

An Introduction to Islamic Movements and
Modes of Thought in Nigeria
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An introduction to Islamic movements and modes of thought in Nigeria¹

Introduction

This working paper surveys Islamic organizations, movements, and ideologies in Nigeria, roughly identifying them along the lines of Islamic traditionalism, Sufi orders (*turuq* lit. pathways), Salafi/Wahhabi revivalism² modernist and insurgent Islam(ism), trado-Islamic and Christo-Islamic syncretism and deviant “Islamic” cultism. Previous academic studies of Nigerian Islam were often limited to the Muslim northern region and focused mostly on traditional, Sufi, and Sunni Islam (Doi, 1984; Kukah 1993; Kane 1994; Loimeier 1997; Schacht 1975; Paden 1973, 2002, 2005; Umar 1993). For the most part, they consisted of “outsider” perspectives that included various strands of misunderstandings or outright stereotypes. More recently, some scholars point out two additional reasons for a periodic review and analysis of Islamic movements and ideological trends in the Nigerian federation. For example, Umar (1993) points out that in the three decades from 1970s to the 1990s, we see that organizational trends constantly evolve due to changing political, socioeconomic, educational, spiritual, ethnic and regional conditions and biases. Moreover, the recent rapid rise to violence by some Islamic movements, notably Boko Haram and its comrade-in-arms, the Ansaru, calls for reconsideration of assumptions and new analysis.

The objective of this essay is to present a comprehensive exploration of the wide spectrum of Islamic movements and modes of ideologies in the Nigerian federation. It updates existing knowledge, particularly regarding trends and organizations in the neglected regions of the east and

¹ I would like to thank David S. Skinner, Rebecca Shereikis, and LaRay Denzer for their valuable comments on this paper.

² Wahhabi is a reference to adherence to the belief of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab (1703–92) strongly maintained in Saudi Arabia where he led a movement to purify Islamic practices back to the original puritan/orthodox principles and forms as drawn from the Qur’an and Hadith or Sunnah (hence sunni) and in the understanding of the early generations of Muslims (*salaf*), which are also referred to as *salifi* or ‘salafism.’ Adherents are quick to accept the term *salafi* but *Wahhabi* is regarded as a derogatory term coined by opponents.

the west as well as emerging or understudied trends in the much studied northern zones. In addition, this essay highlights how Islamic groups engage modern power blocs and systems of thought and practices.

The essay proceeds in three broad sections. The first section reviews the problem of categorization of Islamic trends. The second section briefly overviews the precolonial background and shows how colonialism facilitated or obstructed the formation of Islamic movements in Nigeria. The third section maps contemporary trends such as nonsectarian traditionalism, Sufi orders (*turuq*), Salafism, Shi‘sm, Islamic radicalism, and “jihadism.”

THE PROBLEM OF CATEGORIZATION OF ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS

Many scholars have analyzed the problem of division and categorization of religious groups in Nigeria and in Africa generally. Umar (2001: 145) attributes the difficulties of categorization to “the changing realities of the movements” and some “loaded significations” which make conventional terms less appropriate. A second problem is that many Islamic groups share important beliefs and characteristics even as they diverge on many important points. A third problem concerns the perspectives and values of authors. Paden (1986: 13) rightly observes that “the perspectives of a researcher are always salient to the interpretation of facts, and the values of the researcher may be a partial filter through which data is collected and processed.” It is naive to claim value-free neutrality when writing about religion in particular. What the non-Muslim may view as “fundamentalism,” “radicalism,” or even extremism may be viewed by liberal Muslim writers as simply orthodox Islam. Similarly the Salafi/Wahhabi-inclined writer may project Islamism as orthodox Islam and Shi‘ism as non-Islam. Thus, while recognizing conventional terms and categorization, this essay will develop a categorization that also incorporates local vocabulary and parlance. In addition to documentary sources, this author relies on several years of direct

observation, group discussions, and interviews as well as local aggregate views and understanding to explain contemporary events.

THE PRECOLONIAL PERIOD

Arabic sources suggest that Islam arrived in present-day northeastern Nigeria in about 1100, which is much earlier than some European scholars speculated (Adamu 2009: 2; Al-Baqri 1960; Levtzion 2013: 42; Yaqubi al-Rumi 1924). Starting as a practice of itinerant traders and scholars, Islam was gradually accepted by rulers and rapidly spread among the population. Around 1774, Shehu Uthman Ibn Fodio noted the prevalence of syncretism of Islam with cultural practices in Hausaland and its periphery. For thirty years, he engaged in writing and peripatetic preaching for reform and revival of what he considered to be true Islamic practices, culminating in 1804 with a military and intellectual jihad (striving in the cause of God). Since then, his view of jihad has continued to influence Islamic organizations and trends, particularly but not exclusively, in present-day northern Nigeria.

The Fodio jihad established a confederation of over forty emirates and subemirates that still remain intact although it is no longer a sovereign polity (Sa'ad 1999). This created an identity that Paden (1973) identifies as elaborate emirate authority and traditional non-sectarianism, which nurtures a tendency that may be termed nonsectarian Islamic traditionalism. Many scholars on Islam in this region follow the Paden style of identifying the Islam associated with Fodio as simply Islamic traditionalism. This has weakened attempts to understand the complexities of Islamic practices and the tensions within different northern Nigerian Islamic groups.

In as far as Ibn Fodio, his brother Abdullahi, and his son Bello were fighting syncretism, their writings place them among Sunni (orthodox) Muslim reformers or revivalists. At the same time the triumvirate identified with and wrote extensively on the al-Ghazali type of Sufism and

they praised the saints of the Qadiriyya Sufis. Islamic reformism fused into Qadiriyya Sufism and with time the former weakened while the latter gained strength. Perhaps the most significant postjihad Muslim identity in the northern region was the *tariqa* (path) of Qadiriyya or Kadirawa. Thus at the onset of British colonial rule in the early nineteenth century, multiple modes of Islamic thought and practice coexisted, including what we might term Islamic reformism/revivalism, nonsectarian Islamic traditionalism, syncretic Islam, and Qadiriyya (*tariqa*) Sufism. Given the complex overlap between these modes and the interactions between them, it is difficult to compartmentalize them.

The twentieth century brought about radical political and socioeconomic changes and processes, as the colonialists promoted British ideas, institutions, and policies in areas such as religion, urban life, communications, and industry. These challenged Islam and Muslims to engage institutions and ways of public and personal life that were different from their traditional ways. Two things are essential to understanding the reactions of Muslims. First, Muslims adapted to new opportunities, but by then Islam had become integrated into “traditional” ways of life. Second, Muslims continued to view Islam as a comprehensive (sometimes the only) system of life. Thus Muslims argue that Islam permeates—if not dominates—colonial and postcolonial institutions and ways of life. Unfortunately, Muslims in colonial Nigeria were not organized for a systematic reaction to the forces of modern western political, economic, and cultural influences brought by the new dispensation. As they reacted to these forces, Muslims sought to adapt Islam to these new pressures and/or return to traditional Islamic ideas and institutions, which added to the modes of thought and practice that survived sixty years of colonial domination.

ORGANIZATIONS AND MOVEMENTS FROM THE 1960S TO 2015

Islamic nonsectarian traditionalism

(a) *Jamā'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) (Society for the Victory of Islam)* is the organization that best represents nonsectarian Islamic traditionalism. This organization was founded January 5, 1961 by a sixteen-man committee of eminent Muslim civil servants educated in modern/western schools (*Boko*) and who also had good grounding in traditional Islamic education. It was initiated and headed by Shaykh Abubakar Mahmud Gumi (1922–92), then Grand Khadi of the Northern Region of Nigeria (1962–67), a position which, according to Paden (2005: 60), made him a central authority in the interpretation of the Shari'a legal system in the region. Early in 1963, Shaykh Gumi announced that JNI intended to encourage the production of Islamic literature in Nigerian vernaculars as well as in Arabic and English languages, build mosques, and encourage the establishment of Islamic centers of learning. Membership of JNI was, and still is, open to all Muslims regardless of brotherhood affiliation. Its first patron was the Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello (1910–66), first premier of the Northern Region and a direct descendant of Ibn Fodio. Ostensibly he influenced apportioning the presidency of JNI to the office of the Sultan of Sokoto (a position reserved for the descendants of Ibn Fodio) who acts as the figurehead of the emirate establishment (Paden, 1986: 548–51). The JNI appoints a prominent Nigerian Muslim to serve as secretary-general who will be supported by an administrative secretary. The most senior emirs of the country are members of an executive council; they are the emirs of Kano, Zaria, Katsina, Ilorin, Bauchi, Argungun, Gwandu, and Birnin Gwari, as well as the *Etsu* Nupe and the *Lamido* of Adamawa. A similar structure obtains at the levels of states, local government areas and districts where the most senior emir serves as chairman. Other important offices are occupied by preachers, guides (*murshid*) and prominent members of the locality. A similar structure is then

maintained at the state, LGC DC and WC levels. I happen to be the Chairman of the Education and Youth Development Council of my own state and the emir of my town, who is my cousin, is the Chairman of the Plateau State Central Council.

(b) *The Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs (SCIA)* heads a genre of Islamic organizations that emerged to negotiate space for Muslims in the new political democratization process in the country. When the northern emirate establishment realized that southern Muslims were not finding the JNI suitable to join, SCIA was founded in Kaduna in 1973. SCIA's article of association states that it seeks "to cater for the interest of Islam throughout the federation, to serve as a channel with the government of Nigeria on Islamic affairs, where necessary, *and to serve as the only channel of contact on Islamic matters* (author's emphasis)." Designed to draw membership from all thirty-six states in the federation, SCIA allocates four representatives for each state in its national council. Like JNI, the SCIA president is the Sultan of Sokoto, with the Shehu of Borno as deputy president and a prominent citizen from the southwest appointed as the secretary-general.

(c) *Grand Council for Islamic Affairs in Nigeria (GCIA)*, another political organization, was founded in 1995 by 'Abdulazeez Arisekola Alao (1945–2014), an Ibadan political and business strongman with the traditional title of *A'are Musulmi* (chief of Muslims) of Yorubaland. A supporter of the Sani Abacha government, Arisekola was probably used by the government to destabilize SCIA under the leadership of Sultan Ibrahim Dasuki, a foe of the head of the military government, who was in office from 1988 until he was deposed in 1996. According to newspapers reports, Arisekola asked southern Muslims to pull out of SCIA to protest alleged northern domination (*Punch*, June 18, 2014).

(d) *The Nigerian Council of Ulama (NCU)* is of the sociopolitical genre that first appeared in Zaria in 1986 as a result of the deteriorating Muslim-Christian relationship in the region. The

term *ulama* (scholars) mainly referred to Muslim scholars of Islam but later also incorporated Muslim western-educated intellectuals whose expertise may be in secular disciplines but whose engagement and exposure in the political space is useful for negotiating Muslim political space. For example, Plateau state in the north established a Council of *Ulama* without any link to any national council or any other state. The Plateau state Council of *Ulama* emerged to deal with the ethnoreligious crises that have ravaged the state from 2001. It demonstrates how such councils serve important sociopolitical functions.

TARIQA/SUFISM: ISLAMIC MYSTICAL ORDERS—QADIRIYYA AND TIJANIYYA

According to modern/western conventions, Islamic mystical orders are easily, although somewhat incorrectly, referred to as Sufi; however, in Nigeria they are more commonly referred to as *tariqa* (pl. *turuq* literally meaning path[s]). Ibn Khaldun explains the classical conception of Sufism making it the same as Salafism, which assumes that the practices of the adherents follow the path of truth and right guidance considered important since the early Muslims of the generation of the Prophet and two generations after. According to Ibn Khaldun, the Sufi approach is based upon constant application to divine worship, complete devotion to Allah, aversion to the splendor of the world, abstinence from “worldly” pleasure, property and position. He concludes that when worldly aspirations increased in the second century of Hijrah (800 CE) those who aspired to divine worship were referred to as Sufi.

Ibn Khaldun’s conclusion conflicts with what obtains among the so-called Sufi groups in contemporary Nigeria and elsewhere because “worldly aspirations” are as common among adherents of these groups as they are among other Nigerians, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The *turuq* in Nigeria, like in other parts of contemporary Africa and Asia, are “culturally and

religiously flexible and accommodating" (An-Na'im 1997: 79). This makes them dissimilar to the classical Sufism conceptualized by leading Islamic thinkers such as al-Ghazali, Ibn Khaldun, and others. The *turuq* in Nigeria are Sufi, however, in terms of their liturgy, incantations and saint reverence. Their other practices such as naming and wedding ceremonies, amulets and drinking washed-off Qur'anic writings, are not an "accommodation of culture" as some writers with outsider perspectives think (Parrinder 1959: 134). This is because they cannot be traced to any particular indigenous culture but evolved from the early practices in Islam: practitioners construct them from Islamic readings (Ware 2014: 57–64). Cultural practices in conflict with religion would be considered as outright infidelity even by Sufis. Nonetheless, some anti-*turuq* groups insist that these practices represent "innovations" (*bid'a*) in religion.

Founded by an Iraqi, Abdul Qadir Jailani (or Gilani) (470 /1077–1166]), the Qadiriyya was the first *tariqa* group in Nigeria. Up to the 1950s, it was unrivaled and enjoyed the praise of the Fodiawa and therefore affiliation with the establishment of the day. A rival Sufi group, the Tijaniyya, founded by the Algerian Ahmad Tijani (1735–1815), was brought into Hausaland only in 1830s by then the Sokoto Caliphate. The Tijaniyya had intermittent skirmishes with the Qadiriyya, particularly in the mid-twentieth century, but it eventually made tremendous inroads into the north, northcentral, southwest, and southeast of Nigeria. Tijaniyya registered adherents even in Igbo territory, described as "one of Africa's homogenous Christian regions" (Uchendu 2010: 1). Shaykh Ibrahim Nwagui, an Igbo man, became a student of Shaykh Ibrahim Niass (d.1975) who eventually made the Tijaniyya popular in Nigeria. In 1958 Shaykh Nwagui succeeded in converting to Islam a quarter of an Igbo village and in the early 1960s he established an important Islamic school at Okigwe.

The Tijaniyya was still a presence in the 1940s, and experienced a revival in the 1960s, as documented by Paden (1973: 105–37). During its “comebacks” in the 1970s, the Qadiriyya was forced to present a unified response with its rival Tijaniyya to rising anti-Sufis and “Islamic modernist” tendencies in Nigeria. “A key feature of this comeback,” Umar (1995: 130) observed, “is the successful transformation of the *tariqa* to function effectively as civil associations that aggregate, articulate, and promote both the religious and material interests of their leaders and members.”

The first of these *tariqa* civil associations is Fityanul Islam of Nigeria (Young Muslim Congress of Nigeria). Fityanu, as it is most commonly called, was launched in Kano in 1963 by the Senegalese Shaykh Ibrahim Niass al-Kaolaqi (www.fityanulislamniger.org; Loimeier (1997: 44). Its objective was to counteract the emergence of the "heretical" Ahmadiyya movement, but it may be more plausible to understand Fityanu as a consequence of the 1963 visit of Niass and a reaction to the formation of the JNI. As mentioned earlier, the initiator of the JNI was Shaykh Gumi who in 1963 was its chief spokesman, acting as the chief religious adviser and ambassador of the premier, the Sardauna of Sokoto. Kano *tariqa* clerics had reason to be on their guard with regard to both Gumi and the Sardauna. Gumi had studied and taught at the Kano School of Arabic Studies and his reformist anti-*tariqa* stand was already causing consternation in Kano. The Emir of Kano, Muhammadu Sanusi I (r. 1953–63), a leading *tariqa* scholar, was asserting his leadership and becoming “disenchanted with the shift of powers from emirs to the regional government” headed by the Sardauna (Paden 1973: 308). Sanusi’s reaction to the Sardauna also had the effect of unifying divisions among the *turuq*. Paden (449–59) has detailed commentary on the relations between Sardauna and Emir Sanusi that culminated in the deposition of the emir.

Whatever led to its formation, the Fityanu followed the footsteps of its archrival Izala (discussed below) by getting registered and incorporated under the Companies and Allied Matters Act on September 20, 1995. With branches in 209 local government councils and 23 states, Fityanu is currently the largest modern Sufi civic association constructing and maintaining Islamic schools and mosques; distributing *zakat*, inheritance and relief materials; and organizing *Maulud* (Prophet's birthday) and *Maukibi* (religious procession honoring the Prophet and deceased saints) celebrations all over the country. It is now the unifying organization serving both Qadiriyya and the Tijaniyya groups.

Both the Qadiriyya and the Tijaniyya have influential followings in Kano, Maiduguri, Zaria, Kaduna, and Bauchi as well as in neighboring countries, including Niger, Cameroon and Chad. Well-read and eloquent, Sheikh Nasiru Kabara (d.1996) led the Qadiriyya in Nigeria for decades, bequeathing leadership to his son Shaykh Qaribullah Nasiru Kabara after his death on October 4, 1996 (Adamu 2008) who continues to attract large numbers of students to his school and a large turnout from all walks of life for the *Maulud* and *Maukibi* celebrations from all over Nigeria and many parts of Africa. Similarly Alhaji Isyaku Rabi'u (b. 1928), a wealthy merchant and industrialist in Kano, claims that he is the *Khalifa* (successor) of Ibrahim Niass (1900–75) in the leadership of Tijaniyya in Africa. Meanwhile the eloquent and well-read Dahiru Usman Bauchi is the intellectual head and leading preacher of the Tijaniyya. Both leaders attract a large followership. Indeed, Sheikh Bauchi demonstrates his followership at the closing ceremony of the oral *tafsir* (exegesis of the Qur'an) at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, which thousands of devotees from all over West Africa attend.

As mentioned above, the *turuq* are credited with making immense contribution to the spread of Islam throughout Nigeria. In the north, however, the *turuq* seem to be losing popularity

among the youth population regarding its devotional practices such as organized public *wazifa* (incantations), but it is gaining in terms of ceremonial practices and symbolism such as adapting modern musical instruments such as guitars and pianos. Both Tijaniyya and Qadiriyya have separate youth organizations and the formation of the Fityanul Islam of Nigeria (Young Muslim Congress of Nigeria) gives the appearance that the youth sustains the *turuq*. In the south, the *turuq*'s organized public practices are not nearly as well identified, but it is strong among elderly Islamic scholars, especially those of northern origin. Fractionalization is a contemporary feature of Islamic movements in Nigeria, including the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya *turuq*.

POST-CIVIL WAR AND THE ISLAMIC SALAFI -WAHHABI REFORMISM AND MODERNISM IN NIGERIA

The events leading to and during the Nigerian civil war (1967–70) introduced changes in the religious field as in many other realms of Nigerian life. Shaykh Gumi lost his patron, the Premier and the Sardauna, before the war, and his position as Grand Khadi, which was abolished in 1967 with the restructuring of the regions into states. Most important, Gumi had gradually lost his influence with the JNI that he founded. The emirate establishment took over JNI and moved on to accommodate within its fold the opposing *turuq* groups. Further, it subdued JNI into inactivity by its own imperial protocols as well as ostensibly by some covert design of the Gowon military government.

Not an enthusiast of the Gowon regime, Shaykh Gumi shrugged off JNI and settled down to complete his intellectual career by broadcasting his teaching and preaching from Kaduna, the erstwhile headquarters of the Northern Region. By the mid-1970s, he was unarguably the most vocal Islamic voice in Nigeria. He found an effective instrument in Radio Kaduna, an influential media in northern Nigeria since the 1960s. His eloquent and captivating voice preaching Islam

virtually occupied the airwaves of every northern Muslim city and village through Radio Kaduna's daily and weekly programs. Gumi started the trend of recording his preaching on audio cassettes and later on VHS, video CDs, and MP3s, now a widespread commercial practice that provides abundant materials for understanding contemporary Muslim scholarly discourses in the country.

Gumi had outstanding intellectual credentials. He had passed through traditional and modern Islamic schools, was well-educated in Arabic and the Islamic sciences, had walked in the corridors of power and worked in government. He understood western modernism, but also claimed to continue the Fodio heritage and was well respected by world Muslim leaders and scholars, having twice represented the Sardauna at Muslim World League conferences (Paden 1973: 538–39). Since the civil war, Gumi's ideas have greatly influenced Islamic discourses and movements. For example, his preaching was an important, although not the only factor, that fueled the "Islam Only" student demonstrations of the mid-1970s, the Shari'a debates, and the subsequent renaissance of the Shari'a in 2000s. It remains relevant to the current trends of Islamic revivalism. Shaykh Gumi was a strong advocate of learning, including the cultivation of western education and active participation in politics and government, advocating for Muslims to take their "rightful" position. He caused a controversy, when during the 1979 elections, he opined that politics was more important than *salat* (prayer), a pillar of Islam that is, by consensus of Muslim scholars, considered second only to the declaration of faith in Islam itself. He reasoned that politics determines the degree of freedom of religion, and as such, Muslim participation in politics assures the continuous and strengthened practice of Islam.

Probably Gumi's most important legacy is his avowed "father-ing" of the Jamā'atu Izālat ul Bid'a Wa Iqāmatus Sunnah (JIBWIS) (the Society for the Removal of Innovations and Strengthening Prophetic Traditions), popularly referred to as Izala. The "midwife-ing" of Izala was

the result of the preaching in Jos, the capital of Plateau State, of Shaykh Ismaila Idris (1937–2000), a student of Gumi. The radical posture of the charismatic Idris first became public when at Sultan Bello mosque Kaduna, then “a den of the *Turuq*,” he read Gumi's *Aqidat as Sahihah bi Muwafaqat al Shari'a (The Orthodox Theology in Agreement with the Shari'a)* a book that attacks some practices of the *turuq* as innovations (*bid'a*) at variance with the orthodox Islamic theology. Published in 1972, the book was said to be meant for higher scholars (Tanimu 1999: 21).

Idris joined the Nigerian Army in 1973 because the JNI failed to restore a mosque turned into an Army officers' mess. He claimed that by joining the army, he acquired the power of the uniform to stop the irreligious practice of drinking beer in the mosque (Tanimu 1999: 17). In the course of his military career he was posted to Jos, a city well known for radical secular politics as well as political Islam. During Nigeria's First Republic (1960–66) Muslims in Jos had rejected the Sardauna and his Northern People's Congress in favor of the radical Aminu Kano and his Northern Elements Progressive Union essentially on the strength of the Tijaniyya *tariqa* sentiments. Idris's preaching reawakened debates on the ideology of the *turuq*. Soon he attracted much public attention as well as that of the police and his employers, the army. Several times the military detained him and later put him under house arrest. Once free, he was encouraged by shopkeepers, petty traders, middle-class merchants— many of whom had broken off from the *turuq*— and a few scholars to establish the organization inaugurated February 8, 1978 and named *Izalatul Bid'a Wa Ikamatus Sunnah*. Shaykh Idris left the army on April 10, 1978 (al-Burhan 2000: 8).

Unlike other Islamic organizations, Izala became the first to seek and obtain government certification to exist as a corporate civic association. Probably this was because of the series of police and army arrests suffered by the initiators of the organization during its incubation. Unfortunately, the organization has a poorly written constitution that hardly serves its purpose;

however, an elaborate administrative and power structure and bureaucratic practices have gradually evolved in the organization. Its main objectives are to unite and enlighten the Muslim community regarding distortions in Islamic beliefs and practices, including refuting the claims of prophesy after Prophet Mohammad or claims of visits of the prophet to some saints, the reverence of saints and celebrations of the Prophet's birthday.

The most visible Izala activities include Islamic education alongside secular education in schools of the secular models, open air and mosque preaching, and publication of books and journals. Its formal schools are of various grades and types for both males and females. They include teaching about Islamic sciences and modern sciences (*boko*). In open air and mosque preaching the primary concern is the condemnation of the practices of the *turuq* as innovations (*bid'a*) in Islam. These practices include recitation of incantations or supplications (particularly *salatil fatih*) composed by the *turuq* saints; reverence of the saints, particularly visits to their tombs; music eulogizing the saints and the prophet and holding celebrations to mark their birthdays; child naming and wedding ceremonies; use of charms; and the drinking of Arabic writings washed off from the wooden slates (*shan rubutu*). Other Izala activities include operating health clinics, the collection and appropriation of alms (*sadaqah*), the poor rate (*zakat*), and inheritance. It is also involved in conflict resolution ranging from communal conflict to minor litigations among members. During the many ethnoreligious crises in Plateau state since 2001, Izala partnered with the JNl as well as with its archrival, the Fityanu, and other religious groups in dialogue with government. Indeed, the Jos crises forced Izala to adopt friendly relationships with the JNl and suspend hostility to the *turuq*.

Initially Izala kept a distance from the emirate establishment, which they fault for accommodating the practices of the *turuq* and being inactive in standing for Islam. Gumi on several

occasions referred to the Sultan of Sokoto as *Sarkin* (chief of) Sokoto rather than the *Sarkin Musulmi*. The rejection of the term “chief of Muslims” referred to the Sultan's ineptitude in managing the affairs of Muslims. This added to the antiestablishment, antitraditionalism and radical posture of Izala. In the last two decades, however, cooperation between Izala and the emirate authority is growing.

Shaykh Gumi and Izala evoke Salafism in as much as their concern is to reform religious and even cultural practices on the basis of returning to the pure Islam of the Qur'an (*Kitab*) and prophetic traditions (*sunna*). Hence their initial slogan was “*Kitab wa Sunna*” (The Qur'an and Sunnah). The full meaning of Izala clearly indicates Salafism, which is removing innovations and strengthening *sunna*. Shaykh Idris is reported as saying that everything written in Gumi's *Aqidat as Sahiha* is said by Allah in the Qur'an and established by the Prophet (Tanimu 1999: 4). In addition, Gumi's *Aqidat as Sahiha* and his magnum opus, *Radul Adhhan ila ma'ani Qur'an* (Reflecting Minds towards the Meanings of the Qur'an), a book of Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*), is widely read in Izala schools. Izala preaching sessions clearly indicate adherence to pure Islam as understood and practiced by *al-salaf al-salih* (pious predecessors) while tending to use the interpretation of the Maliki Islamic legal school of thought. Also the books evoke Salafism in their concern with diverse forms of polytheism (*shirk*), reprehensible innovation (*bid'a*) and superstition (*khurafa*) that syncretics subtly mix with “the pure Islam.” The *turuq* sought to withstand the derision of Izala by referring to them as *Wahhabi* and the association of its founding father Shaykh Gumi with Saudi Arabia, which strengthened the association of Izala with Wahhabi. Izala scholars and adherents happily accepted this association. Although some books of Muhammad al-Wahhab and the Wahhabi scholars are read by Izala scholars and students, they do not refer to themselves as Wahhabis.

Customs such as keeping beards and trimming mustaches, which Izala claimed to be part of prophetic tradition emphasizing Muslim identity in public space appeared to be a radical departure from Hausa practice. In addition, Izala rejected music, dance, saint reverence, some *turuq* religious celebrations; and separation of mosques by gender. In other things, however, they are modernist. For they cultivate modern education, encourage women's education, utilize modern information technology for the propagation of Islam, and enjoy modern comforts and fashions: expensive cars, beautiful houses, and expensive dresses.

In the early 1990s, Izala split into two parts. The "hard liners" remained under the leadership of Shaykh Idris. Even after his demise the faction honored him with constant reference to him as the founder of the group that also maintained Jos as their headquarters. The "soft-liners," led by Shaykh Bawa Mai Shinkafa (d. 1999), made more reference to the figure of Gumi whose students were predominantly in Kaduna, which became their headquarters. The leadership of both factions was largely controlled by the Madina-trained scholars known as *yan Madina*. The structure and activities of the two factions remained much the same and both bear the same name, claiming the same registration certificate. The two factions reunited in January 2013 following the death of the then ceremonial head of the soft line faction.

Izala has a widespread following in the three zones of the north and it is also visible in the main cities of the southwest, especially Lagos and Ibadan. Until recently in the north, Izala seemed to be more popular than the *turuq* with western educated elites, middle-class urban dwellers, Fulani pastoralists and youth; however, because the *turuq* differed from Izala by permitting religious music and celebrations, they are regaining ground with the youth. In the southeast and south-south zones, Izala is not very visible, but exists in small Hausa settlements and places where livestock and food items brought in from the north are marketed.

ISLAMISM AND MODERNISM AMONG WESTERN-EDUCATED STUDENTS, GRADUATES AND ELITES

Umar (2001) attempts to correlate western education with Islamic movements in Nigeria, but did not do much to trace systematically the origin of the forces driving Islamic radicalism that closed the 1970s. This section shall trace the origin of some of these forces.

Perhaps the robust activities of the Fellowship of Christian Society (FCS) in secular schools motivated the establishment of the Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (abbreviated as either MSS or MSSN)³. According to the official profile of the organization, the society was established to check the impact of Christian influence among Muslim students in mission schools. Founded in Lagos, MSSN leaders claimed that its objectives were to counter pressure by Christian missionaries that Muslims students in their schools convert to Christianity (Fafunwa 1991; Tajudeen 1984: 4). Specifically, it was believed that the Anglican synod in 1954, the year of the formation of the MSSN, threatened to expel from their schools Muslim students who refused to convert to Christianity. Whatever the motivation was, on April 18, 1954, forty Muslim students from seven different schools met to discuss the formation of a new movement, which was officially launched at the Ansaruddeen Alakoro Mosque School Hall, Lagos about six weeks later on May 30 amidst prayer, joy and exhortation (Tajudeen 1984: 4). Soon the society spread in secondary schools in the southwest. Babs Fafunwa, who later became a professor of education and minister of education, fostered its establishment in the University of Ibadan.

In the early 1970s, the MSSN was introduced in the north and affiliated to the World Assembly of Muslim Youth in 1972. Its radicalism first became public with the 1977 “Islam Only” university students’ street demonstration that called for the adoption of Islamic values in

³Websites vary in abbreviation used.

governance. Umar (2001) rightly notes that “these demonstrations are now clearly recognizable as a turning point in Islamic fundamentalism in Nigeria.” At least five factors can be attributed to the cause of the radicalization of the MSSN in Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, the first and largest university in the north, as well as in other tertiary northern institutions. First, by the mid-1970s, Gumi’s leadership was entrenched and his Kaduna base was the home of the then largest polytechnic in the country, which was only 75 kilometers from ABU. Second, at the same time, the population of northern Muslim students was expanding in tertiary institutions. These students preferred to “Islamize” the new systems of secular education (*boko*) rather than allow this education to engage them in practices interpreted as unlawful (*haram*) in Islam. Third, there was an increase in the importation of Islamic literature in English in Nigeria from the revolutionaries of Iran, from Saudi Arabia and from anti-Wahhabi Muslim modernists of Turkey. Fourth, the assassination of the Muslim head of state, General Murtala Ramat Muhammad (1937–76), by Christian soldiers from the north central zone raised widespread consternation among Nigerian Muslims. Fifth, radical Islamism was promoted by the radical sociopolitical discourses about the relative merits of capitalism vs. socialism/communism by scholars such as Bala Usman (1987), Ibrahim Tahir (1975), Patrick Wilmot (1979, 2007), Ali Mazrui (1993), and others. At the end of the 1970s, some new factors arose, including the controversial Shari’a debates that preceded the 1979 constitution and the well-publicized Iranian revolution.

Umar (2001) articulates the essential features and manifestations of the radicalism, which he calls the “anti-establishment movement” of the students and the graduates of the late 1970s. Some of these features, which linger to the present, include the striving of Fityanul Islam of Nigeria to “enthroned Islamic values in the political processes and governmental institutions of Nigeria” and the campaign for “expanding the scope of Shari’a in Nigeria.” In northern Nigeria, state

governors such as Yarima of Zamfara, Mu'azu of Bauchi, and Shekarau of Kano—all university graduates—implemented the expansion of Shari'a, while in the southwest, university graduates and other western-educated Muslims continued the agitation (Makinde 2010). Further, close observation reveals that Muslim graduates led in the “proliferation of Islamic organizations, Nigerian schools, and Islamist discourses in newspapers and magazines, vernacular publications, and learned journals” (Umar 2001: 138). Many university graduates of the 1970s are today university professors, lecturers and students of Arabic and Islamic studies as well as of economics, political science, law, and the humanities. They are engaged in research and discussions of Islam in the modern world from their various disciplinary perspectives. The organizations and ideologies created by such western-educated elites are briefly discussed below. They include: the Nasrul-Lahi-II-Fatih Society (NASFAT), the *Yan Madinain*, the Muslim Corpers Association of Nigeria (MCAN), the National Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies (NATAIS), the Muslim Lawyers Association of Nigeria (MLAN), and the Da'awah Coordination Council of Nigeria.

Meanwhile the MSSN continues to spread in educational institutions, fostering a specific type of Islamic modernism or Islamism. For example, the University of Ibadan branch claims that it is a “students’ body with enough manpower” to engage in *da'wa* (Islamic propagation) activities and humanitarian works. Its activities include a yearly “jihad week,” a weekly (Sunday) “circle of learning” or *Ta'alim* session, a “spiritual night,” “spiritual upliftment,” “*da'wah* discussion,” “discussions on contemporary Islamic issues,” Arabic classes, an orientation program for fresh students, rural *da'wah*, *da'wah* weekend program, paper presentations, a sisters' circle, and a finalists’ forum (see www.esinislam.com). Similar programs obtain in other MSSN branches.

Another consequence of the events of the mid-1970s actually influenced by Gumi yet opposed to him is the movement called Muslim Brothers (Arabic *Ikhwan*; Hausa *yan broda*) or Shi'ism. This is the subject of the next section.

THE MUSLIM BROTHERS (YAN BRODA) SHI'A IN NIGERIA

Shi'ism lost its opportunity for an early foundation in Nigeria because the Lebanese and Syrian Shi'a Muslim traders in Nigeria neglected to implant it (Doi 1984b: 344). The Shi'a in Nigeria is now led by Ibraheem Yaqoub al-Zakzaky (b.1953), formerly a leading figure in the "Islam only" radicalism described above. He claims descent from the Prophet (*Sharif*) and lays claim to the Zaria emirate dynasty. He was first educated in the traditional Qur'anic system and later in modern secular schools. While at the School of Arabic Studies (SAS) in Kano, he attended the Qadiriyya-Sufi school of Shaykh Muhammad Nasiru Kabara and the Tijaniyya-Sufi school of Shaykh Isa Waziri. After graduating from SAS with a General Certificate of Education (GCE), which includes such secular subjects as economics, he eventually entered ABU, but was expelled for his leadership in the "Islam Only" protest. He then went to Iran for a short course of studies.

Eventually Al-Zakzaky established an organization called the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) (Zakzaky 1999), popularly known as the Muslim Brothers. The English word "brother" is Hausaized, mispronounced by adherents as "*broad*," and hence the members are called *yan broda*, but the members refer to themselves as *yan uwa* (a Hausa word for brothers) *Musulmi*. Many of its leaders and adherents regularly visited Iran or studied there. Influenced by the Islamic revolution in Iran, the movement now accepts being Shi'a after years of denial when the climate of opinion about Shi'ism in Nigeria was not particularly open. Even under various military governments, the movement demonstrated (and still does) "vocal opposition to the secularity of the Nigerian State" as a "main preoccupation" (Umar 2001: 138). Its stated mission is to establish

an Iran-type of Islamic state in Nigeria, which has kept it in intermittent skirmishes with government security forces. On the occasion of its silver jubilee on April 10, 2005, the movement declared that its main aim is “the establishment of an Islamic system and state, no more no less.” The IMN now operates an official website, <http://islamicmovement.org/>, with a Hausa version at <http://www.harkarmusulunci.org/>, an Arabic version at <http://www.alharka.net/>) and an email address (webmaster@islamicmovement.org).

The websites, public pronouncements, programs, and phenomenology of the group clearly attest to their Shi‘ism. The websites discuss such important Shi‘a ideas and rituals such as Ashura, the birthday of Zahra (*Maulud*), *idul Ghadir*, and others. Furthermore, the discourses of Imam Ruhollah Moosavi Khomeini, Imam Ali Hosseini Khamenei, and other Shi‘a scholars are presented on the websites as well as Shi‘i perspectives of Sunni Islam, radicalism, terrorism, nationalism, and secularism. In addition, they post material from the English-language *Pointer Express* and Hausa (*Mizan*) news magazines of the Zakzaky group.

In recent times, these voices have become less audible and the movement appears to be more favorable to the Nigerian secular state. Many of the group’s adherents denied its public assertions in interviews. The alleged appointment of Zakzaky as adviser to the governor of Kaduna State, I gathered, was a confusion of names as the appointee was Ibrahim Yakubu who is an important ally of the Zakzaky group. Zakzaky’s adherents also rejected the notion that the display of the green-and-white colors of the Nigerian state during the celebration of Zakzaky’s sixtieth birthday in 2011 demonstrates an acceptance of the Nigerian secular state. They explained that the green-and-white colors in the Shi‘a view represent the colors of the house of the Prophet, which his cousin Ali, the first Shi‘a Imam adopted. Regarding the perceived silence or apparent complacency with the secular Nigerian state, the adherents explained that this is a process of the

Shi'a doctrine of *Taqiyyah* (concealment of belief) until strength to fight is gathered. Thus while the group still strongly rejects secularism, it maintains the ultimate aim of establishing an Islamic government headed by Shi'a officials. They believe that the time to take up arms is not ripe (yet) in Nigeria. Writings in their websites, news magazines, public lectures, and preaching clearly indicate their radical stand on a number of issues.

Some modernizing activities of the group are worth a brief mention. The Zakzaky group gives education priority, considering their establishment of a considerable number of modern-type Islamic schools (with modern secular subjects) and the mosque circles of teaching (*ta'alim*). Interestingly all the schools of the group are named after Ibn Fodio; reinforced by the group's annual celebration (with public lectures) of the birthday of the great Jihadist, which demonstrates their identification with the Fodiawa heritage. The group also maintains a number of clinics and hospitals with trained medical practitioners, including doctors, who attend to victims of crises and disasters, often free of charges. Related to this, Al-Zakzaky earned a certificate of commendation from the Voluntary Blood Donors Club of Nigeria in Jos for ordering his followers to alter the Shi'a practice of shedding their own blood to commemorate the shedding of the blood of Imam Hussein by donating blood to hospitals. Another important activity of the group is their *usbu'il wahda* (unity week), which seeks to unite Muslims by inviting scholars from other groups (Sunni, Sufi, modernists or traditionalists) to deliver lectures. Well-veiled women also participate in some activities. Indeed the group has a Sisters' Forum that carries out wide-ranging activities and is responsible for organizing the national event that commemorates the birth of (*Maulud*) Zahra, the only daughter of the Prophet that survived him. In the north where it has its largest following, the Zakzaky group seems to have more followership in urban areas among both western-educated and nonwestern-educated, but nonetheless makes steady progress in the rural areas. There are notable

ta'alim (learning circles) of the group, which Al-Zakzaky visits in Lagos, Ibadan, Enugu, Abakaliki, and Port Harcourt.

So far, reference has been made to the Zakzaky group rather than to Muslim Brothers or Islamic Movement. This is because there is another smaller group based in Kano that goes by the same name, with similar contact with Iran and a similar adherence to Ja'afariyyah Shi'ism. This Kano group advocates an Islamic government as the ultimate end, but they accommodate pluralism and a government headed by someone other than a Shi'a or even a non-Muslim as long as there is the freedom to practice religion.

WAHHABISM, SALAFISM OF THE ARABIC AND WESTERN-EDUCATED YAN MADINA

The most influential Nigerian representatives of this movement are the *Yan Madina*, so named because its leading members studied at the Islamic University in Madina or in Makkah (Saudi Arabia), or the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) universities in Niger, Chad, and Sudan. Their common characteristics include above average fluency in spoken Arabic and wider exposure to higher levels of Islamic learning than obtains in traditional schools. Their international university study also fosters international contacts or even national contacts better than those who study in local Nigerian universities. Their religious, social, and political roles include that they establish and teach in modern Islamic schools and serve as *imam* (leaders of congregational prayer) in elitist mosques where they also hold educational assemblies and are private counselors to many middle- and upper-class businessmen. They attract a greater followership from the youth because they are themselves fairly young and display visible intellectual capital. Umar (2001: 137) noted that the *Yan Madina* “exercise considerable influence—far more than their youth or small number will suggest.” This group constitutes a new Muslim elite that does not easily fit within the old Izala

structure even though they initially trained at Izala schools or were inspired by Izala teachings. The movement is active in Kano, Kaduna, Bauchi, Gombe, Katsina, Zaria and Jos, the home and base of greatest influence of the Izala. One of its leading figures is Dr. Aminudeen Abubakar, who more than any other Nigerian, is best connected to the professors of the University of Madina. He runs a well-financed “call to Islam” (*da‘wa*) group although he is opposed to formal organization, which he says was not the practice of the early orthodox predecessors (*salaf*).

The charismatic and eloquent Preacher Ja'afar Mahmud Adam (1960–2007), the leader of the Kano *Yan Madina*, was brutally assassinated as he led an early morning prayers on April 13, 2007. His several debates against the radical scriptural interpretations of his protégé, the slain Boko Haram leader Mohammed Yusuf, as well as his Qur'anic commentaries and translations of *fiqh* books produced on audio and video CDs and cassettes continue to spread. There is also a growing structure engaged in the Izala-type of public preaching. Ibn Abbas, the *Imam* of the Ansar Mosque in Kano represents those who belong to the *Yan Madina* even though he did not train in Madina. Western scholars trace this trajectory to unspecified central religious institutions in Saudi Arabia that propagate Wahhabi/Salafi Islam in Nigeria. However, the extremely poor conditions of the Muslim schools, clerics, leaders, and mosques in Nigeria contrasts starkly with that of their Christian counterparts and belie the myth of “generous” funding from Saudi Arabia.

Shaykh Fantami in Bauchi heads a unique movement that has exactly the same ideological appeal, traditions, and characteristics as the *Yan Madina*, but this smaller movement is led by scholars of different educational and professional training and persuasions. For example, Fantami holds a PhD in computer science, is an assistant university professor, and has good educational grounding in Islamic sciences, which attracts good followership to his scholarly “call to Islam” (*da‘wa*) circles. Overall the *Yan Madina* scholars are very conservative in their discourse, but seek

change through nonviolent means as their disagreement with Shaykh Yusuf of Boko Haram suggests. An important feature of the *Yan Madina* movement is its emphasis on education: formal Islamic schools that offer secular subjects with emphasis on Islam and Arabic and mosque lectures (*ta'alim*) without the formalities of school admission requirements, regularity, and curriculum.

Meanwhile, it is widely acknowledged that the Yoruba Muslims of southwestern Nigeria are more inclined to secularism than Muslims in the north and therefore they do not insist on the implementation of Shari'a. However, inspired by the implementation of Shari'a in Zamfara state on October 27, 1999, the chapters of National Council of Muslim Youth Organisations (NACOMYO) from all states of the Yoruba southwest, held a series of meetings with other groups from early 2000 to strategize about how to establish Shari'a in their own states within the new democratic context. For example, the Lagos chapter met periodically with representatives of Ansar-ud-Din, Nawair-ud-Deen, Anwar-ul-Islam, NASFAT, the MSSN, the Muslim Congress (TMC), and the Muslim Lawyers Association of Nigeria (MULAN) for more than a year. They lobbied Governor Ahmed Tinubu (a Muslim) and the Lagos State House of Assembly (which had a Muslim majority) to enact a Shari'a Courts Bill that they prepared. Governor Tinubu rebuffed the "intense pressure" to introduce the Shari'a in the state," and instead a private tribunal—Private Shari'a Arbitration Tribunal (ISP)—was set up. NACOMYO claimed that this course had been proposed to the Lagos Muslims as long ago as 1894, but had never been implemented. Oyo and Osun states also established similar private tribunals or juridical panels to listen to and administer judgment to litigants even though it lacked the legal standing and paraphernalia to implement its decision. It was hoped that the ISP would gradually attract increasing numbers of Muslim litigants

and financial support from the Muslim community to demonstrate a growing desire among Lagos Muslims for serious Islamic adjudication of the sort the ISP would provide (Makinde and Ostein 2011).

FRINGE ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS

(a) **Mahdism:** Ibn Khaldun offers a succinct analysis of the concept, debates and true meaning of the Mahdi (Ibn Khaldun 1978: 257–59). Some Muslim scholars cite hadiths indicating the coming at the end of time of a man (the Mahdi) from the family of the Prophet who will appear, gain domination over the Muslim realm, strengthen Islam, and make justice triumph. The Mahdi will precede or appear at the time of the return of Jesus and together they will kill the anti-Christ. For centuries Muslims have intensely discussed the theory of the Mahdi.

The prolific Fodiawa wrote a great deal on *al-Mahdi al-muntadhar* (the awaited guide and reformer). Shehu Ibn Fodi, the senior of the Fodiawa, in particular, notes the prophecies foretelling the coming of the Mahdi and that popular imagination identified him as the Mahdi. Ibn Fodio, however, explicitly dispelled the rumor ascribing the Mahdi to him. Nonetheless, he writes in reference to his reformism that it is the garment of the Mahdi that he wears and is “the cloud that precedes the awaited Mahdi” for which he is associated (Hassan 2010). This may account for Mahdism’s failure to take root in northern Nigeria. Nonetheless some scholars claim that Ibn Fodio prophesied that his *jihad* would reach the time of the Mahdi and that his descendants through Bello would be followers of the Mahdi. A letter from Asma’u, the daughter of Ibn Fodio to the emir of Kano, Mohammed Bello (1883–1892) describing the path to be followed by the Mahdi encouraged massive migrations to the Adamawa region to await the Mahdi there. Meanwhile the Sudanese Muhammad Ahmad b. Sayyid Abdullah al Mahdi declared himself as the Mahdi in the month of Ramadan 1298H on June 29, 1881 and compared his movement to that of the prophet. Therefore

he called his followers the *ansar*, recalling the helpers of the prophet at Madinah. He wrote letters to many Muslim leaders around the world, including the Caliph of Sokoto, Umaru bin Ali, and Hayat bin Sa'id, a grandson of Bello, then a famous scholar at Balda, a village in present northern Cameroon.

While the caliph did not recognize the claim of the Sudanese, Sa'id did. The Lamido (caliph's governor) of Adamawa in 1892 fought Sa'id. The latter was victorious and established a small state at Balda. Another small Mahdi state was established at Bormi. Politically, militarily, and ideologically, these two states challenged both the center and periphery emirates of the Sokoto Caliphate, but there was a dramatic turn of events when the British conquered the reigning Caliph Attahiru bin Ahmad (1902–03) who then joined the *ansar* at Bormi to resist the British (Saeed 2006). This was the basis of the British fear of Mahdism in northern Nigeria; however, Paden (1986: 25) notes that the British "fear of Mahdism in the Sudan and the close ties (in Islamic values) of northern Nigeria to the Sudan provide an underlying climate of apprehension on the part of colonial administrators, and a desire to keep the Muslim communities of Northern Nigeria 'separate' from other segments of the world Islamic community." Saeed observes that the colonial administration aimed to eliminate the Mahdi movement by adopting a harsh policy of punishing the followers and exiling its leaders. This policy was inherited by the government of independent Nigeria. Shaykh Sa'id Hayatu, a father-in-law of Shaykh Gumi, was one such leader of the Mahdiyya movement and was exiled by the colonial government to Cameroon (Saeed 2006: 181).

The Mahdiyya movement in northern Nigeria persisted at a low level through colonial times and the independent era. According to Clarke (1982: 120), its headquarters is at Kano and its adherents are found in Jigawa, Gusau, Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Gombe, and Adamawa. The most important implication of the Mahdi for security policy is that it could as well serve as a recruitment

ground for such violent groups as Boko Haram and the successful establishment of the Balda and Bormi Mahdi states could serve as an inspiration for the vision of the Boko Haram and similar movements that seek to establish independent Islamic states.

A group with an ideology of “awaited messiah” similar to that of the Mahdi is the Ahmadiyya which is the subject of the next section.

(b) *The Maitatsine Violence:* The Maitatsine violence that occurred in the period from mid-December 1980 to 1985 was the first of the very violent syncretic movements before the appearance of Boko Haram. Maitatsine followers killed over 5,000 people and destroyed property worth millions of Naira. Its viciousness and unexpected challenge to the state despite its seeming lack of sophistication has generated many studies and commentaries, but this literature neglects the lingering traces and influences of Maitastine ideology, traditions, and the forces that fueled it. For example, the type of Maitastine foot soldiers—the poor, the unemployed, the poorly educated *almajirai* and *gardawa*, illegal aliens—still remain available for recruitment as we have so recently seen with Boko Haram. They are everywhere in the silent mass of the people or as professional preachers offering the same antiestablishment and syncretic discourses. I shall here only briefly attempt to develop the typology of the ideologies of what I call deviant Islamic trends that center specifically on antimodernism.

Maitatsine, led by Mohammed Marwa Maitatsine, started in Kano in the late 1970s and operated throughout the 1980s as a nonviolent cultist group delivering a radical ideology and fetish medications believed to be effective in curing ailments, neutralizing challenges, and attaining ambitions. As his middle name shows, the leader was from Marwa (northern Cameroon). He claimed to have had divine revelations superseding those of the Prophet Muhammad. The Maitatsine had their own mosques and a doctrine antagonistic to established Islamic and societal

leadership. Its main appeal was to “disinherited” and poverty-stricken urban migrants, whose rejection by the more established urban groups fostered their religious opposition (Isichei1987). Ultimately they lashed out at the more traditional mosques and congregations, resulting in violent outbreaks in several cities of the north.

(c) **Isawa (Qur’anic Christians or Biblical Muslims or Christo-Muslims):** The Isawa is another group on the fringe of Islam, not easily distinguishable in the mass of rural Hausas in Kano, Jigawa, Zaria, and Bauchi states. They are called Isawa because of their devotion to the Qur’anic Jesus (Prophet Isa). They can be Qur’anic Christians or Biblical Muslims or indeed a special breed of Christo-Muslims, but they consider themselves to be good Muslims. They are also called *yan sap* (people of straightforward way) because of their manner of praying *salat* in which they avoid the first prostration (*ruku*) and go straight to the second (*sujud*). They also have a straight/direct interpretation of the Qur’an avoiding all commentaries (*tafsir*). They are confused with other groups such as the *kala kato* (a Hausa term meaning “a big human being said”) in reference to their rejecting only the Hadiths since these are sayings of the Prophet (a human being) narrated by humans and restricting themselves to the Qur’an, which also makes this group Qur’aniyyun or ahl Qur’an (people of the Qur’an); or the *dingawa* (another group that has a strict *pardah* system that prohibits the women from speaking in public spaces); or Maitatsine because of their similarity to the Maitatsine group discussed above. Another name, *yan tabarma*, refers to their occupation of mat-weaving while the term *yan farin fula* refers to their dressing in white. These groups have attracted the attention of missionaries in the Sudan United Mission and the Christian Reformed Church who were excited by the claim of the superiority of Prophet Isa (Jesus) that resulted from the Isawa misreading of the Qur’an (Nguvugher, Hock, Sicard and Ludwig, 2010).

(d) *Chrislam*: In Nigeria two separate Chrislam movements have emerged that seek to fuse Christian and Islamic ideas and practices. The first is Ifeoluwa (The Will of God Mission), founded by Tella Tella in the 1970s and 80s. The second is Oke-Tude (The True Message of God Mission), founded by Samson Saka in 1999. Both accept the Bible and the Qur'an as Holy books as well as many practices of both religions, but Tella, while claiming to believe in the Qur'an and the Bible, maintains that they are incomplete and is writing his own book called the "Ifeoluwa Book" (Janson and Bello 2012: 215). Tella claims to be the Messenger or the Will of God reincarnated in a human being. He has a Muslim background, but his neighbors see him as a "traditionalist". In the 1970s Tella began receiving frequent divine revelations through which he was told that the name of the Mission would be Ifeoluwa as well as the congregational practices (e.g., Saturday services), their dress and other religious paraphernalia. His followers believe that he communicates with God through the Angels Gabriel and Michael. A great part of the Saturday service is reserved for singing "revealed" religious hymns in either Yoruba or an unintelligible language. Originally, Tella was fairly reclusive, but it became apparent that construction of a number of divine buildings, including a replica of the Ka'aba, where the Holy Spirit is believed to come down, and a "Spiritual Square," required a lot of money. That is the reason why Tella became a more public person. His sermons contains passages from both the Bible and Qur'an.

Worship in the Ifeoluwa style is somewhat similar to how Muslims pray, but unlike Muslims, the worshipers prostrate on their knees. After worshipping they shake their arms "to open the way." A third difference is that whereas Muslims salute to the right and left, the Ifeoluwa followers salute in the direction of the points of the compass, and whereas Muslims shake hands with their fellows after worship, the Ifeoluwa members do not shake hands but bow to each other while saying "May love and peace abide." Further, the Ifeoluwa members worship only three times

a day (at noon, 3:00 and 6:00 p.m). Tella explains that the hectic Lagos traffic makes it difficult for his followers to gather for prayer on time, and he is even thinking about reducing the number of prayers to twice a day, after having received God's approval. The service ends with testimonies and thanksgiving, the collection of donations for missionary work, and a concluding hymn.

Ifeoluwa has a longer history than Oke Tude, but its congregation is much smaller. Tella leads a secluded life and until recently did not invest much time in evangelism. Recently, however, he has started speaking to journalists and to researchers. Ifeoluwa female followers outnumber male members. Since Tella believes in "the principle of 50-50," both men and women hold leading positions in the mission. Altogether the constitution specifies eighty rules and regulations, believed to be sent to Moses on Mount Sinai, for proper behavior and worship. These include obedience to the ten commandments of God, kneeling in front of Ifeoluwa alone, abstaining from witchcraft, respect for elders, modest behavior, honesty, and refraining from gossip.

Oke Tude is more popular than Ifeoluwa. It offers services on Sunday and has incorporated the trendy Pentecostal preaching style though some scholars claim that it less recognizable to mainstream Christians because it involves interfaith worship, with first a Muslim session, then a Christian session, and followed by a joint session led by the founder Samson Saka who stresses the similarities between Christian and Islamic beliefs. Born in a Muslim family, Saka did not have any Islamic nor Christian education, but was trained in the herbal business of his father. By the time of his "call" he was consulted by both Christians and Muslims. Indeed, he first called his mission Chrislamherb, which was probably offensive to some, appearing to mix "Christianity, Islam and traditional Yoruba religion in a heretic trinity" (Janson and Bello 2012: 258). That name was also not accepted for registration with the federal government, resulting in his decision to take the name Oke Tude. The movement has branches in Lagos, Ibadan, Jos, Abuja and London.

Southwestern Nigeria is a region where Muslims, Christians and practitioners of African traditional religions have lived together peacefully, with many families having Muslim and Christian members. While followers of Oke Tude and Ifeoluwa claim to be part Christian and part Islamic, mainstream Muslims and Christians would probably reject them as being members of traditional secret societies. Janson and Bello (2012: 227) debate whether these two Chrislam movements are syncretistic or “bricolage” or “assemblage.” In some ways they are akin to Isawa or even Maitatsine, which claim to be Islamic, but they also resemble some mushrooming Pentecostal churches or even the emergent Ombatse which remains clearly traditional. Wherever their alignment, they have the potential to go wild.

(e) *The Qur’aniyun — Kala Kato*: The Qur’aniyyun get their inspiration from a movement that originated in the first century of Islam. They reject any source of Islam other than the Qur’an. While at times, they may represent a group, as a general rule they reject sectarianism or organized grouping. Their appellations vary according to the emphasis of their doctrine; hence they are Qur’aniyyun when they emphasize the alone-ness of the Qur’an; Munkirū l-ḥadith when their emphasis is the rejection of the hadith (sayings of the prophet); and ahl Haqq (“true”) or literalists, called *Yan Haqiqa* in Nigeria (discussed below). In Nigeria, the latter group gains its name from the words they employ to denounce the Hadith, “*Kala Kato*,” which means the Hadith is mere words of a big human fellow (the Prophet). In the 1980s, the Maitatsine were identified as *kala kato*. Although the violent Maitatsine movement was crushed in the 1980s, *kala kato* continues to have a strong threatening presence. The least dangerous *kala kato* adherents are itinerant preacher herbalists found in many cities of northern Nigeria and at stops along motor highways. In the course of selling herbs, they recite the Qur’an and claim to interpret texts. Unfortunately, at the other end of the spectrum, some adherents express ideas concerning violence similar to those

expressed by the earlier Maitatsine and more recently by the contemporary Boko Haram. More detailed study is needed on this movement.

(f) *Yan Haqiqa*: An emergent movement is the *Yan Haqiqa* (which translates as “literalists”). The adherents of this group express very radical doctrines, sometimes bordering on the heretical. The BBC Hausa Service on May 21, 2015 reported that it was unethical for it to repeat some of the pronouncements of a preacher from the group at the celebration of the Tijaniyya saint, Shaykh Ibrahim Niass. Among the less serious pronouncements of this preacher was the declaration that Allah and Muhammad (The Prophet) were a joke; all that was required was to hold onto the Shaykh Niass. Further, the preacher maintained that going to school—modern, western, traditional, Islamic or any sort whatsoever—was unnecessary, claiming that “someone just suffered going to school and wants you to suffer the same unnecessary fate.” The foremost Tijaniyya scholars rejected the attempt of the *Yan Haqiqa* to associate with the Tijaniyya. In addition, some youth violently demonstrated against their pronouncements. The office of the Kano state Shari‘a commission and the house of the preacher were burned.

(g) *Boko Haram*: This is the epitome of violent, radical, cultist, Islamic movements in Nigeria. At the beginning in the mid-1990s Boko Haram was like many other movements, but after 2009 took even Nigerian Muslims by surprise when it suddenly turned to indiscriminate brutal destruction of human life and property. Boko Haram has attracted much scholarly writing and reporting, but like Maitatsine, its causes stemmed from economic and political deprivation. Fifth columnist theories about the movement are often too general and conjectural, offering non-nuanced and nonfactual explanation. Historical, geographic, economic, and political factors, including intercontinental linkages and the failure of the Nigerian state, are not properly explored. Unlike Maitatsine, which was a traditional, conservative, mystic and cultist fortune-telling

enterprise, Boko Haram is rooted in the misreading of Wahhabi/Salafi Islam by poorly educated and overzealous youth whose charismatic exuberance was poorly exploited by politicians and poorly managed by an administration widely adjudged a failure.

Thus it was not so conservative as to refer to itself by its popular assigned label Boko Haram (Western education is forbidden) nor to reject Western education (*Boko*) in its entirety or for its own value as argued by many leaders of the community, including the charismatic leader, Muhammadu Yusuf whose assassination by the police on July 30, 2009 was the point when the movement turned to indiscriminate brutality. At different times, Yusuf debated the Boko Haram ideology with popular Wahhabi/Salafi scholars through widely circulated media (Hassan 2010). Although there were claims that privately Yusuf was convinced that this ideology was misguided, he changed position in public. (Sergie and Johnson 2015; Usman 2013).

In his famous debate with Fantami, Yusuf said if the environment for the cultivation of *Boko* (non-Islamic education) meets the Islamic requirement of separating the genders, and if theories at variance with the teachings of the Qur'an are expunged, then *Boko* is acceptable and can be cultivated. Yusuf faults the influence on Muslims of ideas and theories at variance with Islam (i.e., *Boko*) for the pervasive corruption of Nigeria's public sector, rendering them *Haram*. Similarly Mallam Sanni Umaru, who rejects the western use of the term "*Boko Haram*" argues that:

Boko Haram does not in any way mean 'Western Education is a sin' as the infidel media continue to portray us. Boko Haram actually means 'Western Civilization' is forbidden. The difference is that while the first gives the impression that we are opposed to formal education coming from the West...which is not true, the second affirms our belief in the supremacy of Islamic culture (not Education), for culture

is broader, it includes education but not determined by Western Education (*Ngex News*, August 17, 2009).

Boko Haram started like many other movements as religious study group in the mosque holding intermittent public preaching and calling itself Ahlul Sunna wal Jama'ah Hijra (The People of the Prophetic Tradition and the Emigrating Congregation) to underscore its claim to prophetic orthodoxy and migration from the public sins of the day. As its following increased among the poor because of its provision of welfare services, it modified its name to Ahlul Sunnah wa al Jama'ah ala Minhaj as-Salaf (The People of the Prophetic Tradition and the Organization on the Methodology of the Pious Predecessors) to emphasize orthodoxy not only in theological but also in social and political ideals (Muhammad 2010; Abdallah 2011). The failure of government to prosecute the leaders of the movement after several arrests and the relative success of the group after several skirmishes with the state emboldened the group to attack the police and the army (Muhammad 2010: 27-28). After one such skirmish on June 11, 2009, Yusuf questioned the legitimacy of the Nigerian state in a videoed speech, which was followed by more skirmishes in Potiskumn (Yobe state) and Wudil (Kano state). After four days of fighting, the army arrested Yusuf who was killed while in police custody. This provided the group with a justification for further violence, which extended to the civilian population, but the movement failed to establish traction.

This was another moment for the state to take decisive administrative, judicial, intelligence and military actions but it failed to do so. Meanwhile, the group began calling itself Jama'atu Ahlul Sunnah lid Da'awati wa-l Jihad (The Organization of the People of the Prophetic Tradition for the Call to Islam and Jihad), making it the first Islamic movement in Nigeria since Ibn Fodio to associate its name with jihad and *salaf*. It has surpassed Maitatsine in waging murderous warfare

against state forces. The epicenter of its activities occurred in Borno and Yobe states. From 2010–15, under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau, Boko Haram destroyed human life and property on a massive scale, resulting in at least 14,000 media-documented deaths as of July 3, 2015 and the displacement of about 1.2 million people (Campbell, July 6, 2015; UNHRC statistical snapshot, July 6, 2015).

Former President Goodluck Jonathan, under whose administration Boko Haram developed, propagated wild fifth columnist theories even as he admitted government failure. On May 29, 2011, he claimed that there were adherents of Boko Haram in the security forces and in government (Sergie and Johnson 2015). Rumors abounded implicating southerners in anti-Muslim plots in Adamawa and Plateau states and as far south as Yenagoa (Bayelsa state). It was alleged that a person in army uniform had bombed a church in the northcentral city of Jos to give Islam a bad name. There were allegations that the United States was creating an al-Qa'ida in Nigeria to justify a US takeover of the country.

With the election of Muhammadu Buhari to the presidency in March 2015, it is hoped that the federal government will take decisive action to quell Boko Haram, but the future remains uncertain. The new administration faces the challenge to interrogate Boko Haram in such a way as to understand the propelling forces at the movement's epicenter as well as its association with transnational Islamist militancy and potency. Boko Haram is the second Nigerian movement after Maitatsine that has actually taken up arms in the name of jihad to dethrone what it considers as illegitimate (*haram*) system of government and the modern/Western system of education and epistemology (*Boko*). Local "bandits" are widely spread in Muslim northern Nigeria where they are known as "*Yandaba*" and "*Yan Kwanta-Kwanta*." They are armed with small arms—sticks, knives, machetes, and locally manufactured Dane guns—but these are not explicitly Islamic

groups; however, they offer ready recruitment grounds for violent Islamic groups. Also there are countless heretical deviant or fringe Muslim groups of various sizes, lifespans, and influences in urban and rural areas of northern Nigeria. Many are known only to a few critical observers in their places of operations where they nurse grievances.

ISLAMIC MODERNISM IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA

Islamic modernism is very active in the southwest and identified with Yoruba Muslims, including those in the northern Nigerian diaspora such as the Ahmadiyya and Ansarul Deen Society of Nigeria. Later organizations in this tradition are the Ansarul Islam Society of Nigeria, the Nasarul Fathil Islam of Nigeria (NASFAT), the National Council of Muslim Youth Organizations (NOCOMYO), the Movement for Shari'a in North Western Nigeria, and the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN).

(a) *The Ahmadiyya*: The Ahmadiyya is an Islamic group founded 1889 by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (India). Ahmad (1979: 107) claimed to have been honored with divine converse so that he could “bestow sight upon the blind and should guide seekers of the One who has been so far lost.” As such, he claimed the continuation and perfection of prophethood in him (Koya 1995: 32) and indeed that he was the expected Messiah (Jesus) or the Mahdi of Islamic thought. By 1914 the movement had undergone a major split. The main group maintains the doctrine that Ghulam was a prophet and caliph of the community. It maintains headquarters at Qadian while the splinter faction, which regards Ghulam only as a reformer (*mujaddid*), established its headquarters at Lahore (Pakistan). During this crisis (1914–1921), Ahmadiyya literature in English from Qadian came into Nigeria, which coincided with the time when western-educated Muslim Yorubas were eager to read Islamic literature in English. By 1916, educated Nigerian Muslims invited the Ahmadiyya to Nigeria (Balogun 1974: 350). From April 1921 to July 1922, the first Pakistani

Ahmadiyya missionary strengthened the Ahmadiyya Jama'at in the Lagos area and visited Ilorin, Zaria, Kano and Sokoto. Immediately after the departure of "the expatriate Missionary," the organization faced a number of crises (Doi 1984: 350).

The first crisis concerned the question of the leader in *Salat (Imam)* and culminated in the secession of a group that the Ahmadiyya refer to as *Ahlil'Qur'an* (People of the Qur'an). The second, which, according to the Ahmadiyya, "was more devastating," also concerned leadership, ending in the rechristening of the organization as the Ahmadiyya Movement-in-Islam (Nigeria). The Pakistan-based leader, *Khalifatul Masih* (Caliph of the Messiah), announced in the *Daily Times of Nigeria* on January 5, 1940 that he had withdrawn recognition from the Ahmadiyya Movement-in-Islam (Nigeria). Those who remained loyal to the *Khalifa* then adopted the name Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission (Nigeria) and registered the organization as the Nigerian Branch of Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya (Qadian). The official website of the Ahmadiyya in Nigeria (www.ahmadiyyang.org) claims that immediately after the crisis of the 1930s and the Second World War, the mission entered a period of rapid expansion throughout Nigeria. There are claims that the splinter group became the Anwar-ul-Islam and further splits saw the emergence of such other movements as Ansarul deen Society of Nigeria, the Jama'atu Islamiyya Nigeria, and the Anwar ul Islam movement of Nigeria (*Nigerian Review* 1974: 3).

At the international level, the first public conflict between the Ahmadiyya and the Salafi/Wahhabi Islam started in October 1970 when the World Muslim League (WML) at Makkah rejected the English translation of the Arabic text of the Qur'an by an Ahmadi. According to the WML, the renderings were "incompatible with the well-known teachings of Islam and the commentaries of the great scholars of the Qur'an" and the translation "marred the majesty of the Qur'an and contained distortions of its meaning" to justify Ahmadiyya claims. On the basis of the

MWL decisions, the Saudi Arabian government decided that Ahmadis were unbelievers and instructed its embassies all over the world not to issue visas to Ahmadis to visit Makkah to perform the Islamic pilgrimage (*hajj*). In 1974 the Pakistani parliament passed a resolution declaring the members of the Ahmadiyya movement as non-Muslims. The Saudi and Pakistani decisions stirred another round of crises, including newspaper debates among the Ahmadiyya in Nigeria (Doi 1984b: 352–53). The Nigerian Ahmadiyya defends itself, for example, from what it refers to as “concerted accusations” of disbelief” (www.islamonline.net/eng/article/1304971172010).

The Ahmadiyya is well known for its efforts at modernism: building western type schools, hospitals and engaging in other socioeconomic development program. It claims credit for encouraging Muslim parents to encourage their children/wards to obtain western education (<https://islaminafrica.wordpress.com/>). It established its first school in Lagos as early as 1922 and now the Ahmadiyya have many schools and hospitals (some of which are mentioned below) spread all over Nigeria, including some located in rural areas in the spirit of development-from-below. Its success in building modern schools was its major source of strength in attracting a strong Yoruba followership.

(b) *The Ansar-ud Deen Society of Nigeria:* The Ansar-ud Deen Society (The Society of the Helpers of the Islamic Religion) was founded on December 21, 1923 by forty-two young Muslims who desired to organize schools that incorporated western and Islamic education for Muslim children as an alternative to mission schools intent on converting their children (Reichmuth 1996). Among its goals was the translation of the Qur’an and other Islamic books into local languages to fulfill the organizational mission of disseminating the “true message of Islam.” It contributed much toward the western education of southwestern Nigerian Muslims. The admission of women into the society dates back to 1926 (Ansar-ud hjhjh, n.d.). Although

membership is open to all Muslims in the nation, the society appeals mainly to Yorubas.

The society is well structured with offices at the national, state, local government area and district levels. The society has groups responsible for Muslim pilgrims' welfare, a press and bookshop, Islamic propagation and publicity, and other activities. The society's constitution states that the aims are to build and maintain educational institutions, including libraries; to promote literacy and intellectual pursuits; to adopt measures to promote religious, moral and economic advancement of the Muslim community; to eradicate all forms of evil and corruption; to foster brotherhood in the community; and to propagate and defend Islam.

(c) *The Federation of Muslim Women Association in Nigeria* (FOMWAN): Today FOMWAN is probably the most modernizing Islamic faith-based organization in Nigeria. It was founded in the southwest in October 1985 by western-educated Muslim women professionals. By 2010 it had a physical presence in 34 states with over 500 affiliate groups. It is actively engaged in international networking and has been a catalyst to the formation of similar sister associations in other African countries: FOMWAG in Ghana, FOMWAL in Liberia, FOMWAGA in Gambia, FOMWAGA in Sierra Leone, and FOMWAN in Niger. The organization seeks to correct the gender imbalance evident in typical Muslim civic organizations of northern Nigeria where men are and believe they must be seen to be in control, which reflects patriarchal Muslim social systems generally.

FOMWAN is well structured with appropriate officers in its national headquarters at Abuja and state and local government headquarters at their respective capital cities. It has coordinators for the six geopolitical zones of the country. The organization's fundamental aims are educating and empowering women through capacity building. The "spiritual" mission is to propagate Islam, to educate Muslim women to live according to the tenets of Islam, and to make a positive impact

on national issues both of Islamic and secular nature. The organization envisions a world where women are properly educated and equipped to work alongside men for an equitable and peaceful society.

The stated target of FOMWAN is the education of the youth, though it does not restrict its activities to the youth. It has schools providing western and Islamic education at nursery, primary, secondary, and tertiary levels with emphasis on the girl-child and married women. It runs daycare and vocational centers, organizes seminars and workshops, and publishes an annual magazine, journals and pamphlets. FOMWAN organizes programs for early school leavers, especially drop-outs. In addition, it pays school fees for both disabled and less privileged persons in the society. It is concerned with health care delivery, emphasizing reproductive health. To this end, it maintains subsidized clinics and pharmacies. Other activities include work among abandoned and refugee children, operating orphanages, coordinating the distribution of relief materials (zakat), providing portable water through boreholes and wells, and providing food for indigent persons, particularly during the fasting of Ramadan and during local and national crises. To carry out these myriad activities, FOMWAN coordinates with the national, state, and local governments and is actively involved in inter-gender and inter-religious dialogue. It is active in “call to Islam” (*da‘wa*) activities and organizes a FOMWAN week (www.fomwan.org).

(d) *Nasrul-Lahi-Il-Fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT) (Praise the Victory of Allah Society of Nigeria)*: The first part of the name of this organization joins two Arabic phrases: *Nasrul-(Al)lah(i)* and *(a)-l-Fatih*. The first phrase literally means “the help of Allah” and *Al-Fatih*, means “the victorious”; conjoined it can be rendered in English as “the help of Allah is victorious.” The constitution of NASFAT says, “the motto of the Society shall be: *Wa ma Nasru illa-min ‘indillah*” (translated as: There is no help except from Allah).

On Sunday, March 5, 1995 in Lagos, ten Muslim Yoruba men inaugurated what Soares (2009) calls a “prayer group” which, outside the five daily prayers, is an unusual practice in Islam though such “getting together” is a common Yoruba tradition and a growing phenomenon of Nigerian Christianity. In 1996, NASFAT was incorporated with a constitution stating that “the Society shall be a non-profit, non-political and non-sectarian Islamic Organization.” The founding fathers were university graduates and professionals, but only Abdullah Akinbode had advanced Islamic scholarly credentials, a Bachelor of Arts in Islamic Studies. This exemplifies the trend of Muslim professionals attempting to integrate their Islamic values with modernity or their Muslim identity in the secular modernizing Nigerian republic. They engage in *da‘wa* (call to Islam) and various socioeconomic and intellectual activities. Some organizations include the Muslim Lawyers Association and the Muslim Medical Practitioners Association.

NASFAT itself has continued to embrace elites, well-educated Muslims who are professionals, business leaders, government officials, doctors, lawyers and engineers, and “other modern sectors of the economy” (Soares 2009: 184). Its constitution declares that “membership of the Society shall be open to all Muslims from all parts of the world...” In real life, however, NASFAT is almost entirely a Yoruba affair though it claims more than one million members in more than 180 chapters throughout Nigeria and as far afield as Atlanta and Houston in the US, London, Seville and The Hague (www.nasfat.org). A controversial element that helps restrict its membership to Yorubas is the apparent incorporation of some practices of Christian Pentecostalism that is having earth-breaking growth and influence in Nigeria.

NASFAT is derided as “Pentecostal Islam” or “Islamic Pentecostalism” and its members as “Born-Again Muslims.” Such descriptions are strengthened by its attempt to offer an alternative to church services: it holds weekly meetings on Sundays. This is quite unusual for a Muslim group

since most Muslims gather for communal prayers at midday on Fridays. Moreover, the weekly meetings include prayer requests and testimonials, which are not ordinarily associated with Muslim religious activities and public worship. NASFAT members are enjoined to wear white garments at the weekly services, reminiscent of the *hajj* where people are required to wear white, showing that all Muslims are equal. However their white clothing looks very similar to the “white garments” worn by members of some African independent churches in Nigeria. More research is necessary to establish the degree of incorporation of Christian influences. NASFAT publications do give indications of the nature of Pentecostal influences. Its website, www.nasfat.com, explains that the 1995 forum that incorporated NASFAT was based on “The quest for Islamic knowledge and brotherly association,” but “the aim is to maximize favorably the leisure time that exists amongst Muslims who laze away Sunday mornings. The need to spend these precious leisure hours judiciously arose amongst a few Muslim elites who rose to the challenge.” This is reinforced by NASFAT members wish to challenge of the domination of TV airtime monopolized by the Pentecostals on Sundays. Thus the founders of NASFAT desired to give Muslims an alternative opportunity to engage their free and leisure hours of Sunday. Indeed, NASFAT held its inaugural session on a Sunday; Soares (2009) noted that this decision to hold its largest weekly gatherings on Sundays invited criticism from nonmembers. Thus, many Muslims in Nigeria question Yoruba Muslims’ ways and it is “fairly typical” for a northern Nigerian Muslim intellectual to denounce NASFAT as “not very orthodox.” In Soares’ view, NASFAT is essentially a Muslim Yoruba “response to Christianity,” whose members dress all in white, meet on Sundays and behave like Christians—too anchored in the Yoruba context and too mimetic of Christianity to be able to create and sustain universal appeal. I have heard many Nigerians maintain that NASFAT is largely a Yoruba Muslim phenomenon and possibly even an atavistic form of “Islamic Pentecostalism.”

NASFAT's constitution says its mission is "to develop an enlightened Muslim society nurtured by a true understanding of Islam for the spiritual upliftment and welfare of mankind," which implies an understanding of Islam according to the tenets of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. NASFAT is doing much better than other Islamic organizations in realizing its "strategic objectives," which include the promotion of the economic empowerment of members, social welfare, healthcare delivery, vocational training, marriage counseling, and interest-free loans. NASFAT founded a university, Fountain University, the first Islamic tertiary institution among many established by Christian organizations. NASFAT also engages in sophisticated commercial enterprises much more than other Islamic organizations.

(e) *National Council of Muslim Youth Organization (NACOMYO)*: First established in the southwest, NACOMYO aims to serve as a united front for all Muslim youth organizations and fosters unity between all Muslim youth organizations. Its mission statement asserts its aim "to ensure the realization of Islamic education and emancipation of the Muslim community from the claws of oppressors."

ISLAM IN THE SOUTHEAST AND SOUTH-SOUTH ZONES

According to Oseni (2009: 9) there is "a mass of Arabic Manuscript" in southeastern Nigeria, which he believes indicates Islamic scholarship all over Nigeria rather than just northern Nigeria. Further, he claims that a manuscript authored by a Borno scholar who never left Maiduguri may be found in Auchi, Calabar, Ijebu Ode, or Ilorin while there may be no copy of it in the northeast. For example, he found a rare manuscript of Sultan Bello in Auchi. Doi (1984: 158–59, 168–84) discusses at some length Islam in Bendel and in Igboland based on his research during the period 1965–67.

According to Doi's account, Islam first spread in the Etsako area of present-day Edo State in 1860 as a result of Hausa/Fulani conquerors from the present Kebbi state as well as the Nupe invasion of the area for slaves during the second half of nineteenth century. The settlement of Hausa and Nupe traders enhanced the establishment of Islam in the area and its spread to Auchi, which is now better known as the Muslim area of Edo (old Benin Empire). Islam in Benin City itself is of recent origin. The first Muslim arrived from Lagos in 1910, but Christian missionary activities, coupled with the wave of modernization, weakened the growth of Islam in the old Benin kingdom. More recently, however, the greater movement of traders from the northern part of the country allows the maintenance of old mosques and erection of many makeshift mosques.

According to Uchendu (2010: 63-67), Muslim traders from Nupe, Hausa, and Yoruba from northern and western Nigeria began to settle in the Nsukka area from the 1920s. A few Igbos converted to Islam in Enugu Ezike and Ibagwa before 1930 and in 1958, a quarter of the village of Enohia. By 1967, when the Nigeria Civil War started, conversion extended to Owerri and Abakaliki towns. By 1967, the entire Igbo Muslim population was scattered in just three towns—Nsukka, Owerri, and Abakaliki—and was estimated to be fewer than 200 Muslim soldiers in the federal army and 3,450 indigenous Igbo Muslims. Twenty-seven years later, “the Igbo Muslim population was estimated to number about 10,000, out of the entire Igbo population of more than sixteen million. Today, Islam in eastern Nigeria remains at an embryonic stage. Igbo Muslims tend to identify themselves with the Izala, tariqa, and nonaffiliated movements.

So far there is no published work on Islam in the non-Igbo eastern areas of Akwa Ibom and Cross Rivers, and Rivers states. While Islam is still limited in eastern Nigeria, Doi (1984b: 347) notes that the JNII and some Islamic centers resumed activities there immediately after the civil war. Currently, the Jama‘atu Nasril Islam, the Jama‘atu Izalatul Bid‘a wa Ikamatus Sunnah and

even Fityanul Islam have functional offices or mosques and functionaries in many cities of the east though they are manned by people of northern extraction. Also many eastern states have state government agencies charged with the responsibility of organizing the *hajj* and the state governments sponsor people for the *hajj*. The MWL built and manages a college at Afikpo, Imo state. An increasing number of Igbo Muslims teach Islam in universities and other institutions of higher learning in the northern part of the country.

CONCLUSION

It is common knowledge that Islam (in practice) and Muslims (in characteristics and attitudes) do not demonstrate their much acclaimed unity. This paper demonstrates very divergent Islamic trends in Nigeria, yet common grounds are readily found. This paper has highlighted neglected Islamic trends in southern Nigeria as well as neglected unorthodox movements in northern Nigeria that require further investigation. Furthermore it is necessary to have a descriptive catalog of Islamic, Christian, hybrid, and traditional religious movements in Nigeria (and perhaps the diaspora).

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