



## **The Socio-Economic and Political Dimensions of the Development of Centres of Islamic Learning in Zaria City, 1806 – 1960**

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### **Abstract**

The paper examines the roles of the socio-economic and political dimensions of Zaria City 1806 – 1960 in the establishment, development and promotion of Islamic learning and education in Zaria City. This is done by examining some of the notable centres of Islamic learning and education as a result of recent research conducted in different wards in Zaria City such as Kona, Juma, Zage-Zagi, Kofan Doka, Limancin Iya, Kakaki, Magajiya, Kusfa and Anguwan Nupawa respectively. The paper argues that the nature of the socio-economic and political dimension in Zaria City in the pre-jihad period, jihad period and colonial era was one of the major factors that encouraged the development of centres of Islamic learning and education in Zaria City. This could be seen in the organization and administration of the socio-economic and political policies of the Kingship Institutions in Zaria through the building of large-scale farm estates for the ruling class, medium-scale farms for the peasantry, the protection of trade routes that passed through Zaria City for the smooth conduct of trades and commercial activities in the institutionalized market of Durumin Mai Garke which in turn encouraged the permanent settlement of wandering Fulani Muslim scholars in the city. The paper relies heavily on oral information through oral interviews, published materials, unpublished materials and archival sources.

**Keywords:** Socio-Economic, Political, Islamic Centres, Islamic Learning, Development.

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### **Introduction**

This paper examines the roles of the socio-economic and political dimensions in the development and establishment of the Islamic Centres of Islamic Learning in Birnin Zaria. The paper examines the important roles played by the social setting of the state of Zazzau and the societies in accommodating wandering Islamic scholars (Shaykhs) and students (Almajirai) in the establishment of quarters of the Islamic system of education in different wards (Anguwanni), notably Kona, Juma, Zage-Zagi, Kofan Doka, Limancin Iya, Kakaki, Magajiya and Nupawa, ward in Birnin Zaria. The paper examines the roles of the State-assisted economic policy and organization of farmers, traders, manufacturers and producers of agricultural products and the protection of trade routes in Zazzau for the smooth conduct of commercial activities throughout Birnin Zaria. The paper provides an insight into the roles provided by the political and ruling elites such as the traditional Kings (Sarakunan Hausa), Pious learned Islamic scholars in encouraging not only the activities of the



Islamic scholars and students in their towns and villages but also their permanent settlement in the state. In the cultural arena, the paper argues that the Islamic System of education in the past was the only available source of education, knowledge and political power in the state; the larger societies of Hausa and Fulani Muslim population in Birnin Zaria warmly welcome Islamic scholars and students into their respective homes.

### **Nature of the Economy and Society of Birnin Zaria**

Birnin Zaria is an agrarian society with agriculture as the mainstay of the economy and enjoys a favourable location and position not only as the old seat of power of the Kingdom of Zazzau in the pre-colonial periods.<sup>1</sup> The emirate – Islamic System of Government was established immediately after the 1804 Islamic Jihad in Hausa land by Usman Ibn Fodio. Still, it is the largest Centre of commercial and industrial activity in Zazzau, and this position was largely reinforced by the subsequent rulers in the colonial period. This position of Birnin Zaria not only helped the Hausa kings and Fulani Emirs of Zazzau from the Mallawa, Barebari, Katsinawa and Sullubawa ruling elites who established large farm estates in places around Tukur-Tukur, Farin Kasa, Dakace, and Maigana of today Soba local government council to appropriate the peasantry (Talakawa) labour.<sup>2</sup> They provide shelter for Fulani nomadic herdsmen, wandering Islamic scholars and students, but also for the commercial and industrial purposes of the economy and society in Birnin Zaria, along with the security of the surrounding towns and villages. This opportunity provided for the massive inflows of emigrants merchants and traders to take advantage of the existing safe trading routes connecting Birnin Zaria and providing outlets for showcasing agricultural products and non-perishable manufactured products of Zaria such as Iron-ware, textiles, raw cotton, hides and skin, finished leather works, pottery, medicines, jewellery, cosmetics, animals and food-stuffs, etc. This enlarged the migration into Birnin Zaria of learned Islamic scholars, students, and artisans, skilled and unskilled labourers.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Role of the Socio-Economic and Political Settings in Influencing the Settlements of Scholars in Birnin Zaria**

One of the major consequences of the development of economy and society in Birnin Zaria was not only the development of agricultural and small industrial base economy but the establishment and development of an institutionalized city-market of Durumin Mai Garke inside the walled city close to the seat of power and government which attracts Muslim merchants and traders far and near for the purpose commerce and Islamic religious preaching.<sup>4</sup> It is argued that the increasing concentration of Muslim merchants and scholars in the city transformed the market and the settlements around it into major Centre for the spread of Islam and the Islamic system of education,

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, M.G. the Economy of Hausa Communities of Zaria. A Report to the Colonial Social Science Research Council. Published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office for the Colonial Office, 1955

<sup>2</sup> Abdulkadir Adamu; "The Food Economy in Colonial Nigeria: A Study of Food Production and Distribution in Zaria Metropolis, c. 1902 – 1960". PhD Dissertation, Department of History, A.B.U. Zaria, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> A. Smith, Some Notes on the History of Zazzau under Hausa King's Mot. M.J. (ed). Zaria and its Region, Department of Geography, A.B.U. Zaria, Occasional Paper No. 4. 1970

<sup>4</sup> Usman Sulaiman, "A History of Birnin Zaria from 1350 – 1902", unpublished M.A. Dissertation, Department of History, A.B.U Zaria, 2007.



leading to the consolidation of the ancient Kona and Juma wards close to it<sup>5</sup> and the emergence in other wards prominent Islamic centres of learning in Zage-zagi, Kofan Doka, Magajiya, Nupawa, Limancin Iya, Kusfa, Kakaki, Karfe and Albarkawa as major quarters of religious activities and education in Zaria.<sup>6</sup> The Kona and Juma Islamic centres were argued to have influenced a larger number of people to convert to Islam in Birnin Zaria and its environs. Abdullahi Smith argues that the gradual expansion of the Muslim population within the plains of Zazzau was largely through the activities of these Muslim merchants and traders, leading to the construction of the earliest Friday mosque (Masallancin Juma'ah) in Juma ward during the reign of Muhammadu Rabbo king of Zazzau in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, who was regarded as the first Muslim ruler of Zazzau. Subsequently, the Kona Islamic Centre of Learning played – host to the future development of the four prominent Fulani scholars and later Fulani-emirs of Zazzau Mallam Musa Bamalli (1804-1821), Mallam Yamusa (1821-1834), Mallam Abdulkarim (1835-1846) and Mallam Abdulsalami (1860-1863).<sup>7</sup>

### **The Role of Cultural Dimensions in Influencing Islamic Scholars and Scholarship in Birnin Zaria**

The role of the cultural dimensions in influencing Islamic education (Makarantan Allo) and advanced Islamic scholarship (Makarantan Illimi) in Birnin Zaria cannot be over-emphasized. It is on record that the cultural dimensions and understanding among the diverse Hausa and Fulani population and communities living inside played one of the significant roles and important factors to be reckoned with in terms of influencing the permanent settlement of Islamic scholars and students from elsewhere in Zaria City.<sup>8</sup> The tradition is that the nomads wandering Fulani Islamic scholars contributed towards the growth and development of towns and cities in Africa since the tenth century C.E and one of the processes through which linkages were established, and skills were exchanged between communities. It could also be explained as an attempt to satisfy certain basic material needs and to avoid certain challenges or part of the natural movement of the Fulani nomadic communities in search of grazing lands while aiming to enhance the reach of the scholarly activities of its religious scholars.<sup>9</sup> The Hausa-Muslim scholars in learning expeditions, which are synonymous with (Yawon Almajiranci) practised for centuries in Hausa communities in Northern Nigeria; the scholars can easily find available refuge in or shelter in and are warmly hosted in any imam's house during his teaching expeditions.<sup>10</sup> It is also argued that Islamic scholars' education and knowledge are greatly improved by travelling in search of knowledge and meeting with

<sup>5</sup> Usman Sulaiman, "A History of Birnin Zaria from 1350 – 1902", unpublished M.A. Dissertation, Department of History, A.B.U Zaria, 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Abdullahi Mahadi, *The Choice of Zaria as the seat of Higher learning in the North in the History of ABU, Zaria. 1962- 1982*, A.B.U. Press 1989.

<sup>7</sup> A. Smith, *Some Notes on the History of Zazzau under Hausa King's Mot. M.J. (ed). Zaria and its Region*, Department of Geography, A.B.U. Zaria, Occasional Paper No. 4. 1970

<sup>8</sup> Mary Smith, *Baba of Karo, A Woman of the Moslem Hausa, with an Introduction and Notes by M.G. Smith*, Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, New York, 1964

<sup>9</sup> Muhammadu Mustapha Gwadabe, *the Life and Times of a Scholar of Zaria (Nigeria): Shaykh Yahuza b. Sa'ad 1883-1958*, *Aria Annual Review of Islam in Africa*, Issue No II, centre for Contemporary Islamic University of Cape Town, 2012

<sup>10</sup> Mary Smith, *Baba of Karo, A Woman of the Moslem Hausa, with an Introduction and Notes by M.G. Smith*, Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, New York, 1964



authoritative scholars of his time. The reason for this is that human beings obtain their knowledge and characters and all their opinions and virtues either through independent study, instructions and lectures or through personal imitation of a teacher and personal contact with him. The only difference here is that habits acquired through personal contact with the teachers are more strongly and firmly rooted. Thus, the greater the number of authoritative teachers (Shaykhs), the more deeply rooted the habits one acquired.<sup>11</sup>

### **The Scholars of Birnin Zaria, Their History and Areas of Specializations**

There were in the past and at present large unquantifiable numbers of Islamic scholars and Islamic schools for traditional quranic Islamic education (Makarantan Allo) and advanced Islamic scholarship (Makarantan Illimi) in Zaria city scattered in different wards throughout the city and different varieties of Islamiyya schools in different houses, in addition to the new forms of Islamic schools modelled after the public system of education in Nigeria.<sup>12</sup> In the pre-colonial Zaria, three notable centres of Islamic education in Zaria city around the Kona, Juma and Zage-Zagi wards exerted tremendous influences on Islamic religion and Islamic education. Subsequently, the aftermath of Usman Ibn Fodio Islamic Jihad in Hausa land and the quest for Islamic knowledge further led to the emergence of different wards in Zaria City and other notable Islamic quarters in the houses of Shaykh Sani Ibn Railwan in Kofan, Shaykh Musa Ishaq in Magajiya ward, Shaykh Yahuza Ibn Sa'ad in Limancin Iya ward, Shaykh Shitu Abdul-Rauf and Shaykh Hadi in Kusfa ward, Shaykh Abubakar Ishaq in Albarkawa ward, Shaykh Sambo Abdul-Salami in Karfe ward, Shaykh Ma'aji Ishaq in Kakaki ward, and Shaykh Jibril Sani Mallam Na'iyah in Nufawa ward all in Zaria city.<sup>13</sup>

For the purpose of this paper, three notable centres of Islamic education (Makarantan Allo) and advanced Islamic scholarship (Makarantan Illimi) of Shaykh Abbas Centre of Islamic Education in Zage-Zagi ward Zaria City, Shaykh Sani Ibn Rilwan Centre of Islamic Education in Kofan Doka Ward Zaria city and Shaykh Jibril Sani-Mallam Na-Iya) Centre of Islamic Education in Anguwan Nufawa ward Zaria city is selected.

### **Shaykh Abbas Centre of Islamic Education in Zage-Zagi Ward Zaria City**

The ward of Zage-Zagi in Zaria City is the site of the Shaykh Abbas Centre of Islamic Education. It is located on the Fadama soil along the Rafin Bula, which passes the ward to the south and joins with the River Saye, a tributary of the River Galma. It is difficult at the state of scientific historical research to say precisely when this place was first settled and by whom. This ward was believed to have developed from a large compound of wandering Fulani Islamic scholars known as Gidan Zage-Zagi. This big compound constituted the only available historic structure within the site of the ward in the past. Therefore, the numerous compounds surrounding it belonged to splinter groups from the compound who established their own buildings due to over-population in the original compound.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibn Khaldun, the Muqaddima, An Introduction to History, Translated from Arabic by Franz Rosenthal in three volumes, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Volume 3. London, 1967

<sup>12</sup> Y. Abubakar, A History of Islamic Education in Zaria City. 1806-1960, An Unpublished M.A. History Dissertation at the Department of History, A.B.U. Zaria Nigeria, 2017.

<sup>13</sup> Y. Abubakar, A History of Islamic Education in Zaria City. 1806-1960, An Unpublished M.A. History Dissertation at the Department of History, A.B.U. Zaria Nigeria, 2017.



However, what cannot be certain at the state of our research is the antiquity of the compound that formed the nucleus of the Zage-Zagi ward.<sup>14</sup>

But what is certain from available historical research is that they are strongly believed to be of wandering Fulani Islamic scholars who traced the origin and the history of Zage-Zagi ward in Zaria city to Alfa Usman Ibn Ismail and Alfa Abdullahi Ibn Islamil, who are said to be of Arab origin from Fezzan in Libya. They both come to Zaria city during the reign of Sarkin Zazzau Ishaq Jatau (1786-1802). They left their home following a succession dispute after the death of their father. On their arrival at Zaria City, the king of Zazzau Ishaq Jatau directed Magajiya to accommodate them. They were given a piece of land near the compound of the Magajiya upon which they built their compound and the rest land was used as farmland. In front of the house was a pond called Zage-Zagi. The pond was the site of an annual festival during which the Hausa-kings of Zazzau used to attend. The festival involved dancing, music and dredging of the pond. This seems to be similar to the traditional ritual of Gyran Ruwa that characterized most of the Hausa states in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This compound became a prominent Centre of Islamic education and learning in Zaria City, famous for teaching Islamic subjects like the Quran, Islamic law, theology and Arabic.<sup>15</sup>

Another version of the history maintained that, from Libya, Alfa Usman Ibn Ismail and Alfa Abdullahi Ibn Ismail moved westward and settled in Hasbi in the old Borno Empire. Accordingly, they came to Zaria city and met the king of Zazzau Ishaq Jatau (1782-1802), who settled down around the area where their compound was built. From all indications, they did not migrate altogether into Zaria city at the same time, for some Zage-Zagi family members first settled in Nagoyi, others settled in Bagadi and some settled in Dambo all along the new Jos road under different leadership. It was the Nagoyi Zage-Zagi family under the leadership of Alfa Abdullahi who first migrate to Zaria City. They were as subsequently followed by the family of Dambo Zage-Zagi under the leadership of Alfa Usman. On their arrival at Zaria City, they noted the existence of two notable houses or centres of Islamic education and learning namely the Kona and the Juma Centre's.<sup>16</sup>

Following the outbreak of the Sokoto Jihad in Hausa land in 1804, in Zaria city, the Zage-Zagi lineages were said to be very loyal to the Hausa ruling dynasty in the Zazzau kingdom and did not support the Usman Ibn Fodio Jihad leaders in Zaria city. On account of not supporting the movement, the Zage-Zagi family were ejected from their compound and the first emir of Zazzau Islamic emirate Mallam Musa Bamalli (1804-21) ordered Katukan Zazzau to occupy the compound. Later on, a piece of land was given to them in their present location. Following this ugly development, the name of the ward was changed to Katukan Ward. In spite of the change, people in Zaria City still refer to it as Zage-Zagi ward. The Zage-Zagi ward in Zaria City experienced mass desertion of families

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<sup>14</sup> Usman Suleiman, A History of Birnin Zaria from 1350-1922, An unpublished M.A. Dissertation at Department of History, A.B.U Zaria, Nigeria, 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Oral interview with Mallam Buhari Shaykh Sirajo Ibn Yahuza Zaria at Anguwan Rubu Zaria City on 11/05/2015 age 58 years.

<sup>16</sup> Oral interview with Professor Illiyasu Abbas at Katuka Zage-Zagi Ward, Zaria City on 14/11/2015, age 50 years.



following the defeat of the Hausa dynasty and the establishment of the Emirate administration system in Zazzau in 1804.<sup>17</sup>

Shaykh Abbas Centre of Islamic Education and Learning in Zaria City was indirectly a continuation of a century old Islamic school founded by his ancestors Alfa Usman Ibn Ismail and Alfa Abdullahi. They built the compound where the centre was subsequently established with a mosque built by Shaykh Ahmadu Adani, who became the direct successor of Alfa Usman, whom Shaykh Ibrahim Balarabe subsequently succeeded. The students of the above Islamic centre from the lineage of Alfa Usman include Shaykh Abdullahi Shaykh Abbas and Shaykh Aliyu. On the other hand, Alfa Abdullahi, a pious Islamic scholar in Zaria City, taught almost all aspects of Islamic scholarship. Furthermore, the two Alfa's have already and successfully covered some of the members of the Hausa rulers and their subject populations into Islam through teaching and preaching. After the death of Alfa Abdullahi, he was succeeded by his son Shaykh Abubakar, who was after his death was succeeded his son Shaykh Abdullahi. Shaykh Abdullahi taught Shaykh Abbas, Shaykh Suleiman of Dambo, Shaykh Muhammadu Madaka, Zaria City, Shaykh Musa Ishaq Magajiya Zaria City and Shaykh Magatakanda of Kwarbai Ward Zaria City. Shaykh Abdullahi was succeeded by his son Shaykh Muhammad who was succeeded by Shaykh Suleiman. After the death of Shaykh Suleiman from the lineage of Alfa Abdullahi and Shaykh Ibrahim Balarabe from the lineage of Alfa Usman, the two centres of Islamic education of Zage-Zagi, Zaria City were merged together under the leadership of Shaykh Abdullahi Sha-Rubutu. After the death of Sha-Rubutu, he was succeeded by Shaykh Abbas, whose name the centre bears. Shaykh Abbas is credited with making it very popular in Zaria city. He is an Islamic scholar with different specializations in Islamic education through generations of successors' knowledge he acquired up to the period he became *Khalifa* of the centre. He is also known as master-art of the (Ilimin Nisaf) traditional Astronomy and (Ilimin Ta'ajin) modern Astronomy. Among his first generation of students are limited to the following; Shaykh Aliyu Abbas his brother and father to Dr. Abubakar Aliyu Abbas Shaykh Mahmaud Zaria City, Shaykh Suleiman Zaria City, Shaykh Dahiru Imam Nagoyi Zaria, Shaykh Sale Ibn Datti, Kano, Shaykh Shaykh Nagoyi Zaria, Shaykh Ibrahim Ladan, Shaykh Abdulkarim, Shaykh Bashir Ibn Musa Magajiya Zaria City, Shaykh Adamu Dahiru Sokoto, Shaykh Lawal Kano, Shaykh Hudu Gidan Takarawa Bizzara Zaria and Shaykh Ibrahim Sokoto.

The chains and patterns of succession maintained in the centre for decades did not differ when Shaykh Abbas died because he was succeeded by his son Shaykh Aliyu Abbas whose early Islamic education was at home with his father, grandparents, scholars and brother in the same Zage-Zagi ward Zaria as well as other prominent Islamic scholars in Zaria city. He is reported to have graduated some promising scholars, including Professor Illiyasu Abbas (A.B.U Zaria), Dr. Abubakar Aliyu Abbas (A.B.U Zaria), Shaykh Balarabe Badadi Zaria, Shaykh Ishaq Abbas (his successor), Shaykh Junaidu Zaria, Shaykh Salisu Zaria, Shaykh Adamu Sokoto, Shaykh Dahiru Ibn Adamu Sokoto,

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<sup>17</sup> Oral interview with Professor Illiyasu Abbas at Katuka Zage-Zagi Ward, Zaria City on 14/11/2015, age 50 years. See also, Illiyasu Abbas Gabatarda Wasu Bangarorin Rubucen-Rubucen da aka samu a makarantar Gidan Zage-Zagi (Translated from Arabic to Hausa) a conference paper, presented at Arewa House, Kaduna – Nigeria, July 2018.



Shaykh Ibrahim *anguwan* Sarki Kaduna, Shaykh Hamza and Shaykh Hassan. After his death, he was accordingly succeeded by his brother Shaykh Ishaq Abbas (d. 2020).<sup>18</sup>

Although the centre had declined in the form of teaching traditional patterns of impacting Islamic knowledge with the death of Shaykh Aliyu Abbas, his successor Shaykh Ishaq Abbas did not continue with the teaching of Islamic education; instead, he maintained the old tradition in the centre of reading some selected classical Islamic books on some months in the Islamic calendar such as *Hassan* and *Hussaini* in Tashura/Ashura in the month of Muharram, *Alburda* Poem, *Ishiriniyya*–Poem, *Badamasi*–Poem, *Wutriy* Poem, *Arshada*–Poem and *Kitabul Daka 'ikul Ahbar Fizikir Nar Wa Janna* – the important news about paradise and hell-fire in the month of Ramadan Fasting period and *Maulud Nabi* celebrations commemorating the Birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him. Interestingly, the Islamic scholars produced in the centre constitute significant members of the Zazzau Emirate traditional council of Islamic scholars (Ulamah).<sup>19</sup>

### Shaykh Sani Ibn Rilwan Centre of Islamic Education in Kofan Doka Ward Zaria City

The history of Kofan Doka Ward Zaria City is largely associated with the history of the family of Shaykh Sani Ibn Rilwan. Shaykh Sani Ibn Rilwan was born and brought up in Kofan Doka Zaria City; the year and date are not clear. His father, Mallam Rilwan, and his elder brother, Dattiyyal, migrated from Futa-Toro in Senegal. Their father named, Alfa Ummaru was a renowned Fulani Islamic Scholar. Dattiyyal gave birth to three children named Muhammad Bello, Haruna and Shaibu and Rilwan gave birth to Sani, Mamman Lawal (Dikko) and Aminu. Dattiyyal and Rilwan, already Islamic scholars, established the first Quranic Islamic centre of education in Kofan Doka and a Mosque (*Zawiya*) to accommodate students from neighbouring communities in Zaria City. Shaykh Sani Ibn Rilwan started his early Islamic education at home with his parents in Kofan Doka before he went to Gwandu Emirate for further advanced Islamic education for more than two decades. In Gwandu, Shaykh Sani studied to the extent he excelled with his contemporaries in Gwandu. From there, he went to the West African historic Centre of Islamic Education Timbuktu-Mali and studied for ten years. When he returned to Kofan Doka, Zaria City, probably at the beginning of the reign of Emir of Zazzau, Mallam Ibrahim Dan Kwasau (1924-36), after he successfully completed his (*Yawon almajiranci*), he established his own personal quranic and Islamic school along with higher advanced Islamic knowledge in Kofan Doka Zaria city for the promotion and dissemination of Islamic knowledge. Shaykh Sani Ibn Rilwan elevated the status of Kofan Doka settlement to a famous centre of Islamic education in the whole of Zaria City, Zazzau emirate, Northern Nigeria, West Africa and Africa in general that specialized in the twelve branches of Islamic knowledge namely, *Lugga*-language, *Balaga*-Rhetoric, *Mantiq*-logic, *Tasrif*-grammatical etymology, *Hadith*-prophetic traditions, *Tafsir*-Quranic interpretation, *Nahwu*-grammar, *Tauhid*-theology, *Mastalahu*, Hadith-hadith method, *Al-Adab*-literatures, *Al-arudi* poetry and *Fiqhu*-Jurisprudence.<sup>20</sup> Shaykh

<sup>18</sup> Oral interview with Professor Illiyasu Abbas at Katuka Zage-Zagi Ward, Zaria City on 14/11/2015, age 50 years.

<sup>19</sup> Oral Interview with Dr. Abubakar Aliyu Abbas (Shamsuddeen) of the Department of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Education A.B.U Zaria at his residence at Katukan Zage-Zagi Ward Zaria CCity on 14/11/2015 age 59 years. see also, Shehu Ibrahim, *Islamic Scholarship and Scholars in Zazzau Emirate: An Analytical Study of its Prominent Scholars 1760-2018* an unpublished PhD Thesis at the Department of Islamic Studies and Shariah Bayero University Kano, 2019. pp. 57-62

<sup>20</sup> Oral Interview with Shaykh Ibrahim Adamu, a Retire Alkali and Islamic Scholar at his residence at Kofan Doka Ward Zaria City on 14/07/2007, age 65 years. See also, Shehu Ibrahim, *Islamic Scholarship and Scholars*



Sani Ibn Rilwan graduated a large number of students from far and near Zaria City among whom are a few of the following students. Shaykh Abdul-Rahman Kofan Doka his successor, Shaykh Yahuza Ibn Sa'ad Limancin Iya Zaria City, Shaykh Musa Ishaq Magajiya Zaria City, Shaykh Jibril Sani Mallam Na'iyā anguwan Nufawa ward Zaria City, Shaykh Salga Kano, Shaykh Shehu Maihulla Kano, Shaykh Abdul-Salami father to Shaykh Sambo Abdul-Salami Mai Casa'in Zaria city, Shaykh Turaki Zaria city, shaykh Aliyu Gyallesu Zaria, Shaykh Jere Kaduna, Shaykh Alu Kufena-Zaria, Shaykh Alu Tudun Wada-, Zaria, Mallam Ja'afaru Dan Isyaku Emir of Zazzau (1936-1959) and Shaykh Muhammadu Lawal Wazirin Zazzau (d.1963). Shaykh Sani Ibn Rilwan is widely recognized as the Fountain of Islamic Knowledge in the history of Islam in Zazzau and Islamic Quranic education and advanced Islamic scholarship in Zaria City and Northern Nigeria that emissaries, scholars and students from around the world come to find out about him especially from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Sudan, Mauritania, Morocco, Libya as well as from the Republics of Niger, Chad and Cameroon.<sup>21</sup>

Shaykh Sani Ibn Rilwan died in 1932, and in attendance at his Islamic funeral rite was the Emir of Zazzau Mallam Ibrahim Dan Kwasau (1924-19365), and buried in his home at Kofan Doka Zaria City. His grave to date remained a tourist centre for promising Islamic scholars and students all-over Northern Nigeria to seek blessings for his life well-spent. Shaykh Sani Ibn Rilwan is blessed with three childrens: Abubakar, Ummaru and Hannatu. He was accordingly succeeded by Shaykh Abdul-Rahman (d. 1953). The history of the Islamic system of education in Zaria City in terms of his promotion and dissemination of Islamic knowledge in Zazzau emirate is incomplete without the history of Shaykh Abdul-Rahman Kofan Doka, Zaria. He is the father to Shaykh Professor Murktar Abdul-Rahman, Khadi Aliyu Abdul-Rahman, Mallam Rilwan Abdul-Rahman and grandfather to Professor Izzuddeed Murktar Abdul-Rahman. For this reason, Islamic scholars produced in the Kofan Doka Centre of Islamic Education constitute strong members of the Zazzau Emirate traditional council of Islamic scholars (Ulamah) to date.<sup>22</sup>

### **Shaykh Jibril Sani (Mallam Na-Iya) Centre of Islamic Education in Anguwan Nufawa Ward Zaria City**

The ward of Nufawa Zaria City is situated to the North West of the ward of Karfe. The Nufawa ward is the location of the centre of Shaykh Jibril Sani popularly known as Mallam Na-Iya. It apparently appeared to be founded by people of Nupe stock. The history of the Nupe community in Zaria is dated back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century following the establishment of some forms of relationship between Zaria and Nupe land. Initially, trade was certainly of basic importance in the external

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in Zazzau Emirate, An Analytical Study of its prominent scholars, 1760-2018. An unpublished PhD Thesis at the Department of Islamic Studies and Shariah, Bayero University Kano, 2019. Pp. 101-105

<sup>21</sup> Oral Interview with Shaykh Ibrahim Adamu, a Retire Alkali and Islamic Scholar at his residence at Kofan Doka Ward Zaria City on 14/07/2007, age 65 years. See also, Shehu Ibrahim, Islamic Scholarship and Scholars in Zazzau Emirate, An Analytical Study of its prominent scholars, 1760-2018. An unpublished PhD Thesis at the Department of Islamic Studies and Shariah, Bayero University Kano, 2019. Pp. 101-105

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relations of the Nupe kingdom.<sup>23</sup> Several products of the domestic economy such as leather goods, glass wares, Iron bites, cloth, rice and kolanut were exported either to the North or the South. Consequently, several towns not only had flourishing markets, but disparate groups of merchants inhabiting them. Trade actually moved the people to various parts of Nigeria regions, West Africa region and beyond. By the late 15th century, an effective network of trades had developed between the Nupe kingdom and other kingdoms in the Nigerian region. Nupe exported house accoutrements such as stirrups, bites, saddles, cotton, cloth, hides, kolanuts, slaves, and glasswares to either the North or the South kingdom in the Nigerian regions. Nupe people also imported guns, shields, muskets, ammunition, slaves and salt for local use and re-export to Nupe land and Hausa land. From Hausa lands, Nupe imported natron – horses, slaves, swords, religious books and caps for either local use or re-export to the South.<sup>24</sup>

Strong trade relations also apparently existed between Nupe and Kano, Zaria and Kastina from the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, where slaves were exchanged for horses, which permits us to learn about patterns of external relations during this period. The level of external relations was certainly stimulated by the domestic economy and trade.<sup>25</sup> This development led to the immigration of a large Nupe population and the subsequent settlement of various groups, especially merchants, traders and skilled artisans inside Zaria City.<sup>26</sup>

The history of Shaykh Jibril Sani is indirectly connected to the foundation and settlement of Nupe immigrants in Anguwan Nupawa ward Zaria, the founding father of the house and center of Islamic education from which Shaykh Jibril sani Mallam Na – Iya is renowned in Zaria city is a Hausa man from Kano named Galadima Nuhu. He came to Zaria as a result of business transactions in Anguwan Nufawa ward during its economic boom in textile production, kolanuts, weaving, trading, dyeing, leather work/skin-tanning and beads. Galadima Nuhu repeatedly shared his profits with the Islamic scholars of Zaria to pray for him to have a male child that would one day become a great Islamic scholar. As a result of hard prayers by the scholars in Zaria, Galadima Nuhu was blessed with a son by Allah (S.W.T.) in his infinite mercy, and he named him Sani Maiyaki. Sani Maiyaki as a child, is reported to have studied extensively in many schools in Zaria, until he became a learned scholar in his own right. He taught briefly Quranic and advanced Islamic education to some students in Zaria. He married and had a child whom he named Jibril Na-Iya. Then he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca and left all his school responsibilities to his son Jibril, who later became a renowned Islamic scholar in Zaria.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Jimada Shaabu Idris, “The External Relations of the Nupe Kingdom and Emirates c. 1650 to 1850: With Special Reference to the Alafinate of Oyo and Its Successor States”. An Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of History, A.B.U Zaria 2001. Pp 89 – 90.

<sup>24</sup> Jimada Shaabu Idris, “The External Relations of the Nupe Kingdom and Emirates c. 1650 to 1850: With Special Reference to the Alafinate of Oyo and Its Successor States”. An Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of History, A.B.U Zaria 2001. Pp 95

<sup>25</sup> Jimada Shaabu Idris, “The External Relations of the Nupe Kingdom and Emirates c. 1650 to 1850: With Special Reference to the Alafinate of Oyo and Its Successor States”. An Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of History, A.B.U Zaria 2001. Pp 97-98.

<sup>26</sup> Usman Suleiman. A History of Birnin Zaria from 1350-1902, an Unpublished M.A. History Dissertation at the Department of History, A.B.U. Zaria, Nigeria, 2007. Pp. 130-132

<sup>27</sup> Oral interview with Shaykh Suleiman Usman (grand-son of Shaykh Jibril Sani) in anguwan Nufawa Zaria city age 50 years on 30/04/2015. Note: see also, Misbahu Na’iya Katsina, “A study of Advanced level of



Shaykh Jibril Sani was born in 1866 in Anguwan Nufawa Ward Zaria City. As a child, he was sent to several places in search of Islamic education, in addition to his home-studies with his father. He went to Gwandu and Katsina. His teachers in Zaria City included Shaykh Ibrahim Khalilu Salenke of Kakaki Ward and Shaykh Sani Rilwan of Kofan Doka Ward. As a scholar, he continued to teach Islamic education to students in his centre along with his search for further Islamic knowledge for a period of 60 years. In addition, apart from the Quranic education (*Makarantan allo*), Shaykh Jibril Sani taught virtually all fields of Islamic knowledge such as *Fiqhu* (Jurisprudence), *Nahwu* (The Traditional Islamic Science of Grammar), *Tafsir* (Quranic Interpretation), *Balaga* (Rhetorics), *Mantiq* (Knowledge of Tauhid), *Tauhid* (Theology), *Tassawwuf* (*Sufism*), *Al-Arudi* (Poetry Method), *Hadith* (Prophetic Traditions), *Tasrif* and *Lugga* (Language). His first generation of students included; Shaykh Zakari, Zaria, Shaykh Abdulkadir Al-Nupawy Limancin – Iya Ward Zaria, Shaykh Ibrahim Balarabe Alkali Ward – Zaria, Shaykh Ladan Kakaki ward – Zaria, Liman Kona Shaykh Aliyu Limancin Kona ward – Zaria, Shaykh Shehu Mai Hula Kano, Shaykh Abdul –Fathi Maiduguri – Borno State, Shaykh Moddibo Chota, Republic of Niger, Shaykh Sunusi Gwombi Kaduna, Shaykh Abubakar Tureta, Kaduna. Although students of Shaykh Jibril Zaria mostly came from different states throughout Nigeria, however, the bulk of his students were from Niger State, Katsina, Kano, Zamfara and some West African countries like Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon. As a result of his engagements with his numerous students, he published only one book called *faruhul muridin* (Happiness of seekers). Shaykh Jibril Sani died in 1973 at the age of 107 years in Anguwan Nufawa ward Zaria City during the reign of Emir of Zazzau Alhaji Muhammadu Aminu 1959-1975.

### Conclusion

The Islamic education we know in Zaria City is gradually going into untimely extinction due to the emergence of Islamiyya schools in different wards and houses in Zaria. Some of the traditional Islamic schools/centres in Zaria City have physically disappeared, ending with the death of either the founders or some of the pioneering Islamic scholars in the centres. The affected centres are the Shaykh Sani Ibn Rilwan Kofan Doka Ward and Shaykh Abbas Katuka Zage-Zagi Ward. In the former, what we have in place is an Islamiyya school run and managed on a community basis, while in the latter, there are only some of the old-aged traditions of reading classical Arabic books/Islamic works of literature during the months of Muharram, Ramadan and *Maulud Nabiyyi* in the Islamic calendar every year. In Shaykh Jibril Sani (Mallam Na-Iya) centre in Anguwan Nufawa Ward Zaria City, the traditional Islamic educational system is maintained, but not in its original form as it was reported in the past. In fact, some of these schools have suffered and survived a series of transitional problems and decades of governmental programs and policies of reforms in the educational sector in Nigeria.

Today, what we witness in some of the old and historic centres of Islamic learning in Zaria is the emergence of Islamic scholars from the new Islamic schools/institutions with higher university degrees in Islamic law (shariah) and Arabic/Islamic Studies. Some of them are Professors of Arabic/Islamic Studies in institutions of higher education. Examples include the late Professor Mukhtar Abdul-Rahman, Qadi Aliyu Abdul-Rahman from Kofan Doka Centre, Professor Shafiu Abdullahi, Professor Illiyasu Abbas and Dr. Abubakar Aliyu Abbas Shamsuddeen from Zage-Zagi

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Quranic schools in Kano, Katsina and Zaria.” An unpublished M.L.S. Thesis, Department of Library Science, Faculty of Education, ABU Zaria, 1984. Pp 79-82



Centre, to mention but a few. Today, the chains of succession into the leadership in some of the centres that still maintain the traditional Quranic system of education in Zaria City remain mainly from father to son for the politico-economic, social, cultural and religious benefits.

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*Oral Interviews*

S/N	Name	Age	Occupation	Place	Date
1.	Mallam Mustapha Shaykh Salisu ibn Yahuza	45 years	Islamic Scholar	Anguwan Limanci Iya Ward Zaria City	11/05/2015
2.	Dr. Abubakar Aliyu Abbas (Shamsuddeen)	59 years	Islamic Scholar and Senior Lecturer, ABU Zaria	Katukan Zage-Zagi, Zaria City	14/11/2015
3.	Professor Illiyasu Abbas	50 years	Professor of Arabic, ABU Zaria.	Katuka Zage-Zagi Ward, Zaria City	14/11/2015
4.	Mallam Ahmad Sukairaj Ibn Muhammadu Ghali	45 years	Principal	Limancin Iya	11/5/2015
5.	Mallam Buhari Shaykh Sirajo Ibn Yahuza Zaria	58 years	Islamic Scholar	Anguwan Rubu Zaria City	11/05/2015
6.	Mallama Fatima Shaykh Mukhtar Ibn Yahuza Zaria	45 years	House Wife	Anguwan Limancin Iya Ward Zaria	11/05/2015
7.	Shaykh Muhammadu Ghali ibn Yahuza Zaria	82 years	Son and Khalifa of Shaykh Yahuza Ibn Sa'ad	Anguwan Limanci Iya Zaria City	11/05/2015