Dear brothers and sisters in Islam,

Asalaam Aleikum,

If your uninitiated in Tanzanian politics as it is related to Muslims and Islam, it is advisable to read first the research paper, *Islam and Politics in Tanzania* by the same author, before reading this expose. This will help you in having a better grasp and understanding of the plight of Muslims in the country.

Wabillah Taufik.

---

**Contents:**

- Introduction
- Muslim Education Under Colonialism, 1880s
- The Legacy of Dr. Muhammad Hussein Malik, 1970s
- The Leadership of Sheikh Mohamed Ali and Warsha in Bakwata; and Efforts to revive Muslim Schools, 1981
- The Banning of Muslim Seminaries by the Government and expulsion of Dr. Muhammad Hussein Malik, 1981
- Christian Lobby Persecution Against Prof. Malima
- Conclusion
- Notes
This paper will attempt to narrate and at times analyse problems facing Muslims in Tanzania in their quest to uplift themselves from the lower strata by equipping themselves with skills which can only be aquired through education. In this research paper we are introducing a hypothesis which we believe has not been researched into and therefore has remained hidden much as it has been in existence since independence - the concept of the power and influence of the Christianity and its role in the Tanzanian administrative machinery to counter Islam. This is the Christian lobby. This is an opportunity to see how the Christian lobby functions. It is a subject worth researching at the moment since it is one of the clues to the Muslims riddle of stagnation.

**Muslim Education Under Colonialism, 1880s**

To understand the problem of Muslim stagnation in education we need to go back to the history of Islam and its relation with missionaries and colonialism.

When colonialists and missionaries set foot in the East African coast then known as Zanj their main aim was to wipe out Islam. Muslims in the East African coast had their first glimpse of what Christianity was all about in 1498 with the arrival of the Portuguese. In 1567 the Augustinian order was established in the East African coast to counter the influence of Islam so that Christianity becomes the religion of the whole world. Christianity extended its influence further when Cardinal Lavigirie founded The White Fathers, the Catholic institution whose purpose was and still is to confront Islam.(1) About the same time period Church Missionary Society (CMS) imposed upon itself the duty to deliver the world from Islam, ignorance and darkness.(2) The White Fathers are in Tanzania and are still involved in the work which brought them to the country more than a hundred years ago.

When the Germans first arrived in Tanganyika they found Muslim already literate, they could read, write and count. The missionary Ludwig Krapf when he appeared at the court of Chief Kimweri of the Sambaa in 1848 he found him and his children literate. They could read and write with ease. (3) The alphabet in use was the Arabic script. Being educated Muslims were employed by the German colonial government as teachers, interpreters and administrators. The institution responsible for all this excellence and achievement was the _madras_. Missionaries and colonialists were envious of the level of educational advancement achieved by Muslims and therefore initiated plans to subvert its progress.

The first step taken by the British at the turn of this century was to abrogate the Arabic script which was in use for many years in favour of the Roman script. By a stroke of a pen people who were educated were overnight reduced to illiterates. All these machinations against Muslim were part of a systematic campaign as provided in article IV of the Berlin Conference of 1884 which stated that Christianity should be safeguarded and given special preference over Islam. The vacuum created by the abrogation of Muslim education was filled with missionary education in Tanganyika with the British colonial government as the overseer. Between 1888-1892 in compliance with that article as agreed in the Berlin Conference, Imperial British East Africa Company used political and military force to prop up Christianity in East Africa.(4) The Church has been making propaganda that it were missionaries who laid down the first foundation of education in Tanganyika. The truth is that the missionaries followed the _madras_ education system and the teachers they employed in their schools were Muslims who were product of the _madras_ education system. Abel Ishuwi, an educationists has revealed this fact in his work, _Education and Social Change_, (1980).

Realising the importance of education Muslims initiated their own schools under colonialism. These came to be known as Muslim schools. Where as missionary schools were being provided with assistance by the government known as _Grant-in-Aid_, this privilege was denied to Muslim schools. (5) Due to this privilege mission schools were well equipped and could afford well trained teachers.

---

2. About the same time period Church Missionary Society (CMS) imposed upon itself the duty to deliver the world from Islam, ignorance and darkness.
3. The alphabet in use was the Arabic script. Being educated Muslims were employed by the German colonial government as teachers, interpreters and administrators.
4. Between 1888-1892 in compliance with that article as agreed in the Berlin Conference, Imperial British East Africa Company used political and military force to prop up Christianity in East Africa.
5. Due to this privilege mission schools were well equipped and could afford well trained teachers.
It was therefore impossible for schools run by Muslims to compete with missionary schools. Muslims therefore were the most oppressed people by colonialism compared to other communities. The propaganda being spread far and wide by enemies of Islam in Tanzania that Muslims do not value education and that is why they lag behind is false and malicious.

TANU was committed to justice and equality to all and this was its main doctrine during the struggle for independence. In 1962 Nyerere as president of the country realising on the problem of imbalances between different communities had this to say to the Parliament:

> There is no quick way to cancel out the present difference between our African and non-African citizens; there is no easy way to remove the existing disparity in education between Christians and Muslims, or between the educated few and the majority of our people; there is no short cut by which the Masai and the Wagogo can become Wahaya and Wachagga and Wanyakusya.\(^6\)

This was government’s declaration of intent. It wanted to assure the people that justice would be done to redress all ills caused by colonialism. Among the disadvantaged groups were Muslims, Masai, Barabaig, Wamang’ati and Wahzabe. Even women were among the disadvantaged group. Nyerere was confirming the fact that colonialism had severely oppressed certain communities and benefited others in Tanganyika particularly in education. It was therefore imperative that his government redresses the anomaly in free Tanganyika. Nyerere chose to issue this statement in Parliament to give it a force of law.

The ruling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) had a deliberate policy of uplifting communities which due to colonialism were left to stagnate. The government soon after independence effected policies to develop those tribes. In 1976 TANU having realised that women were disadvantaged just like Muslims and other tribes passed a resolution which favoured them in university admission.\(^7\) TANU Central Committee supported the proposal and the National Executive Committee endorsed it. This was positive discrimination. The party was discriminating men in favour of women so that they too progress with the rest of the population but did nothing to elevate Muslims.

The problem would come only when Muslims would demand consideration from the government because of their stagnation in education. But to understand the politics of Muslim education in Tanzania we need to go back again to modern history of Tanzania, to the first decade of independence and meet a Pakistan national, a scholar influenced by Abu Ala Maudud, Dr. Muhammad Hussein Malik. It was Dr. Malik’s students who for the first time in 1981 alerted Muslims and other citizens in Tanzania that the Church through the Ministry of Education was impeding Muslim youths from admission into institutions of higher learning and called upon the government to rectify the anomaly.

The Legacy of Dr. Muhammad Hussein Malik, 1970s

Dr. Hussein Malik came to Tanzania from Pakistan in 1970s as an expatriate teacher of mathematics employed by the government. It is the irony of history that Prof. Malik was to be brought into the country by the government because had the Christian lobby dominating the government known the influence which he would have to have upon Muslims particularly the young generation surely they would not have given him a contract to serve in the country. After completion of his contract with the government Dr. Malik was employed by BAKWATA. Apart from teaching mathematics he also volunteered to teach Islamic studies to all secondary schools of Dar es Salaam and surrounding areas.

Dr. Malik taught Islamic knowledge in a way that no other scholar had done before him in Tanzania.
There was a distinct system of teaching Islamics pursued by all sheikhs in East Africa. The tradition was to take student are taken through the basics, first learning the Qur'an and fiqh. No attempt was made to intertwine the teaching in the Islamic history with the reality of social and political issues of the day as they affected Muslims in particular and the society in general. Most of the students and the sheikhs had barely gone beyond lower primary school. Due to inferior secular education of both teacher and student they could not articulate and translate the teachings beyond what had been recited in the basics. They found world issues alien to them and unrelated to their predicament. The Christian lobby realising the potent force of Islam went out of its way to ensure that Islam was kept far away from politics. The ulamaa in Tanzania therefore became very much removed from politics. Those who had ventured into politics much as to criticize the government were detained, ostracized or declared prohibited immigrants if they happen not to be indigenous. (8) Dr. Malik did not adhere to this school of thought.

It was through the teaching of Prof. Malik that Muslims particularly the new generation came to understand itself and be aware of the anti-Muslim force against Islam. Malik made the young Muslims understand the purpose of their creation and the high value of absolute integrity in Islam which leave no room for one class to oppress another. Not only that but even to allow yourself to be oppressed is a sin. Through such teachings and drawing parallels from the Holy Qur’an and the traditions (hadith) of the Prophet, Peace be Upon Him, the young men began to look at the Tanzanian society in context of equality and justice.

Dr. Malik began first by helping his students overcome the inferiority complex which was a result of colonial propaganda and histories taught in schools. Muslims students were taught of scientific achievement and accomplishment of Muslim scholars of the past and present. Dr. Malik taught his students about exploits and achievements of Muslims scientists and scholars. He taught a contrasting history of Islam as a religion which did not begin with Muhammad (Peace be Upon Him), but with Adam. Dr. Malik taught his way down to the time of Jesus and the Jews emphasising of the fact that Jesus like Muhammad was a Muslim. His most interesting and captivating topic was the history of the Jews how they turned religion into nationality and vice-versa. He concluded his course of study by showing the imprecision in Christianity.

Prof. Malik did not oly wipe out colonial histories of Muslims as blood thirsty, raving through Spain on horse backs with swords blazing killing and forcing Christians to embrace Islam but taught also his student the meaning of jihad and its value; and what it can achieve to an individual, and to a people under subjugation. He taught his students the value of education and to consider education in whatever its form as their top priority and should not fall into the trap of demarcating between secular and religious knowledge because all source of knowledge is one and has importance.

Previously it was not common for student who take Islamic knowledge seriously. Dr. Malik was able to teach the subject in such a way that the subject was interesting and was always adding knew knowledge. His students looked forward to his classes. In a period of ten years Dr. Malik was able to mould a strong following of disciplined and committed young men who began to see the injustices committed to Muslims in the Tanzanian society. Dr. Malik's teachings went beyond schools, he made rounds in mosques to lecture on different topics with his students interpreting for him. Once free of complex and armed with the teachings of correct version of Islam as a superior culture to any other, Dr. Malik laid a heavy burden to his students that they have an obligation to change the society and restore back the honour denied to Islam and Muslims not only in Tanzania but throughout the world. His students in turn now began to hold classes in different schools and mosques. The effect was noticeable.

These young Muslims, a product of post independence conflict between Islam and Christianity in the struggle for power were a different crop. They kept away from alcohol and all vices common to the urbanised educated young aspiring middle class with white collar jobs. This was an unprecedented experience. It had been the norm in the past for educated Muslims to distance themselves from

http://www.islamtanzania.org/nyaraka/Elimu2.html
Islamic culture and all that which goes with it. A portrayal of an educated Muslim was not that of a person who established regular prayers and behaves the way a Muslim is supposed to. It was a picture of an African aspiring to be westernised and "modern", a liberated person from the "archaic" culture of former slave masters- the Arabs. Colonial propaganda wanted people to believe that Islam was synonymous to Arabic culture. This transformation appealed to many young men. The early years of 1970s saw many people particularly the young increasingly turning to Islam as a complete way of life.

This nucleus of young men around Dr. Malik with the support of a small group of Muslims began to see the world and the Tanzanian society in different light. They began to mobilise Muslims to fight for their rights. This created into Muslims a new sense of hope, purpose and direction. Dr. Malik used to tell his students, 'educate the people on their rights and they will fight for them on their own. Fight for peoples' right while they are ignorant of their rights, the people will fight you back.'

Dr. Malik's influence in the psyche of young Muslims intellectuals who were close to him and received his teachings will come to have a lasting influence in them and would come to initiate a strong movement to counter Christian hegemony in Tanzania. These young men would mobilise Muslims as a distinct people living under subjugation. This gradually came to change the political foundation laid by Nyerere and Muslims would defy the status quo and Muslims would seize to be a people ignored by the government. The Muslim question would be on the agenda manifesting itself in many forms.

These young men having finished their tutorial under Prof. Malik began to see issue in the country in a different light. Between 1970 - 1980 students of Prof. Malik began to provide leadership to Muslim organisations. They harboured the desire to initiate a political movement in Mainland Tanzania graced by Muslim sentiments to free Muslims from the bondage of Christian dominance. It was in their view that a movement similar to the independence struggle initiated by Muslims patriots in 1950s which ousted the British from Tanzania should be organised. But this time the struggle had to be different. This movement instead of pursuing the nationalist-secularist ideology articulated by Muslim founders of the independence movement should strive to adopt in the new movement, Islam as the ideology of genuine freedom. The decision to this change of strategy was that secularism had failed Muslims in the political system of Tanzania.

These were by any standards very radical thoughts. But however radical as they might have seemed, the teachings received support and very attentive ears. Most of those who harboured this thought were young graduates who had experienced the discrimination particularly against educated Muslims by the Christian lobby which saw in these young educated Muslims a threat to the future of Christianity in the country. The correst history of the struggle for independence began to be researched and written afresh. Names of Muslim patriots long held in obscure by the Christian lobby were unearthed.

There was also another factor which came to act as a catalyst to Muslim sentiments in Tanzania-the Muslim revolution in Iran.

Before the Iranian revolution of Iran in 1979 Islam as an ideology had long lost its power and influence. It was an ideology groping in the dark with Saudi Arabia which was supposed to be the mirror of the Muslim world firmly under the influence and guidance of the United States of America. The photographs of people in demonstrating in the streets of Teheran standing up to the United States and facing death under the bullets of Shah’s army and Muslim activists hunted by Shah’s secret police, Savak fired the imagination of Muslim militants the world over. Muslim activists in Tanzania were of no exception. It proved to them that Islam could defeat any power in the world.

It happened that by mid 1970s students of Dr. Malik's were passing through higher institutions of learning including the University of Dar es Salaam where they became active in student politics in
their own style. As students they learned how the Christian lobby permeates every sector of the Tanzanian society without exception. The first step to counter the menace was to expose and educate Muslims about it so that Muslim become aware of its existence and fight back. They worked on that through mass contact with Muslims throughout the country. They also started to work on ways to change the leadership in BAKWATA to transform it from a puppet organisation under the influence of the Christian lobby to an effective Muslim institution to represent Muslim interests.

The person who made this possible was the late Sheikh Mohamed Ali Al-Bukhri then secretary of BAKWATA. Sheikh Mohamed Ali was the first sheikh in Tanzania to have studied and obtained a university degree and the second to get any degree. He had graduated from the University of Dar es Salaam with an LL. B.

The Leadership of Sheikh Mohamed Ali and Warsha in Bakwata; and Efforts to revive Muslim Schools, 1981

Strangely the BAKWATA leadership at the headquarters decided to turn the organisation into a profit making body. It registered a transportation company and bought trucks for the business. This became the source of the conflict because reports were received that BAKWATA trucks were transporting alcohol as part of its cargo. It did not take long for the leadership of BAKWATA to find itself engulfed in an internal conflict on important matters of principle. The late Sheikh Kassim bin Juma who was on the forefront in the denunciation of the EAMWS in 1968 was this time, on the forefront to condemn the BAKWATA leadership at the headquarters for un-Islamic practises. The student of Prof. Malik had by then formed their own organisation - Muslim Writers Workshop which came to be popularly known as Warsha. For strategic purposes this organisation operated without registration and no one exactly knew its leadership with certainty. But from the quality of the papers it published and distributed to Muslims there was no doubt whatsoever that authors were highly educated individuals.

In the conflict Warsha saw the opportunity to extricate from BAKWATA the puppet leadership imposed by the government upon Muslims at the founding conference of the organisation in Iringa in 1968. Since inception of BAKWATA a good number of Muslims adopted an apathetic attitude towards it. At that time Warsha’s view was that such an attitude was self defeating. If BAKWATA holds itself as a Muslim organisation then Muslims should make it serve Muslims interests. With the help of Warsha Sheikh Mohamed Ali was able to call for fresh elections under a new constitution.

A new educated, progressive and independent leadership came into power. Sheikh Mohamed Ali had managed to conduct not only a coup de grace against Chairman Saleh Masasi and his deputy Sheikh Abdallah Chaurembo from leadership but also against President Julius Nyerere who had imposed this leadership upon Muslims in 1968. The only person who remained from the old leadership was Adam Nasib. Soon after Warsha members moved in to occupy different positions in BAKWATA. For the first time since 1968 BAKWATA began to act and behave as a true Muslim organisation. This infused into Muslims a new sense of hope, purpose and direction.

Once in BAKWATA Warsha began to implement education programmes initiated by the EAMWS but were left to die after its demise. Before being banned by the government the EAMWS had built schools, mosques and a hostel in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda as follows:

**Muslim projects by the East African Muslim Welfare Society by 1968**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>Tanzania</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Warsha turned four schools built by the EAMWS in Tanzania which were under BAKWATA into Muslim seminaries. These schools were leading in the production of poor school results and were leading in everything compatible with decency. It was a shame that these schools were under and carried the name of Islam. In order to inculcate into the students high virtues of Islam, Qur'an and Islamic Knowledge was introduced as compulsory study subjects to Muslims students. A new recruitment of staff was carried out with Warsha members monopolising most of the all teaching posts. Previous to the Warsha take-over of the schools, the schools were enrolling Christians as students. It was decided that from there on the schools would only accept Muslims. Within a short period of time, discipline was restored into the schools and it was compulsory for students to observe prayers and for girls to dress in hijab.

Since the demise of the EAMWS which published EAMWS Newsletter Muslims did not have a mouth-piece of their own. For the first time Muslims were able to have their own mouth-piece. Warsha helped BAKWATA to register a newspaper Muislam with Warsha forming the editorial board. Warsha's stand was that if Christians had two papers, Lengo and Kiongozi there was no reason for the government to bar Muslims from owning their own paper. Warsha also took over the weekly radio programme on Fridays on the state radio. Warsha reduced the playing of kasda and dhikr to broadcast programmes which carried a special message to Muslims. Warsha urged not to listen to recitation of the Holy Qur'an as if it music but to understand and obey its message. Warsha had by then written books which were published in Kenya by Islamic Foundation, these books were very popular and came to be taken by Muslims as reference books for understanding Islam in the Christian surroundings and the political system which existed in Tanzania.

Warsha under BAKWATA then conducted a social research project which no Muslim organisation had attempted before. It commissioned its educationists to research and write a paper to show why Muslim students were lagging behind in education. It is important to get a glimpse of those findings: (11)

Table 1
Selection of Std.VII Pupils to Form I in Dar es Salaam Region 1978 -1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Selected</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Percentage of Muslims Selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>956</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1071</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Data

http://www.islamtanzania.org/nyaraka/Elimu2.html
Source: Dar es Salaam City Council, Department of Education.

NB: In 1967 census Muslims in Dar es Salaam Region were 67%, therefore the number of Muslim students in Dar es Salaam Primary Schools is greater than that of Christians. This should have reflected in the selection.

Table 2

Religious Distribution University of Dar es Salaam 1971/72-1973/74

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Muslim %</th>
<th>Non-Muslim %</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969/70</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*1970/71</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971/72</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972/73</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973/74</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*1974/75</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975/76</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*1976/77</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1. -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*1977/78</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978/79</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**1979/80</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**1980/81</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**1981/82</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Official Statistics not available

** Students selected for Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Science and medicine not included.


**Table 3**

**Religious Distribution of University Admission 1971/72 -1973/74**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Muslim</th>
<th>% Christians</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>% Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971/72</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972/73</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973/74</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: University of Dar es Salaam Student Directory

**Table 4**

**Christian Seminary Secondary Schools 1980**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mafinga</td>
<td>&quot;O&quot;</td>
<td>Irminga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ujiji</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Kigoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kilema</td>
<td>&quot;A&quot;</td>
<td>Kilimanjaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maua</td>
<td>&quot;O&quot;</td>
<td>Kilimanjaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Uru</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Kilimanjaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Nanupa</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Lindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Makoko</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Mara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kasita</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Morogoro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lutheran Junior</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Morogoro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Saint Peter’s</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Morogoro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Nyegezi</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Mwanza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Kaengesa</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Rukwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Likonde</td>
<td>&quot;A&quot;</td>
<td>Ruvuma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mwadui</td>
<td>&quot;O&quot;</td>
<td>Shinyanga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When these findings were made public and distributed to Muslims throughout the country and to the general public it came as a shock to both Muslims and the government. For the first time it was revealed that there was a system in the Ministry of Education supported by Christian functionaries which was discriminatory to Muslim youths, purposely barring them from institutions of higher learning. The government was flouting the cherished creed of religious tolerance and non-discrimination of its citizens on religion.

Such accusations and disclosure, and particularly coming from Muslims, threatened national unity. The government did not want to find out whether those findings on education were correct or not. Its interests was to know the brains behind Warsha isolate them from Muslims and then persecute them. The government was unprepared for such revelations and was worried by the direction which BAKWATA was taking. BAKWATA was now serving the cause of Islam. This was not what President Nyerere had bargained for when he subverted the EAMWS and helped to found BAKWATA. Sheikh Mohamed Ali as secretary of BAKWATA was taken to task for allowing the organisations to be hijacked by “hot headed youths.” Warsha were accused of being anti-government and perpetrating animosity between Muslims and Christians through their writings. Nyerere ordered Aboud Jumbe to close all Muslim seminaries.

The Banning of Muslim Seminaries by the Government and expulsion of Dr. Muhammad Hussein Malik, 1981

A meeting between Aboud Jumbe and BAKWATA was held at Jumbe’s official residence at Laibon Road. In attendance were Rashid Mfaume Kawawa, Adam Nasibu, Sheikh Mohamed Ali and Sheikh Abbas Makbul, a representative of Darul Iftar. The stand of Sheikh Mohamed Ali was that if those Muslim seminaries have to be closed then the decision to take that step should be laid upon the government. This was a difficult step to be taken by the government as such an act would provoke Muslims. The meeting left the decision to close the seminaries upon BAKWATA. BAKWATA took unilateral decision and reverted the schools back to its original state. Warsha not endorsing BAKWATA’s decision called a meeting of all Muslims to discuss the problem. The Christian lobby used its powers and a crisis was fomented. The government issued a directive to reinstate the schools taken over by Warsha to their former secular status, that is, any Tanzania irrespective of faith should have access to them. The government accused Warsha of trying to divide the society along religious lines. The Christian lobby through the state-radio issued a warning that the meeting was illegal. Anyone attending that meeting would be arrested. This announcement was read by the Director of


Dear brothers and sisters in Islam,

Dungunyi
Itaga
Soni
Katoke
Rubiya
Singida
Tabora
Tanga
Kagera
Kagera

http://www.islamtanzania.org/nyaraka/Elimu2.html

27-3-2013
Radio Tanzania, (13) David Wakati. A crack squad from Oyster Bay police was sent to the school to stop the meeting and intimidate Muslim parents who had assembled to discuss the future of the school. Leading the squad was a Muslim officer one, Msafiri Himba. This is how the Christian lobby operates. It sets Muslims upon Muslims.

The government saw the two Muslim seminaries which were established less than a year as divisive but turned a blind eye to 19 Christian seminaries which were in existence for almost a hundred years.

Adam Nasibu meanwhile in connive with of the government traveled to Moshi and the reason he gave to BAKWATA headquarters was that he was going to Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC) for treatment. But that was not the reason. Once in Moshi with the help of Sheikh Senare the BAKWATA chairman in Kilimanjaro and the late Sheikh Jambeni (14) from Tanga and other few hand picked BAKWATA members he called a secret meeting the agenda being how to oust Sheikh Mohamed Ali from leadership. It was decided by conspirators that a special meeting should be called in Dar es Salaam immediately to discuss what had transpired in BAKWATA since the banning of Muslim seminaries. The government put at its disposal its manpower and sources to make the meeting a success. Members of the BAKWATA Central Committee were sent invitations through police message. A vast country like Tanzania communication is not easy. This type of transmission is usually used by the government for urgent messages because of its efficiency. But this kind of message has another use in third world countries were authoritarian regimes are the order of the day, a police message is no ordinary message it frightens the receiver.

Sheikh Mohamed Ali was accused of flouting the BAKWATA constitution, conducting elections under an invalid constitution and in collaboration with Warsha, for “mixing religion with politics.” Sheikh Mohamed Ali was therefore expelled from BAKWATA and Warsha banned. But it was not possible to ban Warsha because the organisation was not in the first place registered. It was not therefore possible to ban an entity which did not exist because Warsha was not officially registered with the Registrar of Societies. The statement that Warsha is a prohibited by the government from indulging in anything which has to do with Muslims of Tanzania did not affect its activities in any way.

The government gave the transfer of power in BAKWATA special significance by publishing the changes in its daily paper.(15) Warsha's mentor, Dr. Malik was declared a prohibited immigrant by the government and was required to leave the country within twenty four hours. His students advised him to go to Zanzibar to wait and plan his next move. Dr. Malik was received on Aboud Jumbe's orders while his students sorted out certain issues for him, and packed his belongings in the mainland. Arrangements were made and Dr. Malik went to Nairobi where he was employed by Islamic Foundation. But before he left Dr. Malik told his students that BAKWATA were late in asking the government to deport him, he had alhamdulilah already accomplished his work. Indeed Dr. Malik had accomplished his work. The Muslims were aware of machinations against them and the struggle against Christian hegemony in Tanzania had passed to a different flock of Muslims. In the coming years students of Prof. Malik formed other powerful organisations which exist up to now.

During Maulid celebrations of 1982 in Tabora, Adam Nasib in the presence of the Vice-President, Rashid Kawawa through the state radio warned the government of enemies who had invaded the country, meaning Dr. Malik, Sheikh Mohamed Ali and Warsha. The Maulid celebrations were used by the government and BAKWATA to try to diffuse the situation by issuing statements condemning Warsha and white washing the government. Warsha had overtime managed to establish centres in certain areas of the country, Tabora being one of them. Warsha distributed statements from Tabora giving the Muslim position on the issue of Muslim seminaries.

Muslims were sympathetic to Warsha and took Warsha's struggle as their own struggle. Muslims helped Warsha to establish a school, Masjid Quba and Islamic Centre which was owned and managed by them. In retaliation to these effort the government refused to register the school. The
school was perceived by the government as a centre of "Muslim fundamentalism." The government went further to subvert the school by warning Muslim parents that students completing their education at Masjid Quba would not be recognised by it and would not be considered for further education or for employment. Warsha was not to be deterred they decided to run the school and educate Muslim children even without government registration. The school being perceived as a centre of Muslim militancy remained blacklisted by the government until 1988 when Prof. Malima as the first Muslim Minister of Education registered it. Members of Warsha used to say that they have their consent from Allah, they don’t need any permission from anyone. This was Warsha's motto.


With time the problem of Muslim education waned as other Muslim issues took over public interest. But to the enlightened Muslims the problem remained simmering below the surface only to be brought back to life by Prof. Kighoma Malima in 1987.

In 1987 Prof. Malima became the first Muslim Minister of Education. This ministry had consistently been under a Christian minister since independence in 1961. There were accusations that the ministry was a Christian stronghold particularly when at one time a pastor was appointed minister to head the ministry. When Professor Malima became minister of education he thought it was imperative that some changes be effected in the ministry to win back the confidence of Muslims. There were accusations that the ministry was discriminating against Muslim youths barring them from higher institutions of learning and was frustrating career advancement of Muslims functionaries in the ministry.

Table 5

University of Dar es Salaam Student Enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Christians</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985/86</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/87</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/89</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989/90</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Research Data

Table 6

Muslim and Christian Appointments in the Ministry of Education 1961-1989

http://www.islamtanzania.org/nyaraka/Elimu2.html
Prof. Malima found out that professionalism and objective decision making had long been forgotten in the ministry. Examinations were marked using candidates actual names instead of numbers as is the norm the world over. This created an environment in which it was easy for Christian candidates to be favoured. Prof. Malima also found that Muslim functionaries were barred from promotions. Prof. Malima had to rectify the discrepancies at the ministry. First he promoted three Muslims whose promotions were long overdue after retiring three Christians whose retirement was long overdue. Prof. Malima also promoted a Muslim to the post of commissioner. This change made the balance of distribution of top post at the ministry between Muslims and Christians to stand at 30% to 70% scales still tipping in favour of Christians.

Yet inspite of this imbalance Christians in the ministry complained that Prof. Malima’s promotions were religiously motivated. Prof. Malima found out that the population of Muslim students in primary school was more than 50% but they were few in secondary schools. He realised something must be seriously wrong and he therefore directed that examinations numbers should be used in marking examinations. After these changes the number of Muslims students admitted to secondary schools increased by 40%. Prof. Malima fears were confirmed that there was cheating in the ministry. And that kind of cheating was worse than ordinary cheating. Those who were playing that kind of game were poising to put the country in a dangerous path which could cost the nation dearly.

Prof. Malima wrote a confidential report to the President on the state of affairs he had found in the ministry. In that report (16) Prof. Malima mentioned the stagnation of Muslims and women in education. Prof. Malima warned that if this problem was not solved it was going to create problems to the country in the future. Prof. Malima's report got leaked to the press. This letter by Prof. Malima made him a hero to his own people and a villain to the establishment and to the most fervent enemies of Islam in Tanzania. There was panic in the ministry.

It is said that among those who received the report was the former Vice-President and Prime Minister Joseph Waroiba. It was obvious that Nyerere was monitoring President Mwinyi in everything he did. To be able to do what he did Nyerere had to have people deep inside President Mwinyi’s establishment. Nyerere and Warioba were outraged by the letter and tried to have him sacked from the government and party in the same style which ousted Jumbe four years earlier. But this time the issue on the agenda was more sensitive and transparent then was the case with Aboud Jumbe which was covered by political intrigues. Muslims were following closely Prof. Malima’s fight against the Christian bastion with great interest.

### Christian Lobby Persecution Against Prof. Malima

Prof. Malima had said something which was gnawing Muslims for many years. Muslims supported him. This support by Muslims increased hatred against him from the Christian camp. The Christian lobby felt doubly threatened. Already there was tension between Muslims and Christians. With Prof.

---

http://www.islamtanzania.org/nyaraka/Elimu2.html

27-3-2013
Malima heading the ministry it could not have the free hand it once enjoyed. A campaign of hate and misinformation against Prof. Malima was unleashed by the press. Prof. Malima was branded a Muslim 'fundamentalist,' accused of religious intolerance and excessive partisanship. President Mwinyi instead of directing the government to investigate the problem of Muslim being purposely denied opportunities he referred the issue to the Party for discussion. This issue went before the Party in Dodoma under the chairmanship of Mwalimu Nyerere for discussion.

The Christian lobby in the CCM wanted Prof. Malima to be ousted from the party. Nyerere cunning as he is objected to that decision. He knew that to expel Prof. Malima for speaking on behalf of Muslims would make him an instant hero in the eyes of Muslims and if that happens CCM had no means to deal with such kind of a situation. When the issue went before CCM instead of discussing Malima's report and find solution to the Muslim stagnation, the victim and not the perpetrator of the crime was put on trial by the party. The party did not want to discuss Prof. Malima’s report which centred on Muslim’s stagnation. CCM was only keen to discuss Prof. Malima. President Mwinyi succumbed to the powerful Christian lobby.

This was the first time the Church through the Christian lobby intervened openly to protest on Muslim appointments. The Christian lobby put forward a proposal that Prof. Malima be expelled from the CCM. In his defence Prof. Malima stood to what he had written in his letter to the president. Prof. Malima’s defense was that never had Muslims questioned promotions of Christians why should the Church interfere in his appointments and in his report to the president. Strangely, Nyerere blasted those who were condemned Prof. Malima. He told them that the Church had its own way for too long and it was high time it prepared its followers for changes. Nevertheless Nyerere who had become president behind the president ordered him removed from the Ministry of Education. Prof. Malima was found to have overstepped the norms built in the ministry for many years and was therefore relieved of his post and President Mwinyi appointed the timid late Amrani Mayagila in his place.

This is how unconsciously Muslims are made to conform with the wishes of the Christian lobby. If President Mwinyi would have appointed a Christian to succeed Prof. Malima he would have pulled the carpet under the lobby’s feet. That act would have given Muslims more fuel to fan the fire against the Church. But by appointing a weak Muslim to the post he had given the impression that the ministry was still under a Muslim minister while in fact it was not. All decisions were done by the lobby as evidenced by the decisions which were passed to reverse all achievements gained under Prof. Malima. After the removal of Prof. Malima from the ministry the ministry reverted back into marking examination using names of candidates instead of numbers. Muslim student admission to secondary school once again dwindled.

Muslims who were following Prof. Malima’s "trial" could not tell whether Mayagila the new Minister of Education was a Muslim or a Christian. It was only after a lot of inquiries that they came to confirm that Mayagila was after all and indeed a Muslim. His fellow Muslims in the party and government were terrified of Nyerere and decided to remain uncommitted to the Muslim problem, yet privately they admitted that what Prof. Malima was saying was true. Prof. Malima did not write that report to the president because of hatred to Christians much as he did not join TANU because he hated the British. TANU fought for independence because it is the right of all people to be free from foreign domination. Prof. Malima wrote that report because he had seen a cherished principle being violated. It is imperative of any government to do justice to all its citizens. Prof. Malima report and the decision taken against him had confirmed one thing, that is, Muslims were second class citizens in their own country. The question was who was preventing justice to be done and for whose interest?

Having realised that it was the Church’s pressure on President Mwinyi which precipitated the decision to remove Prof. Malima from the Ministry of Education, various Muslim organisations pressed on BAKWATA to prepare a memorandum to the government on education disparity.

http://www.islamtanzania.org/nyaraka/Elimu2.html
between Muslims and Christians and to support Prof. Malima on the issue. This advise was ignored by BAKWATA. Muslims were enraged by the apathy of BAKWATA and word was passed around that BAKWATA should be overthrown at whatever cost and by all means to save Muslims from perpetual bondage. WARSHA sent a petition to the Speaker of National Assembly to look into Muslim marginalisation in education.\(^{(17)}\) Pamphlet and leaflets were distributed throughout the country calling upon Muslims to raise against the puppet leadership of BAKWATA even at the point of defying the government. In avoiding to deal with problems affecting Muslims BAKWATA had denied its own existence and was losing credibility fast. BAKWATA soon became emasculated failing to control events and politics involving Muslims.

**Conclusion**

This narration has included episodes which at times seems unconnected with the main issue. But to understand and comprehend Tanzania’s politics one has to transcend beyond demarcations. It is only through such exposure that one can truly grasp issues as they affect Muslims in Tanzania; for in Tanzania Muslims are facing a lot of intricacies and intrigues. It is only by removing the veil and take a glimpse of those hiding behind that one can understand issues of the day. In this way Muslims not only know their friends and enemies but get to document their *tarikh* (history) for feature generation.

The Grand Mufti of Tanzania Sheikh Hassan bin Amir, Tewa Said Tewa and Aziz Khaki who were president and secretary of the EAMWS respectively were harassed out of their offices by Julius Nyerere simply because they had initiated plans to establish a Muslim University with the assistance of Muslim countries.\(^{(18)}\) Ever since the government has subverted any effort for Muslims to develop educational institutions. When Islamic Conference (OIC) wanted to build a Muslim University in Tanzania the government refused to issue permit and as a result the university was built in Mbale, Uganda.

It is taboo to raise the problem of Muslim education in the government or in the seating of the ruling party. It is an unwritten law that, that is a no go area which should never be tackled by anyone irrespective of having a successive Muslims as ministers of education. The powerful Christian lobby prefers these days to have a Muslim Minister of Education in the ministry merely as a show piece. A show piece is a show piece. It has nothing more to offer other than to decorate and please the eye.

The article has also proved that there is in place in Tanzania a deliberate policy by the government to keep Muslims in perpetual bondage by denying them education. This conspiracy has been existing in Tanzania for more than a hundred years and is still being practiced and carried out by the Christian lobby which control the government and all its agencies. And strangely the Muslim minister of education discussing with fellow Muslims, the injustices committed to Muslim youth in terms of discrimination in the Ministry of Education, will privately and in low voice and looking behind his shoulder admit that he is aware of the problem but he has no authority to exercise his administrative powers and establish justice.

**Notes:**


http://www.islamtanzania.org/nyaraka/Elimu2.html


7. See *Maamuzi Yasiyotekelezwa ya TANU na ASP*, Makao Makuu ya CCM, Dodoma, p. 80.

8. Sheikh Ahmed Badawiy originating from Lamu, Kenya was declared prohibited immigrant. Mufti Sheikh Hassan bin Amir was ostracised to Zanzibar and was not allowed to return to the mainland.

9. Mufti Sheikh Hassan bin Amir was awarded an honorary degree by *Al Azhar* in 1964.


13. In the EAMWS crisis of 1968 the state owned radio was used very effectively as a propaganda tool against Muslims.

14. Sheikh Jambeni as secretary of EAMWS Tanga was among those who supported the government in the banning of the society in 1968.


