials, Abuja National Library; "Badmus Warns Pilgrims' Agents: 'Stop Mal-Practices,'" *Nigerian Tribune*, November 18, 1972; "Warning to Pilgrims," *Nigerian Tribune*, October 25, 1976; Paul Alade, "Airlift Hitch Feared," *Daily Times*, November 3, 1976, Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

¹²⁸ Alhaji F. M. Quraishy, "Islam and You: Punishment for Those Who Use Hajj for Smuggling," *Nigerian Observer*, January 14, 1972, Serials, Abuja National Library; Alhaji H. T. Dada, "Muslim Sermon: Fear of God Is the Only Way to Successful Hadj," *Nigerian Tribune*, December 8, 1972.

¹²⁹ M. I. Mohammed, "Public Forum: Ban False Alhajis and Alhajas," *Nigerian Observer*, January 28, 1971, Serials, Abuja National Library.

¹³⁰ "2 Pilgrims Face L9 Theft Case," *Nigerian Tribune*, May 10, 1960; "Alhaji under Arrest," *Morning Post*, April 13, 1964; "Alhaji Held for Impersonation," *Morning Post*, March 11, 1966; "Alhaji Is a Thief," *Morning Post*,

as common in the 1960s were articles concerning alhajis involved in crime that did not consider it worthwhile to identify them as such in the headline.¹³² Whether this shift was because crime by alhajis increased or simply began to receive more journalistic attention is unclear; what is certain is that even an occasional reader of Nigerian dailies in the 1970s would be greeted with headlines like “Cattledealer loses N4,350 to Trickster: Alhaji Absconds” or “‘Psychedelic Alhaji’ weeps to jail,”¹³³ much to the chagrin of at least one prominent Muslim.¹³⁴

Another category that surfaced in Nigerian crime blotter headlines at the same time was the criminal “bizman.”¹³⁵ And like the Nigerian entrepreneurial class during the oil boom,

March 22, 1966; “Alhaji (55) Fined L800,” *Morning Post*, February 21, 1967; “3 Alhajis Convicted for Smuggling”; “Alhaji Gets 3 Years for Jumping Bail,” *Daily Sketch*, July 26, 1969, 3.

¹³¹ “Bench Warrant on Alhaji,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 21, 1971; “Suspect Dies on Way to Hosp: Alhaji, Guard Quizzed,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 20, 1971; “Alhaji, 7 Others Face Trial for Theft,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 24, 1971; “Alhaji on L2,000 Theft Charge,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 9, 1971; “Smuggling: Alhaji 3 Others Charge,” *Nigerian Tribune*, August 20, 1971; “Alhaji on L2,000 Fraud Charge,” *Nigerian Observer*, July 8, 1971, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Alhaji Faces Robbery Tribunal,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 19, 1972; “Judgement Reserved in Alhaji’s Appeal,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 29, 1972; “Alhaji Docked for Stealing,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 3, 1972; “Alhaji Charged with Stealing Tyres,” *Nigerian Tribune*, May 10, 1972; “Alhaji Charged with Forgery,” *Nigerian Tribune*, June 6, 1972; “Drugs: Alhaji in Court,” *Nigerian Tribune*, June 17, 1972; “Alhaji Adedubu Sued for L1,238,” *Nigerian Tribune*, June 24, 1972; “Fraud: Alhaji Nabbed,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 22, 1972; “Alhaji Nabbed over Stolen Tyres,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 28, 1972; “Trespass: Alhaji Sued,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 21, 1972; “Robbery: Alhaji, 2 Others in Court,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 12, 1972; “Alhaji Garawa Charged with Car Theft,” *Daily Express*, October 28, 1972; “Alhaji Involved in Robbery?,” *Daily Express*, December 12, 1972; “Alhaji George Charged with Assaulting Ajala,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 21, 1972; “Alleged Smuggling of L2,000 Goods: Alhaji Arrested by Police,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 21, 1972; “CID Combats Threat to Our Economy...Naira Forgery--Involving Alhaji & 2 Men Uncovered,” *Daily Express*, March 21, 1973; “Alhaji Weeps as Court Cancels Bail Grant,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 5, 1973; “Alhaji, 50, Charged,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 5, 1973; “Alhaji, 3 Others to Wait Till Nov 2,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 15, 1973; “Rev Sister Held by Customs at Airport...And Alhaji Nabbed with N1m Antiques,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 22, 1973; “Cattledealer Loses N4,350 to Trickster: Alhaji Absconds,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 22, 1973; “Alhaji Wrapped up for ‘Money Doubling,’” *Daily Express*, January 17, 1973; “‘Psychedelic Alhaji’ Weeps to Jail,” *Daily Express*, March 22, 1973.

¹³² “Five Convicted for Evading Tax,” *The Daily Times*, June 20, 1957; “Petrol Man Loses Debt Appeal,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 17, 1959; “Murder on Boxing Day?,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 4, 1961; “Wealthy Trader Charged with Theft,” *Daily Sketch*, April 28, 1965, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

¹³³ “Cattledealer Loses N4,350 to Trickster: Alhaji Absconds”; “‘Psychedelic Alhaji’ Weeps to Jail.”

¹³⁴ Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 304-5. In his dissertation Oloso (now a prominent Muslim in Ibadan and professor of Arabic and Islamic studies) laments “that each time any of them [pilgrims] commits a crime, Nigerian newspapers blow it out of proportion and give the wrong impression that a learned Muslim or a Muslim leader as committed a heinous crime equating him to a Reverend Father whereas while all revered fathers are church leaders not all ‘alhaji/as’ are mosque leaders.”

¹³⁵ “Two Bizmen Nabbed,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 16, 1973; “3 Bizmen Held by Police,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 25, 1973; “2 Businessmen Arrested over Fake Fivers’ Deal,” *Nigerian Observer*, February 12, 1973, Serials,

pilgrims increasingly became linked to cosmopolitan wealth,¹³⁶ with the hajj decried by some as “a wealth-hunting expedition”¹³⁷ undertaken by “hajj businessmen.”¹³⁸ For while in 1958 a Nigerian official could describe the nation’s pilgrims as “not the sophisticated type,”¹³⁹ this changed by the mid-1960s. This was largely due to the efforts by Nigerian politicians to replace the hajj by land with aviation travel and launch an aggressive publicity campaign instructing poor Nigerians to not embark on the hajj (Chapter 3). Since these policies reduced land pilgrims to a trickle by the early 1960s,¹⁴⁰ the status of alhaji now implied an individual with substantial liquid capital,¹⁴¹ at times making them a mark for theft.¹⁴²

Though some alhajis engaged in Islamic philanthropy,¹⁴³ an act clerics actively

Abuja National Library; “Profiteering: Owo Bizman Jailed,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 26, 1971; “Bizman for Robbery Tribunal,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 29, 1971; “Fake Bizmen Curbed,” *Nigerian Tribune*, August 31, 1971; “2 Bizmen Detained in Ibadan for Theft,” *Nigerian Observer*, January 19, 1974, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Bizman Arrested for Forged Naira Notes,” *Nigerian Observer*, February 20, 1974, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Onitsha ‘Bizmen’ Charged with Fraud,” *Nigerian Observer*, September 19, 1974; “Bizman, 2 Others in Court for Trespass,” *Nigerian Observer*, October 18, 1974; “Agric Officer, Bizman Held for Fraud,” *Nigerian Observer*, November 20, 1974; “Adedeji Blames Corrupt Bizmen,” *Nigerian Observer*, December 6, 1974.

¹³⁶ “Sweet Talks: Save Me,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 23, 1978; “I Found a Gold Bar in the Bra of an Alhaja,” *Daily Times*, March 26, 1971. The first citation is a short fictional story contributed by a reader, an alhaja accidentally locks herself in a bathroom while conducting business in London.

¹³⁷ “‘Create Special Court for Unfaithful Pilgrims.’”

¹³⁸ “Daily Express, Opinion: How to Curb the Hajj Businessmen,” *Daily Express*, November 27, 1973.

¹³⁹ Alhaji Muhammed Ngileruma, “Report on Moslem Delegation to Saudi Arabia and the Sudan,” February 15, 1958, Premier’s Office, 4/1: PM 18/S.7: Pilgrim Affairs Nigeria mission to Saudi Arabia and Sudan, National Archive, Kaduna.

¹⁴⁰ “Immigration Centre Maiduguri,” 1957-1963, p.31, Premier’s Office: AS I/208, National Archive, Kaduna. One strong piece of evidence to support this is the trajectory of the Immigration Center built in Maiduguri in Northeast Nigeria for land pilgrims. Started in 1957 when annual numbers hovered around fourteen thousand, by the time the center finished completion in 1963 only 400 pilgrims made use of the facility, and officials opted to use it for a different purpose.

¹⁴¹ Interview with Aremu Lateef Olasunkanoni in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015. Without prompting, Olasunkanoni claimed 1965 was around when the hajj started to become “about money.”

¹⁴² “2 Masquerades Arrested,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 29, 1971; “Thieves Snatch L500 from Alhaji,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 3, 1972.

¹⁴³ Syed Alhaji Y. K. Yakub, “Islamic Platform: A Philanthropist of Islamic Order,” *Daily Express*, March 16, 1973; “Kano Bizmen Builds Mosque,” *Nigerian Observer*, January 4, 1974, Serials, Abuja National Library; “UP Goes Midwest Development Fund,” *Nigerian Observer*, February 15, 1974, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Central Mosque for Abule-Oja,” *The Punch*, September 26, 1978; “Punch Diary: Imam Gets Staff of Office,” *The Punch*, September 12, 1978; “Mosque Opened,” *The Punch*, August 17, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

encouraged,¹⁴⁴ by the mid-1960s and increasingly in the 1970s the popular discourse around pilgrims and wealth had skewed decisively negative, and focused on the corrupt ways pilgrims generated their wealth or how they displayed it. One cleric listed negative categories of pilgrims, which focused mainly on wealth or used an economic lexicon to describe other offences: “money-lenders; and money doubler pools and lottery agencies; crooks and smugglers; lusters after wealth; moral wrecks; gamblers; those changing wives and husbands as commercial commodities and many other things prohibited by Islam.”¹⁴⁵ Particularly targeted by the public’s ire were those “rich people” who took advantage of the ease of air travel to go yearly, with many commentators—ordinary Nigerians and clerics—arguing for government mandated limits on the frequency that one could embark on the hajj.¹⁴⁶

The foreign exchange travel allowance was another way for pilgrims, honest and unscrupulous alike, to accumulate wealth. In order to keep the economy stable the Nigerian government limited the amount of currency citizens could take out of the country. While Muslim organizations and individuals regularly decried the amount of ₦500 per adult and ₦250 per child as insufficient for the costs incurred by the hajj,¹⁴⁷ critics of the pilgrimage complained that this

¹⁴⁴ Alhaji F. M. Quraishy, “Islam and You: Islam on Wealth Distribution,” *Nigerian Observer*, February 15, 1974, Serials, Abuja National Library; Alhaji H. T. Dada, “Muslim Sermon: The Craze for Money in Our Society,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 17, 1972; Alhaji H. T. Dada, “Muslim Sermon: The Mirage of Life,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 20, 1978.

¹⁴⁵ Alhaji H. T. Dada, “Muslim Sermon: The Qualities of Those Going on Pilgrimage to Mecca,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 15, 1976.

¹⁴⁶ A. B. Owosho, “People’s Voice: Let FMG Set up Pilgrim Centres?,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 8, 1971; “Don’t Pollute Islam,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 6, 1972; Alhaji Ahmed Alao, “West Newsletter: Pilgrims Should Be above Board,” *Daily Express*, September 14, 1972; Bhadmus, “What the People Say: Stop These Unholy Pilgrimages”; “Weekend Review: The Nation: Should the Government Control the Annual Pilgrimage to Mecca?,” *Nigerian Observer*, February 10, 1973.

¹⁴⁷ “News in Brief, Around Nigeria: Bauchi,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 24, 1973; “Over 40 Nigerians Die in Mecca: Exposure, Irregular Meals Blamed,” *Daily Times*, January 10, 1974; “FMG Criticized over Decision on Travelling Allowances,” *New Nigerian*, October 6, 1977, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1969-77, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Cut in Traveling Allowance--Pilgrims Board Hold Crucial Talks,” *New Nigerian*, October 15, 1977, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1969-77, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Pilgrims Grumble over Allowance,” *Daily Times*, October 5, 1977, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1969-77, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

elite practice drained the national economy to the detriment of all.¹⁴⁸ For example, one critical voice noted that in 1973 the hajj resulted in at least twelve million Naira leaving the country.¹⁴⁹ While he agreed the hajj was fine for the pious, he alleged that most of this currency drain was done “under the guise of religious worship.” Others accused Nigerian Muslims who took their children on the hajj with them as doing so merely to be able to extract more currency for their trip.¹⁵⁰ Contrary to claims by Muslims that the traveling allowance barely covered their basic needs, critics claimed that pilgrims abused their traveling allowance by purchasing luxury items and treating their hajj as a “shopping spree.”¹⁵¹ One commentator in 1969 framed the drain on the economy caused by the hajj as severe, suggesting that “we should set up a place in the far north where we can go and pray to God in similar pattern as the Hajj: If previous figures are anything to go by, we should save annually a total of nearly £1 million.”¹⁵² Not surprisingly, this idea did not gain traction, but its underlying sentiment persisted.

Memories of pilgrims tell a more nuanced story about pilgrim consumption. First of all, the practice of bringing items back to Nigeria from Mecca was by no means unique to this period. Even when Nigerian pilgrims mainly traveled by road they brought back portable items like clothes, prayer beads, Islamic books,¹⁵³ and in the case of a Lagosian Imam in the 1920s, a grandfather clock.¹⁵⁴ Yet if in the past most items brought back served a practical or religious

¹⁴⁸ Jide Adeleye, “Focus: Embarking on Another Extravaganza,” *Daily Sketch*, January 3, 1969; P. A. Ukenne, “Have Your Say: Save Foreign Exchange,” *Daily Times*, October 24, 1970; “Don’t Pollute Islam”; “Annual Mecca Pilgrimage,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 19, 1973; “The ‘Ugly’ Nigerian,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 29, 1979.

¹⁴⁹ “Annual Mecca Pilgrimage.”

¹⁵⁰ “Don’t Take Kids to Hajj: Ibadan Muslim Leader Pleads,” *Daily Express*, February 8, 1973; “Editorial: Worshipping Allah and Mammon,” *Morning Post*, February 17, 1971.

¹⁵¹ “The Success of This Year’s Lesser Hajj,” *Daily Express*, October 30, 1974.

¹⁵² Adeleye, “Focus: Embarking on Another Extravaganza.”

¹⁵³ Interview with Sheikh Alhaji Muhammed Omar in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, August 2015; Interview with Alhaji M.A. Ahmed in Lagos, Nigeria., Notes, May 2013; Interview with Alhaji Tunde Bello-Bello in Lagos, Nigeria., Notes, May 2013. Elisha P Renne, “Photography, Hajj Things, and Spatial Connections Between Mecca and Northern Nigeria,” *Photography and Culture* 8, no. 3 (February 9, 2015): 269–95. Admittedly, all but Professor Noibi, and Alhaji Gbolagade completed their first hajj in the early 1980s, slightly past the time frame of this chapter.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Imam Misbaudeen Gaji-Muse in Lagos, Nigeria., Notes, May 2013.

function, in the late 1960s Nigerian pilgrims started purchasing, in addition to these items,¹⁵⁵ luxury items like wristwatches, TVs, polaroid cameras, stereos, gold, and rechargeable lamps.¹⁵⁶ And yet these same pilgrims that could be said to have indulged in consumerism also refused to have showy celebrations on their return or partake in other forms of public display of their pilgrim status (soon to be discussed) on the basis that they understood these practices to be antithetical to Islamic comportment.¹⁵⁷ Thus, while those looking to criticize pilgrims for pairing a religious rite with luxury shopping might have had an easy time finding examples within their community, the desire for electronics or gold and the dedication to God could be contained within one individual.

Though certainly constituting a minority, some pilgrims did execute financial crimes, the most common being the concealment of currency in the folds of their clothing,¹⁵⁸ a tactic more generally adopted by Nigerians as the surrealist aesthetics of this political cartoon suggest.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ Interview with Alhaji W O Raji in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, July 2015; Interview with Toyibatu Alimi Oluwakemi in Lagos, Nigeria., Notes, May 2013; Zumratul Hujaj Group Interview in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, March 2015.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Alhaja Sururah Oyero in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015; Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, October 2014; Interview with Alhaji Muftar Abubakr in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015; Interview with Alhaji Lo Yusuf in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, December 2014; Interview with Alhaji Abdulateef Atanda in Lagos, Nigeria., Notes, May 2013; Interview with Alhaja Airat Liasu in Lagos, Nigeria., Notes, May 2013; Interview with Alhaji Yekini Gbolagade in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, October 2014; Interview with Alhaji Muhammed Ademola Mustapha in Lagos, Nigeria., Notes, May 2013.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Alhaja Airat Liasu in Lagos, Nigeria.; Interview with Alhaja Sururah Oyero in Ibadan, Nigeria., April 2015; Interview with Alhaji Muhammed Ademola Mustapha in Lagos, Nigeria.; Interview with Alhaji Lo Yusuf in Ibadan, Nigeria.; Interview with Alhaji Yekini Gbolagade in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, October 2014; Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., October 2014.

¹⁵⁸ "Twenty Nigerians Held in Mecca: Trafficking in Drugs, Currencies Alleged--," *Daily Times*, December 1, 1970; "First Pilgrims Leave: Plea to Govts," *Daily Times*, December 19, 1973; "Customs Recover N1,839 from Pilgrims," *Daily Times*, February 26, 1974; "Arrangee: Four Held in Kano," *The Nigerian Tribune*, October 14, 1979; "Two Nigerian Pilgrims Jailed 20 YRS in Jedda," *The Punch*, October 25, 1979.

¹⁵⁹ "[Cartoon]," *Daily Times*, February 26, 1971.



Figure 4. Political Cartoon, 1971

Pilgrims committed some of the more elaborate financial crimes in banks. In 1971, a “well-known Ibadan businessman,” Alhaji Adedibu, traveled up north with two other alhajis to Kano and “posed as a representative of Western State Pilgrims Welfare Board” when presenting one hundred and fifty passports to a bank in order to get £17,000 worth of foreign exchange.¹⁶⁰

Officials determined that one hundred and forty-six of the passports were for fictitious people, and Adedibu was arrested, though his publicized arrest did not deter others from committing similar crimes.¹⁶¹ Nor was this type of crime contained within Nigeria; in 1980, Saudi authorities arrested nine “suspected members of a [Nigerian] ‘forgery syndicate’ which operated in the holy land,” and implicated multiple Nigerian banks.¹⁶² Others alleged that “fake travel documents” for

¹⁶⁰ ““150 Passports for Fictitious Persons,”” *Daily Times*, November 22, 1972.

¹⁶¹ “50 Barred from Hajj,” *Daily Times*, August 27, 1974. Among the fifty prevented from leaving Nigerian on hajj in 1974 included those that had forged traveller's cheques and bank notes, and who had attempted to travel with documents under false names.

¹⁶² “9 Pilgrims Held over Forgery,” *The Punch*, October 23, 1980.

the hajj had “become a big profit-making business”¹⁶³ and that officials working for the Western State Pilgrims Welfare Board arranged various foreign exchange schemes that freed up funds to buy banned imports such as lace.¹⁶⁴ The perception that the hajj enabled illegal importation of foreign goods endured throughout the decade, as depicted in a political cartoon from 1978 that depicted an alhaja secretly selling imported lace.¹⁶⁵ The Nigerian government took seriously the problem of currency fraud, and by the early 1970s regularly warned prospective pilgrims and their agents against this sort of activity,¹⁶⁶ and by the late 1970s some states tried to prevent foreign exchange fraud by issuing banks master lists of those who had paid their hajj fare.¹⁶⁷ All of this, combined with increased reports about alhajis and alhajas involved in various theft and fraud,¹⁶⁸ fed into the public perception that the hajj and pilgrims leached national resources and could no longer be trusted. The negative tenor of this discourse only strengthened as the decade wore on, with a journalist claiming in 1978 that “the impression is fast gaining ground that all you need to become a ‘successful’ business-person is to acquire the title of Alhaji or Alhaja,”¹⁶⁹ and another in 1977 recounting a “popular rumor” that Nigerian pilgrims had begun to swallow gold to avoid customs, and thus giving a new meaning to the term “the gold stool.”¹⁷⁰

More broadly, during this time period the practice of Islam, along with Christianity, became increasingly commercialized, and clerical writings began lashing out against what they

¹⁶³ “Our View Point: Pilgrimage for Devotees,” *Nigerian Observer*, January 20, 1975.

¹⁶⁴ Alao, “West Newsletter: Pilgrims Should Be above Board.”

¹⁶⁵ “[Cartoon],” *The Punch*, November 7, 1978.

¹⁶⁶ “Beware of Smugglers, Pilgrims Told,” *Daily Times*, December 22, 1972; “50,000 Pilgrims to Perform Hajj,” *Daily Times*, October 29, 1974; “Adegbite Lashes Bad Muslim Pilgrims,” *Nigerian Tribune*, February 26, 1972; “Badmus Warns Pilgrims’ Agents: ‘Stop Mal-Practices’”; “Nine Nigerians Held in Mecca for Smuggling: Tighter Security Measures.”

¹⁶⁷ “Intending Pilgrims Warned over Foreign Exchange,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 7, 1978.

¹⁶⁸ “Alhaji Faces Robbery Tribunal”; “Robbery: Alhaji, 2 Others in Court”; “Cattledealer Loses N4,350 to Trickster: Alhaji Absconds”; “Alhaji on L2,000 Fraud Charge”; “CID Combats Threat to Our Economy...Naira Forgery-- Involving Alhaja & 2 Men Uncovered”; “Alhaji Garawa Charged with Car Theft.”

¹⁶⁹ “Ombudstribune,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 4, 1978.

¹⁷⁰ “A Status Trip,” *Nigerian Chronicle*, November 12, 1977, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos. Of course, what is somewhat odd about this is “the gold stool” refers to the throne of Asanti, in Ghana.

framed as an overly materialistic society.¹⁷¹ Popular culture and print media ensured that most Nigerians, regardless of income, were at least aware of new forms of religious consumption since advertising in newspapers had grown rapidly post-independence. The establishment of a Nigeria-based market research organization in 1964 and the indigenization decree of 1971 both made ads more sensitive to consumer desires.¹⁷² One result was that more ads had begun to frequently target Muslims, especially in the weeks before major Muslim holidays.¹⁷³ While most of these were for major department stores or major firms that simply placed their regular merchandise on sale for Eid, as the decade progressed some advertised specialized items like greeting cards for Ramadan or went to great efforts to reframe their product for Muslim consumers,¹⁷⁴ like a shoe style that the Bata brand dubbed the “Hajj” or “the ‘holy shoe’ ” in 1977¹⁷⁵:

¹⁷¹ “Chief Imam Addresses Pilgrims,” *Daily Sketch*, March 15, 1966, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; Dada, “Muslim Sermon: The Craze for Money in Our Society”; Alhaji H. T. Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Aso Ebi: A Social Malady in Nigeria,” *Nigerian Tribune*, May 4, 1973; Quraishy, “Islam and You: Islam on Wealth Distribution”; Alhaji F. M. Quraishy, “Islam and You: Islam Forbids Extravagance,” *Nigerian Observer*, November 22, 1974, Serials, Abuja National Library; Alhaji F. M. Quraishy, “Islam and You: Abhor Bribery and Corruption,” *Nigerian Observer*, November 1, 1974, Serials, Abuja National Library.

¹⁷² DMITRI VAN DEN BERSSELAAR, “Who Belongs to the ‘Star People’? Negotiating Beer and Gin Advertisements in West Africa, 1949-75,” *The Journal of African History* 52, no. 3 (2011): 391, 401.

¹⁷³ “Gbanjo Oja Qdun: Ileya,” *Eletí-Ofe*, August 1, 1953, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan; “Children’s Shoes for Eid-El-Fitr,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 16, 1971; “Men’s Shoes for Eid El Kabir,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 19, 1972; “[Ad for Bhojsons],” *Daily Times*, October 21, 1970; “[Ad for Chellarams],” *Daily Times*, September 27, 1974; “[Ad for Kainji Hotel],” *Daily Times*, October 7, 1974; “[Ad for Kewalrams],” *Daily Times*, September 19, 1974; “[Ad for Limson],” *Daily Times*, October 9, 1974; “Special Eid-El-Fitri Sales,” *Daily Express*, October 30, 1972; “[Ad for Bata],” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 3, 1977; “[Ad],” *Daily Times*, October 7, 1974. As the ad from 1953 demonstrates, this phenomenon was not entirely new, but the scale had significantly increased in the post-independence period and even more so in the 1970s.

¹⁷⁴ “[Ad],” October 7, 1974; L F Wokomah, “Cards for Eid,” *West African Pilot*, May 25, 1962. The article from 1962 demonstrates the growth of new products designed for Muslims since it decries the lack of Eid-themed greeting cards, and problem that the ad for Eid greeting cards from 1974 suggests was soon resolved.

¹⁷⁵ “[Ad for Bata].”

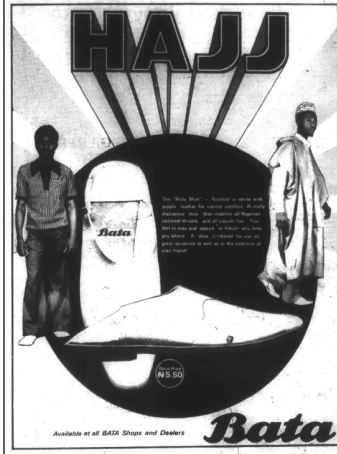


Figure 5. Hajj Shoe Ad

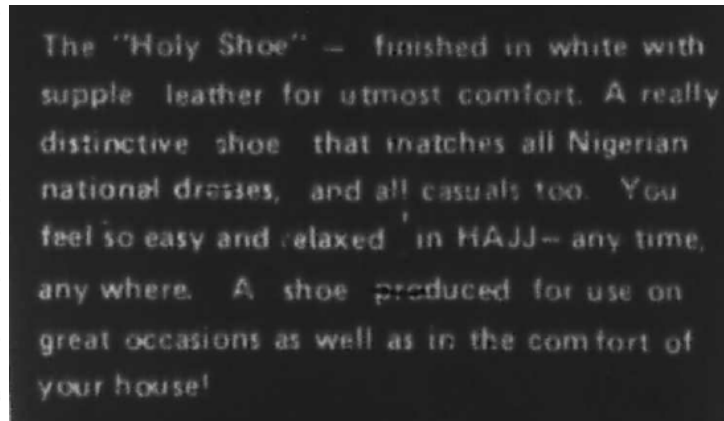


Figure 6. Hajj Shoe Ad [closeup]

Beyond commercial firms, Nigerian musicians increasingly released records for Muslim holidays, and record studios advertised them as the ideal soundtrack for celebration or rising to take sahoor, the pre-dawn meal during Ramadan.¹⁷⁶ Parallel to these consumerist developments, Muslims came under attack by fellow Muslims and Christians for fasting and celebrating holidays merely to gain prestige and engage in ostentatious displays of wealth, or to avoid work.¹⁷⁷ Meanwhile banks, ever desperate to get more Nigerians to trust them with their savings, developed a couple programs directed at Muslim citizens. The National Bank of Nigeria was the first to develop an Ileya [Yoruba term for Eid] Shilling Fund, and enticed participation by inviting Muslims to imagine the large ram their savings would allow them to buy.¹⁷⁸ In 1971 a similar scheme was

¹⁷⁶ “[Ad],” *Daily Times*, December 18, 1973; “Ramadan Fast: New Barrister Record,” *Daily Times*, September 25, 1974; “‘Were’ Sounds for Ramadan Fast,” *Daily Times*, September 26, 1974; “Eidel Fitri Sensational Record,” *Daily Times*, October 6, 1974; “Ayinde Barrister Releases Another Smash Hit,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 8, 1979.

¹⁷⁷ Oddman, “Oddities: Fasting--Why the Noise,” *Daily Sketch*, December 1, 1968; Ayo Dele, “Behind the Scenes: Do’s and Don’t of Fasting,” *Daily Sketch*, December 11, 1968; “Daily Times Opinion: Defeating the Aim of Ramadan,” *Daily Times*, November 9, 1970; “Comment: Ramadan,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 27, 1971; Tai Solarin, “Ramadan: Fasting or Fattening Month?,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 8, 1971; “Labour Punch: Ramadan and Productivity,” *The Punch*, August 7, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Labour: Ramadan Panorama!,” *The Punch*, July 30, 1979. Muslims also began to be accused of “pretending” to fast.

¹⁷⁸ “[Ad for National Bank of Nigeria],” *Daily Sketch*, February 22, 1968; “[Ad for National Bank of Nigeria],” *Daily Sketch*, January 21, 1971.

first developed for the hajj by WEMA Bank.¹⁷⁹ While ads for Ramadan sales or saving schemes had made visual appeals to Muslim clients by decorating their ads with Arabic script or illustrations of minarets,¹⁸⁰ the early ads for the WEMA “Pilgrim Deposit Scheme” took this strategy a step further; the ad placed two quotes from the Qur’an stating the injunction to perform the hajj below a photo of the *ka’aba*, followed by ad copy that promised to “enable you [to] consummate this dream” that “is a must for any devout Muslim.”¹⁸¹ Also in the 1970s, banks started sponsoring a few of their Muslim employees to perform the hajj and assisting pilgrims with cashing bank drafts and travelers’ cheques.¹⁸² While corporate sponsorship of the hajj had begun in the 1950s when air travel allowed companies to reward loyal employees with the hajj without forfeiting their labor for an extended period, this practice had largely remained contained to the North until banks began sending representatives from Lagos.¹⁸³

Intriguingly, Nigerian Muslims were slightly less quick to turn a critical eye on the display of wealth and consumerism practiced in Saudi Arabia compared to that in their own nation. In the mid-1960s to the early-1970s, Nigerians largely marveled at the prosperity in the holy land, such as one Muslim journalist who informed readers that “modern Saudi Arabia is a land of luxury and fun without opium. They consist of wrist watches, heavy cars, soft and sweet drink and all forms of scents.”¹⁸⁴ The Saudi Arabian government received praise for spending

¹⁷⁹ “WEMA Bank to Aid Pilgrims: Deposit Scheme,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 19, 1971.

¹⁸⁰ “Children’s Shoes for Eid-El-Fitr”; “[Ad for Limson]”; “[Ad for National Bank of Nigeria],” February 22, 1968.

¹⁸¹ “[Ad for WEMA Bank],” *Nigerian Tribune*, May 18, 1972.

¹⁸² “Barclays to Help Pilgrims,” *Nigerian Observer*, December 4, 1973; “Bank Officials off to Mecca,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 5, 1976.

¹⁸³ “1,700 Pilgrims to Be Flown to Mecca: Highest Figure Ever Recorded in Recent Years,” *The Daily Times*, June 21, 1957; “A.T.M.N. Men off to Mecca,” *New Nigerian*, April 18, 1964, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Faith and Hope on Pilgrims Progress,” *New Nigerian*, March 18, 1966, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Barclays to Help Pilgrims”; “Bank Officials off to Mecca.”

¹⁸⁴ “My First Glimpse of the Holy City and Ka’aba,” *Morning Post*, April 28, 1965.

money to make the hajj more comfortable,¹⁸⁵ and occasionally Nigerians interpreted Saudi Arabia's wealth as evidence of their piety.¹⁸⁶ At times awe mixed with shame. Alhaji Owa, writing of his experience in 1973, noted how he "marveled at the standard of the airport [Jeddah] and the magnificent way it was constructed...The tarmac looked as if it was made of marbles."¹⁸⁷ This, he immediately contrasted to how he felt "appalled" by the condition of his country, evidenced by the sight of his fellow Nigerian pilgrims struggling to carry their luggage, and the fact that many, including himself, did not know where to sleep that night.¹⁸⁸ At times shame subjected Nigerian pilgrims to sensorial confusion. Dr. Adetunji, a teacher who went on hajj in 1975, related to me that in Saudi it was "lighter, whether afternoon, whether it is morning, there is light. *We don't know that there is night unless you look at your watch!*...So when we go to Lagos, I was ashamed. I was not happy."¹⁸⁹ Though policies enforced by Saudi Arabia at times to the detriment of Nigerians drew ire,¹⁹⁰ the wealth of the Saudi state remained unscathed. However by the late 1970s the continued suffering of pilgrims in the face of Saudi Arabia's wealth bred resentment. In 1977, Alhaji Lateef Jakande used one article in his series on the hajj to address the role played by Saudi Arabia. While he initially lauds their recent expansion of transportation infrastructure, sanitation, security, and the national electric grid, the majority of the article critiques the Saudi state for allowing "too much unavoidable suffering," a fact

¹⁸⁵ "That Land of Islam and Faith," *Morning Post*, December 31, 1965, Serials, Abuja National Library; "Welfare Plan for Pilgrims," *Daily Sketch*, February 11, 1968; Syed Alhaji Y. K. Yakub, "Islamic Platform: Pilgrimage as the Fifth Pillar of Islam," *Daily Express*, December 8, 1972.

¹⁸⁶ "That Land of Islam and Faith."

¹⁸⁷ Alhaji Nuru Owa, "My Experience as a Pilgrim," *Daily Express*, February 6, 1973.

¹⁸⁸ Owa.

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Dr. Barihi Adetunji in Ibadan, Nigeria.

¹⁹⁰ "Daily Times Opinion: Needless Frustration," *Daily Times*, January 21, 1971; "500 Would-Be Pilgrims May Remain in Lagos," *Daily Times*, February 4, 1971; "Saudi Arabia Warned on Nigerian Pilgrims," *Nigerian Tribune*, February 17, 1972; Idrees Abdul Azeez, "Nigerians and Hajj Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, December 31, 1973, 16-17. The articles from 1971 concern what many felt were unfair and overzealous precautions concerning cholera in Nigeria, and the other two the fact that Saudi forced all Nigerian to undergo prolonged customs screening.

“indefensible in the 20th century and in a country as rich as Saudi Arabia.”¹⁹¹ Jakande repeatedly framed problems in Saudi as inexcusable for a wealthy country when discussing available housing, transportation, sanitation, and administration.¹⁹² Thus, though the Saudi government initially escaped critical commentary on their wealth, it was not long until the general sense in Nigeria that fast wealth was inherently corrupt began to be applied towards them as well.

As pilgrims and the hajj became linked in public opinion with illicit wealth generation and government corruption, how pilgrims publically displayed their alhaji or alhaja status shifted. Relatedly, the sartorial practices connected to the hajj changed as well in this period. During the late colonial period and into Nigerianization politicians as well as ordinary Muslims donned the Mecca uniform as a visual marker of prestige (Chapters 2–3). This practice continued into the mid-1960s, and as late as 1967 the Acting Clerk of the Lagos City Council presided over a function in his official capacity wearing full alhaji regalia, as did the Oludbadan of Ibadan, at a meeting with the governor of Oyo State.¹⁹³ And yet curiously, images of traditional authority and politicians wearing the Mecca uniform disappear from the pages of the Nigerian dailies after this time.

Tracing discourse about the Mecca uniform and other visual markers of pilgrimage helps to uncover why this shift occurred. Starting in the mid-1960s, the same time that Nigerian pilgrims started to be linked to crime, critical voices against the Mecca uniform emerged in the press. Several commentators, both clerics and ordinary Muslims, framed wearing the Mecca uniform as separate if not opposite from pious behavior. For example, in 1966 one Islamic

¹⁹¹ Alhaji Lateef Jakande, “The Saudis and the Hajj: 1977 Hajj Reports,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 5, 1977.

¹⁹² Jakande. Jakande argues that Saudi Arabia should pay to build more housing to address the shortage during the hajj, states that “120 pilgrims should not be asked to squeeze themselves into a 40-seater bus in a country as wealthy as Saudi Arabia,” that “the Saudi Government can afford to construct modern toilet rooms,” and they they should “employ the services of experienced organizers of international gatherings” to bring the hajj “into the 20th century.”

¹⁹³ “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, May 20, 1967, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Governor Meets Ibadan People,” *Daily Sketch*, August 3, 1967.

column started out positively before shifting to critique, noting, “The shining head-gears are beautiful indeed. They made a man or a woman wearer look dignified, but unless the heads that wear them are filled with the fear of God...unless they abhor all evils” then they “are meaningless, worthless adornments.”¹⁹⁴ By the 1970s, such warnings became more hostile. For example, in 1973 the president of the Muslim Association of Nigeria lamented to the crowd at the University of Ibadan that “We have become Alhajis and Alhajas whose faith is measured by the amount of gold we can smuggle during pilgrimage and how many 'Makawiya' and 'Aga-Sheriff' [types of the Mecca uniform] are on display in our showglass cases in our house.”¹⁹⁵ Similarly, one prominent Muslim used the *Nigerian Tribune* in 1976 to sternly remind Muslim readers that “God does not ask you to go and buy Mecca Wears you are calling: Sabaka, Agaserif, and Agashudu.”¹⁹⁶ Occasionally this criticism took a comparative dimension in terms of global Islam, like one radio journalist who noted that “in the Middle-East and North Africa” returned pilgrims neither wore a Mecca uniform nor took the alhaji title.¹⁹⁷ Other Muslim leaders suggested that some had started to use the Mecca uniform as a “disguise” for nefarious activities¹⁹⁸ and relatedly, in 1972 the Nigerian Association of Al-Hujaj [plural of alhaji] appealed to law enforcement “to treat as criminal impersonation anyone caught wearing designs and colors of the[ir] registered caps without producing an identity card of the association.”¹⁹⁹

Even the Nigerian courts in the 1970s felt compelled to address the subject. In 1970 the Chief Magistrate in Ibadan, Mr. Adesanya, warned that nobody ought to appear before him on criminal charges wearing an alhaji’s headgear, claiming, “It is an insult on Islamic religion for

¹⁹⁴ Alhaji A. Olatunde, “In the Name of Allah: This Is Unbefitting to Alhajis and Alhajas,” *Daily Sketch*, April 22, 1966.

¹⁹⁵ “‘Fanciful’ Alhajis Scolded,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 7, 1973.

¹⁹⁶ Alhaji A. B. Mohammed, “Happy Song for Pilgrims,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 16, 1976.

¹⁹⁷ Azeez, “Nigerians and Hajj Pilgrimage,” 16–17.

¹⁹⁸ “Govt Should Curb Fake Alhajis,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 15, 1971.

¹⁹⁹ “Hadj: Tougher Measures against Pilgrims Urged,” *Nigerian Tribune*, May 11, 1972.

any alhaji to wear his full robes when coming to answer to any criminal charges.”²⁰⁰ Somewhat different sartorial tensions arose the following year in the Oyo Senior Magistrate's Court, where the president of the court, Mr. Adegroye, announced that he forbid alhajis to wear turbans in the court without the traditional Mecca Cap *tajia* when he ejected an alhaji in a turban from his court because “he was not properly dressed.”²⁰¹ While these courts proposed different requirements for accused alhajis in their courtrooms, they shared—along with the other clerical and Muslim commentators—a sense that the category of pilgrim, once prestigious, risked degradation at the hands of “fanciful” or alternatively, “untrained, unqualified” pilgrims.²⁰²

Yet if public criticism over misuse of the Mecca uniform discouraged politicians from visual displays of their alhaji status, the same cannot be said for all Nigerian Muslims. Not surprisingly given that music contributed to both the celebration of Muslim holidays and celebrations for returned pilgrims (especially in the Southwest),²⁰³ musicians continued to embrace the Mecca uniform throughout the country.²⁰⁴ Some Muslim musicians not only presented themselves to the public in the Mecca uniform but also waxed records that featured tracks describing their hajj and explaining the hajj rites.²⁰⁵ Pilgrims also wore the Mecca uniform to honor life-cycle events, such as naming ceremonies, birthdays,²⁰⁶ retirement,²⁰⁷ or weddings.²⁰⁸ Besides adding prestige to public ceremonies, the uniform could also function more privately. For example, the current president of the *Zumatrul-Hujaj* [a society for pilgrims] in

²⁰⁰ “Magistrate Warns All Alhajis,” *Daily Times*, December 19, 1970.

²⁰¹ “Alhaji Ordered out of Court,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 20, 1971.

²⁰² “Hadj: Tougher Measures against Pilgrims Urged”; “‘Fanciful’ Alhajis Scolded.”

²⁰³ Interview with Alhaji Imam Abd. Rasheed Abdul Azeez in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, November 2014; Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria., April 2015.

²⁰⁴ “Sahara All Stars Band,” *Nigerian Citizen*, May 12, 1965, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Raji Owonikoko to Release Mecca Special,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 18, 1978; “Salawa Abeni in a New Chart Buster,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 21, 1979; “[Ad],” *Daily Times*, March 30, 1974; “[Ad],” *Daily Times*, January 2, 1974.

²⁰⁵ “Raji Owonikoko to Release Mecca Special”; “Salawa Abeni in a New Chart Buster.”

²⁰⁶ “[Photo],” *Morning Post*, November 29, 1972; “Diary of Cherished Events,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 14, 1979.

²⁰⁷ “Alhaji Momoh Retires.”

²⁰⁸ Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, May 2015.

Lagos, Alhaji Adamson, visited his future in-laws adorned in the Mecca uniform as a means to honor them in 1963 and 1970 for his third and fourth wife, respectively.²⁰⁹ Advertising provided another location for Muslims to publicize their alhaji status; companies owned or managed by an alhaji would often feature their photo in the Mecca uniform in their adverts.²¹⁰

Yet how Nigerians used the Mecca uniform shifted, suggesting that some prominent Muslim individuals and societies had begun to feel conflicted over what constituted appropriate pride in piety and what was guilty of being ‘flashy.’ Another established practice continued by ordinary and notable members of society was wearing the Mecca uniform at celebrations of their return from hajj, where friends and family who had also previously completed the hajj would attend in the Mecca uniform themselves. While memories of this practice affirm that it extended at least through the 1970s if not longer, posed pictures of returned pilgrims in the Mecca uniform almost completely disappear from newspapers in the 1970s.²¹¹ Whether this indicates a lack of journalistic interest or a concern by pilgrims of appearing too flamboyant remains unclear.

Another practice in the Southwest that appears to have faded over the course of the 1970s is the use of the Mecca uniform as an adaptation of *aṣo ebi*, the term used to describe matching outfits worn by people affiliated through kinship or organization membership at special functions, whether political, religious, or social. Though it is unclear when this practiced started, by the mid-twentieth century Muslim organizations began to incorporate the Mecca uniform into their

²⁰⁹ Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria.

²¹⁰ “Eid-Mubarak [Ad],” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 19, 1971; “[Ad],” *Daily Express*, October 27, 1973; “[Ad],” *Nigerian Observer*, February 22, 1975; “[Ad],” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 15, 1979; “[Ad],” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 15, 1979.

²¹¹ “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, April 23, 1965; “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, April 28, 1965; “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, May 3, 1965; “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, May 8, 1965; “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, April 16, 1966; “[Photo],” *Morning Post*, April 14, 1967; “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, April 18, 1966; “[Photo]”; “[Photo],” *Morning Post*, May 6, 1967; “[Photo],” *Morning Post*, May 8, 1967; “[Photo],” *Morning Post*, May 15, 1967; “[Photo],” *Morning Post*, May 19, 1967; “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, April 3, 1968; “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, March 15, 1969; “News in Pictures--News in Pictures,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 4, 1978; Interview with Alhaji Abdulateef Atanda in Lagos, Nigeria.

aṣo ebi dress.²¹² Though men almost always adopted the Mecca uniform exactly as it was worn by men in Saudi Arabia, women, particularly when wearing it as an aṣo ebi, would tailor the Mecca uniform to fit Nigerian fashion. This practice by Muslim groups appears to have been the most common during celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. In 1963, the year he returned from Mecca, Alhaji Adamson donned his Mecca uniform and rode a horse along with three other members of the Zumratul Hujjaj who had also performed the hajj that year. As he explained "we parade from Zumratul Hujjaj headquarter to important personalities of Lagos. When we parade people will be see us on the horse, and the members of Zumratul Hujjaj, they will see us go from the president's house, to the lady president's house, then to the important personalities' homes and the Chief Imam's house, as we go around."²¹³ Thus, these celebrations mirrored older forms of Yoruba sociality, in which members of society would parade around urban spaces and honor prominent political and social figures by visiting their residence. While this public display of piety would have been seen by many, the Zumratul Hujjaj sought to reach those beyond Lagos by inviting journalists from the *Daily Times* to their celebration of the Prophet's birthday.²¹⁴ In 1967 their procession in Lagos had grown to include "hundreds of Alhajis and Alhajas almost all of them dressed gorgeously in identical Hadji attires" with "hundreds" more thronging the route.²¹⁵ However by the 1970s the practice faded;²¹⁶ though individuals and even small groups continued to wear the Mecca uniform for special events, Muslim societies appear to have placed some distance between themselves and this increasingly loaded garment and the aṣo ebi dress, which began itself to attract criticism for the expense it

²¹² Interview with Alhaja Rofiah Sanni in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, June 2015.

²¹³ Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria., May 2015.

²¹⁴ Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria.

²¹⁵ "Moslems Pray for Return of Peace," *Morning Post*, June 21, 1967.

²¹⁶ Muhammed, "Public Forum: Denials About Ahmadiyahs' Muslims"; "[Photo]," *Daily Sketch*, July 23, 1969. These last two examples occurred in Ibadan.

required. In 1967 one prominent Muslim put forth a ten-point program “to reform and modernize” Islam in Nigeria, the third point of which read “Abolish ‘aṣo ebi’ immediately.”²¹⁷ A professor at the University of Ife affirmed this injunction the following year at a symposium on Muslim education,²¹⁸ and a cleric in his weekly column in 1973 railed against aṣo ebi dress as another “squandermania” practice that made adults “degenerate” and would “demoralize the young.”²¹⁹

Popular culture helped spread the idiom of the ‘corrupt pilgrim.’ Fela Kuti, who felt that both Christianity and Islam were harmful foreign ideologies, not surprisingly joined the chorus against the hajj.²²⁰ In 1970 Fela had an altercation with an alhaji, after he demanded to be let into Fela’s concert for free. Fela responded by arguing that if the alhaji could afford the hajj he could afford a ticket, and later waxed the mocking “Who’re You” with the repeating lines “Shut your mouth, flies are coming/ Shut your mouth, your mouth reeks.”²²¹ Then he published a public notice in the *Daily Times* in 1976, in which he lamented the amount of foreign exchange lost in the most recent hajj, claiming that in return Nigeria merely received “sick pilgrims and brainwashed Africans.”²²² In 1978, “Shuffering and Shmiling” framed elite Christians and Muslims as greedy with wealth and power, and criticized the masses for carrying their money to religious centers such as Mecca.²²³ Rounding off the decade, “Coffin for Head of State” (1980) lamented that the businesses directors were either alhajis or friends of a bishop. Beyond music,

²¹⁷ “10-Point Proposal,” *Daily Times*, January 18, 1967, Nigeria - Religion (Islam), 1967-1980, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

²¹⁸ “Don Wants Hajj Awards Scrapped,” *Daily Sketch*, March 11, 1968.

²¹⁹ Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Aso Ebi: A Social Malady in Nigeria.”

²²⁰ Tejumola. Olaniyan, *Arrest the Music!: Fela and His Rebel Art and Politics*, African Expressive Cultures, x, 242 p. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 59–61.

²²¹ Michael Olatunji, “Yabis: A Phenomenon in the Contemporary Nigerian Music,” *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 1, no. 9 (August 2007): 37–38; Olaniyan, *Arrest the Music!: Fela and His Rebel Art and Politics*, 60, 200. The original Yoruba is Epanu de o, esinsin nbo/ Epanu de o, enu yin ruun. Thanks to Benson Eluma for the translation.

²²² Olaniyan, *Arrest the Music!: Fela and His Rebel Art and Politics*, 60.

²²³ Olaniyan, 62–63.

alhaji characters in fiction and plays were depicted as wealthy, greedy, and morally reckless.²²⁴

Alhajas and Gendered “Corruption”

Though critiques against ‘corrupt’ pilgrims often lumped alhajas together with alhajjis, some criticisms unique to alhajas replicated broader contemporary invectives against Nigerian women. Though since the 1960s newspaper photo captions regularly praised alhajas and other women for their attractive outfits worn on Eid [See figure 1],²²⁵ clerics and ordinary citizens claimed that women went to Mecca because it “enhances their prestige in the call girl or husband hunting business in Nigeria,”²²⁶ or helped them in “propagating concubinage,”²²⁷ and that alhajas “parade themselves with indecent dresses in order to advertise prostitution, they also drink beer or whiskery in all social functions,”²²⁸ or even that alhajas were the most actively involved in smuggling.²²⁹ Even when commentaries did not accuse alhajas of immoral behavior, alhajas often bore the brunt of complaints that pilgrims were increasingly instrumentalizing the hajj for

²²⁴ Ola. Rotimi, *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again: A Comedy*, x, 86 p. (Ibadan: Oxford University Press Nigeria, 1977). Labo Yari, *Climate of Corruption* (Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1978). Mohammed Sule, *The Undesirable Element*, Pacesetters (Macmillan, 1977). *Turmin danya* (Lagos, Nigeria: Ma’aikatar Al’adun Gargajiya Ta Tarayya, 1982); Joanna Sullivan, “The Question of a National Literature for Nigeria” 32, no. 3 (2001): 80. In the play by Rotimi, the character of Alhaji Mustafa is comical in his wealth and piety. Thanks to Carmen McCain for pointing me towards *Climate of Corruption*. The insight about *Turmin danya* comes from Sullivan.

²²⁵ “Sallah Celebrations [Photos],” *Nigerian Citizen*, February 19, 1964, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Fashion at It’s Best [Photos],” *Morning Post*, February 12, 1965; “Moslems Pray for Peace [Photos],” *Morning Post*, March 22, 1967; “It’s a Riot of Clothes and Gold When Alhajas Go Gay,” *Daily Times*, December 4, 1970; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Observer*, January 28, 1972, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Prayer Time [Photo],” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 8, 1972; “Ladies, Lace...and Now It’s War!,” *Drum Magazine*, November 1976; “Muslims Mark Id-El-Kabir [Photos],” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 21, 1977; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 4, 1978; “Lavish Wear, Sober Looks...,” *Daily Times*, November 10, 1972. The article from 1970 is a great example, declaring that on the Eid prayer ground “fashion is a religion here...as dictated by the Alhajas... The richness of attire, colorful and queenly in its bearing, is the feature of the Alhaja’s fashion.”

²²⁶ Johnson, “When an Alhaji Is Not an Alhaji.”

²²⁷ Tari Bannerman, “Woman to Woman: How Justified Is That Hajj Ban on Single Women?,” *The Punch*, October 20, 1978.

²²⁸ Yakub, “Islamic Platform: Pilgrimage as the Fifth Pillar of Islam”; Alhaji A. Olatunde, “Weekly Muslim Sermon: Why Disgrace Islam?,” *Daily Sketch*, March 28, 1969, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

²²⁹ “Our View Point: Pilgrimage for Devotees.”

personal gain rather than devotion to God.²³⁰ These critiques accused women of viewing the hajj as a mere “status symbol,”²³¹ “just after the wearing of the pilgrim's dress” without knowing its “true meaning,”²³² leading some to conclude that the hajj had “been turned into a silly-looking picnic by notorious women who have found Mecca and Medina as the new target of their ungodly activities.”²³³

Occasionally, policies emanating from Saudi Arabia contributed to these critical discourses surrounding female pilgrims. When, based on a Saudi directive, the Federal Government banned unaccompanied women from going on hajj in 1978 one women’s lifestyle columnist rejoiced, recalling she knew of one frivolous woman who claimed that “she went on pilgrimage just 'for the fun of it' and that the holy land had 'a lot to offer' in form of worldly wealth.”²³⁴ Subsequent actions by some women to arrange an “instant marriage” with an “emergency husband” in order to get a Saudi visa drew further approbation, and provided a chance for the repetition of previous critiques.²³⁵ Thus, once pilgrimage became associated with the anxious discourse of the 1970s surrounding “quick wealth” and “money magic,” the tactic this discourse used to demonize ‘modern women’—painting them as amoral and ruthless seekers of wealth at the expense of men and the national good—was soon applied to alhajas as well.²³⁶

²³⁰ Lasisi Alani Lamidi, “What the People Say: Loudspeakers in Mosques...,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 28, 1978. Though the author addressed his criticisms to alhajis as well, he noted that he appealed to alhajas “in particular.”

²³¹ MD, “Hints for Intending Pilgrims to Mecca,” *Daily Times*, October 10, 1970; Dr. Dee Dokee, “‘All in a Doctor’s Day’ Pilgrims Should Boil Holy Water,” *Daily Times*, November 25, 1972.

²³² Alhaji H. T. Dada, “Muslim Sermon: What to Do before Performing Hadj,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 1, 1972.

²³³ Olatunde, “Weekly Muslim Sermon: Why Disgrace Islam?”

²³⁴ Bannerman, “Woman to Woman: How Justified Is That Hajj Ban on Single Women?”

²³⁵ “Yours Sincerely: Bunmi Fadase: Mecca Marriages!,” *The Punch*, July 2, 1979; “Hajj: Single Women and Emergency Husbands,” *Daily Times*, October 22, 1978, Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

²³⁶ “‘No Mini-Skirts in Holyland,’” *Daily Times*, December 20, 1972. The title of this article proves my point. While it is not surprising that female pilgrims might need to be advised against “immodest dressing” given the differences between typical Muslim attire in the 1970s in Nigeria compared to that in Saudi Arabia, I have found no evidence that Nigerian women ever wore miniskirts while on hajj, nor does the content of the article claim this.



Figure 7. Women at Eid Prayer Ground in Benin City, 1972²³⁷

While these critiques against female pilgrims undoubtedly speaks more about their male commentators than the women themselves, it is true that the position of women within Muslim communities of Southwest Nigeria had changed since independence, and alhajas were at the forefront of these changes. For one, while men still dominated the production and dissemination of Islamic knowledge, voices of alhajas had started to emerge, not as rare exceptions²³⁸ but as a regular source of Islamic authority since the late 1950s.²³⁹ These voices became notably louder

²³⁷ “[Photo],” January 28, 1972.

²³⁸ “Announcements,” *Daily Comet*, January 29, 1948, Serials, Nigerian National Archives, Ibadan. This notice for an alhaja giving a speech on the “Status of Women in Islam” shows the practice was by no means entirely new to the 1960s/70s.

²³⁹ “Radio Programmes,” *Daily Telegraph*, August 20, 1959; “Radio Programmes,” *Daily Telegraph*, August 13, 1959. One of the first sources of female authority in Islam was a weekly Muslim radio program by Alhaja Abibat

in the 1960s and into the 1970s. Alhajas often gave speeches at symposia on topics ranging from women to Muslim education to Muslim unity,²⁴⁰ and transformed celebrations at mosques for their safe return from Mecca into opportunities to speak on the importance of Muslim morality.²⁴¹ The experience of the hajj could prompt alhajas to engage in service work, such as Alhaja Alaga who claimed that while in Mecca she conceived of the idea for what would become the first Muslim grammar school for girls in Ibadan.²⁴² Alhajas also entered the public domain through active engagement in post-independence politics. Alhajas adorned themselves in the Mecca uniform en masse to march on behalf of a political party,²⁴³ used the welcome-home reception after their hajj to encourage others to vote for their political party,²⁴⁴ and it was an alhaja who became the first female Chairman of Lagos Island Local Government.²⁴⁵ At times these alhaja politicians melded politics with Islamic reform. In 1978 one alhaja felt emboldened enough to run for the upcoming presidential election, confidently suggesting she would win with votes of women in *purdah* (seclusion) whom she had promised to “liberate.”²⁴⁶ Though certainly these alhajas had Christian counterparts who were equally vocal in post-independence politics, among Muslim women alhajas stood out for their ability to use their pilgrimage as evidence of their piety to support their politics. Other ways that alhajas entered the public sphere included

Okunnu. While some of the topics specifically pertained to women (like “Women and Gambling”) others were more broad (“Why I am a Muslim”).

²⁴⁰ “Call on Parents to Foster Islamic Unity,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 27, 1972; “All Moslem Sects Must Unite,” *Daily Express*, March 11, 1974; “Advice to Muslim Leaders,” *Daily Sketch*, June 7, 1967, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

²⁴¹ “Back from Mecca with a Message,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 10, 1972.

²⁴² “Sketch Profile: Humuani Alaga: The Successful Hoodless ‘Graduate,’” *Daily Sketch*, November 16, 1968; Interview with Alhaja Rofiah Sanni in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, May 2015. This narration of the origins of the school, found in the newspaper article based on an interview with her, somewhat contradicts the narration provided by the administration of the school today. Alhaja Sanni, the current principal, told me that the inspiration behind the school was that Alhaja Alaga faced delays when she tried to enroll one of her daughters in a government school that had a predominately Christian administration. It is certainly possible both versions contain some truth.

²⁴³ “We Are for UPN, Say Kishing People,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 27, 1978.

²⁴⁴ “Vote for NNDP Call by Alhaja,” *Daily Sketch*, May 8, 1965, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

²⁴⁵ “Meet Lagos Island’s Madam Chairman,” *Drum Magazine*, December 1979.

²⁴⁶ “I Will Liberate Women in Purdah, Says Presidential Aspirant,” *The Punch*, October 23, 1978.

patronage of Muslim societies²⁴⁷ and as musicians.²⁴⁸ For example, Alhaja Salawa Abeni, “alias ‘Hadja Londoner’” was consistently photographed wearing the sabaka cap and in 1979 issued an album *Irohin Abo Mecca* that narrated her journey to Mecca via London.²⁴⁹

Women were also increasingly involved in the hajj administration. The process of Nigerianization had privileged men, and in 1960 only one out of ten members of the Western Region Pilgrims Welfare board was a woman; admittedly an improvement from the colonial hajj bureaucracy.²⁵⁰ However by the mid-1960s alhajas began to enter the once-male dominated world of the hajj travel industry,²⁵¹ a trend that continued to grow in the 1970s.²⁵² These women often built on their pre-existing strong social networks, the most famous example perhaps being Alhaja Abibatu Mogaji, alias ‘Mama Mecca,’ the President of Lagos Market women who translated her popularity among traders into a thriving hajj business, among men as well as women.²⁵³ Her popularity was clearly well earned, for in 1977, when Saudi Arabia instituted a new policy that haphazardly assigned pilgrims to their *mutawifs* [guides] and caused families to be split, Alhaja Mogaji stood out for her commitment to the welfare of her seventy-one pilgrims: "Singlehandedly, she put up a **manly** fight to group them together under one *mutawif* and sought police assistance to achieve her objective."²⁵⁴ [emphasis added] Even if the journalist coded this success as masculine, Nigerian society had clearly started to regard women as integral to the hajj

²⁴⁷ “Muslim Society Formed,” *Daily Sketch*, April 5, 1966, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

²⁴⁸ “[Ad],” *Daily Times*, March 15, 1974; “Alhaja Salawa Abeni: Sends out Christmas Presents,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 22, 1978; “The Face of Waka in 1979,” *Drum Magazine*, July 1979; “Salawa Abeni in a New Chart Buster.”

²⁴⁹ “Salawa Abeni in a New Chart Buster.”

²⁵⁰ Western Region Pilgrims Welfare Board, “Report of the Pilgrims Welfare Board for the Period 1st April, 1959 to 31st March, 1960,” June 19, 1961, University of Ibadan, Dike Library; “[Photo],” *The Daily Times*, May 17, 1960.

²⁵¹ “Warning to Pilgrims: Get Valid Certificates.”

²⁵² Pilgrims Welfare Board, Lagos State, “[Notice],” *Daily Times*, August 29, 1974; Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria., April 2015. By 1974, three pilgrim agents for Lagos State were alhajas.

²⁵³ Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria., April 2015; Alhaji Lateef Jakande, “The Saudi Spanner Disrupted Hajj Plans,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 28, 1977.

²⁵⁴ Jakande, “The Saudi Spanner Disrupted Hajj Plans.”

administration—the same year Alhaja Mogaji battled new Saudi policies another woman held the post of Amir-al-Hajj [president] for the Lagos State Pilgrims Board.²⁵⁵

To return to male accusations that women instrumentalized the hajj, in some respects in the 1970s women *did* gravitate towards visual markers of being a pilgrim relatively more than men. The most visible example of this is the Mecca uniform. As already discussed, whereas politicians largely abandoned this sartorial choice once the hajj started to be linked to crime corruption, more ordinary Muslims continued to wear it. To this end, women were more likely than men to adopt this visual reminder of their piety, at least for some purposes.²⁵⁶ This is perhaps most obvious when examining obituary practices. Though once perhaps more frequently practiced by alhajjis,²⁵⁷ by the 1960s and into the 1970s and beyond obituaries for alhajas²⁵⁸ were significantly more frequently paired with photos of the deceased in the Mecca uniform compared to that of alhajjis. This reveals photography practices of the time and suggests that for alhajas, a studio portrait of themselves in the Mecca uniform usually served as their most prestigious photo available; whereas families of alhajjis frequently chose portraits that emphasized the deceased's status as a 'big man.' Though not until the 1970s, the difference also becomes clear when examining newspaper photographs taken during Muslim holidays of the throngs at various prayer grounds throughout the Southwest. Photos of male sections exhibit numerous turbans and various caps, but examples of men heading to the prayer ground in the Mecca uniform are

²⁵⁵ Jakande.

²⁵⁶ Both men and women continued to consistently wear the Mecca uniform on their return hajj and for any celebration at their home or thanksgiving service at their local mosque.

²⁵⁷ “[Obit],” *Daily Comet*, January 22, 1945; “[Obit],” *Daily Comet*, January 22, 1945. In general, given that newspapers before the 1960s did not print photos as extensively, there are not many examples of this before 1960. The two that I have come across are both for alhajjis.

²⁵⁸ “[Obit],” *Daily Sketch*, November 24, 1967; “[Obit],” *Daily Times*, April 17, 1960; “[Obit],” *Daily Times*, January 9, 1971; “[Obit],” *Daily Times*, January 13, 1971; “[Obit],” *Daily Times*, February 6, 1971; “[Obit],” *Daily Times*, January 17, 1974; “[Obit],” *Daily Times*, February 9, 1974; “[Obit],” *Daily Times*, February 25, 1974; “[Obit],” *Daily Times*, August 31, 1974; “[Obit],” *Daily Sketch*, October 17, 1977; “[Obit],” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 15, 1982; “[Obit],” *The Punch*, November 24, 1978; “[Obit],” *The Punch*, December 17, 1978; “[Obit],” *The Punch*, November 2, 1979; “[Obit],” *The Punch*, October 17, 1980. Looking over the same newspapers I have found only four examples of this with regards to alhajjis, compared to these fifteen examples.

relatively uncommon, a shift from the previous decade.²⁵⁹ In contrast, photos of female sections in the late 1960s and into the 1970s typically show a row of women proudly displaying their alhaja status with their Mecca uniforms.²⁶⁰

This difference continues today, particularly in discussions on the ‘Mecca tooth’ the practice since around the 1970s of pilgrims getting a gold or silver plated tooth while in Saudi Arabia.²⁶¹ In contemporary Nigeria many Muslims, both men and women, framed the practice as a fashion²⁶² for the uneducated, “nominal”²⁶³ Muslim that desires to “show off,”²⁶⁴ and blamed women for indulging in this the most.²⁶⁵ However, unlike male commentators who have suggested that these varied practices revealed that women have a more superficial relationship to Islam, I would like to argue that these visual displays of piety were simply the most efficient means for Muslim women in the 1960s-70s (and perhaps up until today) to gain communal prestige and make political claims upon the state.

Of course, it would be an oversimplification to imply that all women adopted this social

²⁵⁹ “Cynosure of All Eyes!,” *Morning Post*, April 13, 1965; “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, April 22, 1965; “All Gay,” *Morning Post*, January 26, 1966; “Millions of Moslems Celebrate Salla,” *New Nigerian*, April 4, 1966, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Jollity Marks Id-El-Fitri Festival,” *Daily Times*, November 8, 1972; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 17, 1973; “...in Sallah Mood,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 13, 1978. It might also be worth noting that of the three examples from the 1970s, one is of young children rather than adult men.

²⁶⁰ “[Photos],” *Daily Sketch*, March 23, 1967; “Muslims Opt for One Nigeria,” *Daily Sketch*, January 3, 1968; “Barka de Salah,” *Daily Times*, November 8, 1972; “[Photo],” January 17, 1973; “[Photo],” *Daily Times*, January 4, 1974; “Moslems Celebrate End of Ramadan Again”; “[Photo],” *Nigerian Tribune*, August 25, 1979; “[Photo],” *Daily Sketch*, November 2, 1979, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

²⁶¹ Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 299.

²⁶² Interview with Alhaji Otun Abdul Gamy in Ibadan, Nigeria.; Interview with Alhaji Abiola Adeniran in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, October 2014; Interview with Alhaji Yekini Gbolagade in Ibadan, Nigeria., October 2014; Interview with Alhaja Adijat Durojayo in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, November 2014; Interview with Sheikh Alhaji Muhammed Omar in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, March 2015.

²⁶³ Interview with Dr. Alhaji Jimoh in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, May 2013.

²⁶⁴ Interview with Alhaji Lo Yusuf in Ibadan, Nigeria.

²⁶⁵ Interview with Alhaji Abdulraheem Akintoye in Ibadan, Nigeria.; Interview with Alhaji Otun Abdul Gamy in Ibadan, Nigeria.; Interview with Wali in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, October 2014; Interview with Rudirat-Ayo Ola in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, January 2015; Interview with Alhaji Yekini Gbolagade in Ibadan, Nigeria., October 2014; Interview with Alhaji W O Raji in Lagos, Nigeria.; Interview with Alhaji Abdul Akeem Oyetayo Oladimeji MC Handsome in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, July 2015.

strategy. The public perception that most women became alhajas for selfish reasons encouraged women to police their own behavior and presented an internal struggle to some. When asked if women gained prestige by going on the hajj Alhaja Bushra Bisi Oloso, who went in 1975, made a careful distinction between “serious” and “ceremonious” alhajas.²⁶⁶ Alhaja Sururah Oyero recalled her initial unease with her new public identity as an alhaja. Not only did her fear of being labeled an opportunist cause her to not buy the Mecca uniform, but at first she even disallowed others to call her ‘Alhaja.’²⁶⁷ As she explained, it was only when

I got to my workplace and one of my colleagues said, 'There are a lot of bad alhajas out there, people who wanted to be called alhaja, and who were not going to use the title, the respect conferred by that name well. That if you know you will do well, why don't you allow people to call you [alhaja]? So people can see that there can be good ones, even where there are bad ones. So that was when I stopped rejecting it.'²⁶⁸

While her experience in 1983 falls slightly after the period that this chapter addresses, many other ‘serious’ alhajas before her likely faced a similar dilemma of whether or not to embrace what had become a loaded identity. Nor has this tension ceased. Alhaja Musilimot Balogun first went to Mecca in 1993, fully sponsored thanks to being one of three female winners of a Qur’anic recitation contest at the Lagos Central Mosque. During her hajj, she purchased a Mecca tooth, but she later removed it. When I asked her why, she replied “Because I used to laugh, if I laugh some will be thinking ah, because you went to Mecca, that is why you are doing this,”²⁶⁹ referring to the notion I heard from others, that people with Mecca teeth would smile or laugh unnecessarily just to show off their status.²⁷⁰ And yet, Alhaja Balogun admitted she found herself longing for a Mecca tooth again, and found it “very attractive” on other recent alhajas.

At the same time that the meaning of the Mecca uniform became more loaded, attitudes

²⁶⁶ Interview with Alhaja Bushra Bisi Oloso in Ibadan, Nigeria.

²⁶⁷ Interview with Alhaja Sururah Oyero in Ibadan, Nigeria., April 2015.

²⁶⁸ Interview with Alhaja Sururah Oyero in Ibadan, Nigeria.

²⁶⁹ Interview with Alhaja Musilimot Balogun in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015.

²⁷⁰ Interview with Dr. Alhaji Jimoh in Ibadan, Nigeria.

changed towards the thanksgiving celebrations that traditionally marked the safe return of a pilgrim in the Southwest. During fieldwork, I was struck by the quick and disdainful tone of many informants when distancing themselves from these celebrations. To return to Alhaja Oyero, when asked if she had celebrated her hajj in 1983 she immediately shook her head and recalled

My mother was really upset that I didn't. Oh she didn't like it. I think I came back around a Wednesday, and the following Friday, when she had expected that I will still be hiding and we will now announce to people that I wanted to go to the mosque and so, I just told her I wanted to go to my workplace, I was teaching, I just told her I wanted to go to my workplace on Friday, and when I came back she asked why I was late and I said I had gone to the mosque and she flared up, she didn't like it, that 'Ah! Why should you go in these clothes, why should you go without anybody following you!'²⁷¹

When I asked Oyero why she decided against a celebration she replied, "My Islamic understanding told me that it wasn't necessary." In contrast, Oyero's mother went on hajj in 1970, and had marked the occasion with the traditional thanksgiving celebration at the Friday service followed by a home reception. This generational tension, mirrored in other family histories,²⁷² reveals how practices of celebration for pilgrims, like the Mecca uniform, came under attack in the 1970s as indicative of those 'corrupt' pilgrims who performed hajj for profit and status rather than worshipping God. While newspapers in the 1960s reported such thanksgiving services

²⁷¹ Interview with Alhaja Sururah Oyero in Ibadan, Nigeria., April 2015.

²⁷² Interview with Alhaji Muhammed Ademola Mustapha in Lagos, Nigeria.; Interview with Dr. Barihi Adetunji in Ibadan, Nigeria.; Interview with Alhaja Rofiah Sanni in Ibadan, Nigeria., May 2015; Interview with Alhaji Abdu Waasin Aiyepola in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015. Though the time gap between Alhaji Mustapha's hajj (1980) and his father's hajj (1958) is greater, it follows a similar pattern to that of Oyero and her mother. Meanwhile, Dr. Adetunji went on hajj in 1975, and refused to do anything more than to attend the Jumat service after his return, despite the fact that his family wanted to host a celebration. When I asked him why he refused their wishes he replied that at such an event "They [attendees] may commit sins...dancing, all these things, and some people drinking wine, I do not know, I don't want that." Likewise, while Alhaja Sanni's father, on his return from Mecca in 1967 celebrated by hiring "a beautiful horse" and drummers. When I asked how she celebrated her own return from hajj in 1994, she responded she did not celebrate because "I am a missionary, I have to do things proper, as people see us as an example. I need to be careful to do things proper." Finally, Alhaji Aiyepola, who did not celebrate his return in 2005, explained that his father did celebrate when he returned in 1972. When he said this, an alhaja overhearing our conversation (the interview took place in a mosque office) interjected "Ah! he's Alfa!" to which Aiyepola replied "No, but they do celebrate at that time."

without judgment,²⁷³ in the 1970s clerics and Nigerian citizens began to decry them as “wasteful and pompous,” particularly those that requested monetary donations and hired musicians and praise singers.²⁷⁴ As one critic explained in 1972, whereas “a few years ago” thanksgiving services involved simply “prayers and a lot of really good wishes” now “all over the Western and Lagos States” people were compelled “to buy a £30 outfit to commemorate the sixth or eighth return of an Alhaji who is a cousin ten times removed,” noting that the time had passed when pilgrims “did not impose great financial responsibility on their relatives.”²⁷⁵ Perceptions of pilgrims had not only changed relatively quickly, but often embedded within them were critiques, common to the 1970s,²⁷⁶ that framed wealthy individuals as socially parasitic.

And yet, while thanksgiving celebrations aroused criticism from clerics and ordinary Nigerians, these events—as well as farewell prayer gatherings—remained important to the Southwest’s social fabric, even as their ubiquity declined. Perhaps most importantly, they continued to serve as public performances of family and friendship; as in the past, relatives and well-wishers accompanied the returned pilgrim to the first Friday service after their arrival from Mecca,²⁷⁷ who afterward would often treat all of them to food and soft drinks at their home.²⁷⁸ Returned pilgrims often redistributed gifts purchased in Mecca to friends and family (and still

²⁷³ “Pilgrims Commend Western Government,” *Daily Sketch*, May 3, 1965; “Pilgrims Grateful,” *Morning Post*, April 17, 1966; “[Photo],” May 8, 1967; “[Photo],” May 15, 1967; “[Photo],” March 15, 1969.

²⁷⁴ “Letters: A Wrong Approach to Islam,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 20, 1972; Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Islam Detests Squandermania”; Azeez, “Nigerians and Hajj Pilgrimage,” 16–17; Alhaji H. T. Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Warning to Al-Hujaj,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 9, 1977; Alhaji H. T. Dada, “Muslim Sermon: May Allah Bless Your Hajj,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 17, 1978; Olosolowo, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 301. This critique against thanksgiving services also at times aimed its ire at clerics who participated in them and took a cut of the money they raised.

²⁷⁵ “Letters: A Wrong Approach to Islam.”

²⁷⁶ “People’s Voice: Stop This Act,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 8, 1973.

²⁷⁷ “Back from Mecca with a Message”; Interview with Alhaji W O Raji in Lagos, Nigeria.; Interview with Dr. K. K. Olosolowo in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, July 2015; Interview with Alhaji Muftar Abubakar in Lagos, Nigeria.

²⁷⁸ Interview with Alhaji Chief Wahab Ishola Adamson in Lagos, Nigeria., April 2015; Interview with Mutiu Oladele in Ibadan, Nigeria.; Interview with Alhaja Dr. Mrs. Lateefat Dairo in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, June 2015; Interview with Alhaji Abdulraheem Akintoye in Ibadan, Nigeria.; Olosolowo, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 292; Interview with Alhaji Abdu Waasin Aiyepola in Lagos, Nigeria. Those interviewed either spoke about their own hajj or the hajj of a family member that took place in this time period.

do).²⁷⁹ If a member of a society or organization was about to embark on hajj, the group would often host a farewell party in their honor, where all members who were already alhajis or alhajas would arrive adorned in the Mecca uniform.²⁸⁰ If the aspiring pilgrim was involved in business, these occasions allowed their peers to consolidate their professional relationship by making a donation towards their hajj.²⁸¹ Similarly, co-workers might be inspired to financially help an officemate realize their goal.²⁸² Moreover, even if *some* thanksgiving ceremonies had begun to resemble any other social party, many remained relatively solemn occasions where the pilgrim (with the help of a hired cleric) gave thanks to God for allowing their safe return, and expressed gratitude towards those that had looked after their affairs and family in their absence.²⁸³ This emphasis on the greatness of God often included sermons and discussions of the beauty of Islam, which, given the religious demographics of the Southwest, would likely be heard by both Muslim and non-Muslim attendants. Thus, these events, even during the materialist decade of the 1970s, continued to serve as a type of *daw'ah*, or propagation of Islam.²⁸⁴

Suffering in the Face of Oil Wealth

Despite the relative ease of airplane travel, the experience of the hajj by pilgrims into the 1970s remained often grueling, uncomfortable and unsanitary. It is worth recalling that the number of pilgrims embarking on hajj more than doubled between 1967 and 1968, and nearly

²⁷⁹ Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., October 2014; Interview with Dr. Rasheed in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, July 2015; Interview with Sheikh Alhaji Muhammed Omar in Ibadan, Nigeria., March 2015.

²⁸⁰ “[Photo],” *Morning Post*, April 19, 1967; Olosolowo, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 293.

²⁸¹ “Sketch Profile: Humuani Alaga: The Successful Hoodless ‘Graduate.’” As a prominent trader, Alhaja Alaja received a donation of fifty pounds from the Leventis boss in Ibadan “as a token of the company's appreciation for her honest dealings with them.” While her hajj (1954) is somewhat before this period, it is reasonable to assume this practice continued as long as pilgrims continued to collect money before embarking on the hajj.

²⁸² Interview with Alhaji Abdu Waasin Aiyepola in Lagos, Nigeria. Speaking about his father, a civil servant who went on the hajj in 1972, Aiyepola explained that he had established himself as a Muslim at his office. Then, when some of the bosses learned he wants to go to Mecca, they assisted him.

²⁸³ Interview with Professor Oladosu in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, February 2015.

²⁸⁴ Interview with Professor Oladosu in Ibadan, Nigeria. This insight came from Professor Oladosu.

doubled again between 1968 and 1973. The strain this placed on the hajj infrastructure registered in the service provided by Nigerian Airways, which by 1966 had secured a monopoly on hajj travel from the Nigerian government.²⁸⁵ Though the time before this was certainly not without delays,²⁸⁶ the length and frequency of these only increased along with incidents of lost luggage.²⁸⁷ At the same time, the image of pilgrims whose flights had been delayed sleeping on mats in Nigerian airports or worse, streets, caught the critical attention of the press²⁸⁸ and pilgrim agents, resentful of the recent monopoly.²⁸⁹ By the early 1970s the problem had gotten bad enough to occasionally spark protests by pilgrims,²⁹⁰ and calls by Muslims in the Southwest to develop a pilgrimage route by sea, pointing out this would be cheaper, healthier, involve less hassle and prevent lost luggage.²⁹¹ Medical facilities also left much to be desired. Vaccines, if administered improperly, produced harmful side effects and anxiety.²⁹² In 1973 one pilgrim complained that the quarantine camp outside the Lagos airport “packed [pilgrims] so tightly” and forced them to sleep outside without protection on the bare ground, all to the effect that several

²⁸⁵ “Pilgrims Stranded in Kano,” *New Nigerian*, March 16, 1966, Serials, Abuja National Library.

²⁸⁶ “Cheers, Cheers, as Pilgrims Leave for Mecca,” *Morning Post*, April 7, 1964; “All but One Sleep It Off,” *Morning Post*, March 30, 1965.

²⁸⁷ “Pilgrims in 24-Hrs Delay,” *Daily Sketch*, March 19, 1968; “5,000 Pilgrims Now Stranded at Kano Airport,” *Nigerian Observer*, January 21, 1971, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Pilgrim Agents Appeal to Govt,” *Daily Times*, January 23, 1971; “Muslim Body Pleads with Fed. Government,” *Daily Express*, October 27, 1972.

²⁸⁸ “All but One Sleep It Off”; “Faith and Hope on Pilgrims Progress”; “Pilgrims Stranded in Kano.”

²⁸⁹ “Letter from K Kolawole Shomade, Barrister and Solicitor of the the Supreme Court of Nigeria, Lagos to Yakubu Gowon, Head of the Federal Military Government,” February 1, 1967, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1: AS I/206: Pilgrims Complaints, National Archive, Kaduna.

²⁹⁰ “Faith and Hope on Pilgrims Progress”; “Transport Us to Arafat, Plead Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, January 26, 1971; “Pilgrims Stage Demonstration,” *Nigerian Observer*, January 26, 1971; “Pilgrims Protest at Kano Airport,” *Daily Times*, December 24, 1973. While some protests were more spontaneous, others, like that in early 1971 were clearly organized, with “Groups of placard-carrying Mecca pilgrims” planning their protest to coincide with then Head-of-State General Gowon’s flight to Enugu.

²⁹¹ Alhaji L A Ishola, “Letters: Why Not Go to Mecca by Sea?,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 22, 1972; Alhaji S Oridota, “Letters: Let’s Go to Mecca by Sea,” *Nigerian Tribune*, August 22, 1972; Alhaji K Adeyemi, “Letters: Try the Sea-Route for a Change,” *Nigerian Tribune*, August 26, 1972; “Muslim Body Pleads with Fed. Government”; “More Routes to Mecca: Pilgrims May Go by Sea,” *Daily Express*, November 4, 1972. The sea route however never came about, despite one company offering voyages in 1972. This was mainly due to two reasons. First, Nigeria Airways objected that this violated their exclusive rights to transport pilgrims. Second, instability in the Middle East and a commitment to isolate the apartheid government in South Africa meant that no feasible route was available.

²⁹² Alhaji Ahmed Alao, “As next Pilgrimage to Mecca Draws Nearer... Vaccine Uproar,” *Daily Express*, November 11, 1972.

pilgrims fell ill.²⁹³ Once in Saudi Arabia, Nigerian pilgrims faced rude officials and cramped accommodation, with up to “twenty pilgrims or more sleeping in a room in Mecca.”²⁹⁴ The hajj of 1973 ended on a particularly tragic note when weather conditions caused one returning aircraft to crash on landing in Kano, killing around 155 pilgrims on board,²⁹⁵ though initial headlines mourned up to 192.²⁹⁶ The crash renewed impassioned calls for an alternate sea route.²⁹⁷ The aftermath of the crash also witnessed growing frustration of pilgrims towards the government management of the hajj. Pilgrims from Ilorin diverted to the airport in Lagos because of the Kano crash refused to travel the entire way to Kano by rail, where the government had decided they would undergo customs clearance. Instead they alighted from the train in Ilorin, and when police refused to allow the pilgrims to receive their luggage the pilgrims, numbering in the hundreds, and their relatives, numbering in the thousands, gathered in front of the train to block its path until soldiers arrived, and eventually agreed that customs clearance could happen there.²⁹⁸ Ilorin is the capital of Kwara State, from which about a hundred pilgrims had died in the crash.²⁹⁹ The unwillingness of these pilgrims to comply with this state directive was likely in part a response to this loss of human life and trust in the government. And one Muslim reflecting on

²⁹³ Alhaji T Babalola, “Pilgrims Need a Better Treatment,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 18, 1972; Alhaji Nuru Owa, “(2) Hazards of Fulfilling Allah’s Injunction,” *Daily Express*, February 7, 1973; Aremu Shodeko, “A Reflection on That Historical Pilgrimage,” *Daily Express*, March 20, 1973. As the article from 1972 evidences, this was not unique to 1973.

²⁹⁴ Owa, “(2) Hazards of Fulfilling Allah’s Injunction”; “5,000 Pilgrims Return from Mecca,” *New Nigerian*, April 16, 1966, Serials, Abuja National Library. In the earlier example from 1966, a returning pilgrim that year recalled to reporters how she saw three Nigerian women die when the roof of the room they stayed in collapsed, while another two were injured.

²⁹⁵ “Nigeria Prays --for Victims of Plane Crash,” *Daily Express*, January 25, 1973.

²⁹⁶ “Crash: 180 Alhajis Killed,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 23, 1973; “192 Pilgrims [Fresh from Mecca and Medina] Die in Crash,” *Daily Express*, January 23, 1973.

²⁹⁷ “To Hajj by Sea or Air? : Expressman Bimpe Afunku Finds out from the Public,” *Daily Express*, March 3, 1973. Of the five people interviewed in the article, all indicated that they favored the idea of a sea route, and expressing fears in regard to air travel. The most emotional plea came from Madam Iyalaje, who claimed that no “reasonable person can have the audacity or be wicked enough to enforce the use of air route for future pilgrimages” based on the Kano crash.

²⁹⁸ “Train Held up by Pilgrims in Ilorin,” *Nigerian Observer*, February 1, 1973.

²⁹⁹ “Train Held up by Pilgrims in Ilorin.”

the challenges they faced as a result of government mismanagement during their own hajj that year concluded, “The representatives of state government should not carve a bad image for Nigeria in Saudi Arabia.”³⁰⁰ Thus, the same language previously applied to corrupt pilgrims was now used by pilgrims to describe failures of the Nigerian government’s hajj administration. This marked a shift from the mid to late 1960s when pilgrims frequently voiced expressions of gratitude for the state’s facilitation of the hajj.³⁰¹ Such praise did not disappear in the 1970s, but its frequency diminished;³⁰² left in its place was the sense that the state’s failure to provide adequate arrangements for pilgrims and the rise of government sponsorships were part and parcel of the larger problem of the hajj and corruption.

Though the Nigerian government and the Pilgrims Boards did not escape criticism, agents absorbed the most frustration and anger from pilgrims. As discussed in previous chapters, one of the key aspects of Nigerianization of the hajj was the centralization and government oversight of hajj agents, who had once operated autonomously. Despite these efforts, cases of unscrupulous agents overcharging pilgrims or worse, absconding with their deposits, continued to occur.³⁰³ Even agents that did not outright cheat often provided poor service, either by abandoning pilgrims on arrival in Jeddah or providing them with substandard accommodation and meals.³⁰⁴ Beyond the concern and uproar this provoked among Nigerians, even worried

³⁰⁰ Owa, “(2) Hazards of Fulfilling Allah’s Injunction.”

³⁰¹ “Pilgrims Commend Western Government”; “Pilgrims Grateful”; “Hajj Pilgrims Thank Fajuyi,” *Daily Sketch*, April 19, 1966; “Pilgrims Thank Govt for Tearless Hajj,” *Morning Post*, April 21, 1967; “Pilgrims Board to Be Self-Supporting,” *Daily Sketch*, March 31, 1969, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

³⁰² “West Alhajis Thank Governor”; “Muslims Thank Gov Ogbemudia,” *Nigerian Observer*, March 15, 1974, Serials, Abuja National Library.

³⁰³ “Pilgrims Stranded in the Chad,” *Morning Post*, March 27, 1965; “Note from ASI to Y.E.,” March 16, 1967, Military Governor’s Office: PRE 2/1 4th Collection: AS I/218 Vol II: Pilgrimage Arrangements [1967], Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “Pilgrim Agents Taken to Task,” *Daily Sketch*, January 18, 1969; “Comment: Stop This Racket,” *Nigerian Tribune*, February 15, 1972; “2 Alhajis Quizzed by Police,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 19, 1973; “Pilgrims’ Agent Jailed 4 Years for Theft in Sokoto,” *Nigerian Observer*, March 13, 1973; Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 158–59.

³⁰⁴ “Pilgrims Thank Govt for Tearless Hajj”; “Badmus Warns Pilgrims’ Agents: ‘Stop Mal-Practices.’”

Saudis reached out to discuss the matter with Nigerian officials.³⁰⁵ Others complained that agents often engaged in the same illicit activities of corrupt pilgrims.³⁰⁶ Several commentators argued that the increased commercialism of the hajj had caused agents to become overly competitive, and that this led agents to prioritize their profits over pilgrim welfare.³⁰⁷ Regardless of whether capitalism was to blame, taking Lagos State as a case study, the number of agents had dramatically risen, from six in 1966 to twelve in 1967 to sixty-three in 1972.³⁰⁸ Of course, not all agents disregarded the needs of pilgrims. Occasionally agents acted as advocates on the behalf of pilgrims³⁰⁹ and received praise from grateful clients.³¹⁰ Moreover, agents themselves could be critical of their peers, such as in 1967 when the Zumratul-Hujaj in Lagos, which also operated as a pilgrim agent, publically asked the government to exercise more care in vetting pilgrim agents, warning the state risked “serious embarrassment” if the wrong people received licenses.³¹¹ Before long, the Nigerian government and its regulatory agencies began to agree, and some states began to ban all agents starting in 1971.³¹² At the federal level the Ministry of External Affairs took over some of the responsibilities held by agents in 1971,³¹³ and then in April 1976

³⁰⁵ “Handwritten Note from AS I to Secretary to the Premier,” November 6, 1965, PRE 2/1: AS I/202: Pilgrimage Publicity, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna. In this case, the Saudi Arabian Red Crescent (an Islamic charity organization modeled off of the Red Cross) chief described to one Nigerian official “some conspiracy on the part of our Pilgrim Agents and their friends in Saudi Arabia who raise the Mutawif fees [term for pilgrim guides in Saudi Arabia] while no increases is made by Saudi Govt.”

³⁰⁶ “Report by Mr. C Dello Strolago,” June 20, 1965, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna; “NCS Pilgrim Agents Sacked,” *Daily Times*, February 20, 1971; A. B. Owosho, “People’s Voice: Let FMG Set up Pilgrim Centres?”; Alao, “West Newsletter: Pilgrims Should Be above Board”; Hassan, “Pilgrimage Is Holy Mission.”

³⁰⁷ “Nigerian Dateliners: Kaduna,” *Daily Times*, November 16, 1970; “Aminu Kano Calls on Pilgrim Agents to Cooperate with Govt”; “Comment: Stop This Racket.”

³⁰⁸ “Pilgrims’ Agents Appointed,” *New Nigerian*, March 10, 1966, Serials, Abuja National Library; “12 Pilgrim Agents Named,” *Daily Sketch*, December 28, 1967, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Public Notice,” *Daily Express*, October 3, 1972.

³⁰⁹ “Hajj Agents Threaten Show-Down,” *Daily Sketch*, January 23, 1969; “Pilgrim Agents Appeal to Govt.”

³¹⁰ “[Ad],” *Daily Times*, February 26, 1971.

³¹¹ “Hujaj’s Concern About Pilgrims,” *Morning Post*, February 12, 1967.

³¹² “NCS Pilgrim Agents Sacked”; “Badmus Warns Pilgrims’ Agents: ‘Stop Mal-Practices’”; “Script of NBC Newstalk: ‘This Year’s Pilgrimage to the Muslim Holy Places,’” January 17, 1976, In folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

³¹³ Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 178.

the National Pilgrims Commission (est. 1975) outlawed the use of agents altogether.³¹⁴ Now pilgrims dealt directly with the various state Pilgrims Boards, overseen by the National Pilgrims Commission. However as one alhaji pointed out in a letter to the editor, many of the welfare officers appointed by the boards were “known Pilgrims Agents whose conduct and public behavior have been ruthlessly criticized and for reason of which they were disbanded.”³¹⁵ Some states even went so far to pay these retooled Welfare Officers a commission for every pilgrim they recruited, a near identical arrangement to what existed before with agents.³¹⁶ Regardless if some agents engaged in malpractices, they had long served an integral role in Nigeria’s hajj administration and held extensive knowledge of Saudi Arabia, aircraft chartering, and travel regulations. And, as the Chairman of the Ogun State Pilgrim Board pointed out in 1977, employing agents as welfare officers saved money since their business network allowed the Board to register pilgrims residing all over the state while only maintaining one central office.³¹⁷ Thus, even if some agents overcharged pilgrims and engaged in illicit activities that threatened Nigeria’s international reputation and the reputation of Islam within the nation, agents’ bureaucratic nimbleness and specialized skills made it hard for the state to remove them entirely.

Beyond pilgrim agents, one of the most contentious debates surrounding the hajj during this period concerned government sponsorship of individual pilgrims. As previously discussed, while the British colonial state had only sponsored the hajj of a couple elites, like the Emir of Katsina, one outcome of the Nigerianization was that the post-colonial government began funding a number of pilgrims annually (Chapter 3). For the first half of the 1960s this practice

³¹⁴ “Editorial: Good Beginning,” *New Nigerian*, April 21, 1976, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1969-77, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

³¹⁵ Alhaji Gafaru Mohammed, “Your Letters to the Editor: We Need Pilgrim Welfare Officers Not Agents,” *Nigerian Tribune*, June 8, 1976.

³¹⁶ Jakande, “The Unstoppable Agents: 1977 Hajj Reports.” This arrangement also included providing a free hajj ticket to any officer than registered forty or more pilgrims, and paying them a per diem for their services during the hajj.

³¹⁷ Jakande.

provoked relatively little ire, evidenced by the fact that one Ibadan politician in 1964 could still safely brag that the 135 pilgrims sponsored by the Western Region was “the greatest number of free passage to pilgrims to Mecca this year.”³¹⁸ Yet by the following year several individuals had publically decried the practice. The timing of this push back likely had at least in part to do with recent numerical blossoming of the practice, as seen in the chart below:³¹⁹

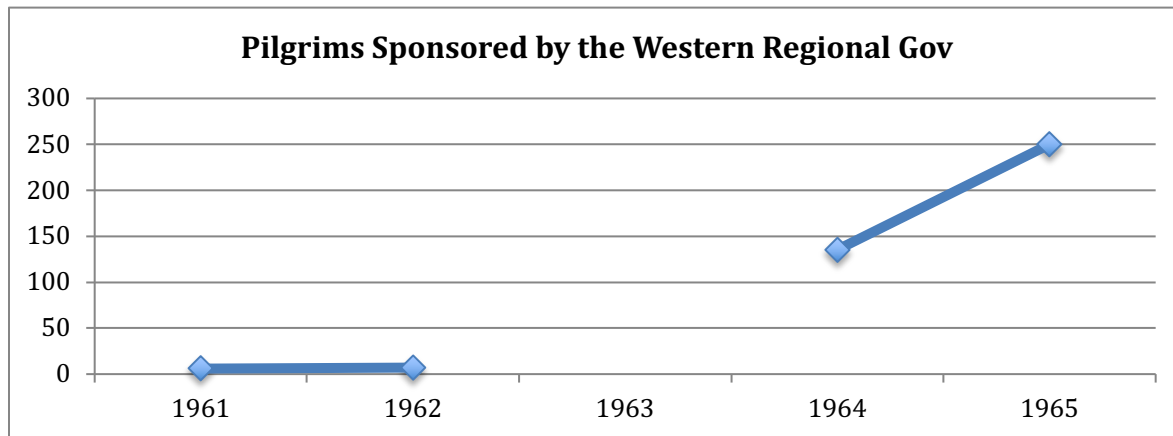


Figure 8. Pilgrims Sponsored by the Western Regional Government, 1961–1965

Among those that protested sponsorship by the Western Region included the minority NCNC party, which accused the program of sponsored pilgrimages as “an attempt to woo the moslems of the region” by the ruling party (NNDP).³²⁰ The NCNC did not object to government sponsorship in and of itself, but the fact that politicians, rather than the Muslim Congress or another Islamic group, doled out the free trips to Mecca. In response, the leader of the Western House of Assembly retorted that politics played no role in the selection process, though another House member lamented that those sponsored praised the NNDP instead of the regional government.³²¹ Tellingly, that same year the Oluwo of Iwo “praised the Government of the NNDP” for its hajj scholarships, and one pilgrim sponsored by the government used her

³¹⁸ “Are Wants Direct Flight to Mecca,” *Morning Post*, May 2, 1964.

³¹⁹ “Ilaro Muslims Thank Government,” *Nigerian Tribune*, May 9, 1961, 2; “84 Pilgrims for Mecca,” *Daily Times*, April 28, 1962, 11; “Are Wants Direct Flight to Mecca,” *Morning Post*, May 2, 1964, 2; “Two Pilgrims Die in Medina,” *Daily Sketch*, April 5, 1965, 1.

³²⁰ “Pilgrims: Govt. Rapped,” *Morning Post*, March 9, 1965.

³²¹ “No Party to Mecca,” *Morning Post*, April 1, 1965.

thanksgiving reception to encourage attendees to vote for the NNDP in the next election.³²² Not all critiques that year concerned politics, especially in the interfaith Southwest. Politicians and citizens argued it was unfair to sponsor Muslims to Mecca in a country that was half Christian, and some explicitly called for a parallel sponsored trip to Rome or Jerusalem for Christians.³²³ And a few years later, a Muslim university professor, though not against state funds allocated to one religion, contended that the money would be better spent on Muslim education.³²⁴ And a government report on the 1964 hajj claimed that “the most difficult pilgrims” were those sponsored by the Western Regional government, because many were underprepared spiritually and financially, and became a burden on their fellow pilgrims, leading to “the consequent loss of the benefit of Haji.”³²⁵ These critiques—that hajj sponsorships enabled political favoritism, were unfair, and a poor use of government spending—remained in the 1970s; added to them was now allegations that those sponsored epitomized the ‘corrupt pilgrim’ in terms of their materialism and amoral activities,³²⁶ though the practice was not without its defenders.³²⁷

Government and Clerical responses: Good Ambassadors, Pilgrim Quotas and Screening

In addition to reining in agents, in the 1970s the Nigerian state ratcheted up policies seeking to constrain pilgrims. It also provided pilgrims with moral instruction, and encouraged them to view themselves and their comportment as key to the interests of the nation. Given the

³²² “Oluwo’s Plea to Alhajis,” *Daily Sketch*, May 1, 1965; “Vote for NNDP Call by Alhaja.”

³²³ “160 East Catholic Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, June 17, 1960; “79 East Catholics Go on Pilgrimage,” *Daily Times*, June 25, 1960; “Pilgrimage to Holy Land Postponed,” *Morning Post*, July 6, 1966, 2; “Council Appeals for Christians to Be Sponsored to Jerusalem,” *Daily Sketch*, April 9, 1965; Adedun, “What the People Say: Just a Waste,” *Morning Post*, April 29, 1965; M O Obisan, “Pilgrimage,” *Daily Sketch*, May 15, 1965, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

³²⁴ “Don Wants Hajj Awards Scrapped.”

³²⁵ “Report on 1964 Pilgrimage by the Nigerian Government Representatives,” 1964, 8–9, Premier’s Office, PRE 2/1 4th collection: ASI/217: Pilgrims Report, Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna.

³²⁶ Tai Solarin, “Thoughts of Tai Solarin: Pilgrim’s Non-Progress,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 5, 1973; Dupe Adewoye, “What the People Say: ‘scholarship’ to Mecca,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 1, 1977.

³²⁷ “Weekend Review: The Nation: Should the Government Control the Annual Pilgrimage to Mecca?”; Tayo O Salam, “What the People Say: Scholarship to Mecca?,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 24, 1977.

reports on smuggling and other irreligious activity by pilgrims, unsurprisingly many clerics praised existing government efforts, called for more hajj regulations by the state,³²⁸ and proved willing collaborators. Such collaboration was not new; as Nigerian elites began overseeing the hajj in the 1950s, they enlisted clerics to educate pilgrims about the hajj to protect Nigeria's reputation within the Muslim world (Chapters 2–3). By the late 1950s, clerics in the Southwest began to use their Islamic newspaper columns to provide detailed instructions on how to perform the various rites, along with expounding upon the relevant Qur'anic verses that explain their religious significance.³²⁹ By the mid-1960s, when Nigerian pilgrims began to be arrested for smuggling, clerics started including in their news columns moral guidelines for pilgrim behavior in Saudi, and especially upon return to Nigeria.³³⁰ At times they explicitly stated that those whose actions presented a liability to the reputation of Islam and the hajj would gain no reward from their pilgrimage.³³¹ These clerics also claimed that financial greed caused most of the

³²⁸ Alhaji A. Olatunde, "Weekly Muslim Sermon: Conditions for Hajj," *Daily Sketch*, February 9, 1968; "Govt Should Curb Fake Alhajis"; Yakub, "Islamic Platform: Welfare of Pilgrims."

³²⁹ Alhaji H. T. Dada, "Muslim Corner," *Nigerian Tribune*, June 6, 1958; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, "Calling All Muslims: In the Name of Allah: Importance of Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, March 7, 1958; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, "Calling All Muslims: Benefits of Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, May 29, 1959; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, "Calling All Muslims: Mecca Pilgrimage Is Obligatory," *Daily Times*, May 22, 1959; Alhaji H. T. Dada, "Muslim Corner: The Pilgrimage—A Phase of Love," *Nigerian Tribune*, June 12, 1959; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, "Calling All Muslims: Hajj Is Divine Service," *Daily Times*, April 1, 1960; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, "Calling All Muslims: Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, April 7, 1960; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, "Calling All Muslims: The Benefit of Hajj," *Daily Times*, May 6, 1960; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, "Calling All Muslims: The Islamic Hajj," *Daily Times*, April 14, 1960; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, "Calling All Muslims: The Holy Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, March 24, 1961; Chief Imam Y P O Shodeinde, "Calling All Muslims: Behind the Pilgrimage," *Daily Times*, April 19, 1962; Embeay, "Duties of Alhujaj," *West African Pilot*, May 5, 1962.

³³⁰ Alhaji M Ahmad, "Teachings of Islam: After Hajj, What Next?," *Morning Post*, April 23, 1965; Olatunde, "In the Name of Allah: This Is Unbefitting to Alhajis and Alhajas"; Alhaji H. T. Dada, "Muslim Sermon: Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina," *Nigerian Tribune*, December 3, 1971; "Govt Should Curb Fake Alhajis"; Dada, "Muslim Sermon: Fear of God Is the Only Way to Successful Hadj"; Dada, "Muslim Sermon: Islam Detests Squandermania"; Alhaji F. M. Quraishy, "Islam and You: Pilgrimage: Opportunity to Know God," *Nigerian Observer*, January 31, 1975, Serials, Abuja National Library; Lamlo Adesina, "A Case for the Pilgrims Board," *Nigerian Tribune*, January 21, 1976; Dada, "Muslim Sermon: The Qualities of Those Going on Pilgrimage to Mecca"; Dada, "Muslim Sermon: Warning to Al-Hujaj"; Dada, "Muslim Sermon: May Allah Bless Your Hajj"; Alhaji H. T. Dada, "Muslim Sermon: Hajj or Holy Pilgrimage," *Nigerian Tribune*, October 5, 1979. Many of these articles called specifically for developing a "moral code" or "code of conduct" that all pilgrims would be forced to abide.

³³¹ Olatunde, "In the Name of Allah: This Is Unbefitting to Alhajis and Alhajas"; Alhaji A. Olatunde, "Weekly Muslim Sermon: Becoming an 'Alhaji' Is Not Enough," *Daily Sketch*, March 22, 1968; Alhaji A. Olatunde, "Weekly Muslim Sermon: Hajj: Institution Not Extravaganza," *Daily Sketch*, January 10, 1969, Folder: Nigeria -

problems connected to the hajj,³³² and on occasion even adopted dichotomous language in contrasting improper pilgrim behavior with that of the “good” or “true Muslim,” as did ordinary Nigerians and politicians.³³³

Public speeches by government officials (often were later either reprinted or reported by the national press) also contained this type of moral instruction. Thus, while the government’s critique in the 1960s focused on the behavior of hajj agents, by the early 1970s government officials additionally targeted immoral individuals. New official directives coalesced around the idiom of pilgrims as “good ambassadors,” a phrase voiced by state governors and even the president.³³⁴ The language officials used when calling upon pilgrims to be good ambassadors bore a striking resemblance to that of clerics and other prominent Muslims. In 1976 the military governors of neighboring Oyo and Ogun states delivered nearly identical speeches, suggesting

Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; Olatunde, “Weekly Muslim Sermon: Why Disgrace Islam?”; Alhaji H. T. Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Spiritual Value of the Sacred Journey,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 21, 1972; Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Fear of God Is the Only Way to Successful Hadj”; Quraishy, “Islam and You: Punishment for Those Who Use Hajj for Smuggling”; Alhaji F. M. Quraishy, “Islam and You: If You Have No Money Pilgrimage Is Unnecessary,” *Nigerian Observer*, January 21, 1972, Serials, Abuja National Library; Yakub, “Islamic Platform: Pilgrimage as the Fifth Pillar of Islam”; Alhaji Yusuf S. Hassan, “Pilgrimage Is Holy Mission,” *Daily Times*, December 7, 1973; Alhaji F. M. Quraishy, “Islam and You: Journey to Mecca: Pilgrims Must Have Sincere Motives,” *Nigerian Observer*, December 13, 1974, Serials, Abuja National Library.

³³² Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina”; “‘Create Special Court for Unfaithful Pilgrims’”; “‘Fanciful’ Alhajis Scolded”; “Don’t Take Kids to Hajj: Ibadan Muslim Leader Pleads”; Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Islam Detests Squandermania.”

³³³ Olatunde, “Weekly Muslim Sermon: Becoming an ‘Alhaji’ Is Not Enough”; “Govt Should Curb Fake Alhajis”; Mohammed, “Public Forum: Ban False Alhajis and Alhajas”; Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Spiritual Value of the Sacred Journey”; “Adegbite Lashes Bad Muslim Pilgrims”; “‘Fanciful’ Alhajis Scolded”; Bannerman, “Woman to Woman: How Justified Is That Hajj Ban on Single Women?”; “Sweet Talks: Fasting,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 7, 1978; Alhaji Chief L A K Ogunwoole, “Talk Shop: How to Be Good Muslims,” *The Punch*, September 26, 1979; “What the People Say: Why Fooling Us?,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 3, 1979.

³³⁴ Alhaji F. M. Quraishy, “Islam and You: Punish Unscrupulous Pilgrims,” *Nigerian Observer*, January 5, 1973, Serials, Abuja National Library; “Intending Pilgrims to Be Good Ambassadors,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 22, 1976; “Hajj Operation Begins Today,” *New Nigerian*, November 1, 1976, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1969-77, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; Alade, “Airlift Hitch Feared”; “Be Good Ambassadors of Nigeria--Pilgrims Urged,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 6, 1976; “Don’t Tarnish Nigeria’s Image--Innih,” *The Nigerian Herald*, March 16, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Ondo Pilgrims Advised,” *The Nigerian Tribune*, October 12, 1978; “Govt Plans for Pilgrims Welfare in Arabia,” *The Nigerian Tribune*, October 12, 1979.

authorship at a higher government level.³³⁵ Both stated that to be “good ambassadors” pilgrims must “avoid any temptation that might turn the pilgrimage into a secular affair with its attendant parade of glamour and pageantry” and remember that the main purpose of hajj “was to purge them of their sins in order to redeem their souls.”³³⁶ Though both officials made clear that it was specifically drug and currency trafficking that pilgrims must avoid, similar to clerics, they did not focus on the legal ramifications of these crimes but on how pilgrims, for their own *spiritual* benefit, needed to comport themselves “bearing in mind that Nigeria would be judged by their behavior and demeanor.”³³⁷ If the language of government officials borrowed from clerics, clerics soon echoed government officials in their use of the “good ambassador” idiom,³³⁸ which endured in clerical and government discourse well into the 1980s.³³⁹ Relatedly, the Nigerian and Saudi Arabian government increasingly enlisted Nigerian clerics to preach to future pilgrims on the topic of proper comportment in addition to preparing them to fulfill the hajj rites.³⁴⁰

Moral instruction represents a fraction of government efforts in the 1970s to reform the Nigerian hajj, though more concrete action tended to only occur in light of dramatic failure and public outcry. As already discussed, the Nigerian government promised to enforce stricter

³³⁵ “Intending Pilgrims to Be Good Ambassadors”; “Hajj Operation Begins Today.”

³³⁶ “Intending Pilgrims to Be Good Ambassadors”; “Hajj Operation Begins Today.”

³³⁷ “Intending Pilgrims to Be Good Ambassadors.”

³³⁸ Alhaji F. M. Quraishy, “Islam and You: Alhajis and Alhajas Should Show Good Example,” *Nigerian Observer*, December 31, 1976, Serials, Abuja National Library.

³³⁹ “Shagari Appeals to Hajj Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, September 25, 1980, Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1979, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; Alhaji H. T. Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Welcome Address,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 8, 1982; “14,000 Intending Pilgrims Airlifted to Jeddah,” *New Nigerian*, August 30, 1983, Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1979, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Gambari Warns Officials of NPB,” *Sunday New Nigerian*, August 12, 1984, Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1979, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Press Release No. 1071: Intending Pilgrims for This Year’s Hajj Warned Against Trafficking in Drugs and Currency” (Federal Department of Information, Lagos, Nigeria, June 18, 1985), Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1979, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; Alhaji H. T. Dada, “Muslim Sermon: Have a Hitch-Free Pilgrimage,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 25, 1986; Wale Aina, “Barka de Sallah, IRB Calls for Unity,” *Nigerian Tribune*, August 15, 1986.

³⁴⁰ “Two Pilgrims Turned Back”; “Massive Airlift of Pilgrims Commences,” *Nigerian Observer*, December 27, 1973; Interview with Toyibatu Alimi Oluwakemi in Lagos, Nigeria. Oluwakemi’s father was a traveling cleric, who was employed by the Saudi Arabian Embassy and Pilgrims Welfare Board in the 1970s to lecture to pilgrims.

customs control soon after the first cases of pilgrims smuggling. However it was not until 1971, when the Ministry of External Affairs took control over most of the administrative work related to the hajj from the pilgrim agents,³⁴¹ that the issue of Nigeria's deteriorating image in Saudi Arabia was addressed beyond customs control. At this moment of greater centralization, once again the state enlisted the advice from clerics (and it would not be the last time),³⁴² and the Ministry invited a number of Islamic scholars from across the country to Kaduna, where they, along with various government officials, addressed how best to respond to the "unfavorable reports" of Nigerian behavior in Saudi Arabia.³⁴³ Abubakar Gumi, one of the prominent attendants, delivered a speech that blamed the dilemma on Nigerian pilgrims, and demanded a successful resolution.³⁴⁴ The clerics proceeded to address the problem "within the context of Shari'ah" and decided that the best solution was for the Nigerian state to restrict the number of pilgrims by placing limitations on who could undertake the hajj:³⁴⁵ now banned were children under fifteen years, pregnant, unmarried or unaccompanied married women, the medically unfit, adults over seventy years, and anyone who had undertaken the hajj in the last five years.³⁴⁶ Not all agreed with some of these restrictions,³⁴⁷ enforcement was extremely inconsistent,³⁴⁸ and hajj

³⁴¹ Oloso, "Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980," 178.

³⁴² "Supreme Body for Islam to Be Formed Soon," *Nigerian Observer*, March 13, 1974; "Gen Gowon Gets Islamic Council Report," *Nigerian Observer*, September 2, 1974.

³⁴³ Oloso, "Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980," 179. Besides smuggling, this behavior included engaging in petty crime, neglecting to actually do the hajj rites in order to engage in trade, and becoming destitute.

³⁴⁴ "Smuggling, Drug Peddling: Grand Khadi Blasts Alhajis," *Nigerian Tribune*, August 10, 1971.

³⁴⁵ Oloso, "Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980," 181.

³⁴⁶ Oloso, 181-82.

³⁴⁷ Alhaji Imam Dabiri, "People's Voice: Why the Age Limit for Pilgrims?," *Nigerian Tribune*, September 2, 1971; "Over 40 Nigerians Die in Mecca: Exposure, Irregular Meals Blamed." While the ban against pregnant women received the most support, the implementation of an age limit was particularly troubling to some, who felt that as long as an elderly person was physically fit they should not be denied the ability to perform the fifth pillar of Islam.

³⁴⁸ Shodeko, "A Reflection on That Historical Pilgrimage"; "Daily Express, Opinion: How to Curb the Hajj Businessmen"; "Front Page Comment: Going to Mecca," *Nigerian Tribune*, February 24, 1973; "Over 40 Nigerians Die in Mecca: Exposure, Irregular Meals Blamed," 40; "Tribune Comment: Going to Mecca," *Nigerian Tribune*, October 30, 1976; Oloso, "Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980," 182. Most telling is perhaps the Tribune Comment from 1976, which reads "Another feature of the pilgrimage is the number of children and old people who go to Mecca every year."

numbers continued to rise. During the early to mid-1970s occasional calls for religious screening surfaced in the press,³⁴⁹ as did calls for an annual cap on the number of pilgrims,³⁵⁰ though some argued this would be contrary to the teachings of the Qur'an.³⁵¹

The Hajj of 1977 and its Aftermath

Ultimately it was the hajj of 1977, when a record number of over one hundred thousand Nigerians flew to Saudi Arabia, that led the Nigerian government to enforce restrictions on who could undertake the hajj, and set a limit on the annual number of pilgrims. Overall, the 1977 hajj resulted in much national embarrassment and individual suffering, and the commentary that followed made inaction by the state untenable. The key problem was not only did the sheer number of pilgrims strain the capacity of the Nigerian hajj administration (and resulted in a dramatic intervention by General Obasanjo, then Head-of-State),³⁵² but a mere six weeks prior to the hajj the Saudi Arabian government announced that it was changing how pilgrims acquired and paid for accommodation and transport.³⁵³ Whereas before pilgrims (or their agent) oversaw their own accommodation and transport arrangements, now the process would be centralized through the Saudi state, to which all pilgrims paid a fixed fee for these services.³⁵⁴ The result was disastrous; Saudi Arabia proved incapable of handling all of the arrangements, and most Nigerians received inadequate to no services in return for their money, with one report claiming

³⁴⁹ "Editorial: Worshipping Allah and Mammon"; Azeez, "Nigerians and Hajj Pilgrimage"; "Our View Point: Pilgrimage for Devotees."

³⁵⁰ "Front Page Comment: Going to Mecca"; "Editorial: Good Beginning."

³⁵¹ "Our View Point: Pilgrimage for Devotees."

³⁵² Alhaji Lateef Jakande, "The Problem of Hajj Is Poor Organization," *Nigerian Tribune*, December 1, 1977; "No Hajj for 2,000?," *Nigerian Tribune*, November 18, 1977. Just twenty-four hours before Arafat, Obasanjo ordered that all aircraft of the Nigerian Air Force and Nigerian Airways be available to fly out remaining pilgrims (roughly two thousand in Lagos), even though the Jeddah airport was closed. Jakande framed this as evidence that hajj administration was broken.

³⁵³ Jakande, "The Saudi Spanner Disrupted Hajj Plans."

³⁵⁴ Jakande.

that at least forty percent of Nigerian pilgrims slept on the streets.³⁵⁵ In the aftermath, government officials, Islamic organizations and individuals decried the 1977 hajj as a national disgrace,³⁵⁶ and one commentator went to so far (though he was not the first to do so)³⁵⁷ to suggest that an alternate ‘Mecca’ and ‘Medina’ should be built in Sokoto and Jos, thus solving the problem of transportation and foreign exchange.³⁵⁸ Far less extreme, several Nigerians once again called for the government to cap the number of annual pilgrims,³⁵⁹ though a few dissenters argued this would encroach on religious freedom.³⁶⁰

The Federal Military Government enacted new policies in 1978 to address the growing sense that the hajj operation could not cope with the rising number of pilgrims, and that too many embarked on hajj out of self-interest rather than self-sacrifice to God. The key change was a drastic cut in pilgrim numbers (news well-received by Saudi Arabia),³⁶¹ pegging 1978 to fifty thousand pilgrims, slightly less than half of the 104,557 that departed in 1977.³⁶² To facilitate this cap, a quota system would allot each state with a number of slots based on the percentage of pilgrims from that state in 1977. To help guide the process of reduction, the government additionally restricted an individual’s frequency to once every three years, enforced lower and

³⁵⁵ “Nigeria Leads in 1977 Hajj But...Pilgrims Sleep in the Streets,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 29, 1977.

³⁵⁶ “‘Pilgrimage Not for the Old’ --Governor,” *The Nigerian Tribune*, January 11, 1978; Lam Adesina, “The Search Continues: Disband the Pilgrims Board,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 21, 1977; “Call to Dissolve Pilgrims Board,” *Nigerian Tribune*, November 26, 1977.

³⁵⁷ Adeleye, “Focus: Embarking on Another Extravaganza.” In this earlier example from 1969, the author, remarking that the Biafran War had strained the national economy, suggested that “we should set up a place in the far north where we can go and pray to God in similar pattern as the Hajj: If previous figures are anything to go by, we should save annually a total of nearly L1 million.”

³⁵⁸ “Each Day as My Last: Mecca and Medina at Sokoto and Jos,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 10, 1977.

³⁵⁹ “Tribune Comment: Avoidable Suffering,” *Nigerian Tribune*, December 13, 1977; Jakande, “The Unstoppable Agents: 1977 Hajj Reports”; “Tribune Comment: Deaths in Mecca,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 25, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

³⁶⁰ “Sketch Comment: Needless Deaths.”

³⁶¹ “Arabia Happy over FMG’s Directive,” *Daily Sketch*, June 26, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos. The interesting part about this is that the Saudi Ambassador in Lagos also claimed that Saudi, due to sharia, could not legally enforce any reduction on the number of pilgrims, and thus it was up to other nations (arguably though, only those not practicing sharia) to do this. Of course, Saudi Arabia would soon enact a similar policy on a global scale themselves.

³⁶² Rotimi Abe, “FMG Goes Tough: Mecca,” *New Nigerian*, June 1, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Sketch Comment: Needless Deaths.”

upper age limits, and banned pregnant women,³⁶³ all of which were in line with the recommendations found in a blistering series of reports in the *Tribune*, and the reports by the Amirul Hajj for 1977 and a nine-man task force appointed by the Military Government that same year.³⁶⁴ The response in the national press largely welcomed this reform,³⁶⁵ though some noted that the new system could easily provide room for corruption and political favoritism,³⁶⁶ a prediction that soon proved accurate. Beyond expressing hope that the cap would negate logistical problems and the prevalence of ‘bad pilgrims,’ some also pointed out that this new policy would help conserve the nation’s foreign exchange.³⁶⁷

At the end of the 1970s, the Nigerian state added layers of paperwork to protect the national economy and the reputation of the hajj. Starting in 1978, the Federal Military Government developed required all pilgrims to produce tax clearance certificates, or else their State Pilgrims Welfare Board would refuse to process their applications.³⁶⁸ Given the scale of Nigeria’s informal economy, the policy generated much frustration among hundreds of aspiring pilgrims, particularly among women. As one article put it, women faced difficulties obtaining their certificate due to “their nature of jobs,” undoubtedly referring to the fact that many Nigerian women were either self-employed or primarily housewives (though housewives were offered a

³⁶³ “A Good Policy,” *Nigerian Chronicle*, June 9, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

³⁶⁴ “Cut Number of Pilgrims Plea,” *New Nigerian*, March 10, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

³⁶⁵ “Hajj Without Tears?,” *New Nigerian*, July 5, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Opinion: Moslems and the Hajj..,” *Daily Express*, June 7, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “A Good Policy”; Lam Adesina, “The Search Continues: Dissolve Pilgrims’ Boards,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 19, 1978.

³⁶⁶ Jakande, “The Unstoppable Agents: 1977 Hajj Reports.”

³⁶⁷ “A Good Policy”; “Opinion: Moslems and the Hajj..”; Jakande, “The Unstoppable Agents: 1977 Hajj Reports.”

³⁶⁸ “Akure,” *Daily Express*, September 2, 1978, Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Pilgrimage: FMG Takes New Measures,” *Daily Sketch*, June 1, 1978, Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos.

workaround the next year).³⁶⁹ Some pilgrims faced fees around twice the cost of the hajj,³⁷⁰ and others reported offering bribes in return for the necessary paperwork.³⁷¹

The government also expanded the regime of hajj paperwork to maintain the status of the hajj. For much of the 1970s, the phrase “fake alhaji” was used in reference to either improperly behaved pilgrims³⁷² or even non-Muslims who pretended to be Muslim just so they could go to Saudi Arabia for fun,³⁷³ a problem that led to some of the earlier calls for mandatory religious screening for all pilgrims.³⁷⁴ However by the end of the 1970s, the term ‘fake alhaji’ grew to contain a literal meaning; those who had never been on hajj but lied that they had, both in speech and through adorning themselves in the Mecca uniform.³⁷⁵ In Ondo State the Pilgrims Welfare Board started in 1979 to issue a “certificate of Hajj performance and a special identity card to every pilgrim returning from hajj... to protect the sanctity of [the] hajj institution” against the “cases of impersonation by some unscrupulous imposters...who used hajj regalia to commit all sorts of crimes.”³⁷⁶ Clearly the Board was serious, for an article that announced the policy also noted that the state had already arrested 315 people for this offense. Direct government involvement in policing the matter was clearly patchy, for nearby in Abeokuta, the capital of Ogun State, citizens in 1979 felt forced to address the same problem on their own. One alhaji

³⁶⁹ “No Tax, No Hajj,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 18, 1979; “1,000 Pilgrims Barred from Hajj,” *The Punch*, September 5, 1979. At least in Lagos State, in 1979 housewives could now instead obtain a letter of support from their local government.

³⁷⁰ “500 Pilgrims in a Fix,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 9, 1979.

³⁷¹ “No Tax, No Hajj.”

³⁷² “Govt Should Curb Fake Alhajis”; Mohammed, “Public Forum: Ban False Alhajis and Alhajas”; “What the People Say: Why Fooling Us?”

³⁷³ Azeez, “Nigerians and Hajj Pilgrimage.” In this article he claims that in past five years, non-Muslims had been pretending to be Muslims to get the pilgrim passports, which had caused some to start to implore that Imams should be required to certify that a pilgrim is a Muslim. He then explains that he was on a bus in Jeddah with two of these non-Muslim pilgrims. Not realizing he spoke Yoruba they, talking in Yoruba, described how they managed to get pilgrim passports, with one confessing that she changed her name from Maria to Mariam.

³⁷⁴ “Hadj: Tougher Measures against Pilgrims Urged.”

³⁷⁵ “Hajj Pilgrims to Get Certificates,” *The Punch*, September 1, 1979; Ogunwoole, “Talk Shop: How to Be Good Muslims.”

³⁷⁶ “Hajj Pilgrims to Get Certificates.”

reported in the *Punch* that recently “the genuine Alhajis” in Abeokuta had met “to combat impiety” and those “FAKE ALHAJIS AND ALHAJAS” [sic] who had never been to Mecca yet paraded about in the Mecca uniform.³⁷⁷ Towards this end they “sent instructions to all compounds where Muslim exist urging the true Muslims there to report to the true Alhajis whoever parades himself/herself in the fake manner.”³⁷⁸ Thus, in locations where the State Pilgrims Welfare Board was less proactive in policing who could claim the status of pilgrim, local Muslim communities occasionally step in instead.

Once again, the Nigerian government relied on clerics and prominent Muslims to help enact new policies.³⁷⁹ While politicians occasionally cited the Qur’an’s stipulation that one only needed to perform the hajj once to fulfill the Islamic requirement,³⁸⁰ most politicians outsourced the task of justifying the hajj quota to clerics.³⁸¹ Beyond making the new policy palatable, clerics facilitated the allotment of hajj slots. Though the new restrictions reduced the number of applicants, most states still faced far more legitimate applicants than their slot allotment. To winnow down the pool of prospective pilgrims further, most states recruited clerics and Muslim leaders to administer a test on the Qur’an and Islamic practice.³⁸² In the case of Lagos State, this included demonstrating ablution before prayer, reading “a simple portion” of the Qur’an,

³⁷⁷ Ogunwoole, “Talk Shop: How to Be Good Muslims.”

³⁷⁸ Ogunwoole.

³⁷⁹ “Hajj Crisis: Only Islamic Leaders Can Help--Commissioner,” *New Nigerian*, March 30, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos. In this case, a commissioner in Gongola State suggested that respected clerics should voice their support for limiting the number of pilgrims over the radio and TV, because this would help government avoid blame.

³⁸⁰ “Pilgrimage Not for the Old’ --Governor”; “Hajj Crisis: Only Islamic Leaders Can Help--Commissioner.”

³⁸¹ “Hajj Crisis: Only Islamic Leaders Can Help--Commissioner.” The Gongola State Commissioner for Finance, Establishments and Service Matters urged that respected clerics should express their support for the pilgrim number reduction via radio and TV, since, he claimed, this would help the government avoid blame.

³⁸² “Test on Koran for Pilgrims,” *Daily Times*, July 21, 1978; “Hajj Crisis: Only Islamic Leaders Can Help--Commissioner”; “No Hajj for 1,000...Some Don’t Know the Daily Prayers,” *The Punch*, August 10, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Hajj 1978--The Old to Stay Home,” *Daily Times*, June 27, 1978, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims - 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Hajj ’79: 10,000 Scramble,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 6, 1978.

identifying the five daily prayers, and a basic test on the Qur'an.³⁸³ While the tests successfully eliminated thousands of aspiring pilgrims, one, perhaps unintended consequence of this success was that it validated previous allegations that most pilgrims undergoing the hajj did so without proper Islamic knowledge, which gave fuel to critique³⁸⁴ and satire such as the political cartoon³⁸⁵ below:



Figure 9. Political Cartoon, 1978

Here a man cajoles another man holding a whip, in close proximity to a student's bare behind, pleading "Softly, softly, Alhaji. You know you failed the Koran test too."

As is perhaps already clear, one consequence of the growth of the annual number of Nigerian pilgrims was that the hajj administration became increasingly centralized, often with

³⁸³ "No Hajj for 1,000...Some Don't Know the Daily Prayers"; "Test on Koran for Pilgrims."

³⁸⁴ "Ombudstribune."

³⁸⁵ "[Cartoon]," *Nigerian Tribune*, September 12, 1978.

great public support.³⁸⁶ While ten state pilgrim welfare boards operated with a significant degree of autonomy and variation in 1967, by 1971 they received greater oversight from a new Pilgrims Commission housed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in 1975 the Federal Military Government established a national Nigerian Pilgrims Board (NPB), with Alhaji Abubakar Gumi as the chairman.³⁸⁷ Whereas before the state boards appointed or rejected hajj agents, arranged transport and housing for pilgrims, oversaw medical facilities, foreign exchange, and passports, now all of these duties were to be controlled by the NPB.³⁸⁸ While the response to the NPB after its first hajj in 1976 was mainly positive,³⁸⁹ after the disastrous hajj of 1977 several calls by journalists, clerics, and hajj bureaucrats to dissolve the NPB and decentralize the hajj administration arose throughout Nigeria and continued until the end of the decade.³⁹⁰ Yet despite this criticism, the Nigerian government remained committed to the centralization of the hajj administration as the best, if imperfect, solution to expanded Nigerian hajj.

Conclusion

To return to the Ahmadiyya crisis, this event—and the religious anxieties and judgments it aroused—fit within a larger mood of spiritual insecurity that arose with the widening gap between rich and poor in 1970s Nigeria. By the end of 1973, when the Nigerian press first reported the Saudi refusal to grant visas to Ahmadis, Nigerian Muslims (along with their non-

³⁸⁶ “‘Create a Ministry for Pilgrims,’” *Daily Times*, March 12, 1971; “Muslims Call for National Pilgrim Welfare Board,” *Nigerian Tribune*, March 11, 1972.

³⁸⁷ Oloso, “Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980,” 177–83.

³⁸⁸ Oloso, 183–84.

³⁸⁹ A Abiodun Lamidi, “Solution to Pilgrims’ Suffering,” *Nigerian Tribune*, January 3, 1976; “Script of NBC Newstalk: ‘This Year’s Pilgrimage to the Muslim Holy Places.’”

³⁹⁰ Jakande, “The Problem of Hajj Is Poor Organization”; “Call to Dissolve Pilgrims Board”; “‘Pilgrimage Not for the Old’ --Governor”; “Tribune Comment: Deaths in Mecca”; “Tribune Comment: Hajj, 1978,” *Nigerian Tribune*, July 7, 1978, Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Decentralize Pilgrims Board,” *Nigerian Herald*, January 9, 1978, Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1978, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; “Sketch Comment: Towards Hitch-Free Pilgrimage,” *Daily Sketch*, November 16, 1979, National Archive, Ibadan.

Muslim peers) were already well trained to think dichotomously of ‘good’ vs. ‘bad,’ and ‘fake’ vs. ‘real’ Muslims and pilgrims. This thinking continued throughout the decade into the 1980s. Much of the qualities and practices ascribed to ‘bad’ Muslims—smuggling, greed, prostitution—were understood (at times in a highly gendered fashion) as national problems involving far more than Muslim Nigerians. Smuggling in particular was on the rise in the 1970s,³⁹¹ and was a problem that engulfed several independent African nations at the time.³⁹² Yet in the case of Nigeria, it was Muslim pilgrims who absorbed the bulk of the nation’s ire, an imbalance that led a principal of an Arabic high school to voice his disagreement with the idea “that alhajis were the brains behind smuggling.” Hajj, he pointed out, occurred just once a year whereas smuggling provided a full-year job for some.³⁹³ Likewise, a cleric devoted one week of his Islamic column to defend the national expense of hajj by noting the other types of equally great expenditure that the “economic moralists” conveniently ignored.³⁹⁴ If pilgrims attracted more than their fair share of scorn, this is perhaps because some pilgrims demanded to be addressed by the alhaji or alhaja title and publically performed, with increasing ostentation, their status as venerable Muslims; it was not just the smuggling that bothered people, but the hypocrisy. Moreover, in the case of the hajj at stake was not only the national economy and a sense of patriotism, but the respectability of both the institution of the hajj and the Islamic faith, a claim repeatedly made by Nigerian citizens and clerics. And the hajj deserved protection because even after pilgrims became

³⁹¹ “Smuggling 21 Charged,” *Daily Express*, December 8, 1973, 1; “Rev Sister Held by Customs at Airport,” *Nigerian Tribune*, September 22, 1973, 1, 12; Stephen S. Golub, “Entrepôt Trade and Smuggling in West Africa: Benin, Togo and Nigeria,” *The World Economy* 35, no. 9 (September 1, 2012): 1142; Stephen Ellis, “West Africa’s International Drug Trade,” *African Affairs* 108, no. 431 (2009): 175–76.

³⁹² A. G. Adebayo, “Currency Devaluation and Rank: The Yoruba and Akan Experiences,” *African Studies Review* 50, no. 2 (2007): 96; NM Henstridge, “De-Monetisation, Inflation and Coffee: The Demand for Money in Uganda,” *Journal of African Economies* 8, no. 3 (October 1999): 349; Jennifer Hart, “‘One Man, No Chop’: Licit Wealth, Good Citizens, and the Criminalization of Drivers in Postcolonial Ghana,” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 46, no. 3 (2013): 392–94.

³⁹³ “Principal on Pilgrimage,” *Nigerian Tribune*, October 7, 1971.

³⁹⁴ Olatunde, “Weekly Muslim Sermon: Hajj: Institution Not Extravaganza.”

associated with unsavory activities the alhaji title *did* continue to exert prestige within Nigerian Muslim communities, albeit with decreasing frequency as the 1970s drew to a close. Pilgrims were given privileged visibility at government and religious functions,³⁹⁵ acted as spokesmen³⁹⁶ or mediators³⁹⁷ for their broader Muslim communities; Muslim leaders framed pilgrims' prayers to God as especially potent³⁹⁸ (and made special requests for them during the Biafran war);³⁹⁹ government officials and prominent Muslims claimed the hajj had the ability to ensure moral behavior by participating civil servants⁴⁰⁰ and to "produce a liberalizing influence on all Muslims,"⁴⁰¹ and the alhaji status remained a respectable aspiration.⁴⁰² Put another way, pilgrim behavior generated such scrutiny because even while lamenting the actions of several pilgrims it was possible for many, like one op-ed writer to the *Tribune* in 1972, to still believe in the hajj's potential benefit to the nation, arguing as he did that if all Nigerian pilgrims had been "devout and dedicated Muslims, this country would have been a better place than what it is today."⁴⁰³ At least one cleric even went so far as to declare that even "prostitutes and pimps should be encouraged to go to Mecca and be influenced by it."⁴⁰⁴

Finally, the hajj debate diverged from other national debates over wealth and prestige in

³⁹⁵ "Bayo Addresses Ijebu People," *Daily Sketch*, August 4, 1967; "Three Muslim Chiefs Turbanned at Ikeja," *Daily Sketch*, November 29, 1967.

³⁹⁶ "West Alhajis Thank Governor."

³⁹⁷ Interview with Alhaji Badmus Abdkabir in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, January 2015; Interview with Aremu Lateef Olanukanoni in Lagos, Nigeria.; "Egba Muslim Row Now Off," *Morning Post*, February 25, 1965. The interviews both brought up the mediation of disputes as something that, as alhajis, the local Muslim community requested of their relatives who had gone on the hajj in the 1970s.

³⁹⁸ "Muslims Urged to Fast and Pray for Nigeria," *Daily Sketch*, August 3, 1967.

³⁹⁹ "World Moslems to Pray for Us," *Morning Post*, February 21, 1967; "Pilgrims Urged to Pray for Peace," *Daily Sketch*, February 15, 1968; "Pilgrims Urged to Pray for Peace," *Daily Sketch*, February 22, 1968.

⁴⁰⁰ "Plea to Alhajis," *Daily Sketch*, April 27, 1965, Folder: Nigeria - Religion (Islam) Pilgrims, 1969-1977, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; "Muslims Urged to Protect Islam," *Nigerian Tribune*, March 3, 1972.

⁴⁰¹ Alhaji Gafaru Mohammed, "Pilgrims Board Advised," *Nigerian Tribune*, July 6, 1976.

⁴⁰² "Id-El-Kabir Celebration in Midwest," *Nigerian Observer*, January 5, 1974, Serials, Abuja National Library. Here the caption of a photo of a boy at an Eid prayer ground, describes him as "holding fast and firm to his prayer beads like the Alhaji he hopes to be."

⁴⁰³ Bola Adekoya, "Letters: Dishonest Pilgrims," *Nigerian Tribune*, March 10, 1972.

⁴⁰⁴ "Mecca Is Open to All Moslems--Ali," *Daily Times*, August 2, 1974.

Nigeria since Middle Eastern countries,⁴⁰⁵ especially Saudi Arabia, bore greater influence on debates surrounding Nigerian practices of Islam and the hajj. As such, smuggling by pilgrims was not only reprehensible in terms of individual greed corroding the national economy, but in terms of Nigeria's reputation within the broader Muslim world, a concern well-entrenched by 1970s thanks to earlier efforts principally by Ahmadu Bello and Abubakar Gumi. The raised awareness of Saudi Arabia was in part due to photographic practices adopted by Nigerian pilgrims in the 1950s to document and share images of their hajj on their return.⁴⁰⁶

Yet if the global pull of Saudi Arabia had grown substantially greater in the 1970s, it was by no means hegemonic or complete. Pilgrims and even clerics continued to espouse misinformation and exaggerations about Mecca, leading many Nigerian Muslims to consider Saudi Arabia and the hajj to be far more difficult than in actuality.⁴⁰⁷ This misinformation resulted in less advantageous tactics by Nigerian pilgrims, such as bringing large quantities of basic foodstuffs to Mecca into the mid-1960s due to "tales about Saudi Arabia of 40 years ago," a place "without adequate food" when in fact food could by then be obtained there easily.⁴⁰⁸ And while Nigerian Muslims largely admired what they experienced in Saudi Arabia, some disagreed

⁴⁰⁵ Azeez, "Nigerians and Hajj Pilgrimage," 16–17. In criticizing Nigerian pilgrim, Azeez claimed certain practices were merely Nigerian innovations, using their absence in other countries as proof: "It is hardly the practice in moslem countries, notably in the Middle-East and North Africa, to refer to moslems who have performed the Hajj as Alhaji and Alhaja." Likewise the "Meccan wears....are simply artifice."

⁴⁰⁶ Interview with Alhaji Tunde Bello-Bello in Lagos, Nigeria.; Interview with Alhaji Muhammed Ademola Mustapha in Lagos, Nigeria.; Interview with Alhaja Bushra Bisi Oloso in Ibadan, Nigeria. Mustapha and Oloso both reported seeing photographs from relatives in the 1950s, whereas Bello-Bello saw photographs from his mother in 1976.

⁴⁰⁷ Oloso, "Hajj and Its Operations in Nigeria, 1954-1980," 290–92, 302; "Alhaji Ade Thanni Reports from Saudi Arabia: Arrested Nigerian Pilgrims Released." Some examples of what clerics would say during the farewell parties, taken from Oloso's dissertation: "They describe Arafat as a slippery mountain which all pilgrims must climb and in an attempt of which many fall and get trampled to death. They also describe the constant missing of many pilgrims who may be abducted by jinns who according to the Mallams usually disguise as human-beings and also come for pilgrimage! They also say that jinns and angels organize a market at a particular spot on the plain of 'Arafat where they auction their articles of merchandize and sell them at give-away prices only to lure greedy buyers away to the oblivion!" As far as exaggerations by pilgrims, one alhaji Oloso interviewed claimed that in Mecca, roosters were as big as zebras, and when pressured to be more accurate, would agree they were no smaller than a ram.

⁴⁰⁸ "Alhaji Ade Thanni Reports from Saudi Arabia: Arrested Nigerian Pilgrims Released."

with the Islamic practices they witnessed there, such as *purdah*.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁹ Interview with Alhaji Abdwaheed Abdhamid in Muslim, Ibadan, Nigeria. In Abdhamid's case, the practice he found concerning was *purdah*, or female seclusion. This was while studying abroad in Medina in 1980. He admired much about Saudi culture, but not the lack of "freedom" for women.

Conclusion

The act of learning how others see you and seeing and comparing yourself with others—this is a key part of any travel to foreign places. When traveling with a group of fellow citizens, on a trip arranged by your government, such travel can also invite comparisons at the level of the nation—whether governmental, economic, social, etc. This dissertation has outlined how comparisons, self-assessments, and feelings of shame and pride have driven debates over the hajj in terms of its organization and Islamic practice. Such debates have attracted much more attention of Nigerians—Muslim and Christian—than other types of international travel by Nigerians. This is because what is unique about the hajj is its ability to transverse scales; as an annual gathering of Muslims from all over the world, conducting the same rites in the same place at the same time, the hajj intersects global, national, and local politics and Islamic debates. As this dissertation has discussed, which scale bares greater influence on a pilgrim's experience is tied to historical contingencies. Within Nigeria, overland travel dislocated pilgrims from their local communities for years, sometimes even permanently, and brought them into intimate contact with other peoples, even if they worked to maintain the memory of their homeland. Aviation and the subsequent rise of pilgrim numbers along with independence from Britain in 1960 led the hajj bureaucracy to enter a nationalist register. These developments have provided an ever-growing number of Nigerian Muslims a common experience (or aspiration) to discuss and debate. Of the five pillars of Islam, the hajj is the only one that requires state organization, and the co-participation of Muslims. If a Muslim comes to disagree with their imam, they can find a different mosque—but if a Sufi finds himself in the same hotel room as a member of Izala,

the Nigerian movement that began targeting Sufism in the 1980s, he has little recourse. Since its nationalization, the hajj has flung a diverse array of Muslims together, sometimes in cramped hotel rooms, sometimes across impassioned letters to the editor.

As this dissertation has explored, the colonial bureaucratization of the Nigerian hajj and its afterlives defy easy categorization as a result of their multiscalar nature. As a result, the hajj has revealed occasional tensions caused from the British pernicious fiction (and organization of governance) of a “Muslim North” and “Christian South.”¹ While some research, such as Omenka’s study of the rhetoric of Biafran separatists, evidence the enduring legacies of Britain’s handiwork (as do contemporary Nigerian politics), the hajj provides a counterpoint to this worrisome trend. Occasional tensions within Nigeria’s Muslim community notwithstanding, the hajj has long joined Muslims of a variety of ethnicities, sects, and socioeconomic standing—whether on the road, in a plane, fighting for hajj reform, or carrying out a fact-finding mission in Saudi Arabia.

Such intersections between different Muslims predates British colonial rule, albeit at a much smaller scale. The first record of pilgrims from the southwest, according to Gbadamosi, observed in the 1860s “several” Muslims in and around Lagos who had completed the hajj, and many others who had journeyed to Kano, Sokoto or even Tripoli. By 1877, this accomplishment had become common enough that it had given way to a shared sartorial display by pilgrims in Lagos, who wore green turbans to index their accomplishment.² Little is known about the details of these early journeys from the southwest, but they most likely joined caravans departing from Kano—or at the very least interacted with Hausaphone pilgrims on the road. Thus, it is

¹ Nicholas Ibeawuchi Omenka, “Blaming the Gods: Christian Religious Propaganda in the Nigeria-Biafra War,” *The Journal of African History* 51, no. 3 (2010): 368.

² T. G. O. Gbadamosi, *The Growth of Islam among the Yoruba, 1841-1908*, Ibadan History Series (Harlow, England) (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1978), 61.

unsurprising that the British colonial state's approach to the hajj as solely a matter for the Northern Provinces failed. As we saw, Yoruba pilgrims kept showing up in places where the British didn't expect them, eventually prompting the colonial state to extend the northern-based Nigerian Repatriation Fund and Pilgrimage Control Scheme to southwestern Muslims. When the British began ceding control of the hajj to Muslim elites, those from the southwest and north (mostly) willingly cooperated and shared a similar vision of what reforms ought to happen. Such interethnic respect did not merely exist among elites. Though he was a contested figure in national politics, Ahmadu Bello received letters from Muslims throughout the nation, sometimes even in Yoruba, requesting his sponsorship or simply asking for the privilege to pay to join his VIP plane. Thus, in a time when Nigeria was on the brink of being torn apart in a Civil War that played upon ethnic and religious tensions, southwestern and northern Muslims had begun thinking of themselves in national terms, as *Nigerian* pilgrims. In contemporary times, as evidenced by Farouk's narrative that began this dissertation, Muslims of different ethnolinguistic and geographic identities continue to interact through the hajj.³

Yet if the basic pragmatics of the hajj—its transportation and organization—have been a point of agreement between Muslims and brought them together, the meaning of the hajj—and how this meaning interacts with a pilgrim's daily lived experience—more often than not varies across scales, creating a “disjunctive order” at any given time.⁴ Scholars focused on northern Nigeria have noted the ability of groups that are largely socially marginalized by mainstream Muslims to gain religious prestige within their communities after they return from Mecca,

³ Usman Shehu Liman, *Hajj 91: Travel Notes of a Nigerian Pilgrim* (Zairia [Nigeria]: Ashel Enterprises, 1996). Usman's narrative provides another relatively recent example.

⁴ Susan O'Brien, “Pilgrimage, Power, and Identity: The Role of the Hajj in the Lives of Nigerian Hausa Bori Adepts,” *Africa Today* 46, no. 3/4 (1999): 13; Arjun Appadurai, “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 7, no. 2 (1990): 295. The idea to use Appadurai comes from O'Brien's article on the hajj.

despite their Islamically unrespectable line of work.⁵ Some practices connected to the hajj have remained local, even in contemporary times of connectivity, such as the Sabaka Night celebration enjoyed by some Lagosian socialites (even while attracting approbation).⁶ Other practices connected to the hajj have easily crossed ethnic and geographic boundaries, or divided more by gender and generations, such as the Mecca tooth, hajj portrait photography and display, and gift-giving.⁷

Yet if the meaning of the hajj has historically (and continues) to contain difference across scale, in Nigeria technologies of communication and statecraft have made it—and the debates it creates—increasingly national. With the development of national politics in the 1950s, several political parties endorsed the importance of hajj reform, which sparked debate—among Muslims and Christians—at a variety of scales. Aviation, starting in the late 1940s and becoming the dominant form of hajj transport by the early 1960s, scaled up the hajj in terms of annual numbers, particularly during profitable seasons of cash crops like cocoa. Thanks to all of these developments, by the 1970s debates over the ability of the Ahmadiyya to undertake the hajj quickly became a national issue, despite the fact that the sect’s members were concentrated in the southwest. The popular figure of the “corrupt pilgrim” also enjoyed national purchase at this time, as did discussions over sartorial practices connected to the hajj.

This strengthening of a nationalist scale applies as well to Nigerian pilgrims’ experience within Saudi Arabia. As described, for much of the first half of the twentieth century Nigerian pilgrims were absorbed into the category of “Takruni,” a blanket term applied to all West

⁵ Rudolf Pell. Gaudio, *Allah Made Us: Sexual Outlaws in an Islamic African City*, New Directions in Ethnography ;3 (Chichester, U.K. ; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 112; O’Brien, “Pilgrimage, Power, and Identity: The Role of the Hajj in the Lives of Nigerian Hausa Bori Adepts.”

⁶ Interview with Alhaji Muhammed Ademola Mustapha in Lagos, Nigeria., Recording, April 2015. Sabaka Nights are best described as glitzy affairs, with music, mixing of genders, and even alcohol.

⁷ O’Brien, “Pilgrimage, Power, and Identity: The Role of the Hajj in the Lives of Nigerian Hausa Bori Adepts,” 30–31. O’Brien’s description of practices of prestige in the north match my own observations in the southwest.

Africans in the holy land. At other moments along the pilgrimage trail, one's ethnolinguistic identity was more important, such as when pilgrims were matched based on language to Sheikhs who served as middlemen between them and Sudanese or Saudi authorities. While racism and linguistic barriers assured that the importance of such categorizations did not disappear, a new national identity began to strengthen. As we saw, a number of factors contributed to this development. Politically, the decolonization of Africa gave rise to new national governments that began to control more tightly the movement through their borders. Technologically, the rise of aviation limited pilgrim itineraries to just two countries: Nigeria and Saudi Arabia. Arriving in plane loads rather than trickling in by sambuk, Nigerians now shared one or two *mutawwifs* who arranged for them to share transportation and hotel rooms. A national culture of the hajj also began. Starting in the late 1950s, a national medical and welfare mission was established, and all Nigerian pilgrims gathered under a national flag on the plain of Arafat.⁸ Today, Nigerian pilgrims traveling with their state government all wear custom wax-print uniforms when not in a state of *ihram*, making them easily identifiable. Thus, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the Nigerian hajj in the age of globalism has gotten progressively more national compared to overland journey that once brought pilgrims into a range of cultural settings, often intimately.

Not all reasons for national identification have been positive. As we saw, in the 1970s Nigerians became painfully aware of their national status—and how others perceived it—when Saudi Arabian customs authorities subjected them to increased screening in the airport, due to the illegal activities of a minority of their fellow citizens (Chapter 4). Since Nigeria's economic downturn in the 1980s, pilgrims have frequently come away feeling disappointed at how their country compares with Saudi Arabia. Alhaji Otun Abdul Gamy, who went on the hajj in 2003, exemplified a common sentiment among Nigerians I spoke to when I asked if had ever had a

⁸ Ian Heiz Eual, "When Religion Becomes State Liability," *West African Pilot*, July 3, 1958, 2.

dream of Mecca:

I spent almost forty days there, and for that forty days there wasn't a *day* that there was no light...Ok, let's say Mecca and Medina now, the distance is more than 700km. And we cover it overnight. We cover it overnight. And let me tell you something. Through the trip...wherever people are residing, in the big forest, you see light there, everywhere is illuminated, even in the tunnel... twenty kilometers in the rock...Hardly do we see a florescent that is off. Everything is illuminated. With a/c. So how can you come back and not dream about what you have seen?...So when we are now coming back to Nigeria, and you know you are landing at the Ikeja airport, Lagos now. What happened? We landed maybe 3am. What happened? No light. Everything was DARK! **So we are all complaining, what is all this nonsense, as if we are not Nigerians, but we are Nigerians!** But with what we have experienced there for forty days, no problem, when you are going by the roadside, if you need hot water, you just open the tap, you need cold water, you open the tap, in your house, same thing, no problem! No mosquito. So all this, when you now come back to Nigeria, there is no way you can sleep without having dream of where you came from [Mecca].⁹ [Emphasis added]

Alhaji Gamy, so awed by the steady electricity and running water, describes himself and fellow passengers as acting “as if we are not Nigerians” when they experience dismay upon landing in a dark airport. A number of informants, whether Yoruba or Hausa, made similar negative comparisons and feelings of “shame” regarding electricity, light, traffic, telecommunications, and security.¹⁰ Likewise, a few informants who had traveled on hajj through different national contingents (either from the UK or an Arab nation), observed the relative comfort of their hajj compared to that of their fellow Nigerians.¹¹

Given its ability to bring national identity and difference into sharp relief (while simultaneously nurturing a sense of Muslim unity), how might the case of the Nigerian hajj contribute to the literature on nationalism? Scholars of religion have long productively worked with and critiqued Benedict Anderson's seminal *Imagined Communities* since its publication

⁹ Interview with Alhaji Otun Abdul Gamy in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, March 2015.

¹⁰ Interview with Alhaji Abdu Waasin Aiyepola in Lagos, Nigeria., Audio Recording, April 2015; Interview with Alhaji Abdwaheed Abdhamid in Muslim, Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, November 2014; Interview with Dr. Barihi Adetunji in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, January 2015; Interview with Alhaji Yahaya Baka Ahmed in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, November 2014. At times such experiences could be disorienting—Dr. Barihi told me that as a result of the constant electricity, “We don't know that there is night unless you look at your watch!”

¹¹ Interview with Professor Dawud Noibi in Ibadan, Nigeria., Notes, October 2014; Interview with Alhaja Bushra Bisi Oloso in Ibadan, Nigeria., Audio Recording, June 2015.

over thirty years ago. Anderson's assertion that religious community acted as a precursor to a secular nationalism, has received a fair bit of push back, often from examples from the global south.¹² James Ockey's microhistory of Haji Sulong Abdulkadir al-Fatani (a notable pilgrim from modern-day Thailand during the early twentieth century) starts by considering the "nationalist pilgrimages," of "bureaucratic functionaries" from post to post, that Anderson argued helped the functionaries—who might otherwise share little in common—develop a sense of national (or imperial) identity.¹³ Like this dissertation has argued in regard to Nigeria, Ockey finds that the hajj among Southeast Asian pilgrims could strengthen national or even more local identities, as well as a sense of belonging to a universal Muslim community. Nor is this process linear. Haji Sulong lived, studied, and taught in Mecca from the age of twelve to thirty-two, during which his knowledge and devotion to Islam deepened. Yet, as Ockey points out, he would have also encountered Arab nationalism and other members of his homeland.¹⁴ When he returned to Pattani, his cosmopolitan knowledge allowed him to become a venerated figure by fellow Muslims, which in turn attracted attention from Buddhist politicians in Bangkok looking to liaison with local leaders.¹⁵ Sulong's politics did not align with Islam, until a new prime minister enacted "forced assimilation," in part targeting Muslims.¹⁶

Like the case of Sulong, Nigerian Muslims have become more acutely aware of their nationality through the hajj, despite Islam not being a majority religion in their country (albeit a

¹² Edward A Tiryakian, "The Missing Religious Factor in Imagined Communities," *American Behavioral Scientist* 55, no. 10 (October 2011): 1395–1414; Mariano Barbato, Sinja Hantscher, and Markus Lederer, "Imagining Jihad," *Global Affairs* 2, no. 4 (August 7, 2016): 419–29; James Ockey, "Individual Imaginings: The Religio-Nationalist Pilgrimages of Haji Sulong Abdulkadir al-Fatani," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 42, no. 1 (January 2, 2011): 89–119.

¹³ Ockey, "Individual Imaginings: The Religio-Nationalist Pilgrimages of Haji Sulong Abdulkadir al-Fatani," 90; Benedict R. O'G. (Benedict Richard O'Gorman) Anderson 1936-2015., *Imagined Communities Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism [E-Book]* (London ; New York : Verso, 2006), 53–55.

¹⁴ Ockey, "Individual Imaginings: The Religio-Nationalist Pilgrimages of Haji Sulong Abdulkadir al-Fatani," 103, 105.

¹⁵ Ockey, 108.

¹⁶ Ockey, 110.

substantial one).¹⁷ As is the case in many African countries, in Nigeria religion (including Islam) has often brought different ethnicities together before the development of a national culture.¹⁸ And the experience of travel and of reforming the hajj have consistently brought Muslims from across the southwest and north together, often in intimate affective ways. Sartorial choices by Muslim politicians in the 1950s–1960s emphasized their alhaji status, drawing political legitimacy from this religious rite. Furthermore politicians, whether Muslim or Christian, encouraged pilgrims to view themselves as representing the nation when they instructed them to be “good ambassadors.” Of course as we saw, despite a shared connection to Islam ethnic tensions have sometimes come to the foreground, such as during the Ahmadiyya crisis. Regardless, the experience of the hajj (and the collective aspiration to perform it, and defend it) has in the twentieth century contributed to Muslims’ sense of themselves as *Nigerian* Muslims, even if this overlaps with other forms of identity. This process started in the colonial period, with the development of roads and national identification paperwork, and was solidified in the era of nationalism when aviation aided the desire of elites to exercise more control over the hajj.

One legacy of the colonial fiction of a “Muslim North” and a “Christian South” in relation to the hajj, is the fact that it took until the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria Act of 1990 for a national Muslim body to oversee the hajj. Previously, the hajj—much like under the colonial era—had been orchestrated mainly at the level of the region, and later the state, albeit with a notable increase of collaboration across geographies arising in the rise of nationalism during the 1950s. Today, the National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON) works closely with State Pilgrimage Hajj Boards to regulate and standardize (in theory, at least) everything from application fees, hajj uniforms, passports, religious screening tests, inoculations, and flight

¹⁷ Of course, the difference between Nigeria and Thailand is great, given that Muslims in Thailand constituted a small minority, whereas in Nigeria they are roughly half of the population.

¹⁸ Tiryakian, “The Missing Religious Factor in Imagined Communities,” 1397–1405.

schedules. That such arrangements would be overseen by a centralized body seems intuitive, suggesting that decades of regionalized colonial policy in regards to Islam left a mark.

If a latency towards centralization might be relatively innocuous, a more pernicious affect of this fictive colonial divide is observed in discourse surrounding the hajj in terms of Muslim and Christian relations, particularly in the south. As we saw, in the build up to Nigeria's independence in 1960, politics rose to the national scale as did debates over the country's future political culture. In both the north and southwest, hajj reform was a priority for political elites and their supporters. In the southwest, many Muslims framed hajj reform as necessary in order for them to gain an equal footing with their Christian peers, and Christian politicians (eventually) endorsed hajj reform to appeal to Muslim voters. But the hajj, and the increased connection between Nigerian Muslims and the Middle East also provoked fears of a possible Islamization of the country as well a sense of unfairness of having one religion enjoy subsidized travel at the collective expense of the nation, of which some Muslims agreed. Of course, the colonial government's main impetus and efforts to control the hajj were centered around the north, where Islam predominated; it is little wonder then that when a system with a northern-bias got adapted to a religiously split nation that it would result in tensions and debate.

Such tensions persist into the present in ways that are clear as well as more indirect. Over the course of fieldwork, countless Nigerian Muslims—regardless of ethnicity, gender, or regional hometown—emphasized to me that the hajj is *not* tourism. To understand why so many would feel the need to explicitly tell this to me (and as a white foreigner, many assumed I was Christian)¹⁹, one needs only to remember the contentious position of the Nigerian hajj since the nation's independence in 1960, and the demand by Christians to have their own “pilgrimage” to Jerusalem—a trip that an equal number of Nigerian Muslims scoffed at *as tourism*. The

¹⁹ Thanks to Elisha Renne for reminding me of this.

importance of this distinction, though based on the fact that the hajj is a religious requirement for all Muslims who have the ability, is thus also bound up in contemporary politics and interfaith relations.

Though I did not conduct research in eastern Nigeria, the small literature concerning Islam in the region points to how discourses around the hajj have refracted in this predominately Christian space. Misty Bastian observed an “alhaji” style adopted by Igbo women in the 1980s; though not all Igbo men approved women dressing like men, some tolerated it unlike other gendered sartorial borrowings, which Bastian attributes to the dimension of satire against a detested group—powerful northern elites—in the women’s “alhaji” fabrication.²⁰ Meanwhile, a minority Igbo Muslim population has faced hostility since at least the late 1950s,²¹ and continues to be ostracized by their Igbo peers up until the present.²² Such discrimination is also alleged against their co-religionists,²³ including in regards to their occasional omission from the organization of the hajj.²⁴ An area worth further research in order to examine the range of ways and degrees that the colonial “Muslim north” and “Christian south” divide has played out, would be to see if anxiety pertaining to the hajj has been particularly acute in the predominately Christian east.

The hajj—actively desired by Nigerians and predating colonial rule, rather than say

²⁰ Misty Bastian, “Female ‘Alhajis’ and Entrepreneurial Fashions: Flexible Identities in Southeastern Nigerian Clothing Practice,” in *Clothing and Difference: Embodied Identities in Colonial and Post-Colonial Africa*, ed. Hildi Hendrickson, Body, Commodity, Text (Duke University Press, 1996), 104, 105, 110.

²¹ Simon Ottenberg, “A Moslem Igbo Village,” *Cahiers d’Études Africaines* 11, no. 42 (1971): 231–60.

²² “Ndigbo Muslims Unite, Align with Igbo Agenda,” *Vanguard*, December 21, 2018; Wole Mosadomi, “Nobody Forced Me into Islam, Charity Uzoechina Insists,” *Vanguard*, July 29, 2013, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/07/nobody-forced-me-into-islam-charity-uzoechina-insists/>; Urowayino Warami, “2019: Group Begg Igbo Muslims to Join Politics,” *Vanguard*, October 19, 2018, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/10/2019-group-begs-igbo-muslims-to-join-politics/>.

²³ Adekunle, “National Mosque: Igbo Muslims Grumbles over Delay in Appointment of Imam,” *Vanguard*, October 30, 2018, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2018/11/national-mosque-igbo-muslims-grumbles-over-delay-in-appointment-of-imam/>.

²⁴ Muhammad Ajah, “Nigeria: We Are Marginalised - Igbo Muslims Tell Obasanjo,” *Weekly Trust*, November 29, 2003.

prisons or oil production—presents a complicated case for teasing out colonial legacies. The colonial impact on the hajj does not fit the model—common to indirect rule—of the British creating a new structure based on the codification of a pre-existing elite structure (eg. customary law). Though precolonial states had organization the hajj, others—such as the Sokoto Caliphate—discouraged it (Chapter 1). Moreover, alongside any state organization, individual pilgrims had set off on their own itineraries. As we saw, unlike other aspects of Islamic society in northern Nigeria,²⁵ the colonial state’s efforts to regulate the hajj impacted a minority of pilgrims. Thus, the Nigerianization of the hajj was less a takeover by elites of an entrenched colonial system but more an opportunity for elites to reform a weak, ineffectual bureaucracy to promote an act of religious worship, the importance of which existed independent of any colonial efforts. Yet, the colonial fiction of a “Muslim North” and a “Christian South” did impact the roll of the Nigerianization of the hajj, as well as the response to it.

My method of tracking the state and its technologies, print culture, pilgrim experience and affect, has allowed me to capture the multiscalar complexities of the hajj and its development in Nigeria. The case of the Nigerian hajj perhaps serves as an apt example of Ann Stoler’s concept of “duress,” which “has temporal, spatial, and affective coordinates.”²⁶ For Stoler, the value of this concept is that it allows for colonial “histories that yield neither to too smooth continuities nor too abrupt epochal breaks” by making room for “the uneven, recursive qualities of the visions and practices that imperial formations have animated.”²⁷ While examining the state and its technologies suggests a degree of continuity, pilgrim experience and affect have pointed to moments and spaces of disjuncture that defy neat delineation between

²⁵ Muhammad Sani. Umar, *Islam and Colonialism: Intellectual Responses of Muslims of Northern Nigeria to British Colonial Rule*, Islam in Africa, 1570-3754 ;v. 5 (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2006).

²⁶ Ann Laura. Stoler, *Duress Imperial Durabilities in Our Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 6.

²⁷ Stoler, 6.

colonial and postcolonial. Nigeria's vibrant print culture, uniquely in the southwest since the late nineteenth century, serves as a record of the state, experience and affect, as well as practices (local, regional, national) of prestige and controversies generated by the hajj. Such a method is, I'd argue, particularly critical for a topic such as the hajj, which looms large not only in terms of its transnational bureaucratic complications, but in Muslims' sense of spiritual connection to God and their co-religionists.

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