

ROUTLEDGE STUDIES IN RELIGION

# New Perspectives on the Nation of Islam

Edited by  
Dawn-Marie Gibson and Herbert Berg

ROUTLEDGE 

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# Contents

<i>List of Contributors</i>	vii
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
DAWN-MARIE GIBSON AND HERBERT BERG	
<b>PART I</b>	
<b>Gender, Society, and Global Connections</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2 “A Superb Sales Force . . . The Men of Muhammad”: The Nation of Islam, Black Masculinity, and Selling <i>Muhammad Speaks</i> in the Black Power Era</b>	<b>9</b>
D’WESTON L. HAYWOOD	
<b>3 Ebony Muhammad’s <i>Hurt2Healing</i> Magazine and Contemporary Nation Women</b>	<b>31</b>
DAWN-MARIE GIBSON	
<b>4 The Crescent Moon and the Carceral State: The Nation of Islam and the Legal Battle for the Right to Assemble</b>	<b>46</b>
SENECA VAUGHT	
<b>5 Eat to Live: Culinary Nationalism and Black Capitalism in Elijah Muhammad’s Nation of Islam</b>	<b>68</b>
MARY POTORTI	
<b>6 Was It a Nine Days Wonder? A Note on the Proselytisation Efforts of the Nation of Islam in Ghana, c. 1980s–2010</b>	<b>95</b>
DE-VALERA N.Y.M. BOTCHWAY AND MUSTAPHA ABDUL-HAMID	
<b>7 The Nation of Islam and Japanese Imperial Ambitions</b>	<b>118</b>
FRANK JACOB	



**PART II**

<b>Propaganda and Theology</b>	133
8 Propaganda in the Early NOI PATRICK D. BOWEN	135
9 "The Secret . . . of Who the Devil Is": Elijah Muhammad, the Nation of Islam, and Theological Phenomenology STEPHEN C. FINLEY	154
10 Elijah Muhammad's Christologies: The "Historical" Jesus and the Contemporary Christ HERBERT BERG	174
11 Black Muslims, White Jesus: Removing Racial Images of God with CRAID and W. D. Muhammad JAMIE L. BRUMMITT	190
12 Clearing the Planet: Dianetics Auditing and the Eschatology of the Nation of Islam JACOB KING	218
13 The Evolving Theology of the Nation of Islam NATHAN SAUNDERS	236
<i>Index</i>	251



## 6 Was It a Nine Days Wonder?

### A Note on the Proselytisation Efforts of the Nation of Islam in Ghana, c. 1980s–2010

*De-Valera N.Y.M. Botchway  
and Mustapha Abdul-Hamid*

#### Introduction

Founded by Master Fard Muhammad and guided and developed by Elijah Muhammad, the Nation of Islam (NOI) is an Islamic religious movement that was part of the quest of a marginalised Black nationality to reclaim their humanity, gain equality, and leave the political periphery in the USA. The NOI's efforts in economic emancipation, cultural assertion and self-determination, and heightened socio-political visibility ultimately aimed to rehabilitate the colour black and deal with the past injustices and present injuries from the supposed hypocrisy of a white hegemony. Originally interested only in Blacks in the USA, whom it deemed socially dispossessed, morally compromised, and economically emasculated, the NOI focused on the desperate Black proletariat and ghetto poor whose lives the NOI contended "were ethnically impoverished by white racist neglect of their most fundamental needs: . . . self-respect, . . . social dignity, . . . their royal black history, and worship and . . . a black God."<sup>1</sup>

Over time, however, the NOI started to reach out to other parts of the world by preaching its message to Black people globally, including Ghana. This effort was in tune with Islam's character as a missionary religion. Indeed, the Qur'an asserts that the Prophet Muhammad was sent as "a mercy to humankind" (Q 21:107). Thus Islam is supposed to be a religion for all nations. Therefore, even though the NOI was originally founded for Blacks in the USA, it also purported to have the divine mandate and Islamic character to serve as a light and guide to all Muslims. During the NOI's 1994 Saviour's Day celebration, held in Ghana, (the first time the event was held outside the USA), Louis Farrakhan, the leader of the NOI, declared the NOI was the light of the age to which Muslims internationally should look for truth and guidance. While Farrakhan argued that "we have always looked to the Prophets, and the Prophets came from the East: from Abraham to Muhammad",<sup>2</sup> he quickly invoked the Prophet Muhammad<sup>3</sup> to legitimise his point about the NOI, which was born in the West. With all the passion that he could muster, he thundered, "In this day, your light is not in the East anymore; your light is in the West and it will come back to the East."<sup>4</sup>

This was obviously re-echoing the prophetic statement that “the hour will not be established till the sun rises from the west, and when it rises from the west and the people see it, then all of them will believe in Allah . . . ”.<sup>5</sup> It was also a direct response to the many sceptical Muslims who look upon the NOI with some suspicion. Farrakhan explained that the sun as used by the Prophet did not refer to the physical sun. But that the sun represented light. One of the praise names and attributes of the Prophet is *An-Nur* (the light). The Prophet, like all the other Prophets, brought light and guidance to humankind. By Farrakhan’s interpretation, therefore, Prophet Muhammad meant that before the end of time, the light of guidance for humankind shall come from the West. The NOI was and is a bearer of a message from the West, hence Farrakhan found legitimacy for it through this prophetic saying. Muslim groups often seek to establish legitimacy using prophetic sayings (i.e., hadiths).

Indeed, by bringing the Saviours’ Day celebration to Ghana, Farrakhan hoped to establish the NOI firmly in Ghana. However, as this chapter will show, that never happened, and today the NOI barely maintains a presence in Ghana. From the initial buzz that it generated when Farrakhan established friendship with Ghana’s former revolutionary president, Flt. Lt. (rtd) Jerry John Rawlings, the NOI became “a nine-day wonder”: an event that generates a lot of excitement and interest but which quickly fizzles out. This chapter looks at the attempts at establishing the NOI in Ghana, the initial interest and state support that it generated, its subsequent fizzling out, and the factors that accounted for its inability to become an established Islamic tradition like other Islamic traditions such as the Ahmadiyya, Tijaniyya and Ahl-Sunnah. The chapter concludes that the NOI could not have flourished in Ghana principally because of its beliefs, most of which are at variance with “orthodox” Islamic teachings. And in a fiercely conservative nation such as Ghana, the NOI was bound to face opposition not only from Islamic groups, but also from Christian groups who viewed the NOI as militant and anti-Christian. There is not much literature on the NOI in Ghana. Kevin K. Gaines, in his *American Africans in Ghana*, recounts aspects of the history of the NOI’s internationalisation effort in Ghana. However, Gaines did not examine the theological factors that accounted for the failure of the NOI to make an impact in Ghana. This chapter therefore seeks to fill this gap as far as literature on the history and evangelizing efforts of the NOI in Ghana is concerned.

### **Transcending the USA Border: NOI Internationalised**

After the exit of Malcolm X from the NOI, Farrakhan emerged as the spokesperson of the NOI. He became the leader of the NOI, albeit a reorganised one, after the death of Elijah Muhammad. He endeavoured to give the NOI an international outlook and transnational solidarity with the wretched of the earth and the struggles of the so-called third-world revolutionaries



against the hegemony of the USA and its Western allies. As part of this internationalisation effort, Farrakhan undertook three world friendship tours in 1985, 1996, and 1997 to a host of countries and their leaders.<sup>6</sup> Gaines has argued that Farrakhan hoped to gain from the symbol of Pan Africanism and “seemed obsessed with retracing the footsteps of Malcolm X, whose image and memory were ubiquitous within African American popular culture at the time.”<sup>7</sup> He posits that Farrakhan’s warm reception in Ghana enabled him to reprise Malcolm’s role as militant world spokesman.<sup>8</sup>

The NOI’s international branch emerged in Britain in the 1980s, followed by missionary activities in parts of the African diaspora. Some branches flourished, converted significant numbers, and became stable. Others did not because of certain factors. For example, sociologist Nuri Tinaz implies in his discourse that the British branch became popular among people of African descent, especially Afro-Caribbeans, because of a certain shared “pastness”<sup>9</sup>—a concept which Wallerstein identifies as basis for identity formation.<sup>10</sup> On that score of analysis, Tinaz suggests that although the experiences of Blacks in Britain were different from those in the Americas, they had an awareness of their common historical encounter with and struggle against slavery, racism, and socio-economic exploitation and exclusion. It was this sense of a shared past, centred on the idea of Black diasporic peoplehood, and linked to a common history of white oppression of Black people in America and Europe and traditions of Black efforts to be free, since the days of slavery, which eventually manifested in shared movements and ideologies such as Garveyism and Black Power of the 1960s, and a contemporary struggle against a white British political system which was “intrinsically” racist.<sup>11</sup> Within that context, the NOI’s racial and political agenda and self-help economic programmes, and image as a movement that sought to globally mobilise and unify Black masses and people, attracted many young African Caribbean and Blacks in Britain from the late 1980s onwards.<sup>12</sup>

In Trinidad, for example, the NOI remains small and weak.<sup>13</sup> Though the Trinidadian mosque may be relatively small, that has not diminished its importance in the eyes of converts.<sup>14</sup> That is because NOI members there “share more in common with their African American counterparts than an adherence to particularistic Islam.”<sup>15</sup> Citing Michael Liber’s view on the African diaspora in Trinidad, Gibson avers that the African Americans and their Trinidadian counterparts share high levels of unemployment, poverty, and “complex racial problems”<sup>16</sup>—not all of which are shared with Ghanaians.

### **Going to Africa, the Motherland**

During the 1980s, the NOI started to court the friendship of African leaders. This orientation was part of its efforts to connect with the ancestral home of most of the members of the NOI and the African American community.



Partly a pilgrimage project, “a kind of new Hajj”,<sup>17</sup> it was a return, association, and communication with their origin, which, in a Pan-African frame, aimed to create mutual benefits and a formidable front for their liberation from the clutches of neo-colonialist powers. Diplomatic ties were made with different African countries. Ghana attracted the missionary enterprise of the NOI. According to Gaines, most people of African descent globally revelled in Ghana’s independence in 1957—a milestone that invigorated their “rising demands for freedom and self-determination and heralded the impending demise of the systems of racial and colonial domination instituted in the late nineteenth century in the U.S. South and on the African continent”.<sup>18</sup> Ghana’s successful anti-colonial struggle informed African Americans’ struggles for equal citizenship, and its internationally acclaimed pro-Pan-African image/reputation continued to attract expatriates and visitors and groups of African descent, including the NOI; the African Hebrew Israelites, led by Ben Ammi; and the Bereshith Hashuvah Black Jews group, led by Rabbi Kohain Ha Levi, from the African diaspora.<sup>19</sup>

This study diverges from the thematic foci and analytic occupations of other extant studies about the NOI by examining the NOI’s diplomatic arrangements and operational endeavours in Ghana and how these fared. It was under the leadership of Farrakhan that the NOI from the 1980s onwards consciously made greater formal diplomatic intrusions and proselytising strides into Ghana. Farrakhan and his entourage of NOI notables and members frequented the country. The head of state, Flt. Lt. J.J. Rawlings, and his Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) government provided Farrakhan and his lieutenants space within the national media to espouse NOI views concerning Islamic theology, political and economic orientation, culture, and the idea of racial segregation within a country whose tapestry of religion had a significant slice of Islamic influence. Could its worldview flourish and endure in a country whose traditional Islamic culture preached the familyhood of humankind, regardless of gender, geographic location, and the artificially created labels of race, ethnicity, and nationality? How was its apocryphal story of the tribe of Shabazz and creation of the “devil” by Yacub going to fit into the sacrosanct narrative in the Qur’an about Allah being the Creator of everything and be accepted along the normative traditional account of creation? How were the projected images and persons of Wali Fard and Elijah Muhammed as Allah in flesh and Prophet, respectively, by the NOI going to be accepted by conventional Muslims in Ghana in the face of the normative that Allah is not visible and Muhammad is the last prophet? What about its belief in the existence of two Qur’ans<sup>20</sup>—a known one, which is familiar to all Muslims, and a powerful arcane one, whose import and secrets, understandable in NOI, are accessible through a numerical understanding of the known Qur’an? The unique history of slavery and racism in the USA is a factor for the rise of the NOI and its version of Islam. Could this experience have become meaningful to the Ghanaian public in their different historical and geographic contexts? Could Ghana have

continued to dabble as a diplomatic friend of the USA and NOI forever? Despite these questions, the NOI attempted to create an enduring presence among the people of the country and to endear itself especially to Ghana's long-standing *ummah*.<sup>21</sup>

### Islamic Communities in Ghana and NOI Beliefs

A picture of the Islamisation of Ghana can be obtained through the patterns of the historical penetration and consolidation of Islam among the various chieftains and ethnic groups. By the advent of colonial rule, only the northern part of the country was Islamised with the massive conversion of the Dagomba, Gonja, Mamprusi and Wala.<sup>22</sup> Islam became the "state" religion of these groups, whose rulers were converted by itinerant Muslim holy men, whose prayers were deemed efficacious in the solution of problems that beset these ethnic "states" in their formative periods. The gold and kola trades and, subsequently, Asante political domination of the north opened the middle and forest belts of the country to Muslims from the north. Many moved south and settled in Kumasi, the capital of the Asante region in the forest zone. Some became powerful courtiers, who used their literacy in Arabic as palace secretaries, peddlers of Muslim charms and amulets, soldiers for the Asante army, and ambassadors of the Asante chief to the northern kingdoms.<sup>23</sup> The enclaves of these migrant Muslims in the south were called *zongo*. *Zongo* is a corruption of the Hausa word, *zango*, which means "the stranger's temporal abode/quarter". In time, however, these *zongos* became permanent places of settlement for these Muslims, who originally thought that their business-inspired stay in the south would be transient. The indigenes of the north, who constitute the bulk of the Muslim population in Ghana, were therefore Islamised through the activities of itinerant holy men whose power of prayer was believed to be almost magical.

However, there was another group of "northern" Muslims who were not indigenes of the Gold Coast (the name by which Ghana was known before independence). These were Hausa men who were brought from Northern Nigeria by the colonial administration to serve as the nucleus of the Gold Coast Police, called the Gold Coast Hausa Constabulary (GCHC).<sup>24</sup> Eventually, the GCHC garrisons emerged in littoral places such as Denu, Aflao, and Accra. The mainly Muslim Hausa units of the colonial police contingent became factors for the spread of Islam in the coast.

There were also Muslim enclaves created by returnee Afro Brazilians who were settled in Ghana after the abolition of the slave trade. During the first decades of the nineteenth century, freed enslaved Africans from Brazil, many being Muslims and originally of Hausa, Nupe, Kanuri, and Sahelian ethnic descent, were returned to Accra. The first group, with their leader Kangidi Asuman, alias Azumah, arrived around 1829.<sup>25</sup> Others followed. Descendant families of these returnees include the Aruna, Nassu, Asuman (i.e. the Azumah family from which Ghana's world boxing champion,



Azumah Nelson, comes), Tintingi, Adama, Peregrino, Abu, Marselieno, Sokoto, Viara, and Alipatara families in Accra.<sup>26</sup>

Then also, from the early 1920s to the 1980s, the missionary zeal of the Ahmadiyya and Shia traditions of Islam implanted them in Ghana. The Ahmadiyya flourished, mostly in the coastal and Upper West Region of the country. It is currently a dominant Islamic movement in Ghana, which sets up schools and hospitals to support its missionary efforts. The early 1980s especially saw the Shia tradition gaining roots in Ghana. Many Muslim students went to Iran for Islamic knowledge, in obedience to the prophetic edict to “seek for knowledge even if you might travel to China.” They returned to Ghana with the Shia ideology, which reigns highest in Iran. Today, many mosques in Ghana are designated Shia mosques and presided over by a chief imam called Shaykh Abubakr Kamaldeen. Thus Tijaniyya, Wahhabiyya, Ahmadiyya, and Shia are the dominant brands of Islam in Ghana. They constitute the Muslim Council of Ghana and the Hilal Committee that meets to deliberate on issues of common interest. Shaykh Osman Nuhu Sharubutu, a Tijaniyya, is their leader, mainly because of the status of Tijaniyya as the dominant Islamic religious movement in Ghana.

Although, Farrakhan claimed the NOI was not in search of converts as such, but mutual understanding in Ghana, many Muslims, reportedly, deemed the line of faith which the group carried into Ghana as heretic. Reportedly, one Ghanaian Muslim postulated, “‘They have come here to talk about Islam, but it seems we should be teaching them’, . . . ‘Any true Muslim can tell that Muhammad was our last prophet’”.<sup>27</sup> Sheikh M.M. Gedel, the secretary general of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs also charged, “Any other additional message that comes after the Prophet Muhammad, is not proper and must be rejected”.<sup>28</sup>

*Tawhid* (unity of God) is core to Islam. Qur’an chapter 112 declares, “Say: He is Allah. The One and Only. The Eternal, the Absolute. He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there is none like unto Him.” Indeed, a major disagreement between Islam and Christianity is the latter’s claim that Jesus is God incarnate. The Qur’an responds by saying that “the likeness of Jesus is like that of Adam” (Q: 3:59). The Qur’an illustrates the enormity of giving God an equal by declaring that “the skies are ready to burst, the earth to split asunder and the mountains to fall” (Q:19:90) but for the mercy of Allah, only because Christians say that He is three. Thus in the view of many orthodox Muslims, the NOI commits a similar offence with its belief that Master Fard Muhammad, Elijah Muhammad’s teacher, is Allah incarnate who manifested to rescue Black people, his people, on earth. They therefore view this as heresy. In Islam, it is believed that *shirk* (associationism) is the only sin that Allah is incapable of forgiving. To them, therefore, the NOI’s deification of Fard is tantamount to *shirk*. By the very theology regarding Fard’s status, the NOI was bound to stagnate within Ghana’s fiercely conservative Muslim population.



Shaykh Muhammad Abubakar Moomen, a Ghanaian Muslim cleric and graduate of the Islamic University in Madina, Saudi Arabia argues that the NOI cannot claim to be a true Islamic sect with what he calls "its weird theologies which are at variance with the foundational tenets of Islam."<sup>29</sup> He argues that there are two critical pillars of the Islamic faith that distinguish it from other faiths and which, according to him, make Islam "the only truly monotheistic faith in the world."<sup>30</sup> He mentions the absolute oneness of Allah and the humanness of the Prophet Muhammad as these "critical pillars." For him therefore, the foundational tenets of the NOI violate these two critical pillars and to the extent that the NOI's beliefs are inconsistent with these foundational tenets of Islam, the NOI cannot be termed an Islamic sect.

Beyond the NOI's negation of *tawhid*, other core beliefs, such as the existence of two Qur'ans, made it unattractive and even aberrant. In Ghana where Wahhabiyya and Tijaniyya have been conflicting over "petty" doctrinal differences, one can imagine the resentment that a USA-born Islamic movement which confers prophethood on Elijah Muhammad and deems "whites" as devils will attract. The doctrines concerning Elijah Muhammad's prophethood and duality of the Qur'an and the demonising of whites evoked a heterodox narrative, which was unacceptable to most Muslims. Even the Ahmadiyya that asserts that Ahmad Ghulam is a non-law bearing prophet is resented. Indeed, some Muslims categorise them as deviationists at best and *kufar* (unbelievers) at worst. Furthermore, many Ghanaians having their ethnic and cultural identities such as Asante, Fante, and Ewe intact did not see themselves "lost" and therefore could also not identify with and gravitate to an ethno-religious organisation that preached that it was gathering and installing the identity of the members of the "lost tribe of Shabazz".

For many of the descendants of enslaved Africans in the US and the diaspora, it was easy for them to accept the story of Shabazz because of the alienation from their history and the amnesia about their specific African origins that the episode of slavery engineered for them.<sup>31</sup>

However, for many Ghanaians, even if the tribe of Shabazz was not mythical, they definitely were not part of it.

Gary Karim, an African American and member of the NOI, who moved to reside in Ghana permanently after Akbar Muhammad (formerly Larry 4X Prescott), an aide of Farrakhan, set up base in Ghana as Farrakhan's representative in the early 1990s, states that institutionally, the NOI barely exists in Ghana today. He says that apart from his three children, he barely knows any other members of the NOI in Ghana today.<sup>32</sup> To him, however, that does not matter. For Karim the NOI is more of a philosophical idea than it is structural. For him, the existence or absence of physical structures is not necessarily proof of the success or failure of an idea. He argues

that the ideology of the NOI continues to influence many people in Ghana today, whether they are aware of it or not. That to him is a measure of the NOI's success in Ghana. Gary Karim and his octogenarian father, Osman Karim, who lives in the USA but frequents Ghana, admit that the doctrines of the NOI are at variance with mainstream Islam "in many ways,"<sup>33</sup> and, for them, that has made it difficult for the NOI to establish physical roots in Ghana where the Islamic orientation is traditional. Osman Karim, who maintains ties with Farrakhan, was a close associate of Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X, and was part of the entourage of Muhammad Ali, the heavyweight champion and member of the NOI, that visited Ghana in 1964. A Ghanaian Muslim cleric, Shaykh Muhammad Abubakar Moomen agrees with the Karims and adds that if Farrakhan had allowed Warith Deen Mohammed, son of Elijah Muhammad, to insert the NOI into orthodox Islam, it would have made a better impact outside the USA.<sup>34</sup>

The NOI therefore struggled to find acceptance within the Ghanaian Islamic context. The majority of Ghanaian Muslims maintain their allegiance to "orthodox" Islam, mostly because they deem it efficacious in solving their spiritual and physical problems.<sup>35</sup> This is premised on the belief that the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, is *As-Shifa* (The Healing). The Qur'an, according to popular Islamic belief, is the literal word of Allah revealed verbatim to the Prophet Muhammad through Gabriel, an angel of Allah. Many Muslims believe that the Qur'an is uncreated and eternal. For the NOI to posit the existence of another Qur'an was to dilute the essence and power of the Qur'an, and that belief and its carrier were bound to be viewed with scepticism at best and suffer rejection at worst in a fiercely conservative country such as Ghana.

### The NOI in Ghana

Flt. Lt. J. J. Rawlings and a military junta overthrew the government of Dr. Hilla Limann on the 31 December 1981 and decreed on radio the establishment of the gun-backed PNDC government, which lasted until 1992. This regime presented itself as populist, revolutionary, and anti-neo-colonialism. Rawlings declared "a holy war" on social rot. "Holy war", as used by a man who befriended Colonel Muammar al Gaddafi, immediately signalled a Gaddafi-Libya revolution ideological inspiration and/or connection to the coup. This was ascertained when the PNDC junta set up nationwide Study Clubs of *The Green Book*<sup>36</sup> to promote the learning of Gaddafi's brand of governance, which was a mix of Islam and socialism. Rawlings and his men preached that they sought to awaken a revolutionary psyche and spirit in the people: a can-do attitude that relies solely on Ghanaian and African capability. Rawlings searched for nearly every revolutionary around the globe (especially African revolutionaries) for edification. During the heydays of his autocratic regime, Rawlings commonly gravitated to the company and political ideas of radical near-left and/or left anti-Western and



anti-capitalist leaders of the so-called third-world countries. These included Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua, Fidel Castro of Cuba, Muammar al Gaddafi of Libya, and Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso.

Farrakhan's iconic revolutionary image was endearing to Rawlings. The military-style discipline of the Fruit of Islam (FOI), the seeming paramilitary wing of the NOI, and the order it brought to Farrakhan's organisation, the NOI, was attractive to the soldier that Rawlings was. He invited Farrakhan to Ghana on numerous occasions to speak of his revolutionary political ideology publicly to motivate the can-do attitude in the people. Farrakhan's first official visit to Ghana, a famous site of Pan-African hopes, was in March 1985 when he was on a World Friendship tour. Rawlings welcomed him, and they discussed African empowerment and renaissance issues. Emphasising the relevance of Pan Africanism and the international struggle of Black people and members of the so-called third world for mutual growth, Farrakhan also declared to his audience,

[W]e are brothers . . . your friends and we come home . . . for the first time in 400 years . . . hoping that you will receive us . . . from the West and know that God is raising up the destroyed in the west.<sup>37</sup>

Coincidentally, the mid-1980s was a period when the "religious landscape of Ghana showed a kaleidoscope of many different traditions which, for its sheer novelty and the speed with which it developed, forced itself on the consciousness of many Ghanaians."<sup>38</sup> Atiemo has cited Hummel to demonstrate that

in Accra [in the 1980s] . . . Hindu and Buddhist organizations are active among black Africans. The Hare Krishna movement has a temple and a training centre for black Krishna missionaries there, Swami Sivananda's 'Divine Light Society' is running a 'Hindu Monastery of Africa', a Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre proclaims the 'Sai Religion', a Guru Nanak society the Sikh Dharma. The 'Maha Bodhi Society of Ghana' has established a Buddhist temple, a library, and a training centre for Ghanaian Buddhist missionaries and printing press, and the Nicheren Shoshu is trying to spread its own Japanese version of Buddhism there. Add to this the Ahmadiyya Mission and some Sufi orders.<sup>39</sup>

The advent of the NOI in Ghana coincided with this proliferation of different religious traditions and movements, including Afrikania, which represented "Reformed African Traditional Religion".<sup>40</sup> The NOI belonged to the Abrahamic traditions, but its perspective about the theology of two Abrahamic faiths in Ghana: Christianity and Islam, was different. Because of their exclusivist tendencies, those two viewed the entrance of the NOI's ideology and institution as an unsettling threat that should not be entertained. That entrance did not antagonise the other "newcomer" traditions



on the Ghanaian terrain, nor did it appear a threat to the indigenous spiritual path because of the accommodating tendency of the traditional religious worldview of indigenous African societies, which Sanneh describes as “the preponderant African impulse in the absorption of new religious ideas”.<sup>41</sup>

Through Rawlings’ “friendship” with the NOI, Farrakhan created a perennial relationship between himself and Ghana. Rawlings became an ally of the NOI, but Gaddafi was the NOI’s strongest ally on the continent and, according to Gibson, the NOI’s unorthodox teachings never hampered relations with Islamic Libya, arguably because the version of Islam which Gaddafi himself practiced was not in line with orthodoxy.<sup>42</sup> Rawlings, as leader of the National Democratic Congress party was democratically elected in 1992 as the first president of the Fourth Republic of Ghana. He left the office of president in 2001. The executive audience and state privilege that the NOI received from Rawlings was pronounced during his tenure as a military ruler, and such support remained visible during the immediate years of his first term as a constitutional president. Pursuing the creation of Western-inspired liberal democracy required him to cultivate sustainable diplomatic relations with the USA and the West in general. His seemingly liberal stance, however, sapped and retracted the revolutionary urgency and spirit that had foregrounded the NOI and its radical religio-political ideology during the PNDC revolution era. Rawlings and his government could no longer deem the USA as “evil” under the new political dispensation. Rawlings championed Pan Africanism, but the overt support which he offered the NOI diminished because such a support would have implied an anti-USA action. In March 1998, Rawlings and his government hosted President Bill Clinton in Ghana. Rawlings’ show of solidarity with Clinton signalled, at least to the recognition of the world, that he had cultivated a moderate view about the USA.

As highlighted, Farrakhan’s visits to and lectures in Ghana continued after 1985. Rawlings encouraged Farrakhan to set up a permanent office in Accra, a NOI base and resident representative in Ghana, somewhere around 1989.<sup>43</sup> As Gaines has pointed out, Rawlings expected some gains from the partnership. He sought to capitalise on the historical symbolism of Pan Africanism and

hoped to bask in the aura of Farrakhan’s image as Pan-Africanist fire-brand and, through his association with the NOI leader, to appeal for the support of Ghana’s Islamic minority in the Northern Territories as well as in the Accra suburb of Nima.<sup>44</sup>

It was also about “furthering Rawlings’ agenda at promoting tourism, a major growth industry, by attracting African American visitors”.<sup>45</sup> Farrakhan obliged to the request for an information office, which would double as the NOI’s Africa headquarters, and sent the NOI’s international representative,

Akbar Muhammad, as ambassador to Ghana. Representing the NOI, Farrakhan became a familiar face at many functions of national importance including Ghana's independence ceremonies, Kwame Nkrumah's eightieth birthday, and the Pan-African Historical Theatre Festival (PANAFEST). Situated near the castle, the seat of government, perhaps as indication of government approval, the NOI office, opened sometime in 1990, initiated the selling of NOI literature such as the *Final Call* newspaper in its bookshop, at Osu, other bookshops, and around some Ghana mosques.

However, by the late 1990s, nearly a decade after setting up base, the NOI's identifiable presence had dimmed. While the NOI's status has remained nebulous, the active presence of the other more traditional movements continued. Its office near the castle is not functioning. It has been closed, and the shadow office it established around the Tesano-Achimota overpass in Accra became dormant and is now unnoticeable. There has been a deafening silence about organised NOI public meetings and seminars. Prior to this blur, the visibility of the NOI benefited from the visits and lectures of Farrakhan, a master of public psychology, who had an immense capacity to get public attention with his effusive, suave and charming personality, magnetic gestures, and insightful and enlightening lectures. Many of Farrakhan's activities and speeches had access to the state's print and electronic media. Some were broadcast live. His views, enmeshed in rhetoric which frequently referenced the Bible, Qur'an, and Black history, elicited the listening curiosity of many Ghanaians. His visits and the national platform that projected it made him and "Farrakhan's people"—that is, the "Muslims from America" (NOI), to become recognisable by many people in Ghana. Farrakhan's charisma, the glitz and distinctive smart dressing of his entourage, his eloquent commentary about Ghanaian and African history and contemporary issues, his penchant to worship and interact with the *ummah* in the Central Mosque in Accra, (signalling him as an affable leader), his call on African leaders and people to resist corruption and neo-colonial tendencies and unite for progress in Africa, and the NOI's fascinating theology attracted the curiosity of many Ghanaians. The distinctive groomed hairstyle of the suit-and-bowtie-wearing men of the NOI made a niche in Ghana's popular fashion culture. Impressed by the fashionable look of Farrakhan and his male followers, many Ghanaian men emulated that hairstyle, which became popularly known as "Farrakhan". Considering the aura of dollar-backed affluence, which the glamorous appearance of Farrakhan and his entourage from the diaspora exuded, many hopeful youth who gravitated to the NOI's activities must have done so nurturing an expectation to get the chance to travel to the USA and acquire the materials of such glamour. Mustapha Abdul-Hamid sees that an initial gravitation of some youth to the NOI, for intellectual and not religious reasons, was also spurred by the use of some of Farrakhan's literature—that is, audio and video speeches—as part of the material for study by a burgeoning but transient youth movement called the Democratic Youth League of Ghana (DYLG). The DYLG was Rawlings's



ideological youth movement, which aimed to tutor Ghanaian youth, especially those in secondary and tertiary institutions, in revolutionary ideas, including those of Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Kwame Nkrumah, and other socialist ideologues and Pan-Africanism thinkers.<sup>46</sup>

It must be mentioned that welcoming a group of African relations from the diaspora and their secular political message of Black emancipation into Ghana, by many Ghanaians, including Rawlings, their leader, with a Pan-African hand and the proverbial Ghanaian hospitality, was one thing. Another was whether the theological and ideological orientation of the NOI would be largely accepted in a country whose large populations of normative Christians and Muslims, and members of indigenous African spirituality, possessed a different religio-political *Weltanschauung* and experience of colonialism. Thus, despite the executive patronage, some ambivalence and mixed reaction, and, at times, opposition from some Ghanaian individuals and political and religious groups confronted the NOI and its worldview. Some criticised it as heterodox. Others denounced it as racist, while some viewed its presence as a political danger to Ghana's relationship to the West. For the political detractors of Rawlings, the NOI was anti-democracy because it supported the authoritarian regime of Rawlings. Gaines points out that Farrakhan's exhortation in speeches to support Rawlings and his government and not to begrudge them the amenities of power, prestige, and wealth flew in the face of Ghanaians long-standing resentment of corruption.<sup>47</sup>

Opposition which sought to caution Ghanaians to suspect Farrakhan and the NOI and desist from entertaining their ideas manifested as demonstrations and writings in newspapers. In 1994, Farrakhan held the Saviours' Day Convention, which commemorates the birth of Fard Muhammad, in Accra, Ghana. Being the first international one and lasting from October 6 to 9, it took about 1,500 to 2,000 celebrants into Ghana. It was good for the internationalising efforts of the NOI and also beneficial to Ghana's tourism sector. Rawlings opened and closed the gathering. He applauded Farrakhan, who preached Black emancipation and rebuked the politics of the USA, as "one of the greatest and most impressive people I have come across" and for bringing "truth".<sup>48</sup> This grand celebration, which had aspects televised on national TV,<sup>49</sup> however, revealed some of the suspicion and dislike for the NOI that existed among the local population in the secular and religious spheres. Many viewed the celebration "with a mixture of puzzlement, humor and even offense".<sup>50</sup> It thus elicited voices of condemnation of the NOI's "racialised" politics and support for a Ghanaian government, whose antecedents are generally considered undemocratic, and its theology as heterodoxy. The *Ghanaian Chronicle*, a major mouthpiece of the political detractors of Rawlings, questioned a seeming paradox in the NOI's political orientation: How could the NOI claim to be for freedom, justice, and equality and against the oppressive white man and the USA while befriending

those whom the newspaper perceived as “oppressive” and “undemocratic” African leaders. The newspaper therefore averred,

We [Ghanaians] do not care about some phantom White man sitting in down town Santa Barbara or in Accra or Harare . . . [and] about the colour of an oppressor or tyrant. A tyrant is a tyrant, and it is more painful when the oppressor happens to be black or African. Unfortunately, that is the situation in most of black Africa which has been enslaved by military men of stunted intelligence who overnight turn into four-piece wearing, agbada clad teflon democrats and terrorise their own citizenry.<sup>51</sup>

Moreover, the religious suspicion manifested because many Christians, especially the leaders, disagreed with the NOI's traditional criticism of Christianity, which had assumed Eurocentric dimensions, as the devil's religion. Consequently, a Christian women's group spitefully petitioned Parliament to block the NOI's Saviours' Day Convention in Ghana.<sup>52</sup> Some “Ghanaian [Christians] read Farrakhan's warnings that whites were using religion to recolonize Africa as an open appeal for support for Islam in the face of the growing popularity of the Christian evangelism in Ghana and throughout Africa”.<sup>53</sup> Many also deemed the NOI's use of biblical ideas to support their doctrines and liberation theology as intentional misinterpretations of the Bible. In their estimation, the NOI was a threat to the sanctity of Christianity. This inspired their opposition to the NOI's steady intrusion into the country. No wonder there were demonstrations of some Christians in 1993 to protest against NOI's plan to hold the Saviours' Day in Ghana. According to Professor David G. Du Bois, “An attack in the media emanating from Christian elite . . . even discouraged Ghanaian Muslims from wanting to be part of it”<sup>54</sup> Reacting to the opposition to the Saviours' Day and by extension the NOI in Ghana, Farrakhan, it is reported, thanked all Ghanaians and added, “I don't really believe they heard my message”.<sup>55</sup>

Nevertheless, it was Rawlings and state assistance that sustained the NOI's public currency. On his visits, Farrakhan always made pronouncements that supported the PNDC's orientation and credo of probity and accountability and self-help. He vocally praised Rawlings and his political achievements since his first political takeover with the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) junta in June 1979, and appealed for nationwide support for Rawlings. For example, in 1993, he celebrated the June 4 Revolution anniversary. He endorsed the rationale of the June 4 uprising of 1979, which made Rawlings the head of state for about three months under the AFRC. Consequently, newspaper articles such as “Time Africans Shunned Divisive Tendencies”<sup>56</sup> and “June Four Aimed at Stamping Out Corruption”<sup>57</sup> reported Farrakhan's comments in favour of Rawlings and his political ideas and government.



During the Saviours' Day celebration, Farrakhan spoke eloquently about Ghana and its connection to the Pan-African and Black emancipatory ideals of the iconic Marcus Garvey. He praised the foresight and wisdom of Ghana's founders to include in the middle of the Ghanaian flag a black star. He saw in this an imagery that was akin to Marcus Garvey's Black Star Liner that was the symbol of the return of the Black people to their ancestral home. He praised Ghana as a trailblazer in many respects, including the fact that it was the one country that was willing to take the bull by the horn and host the NOI despite of its rejection by other African countries, including Nigeria, where Farrakhan had made many unsuccessful trips to get its leaders to play host to the NOI. Ideally, Nigeria, as the most populous Black nation in Africa, would have been the best suited to host Black people returning to their roots. Farrakhan, therefore, saw in Ghana a nation of visionary people and leaders who would play a leading role in re-asserting for Black peoples a positive central position and significant role in world affairs.

Apart from Farrakhan, whose visits threw light on the NOI, the local functionaries, primarily in Accra, undertook certain activities, such as occasional provision of health services by NOI doctors from the USA and the donation of medical items to hospitals in Accra to showcase the NOI as an entity with a social responsibility. They also endeavoured to connect with students of tertiary institutions by showing them videos, giving them NOI literature, and engaging them in discussions about NOI activities, lectures of Farrakhan, and history, as well as their connection to Black people's global efforts. NOI's dignitaries—for example, Akbar Muhammed and Farrakhan—also taught themes that the NOI traditionally dealt with at Pan-African studies and meetings, such as those at the W.E.B. DuBois Centre, in Accra.<sup>58</sup> Due to the visibility that the state media gave to the movement and its leader, the broader collective consciousness of Ghanaians carried the knowledge that the NOI was/existed in Ghana. However, the actual catchment area of practical activities of the NOI was Accra. Therefore, its organisation became limited and attracted a few followers.<sup>59</sup> One cannot tell the number of converts that the NOI made. Up till now, there is no recognisable NOI mosque, even though in 1994 Farrakhan pledged to build a mosque and school in Nima<sup>60</sup> and in May 1999 his wife, Khadijah Farrakhan, Akbar Muhammad, and an NOI delegation laid the first bricks to signal the erection of an NOI mosque and school and training centre at Galilea in Weija, a suburb of Accra.<sup>61</sup> Present at the ceremony were government ministers including Dr. Muhammad Ibn Chambas, the late Dr. Farouk Braimah, some Imams and Islamic clerics from Ghana, and some Ghanaian and African diasporan guests. Mrs. Farrakhan deemed the proposed project "a small step to our (NOI) obligation to provide quality education and training to our youth."<sup>62</sup> A similar project, the NOI's first building project in Africa, was undertaken earlier in the Gambia to memorialise Alex Haley, the writer of *Roots*.<sup>63</sup> A mosque or temple would have given some infrastructural

permanence to NOI's physical presence. Some Ghanaian Muslim affiliates and sympathisers of the NOI are in Accra, but today, a handful of visiting or repatriated African diasporans may claim to be NOI. Gary Karim and his father, Osman Karim, are two such diasporans who still have a doctrinal and ideological allegiance to the NOI but whose recognition of and participation in any NOI operations in Ghana is at best theoretical because, in the words of Gary Karim, "there is no infrastructure on the ground to give vent to NOI beliefs."<sup>64</sup> Apart from what remains in the memory and psyche of some people in the public about Farrakhan and the visibility of the NOI during the 1980 and 1990s, an actual presence of the NOI in Ghana and, more importantly, the Islamic community is not and cannot be physically felt in terms of numbers and infrastructure and social activities. Despite this, the NOI has acquired a place in the history of Ghana.

### NOI's Failure to Gain Roots in Ghana

The NOI was too Accra centred and failed to spread its teaching activities and social projects nationwide. Many Ghanaians thus acquainted with its message only through the camera's lenses and, even so, mainly felt it through Farrakhan's emotional outbursts during his occasional visits. Occasionally, some received firsthand experience about its import from visiting African Americans, the major adherents of the faith. The NOI lacked a conscious proselytisation outside the Greater Accra Region. In the case of other movements, especially the Wahhabiyya, Tijaniyya, Shia, and Ahmadiyya, they sent "missionaries" nationwide, who settled among localities and engaged in *da'wah* (Islamic propagation activities). The Wahhabiyya enjoys the active support of the Saudi government in offering scholarships to Ghanaian *ulama* who have completed *sanawi* (the equivalent of senior high school) to study in Saudi universities, notably the Islamic University of Madina. They return to propagate the Wahhabi ideology. Ahmadis send their scholars to Pakistan to study. They return as tools for the spreading of the faith. In West Africa, Senegal has remained the spiritual Makkah of Tijaniyya. Iran continues to offer scholarships to Ghanaians to study in Iran. They also return and preach the Shia path. The Iranian government has established the Islamic University College in Ghana, where the Shia ideology is core to academic work.

For the NOI, no incentive for study abroad existed, nor was there a clearly designated spiritual nerve centre where potential "evangelists" could go to study and return for the purpose of spreading the faith. Hence the African Americans were themselves required to spread the message. That was problematic. First, the African American was viewed locally as a person whose orientation was primarily Western. Many Ghanaian Muslims view Western ideology as an ideology that is tangential to Islamic ideology. Therefore, African Americans coming from the West and purporting to be preaching Islam, albeit a form of Islam that was different from the one



practiced locally, were bound to be viewed with scepticism. This created a certain epistemic distance that impeded the absolute acceptance of him/her as a genuine carrier of the message of Islam. Perhaps it was in recognition of this scepticism towards him and his followers that Farrakhan tried to justify the genuineness of the Islamic practice of the NOI at the Saviours' Day Convention in Accra where he invoked a prophetic saying about the sun rising from the west to justify the genuineness of the NOI. In other words, he was trying to convince his Ghanaian audience, especially those that he called "my Muslim brothers and sisters", that the NOI's brand of Islam (coming from the West) was the modern-day guidance/light that the Prophet talked about. In spite of this intellectual rendition of the Prophet's *hadith*, many Muslims were still not convinced of the guidance that the NOI was offering. Second, Ghana's population has a majority section which is illiterate, at least in the secular sense of education—an education whose medium of instruction is English. The message of NOI was mainly delivered in English, and because it lacked adequate local conduits, it was difficult for most people to understand, let alone follow and accept the NOI's message.

As mentioned, the NOI did not put in place infrastructure to support its mission activities and register its physical presence. Apart from the executive support from the government, which was not eternal, the missionary officials on the ground, under Akbar Muhammad, and including himself, were basically left to their own funding and organisational managing devices, with no sustained powerful pump of funding from the NOI's seat in the USA. Many, therefore, upon finding themselves in a dire financial situation, returned to the USA, which reduced the initial vitality of the NOI's organisation efforts and sustainability of its ideological impartation work in Ghana.<sup>65</sup> The NOI's promises of building a mosque and health facility for Nima remained unfulfilled. Conversely, the Saudi, Kuwaiti, and Iranian governments built and continue to support the building of mosques, schools, orphanages, and hospitals, which attracted public admiration and led to conversions. The closeness of the NOI's leadership to Rawlings, which created the impression that it was funded by the government, attracted resentment rather than admiration.

Also at the heart of the NOI's failure to fully anchor in Ghana was its seeming emphasis on the intellectual dimensions of Islam rather than its mystical aspects that purports to have a practical solution to the everyday problems of people. The West African Tijaniyya, also called *Jama'at Faydat al-Tijaniyya* (the Tijaniyya Community of Divine Grace), continues to attract popular allegiance because it purports owning the secrets of divine beneficence (*sirr al-rububiya*). Based on the customary worldviews of their indigenous communities, Africans generally gravitate to religions that show ability to solve the everyday crises that face them. There are numerous stories about how African chiefs became Muslims because they perceived Islam as having an almost magical solution to their confronting crises. Yaji, Kano's chief from 1349–1385, pioneered the Muslim worship when, reportedly, he

converted to Islam because a Wangara holy man prayed for his victory in battle.<sup>66</sup> Another story attributes the introduction of Islam to Dagbon in Northern Ghana to a Wangara holy man who won the Dagomba over to Islam because Zangina, the Dagomba chief, thought that he aided him mystically to remove the Gonja hegemony over Dagbon.<sup>67</sup> Thus the Dagomba remains the most Islamised ethnic group in Ghana. Reportedly, Ndwura Jakpa, who founded the Gonja chiefdom, had a permanent Muslim cleric, Muhammad Al-Abyad, who helped him win battles through a magical staff decorated with amulets containing Qur'anic writings.<sup>68</sup> Considering that the NOI and its missionaries did not engage in any exorcism exercises or faith-healing activities, it naturally was challenged in its ability to attract the admiration and allegiance of most Ghanaians. Even the Wahhabiyya, which initially purported to be puritanical, has resorted to faith healing in order to hold and retain the allegiance of its adherents.

The NOI has unceasingly campaigned that Islam is humankind's and not for Arab or any other group's monopoly, and that Arabo-centric Islam tainted by racism of certain Arabs should be rejected. This led Farrakhan to caution,

Be careful how you spread Islam . . . . [don't] spread a cultural imperialism in the name of Islam . . . If you feel that Islam is the true path, then ask me to accept Islam but don't try to make me an Arab when I am African. Allow me to keep my African personality, my African culture . . . . [I]n Africa . . . the seed of white supremacy is even seen in Islam in the way some of my Arab brothers treat their African brothers in Islam. They are not treated as equal. They are treated as somebody who joined a faith that doesn't belong to them.<sup>69</sup>

This confrontation of the hegemony of Arabs and other non-Africans, such as Iranian and Pakistanis, in Islam, which the NOI deems as white supremacy and racism against Africans/Blacks, must have seemed very extreme and distasteful to most Muslims, since by that stance, the NOI in fact challenges the sources of spirituality and even financial sustenance of the Shia, Sunni, and even Ahmadi Muslims.

Moreover, the tacit support of Rawlings for the NOI fundamentally seemed advantageous, yet it also alienated many people from the movement. Rawlings certainly had many enemies, especially among the Muslim population. Rawlings outraged the Muslim community when his June 4 Revolution demolished a mosque in Accra's central business district around 1979. It was part of his campaign against hoarding and profiteering. Similar to Prime Minister Busia's case, Rawlings was resentful because of the popular belief that most small businesses were owned by Muslims, many of whom were considered non-indigenes, and the mosque in the heart of Accra was a sort of sanctuary for them. In his view, however, his action was not impious; rather, it was an effort to prevent God's house from becoming "a den of thieves and robbers." The Muslim community, however, did not take



this kindly. Quoting the Qur'an to buttress his point, Alhaji Bashiru Baba Waiz, a prominent Muslim cleric of Kumasi and opponent of Rawlings, told the authors of this paper that, the demolishing was rather a declaration of war on Allah and His messenger,<sup>70</sup> for the Qur'an expresses abhorrence for the pulling down of mosques thus

“had Allah not checked one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid His cause, for verily Allah is full of strength, exalted in might.

(Q: 22:40)

Therefore, many Muslims classified Rawlings an enemy of Allah and one of the wagers of war against Allah and His messenger. His ally, Farrakhan, was not spared in that hatred, and that certainly was a huge stumbling block for the fortunes of the NOI.

## Conclusion

The NOI made its first official contact with Ghana in 1985. With state backing and a revolutionary message, it held a lot of promise for spreading the message of Islam and inspiring a new generation of positive-thinking Africans. Nearly three decades after this initial contact however, the dream has all but fully manifested. Perhaps it will be re-dreamt as long as Ghana continues to maintain its renowned historical position as a symbol of Pan Africanism. Perhaps the NOI's outreach efforts will be rekindled. Akbar Muhammad, the NOI's first ambassador to Ghana, has virtually left the shores of Ghana. In 2014, he came to Ghana to attend the funeral rites of his daughter, Sumaiyah Aziz, who lived in Ghana. Like him, some key official members continue to undertake private and incognito visits to Ghana.<sup>71</sup> Many factors have been responsible for this state of affairs. The NOI's core messages about Allah and prophethood have not resonated with a Ghanaian Muslim population that is fiercely conservative. The NOI's association with Rawlings proved to be a double-edged sword; it seemed advantageous in the beginning, but it also blunted its potential for growth. It must have been unfathomable to sections of the Muslim population for the NOI to claim to defend Islam and openly ally with someone they deemed waged war against Allah and His messenger. This enhanced the mistrust that sections in the Muslim communities had for the NOI. Love is not the reward for those who “wage war against Allah and His messenger”; rather, it is “execution . . . or . . . the cutting off of hands and feet . . . or exile from the land” (Q 5:33). Therefore, rather than provide oxygen for the fire of the NOI, Farrakhan's association with Rawlings was, quite manifestly, the water that doused it. Indubitably, Rawlings's exit from the political scene

after 2000 was a major event that sapped the energy of the NOI to grow and thrive in Ghana. For many Ghanaians, the revolutionary language of Farrakhan resonated, but they were determined to remain firmly within the Ghanaian cultural and social milieu.<sup>72</sup>

## Notes

1. Michael E. Dyson, *Making Malcolm: The Myth and Meaning of Malcolm X* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 9.
2. Louis Farrakhan, Saviours' Day Celebration Speech in Accra, Ghana, 1994. Video in possession of authors.
3. Muhammad Ibn Ismail Al-Bukhari, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhsin Khan, Beirut: Dar-al-Arabia, n.d, vol. 8, 338.
4. Farrakhan, op.cit.
5. Al-Bukhari, op.cit.
6. For example, see Maize Woodford, "A Chronology: Farrakhan's "World Friendship Tour" to Africa and the Middle East: January-February 1996", *The Black Scholar* 26.3-4 (1996), 35-40, for sketch on the chronology and highlights of his itinerary of the 1996 Tour.
7. Kevin K. Gaines, *American Africans in Ghana* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 275.
8. Ibid.
9. Nuri Tinaz, "Black Islam in Diaspora: The Case of Nation of Islam (NOI) in Britain", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 26.2 (August 2006), 153.
10. I. Wallerstein, "The Construction of Peoplehood, Racism, Nationalism, Ethnicity", in *Race, Class and Nation*, ed. E. Balibar and I. Wallerstein (London: Verso, 1991), 78 as cited by Tinaz, *ibid.*, 153.
11. Tinaz, op.cit., 154.
12. *Ibid.*, 153.
13. Dawn-Marie Gibson, *A History of the Nation of Islam* (Santa Barbara: Preagar/ABC-CLIO, 2012), 135.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. Cited in Gibson, op.cit 135.
17. Interview with Rabbi Kohain Natanyah Ha Levi, repatriated African American and leader of the Bereshith Hashuvah Black Jews Group in Elmina, Ghana, since the 1980s and executive secretary for PANAFEST, Ghana, on 30th November, 2014.
18. Gaines, op.cit., p. 2.
19. Interview, Ha Levi, op.cit.
20. Mattias Gardell, "The Sun of Islam Will Rise in the West: Minister Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam in the Latter Days," in *Muslim Communities in North America*, ed. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Jane Idleman Smith (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 34.
21. This Arabic term connotes the universal community of Muslims. Here it means the family of Muslims in Ghana.
22. See Joseph Dupuis, *Journal of a Residence in Ashantee* (London: Henry Colburn, 1824); Mervyn Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa* (London: Longman 1984).
23. Hiskett, *Ibid.*, 133.
24. Misbahudeen Ahmed-Rufai, "The Muslim Association Party: A Test of Religious Politics in Ghana," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series 6 (2002), 104.



25. Alcione M. Amos and Ebenezer Ayesu, "I am Brazilian: History of the Tabon. Afro-Brazilians in Accra, Ghana," *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series 6 (2002) 39.
26. *Ibid.* 41.
27. Howard W. French, "Some surprises meet Nation of Islam visitors on Ghana Tour", *New York Times*, October 9, 1994, accessed 25 November 2013, [www.nytimes.com/1994/10/09/world.some-surprises-meet-nation-of-islam-visitors-on-ghana-tour.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1994/10/09/world.some-surprises-meet-nation-of-islam-visitors-on-ghana-tour.html).
28. Ghanaian Chronicle, October, 10–12, 1994, 5.
29. Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Abubakar Moomen in Cape Coast on 21 April 2016.
30. *Ibid.*
31. Interview, Ha Levi, *op.cit.*
32. Interview with Gary Karim, repatriated African American in Cape Coast, Ghana. He was born into the NOI. June 2014.
33. Interview with Gary Karim and Osman Karim, NOI members, in Cape Coast, Ghana, 25 April 2016.
34. Interview, Moomen, *op.cit.*
35. Interview with Dr. Alhaji Abdulsalaam Adam, Ghanaian Islamic cleric and university lecturer in Cape Coast, Ghana, 19 April 2016.
36. The Libyan leader espouses ideas that he opines offer solutions to African and global economic problems and the problem of oligarchic democracy, which robs the masses of their authority in this book. He introduces his "Third Universal Theory" and articulates his views about direct democracy or Jamahariyya. See M. Al Gathafi, *The Green Book* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 2005).
37. Gibson, *op.cit.*, 99.
38. Abamfo Atiemo, "Zetaheal Mission in Ghana: Christians and Muslims Worshipping together?" *Exchange* 32.1 (2003), 33.
39. Reinhart Hummel, "Contemporary New Religious Movement in the West", in *New Religious Movements and the Churches*, ed. Allan R Brockway and J. Paul Rajashekar (Geneva: WCC, 1987), 21 cited in Abamfo Atiemo, "Zetaheal Mission in Ghana: Christians and Muslims Worshipping together?" *Exchange*, 32.1 (2003), 33.
40. Samuel Gyanfosu, "A Traditional Religion Reformed: Vincent Kwabena Damuah and the Afrikania Movement, 1982–2000," in *Christianity and the African Imagination—Essays in Honour of Adrian Hastings*, ed. David Maxwell and Ingrid Lawrie (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 271–294.
41. Lamin Sanneh, "The Domestication of Islam and Christianity in African Societies. A Methodological Exploration", *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 11.1 (1980), 2.
42. Gibson, *op.cit.*, 98.
43. Interview, Gary Karim, *op.cit.*
44. Gaines, *op.cit.*, 275.
45. *Ibid.*
46. Mustapha Abdul-Hamid, an Islamic scholar and university lecturer in Ghana, was once the patron of the DYLG in Nelerigu Secondary School in Northern Ghana.
47. *Ibid.*, 275.
48. Gwen Gilmore, "Ghana extends warm welcome to Nation of Islam", *The Baltimore Afro-American*, October 29, 1994, B8.
49. Minister Farrakhan Speaking in Accra, Ghana—1994, uploaded by Ahmed 770, April 3, 2009, accessed 25 November 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gjz8K-yJpJc>.
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51. *Ghanaian Chronicle*, October, 10–12, 1994, 5.
52. Clifton E. Marsh, *The Lost Found Nation of Islam in America* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press and Rowman and Littlefield Publishing, 2000), 148–149.
53. Gaines, op.cit. 275.
54. Marsh, op.cit., 148–149.
55. *Final Call*, vol. 14, No 1. 1994, 34.
56. *Ghanaian Times*, Monday, May 31, 1993, 1.
57. *Daily Graphic*, June 1, 1993.
58. Interview, Gary Karim, op.cit.
59. Steven J. Salm and Toyin Falola, *Culture and Customs of Ghana* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002), 53.
60. *Final Call*, November 2, 1994, as cited in Marsh, op.cit., 149.
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62. “First Brick Laid for Nation of Islam mosque/school & training centre in Ghana”, *Final Call Online*, accessed 11 July 2014, <http://www.finalcall.com/international/1999/ghana-noi6-1-99.html>.
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66. Abd al-Rahman Al-Sa’di, *Tarikh al-Sudan*, (trans.) and (ed.) O. Houdas and E. Benoist, 2nd Ed. (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1964),.
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69. *Final Call*, November 2, 1994, 31.
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