BRILL

Secularity and Muslim-Christian Relations in Uganda

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Abstract

The article reconstructs aspects of the secularizing project of the British colonial administration in Uganda by exploring how state regulatory practices in the field of Western school education set the conditions for two forms of religious difference: first, relations between Muslims as members of a religious minority and the Christian majority, and second, dynamics among Muslims that transpired not only in leadership competition but also in controversies over education and proper religious practice. Focusing on the intersections between a state regulatory regime and the activities of Muslims who claimed religious and political leadership on behalf of other Muslims in the areas of Buganda and Bugisu, the article argues that these Muslim intellectuals mediated and contributed to the colonial administration's production of Muslims as a religious minority. As articulators of Islam, they (re)formulated and debated the forms and purpose of Muslim education and partly novel understandings of proper religious practice, and what it means to be a modern, pious Muslim in the new colonial order. Their political aspirations were hampered, not only as a direct consequence of the colonial administration's production of systematic inequalities between Christians and Muslims, but also as a result of the dynamics of intra-Muslim plurality.

Keywords

1   Introduction

This article analyzes what particular historical forms of secular governance were established in colonial Uganda and how this affected religious minority-majority politics, in particular relations between Christians and Muslims. Following the special issue's invitation to probe the applicability of the concept of secularity to African societies, it focuses on what Charles Taylor identifies as the first meaning of 'secularity', or 'secularity 1', first the historical process by which various domains of political and social life became if not dissociated, then at least partly 'emancipated' from religious authority and norms, and second, ongoing constructions of the relation between the political and the religious. Drawing inspiration from the work of Hefner (2016) and Burchardt (2020), the article conceives of this process in terms of a specific 'state regime of religious governance' (Hefner 2015: 145–146). In probing the relevance of the secularity 1 perspective for African lived worlds, the article's focus is less on how the colonial state in the British Protectorate of Buganda regulated and framed the place, form, and role of religion in the public domain. Rather, its primary interest is in the effects of these regulatory practices on the relations between different religious constituencies (Burchardt and Wohlrab-Sahr 2013), in this case between Christians and Muslims, and also on their practices, self-understandings, and internal debates. I also posit that, to understand the secular governance of religious difference and hence the state's production of religious plurality, we need to distinguish between two forms of religious plurality – plurality between and plurality within – and examine how each of these are affected by state regulatory practices. These questions are addressed from the point of view of Muslims who, politically and numerically, form a minority of about 12 to 15 percent of the Ugandan population. Notably, to expand scholarly understanding of the highly variable situation, past and present, of Muslims in different regions of the country, this article draws significantly on primary ethnographic and oral historical research in Eastern Uganda, conducted in consecutive research stays over a period of twelve years.[1] The rationale behind this analytical and empirical choice is to balance what I call the 'Bagandacentric' bias that informs the scholarly literature on Muslims in Uganda.

There is an abundant historical and anthropological literature on religion and politics in Uganda that illustrates the many ways in which, already before the arrival of Christian missionary and British colonial troops, these realms have been interlocking and feeding on each other (Goodman Lockhard 1974; Hansen and Twaddle 1995; Kassimir 1995; Hansen 2003; Furley 1988). What is striking about this literature, however, is that it concentrates primarily on

different forms, practices, and historical legacies of Christianity. Some work also discusses local traditions of engaging the forces of the invisible world, such as ancestor spirits (Reynolds Whyte 1998) or other spirits (Finnstrom 2003), with a few studies relating these practices to broader political processes and nation-state politics (Behrend 1998; Vokes 2009). In comparison, few scholarly studies address the history of Islam and Muslims in Uganda and account for their struggle as members of a religious minority for political participation and economic prosperity (Kasozi 1986, 1996; Kiyimba 1985, 1989, 1990; Kasule 2022; Sseremba 2023).

A second striking feature of the literature on religion and politics in Uganda is its Bagandacentric perspective, which mirrors a broader tendency in anthropological and historical scholarship on Uganda (Oloka-Onyango 1998; Mutibwa 2008). Numerous studies offer fascinating insights into the politics of religious affiliation in Uganda, that is, the ways in which since the early days of the British Protectorate in Uganda Christian religious affiliation intertwined with political allegiances and party politics. This gave an emergent Protestant (Anglican) elite associated with the Buganda kingdom political precedence over Catholics and Muslims. The Bugandacentric perspective also applies to the literature on Islam: the few authors who write on Islam in Uganda locate its historical roots in the country since the mid-nineteenth century in the areas that formed part of the Buganda kingdom and the royal court in particular (King et al. 1973; Oded 1974; Kasozi 1974; Kiyimba 2012).[2] Their accounts of Muslims' efforts for political participation and equal citizenship tell the story primarily through the lens of Ganda Muslims (Kasozi 1996; Sseremba 2023). Although Ganda Muslims played a leading role in these struggles, it is important to note that because many of them were closely associated with the kingdom of Buganda, on which the British colonial administration relied heavily, Ganda Muslims found themselves in a historical position of relative privilege. The task at hand, then, is to know more about Muslims' historical efforts in other regions of Uganda. How were Muslims outside the heartland of the Buganda kingdom affected by the ways the colonial state regulated their relations to Christians, and thereby made them into a religious minority?

2   Exploring Regimes of Religious Governance

By addressing the effects of state regulation of religious difference from the point of view of a religious minority, this article echoes Saba Mahmood's (2016) inquiry into historical constructions of political secularism in Egypt by paying special attention to the regulation of religious minority-majority

relations. However, while Mahmood, similarly to Hefner (2015) and other contributions to Fallers Sullivan (2015), frames the issue as a critique of the concept and politics of 'religious liberty' and as an expression of state power that imposes a restrictive frame on religious practice, I argue that the state regulation of religion, and hence of the relationship between religion and politics, by its very nature implies circumscribing and standardizing it, regardless of whether this means privileging one religion or else containing the influence of an 'unwanted' (minority) religion. Moreover, if we explore historically specific constructions of secularity by asking how the state governs and produces religious difference, it is important to widen our perspective and take into consideration that such difference exists or arises as the result of state regulatory measures, not only between but also within different 'communities of (religious) practice' (Wenger 1998). The article therefore distinguishes between plurality between and plurality within as two different dynamics of religious difference and boundary drawing (Schulz 2021; Mahomed 2022). Both forms of religious plurality are characteristic of many African settings and their dynamics change in response to secular forms of religious governance.

Here the area of regulation focused on is the domain of formal school education. In exploring state regulation of the field of education, I ask how this has affected first, relations between practitioners and institutions of different religious traditions, particularly the space for maneuver available to religious minorities, and second, what dynamics emerge within such a minority community of religious practice. Addressing these questions means extending the analysis beyond an account of formal state regulation, whether in the legal realm, through administration or through de facto politics (Bâli and Lerner 2017; Künkler et al. 2018), to understand how members of a religious constituency act within the confines that these regulatory measures set (Wohlrab-Sahr and Burchardt 2012, 880). Second, it requires moving beyond anthropological studies of everyday interactions between practitioners of different religious traditions, an approach that, in recent years, has been applied to stress mixing, bricolage, and the pragmatic accommodation or tolerance of religious difference (Ahmed 2007; Larkin 2008, 2015; Murtala 2017; Fesenmeyer et al. 2020; Janson 2016, 2021; Janson and Meyer 2016; but see Soares 2006). As important as the stress on long-standing conventions of toleration is, a one-sided insistence on pragmatic accommodation may turn a blind eye to enduring institutional arrangements that put Muslims in a situation of structural marginality from which it is difficult to escape. Colonial and postcolonial state regulation of the educational sector in Uganda has played a significant role in establishing and maintaining systematic inequalities between Christians and Muslims. It is against this backdrop that we need to view Muslims not just as passive

subjects of a state regulatory regime but as agentive, purposeful actors. For instance, the actions of Muslim religious authorities and leaders also bear on the internal dynamics of the community of religious practice on whose behalf they claim to act. In this sense, Muslim actors contribute to the molding of plurality between and plurality within.

To take this two-pronged perspective on the making of religious difference, this article draws on empirical research to reconstruct the activities and self-understandings of a particular category of Muslim intellectuals: various Muslim 'learned men' (referred to as 'sheikhs') who, between the 1920s and 1960s, launched different educational initiatives geared toward raising future generations of pious Muslims who would be subjects capable of competing in the new institutional setting created by the British colonial administration. It also discusses points of controversy that emerged among Muslims as a result of their educational activities, thus showing how, in response to the state production of plurality between, a particular dynamic of plurality within started to take shape. A closer understanding is first needed of the longer history of educational policy as a backdrop against which Muslim intellectuals' responses and their efforts in the field of schooling need to be viewed.

3   British Colonial Administration: Implementing a Less-than-Neutral Educational Domain

Western school education in colonial Uganda can be seen as an important domain in which the secularizing project of British colonial administration can be traced. The purpose of such a reconstruction is to understand how the ways in which British colonial administration regulated – or preferred to keep out and hence not regulate – Western-style school education contributed to systematic inequalities between Muslims and Christians. These continue to circumscribe Muslims' opportunities for education and regular employment today.

Focusing on formal education as a field in which to study the particular historical forms of secular governance offers several promising perspectives. As authors have demonstrated for other Muslim settings (Reichmuth 1998, 2000; Gomez-Perez 1999; Brenner 2001, Loimeier 2002, 2009; Schulz and Dilger 2013; Dilger 2021), school education is among the most important fields in which the modern secular state regulates and constructs religious difference. Studying school education also sheds light on the effects of what Foucault has called 'governmentality', that is, a technique of power that does not operate through direct repression and physical coercion but in more decentralized, diffuse

and 'capillary' ways (Foucault 2008; Stambach 2010). Understanding school education as one mode of governmentality allows us to take account of the fact that educational institutions play a major role in the process of making citizen-subjects. It is here that norms of bodily conduct, daily behavior, and ritual observance are inculcated. Finally, precisely because education is a domain of subject formation and of the making of moral personhood, the control that the state claims over this domain is frequently challenged by various actors who promote their own projects of moral subject formation (for Muslims see, for instance, Brenner 2001; Augis 2002; Loimeier 2002, 2009; Kane 2003; Hefner 2007; Schulz 2012).

From its early beginnings, Western school education in the area of contemporary Uganda was under the exclusive control of the Christian missions since the British Protectorate of Uganda relied on Anglican and Catholic missionaries to establish and run the first Western schools.[3] The situation thus contrasted with that in the German East African Protectorate on the Swahili coast, where the colonial administration introduced nonreligious schools with the purpose of attracting Arabo- and Swahiliphone Muslim elites and integrating them into the colonial apparatus (Loimeier 2009; Haustein 2022; Kasozi 1996).

Yet rather than view colonial educational policy in the area of Uganda as a clearly designed strategy, there are indications that Western schooling emerged as a 'field of religious contestation between missionaries and the colonial government' (Haustein 2022, 4), and that administrators ceded to the demands of the Christian missions that no system of state schools was to be established. Kasozi (1996), for instance, reports in detail on colonial officials' initial efforts to 'build non-denominational institutions in which Muslims and non-Christians could receive a secular education', efforts that were cut short by the strong 'opposition from missionary circles' (Kasozi 1996: 106).[4] Another way in which Christian missionaries protected their monopoly on providing Western education was to block individual educators from establishing private secular schools, regardless of the religion they adhered to. In this way Anglican and Catholic missionaries kept close control over what was to be taught in terms of religious subject matters as well, foreclosing any possibilities for dissenting Protestants or Catholics to found their own schools (Kasozi 1996).

There was no consistent colonial educational policy with regard to the schooling provided to different religious groups. To a certain extent, the lack of consistency was due to the fact that colonial administrators did not always agree on their attitudes toward the schooling of colonial subjects. In general, colonial administrators tended to profess a tolerant attitude to all locally practiced religions. Yet because colonial administration essentially gave the Christian missions carte blanche for their implementation of school curricula of their choice, its de facto religious policy favored the inculcation of Christian

values and learning formats. Also, the professed tolerance toward all religions was not extended to Muslims who, as Kasozi reports, were to be 'judiciously watched by those responsible for the preservation of law and order' because Islam was considered to be 'peculiarly liable to fanatic developments' (cited by Kasozi 1996: 107).

As an example of the colonial administration's apprehensions about potential Muslim empowerment and activism, in 1923 the secretary of Native Affairs opposed a move by reform-minded Muslim educational activists to create so-called integrated Muslim schools that would have combined Western-style education with Islamic religious subject matter. Kasozi (1996) interprets this opposition, as well as the chief secretary's subsequent refusal to subsidize integrated Muslim schools, as an important mechanism in preventing Muslims from accessing knowledge relevant for political success and influence in the new colonial order.

The framework that the colonial administration set for Western schooling had two significant, if partly countervailing, implications for Muslims. On the one hand, by giving Christian missions unlimited leeway to shape Western school education according to their priorities and values and control access to it, colonial administration created a less-than-neutral space for living out religious difference. Muslims and Christians received differential treatment when it came to the acquisition of knowledge essential to future positions of political influence and wealth. The de facto policy of educational neglect and limited access to school education for Muslims was an essential factor in their constitution as a religious minority (Kiyimba 1990). It laid the ground for a lopsided educational system that even today provides unequal opportunities to Muslim children to acquire a good-quality education. At the same time, and almost paradoxically, colonial administrators' neglect of Muslim education created a space for Muslim intellectuals, among them educational reformers and their Muslim opponents, to launch initiatives to ensure that future generations of Muslims would be able to access schools that combined secular and religious knowledge. In doing so, these intellectuals became key agents in Muslims' self-awareness and sense of community.

4 Islamic Education in Colonial Uganda

To understand the effects of colonial educational policy on Muslims' chances and struggles to partake as equal subjects in national political and economic life, it is important to keep in mind that from the early days of colonial rule, two types and proponents of Muslim education existed side by side, very often in tension with each other. Whereas the colonial administration paid

little attention to traditional that is, Qur'anic, school education, the efforts of Muslims to reform traditional education in line with Western schooling took place under the immediate radar of the colonial state.

Similarly to Muslim-majority societies in East and West Africa, in Uganda the traditional system of Qur'anic school education centered on acquainting pupils with the holy scriptures, putting a strong emphasis on memorization during the first years of schooling, and subsequently on the acquisition of Arabic literacy and reading the Qur'an.[5] According to Kasozi (1996), in Uganda pupils learned Arabic script and began reading the last chapter of the Qur'an (Surat 'Amma) during their first four years at school. Those children who continued would improve their Arabic literacy skills and start reading the Qur'an in the fifth and sixth year. Upon completion, advanced pupils would be acquainted with aspects of Islamic law and Islamic civilization. Very few of these advanced Qur'anic schools existed in the British Protectorate and, notably, they were highly unevenly distributed: with the exception of Arua in the northwest, until 1962 all of them were located in central (Tikkalu and Katuumu in Bulemeezi, Bwayse in Kyaddondo) and Western (Kabigi in Masaka) Uganda (Kasozi 1996).

The few pupils who graduated from these schools of advanced Islamic education were the only ones able to meet the conditions for going abroad to achieve higher levels of Islamic erudition.[6] If they had the means to do so, they would usually attend schools on the East African coast, in Mombasa, Zanzibar, or Lamu. Even fewer of them would reach levels of erudition and have the means to continue their studies at higher institutions of Islamic learning in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, or Pakistan. Upon their return they were considered learned and referred to as 'sheikhs'. Their fellow graduates who had stayed behind usually stayed with and worked for a local sheikh in return for being his pupils. Some of these local sheikhs, who had been trained by sheikhs from the East African coast, became key mediators and hence generators of Islamic erudition in the area since they taught and graduated advanced Muslim students who could not attend institutions abroad.

Throughout the colonial period, primary and advanced Islamic education was not systematized or centrally integrated. This essentially meant that no generally applicable standards of Islamic learning, in the form of a curriculum or general examination, existed. The knowledge that individual sheikhs passed on to pupils varied considerably because it depended on their own teacher's level of erudition. Since ordinary Muslims could not ascertain an individual's erudition, to them all 'learned men' were to be respected as 'sheikhs'.[7]

Below I discuss several locally educated sheikhs who lived in the Mount Elgon area near Mbale, in Eastern Uganda, and played a pioneering role as

what I call 'articulators of Islam' in their respective village communities. While collecting the life biographies of these sheikhs in 2012 in the Mbale country-side, one sheikh was frequently mentioned as an important teacher: Sheikh Swaibu Ssemmakula, who received and taught students at his different learning centers in Central Uganda.[8] Sheikh Ssemmakula's key position as an articulator of Islamic knowledge was demonstrated in the leading role he assumed in the 1930s and 1940s in intra-Muslim debate over proper ritual, and the forms and content of Muslim education.

Islamic education operated as a parallel structure of knowledge transmission with an exclusive focus on religiously relevant knowledge. It did not provide any skills conducive to gaining access to political influence or economic control in the new political apparatus of British colonial rule. Politically relevant knowledge and marketable skills were passed on exclusively in the mission schools. It was in response to this gap that, starting in the late 1920s, Muslim educational activists launched their reform efforts.

5 Carving Out a Space for Modern Muslim Subjecthood: Muslim Educational Activists in Early Twentieth-Century Uganda

How did Muslim leaders and intellectuals, in their role as intermediary actors between the state regulatory regime and local communities of religious practice, respond to the conditions set by British colonial administration with respect to formal, that is Western, school education? What efforts did Muslim leaders undertake to carve out a space for Muslim modern subjecthood within this realm of maneuver? What intra-Muslim dynamics and debates were prompted or fueled by their endeavors, and how did this constellation of plurality within affect Muslims' chances of political participation?

Throughout the colonial period and for decades after independence, a major gap existed between school enrollment numbers of Muslim pupils and of Christian, Catholic and Anglican, pupils, with the result that by 1960 only one Muslim in the entire country had successfully graduated from university (Carter 1965, 195). The low enrollment rate of Muslim pupils was compounded by a high rate of school dropouts among them, with the result of a high level of illiteracy (in the Roman alphabet) among adult Muslims. In consequence, only few, unskilled, and low-paid occupations, such as work as butchers, drivers, or soldiers, were open to Muslims in the colonial economy (Rowe 1988; Kiyimba 1989). Yet a few Muslims, usually residents of urban areas, became very successful and prosperous in trade and transport, and used some of their wealth to advance the cause of Muslims, such as by sponsoring Muslim education.

An important reason for the fact that Muslims were lagging behind in Western school education was, as Kasozi (1996, 101) puts it, the 'Christian baggage' of the Western-style schools established under the colonial administration. Muslim parents were reluctant to send their children to these schools. They were well aware of the fact that Western school education opened up new pathways to political influence and economic success. School graduates were recruited into the lower ranks of the colonial administrative apparatus where they worked as interpreters, clerks or policemen.[9] However, Muslims acutely felt that the secular subjects taught at Western schools were infused with Christian values and lifestyle, such as food preferences, dress, and hairstyles (Kiyimba 1989). In contrast, Muslims had a strong admiration of the African Islamic dress code, demeanor, and lifestyle practiced along the Swahili coast.[10] Even the method of writing and reading from left to right directly opposed the Arabic writing conventions practiced by Muslim scribes.

Muslim parents acutely perceived that missionary school education was aimed at turning children into Western-oriented, modern subjects capable of basic literacy and numeracy and willing to act as builders of a Christian colonial society. The first reading materials used in missionary schools were drawn from the Christian holy scriptures, such as the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer (Kasozi 1996). School life, including school meals, was organized around a Christian calendar of holidays and religious rituals. The close association between school education and Christian evangelization was also evident in the fact that most schools were built on church grounds. For all these reasons, Muslim parents feared that their children's exposure to a Christian learning environment would estrange them from their family background and ultimately lead to their conversion (Kiyimba 1990). This fear was borne out in numerous, sometimes widely noted, instances.[11]

Because only few Muslims could read or converse in English, the new elites trained at the mission schools considered them uneducated. As a result, as Kiyimba notes tersely, Muslims held 'an inferiority complex that [kept] them away from the company of secular elites and [reconciled] them into accepting an inferior rating with reference to their countrymen' (1986, 247–248). The situation also created considerable moral ambiguity for any Muslim who nourished an ambition to attain a position of influence and wealth.

As early as the 1920s some elite Ganda Muslims sought to respond to the adverse conditions of Muslim schooling. Prince Badru Kakungulu, a member of the royal family of Buganda who, with the backing of the colonial administration, assumed leadership of the Protectorate's Muslim community, became the figurehead of an organized Muslim effort to create an alternative to the existing schools. Badru Kakungulu himself illustrated the educational dilemma

faced by Muslims. His father's initial objections to his enrollment in the elite Protestant school King's College, Buddo, were assuaged only by the pragmatic arrangement that Kakungulu would attend classes but continue to sleep and eat his daily meals at home. Badru Kakungulu and his supporters from the kingdom of Buganda, who together formed the so-called Kibuli faction, intended to create independent schools for Muslim children that would combine religious instruction with the teaching format and subject matters offered at the mission schools (Kasozi 1996). Still, as mentioned earlier, the colonial administration initially blocked Kakungulu's efforts to found a Muslim school and employ Indian Muslim teachers (Kasozi 1996). Kakungulu also faced a strong opposition from older members of the traditional ulema.

Perhaps the most momentous innovation of the Muslim educational initiative led by Kakungulu was to teach pupils literacy in English and the Roman alphabet. Kakungulu's recognition of the strategic role of English literacy as a key ingredient of political and economic success in the colonial system is illustrative of the political mindset of a younger generation of Western-educated Muslims. Also, the ways in which he and his supporters interacted with the colonial administration to ultimately realize their ambitions reflect the extent to which elite Ganda Muslims took for granted their leadership position within the Protectorate's Muslim community. This leadership claim soon became a source of contestation among Muslims, initially within Buganda and, in the 1940s and 1940s, increasingly also between Ganda Muslims and Muslims from other regions. For decades to come, and with consequences that are still palpable today, the resulting plurality within the Muslim religious field had a crippling effect on Muslims' chances to represent their political and moral aspirations in a unified form (Kasozi 1996; Kiyimba 2005, 2012; Kasule 2022). At times these contestations played out in intra-Muslim controversies over proper ritual (see below, section 7). The educational efforts of Kakungulu and his supporters were another source of contestation; they met stiff resistance from a number of Muslim leaders and fueled existing divisions among Muslims, divisions that ran mainly between different segments of the Muslim Ganda political elite. Members of an older generation of traditionally educated ulema, among them prominent figures such as Sheikh Swaibu Ssemmakula, opposed the idea that the secular knowledge dispensed at Western schools should be made part of the curriculum taught to Muslim children. As representatives of the learned Muslim establishment for whom traditional Qur'anic education had served as the entry point for their leadership position, the older sheikhs also resented the idea that the Muslim reformers were ready to rely on teachers without the conventional training of sheikhs and, for secular subjects, even on non-Muslims (Kasozi 1996). English literacy thus became a bone of contention

because it constituted a new source of authority and leadership claims. It required teaching expertise that differed from the conventional, purely religious knowledge of traditionally trained sheikhs.

In spite of the resistance from representatives of the traditional ulema and factions of the Ganda political elite, by the early 1930s Western school subjects and literacy in the Roman alphabet had been integrated into the curriculum of a few Islamic schools that were thus turned into Muslim primary schools. Apart from the primary schools at Kabisanda and at the Bombo military barracks in central Uganda, there was also the school at Nyamitanga in Mbarara District, southwestern Uganda.[12] Over the 1930s and 1940s more primary and secondary Muslim schools emerged that were mostly located in the urban zones of central Uganda. These opened up Western education to Ganda commoners. Several factors were conducive to this development (Kasozi 1996). Throughout the 1930s the colonial administration, now firmly established, became an environment less fearful of Muslims. Also, in the context of an emergent nationalist movement in the 1940s, the Anglican-leaning Ganda political elite began to feel the effects of mass education that Catholic missionaries had provided to the rural populations.

By the 1950s the great number of Catholic beneficiaries of the schools and medical care provided by the Catholic mission formed a considerable challenge to the Anglican elite and its privileged access to the political and economic resources within the colonial apparatus. To counter their loss in political influence, members of the Anglican African elite started to cultivate ties with Muslim leaders, which in this context meant elite Ganda Muslims. For their part, Prince Kakungulu and his Kibuli faction realized the strategic advantages of the growing, by now party-based, competition between Anglican elite and Catholic contenders within Buganda but also increasingly throughout the area of the British Protectorate (Kasozi 1996), and used it for their own gain. A final factor that facilitated the founding of separate Muslim schools was that they received substantial financial support from the Aga Khan.[13] In spite of these gains, it took Muslims much longer to establish their own independently funded primary and secondary secular schools.[14] The barriers set by the colonial state to good-quality education of Muslim children continued to impinge on Muslims' chances of future employment and positions of influence.

In 1947 the Uganda Muslim Education Association (UMEA) was created as an administrative structure to oversee the implementation of a standardized school curriculum and the coordination of school-related activities, such as quality management and grading final exams. Funded by Muslim sponsors and with the aid of the Aga Khan and the colonial administration, UMEA oversaw the creation and administration of additional Muslim schools. After

independence, by the time all schools were placed under the supervision of
the state and UMEA became irrelevant as an administrative structure in 1964,
about 180 primary schools, eight junior secondary schools, and one senior sec-
ondary school, as well as a teacher-training college operated under the aegis
of UMEA (Kasozi 1996). The number of Muslim-funded secondary schools
rose much more slowly than their Catholic and Anglican counterparts.[15] For
decades to come, Muslims' educational disadvantage was compounded by
the fact that the existing Muslim-funded schools could rarely compete with
Christian-funded schools with respect to their pedagogical infrastructure and
quality of the teaching staff (Kiyimba 2005; Schulz 2013a, 2013b).

Notwithstanding the persistent discrepancies in educational opportunities
for Muslims and Christians, it is important to stress the pioneering role that
Kakungulu and like-minded advocates of separate Muslim schooling played.
Their educational reforms formed a stepping stone for Muslims' struggle to
achieve equal social and economic standing and increase chances of political
participation, in the colonial setting and in postcolonial Uganda. The develop-
ment was paired with a gradual shift toward greater self-confidence among
Muslim parents and their growing recognition of the strategic importance of
Western education (Kasozi 1996). At the same time, the political aspirations
of Muslim educational activists were short-circuited by continuing leadership
wrangles surrounding Kakungulu's claim to religious and political leadership
of the Muslim community. Nevertheless, insofar as the Muslim educational
reformers carved out a new path to political and social success for Muslims
within the colonial environment, they assumed a key role as articulators, and
in a triple sense. At the institutional level, by founding a new type of school,
Muslim educational reformers served as a liaison between administrative
regulations and Muslims' specific educational needs within the tight space
for maneuvering set by the colonial economy and administration. Second, by
teaching literacy in English and the Roman alphabet, the reformers articu-
lated, in the sense of evoking, and paved the way for future positions of social
influence, power, and prosperity. Third, by establishing school curricula that
reflected their particular understandings of moral propriety and correct
conduct in everyday life, the proponents of Muslim Western education also
formulated novel understandings of what it means to live as a Muslim in a
Christian-dominated setting. In doing so, they articulated a new religious sub-
jectivity, one that placed Muslims squarely within the new social, economic,
and political conditions of the colonial (and later postcolonial) state. Clearly
these intermediary actors, and the organizational and authority structures
in which they operated, played a decisive role not only in mediating what
the colonial administration endorsed as 'acceptable' religion but also in

reformulating the forms and content of knowledge transmission and sources of religious authority.

The Muslim educational reformers on whose activities I have focused so far sought to push the boundaries set by an allegedly religiously neutral colonial state. Claiming to speak for the Muslim religious minority in the British Protectorate of Uganda, members of the Ganda Muslim elite contributed to the particular historical forms and stakes of colonial secularity in Uganda by creating a separate space for schooling within the Christian-dominated educational domain. They became, in the double sense of the term, subjects in a secularizing process, that is, in the realization of the political doctrine of secularism under specific historical circumstances.

In what follows I return to the question of how Muslim actors who worked as intermediaries between the state regulatory framework and local communities of religious practice responded to and shaped the colonial secularizing project, by extending the analysis to a region outside of Buganda: the Mbale area in Eastern Uganda. At the center of the discussion are, again, Muslim leaders who acted as articulators of Muslim subjectivity in the colonial setting. In the area around Mbale these were Muslim learned men who did not belong to the Ganda elite and who differed significantly in their authority credentials and views on how to live as modern Muslim subjects in an adverse colonial environment. Assessing the debates in which these early articulators of Islam engaged allows us to understand how they responded to the colonial order, and what spaces they sought to carve out for their fellow Muslims.

6   Making Pious Subjects: Articulators of Islam in Eastern Uganda

The educational reforms launched by Badru Kakungulu and his supporters generated disagreements among religious leaders over the form and content of Muslim schooling. The disagreements fed into power struggles among Ganda Muslims that were mirrored at times in controversies over correct religious practice and ritual. What were the repercussions of these disagreements among Muslim leaders in regions outside central Uganda? What were the stakes of Muslim activism and debate in the Mbale area and who participated in the debate? How did Muslim leaders shape the space for action that the colonial state granted them? To respond to these questions the following discussion draws on interviews with several sheikhs who, either as pioneers of Qur'anic education or as advocates of reformed Muslim schools, were responsible for the spread and anchoring of Islam in rural Bugisu, that is, in the rural areas near Mbale town.

Reconstructing the pioneering role of these sheikhs in the Bugisu area around Mbale is significant in several respects. First, presenting material on the history and stakes of Muslim activism in Eastern Uganda provides novel insight into the forms, content, and challenges of Qur'anic education in colonial Uganda. Significantly, it offers a corrective to the dearth of historical documentation on Muslims outside of the kingdom of Buganda which, as mentioned in the introduction, played an instrumental role in the British colonial order. Members of the Ganda political elite, among them some Muslims, enjoyed a position of political privilege and wealth that continued to shape postindependence state politics (Mutibwa 2008).[16] Second, detailing the stakes of Muslim activism and debate in a particular area of colonial Uganda sheds light on the heterogeneous nature of the category of historical actors referred to above as 'articulators of Islam'. Third, grounding Muslims' historical educational activities in a particular regional setting allows us to understand how local Muslim debate was generated at the intersections of local social and cultural conventions, regional debates (originating in Buganda), and finally, the influence of transregional actors, particularly of traders from Mombasa, Oman, and Saudi Arabia.

Two groups or types of articulators of Islam were active in Bugisu in the period between the 1930s and 1950s. The first group were sheikhs who, as residents of the mountainous rural surroundings of Mbale, viewed themselves as propagators of Islam and role models in their village communities. As emerged from interviews with family members of these sheikhs and other sheikhs who had studied with the pioneers, they could essentially operate without interference from the British colonial administration. This suggests that colonial administrators did not consider them a threat, in contrast to their fear of radical Arab Islam (cf. Kasozi 1996). They had trained locally, with a sheikh who had either received his education in central Uganda or had himself been educated by a locally resident sheikh. The rural sheikhs were among the first in their locality to convert to Islam and therefore made it their priority to convert others and offer traditional Qur'anic education to children and youth. As illustrated by the following example, Qur'anic education was commonly realized in the context of an apprenticeship in which pupils lived with their teachers and cultivated on their behalf.

> Sheikh Hassan Namulemba from Mukende village [about 20 km away from Mbale town] was born in 1918. Along with six sisters, Namulemba was the first in his family to convert to Islam (in the early 1930s). He started 'learning the Qur'an' with a 'great learned man', Sheikh Zakariah Wamboya. In 1936, he moved to a nearby village and the residence of

Sheikh Masolo to learn memorizing the Qur'an in its entirety. As part of his studies with Sheikh Masolo, Namulemba 'was treated like one of his children', which also meant that he 'digged for and planted cassava and bananas' for his teacher. After 'completing the Qur'an', Namulemba moved on to live as the apprentice of yet another 'rural sheikh', Sheikh Hassan Maberi, who lived in a village 'further down the road' (near Mbale) until he 'received the turban', that is, was declared a 'learned man' himself capable of dispensing Qur'anic education to the next generation of pupils. When I asked Namulemba about how he saw his role as a 'learned man' in a setting in which the majority of the local population was non-Muslim, he described himself as 'mostly a preacher and as someone [who] strived to be a spiritual guide to others, teaching them how to properly conduct the prayers'. He also stressed that he 'prayed on behalf of all Muslims and did not want to take sides', an allusion to the ritual controversies that, starting in the 1920s, prompted divisions within the Muslim field in Buganda.[17]

As illustrated by the following example of Sheikh Rashid Kitangule, Qur'anic education was not formalized, with the result that the sheikhs' levels of erudition varied significantly. Born in Gangama village in 1942, Sheikh Kitangule was the grandson of Amir Sabangazi who worked for Semei Kakungulu, a high-ranking civil servant of the British colonial administration who came to Mbale in 1899.[18] In a conversation in March 2012, Sheikh Kitangule recounted his learning biography as follows.

Because my father had died early and my guardians did not support me, I could not learn through formal arrangement but picked up some knowledge of Islam by begging a friend of the family, who was a sheikh, to teach me a bit about Islam. Then Sheikh Musa Kasara of Namunsi accepted to sit and teach me for some time. In the end, my guardian, Aballa Wasoa, took me to Kampala to stay with Sheikh Saidi Mukasa at Natete. That was in 1954. I learned the thirtieth chapter of the Qur'an within a week. After that, I was considered a learned person and was told I should go back and teach peers and children. But I was not happy with that and looked for ways to improve my knowledge. In 1962 Muslim friends from the Swahili coast whom I had met in Soroti sent me to Kibera, near Nairobi, where I learned some with Shiekh Ahmed Hamid. Still, I was not satisfied, so I went to Mombasa where I stayed for three years. After I had returned home, I worked for some time as a driver … until in 1972, a Muganda, Sheikh Abdallah Tayib, became my tutor. In the end, I was confirmed a

> learned man. It was my greatest desire to teach others about the holy
> Qur'an, about *fiqh*, and to show them the path towards true Muslimhood.

As much as the two accounts differ in their learning biographies, both sheikhs
highlight their aspiration to act as role models and preachers. Similar to other
rural sheikhs, they were primarily concerned with making pious Muslim sub-
jects and with teaching and watching over the correct performance of ritual.
Rather than striving to improve Muslims' chances within the educational
domain created by the colonial state, Namulemba's three teachers were ori-
ented inward, that is, toward rooting Muslim life and religious practice in local
social realities. Yet the primary inward orientation of the rural sheikhs did not
preclude their reassessment of their own role as religious teachers. Starting in
the early 1950s, some of the rural sheikhs supported the initiative to preach in
and translate the Qur'an into Luganda, an effort that other sheikhs and also
some resident Arab traders strongly opposed because they favored Arabic as
the only legitimate religious language.

Another sheikh, Sheikh Mohammed Hadj Wamboya, the son of the
above-mentioned first teacher of Sheikh Namulembe, recalled the controversy
over Luganda as the language of teaching and interpretation as a highly divi-
sive issue. In his account the controversy revealed the influence of Ahmadi
Muslims 'who first came up with the idea of translating the Qur'an into
Luganda'. Recalling his father's pioneering role as a Qur'anic teacher, Sheikh
Mohammed Wamboya stressed how 'for a long time' his father opposed the
initiative as an 'innovation' that 'broke with the rules of gaining religious eru-
dition'. What this statement reveals is that, similar to intra-Muslim dynamics
elsewhere (Brenner 1993; Loimeier 2003; Schulz 2007), the controversy over the
language of religious teaching and interpretation revealed competition over
interpretive authority and hence a struggle over legitimate religious leadership
credentials. Although the rural sheikhs shared a concern with spreading tradi-
tional Qur'anic education across Bugisu, they were divided over the question
of Luganda translation, which shows they were far from constituting a uni-
form and coherent group. Also, from the 1950s onward some of them moved on
from their investment in Qur'anic education to promoting integrated Muslim
schools. Among them was the earlier-mentioned Sheikh Zakariah Wamboya,
the father of Sheikh Mohammed Wamboya, who, after years of expanding
the infrastructure of mosques and attached Qur'anic education centers in the
Bugisu area, came to play an important role in establishing integrated Muslim
schools in the area.

From the outset, the second group of sheikhs promoted the creation of sep-
arate Western schools for Muslims in and around Mbale, very often in direct

connection with Muslim educational reformers in Buganda. Some of these sheikhs had trained with renowned teachers from central Uganda, while others descended from Ganda Muslims who had occupied positions as lower-level clerks or servants in the colonial administration. The sheikhs usually resided in the urban centers of the Bugisu area where they played an instrumental role in founding Muslim primary and secondary schools and in expanding the number of mosque buildings across the area. In the later years of their lives in the 1960s and 1970s, some of these sheikhs served in high-ranking positions in the national Muslim umbrella organization.[19]

Sheikh Sadiu Mukuwa, born in 1936 in the remote Bududa area of southern Bugisu, received his traditional Qur'anic education from a sheikh whose homestead was located near his parental home. After some time his teacher recommended he enroll in one of the first integrated primary Muslim schools in the area, Bulucheke Primary School. From there Sheikh Mukuwa went on to study at Bukoyo Muslim Secondary School and finally graduated from the Muslim Teachers' College in Kampala that had been founded by Ganda advocates of reformed Muslim education in 1945. After years of working at a Muslim primary school in Bududa, he was assigned the function of a county sheikh within the national Muslim umbrella organization. As Sheikh Mukuwa told me in 2012,

> As someone who was born to parents who only converted to Islam after I had been born, my chances to become a learned person were low, at least initially. I so much longed to learn about Islam and I was happy when my father agreed to let me stay and learn with my first teacher. But my father was a simple man, a farmer, he was not knowledgeable. At that time, those who had some knowledge of the Qur'an, they had a sense that learning to memorize the Qur'an was not enough to help you advance in life. There were already those who pushed for integrated schools so that Muslims too could become successful and prosperous. My first teacher was one of them, thanks to God. He convinced my parents that I should attend school at Bulucheke. … I owe it to him and all those Muslims who were open-minded, who thought about how to advance Muslims, to help them overcome adverse conditions. They helped me to become what I am today.[20]

Sheikh Mukuwa followed in the footsteps of sheikhs who, by building up an infrastructure of reformed Muslim education, very purposefully tackled the adverse conditions for Muslim schooling under colonial rule. He and several other sheikhs involved in reformed Muslim education recalled that from early

on, their efforts were motivated by their recognition of the higher competitiveness of Christian schools and by the example set by educational reformers in central Uganda. Yet what also emerged from the interviews was the strategic role that another group of outside actors played: Omani traders who resided in the Mbale area and who were the first to draw attention to the advantages of literacy in the Roman alphabet and in English. As Sheikh Mohammed Hadj Wamboya put it,

> There are people today who say that we owe our integrated schools to the initiative of the Baganda [educational reformers]. But that is not true, we did not need their ideas. Very soon, there were sheikhs in our area, visionary men, who understood that to break the fear of whites, Muslims needed to learn the alphabet to come closer to whites and Christians. But they also took the advice of Omani traders who were among the first to suggest that Muslims needed to learn with white people. So that is how it came about in our region. From early on, we set up schools and invited sheikhs from the (Swahili coast) to take care of the religious teachings. And we also made sure that our children would learn to read and write in the English alphabet. Look at me: I was admired everywhere, by Christians, too, for writing and reading Luganda in the English alphabet.[21]

This statement illustrates the extent to which the advocates of reformed Muslim schooling in the area took up impulses not just from central Uganda but from places on the Swahili coast and from across the Indian Ocean. Swahili culture and religious traditions were deemed a source of greater religious knowledge and of a lifestyle more in tune with the prescripts of Islam. However, the impulses for reform that advocates of Muslim education in Bugisu received from their long-distance orientation toward the Swahili coast also prompted considerable rifts in the local religious field, thus mirroring the disagreements over Muslim schooling that emerged in central Uganda. In Bugisu, too, a similar factor of plurality within was at work: the strongest opposition to the Muslim educational initiatives in the area came from an older generation of sheikhs. They rejected the introduction of secular subjects, the teaching of English literacy, and the employment of teachers who had no religious training and in some cases not Muslims. Also controversial was the initiative of some advocates of integrated Muslim schools to make the religious teachings more accessible to ordinary believers by translating them into Luganda. Here again, questions of interpretive authority and hence religious authority credentials were at stake. As Sheikh Mukuwa told me,

Building more mosques across the area in the 1940s and 1950s, found-
ing those integrated Muslim schools, all of this was hard work, not only
because we received little [financial] support but also because there were
those older sheikhs who were against us. They felt that we had strayed
from the proper path of [living as] religious teachers. They said that some
of our religious practices were unlawful innovation (Arabic *shirk*) and
that we engaged in them because we wanted to take sides with Muslim
factions in Buganda. They feared that teaching our children the subjects
taught at Christian schools would make them convert to Christianity. And
they argued that Arabic is the only legitimate language for prayer, preach-
ing, and instruction. But we were determined to do more than that. We
felt that as leaders of our local religious communities, we had to do more
for future generations of Muslims. We had to emulate the Christians but
in a smart way, by sticking to our own values and religion.

Sheikh Mukuwa's succinct summary of the points of Muslim contention in
late colonial Bugisu captures the convictions and aspirations of this group of
articulators of Islam. Rather than withdraw to a seemingly nonpolitical realm
of religious learning and ritual practice as their fellow sheikhs would do, the
second group of sheikhs labored to create an institutional infrastructure that
would allow future generations of Muslims to compete with Christians for posi-
tions of power and affluence, and partake of the nation-state as full citizens.

7   The Stakes of Intra-Muslim Controversy in Eastern Uganda

So far, we have seen that differences between the two groups of Muslim edu-
cational activists whom I call 'articulators of Islam' existed at two levels and
together formed important axes of plurality within the Muslim religious field in
colonial Bugisu. First, they differed with respect to the kind of knowledge that
formed the basis of their religious authority and leadership claims. Whereas
the rural sheikhs were schooled in Arabic and religious subject matters, but
did not speak or write English, the sheikhs who promoted reformed Muslim
schools were, in addition to having religious expertise, literate in English and
the Roman alphabet and could therefore directly engage the institutional
framework set by the colonial state. A second difference consisted in the
entirely distinct preoccupations that guided the two groups and affected the
ways in which they carved out a space of action and shaped the colonial secu-
lar project of the colonial state. Whereas the rural sheikhs saw themselves as
role models in their respective rural communities to whom they felt indebted

first and foremost, the reform-minded sheikhs devised activities that aimed at institutional transformations at the regional level and addressed broader constituencies.

In Sheikh Mukuwa's historical reconstruction the form, languages, and content of Muslim education became major points of Muslim controversy, a controversy that often revealed intergenerational divisions among Muslim 'learned men'. Yet his statement also suggests that disagreements between the different groups of sheikhs crystallized around yet other issues, particularly around questions of proper religious practice, some of which took their key from debates among Muslim leaders in central Uganda at that time.

In colonial Bugisu one point of contention was the question of whether an additional prayer should be added after the Friday congregational (*juma*) prayer. Those who defended the so-called *zukhuli* prayer and those who opposed them were considered political allies of the respective Muslim factions that had emerged around this question in Buganda in the 1920s, where it was primarily associated with Prince Badru Kakungulu and his Kibuli group. Although the question may have appeared to be inconsequential for Muslims' self-understandings as proper believers in Buganda, it became a divisive issue that, for decades to come, served as a marker of religious difference between three competing Ganda factions that had been vying for political influence in the colonial environment for some time. Kakungulu's 'Kibuli group', which favored the additional prayer was therefore also referred to as 'Juma group'.

The other ritual question over which Muslim leaders in Bugisu were divided likewise took its origins in Buganda, where it intersected with leadership wrangles among Ganda Muslim factions. At the heart of the controversy was the contested celebration of the *malid-al-nabi*, the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad that had been newly introduced in Uganda in 1937 (Kasozi 1996; Kasule 2022). As several interviews with sheikhs in the Busoga region showed, the controversy around the *malid* was heightened under the influence of Omani traders, who had been the first in the area to celebrate it. However, the communal celebration of malid also resonated with local forms of socializing and the understanding that in order to be a respectable person and Muslim, one should engage in communal activity. As Sheikh Yusuf Ouakim recalled,

> When we Muslims in the area first saw how the Omanis celebrated the *malidi*, we liked it very much. We felt it agreed very much with our values and ways of doing things, it felt natural to celebrate it. That's why we resented it when some of the ulema said it was unlawful innovation. They said this under the influence of these Arab traders who said it was not condoned by God. But why not come together and show that we are

self-respecting Muslims if we commemorate the birth of our Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, in a festive celebration? Why should God resent this?[22]

Both historical controversies indicate that local Muslim ritual practice was shaped by local social conventions and understandings of what it meant to be a socially responsible and respected person. The controversies also reveal the extent to which local intra-Muslim dynamics were shaped first by controversies over ritual practice that took place in Buganda and that, in themselves, could be read as a response to the state's regulation of religious majority-minority relations and hence of plurality between. However, and this is the second insight emerging from the ritual controversies, the fact that the reform-minded sheikhs engaged in these controversies suggests that engaging the adverse conditions of the colonial state was only one of their preoccupations. This shows that the dynamics of internal plurality within the Muslim religious field cannot be interpreted exclusively as the outcome of state regulation. Closely related to this is a third insight: intra-Muslim dynamics in colonial Bugisu were also importantly fueled by transregional intellectual influences introduced mainly by foreign traders from the Kenyan coast, Oman, and Saudi Arabia.

8   Conclusion

This article reconstructed aspects of the secularizing project of the British colonial administration in Uganda by exploring how state regulatory practices in the field of Western school education set the conditions for two forms of religious difference: first, relations between Muslims as members of a religious minority and the Christian majority, and second, dynamics among Muslims that transpired not only in leadership competition but also in controversies over education and proper religious practice. My starting proposition was that it would be incorrect to understand interreligious relations and forms of religious difference mainly as the outcome of secular state governance. I suggested instead to pay particular attention to the intersections between a state regulatory regime and the activities of Muslims who claimed religious and political leadership on behalf of other Muslims. As the interviews with a particular group of Muslims made clear, it was partly due to the initiatives of these historical actors that the colonial secularizing project and regulation of religious difference did not evolve as a fully coherent regulatory system. Whereas some regulatory measures yielded unexpected consequences, others

left enough room for dynamics of internal religious controversy and for the influence of transnational actors who fueled the internal dynamics of ritual disagreement and leadership disputes.

By pointing to the historical role of reform-minded educational activists and articulators of Islam in Buganda and Bugisu, I stressed the key role of different categories of Muslim intellectuals acting as intermediaries between the state and local communities of religious practice. To different degrees and in different ways, these intermediaries mediated and contributed to the colonial administration's production of Muslims as a religious minority. As articulators of Islam, they (re)formulated and debated the forms and purpose of Muslim education and partly novel understandings of proper religious practice, and what it means to be a modern, pious Muslim in the new colonial order. Very often their understandings and claims were, in themselves, responses to regionally particular constellations of internal plurality and of power inequalities vis-à-vis Christians that resulted from state educational policy. The political aspirations of Muslim leaders and activists were thus seriously hampered, not only as a direct consequence of the colonial administration's production of systematic inequalities between Christians and Muslims, but also as a result of the dynamics of intra-Muslim plurality and of the particular controversies in which lines of divisions within the Muslim religious field became manifest. A question for future investigation would be how the paradoxical situation in which Muslim activists found themselves in their role as intermediaries evolved in the postindependence era, and whether, in the postcolonial era, we can demarcate distinct steps in the transformation of the conditions of political practice set for these and other categories of articulators of Islam.

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Notes

1   I conducted in-depth and follow-up interviews with sheikhs in Mbale town and its rural surroundings in 2011, 2012, 2016, and 2023 (a total of five months). To counterbalance my empirical findings I conducted additional interviews with sheikhs in Mbarara and adjacent districts in southwestern Uganda in 2012–2013, 2017, and 2023 (a total of six months) and consulted historical documentation and 'grey' literature. I used the biographical interview method (Schütze 1976; Rosenthal 2004; Bogner and Rosenthal 2017), complemented by semistructured and group interviews. I am deeply indebted to Amir Manghali, Mbale, for acting as an intermediary and translator during interviews, and for countless conversations on the historical roles played by Muslim religious authorities and other intellectuals in shaping Muslim affairs.

2   They mention in passing, yet without much elaboration, that Muslim religious practice (associated with another madhab, the Maliki tradition) was also introduced in the northwest of the country by former soldiers of Emin Pasha's army who were integrated into the British colonial army in the 1890s (Kokole 1985; Hansen 1991).

3   The Church Mission Society of London set up the first schools in 1886, closely followed by the first Catholic missionary schools. Subsequently, and until the mid-1960s, Catholics were more significantly involved in missionary-based school education, opening it up to broad segments of the rural population and 'commoners'. In this way, Catholic missionaries extended their influence in a situation in which political elites and central political institutions were heavily bound up with Protestant (Anglican) Christianity.

4   Kasozi mentions that in 1905 George Wilson, the acting governor, was forced to abandon plans to establish a neutral school system after Bishop Tucker had voiced his strong opposition. In 1924 Eric Hussey, who, after being stationed in the Sudan, came to Uganda as the first director of education, made another effort to found government schools that would be open to Christians and non-Christians alike. However, his initiative was also cut short, this time by the intervention of Bishop Willis (Kasozi 1996, 107).

5   The following account draws heavily on Kasozi (1996, chapter 6) and on interviews with sheikhs in the rural surroundings of Mbale, Eastern Uganda, and Mbarara district, Western Uganda, in 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017, and 2023.

6   Kasozi estimates their number at 5 percent of those who graduated from the Qur'anic school system (Kasozi 1996, 105).

7   As I realized during my research in Mbarara, Mbale, and Yumbe districts, to a certain extent this is still the case today, even if training in Islamic knowledge has become much more systematized.

8   Kasozi also highlights the central role of Ssemakula in producing a generation of learned sheikhs capable of passing on their advanced Islamic knowledge to the next generation of Muslims. He mentions that by '1950, Sheikh Swaibu Ssemakula had taught and graduated many other sheikhs' (1996, 105).

9   It is important to distinguish between different types of Western schools according to their location and zone of recruitment. Whereas primary school education took place in widely dispersed 'bush schools', more-advanced pupils moved to central school locations. Secondary schools were located in easily accessible, urban, or semiurban locations (Kasozi 1996, 102).

10 Sheikh Kaduyu, personal communication, Mbarara, January 2014. See also Kasozi 1996, 103.

11   The most widely noted example was Yusuf Lule, whose attendance at Protestant King's College, Buddo, led to his conversion. Lule later became principal of Makerere University and served as president of Uganda between April and June 1979.

12   The few other schools created in this period were at Bukoyo (Busoga, near Jinja), Masindi (Bunyoro, Western Uganda), Kabukunge (Masaka, Western Uganda), and Arua (West Nile Region) (Kasozi 1996, 111).

13   Muhammad Shah (1877–1957).

14   Today these schools are commonly called 'Muslim-funded schools'. According to Lockhard (1974, 344, quoted in Kasozi 1996, 101), in 1964 there were 969 Anglican church-funded and 1,146 Catholic primary schools, compared to 99 government schools and 178 Muslim-funded schools (which equaled 7.4 percent of all primary schools, compared to 47.3 percent for Catholics and 40 percent for Anglican primary schools). In 1968 the number of Anglican primary schools had substantially increased to 1,102, compared to 1,170 Catholic schools, whereas only nine more Muslim-funded primary schools (187 in total) had been opened (see also Goodman Lockhard 1974).

15   After 1964 two more Muslim schools were added to the then only other secondary Muslim school, while Catholic-run schools exceeded nineteen and Anglican schools grew from ten to nineteen (Kasozi 1996, 101).

16   The most insightful account of Muslims' historical struggles and educational reforms is Kasozi's (1996) detailed account of Badru Kakungulu's educational endeavor and his role in representing the interests of Muslims during the colonial and early postcolonial period. The book focuses exclusively on developments in the kingdom of Buganda, especially its metropolitan area, and a few areas in southwestern and Eastern Uganda where Ganda Muslims settled at different times of the colonial period (see also Kasozi 1974).

17   Sheikh Hassan Namulemba, personal communication, March 2012.

18   Semei Kakungulu later gained notoriety for his conversion to Judaism and founding of the Ugandan Jewish community of the Abayudaya.

19   NAAM (National Association for the Advancement of Muslims) was founded under President Obote in 1965. In 1972 Idi Amin created a new body, the UMSC (Uganda Muslim Supreme Council), that still today forms the national Muslim umbrella organization.

20   Sheikh Sadiu Mukuwa, personal communication, March 2012.

21   Sheikh Mohammed Hadj Wamboya, personal communication, February 2012.

22   Sheikh Yusuf Ouakim, personal communication, April 2012.