

This document consists of a short correspondence between Boer and Mr. Ahmad Yahya. It started during Yahya's students days at the Department of Islamic Studies of the Federal College of Education, Kano. He also held a political post in the Kano State government under Governor Shekarau. In this file, the correspondence starts at an arbitrary point and is intended to share with you the interaction between Mr. Yahya and myself about my Christian-Muslim series.

Hello Ahmad

I don't know whether or not you remember me, but years ago (2007 and 2010) you and I corresponded about books I wrote about Christian-Muslim relations. You kept promising me you would write your comments and you did--a little bit--and promised to say more once some conference was over.

The entire series is now on my website and easily accessible as well as a lot of other stuff on related subjects. Check it out and let me know what you think.

Da alheri

Dr. John H. Boer  
Vancouver, Canada

The next day, Ahmad wrote:

Thank you very much for your response, though, I may say, after a long time. Actually I had enough time to go through

your piece. I have to admit that I enjoyed it though there are many areas i totally disagreed. I was in the middle of giving my own comments and observations when a conference came up which forced me to concentrate on my paper. Sir, my major observation is that you should have consulted the scholars on issues that are strictly religious, and not ordinary people who may not be knowledgable enough to speak for Islam. I will send you my full comments in a couple of weeks, because I consider knowledge as a trust and truth as sacred as you also do. Thank you. My kindest regards.

Ahmad Yahya

Boer wrote in February, 2007:

As promised, I attach a couple of chapters of vol. 6. This volume has not yet come out from the publisher, but I am expecting it any time. Hope you will enjoy reading it. You are free to comment and critique. I will appreciate that.

Ahmad wrote on February 22, 2007:

I will like to, ab-initio, express my invaluable appreciation over your kind gesture and your scholarly approach to issues. You really deserve my thanks. I received your project via attachment and will, God willing, go through it and render my own contributions. However, I will like you to bear with me because of the time constraints. It may take me sometime before I finish going through it. I have to wait for my salary in order to print it out as i have no personal computer set. But I assure you that I will do my best. Thanks.

Three years later, Boer wrote on April 19, 2010:

It has been over three years since we last corresponded. I had sent you some of my work in digital form. You promised to read and to comment, but were too busy at the time. In the meantime, I have completed the series--eight volumes in all. I wonder if you ever did get around to reading the material I sent you. I did not get your reaction to it. If you check the info below in the signature, you will discover you can access the entire series as free e-books. Please try and let me know whether you succeeded.

In 2015, Boer wrote again:

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Da alheri

John H. Boer  
Vancouver, Canada

On Aug 25 2015, Ahmad wrote:

Dear Sir.

Thank you for the reminder.

If I can remember clearly you sent a chapter of your then proposed work about the quest of Shari'ah in northern Nigeria to me, asking thereof to assist you in edification. That was sometime between 2007 and 2009. You even quoted from my article under the title: *Between an invading centre and a marauding periphery...* I then promised to get back to you after a conference I was then preparing to attend. However, when I was going through the chapter, my Head of Department purchased the volumes you authored in which the article you sent to me formed a chapter. Seeing that I concluded that there would be no point in further going through the article as the volume was already out. I made my observations then among which is your consulting non scholars on matters that affect the crux of Islam and eliciting information from those whose areas of specialization is not Islam at all, though they may be Muslims by faith. There are many. In spite of this I find your work revealing and informative. I will endeavour to carry on with my observation if you will not mind.

Thank you

**Ahmad Yahya**  
**Department of Islamic Studies**  
**Federal College of Education**

On August 26, 2015, Boer wrote:

Hello Ahmad

I am so delighted that we are back in touch with each other.

I hope that things have gone well for you during the intervening years.

I will love any kind of comments/evaluation from you about my series. You have made me think seriously whether my conscious choice of including a heavy dose of non-specialists was wise, but it's too late to change. Of course, there are plenty of specialists as well.

The project is about relationships between the two religions, as they actually are on the ground, as their adherents deal with each other on the ground, not first of all on books and ideas.

I do wonder what your Dept Head thought of the series. And what of other students in your dept?

I am currently in the process of placing the entire series on my website (see below), but not only the series as it appears in paper, but also the appendices that are not in the books as well as some of the research files—hundreds of pages, if not thousands. So, a considerable enrichment.

Since you are still associated with that College, I surmise you must be on the faculty now? And have you done any writing that you could share with me? I would be delighted to read it.

Finally, what are your thoughts about Boko Haram? Do you see any end to their terror? Is the Fed Govt doing anything serious about them now? The term "Boko Haram" has now become an international term, probably the only Hausa term to have so made it.

Okay, long enough for a chat. I look forward to your

response. I would like us to relate to each other as friends. Among other things, that means you are free to use my name without titles. I believe that both our religions in their depth prefer humility and simplicity to *dogon Turanci*.

John

On August 26, 2015, Ahmad wrote:

Dear John

I am also delighted for our reunion after more than half of a decade.

Despite the fact that your series serves as eye opener for both teachers as well as students in the department, there appear to be some gaps which I suggest you find time to fill. The observation I made happens to be among the major ones. If on matters that affect Christianity you consult specialist in the faith you should also do the same on issues that affect Islam. This will help you substantially in striking a balance which both adherents and non adherents of the two faiths will find it comfortable to consume.

At this juncture I am glad to make it clear that you have apparently done your best to be objective in both your descriptions as well as interpretations of events on the ground.

With regard to my article I sent you, you only referred to it once (I will try to remember the chapter) over which I am proud because of the value of your series and their scholarship aroma.

*Boko Haram*, as I see it, is no more than an end result of the aggressive and intolerant attitude of the Saudi brand of Islam. Products of Saudi universities here hardly assimilate on their return. They tend to look down on anything local and regard all Muslims in their localities as those who are spiritually handicapped as well as lacking in strong faith. The first leader of Boko Haram, who was killed in 2009, was a well-known student of a prominent Wahhabi scholar.

The emergence and entrenchment of *Boko Haram* is further facilitated by the abject poverty, squalor and total governmental neglect which the entire Northern part of Nigeria has been subjected to by its own people who happened to enjoy several key positions in the government for several years. My college was attacked in the daylight last year out of which I narrowly escaped. A number of staff and students were killed or injured. One of the Boko Haram members, during interrogation by the local people, revealed that for every man they killed they are paid an amount ranging between hundred and twenty to two hundred thousand naira. Matters became worse when they formed a coalition garnered from Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

Nigeria, as any other country in the world, is finding it difficult to engage in unconventional war with a faceless enemy. You can never tell who they are. They now devised a strategy in which they kidnap children, indoctrinate them and then send them back to their various communities with explosives with which they kill themselves and those around them.

Finally, I don't know if my writings may be of any interest to you. I write on Muslim women and the issue of inheritance, Muslim architecture in Hausaland, Tsangaya educational system, etc. I also venture into clinical ethics and the extent to which, more than two hundred years ago, in Hausaland,

practice of medicine and medication were attuned to the conventional medical ethics by the Jihad leaders.

I wouldn't like to take much of your time. Thank you very much and I hope the tempo will be maintained.

Ahmad