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Of the golden pen of an islamicist and academic: an insight into the literary works of Lateef Mobolaji Adetona 1967-2018*

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Abstract

Publications and authorship are major avenues through which the erudition, experiences, and submissions of a scholar is manifested, while his names are written in gold within the scrolls of history as a contributor to the human progression and revolution. This noble art is encouraged in Islam, a monotheistic religion that built its foundation on knowledge acquisition and dissemination. Therefore, Muslims are enjoined to seek knowledge from cradle to grave and utilize its proceeds in worshipping Allah, creating good social relations and in developing humanity at large. In enliven this tradition, several authors have emerged in Muslim world and indeed in Nigeria contributing to the evergreen Islamic repository for centuries. Among these scholars of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries was Professor Lateef Mobolaji Adetona, an erudite scholar whose authorship transcended all fields of Islamics. This study, through content review assessed the literary works of Adetona (d.2018) as an international scholar, award-winning Islamicist, mentor, teacher and academic of repute. The paper, therefore, affirms Adetona as an undisputable and productive religious scholar with sterling qualities whose name and works would continue to resonate among academics especially in the field of religious studies in Nigeria and beyond.

Keywords: academic, Adetona, golden pen, Islamicist, legendary works

Introduction

Death is an irreversible covenant of Allah that must be experienced by every living being. Indeed, as affirmed by the Qur'ān, *every soul shall taste death* (Q3:185). It was a sunny Friday, 13th April 2018 when thousands of Muslims gathered in various *Jumu'ah*Mosques in Lagos and other cities of the world when the death of Professor Lateef Mobolaji Adetona (born 1967) was announced from far away Ilorin, the Kwara State capital.¹It was a gloomy day to remember, a period when a prolific author, astute administrator, soft-spo-

ken and eloquent orator, lecturer of repute, quintessential mentor, academic per excellence, award-winning writer, an Islamicist of note and religious leader bade farewell to this ephemeral world.

Born and bred in Lagos, Adetona attended *Hasbunallāh* Centre for Arabic and Islamic Studies and Fazil Omar Primary School, Saviour Street, Lagos Island while for his secondary education, he attended *Ansar-u-Deen* High School, Surulere, Lagos.² Prof. Adetona also bagged his first degree in Islamic studies from Lagos State University(LASU), Lagos, Nigeria in 1989 and later had his Master degree in the same discipline from the University of Ilorin, Kwara State in 1995. In further pursuance of his academic certificates and erudition, Adetona bagged his Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from LASU in 2007 under the supervision of Prof. Muhib Omolayo Opeloye.³

Furthermore, Adetona joined the service of Lagos State University in the early 90s as a lecturer and rose to the rank of the Professor of Islamic Studies in 2017. Administratively, he held various posts in LASU including the Assistant Director (AD) of the defunct LASU's External System, Anthony campus in Lagos and later became the substantive Head of the Department, Religions and Peace Studies, Faculty of Arts, Lagos State University, a position he held till his demise in 2018.

L.M as fondly called by colleagues, friends and associates was a Fullbright scholar⁴ who authored several books, edited papers, wrote and published journal articles both nationally and internationally and supervised long essays, dissertations and theses of hundreds of students from undergraduates to postgraduate levels at the Islamic Studies Unit of the LASU's Department of Religions and Peace Studies. Being a prominent town and gown scholar, he was an active member of the National Council of Muslim Youth Organizations (NACOMYO), Lagos State Chapter for decades and an active member of *Nawair-u-Deen* Society of Nigerian where he was turbaned as an *Imām* and Deputy Missioner in July, 2014.⁵

Prof Adetona was a renown and revered international academic and Islamicist of repute because of his resonated golden pen and legendary publications. His works which spanned almost two and the half decades (1993-2017) were treasures to behold in the field of Islamic studies, moral education, Islamic theological discourse, Islamic jurisprudence, comparative religious studies, peace advocacy and Islamic history especially on the advent and development of Islam in Lagos and Yorubaland, hence, Adetona was an encyclopaedic scholar of *Islamics*.

Though, chapters in book have been written and published posthumously in his honour by Adetona's colleagues, associates and admirers as *Gedenkschrift*,⁶ while some of his mentees have also dedicated papers

in his honour⁷, this paper is aimed at insightfully and concisely, out of Adetona's numerous works, review *twenty evergreen academic works* among his published books, journal articles, chapters in book, edited books and his professorial inaugural lecture.

The parameter used is not for classical book review nor review of article *per se* where the weakness and accolades of the works are apportioned, but an avenue to recognize the ingenuity of the author by summarily enunciating the content, publication year, publication medium and the contribution of the reviewed works to knowledge. This, as we believe would afford authors and academics some acquaintances with the works of Adetona for future references and usefulness and, further showcase the indelible marks of L.M who at his fifties had ingrained his names in gold on the sand of history through publications. The paper also maintains the arrangement of "author's Name" as used by Adetona in all the works under review for easy identification. Therefore, the reviewed papers are divided into five sections; namely, four published books, two edited books, four chapters in commissioned books and *Festschrift*, nine journal articles and lastly the professorial inaugural lecture

The Golden Pen of Lateef Mobolaji Adetona: A Concise Literary Review

Publication of books in forms of *al-Ta'lif* (authorship) and *al-Tadwīn* (documentation) according to Abu Sadat Nurullah stimulates both creative and critical thinking that enhances new interpretations, solutions, judgements and views on different matters.⁸ Therefore, literary *'Ijtihād* (efforts) of Adetona in writing books remains an unquantifiable avenue of disseminating knowledge, proffering solutions to religio-legal and societal problems and a way of immortalising oneself for prosperity. Adetona, a left-hand scholar authored more than fifty (50) works and supervised numerous undergraduates and postgraduate students, especially at the Department of Religions and Peace Studies, Faculty of Arts, Lagos State University, Lagos, Nigeria.

In this section, we shall review some of the works authored by Adetona as follows:

A- The Published Books

- i. Abdul Lateef Mobolaji Adetona. *The Abuse of Islamic Rites and Ceremonies in the Contemporary Nigerian Society*. Lagos, Nigeria. Al-Basit Production. 1993. Ix+47pp. ISBN 978-33316-0-4.

The ingenuity and literary prowess of Adetona manifests in

1993 when he published his first book titled "*The Abuse of Islamic Rites and Ceremonies in the Contemporary Nigerian Society*" in Lagos State. The book was dedicated by the author to all Muslim brothers and sisters striving in the way of Allah. The foreword to the book was written by Prof. Ismail A.B Balogun (the then Provost of Zulikha Abiola College of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Abeokuta, Ogun State). The book, a 56-page compendium has five captivating chapters which discusses various Muslim activities in Nigeria. The chapters are "The Extravagance in Naming and Funeral Ceremonies among Nigerian Muslims" (pp.1-14), "Wedding Feast: A Misconceived Phenomenon among Nigerian Muslims" (pp.15-22), "The Islamic Divorce: A Logical Legislation Abused in Nigeria" (pp.23-32), "Moon Sighting as an Instrument of Muslim Unity" (pp.33-39) and "Asceticism: A Panacea to Moral Decadence" (pp.40-47).

All discourses in the book are embellished with various Islamic references and citations from the Qur'ān, aḥādīth of the Prophet, scholars' opinion and contemporary happenings in Nigeria and around the world. Lastly, all chapters were referenced while the notes and references as required in academic are chronologically arranged at the end of each chapter. The book is a complete documentation of Islamic teachings and values.

- ii. Abdul Lateef Mobolaji Adetona. *Concept of God in African Religion, Christianity and Islam: A Catalyst for the Promotion of Peace and Harmonious Co-Existence in Nigeria*, Lagos, Nigeria. Debo Prints. (n.d). 21pp. ISBN: Nil

This 21-pagebooklet titled "*Concept of God in African Religion, Christianity and Islam: A Catalyst for the Promotion of Peace and Harmonious Co-Existence in Nigeria*" discusses concepts of God in the three prominent religions in Africa; Islam, Christianity and African Traditional Religion (ATR). The main aim of the author was to investigate the religious belief of Nigerians who were mainly adherents of the three religions and how such belief can be utilized to create a peaceful and harmonious society. It is generally believed that Nigeria is a multi-religious and heterogenous nation which has witnessed series of ethnic and religious crises before and after the 1960 independence, therefore, the solution to perennial crises must be examined inwardly from religious perspective. Having enunciated the concepts of God in the three religions and the

provision of peace within their religious text either textually or orally (pp.1-13), the author also enumerates the causes of violence and intolerance among the adherents of the three religions which include inability to accommodate the view of other religionists, mutual suspicions, jealousy and particularistic claims (pp.14-17).

Adetona then proffered solutions for everlasting peaceful and harmonious coexistence among religious adherents in Nigeria (pp.17-19). The book concludes with notes and references as citations at the end of the discourse (pp.19-21). If the work is thoroughly read and implemented, Adetona's assertions in the booklet under review can serve as guideline for the attainment of peace, love and development among Nigerians irrespective of their religious affiliations and ethnic identities.

iii. L. M Adetona. *A Concise Introduction to the Practice of Islam*. Lagos, Nigeria. Religions Think Thank Group Publication. 2002. iii+82pp. ISBN: Nil

In 2002, Adetona published this book titled “*A Concise Introduction to the Practice of Islam*” through which he scholarly explains some important lessons of Islam. As he notes in the preface, the book was designed to address two broad sections of Islam in a concise and introductory manner. The first section discusses the pillars and articles of faith in Islam while the second section covers our sources of information in Islam. Therefore, the 91-page book has nine chapters which treated meanings and definitions of Islam, (pp.1-5), *Tawḥid* and *Shirk* (pp.6-14), Articles of faith in Islam (pp.15-35), *As-Ṣalāt*-Canonical Prayers(pp.36-44), *Zakāt*-Compulsory Alms Giving (pp.45-47), *Sawm*-Fasting in the month of *Ramadān* (pp.48-54), *Hajj*-Pilgrimage to Makkah and Madinah (pp.55-56), The Qur’ān (pp.57-69) and other sources of information and guidance in Islam which include *Hadith* (*Sunnah*), *Ijmā‘* and *Qiyās* (pp.70-81).

It is well noticed that the contents of each chapter based on the topic are self-explanatory for learners with various references and instances buttressing the Islamic knowledge that are dished out by the author. In validating the content of the book through referencing, the author concludes some of the chapters with footnotes, notes and references and bibliography at the end of the book. *A Concise Introduction to the Practice of Islam* is an all-encompassing Islamic studies material that is useful to learners, authors and researchers.

iv. L.M Adetona. *Essays on Islam, Youth and Contemporary Issues*. 2010. Lagos, Nigeria: Free Enterprise Publishers. 86pp. ISBN 978-37867-3-3

According to Adetona, the collection of essays that were previously published in various peer-review academic journals around the world was to afford 'restricted audience' an opportunity of reading and learning from the points highlighted therein since most of these journals are not accessible to people outside academic environment. Thus, in the light of the above, six Adetona's papers which were presented either as journal articles (such as the one published with *Hamdard Islamicus* Pakistan and *JOAS*, Athens, Greece), international conference papers (as presented in Tokyo, Japan and in Israel) and lectures (such as *Ramadān* lecture held in Lagos) were collected and published into six chapters in a book form.

The Chapter one with the title "*Roles of Muslim Youth in the Implementation of Shari'ah in Nigeria*" discusses the fundamental human rights issues in Nigeria and the expected roles of Nigerian Muslim youths in the Northern and Southern parts of the country in ensuring the statutory implementation of *Shari'ah* through their peaceful and exemplary agitations for its implementation (pp.8-20). In Chapter two, Adetona enumerates the exceptionalism of the Independent *Shari'ah* Panel of Lagos State, a non-statutory Islamic court which came to being in Lagos and other Southwestern States of Nigeria (such as Oyo and Osun) in the absence of *Shari'ah* Courts in Yorubaland. The paper titled "*Dynamics of the Independent Shari'ah Panel of Lagos State, Southwest Nigeria*" (pp.21-33) was first presented by Adetona at a workshop on the "Courts of Law and Legal Cultures in Past and Present Muslim Societies" at Ben Gurion University, Israel and later published as journal article in the *Journal of the Nigeria Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, Vol. 8, 2005, pp.30-40. The Chapter three of the essays as compiled by Adetona titled "*Work Ethics and National Rebirth in Nigeria: An Islamic Viewpoint*" (pp.34-44) discusses among others the divine roles of Islam in changing the negative work ethics of Nigerians through national rebirth and good working relationship between the employers and the employees across all sectors.

Furthermore, the benefit of empowering teeming youths for national development in Nigeria as viewed from an Islamic

perspective was the discourse of chapter four with the caption “*Youth Empowerment in Contemporary Nigeria: An Islamic Perspective*” (pp.45-54). He discusses the concept of Youth empowerment and its gains for religious, technological, economic and social development of Nigeria. In Chapter 5, the view of poverty, state of Nigerian Muslims, relevance of works to poverty reduction and mechanism for wealth distribution in Islam were the main thrust in the paper titled “*Poverty Alleviation among Muslims in Nigerian Society*” (pp.55-68) while the last chapter of the collection “*Islamic Paradigms of Dialogue as Mechanism for Conflict-Resolution*” (pp.69-84) showcases the peace and dialogue methodologies adopted by Prophet Muḥammad in the Treaty of *Hudaybiyyah* in 628 C.E to avert violence and conflict between Muslims and the *Quraysh* of Makkah and the lessons that could be adopted in solving conflicts around the world. The contents of this edited book shows that Adetona was not just a scholar, but a contemporaneous academic with diversified knowledge of Islam and contemporary studies whose writings were invaluable, precise, concise and effective to change the society.

B- The Edited Books

Among the numerous academic works of scholars is their abilities to review commissioned papers submitted for chapters in book or *Festschrift*, submitted papers for journal articles, and being the Editor-in-Chief for departmental, faculty or publications of academic associations. Prof Adetona was not an exception in these academic adventures and we look at some of the works he reviewed and edited.

i. *Islamic Studies in Contemporary Nigeria: Problems and Prospects.*

2007. L.M. Adetona (ed.) Lagos, Nigeria: Romio Concept Limited and Alamsek General Concept Enterprises. X+132pp. ISBN 978-099-197-5.

The main *raison d'eter* behind the collection of papers for this edited book was an attempt to refute claims of Islamic Studies being an ordinary subject that had been relegated to only mere field of study at the Primary and Junior Secondary School levels in Nigeria. The dearth of teachers and bias attitude of administrators and inconsequential policy of the government towards the subject that was then infused into moral studies with lesser topics aroused the interest of the then Dr. Adetona and Mrs Idiat Oluranti Adegbule (who later had her PhD, became the Lagos State Deputy Governor

and currently serves as the Senator representing Lagos State at the 10th National Assembly in Abuja). Though, the edited book was later dedicated as a *Festschrift* in honour of Prof. Muhib Omolayo Opeloye, the quality of the papers published in the collection speaks volumes of the desire of Adetona and Adebule to change the negative narratives of the subject through paper presentations.

The edited work has six chapters written by seasoned Islamic studies scholars in Nigeria who were all then Ph.D holders and today are Professors of *Islamics*. Chapter one written by Adebayo Rauf extensively discusses the “*Influence of World Conferences on Muslim Education on Islamic Education in Nigeria*” with various data and analytical studies (pp.1-32) while Chapter two with the title “*Problems and Prospects of Teaching and Learning Islamic Studies in the Nigerian University: A Case Study of the University of Maiduguri*” was an invaluable aper written by Yahya Imam Oyewole using University of Maiduguri as a case studies to enunciate the problems and prospects of Islamic studies in Nigerian tertiary institutions (pp.33-58). In his usual didactic writing, Adetona Lateef Mobolaji discusses the unavailability of students and teachers for Islamic studies in Lagos State and the golden opportunity that could be gotten through pre-degree programmes if the duo (teachers and students) and the policy makers in our institutions are well informed with the topic “*Dearth of Students and Teachers for Islamic Studies in Lagos State: Sub-Degree Programme to the Rescue*” (pp. 59-72).

Also, Lateef Oladimeji with the title “*The Impact of Islamic Vacation Courses of the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria on the Youths in Nigeria*” methodically highlights the impacts of the MSSN's vacation courses on Nigerian youth since the inception of the society in 1954 via the programmes and activities that are serially offered during the vacations (pp.73-85). Furthermore, Arikewuyo Abdus Sami'Imam discusses the gaps of Qur'anic schools' administration and academic methodologies in Ilorin city and the needs for its upgrading with the title “*Towards the Standardization of Learning in the Qur'anic School in Nigeria: A Case Study of Ilorin Metropolis*” (pp. 86-105) while in conclusion, the needs to investigate the sociological effects of Islamic education as it affects Muslims and other citizens was discussed by Makinde Abdul-Fatai Kola with a title “*Sociological Impact of Islamic Education in Nigeria*” (pp.107-132).

Going by the papers presented in this 142-page collection of

academic works, it is enough to admit that Adetona as the editor and one of the contributors is a worthy towering figure among his contemporaries.

ii. Adetona as JOREPS' Editor in-Chief: *LASU Journal of Religions and Peace Studies* (JOREPS), Vol. 1, No 1, June 2015, 125pp. ISSN: 2476-8146. A Publication of the Department of Religions and Peace Studies, Faculty of Arts, Lagos State University, Lagos, Nigeria.

In 2015, Adetona in conjunction with other notable academia in the Department of Religions and Peace Studies, Lagos State University commenced the publication of a world class academic journal that would be reckoned with internationally. The publication at inception had Profs. D.F Asaju, I.L Akintola and the then Dr T.M Salisu as members of editorial board while Profs. Danoye Oguntola-Laguda and Lateef M. Adetona were the chairman and Editor-in-Chief respectively. The first volume of the journal was published in 2015 as scholarly edited after peer-reviewing by L.M Adetona. This was a testimony to his erudition and academic resourcefulness which brightly shown in the publication of the journal which had contributions from various intellectuals in Nigeria and beyond.

The maiden volume, a 125-page publication had nine (9) papers which discussed various religious, cultural and contemporary issues. It must be reiterated here that Adetona's in-depth knowledge of religious and cultural studies contributed to the success of the publication as the pioneer Editor-in-Chief of the journal which till today continues to wax stronger under the editorial leadership of Prof Kabir Olawale Paramole (2018-2023), Prof. Adepeju Johnson-Bashua (2024) and now Ass. Prof Lydia Bosede Akande.⁹ The journal is now hoisted on the official website of the Lagos State University.¹⁰

C- Published Chapters in Books and *Festschrift*

As a prolific author of repute, Adetona also contributed papers to many commissioned chapters in book such as "Correlates of Islam"¹¹ and numerous *Festschriffts* as edited by seasoned scholars in honours of various academic personalities. This is an academic exercise he maintained even till 2017 with a co-authored contribution to a book project published in Lagos as edited by Lawal Adams with the title "Colonial Administration and Islam in Lagos".¹² Therefore, in this section, we shall concisely look at some papers contributed by Adetona as chapters in book and *festschrift*

i. Lateef M. Adetona (2006) “**The Metamorphosis of the Bamidele Movement**” in Toyin Falola and Ann Genova (eds.), *The Yoruba in Transition: History, Values and Modernity*, Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, pp.85-100. ISBN 1-59460-134-8

The volume, dedicated to Prof E.A Ayandele and published in the USA in 2006 was edited by Profs. Toyin Falola and Ann Genova. It has 27 chapters which discusses the transition of the Yoruba people socially, educationally, politically and religiously from the past to the present day of modernity. Among these papers was Adetona’s insightful analysis of an important Islamic Movement among Yoruba Muslims, Southwest Nigeria with the titled “*The Metamorphosis of the Bamidele Movement*”. The 15-page paper unearthed the genesis of the *Bamidele* Movement in Ibadan and its metamorphosis as one of the greatest religious and knowledge-based movements in Yorubaland known as “*Mokondoro*” till today. His contribution in such internationally commissioned project showcases the history and development of *Bamidele* Movement to the world and affirms Adetona’s prowess as an international author of repute.

ii. Lateef Mobolaji Adetona (2013) “**Religious Models for Peace and War in a Heterogeneous Society: A Case Study of the Sharia Law Model in Yorubaland**” in Pade Badru and Brigid Maa Sackey (eds.), *Islam in Africa South of the Sahara: Essays in Gender Relations and Political Reform*, Plymouth, UK: Scarecrow Press Inc., pp.313-330 ISBN 978-0-8108-8469-4

Published in United Kingdom, these essays in gender relations and political reforms were edited by Pade Badru and Brigid Maa Sackey with sixteen academic papers from international contributors. The volume was divided into five parts; historical origin of Islam in Africa, gender relations within Islam in Africa, the *Sharia* code and conditions of women in African Islam, political Islam and Africa, and the African in diaspora. Adetona’s contribution which is the thirteenth paper in sequence falls under the third part of the book. He chronicles the introduction of *Shari‘ah* into Nigerian legal system and its pronouncement as State law in Zamfara State in 2001. He also enumerates the conditions that led to the agitation of *Shari‘ah* implementation in Yorubaland, benefits of *Shari‘ah* in socio-economic growth of the citizenry, *Shari‘ah* paradigm of conflict resolution as witnessed in two models, the

treaty of *Hudaybiyyah* and the case of ‘Alī and the *Kharījites* and lastly, applications of the lessons from the two models in the agitations for *Shari‘ah* implementation in Yorubaland without violence. The 17-page paper is a peaceful novel for all Yoruba Muslims and other Muslims worldwide who are agitating for *Shari‘ah* implementation in their territory.

iii. L.M Adetona (2003) “The Prospects of Islamic Studies in a Southwestern Nigerian University” in Amidu Sanni (ed.) *An Unfamiliar Guest in a Familiar Household: Arabic and Islamic Studies*, Lagos, Nigeria: Debo Prints, pp.62-72. ISBN 978-689338-1.

In 2005, Prof Isaac Ogunbiyi, a Christian by faith, one of the pioneer lecturers of Arabic Studies at the Department of Foreign Languages of the Faculty of Arts, Lagos State University and the first professor of Arabic Studies in Yorubaland retired from the service of the university at the then statutory age of retirement. Prior to his retirement, as a mark of honour for his contributions to the development of Arabic and Islamic Studies in LASU since inception and his supports for the growth of the duo disciplines, a *Festschrift* was commissioned in his honour. The *Festschrift* was edited by Prof Amidu O. Sanni while Adetona was one of the contributors with the paper titled “*The Prospects of Islamic Studies in a Southwestern Nigerian University*”.

In doing justice to the paper, Adetona chronicles the commencement of Islamic Studies as one of the pioneer courses at the inception of LASU in 1984, enumerates the aims of the course in LASU, analyzes the staff and student population, highlights the factors responsible for low enrolment of students such as inadequacies of Islamic studies teachers in primary and secondary schools and in conclusion, he proffers methods of solving the problem for the development of the course in LASU and beyond. Adetona’s contribution in Ogunbiyi’s *Festschrift* is an academic masterpiece and undiluted analysis of the status of Islamic studies in LASU which would continue to serve as a template for the policy makers and academia in upholding the vision of the pioneers in the field of *Islamics*.

iv. L. M Adetona (2004) “Islamic Panacea to Corruption in Public Office in Nigeria” in Ade Dopamu *et al* (eds.) *Religion, Leadership and Society: Focus on Nigeria*, Lagos, Nigeria: NASR and Free Enterprise Publishers, pp.199-204 ISBN 978-065-022-9.

This volume was published by the Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions (NASR) in 2004. It was edited by Profs Ade F. Dopamu, R.D Abubakre, the then Dr Danoye Oguntola-Laguda and others. L. M Adetola's contribution in the volume titled "*Islamic Panacea to Corruption in Public Office in Nigeria*" is among the numerous papers under Section B (Islam) of the work.

Meticulously, Adetona defines the main terms in the paper which include public office, corruption and Islamic panacea. He also discusses corruption and its ugly trend in the Nigerian society, its effects on socio-economic development of Nigeria and proposed Islamic precepts as panacea to corruption in public offices. The paper concludes by highlighting all Islamic teachings and norms that could be used in combatting corruption in Nigeria which as he notes has become incurable bane to the national development.

D- Local and International Published Journal Articles

Academic publication in both local and international journals is one of the primary assignments of university scholars not for promotion purpose alone, but for an unparallel contributions to socio-economic, political, educational, philosophical and scientific advancements of society where an institution is situated. For this reason and others, Adetona contributed scores of papers that were published as journal articles in both local and international outlets. Therefore, in this section, we are showcasing some of the journal articles written by Adetona and published by reputable journals within two decades (1996 to 2016)

- i. L.M Adetona (1996) "An Assessment of the Contribution of Ibn Rushd (Averoes) to Intellectualism in Islam" *Artslinks: A Journal of the Department of Arts, Lagos State College of Education*, Vol. 1, No 2, pp.29-34. ISSN 0795-3055.**

The journal was an annual publication of the department of Arts of the defunct Lagos State College of Education (now Lagos State University of Education), Oto-Ijanikin, Lagos. Adeona's paper "*An Assessment of the Contribution of Ibn Rushd (Averoes) to Intellectualism in Islam*" was the fourth out of the sixteen academic papers published in the volume. It discusses the contribution of *Ibn Rushd*, one of the foremost Muslim scholars of intellectualism in Islam and the western world in the areas of law, medicine and philosophy. The paper is an exposition of aeroes's contribution to knowledge as proclaimed worldwide.

ii. L.M Adetona (1998) “Wedding Feast: A Misconceived Phenomenon among the Nigerian Muslims” *Al-Hadarah: LASU Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, Vol.1, No 1, pp.41-47. ISSN 1118-0161

Al-Hadarah is the flagship Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies bankrolled by the Units of Arabic Studies and Islamic Studies, Lagos State University. In June 1998, the journal debuted its first volume which has three issues. Among the nine (9) papers published in *Al-Hadarah*'s maiden edition (first issue) was Adetona's work titled “*Wedding Feast: A Misconceived Phenomenon among the Nigerian Muslims*”. He explicitly discusses the concept of marriage in Islam and its essential features as enshrined under Islamic jurisprudence.

The author also discusses wedding feast (*Walīmatu'n-Nikkāh*) as an emphatic *Sunnah* of Prophet Muḥammad and how it supposed to be celebrated. He then enumerates the misconception about wedding feast in Nigeria among Muslims in tandem with Christian marriage which has no bases in Islam. The conclusion highlights the acceptable way of wedding feasts in Islam. The work is an eye-opener and a precursor for Muslims who are imitating the Christian mode of marriage feast in all ramifications.

iii. Lateef Mobolaji Adetona (1999) “Murder: A Capital Crime in Islam” *Journal of Ethics*, Vol. 2 No 1, pp.1- 8. ISSN 1117-8280

The 8-page paper titled “*Murder: A Capital Crime in Islam*” was a jurisprudential exposition about murder (*Qatl*) in Islam. Adetona decries the incessant killings in Northern Nigeria as one of the reasons that necessitated the writing of the paper as an *exposé* to the concept of murder in Islam. He defines murder, its permissibility (conditions) in Islam according to the four *SunniImāms* and their Schools of Thought, the meanings of intentional and unintentional murder and what constituted crime punishable under Islamic law for whoever spills the blood of innocent ones. He concludes the paper by saying that the justification for murder punishment according to Islamic law is logical for peace to reign in any society and advises Muslims in Nigeria to desist from jungle justice where lives of innocent beings had been wasted without any recourse to authority and competent Courts of law. The paper is a needed admonition and elucidation for all Muslims from being criminally-minded and murderers, a crime forbidden under Islamic law.

iv. Lateef Mobolaji Adetona (1999-2000) “Moon Sighting as an Instrument of Muslim Unity: A Case Study of Nigeria” *Journal of the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic* (JOFISA), Vol. 5, Issue II, pp. 5-12

JOFISA is a bi-annual journal of the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic, University of Peshawar, Pakistan. In its Volume five, Adetona's paper titled “*Moon Sighting as an Instrument of Muslim Unity: A Case Study of Nigeria*” was published among other contributors of international repute. The paper discusses the stance of Islam as regards brotherhood and unity which can be achieved through many Islamic orthodox mediums. The evolution of Islamic *Hijri* calendar from 623 C.E and the involvement of *Khalifah ‘Umar bn Khaṭṭāb* till present period was discussed. He also enunciates the effects of *Hijri* calendar on moon sighting and the importance of moon sighting to Muslims especially in the month of *Ramadān*. Adetona, in tandem with the aim of the paper, then enumerates moon sighting in *Ramadān* and other Islamic lunar months as a potent factor of unity among Muslim *Ummah*. The paper, in its entirety, is a jurisprudential exposition about the moon sighting and its factors as a medium of unity among Muslims in Nigeria considering the dichotomy that usually ensue among the Northern and Southern Muslims of Nigeria especially during the commencement of *Ramadān* fast.

v. Lateef Mobolaji Adetona (2002) “Religious Literature in Early Islam: A Study of the Status of Muwatta Imam Malik” *National Journal of Contemporary Issues on Religions, Arts and Social Studies*, Vol 2, No 1, pp. 43-51. ISSN 1596-2822.

This paper is one of the brightest Adetona's works published by the Nigerian Association of Religious Scholars and the Religious Forum Academia. He brought to fore an example of religious literatures in early Islam by studying the first encyclopedic book of *ḥadīth* of *Imām Mālik*, *Al-Muwattā'*, a distinct major literature of the *Malīki* School of Jurisprudence.

In educating his readers, Adetona chronicles the biography of *Imām Mālik* from Madinah which was then the political headquarters and citadel of Islamic learning from the *Hijrah* of the Prophet to the period of successors when the *Imām* was born. The author accentuates the status of *Muwattā'* as a compendium of Islamic knowledge and a literature of both *fiqh* and *ḥadīth*, albeit

its low gradation for not being classified as one of the six authentic collections of *ahādīth* by some contemporary scholars and students of *hadīth*. In justifying this, Adetona briefly narrates the biography of *Imām Mālik* who was born in 93 A H, his teachers, his unique teaching methodology and his students. He then discusses works of *Imām Mālik* which include *Risālah*, *Kitāb al-Nujūm*, *Tafsīr'l-Gayb al-Qurān* and *Muwattā'*. He then discusses *Muwattā'* as literature of *hadīth* and *fiqh*, period of its compilation, its compilation and arrangement and also the style of *Muwattā'* as a book of religious studies.

In conclusion, the author reiterates the position of *Muwattā'* as not just a book of jurisprudence and *hadīth*, but a compendium that must be treasured by Muslims from a generation to the other because of its authenticity and chain of narration.

vi. Lateef Mobolaji Adetona (2010) “*Da’wah (Islamic Propagation) in Yorubaland- From the Advent of Islam to the End of Colonial Period*”*The Journal of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 19. pp. 99-121. ISSN 1105-3518

As one of the well-grounded Yoruba Islamic scholars whose knowledge of historiography of Islam, its advent and development in Yorubaland is of note, Adetona's paper on Islamic propagation (*Da’wah*) in Yorubaland from its inception to the end of colonial rule in 1960 was published by the highly rated *Journal of Oriental and African Studies* (JOAS), from Athens, Greece.

In the JOAS's 19th volume, the 22-page Adetona's paper extensively discusses the advent and development of Islam in Yorubaland through *da’wah*. He emphasizes that the religion has become indigenous to the Yoruba people next to the African traditional worship but its growth was retarded with the emergence of British colonialism. He claims that the effect of colonialism resulted in formation of various Islamic group advocating for the development of Islam and equal representation for Muslim under the colonial masters.

Adetona enlightens his readers about the status of Islam in Yorubaland before colonialism, its retardation during colonialism and Muslim responses through propagation such as the formation of *Jamat-ul Islamiyyah* (est.1924) by Lawal Basil Augusto, one of the founding members of The Muslim Literacy Society and his supporters. He narrates the establishment of *Ahmadiyah Movements*

in 1916 and its splinter group such as *Ahmadiyyah Mission in Islam* and *Anwarul-Islam* (formerly *Ahmadiyah Movement*) and other notable associations such as the *Ansar-ud-Deen* (est. 1923), the *Zumratul-Islamiyyah* and the *Nawair-ud-Deen* (est. 1924) societies of Nigeria. The responses of Yoruba Muslims to British alienation through conservative method of propagation, the formation and development of *Bamidele Movement* in Ibadan, its approach to learning and propagation and the Muslims' later responses to modernity through education and other methodologies towards the end of colonialism were all enumerated.

In nutshell, the paper is an embodiment of history and activities of foremost Yoruba Muslim elites especially in Lagos through which the propagation of Islam spread to other Yoruba cities and towns. The paper is a repository for historians and researchers as regards Islamic propagation in Yorubaland, southwest Nigeria.

vii. Lateef Mobolaji Adetona (2012) "NASFAT: A Modern Prayer Group and Its Contributions to the Propagation of Islam in Lagos" *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization*, 2(2), pp. 102-107. ISSN 2225-0883

As an encyclopaedic Yoruba Islamist who has written extensively on Islam in Yorubaland, Adetona was able to beam his research searchlight on the modern Pentecostal Islamic movements in Nigeria especially with the emergence of modern *Asalatu* and prayers groups. He posits in his introduction that prayer groups among Yoruba Muslims had been known before colonialism in which notably, beyond mosque circles, many groups such as *Asalatu* of *Jama'at ul-Suadai* in Kuti Mosque, Lagos and the famous *Asalatu* group of Lagos Central Mosque had existed and flourished.

In unearthing the emergence of *Nasrullahi al-Fathi* Society of Nigeria (NASFAT), the author chronicles the formation of *Yusrullah Association of Nigeria* (YAN) in 1984 at Ibadan through Alhaji *Shaykh* Murtadha Akangbe, a senior banker with WEMA Bank at Iwo Road in Ibadan and other founding members such as Alhaji *Shaykh* Ibrahim Aliyy and Alhaji Sulayman Adebayo. The transformation of the Lagos members of YAN to NASFAT in 1995 due to distance and other commitments was also mentioned. He posits that some YAN members in Lagos and some group of young educated Muslims started a prayer meeting in the house of one of them, Alhaji Abdul Lateef Olasupo every Sunday between 8am and

12pm.

According to Adetona, NASFAT is today a leading household *Asalatu* group not in Lagos alone but around the world with their modern Islamic Pentecostal evangelism which attracts many Muslims to the group. The contributions of the two notable towering figures among the NASFAT's founding scholars in Lagos, *Shaykh* Abdullahi Akinbode and *Shaykh* Taye Mun'im was also spelt out. As an Islamic Pentecostal movement, the author enumerates the development of NASFAT and its modern activities in the area of weekly *Asalatu* session, economic empowerments, *fiqh* session for its members, public lectures, Qur'anic tutorial class, *Hajj* and *Umrah* operation, *Zakāt* and *Sadaqah* collection and distribution, TAFSAN Beverages limited, establishment of educational institutions and building of NASFAT village along Lagos-Ibadan Expressway among others. The article is a complete chronicle of NASFAT's establishment, activities and achievements and a fount for anyone researching on *Asalatu* or prayer groups in Nigeria.

viii. Lateef Mobolaji Adetona (2015) "The Prophet Muḥammad: A Universal Exemplar for Building a Muslim Home as Contained in *Muḥammad, The Messenger of God- An Analysis of Prophet's Life* of M. Fethullan Gullen" *LASU Journal of Religions and Peace Studies* (JOREPS), Vol. 1, No 1, June 2015, pp.115-125. ISSN 2476-8146.

Prof. Adetona in this article based on the book of a Turkish Scholar, Fethullan Gullen titled "*Muḥammad, The Messenger of God- An Analysis of Prophet's Life*" discusses Prophet Muḥammad as a universal exemplar and mercy to the entire world. He lauds the uniqueness of the book as a master piece in the history of the Prophet as a mercy to the entire world, as an exemplary father, husband, educator, an administrator, a social and military leader and political head.

In emphasizing glowing tributes of Prophet Muḥammad as highlighted in Fethullan's book, Adetona then highlights the qualities of the Nobel Prophet as husband and father and as an educator with various narrations from the Qur'ān, *ahādīth* and various Islamic authentic books of history. In conclusion, he maintains that following the Prophet's footsteps and tradition (*Sunnah*) is the only way needed to guide mankind from all contemporary difficulties. He advises Muslim parents, teachers, scholars and political and religious leaders to learn from the Prophet's qualities in order to

have a peaceful society where love and development thrive. This article is broadly classified as one of the Islamic moral enunciation and guidance bequeathed by Adetona to world Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

ix. Lateef Mobolaji Adetona and Mubin Olatoye Raji (2016) “A Study of the Misuse of *Suratu Yasin* among Yoruba Muslims”*Ilorin Journal of Religious Studies (IJOURELS)*, Vol.6, pp. 1-15. ISSN: 2141-7040

In Islam, supplication with verses and chapters of the Holy Qur’ān is permissible and enjoined by Allah and His Prophet because prayer (*Du’ā*) forms part of ‘*Ibādah* in Islam. However, across the length and breadth of the Muslim world, there exists transgression (*Guluwu*) from Islamic norms while praying. This formed the basis of the article titled “*A Study of the Misuse of Sūratu Yāsin among Yoruba Muslims*” as co-authored by Prof Adetona and one of his foremost mentees, Mubin Olatoye Raji. The 15-page paper published by *IJOURELS*, the flagship Journal of the Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, Nigeria in its introduction discusses the essence of the Holy Qur’ān not just as a source of guidance for mankind, but as a medium of healing and supplication used by Muslims in facing world vicissitudes of all kinds. The authors note that there are some *Suwar* (chapters) and *Āyāt* (verses) which are in prayer forms which are frequently used for supplications by Yoruba Muslims and their scholars (*Alfas*) for solving spiritual challenges such as ill-luck, sickness, sorcery, and barenness. As they note, favourites among these Qur’anic portions are *Sūratul-Kahf* (Q18), *Sūratul- Wāqi’ah* (Q56), *Sūratu Yāsin* (Q36), *SūratulMulk* (Q67), *Sūratul- Fātiḥah* and *Mu’awwūdhatayn* (Q113 and 112).

In this regard, the authors notice the prevalent usages of *Sūratu Yasin* (which is known as the heart of the Qur’ān- *Qalb al-Qur’ān*) amidst its misuse among Yoruba Muslims. They, therefore, analyse the status of *Sūratu Yāsin* in the Qur’ān, its virtues, benefits and hidden spiritual values. Going by the core aim of the work, the authors detailed the study of its misuse among Yoruba Muslims. As they enumerate, Yoruba Islamic scholars who are prayer’s consultants are fond of indulging in sharp practices and anomalies in supplicating with *Sūratu Yāsin*, a clear departure from the right precept of *Shari’ah* on the beneficial use of portion of the Qur’ān. These unorthodox practices include bastardization of its contents

like twisting its wordings, application and mixing of *harām* substances to the written portions (*hantu*) of the *Sūrah*, economic reduction of the whole chapter to a numerical value formed and summarized diagrammatically into representations called *Khātim* or *Wafq*, rendering the *Sūrah* into bizarre construction known as “*Opa*” to avoid repetition of the chapter and, writing or reading of *Sūratu Yāsin* backwardly for various usages.

The article copiously showcases all the above means of misuse of the *Sūrah* with explanations and copies of some handwritten forms of *Yāsin* in *khātim* form or in backward writings as commonly used by some scholars in Yorubaland. It is instructive to mention that the authors’ exposition in the article is thought-provoking and eye-opening for Yoruba Muslims who have deviated from orthodox usage of the Holy Qur’ān and in particular, the usages of *Sūratu Yāsin*.

E- The Professorial Inaugural Lecture

- i. Lateef Mobolaji Adetona, Ph.D. (2017) “**Dynamics of Islam in Post-Colonial Lagos**” Lagos State University (LASU) Inaugural Lecture Series, 59th Edition, Lagos, Nigeria: Lagos State University. v+36pp. Tuesday March, 14th 2017. ISSN 0794-7453

Inaugural lecture, according to the University of Nigeria, Nsukka is a formal way of acquaint the public what academic or research activities a professor has carried out over the years and what his or her future research interests are.¹³ In essence, inaugural lecture synthesizes one’s scholarship and the scholar’s contributions to knowledge for years and an avenue to celebrate such a scholar by the university community, his family, friends, colleagues, students and the public. This was the occasion in 2017 when Prof Lateef Mobolaji Adetona delivered his professorial inaugural lecture titled “*Dynamics of Islam in Post-Colonial Lagos*” as Professor of Islamic Thought and Contemporary Studies.

Adetona’s inaugural lecture held inside the Buba Marwa Auditorium, LASU was a culmination of his doctoral thesis titled “*Effects of Da’wah (Propagation) on the development of Islam in Lagos (1900-2006)*”¹⁴ and otherresearches on the advent of Islam in Yorubaland and in Lagos in particular where he had published papers such as “*Ilmiyyah School in Post-Independence Lagos (2009)*”, “*The Prospects of Islamic Studies in a Southwestern Nigerian University (2003)*”, “*Da’wah (Islamic Propagation) in*

Yorubaland- From the Advent of Islam to the End of Colonial Period (2010)”, “NASFAT: A Modern Prayer Group and Its Contributions to the Propagation of Islam in Lagos”(2012) and “Lagos in the Eve of Islam (2017)”. Therefore, the inaugural lecture which was well-attended by reputable Islamic scholars within and outside Nigeria, LASU management, friends and family, colleagues, academia and students explicitly gave accounts of the dynamics of Islam in post-colonial Lagos.

The inaugural speaker chronicles the advent of Islam in Lagos, education of Muslims in post-colonial Lagos which include the traditional Arabic schools and *‘Ilmiyyah* schools in post-independence Lagos with their contemporary traits as fashioned on modern educational models. He also enunciates the reactions of Muslims in Lagos to Pentecostalism through songs and Music and emergence of Pentecostal *Asalatu* group such as NASFAT and others and their *da’wah* methodologies. Also, In the absence of statutory *Shari‘ah* application in Lagos State, the insistence of Lagos Muslims on the application of Islamic personal law which led to the establishment of the Independent *Shari‘ah* Panel, its composition, *modus operandi* and dispensation of justice within the State.

In a fascinating presentation, Adetona concluded his 36-page inaugural lecture with a notion that the emergence of colonialism retarded the progress of Muslims in Lagos. He posits that the efforts of Lagos Muslims to close the lacunae created by the colonialism may not have been fully satisfactory but, the emergence of modern prayer groups have started yielding positive effect or about three decades ago. He admonishes proprietors of Muslim conventional schools and *‘ilmīyyah* schools in Lagos to model their education institutions on modern school settings. The *Asalatu* groups as he notes should also update the knowledge of their missionaries at interval through seminars while the Lagos State Government should assist *‘ilmīyyah* school in the area of standardization because of the numbers of students they graduate into the community annually. Finally, Adetona charged the government to objectively consider the justice dispensation of the Lagos Independent *Shari‘ah* Panels as part of statutory judicial apparatus recognized in Lagos State. The inaugural lecture would remain evergreen in the anal of LASU’s history as a piece of intellectualism centred to reawaken the consciousness of Lagos Muslims towards the development of Islam and Muslims within the context of Nigerian federation.

Conclusion

This paper has been able to review twenty evergreen publications of late Prof Lateef Mobolaji Adetona from his numerable and valuable academic works between 1996 and 2016. The review which is not a rigourous book review nor review of article but an exercise to explicitly showcase the academic prowess, unquenchable intellectual infatuation of Adetona and means of immortalizing him within the fields of Islamics and humanities in general. The work, in its entirety, has also proven that Adetona was a quintessential teacher, author, public orator, an Imām, mentor, a researcher par excellent, an editor of note, an administrator and facilitator of reputes throughout his life time. His exemplary qualities in publication and mentorship are admonitions for all and sundry who are aiming to immortalize their names through academic and scholarship.

*The authors dedicate this work to the memory of the Late Prof Lateef Mobolaji Adetona (1967-2018). They also appreciate Drs Bello Mustapha Adebayo, Raji Mubin Olatoye, *Imām* Olayiwola Habeeb and others for the assistance rendered during our investigations about the biography of late Prof Adetona and in identifying some of the books and articles he authored and other useful information. We say *Jazākumullāhu Khayran*.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See <https://educaleb.com/lateef.adetona-is-dead/> for the reportage of Prof Lateef Mobolaji Adetona'a death on several media outlets
2. Olayiwola Habeeb, Islamic Scholar, age 62, interviewed on the 16th January, 2025 at Lagos Island, Lagos State, Nigeria
3. *ibid*, 16th January, 2025.
4. Prof Adetona Lateef Mobolaji was a 2009 visiting Fullbright Scholar at the Hope College, Holland, Michigan, USA.
5. Olayiwola Habeeb, Islamic Scholar, age 62, interviewed on the 16th January, 2025 at Lagos Island, Lagos State, Nigeria
6. In Adetona's honour, A *Gedenkschrift* titled "*Interrogating Problematic Issues in Humanities and Education*" was post-humously published in 2020. The project was edited by Profs. K.O Paramole, T.M Salisu and Adepeju Johnson-Bashua. Over forty well-researched papers were published in the volume as contributed by scholars around Nigeria. See "*Interrogating Problematic Issues in Humanities and Education*" (2020) in K.O Paramole, T.M Salisu and Adepeju Johson-Bashua (eds.), Lagos, Nigeria: Department of Religions and Peace Studies, LASU and Free Enterprise, 2020. ix+375pp. ISBN 978-978-721-4.
7. One of such papers was dedicated to the memory of Adetona by one of his mentees, Busari Jamiu Muhammad in a journal article published in Malaysia. See Busari, J. M (2024) "Islam in Yorubaland, Southwest Nigeria: A Historical Review of Its Advent and Impacts till Present Time" *Al-Qanatir International Journal of Islamic Studies*, Vol 33, No 1, 41-63. E-ISSN: 2289-9944.
8. Nurullah, A.S (2006) "*Ijtihād* and Creative/Critical Thinking: A New Look into Islamic Creativity" *Islamic Quarterly*, Vol.50, Issue 2, 165-168
9. Currently, the Journal has been enjoying patronage across Nigeria and beyond and between 2015 and 2025, JOREPS has published six volumes under the editorial acumen of Profs. L.M Adetona, K.O Paramole, Adepeju Johnson-Bashua and lately, Dr Lydia Akande.
10. The journal (JOREPS) is now hoisted on the official website of the Lagos State University. See <https://www.lasu.edu.ng/home/journals> and then click Department to see the JOREPS.
11. *Correlates of Islam* is a book project in honour of Prof Yasir Anjola Quadri in 2009. It was edited by Profs. Ishaq Lakin Akintola, Taiwo Moshood Salisu and Badmus Yusuf. Prof Adetona was among nineteen scholars whose papers were edited and published. See Lateef Mobolaji Adetona (2009) "*Ilmiyyah School in Post-Independence Lagos*" in I.L Akintola, T.M Salisu and B.O

Yusuf (eds.) *Correlates of Islam*, Zaria, Nigeria: ABU Zaria Press Limited, 52-62. ISBN 978-125-158-1

12. See Adetona, L.M and Adams, L.B (2017) "Lagos in the Eve of Islam" in Lawal, B. Adams (ed.) *Eko Dynasty, Colonial Administration and the Light of Islam in Lagos*, Lagos, Nigeria: Oko Faaji Community.

13. See www.unn.edu.ng/inaugural-lecture-unn

14. Adetona, L.M (2007) "Effects of *Da'wah* (Propagation) on the development of Islam in Lagos (1900-2006)" unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Department of Religions, Lagos State University, Lagos, Nigeria.