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Imamship in Ogbomoso Central Mosque: History, Appointment and Function

— By —

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Abstract

Imamship is a position of leadership that is considered statutory and assumed only by qualification. In Ogbomosho, Jumu'at Mosques have proliferated but only one Central Mosque exists and it is located at the heart of the town. So far, the current Imam is the twelfth of the Chief Imams the town has had. This work researched into the historical survey of the chief imams with a view to identifying the sequence of their Imamship and the development the office has brought to the city of Ogbomosho in particular and to the Muslim community in general. Historical research method was majorly relied upon in the work and a combination of oral interview and personal observation are adopted as research tools. Findings of the study revealed that appointment of Imam in Ogbomosho is strongly by approval of the Soun of Ogbomoso and the nomination shall come by rotation from the traditional Imamship families. The paper concluded by recommending that Islamic guidelines in the selection of Imam should be strictly observed to avoid internal crises among the Muslims in the town and that Da'wah activities therein should be coordinated by the Chief Imam.

Keywords: *Imamship, Jumu'at, Ogbomoso, Soun*

Introduction

Mosque is primarily the Muslim's place of worship(Q72:18). It is called *Masjid* in Arabic, plural (*Masājid*). The mosque has other functions apart from being a place for the observation of prayers. Most of these functions have to do with the coordination of Muslims' social and political affairs. The Prophet's Mosque in Madinah served as a place of worship, a school, a place of arbitration and many others during and after the time of the Prophet. This explains why Al Azhar, one of the oldest universities in the

world, started as a mosque wherein learning takes place. The origin of mosque as a place of worship dated back to the time of the Prophet while in Makkah despite all constraints. Although the verses on the observation of Jum'ah prayer were revealed in Makkah, the circumstance there did not allow the Prophet to observe it. His migration to Madinah paved the way for the first Jum'ah prayer in Islam, which was observed in Madinah with Mus'ab bn Umayr as the first person to bring people together for prayer on Friday before the arrival of the Prophet.¹

Nine mosques were in the city of Madinah at the time of the Prophet but the Prophet's Mosque was the only recognised Jum'ah mosque. The reason for this is the small size of the population of Muslim community coupled with the interest of the companions in meeting the Prophet at least once in a week. The expansion in the Muslim community in the days after necessitated an increase in the number of Jum'at mosques in cities but then, the ancient mosque of the cities which in most cases, is located in the heart of the city is considered the central mosque of the city. In Ogbomoso, the central mosque is located in the heart of Ogbomoso, a place very close to the palace of the king. The Chief Imam is the executive officer of the Mosque and his office is recognized and respected by the Muslim Community. This implies that the office determines the strength of Islam in any Muslim community. Imam Yekeen Ashafa Sanusi is the current and the 12th Imam of the city of Ogbomoso. He assumed the office in the year 2002 and since then, he has been enjoying the blessings of the King and the entire Muslim community.

Imamship in Islam

The word "Imām" literally means a leader, and could be used for both political and spiritual leaders.² Technically, al-Imām means the person who possesses the qualities of a leader in prayer and he is made to lead prayers.³ Imamship is a crucial office legislated by Allah in Qur'ān 2:30. Allah's discussion on leadership is expatiated by the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) where he identified his generation and that of the companions as the best generations. Though the office of Imam is restricted to some traditional houses, it is an office that could be rotational among people if merit is taken as the yardstick for its selection.⁴

An imam is a vicegerent of the Prophets on the surface of the earth especially on religious matters. In Islamic terminology, a leader is called *Imam* and the office is *Imāmah*. Since *Imām* is said to be representative of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who was the pioneer Imam, the qualifications of an *Imām* should be that which the Prophet possessed, such as: Knowledge, Masculinity, Justice, Equality, Transparency, Honesty, Patient and similar others.⁵ The work of an *Imām* is to lead Muslims on their affairs be they social, political, or economic.⁶ These show the great importance of Imamship in Islam as it affects the Muslim's life either positively if done properly or negatively if it is misused.

An Overview of the History of Ogbomoso

Ogbomoso is a city in Oyo State, Southwestern Nigeria. It was founded in the mid 17th century and it has a population of approximately 299, 535 in 2006 census. Majority of the inhabitants are of the Yoruba ethnic group.⁷ Historical accounts attribute the founding of Ogbomoso settlement to five migrants who came from different areas. The first was Nupe hunter who migrated from the River Niger Area. His descendants became head of Okelerin Quarters with the title of "*Baale*" of Oke-Elerin.⁸ The second migrant was called Ohunsile, an Awori Prince from Aworiland in Ota, Ogun State. His descendants held the chieftaincy title of Baale of Ijeru.⁹ Orisatola was the third migrant, he came from Ibaribaland in Kwara State. He was a farmer and an *Ifa* priest.¹⁰ Orisatolu was indeed a large-scale *Isapa*¹¹ farmer which made the area later to be known as Isapa.¹² The fourth settler was Akandia who was a renegade *sango* priest from Oyo Ile. He also settled at *Isale Afon*. The fifth early migrant was Ogunlola. He also came from Ibaribaland. He was the progenitor of the Soun ruling dynasty in Ogbomoso. He became the leader of a club named Alongo society by a consensus of the five early settlers and Olugbon, the representative of the Alaafin.¹³

Ogunlola was of Ibariba descent and he was a renowned hunter. He came to the area now known as Ogbomoso in pursuit of his hunting profession. He stayed under a tree called *ajagbon* and used the branches for hanging gears. The whole place was at the time in question, a dense jungle. Ogunlola was an expert archer and brave hunter. Later he and his wife, *Esun*, built tree hut by the side of the *ajagbon* tree. Ogunlola (Late Soun) noticed smoke oozing from some nearby locations. He took courage and approached these places and discovered other hunters. The first one named Aale at a site now called *Oke-Elerin* quarters, the second called *Ohunsile* at the site now known as Ijeru quarters, the third Orisatolu at Isapa quarters and the fourth Akandie quarters. The descendants of the first three hunters are still today the Baales of Oke-Elerin, Ijeru and Isapa Quarters respectively.¹⁴

Ogunlola returned to his settlement as a brave ruler. The settlement became known as '*Ido eniti o gbori Elemoso*' meaning "The camp of him who took Elemoso's head" and was later shortened to *O-gbori-Elemoso*, then to *Ogbetemoso*, and finally to Ogbomoso.¹⁵ Therefore, the merging of various migrant cultural groups in the foundation period of Ogbomoso settlement was in line with the trend of history of settlement in the pre-colonial period. Ibadan, Ife, Shaki, Ilorin and so on were examples of such settlements that were established as a result of conglomeration of various migrant groups. Hence, the existence of some Muslims and Islam at this early period of Ogbomoso history cannot be ruled out being the religion of traders and migrants at this period.¹⁶

Advent and Development of Islam in Ogbomoso

Before the emergence of Islam, the people of Ogbomoso were very conservative, clinging passionately to the custom and tradition of their ancestors. In Ogbomoso, the main traditional beliefs include the divinity of *Orisa Popo* or *Obatala*, which was seen as deputy god. Other deities worshiped include Ogun and Sango. The worship of these deities remains even after the advent of Islam and Christianity¹⁷

Islam got to Ogbomoso many years before Christianity through the contact of the people with traders, soldiers, cattle herders and immigrants majorly from the northern part of Nigeria and probably since the time of Baale Ogunlola (1659-1714) who was the founder of the town. Report had it that a man named Biayin Ibrahim, a ground son of Soun Ogunlola, was a Muslim. The religion was assumed to be consolidated during the reign of Baale Oluwasi Aremu who reigned between 1826 and 1840CE.¹⁸ Mallam Shuaebu, a cattle herder who migrated from Aatia, Ubaid Sudan, came through Maiduguri and settled in Ikoyi together with his brother, Badiru, were considered to have played a significant role in planting the tree of Islam in Ogbomoso.¹⁹

Because of Badiru's usual and continuous visits to *Ikoyi*, he was given the appellation "*Baba ti n paara Ikoyi*", that is, the man who frequents *Ikoyi*. Later, the appellation was shortened to *Parakoyi* and by the passage of time to *Pakoyi*.²⁰ This was how *Pakoyi* became a religious title in Ogbomoso. However, this is unlike the situation in other parts of Yorubaland, in which *Pakoyi* is an office in charge of markets, strangers, and long distant traders.²¹ Nevertheless, in Ogbomoso, there is another office in charge of markets and traders. Though a religious title, it is the ruling *Soun* that appoints the *Parakoyi*.²²

After many converts had been won and Islam was firmly established through the efforts of Shuaib and his brother Badiru, the Muslims thought it was high time they had a Mosque for the observation of their five daily prayers and the *Jum'ah* service. The first Imām to be appointed was Nafiu.²³ His father's name was Onaleye, Iba Abogunde. Nafiu was a native of Ogbomoso from Abogunde's family. He acquired Islamic Education under a *Tapa* man. He was more versed in Islamic knowledge than those Muslims who had settled before him in the town.²⁴ After the demise of Nafiu, Musa was nominated to succeed him and Gbadamasi succeeded Musa.²⁵ At present, the town is recording a challenging number of Muslims with over one hundred and twenty *Jum'at* mosques and hundreds of *Ratibi* mosques at strategic places in the town. Islamic education has proliferated the town with the radical establishment of both traditional and modern Islamic schools in the town.

Ogbomoso Central Mosque

Salah was observed by Muslims since the introduction of Islam in Ogbomoso, but it was not congregationally practised, because at that time, the Muslims were few in

number and they could not face the threat of the idol worshippers.²⁶ The coming of Abdul wārith and his two children (Shuaib and Badrudeen) to Ogbomoso from Borno State brought about the establishment of the first mosque in Ogbomoso, which was named *Lamasijidu Mosque* in the year 1780 C.E.. It was built with mud and a thatched roof. The *Lamasijidu Mosque* became the first *ratibi* mosque to be built in Ogbomoso.²⁷

Shaykh Nafiu Onaleye of Abogunde who went on war from Abogunde to Bida was appointed an Imām of Bida.²⁸ He was later invited to return home and on arrival, he suggested the observation of *Jum'ah* prayer. He then became the first Imām to be turbaned in Ogbomoso as the Chief Imam in the first *Jum'at* mosque which was initially located at OjaJagun on a land donated by Soun Teyeje Akanni (1797-1825)²⁹ and later shifted to Ojagbo on a land donated by Soun Bello Afolabi Oyewumi (1916-1940). The reconstruction of the mosque started during the reign of Soun Lawani Olanipekun Olaoye (1944-1952). When Soun Bello Afolabi Oyewumi accepted Islam, he invited all his chiefs such as the Jagun, Aale of Okelerin among others to accept Islam and he subsequently turbaned all those that embraced Islam with him.³⁰ In 1987, the Soun of Ogbomosoland, Oba Jimoh Oyewumi Ajagunbade III, launched the renovation of the Oja Oba Central Mosque.

Appointment of Chief Imām in Ogbomoso

Islam sets some standards by which a qualified person or candidate is known and selected for Imāmship. However, in Ogbomoso, before an Imām can be appointed, the next Imām's ruling house or family will present a candidate having some qualifications which will be discussed later. When the institution of Imāmship was evolving in Ogbomoso, the *Mufassir* of the town was usually the succeeding Imām with the demise of an incumbent Imām but after the establishment of the traditional Imām houses, the office of Imām becomes rotational among the traditional houses and Soun became significant in the choice of who becomes the Imām after prospective candidates had been presented.³¹ The tradition is that a committee will be constituted for the selection of the next Imām among the qualified candidates presented by the house whose turn is to produce Imām. The candidates will be screened and scrutinized and the most qualified candidate will be presented to the Soun for ratification as the Chairman of the Committee. The Soun reserves the right to accept or reject the nominee of the members of the Committee. This power conferred on the Soun became more pronounced with the accession of throne of the Oba Jimoh Oyewumi Ajagunbade III.³²

Traditionally, six families have produced the Chief Imām of Ogbomoso Central Mosque since the establishment of the Mosque. These houses are: Abogunde's Family, Aafa Muse Oke-Odo Masifa's Family, Aadun'in's Family Isale Ora, Alawiye Isale-Ora Bango's Family, Ayilara Oke Agbede's Family and Adesile's family³³

It is important to note that every house has produced an average of one Imām. The families of Abogunde and Masifa have the highest number of Imāms, having produced three of the twelve Chief Imāms each since inception. Below is a table of the imams with their respective family names.³⁴

S/N	Family	No. of Imams Produced	Names
1	Abogunde	3	1. Imām Nafiu Onaleye Abogunde. 2. Imām Muhammad Abogunde 3. Imām Maruf Abogunde
2	Aafa Muse Oke-Odo Masifa	3	1. Imām Muse 2. Aafa Sanusi Memudu 3. Imām Yakeen Ashafah Sanusi.
3	Aadun'in Isale Ora	2	1. Imām Muhammad Gbadamosi Aadunyin 2. Imām Salawu Aadunyin
4	Alawaye Isale Ora Bango	2	1. Imām AbdulRahman Bango 2. Imām Buhari Bolanta Bango.
5	Ayilara Oke-Agbede	1	Imām Mahmud Ayilara.
6	Adesile, Ile Popo	1	Imām Hamzat Ahmad Alawiye

To assume the office of imamship in Ogbomoso, a person must be from Ogbomoso, a renowned *Mufassir* or an Alfa, and more importantly, he must be among the traditional houses of Imāms. Equally, such person must be Islamically learned, morally upright and proficient in Arabic and Islamic education.³⁵

On assumption of the office, he is expected to play the role of leading *Jumrah* Prayer in the Central Mosque.

Imāms in Ogbomoso Central Mosque: Yesterday and Today

In the history of Ogbomoso Central Mosque, twelve (12) Imām have been appointed so far. Below are the names of the Imāms of Ogbomoso Central Mosque from 1829 till date:

1.	Imām Nafiu Abogunde	1829 – 1870
2.	Imām Muse	1871 – 1892
3.	Imām Gbadamosi Aadunyin	1892 – 1899
4.	Imām Abdul Rahman Bango	1901 – 1903
5.	Imām Muhammad Abogunde	1903 – 1909
6.	Imām Sanusi Memudu	1909 – 1917
7.	Imām Mahmud Ayilara	1917 – 1919
8.	Imām Salawu Aadunyin	1919 – 1933
9.	Imām Buhari Bolanta Bango	1934 – 1936
10.	Imām Maqūf Abogunde	1936 – 1976.

This Imām was suspended for a period while Alfa Ashifat Sanusi acted as Imām.

11.	Imām Hamzāt Alawiye	1976 – 2002
12.	Imām Yekeen Ashafa Sanusi	2002 – till date. ³⁶

Below is a short biography of each of the Imams

1. Imām Nafiu Onaleye Abogunde (1829 – 1870)

Imam Nafiu Onaleye's family were migrants from Ile-Ife. History has it that they migrated to Ogbomoso probably during the wars in the 19th century. The family is known for wood carving and doors designing. Imam Nafiu was reported to have acquired Islamic education in Nupeland before he finally settled in Bida, a central city in Nupeland. This great scholar was versed in the knowledge of Arabic and Islamic studies so much that he was made an Imam in Bida. It is to the credit of this scholar that he was the first turbaned Imām of Ogbomoso and the first to deliver the *Jum'ah* sermon in the *Jum'ah* Mosque at Oja Jagun.³⁷

2. Imam Muse Oke Oloko (1871-1892)

Imam Muse, OkeOloko, Masifa was next to Imām Nafiu Abogunde in the Imamship of Ogbomoso central mosque.³⁸ A version of history of Ile Imām Oke states that Imām Oke Odo Masifa Compound is an annex of *Lamasijidu* Compound which is now known as Okunmebo Compound and that Imam Musa was relocated by Soun Laoye to OkeOdo on the event of the Okunmebo house that got burnt.

3. Alfa Muhammadu Gbadamosi Aadunyin (1892-1899)

Imam Muhammadu migrated from Ilorin, in the present Kwara State where he acquired Islamic education. He was the first to settle in IsaleSajawhen the area was in the bush. His land included the present site of Saja Baptist Church, where he planted Ajagbon tree and flowers used as '*laali*'³⁹ by Muslim Women. Alfa Muhammadu was made the Chief Imam of Ogbomoso Central Mosque during the reign of Soun Bello AfolabiOyewumi (1916-1940). He led the *Juma'at* service and *Eid* prayers when the *Eid* praying ground was at a place called Bode Masifa.

4. Imam AbdulRahman Bango Alawaye (1901- 1903)

Imam AbdulRahman Bango mounted the throne of Imāmship of Ogbomoso after Imām Muhammadu Gbadamosi; his family was reported to have migrated from Ado Awaye in Oke Ogun area of Oyo State around the 18th century. History reports that the family travelled first to Ilorin before migrating to Ogbomoso. A member of the family could hence be found in Ilorin and Oyo. The family was given the title of Jagun Alawaye in recognition of their war strength after settling in Ogbomoso. Abdul Rahman committed the whole of the Qur'ān to memory. He was known to be a writer, a preacher and a teacher, all in addition to his craftsmanship and cloth weaving. Many people among the idol worshippers in Ora area of Ogbomoso became Muslims through the preaching and evangelism of Imam Abdulrahman. He was turbaned as the Chief Imam of Ogbomoso by Soun Gbagunloju Ajamasa Ajagunbade (1869-1871).⁴⁰

5. Alfa Muhammad Abogunde (1903-1909)

Imāmship returned to Abogunde'sfamily in 1903 after the death of the then incumbent Imam. At this time, Imam Muhammadu Abogunde was made the Chief Imām of Ogbomoso Central Mosque. This was during the reign of Soun Majengbasan Elepo I (1901-1907). In the manner of his fathers, Imam Muhammad studied Qur'ān in Nupeland in addition to other fields of Islamic education before he later migrated to Ogbomoso and was turbaned the Chief Imam of the town. His seven years on throne was remarkably acknowledged as the period of Islamic renaissance in Ogbomoso land⁴¹

6. Alfa Sanusi Memudu Masifa (1909-1917)

With the death of Imām Muhammadu Abogunde in 1909, it was unanimously agreed that Imāmship should return to Oke Oloko Masifa. A decision that ushered in Alfa Sanusi as the next Chief Imam of the town. Unlike Imam Muhammad Abogunde, Alfa Memudu Masifa was blessed to stay longer on the throne as the Imām and with this: the religion of Islam gained a gross expansion in Ogbomosoland and beyond.⁴²

7. Alfa Mahmud Uthman Ayilara (1917 – 1919)

Alfa Mahmud was the son of Mallam Uthman. His father, Uthman known as Uthman Ayilara migrated from Ikoyi-Ile from the family of Adegun. The father later migrated to Ilorin and studied under some scholars of the time. At the time he became sound in Islamic education, he sojourned to Ogbomoso as a preacher. In recognition of his erudition, the then Soun of Ogbomoso invited him to settle close to him and he settled in a place presently called Ayilara compound, OkeAgbede. Due to the controversy of eligibility that surrounded his ascension to the office of Imāmship, he led the Jum'at service just once after which he fell sick and was deputized till his death in 1919.⁴³

8. Alfa Salahudeen Aadunyin (1919-1933)

Alfa Salahudeen Aadunyin, like some of his predecessors, acquired his knowledge of Arabic and Islamic studies from scholars in Ilorin. Alfa Salahudeen Aadunyin was versed in the knowledge of the Qur'ān as he equally professed the use of selected verses of the Qur'ān for the cure of people with mental retardation. Credited to him is the establishment of a local Qur'ānic class that produced great people such as a later Imām of the town, Alfa Hamzah Alawiye, and a later Mufassir of the town, Alfa Shehu Tijani Opeloyeru.

9. Alfa Buhari Bolanta Bango (1934-1936)

Alfa Buhari became the next Imam of Ogbomoso in 1934. He succeeded Imam Salahudeen Aadunyin. Imam Buhari was a renowned teacher and preacher who had a traditional Arabic school that produced scholars. Imam Buhari, despite his short period on Imāmship, left behind a legacy that is always remembered in the history of Ogbomoso.

10. Alfa Maruf Abogunde (1936 – 1976)

Alfa Maruf Abogunde mounted the throne of Imāmship on February 17, 1936, after Imām Buhari. He studied under his father, Imām Muhammadu Abogunde. Alfa Maruf, like Imams before him, was a preacher and a great Jihadist who would not leave any stone unturned when it comes to speaking the truth. On several occasions, he was in conflict with Soun Olatunji Alao Elepo II over not being economical

about the truth in the religion of Islam, a dispute that led to his suspension for a period before he was later called back. Imam Maruf served in the capacity of an upright Imām until his death on 8th August 1976.⁴⁴

11. Alfa Hamzāt Ahmad Alawiye (1976 – 2002)

Alfa Hamzat Ahmad Alawiye was a *Mufassir* when Imām Maruf Abogunde was the Imām of the town. With the death of Alfa Maruf, Alfa Alawiye was made the next Imām of the town by *Soun* Oba Jimoh Oladunni Oyewumi in 1976. The *Soun* of Ogbomosoland made him the next Imām in appreciation of the modesty of Alfa Alawiye in addition to his erudition and oration.⁴⁵

It was during the tenure of Imām Hamzāt Alawiye that Ogbomosoland witnessed the rise of numerous *Jumu'at* mosques. During his own time, he allowed the formation of *Jumu'ah* mosques not only in the town but in institutions of learning and all the mosques founded enjoyed the blessings of the Chief Imam.⁴⁶

12. Alfa Yakeen Ashafa Sanusi (2002 till date)

Imām Abdul yakeen Ashafa Sanusi was born on October 28, 1938 in Ogbomosoland and unlike many other Imams that have their knowledge of Qur'ān and Islamic education traceable to the city of Ilorin, Imam AbdulYakeen had his elementary knowledge of the Qur'ān and western education in ogbomosoland. Imam Yakeen grew up as a trader and a cleric in the northern part of Nigeria, specifically in Kaduna, before he was then invited to be the Chief Imām of Ogbomosoland in the year 2002.⁴⁷ Imam Yakeen remained the Imām of the town up till the time the authors of this article were gathering this information.

Functions of the Chief Imam of Ogbomosoland

It is to the pride of Ogbomosoland people that the functions of the mosque are not restricted to prayers. The NASFAT programme which is majorly *Darwah* is being conducted every Sunday in the Central Mosque, and the activity is mainly a prayer session of *Asalatu* and a lecture to be delivered after the prayer session by either an invited guest or one of the members of the mission board. Equally, there is *Ta'lim* activity during which issues on *fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) is discussed.⁴⁸ Another *Darwah* activity in the Central Mosque is the conduct of Islamic ceremony inside the Central Mosque. These ceremonies include marriage and *Mawlud Nabiyy* celebrations. The *Mawlud Nabiyy* celebrations in Ogbomosoland is an annual programme that is conducted inside the Central Mosque of Ogbomosoland and witnessed by representatives of His Royal Highness, the *Soun* of Ogbomosoland.⁴⁹ Another activity is the *Ramadan Tafsir* session. The period of 30 or 29 days of *Ramadan* is used for *Tafsir* inside the Ogbomosoland Central Mosque. This *Tafsir* session which is normally anchored by the *Mufassir* of Ogbomosoland is witnessed by all members of the league of Imām as well as some youths in the township.⁵⁰

The function of a Chief Imam in Ogbomoso is not different from his functions in any other Muslim towns. A close assessment of the functions of an Imam as witnessed in the activities of the current Imām and recorded in the activities of the past Chief Imāms include leading Muslims in the *Jumu'at* and *'Id* prayers, officiating marriage and naming ceremonies, carrying out the Islamic rights on the corpse of a deceased Muslim, reconciling Muslims in dispute and especially among the Imāms in the town, playing a supervisory role on activities of Islamic institutions in the town and some others.⁵¹ The sermons delivered by the Chief Imām on every Friday and on the *'Id* days place him in the position of a preacher. Even though some youths in Ogbomoso do complain of non-currency of some of the sermons delivered,⁵² it still remains relevant to mention that the sermons as observed, are exhibition of a long time experience of the Imām about life and living. Issues discussed in the sermon are political, social, economic and religious. Current issues and the position of Islam are equally discussed in the sermon ⁵³

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study discussed the trend in Imāmship in Ogbomoso. It established that the penetration of Islam into Ogbomoso is dated back to the founding of the town and admitted that there is northern Nigerian factor in the spread of Islam in the town. Imām Yakeen Asafa who is currently the Chief Imām of the town is the twelfth Imām of the town. The criteria for appointment of Imām in Ogbomoso is being a Muslim, coming from the traditional families of Imāms of the town, having adequate knowledge of Arabic and Islamic studies, being modest and being pious. Unlike what is obtainable in some Yoruba muslim community in the appointment of Imam, in Ogbomoso, the ruffle is manageable because there is a designated family that is always entitled to the office and the discretion of the Imam overshadow the view of the scholars in the town.

It must be noted that despite the numerous functions of the Chief Imām of Ogbomoso, the contemporary period calls for modern functions which are necessitated by the challenging society. The care for the welfare of the Muslim *Ummah* is a function of necessity. The Imām shall be expected to constitute an institution of *Zakāt* and *sadaqah* in the town and should participate fully in the administration of the institution. Other aspects of *'Ibadah* that need the intervention of the Chief Imām is the coordination of people for *Hajj*. In the current time, people suffer in their ambition to fulfill the obligation of *Hajj* partly from the hand of dubious agents and from the poor coordination by the hajj board. The Imam is expected to throw his weight on this aspect so that intending pilgrims will be rescued from the hardship.

Equally important is the need for the Chief Imām to coordinate all *darurah* activities in the town. Islamic activities are observed to be roughly coordinated and controlled. It is a function of the Imām to organize the activities so that no activity would be

organized or anchored without his verbal permission. It is the hope of the authors that if these responsibilities are added to the ones shouldered by the Chief Imām, the practice of Islam in the town will be more modernised and the office of the Chief Imām will be more honoured.

Notes and References

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- ⁹An oral interview conducted with Prof. Abdul Wahab Tijani, The Chief Imām of LAUTECH, Ogbomoso. aged 64, at his office on August 12, 2018.
- ¹⁰Ifa is one of the Yoruba religions and system of divination. The grand priest of ifa is Babalawo
- ¹¹a kind of vegetable that is commonly used for soup among the Yoruba. It is assumed to have originated from Ekiti State of Nigeria and it is best served with pounded yam
- ¹²An Oral interview conducted with Alhaji Shittu Atunnise, The Chief Imām of Ansarul-Islam Society Ogbomoso, Age 83 at his residence Malete Ogbomoso on August 18, 2018.
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- ¹⁹An Oral interview conducted with Alhaji Abdul Rasheed Abogunde...
- ²⁰An Oral interview conducted with Prof Abdul Wahab Tijani, ...
- ²¹An oral interview conducted with Alhaji AbdulRasheed Abogunde ...
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- ³⁷ An Oral interview conducted with Alhaji AbdulRasheed Abogunde ...
- ³⁸ An Oral interview conducted with Alhaji AbdulRasheed Abogunde ...
- ³⁹ Laali is a redish plant substanceprepared from the dried leaves of Henna plant, used for temporary tattoos and hair colouring
- ⁴⁰ Tijani, *The Growth and Development of Islam in Ogbomoso*...52.
- ⁴¹ An oral interview conducted with Alhaji Mohammad Bashir Busari Okunmebo, the *Mafasir* of Ogbomosoland ...
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- ⁴⁶ An oral interview conducted with Alhaji Mohammad Bashir Busari Okunmebo, the *Mafasir* of Ogbomosoland ...
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- ⁴⁹ An oral interview conducted with Dr. AbdulWahab Shittu Danladi at his residence Islamic Village, Ilorin, on 12th March, 2019.
- ⁵⁰ An oral interview conducted with Alhaji Mohammad Bashir Busari Okunmebo, the *Mafasir* of Ogbomosoland ...
- ⁵¹ Personal observations made by authors of this work
- ⁵² This is a response from a number of youths in Ogbomoso town
- ⁵³ The authors attended a Jumuat service for objective assessment of the sermon delivered by the Imam.