

## **REINCARNATION: RE-APPRAISING THE BELIEF OF YORUBA MUSLIMS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ISLAMIC ORTHODOXY<sup>1</sup>**

**Shaykh Luqman Jimoh Ph.D.**

Department of Religions,  
Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos  
jimluq@yahoo.co.uk

### **Abstract**

*Reincarnation is one phenomenon that has always generated great controversies. While some people, based on personal experiences, are convinced of its possibility, some others outrightly denounce it. The Yoruba Muslims with regards to belief in reincarnation are divided into two; a section among them believes in the phenomenon, another section, however, opposes it and denies its occurrence. This study, contextualising the phenomenon within the framework of Islamic orthodoxy, attempts reconciliation between the two opposing views of Yoruba Muslims on reincarnation.*

### **Introduction**

The celebrated Mexican Soap Opera, ‘Second chance’ has in recent time further heightened the age-long debate on reincarnation among Nigerians. In the soap opera, the spirit of Donoso, a wealthy man who died of poison, immediately after burial, took on the body form of a wretched village man, Salvador Serenza who died in his village at the same time with Donoso. Donoso, in the guise of Salvador, later returned back to his home and reclaimed all that belonged to him.<sup>2</sup>

Reincarnation is an age-long controversial issue which scholars, writing from different backgrounds and perspective have discussed and attempted resolving the various controversies surrounding it. J.B long in an article he contributed in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion* views the issue from various cultures of the world, both archaic and modern<sup>3</sup>. Dwelling on the subject matter, he looks at it in Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and among the ancient Greece. He, however, fails to discuss reincarnation in the light of the two leading revealed religions – Christianity and Islam.

Onyewuenyi, writing from philosophical point of view, had done a philosophical reappraisal of the African belief in reincarnation with the conclusion that the use of the term ‘reincarnation’ as understood by the

West for the African belief in the return of the dead forebears in the newly-born is grossly erroneous and misleading.<sup>4</sup> Leading authorities in Yoruba Traditional religion like Idowu,<sup>5</sup> Awolalu<sup>6</sup> and Dopamu<sup>7</sup> have also contributed to the debate. While some Muslim writers in the Arab world like Al-'Ashqar<sup>8</sup>, 'Adham<sup>9</sup>, etc have discussed reincarnation, though in passing, we are aware of only two Muslim writers in this part of the world namely Balogun and Akintola. While Balogun looks only at the position of Islam and reincarnation,<sup>10</sup> Akintola, in his Doctoral work, looks briefly at the phenomenon in his discussions on the destination of *Rūh* after death<sup>11</sup>.

Of course, most of these contributions not only discuss the subject of reincarnation, but attempt resolving the contentious issues involved. Regrettably, however, their explanations have not, in the opinion of orthodox Muslim theologians, really laid the matter to rest. This paper is focused on Yoruba Muslims of Nigeria and their position on reincarnation. After the introduction, the paper brings the Yoruba people into focus. Then it defines and gives a brief survey of the belief in reincarnation. As a background to the main study, the paper looks at the concept of reincarnation among the Yoruba people. Narrowing down the issue, the Yoruba Muslims with regards to belief in reincarnation are divided into two viz: the ardent believers and the opponents of reincarnation. The work then presents and analyses the views of the orthodox Muslim theologians especially their explanations of people's experiences associated with reincarnation, rebirth and past-life recalls. This is followed by the concluding remarks.

### **The Yoruba People**

Occupying a large area, the Yoruba constitute one of the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria. They are also one of the largest homogenous groups among Africans. Mostly found in the South-Western part of the country, the Yoruba predominantly belong to the Ogun, Oyo, Ondo, Osun, Ekiti and Lagos States in Nigeria. Substantial portions of the population of the Kwara State are also Yoruba.<sup>12</sup>

Some neighbouring countries such as Republic of Benin, Dahomey, Togo and Cote d'Ivoire also accommodate some sections of the Yoruba.

On the historic origin of the Yoruba, there are, according to Akinjogbin and Ayandele, two authorities in Yoruba history, two main versions. A version has it that the Yoruba originally migrated from the North-eastern area of Africa to settle down in Ile-Ife, now part of Osun

State of Nigeria. The other has it that the Yoruba originated from Ile-Ife which, according to that version, was the centre from which the whole world was created.<sup>13</sup> Many historians, have, however, looked critically into the two versions with the view to determining which is more probable. That however, is not of major concern to us here.

The Yoruba, like other Africans are traditional people. Though, the advent of Islam and Christianity really robbed off on their traditions and customs with many of them abandoning their traditional religions and the way of life for the revealed religions. That notwithstanding, substantial number are still traditionalists while a good number of those who cross-carpenter, unable to break completely from their origin, still syncretise, thereby mixing between traditional beliefs and practices and those of Islam and Christianity as the case may be.

### **Reincarnation – its Meaning and Manifestations**

Derived from Latin words: “re” meaning again and “incarnate” meaning to enter into the body, reincarnation, in classical sense, is therefore transfer of soul after death to a new body, human or animal.<sup>14</sup> When the soul informs an animal or tree that instead is referred to as transmigration. Reincarnation, doctrinally, is the belief that the soul of a dead person, rather than going to the spiritual world and abiding there, is transferred into another body, may be that of a newly born baby in which case it is called rebirth or it continues its existence in another part of the world.

As earlier noted in the introduction, reincarnation is an aged-long belief. Indeed, there are evidences that it had existed, ever before the coming of Jesus. For instance, four centuries before Christ, Pythagoras of Samos and his followers had expressed belief in transmigration of soul as a result of which they never ate animal flesh believing that the souls of one’s friends might be inhabiting the body of the animals killed for foods.<sup>15</sup>

The Christian Bible contains texts that imply reincarnation. Such include Mathew 11:14, 17:12-13 concerning the identity of John the Baptist, Mathew 16:13-16 and Mark 6:14-16 concerning the identity of Jesus himself. However, some Christian writers have argued that while some of these texts only suggest reincarnation, they do not really prove it. Others merely confirm that the Jews and not Jesus and his disciples believed in reincarnation.

J.B. Long in his article on the subject matter locates the cultural areas of the world where the doctrine of reincarnation could be found. He writes:

It is significantly important that a belief in reincarnation in some form or another is to be found in non-literate cultures all over the world. Other primary cultural areas (beside central Australia) in which this precept is noticeably present are West African (among the Ewe, Edo, Igbo and Yoruba), South African (among the Bantu speakers and Zulu), Indonesia, Oceania, new Guinea and both North and south American (among selected ethnic groups)<sup>16</sup>

It is of particular interest that the Nupe in the Northern Nigeria also believe in reincarnation. Their belief, strangely, is that every man has two souls and that at death, it is one of the souls that goes and abide with its Creator while the other informs another body and continues its existence.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Concept of Reincarnation among the Yoruba People**

Various manifestations of reincarnation have been given by the Yoruba people to prove the possibility of reincarnation. In an instance, one who dies may be seen elsewhere shortly before or after his burial by people who may not be aware of his death. In another instance, he might be seen leading another life elsewhere. He might even settle down with a wife who, not suspecting her partner, may have issues for him. Once, we were invited to see a boy whose father was said to have died but later reincarnated. From the information gathered, the father died in Lagos only to be seen in another Yoruba town where he married a woman who had the boy for him.<sup>18</sup>

Awolalu and Dopamu have confirmed that this is what the Yoruba people call *Aku-da-aya* (the ghost of a dead person appearing in a place other than his home town).<sup>19</sup> The implication of this is that those who die here on earth have only changed places on this same earth. It is, however, believed that only those who do not live to a ripe old age but die prematurely fall into this category.<sup>20</sup>

Another manifestation of reincarnation among the Yoruba is *a-tun-wa* (another coming, rebirth or born again). This, according to the Yoruba is peculiar to those who have lived to a ripe age and were righteous. They become ancestors and can also re-incarnate, in most

cases as a grandchild or great grandchild in the family.<sup>21</sup> That is why the Yoruba name some children *Iyabo* (mother has come back) and *Babatunde* (father has come back). Indeed it is a common thing among the Yoruba to consult the oracle when a child is born into the family with the view to knowing which of the ancestors, who they also regard as the living dead, has come back. An authority has submitted that the reason why the ancestors perform the feat of reincarnation is because of their love for this world and especially their family.<sup>22</sup>

An authority in African Traditional Religion, informed us about the case of a man who at death told the people that he would soon come back and that his younger brother would give birth to him. When questioned as to how they would be sure he was the one, he told them that he would be born with teeth in his mouth. Soon, the brother gave birth to a baby with teeth in his mouth.<sup>23</sup> Similar experiences abound. Two major factors that strengthen the Yoruba belief in rebirth are reappearance of bodily marks of an ancestor on the body of a newly born child and past life recalls – a situation whereby a growing child not only exhibits traits that make the Yoruba conclude that he is older than his age, but he is equally able to recall that he had once lived and would even recount some of his/her experiences during that past existence.

The above enunciation notwithstanding, the concept of reincarnation among the Yoruba is shrouded in confusion. This, according to Danoye has made Idowu, an authority in Yoruba Traditional Religion to conclude that, in reality, there appears to be nothing like it (reincarnation) in specific sense.<sup>24</sup> One major problem Idowu has with the concept is that of reconciling between it and ancestor invocation. He finds it difficult to believe that an ancestor could reincarnate fully, wine and dine with the living in this physical world while at the same time, he could continue to remain in full life and vigor in the after – life as a result of which he is also invoked from time to time. Idowu, sensing the contradiction inherent in an ancestor being ‘there’ and ‘here’ at the same time and in the same manner, comes up with the theory of partial reincarnation – a theory which is based on the argument that the continuous existence of the ancestors in full life and vigor in the spiritual world necessitates only their partial reincarnation in this physical world.<sup>25</sup> Awolalu has amplified this theory of Idowu when he said that the Yoruba religion emphasizes both partial reincarnation and life continuing in the hereafter much in the same way as life here.<sup>26</sup>

Reacting to this theory, Onyewuenyi says it is no solution at all to the problem of Yoruba belief in reincarnation. He rather submits that the word reincarnation should not be used. According to him:

Reincarnation is an European word which conveys a definite constant concepts. It would be erroneous, therefore, to limit African interpretations of concepts which explain the vital influences of the dead forebears on the living and for which there are no proper translations in European languages, to the stable concept of reincarnation.<sup>27</sup>

A critical look at the arguments of Idowu and Onyewuenyi shows that they both limit reincarnation in Yoruba belief to rebirth of the ancestors; losing sight of *a-ku-da-ya* phenomenon discussed earlier as a manifestation of reincarnation.

The above polemics notwithstanding, the truth is that based on their experiences, the Yoruba people believe in reincarnation in the classical sense, though the concept in their religion, admits of some flaws which in our opinion, they have not been able to convincingly resolve.

### **Yoruba Muslims and Reincarnation**

On the issue of reincarnation, Yoruba Muslims are divided into two main groups. There are those who express belief in its possibility while some others do not believe it is possible for a dead soul to inform another and continue existence. This division also holds for Yoruba Muslim scholars<sup>28</sup>.

It should be noted that the concept of reincarnation had existed among the Yoruba ever before their contact with Islam. Therefore, when one compares the belief of the Yoruba Muslims in reincarnation with what obtains in the Yoruba traditional belief, one can not but conclude that, to a large extent, the latter, not only informed but equally had great influence on the former. Be that as it may, this category of Yoruba Muslims who express belief in reincarnation equally rely on experiences of people who claim to have seen dead people reincarnate while they also rely on two distinct Qur'anic portions.

The first portion is verses 60 and 61 of chapter 56, which read thus:

We have decreed death to be your common lot, and We are not to be frustrated from changing your forms and creating you (again) in (forms) that you know not.

In the opinion of this group, this is a clear reference and evidence for reincarnation. Thus, by implication, the present existence, for many, is not the first and may not be the last. They buttress this with past-life recall experiences.

The second Qur'anic reference is made to verse 2 of chapter 6 where Allah says:

He it is who created you from clay, and then decreed a stated term (for you) and there is in His Presence another known term; yet you doubt within yourselves.

In this verse, the word '*Ajal*' (stated term) occurs twice. The second is qualified with *Musamman* (meaning: known). Scholars have given the two, different interpretations. A view interprets the first '*Ajal*' to mean the termination of a life span and the second '*Ajal*' to mean the time of resurrection.<sup>29</sup> Another view maintains that two life spans are decreed for every man. The first is shorter. It is the one written down for many by the angel mentioned in the fourth *hadith* in the forty selected traditions of *Al-Nawawi*.<sup>30</sup> The second is longer. It is kept in the '*Ummu 'l – Kitāb*' (Mother of the Book) which, according to most *sunni* writers is the same as *Lawhu 'l – mahfuz* (the Preserved Tablet). Yusuf Ali remarks that 'it is the original foundation of all revelation, the essence of Allah's Will and Law'<sup>31</sup>. It is, however, interpreted by Gumi as a divine Book in which it is written down since sempiternity all that will be and their determined terms.<sup>32</sup> Also, whatever is contained in the '*Ummu 'l – Kitāb*' is unchangeable and no one, other than Allah, has access to it, not even the Angels. This interpretation is further supported with a statement of the Prophet that righteousness (*birr*) such as keeping the family ties can necessitate the first '*Ajal*' being lengthened.<sup>33</sup> The lengthening in our understanding will, however, be within the span of the second '*Ajal*'.

The third interpretation is oral. It takes the first '*Ajal*' to refer to 'untimely death' and the second '*Ajal*' to mean the natural death. It is not impossible that this interpretation is informed by the African traditional belief in 'untimely death' of young people, the implication of which is that the dead did not die a natural death, rather, some forces caused the death before the appointed term.<sup>34</sup> It is therefore believed that such a soul cannot gain entrance into the spirit world. It will still live on earth to complete its appointed term and die naturally.<sup>35</sup>

The second group does not at all subscribe to the belief in the possibility of reincarnation. They are also not comfortable with the Qur'anic references cited by the first group. They therefore advance counter arguments. On verses 60 and 61 of chapter 56, they say the statement "to transfigure you and create you in (forms) that you know not" refers to resurrection in the Hereafter and not reincarnation in this physical world. They argue that if it is a reference to reincarnation, it then means that the soul will reincarnate in a new body or form different from the original form. In that case, the *a-ku-da-aya* phenomenon will not fit in because those who see dead souls reincarnate have always claimed to see the same bodies and forms of the dead ones. In fact, that is one reason why they are able to recognize them. Also, on the issues of untimely death, this group submit that it is not possible for any 'soul' to die before its appointed term as the Qur'an clearly states: "And no person can ever die except by Allah's leaves and at an appointed term".[Q3:145] Further, they ask that if truly there is reincarnation with all its manifestations, what form will accountability and recompense take on the Day of Judgement? That is, if for example, a particular soul led an ungodly and unrighteous life, it then died and later reincarnated and then led a godly and righteous life, will this single soul, on the day of Judgement account for its first existence or the second or both? To, however, establish their position on the impossibility of reincarnation, they cite certain portions of the Qur'an. One of such are verses 99 and 100 of *Suratu 'l-mu'minun* where Allah says concerning the unrighteous ones thus:

Until when death comes to one of them he says: My Lord! Send me back, so that I may do good in that which I have left behind" No! It is but a word that he speaks, and behind them is *Barzakh* (a barrier) until the Day when they will be resurrected.

Certain points, according to this group, are to be deduced from these verses. Firstly, the plea of the unrighteous asking to be sent back at the point of death. The phrase "and behind them is *Barzakh*" further clarifies this. *Barzakh* literally means a barrier between two things. But in Islamic theology, it refers to the "period which intervenes between this world and the life hereafter commencing immediately after the death of a man and ending on the Day of Resurrection". As soon as a man dies, he enters *Barzakh*<sup>36</sup> Secondly, the emphatic 'No' response given by Allah shows the impossibility of reincarnation and that the dead will be barred

completely from returning to this physical world, rather, he will be in *Barzakh* and will not be resurrected until the Day of Resurrection.<sup>37</sup>

Another Qur'anic reference cited by the group is verses 15 and 16 of chapter 23, which reads thus, "after that, surely, you will die. Then (again), surely, you will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection". The argument raised here by this group is that the word '*Thumma*' and the phrase *Yawmu 'l-qiyāmah* both of which occur in verse 16 are clear indications that there is no resurrection immediately after death prior to the Day of Resurrection.<sup>38</sup> They explain that while *thumma* shows that resurrection cannot be immediately after death, *yawmu 'l-qiyāmah* establishes the exact period that resurrection will take place. They, therefore, conclude that it is not at all, in the light of this reference, possible for any soul to reincarnate.

Another reference is made to verse 42 of *Sūratu 'z-Zumar* where Allah says:

It is Allah who takes away the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not during their sleep. *He keeps those (souls) for which he has ordained death and sends the rest for a term appointed.*

The reference point here is to the phrase in italics. They argue that if Allah withholds and keeps a soul after its death, the soul dwells there in the spiritual world and cannot therefore reincarnate and be seen again in this physical world. To further support this argument, they make reference to varying reports from the Prophet on the positions and states of souls after death. Such reports have it that the souls of Allah's Prophets at death are taken to the highest of the high places (in the heavens) or in the Paradise; drinking eating and enjoying and at night resting in a lamp attached to Allah's Throne of Authority. The Soul of a martyr resides in the belly of a green bird in the Paradise also enjoying there. As for the soul of an obedient believer, it abides in a place called *Rabd* in Paradise. The disobedient believer's soul is in its own case, suspended in air between the heavens and the earth. The disbeliever's soul is confined in the belly of a black bird in *Sijjin* (a prison or a dungeon in the seventh earth). Reports similar to the ones given about the martyr's soul are also given about the souls of Muslim children who die in infancy.<sup>39</sup> The conclusion they draw from these reports is that no soul, whether righteous or otherwise still resides on this earth after death.

In sum, on the basis of all these references, Islam, according to them, rejects totally the doctrine of reincarnation.

### **Reincarnation within the Context of Islamic Orthodoxy**

Not many Muslim scholars in this part of the world have written on this subject matter, Balogun, however, has an article titled “Islam, reincarnation, resurrection and incarnation” in which he submits that the belief in reincarnation is alien to Islam<sup>40</sup>. The same conclusion is also drawn by Akintola who says: “Islam rejects the idea of the *rūh* tenating a new *jism* or ‘reincarnation’<sup>41</sup>. However both of them do not offer any explanation for the experiences of those who claim its possibility. If the first group claims that reincarnation is possible using Qur’anic verses and personal experience which in logic is considered a strong proof as evidences; and the second group says it is not possible disproving their Qur’anic citations but certainly not their personal experiences. How then do we resolve the issue?

Orthodox Muslims the like of Ibn Taymiyyah, Al Ashqar and a host of many others have taken up this challenge, though, they also do not believe in reincarnation. Their reason is that it has no basis; neither in the Qur’an nor in the *hadith*. While they do not disprove the ‘experiences’ of its proponents, they have their explanations for them. In their opinion, such ‘experiences’ are but the handiwork of the *jinn* especially, the *Qarīn* among them.

#### **i) The Jinn**

The *jinn* are certain creatures of Allah also called spirits in English. They are created from fire free of smoke (Q.55:15) and are simply invisible to man’s sight when in their natural states. The *Jinn* co-exist with man on earth.<sup>42</sup> They are also imbued with some powers, which afford them the capability of performing certain feats such as transformation/transfiguration. *Jinn* may take human form (man or woman, old or young). They could also appear in the form of animals and creeping or flying creatures.<sup>43</sup> Swiftness in movement is another power the *jinn* are imbued with (Q.27:39). Since they are created from smokeless fire, they have no weight; and being gross less, they are light and very swift in movement. Like light, they travel very fast. Also because of this nature, they are able to penetrate any concrete object. This is known in Islamic theological parlance as *mass* (possession). The *jinn* can enter into trees, animals and even human beings and reside in them for years.<sup>44</sup>

Another feature of the *jinn* is longevity of life. This explains the reason while they are highly knowledgeable especially in the area of past events. Also the *jinn* do marry and procreate like man since they are also of two sexes.<sup>45</sup> Theologians have also confirmed the possibility of marriage between *jinn* and man. They, however, differ on its desirability.<sup>46</sup>

## ii) The *Qarīn*

It is believed that for every man, there is a *jinn* companion called *Qarīn*. The Qur'an in some places affirms the attachment of *Qarīn* to man (Q.43:36, 50:27). The *Qarīn* mentioned in the Qur'an according to most exegetes refers to Satan or devil companion appointed for whoever turns away from the remembrance of the Most Beneficent God. Thus, this usage seems to be special and restricted. *Qarīn*, however, assumes a general usage in the *hadith* in which the Prophet said that for every man, there are two *Qarīns*—one, a *jinn* and the other, an angel.<sup>47</sup> From the content of the *hadith*, it could be gathered that the two *Qarīns* are always in man's company and that the one from among the *jinn* is a *shaytān* (i.e. evil companion always commanding and spurring one to commit evil). It can therefore be said and safely too that the *Qarīn*'s accessibility to man privileges it to knowledge of almost every bit of man's life.

## iii) The *Qarīn* and Reincarnation

On the destination of the soul after death, Yusuf Ali submits that “it goes back to a plane of existence in which it is more conscious of the realities of the spiritual world”<sup>48</sup>. Ibrahim Adham, an orthodox Muslim writer, relying on Qur'anic text submits that souls at death do not die but withheld by Allah and kept back from returning to this world.<sup>49</sup> That being the case, he concludes that reincarnation is not possible. Once a man dies, his soul is withheld and is not transferred into any new body.

As for the experiences of people, the author of *Kitābu 'l- 'imān bi 'l-malā'ikah*, after narrating his personal experiences concludes that reincarnation is but the handiwork of *Qarīns*.<sup>50</sup> The same conclusion is drawn by Ibn Taymiyyah<sup>51</sup> and 'Umar Salayman al-'Ashqar<sup>52</sup> to mention but few. These orthodox Muslim theologians all maintain that the only possible explanation of people's experience is the involvement of *jinn* especially the *Qarīns*. These *jinn*, having longevity of life as part of their features, mostly outlive the men they are attached to and whose form they can easily assume thereafter. It is this *jinn* in human form that roam

about deceiving and confusing people. It may also decide to settle down in a locality, marry human being and bear children and if, perchance, its nature is about to be discovered, the next thing, according to those who narrate to us their experiences, is mysterious disappearance – a strong confirmation that it is *jinn* and not a human being.

On the issue of rebirth and past life recalls, the same explanation holds. Three features of the *jinn* namely possession, longevity of life and knowledge, interplay here. When a man dies, his *Qarīn* does not die with him. It may also decide not to go away from the family. Therefore, when a new baby is born into the family or while still in the mother's womb the *jinn* of the deceased might take possession of the new baby. And, since it had the privilege of knowing virtually every information about the deceased, it is able to recall these details through the young member of the family it possessed and robbed of his personality. Thus it appears to people that the deceased has reincarnated in the form of the baby when in actual fact, it is not so.

### **Conclusion**

One reason advanced by some sections of African people to justify the need for reincarnation is that it affords the deceased another opportunity to right his wrong thereby improving the world of the living.<sup>53</sup> This line of thinking which is also shared by some Muslim believers in reincarnation is, however, not only absurd but equally repugnant to the beliefs and teachings of Islam as contained in verses 99 and 100 of *Suratu 'l Mu'minin* earlier cited.

Another reason why Islam will not accept the above postulation is because its acceptance is tantamount to an outright rejection of an article of faith in Islam (i.e belief in the Last Day). When reincarnation is viewed critically, it would be realized that it is a doctrine subscribed to by people who express disbelief in the final Resurrection and consequently, final judgement and Recompense. These are the people who according to the Qur'an say: "There is nothing but our life in this world, we die and (then live (again), never shall we be raised up again" (Q.23:37). The implication of this statement is that there is no world other than the present. It is (only) those who die that come back to life again and so life continues as the circle continues. The world will not come to an end and therefore there will be no *Yawmu 'l qiyamah* (Day of Resurrection) and all the events therein.

In the light of the foregoing discussions, the conclusions would be drawn that reincarnation has no place in orthodox Islam since it has no

basis neither in the Qur'an nor in the *hadith*; while it is also contradictory to the beliefs and teachings of Islam. Equally, in the light of the explanations given by the orthodox Muslims, what seems like reincarnation and its varying manifestations are nothing but the handiwork of man's co-tenant on earth- the *jinn*.

If the above submission of orthodox Muslim theologians is anything to go by, there is nothing like reincarnation. And, in the case of the celebrated Soap Opera, *Second chance*, it was the spirit (*jinn* companion) of Donoso and not Donoso himself that informed the body of Salvador. Donoso did not therefore reincarnate.

### Notes and References

1. This Article was reworked and published during my Sabbatical leave at the Nasarawa State University, Keffi (November 2011-October 2012).
2. 'Second chance' is a Mexican Soap Opera directed by David Posada. The Opera was shown on the Nigerian Television Authority Station, African Independent Television (AIT). For the full story of the Soap Opera and opinions of people about it, google 'Second Chance' on <http://www.telenovelasstories.tv>
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4. I. C. Onyewuenyi, *African Beliefs in Reincarnation: A Philosophical Reappraisal*, Enugu, Snaap Press Limited, 1960, pp. ix-x
- 5 E.B. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion*, London, S.C.M Press, 1973, p.187
- 6 J.O. Awolalu, *Yoruba Beliefs and Sacrificial Rites*, London, Longman Group Limited, 1979, pp.59-60
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- 8 U.S. Al-'Ashqar: '*Alamu 'l-Jinn wa 'sh-Shayātīn*', Kuwayt, Maktabatu 'l-Falah, 1984, p.109.
- 9 I. 'Adham, *As-sihr*, Beirut, Daru 'l- Bashiri 'l- 'Islamiyyah, 1998, pp.129-137.

- 10 I.A.B. Balogun, “Islam, Reincarnation, Resurrection and Incarnation” in *Islamic Tenets and the Shari‘ah*, (ed.) Ibadan, Nigeria, Sam Bookman Publishers, 2000, p.119.
11. I.L. Akintola, “A Study of Islamic Doctrine of Eschatology”, (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis submitted to the Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, 1990), Pp.74-82
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- 15 I. C. Onyewuenyi, *African Beliefs in Reincarnation: A Philosophical Reappraisal*, pp.16-17
- 16 J. B. Long; “Reincarnation” in the *Encyclopedia of Religion* (vol. 12), p.265
- 17 I.C. Onyewuenyi: *African Beliefs in Reincarnation: A Philosophical Reappraisal*, pp.28-29
- 18 When we got this information, we made inquiries in order to determine the correctness or otherwise of the information. We were thus conducted on 5-10-2005 to a house in Adeola Street, Aguda, Lagos, where the boy lived with his grandfather, Baba Ewe Nla. Many residents of this area testified to the correctness of the information.
- 19 Awolalu and Dopamu: *West African Traditional Religion*, p.271
- 20 *Ibid*, p.271
- 21 *Ibid*, Pp.272-273
- 22 J. O. Awolalu, *Yoruba Beliefs and Sacrificial Rites*, p.59
- 23 Information obtained from Daniel Oguntola – Laguda of the Dept. of Religions (CRS Unit), Lagos State University (7/1/2006).
- 24 D. Oguntola-Laguda: *Religion, Man and Society* (2nd ed.), Ikeja, Free Enterprise Publishers, 2001, p.137.
- 25 E. B. Idowu: *Olodunmare: God in Yoruba Belief*, Ikeja, Longman Nigeria plc, 1996, pp. 209-210.
- 26 J.O Awolalu: *Yoruba Beliefs and Sacrificial Rites*, p.54
- 27 I.C. Onyewuenyi: *African Beliefs in Reincarnation: A Philosophical Reappraisal*, p.14
28. The following Muslim scholars belong to the category of those who do not believe in the possibility of reincarnation: Prof. Amidu

Sanni of the Lagos State University (interviewed on 18/6/2012), Shaykh Mustapha Zughlul of Daru-d-Dawah gave a lecture where he publicly refuted the possibility, Dr. Abubakar Ali Agan of the University of Ilorin in a telephone interview conducted on 19/6/2012 also denied its possibility.

The following Muslim scholars belong to the category of those who believe in the possibility of reincarnation: Shaykh Abdul Wahhab Al Gamawy of Zawiyat Sofwat el-Islam through a telephone interview conducted on 19/6/2012. Dr. L.M. Adetona and Dr. Saheed Rufai, both of the Lagos State University (interviewed on 21/6/2012) .

- 29 A.M. Gumi: *Raddu 'l- 'adh-han 'ila ma'ani 'l-Qur'an* (vol. 2), Lagos, (n.d, n.p), p.162
- 30 M.O.A. Abdul: *The Selected Traditions of An-nawawi*, Lagos, Islamic Publications Bureau, 1982, Pp.25-26
- 31 A.Y. Ali: *The Holy Qur'an – Text, Translation and Commentary*, Jeddah, Saudi – Arabia, Dar Al Qiblah for Islamic Literature, 1403 AH, p.616
- 32 A. M. Gumi: *Raddu 'l- 'adh-han 'ila ma'ani 'l-Qur'an*, p.328
- 33 Ibn Khalifah: *Jami'u 'n-nuqul fi 'asbabi 'n-nuzul*, (vol.I), Saudi-Arabia, Matabi'u 'l- 'Ash'a, 1404 AH, Pp.170-173
- 34 J. O Awolalu and P.A Dopamu: *West African Traditional Religion*, p.25
- 35 *Ibid*, p.271
- 36 K.M. Islam: *The Spectacle of Death including Glimpse of Life beyond the Grave*, Ofa, Hasbunallah Printing and Publishing House, 1999, p.93
- 37 Qurtubi: *Al-jami'u li 'Ahkami 'l-Qur'an* (vol.8), n.p, 1965, p.26
- 38 Resurrection implies two fundamental things. One, return of a soul to the body and two, rising of the body – both on the Day of Resurrection only. Even, in the grave, at the point of questioning, the soul only returns to the body.
- 39 Shihabu 'd-Din: *Rūhu 'l-ma'ani*, (Vol. 15), Beirut, Daru 'l-fikr, 1978, pp.161-162
- 40 I.A.B Balogun, “Islam, Reincarnation, Resurrection and Incarnation” in *Islamic Tenets and the Shari'ah*, p.119
- 41 I.L Akintola, “A Study of Islamic Doctrine of Eschatology...” p82

- 42 A.A.B. Philips, *Ibn Taymeeyah's Essay on the Jinn (demons)* (abridged, annotated and translated), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Tawheed Publications, 1989, p.1
- 43 W.A. Bali, *Wiqāyatu 'l- 'Insān mina 'l-Jinn wa 'sh-Shayātīn*, Cairo, Daru 'l- Bashir, 1409 AH, Pp.24-29
- 44 See A.A.B. Philips, *Ibn Taymeeyah's Essay on the Jinn (demons)* (abridged, annotated and translated), p.31.
- 45 A *hadith* teaching the prayer to be said when entering the toilet shows that the *jinn* are of male and female sexes. The *hadith* is reported by 'Anas and transmitted by both Bukhari and Muslim. See W. A Bali: *Wiqayatu 'l- 'Insan mina 'l-Jinn wa 'sh-Shayatin*: p.29
- 46 Majority of scholars are of the opinion that intermarriage between man and jinn is illegal. There are, however, those who see it as only detestable. Yet, some others are of the view that it is permissible. See Badru 'd-Din Ash-Shibli: *Ghara'ib wa 'aja'ibu 'l-Jinn wa 'sh-Shayatin*, Cairo, Daru 'r-Riyad, , 1982, Pp.100-102 & 106.
- 47 The *hadith* is reported by Ibn Mas'ud and transmitted by 'Ahmad and Muslim. See *Ibid*, p.39
- 48 See A.Y Ali: *The Holy Qur'an – Text, Translation and Commentary*, (fn. 4306) p.1249
- 49 'Ibrahim 'Adham: *As-sihr*, Pp.129-137
- 50 U.S. al- 'Ashqar: *'Alamu 'l-Jinn wa 'sh-Shayatin*, p.109
- 51 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Jami'u 'r-rasa'il* (n.d, n.p), Pp.194-195
- 52 U.S. al- 'Ashqar: *'Alamu 'l-Jinn wa 'sh-Shayatin*, Pp.1-12
- 53 J. B. Long, "Reincarnation" in the *Encyclopedia of Religion* (vol. 12), p.265