

Seminars, Conferences, Addresses

National Seminar on Muslims and Islamic Scholarship in Twentieth- Century Nigeria

15–17 *Rabi' al Awwal* 1415 / 12–14 August 1994

Congregation Hall, City Campus

Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Nigeria

This seminar was organized by the Center for Islamic Studies (CIS), Usmanu Danfodiyo University (UDU), Sokoto, Nigeria. Many important personalities and academics of merit attended. The main theme was divided into seven subthemes: Islamic scholarship in modern Nigeria, intellectual contributions of notable Muslim scholars, Muslim relations with non-Muslims, Muslim religious groups and national unity, the influence of foreign Muslims on Muslims in Nigeria, contemporary innovation (*bid'ah*) and the challenge of Islam, and Muslims and religious practices.

Twenty-two papers were presented. During the opening ceremony, speeches were made by Zayyanu Abdullahi (vice-chancellor of Usmanu Danfodiyo University) and Sambo W. Junaid (director, Center of Islamic Studies, Usmanu Danfodiyo University). The paper by Colonel Yakubu Mu'azu (governor of Sokoto State) was delivered by his representative, Muhammad Lawa Maude (commissioner for works, housing, and environment). The representative of Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki (sultan of Sokoto) Magajin Rafi of Sokoto also attended the opening ceremony.

In the first session, M. G. Maitafsir (Faculty of Education, UDU) presented "Islamic Scholarship in Nigeria Today: A Way Forward." He discussed the problem facing Islamic scholarship and offered solutions. Bello D. Bada (Department of Modern European Languages, UDU), speaking on "The Role of Hausa Proverbs in the Propagation of Islam in Nigeria," explained how some Hausa proverbs containing codes of "do's" and "don't's" similar to Islam help to establish the Islamic faith and practices. Habib al Hassan (Translation Bureau UNESCO, UDU), in his "The Knowledge of *Hisāb* and Its Teachers in Hausaland (1900-1914)," pointed out that many Nigerian scholars specialize in this area. In a similar paper, "How *Hisāb* is Performed in Hausaland (1900-1914)," he showed through figures and illustrations how mathematics is mixed with magic to find certain hidden facts and to perform certain good or bad actions.

In the second session, Abubakar Y. Muhammad (CIS, UDU) delivered his "The Contribution of Muhammad Muntaqa Kumasi to the Propagation of Islam within and outside Nigeria in the Twentieth Century." He mentioned the various literatures and activities of scholars that help to develop Islam. Chika Umar Aliyu (Department of Economics, UDU) presented "The Economic Ideas of Sheikh Abubakar Mahmud Gummi" and then discussed and evaluated this scholar's economic ideas. Sulaiman Musa (CIS, UDU) dealt with the contributions to Islamic scholarship made by al Wazir Muhammad ibn Abdullahi al Badauri. Bashir O. Ahmad (CIS, UDU) focused on the biography of al Shaykh Uthman and his promotion of Islam. M. Habib (head, Department of Arabic, UDU) presented "Shaikh Usmanu Na Limqan and His Contributions to the Development of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Nigeria." H. M. Maishanu (Department of History, UDU) and H. A. Aiunu (CIS, UDU) analyzed "The Role of Twentieth-Century Ulama in the Spread of Islamic Education: The Case of Malam Ibrahim Halilu Marinar Tsamiya Sakkwato (1920-77)."

In the third session, Muhammad Adam (CIS, UDU) explained Muslim-non-Muslim relations in twentieth-century Nigeria. A similar paper, "The Relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims in Contemporary Nigeria," was presented by Sani M. Makarfi (Department of Chemistry, UDU). S. G. Abdul Qadir (Department of Arabic, UDU) analyzed the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims in twentieth-century Nigeria. Each paper focused on the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims and provided ways to ensure a peaceful co-existence.

The fourth session consisted of three papers. The first one, that of Sani Umar Musa (Department of Arabic, UDU) on "An Overview of the

Organizational Structure and Functions of the Jam'at al Muslimin in Nigeria," summed up the designs and activities of various Islamic groups in Nigeria. Mukhtar U. Bunza (Department of History, State College of Arts and Science, Sokoto) discussed "Muslim-Christian Relations in Northern Nigeria: A Historical Perspective" by tracing historical Muslim-Christian crises and advised tolerance and working for a peaceful co-existence. Aminu I. Yandaki (Department of History, UDU) talked on "A Critical Analysis of a Christian Document: An Islamic Perspective," in which he articulated carefully and objectively the unjust and wrong utterances in an anti-Muslim document written by a Nigerian Christian.

In the fifth session, Sulaiman Musa (CIS, UDU) presented "The Influence of *Tafsir al Jalālayn* on Some Notable *Mufasssirūn* in the Twentieth Century." He showed how some of its elements featured in Qur'anic commentaries, both written and oral, by notable Nigerian scholars. "The Bosnian Conflict: A Lesson for Nigerian Muslims," was presented by L. G. Hassan and S. M. Makarfi, both from UDU's Department of Chemistry. They traced the Bosnian conflict and argued that Nigeria is moving toward a similar fate if the lesson is not learned. Aminu I. Yandaki, in his second paper, dealt with "The Influence of the Wahabiyah Movement in Nigeria." He argued that this Saudi movement had influenced notable scholars in Nigeria and, therefore, the rest of Nigeria's Muslims.

The sixth session featured two papers. Umar Muhammad's (CIS, UDU) "*Mankibin Kadirīya*: A Sufi Ritual Ceremony in Kano" explained a Sufi rite of tomb visits performed annually in the northern Nigerian city of Kano. He opined that it is an innovation (*bid'ah*) that has no basis in Islam. Dahiru M. Argungu, (Department of Nigerian Languages, UDU) used his "Language Use and Literacy during the Sokoto Caliphate" to analyze how the use of Arabic, Fulfulde, and Hausa enabled the Sokoto Jihad leader and scholars to achieve their historic religious mission.

The seventh and final session was marked by Ahmad Bako's (Department of History, UDU) "The Impact of Early Colonial Policies on Islamic Scholarship in Nigeria." He explained the negative impact colonial policies on Islamic scholarship and opined that the impact is still felt in the current neocolonial period. He suggested that the government should pay more attention to Islamic education in order to promote Islamic scholarship. After the discussion, the remainder of the time was used to read the communique, consisting of observations made regarding the state of Islamic scholarship in twentieth-century Nigeria and some resolutions on how to develop general Islamic knowledge in Nigeria, to the audience. After the communique, the organizing committee of the seminar thanked the paper presenters and the audience.

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