

Sufi Manuscript Culture in Western Borno:
A Critical Analysis of the Themes and Contents of the Twentieth Century Works of
Nguru Sufi Scholars

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Declaration

I, Usman AL-AMIN, hereby affirm that I have read and understood regulations § 7.4 of the doctoral regulations for the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Hamburg on plagiarism, dated 7 July 2010. I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “Sufi Manuscript Cultures in Western Borno: A Critical Analysis of Themes and Contents of 20th Century Works of Nguru Sufi Scholars,” written under the scientific supervision of Dr. Dmitry Bondarev, Prof. Dr. Thomas Eich and Prof. Dr. Stefanie Brinkmann, was single-handedly conceived by me. To the best of my knowledge, it contains no quotations or contribution by another scholar or someone surrounding me that has not been explicitly acknowledged. I also declare that the scientific contribution made by this study is the product of my own work and original research. The dissertation in the same or similar form has hitherto not been presented to another examining authority in Germany or abroad, nor has it been published.

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Abstract

This work is a first-time examination of the Sufi manuscript culture in twentieth-century Nguru, Nigeria. The specific focus is on the themes and contents found in the works of Shaykh Muḥammad Ghibrīma al-Dāghirī al-Ghūrāwī al-Barnāwī at-Tijānī (19.02.1902CE/15.01.1323 AH) and Shaykh ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī al-Ghūrāwī al-Barnāwī at-Tijānī (1909 CE/1330 AH) who were the leading Sufi figures in the town. Although, their works are famous in the Tijānīyya Sufi order in Sudanic Africa, what they wrote is almost unknown to both African and Western scholarship. Most of these works were written in classical Arabic and *Ajami* and touched on different subjects such as jurisprudence (*fiqh*), esoteric sciences and Sufism. Some of them have been published in print, but the majority are still in manuscript form. These works are essential in the intellectual discourse of Nguru. Hence, by tracing their circulation and popularity, and by carrying out a critical analysis of the themes and contents of their works, this study will try to bring shed light on the Sufi manuscript culture of western Borno in the twentieth century. To achieve its goals, this study will adopt a multi-disciplinary approach: a historical framework, an ethnographic framework, and an interpretative framework.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my father, Alhaji Aminu Kafinta, who passed away on Friday, 22nd May, 2019 for all the sacrifices he made throughout his life time. Unfortunately, he did not live long enough to witness the realization of his dream for me. He always encouraged me to pursue and excel in my educational career. My mother Jummai Abba who had been very supportive to my academic career right from my primary school days. May Allah reward them both with *Jannat al-Firdaus*.

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Definition of Operational Terms:

<i>Adab</i> (Ar)	Good or proper conduct/Arabic literature
<i>Ajami</i> (Ar)	Non-Arabic language written in Arabic characters.
<i>Al-Hubb llahi</i> (Ar)	Divine love
<i>Al-Haqiqatul Muhammadiyya</i> (Ar)	The Reality Essence of Prophet Muhammad
<i>Ahadith</i> (Ar)	Prophetic Traditions
<i>Al-mada'ih an Nabawiyya</i> (Ar)	Panegyrics Poem on the Prophet
<i>Asrar /Asraru</i> (Ar)	Divine Secrets
<i>Balagha</i> (Ar)	Rhetoric
<i>Basmalah</i> (Ar)	Invocation: "In the name of Allah"
<i>Batin</i> (Ar)	Hidden
<i>Bid'ah</i> (Ar)	Innovation
<i>Bn</i> (Ar)	Son of
<i>Dhikr</i> (Ar)	Remembering Allah and Invoking His Name
<i>Eid</i> (Ar)	Festival
<i>Fada'il</i> (Ar)	Excellent Qualities
<i>Fanā</i> (Ar)	Transmutation of Self
<i>Fayda</i> (Ar)	Divine Flood/blessing
<i>Fiqh</i> (Ar)	Islamic Jurisprudence
<i>Fulfulde</i> (H)	Language of the Fulbe.
<i>Ghawth az-Zaman</i> (Ar)	The Savior of the Age/Supreme Saint of his Era.
<i>Hafiz</i> (Ar)	Here Referred to Memorizer of the Holy <i>Qur'an</i>
<i>Halal</i> (Ar)	Anything lawful
<i>Khalwah/Halwa</i> (Ar)	Solitude
<i>Haqiqqa</i> (Ar)	Reality
<i>Hajj</i> (Ar)	Pilgrimage to Makkah
<i>Haram</i> (Ar)	Anything unlawful
<i>Hijra</i> (Ar)	Flight of Muhammad from Makkah to Madinah
<i>Ibn</i> (Ar)	The son of
<i>Ilm</i> (Ar)	Knowledge

<i>Ilm al-Kalam</i> (Ar)	The sciences of unity
<i>Imam</i> (Ar)	Leader of the congregational prayer
<i>Ijaza</i> (Ar)	License/Certificate/ authorization
<i>Kafir</i> (Ar)	Unbeliever
<i>Karamat</i> (Ar)	Miracles/Marvels
<i>Kashf</i> (Ar)	Unveiling
<i>Khalifa</i> (Ar)	Representative
<i>Lugha</i> (Ar)	Philology
<i>Ma'arifa</i> (Ar)	Gnosis
<i>Madarasah</i> (Ar)	Islamic school
<i>Madarasatul Ilmi</i> (Ar)	Higher Islamic School of Learning
<i>Maghreb</i> (Ar)	North Africa
<i>Maghreb Salat</i> (Ar)	Sunset Prayer
<i>Mahabbah</i> (Ar)	Divine love
<i>Malam</i> (H)	Teacher; also used as a honorific title
<i>Makaranta</i> (H)	School
<i>Makarantar allo</i> (H)	Qur'anic school
<i>Muqaddam</i> (Ar)	Initiator Male or Female of Tijāniyya <i>Tariqa</i>
<i>Maqamat</i> (Ar)	Spiritual Stations
<i>Maulud</i> (Ar)	Celebration of the Birthday of the Holy Prophet
<i>Murid</i> (Ar)	Disciple, Adherent/Novice
<i>Murshid</i> (Ar)	Spiritual Guide
<i>Nahw</i> (Ar)	Grammar
<i>Nafs</i> (Ar)	Soul/ego Soul
<i>Na'ibi</i> (Ar)	Deputy <i>Imam</i>
<i>Qablu</i> (Ar)	Crossing the Hands over the Chest during <i>Salat</i>
<i>Qadiri</i> (Ar)	Follower of the Qadiriyya order
<i>Qasida</i> (Ar)	A poem/an ode
<i>Salat</i> (Ar)	Muslim daily prayers
<i>Salati</i> (Ar)	A praise to the Prophet Muhammad
<i>Salgawa</i> (H)	The disciples of Muhammadu Salga (1869-1938)

<i>Sallallahu Alaihi Wassalam</i> (Ar)	Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him,
<i>Sadlu</i> (Ar)	Praying with Hands at Ease
<i>Sahabah</i> (Ar)	Companions of the Prophet
<i>Sahib al-Waqat</i> (Ar)	Saint of the Era
<i>Sahib Fayda</i> (Ar)	The repository of Divine flood
<i>Sahibul Dhikr</i> (Ar)	A Person who always Remember Allah
<i>Shafa'a</i> (Ar)	Intercession
<i>Shari'ah</i> (Ar)	Islamic Law
<i>Shaykh/Shuyukh</i> (Ar)	Spiritual Leader/Spiritual Leaders
<i>Silsila</i> (Ar)	Chain of Authority/Certificate
<i>Sufi</i> (Ar)	A Muslim mystic/Devotee In-depth Spiritual
<i>Sunna</i> (Ar)	A Practice of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
<i>Tariqa/Turuq</i> (Ar)	Path/Sufi order/Sufi Orders
<i>Tasawwuf</i> (Ar)	Spiritual Activities of the Sufis
<i>Tafsir</i> (Ar)	Qur'anic Exegesis/Explanation
<i>Tauhid</i> (Ar)	Scholastic Theology
<i>Tsangaya</i> (H)	A centre for Qur'anic studies away from town
<i>Tijānī</i> (Ar)	A follower of the Tijāniyya order
<i>Ulama</i> (Ar)	Learned Men
<i>Ummah</i> (Ar)	Muslim Community
<i>Wahdatul-Wujud</i> (Ar)	Existential Unity
<i>Wahdatu ash-Shuhud</i> (Ar)	Experiential Unity
<i>Wali</i> (Ar)	Saint
<i>Wilaya</i> (Ar)	Sainthood
<i>Zahir</i> (Ar)	Outward
<i>Zawiya or Zawaya</i> (Ar)	Sufis' Religious Centre
<i>Zhul Ma'arif</i> (Ar)	Ocean of Knowledge
<i>Zuhd</i> (Ar)	Ascetic
<i>Ziyara</i> (Ar)	Visitation

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

This dissertation is a historical study of Sufi manuscript culture in western Borno with specific reference to the analysis of themes and contents in the works of twentieth century of Nguru Sufi Scholars. It limitedly deals with the works of only two Tijānī Sufi scholars namely; Shaykh Muḥammad Ghibrīma al-Dāghirī al-Ghūrāwī al-Barnāwī at-Tijānī (1902-1975) and Shaykh ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī al-Ghūrāwī al-Barnāwī at-Tijānī (1909-1996) who are the most prominent and greatest scholars of Islam that Nguru produced in twentieth century. They are versatile personalities who devoted their lives in acquisition and dissemination of knowledge and led highly disciplined lives of successful merchants and erudite scholars. They are prolific writers and unique figures of their time and have many monumental works to their credit, all written on the area of Islamic sciences and Arabic literature. The relevance of the literary works left behind by the Shaykhs and their significance to individuals and community at large cannot be over emphasized, considering the fact that they are widely spread and used in every nook and corner of Nigeria and beyond. The leading role, which al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī played in the production, printing and marketing books immensely contributed to the survival and continuity of the Sufi literature in particularly Nigerian and generally West Africa.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The place of Sufi scholars and their literary works as major factors in development of Islam and Islamic education in West Africa is beyond all questions. In fact, it is impossible to discuss much of West African history, both and contemporary, without paying utmost attention to the role of Sufi scholars and their intellectual production in the spread of Islam and Islamic education in the twentieth-century West Africa who have been the focus of considerable number of ground-breaking research such as Brigaglia (2000, 2009, 2013, 2014, 2017, and 2018) Seesemann (2000, 2010, 2011, 2015, and 2017) and Wright (2005, 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2019). The efforts of these scholars clearly indicated that West African Sufism is a fast-growing field of research, but the vast geographic and demographic scale of the Sufi complex networks makes it very difficult to study. The Tijaniyya school of Sufism, for instance, is especially widespread across West Africa, with larger and smaller urban centres positioned as nodes of intellectual exchange within the Tijaniyya

networks. Nguru, Nigeria, is one such node historically emerged between the Muslim communities of Borno Sultanate to the east, and Muslims of the Sokoto Sultanate to the west. During the twentieth century, the Tijaniyya exponentially grew in these two cultural areas and Nguru was a significant connective factor in this process.

The twentieth-century Nguru was a residence place of two prominent Sufi Shaykhs al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī whose intellectual and public activity coincided with introduction of new media of literary dissemination whereby manuscripts were increasingly being supplemented by facsimile and print editions. Very little was known about the scope of their literary works and no research has been done into different manuscript/print distributional channels of their writings. In the backdrop of paucity of research into these topics, this dissertation therefore, intends to analyse the themes and contents of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's literary works by applying several conceptual and theoretical approaches used in such analysis as presented by different scholars especially intellectual historians. In line with this therefore, this research is not only important, but necessary, so as to cover up an important, but neglected area in the intellectual history of Nguru.

1.3 Objectives and Research Questions of the Study

The general objective of this research is to examine the Sufi manuscript culture in Western Borno through an analysis of the major themes and contents in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. The specific objectives are to:

- i. examine the nature and componenets of manuscript culture in twentieth-century Nguru;
- ii. investigate the life histories of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī as a Tijānī Sufī scholars;
- iii. identify al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's literary works;
- iv. discusss the codicological and palaeographical features of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's literary works;
- v. translate and analyse five selected mystical poems of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī;
- vi. discuss major themes and contents in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī as illustrated in the translated poems, and;
- vii. assess contextual value, popularity, distribution and function of literary works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī.

1.4 Research Questions:

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- i. What is the history and nature of manuscript culture in twentieth-century Nguru?

- ii. Who are twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars particularly al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī?
- iii. What are the literary works al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī?
- iv. What are the codicological and palaeographical features of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's literary works?
- v. What are the major themes, contents and styles used by al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī?
- vi. What are the contextual value of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's literary works and their popularity, distribution and function?

1.5 Justification of the Study

The study is justifiable, because to the best of my knowledge, no scholar has ever carried out research strictly and exclusively on the analysis of the major themes and contents in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, despite the level of their contributions to the development of Islamic education in Nguru. Most of the earlier researches focus their attention on the life and works of prominent Tijānī Sufi scholars/leaders such as Shaykh 'Umar al-Fūtī Tal (d.1864)¹ from Mali and Shaykh Ibrahim bin 'Abdallah Niasse (d. 1975)² from Senegal.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is on one of the neglected areas of the Sufi manuscript culture in the intellectual history of West Africa. This situation therefore, also calls for a research of this nature. This is hoped to expand the boundaries of the research area as it relates to the themes and contents of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, as well as, their relevance contextually to the socio-political and economic life of the people of Nguru and beyond. This research will as well serve as an important databank or source material for other researchers, policy-makers, non-governmental organizations, research institutions, governments and above all, to both admirers of Sufism and critics of Sufism, and to intellectual historians. Hence, it will open a new vista of understanding some aspects of Sufi literature and rituals by the Tijānī Sufis whose ideas, doctrines, theology and religious activities which later became sources of their pragmatic and speculative thinking in Sūfi manners.

¹ For more on al-Fūtī Tal see Jah, O. (1973); see also Willis 1989; Amir Syed 2016; Ware 2018.

² For a detailed discussion of the biography, ideas and contents of Ibrahim Niasse see Seesemann 2011; see also Wright 2015; Taofiq 2008; Quadri 1981; Ware 2018.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The main thrust of this thesis, as earlier noted, is to analyse critically the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, with a view to arriving at general conclusions as to their themes and contents. In view of this, the study is limited to only translation and analysis of five selected mystical poems of al-Dāghirī³ while, in the case of al-Fallātī, only his seven mystical prose writings will be analysed with the intention of arriving at general conclusions concerning themes, contents, style and language.

1.8 Sources and Methodology

Like any historical research, data was collected from basically two important sources; primary and secondary. The primary sources comprise the archival corpus and the oral data that were collected through interviews with the *Murīdūn* (disciples), associates, Tijānīyya *Muqaddams*, (spiritual guide and a Sufi group leader) *Mālams* (teacher and trainer) and *Shuyukh* (Sufi master) who had close contact with al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. Secondary sources are used to corroborate information generated from the primary sources. The secondary sources used in this study are both the published and the unpublished works such sources gave direction to my thoughts when analysing the themes and contents of the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī.

With regards to the methodology, this research adopts the multi-disciplinary approach: a historical framework, an ethnographic framework, and an interpretative framework. The historical framework comprises the main events which took place within the selected period; these are described and analysed. The selected mystical writings are artifacts, thus, are analysed more as literary genres with a mixture of narrative analysis that discloses past experiences socio-religious, cultural, and societal factors. They are assessed in the light of the teachings of Islam and the influence of Tijānīyya in northern Nigeria including Nguru.

The ethnographic framework involves field trips which were carried out in two periods of forty days: in March-April 2018 and again in March-April 2019, with financial support from the DAAD. I began the fieldwork with visits to the families of the late al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī and continued with visits to agencies, research centres, private and public libraries, especially many Nigerian University libraries where relevant data were secured. Apart from the libraries, I visited book sellers/vendors and book centres in Nguru and Kano Central Mosque, and at the ancient

³ However, there are two more mystical poems of al-Dāghirī which I will refer to in the overall analysis as well as to a few selected Sufi doctrines in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī.

Kurmi Market. I also consulted with some Nigerian experts in the field; this turned out to be a valuable source of information for this work. I interviewed others over the telephone and recorded their responses, which I later used in my data analysis. These discussions and responses have shaped my research.

The interpretative framework involves the analytical study and definition of the components of any text.⁴ It is the construct which “pieces together” the various parts of a text like mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī; the expressed notions, thought, and feelings which are structurally transferred into a textual world or reality. Sufī terminology and literary tropes are common features of all the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. The interpretative approach involves interpretation and analysis of terminology and tropes; and goes beyond simply interpreting the texts or terminologies; it also involves identifying the implicit and explicit ideas within the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī.

1.9 Theoretical Frameworks and Model of Approaches

Due to the nature of this research, two theoretical frameworks are adopted; the first theoretical model was formulated by William Graham and the second is Historicist theory, so as to critically analyse the themes and contents found in the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. This is mainly because, by objectively examining the doctrines and beliefs embedded in mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī within an autonomous religious context, their works could be appreciated. Thus, drawing on the approach developed by Graham, the mystical works produced by al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī will be considered as sacred texts and will be critically analysed based on the ways both Sufis and non-Sufis view and understand them. Special attention is given to how this reflects the worldview of Sufī and Tijānī ideas, their doctrines, and religious activities such as devotion to the Prophet Muḥammad, to the saints and other religious leader they praise.⁵ In this way, the statement made by William Graham will serve as a guide in my analysis and methodology for this research. According to him:

The most crucial kind of ‘authenticity’ of a scripture or anything else of religious significance is, in the final analysis, its absolute authenticity in the understanding and faith of a particular individual or a particular group in a particular age. What a person or community recognizes as true, has faith in as true, is as legitimate an object of scholarly concern as the equally elusive genesis or ‘original source’ of an idea, an image, a myth, or even a

⁴ Solagberu 2009, 5.

⁵ Aslan 2008 drew my attention to this approach I looked for the work and benefitted immensely from it.

text; and certainly it is more important than the latter in seeking to understand the person or group involved.⁶

The relevance of the approach developed by Graham is that the beliefs and doctrine presented in this research are analysed in the context of those who believe in them. This, therefore, differs from the methodology of many Orientalists who attempt to investigate the validity of beliefs or recorded experiences.⁷ I try to understand how these beliefs and experiences originated and to place them in their appropriate cultural, historical, religious, and intellectual context.⁸ This there study therefore is more of historiographical research rather than a literary purpose.

Another theory used in this research work is Historicist theory as it is guiding principle. New Historicism is a theory that seeks to find meaning in a text by considering it within the context of the prevailing ideas and social assumptions of the historical era in which the text is produced. The New Historists seeks to understand literature from a historical perspective. This theory is relevant to this study as it seeks to critically analyse the themes and contents of the literary works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. Thus, my research work aims to clearly demonstrate that the writing of texts is strictly connected to the society in which these texts are embedded in a particular period.

The William Graham's theory and the Historicist theory will be the theoretical perspective within which our analysis shall be constructed.

1.9.1 Functional Approach

The functional approach assists researchers in understanding the religious, socio-cultural values of a text because it focuses on the contribution of the text in maintaining religious, socio-cultural institutions of a place or a group of people. This research makes use of this approach particularly in analysing function and contextual value of the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. In the functional approach, researchers consider both the context and text. Context, in this study, refers to the religious, socio-cultural milieu, the extent to which the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī reflect the ideas, cultural and belief systems of the people of northern Nigeria. This is because, in analysing the meanings and functions of the texts, the functional approach focuses on the religious, socio-cultural environment in northern Nigeria including Nguru. The religious and social context refers to the relationship between the texts and religious and social

⁶ Graham 1977, 2.

⁷ Aslan 2008, 22.

⁸ Aslan 2008, 22.

matters such as devotional, homiletic, festival activities (begging, wedding, *Maulud Nabi*, *Salah al-Fitr* and *Salah al-Adha* celebrations) and other socio-cultural functions.

1.9.2 Structural Approach

The structural approach looks for the rules that underline and govern how the structure of a text functions and stresses the idea of the inseparable feature of form and meaning. In analysing the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, structuralist perspectives such as poetic devices (rhyme, meter, length, date, and chronogram symbols and images, figures of speech and anthropomorphism) are applied in this research. This is because the themes and contents of the mystical writings, especially poetry, are influenced by syntax, vocabulary, and grammatical structure. Moreover, under this structural approach, both the nature and specific role of style in the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are investigated.

These approaches, we believe, shall meet virtually all our requirements in dealing with the several critical analysis of the themes and contents of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī.

1.10 Previous Works on the Research Topic

Literature review is basically the foundation upon which all academic research works are built. Meanwhile, its importance in intellectual history research cannot be over emphasized. Based on this therefore, to critically analyse the work of twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars, related literature particularly on the life history and literary works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī will be reviewed in order to acquaint the reader with the current status of research work on the subject. However, the main idea behind the review is to note and appreciate some works on life history and literary works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī written by scholars and academics over the last few decades; also to appreciate the progress made in the area with a view to providing some direction for further research. Thus, a number of literature ranging from books, journals, papers, archives, to reports will be reviewed but we may or may not comment fully on all of them.

Yet, despite many scholarly works on intellectual and social history in northern Nigeria, few have given serious attention to their life histories and their writings. For instance, al-Dāghirī, who sought the post of *ghawth az-zaman/Sahib al-Fayḍa* (the reformer or saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era), is not even mentioned by Seesemann (2011, 2015), Wright (2015, 2018), Paden (1973) and Hiskett (1975, 1977, 1982); and they have written extensively either on the Sufi literature or Tijānī writings or Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niāsse (d. 1975). Brigaglia (2017a, 2017b, 2018), Hunwick (1995) and Solagberu (2009) only refer to him in the most cursory manner. This

suggests that no substantial academic research has been carried out on by these intellectual giants. A few works have been written on them by local scholars, but they make no attempt to analyse the themes and contents of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's works or their popularity, distribution, codicological and palaeographical features.

In the case of al-Dāghirī for instance, attempts to record his works and life history have been made by certain local scholars. Mohammed al-Mukhtar Atamma al-Qadiri was the first local scholar to write about him. The title of his work is "Shaykh Muhammad Ghibrīma: His Life and Works."⁹ It is a long essay written in Arabic and was submitted to the Department of Arabic, Bayero University Kano (BUK) in 1979. His research contains three chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter dealt with the life history of al-Dāghirī, his upbringing, teaching, and learning. The second chapter presents most of his works, which the researcher has studied. The third chapter discusses the literary values of those works. Then, the research was concluded with suggestions and recommendations. The essay, being the first of its kind, provides background information for academic research on al-Dāghirī. It was written shortly after the death of the Shaykh and much information is missing.

Additionally, it is full of fictional and hagiographical narratives glorifying the Shaykh. This work does not, in any way, mention the themes and contents of al-Dāghirī's works. Furthermore, apart from the type and size of the paper used in writing the works, most of the fundamental codicological and palaeographical features of the works are not treated. Despite these limitations, the present researcher finds al-Qadiri's work very useful and as an important literature on al-Dāghirī biography and an eye opener to his works. Furthermore, it was written for the Arabic-speaking community, and is only available to those who are conversant with Arabic language. Thus, there is a clear need for further research on the life and writings of the Shaykh for English speaking communities.

Another local annalist, J. T. Lawan, also supplies valuable information on the life history of al-Dāghirī. His work is entitled *A Scholar of His Generation: The Life and Times of Shaykh Muhammad Ngibrima (1902-1975)*.¹⁰ He sheds considerable light on the emergence and early development of the Nguru polity. Tahir also writes on Sufism as well as the lifestyle of the Tijānīyya brotherhood in the town and his work deals with the influx into the area of the Dagira

⁹ Al-Qadiri 1979.

¹⁰ Tahir, 2006.

people (an ethnic group from northern Nigeria and Niger Republic). The book gives an insightful knowledge into the life of al-Dāghirī. In relating the story of this great Islamic scholar and reformer, the author fiddles the work with “Sufi attitude” thus emphasizing his spiritual life rather than his material life. He records the words of some prominent Tijani Sufi Scholars about al-Dāghirī, but he did not mention his relationship with them during his lifetime.

Interestingly, he mentions the titles of some of the Shaykh’s works, though he had no interest in either the themes or contents, limiting himself to explaining why the Wahhabi scholars do not give objective assessment to the works. Tahir did not even try to discover the exact number of works written by al-Dāghirī, nor did he explain the genres, major motives and categories of the works, perhaps, seeing them as unconnected to the Shaykh’s contribution. This work does not consider the codicological and palaeographical features of al-Dāghirī’s works. His claim that nobody introduced al-Dāghirī to Sufism and Tijānīyya is correct inasmuch as he has six different Tijānīyya *silsilāh* (chains of authority). In addition, the work partially deals with the intellectual history of Nguru, but he did not shed light on Tijānī Sufi manuscript culture in the town. Tahir’s work is the second attempt of its kind in the field but will be of little help to people who do not understand Arabic. Despite these weaknesses, this work is not only useful for historical references but is also important to this study offering the present researcher additional information on the biography of the Shaykh as well as a partial list of his works.

Muhammad Ubaliyo Abubakar’s “The Contributions of Shaykh Muhammad Ghibrīma Dagira Nguru to the Development of Islam,” a long essay submitted to the Department of History, University of Maiduguri in 2014 focuses on three aspects: He gives a sketchy biography of the Shaykh; he highlights the intellectual, social, medical, economic, and political contributions of al-Dāghirī; and he examines the impacts of the Shaykh on the people of the area. This work builds on the earlier one by supplying additional information on the life of the Shaykh while it also adds to the list of his works without dwelling on their impacts on the Muslim population in the area. However, as the title suggests, its concerns are the contributions of al-Dāghirī to the development of Islam and the author fails to make even general appraisal of the literary works of the Shaykh. Thus, the work offers no analysis of the themes and content of the works of al-Dāghirī. Despite these drawbacks, the work provides background information to this study.

However, there is one major academic work on al-Fallātī. It is Usman Al-amin’s M. A. Thesis “Nguru Islamic Scholars in Perspective: the Contributions of Shaykh Usman al-Fallātī (C.

1906-1996) to Islamic Scholarship,” it was submitted to the Department of History, University of Maiduguri in 2016. The work can be divided into seven major parts: The biography of the Shaykh, list and location of some of the Shaykh’s works, categorization of the works according to subject matter, presentation of works on various themes and a general appraisal of the works, i.e. the intellectual, social, medical, economic and political contributions of the Shaykh and the impact of the Shaykh on those in his environment. The biographical aspect of the work is almost the same as that of the long essay earlier referred to. The work focuses on the collection of literary works, and is a major contribution to our knowledge. The work gives a critical appraisal of the literary works of al-Fallātī, which contain Sufī and non-Sufī themes, but no mention is made of the codicological and palaeographical features. He did not explain how widely the works are circulated, distributed, and used. Nor is there any indication as to how and when the Tijānī Sufi manuscript culture was introduced into Nguru. Despite these shortcomings, the work is very useful to the present research as it provides a biography and lists most of the literary works of the Shaykh, especially the unpublished ones.

Apart from the three works mentioned above, there are other works containing references to al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī; such works include Hunwick’s Arabic Literature of Africa which makes reference to a few works attributed to al-Dāghirī (with some mistakes). The desire to bring al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī’s life histories and works into the light is found in Muhammad Sani Idris’s M.A and PhD thesis¹¹ in which he tries to indicate al-Dāghirī’s, al-Fallātī’s and others’ contribution to the development of Islamic education in Yobe state by offering brief life histories and summaries of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. However, he treats the topic superficially. This is mainly because he deals with the topic in a more general way rather than particularizing it to a single scholar. He describes al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī as the pillars not only of Arabic and Islamic studies in Nigeria but also as the pivot around which the proper Muslim proper knowledge of Sufism and Tijānīyya brotherhood revolves. Hamza Salihu Dayyabu (2002) also sketches the historical background of Islamic scholarship and the contributions of the Islamic scholars of Nguru. However, it contains references only to al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī’s life histories and works. Another work is *Madinat Nguru Fil Gabir wal Hadir (Nguru City in the Past and the Present)* (2006),¹² which is not a scholarly work but rather a rough guidebook. The work contains the

¹¹ Idriss 2010; 2017.

¹² Abdulqadir 2006.

Shaykhs' brief biographies. Al-Dāghirī is mentioned in a few works written by other scholars. One such work makes references to al-Dāghirī's *Qur'anic Studies in Borno: Development in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*; it is written by Umaru Dahiru.¹³ In so doing, these authors enabled a brief understanding of the lives, works and legacies of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī.

This review, as earlier noted, is meant to give some guidance for better understanding and appreciation of the enormous works done on the subject matter. In addition, it may provide some useful insights and valuable directions for future research. The need for further research in the area, constitute our main motivation in ensuring that the readers are reasonably acquainted with the developments so far recorded on life history and literary works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī over several decades. As can be seen from the above publications, little research has been done on the lives and works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. These studies are limited by the objectives they set out to achieve. As an illustration, J. T. Lawan and Muhammad Ubaliyo Abubakar (mentioned above) only attempt to document the life history, literary works, and influence of al-Dāghirī as a Sufi leader. In the same vein, Hamza Salihu Dayyabu, Umaru Dahiru, J.O. Hunwick and Brigaglia in their works (referred to earlier), did not have al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī as the focus of their works.

However, there is little or no emphasis on the themes and contents of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's mystical writings or on their popularity, the distribution or codicological and paleographical features. And the few works which focus on al-Dāghirī are written in Arabic e.g. "Shaykh Muhammad Ghibrīma: His Life and Works," by al-Qādiri. This limits the number of readers that have access to them. Nevertheless, the work is important as a source for al-Dāghirī's life and works. Taken together, these publications motivated the present study which offers further insights into the lives and writings of the two Shaykhs.

Critically, the works mentioned above do not analyse or study the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī in detail; this is especially true of their Sufi themes, and thus these themes and doctrines need to be brought into focus. In addition, since most of the Shaykhs' works are written in Arabic, there is a need to let other speakers (especially, the English audience), know of and benefit from the writings of the Shaykhs. As noted earlier, translating five mystical poems of al-Dāghirī and parts of seven of the mystical prose writings of al-Fallātī into English makes them accessible to a wider circle of readers. Thus, the present contribution will give scholars an idea of the number of works attributed to works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, will allow them to examine the approaches

¹³ Dahiru 1995, 68-69.

of both Shaykhs to the various major Sufi themes, and to assess the quality of their works, and evaluate their influence on members of the Tijānīyya order in northern Nigeria. In line with this therefore, this research work is not only important, but necessary, so as to fill an important, but neglected area in the intellectual history of Nguru in particular and northern Nigeria in general.

1.11 Organisation of the Study

The work is structured into ten chapters: the content of each follows and expands on the previous chapter, often chronologically. Chapter one discusses the general introduction of the work. It covers research problems, scope, and limitation of the study, sources and methodology, objectives of the study and related literature. In other words, it offers a general insight on the thesis: its focus and direction. Chapter two discussed the history of Nguru, and it provides a historical background of Islamic education as well as the introduction of the Tijānīyya movement in Nguru. This was done with a view to provide a background of the historical context which al-Dāghirī and al-Fallāṭī composed their works. Chapter three outlines typical features of Islamic manuscript and print culture of Nguru in the context of northern Nigeria. Chapter four sketches biographies of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallāṭī and chapter five provides a comparative description of their works; and chapter six investigates a physical output and cultural impact of their texts in the form of manuscripts, facsimiles and printed books. Chapter seven translate and provides a content analyses of selected al-Dāghirī's poems while chapter eight identifies major Sufi themes in the translated poems, and chapter nine discusses the Sufi themes in selected prose texts of al-Fallati. Chapter ten, the last but not the least, gives a general conclusion of the thesis by drawing together the mai points and issues raised in the preceeding chapters and outlines its major findings.

1.12 Conclusion

This chapter has laid the foundations of what will be discussed in the subsequent chapters. It chapter presents a general introduction to the work, examining the aims and objectives of the study, its methodology, scope, and its limitations, as well as a review of the related literature.

CHAPTER TWO

Mapping the Intellectual Foundations of Sufi Manuscript Culture in Nguru: Islam, Education and Tijānī Sufism

2.1 Introduction

The emergence of the Sufi manuscript culture in western Borno cannot be understood outside the context its history. Thus, this chapter discusses some historical accounts and factors that led to the establishment of Tijānī Sufi manuscript culture in twentieth century Nguru. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the historical developments of Nguru where where al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī lived and died. The second section offers an account of the history of Islamic education in Nguru. The last section concentrates on the advent of *ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya into Nguru along with biographical notes on some major Tijānī scholars who played significant roles in the spread, consolidation and understanding of the Tijānīyya brotherhood in Nguru.

2.2. The Study Area: The Sultanate of Borno

The roots of the intellectual tradition and Tijānī Sufi manuscript culture established in the twentieth century Nguru, go back to the defunct Borno sultanate, and specifically western Borno. The sultanate of Borno was popularly known as Kanem-Borno¹⁴ Empire whose dynasty is reputed to be the earliest but also the greatest and the longest-lived of all the Islamic political states of the Central Sudanic Africa,¹⁵ was centred on Lake Chad. Kanem, to the east of the lake, was the centre of the kingdom until the 14th century when Borno, to the west of the lake, became the centre of power. The earliest period is sometimes referred to as the first *Kanuri* Empire,¹⁶ the later period the second empire. Kanem-Borno has been the greatest centre of Islamic scholarship and manuscript culture in the whole of the *central Bilad al-Sudan*¹⁷ before the rise of the Sokoto

¹⁴ The seat of power of this great empire was moved from Kanem to Borno during the fourteenth century; Therefore, Mahadi argues that it is appropriate to speak of a Kanem-Borno Empire only from the ninth century to the fourteenth century while from the fifteenth century to the eighteenth century, it should be called Borno-Kanem Empire. See Abdullahi Mahadi 1996, 55–81.

¹⁵ The term is used to describe the band of savannah lands south of Sahara, stretching from the Atlantic coast to Lake Chad, the region which Arabic geographers called *Bilād as-Sūdān* (land of the black people).

¹⁶ *Kanuri* refers to the principal people of Borno who are a mixture of Arab and Negro communities established in the area for many centuries and they can still be found east of the Chad Republic, an area which covers the greater part of the Kanem Empire. The term refers to their language and the people who speak the language; *Manga*, *Mobar* and *Bodawai* are the major groups that formed the *Kanuri* language, see Alkali 1987, 1-14.

¹⁷ Central Bilad al-Sudan refers to the areas of the ancient Hausa states, and the domains of the ancient Kanem Bornu see – Bunza 2013, 342.

Caliphate¹⁸ in the nineteenth century. This was due to its long standing history of Islamic influence.¹⁹ Some sources seem to believe that by the fifteenth century, for instance, Borno had a distinguished reputation for handwritten Qur'anic commentary in the outside world.²⁰ In the twentieth century, the Tijānī Sufi scholars of Borno had developed a remarkable intellectual and literary culture with Western Borno essentially Nguru as one of the most sophisticated Tijānī Sufi manuscript cultures in the defunct sultanate.²¹

2.2.1 Western Borno

History has it that western Borno refers to belt which stretches right from the west of an agricultural region of Hausaland, and to the east was the greater part of metropolitan Borno extending to Lake Chad and the Shari-Logone river system.²² The region, as a whole, had lost a great deal of its political importance long before the seventeenth century, but Borno's control and influence over the region was firmly established with the creation of the office of the Galadima or Galtima (Kanuri: warden of the west) in 1625.²³ With his capital at Birni Nguru (which is later known as Nguru Ngilewa), the Galadima, Mai Muḥammad Maikintami (c. 1625-1655) served as the Governor or Provincial administrator of the western marches of the sultanate of Borno, usually appointed by the sultan of Borno (known as Shehu).²⁴ The region politically comprises the areas which were under the direct control of the Galadima, particularly Birni Nguru and Ngilewa; Machina, the Gumel area, extending northwards to the Sosebaki Chiefdoms of Mirriah, Wacha and Dungas; to Munio and north-westwards to Damagaram.²⁵ After the British occupation of Borno, Nguru maintained its position as the most prominent province of western Borno and the seat of the Galadima, ruler of the whole region.

¹⁸ For the history of Sokoto caliphate see Last 1967.

¹⁹ Gidado 1991, 107, see also Laminu 1992, 1.

²⁰ Dahiru 1995, Laminu 1992, 10. The earliest dated Qur'anic manuscript 1669 recovered from Nigeria was Borno.

²¹ It has been noted that due to trading activities and the culture of performing to the holy land and scholarship pursuit, a lot has been written on Borno manuscripts and were documented in archives and libraries. For a more detailed account on the Bornoan intellectual history see Laminu 1993, Hunwick 1995, Gazali 2005, Bobboyi 1992, Dahiru 1995, and Laminu 1992.

²² This region was formerly called "Great Forest" by Heinrich Barth see Stenning 1959, 28 and later the region was called "Dilaara" by Eldridge Mohammadou 1997, 289.

²³ The title N' gal-ti-ma "Ruler of the land of the N'gal" or "Land of the West," existed from the earliest times but the first Galadima recorded in the Girgam of the Galadimas of Borno was a son of the Mai of Borno about the year 1625. The title was a rank which was second only to that of the Mai. Galadima oversaw western march of the sultanate of Borno. The title of the Galadima is hereditary. The other three main offices of Borno were *Kaigama*, chief of the south, *Yerima*, the chief of the north, and *Mustrema*, chief of the east, Brenner 1973, 13; see also A. H. M. Kirk-Greene 1972, 102. For the list and names of the Galadimas of Nguru see Kirk-Greene 1972; see also Nguru 2013, 12-14.

²⁴ Benishekh 1983, 141; see also Mukhtar 1986, 1.

²⁵ Mukhtar 1986, 1; see also Brenner 1973, 25.

2.2.2 The Study Area: Nguru

Nguru, the place where al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī lived and died, was the capital of the western marches of the sultanate of Borno. The town was sandwiched between two distinct and powerful kingdoms: the Borno Sultanate in the east and the *Kasar* Kano in the west.²⁶ The town of Nguru is 200 kilometres west of Birni Garzagamu (the former capital of ancient Borno) and 63 kilometres to *Kasar* Hadejia. Located in the commercial crossroad of the north, Nguru was a major trade route in the Trans-Saharan trade, and is on the major route linking Kano, Hadejia, and Badde before finally reaching Borno. This route, without doubt, was most patronized by both traders and trevellers.²⁷ By the colonial rule, Nguru was recognized as the centre for the production of economic crops such as groundnut, which attracted migrants from neighbouring areas. The British, during the colonial period, therefore improved conditions for long distance travel by construction of railroads in 1929. This rail line therefore linked Nguru with major cities in Nigeria such as Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna, Lokoja, Minna, and Kano socially and economically.

The position of Nguru as one of the major supplier of groundnut, grains, Gum Arabic, dry fish and meat. By the time, Second World War broke in 1939, the strategic value of the town has been enhanced as²⁸ it emerged as an important military outpost of the Allied Forces during the war and major supplier of grains to Allied alliance. Indeed, the subsequent construction of the Air strip, military camp and new roads for the war increased educational activities and urbanisation processes of the town. Nguru experienced rapid growth throughout the 1960s and 1970s because of Nigeria's economic boom prior to the Biafra war. Nguru is now the capital of Nguru Local Government area in Yobe state, north-eastern part of Nigeria.²⁹

The town of Nguru is home of the Manga or Mangawa,³⁰ who formed and still form most of its population. Manga are not a single ethnic group, but a group of people of various ethnic origin who share a common language. The dominant ethnic groups presently living in the town

²⁶ Hunwick 1985, 279. The claims by oral tradition that Nguru was established “as a strategic centre for rapid penetration of Hausaland” does not seem to be accepted rather Nguru appears to have been one of the first buffer vassal states which Borno created during the 17th and 18th century. Others were Muniyo, Machina, Gaskeru, Tunbi, Dikwa, Damagaram etc.

²⁷ Yaya 2017, 35; see also Alkali 1983, 68.

²⁸ For more detailed information on the contribution of the town to Allied war efforts see Al-amin 2008.

²⁹ See appendix vi

³⁰ The Manga (singular, Mangi) were probably (*takilin*) of the Zaghari rulers of Kanem who were incorporated into Borno at a comparatively early date when Borno was ruled by powerful monarchs. The Manga adopted the Kanuri language and way of life, see Kirk-Greene 1972, 46. Apart from Nguru, there are Manga in Niger Republic. Like most of the ethnic groups in Nguru, they trace their origins to the ‘East’ see Mukhtar 1986.

include: Manga, Dagira, Hausa, Bade, Fulani, Kare-kare, Ngizim, Banana, Yoruba, Igbo, Nupe, Idoma, Tiv, Igala, Igbira as well as foreigners such as Arabs, Lebanese and Tuaregs. Hausa is the predominantly the language spoken in Kano, while English is the official language in government as well as in business sector.³¹ The major economic activities of the people are farming, dyeing, hunting, tanning, fishing and production of crafts. The town serves as a platform for the commercialization of various agricultural produce such as grains, vegetables, onion, beans, salt, livestock, natron and various home utensils and farm implemets.³² By the mid-twentieth century, the activities of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were to increase the tempo of educational and Sufi activities and accelerate the degree of urban and Islamic scholarship in Nguru.

2.3 Islam and Islamic Education in Nguru

Sufi manuscript culture which led to the production of Suf literary works can be said to have begun among Nguru Islamic scholars with the advent of Islam and with the emergence of Islamic education is basic to the existence and growth of the manuscript culture in twentieth century Nguru. Islamic education in Borno in general and in Nguru in particular is an age-long tradition as the history of Islam. Wherever Islam goes, Islamic education find their way there. Nguru has been noted as a great centre of Islamic religious and cultural activity in the twentieth century. The precise date when Islam penetrated into Nguru is yet to be determined by scholars, largely due to the absence of written sources. The earliest report of the presence of Islam in Nguru, to the researcher's knowledge, has been provided by Barkindo, citing the Kano Chronicle that people of the town were Muslims during the reign of Muḥammad Kisoki dan Abdullahi (c. 1509-65) in the sixteenth century.³³ Nevertheless, the oral and some written sources would like to regard the seventeenth century as the date when Islamic faith first registered its presence in the environs of Nguru due to the effort of the occupants of the town, Idris Alooma (r. 1570/1602/03 or 1580-1617) and Umar ibn Idris.³⁴ There is, however, a claim among some indigenous scholars that Islam came to their land during the period of Kanem-Borno. Trying to give reasons for the Islamization in the town, Tahir and Sani go on to say: "Long before the Islamic development in central and western parts of the Sudan the custodians of Nguru had been Islamized. This is because Nguru is

³¹ For more information the ethnic groups in Nguru see Mukhtar, 1986; Mohammed 1999: 3; see also Idris 2010, 2, and Yobe State Diary 1993, 2.

³² Kirk-Greene 1972, 70; see also Nguru 2013, 45; Yobe State Diary 1993, 2.

³³ See Bawuro M. Barkindo 1989, 157. However, Muḥammad Kisoki bn Abdullahi (c. 1509-65) was the twentieth second Emir of Kano.

³⁴ Nguru 2013, 43; see also Tahir 2006, 28-29.

part and parcel of old Kanem-Borno.”³⁵ To the knowledge of this writer there is no extant record supporting such an assertion.

Among the leading centres of Islamic education in Borno, Nguru was famous and illustrious. The presence of Islamic education in the town could be attributed to the appreciable role of immigrant Muslims and some itinerant ‘Ulama for the neighbouring places like Borno and Hausa. Due to its strategic location between the two distinct and powerful states. Birni Gazargamu, for instance, which was very close to Nguru, was indeed one of the most important centres of Islamic learning not only in Borno but in the whole of the Sudan.³⁶ The individual ‘Ulama and their disciples immigrated into the town and settled there as Muslims and teachers.³⁷ There are some indications, without doubt, that by 1890 there was an established intellectual community active in Nguru, known as Limanti.³⁸ Tahir points out that it was a period of advanced culture of Islamic learning in the town; many people were coming to meet great scholars who migrated to the town due to the historical merits of Borno scholars.³⁹ Muḥammad Ganim, father of al-Dāghirī is one of the students who visited Nguru in search of knowledge. He was said to have come to Njibulwa, a village very close to Nguru where he studied the Qur’an and Arabic language under Goni Momodu b. Ahmad (c. 1935) who later became *Imām Kabir* (Chief Imām) of Nguru central mosque.⁴⁰

By the end of the nineteenth century, Islamic education flourished, and it was at this period that Nguru witnessed the influx of another set of immigrant Muslim scholars from Borno who obtained offices as teachers and *Imāms* in Nguru.⁴¹ This migration started when Rabeh conquered Borno in 1893 and a significant number of Tripolitarians resident in Kukawa fled to Zinder, Damagaram, Nguru, Hadejia, Baghirmi, Kano and other places.⁴² This period also witnessed the intermittent arrival in Nguru of eminent scholars from various parts of the Hausaland on their way

³⁵ Idris 2010, 73.

³⁶ Dahiru 1995, 50.

³⁷ Idris 2010 2 & 16.

³⁸ Limanti refers to the extended constituency of the chief Imam of Nguru. It stretches from the inner family caucus to the larger domain that mostly has linkages with each other either culturally, linguistically or by blood ties. See Tahir 2006, 33.

³⁹ Tahir 2006, 33.

⁴⁰ Tahir 2006, 33.

⁴¹ Following Borno’s tradition, the scholars were perhaps issued with *Mahram* (grant of privilege).

⁴² Ladan 2013, 401-2.

to pilgrimage in the twentieth century.⁴³ Most of these immigrant scholars established many important centres of Islamic learning in the town. The local sources have identified at least two Islamic educational institutions, Goni Usman Galadima which was established around 1921.⁴⁴ Goni Usman Galadima is remembered by oral tradition as one of Nguru's principal teachers who contributed immensely to the spread of Islamic learning during this period. The other important school remembered by the sources was Talbari Qur'anic School, which was said to have reached its zenith under Talba Mustapha in 1930.⁴⁵ Mustapha combined Manga and Hausa methodology of teaching Qur'an and also used Hausa and Manga as medium of instruction in the school.⁴⁶ These two Islamic educational centres had played a significant role in the dissemination of knowledge during the period under consideration and laid the foundation of subsequent development of scholarship in the town.

Tahir maintains that there were many scholars who had continued to visit the town in the 1930s and 1940s still either remained there and established schools or had migrated to establish themselves somewhere but the memories and values of that town are still fresh in their minds.⁴⁷ The available sources do not, however, supply us with information about these schools. It is reported that between 1940 and 1945, the school produced 40 *Goni* (those who not only know the Qur'an by heart but also became expert in it).⁴⁸ These Islamic educational institutions have become so populous to the extent that one could hardly see a hamlet without them in Nguru area.⁴⁹ These have been responsible institutions for not only breeding the literates who later became authors, scribes, calligraphers, but helped in the production and circulation of the Sufi works, the subject of this thesis. Moreover, the habitus of writing along with the proliferation of *madarasa* sustained high literacy rates in Arabic among the people of Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria.

⁴³ This development can be traced back to the time when pilgrimage to Makkah was undertaken by foot. Today, the descendants of such pilgrims who permanently settled in Nguru are still found in the town; and their forefathers were said to be the founders of many communities such as Bombori village, *Zangon Alhazai* ('pilgrims' camps), Bulabulin, Hausari, and the villages of Loko and Garbi, see Nguru 2013, 52-56. The pilgrimage has for long been an important factor in sustaining West African Islamic scholarship. This journey to the holyland had been regarded by many Muslims as a prerequisite for the completion of one's education. The tradition was exclusively learned classes' affairs who undertake the journey not only to acquire for themselves a locally eminent scholastic carrier but also to visit new teachers on their way and learn from them. For more information about the tradition..

⁴⁴ Idris 2010, 31.

⁴⁵ Idris 2010, 31.

⁴⁶ Idris 2010, 31.

⁴⁷ Tahir 2006, xx-xxi.

⁴⁸ Idris 2010, 31. However, Idris also claimed that opened branches in within and outside the town.

⁴⁹ Idris 2010, 25.

Nguru in the twentieth century was an important centre of Sufism actively connected with the West Africa's Tijaniyya brotherhood, with wealth of facts on the social and technological background of the Sufi-inspired literacy.

2.4 The Introduction of the Tijānī Sufism into Northern Nigeria

Sufism (*Taşawwuf*) which simply means “the state of being a Sufi” is the name given to mysticism in Islam. The term Sufism embraces the divergent philosophy and religious practices which aim at direct communion between God and man, and those who practice Sufism are called Sufis.⁵⁰ Sufism, for centuries, has been a central issue in Islam and by nineteenth century several Sufi orders had been established in the Muslim. The trend of Sufism continued until the emergence of Sūfī order such as Qādiriyyah and Tijāniyyah Sufi brotherhoods in Nguru. Until the beginning of nineteenth century, the Qādiriyyah was the only Sufi order in Nguru but it was later replaced with the Tijāniyya. In fact, the introduction of Tijāniyya into the town made the history of Sufism in the part of this country, western Borno, become clearer.

The Tijāniyya Sufi brotherhood is one of the Sufi orders in Islam founded with the aim of moving closer to Allah. The foundation of the order is attributed to Abū'l-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Mukhtār al-Tijānī, who is also known as Aḥmad al-Tijānī (1737-1815), in Fez, Morocco and it is named after him. He was born into a religious family that is famous for learning in Ain Madi, a village in the present day Algeria in 1737 A.D/1150 A.H.⁵¹ Before he founded his own Brotherhood, he was a member of several Sufi brotherhoods. One of the brotherhoods was *Khalwatiyya* into which he was initiated by Sayyid Mahmud al-Kurdi in Cairo while he was on his way from Mecca in c. 1774.⁵² The Tijāniyya was founded when Prophet Muḥammad appeared to Shaykh Aḥmad Tijānī in a waking vision under a state of full consciousness and conferred on him the position of a spiritual master (see chapter eight below).⁵³ Before the end of his life, Aḥmad al-Tijānī prophesized the appearance of *ḥayḍa* among his followers and that a large number of people will be initiated into the *Tarīqa* Tijāniyya towards the end of the last hour.⁵⁴ He died in 1230 AH/1815 CE) at the age of 80.

⁵⁰ Khanam 2009, 1; However, the non-Sufi, whether a scholar or an ordinary Muslim, was a *mahjub* (the blocked one) because he was separated from the true meaning and essence of worship and from knowledge of the Almighty by a Hijab (obstruction)for information on the concept and beliefs of Sufism see Tahir 1975, 502 and Aslan 2006, 198-219. Khanam, F. (2009) Sufism: An Introduction, Goodwords Books, New Delhi: India.

⁵¹ Tahir 2006, 47.

⁵² Mohammed 1986, 28.

⁵³ Adam 2015, 44.

⁵⁴ Nazifi 1984, 135-137; Nazifi, *Yaqutat*, 7; Seesemann 2011, 65-70 and Seesemann 2004, 79-81.

He left a well-established *Tarīqa* Tijānīyya.⁵⁵ It was reported that when Sayyid Muḥammad al-Hafiz al-Baddi of Mauritanian tribe of Idaw was passing through Fez on his route to pilgrimage, he was instructed about the rituals by Aḥmad al-Tijānī himself, the founder of the order. Aḥmad al-Tijānī appointed al-Baddi as his *Khalifa* (representative) for Western Africa. Al-Baddi preached the Tijānīyya and spread the order with great vigour, not only within his tribe Idaw alone, but also beyond. Tijānīyya grew into a powerful force in Mauritania, and through various forms of contact, people from Western Sudan obtained their initiation.⁵⁶ Another Idaw Ali scholar was Mawlid Fal, who initiated Shaykh al-Hajj ‘Umar b. al-Fūtī al-Tūrī (1794-1864)⁵⁷ into Tijānīyya. While on pilgrimage to Makka, al-Fūtī met Muḥammad ibn Khalifah al-Ghali, Wakil of al-Hajj Ali at-Tamasini who appointed him Khalifah of Sudan 1820.⁵⁸

The Tijānīyya which is presently the most populous Sufi *tariqa* in West Africa reached the region through al-Baddi, but did not seem to have a wide influence in the region during this period until the arrival of Shaykh al-Hajj ‘Umar b. al-Fūtī. On his return journey from Makka, Umar reached Kukawa in 1833, the former capital of Borno after the fall of Birni Ngazargamu in 1814.⁵⁹ Some sources, like Quadri argue that the history of Tijānīyya in northern Nigeria pre-dated the arrival of Umar because the people of Madabo ward in Kano were members of the order during the life-time of the founder, Aḥmad al-Tijānī. Also, Abdur-Rahman as-Suyuti of the same Madabo was said to be initiated into the order by one Malam Sharih who came to Kano from Futa-Toro.

However, a named Shaykh Ibrahim was said to be the first person known to be a member of Tijānīyya in Borno. Ali Rukayami was next to be initiated into the order and later became the chief Imām of Gajibo, a town in Borno. In Ilorin again, Solagberu of Okesuna, who was said to have died before the arrival of Umar in Nigeria was said to be a member of the Tijānīyya. Considering the above fact, we tend to agree with the view of Quadri and others that the visit of Umar to Nigeria could therefore be perceived as an attempt at popularizing the brotherhood, rather

⁵⁵ Hussaini 200, 7-8; Wright 2005, 71-3.

⁵⁶ Abu-Nasr 1965, 102.

⁵⁷ Shaykh al-Hajj Umar b. Sa’id ibn ‘Uthmān al-Futi al-Turi al-Kidiwi (1794-1864), also known as Hajj Umar Tal, was perhaps the most famous of all Tijānī figures in the nineteenth century West Africa. He was an accomplished scholar, author and social activist. He combined the greater holy war (*jihad al-akbar*) against the ego-self (*nafs*) with the lesser war of arms (*jihad al-asghar*) in the hope of establishing a Muslim empire of justice and peace in West Africa. For more details see Louis Brenner 1984. For biographical account on the various works written on ‘Umar al-Fūtī, see Jah 1978, 5-26; see also Abu-Nasr, 1965, 106-140.

⁵⁸ Trimmingham 1967, 97; see also Abu Nasr 1965, 108.

⁵⁹ According to oral tradition, there was a trace of Tijānīyya in the area before the period. Some sources suggest 1833 as the exact time of his arrival in Borno after he was appointed as Muqaddam in 1820. See Abu Nasr 1965, 108.

than introducing it to the area.⁶⁰ He immensely contributed to the spread of the brotherhood in Nigeria as some members of the brotherhood mentioned above like Suyuti, Shaykh Ibrahim and Malam Sharih were said to have renewed their initiation from him (*tajdid*).⁶¹ The Tijānīyya flourished in all towns and cities of northern Nigeria through the efforts of the Tijānī scholars and traditional rulers who are members of the brotherhood. Prominent towns and cities among them are Kano, Zaria, Katsina, Maiduguri, Nguru among others.

2.4.1 The Tijānīyya Brotherhood in Nguru

The exact date when Tijānīyya was introduced into Nguru was, at best, obscure. There are, however, some indications, largely furnished by the colonial report with exaggeration, that by 1908 “the Shehu and all Muḥammadans (Muslims) in Borno are of the Tijānī sect” including Nguru.⁶² The local sources, however, seem generous enough to provide, as far as they could, additional information on the subject. The available evidence suggests that Tijānīyya was already well established in Nguru before the arrival of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī in 1930s. It was claimed that prior to their arrival, Nguru played host to several Tijānī scholars. For instance, Imām Aḥmad Dawoma, the chief Imām of Nguru central mosque and the head of Limanti, and his followers were said to have belonged to the Tijānīyya and immensely contributed to the spread of the brotherhood in the town.⁶³ The activities of Imām Aḥmad Dawoma have not received much attention, and it was during his period that the members of the brotherhood were involved more in individual worship and activity than large organisation.⁶⁴ The brotherhood had little effect on the local population.⁶⁵

That situation changed with the arrival of al-Dāghirī who was already a *Muqaddam* or Shaykh⁶⁶ and marked the beginning of the consolidation and popularisation of the brotherhood in the town, a tradition that was apparently continued by his successors.⁶⁷ The arrival of al-Dāghirī was, for all intents and purposes, a watershed in the history of the brotherhood in Nguru. The

⁶⁰ He had problem with the rulers of Borno and Sokoto as they considered him a threat to their orders.

⁶¹ For detailed academic discussion on the introduction of the brotherhood into Nigeria see Quadri 1981, 1983, 1985.

⁶² See N.A.K., 1908 cited by Mohammed 2013, 348-349.

⁶³ Interview with Alhaji Mai Musa Shehu on 30.03.2019 at Nguru.

⁶⁴ Interview with Alhaji Mai Musa Shehu on 30.03.2019 at Nguru.

⁶⁵ Interview with Alhaji Mai Musa Shehu on 30.03.2019 at Nguru.

⁶⁶ Shaykh is defined by the degree of learning and publications, with the provision that the person is a Sufi as well; and by piety and devotion with or without great age. In our observation these qualities subsume other considerations. Brenner adds that the Shaykh may not necessarily receive his title from any appointment but through recognition by other Tijānīs of his spiritual qualities Brenner, 1984, 44.

⁶⁷ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

available evidence suggests that al-Dāghirī, despite logistic problems, made conscious and concerted efforts to create a cadre of Islamic intellectuals and Tijānī lieutenants, and lay the foundations of an Islamic learned tradition and Tijānī network that helped to shape the character and identity of Nguru society as discussed in chapter four.

Two things are specifically associated with al-Dāghiri's Tijānīyya consolidation in Nguru. The first is the establishment of his *zāwiya* as a result of which Tijānīyya garnered more adherents. The second is that because of his charisma as a pious religious leader, membership of the brotherhood grew rapidly as more and more adherents arrived to settle in Nguru to join his *zāwiya*.⁶⁸ Even though al-Dāghirī is considered a great stimulus for the spread of Tijānīyya brotherhood in Nguru and beyond, yet the coming of al-Fallātī to Nguru added impetus to the spread of the brotherhood. Many respondents testified that he was another important figure who contributed to the spread of the Tijānīyya in Nguru. He was a recognized member of Tijānīyya before his arrival in Nguru. During this period, Nguru caught the attention of many scholars and students, hence Tijānīyya reached its zenith in the town.

The brotherhood received a boost in 1930s with the arrival of al-Fallātī and other different Shaykhs of the order. He therefore became very busy with his effort of mass initiation of local scholars, establishing networks in the urban and sub-urban centres and producing Sufī texts to enlighten *murīdūn* about the teaching of the order. He visited Karasuwa, Baimari, Kumaganam, Damasak, Yusufari, and Gashua, to mention a few.⁶⁹ In each town or village, he would be hosted by local *muqaddam* and regarded as the guest of the entire Tijānī community. Some members even followed him to Nguru and after several days, months or years returned to their respective communities.⁷⁰ This was to uphold the contribution of al-Dāghirī. The initiation of the local scholars into the order was another booster to its development. Therefore, whoever is not initiated into Tijānīyya among the Muslims feels that he has not yet attained the high mark of spiritual expectation; hence, he remains ever an aspirant. If there is any Muslim in Nguru today who has refrained from the practice of divining whose reincarnation a child is, he is a Tijānī. During the period under study, over 80 percent of Muslims in Nguru belonged to the Tijānīyya brotherhood; the Qadiriyya is virtually non-existent in the town.

⁶⁸ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁶⁹ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁷⁰ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

Al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī individually continued to spread the Tijānīyya brotherhood in and outside Nguru. For instance, al-Dāghirī concentrated on Manga and other ethnic groups while al-Fallātī directed his attention on Fulanis and Hausas. These Shuyukh who were committed members of the Tijānīyya order worked hand in hand to propagate Sufism in Nguru and beyond. They travelled extensively in western Borno and succeeded in having many Tijānīyya centres opened in numerous places. They also appointed spiritual guardians (*Muqaddam*) for the people in the urban and rural areas wherever they visited. In the 1940s and 1970s two major networks of Tijānīyya developed in Nguru, they are: the mostly Fulani group under the leadership of al-Fallātī; and the Daghirawa scholars under al-Dāghirī which predominantly comprised of the Kanuri, Yoruba, Hausa traders and scholars. The disciples of al-Dāghirī used the word “Badagire” or “al-Dāghirī” to indicate that they belonged to the zāwiya or network of al-Dāghirī. This illustrates the extent to which the community was firmly assimilated into the brotherhood of adoption. These two networks maintained strong links with those of Kano, especially *Salgawa*.⁷¹

The *Salgawa* movement started in the late nineteenth century to 1937, when they formed a network which ideologically linked up all the Tijānī followers in northern Nigeria. A majority of the Tijānī *murīdūn* (Sufi disciples) became committed members of the network and their scholars were absorbed into this spiritual and mystical network. It is the opinion of Shaykh Abū Bakr 'Atīq (1909-1974)⁷² that Shaykh Muḥammad Salga (1869-1938), the leader of the network was responsible for the spread of the brotherhood in Hausaland, explaining further that by the time Salga died, a majority of Tijānī members in northern Nigeria were linked to him.⁷³

2.4.3 Profile of Prominent Tijānī Sufi Scholars in Twentieth century Nguru

Nguru was bestowed with many distinctive Tijānī Sufi scholars who are renown in many parts of northern Nigeria, and they contributed in one way or the other to the spread of the Tijānīyya

⁷¹ *Salgawa* is a term used to refer to the network of scholars who have a direct or indirect relationship with Malam Muḥammad Salga (1869-1938). Salga was the imam of the first Zawiya (Sufi devotional centre) of the Tijānīyya Sufi order in Kano. He was instrumental in the extension of Tijānī community throughout northern Nigeria. Born in Salga (present-day Ghana), the eponym of the group was able to set up a network of scholars throughout Hausaland. This was done mainly by establishing Islamic schools and training a large *murīdūn*. Today, the word *Salgawa* is used to refer to those who have connection with Salga either by blood or by scholarship. The authority of most of the major Tijānī scholars in Kano can, in some ways, be traced to Malam Salga. For detailed academic discussion on his life history and his contribution to the brotherhood of the Salgawa see Adam 2014.

⁷² Shaykh Abū Bakr 'Atīq was one of the important personalities among the Tijānīs in northern Nigeria. For detailed discussion on his life history and his contribution to the brotherhood see Solagberu 2009; see also chapter seven of this research work.

⁷³ Abū Bakr 'Atīq nd. 2.

brotherhood in twentieth century Nguru. In fact, it is very difficult to make a complete list of them in a project of this nature. Thus, the names of the most prominent ones are given below⁷⁴ and a brief biographical note is provided for each of the selected scholar:

Goni Muḥammad Karamsami (1910-2005)

One of the major contributors to the spread of *fayḍa* Tijānīyya in Nguru, and northern Nigeria as a whole, was Goni Muḥammad Karamsami. He was one of the senior students and disciples as well as the chief scribe of al-Dāghirī. He was born in 1910 in Fangoriya, not far from the present Diffa in Niger Republic.⁷⁵ He was first educated by his father who taught him the basics of the Qur'an. After the death of his father, he continued his studies under his uncle. Karamsami went to Guyamari where he completed his Qur'anic studies. He proceeded to Koromari Taha in the present Yusufari Local Government, where he studied under Goni Suntalma. Thereafter, he proceeded to Nguru where he studied *Fiqh*, *Hadith*, *Nahw* under Goni Ainoma Muḥammad Mustapha. Later, became his chief scribe until the death of al-Dāghirī in 1975.⁷⁶

While in Nguru, he was initiated into *ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya by Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī under whom he also did his *tarbiyya al-azkar* and accepted *fayḍa* when it was introduced into the town. He therefore became one of the frontline leaders of the *fayḍa* Tijānīyya in Nguru, and he initiated many people into the brotherhood. His *Zāwiya* rapidly acquired international fame and his *Maulud* celebrations were always attended by eminent Muslim dignitaries from all over Nigeria and abroad.

Karamsami devoted his whole life to studying and teaching. He concentrated on teaching, not preaching, and acquired fame as a gifted teacher under whom several Islamic scholars both in Nigeria and the present-day Niger Republic studied. Today, his students and *murīdūn* cut across different states and towns in Nigeria. His life is full of devotion, prayer and seclusion even in his old age when he was very weak and until the time of his death in 2005. He left behind many correspondences and copies of books written by either himself or al-Dāghirī. He has written several Sufi works on various aspects which were discussed in the next chapter. He was the father of the prominent contemporary Tijānī Sufi scholar, Malam Ayuba Goni Karmasami discussed in chapter three.

⁷⁴ Excluding Muḥammad al-Dāghirī and ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī whose biographies were given in the next chapter.

⁷⁵ Interview with Baarma Goni Karamsami on 23.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁷⁶ Interview with Baarma Goni Karamsami on 23.03.2018 at Nguru.

Malam Yahaya Mikail (1917-2003)

Malam Yahaya Mikail was another Shaykh who played a positive role in the spread of *fayḍa* Tijānīyya in Nguru. He was born around 1917, as far as we can speculate, because the date of his birth was not registered. He was born in Babura in the former Kano State (the present Jigawa State). His father, Mikail occupied the post of the head of this same town, to which he was sent from Kano.⁷⁷ Malam Mikail married the mother of the Shaykh from Babura and she gave birth to their son Yahaya. Later in life, Mikail's father divorced his mother who later married in Nguru of Borno state at that time. Mikail grew up in his father's house, a family of nobility and honour. He learnt the principles of reading and writing. He also learnt how to recite the Holy Qur'an in *makarantar allo*, as the tradition of that time. When he attained the age of six, his father sent him to primary school in Babura. Mikail continued in his Islamic education, along with formal education. He did not face any difficulty in standing out among his classmates due to his intelligence and bright mind when he obtained his elementary certificate. Immediately after his studies, he was employed as an interpreter by Kano State. Later, he was also appointed as a forest officer and relocated from Ringim to Hadejia.

Although the mother of the Shaykh left his father to marry another person, her heart was not at peace about him, especially because he lived far away from her. She insisted that his father should allow him to join her so he would continue his Islamic education in Nguru which was famous for its Islamic culture and distinguished scholars.⁷⁸ The Shaykh's father agreed to his mother's request, and sent him to Nguru, where he placed him under the care of one of his friends, Alhaji Namalamai, a famous trader of leather, gum and peanut in Babura and later moved to Nguru. Namalamai is also related to the Shaykh on the part of the mother. The Shaykh began to help the merchant in his commercial transactions, wandering through the villages and countryside looking for goods and taking them to Nguru. The Shaykh learnt from Namalamai all artistic, scientific, and literary arts, except poetry which he took from Malam Saleh Jakada in Nguru.

It was reported that he went to study under Malam Saleh Jakada based on the advice of al-Fallātī who was more conversant than him Hausa, a language of wider communication. Malam Muḥammad Bulabulin was one of the scholars who was said to have taught him *fiqh* in Nguru. He also learnt to memorise Qur'an with Malam Musa Majema; he used to go with Malam Musa

⁷⁷ Sanda citing Garba Idris Sadiq 2005, 26.

⁷⁸ Sanda 2016, during his interview with Mohamed Mujub Yahaya Mikail.

Majema to the outskirts of the town to study the Qur'an. He attained the stage called “*Satu*”⁸ with the local reciters. This stage is unattainable except by talented memorizers.⁹

Mikail continued studying under al-Fallātī. Every morning he went to him to receive knowledge, and then he would go to the marketplace during the day to open al-Fallātī’s shop. Some students joined him in the marketplace to learn from him and in a little time, the shop became a small school inside the marketplace where students received Islamic knowledge, the grammar of Arabic and the arts of literature. When al-Fallātī heard about his student's preoccupation with education at the expense of trade, he advised him to be a full-time teacher and learner. The disciple obeyed the Shaykh's brotherhood and opened an educational institute in front of his house in the Shaykh's corner (small mosque). Al-Fallātī sent him some pupils to continue to seek knowledge from him. He also entrusted him with the responsibility of the Imamate in the zāwiya Mosque, a position he held until his death in 2003. Here, he attracted large number of students from different parts of the area. Immediately, the area became a centre for learning both the Qur’an and Islamic sciences under this great scholar, where teaching and, preaching took place. He also initiated interested Muslims into the Tijānīyya brotherhood. The researcher found it difficult to know the number of students of Mikail.

Mikail composed a considerable number of poems mostly in praise of the Prophet Muhammad. These poems were not collected in a book but individual poems in the hands of his students and some of his children which were discussed in the next chapter. He was until his death on 22nd of Sha'ban of 1424 AH which corresponds to 18th day of October 2003, at the age of eighty-eight (88), active in the service of Islam. His chief copyist was Abdullah Nabara who is still alive.

Shaykh Malam Jafaru Suleiman (1900-1985)

Shaykh Malam Jafaru Suleiman was an eminent *faqīh* Tijānī Sufi scholar and preacher. His father was a native of Zamfara but Jafaru was born in 1900 in Kusada, now a Local Government in Katsina State, Nigeria. He began his intellectual sojourn at Tsanyawa, Katsina municipality and Zugo, a village under Guri (now a local government in present Jigawa State, Nigeria) where he mastered Qur’anic recitation and Qur’anic sciences for five years. He accepted Tijānīyya and rose in the brotherhood’s hierarchy to the exalted position of *Muqaddam*. From Zugo, together with his

⁸ It was the penultimate stage for the students of makarantar allo. The interest of the students focused on writing the Qur'an Hizb by Hizb, or part after another by heart. They studied with the versed readers in the Holy Qur'an, were prepared to be ready to write a complete copy to be persevered in papers.

⁹ Sanda during his interview with Mohamed Mujub Yahaya Mikail.

friend, Malam Dan Kyallori he proceeded to Geidam, another leading centre of learning in Borno. He left Maiduguri for Geidam and then to Nguru where he permanently settled on the advice of his teacher, al-Fallātī. Suleiman was said to have settled at Hausari ward where he established his *zāwiya*. Shaykh Malam Bala, al-Fallātī, Shaykh Muḥammad Salga of Kano were among his famous teachers under whom he studied a great deal of Arabic language, all aspects of Islamic sciences and esoteric sciences.

The establishment of his *zāwiya* added to the acceptability of the brotherhood in Nguru as many Muslims from different parts of the region came to him in Nguru for initiation into the brotherhood who, thereafter, carried the brotherhood to their respective bases. Throughout the early period of intellectual activity in Nguru, his major task was teaching the Muslim all aspects of Islamic sciences. He also taught some literary works on Tijānīyya.⁷⁸ Among the notable students of his school were: Malam Usaini who succeeded him in 1985 after his death as the first Khalifa of the institution, and then Shaykh Sabiu Jafaru who took over from Malam Usaini in 1989 and died in 2007. The present Khalifa is Malam Alhaji Bala who happen to be ones of the informants for this study. His literary work is not available now. Even if there were, he might have written much but did not want them to be in circulation or that his immediate successors might have inherited some of them but due to negligence mishandled them. He was very popular for his knowledge, piety, and strict adherence to the Islamic law. After his death, his name has been immortalized through scholarship pursuits by his students and family for his tremendous contribution in the field of Islamic education.⁷⁹

Shaykh Ibrāhīm Bala (d. 1963)

Another most prominent *fayḍa* Tijānī scholar who established a school of advanced Islamic studies and propagated the Tijānīyya brotherhood in Nguru was Shaykh Ibrāhīm Bala. He was born in Kano in around 1841. His parents were Muḥammad and Ruqayya. Bala learned and mastered the Qur'an under different scholars. He proceeded to an advanced level and came to learn under Salga and later moved to Malam Sule Jankasa under whom he studied many Islamic books. Having been learned in the Islamic sciences, he was said to have been selected for appointment as a judge by the then Emir of Kano. But he declined the offer despite so much pressure on him. To escape the demand, he left Kano for Zaria on the advice of his teacher, Salga. Thereafter, he left

⁷⁸ Interview with Alhaji Malam Bala Jafaru Suleiman on 23.04.2019 at Nguru.

⁷⁹ Interview with Alhaji Malam Bala Jafaru Suleiman on 23.04.2019 at Nguru.

Zaria and moved to Nguru where he established his school and became a veteran teacher there.

He taught Muslims the Islamic education and preached the virtues of Tijānīyya brotherhood until his death in 1963. He initiated many interested Muslims into Tijānīyya who became the instrument for its development in their respective places. During his time of active scholarship, his centre of learning was expanded to the extent that Nguru became famous for Islamic education in the whole of western Borno. His school was known for offering various disciplines of Islamic sciences and attracted students from different places to the institution. His students and the Sufi disciples cut across various towns and cities in Nigeria.

Malam Yahaya Muḥammad Manzo

Malam Yahaya Muḥammad Manzo was another *ḥayda* Tijānī Sufi scholar to be considered. He was popularly known as Malam Yahaya mai tafsīri (the preacher). He was a Sufi scholar of high repute who belonged to the *ḥayda* Tijānīyya brotherhood. It was reported that the order became popular in Bulabulin through his effort. He was born in Borno and studied under many scholars in Auyo where he spent some years before he moved to Kano. There he learnt various branches of knowledge and visited many respected scholars before moving to Jigawa. Having obtained *‘ijāzāt* (certification) from his master, Malam Wada, he travelled back home. As soon as he returned home in 1950, he established a centre for learning in his house at Number 2, Gada near Gobe da Nisa’s house. However, after ten years, he transferred the school to its present location in Bulabulin. This school is noted for teaching different advanced subjects. These include *Fiqh* (jurisprudence), Arabic grammar, Hadith (traditions), *tafsīr* (Qur’anic exegeses), Arabic language, rhetoric, theology and medicine. He trained and taught many students who thereafter received *‘ijāzāt* (certificate). They established centres for Islamic education in other places. They also became the committed disseminators of the Tijānīyya brotherhood in the respective areas as well.

Manzo, like his contemporaries, contributed immensely towards the development of Islamic education and Tijānīyya in Nguru. Scholarship was the only profession which concerned him. Even his private engagements during leisure periods were religious. They included reading religious books, recitation of the Qur’an, reading of religious issues and attending the obligation of the Tijānīyya brotherhood. He passed way at age 80 after a brief illness in Nguru. His brother, Malam Babaji continued not only with disseminating Islamic education, but also spreading Tijānīyya brotherhood.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Interview with Abubakar Suwailu on 20.03.2019 at Nguru.

2.6 Conclusion

The historical development of Nguru, Islamic education and Tijānīyya, the order which al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī belonged to has been discussed. In the first half of the twentieth century, Tijānīyya went through a process of transformation with the emergence of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niase who claimed to be the *Sahib al-fayḍa* (the repository of the divine flood) and who attracted the largest followers among the Tijānīs in West Africa. The prominent of the twentieth century Tijānī Sufi scholars in Nguru have been identified and their biographies have been provided.

CHAPTER THREE

Sufi Manuscript Culture and its Transition to Print Culture in Nguru

3.1 Introduction

The themes and contents of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī cannot be meaningfully explained outside the context of the Sufi manuscript culture within which they are produced. As such a discussion of the emergence and development of Sufi manuscript culture and its transition to print culture is necessary to our understanding of not only the themes and contents of their works, but also its the codicological and palaeographical features. This chapter, therefore, discusses the components of Sufi manuscript culture. This includes the art of copying, calligraphy, and talismanic production, trade in manuscript books and printed books,⁸¹ papers, and other writing tools such as of inks, pens, slate, or board. The last part of the chapter examines the transition from the manuscript to printed form: lithographs and typography in the northern Nigeria including Nguru.

3.2 Meaning and Components of Sufi Manuscript Culture in Twentieth century Nguru

The term ‘manuscripts’ has a very broad definition which seems to encompass all types of document that is written by hand as opposed to one printed. There is also an information that is hand-recorded in ways other than by writing, for example inscription on hard material which can be termed as manuscript, according to this broad definition. However, in this study, a manuscript refers to any hand-written document on historical accounts, Islamic sciences, and private records by writers in formal Arabic or in the local languages using the Arabic script known as *Ajami*. They constitute a major source of indigenous literature of Nigeria.

Michael Friedrich, during a graduate lecture series at the Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC), proposes an intriguing model for understanding manuscript culture around the world. He defines manuscript culture as “the social and cultural practices which are involved in the production and utilisation of manuscripts and the interplay of the manuscripts with these practices make up a manuscript culture (vs. “Chinese” or “Islamic”).”⁸² Friedrich goes more further to mention that the manuscript itself defines the scope of the manuscript culture. In another

⁸¹ A book, according to UNESCO in 1964, is a non-periodical printed publication of at least 49 pages, exclusive of the cover pages, published in the country and made available to the public. Manuscript books here is used to refer to handwritten document in form of a book that are yet to be printed while books refer to printed books, all bound in one singular volume. For more information on concept of book see Kovač et’al 2019. Publishing Research Quarterly What is a Book? Miha Kovač, Angus Phillips, Adriaan van der Weel, Ruediger Wischenbart, 2019

definition, he defines manuscript culture as “the social and cultural contexts within which manuscripts are written, used and transmitted. This social and cultural contexts in turn are shaped by the medium they produce. Thus, manuscript cultures are not necessarily identical with regional (Indian) or religious (Islamic) cultures. More than one manuscript culture may be found in each place at a given time; for example, there are the manuscript cultures of elites and that of the religious experts.”⁸³

In the context of northern Nigeria and for purpose of this discussion, manuscript culture is interpreted in its broadest attainable sense to incorporate not solely the socio-cultural context in which the manuscripts are made and distributed, but also the popularity, the themes, the general purposes and functions, readership and the impacts on the audiences. Manuscript culture also constitutes its relationship with other reproduced manuscripts (facsimile). Here, it is also an umbrella term for policies and options for the acquisition, organisation, conservation, and preservation of the manuscripts to prevent deterioration and to renew the usability of selected groups of manuscripts.

The Sufi manuscript culture that we have attempted to describe here is the brainchild of the Islamic manuscript culture. The Islamic manuscript culture which began in the early years of the seventh century with the religion of Islam swept through most of the Arab world from Persia to Africa down to the area now known as northern Nigeria, bringing in its rich intellectual tradition.⁸⁴ This development was later guided by the social and political roles of the Sufi thought and ideologies from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.⁸⁵ This phenomenon led to the formation of a particular manuscript culture in which certain Sufi themes, patterns or style of composition are repeated with slight or significant variations with ‘orthodox’ or non-Sufi manuscript culture in the seventeenth century. These variations should not in any way destroy Islamic identity; instead, they make the identity more prominent and noticeable. Nguru, being one of the major centres of Sufism because of its great scholars and its close contact with Borno and Kano scholars has been one of the areas where the Sufi manuscript culture flourished. Sufi manuscript culture in twentieth century Nguru produced both non-Sufi and Sufi Arabic and *Ajami* manuscripts which are largely contrary to the purely mainstream orthodox Islamic literary works,

⁸³ Michael Friedrich

⁸⁴ Alegbeleye 2010, 86-87.

⁸⁵ Hiskett 1975, 73; see also Umar 1999, 359.

in theme, content and purpose. The subsequent sections explore the components of Sufi manuscript culture in twentieth century Nguru.

3.2.1 The Culture of Copying Manuscript Books: Copyists' Duties and Methods

Copying and writing by hand of Islamic text is one of the components of Sufi manuscript cultures and it is a well-established tradition throughout northern Nigeria before and after the advent of the printing technology in the region.⁸⁶ It is difficult to ascertain the exact date when the art of copying was introduced into the region due to scarcity of written sources, but it was said to have reported that by the early fifteenth century, the letter from Mai of Borno to Mamluk Sultan Barquq in Cairo which al-Qalgashandi commented upon it is a clear handiwork of Borno copyist and scribes.⁸⁷ During the same century, it is a well-known fact that handwritten copies of the Qur'an from Borno were exported to Egypt and other parts of North Africa.⁸⁸

Like many other towns in Borno, it is difficult to say specifically the exact date when the art of copying was introduced to Nguru, however, according to oral accounts it was said to have become popular during the period of our study. Prior to the establishment of Arabic printing houses and presses in Kano in the 1930s, the manuscripts that were used among the Tijānī Sufi scholars and students of Nguru were not in print form. Although there were few printed copies in circulation, the vast works (both in prose and verse) in Arabic and *Ajami* were mainly in manuscript form.⁸⁹ Most copies of the manuscript and printed texts in circulation were owned by the private individuals who started collecting them, presumably when they went on pilgrimage, or when merchants could use the efficient parcel post set up by the new colonial authorities in the beginning of the twentieth century. The alternative to importing books is, of course, either to copy books already imported or compose books by oneself in a few days to possess them. Scholars have a generous attitude towards books; they could sell their valuables to purchase books.

This important development, has therefore, led to the emergence of a large body of professional copyists and calligraphers (*warraqun* in Arabic) with good handwriting especially among the 'Ulama. There was also the emergence of reciters of the Qur'an who copy texts or portions of the Qur'an and other books for little or no money to satisfy the growing need for books.

⁸⁶ Dahiru 1995, 137.

⁸⁷ Biddle 2011, 7.

⁸⁸ Denham, Clapperton and Oudney 1826, 1985 2, 144; see also Mohammed 1993, 37 and Dahiru 1995, 137.

⁸⁹ Most respondents reported that during this period, the attention of scholars seemed to have been centred on studying and copying manuscripts rather than authorship because it was the only means of reproducing books and manuals and this tradition survives till modern times.

This profession was open to all, irrespective of educational status. Almost anybody who could write could be a copist, but the elegant hands were considered eligible for the job. The only qualification for being asked to copy a manuscript was their beautiful handwriting.⁹⁰

3.2.2 Calligraphy and Qur’anic Decoration (H. Zayyana)

Islamic art known as *zayyana* in Hausa or *fawne* in Fulfulde.⁹¹ *Zayyana*, in the context of northern Nigeria, is a decorative arts and calligraphic design in the handwritten Qur’anic and non-Qur’anic manuscripts such as the colourful artistry (pertaining to representing different characters of the alphabets and their vocalisations), the separational artistry of colourful identifications of chapter and section endings as well as many other artistic and printing potentials are abundantly available to assist the reader in knowing the divisions of the text.⁹²

The production of a handwritten Qur’an became one of the most highly respected skills of the Sufi scholars and is considered a pious act. Not only scholars or professional calligraphers are engaged in the production of a handwritten Qur’an, but also ordinary devout Muslims. The Qur’an is written in most original and aesthetically intriguing styles of Borno. The decoration is done according to the divisions of the Qur’an. *Zayyana* decoration appears at the beginning of every quarter of the Qur’an.⁹³ The actual process of writing the whole Qur’an usually takes between six months and one year; depending on the writer’s speed, abilities, and experience.⁹⁴ The first stage is writing up the whole text using only consonants; without vowels, punctuation or diacritical marks, in black or brown ink. At the second stage, the vowels are introduced as well as *basmalah*, title, diacritical marks, and number of verses at the beginning of each chapter using red ink. The *hamza* is written in yellow while the name and number of verses is written in red. After finishing the actual text of the Qur’an in its final shape, the calligrapher starts writing another two to three pages of a text known as *dua’a khatm al-Qur’an* (the prayer of the sealing of the Qur’an). The last step is to write the colophon where the calligrapher usually writes his name and the date of finishing the manuscript, after praising the Lord and praying for the prophet Muḥammad. This enables the reader to know exactly where he is while reading the text.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Gwandu 2010, xxxiii.

⁹¹ *Zayyana* generally means calligraphy on paper, slates, wall etc.

⁹² For more information on *ayyana* in the context of northern Nigeria see Biddle 2011.

⁹³ For a general description of the handwritten Qur’an produced in the northern Nigeria, see Brigaglia 2011 and Mutai 2014.

⁹⁴ Interview with Alhaji Mai Musa Shehu on 26.13.2018 at Nguru.

⁹⁵ Dahiru 1995, 142.

However, it is also a common practice among pupils in the Qur'anic schools (*makarantar allo*) to have beautifully designed wooden slates with few verses of the *Surat al-Baqarah* (the second chapter of the Qur'an) written *zayyana* style – meaning calligraphy. The wooden slates decorated with *zayyana* become their certificate which would be presented to the pupils on the day of their graduation ceremony (Hau. *Saukar Kura'ani*) as proof of academic proficiency. It is an aspect of the intellectual tradition which was previously observed only in the *makarantar allo* but now, in the town⁹⁶ and other places.

3.2.3 Binding and Binders (H. *Dukawa*)

In Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria, the sheets of the Qur'an are as earlier noted are neither stapled together nor stitched as a single book. The sheets are separately put together and bound with hardcover as the immediate protector; and a bag for carrying it which are made by leather workers known as *dukawa* (sing. *baduku*).⁹⁷ The Qur'anic cover is made of cardboard and leather and the Qur'an which is folded around the loose sheets of the Qur'an known as *tadarishi*. On the leather is a belt of the same leather used to tie the collections properly and safely. The leather bag (satchel or case) for carrying the Qur'an is known as *gafaka* in Hausa and *baktar* in Kanuri. The casing is usually made of leather and it is elaborately decorated in a rectangular container. Yet, the Nguru Qur'anic signs and pattern works are somewhat unique in design and decoration. Nguru has a substantial number of people who are famous for skills in leatherwork who also produce leather handles, as well as designs in plaited leather. They are frequently added to articles such as ink pot (made from a small gourd) and pen case, (made from strips of doom-palm fronds) which are both made by Qur'anic scholars and their pupils. The wooden writing boards are also decorated with *zayyana* patterns by the *dukawa*. The kind of leather that is commonly used for decorative work is tanned goatskin in a place called Majema in the northeastern part of Nguru. Untanned leather is also used if a person presents an uncovered amulet and demands that a skin of hyena, alligator, electric fish, monkey, lion, sheep, lizard, snake, and leopard should be used as cover. Thus, the leather worker must satisfy his client.⁹⁸ The tanned leather, which is frequently dyed to a bright red colour, is easy to work with because this is the well-known practice of casing the Qur'an in Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria.

⁹⁶ During my recent fieldwork, I witnessed this in Umar bin Abdulaziz Islamic School in Nguru.

⁹⁷ This was an industry that central to life in the Northern Nigeria including Nguru. It was formed by a respectable group who were highly esteemed.

⁹⁸ The leather and the materials were locally obtained in the area.

3.2.4 Surveying the Book Culture and Book Trade (*H. Kasuwancin Littafi*)

Trade in books constituted one of the most important aspects of the Sufi manuscript culture and it occupies a special position in northern Nigeria. Nguru, in northern Nigeria, is a modernised ancient town as explained in the previous chapter. Its participation in long distance commerce and extensive market trade had a heritage of over four hundred years. Trade in books continued to thrive in twentieth century northern Nigeria and Kano became the principal centre of the trade. Most of the books were imported from Islamic worlds and some were written in northern Nigeria by some of the leading *malams*. They were copied and spread around; they were used in the same way as the ones that came from Islamic worlds. Al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were part of the business in Kano and Nguru. The former did not only sell books but also imported them from India, Lebanon, Egypt etc., to Nigeria. Brigaglia argues that there was book-boom in the 1930s and 1970s when Tijānī books were available as never before. It was also the time when trade in Tijānī books in northern Nigeria including Nguru assumed much wider scale due to certain changes that were introduced by the colonial masters. The changes include among others the introduction of printing technology and construction of railways in the 1930s which linked Nguru with other parts of Northern Nigeria. With this change, Nguru Tijānī Sufi scholars and students looked up to Kano for their trade in books and Islamic inspiration.

Hiowever, repair and restoration work to books in manuscript and printed edition were also carried out in Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria. For instance, whenever pages of books were torn and there was the danger of them falling apart, they were immediately sown together with the help of ordinary thread and needle. When pieces of pages disappeared completely, they were replaced but with a note that this had been done by the same or a different scribe.⁹⁹ If both manuscript books and printed books were old enough and no longer readable, they were either buried or burnt.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, any destruction or disrespect to both manuscript books and printed books was absolutely condemned and discouraged.

3.2.5 Tools and Instruments of Writing and Copying Manuscripts

The scholars, scribes and copyists need writing materials which are used in the production of manuscripts. These writing materials in the context of Nguru may be divided into two

⁹⁹ Mohammed 1993, 38.

¹⁰⁰ Most of our informants revealed that many of their religious texts especially Qur'an inherited from their parents, they often burnt them to ashes because desecration of the religious texts is forbidden in Islam.

categories. Firstly, there were some materials, which were locally made such as pen, ink and *allo*: these are less expensive. Secondly, there are some materials like paper, which are imported to the area.

3.2.5.1 Writing Paper (H. *Takarda*)

Nguru was one of the main centres of production and copying the handwritten Qur'an; hence, students went to the town to learn calligraphy and to study the Qur'an. Prior to the indigenous production of books by local scholars in the region now known as northern Nigeria, book in manuscript or printed editions, as earlier noted, were imported into the region.¹⁰¹ The last option for the dissemination of the text is either to copy books already imported or to compose books by oneself. Either way, the most important writing materials in the book-production is paper, as all the works were written on paper. Thus, the scholars, scribes and copyist largely depended on the imported papers; there is hardly any evidence of local production of paper in the region.¹⁰²

The information at our disposal reveal that Nguru area was never starved of writing paper because the importation of the material from across the Sahara was a continuous affair up to the establishment of the British colonial rule at the beginning of the twentieth century. The importation of writing paper continued even under the colonial regime but it was done through the coast of the south.¹⁰³ From twentieth century to date, paper has been available in Nguru markets and other local markets around the town, with Kano as its main source of paper. Two types of papers (*mai wata*¹⁰⁴ and *mai tsarkiya*)¹⁰⁵ were commonly used during the pre-colonial and colonial period. In the twentieth century, another type of paper which was carrying the Hausa expression "*Hakuri Maganin Dunya*" written in Arabic script, which means "Patience is the way to cope with the world's ills"¹⁰⁶ was discovered. The paper dates back probably to the time of the early period of British occupation of northern Nigeria.¹⁰⁷

One ream of paper (*ruzuma*) consists of a bundle of 500 sheets, and a sheet was a large piece of paper, from which four leaves of the Qur'an are produced. One *ruzuma* of paper could

¹⁰¹ For more information on history of paper and watermark in the region see Biddle 2017.

¹⁰² Last 2011, 185; see also Mohammed 1993, 37.

¹⁰³ Adamu 2010, 164.

¹⁰⁴ The first type had trademark or watermark on it showing *wata* (*moon*) and that was the best. It was thick and the most expensive type because it does not absorb ink. The origin of *mai wata* paper is obscure but it is likely that it was initially known.

¹⁰⁵ The second type, *mai tsirkiya*, was somewhat flimsy and cheaper.

¹⁰⁶ Walz 2011, 104.

¹⁰⁷ Walz 2011, 104.

produce a complete Qur'an and two copies of *Dalā'il Khayrāt*. The standard size folio for writing decorative Qur'anic manuscript in Borno is called *jamba* in Kanuri. The sheets are cut by the writer himself: properly measured and trimmed with knife or any sharp object. When the sheets are cut in approximately 190mm x 230mm, four to five hundred folios could be used to produce a copy of the Qur'an. The half of the *jamba* is called *wadami* which makes up to three to four hundred folios measuring 110.5mm x 170mm approximately.¹⁰⁸ There is a readymade margin paper which is known as *Bayalaram*. It measures 80.5mm by 140mm for the big size (*Jamba*) while the small size (*Wadami*) measures approximately 70mm by 110mm.¹⁰⁹

3.2.5.2 Wooden board (H. *Allo*)

The earliest form of Qur'anic manuscripts and other religious texts available to learners in Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria, was written on a wooden tablet or board popularly known as *allo* in Hausa or *lawh al-Qur'an* in Arabic. *Allo* is historically and culturally part of the book industry in the town. It is a locally carved wooden board primarily used as a medium of teaching Arabic writing and more specifically for copying and memorizing passages from the Qur'an. It is mainly used in the *makaranatar allo* and it can be used as many times as possible: all it requires is for it to be washed, cleaned and a new lesson can then be re-written on it. The *allo* has two sides and the writing can be on both sides. The *allo* are classified based on the quality or size and are named after the tree from which the wood they are made from is obtained.¹¹⁰

As noted earlier, almost all the types of *allo* are made of wood, with the exception of *allon karfe* (metal slate) which is made from iron sheets and exclusively used for healing and magical purposes. The best and expensive *allo* is made from the wood of the *Aduwa* (desert date tree); it is also the best for *allo zayyana* and for writing *rubutun sha*. It is brownish or yellowish in colour. Most *allo Aduwa* are made in the average size of 30 to 34 inches in length and 12 to 19 inches width and they are mostly used by the *gardawa*.¹¹¹ The second-best type of *allo* is produced from the *giyayya* tree (*Mitragyna Africana*), which is also locally obtained in Nguru. It is yellowish in colour and it diffuses the ink; therefore, it needs to be treated with oil and other material before writing on it. It is also used by younger students of the *makarantar allo* especially beginning *kolo/kotso*. The third in hierarchy of quality is obtained from the *Ararafi* tree which is also locally

¹⁰⁸ Dahiru 1995, 138. For a detailed discussion on this topic see Brigaglia 2017.

¹⁰⁹ Dahiru 1995, 138.

¹¹⁰ Fieldnotes; see also Hassan 1992, 154.

¹¹¹ Fieldnotes; see also Hassan 1992, 154.

found in Nguru area. The fourth one is known as *allo kanya* which is obtained from *Kanya* tree (*Diospyros mespiliformis*, or the African ebony tree). It is brownish or reddish in colour and it is used by students ranging from beginners to the initial stage of the *gardi*. The last is called *allo goba*, which is made from *Goba* tree (Guava). It is also reddish or brown.¹¹²

Allo can be classified into the following types according to its function. The first type of *allo* is known as *allo karatu* which is used in the school for the purpose of memorizing the Qur'an. Each time a student finishes memorizing a certain lesson he/she can wash the writing off with water and prepare the *allo* for the next text. The second type of *allo* is called *allo zayyana* (well-decorated wooden tablet): this is a special type of *allo* used in the celebration of *Saukar Qur'ani*.¹¹³ As earlier stated, during the ceremony of the completion of Qur'anic recitation (*sauka*), the *malam* would prepare *allo zayyana* on which *Surat al-Fatiha* (the first chapter of the Qur'an) and the first five verses of *Surat al-Baqarah* (Q2:1-5) were written. With technological developments, however, many scholars have resorted to buying a 'nameless ready-made' glazed tablet for the *walima* celebrations of their pupils.¹¹⁴ The other types of *allo*, besides the educational one is called *rubutu* (writing) *sha allo* or *tsubbu* (medical) *allo* which is used for magical and healing activities.

3.2.5.3 Ink Recipes (H. *Tawada*)

Ink is another thing required by the scribes, scholars and copyists to either compose or copy a text.¹¹⁵ Ink is locally produced and therefore created no problem at all.¹¹⁶ There are two types of ink that are used in writing the Qur'an. The first type is *zege*. This could easily be washed because it is used for writing on slate (*allo*).¹¹⁷ The second type is the durable ink: this is used for writing the Qur'an, amulets and all other records which are preserved on paper.¹¹⁸ This type of ink is of four main different colours; they are black (Hau. *baki* and Kan. *yanbar*), red (Hau. *ja* and Kan. *kimeyaram*), yellow (Hau. *Ruwan dorawa* and Kan. *zarni*) and green (Hau. *kore* and Kan.

¹¹² For more detail on the description of the types of *allo* see Hassan 1992, 155-6.

¹¹³ For some details on the process of making the *allo zayyana* such as text, decoration and design see Hassan 1992, 157-170.

¹¹⁴ At times in the southern part of Nigeria, the writing of the Qur'anic portions was beautifully decorated in colour on pieces of paper cut to the size of the wooden tablet on which it would be pasted see Jimoh 2007, 179.

¹¹⁵ For the definition of ink in the context of northern Nigeria see Biddle 2011.

¹¹⁶ Mohammed 1993, 38.

¹¹⁷ Dahiru 1995, 138.

¹¹⁸ Dahiru 1995, 138.

maririma).¹¹⁹ Each colour has its separate usage and also a separate pen is used for writing each colour. The black ink is primarily used for writing plain letters of the text or bare text. The red is used for vowelling, while yellow serves as indicator of *hamza* and used for dotting at the end of a verse. The green colour is used for indicating *hamzat al-wasl*.¹²⁰ The coloured ink in some special cases is used against the usual black ink when writing some magic manuscripts. The colour depends on the nature of the magic and a combination of colours is usually done by writing magic circle and gibberish.¹²¹ The traditional inking does not only make the writing beautiful but also contains some ingredients that preserve the writing and the durability of the papers against moisture and heat.¹²²

The inks are prepared through different and more complex processes which take days or weeks to complete. The black ink is made from various local ingredients and the methods of preparation are three or four. The first method of making the black ink is by using rusty old iron or pieces of metal (*tsatsan karfe*), mixed with pulp of gum Arabic (*kaaro*) of *Egyptian mimosa* or *senegal* or *seyal* or *acacia farnesiana* or *sieberiana*, *nilotica* or *polyacantha* which which are all collected from the trees that grow in Nguru, asa in other places of northern Nigeria.¹²³ Other ingredients are the pigments of bark of *Egyptian mimosa* (*sassaken gabaruwa*), pigments of bark of *Bauhinia reticulate shrub* (*sassaken kargo*), *ganyen bunya* (leaves of a species of tree) or the red weed, *striga Senegalensis* (*wuta-wuta* or *kudunji*) or chalk of millet mixed with gum Arabic. They are soaked in water placed in *tukunya* (earthen pot) for days depending upon the activity of the ingredients for producing the black ink.¹²⁴ The second method is called *wanke*. This is by using the soot extracted from the outside bottom of cooking pot or cooking bowls. Gum Arabic is added to the soot and it is cooked for some time to become the black ink.¹²⁵

The third method is locally known as *zuge*. The black ink is produced by using powdered *gawayi* (charcoal) instead of the soot. This is done by burning the wood of the desert date to the

¹¹⁹ Dahiru 1995, 138. However, in a recent scientific research and analysis conducted in northern Nigeria by Biddle confirms that there is also light brown, orange red, opaque, lemon-yellow, and green, dark purple, brown colours see Biddle 2011, 8.

¹²⁰ Dahiru 1995, 138.

¹²¹ It is observed in nineteenth century northern Nigeria that some of the magical manuscripts are written with blood or sperm as noted by Shaykh ‘Uthmān Dan Fodio in his *Nurul Abab* see Bunza 2009, 156.

¹²² Bunza 2009, 155.

¹²³ Garba and Girei 2014, 224. The gum Arabic of three types namely, *falli* (white), *marua* (yellow and reddish) and *mumuye* (dark). For detailed analysis of the gum Arabic see Biddle 2011, 9.

¹²⁴ Garba and Girei 2014, 225; see also Dahiru 1995, 139.

¹²⁵ Hassan 1992, 152; see also Muhammadu Koki 1977, 21.

charcoal. The charcoal is dissolved in water and it is boiled satisfactorily. Rarely a little *Kanwa* (potash) is added to the substance. Before the ink is all ready for use, little *karoo* (gum Arabic) and cassava powder are added to the usual charcoal of the ink to make it thick and sticky so that the writing can last for a very long time.¹²⁶

The last method used in the production of the black ink is by using the leaves of the *plectropterus gambensis* (spur-winged goose) or *dinya*. The leaves are cooked again and again until they become thick. The substance can cool after which it is then turned into the inkpot and gum Arabic is added.¹²⁷ In all cases, to test whether the ink is ready for use, a small drop is placed on the nail of the thumb.

The red ink is produced by using red soil or stone locally known as *magar*. Another type of stone which can also be used to produce the red ink is *koya*; it is imported from Ilella which is a district under Damagarm in present day Niger Republic. This is mixed with the pulp of the *tamarindus indica* (tamarind tree) or *tsamiya* and gum Arabic.¹²⁸ The same type of soil is also used in the second method of making red ink. The soil is mixed with lime and gum Arabic.¹²⁹ The yellow ink (ochre) is traditionally obtained from certain stones and sometimes roots of certain plants or made of a water vine *leptatadenia lancifolia* or *ruwan yadiya* mixed with fresh cow milk and gum Arabic is added it thicker.¹³⁰ The second process of making the yellow ink is by using blossoms of gum tree: *combretum verticillatum*. (*Taramaiya kantara*, or *zindi*) They are thoroughly soaked in water together with cow milk and gum Arabic is added to make thicker.¹³¹ The third procedure is by using a type of soil from the Republic of Niger. This is also mixed with fresh cow milk and gum Arabic to produce a yellow ink.¹³² The green ink was recently introduced, and it involves the use of an imported factory powder, mixed with water and gum Arabic.¹³³

Furthermore, the *tawada* (ink) is normally kept in the pot which is made of either *yumbu* or *tabo* (clay usually available at the riverbank), or alternatively Itace (wood cut) moulded and shaped to make ink-pots which is said to be stronger and more durable. Calabash material which

¹²⁶ Mohammed 1993, 38; see also Hassan 1992, 152; Bunza 2009, 155 and Muhammadu Koki 1977, 21. However, *Zuge* in Sokoto and Katsina is not actually charcoal but something like it which is also used.

¹²⁷ Garba and Girei 2014, 225.

¹²⁸ Garba and Girei 2014, 226.

¹²⁹ Garba and Girei 2014, 226.

¹³⁰ Garba and Girei 2014, 225.

¹³¹ Garba and Girei 2014, 225.

¹³² Garba and Girei 2014, 225.

¹³³ Garba and Girei 2014, 226.

is locally known as *kurtu* was also used in some places for making pots. Tins and bottles were also subsequently adopted and used as inkpots. Most of these inkpots are decorated with leather strings for carrying or hanging them.¹³⁴

3.2.5.4 Pens (H. *Alkalami*)

Deroche, a leading authority on codicology argues that no object of copying or production of manuscripts can occupy special position in the culture of calligraphers, copyists, and scribes than calamus or stalk/reed pen (Hau. *alkalami* or Kan. *Albran*).¹³⁵ The art and tradition of making manuscripts, Qur'anic or otherwise, cannot be separated from those associated with the pen. The pens utilized in the writing or copying of the Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic manuscript are like those used throughout northern Nigeria made of reed. Like ink and slate, they are locally manufactured in Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria; the pens are used on *allo* and they are used in writing and decorating paper manuscripts.

Making pen is the first skill learnt by the *almajiri* (pupil) in *makarantar allo*. *Alkalami* is used for writing on paper and *allo* and it is locally made from a material called *suli* in Kanuri; *sulle* in Hausa). The *sulli* or *sulle* can be obtained from *gamba* (*andropogon guyanus*), *tsuare* (*Cymbopogon*), *karan-gero* (reed straw), *karan dawa* (cornstalk, or cane-stem).¹³⁶ These materials are mostly collected after the rainy season and they are used throughout the year. A knife or razor blade is used to cut cornstalk into a nib-like point or by sharpening the tip of the cornstalk to make pens for writing according to required size and purpose. For instance, the pens used by scholars in writing or decorating *allo* are usually made from cane stalks of guinea corn plant. However, the professional copyists and calligraphers prefer pens made from *gamba* and *tsuare* which are of a better quality because they are strong, hence, it is difficult for the tip of the pen to become sodden in the ink.¹³⁷

It is also interesting to note that the *alkalami* used in writing the bare text is different from the one used for writing the vowels, diacritical marks, punctuations and stops. Therefore, a set of pens is required for an average work that includes a bare text, vowels or diacritical marks and a decoration.¹³⁸ The twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars usually employed local materials such as

¹³⁴ See appendix for the picture of the different types of the inkpots.

¹³⁵ Deroche 2005, 103.

¹³⁶ All these materials are abundant in Nguru area and other parts of the northern Nigeria.

¹³⁷ Hassan 1992, 151.

¹³⁸ Hassan 1992, 151.

wood, calabash or bag made of sisal as pen case while others kept their set of pens wrapped together without a pen case.¹³⁹ Nowadays, pens are usually kept in pen cases of different forms and qualities. Some are produced from metal by the local blacksmith, others are made of leather by leather workers.

3.3 Popular Culture in Manuscripts: Amulets, Charms and Talisman

One of the major components of many Arabic manuscripts, according to Gacek, is the presence of talismanic inscriptions. These consist of mysterious letters (*abjad*) and numbers which represent magical formulas which are manipulated in different shapes and combinations to produce medicine or spells of superior supernatural efficacy.¹⁴⁰ These talismanic inscriptions are largely derived from the Qur'an. Retrospectively, the tradition of regarding the Qur'anic text as an amulet, *rubutun sha* or *ruqya* is old in the whole of what is now northern Nigeria including.¹⁴¹ The Qur'an being considered as the word of God is very central to Islamic healing and magic. In the twentieth century Nguru, every family is expected to possess a copy of the Qur'an for blessing and protection. For them, belief in the Qur'an, like belief in the angels, is an integral part of the Nguru belief. Thus, the primary methods and procedures employed by the Tijānī and non-Tijānī Sufi scholars in healing and magical practices are manifested in verbal prayers and incantations; their calligraphic charms or *hatimi* are used as textual amulets, or *rubutun sha* (imbibing the word), and other procedures which are extracted from the Qur'an.¹⁴² In addition, Tijānī and non-Tijānī Sufi scholars are engaged in performing prayers, the interpretation of dreams and identifying signs of fortune or misfortune telling through astrological means (*hisab*), sand divining (*raml*), numerological and other divinatory means. These activities or professions are often guarded with secrecy and protected as esoteric domains known as *asiri* or *asrar* (Ar. *sir*, i.e secret, or *sahr*, i.e. magic).¹⁴³

3.3.1 Textual Amulets: Meaning, Composition and Essence

The practice and production of the calligraphic charms for the purpose of protection and for other successes is a very old phenomenon in Nguru and other parts of northern Nigeria as well

¹³⁹ See appendix for illustration.

¹⁴⁰ Gacek 2009, 199.

¹⁴¹ In this tradition, a copy of the Qur'an is essentially preserved and regarded as 'hidden sacra' as talisman for its efficacy. The tradition in the sultanate of Borno was known as "Mune" tradition and in Kano people were known for their 'Dirki' tradition see Palmer 1967.

¹⁴² Most of the twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars claimed that the justification for the uses of the Qur'anic verse and names of God in amulets, *rubutun sha* or *ruqya* is found in Qur'an 17: 82.

¹⁴³ Hassan 1992, 195.

as West Africa in general especially from seventeenth century to date. Sufi scholars in Nguru, like their counterparts in other parts of northern Nigeria were effective in the production of calligraphic charms, and this resulted in quite a rich body of writings in the twentieth century. Most twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars are involved in some form of healing or supernatural activity but many of them I interviewed distanced themselves from the harmful services such as making *sammu*, or writing charms to destroy others which are provided by *malaman tsibbu* or *malaman duba* (who also claimed to be Sufis). Thus, they only prescribed prophetic medicine or amulets and made prayers for clients for good and curative causes according to the Islamic injunctions. Whatever might be the case, the production of calligraphic charm requires the knowledge of lapidary arts and complex rituals. This is mastered by elite practitioners who were able to read handbooks based on magical learning of ancient or near East origin. Moreover, unlike other types of writing, calligraphic charms inscription must be carefully executed. This is because, the artistic and aesthetic appeals are to enhance their efficacy and power of cure and protection. There are two ways of administering calligraphic charm: amulet¹⁴⁴ and *rubutun sha* as discussed below:

3.2.2 Talisman and Textual Amulets (H. *Laya*)

The Arabs call amulets *hama'il*; this can be translated as calligraphic charm, talisman, or textual amulets. In twentieth century Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria, talisman, charm and textual amulet are sometimes used interchangeably as that text which chiefly comprises praises to God and brief quotation of verses from the Qur'an, names of Allah, divine names of Angels, the four rightful caliphs, prayers, signs, figures, astrological cum numerical symbols, figures of animals and men, magic squares and names of spirits are beautifully written for the purpose of protection, cure or any form of medicine.¹⁴⁵ The content of Islamic calligraphic charms can be divided into four categories. The first aspect of the medicine scripts are the manuscripts which consist of text of continuous intelligible sentences. The second aspect contains single words, which denote intelligible meanings of known names and words. The third aspect comprises signs and figures of unknown origins and the last contains letters and numbers, either separate or arranged in magical squares, astronomy, divination, circles, or other geometric designs.

An amulet is written on strip of papers or a sheet of paper and is normally folded in special

¹⁴⁴ The word amulet in Hausa is *laya* (pl. *layoyi*) and when it is encased in leather or metal sheaths or in other material it is known as *kurmanlaya*.

¹⁴⁵ Khalid 2010, 291.

ways, sometimes into small triangles and squares, and other interesting shapes and special techniques which must be learned. The date and time of their production are not usually recorded, but their names and significance are clearly stated at the beginning or ending of the page. Then, the amulets are wrapped and tied by pieces of fabric or a string by the *malam* himself. They are then taken to *baduku* (leather worker) to make a cover for them as discussed below. The usage of these textual amulets and talisman is prevalent in Nguru.

The amulets can be used in different ways: they may be worn or carried on the body (*layar wuya*), worn on arm (*kambu*), wrapped in brown leather like belt worn around the waist as preventative (*guru*). They may also be wrapped in a blue cloth, worn on arm (*dagumi*), wrapped in leather, attached to rosary (*yar mitsila*), hung on the bed of a patient or placed somewhere in a house. In most cases, they are kept in hidden places to ensure their efficacy. An amulet can be worn as adornment and still serve the medicinal purpose.

The amulets are used for all sorts of maladies and for any kind of bodily disease and for protecting human beings and animals. Most amulets are believed to serve protective or preventive functions i.e to ward off an evil. Others are believed to be causative or positive; they are used to obtain wealth, women, children, love or power of control over others. In fact, in some cases amulets are believed to be vindictive or counteractive, i.e they are designed to render bad magic ineffective. For instance, children often wear *laya* against illness, adults may wear them for several reasons like *magani* (written to ward off evil), *layar zana* (for invincibility) and *kau-da-bara* (to avoid being wounded). They are also used against (evil charms), fever, evil spirits and even thieves. Most charms are usually male inclined, but a woman also use charms on her husband, so she could manipulate him when she feels her husband is not happy with her (she may feel he is neglecting her for another wife). Moreover, they also do so for the sake of their children, co-wives, or for other martial issues like childbearing etc. They use amulet for medical cum spiritual problems prevailing in the town.

3.2.3 Imbibing the Words (H. *Rubutun Sha*)

Literally, ‘writing for drinking’, (*rubutun sha* in Hausa), involves writing verses from the Qur’an. It also includes the addition of other *hatimi* or magical squares, names of God, and other divine formula. This writing is done with non-toxic ink on wooden or silver tablet, often thousands of times. This writing on wooden or silver tablet is then washed off with clean water in a calabash or container and the afflicted person drinks or rubs the resulting liquid on his body. This literally

means internalizing the potency of the verse as a cure for certain illness or for protection and for many other purposes. This type of drink preparation is known as *rubutun sha*. It is also used as a local medicine rubbed against the body.¹⁴⁶ Most of the content of calligraphic charms or *allo*, on which a *rubutun sha* is prepared, consists of two parts: they are inscriptions (verses, names, letters) and a magical square or a *hatimi* design which is referred to in some literature as *jadwal* as explained above.

Rubutun sha is a second important way of using calligraphic charms in the twentieth century Nguru. The belief in the magical power of the *rubutun sha*, of course, was very strong among the people in twentieth century Nguru. The *darnimas* (writers) are considered to have possessed power in their writings and once they write a verse on *allo* (slate) people believe that drinking that writing is synonymous with solving the desired problem. During my field work, I observed that in most cases the verse of the Qur'an is used more often than magical squares or *hatimi*. The ink used in making or preparing *rubutun sha* is of the soluble water.

3.2.4 Purposive prayer (H. *Addu'a*)

Khalil argues that amuletic texts written down in codices or verses from the Qur'an could also be used as verbal charm popularly known as *addu'a* or 'supererogatory prayer' and indeed, like written charm, they possess spiritual efficacy.¹⁴⁷ It is one of the major methods adopted by all Islamic scholars and it covers a wide range of their healing activities. This type of prayer is flexible and less formal. It is a non-obligatory prayer used in varying circumstances to invoke God's blessing or help. It is also widely used by Islamic scholars in calling for a blessing on a client. It involves the reading of certain calligraphic chapters of the Qur'an which are believed to have special effects. This is in addition to the famous prayers and ritual incantations which are found in manuscripts or printed forms. Some *malams* refer to occult Islamic knowledge as *Ismil Azim*.¹⁴⁸ However, there are also some Islamic scholars and average individuals who are employed by people to pray for them against *jinns* or send it out of their bodies; this is called "*rukiyya*." Like *rubutun sha*, *rukiyya* is a form spirit exorcism. A *malam* recites passages that are renowned for their healing powers from the Qur'an. They are recited loudly and repeatedly into the ears of the person that is believed to be afflicted by *aljannu* (jinns), the supernatural creatures mentioned

¹⁴⁶ Hassan 1992, 202-203.

¹⁴⁷ Kahlil 2010, 281-303.

¹⁴⁸ *Ismil Azim* is the special names of Allah in the Qur'an which are not known by ordinary Muslims.

frequently in the Qur'an. The *malam* uses vigorous prayer and even physical violence to pull the spirits (*cire iskokai*) out of the afflicted person's body.

Texts (*lakani or sirri*) may be used in various ways: they may be written, recited, or read. This is based on the subject which are sold and circulated widely in Nguru and other parts of the northern Nigeria especially Kurmi market Kano. The *lakani* were commonly meant for recitation. Recitation of a *lakani* may be used where one wishes to achieve a specific end. A businessman, for instance, may recite a *lakani* given to him by his *malam* when going to meet another businessman to sign a contract. He will recite while approaching the other businessman to shake hands with the intention of creating a climate where a favourable conclusion will be reached.

3.4 Transition from the manuscript culture to print culture

In the previous sections, components of manuscript cultures have been discussed, but this sections explores nature of print culture in the twentieth century Nguru. The emergence of the print culture had made it possible to reproduce many copies of Sufi literature which encouraged their distribution and circulation not only in Nguru but also in northern Nigeria, West Africa, North Africa and the Middle East. This development resulted in the increase and spread of Arabic literacy and Sufi ideas in the region and the neighbouring countries. It had also appeared to have marked the beginning of a new era, as the region gradually lost many of its medieval and Islamic characteristics.

In Nigeria, printing was pioneered by the Christian missionaries in 1846: the old Calabar Mission Press and the Presbyterian Printer in August 1849.¹⁴⁹ The print technology was later introduced into the northern Nigeria, specifically Kano, where the first printing press in northern Nigeria was established. With the introduction of print technology in Kano, Nguru embodied a tradition of book culture different from that of Borno by getting inspiration from Kano. Print culture, then offered the Nguru scholars another chance of printing¹⁵⁰ and publishing their works in Kano, with very cheap prices and a wide audience. Most of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were printed and distributed in Kano.

Printing (*ṭab`*) came to Kano in the 1920s. Kano Emirate Press was established in 1918 at Kofar Dan Agundi in Kano City. It started its full operations between 1920 and 1921. The press

¹⁴⁹ Oyewole 1998, 50.

¹⁵⁰ Printing is the process of getting text and images out on a paper by using master form or template while publishing is the process of making works available to the public. In short, Printing is production, while publishing is dissemination.

used four scripts in the production Arabic, *Ajami*, Hausa Boko and English.¹⁵¹ The press was relocated to its present location in Kofar Nasarawa, Kano in 1938.¹⁵² Translation Bureau was opened in Kano in 1929 but later transferred to Zaria in 1931. Despite the existence of the government's printing presses in Kano, printed Arabic and *Ajami* were a rare sight then. This persisted until the late 1940s and early 1950s when printed books by commercial printers began to arrive in the area. Ife-Olu was the first commercial printing press established in Kano in 1943 as a branch of Ife-Olu printing works, in Lagos. It was established in Kano by Mr. I. W. Oshilaja (Oshinuga) Washington who hails from Ijebu-Ode in Ogun State.¹⁵³ The success of the company attracted other entrepreneurs to establish printing presses such as Gaskiya Corporation Zaria in 1945. All of them were using the offset method after which the Kano Government print obtained two Rota print machines in 1958.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, it was very expensive to print the Arabic character (especially if the vowel points have to be added as is necessary when Hausa is written in Arabic character). This is mainly because the hand-setting of *Ajami* was a laborious and expensive process.¹⁵⁵ Oluseyi was founded in 1947, while Adebola was established in 1951 (the two enterprises were later renamed Bolaprint Limited).¹⁵⁶ Oluseyi Press became popular in printing for many Arabic texts and manuscripts, text books and other religious publications.¹⁵⁷ Oluseyi, for instance, had offset equipment since 1960 and it printed most of the Tijānī manuscripts in northern Nigeria including Nguru.

Mid-West Printing Works (then known as the Emirate Printing Press) is another commercial printing press which was founded in 1953 by Mr. Okena,¹⁵⁸ It started using offset methods since 1963 and deals with most of the manuscripts that other printing presses cannot handle.¹⁵⁹ Jola-Ade Printers was founded in 1971 by Alhaji Saad Bello in Kano, who possesses exceptional qualities. He is literate in Arabic, a printing engineer, and a printer. He studied Kord and Lithographic Engineering at Vouce and Umloaft, Mokenberg in Hamburg, Germany in

¹⁵¹ Oyewole 1998, 60.

¹⁵² Oyewole 1998, 57.

¹⁵³ Oyewole 1998, 74.

¹⁵⁴ Furniss 1978, 442.

¹⁵⁵ Adamu 2009, 104; see also Furniss 1978, 442.

¹⁵⁶ Oyewole 1998, 57.

¹⁵⁷ Oyewole 1998, 79.

¹⁵⁸ Abdullahi 1980, 37; see also Oyewole 1998, 57. However, as the name of the company suggests, the owner of the company originally came from the Mid-West of Nigeria. He was said to have come from the defunct Bendel State and had worked with the Kano Native Authority Press.

¹⁵⁹ Furniss 1978, 444.

1981.¹⁶⁰ His enterprises involve sale, repair, and service of printing machines. He specializes mostly in printing Arabic manuscripts, Islamic texts, and books.¹⁶¹

When the Oxford University Press opened an office in Zaria in 1974, eight of the twenty printing presses in Kano had working offset facilities.¹⁶² The lithographic offset printing entails “the photographing of the manuscript, the image is then transferred to a machine which etches that image on to a metal sheet, known as the plate. The plate is then moved to the press where it is finally inked and used to imprint the exact image of the original manuscript on the paper.”¹⁶³ This was a significant method because it is not necessary for the printer to have the expertise to set the Arabic script when printing Ajami manuscript. However, the cost of printing entailed the paper, ink, number of plates to be made and the labour.¹⁶⁴

About 1960, another development took place in the commercial printing technology in Kano. This was the introduction of new technique and facilities, the photo-offset method of printing.¹⁶⁵ This made it possible for the first time in the history of Tijānī scholars to take their carefully handwritten manuscript written in *Ajami* to printing presses and make as many copies as they could afford. Since the printers could not read the manuscript or type set it, the authors usually told them how they wanted the copies to be and they took their time in paginating the publication.¹⁶⁶ The importance of photo-offset printing process, according to Paden, has allowed the reproduction of the local Hausa style of writing Arabic script.¹⁶⁷

This period in the history of northern Nigeria printing in the second half of the twentieth century coincides with the golden age of the *fayda* Tijānīyya with its prospering publications. With the increasing fortune of the brotherhood and desperate need of its *Shaykhs* for printing facilities for the propagation of their particular beliefs and ideologies, a printing press was exclusively established for printing the manuscripts of the brotherhood known as Northern Maktabat Press (*Yan Kasa).¹⁶⁸ It was established in 1964 by a very religious Hausa man, Faruk Salga (the grandson of Muhammad Salga). He was very close to the leadership of the *fayda*

¹⁶⁰ Oyewole 1998, 85.

¹⁶¹ Oyewole 1998, 85.

¹⁶² Furniss 1978, 443-445.

¹⁶³ Furniss 1978, 442.

¹⁶⁴ Furniss 1978, 442.

¹⁶⁵ Furniss 1978, 441.

¹⁶⁶ Furniss 1978, 441.

¹⁶⁷ Paden 1973, 141.

¹⁶⁸ Furniss 1978, 446.

Tijānīyya,¹⁶⁹ but he did not know anything about printing.¹⁷⁰ Abdullahi claims that this was the reason he started with offset printing and this was the only thing he could print in *Ajami* scripts.¹⁷¹ Whereas the other printing companies were using the very best Heidelberg equipment; the printers of the Northern Maktabat Press were using two old and well-used Gestetner A.B. Dick 350 machines, one plate-maker and one plate making camera.¹⁷² The printing firm had largely dealt with the publication of Tijānī manuscripts despite being poorly equipped with printing equipment.¹⁷³ The manuscripts that were written by Tijānī scholars found their ways through Mudi Salga to the press into the *Zāwiya* networks in northern Nigeria.¹⁷⁴ Furniss explains that most of the manuscripts were often donated by its authors to the organization.¹⁷⁵ As will be seen below, they also printed many manuscripts of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. Apart from publication of the Tijānī manuscripts, the compound of the company was also used for the brotherhood activities. Furniss reports that in 1974, Mudi Salga, Shehu Mai Hula and Faruk Salga often conducted the *Zikr* of the brotherhood in the company of the workers at the press.¹⁷⁶

The printing presses in Kano continued to grow and became a rival to the traditional monopoly that the Gaskiya Corporation had virtually completely established in printing literature in northern Nigeria.¹⁷⁷ By 1968, there were more than twenty-two commercial printing presses in Kano. Therefore, Kano had more private presses than the rest of the northern Nigeria combined.¹⁷⁸ In 1975 there were more than thirty-eight commercial printing presses in Kano. Between 1975 and 1980, new printing technologies with automatic machines were acquired by the various commercial presses and this improved the scale of production. The number of printing presses rose from thirty-eight in 1980 to over seventy-four in 1983.¹⁷⁹ The period between 1979 and 1983 marked a printing boom in Kano, as a result of the transition to civil rule which required the

¹⁶⁹ Furniss 1978, 444.

¹⁷⁰ Abdullahi 1980, 32.

¹⁷¹ Abdullahi 1980, 32.

¹⁷² Furniss 1978, 444.

¹⁷³ Furniss 1978, 444.

¹⁷⁴ Furniss 1978, 446.

¹⁷⁵ Furniss 1978, 446.

¹⁷⁶ Furniss 1978, 444.

¹⁷⁷ Furniss 1978, 445.

¹⁷⁸ Oyewole 1998, 57. For more discussion on the capital expenditure to set up a small printing press and the full names of these companies, see Abdullahi 1980, 128-130; see also Furniss 1978, 442-443.

¹⁷⁹ Oyewole 1998, 60.

printing of posters, pamphlets, political bulletins and party identity cards. It was during this era that most of the existing presses expanded their scale of operation.¹⁸⁰

Shortly after these developments in Kano, Tijānī scholars of Nguru looked up to Kano for the printing and trade of their books. The manuscripts and other religious texts written by the twentieth century Nguru Tijānī scholars, especially the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were printed in Kano as discussed below. Despite their tremendous efforts in printing their manuscripts, they left a huge number of works most which remain unpublished.¹⁸¹ The twentieth century Sufi scholars like other scholars in northern Nigeria sometimes deliberately neglected the printing presses. In the case of al-Dāghirī, his works were printed in Nigeria and outside Nigeria. Interestingly, of the first books which were published outside prior to the arrival of the printing press in northern Nigeria,¹⁸² *Jihaazus Saarih* was first printed in Egypt by Mustafa al-Bābī al-Halabī in 1943 and it was only later that the work was continuously printed in Nigeria; the copy in my possession was printed in 2005 in Kano.¹⁸³ The other books published in Egypt by the same publisher include *An-nawaafihul Itriyyati*, *Itbaa 'ut-tazyiil* and *Nataa 'ijus-Safar*.¹⁸⁴

The titles of the Facsimiles of al-Dāghirī in the early years of printing press in northern Nigeria were published in Zaria by Gaskiya Corporation. These include *Tadhyiil wat-ta'aqiibun nataa 'i*, *Nuurul Fu'aad*; and a couple of talismanic editions.¹⁸⁵ Some titles like, *Itbaa 'ut-tazyiil*, *Hidhbus-surul manii 'i*, *Jihaazus Saarih*, etc. were either printed or reprinted in Kano. Maktabatul Zulma 'arif was another printing press which printed the works of al-Dāghirī in Kano. Contrary to what most people think, the printing press company was not established by al-Dāghirī, rather it was established by his disciple, with the aim of reducing the cost of production incurred by al-Dāghirī in printing his writings elsewhere. The printing press was well equipped with printing facilities. The printing press was named after al-Dāghirī which was the reason why many people think he was the one who established them. Some his works were often printed by either Muhammad Ghibrima al-Daghiri Maktabat (the business name of Muhammad Ghibrima al-Daghiri) or by Oluseyi Press, Adebola Printing Press, Alhaji Sunusi Dantata Printing Press or Northern Maktabat Press. Today, several the titles of al-Daghiri now have the name of a bookshop,

¹⁸⁰ Oyewole 1998, 60.

¹⁸¹ Idris 2010, 37.

¹⁸² Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

¹⁸³ Interview with Alhaji Umaru Matazu 26.3.2019.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

Umaru Matazu bookshop, prominently displayed on the front cover. Umaru Matazu confirmed to me that he printed titles of al-Dāghirī’s book which are in circulation in the market. These are *Jihaazus Saarih*, *Hidhbus-surul manii’i*, *Nataa’ijus-Safar*, *Itbaa’ut-tazyiil*, *Tadhyiil watta’aqiibun nataa’i* and *Khutbatul Murtaaniyyah*.¹⁸⁶

All the manuscripts of al-Fallātī in Nigeria are printed in Nigeria by many presses especially Northern Maktabat Press (‘Yan Kasa) and Adebola Press. For many years, these companies produced his works in book form. Commercial printing presses such as the Oluseyi, Adebola, Maktabatul Zulma Arif,¹⁸⁷ Northern Maktabat and Jola-Ade are famous among religious commercial printing presses which have printed most of the works of the twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars including al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. The following is the breakdown of the printing presses and the number of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī’s works they have published. This is based on the available information at our disposal:

Printing Press	Al-Dāghirī	Al-Fallātī
Northern Maktabat Press (‘Yan Kasa)	1 work	13 works
Adebola Press		13 works
Bolaprint Limited		4 works
Oluseyi Press		1 work
Jola-Ade Press	1 work	
Maktabatul Zulma Arif	5 works	
‘Uthmān al-Fallātī		5 works
Alhaji Sunusi Dantata Printing Press	1 work	
Umar Matazu (recently printers and marketers)	4 works	
Mustafa al-Bābīal-Halabī	4 works	

Fig. 1: The number of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī’s works printed locally in Nigeria

3.4.1 The Nature of the Facsimiles (lithograph and typograph) in Nguru

These books printed in Nigeria have been described as “market editions” because they are produced in the local book-style forms. Market editions,¹⁸⁸ according to Hunwick, are more in lithographs, facsimile, xeroxed and photocopies of handwritten samples; they are produced for wide distribution and market sale. Brigaglia adds that they are specifically produced for public consumption. From the earliest period of the production of printed books in northern Nigeria, a

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Alhaji Umaru Matazu 26.3.2019.

¹⁸⁷ The printing press which bears the name of al-Dāghirī was established by Muhammad Mahdi, a disciple of the Shaykh.

¹⁸⁸ Edition is used to refer to the process which involves some preparation before the text is submitted for photocopying or printing.

primary concern was the economy of book production. Perhaps that was the reason Hunwick terms these books in lithographs and printed form as ‘market edition.’ Most respondents especially the families of the two scholars disputed the term. Adamu however argues that the facsimiles are not market-driven literature¹⁸⁹ the facsimiles were purposely produced to spread Sufi ideologies and boost the literacy among the followers.

Mayeur-Jaouen provides a clear description of the relationship between manuscripts and facsimile, particularly lithograph.¹⁹⁰ This has widened our knowledge about the strong impact of manuscript culture where a particular book originated from, this is often reflected even in certain technical aspects of the printed book.¹⁹¹ This therefore supports the context of this section, which postulates that there are strong links between manuscript and facsimiles including that of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. At the very beginning of the print culture in northern Nigeria, the printed books were presented in the style of manuscripts which were often known as lithographs. Although divided by dissimilar methods, challenges of modernity and the social factors have bound them together over time, hence they remain functional and relevant. The numerous details provided by the lithographic book itself on its composition and its physical manufacturer (*the bayanat al-nashr*) show the lingering influence of manuscripts. The exact printing date (day, Islamic month, Hijri year) is usually mentioned at the end of the work. At times, it is accompanied by a short poem or couplet to pinpoint that date, in the form of a triangular colophon, as had been the custom of manuscripts.

The tradition of providing catchword for announcing the first word of the next sentence continued for a long time, despite the Hindu-Arabic which were used in the pagination of the lithographed work. Furthermore, if an author does not give his manuscript a date, the printers do not insert one. It is up to the author to make sure that prior to submission to the printers the manuscript is in order and all writing conventions have been observed. Some conventional pious words accompany the end of the text. It is often embellished with *taqariz* (a short text usually written in verse) in which distinguished colleagues (Ulama and Sufi) address the author, praise his work, just as was done when manuscripts reigned exclusively.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Prof. Abdallah Uba Adamu 26.3.2019.

¹⁹⁰ For detailed discussion on both codicological and palaeographical features of manuscript and facsimile: lithographed and typographic works in the northern Nigerian context are completely discussed in chapter six of this thesis.

¹⁹¹ Mayeur-Jaouen 2015, 25.

¹⁹² For more on the codicological description of these manuscripts, see chapter six.

Between the 1980s and 1990s, things began to change. Lithography gave way to typographs, and the power of the press superseded that of northern Nigeria's oldest surviving print culture. New electric machines and computers were replacing the old manual type. It was a time when the printers took much of the initiative to promote modern methods of publishing. The manuscripts which were originally written in *Maghrebi* script are now typed in computer in *Naskh* script. The colourful covers decorated with abbreviated titles and pictures progressively replaced the simpler and less expensive lithographic covers. Increasingly, these works had the name of the publishing company, place of publication and page number in Hindu-Arabic numerals, especially from the 1990s-2000s onward. The edition statement (first, second, third), is also written on the printed books. At the same time, the glosses written in the margins of the manuscripts began to disappear.

Despite the introduction of modern photo printing techniques and computer, many Sufi scholars prefer the reproduction of hand copied manuscripts in the original handwriting. At the same time, it has made it easier for the Sufi scholars and students to obtain printed copies of their preferred books reproduced in the *Naskh* script style. This development was supported by the introduction of photocopying facilities, which the Tijānī Sufi literatures and literacy to thrive in the area. The Tijānī literary tradition in Nguru, however, continues to thrive until this period, with new the themes, style, and tone.

3.4.2 The Importance and Influence of Print Culture

There is no better way to access the impact of print culture in the society than through its importance and influence. Prior to the advent of print culture, manual copying produced smaller quantities of manuscript texts and books; this did not allow effective distribution among students and the public. With the advent of print culture, it became possible to produce many copies. The printing and reproduction of the works have preserved many of the writings of the twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars. The advent of print culture with facilities for setting Arabic manuscript promoted Islamic learning in Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria. It also promoted Arabic literacy and Islamic knowledge among the religious and *foyda* Tijānī scholars and students through magazines, books, receipt and pamphlets. However, the possibility of increased communications due to literacy and printing reinforced the elites' tendency to produce new literature and revise the old ones. Furthermore, printing has given ordinary people a powerful voice. For instance, it has inspired many local poets and authors to express themselves on

brotherhood matters, either Qadiriyya or Tijānīyya.¹⁹³ Both the *Shaykhs* and the murids produced their own literature in Arabic and *Ajami*. This also boosted the development and preservation of those literary languages.¹⁹⁴

3.4.3 Treasure Troves of Manuscripts: Situating Manuscript in the Print culture

Print culture left profound impacts on the Sufi literary production of the twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars. By the end of the century, a huge number of Sufi works consisted of printed books and texts, even though Sufi scholars continued to produce, collect, and use manuscripts up till date. Today, almost all the Tijānī writings of the twentieth century Tijānī Sufi scholars can be obtained in the manuscript forms due to its originality and the importance attached to the manuscript itself. As part of the Nguru Sufi's attitude toward the written word, many people believed that handwritten books are permeated with copying Sufi's own *Baraka* (blessing). For instance, it is only the hand-written talismanic text that is required for making amulets. Therefore, even if one gets printed text, he must copy the text by hand again. This brings about the question of originality and authenticity. The oral information gathered during fieldwork confirmed that many traditional scholars tend to believe that both the original and the copy are authentic and original, but they are regarded as superior and inferior respectively; and the passion for manuscript culture is also missing.

The handwritten books and manuscripts are symbols of identity and great honour to the family's genealogy. This is because a large portion of contemplative life in Islam is centered on the written word.¹⁹⁵ Most of the masterpieces of supreme sacred art of Islam are calligraphic works; for instance, Nguru Qur'an, is still in the form of a manuscript. They continue to transcend one generation to another, and they are preserved with great pride. This attests to the importance of the manuscripts among the Nguru scholars. Most respondents reported that copying a book was the best way of studying the book. Ironically, the standard books in Nigeria and those imported from Egypt and Lebanon are expensive for the local Tijānī Sufi scholars and readers. The printed books (local and foreign) are written in *naskhi* style; there are many errors in them, and they are also sometimes difficult for some Tijānī Sufi scholars who are used to the traditional *maghrabi*

¹⁹³ Interview with Prof. Abdallah Uba Adamu 26.3.2019.

¹⁹⁴ Interview with Prof. Abdallah Uba Adamu 26.3.2019.

¹⁹⁵ Hassan 1992, 175.

style. Today, a large quantity of manuscripts, especially talismanic manuscripts are still being written in many parts of Nguru.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter examines the remarkable components Sufi manuscript culture in twentieth century Nguru. Such componenets included copying, calligraphy, and talismanic production, trade in books and papers, and other writing tools such as of inks, pens, slate, or board. It also dwells on the popular culture in manuscripts such as production of amulet, charms, and talisman in the age of manuscript culture in twentieth century Nguru. The chapter proceeded to discuss transition from the manuscript to print culture which produced lithographed and typographed books and pamphlets. The next chapter will consider the life history of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Biographical Portrait of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī

4.1 Introduction

Twentieth century was a watershed in the history of Nguru was, as explained in the previous chapter, because during that period it was highly blessed with a considerable number of scholarly works in almost all aspects of Islamic knowledge produced by both Sufi and non-Sufi scholars. Not all the scholars who have previously been mentioned can be studied here, only two of them are used as case study. These are al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. This chapter therefore intends to discuss the Shaykhs' life histories: their family, their early studies, their quest for knowledge and some factors that shaped their religious and doctrinal outlooks, the beginning of their movement in Tijānīyya, and their participation in *fayḍa* Tijānīyya under the leadership of Niasse (d. 1975), their role in the society and the final analysis of their lives.

4.2. Biography of Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī

The ancestors of al-Dāghirī originated from a place called Girazu or Damargu; a village situated in the present-day Niger Republic,¹⁹⁶ where his ancestors lived. It is recorded that prior to the colonial domination of the area which is now known as northern Nigeria, there was rampant migration and settlement of people in the region and its neighbouring areas due to number of reasons such absence of artificial boundaries, stresses and storm in the northern Borno Sultanate, two corresponding droughts and epidemic disasters which engulfed the people of the area.¹⁹⁷ A good number of people migrated to other places in order to save their lives. Majority of such people moved westwards and settled in Girazu.¹⁹⁸ Consequent upon that, the new settlers in Girazu were given the name 'Dāghirawa,' that is, 'people in the diaspora.' The great grandparents of al-Dāghirī came from this town and they are also Dagera speaking people of Girazu.¹⁹⁹

The origin of tradition of the ancestors of al-Dāghirī is tied to two separate versions. The first version revealed that the Shaykh's father was Imam Goni Muḥammad Ganim; he was also known as Malum (Kanuri: teacher). His great grandfathers were scholars throughout their lives

¹⁹⁶ Tahir 2006, 6.

¹⁹⁷ Tahir 2006, 6.

¹⁹⁸ Tahir 2006, 6.

¹⁹⁹ The Dagera is erroneously believed to be a language like Kanuri and Manga languages. However, it was recently discovered that the Dagera is not a language. Truly, both Manga and Dagera are nothing more than Kanuri language with very few disparities in pronunciation. In addition, they belong to branches of Mowar mother tongue. See Tahir 2006, 1-9. For details of the linguistic information of Dagera and Manga dialects of Kanuri see Bulakarima 2001; see also Robin Hallet 1974, 198.

and their lineages were traced to Yemen, specifically from Sheba (the people of Yemen from Himyar origin), they migrated to Makkah and to Garu Kime (in present day Borno State) then later moved to Auno in present-day Jigawa state, Nigeria. The great-grandparents of Muḥammad Ganim claimed to have maintained the long existing lists of their ancestors.²⁰⁰ Lawan and Sani maintain that there is historical record written by the great grandfather of al-Dāghirī around 1816 that substantiates such a claim.²⁰¹ I was fortunate to meet with Munir during my field work, a member of the family who provided him with such relevant information but he could not recall where he kept the document.

The second version indicated that al-Dāghirī was a descendent of the Quraysh whose great grandparents moved to the west in the early time of Islam and settled at Gazargamu.²⁰² Nevertheless, with the destruction of the city by uninformed force, they finally migrated to Ngurdo.²⁰³ It is very probable that the two accounts refer to the same events, although the latter assertion by Dahiru of where the Shaykh was born seems to be contrary to the opinion of the Shaykh's family. According to their sources, as earlier noted, it was Girazu (the place where the Shaykh was born), a centre of learning in Niger Republic. This may also not be a contradiction when the ancestors of al-Dāghirī are said to have originated far away Arabia and spent greater part of their lives elsewhere before moving to Girazu. What seems clear, however, is that it was an established tradition and recorded phenomenon that most of our Islamic scholars here in northern Nigeria were itinerants that engaged in moving from one place to another in search of knowledge or in the course of spreading it as commanded by Islam.

The relevant sources specify the name of his mother as Fadimatu Abdur Rahman popularly known as Maza.²⁰⁴ The history of their ties had been very long as it was reported that Muhammad Ganim visited Njibulwa, where Imam Ahmad presided over the affairs of Islam. The period which precisely according to the present Imam dated around 1890, was a moment of advance culture of Islamic learning in the area up to Nguru, where his family later took over the Imamship, first by

²⁰⁰ See Tahir 2006, 2; see also Idris 2010, 70.

²⁰¹ Tahir 2006, 19. I was fortunate to meet with Munir during my field work, a member of the family who provided him with such relevant information but he could not recall where he kept the document.

²⁰² Dahiru 1995, 69.

²⁰³ Dahiru 1995, 69.

²⁰⁴ Her father was said to be unique in his lifetime because he acquired some miraculous features. It was hagiographically narrated that his image used to appear to people whenever his name was mentioned or an attempt to describe him in person. He was also said to be the leader of his people; he won their respect due to his attentiveness and hospitality.

Liman Ainoma.²⁰⁵ Many people were coming to meet a lot of scholars who trooped in due to the historical merits of Kānemī-Borno scholars. However, Imam Ahmad (d.1947) was married to a woman called Khadija whose parent was also a custodian of Islamic scholarship. Muhammad Ganim met his future wife Khadija at the house of Imam Ahmad, her brother in law. After their marriage she gave birth to a number of children, among them was Muhammad al-Dāghirī.²⁰⁶

The local sources do not mention anything about the economic status of the Shaykh's family. However, it is narrated that the ancestors of al-Dāghirī had been scholars throughout their lives with a long-standing tradition of learning spiritual leadership. Some of the Shaykh's ancestors were outstanding scholars and Sufi leaders in Girazu.²⁰⁷ Lawan points out that long before the birth of al-Dāghirī, his father, Goni Muḥammad Ganim came to Njibulwa, a village very close to Nguru where he studied Qur'an and Arabic language under Goni Momodu b. Ahmad (c. 1935) who later became the Chief Imam of Nguru central mosque. He was a farmer and an Islamic scholar as well as a member of Tijānīyya Sufi order famous in the area and contributed immensely to the spread of the order in the region. He was said to be very devoted and often spent all night praising and praying for the Prophet Muḥammad.²⁰⁸ It was into such a family, in which so many scholars were engaged in teaching and learning, that al-Dāghirī was born. He was also said have benefited greatly from the members of the family especially his father and uncle, both educationally and spiritually.²⁰⁹

4.2.2 Place of birth and his name

It is generally agreed amongst biographers of the Shaykh that he was born at Girazu on Wednesday, 19th of February 1902 (this is equivalent to 15th Muharram 1323 A.H.).²¹⁰ The Shaykh has also been called different names, but his full name as written in his works and transcribed is Shaykh Muḥammad Ghibrīma al-Dāghirī ibn Muḥammad Ganim ibn Ali al-Dāghirī al-Ghūrāwī al-Barnāwī al-Malikī al-Ash'arī al-Tijānī was the pen name by which he signed his writings.²¹¹

²⁰⁵ Tahir 2006, 33.

²⁰⁶ Tahir 2006, 33.

²⁰⁷ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁰⁸ From the paternal side and according to oral tradition, al-Dāghirī is related to Prophet Ibrahim (A.S), one of the prophets of Islam.

²⁰⁹ Tahir 2006, 3.

²¹⁰ There is however, a contention about place of his birth and many miraculous stories are often told by his disciples of the incident of his birth.

²¹¹ He was named Muḥammad by his parents but the name Ghibrīma means "child of prickly bur grass" in Manga. This was attached to his name because of the period he was born: the period was a time of excess fanning of this weed. It was also narrated that many people from nearby villages who gathered for his naming ceremony had their clothes

That is the name he was called among the Tijānīyya; it reflected his popular career and position in the Sufi circle. He is also well-known with his nickname, “*Dhul Ma’arif*” meaning, the master of gnosis or knowledge of knowing God, which was given to him by Niasse (d. 1975) as a mark of respect.

4.2.3 His Early Education

It has been the custom in northern Nigeria and Niger Republic to send the child, after he attains the age of five, to an itinerant Islamic scholars in a village quite away from home for religious studies. In the case of al-Dāghirī the experience was different. He was from a family quite well educated from the Islamic point of view. His greatest fortune was that even his mother was well educated to have studied the Qur’an before she was given out for marriage. Thus, right from his very early childhood started learning the Qur’an at home from his father, Muḥammad Ganim who was a renowned scholars and famous for his learning, piety and asceticism.²¹² At stage, al-Dāghirī was undoubtedly a very precocious child who memorized short verses of the text, and studied Islamic elementary textbooks before the age of five.²¹³ In his biography, Lawan and Sani indicated that al-Dāghirī showed himself at an early age to be interested in learning, to the extent that he, unlike other children, did not spend much of his time in play. Therefore, by the time he was old enough to go out in search of knowledge, al-Dāghirī had already covered significant portion of the Qur’an at the age of nine and forty *hizbs* (parts) of the Qur’an when he was only fourteen (14) years old, which was a remarkable thing for a boy of that age.²¹⁴ His father became fascinated by his performance and he became favourite son of his father who would take him (al-Dāghirī) with him whenever he went out to teach in his school.

With this solid foundation laid at home, his father then sent him out of their village to study under his uncle, Malam Muḥammad Nuzu in Duguro to perfect his memorization of the Qur’an. His uncle was well versed in Qur’an, the texts of religion and calligraphy. Muḥammad taught him handwriting and assigned him to look after their cattle shortly after. Thus, he simultaneously learnt

husked by grass while going back to their homes. The grass was popularly known as “*Ngibi*” in Kanuri. For that reason, people began to say: “This son is *Ngibi rima*. *Rima* is a Kanuri word, which means owner. *Nghibrīma* literarily means “owner of the thorn grass” or “child of prickly bur grass.” It was reported that this nickname lived up to his maturity but stopped at the time of his visit to Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse (1975) in Senegal. When Niasse saw him, he welcomed him with his nickname, saying: “*Marhabun Bi Muḥammadu Ghibrīma;*” and since then, people continued calling him with such a nickname.

²¹² Idris 2010, 70.

²¹³ Hamza 2001, 33.

²¹⁴ Tahir 2006, 16-17.

calligraphy and rearing of animals. Even then, he would sneak off and read books with *mālams* of the town instead of collecting grass for the pack animals as expected by his uncle. Apart from calligraphy, he also studied the Qur'an and *tafsīr*, as well as other branches of Islamic knowledge for two years under Muḥammad in Duguro.²¹⁵ He was carefully instructed by this scholar, who exercised a great influence on him while he was still at an impressionable stage. His uncle was so impressed by the understanding and perception shown by the young boy, al-Dāghirī.

Thereafter, his uncle sent him to another Islamic scholar of international standard, Shaykh Muḥammad Abba Chulum (d.1944). He was a Tijānīyya Muqaddam who was highly recognised and respected by Borno scholars. He resided in a town called Kolori to the north of Nguru. It was under Chulum that al-Dāghirī became *hafiz*. It was during this time, al-Dāghirī had written down his first complete one copy of the Qur'an in manuscript.²¹⁶ However, Chulum was the first scholar to have introduced al-Dāghirī to Sufism.²¹⁷ Three years after, he was sent back to his father with a letter from his teacher, Chulum. In the words of Muḥammad of Jaji-Maji, a close disciple of the Shaykh, the letter reads inter alia: "...your child has been trained beyond understanding. He is now a teacher himself. Give him all the kind of assignments or questions ranging from the Qur'an, Hadith, and Fiqh ... all ramifications of Islamic knowledge."²¹⁸ He came to the house in a manner well-advanced than any expectation.²¹⁹ Since then, al-Dāghirī settled with his father and took over all the responsibilities of teaching pupils. In his regard, however, the father had played significant role both as exemplar and guide throughout the course of his studies up until he had died. By tradition, with the death of his father around 1925, he had reached a decisive moment of his adult life. This sudden change in fate compelled al-Dāghirī to assume a more assertive attitude and independence of thought.

Thus, as soon as the father's funeral rites were completed, al-Dāghirī stepped out of the box by carrying out a series of long expedition to pursue his objective of furthering his studies. No reference is made by the available sources as to his exact age when he left home, but it is likely that he was then in his late teens. The first place he went after leaving his hometown in Niger

²¹⁵ Idris 2010, 71.

²¹⁶ Writing the complete *ahzab* (plural of *hizb*) of the Qur'an off hand in manuscript is like a dream come true for students of *makarantar allo*, as this means they are qualified as *Alaramma*. In northern Nigeria including Nguru, a person who is an *Alaramma* in the field of Qur'anic scholarship is tantamount to a graduate in Western system of education.

²¹⁷ Idris 2010, 71.

²¹⁸ Idris 2010, 71; see also Tahir 2006, 18.

²¹⁹ Tahir 2006, 18.

Republic, in his successive travels was a town called Kadhmaymari where he strengthened his memorization of the Qur'an under *Muqri* Malam Ibrāhīm Kori.²²⁰ From there, he went to many places in search of knowledge. For instance, he went to Kellori in Geidam where he studied *Tafsīr* and other different aspects of Islamic Sciences under Muḥammad al-Barkawi, who was said to be the author of *Mir'at al-Sa'im fi ahkam al-Siyam*.²²¹ He stayed in Geidam, an important centre of Islamic scholarship in Borno sultanate, now identified with Yobe State, Nigeria, although there is no reference to number of days, months or years he spent in the town. Thereafter, he was said to have proceeded to Jajeri, a small village near present Nguru, where he met Goni Ahmad Abba who was a leading scholar in the area. Al-Dāghirī studied Islamic jurisprudence under the man for eight months after which he established his domain in the area.²²² He taught Qur'an and Hadith and he attracted many disciples because of his vast knowledge of analogical deduction on many difficult aspects of Islamic injunctions.²²³ A Qur'anic teacher in the village, Goni Mustapha Ahmad offered al-Dāghirī a life partner when he was twenty-two years old. Shortly after the marriage, Hannatu and al-Dāghirī left for Kano.²²⁴

At that time, Kano assumed primary importance as a centre for business and commercial activities in northern Nigeria, a position it has never relinquished until today.²²⁵ In addition, it was the residence of most of the members of the Tijānīyya brotherhood, close associates and prominent elites of Niasse's entourage. And as a result, Kano had come to symbolize the headquarters of Tijānīyya brotherhood in Nigeria up to date. At that time scholars and students turned towards Kano to study and, in part, to acquire the knowledge of the brotherhood as well as the *'ijāzāt* and *baraka* (blessings) of Tijānī Shaykhs. Lawan and Sani argue that he went to Kano with the intent to understand the Hausa language because he acquired his knowledge in the Manga language. This was important to al-Dāghirī because it would lift the language barrier between him and his students. Al-Dāghirī decided to further his studies in the Hausa language because most of his disciples were Hausa.²²⁶ The period the Shaykh spent in Kano was the longest he passed from

²²⁰ Hamza 2001, 339; See also Dahiru 1995, 69.

²²¹ Dahiru 1995, 69.

²²² Idris 2010, 71.

²²³ Tahir 2006, 21.

²²⁴ Tahir 2006, 21; see also Idris 2010, 71.

²²⁵ Mohammed 1978, 4.

²²⁶ Tahir 2006, 21. In one of the interviews I watched on YouTube, Shaykh Ibrahim al-Hussain said that he himself went to Nguru to study under al-Dāghirī but he found out that he only teaches in Manga language at that time. This problem forced Shaykh Ibrahim al-Hussain to Kano.

home in the course of his studies. It was also of consequence for his preaching, teaching, writing and trading.

In Kano, he widened his knowledge of the Hadith and jurisprudence, studying also Arabic grammar and copying many works on these subjects. He also had the opportunity to meet many distinguished Islamic scholars of the time. Even though, Sani and Lawan argue that al-Dāghirī studied under only one teacher, named Malam Muḥammad who was also an authority in *Fiqh*. He was said to have been very fluent in the Manga language.²²⁷ Certain sources, like Dayyabu and Dahiru report that al-Dāghirī also studied under the renowned scholars, Shaykh Muḥammad Salga (d. 1938)²²⁸ under whom al-Dāghirī studied Arabic grammar and different branches of Islamic education.²²⁹ It was also reported that while in Kano, he studied under Sayyid Mu'allim Mahmood (d. 1943)²³⁰ and he later moved under Mu'allim Inuwa Kurna (1937).²³¹ During this period, al-Dāghirī engaged in hand-copying of the Qur'an and other Islamic texts to earn a living.

It was from Kano he made up his mind to perform his first pilgrimage to Makkah. He and his wife therefore set out on the pilgrimage to Makkah in 1932, as was common practice among men of his religious culture. The journey to Makkah then was by road and thus full of difficulties. The only route to Makkah from West Africa especially northern Nigeria was through Khartoum. It was from there the pilgrims join ship to cross the red sea into Saudi Arabia.²³² Al-Dāghirī embarked upon the pilgrimage to Makkah, accompanied by his wife. The Shaykh did not mention anything about his journey. It is, however with the help of his wife, we got scanty information concerning this historic travel undertaken by al-Dāghirī. According to Hannatu, their long and protracted journey caused them many hardships. Along the way, they made a stop-over at N'djamena (a city in the present-day Chad Republic) where they spent two months.²³³ It was at that N'djamena al-Dāghirī entered *khalwah* (seclusion) for forty days, praying to Allah to have accepted his Hājj. He also met Shaykh Ibrāhīm Muḥammad al-Fasi who was a renowned Tijānī Muqaddam; he also had many intellectual discourses with him for three weeks.²³⁴ It was based on

²²⁷ Tahir 2006, 21; see also Idris 2010, 72.

²²⁸ Dahiru 1995, 69. As earlier noted in chapter two, Salga was a leader of *tariqa* Tijānīyya before the emergence of Niassa as *ghawth az-zaman* and *Saahibul Fayḍa*. Salga was reputed for being a disciplinarian in both teaching and learning.

²²⁹ Hamza 2001, 35.

²³⁰ Hamza 2001, 34.

²³¹ Fagge 1997, 106; see also Hamza 2001, 34.

²³² Tahir 2006, 23.

²³³ Tahir 2006, 23-4.

²³⁴ Idris 2010, 72.

that discourse that al-Dāghirī started writing his first book entitled “*Jihaazus Saarih*” and completed it before he got to Makkah.²³⁵

At Makkah, al-Dāghirī was very impressed by the spectacle of Muslim brotherhood among people from many countries, speaking various languages and wearing different costumes. Impressive, too, would have been the sight of large circles of people gathered around great scholars and preachers in the Holy mosque. He therefore did as many Ulama used to do. Having performed the rites of the Hājj at the holy places of Makkah, he engaged himself in research and study under acclaimed scholars of Islamic knowledge from different countries.²³⁶ In contrast to what he had known in Nigeria, where the teaching was almost entirely limited to Malikī jurisprudence, the newcomer found himself at the Mosque of the Prophet among eminent Ulama lecturing on several different branches of Islamic learning. This was an opportunity for him to choose the teachers he liked, as well as the subjects he wanted to learn. Although he may well have joined the circles of a number of scholars, it was certainly during this sojourn in the town of the Prophet that he became acquainted with the famous Senegalese Islamic scholar, Shaykh Isma’il Abubakar, who was to become one of his influential teachers.²³⁷

He studied advanced Arabic grammar and Arabic prosody. Al-Dāghirī stayed in Makkah for two years before returning home. It was in that critical period of broad-based research in Makkah that he received news of the death of his most respected teacher, Goni Abba Chillum.²³⁸ Therefore, Abubakar and al-Dāghirī thus came together to N’djamena where they spent six days. Al-Dāghirī and his wife finally returned to Kano and went straight to the family of the deceased, to register their condolence.²³⁹

However, the sources do not mention how the Shaykh covered his expenditure during his stay at the two holy cities. Although he may have received support from the *waqf* endowments usually granted to the students in this city, it is probable that he went there with his money. It would be stating the obvious to declare that this pilgrimage had a profound effect on the Shaykh and had transformed him spiritually, emotionally and educationally. It did, however, in one significant sense which makes it relevant to mention here. We can detect three factors that influenced and

²³⁵ Tahir 2006, 24. The work which Shaykh wrote during his travel to Makkah is not agreed upon by researchers. Sani argues that it was not *Jihaazus Saarih* but *Nataa’ijus-Safar*.

²³⁶ Tahir 2006, 25.

²³⁷ Idris 2010, 72.

²³⁸ Tahir 2006, 25.

²³⁹ Tahir 2006, 25.

transformed the Shaykh's thinking during his stay at the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, putting him on the first stage of the road on his mission of becoming a great scholar. These were reading the works and meeting the great scholars of Islam and Sufism, the association with Shaykh Isma'il Abubakar, who was also a member of Tijānīyya brotherhood. These factors gave him an opportunity to come in touch with Middle Eastern sources of Islamic thought. These intellectual engagements would later become so significant in shaping al-Dāghirī's world view with regards to Islamic religious thoughts and would assist specifically in developing his Sufi works.

Having paid the condolence, al-Dāghirī had therefore returned to Kano for the second time, a commercial town and a centre of trade, there must have flourished a book market, because he established a bookshop in his residence. He often engaged in book trade to help support his educational and religious endeavours. He imports Islamic books from Middle East and North Africa, especially from India, Beirut, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia etc. to sell in Kano.²⁴⁰ He was thus not just a student but also a trader, with a circle of his shop keepers. His business and education were progressing in the city.²⁴¹ Nevertheless, being a scholar with intellectual ambition, it appears that the educational climate in Kano did not satisfy his ambition and, he determined to seek knowledge elsewhere. He suddenly planned for another educational sojourn, and he thus left Kano again for Katsina in 1934. Katsina was a centre for Islamic learning since the seventeenth century in contrast to Kano, which represented the centre for business and commerce.²⁴² The influx of scholars and traders to Katsina at the early part of the eighteenth century had made it a reputable centre of Islamic learning.²⁴³

Thus, al-Dāghirī reached Katsina in time to witness the investiture of the new emir who is said to be somehow related to the Shaykh. He stayed there and acquired further education under a great Islamic scholar in Katsina, Malam Aliyu Maradi.²⁴⁴ He studied Arabic grammar, Hadith, *Sira* (Prophetic biography), thus ending the first stage in his early career and entering another. That was not all; the Shaykh continued learning *taṣawwuf* and divine Gnosticism until his teacher applauded his performance. Sani reports that the intellectual performance of al-Dāghirī made Malam Aliyu to offer him the post of his Khalifa, but Shaykh declined to accept it. Instead, he left for Kaburi,

²⁴⁰ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri on 27.3.2019 in Kano.

²⁴¹ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri on 27.3.2019 in Kano.

²⁴² Dahiru 1995, 73.

²⁴³ Dahiru 1995, 73.

²⁴⁴ Idris 2010, 72.

after spending two years with Maradi.²⁴⁵

Kaburi was a town very close to Damagaram, in the present-day Niger Republic. He immediately established his first *zāwiya* in Kuburi. The growth of the school made him famous.²⁴⁶ It was reported that at this school more than twenty-one (21) students memorized the Qur'an under him. One of them was Goni Mustapha Dawasa who said that:

I, in particular had learnt not only the Qur'an but also Hadith and Fiqh from this wonderful scholar. Besides teaching us various branches of Islamic knowledge at several occasions, he had set us to fulfil different missions in connection with either propagation of Islam or reactivation of an institution.²⁴⁷

He stayed and taught in Kuburi for about a year before he proceeded to Jajeri where he established his *zāwiya* and taught various branches of Islamic knowledge for some time. It was during his stay at Jajeri that he had his first son who was named after his father, Muḥammad Ganim. He stayed there for a reasonable period until he decided to move to his permanent base in Nguru,²⁴⁸ although the sources do not mention the reason, he decided to leave the town. All those places were linked to northern Nigeria, or Niger Republic, by important trade routes. Those travels took him many years, and they considerably increased his knowledge of the people and countries he visited.

Besides, all the above-mentioned teachers, al-Dāghirī went through tutelage under many other scholars who guided and shaped his educational career. Certain sources point out that he also studied under some other great scholars such as Shaykh Ibrāhīm Kano, Shaykh Ahmed Idris Zaria, Goni Mamman Damagaram, and Goni Liman Ainoma Njibulwa etc.²⁴⁹ With this steady search for knowledge under notable scholars and institutions, Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī equipped himself adequately for future challenges of becoming a world class Islamic scholar, a status that he attained and sustained until his death. In all educational quest days, he had by now collected as many *'ijāzāt* (sing. *'ijāzah*), testimonials from pre-eminent scholars as would qualify him to successfully assume a career of professional teacher of Islamic sciences. He also became acquainted with various peoples, languages, and cultures, particularly Hausa. Having reached out to some Islamic institutions in Nigeria, Niger Republic and Saudi Arabia, he settled down to

²⁴⁵ Idris 2010, 72.

²⁴⁶ Idris 2010, 72.

²⁴⁷ Idris 2010, 73.

²⁴⁸ Tahir 2006, 27.

²⁴⁹ Idris 2010, 72-3.

propagate Islam and spread its knowledge through writings being published by various publication houses both at home and abroad.

4.2.5 His Relocation to Nguru

Al-Dāghirī, ended his spiritual journey and search for knowledge at Nguru. He arrived in Nguru on Monday 5th of Rabi’ul Thani, 1359 A. H., which is equivalent to 13th May 1940.²⁵⁰ It would be recalled that the history of the family has it, long before his birth, the house of Liman Aḥmad (d.1947), the later custodian of Imamship of Nguru central mosque had established a marital relationship with al-Dāghirī’s family. And his father was in Njibulwa near Nguru before.²⁵¹ Thus, al-Dāghirī settlement in Nguru was not an accident of history but a revival of a historical occurrence. It was an established policy of the rulers of Nguru to give a plot of land to new coming scholar for him to settle.²⁵² A permanent residence was therefore allocated to him in Limanti ward. According to him, he came to Nguru when Islamic education was reaching its zenith in the area.²⁵³ The town was at that time a centre of learning, where students from within and neighbouring areas, came to study under scholars. Field interviews indicated that two things are usually associated with al-Dāghirī, as earlier noted in the previous chapter. The first is that al-Dāghirī succeeded in establishing *zāwiya* in Limanti and the second is that he began his mission at his *zāwiya* by explaining the doctrines of Tijānīyya to the inhabitants as well as engaging himself in serious scholarship activity. Lawan’s research confirms the information given by informants: “So was the early contact of Shaykh Mohammed Ngibrima with people of Nguru. There and then a very big and gigantic constituency known as *Zāwiya* or *Tsangaya* as widely known among traditional Islamic students or Almajirai came into existence (sic).”²⁵⁴ Nguru, as explained in chapter two, was one of the main centres of membership activity in Nigeria.

Here, al-Dāghirī met many scholars and students who warmly received him. There were three dominant influential Muslim teaching traditions prevalent in the region. These were the Hausa tradition that originated from Hausa, most especially Kano and Katsina, the Kanuri tradition professed by groups of Kanuri ethnicities and the Fulani traditions imparted by scholars of Fulani ethnicity. Teachers usually attract students from their own ethnicities since the prevalent

²⁵⁰ Tahir 2006, 32.

²⁵¹ Tahir 2006, 32.

²⁵² Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁵³ Tahir 2006, 32 quoted al-Dāghirī.

²⁵⁴ Tahir 2006, 37.

translation-methodology could only be carried out through a language familiar to both teacher and student. He went to Kano where he learned Hausa and became very conversant with the language. This gave him opportunity to effectively communicate with his students from different ethnic groups who could also speak Hausa. Because of the widespread nature of Hausa traders, indigenes with whom they transacted business soon learned to speak their language, and over time Hausa developed to become a sort of lingua franca through which linguistically mutually unintelligible speakers, within the region, could effectively communicate. Consequently, Hausa is now spoken across many countries in the West African region apart from Niger and Nigeria, especially in Ghana, Togo and Benin. This is what explains, in part, al-Dāghirī's popularity and influence over other scholars, as he was able to attract students from all ethnicities other than his mother tongue.

As fame of al-Dāghirī began to spread, within a short period, he came to the notice of many people who were yearning for Arabic and Islamic scholarship who registered with him as pupils and students. He taught both the indigenes of the area and those who accompanied him in the journey to Nguru from Kaburi and Jajeri.²⁵⁵ Lawan supplements the field interviews when he said:

People from Sudan who met him on his way to his first pilgrimage as digested earlier kept on coming frequently, In fact from all his former settlements such as Kano, Daura, and above all substantial northern parts of present Niger Republic, particularly series of towns where he was once a student or teacher such as Jajeri, Abba Sulum, Kaburi, Garin Abubakar Bukabe etc.²⁵⁶

Furthermore, his disciples, who had by this time begun to grow in numbers, had made his reputation known across the towns and cities in northern Nigeria. According to some sources, within a short period of time of the arrival of the Shaykh in the area, all its inhabitants adopted his doctrines except very few families who did not belong to any other Sufi brotherhood.²⁵⁷ He thus started consolidating his power in the community by winning the hearts of the people and his actions reached out to the authorities.

4.2.6 Establishment of His New Sufi Community (Dāghirawa) in Nguru

As a tradition, Muslim mystics of all ages laid emphasis on the establishment of their own community because they wanted to cut themselves off completely from the material life.²⁵⁸ They, therefore, established a community and *zāwiya* where men of different temperaments were found

²⁵⁵ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁵⁶ Tahir 2006, 37.

²⁵⁷ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁵⁸ Nizami 1973, 46.

and engaged themselves in devotion. Like his contemporaries, al-Dāghirī proposed to retire from his place in Limanti to establish his own Islamic community. He was therefore given a virgin land at the outskirts of Nguru and he moved from Limanti with a considerable number of people who admired his reputation within the short period he spent with them. He divided the land given to him among his people and relatives who erected their houses in the area. Later development had witnessed people migrating from their family base and other areas to spend decades in the diaspora. Consequent upon this mass influx of his people to Nguru, and most of whom were Dagera by tribe, the place was named Dāghirawa (Dāghirī community), which means an area where the Dāghirawa live. Besides establishing his famous permanent residence at Dāghirawa, he founded his *zāwiya*, mosque, where his disciples used to sleep, pray, and study. No sooner had the Shaykh established himself in his new community some of his supporters and followers in other towns and cities within Nigeria as well as Niger Republic moved there. They immigrated solely to be closer to their great teacher and to study under him. Sani rightly puts:

By settling at Nguru, he had probably, unknown to his shape, was a new epoch of historical resettlement and re-linkages between people of one background. From 1938 to date when he chose Nguru as his permanent base, only Allah knows the number of people that transcended the border of Niger Republic and found shelter under an intellectual banner of the man.²⁵⁹

The Shaykh attended to the individual problem of every visitor and welcomed strangers and acquaintance with equal warmth and affection.²⁶⁰ It is noticeable that among these immigrants were several disciples from inside and outside Nigeria. Describing the condition of the newcomers, Munir says that they were very poor, and because they were eager to learn, they used to work during the night in order to earn money to meet their needs and allow them to attend the Shaykh's classes during the day.²⁶¹ After graduation, some students returned to their various destinations to be Imams, teachers, writers and so on. While others stayed in Nguru up to the end of their lives.

However, his break away from Limanti did not indicate any bad relationship. Instead, a new forum of intellectual discussions and interactions was developed between the old and new

²⁵⁹ Tahir 2006, 162.

²⁶⁰ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁶¹ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru. However, this is an existing tradition in northern Nigeria from nineteenth century. For instance, Laminu noted that in Borno, younger students hired themselves off as farm labourers to provide for their livelihood during their period of study. In addition, most of the advanced students earned their keep from working as scribes for the government or privately for scholars who desired the copying of rare books. In fact, the profession of the scribe was the highest paid profession in Nguru second only to the book and paper merchants as discussed in the previous chapter.

Islamic institutions based on mutual respect and understanding. For instance, every Thursday of the week, al-Dāghirī during his lifetime visited the then chief Imam at Nguru central mosque. Perhaps, the choice is very significant in making Dāghirawa a centre of scholarship and to establish a community in which Islamic law had to be obeyed and followed strictly. The specific goal of this choice was to make it a centre of learning par excellence that would attract scholars and students from different parts of Hausa land, other parts of Borno, Niger Republic and beyond. Another reason for which al-Dāghirī had selected Dāghirawa as his area of settlement was based on the Sufī tradition of establishing their base known as Madinah, like Madinah Kaolack of Niassa (popularly known as *Jamā'at al-fayḍa* “Community of the Divine Flood established in 1931”). Such intentions were illustrated by an incident that was to become of considerable consequence. Dāghirawa, as a matter of fact, became a spiritual and natural home for the seekers of knowledge. It became one of the greatest educational and spiritual centres of spiritual culture in northern Nigeria.

Between the 1940s and 1970s, this centre eventually eclipsed other educational institutes during that same period. Students and teachers trooped to his *zāwiya* in hundreds not only from different parts of West Africa but also North Africa. Tahir reiterates similar view:

...a development per say which fashionably turned Nguru to witness for the first time in its history, a constant visit by the Arabian Scholars, especially North African teachers, and particularly from the university of Al-Azhar, Cairo, Egypt.²⁶²

To understand the position of al-Dāghirī in Nguru and northern Nigeria, we need to closely compare him with his contemporaries in general. To begin with, the level of al-Dāghirī's knowledge in Arabic and Islamic sciences was outstandingly remarkable compared to scholars of his intellectual circle. Many testimonies have confirmed that he was one of the most knowledgeable Muslim scholars living at that time within the region. Although it seems that the Shaykh regarded himself as the intellectual superior of the local scholars in the town and in a position to make contacts with other scholars, such as those in Kano, he continued composing most of his works on Islam and Sufism, in which he set forth the principles of his doctrines and his understanding of Islam and Sufism.²⁶³ His arrival marked a further stage in the development of Islam and the efflorescence of Arabic literature in Nguru. As result of this, the Shaykh became a

²⁶² Tahir 2006, 40-41.

²⁶³ Audio clip by Malam Ayuba Karmasami retrieved on 2.04.2019 at Nguru.

pillar and pole of Tijānīyya in the region. Copies of his works spread quickly and widely throughout all the nooks and crannies of northern Nigeria and neighbouring countries.

There is no denying the fact that al-Dāghirī's scholarly achievements earned him respect and deference from people of all social ranks and background. In communities such as in northern Nigeria, mālams, such as al-Dāghirī, have significant roles to play as religious and social leaders, and are thereby able to wield immense authority and power. His writings, in verse and in prose, portray al-Dāghirī as a Muslim community scholar conscious of his role as watch dog over social and moral behaviour. Consequently, he felt the ethical responsibility to critique and denounce any sign of ethical deviation, to preserve honour, respect and devotion among the community until his death in Nguru. Many sources mention that while staying in Nguru, al-Dāghirī occasionally took leave from his religious and literary activities and travelled within and outside Nigeria as discussed below. Al-Dāghirī's period could be counted as constituting a landmark in the history of the Islamization and Sufism in Nguru and beyond.

Today, the purely Islamic community he established, Dāghirawa still remains the most important intellectual Tijānīyya centre for the Sufis and their students all over northern Nigeria; its significance for the Tijānīyya operations everywhere is obvious. The primary ideological inclination of the people in the area is Tijānī. There are many grand mosques, and three Friday mosques which belong to the order. Large crowds gather annually to celebrate the birth of Prophet Muḥammad (*Mawlid an-Nabiy an-Nabiy*) as discussed below.

4.2.7 Al-Dāghirī's Exposure to *Taşawwuf* and Tijānīyya

It is hard to imagine a meaningful discourse on twentieth century Tijānī Sufī scholars and Sufism in Nigeria without reference to al-Dāghirī. This comes because he is acknowledged up to today as one of the Sufī scholars who have had the greatest influence on contemporary northern Nigerian Muslims, particularly in Sufī circles. Reference has already been made, in chapter two, to the influential role that al-Dāghirī has played in shaping Nguru of the Sufī and Tijānīyya and giving it spiritual meaning and direction, and so those histories will not be repeated here. Instead, the focus of attention will be on his initiation, his chain of authority in the brotherhood, his role as an initiator (*muqaddam*), and his position as an initiator of initiators (*muqaddam al-muqaddimin*) as well as the way it influenced his achievements in social and intellectual undertakings. As far as al-Dāghirī as a scholar is concerned, broadly speaking, there have been two points of view about his status in knowledge. Firstly, he was a follower of the al-Malikī School of Jurisprudence and an

adherent of the Ash'arī School of Theology. Secondly, his mystical inclination makes itself apparent in various genres of his literary works that he is a member of Tijānīyya brotherhood. Tijānīyya brotherhood was one of the most important instruments for articulating his Sufi way of life. In what appeared to be strange and contrary to the existing tradition of *Taşawwuf* (Sufism), Lawan claims that Sufism to al-Dāghirī, was a natural choice.²⁶⁴ He rightly remarked that: ...*he did not take any Shaykh to teach or train him on Sufism nor devoted himself for reading mystic books and practicing its contents such as solitude and spiritual devotion.*²⁶⁵ Indeed, simply through exposure it would have been natural for al-Dāghirī to perform some of the Tijānīyya activities before his formal initiation. Furthermore, it was a common practice for the sons of the Tijānī scholars to have read Sufi works and to play the role of *jemage* (a young man who practices the rituals of a Sufi order but who has received no formal initiation).

Contrary to the claim of Lawan, during my fieldwork, I found out that six different Tijānīyya *silsilāh* (chains of authority) were converge to him. The history of his Tijānīyya *silsilāh* could be traced to his great teacher, Chulum, who introduced him to Sufism. As earlier noted, from the beginning of his studies, his uncle who had then taken residence in Duguro, took him to Chulum (d.1944) in Kolori and initiated him into the *ṭarīqa*. Thus, Chulum was the first member of the Ulama to initiate al-Dāghirī into the rewarding and blessed circle of the Tijānīyya and who also conferred the office of *muqaddam* upon him. Chulum was a major figure in al-Dāghirī's education about Sufi orders. With him, he studied several books on Sufism and the Tijānīyya brotherhood. Chulum received his *silsilāh* from Shaykh Muḥammad al-Hafiz al-al-Murtani, who was in turn authorized by Sidi Muḥammad al-Ghālī (d. 1244/1829), who was authorized by Shaykh Abu al-Abbas Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Tijānī, the founder of the *ṭarīqa* and from him to the Prophet Muḥammad, the Messenger of God.²⁶⁶ Al-Dāghirī was in his late twenties or early thirties when he received his first initiation into the Tijānīyya.²⁶⁷

As member of the Tijānīyya brotherhood, al-Dāghirī participated in social and spiritual activities which served to strengthen his ties with other members of the order and to enrich his religious experience. He also performed all the Tijānīyya (such as *Lazim*, *wazifa*, *dhikr*, *wird*)²⁶⁸

²⁶⁴ Tahir 2006, 59.

²⁶⁵ Tahir 2006, 59.

²⁶⁶ Interview with Ba Tijanima on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁶⁷ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁶⁸ For more information on these concepts see chapter two.

rituals which are requirement for every member of the Tijānīyya to practice in addition to the religious obligations which are mandatory upon all Muslims. The components of Tijānīyya rituals formed a significant part of his daily life.²⁶⁹ Later on in life, he was ranked as an initiator of initiators (*muqaddam al-muqaddimin*) in the hierarchy of Tijānīyya and Sufism, who also led people towards the system and acquired global recognition. His main role was a mediator between his followers and God. It was a tribute to al-Dāghirī's scholarship and personality for him to rise so quickly within the brotherhood.²⁷⁰ Like the earlier Tijānī scholars, he engaged himself in excessive prayer in seclusion for forty (40) days or more. Al-Dāghirī became famous by his ability to apply Islamic science to solve the problem of the people through prayers, and finally reached the position of *wulaya*, the apex position.²⁷¹ The efficacy of his supplications made al-Dāghirī famous in northern Nigeria where he won the hearts of the people. Certain sources maintain that his reputation started to arise from the role he played as teacher and writer in Nguru. For instance, all over northern Nigeria, al-Dāghirī became famous for his first mystical prose writing in the Arabic language, entitled *Jihaazu Sarhi*.²⁷²

It is however, as earlier mentioned in chapter two, according to information gathered from my respondents who were conversant with the area, the Tijānīyya did not have significant impact in Nguru before the arrival of al-Dāghirī. Therefore, after his arrival in Nguru, his *zāwiya* and *wazifa* became the centre where Tijānīyya was promoted. Al-Dāghirī and his pioneer students fronted the spread of the order to the nooks and crannies of western Borno specifically and Nigeria as well as West Africa generally. This period was to become the beginning of his true position within the brotherhood in northern Nigeria. Hassan who treats al-Dāghirī with the greatest esteem and characterised him in his thesis as an extraordinary person, maintains that by 1931 he had established his religious authority in northern Nigeria.²⁷³ In this period, he encountered many national and international scholars and the leaders of Tijānīyya.²⁷⁴ In the following years, al-Dāghirī's notoriety and influence increased, and as more disciples were attracted to him, Tijānīyya

²⁶⁹ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁷⁰ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁷¹ Audio clip by Bakura Shehu Gana retrieved on 14.09.2020.

²⁷² Interview with Malam Ayuba Karmasami on 2.04.2019 at Nguru.

²⁷³ Hassan 2014, 53.

²⁷⁴ Hassan 2014, 53.

began to constitute a real force in the new society that was emerging. He had a considerable number of disciples in Mali, Chad, Niger, Cameroon, Sudan, Nigeria, and Ghana.²⁷⁵

From 1937, there was intense contention on who will emerge as the leader of the Tijānīyya. It was prophesized by the founder of the order that *Sahib Zaman* and *Sahib Fayḍa* (the bearers of the outpouring)²⁷⁶ would be among his disciples who will be his successor.²⁷⁷ Thus, due to al-Dāghirī's deeper knowledge of the order and being always in constant prayer to God, he was assumed by many prominent leaders and Tijānīyya members to be the predicted *Sahib Zaman* and *Sahib Fayḍa*.²⁷⁸ Lawan points out that al-Dāghirī himself thought he would be the *Sahib Zaman*, but by 1941 he frequently dreamt of someone whom he did not know at all.²⁷⁹ The person appeared before him with similar manner of approach toward Islam, Prophet Muḥammad and, above all, Allah. The competition of who will attain the pinnacle in the path of the brotherhood was even more intense among scholars of the time.²⁸⁰

In the face of this development in Kaolack, Senegal, the Islamic reform movement across West Africa was gaining momentum; this was demonstrated by one of the most important and influential of the Islamic reform leaders of the era, Niasse. While al-Dāghirī was praying and expecting to be appointed as *Sahib Zaman*, he learnt about the emergence of Niasse. Consequently, he proposed to make a visit to Kaolack, the home of the celebrated, Niasse. Lawan tells the story of the Shaykh's travel to Kaolack and his first meeting with Niasse in a somewhat different way. According to him, al-Dāghirī went to Kaduna which was the political capital of the then northern region, where he met someone who also bears similar name with the Shaykh. He was Malam Karangiya (which also means prickly bur grass in Hausa language as Ghibrīma in Kanuri) and they became very intimate later, a relationship which lasted for the rest of their lives. All required information about Kaolack was gathered in Kaduna and subsequently they set up for their journey to Senegal.

Senegal is a country located in West Africa and it shares almost the same history with Nigeria. Both countries have very long Islamic histories and they had produced many intellectuals

²⁷⁵ Hassan 2014, 53.

²⁷⁶ This refers to the highest position in the Tijānīyya order where one appears to be the representative of the founder and probably the leading vanguard of Islamic propagation on earth.

²⁷⁷ Tahir 2006, 51-52.

²⁷⁸ Hassan 2014, 53.

²⁷⁹ Tahir 2006, 51.

²⁸⁰ Tahir 2006, 51.

and institutions of knowledge. Thus, the emergence of Niasse there was never a new phenomenon in history. What appeared to have been very interesting in this journey was the manner the meeting of these two giant Islamic scholars culminated. These kinds of utterances are the usual causes of disbelief by many who are not adequately aware about the ethics of Sufism. On their arrival at Kaolack, for instance, they met Niasse and his students were at *majalis* (session) discussing issues related to Islamic *Fatwa*. Immediately on seeing al-Dāghirī and Malam Karangiya, Niasse spoke out to his disciples: “Here he comes. This is the man I have been telling you about. Thanks be to God the exalted on this happiest day. You are welcome.”²⁸¹

According to an eyewitness, al-Dāghirī was surprised as that was not the first time, he was meeting Niasse: he was the same person whom he dreamt frequently about and they have met on several occasions through mystical powers.²⁸² However, they were said to have engaged in scholarly debate for a very long time. Niasse confirmed that he was competing with him upon the position of *Sahib Zaman* and *Sahib Fayḍa*. He made an assertion that the position could not be reached by anyone other than him and with the will of Allah he attained the position.²⁸³ Niasse was reported to have said that: “If it was that one, the number of (recitation of) *ṣalāt ‘alā al-nabī* was what would make one attain the position (of *ghawth*/ Divine Succour), then al-Dāghirī would have been the *ghawth az-zaman*/ Divine Succour of the age.” It is well-known that al-Dāghirī was one of the Sufī scholars that transcended to his greatest spiritual pedestal, with the *hurmat* (sanctity) of *Ṣalāt al-Fātiḥ* which he sent upon the rūh of the Prophet. Al-Dāghirī was referred to as *Sahib al-Fātiḥ* (Master of the *Ṣalāt al-Fātiḥ*). But Allah destined the position to Niasse. Having widened his knowledge and experience, and convinced of the claims of Niasse and need for reform of the brotherhood, the Shaykh finally gave his allegiance to Niasse.²⁸⁴ Moreover, he appears to have fully understood the works of Niasse and his claims as prophesied by Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī, to have felt the urgent need for the reform of the brotherhood. This, in his opinion, could be achieved by accepting the claims of Niasse.

This meeting between al-Dāghirī and Niasse ended with a simple verbal agreement to work for the cause of Islam and this may be regarded as the compact or alliance that laid the foundations for a new reform in the Tijānīyya brotherhood. Lawan claims that putting heads together of the

²⁸¹ Tahir 2006, 58.

²⁸² Tahir 2006, 59.

²⁸³ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁸⁴ Tahir 2006, 58-59.

two personalities had led to a rapid acceptance of their brotherhood by millions of Muslims especially in West Africa.²⁸⁵ Moreover, certain authors maintain that it was after this meeting that Niasse conferred the title “*Dhul Ma’arif*” on al-Dāghirī. He stayed at Kaolack for about four months before returning home. It was reported that Niasse had insisted to have him stay very close but the latter refused as many asserted that his mind diverted to Nguru where he considered as a centre for spreading Islamic knowledge.²⁸⁶ His decision to return to Nguru, according to his wife was an instruction. During this period at Kaolack he is likely to have continued his reading of Niasse’s work, and he seems to have privately accepted certain aspects of belief and practices of his host. Some oral sources claim that he participated in the construction of Niasse’s mosque in Kaolack.²⁸⁷

The meeting with Niasse has also singled out al-Dāghirī among the other Tijānī scholars of the time. He was said to be unique and best among the others on the path to God. However, this meeting relaxed the intricate predicament al-Dāghirī found himself and his return home was followed with deliverance from the bondage of spiritual indecision, according to Goni Karmasami.²⁸⁸ This refers to his dilemma on the position called *Sahib Zaman* from which he got relief when he went to Ibrāhīm Niasse. Al-Dāghirī said:

O you! Who provide spiritual providence to all creations (sic). Increase my spiritual flood that Allah endowed you with. Furnish me and my disciples (with spiritual flood). Verily, they adhere to you. They came to you to receive blessing and for the purpose of visitation and personal contact with you. Have a look at them, a mere looking that will connect with them spiritually with Allah, let this be a favour from you O Barhama (Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse).²⁸⁹

When al-Dāghirī returned home, he devoted himself to a life of intensive ascetic practices. He sought for like-minded companions and some form of effective spiritual guidance, with many successes. Even though al-Dāghirī did not assume the office of *Sahib Zaman*, within the Tijānīyya brotherhood, his sphere of influence in West Africa especially in Nigeria expanded. His first task now consisted in organizing his school and continuing to deliver lessons in a variety of subjects in the Islamic sciences. It was natural that since that time al-Dāghirī became an admirer of Niasse,

²⁸⁵ Tahir 2006, xxiv-xxv. However, very interesting data on the cooperation between the two men are available in a poem written by each scholar which are discussed in chapter seven.

²⁸⁶ Tahir 2006, 59-60.

²⁸⁷ Audio clip by Malam Ayuba Karmasami retrieved on 2.04.2019 at Nguru.

²⁸⁸ Tahir 2006, 60.

²⁸⁹ Qasida Mimiyya n.d. 3.

and no doubt he drew the attention of his students to this celebrated scholar and assisted them in studying most of his works. He was kept preoccupied throughout the day. From morning to night, his time was devoted to praying, reading, teaching, officiating Muslim social events, advising and resolving disputes,²⁹⁰ and at times travelling upon invitations across the country, as far as the southern parts of Nigeria. But he still had time to write many texts in classical Arabic. All these engagements did not prevent him from devoting some time to commerce. He travelled quite regularly on commercial trips for importation of Islamic books as far as Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, and India for living as discussed below.²⁹¹

Al-Dāghirī's career within the Tijānīyya received another boost when Niasse visited Nigeria in 1945, when al-Dāghirī publicly accepted the claims of Niasse and submitted to his religious authority after he had resorted to *Istikhārah* on the issue. It was during this maiden visit that al-Dāghirī in the company of other Sufi Shuyukh in Nigeria.²⁹² They were reinitiated (*tajdīd*, renewal of initiation into the order) into the brotherhood by Niasse who was considered to have a higher source of authority than that of their first initiators.²⁹³ In addition, the initiation was undertaken as a renewal (*tajdīd*) because they wanted Niasse to bestow his own blessings upon their membership as well as a means of accepting his leadership. His second chain of authority in the brotherhood came from Niasse (d. 1975).²⁹⁴ The Shaykh therefore joined the fellowship of the *fayḍa* led by Niasse. Since then, Kaolack had become a fundamental place to visit, where they pay respect to Niasse who represented the founder of their brotherhood.

Al-Dāghirī's rapid rise within the *fayḍa* Tijānīyya can be attributed to a variety of factors. For instance, his initial advantage of having been born into a family of scholars who not only followed the Tijānīyya brotherhood themselves, but who also provided him with the required knowledge of the brotherhood at an early age. As a result of his contacts with Niasse both in

²⁹⁰ This is a common practice among northern Nigerian communities. Whenever faced with good fortune, favour, happiness, misfortune, conflict, calamity as well as ceremonies and events they approach local malam seeking favourable spiritual intervention on their behalf.

²⁹¹ Tahir 2006, 88.

²⁹² Scholars like Malam Tijānī Usman Zangon Barebari (d. 1970), Malam Abubakar Atiq (d. 1974), Malam Shehu Maihula (d.1988), Malam Sani Kafinga (d. 1989) and Malam Mudi Salga (b. 1932) and a host of others paid homage to him.

²⁹³ Taofiq 2008, 127-128.

²⁹⁴ The second initiation was considered as a renewal (*tajdīd*). There are basically two purposes in renewing a chain of authority. First, when someone failed to carry out essential functions of the order or second is to enhance one's position and status within the order or he meets someone who had a higher source of authority than his/her previous initiator. Niasse received his Tijānīyya from Shaykh Aḥmad al-Sukairij → Shaykh Ahmad al-Abdalawi → Shaykh Aliyu at-Tamassini → Aḥmad al-Tijānī (1735–1815), who received from Prophet Muḥammad.

Nigeria and in Senegal, al-Dāghirī became more actively involved with the *fayḍa* Tijānīyya and became a very close to the latter. In fact, Niasse pointed out that all *rijaal* (Tijani Sufi Shaykhs) of the *fayḍa* Tijānīyya in northern Nigeria and elsewhere are his disciples except al-Dāghirī whom he considered as his companion.²⁹⁵

It should be noted that most of the local Shaykhs, *muqaddams* or members of the Tijānīyya knew Niasse through al-Dāghirī.²⁹⁶ Furthermore, his association with Niasse and his advanced studies with Islamic scholars throughout Saudi Arabia and Nigeria provided him with a broad network of contacts and friends around the world which made him prominent in the history of Tijānīyya. In so many instances, Niasse prays *Salat* behind al-Dāghirī who often led them in prayer. More importantly, al-Dāghirī was the only scholar who was authorized by Niasse to correct his works.²⁹⁷ Indeed, Niasse more often was quoted to have said: “Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī had a full authority to correct and fill the lapses in my entire write up.”²⁹⁸ Moreover, whenever Niasse’s family sought heavenly support, he used to direct them to al-Dāghirī to pray for them.²⁹⁹ In fact, this is a clear indication of the exalted position of al-Dāghirī in the Tijānīyya brotherhood. The relationship between al-Dāghirī, and Niasse lasted until their death in 1975.

The fact still stands, Niasse, influenced his intellectual disposition in his later life. He also influenced al-Dāghirī in organisational matters. Al-Dāghirī completely copied the pattern of organisation of matters such as building of schools, organisation of *Mawlid an-Nabiy an-Nabiy* and establishment of the new settlement at the outskirts of the town from Niasse. He thus became a strong member of the *Fayḍa* Tijānīyya not only in Nigeria but also in West Africa. In fact, his position as one of the most influential figures in the Tijānīyya circle in Nigeria cannot be underrated. However, the relationship between al-Dāghirī and the mystical Muslims of other Sufi brotherhood remains the less known aspects of his activities. Furthermore, although he settled with his family and disciples in Nguru, but a relationship was preserved with his roots down in Girazu, and all other places where he was once either a teacher or student.³⁰⁰

4.2.8 Al-Dāghirī’s Ascetic Life

Al-Dāghirī was a devoted Sufī who can safely have judged him as an ascetic who saw the

²⁹⁵ Audio clip by Malam Ayuba Karmasami retrieved on 2.04.2019 at Nguru.

²⁹⁶ Tahir 2006, 59-60.

²⁹⁷ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁹⁸ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

²⁹⁹ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

³⁰⁰ Tahir 2006, 61.

way practised by the Prophet Muhammad and his companions as an ideal for any true and faithful Muslim. He enthusiastically emulated their conduct and for that reason he is placed at the head of the Sufi *silsilāh*. As anticipated, all the Shaykhs and *Murids* of northern Nigeria, during my fieldwork in northern Nigeria unanimously declared that no saint had excelled more than al-Dāghirī in his devotion and asceticism.

In fact, his life is one time-consuming story of constant prayers, vigils and voluntary fasts. These rituals not only purified his inner life but opened his soul to the indwelling power of God. His asceticism dated back to his early life under the tutelage of his teacher, Abba Chillum and had since then become ascetic till the end of his life. For instance, he fasts every Monday and Thursday and in the months of Rajab and *Sha'aban*. This was apart from the compulsory Ramadan fast and his fasting on 13th 14th and 15th of every lunar month. Al-Dāghirī considered frequent fasting almost indispensable for spiritual progress.³⁰¹ He often keeps vigils, supplicating to Allah. He made it a tradition every night before sunrise to sit and face *Qibla* to recite *Lailaha illallah*, the highest form of *dhikr* 70,000 times. Only Allah can place him at the appropriate position among his special devoted servants.³⁰² It was also his tradition to recite the Quran from cover to cover between *Zuhr* prayer and *Isha'i* by heart.³⁰³ This had happened for the greater part of his life because he wanted to break all obstructions which stood between him and his Beloved.

Al-Tustari is reported by Al-Ghazali to have said: “The Sufi attains Sufism or ascetic life by four things: hunger, self-scrutiny, silence and seclusion”³⁰⁴ all of which are easily discernible in al-Dāghirī’s character. These are some of the attitudes he adopted right from his tender age. As an adult, he spent a greater part of his life as a Sufi who was always in *khalwah* (spiritual retreat and seclusion) for some days or even months as a means of moving closer to Allah and attaining spiritual uplifting.³⁰⁵ As matter of fact, his life seclusion was his most reputable form of worship. Whether he was at home or on a journey, he was always committed to his *khalwah*. He often said: “*To shy away from people and meet your creator is the best food on this earth*”³⁰⁶ Majority of the respondents I interviewed believe that al-Dāghirī until the end of his life, he had been always in

³⁰¹ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

³⁰² Tahir 2006, 132.

³⁰³ Tahir 2006, 72.

³⁰⁴ *Ihyā'* vol. 3, 99.

³⁰⁵ Tahir 2006, 61.

³⁰⁶ Tahir 2006, 66.

seclusion.³⁰⁷ It was in the last moments of al-Dāghirī's days that he established a full force in guiding people to the principle and practice of Sufism. One of his disciples has this to say:

He was more than sixty years then when my full zeal to practice Sufi life engulfed me. I was privileged to have several forms of prayers which gradually brought me proximity to my creator. Initially it sounds so strange to me and my spiritual capacity. But what followed later is enough for me to conclude the superiority of Shaykh Muhammad al-Daghiri and today I stand to say he was a pious Muslim of excellent faith with vivid demonstration of Wilaya concept. May Allah bless him once more.³⁰⁸

This extraordinary pious life led him to be elevated to a considerable height by both the society he belonged and the outside world.³⁰⁹ His piety, holiness, spiritual and devotion distinction were recognized and gave him fame which spread far and wide.

Known by his attitude to life, which is evidently characterized by the *zuhd* (asceticism) and *taqwā* (piety),³¹⁰ for which Sufis are known. He led a simple and austere life devoid of self-aggrandisement or political ambition. He shunned material gain and selfishness. For instance, he had contempt for material wealth to the extent that he never in his long life wore good clothes or ate expensive food. His shelter was like that of an ordinary person and he had no good bedding and pillow. Lawan explains that

Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī did not live in a mansion, neither did he sleep in an Air-conditioned room nor ride in a beautiful car; even though, all these were available and could be easily procured at his wish. His status was uplifted due to his complete rigorous dislike of this world and its concomitant materialism.³¹¹

Although, al-Dāghirī was not rich, he neither sought the help of someone nor solicited the support of anybody in his records, especially on his conviction that only Allah could provide.³¹² It is significant to mention that though he never sought financial assistance from affluent members among his disciples, most of them readily placed their power and wealth at his disposal.³¹³ At many points, awards given to him which attracted substantial amount was donated instantly to many foundations in the name of Allah. One day, one of his closest loyalists asked why made such a big sacrifice, his reply was:

³⁰⁷ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

³⁰⁸ Tahir 2006, 106.

³⁰⁹ Tahir 2006, 61.

³¹⁰ An excessive abstinence and a life of asceticism was said to be condemned by the Qur'an see (Q1vii:27).

³¹¹ Tahir 2006, 68.

³¹² Tahir 2006, 68.

³¹³ Tahir 2006, 68-69.

What is so special in wealth; the worldly materials has nothing good in it. Avoid being so materialistic; Allah will make things easier for you both in this world and Hereafter. But I will pray for you and surely you will be satisfied in your needs but not in amassing wealth.³¹⁴

Furthermore, he did not bother himself with paying courtesy visits to Emirs or people in authority.³¹⁵ He had good relationship with the members of his family and the larger society. For instance, he had a special relationship with the noble family of Imam Ainoma who till today are the pioneers of Nguru central mosque. He did not claim for himself any unique status, rather he was always humble to attend to any social, cultural, educational, or religious event. There was no single conflict between him and anybody directly or indirectly, religiously, or otherwise. The peaceful co-existence of this nature had earned him much respect.³¹⁶ In addition, the contributions he made in the Islamisation of his society also brought him the honour of belonging to many Islamic organizations, both at home and abroad. Though a Sufi by nature, he did not associate with much worldly activities. However, because of his inevitable relevance, he could not avoid many roles he had to play.

4.2.9 His *Karāmah* (thaumaturgical acts)

One of the factors that lead people to believe in the spiritual capacity of a Sufi saint and Shaykh is his ability to perform *karaamaat*.³¹⁷ Al-Dāghirī's extraordinary acts, piety and asceticism are associated with the performance of miracles. A miracle is an event involving the suspension of the actual course of events because its occurrence is contrary to the actual course of events. This perception is used in different contexts depending on the contents. In Islamic theologically writings, miracles are categorized into five, according to the rank of the person who performs them. They are (a) a miracle performed by a Prophet or a Messenger of Allah is known as *mu'ujizāt*, an extraordinary act which cannot be imitated by anyone; (b) a miracle performed by a saint is called *karāmah*, an act of honour; (c) a miraculous feat performed by a common man is called *al-Ma'ūnah* (assistance); (d) a positive miracle performed by a liar, is known as *al-Istidrāj* (an act designed to gradually and eventually expose a liar); and (e) a negative miracle by a liar is called *al-Ihānah*.

³¹⁴ Tahir 2006, 90-91.

³¹⁵ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

³¹⁶ Tahir 2006, 20.

³¹⁷ According to Shaykh Abū Bakr 'Atīq (1909-1974) any Sufi who denies the saints' *karāmāt* is not fit to be a Sufi see Taofiq 2008, 357.

In view of the above, it is deduced that a miracle performed by a saint is technically termed and interpreted as a miracle or charisma ascribed to a saint, i.e. favour, which Allah bestows.³¹⁸ *Karaamaat* is divided into two: *karaamaat hisiyyah* and *karaamaat ma'anawiyyah*. *Karaamaat hisiyyah* refers to the extra-ordinary acts performed by a saint which is contrary to the physical customs of sensory habits such as the ability to walk on water or in the air. *Karaamaat ma'anawiyyah* is an *istiqaamah* in which the Sufis devote themselves to Allah until it removes the *hijab* (veil or barrier) and he knows God and feels peace with Allah.

Al-Dāghirī is reputed for several acts of *karaamaat ma'anawiyyah* and *Karaamaat hisiyyah*. His charismatic gifts and their display are evidence of his mystical position among Muslim saints in northern Nigeria including Nguru. In fact, to dabble on the *karāmah* of al-Dāghirī is to state the obvious as the miracles ascribed to him made him such a unique saint in the region. It may not be out of place to admit that Shaykh was brought into the limelight after his death due to the various *karāmah* ascribed to him. Little wonder most of his disciples always have an episode to narrate on the miracle and positive impact of Shaykh in their lives. In fact, speculations have it that he was the Tijani scholar in northern Nigeria who was mostly ascribed with different miracles, thus, he was *nulli secundus* in terms of its performance, one may contest the veracity of this anyway.

(a) Generally, al-Dāghirī's prayers were instantly answered. For example, a man begs al-Dāghirī to pray to God for him so that he could sell his goods. Al-Dāghirī recited *Surat al-Fatiha* for him and the man instantly declined the prayer. He protested that the *Surat al-Fatiha* is an ordinary prayer, he thus prefers special prayer. Al-Dāghirī withdrew the prayer from him by pointing at a grass and made the prayer on it. The grass instantly reduced into ashes.³¹⁹

(b) There was a time someone visited the Shaykh and while sitting together with the Shaykh, Shaykh's family complained that there was no salt. The man performed a magic and bag of salt instantly appeared before them. The Shaykh declined the offer and wrote a *Hatmi* which clearly showed a man looking for his bag of salt in the market. This indicated that the bag of the salt was stolen from market.

(c) The efficacy of the prayer of al-Dāghirī was said to be almost immediate. Shehu Goni Aisami indicated that one day in Saudi Arabia, al-Dāghirī prayed for a destitute in Makkah, and

³¹⁸ Solagberu 2009, 106. For more detailed information on miracles see chapter six of this thesis.

³¹⁹ Interview with Shehu Goni Aisami on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

sooner after, the man person concerned became rich and whenever he made *tawassul* with al-Dāghirī his prayers were instantly answered.

(d) Another example of al-Dāghirī's supposed *karaamaat* was demonstrated at Lagos Airport. According to Shehu Goni Aisami, one of the most revealing miracles of the Shaykh happened when travelling, in the company of Muḥammad Aisami to Kaolack via Lagos Airport and their passports were delayed. When it was only five minutes to departure time, his co-traveller reminded him that flight time was rapidly approaching. The Shaykh assured them that they would soon get their passports. He also insisted that so long as their passports were not with them, the flight would not depart. The passports instantly descended from above.³²⁰

The above-mentioned miracles enhanced his prestige and boosted his mystical powers in the mind of his disciples. It is worthy of note that this researcher interviewed many disciples of al-Dāghirī over the various 'miracles' attributed to al-Dāghirī. The interview was meant to confirm the authenticity of the said miracles. Most of the disciples affirmed that it was true that the Shaykh performed those feats and there was no doubt about them. The anti-Sufi scholars criticized and attacked any form of miracle which was said to be performed by the Sufi scholars. While the Sufis do not bother themselves with whoever denies the miracles of the saints saying that the critics and deniers would never accept whatever one says, even if all the divine books were recited for them.

4.2.10 The Profession of Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī

Al-Dāghirī seems to have spent most of his days at home, teaching, preaching, and writing for the Muslim community. He therefore gained reputation for dedication to development of Arabic and Islamic scholarship in the country. Lawan did not exaggerate when he described him as a multi-talented scholar of many holds. He was a teacher, a writer, and a reformer. He was known to be committed to four different careers in his lifetime as his profession, these are: teaching, preaching, writing and book trade and faming. Naturally, these careers were however not pursued on equal basis; rather, he was more committed to one more than the others. For instance, he was more committed to teaching, writing and book trading rather than farming and preaching. Yet, all these activities together created an everlasting image for him.

4.2.10.1 His Role as a Teacher

Teaching role of the traditional Ulama is a well-known social phenomenon in the context of West African intellectual history. The Ulama travelled far and wide in West Africa to pursue a

³²⁰ Interview with Shehu Goni Aisami on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

course of study, as well as to teach their followers in the various towns and resting stations along their routes.³²¹ Teaching was the main focus for many of the Ulama and the source of their livelihood. They taught and preached almost without break except for prayer times. Al-Dāghirī is a fine example of this ongoing tradition of Islamic scholarship and can be placed in a long and prestigious line of West African and Nigerian scholars. As earlier mentioned, from the earliest stages of his studies, al-Dāghirī was aiming at becoming a great teacher. The first scholarly activities started by al-Dāghirī were teaching and preaching before the death of his father. He was not just a teacher; he was an institution of learning. He did not only impart knowledge to his students, but also trained them as professional intellectuals. He also inspired them to teach others.

There are two versions as regards the history of al-Dāghirī's career as a teacher. One version state that he started teaching immediately after he had completed studying the reading of the Qur'an from his teacher, Chulum. Another version states that his career as a teacher did not commence until the death of his father when he was at Jajeri.

Whatever may be the case, the field interviews indicated that one of the first things al-Dāghirī did when he settled at Nguru was the establishment of his personal domain where a school for the study of both Qur'an and *Ilm* were established in 1936 and earned him a reputation as a teacher. He admitted students in both Qur'anic and *Ilm* schools of Islamic education, with the first set of his students from different parts of Nigeria and nearby countries.

As for the curriculum of the *Ilm* school, like many traditional Islamic schools in northern Nigeria, it consisted of the following: *Fiqh* (jurisprudence) *Tawhid* (Science of Unity), *Adab al-Arab* (Arabic Literature), *Qawā'id al-Lughā* (Arabic Grammar), Hadith (Prophetic tradition), *Uṣūl al-fiqh*, *Taṣawwuf* (Sufism) and many others.³²² This is typical of all the schools established by al-Dāghirī in terms of the diversity of their curricula. According to Solagberu, this fluid curriculum gives students the opportunity to decide on what subjects or the books they wish to study.³²³ The teacher often advises them on what books to study based on their experience and level of maturity. It is interesting to note that including his *zāwiya* at Nguru, Jajeri, Girazu and Melte, al-Dāghirī established a total of thirteenth (13) *zāwiyas*.³²⁴ The teachings and example of al-Dāghirī are said

³²¹ Mohammed 1978, 63-64.

³²² Idris 2010, 74.

³²³ Solagberu 2009, 98.

³²⁴ Idris 2010, 73.

to have stimulated literary activity in Nigeria, especially in northern Nigeria, but also over a wide area.

4.2.10.2 His Role as a Writer and Book trader

Before al-Dāghirī decided to take up writing and trading activities, he directed his attention to the acquisition of religious and intellectual training, which he could fully utilize as a basis for his vocation for writing and trading. He considered this idea as a matter of prime concern for the eventual realisation of the goals he had set for himself. One can learn from his literary output that writing is another career which al-Dāghirī engaged in perhaps to express and spread his views. He had been acknowledged even by his contemporaries as a versatile scholar and prolific writer, who stands like a pillar amidst the Tijānī writers in the twentieth century Islamic northern Nigeria.

Al-Dāghirī started his Qur’anic writings on *allo* at a very young age and as a student of *makarantar allo*. Through writing the Qur’an on *allo*, al-Dāghirī developed the skills of writing the Qur’anic and non-Qur’anic manuscript. He started writing non-Qur’anic manuscript books in 1932 on his way to Saudi Arabia to perform Hājj, but this claim was debunked by his *khatim*, Abubakar Wasiri. Abubakar Wasiri argues that al-Dāghirī wrote his first book when he was in Kano.³²⁵ In Nguru, al-Dāghirī used to seclude himself whenever he wanted to write a book or compose a poem. The rationale behind this was to create a quiet and conducive environment for his writings.³²⁶ In his work on biography of the Shaykh, Lawan once more pointed to the noteworthy writings of al-Dāghirī and went saying that not one of Islamic writers in Nguru could compete with him in literary production.³²⁷ He continued to manifest his admiration for al-Dāghirī’s knowledge and learning when he claims that he had contributions on many topics in Islam more than any Islamic cleric in Nguru, especially in the field he wrote on.³²⁸ About sixty works have been attributed to him on various subjects. The subjects of al-Dāghirī’s works will be dealt with much more extensively in the subsequent chapters.

Most of his works were published here at home while other works were prepared outside the country. These various writings had brought him into direct contact with various world Islamic institutions like al-Azhar University where some of his books are still relevant in their rich

³²⁵ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

³²⁶ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

³²⁷ Tahir 2006, 86.

³²⁸ Tahir 2006, 86.

library.³²⁹ Sani argues that al-Dāghirī being a writer of international repute, served as consultant to the Islamic International Library at Saudi Arabia and he has served as a member of al-Azhar Research Institute, where more than two thirds of his work were published.³³⁰

His mystical prose writings cover various aspects of Islamic studies, especially *Taṣawwuf*. However, the number of works ascribed to him varies from one researcher to another as will be discussed in the next chapter. But he specialized in theology and *salawat*, therefore, his writings were more in these fields. Another area in which he excelled was in poetry where he also made his greatest contribution. He was a great and very gifted poet who used to compose many poems and comment on many poems written by classical poets. Up to date he is remembered by many Muslim learned men in present-day Nigeria, Niger Republic, Senegal, and Ghana. His local and international fame is mainly based on a substantial corpus of his praiseworthy Arabic poems. They attracted the attention of a dozen or so scholars from Africa and overseas. He was also participating in Prophet Muḥammad's eulogy competition to exhibit his Arabic and Islamic knowledge. For his intellectual contribution in this field, he was awarded the best African Islamic poet by Almanac Islamic organisation, Beirut in 1962.³³¹

Moreover, within the traditions of esoteric writings and book trading al-Dāghirī's influence has been both enormous and unique. Al-Dāghirī's uniqueness was because he had a wide and deep religious experience. His motives of writing were manifold; for instance, as a Tijānī Shaykh, he wrote to answer questions which were put to him on these tenets or to defend his own views. In addition to this, the Shaykh wrote to guide his adherents to advise them. The list of his titles, disciples and followers is impressive indeed.

Another kind of profession in which al-Dāghirī apparently engaged during his stay in Kano and Nguru was the book trade. In the Muslim community of West Africa generally and northern Nigeria specifically, the trade and scholarship have always fit together as a hand in glove.³³² Trade can be seen as the glove that provides cover and protection for the vital core which is the community of Islam, its fingers extending throughout West Africa and giving shape and form to the glove. Al-Dāghirī successfully combined the two in this way which supported his educational and religious endeavours. As mentioned earlier, apart from selling his own publications which were

³²⁹ Tahir 2006, 88.

³³⁰ Idris 2010, 75.

³³¹ Idris 2010, 75.

³³² Mohammed 1978, 69.

recognised and even sold outside Nigeria as a trading commodity, and as generally known throughout northern Nigeria, al-Dāghirī ordered books from Egypt (either on special request or based on market demand) which he then sold.³³³ This is expatiated by a discussion with Imam Ahmad (the chief Imam of Nguru) who said that there was a time they wanted to buy a book from him but it was not available. He thus promised them an order from Egypt and quite authoritatively before the week ran out, the book was brought.³³⁴

This great effort motivated his disciples and made some of them even inherit this business. An example of his disciple who took up the business was Alhaji Mohammad Sani Kurna. He was a famous dealer in importing Arabic and Islamic studies books and other Islamic related goods. This business had been greatly profitable in northern Nigeria especially in the late 1960s and 1970s.³³⁵ One of the disciples of al-Dāghirī who also engaged in book trade of his teacher narrates that there was a time al-Dāghirī ordered reasonable a bulk of books from Egypt and the books were sent through Lagos. As it reached Lagos, some Yoruba people stole and sold the books. Al-Dāghirī decided to go to Lagos to report them to the authority, but Emir of Kano and Niasse advised him not to do that. He should instead leave them with God, and he agreed. Thereafter, he went to Lagos and bought the books from different bookstores within the city.³³⁶ He also used to send books to Ghana for sale through Yakubu Tamale. There was a time that they even travelled together to Ghana with a large quantity of books.³³⁷

All these confirm that al-Dāghirī can be regarded as a prolific writer and book trader. All his writings attest him to having a great self-esteem, taking great pride in his Tijānīyya brotherhood and Islamic religious belief in northern Nigeria. The subsequent chapter will further buttress this submission as several works, in verse and prose, composed by him will be listed and reviewed.

4.2.10.3 His Role as a Farmer

There is very scarce data on al-Dāghirī as a farmer, both in the written and in the local sources. One of the most knowledgeable informants about the life of al-Dāghirī, Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī, confirmed in our oral interviews that his father was certainly involved in farming. He used to cultivate very vast hectares of land; he produced various types of crops ranging

³³³ Trading and distribution of his works will be discussed in chapter eight of this thesis.

³³⁴ Tahir 2006, 80.

³³⁵ Tahir 2006, 88.

³³⁶ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

³³⁷ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

from millet, guinea corn, groundnut, Beans, cassava, etc. during the early stages of his educational and commercial careers.³³⁸ However, when he started scholarship, he quitted farming. Due to unavailability of permanent settlement and his nature of commitments, the Shaykh did not farm for more than twenty years.

However, he obliged to revert to the old occupation of his ancestors on the advice of Ibrāhīm Niasse.³³⁹ It was narrated that during his first visit to Niasse in Kaolack, Niasse asked him if he had a farm. His answer was in the negative and Niasse advised him to possess a farm. It was as a result of this advice, on his return, al-Dāghirī became a prominent farmer.³⁴⁰ The wisdom behind this advice is not known; perhaps he was advised to get a farm because the adviser had realized his significance in the society he belonged and thus, without farm he could not cater for the needs of his followers. Today, the families of al-Dāghirī are still seasoned farmers. The whole family engages in farming, producing enough to feed themselves and for commercial purposes.³⁴¹

4.2.10.4 His Role as a Preacher

Al-Dāghirī also played an important role in preaching. However, his preaching activity was not as prominent as his teaching and writing. He tried to explain the real meaning of Islam to the people in his lifetime. Despite his learning sessions and *ibadah*, he organized the preaching of the religion of Islam. One of my respondents told me that al-Dāghirī was not an itinerant preacher.³⁴² He was unlike some Islamic scholars who embark on itinerant preaching or choose strategic spots conducting *Tafsīr*, especially during the month of Ramadan. Rather, he usually used his house and *zāwiya* at Dāghirawa community as a venue for preaching. His audience were his students, disciples, members of his *zāwiya* and other callers.

One respondent stated that al-Dāghirī became successful in his preaching session partly due to his ability to command both Arabic and Hausa languages.³⁴³ This was evident in his Qur'anic exegesis the theme of his preaching was generally on Islamic etiquettes. This covered teaching the pillars of Islam, moral conduct in Islam such as good manners and notable qualities of the prophet and his companions. Sometimes, the focus of his preaching could be Sufism, especially the Tijānīyya order. Al-Dāghirī had also taken the responsibility of rehabilitating and

³³⁸ Tahir 2006, 18.

³³⁹ Tahir 2006, 18.

³⁴⁰ Tahir 2006, 18.

³⁴¹ Tahir 2006, 19.

³⁴² Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

³⁴³ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

purifying the mind of people to get rid of all evil thoughts. He dedicated himself to carrying out this assignment which made him to travel across many villages, towns and cities in Nigeria.

4.2.11 Al-Dāghirī's Itinerancy

Travelling was, as earlier noted, an essential part of a mystic's discipline from the Middle Ages and³⁴⁴ it had several advantages. First, it brings the mystic in touch with men of different temperaments living under different climes and different conditions through which the mystic gains intimate knowledge of God.³⁴⁵ Secondly, when the mystic travels, all the forces that bind man to a particular place; limiting his teachers, disciples and visions are all broken.³⁴⁶ Thirdly, by meeting different scholars, the mystic gains blessings from them. As evident from his literary output, al-Dāghirī undertook many journeys to foreign lands. The journey began by visiting the Islamic holy cities of Makkah and Madinah more than ten times (combining Hājj and 'Umrah (lesser Hājj)).³⁴⁷ He also made journeys which are related to Tijānīyya brotherhood but the exact number cannot be precisely ascertained. But it is known that he visited Fez in Morocco most frequently being the home of Ahmad al-Tijānī, the founder of the *tariqa* Tijānīyya order. He visited other West African countries such as Senegal being the home of his spiritual leader, Niasse. After his first meeting with Niasse, as earlier noted, al-Dāghirī visited Senegal several times on retreat with Niasse. He regularly visited Niger Republic, Ghana and Sudan.³⁴⁸ He also went on business trips to Egypt, Lebanon, India and Iraq, to mention a few either for publication of his work or importation of books.³⁴⁹ His travels within Nigeria took him to many major cities such as Kano, Lagos, Bauchi, Kaduna, Ibadan, Sokoto, Katsina, Maiduguri, and Zaria among others.³⁵⁰

4.2.12 Death and Burial

Few years back when he was in Cairo, his right leg had a medical condition which resulted from his constant fasts, vigils, prayers and sitting at a spot for many hours. He was also prevented from further research because of the poor condition of his eyes at the age of 71 years. At the age of 72, his health condition deteriorated as he took ill for two days (Monday and Tuesday). He finally died on Wednesday, 19th March 1975 at Nguru, leaving behind four wives and twenty-four

³⁴⁴ Nizami 1973, 29.

³⁴⁵ Nizami 1973, 29.

³⁴⁶ Nizami 1973, 29.

³⁴⁷ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri on 27.3.2019 in Kano.

³⁴⁸ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri on 27.3.2019 in Kano.

³⁴⁹ Tahir 2006, 88.

³⁵⁰ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri on 27.3.2019 in Kano.

children.³⁵¹ Several important personalities, including the Emir of Nguru and thousands of sympathizers from inside and outside Nigeria especially Niger Republic attended his *Jinazah* (funeral prayer) in accordance with the Prophetic Sunnah (tradition) and as a mark of honour. Wednesday is traditionally the Nguru market day but because of this sad event, the market was not open on that day because of the death of the Shaykh. This event has never been witnessed in Nguru throughout its history.³⁵² The then Chief of Nguru performed the funeral prayer for the blessed body of al-Dāghirī. His house was not far away from the graveyard, thus, by mere trekking his body was conveyed to its resting place. He was buried in a cemetery in the north-eastern part of Nguru and in accordance to his wish, he was buried next to his father.³⁵³ He was buried in the presence of an impressive number of scholars, pious men and saints as well as the emir.³⁵⁴ A number of scholars expressed their sympathy to the family of al-Dāghirī on his death and paid condolence visits to the family of the Shaykh in Nguru. Some of these sympathizers composed elegiac poems. One of such was Shaykh Goni Karmasami (1910-2005), the chief *khatib* (scribe) of al-Dāghirī who wrote *Marsiyyat Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī*.

As a rule, a tomb is erected over the graves of saints and Shaykh, and a single room was later built with cement blocks over this tomb and the cemetery became one of the centres of Sufi rituals. In 2004, one of his disciples in Kano, Shaykh Aliyu Harazimi (1919-2013) financed the entire cost of the renovations for buildings of al-Dāghirī's old tomb in Nguru. It was renovated to become a room and a parlour. He was buried in a single room while his brothers and sons were buried in the parlour. All the tombs are enclosed within the new building with a wrought iron portal (gate). The Shaykh's family holds the keys and oversees the tombs. Such a cemetery may, at times, not contain the remains of a saint at all, but it is merely a place dedicated to Sufis.

Moreover, immediately after his death, a new *Khalifa* was appointed in person of *Khalifa* Muḥammad Ganim (Malum); he was the eldest son who took over the responsibility of leading this institution. Following the death of *Khalifa* Muḥammad Ganim (Malum), a new *Khalifa*, Fatihu Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī was appointed. Fatihu since then has been leading the institution. *Khalifa* Fatihu Muḥammad remains the spiritual image and social symbol, as were his forefathers.

³⁵¹ Tahir 2006, 121. However, the number of wives and children do not portray the affluence of a man in northern Nigeria.

³⁵² Tahir 2006, 125.

³⁵³ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

³⁵⁴ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri on 27.3.2019 in Kano.

However, the death of the Shaykh did not affect the progress of the new community (Dāghirawa) that he had originated about half a century earlier, a community that continued to expand Islamically and spiritually. The *zāwiya* continues to function as ever before for daily *wazifa*, weekly *dhikr Juma'ah* and annual *Mawlid an-Nabiy an-Nabiy*. The emergence of *zāwiya's* leadership through the principle of hereditary succession which is termed *Shaykh Sajjada*, can either weaken or split the *zāwiya* or order, if care is not taken. According to Trimmingham, such practice frequently led to the appointment of incompetent or worldly-minded men as *Khulafah*. The same principle of *Shaykh Sajjada*, according to him is an important factor in holding the *zāwiya* or the order together.

4.2.13 Ziyaarat (visitation) to his tomb

The visitation or *Hājj* (Pilgrimage) of a shrine of a mystic or saint is known as *ziyaarat* (visitation) while the shrine itself is called *Hubbare* in the context of northern Nigeria. In fact, in both *Hājj* and *ziyaarat*, pilgrims seek to have a close contact with the sacred object of their veneration.³⁵⁵ The visitation of tombs of saints is a very common practice in Islam and tombs have, during successive centuries been rendered into shrines where pilgrimage is performed, sacrifices and votive gifts are offered and prayers for help are made. The Sufis hold the view that “the saints of God die not, but merely depart from one habitation to another.”³⁵⁶ Because of this, the excessive honour paid to saints and *Shuyukh* in their life-time is continued to them after death. The purpose of *ziyaarat* is to search for spiritual succour, or to seek a miracle for the late saint which was influenced by the concept of *Baraka*. *Baraka* is, according to Sampson, the spiritual power or blessing that emanates from those who are deemed to be close to God.³⁵⁷ The *Baraka* can be obtained from handshakes with a Shaykh if he is still alive and if he departs, it can be gained from visiting his grave.³⁵⁸

Al-Dāghirī was, as earlier noted, one of the most revered and distinguished undisputable Tijānī mystics in twentieth century Nigeria. He was regarded as one of the saints of the order to the extent that some contemporary scholars of Islam argue that, with the exception to Niasse, no figure has been more influential in the history of Tijānīyya in northern Nigeria than al-Dāghirī.

³⁵⁵ Sampson 2010, 338.

³⁵⁶ Subhan 1960, 107. For more detailed information on the concept of death and the *ziyārat* of Prophet Muḥammad's tomb see chapter six of the thesis.

³⁵⁷ Sampson 2010, 338.

³⁵⁸ Sampson 2010, 338.

For many years, his tomb at Nguru was a place of pilgrimage for thousands of people of all Sufi orders and sects like Shi'a. The shrine is generally visited on *Mawlid an-Nabiy* in honour of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad or *Mawlid an-Nabiy* of al-Dāghirī himself, and during such time no special ceremonies are performed but a special prayer. Moreover, on Friday mornings and evenings, large crowds usually trooped to his tomb and found spiritual solace in his company. A calm spiritual atmosphere pervaded his resting place, and men who were secretly tormented by flames of mundane ambitions, found solace in his tomb. The visitors of the shrine are believed to acquire merit. It would be difficult to describe the prayer, but the form of prayers generally contains repetition of certain prayers for the soul of al-Dāghirī, finally, the visitor makes some personal requests. It is a common practice by the visitors to pray for the souls of all people buried in the cemetery. One of the visitors I interviewed said that a saint must be prominent in divinely certified religious leadership to be distinguished sharply from other leaders for his love for the Prophet Muhammad and his miracles during his lifetime. His beautifully erected tomb can be visited in Nguru up to now.

4.2.14 His Library

Al-Dāghirī's library was established in his house for personal research and reference and it is said to be the biggest library in Nguru during his lifetime. Its general pattern appears to be typical example of the distinguished Ulama class in twentieth century West African libraries, including most of the present northern states of Nigeria such as Umar Falke library.³⁵⁹ The study of the works in their social context is vitally important because it will provide a background to put al-Dāghirī's library into its proper cultural and historical perspective. Like many other scholars in West Africa including northern Nigeria, al-Dāghirī collected various kinds of material in book form, both printed and handwritten manuscripts, on all aspects of Islamic learning, protective medicine, and the secret arts. There were more than 5,000 items in stock which covered different branches of Islamic knowledge. Among these are the works on Sufism, *Fiqh*, hadiths, Tarikh, poetry, astrology and numerology. Most of the material is written in Arabic although some items are in *Ajami*, and a few without bindings. The works were written by many different scholars in the Middle East and Africa. There are also books in the form of prose and poetry which were written by the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century Ulama of what is now known as northern Nigeria.

³⁵⁹ See Mohammed 1978.

During his lifetime, the library was always open to everyone without a fee. He granted permission to anyone who wanted to have access to his works. No deposit had to be made if books were taken outside the library building. He often accommodated scholars who travelled from afar to offer their services. It is worthy of note that in northern Nigeria at this time, the success of a man is measured by the amount of wealth he acquires but al-Dāghirī had nothing but books. He usually used all his resources to buy books. That is the reason he left nothing but a complete Islamic personal library with more than one thousand collections after his death. Up till now, the family continues to use the library for personal research. A copy of the Qur'an written in his own hand was presented to me during my fieldwork.

4.2.15 *Mawlid an-Nabiy* of al-Dāghirī

Following the tradition of celebrating the birthdays of the great mystics, the disciples, and followers of al-Dāghirī still continue to demonstrate their tribute, love and respect for him after his demise in 1975. It was on this basis that Shaykh Shehu Gana introduced the *Mawlid an-Nabiy* of al-Dāghirī in 2012. It is celebrated annually in the night of the 10th of al-Muharram, the first month in the Islamic calendar.³⁶⁰ The festival used to be a one-day event, but other activities were later introduced like holding wedding Fatiha and graduation ceremonies of Qur'anic students.³⁶¹ The disciples and families of al-Dāghirī usually gather for the celebration of his *Mawlid an-Nabiy*. Many important personalities recognised *Mawlid an-Nabiy* of al-Dāghirī and graced the occasion on invitation. Visitors come from as far as Niger Republic and even the south-western part of Nigeria, as well as from many of the towns and villages around Nguru to grace this occasion while active participants come from Kano, Borno to mention a few. During my fieldwork, some Tijānīs who used to attend their *Mawlid an-Nabiy* of al-Dāghirī told me that they consider it an annual pilgrimage that enables them to purify themselves. This purification was to attain a closer union with God throughout the session.³⁶² This *Mawlid an-Nabiy* of al-Dāghirī started in Nguru and later spread to places like Kano.³⁶³

4.3 Biography of al-Fallātī

Compared to al-Dāghirī, al-Fallātī was a scholar of considerable local fame. That is why for many years, al-Fallātī has been viewed mainly as the devoted disciple of his teacher, al-Dāghirī.

³⁶⁰ Interview with Ahmad Mai Zare on 20.03.2019 at Nguru.

³⁶¹ Interview with Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī on 20.03.2019, at Nguru.

³⁶² Interview with Malam Tukur 26.03.2019, Bulabulin, Nguru.

³⁶³ Interview with Auwal Muhammad Hassan on 18.09.2019 on phone.

Although neither his knowledge nor his influence was as great as al-Dāghirī's, he was still qualified to become a Shaykh in West African Islamic learning tradition. Al-Fallātī always regarded himself as a student of al-Dāghirī.³⁶⁴ Taking al-Fallātī himself as a case study, he considered it necessary to inform his master to obtain his blessings and approval in whatever he intended to do. Against this backdrop of the histrionic life of his master, in modern scholarship the life history of al-Fallātī (and, indeed, that of any other Sufi scholar in Nguru) looks much less spectacular. This is because, his biography has been examined only in bits and pieces and while these bits and pieces may be fascinating in their own isolated rigor, they give us no coherent synthesis of his legacy that has dramatically risen into prominence in northern Nigeria since the twentieth century, after a long period of relative obscurity. The life history of al-Fallātī, therefore, presents some difficulties, the most obvious being that of chronology. For instance, information on al-Fallātī from local Nguru sources are, unfortunately, scarce, and not totally unaffected by the problem of hagiography. Adamu, for instance, one of the prominent disciples of al-Fallātī laments the dearth and paucity of information about the life-history of his teacher. What is available according to him, are fragmented manuscripts of which the writings are difficult to read.³⁶⁵

4.3.1 His Family Background

The original home of al-Fallātī, according to these sources, was in the Marwa in northern part of present-day Republic of Cameroun, and this was where he grew up and got his early education. His father, Muḥammad Sani, and mother, at least from the available evidence, are Fulani by tribe who were said to have hailed originally from the present-day Mali. They reportedly migrated from Mali to Cameroun on the way to Hājj (pilgrimage to Makkah) and finally settled in Marwa in the nineteenth century.³⁶⁶ In fact, many of their forefathers died on their way to Makkah for the pilgrimage, while others who reached their destination decided to settle permanently in Madinah and the Republic of Sudan respectively.³⁶⁷ The Shaykh was reportedly born in 1909 in Marwa, now northern Cameroun.³⁶⁸

The genealogy of Muḥammad Sani, the father of al-Fallātī according to local sources may be traceable to 'Uqba ibn Nāfi (622-683), a great companion of Prophet Muḥammad, who defeated

³⁶⁴ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru

³⁶⁵ Nurul Aulad n.d. 1.

³⁶⁶ Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

³⁶⁷ Nurul Aulad n.d. 2-3.

³⁶⁸ Nurul Aulad n.d. 2; see also Idris 2017, 166

some states of West Africa during the reign of Amr bin Asi of Misra (present-day Egypt). Uqba married a lady known as Bajju-Maggu and it was through this marriage that the Fulani that al-Fallātī's tribe emerged.³⁶⁹ His parents have been living in Marwa ever since then, his father was a respected Islamic intellectual who distinguished himself in the philosophy of Qur'anic knowledge. In fact, he was a teacher of repute, a scribe, and the *imam* or religious and educational leader of his community in Marwa.³⁷⁰ He later became a renowned scholar and humanitarian as well as philanthropist in the city where he used to welcome merchants and caravans. As a matter of fact, he was one of the most influential leaders in Marwa, and his outstanding contributions to Islamic education cannot be overestimated.³⁷¹

4.3.2 His name and Early Education

His name was Usman (Ar. 'Uthmān) which often becomes Usmanu or even Usmani in northern Nigeria. The name by which he was generally known, Usman Fullatiyya, was an epithet given to him because of his Fulani affiliation. Having made a pilgrimage to Makkah, he took the title of Al-Hājj (the pilgrim) and some researchers have chosen to call him Al-Hājj Usman or Alhaji Usman, being its Hausanized form. His literary works used to be signed, and he was known among the learned Muslim elite by his full Arabicised name: al-Fallātī ibn Muḥammad Sani ibn Umar Babba ibn Muḥammad Mustapha al-Fallātī al-Ghūrāwī al-Barnāwī al-Malīkī al-Ash'arī al-Tijānī. However, his family, friends, and students called him Shaykh Usman. According to his disciple, Malam Adamu Nurul Aulad, he continued to be remembered by this name even after his death.³⁷² In this work we shall make use of the Arabic name Shaykh 'Uthmān al-Fallātī or al-Fallātī where appropriate.

Reportedly, his father, as earlier noted, was a learned man, but most of his time was spent on welcoming traders and caravans. Al-Fallātī was opportune to grow up under the care of his parents and began his life with all the advantages that were available to a child of his social standing. The family provided a comfortable upbringing for the Shaykh and his siblings. Later in life, he briefly lived in Garoua before coming back to his place birth, Marwa.³⁷³

³⁶⁹ Idris 2017, 166; see also Aulad Nurul Aulad n.d. 3. However, not only al-Fallātī's parents all the Fulanis in northern Nigeria claimed same origin see for instance Hiskett 1973 about the root of 'Uthmān bin Fodio.

³⁷⁰ Nurul Aulad n.d. 2.

³⁷¹ Nurul Aulad n.d.

³⁷² Nurul Aulad

³⁷³ Nurul Aulad n.d. 2.

In Marwa, his father was well known for his devotion to knowledge and learning. He had the opportunity of benefiting from the long-standing tradition of Islamic system of education. Al-Fallātī expectedly started learning at an early age under his father, Muḥammad Sani. This was done in the traditional system of learning (*makarantar allo*) where he was learning to read and recite the Qur'an and to write it in Arabic characters. He memorized the Qur'an at a very early age; he proved to be exceptionally intelligent. This must have laid a solid foundation for rapid and steady learning.³⁷⁴ Having attained that level of basic knowledge of the Qur'an, al-Fallātī entered the system of advanced Islamic learning. Having completed the second reading of the Qur'an, he proceeded further to study the Arabic language and some advanced Islamic sciences such as Hadith, *tafsīr* (Qur'an exergies), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *lugha* (Arabic grammar) etc., under his father.³⁷⁵ This account demonstrates with what fervour young al-Fallātī was yearning for knowledge.

Moreover, his father, being one of the outstanding Sufi leaders in the city, recognised the potential intellect of al-Fallātī and taught his son divine love and asceticism.³⁷⁶ This was the turning point, a landmark in al-Fallātī's life which he passed through on his way to Sufism. This effort seems to have had a profound effect on al-Fallātī's spiritual life and showed him a new way to God. Furthermore, in his effort to prepare his son for the challenge that awaited him in the future, he handed him over to prominent scholars in Marwa during his time to teach his son Islamic sciences.³⁷⁷ His father's decision was largely informed by the reality that, apart from the potential intellect of al-Fallātī, he had also come of age and was pre-occupied with other activities. Moreover, he needed to acquire knowledge from other scholars.³⁷⁸ It was a common practice all over West Africa.

The local account of al-Fallātī, lean as it already is, reported that within a short period of time, after he was taken to learn, he soon developed into a perspicacious scholar and an ardent aspirant on the Sufi Path.³⁷⁹ Having been satisfied and impressed with al-Fallātī's performance, his father suggested to him to go out of Cameroun and seek for knowledge in order to diversify

³⁷⁴ Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

³⁷⁵ Idris 2017, 167.

³⁷⁶ Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

³⁷⁷ Idris 2017, 167.

³⁷⁸ Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

³⁷⁹ Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

his academic approach and seek his fortune and blessings of several scholars.³⁸⁰ The decision of his father fortified his zeal to pursue his education with more determination than ever before.

4.3.3 His Educational Quest

Since travelling from one place to another in search of knowledge is traditionally recommended in Islamic custom, al-Fallātī too, like al-Dāghirī, travelled out of his place of birth for the sake of learning. He went to Maiduguri (capital of Borno) perhaps because of its long reputation in Islamic education. There were great Islamic scholars in Borno as at that time; it was a great cultural centre of Islam.³⁸¹ In Maiduguri, al-Fallātī looked for a scholar to study under and he was accepted by a renowned scholar, Abubakar as-Sokotowiyyi. Al-Fallātī was under the tutelage of as-Sokotowiyyi who at that time was a famous Islamic scholar of great distinction in Borno and beyond.³⁸² Al-Fallātī was lucky to have as-Sokotowiyyi as his teacher from whom he learnt *fiqh* (Jurisprudence).³⁸³ Al-Fallātī was outstanding among all the students he met under as-Sokotowiyyi. He became the most learned emerging scholar in the circle after his mentor, as-Sokotowiyyi. Although he continued his study under as-Sokotowiyyi, he desired to undergo other teachers who specialised in other fields of Islamic knowledge. It was during this period that al-Fallātī met a great scholar, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Shuwa al-Sangadi who came to visit as-Sokotowiyyi.³⁸⁴ Then, as-Sokotowiyyi introduced him to al-Sangadi, and described him as a great scholar with potential intellect. Later, al-Fallātī sought permission from his teacher to go to Geidam to study under al-Sangadi, and it was enthusiastically granted.³⁸⁵ In fact, as-Sokotowiyyi was one of his teachers who influenced him most and left a lasting impression on him.³⁸⁶

He therefore proceeded to Geidam (now a Local Government in Yobe State), where he undertook further study under Muḥammad Shuwa al-Sangadi. He studied *Nahw* (Arabic Grammar), *Sarf* (syntax), semantics and lexicography, *Balagha* (eloquence) under the tutelage of his new teacher and mentor Muḥammad Shuwa al-Sangadi.³⁸⁷ He stayed with him for many years and emulated almost all his good characters until al-Sangadi directed him to learn from another great Sufi, Al-Dāghirī in Nguru. Hence, he moved to Nguru and visited al-Dāghirī, who had a wide

³⁸⁰ Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

³⁸¹ Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

³⁸² Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

³⁸³ Idris 2017, 168; Idris 2010, 58.

³⁸⁴ Nurul Aulad n.d. 4.

³⁸⁵ Nurul Aulad n.d. 4.

³⁸⁶ Nurul Aulad n.d. 4.

³⁸⁷ Idris 2017, 168, Idris 2010, 58.

local reputation at that time. Al-Fallātī met many scholars, perhaps, those Hausa teachers who came to study under the Shaykh. He presented himself as a very humble disciple considerably surpassed any other students, but he did not stay long there before he proceeded to Kano.

Like al-Dāghirī, most of al-Fallātī’s teachers are popularly known in Kano. In Kano, he studied under prominent Islamic scholars who specialized in several areas of Islamic education. One of such scholars was Malam Shu’aibu Warure, under whom he studied *fiqh* (Jurisprudence). Al-Fallātī stayed with him until he learnt all the branches of jurisprudence.³⁸⁸ He therefore proceeded to Waziri Gidado under whom he studied *Nahw* (Arabic grammar) and *Sarf* (morphology).³⁸⁹ Waziri Gidado, the father of Shaykh Isa Waziri, besides the substantial claim that he was a very outstanding Islamic scholar who made positive impact on the life of al-Fallātī, he was said to be the Wali of Kano. He also studied *tafsīr* under Malam Modibbo of Cameroun in either Kano or Marwa.³⁹⁰ However, al-Fallātī continued to learn more Islamic knowledge under Malam Abubakar Ja’afar Jahun with whom he studied different subjects; particularly *Fiqh*. Then, he decided to specialize on other disciplines, therefore he moved to al-Qādī Bello Azare under whom he studied *Tafsīr* (Qur’anic exergies), *hisab* (arithmetic) and *Balagha* (rhetoric).³⁹¹

Al-Fallātī, after staying for a while with his teachers and having completed his studies in Kano ultimately, returned to Nguru and stayed in Malam Umaru Kafinta’s resident with his family. In Nguru, he firstly had his education in the school of Malam Musa Limamin Babura. It was under Babura he revised his studies in Islamic *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence) and other Arabic books.³⁹² The local sources reported that initially, al-Fallātī’s aim was not to stay in Nguru permanently, but the death of his friend, Malam Umaru Kafinta, obliged him to stay in the town where he led an active scholarly life and helped took care his Kafinta’s family.³⁹³ It is said that he established his first *zāwiya* at Malam Umaru Kafinta’s residence, as a young but learned scholar, where he devoted himself to the transmission of knowledge.³⁹⁴ Following large influx of his new disciples, he was forced to Sabon Fegi as discussed below.

³⁸⁸ Nurul Aulad n.d. 4; see also Idris 2017, 168; Idris 2010, 58.

³⁸⁹ Nurul Aulad n.d. 5.

³⁹⁰ Nurul Aulad n.d. 5.

³⁹¹ Idris 2017, 168; Idris 2010, 58.

³⁹² Idris 2010, 58.

³⁹³ Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

³⁹⁴ Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

There were strenuous and seemingly successful efforts at consolidating the strands of Islamic scholarship in the new homeland, and at the same time, a significant movement of Tijānī scholars into the area from the other parts of northern Nigeria. At the centre of this emerging Islamic and Tijānī intellectual movement was al-Dāghirī, who moved to the area from Girazu in the present-day Niger Republic. He later went to al-Dāghirī under whom he studied general fields of Islamic religion, history, law, and the Arabic language. In later years, he continued with his study under al-Dāghirī but this time, he concentrated all his emphasis on studying the philosophy of *Taṣawwuf* (Sufism) from al-Dāghirī, who also taught *Adab* (Arabic literature), *Ilm* (knowledge) *Usul al-Fiqh*, *Mandiq*, *Hisab*, *Arud* etc.

In the course of his teaching and preaching sessions, he often cited al-Fallātī as a typical example of ascetic life. It is possible that the supposed tutorial relationship between al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, if it indeed existed, amounted to nothing more than what would normally exist among advanced scholars in the exchange of *asrar* (esoteric) and academic insights.

Subsequently, al-Dāghirī upon realizing that al-Fallātī was a great scholar with potential intellect in his own right but was pretending to be a student, he therefore ordered al-Fallātī to establish his own school in other part of the town. Also, al-Dāghirī directed some of his disciples to study under al-Fallātī.³⁹⁵ This incident as mirrored in both accounts implies that al-Fallātī considered himself the disciple of al-Dāghirī, and the latter had never ever regarded himself as his teacher, despite the fact that he had imparted authoritative knowledge to him. In relation to this, it was reported that when al-Dāghirī was satisfied with his knowledge, he gave *ijāzāt* (certificate or permission) to al-Fallātī, in which he authorized him to either make a commentary, abridge or simplify his works and publicize them.³⁹⁶ Furthermore, Adamu also explains that al-Dāghirī authorized him to publicize the works of Niasse.³⁹⁷ He stayed with him happily all his life and emulated almost all his good characters. It was from al-Dāghirī he obtained his knowledge of Sufism and Tijānīyya brotherhood that made him to be one of the respected Tijānī Sufi adepts in the Sufi way of life. He could attain this status by virtue of his piety and dissemination of Islamic

³⁹⁵ Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

³⁹⁶ Nurul Aulad n.d. 5.

³⁹⁷ Nurul Aulad n.d. 5.

education.³⁹⁸ As a matter of fact, al-Dāghirī made a great impact in al-Fallātī's life being one of his teachers who influenced him most and left a lasting impression on him.³⁹⁹

Eventually, al-Fallātī with his large number of followers resolved to move to Hausari and established a new centre at the residence of Umaru Kafinta as discussed below. The place was quite convenient for scholarship and spreading Islamic education and Tijānīyya brotherhood. Thus, both the teaching and introduction of Muslims to the *tariqa* (Tijānīyya) were concurrently carried out with full force. Many Fulani Muslims who came from various villages were taught the basic principles of Islam and litanies of Tijānīyya.

4.3.4 His Exposure to *Taşawwuf* and Tijānīyya

It was reported that before his arrival in Nguru, he was already a member of the Tijānīyya brotherhood. Going by the history of his father, al-Fallātī was born amidst Tijānīyya because his parents were all members of the order. His relationship with *tariqa* therefore was not coincidental, but a long spiritual attachment with extra-ordinary devotion to its doctrine. This probably would have been the reason for his emergence as one of its pioneers during his lifetime.⁴⁰⁰ Al-Fallātī's official exposure to *Taşawwuf* (Sufism) could be traced to Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Hadi Said Maulud who formally initiated him into the Tijānīyya.⁴⁰¹ Shaykh Maulud contributed to the erudition of al-Fallātī; he taught him the conditions of Sufism that involve its intrinsic essence, with emphasis on Tijānīyya brotherhood. Thus, Shaykh Maulud having been satisfied with al-Fallātī's grasp of the Tijānīyya and his level of spiritual cultivation and immersion in the secrets of the brotherhood, subsequently appointed him *Muqaddam*. This confirmed al-Fallātī as an authority and it gave him the rights and privilege to convert others independently.

This appointment as the *Muqaddam* marked the beginning of his being addressed as Shaykh.⁴⁰² He quickly won the confidence and support of his fellow brotherhood members. It is worthy of note that no application is submitted for the post of *Muqaddam*. The position is acquired only through the consideration and recommendation of the leadership of the brotherhood. Thus, it was a great honour for al-Fallātī to be chosen particularly after a short period of membership. Some

³⁹⁸ Hamza 2001, 45.

³⁹⁹ Hamza 2001, 45.

⁴⁰⁰ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴⁰¹ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8. However, prior to this occasion, he held the position which is described in Hausa as Jemage (fence-sitter). This is a normal stage to refer to a young man who practices the ritual of Sufi order and who has received formal initiation

⁴⁰² Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

members of the brotherhood practiced for between five and twenty years before they are offered such a position.⁴⁰³

Al-Fallātī was raised with Tijānīyya practice and all his life was surrounded by people who followed the brotherhood. For instance, al-Dāghirī, a Tijānīyya aficionado, always encouraged al-Fallātī to advance his Islamic knowledge and Tijānīyya doctrine. It was from this scholar, al-Fallātī acquired considerable knowledge of the order which made him a pillar in the Tijānīyya beyond the whole of northern Nigeria.⁴⁰⁴ Apart from the spiritual training he received from al-Dāghirī, he also studied Sufi works. Like al-Dāghirī, al-Fallātī's career within the Tijānīyya received another boost when Niasse, the *ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa* Tijānīyya visited Nigeria in 1945. It was during this maiden visit of Niasse to Kano, al-Fallātī together with other Sufi *Shuyukh* in Kano paid homage to him and accepted his leadership of the order.⁴⁰⁵ He seized the opportunity to renew his chain of spiritual descent at the appearance of this prominent Shaykh whose added blessing could only serve to increase al-Fallātī's own authority within the brotherhood.

Interestingly, on his return home, Kaolack, al-Fallātī was also said to have travelled to Kaolack several times, to visit Niasse, the who was regarded as the adjure Khalifa *khatim* of the Tijānīyya brotherhood, a successor of Aḥmad al-Tijānī (1737-1815), the founder of the order and leader of the *fayḍa* Tijānīyya. Al-Fallātī stayed there for about six months, studying Sufism and other related religious issues. It was during such a stay, Niasse was said to have ordered al-Fallātī on returning home to go back to Nguru.⁴⁰⁶

Yet al-Fallātī was quick to perceive the need for reform within the brotherhood and, as we have seen in chapter two, enthusiastically embraced the ideas and leadership offered by Niasse in extending the *fayḍa* Tijānīyya into northern Nigeria. He did not only contribute to the spread of *fayḍa* Tijānīyya through his articulate preaching, but he also was able himself to prosper as a result of its advance. Al-Fallātī reached his official pinnacle of Tijānīyya brotherhood activities when he was requested to authorize each of those initial *muqaddams* mentioned above formally to initiate additional *muqaddams*. Thus, he had become not only the initiator of new members but the *muqaddam al-muqaddimin* or grand initiator of the brotherhood. In his years of brotherhood membership, al-Fallātī had accomplished more and risen further within the brotherhood than most

⁴⁰³ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴⁰⁴ Idris 2010, 58.

⁴⁰⁵ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴⁰⁶ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

scholars did in a lifetime of participation. He had the privilege of interacting with erudite Sufi adherents of different status. This was another factor which enhances one's position and status within the brotherhood.

Al-Fallātī's most outstanding contribution to Tijānīyya was in propagating the doctrines of the Sufi order. At his *zāwiya* at Malam Umaru Kafinta's residence in Hausari ward which was later moved to Bulabulin ward, students are taught not only Qur'anic education, but also Tijānīyya poems and other Tijānīyya literary works. One of the features of the Islamic school established by al-Fallātī is the large number of students that attended the school as discussed below. Therefore, the poems read at Tijānīyya sessions were taught to several students through the Islamic school established by al-Fallātī. Inculcating the doctrines of Tijānīyya in the minds of the young ones is vital in the spread of the Tijānīyya Sufi order, as this means there will be more adherents of the Sufi order.

Another means through which al-Fallātī contributed to propagating the doctrines of Qadiriyya *Tariqa* was in writing and publishing Tijānīyya books. Al-Fallātī wrote and published several works that are preponderant to the Sufi order. Books, which play a crucial role in the spread of Tijānīyya doctrines. Al-Fallātī also contributed to Tijānīyya by dedicating his mosques, which served as *zāwiya*, to Tijānīyya ritual practices such *dhīkr al-Jumaat* which took place every Friday. This ritual practice is of paramount to Tijānīyya adherents, therefore, promoting their practice is an important contribution in the spread of the Sufi order.

Al-Fallātī also provided financial contributions to the spread of Tijānīyya and devoted much of his time to activities related to the Sufi order. His love and passion for Tijānīyya made him contribute financially towards the spread of the Sufi order. These various factors must have contributed immensely to the exalted position of al-Fallātī in the Tijānīyya brotherhood. He therefore became a strong member of the *Fayḍa* Tijānīyya not only in Nigeria but also in West Africa. In fact, his position as one of the most influential figures in the Tijānīyya Sufi circle in Nigeria cannot be underestimated.

The size of the following he acquired contributed to his rapid rise within the Tijānīyya which, in turn, contributed to the growth of his followers. He was usually requested by al-Dāghirī to initiate many advanced disciples as *muqaddams* in Nguru. At this point he was initiating not only new members into the brotherhood but members into muqaddamships as well. Besides, what exposed the position of al-Fallātī was a remark made by Niasse, the second spiritual leader of the

order. He said: “whoever visits the *zāwīya* of al-Dāghirī and isolates the *zāwīya* of al-Fallātī is similar to the incident of a pilgrim who went to Hājj without visiting the Holy Mosque of the Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) at Madinah: this is what makes Hājj absolutely incomplete.” The two *zāwīyas* are still inseparable for the true Tijānī followers of Nguru. The hidden position of al-Fallātī was equally revealed when Shaykh Aliyu Sisse visited Nguru to appoint the vicegerent of al-Dāghirī. Prior to his arrival, there were divergent views on who deserved to be the Khalifa because his eldest son, the Khalifa Malum, was in a great fear of the position due to his poor dedication to the Islamic education and Sufism. Despite these weaknesses, he was appointed as Khalifa and Shaykh Aliyu Sisse gave assurance that nothing would happen to him if he remained under the guidance of the Imam Mustapha and al-Fallātī. He therefore called upon these two scholars and asked them to be his guardians.⁴⁰⁷

It is remarkable to note that al-Dāghirī was a figure that influenced al-Fallātī intellectually. Al-Dāghirī urged al-Fallātī to spread the order among the Fulani thereby reforming the society in which the Fulani of Nguru lived. This reform was synthesized with traditional norms and conventions.⁴⁰⁸ His effort was not limited only to the Fulanis but also to the *talakawa* (commoners), *yan-kasuwa*, especially, students, local people, farmers and small scale traders.⁴⁰⁹ Being the most senior Tijānīyya muqaddam in Nguru, he contributed considerably to Islam. He has not only consolidated the Tijānīyya gains but also disseminated the Tijānīyya principles to all parts of northern Nigeria and beyond. As a result of his efforts, Tijānīyya in Nguru recorded spectacular achievement in converting people. He also fostered unity among Tijānī scholars who have been at loggerheads with one another on the issue of understanding certain key Islamic issues. He fostered this unity through his *Mawlid an-Nabiy an-Nabiy-Nabiy*, where all these scholars were brought together to an annual ceremony.⁴¹⁰ Both factors operated to ensure his social status and his economic prosperity, legacies his descendants enjoy today.

4.3.5 His Ascetic Life

Al-Fallātī, although a follower of the traditionalist path of Ash’arī School of Theology and of the al-Malikī School of Jurisprudence, was generally an independent-minded thinker with a

⁴⁰⁷ Interview with Alhaji Ahmed Ieala Fulatari in Nguru on 26th August 2013.

⁴⁰⁸ Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru

⁴⁰⁹ Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴¹⁰ Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴¹⁰ Idris 2010, 58.

critical approach to other views and did not follow his predecessors blindly. In the realm of Sufism, he belongs to Tijānīyya and he was a disciplined, pious and upright *Muqaddam*. He adhered strictly to the fundamental principles and practices of the Tijānīyya without jeopardizing the basic Islamic injunctions. His ascetic life could be traced to the influence of his father.⁴¹¹ As mentioned earlier, his father was a famous ascetic who regarded this world and its trappings as vanity: an attitude with which Sufi scholars have been identified overtime. His father introduced him to asceticism and kindled that spark of divine love in him which later dominated his entire being and moulded his thought and action.⁴¹² His father was man of fervent piety. He used to have vigils in order to engage in prayers. Under the care of the pious and saintly father, al-Fallātī developed a spirit of intense devotion to God from his very childhood. It was this attribute that made al-Fallātī to be influenced by his father's ascetic philosophy lifestyle. Al-Fallātī had no reason to attach significance to pursuit of unbridled materialism since his father shunned it. Thus, the kind of influence which his father had exerted on al-Fallātī is ever so great and everlasting.⁴¹³

Although, al-Fallātī studied under many teachers, only one of these teachers had been able to exert much influence on his lifestyle, in terms of piety, reservation, modesty, asceticism, and accommodation; this teacher was al-Dāghirī.⁴¹⁴ It was authoritatively gathered that al-Fallātī's second teacher apart from his father, who was able to influence him was al-Dāghirī. He was always rapt and pre-occupied with routine of prayer, yearning to see a vision. He had a considerable influence on al-Fallātī's thought and spiritual ways. Al-Fallātī was said to be so deeply impressed by the spiritual greatness of the saint that he became his disciple.⁴¹⁵

While he was still in Nguru, al-Fallātī became known in the town for his deep mystic mind. He was a man whose generosity was legendary, and despite his eminence as a scholar, al-Fallātī was very gentle, unassuming and shy. His humility earned him respect and reverence not only by the people but also by his colleagues who usually referred to him as their teacher.⁴¹⁶ He loved to give to the needy and he never had the instinct of material accumulation, but gave out whatever

⁴¹¹ Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

⁴¹² Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

⁴¹³ Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

⁴¹⁴ Nurul Aulad n.d. 3.

⁴¹⁵ Hamza 2001, 45.

⁴¹⁶ Interview with Alhaji Ahmed Ilela Fulatari in Nguru on 26th August 2013.

came to his possession. Al-Fallātī divorced the material world that he had no knowledge of even the ranks in the army.⁴¹⁷

He constantly engaged himself in solitary confinement, *khalwah* ranging from seven days to several months with the intention of getting closer to Allah. Al-Fallātī often abstained himself from worldly affairs and whenever he was given money, he used to share it among his disciples.⁵⁴ He never requested any financial support from his disciples or his family members.⁴¹⁸

Sani narrates that there was a time he visited al-Fallātī on his sick bed, the Shaykh held his arm and said to him “Malam Sani... I want to tell you that this is the path your father and I have chosen for us, and it is very tasking. I cannot tell you the number of days we went without food, neither could I tell you the number of days we slept with hunger, this is in addition to several psychological tortures. The path was very difficult, too demanding but rewarding. We exhausted our lives in service to Islam: teaching Islamic sciences, yet some group of Muslims called us *Kāfir* (unbelievers). If this is why they call us *Kāfir* (disbelief), I excuse their ignorance.⁴¹⁹

Al-Fallātī had a reputation for being highly pious within the realm of the mystical engagement. A typical example illustrating al-Fallātī engagement in *Taşawwuf* was gathered from an interview with his disciple. Alhaji Ahmed Ilela al-Fulatari said that there was a time when they (Shaykh and his disciples) paid a visit to Kano and they were lodged in different bedrooms, but Shaykh did not accept that. He therefore called his disciples to his bedroom and they slept in the same room. It was then they discovered that al-Fallātī used to worship His Lord when people are asleep.⁵⁵ Consequently, he guided and counselled those who consulted him on religious and secular endeavours, thus enhancing their self-fulfillment and attainment of Allah’s endless bliss.

4.3.6 The Profession of al-Fallātī

The life and career of al-Fallātī follows very closely the pattern of Islamic scholarship and commercial activity that has prevailed throughout West Africa in general and northern Nigeria in particular for centuries. Al-Fallati’s sterling qualities and principles have governed his career. They also informed his decisions which affected not only his personal development, but also the shape and nature of the growth of Islamic scholarship in the institutions in Nigeria and beyond.

⁴¹⁷ Idris 2010, 61.

⁵⁴ Interview with Alhaji Ahmed Ilela Fulatari in Nguru on 26th August 2013.

⁴¹⁸ Idris 2010, 60.

⁴¹⁹ Idris 2010, 60.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Thus, al-Fallātī won fame, prestige, and economic privilege through his teaching and preaching activities which he carried out in the interest of his public; an ever-expanding audience within Tijānīyya brotherhood.

4.3.6.1 Al-Fallātī as a Teacher

Teaching is one of the roles that should be played by a Sufi leader (*Muqaddam*) as earlier stated. Sufi leaders take teaching as a profession in order to serve as a vehicle for prevalence of literacy among the Muslim community and the members of the brotherhood.⁴²⁰ Al-Fallātī was born and brought up under a system which was completely Islamic in nature, this background prepared his career for scholarship. The greatest of all his roles was the teaching profession which he picked up after the establishment of his *zāwiya* in Nguru around 1940. This was as a result of the advice given to him by Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī and some of his students who had benefitted from his knowledge.⁴²¹ He thus established his *zāwiya* at Malam Umaru Kafinta's residence in Hausari ward.⁴²² However, following large influx of new students, he was forced to move to Sabon Fegi, Bulabulin area where he built his *zāwiya*. The curriculum of the school included *Tafsīr* (Qur'anic exegesis), Hadith (Prophetic tradition), *Fiqh* Islamic jurisprudence, *Nahw* (Arabic grammar) *Sarf* (syntax), *Balagha* (Eloquence), and *Taṣawwuf* (Sufism).⁴²³ The school soon attracted students from within Nigeria, and neighbouring countries such as Niger and Cameroun. The establishment of the *zāwiya* is an achievement on the part of al-Fallātī. The school has contributed immensely to Islamic education. He dedicated his life to teaching and learning to the extent that he would forfeit all pleasure for learning.

Al-Fallātī's duty as a teacher could not be reduced to *zāwiya* alone. He took another direction by ignoring Kano and Senegal, where the Tijānīyya leaderships in particular were strongly opposed to western type of education. Rather he looked to the southwestern parts of Nigeria among the Yoruba Muslims and adopted their educational approach. This is seen in his attempt to synthesize Islamic and western education, having realized the necessity of the latter in the modern life. In 1975, he established a modern Islamiyah School, popularly known as *Rūh al-Ad-Din (The Soul of Religion)* Islamiyah School.⁴²⁴ In the school, both Islam and Arabic are taught

⁴²⁰ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

⁴²¹ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

⁴²² Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴²³ Idris 2010, 60.

⁴²⁴ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

along with modern subjects taught in English. The school started with only two teachers-Malam Mode and Malam Shuwa.⁴²⁵ Initially, the school was set up at his own house. But later, a land was acquired at Bulabulin ward behind Hamza Al-Mustapha Stadium where the school is currently located. The school was established with the aim of enlightening Muslims towards a better understanding of Islam. By educating individuals, it was envisaged that Muslims and the larger society would find it more useful and relevant in discharging their religious obligations for the peaceful co-existence of the entire community.

Also, through his initiative and after a long and arduous struggle against some obstacles, *madrasah* was officially accepted by Nguru Local Education Authority (NLEA) in 1989. NLEA felt obliged to take over the affairs of the school to further meet the growing yearning and aspiration of the youth in the advanced level.⁴²⁶ Since then, NLEA started sending teachers to the school and prominent among them were Malam Sani Lawan (headmaster), Malam Sani Shu'aibu, Malam Faruk Mohammed, Malam Abdullahi Akilu, and Malam Adamu Suleiman.⁴²⁷

The curriculum of the school was mixed with subjects in the western system of education in order to meet the desired educational standard which the modern society required in order to be integrated into modern system of education. One unique characteristic of this curriculum is that it has a mechanism of inculcating the ability to cope with challenges at all stages of life in students. It also serves as a stimulant, propelling them to go into various branches of Islamic knowledge and western education subjects such as English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Integrated Science among others. This explains why many of its graduates though, mainly trained in art and religious subjects at early stages of their lives, still excelled among their contemporaries from various other backgrounds. Thus, the school has made a landmark in the annals of educational development in Nguru and beyond. It has produced world-class scholars, academics, diplomats, professionals, captains of industries, and of course theologians.

The School has three classes and operates co-education where girls sit behind the boys' rows. The enrolment age ranges between 5-12 years. The daily operational hours are 12:00-1:30 pm. Presently the School has seven (7) teachers. Most of these teachers have N.C.E certification in Islamic studies but the Headmaster possesses B.A. Islamic studies certificate.

⁴²⁵ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

⁴²⁶ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

⁴²⁷ Al-amin 2016, 135.

4.3.6.2 Al-Fallātī as a Preacher

As noted earlier, one of the effective technique adopted by twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars in educating the Muslims in the town and, in expanding the base of Tijānīyya is the holding of *tafsir* sessions during the month of Ramadan between 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. This is an important tradition of public education in many Muslim communities in northern Nigeria.⁴²⁸ Al-Fallātī tremendously contributed towards the development of Islamic education through preaching to the Muslim Ummah. He was said to be a very eloquent, knowledgeable and courageous preacher. He was so illustrative in his preaching that he often stepped on the toes of people who were otherwise regarded as sacred cows. He began his public preaching in the month of Ramadan at Malam Umar Kafinta's house at Hausari ward but later moved to Bulabulin ward where he became fully established. His *tafsir* session had been a crowd-pulling occasion for Muslims all over the ward.⁴²⁹ Both men and women attend the *tafsir* from 4:00 p.m. to about 5:30 p.m. and sometimes it offers an avenue for the collection of funds from the Muslims for building or renovating mosques or schools and for assisting Muslim that were destitute.⁴³⁰ He also usually seized the opportunity to preach about the essence of unity and mutual understanding and on the expected attitudes of a good Muslim community; and how to observe the obligatory and non-obligatory requirements of Islam.

One interesting aspect of al-Fallātī's *tafsir* is that he usually interpreted the text in Hausa and Fulfulde. One explanation to this may be that he did not want the Muslims of both ethnic groups who attended the sessions to miss the gist of the *tafsir*. In the course of preaching, he concurrently combined the activities of teaching and preaching most of the time.⁴³¹ Another *tafsir* or *nasiha* (admonition) session was usually delivered during *Mawlid an-Nabiy*, there he usually lectured on the life history of Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.). Other occasions in which *tafsir* or *nasiha* are delivered include the holding of graduation ceremonies of Qur'anic students and the organisation of various religious activities by the different Qur'anic schools in the area. *Tafsir* either during month of Ramadan, *Mawlid an-Nabiy* or Qur'anic graduation had considerably helped in educating the Muslims of the town about Islam. For it is common practice among the

⁴²⁸ The 'Ulama became convinced that it could be a strong weapon for winning convert, as, according to them, they felt that there is no human being that would listen to the meaning of the whole contents of the Qur'an that would not be convinced of the divine unity of Allah or that the scripture is divine and not man-made.

⁴²⁹ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴³⁰ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴³¹ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

literate Muslims to refer to statements in the Qur'an, Hadith or the scholar while holding discussion on some issues. It is rightly observed that the preaching during the programmes helped to unite the people and gave them better understanding of Islam thereby strengthening their faith; it attracted people to Tijānīyya and the young ones to Islamic schools.⁴³²

4.3.6.3 Al-Fallātī as a Writer and Book trader

Scholarship and trading role of the traditional scholars are well-known social phenomena the West African intellectual history. In the Muslim community of northern Nigeria, trade and scholarship have always been interwoven. The Islamic scholars travelled across northern Nigeria to pursue a course of study and to teach their followers in their various towns and resting stations along the routes. Like al-Dāghirī, al-Fallātī was also a good example of this ongoing tradition of Islamic scholarship of the northern Nigerian scholars.⁴³³ He also juxtaposed his studies with writing and trading in books as his main occupation. These were the sources of his livelihood during his lifetime where he operated within an extensive nexus of trade and scholarship that is familiar to all who have studied the history of twentieth century northern Nigeria. It has been and continues to be a viable and vital network for the Islamic community of northern Nigeria today.⁴³⁴

Writing to express one's idea in written form is one of the rarest gifts bestowed by Allah to some of His favourites. Al-Fallātī, to some extent, was among the beneficiaries of this particular gift among his contemporaries. Though, this charisma is not evident to many people, but it may interest us to know that al-Fallātī was a prolific writer. Al-Fallātī as a writer, wrote, as will be discussed in the subsequent chapter, extensively on a variety of subjects. He wrote myriads of works in Arabic and in Fulfulde. However, the greatest problem in the study of his works is that most of them are commentary and abridgement of the works of other scholars. In addition, some are still in the hands of scholars and his family members who are unwilling to surrender them for public use. This makes any effort towards their collection and estimation extremely difficult if not impossible.

Al-Fallātī was also a remarkable poetic visionary who composed a great number of poems on many themes. Some of these poems are supplicatory poems for the benefits of *salikīn* (spiritual travellers) who are yearning for the mercy of Allah, some are responses to various questions posed

⁴³² Interview with Alhaji Mai Musa Shehu on 01.04.2019 at Nguru.

⁴³³ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴³⁴ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

to him by adherents of Sufism etc. He was composing mainly in Arabic but his few poems in Fulfulde are of great significance like *Al-Qasidatani al'ajamiyatani biluggatul Fullaniyya* (The Two Poems in Fulfulde), a didactic poem on the virtues and bounties of reading Qur'an. This poem was written in Fulfulde for his audiences who are not conversant with Arabic. Thus, in turn, makes us consider him as a great poet of the Fulfulde language as well as great literary innovator. His poems are of great importance as the sources for social and religious knowledge of life and functioning of the Fulani in the diaspora in the present day Nguru. At this juncture, it may be apt to debunk the erroneous notion held in some quarters that the Shaykh wrote nothing. It could be deduced that the Shaykh strived for his acquisition of knowledge because *ex nihilo nihil fit*.

4.3.6.4 Al-Fallātī as a farmer

In addition, al-Fallātī was an ardent and a professional farmer. His family background prepared him for farming and cattle rearing which he did to feed his large family, students and followers.⁴³⁵ He also practiced cattle rearing where he raised a large number of domestic animals, creating employment for milk producers and meat for domestic consumption.⁴³⁶ Al-Fallātī cultivated grains like rice, beans, soya beans, maize and groundnuts in large quantity with which he fed his large family and the remaining were channelled to boost the national economy. In addition to these, the Shaykh was also an employer of labour who provided employment for the teeming youth in the society.⁴³⁷

4.3.7 Al-Fallātī's Itinerancy

Al-Fallātī travelled extensively both inside and outside Nigeria. In the course of his educational sojourn, for instance, many of the places he travelled for study were already mentioned. In this section, his travels for the purposes of the pilgrimage, teaching and trading will be discussed.

4.3.8 His Death

Al-Fallātī died on Sunday, 2nd Sha'aban, 1416 A.H, which is equivalent to 24th December 1995 at Nassarawa Hospital, Kano State. He was buried at Makabartar Gabas where al-Dāghirī was buried.⁴³⁸ A large crowd of Muslims including very important dignitaries and personalities attended the *Janaza* (funeral prayer) to honour him. He was survived by four wives and twenty-

⁴³⁵ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴³⁶ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴³⁷ Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁴³⁸ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

nine children. Many scholars expressed their sympathy with the family of al-Fallātī on his death and paid condolence visits to them.⁴³⁹ Since the time he was buried, people from different parts of the world have been going to Nguru purposely to visit his grave and that of his teacher, al-Dāghirī. Today, the burial ground of al-Fallātī and al-Dāghirī at north-eastern part of Nguru, Yobe State, Nigeria is a centre of *ziyaarat* where people made their various supplications.⁴⁴⁰

Like his master, al-Fallātī was considered a saint who performed many miracles during his lifetime. The *ziyaarat* is also an occasion to remember the life and deeds of al-Fallātī. All pilgrims supplicate there throughout the day and pray *Salat*. The death of al-Fallātī created no problem for his heirs as regards the appointment of his successor. His first son, Alhaji Salisu Usman was therefore appointed, as new Khalifa who took over the responsibility of leading this institution. Since then he has been leading the institution with moral courage to date.⁴⁴¹

4.3.9 Students

His students and disciples comprised the old and young, who attended his *zāwiya* with their books. They came from different family backgrounds; some from ruling families and others from the *ulama* family. However, most of his followers are common people and indigents. Youths constituted the larger body of his students and disciples. Sani mentions twenty-two (22) disciples of al-Fallātī.⁴⁴² Thus, a good number of students who have become eminent scholars within and outside Nguru graduated from his *mādrasah* (school). Prominent among them were Malam Yahaya Mikail (1917-2003), Shaykh Lawan Bulabulin, Shaykh Idriss al-Bulatara, Malam Adamu Nurul Aulad.⁴⁴³ These are some of al-Fallātī's students who have distinguished themselves in their various fields of specialisation and have extensively written on Islamic issues which are currently used in Nigeria. Some of them even established a *zāwiya* or *mādrasah* (school) where they also produced scholars. Not only these scholars, but there are also others who have distinguished themselves in their various fields of endeavours, who are graduates of the Islamiyah school established by al-Fallātī. There are also other Islamic scholars who have also distinguished

⁴³⁹ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

⁴⁴⁰ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

⁴⁴¹ Nurul Aulad n.d. 8.

⁴⁴² Idris 2010, 59.

⁴⁴³ Others were Shaykh Lawan Bulabulin, Malam Usman Adam, (maisunan Malam), Malam Nafi`u, Shaykh Abdulqadir Bulabulin, Shaykh Tukur Bello, Shaykh Dayyabu Bello, Shaykh Abubakar Bello Yusufari, Shaykh Muḥammad Junaidu Geidam, Shaykh Sagir Ibrāhīm Damasak, Shaykh Hassan Gawuna Kano, Shaykh Muḥammad Bello Geidam, Shaykh Abubakar Garba Yusufari, Shaykh Said Marwa Cameroun, Shaykh Muḥammad Abdullahi Dushaski, Shaykh Falalu Shullajewol Niger Republic and Shaykh Kanta Gure of Niger Republic to mention but just a few.

themselves in the field of Islamic studies and who are currently lecturing in various Universities; an example of such scholars is Malam Isa Abdulmumini.⁴⁴⁴ These students were, to a large extent, responsible for perpetuating the legacy of al-Fallātī and for popularizing his teaching *‘ijāzāt, Tijānī Silsilāh and Qur’anic Salasil*.

4.3.10 His Library

The contribution of al-Fallātī to the expansion of Islamic education is great. He was unique in pursuit of excellence within this theoretical framework because he did not rely on borrowed or scanty literature for his research. He built up a big library for his research and other day to day scholarly activities. This library contained many bookshelves standing all-round the enormous hall. The shelves were divided into compartments by vertical partitions and each compartment was secured by a hinged door with a padlock. The following were the major categories in the collection.

- a. **Grammar and Literature:** This category covers both language and literature which includes grammar and poetry. The poetry expresses pre-Islamic themes as well as Muslim religious thought. Arabic grammar and linguistics, education and proverbs constitute a considerable part of this category.
- b. **Religious literature:** There are many religious literatures in various fields which include *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence), *Salat* (prayer), *Siyam* (Fasting), *Zakat* (alms giving), *Hājj* (pilgrimage), *Tawhid* (theology), etc.
- c. **Sufism and Tijjaniyya Brotherhood:** Mysticism and the general works on Sufism are also available in the collection. There are several works on the Tijānīyya order.
- d. **History:** This category covers several useful materials on general history of Islam as well as some special areas such as the history of Islam in Africa with particular reference to North and West Africa.¹¹

It is on record that whenever he went to foreign countries, he used to come back with various textbooks which are presently in his library.¹²

4.4 Conclusion

The chapter has examined the life history of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī; and their contributions to the spread of Islam and scholarship in Nguru and in the whole world. They started

⁴⁴⁴ Idris 2010, 59.

¹¹ See appendix for the graphic analysis of Shaykh Usman al-Fallati’s Library.

¹² Interview with Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 23rd November 2015 at Nguru.

their lives somewhere outside Nigeria and spent the rest of their lives in Nguru. Upon their arrival in the town, they established Islamiyah schools, mosques and Tijānīyya *zāwiya* in Nigeria and outside Nigeria; these they left behind for their sons, *Khalifa* Fatihu al-Dāghirī and *Khalifa* Salisu al-Fallāfī respectively. They also associated with many scholars from within and outside Nigeria and had to their credit over fifty literary works each on different aspects of Islamic knowledge. They adopted teaching, preaching, writing, farming and book trading as their careers and sources of livelihood; these were their most effective medium of communicating the noble ideals of their *fayḍa* movement to their followers, Sufi Shaykhs and the general public. They attracted many students and scholars, from far and near, to their teaching and preaching sessions for the spiritual development of the Muslims within and outside Nguru. They instilled the zeal for propagating Islamic education and *fayḍa* Tijānīyya in the Muslims of Nguru and other places and became the instruments for this development. Having provided the life history of the Shaykhs, the next chapter will look at their literary oeuvres.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Literary Oeuvres of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī

5.1 Introduction

Twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars have produced considerable number of literary works. These literary works are in both prose and poetry forms. In this chapter, the works written by al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī will be given more attention. The chapter is divided into three parts: the first will briefly examine define Sufi literary works so that we shall be able to situate the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī and analyze their themes and contents effectively within its Sufi literary tradition scope. The second part looks into the subject matters of their works and the last parts present thematic comparison between the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī.

5.2 Sufi Literature

Sufi literature is viewed from two major perceptions: traditional and modern view points.⁴⁴⁵ The first perception is that the Sufi literature is traditionally defined as the prose and poetic composition produced by renowned Sufis and acclaimed mystics (Sufi masters).⁴⁴⁶ According to this definition, literary work can only be considered Sufi literature if the author of the work is acknowledged as a Sufi. The modern definition of Sufi literature, on the other hand, is spearheaded by Muḥammad Zaki Abdus-Salam Mubarak (1892-1952). According to them, Sūfī literature is a literary production that treat Sūfī topics such as *Hubb al-Ilaah* (Divine Love), *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* or *an-Nuur al-Muḥammadi* (The Real Essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality), *al-'Israa'ī' wal-Mi'raaj* (Night journey and Ascension of the Prophet Muḥammad to Heaven), *Mu'jizah* (Evidentiary Miracles), *Quṭb al-aqṭaab* (the supreme pole of the sainthood) or *khatm al-awliyyaa'* (the seal of the saints), *ghawth az-zaman/Sahib al-Fayḍa* (the reformer or saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era), *Wahdat al-Wujud* (Existential Unity) and *Wahdat ash-Shuhud* (Experiential Unity), illumination, gnosis, divine love, ecstasy, and others like that. These Sufi ideas are the most common elements found in the Sufi literature were based on religious principles of Islam and Sufi doctrinal practice, as exemplified in the Quran and Hadith of Prophet Muḥammad. Muḥammad Zaki Abdus-Salam Mubarak (1892-1952) added that Sufi literature must be “an integral part which emanates from the ethical values of Sufism....” This view

⁴⁴⁵ Solagberu 2009, 182; see also Solagberu 2015, 66.

⁴⁴⁶ Kamorudeen 2022,

of Mubarak is an attempt on his part to show the mixed nature as well as that close relationship between Sufi literature and Sufi ethics. He further conceives of Sufi literature as “any prose or poetical composition, which faithfully expresses the deep sentiments of the composer, especially, if such sentiments are of ethical nature.”⁴⁴⁷

Going by the above definitions on Sufi literary work, one can deduce that literary works written on topics Sūfī topics and any prose or poetical expression which later became sources of Sufis pragmatic and speculative thinking in Sūfī manners that made it a Sufi literature. However, Mun'im Khafaji separates Sufi literature into two different categories in his book *al-Adab fi TurBst al-Sufi*: Sufi prose (*al-nastr al-Sufi*) and Sufi poetry (*al-syi'r al-Sufi*).⁴⁴⁸ Braginsky wants to refer to these as Sufi books and Sufi poems.⁴⁴⁹ Nevertheless, it can be said that Sufi poetry is defined as ideas, thoughts, and feelings about Sufism expressed in the form of poetry, and Sufi prose is defined as someone's ideas, thoughts, and feelings about Sufism expressed in prose.⁴⁵⁰

The goal of Tijānī writings or literary works is to serve as spiritual guidance for the *murīd* (disciple). It also deals with Shaykh (spiritual master) and *murīd* (disciple/novice/adherent) as well as the relationship in giving the necessary guidance for spiritual journey and its progress. Moreover, Tijānī Sufi literary works also focus on the biography of famous Tijānī whose lives and works were combined to serve as compendia and dictionary on the lives and teachings of those Tijānī Shuyukh. Some of these works are considered hagiographies by some scholars, others have an imaginative account of different events as part of their content.⁴⁵¹ It is also speculated that most of moral stories narrated by the Sufi may not necessarily be authentic.⁴⁵² Other content of the Tijānī Sufi literary works also focus on the ascetic's description of the mundane life.⁴⁵³

5.2.1 Approaches of Sufi scholars to Sufi Literature

The central thesis of Sufi literary works, in verse and in prose, was to reform society. They therefore saw *taṣawwuf* as a tool for rejuvenation of morals and ethics. They also understood *taṣawwuf* to be two types: the necessary and the desirable types. The first one was pursued by the moderate Sufis and they teach the populace with the aim of making them to adopt praise-worthy

⁴⁴⁷ Noibi 1984-7, 52.

⁴⁴⁸ Muhammad Abd al-Mun'im Khafaji, *Al-Adab Fi Turats Al-Shufi* (Maktabah Gharib, n.d.).

⁴⁴⁹ Braginsky, *Yang Indah, Berfaedah dan Kamal: Sejarah Sastra Melayu Dalam Abad 7-19* (Jakarta: INIS, 1998), 435.

⁴⁵⁰ Al-Tunji, *Al-Mu'jam Al-Mufassal Fi Al-Adab*, 550-551.

⁴⁵¹ Solagberu 2008, 128.

⁴⁵² Solagberu 2008, 128.

⁴⁵³ Solagberu 2008, 129.

attributes and shun blame-worthy ones. Moderate Sufis have authored many works on both general *taṣawwuf* and a particular *tariqa*. In these works, the approach adopted by them is to analyze *taṣawwuf* and bring out what it can offer, more especially, to the corrupt society. Their priority was reforming the masses and therefore their approach must take the form of admonishing, counselling and advising; and that is essentially what the literature produced by these Sufis along this line is discussing.⁴⁵⁴

The second aspect was pursued by the philosophical Sufis and they concentrated on philosophical expositions from Sufi perspective. The approach adopted by philosophical Sufis was totally different from that of the moderate Sufis. Instead of discussing the obligatory aspects of *taṣawwuf* they engaged in philosophical exposition to establish *taṣawwuf* as a speculative thought. Their works contain theories of perfect man, gnosis, and knowledge of the unseen, prophetology and expositions of the question of creation from Sufi philosophical perspective.⁴⁵⁵ It can therefore be seen that approach to Sufi writing in northern Nigeria depends upon many things among which are the division of *taṣawwuf* into necessary and desirable. The social environment and the idea to be treated by a Sufi.

Having defined the term Sufi literary work from both traditional and modern perspectives and approach of Sufi scholars to Sufi literary works, we can now discuss the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī which are Sufi and non-Sufi literature, in themes and contents.

5.3 Identification and Description of Literary Oeuvres of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī

In northern Nigeria, an important pre-requisite for a successful outing for manuscript recovery is a comprehensive survey of target areas and institutions. The identification and collection of the works of al-Dāghirī was initiated by the Centre for Trans-Saharan Studies, University of Maiduguri when it initiated a systematic research on the collection of manuscripts of indigenous Islamic scholars of the region. The centre was fortunate to send different researchers to Nguru in search of manuscripts. The first trip was undertaken by Abubakar Garba from 26th to 29th February 1988. At Nguru, he canvassed for manuscripts which might have been in the possession of learned scholars, Alkalis, prominent title holders and the palace. According to the report of the researcher nothing substantial was achieved from the trip.²⁷ The second trip to the

⁴⁵⁴ Kaura 1991, 95-96.

⁴⁵⁵ Kaura 1991, 96.

²⁷ Centre for Trans-Saharan Studies, University of Maiduguri, Progress Report, No. 2, September 1988, p.28

area under study was also undertaken by the same person on the 16th March 1988. At Nguru, the research fellow held useful discussions with the people about the activities of the centre. He also interviewed some persons in connection with project No. 1987/I and solicited for manuscripts from scholars. However, according to the report of the trip, no manuscript was obtained.²⁸

The third trip to the area under study was made by Yakubu Mukhtar, when he was an assistant lecturer in the department of History, University of Maiduguri.²⁹ Yakubu Mukhtar took one fieldwork on 11th March, 1988. He interviewed Imam Ahmed, Ba Malam Kanta, a contemporary of al-Dāghirī, Zanna M. Ali, the District Head of Nguru, al-Fallātī, a renowned scholar in Nguru and Sheriff Tahir, a leader of the Izala Movement in the town. So, according to his report, he was able to get some manuscripts which consisted of works of Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī. He was also able to tape-record all interviews conducted in the town.

It was not until recently that serious attention has been given to the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. In 1979, for instance, M. M. Atamma tried to list the works of al-Dāghirī, followed by John Hunwick in 1995 and Lawan J. Tahir 2006. Sani Idris was the scholar who tried to list the works of both al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. Since March 2012, I have been engaged in the collection of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī from different parts of Nigeria. Assisted by Shehu Goni Aisami, a Muslim scholar from Nguru who created a large net of contacts with local scholars and educational centres. A considerable number of works both in manuscript and printed forms were recovered during the several trips that I have undertaken as discussed in chapter one. The recovery of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī by me has broadened our understanding of the depth and scope of the learning, encyclopaedic knowledge, range of the subjects they treated, standard of their scholarship, diversity of sources used by them, variety of the literature at their disposal and above all their high level of intellectualism.⁴⁵⁶

At present, the copies of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī in the manuscript and printed editions are extant not in the libraries of the families of the Shaykhs, individual libraries and book vendors in Nguru, Yobe State, Nigeria; but also in the Kurmi market, Kano, Nigeria; Borno College of Legal and Islamic Studies and Centre for Trans-Saharan Studies, University of

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid. 29

⁴⁵⁶ An attempt has been made to provide a broad, though fairly comprehensive bibliographical list of available works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī in the appendix. It should however be noted that the envisaged list, is by no means exhaustive.

Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria; African Library Catalogue, North-western University, Evanston; John Hunwick library; Centre for Arabic Documentation (CAD) in the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria; Centre for Ilorin Studies, University of Ilorin, Nigeria; Private individual libraries in Geidam, Kano, Zaria, Ibadan, Ilorin etc. Al-Azhar University, Egypt.

5.3.1 The Problem of Chronology of their works

One of the problems confronting the researchers who attempted to list the writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī is that of fixing dates for all the Shaykhs' writings. The issue of the chronology is very crucial in determining the content of their writings; especially when it becomes clear from internal evidence that the Shaykhs were not writing in a vacuum and that their writings, addressed to a particular community, were written for a specific purpose in order to achieve certain objectives. These objectives were translated into action by establishing a Muslim community in Nguru based on entirely Tijānī Sufi ideologies. The ideas of the Shaykhs could not be properly analysed unless they are related to the development of Tijānī Sufi thought and its revival in twentieth century northern Nigeria and West Africa. No proper examination of the Shaykh's thought could be made unless there is adequate study of the content of their works and naturally this will not be possible without a detailed and a comprehensive chronology. Since most of the Shaykhs' work is undated, it is difficult to say exactly when they made a particular statement and under what circumstances. Nevertheless, a close look at these works reveals that it is possible to work out a relative dating based on internal evidence. Therefore, despite several attempts, we were unable to work out a chronology for the writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī.

5.3.2 Characteristics of their works

The corpus of the Shaykhs' works consist of a number of books of varying length, some of them contain only a few pages. Most of them are published, others have never been published. Several of them are lost, and the extant ones are scattered in different places. Compared to other writings in the twentieth century northern Nigeria, the Shaykhs' writings are noted for their clarity and simplicity. The works of al-Fallātī are simpler than that of al-Dāghirī. Another feature of their works is that they are well documented; the Shaykhs usually mention the work or the author of a work to whom he has referred. Most of their works are original, while others are abridgements or summaries of the earlier works. Sometimes the Shaykhs compile a work from the writings of other 'Ulama and collate or edit them. Although some of their works may not fit into the new western

system of writing, it is important in the traditional Islamic scholarship. The traditional Islamic scholars easily understand the nature, objectives, and the style of such writings.

Another characteristic of their writings is the use of basic and unambiguous Arabic language. The Shaykhs were very eloquent in Arabic language. They had, thoroughly, studied its grammar, syntax prosody and rhetoric and they brilliantly reflected these in all their writings. They were not fond of uncommon words nor of ambiguous usages. Their aim was to communicate the message to the reader in a very straight forward manner so that anyone with basic knowledge of Arabic could easily comprehend their writings. For al-Dāghirī, some of his works, mainly poems, were written in a very complex language.

In the case of al-Fallātī, he wrote the work in simple, lucid, and impressive Arabic, avoiding strange and difficult diction often encountered in the writings of al-Dāghirī. Even the arrangement and construction of the language in his works are simple and explicit. Additionally, some his poems were written in Fulfulde. This type of work was mainly addressed to people who either do not have full grasp of Arabic or do not read Arabic at all.

Another reason for writing in *Ajami* was to simplify the difficulties which learners may experience in the course of their scholarship pursuit; and, to engage in self-examination to see whether they attain the mental aptitude in their scholarship endeavour. The subject matter of their poems was praises and yearning for Prophet Muhammad or Aḥmad al-Tijānī, the founder of the Tijānīyya brotherhood. On the other hand, some poems touch on some mystic experience, *taqriz* (Encomium) or *marthiya*, *rithā* (elegy) and the like.

Their writings were not meant for mere theoretical debate. There was a clear and defined objective behind them. He wrote on multifarious motives in his own right, each work covers or answers a certain problem faced by the community or in the interest of the community. Some were written in response to a question raised by one of their students, or to answer questions which were put to him on these tenets or defend their own claims or views. They also write in defence of criticism of certain rituals which are considered contradictory to the teaching of Islam, or for the correction of certain misconceptions accommodated by some scholars of their time. While some of al-Dāghirī's works were on purification of oneself, how to become very close to the Prophet Muhammad; the works of al-Fallātī were mainly on bounties of reading the Qur'an, on the position, qualities and ranks of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad, how to perform correct ablution and preform religious obligations and the like.

In their prose writings, they extensively quoted the works of both classical and contemporary scholar of the Islamic world. These extensive quotations are indicative of their scholarship. They also testify to the availability of numerous works of Islamic literature in the twentieth century northern Nigeria.

5.3.3 Arrangement of Chapters of their works

The writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī consist of short and lengthy essays, letters, poems, and sermons. They divide some of their works into chapters in a logical manner with a list of contents and precise chapter headings. They usually indicate this division at the beginning of such works. A good example of this is to be found in al-Dāghirī's book, *Sharh al-Burda* (Commentary on the *Qāsidat al-Burda* (The Cloak) of al-Būsīrī), Commenting on the arrangement of the chapters, al-Dāghirī states ... and guided the reader to the way of its reading and repeating after each of its chapters in the day of Monday for six nights...⁴⁵⁷ That he has arranged every chapter to constitute a complete and independent whole in order to make it easy to understand and helpful for anyone concerned. The Shaykhs went on to discuss a problem under each chapter. After the usual introduction, the Shaykhs sometimes describe the content of each chapter before elaborating on it. He states in *Majmoo' u ihdaa ashara khutba*, after the preface that the work consists of eleven chapters. Ten out of the eleven chapters were composed by al-Dāghirī, except one which is the second in the sequence, which was written by Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse (d. 1975), which is on *Khuṭbah al-Juma'ah*.

Sometimes, he summarizes the content of the work in a short poem known as *taqriz* (Encomium), giving the amount of the stanzas and the importance of the book. A typical example is found in his *Itbaa' ut-tazyil fii salaati alas-sayyidil Jaliil*, in which he remarked that:

- ختمت وأن الحمد لله وحده كتابي إتباعا بأسعد مقعد
- V1. I ended my work (my book) in the best dwelling place with the help of Allah, (praise be to Him alone).
- أخي أيها المجتاز مهلا فهذه صلاة على المختار خذ وتزود
- V2. O my fellow brother passer-by holds on, here is a book⁴⁵⁸ enclosing *salawat* (prayer) upon the selected prophet (Muhammad saw), take and make provision with it.⁴⁵⁹
- وصلّ عليه كلّ مسي وبكرة تقز فوز ذي حظ عظيم بسؤدد
- V3. Pray for him⁴⁶⁰ in the morning and evening respectively to obtain the status the way lucky one achieves.
- وأودعت فيه كلّ مضمون جوهر يسرّ به قلب المحبّ المجدد
- V4. I placed in it (book) many expensive contents that are capable of making the hearts of dignified lovers happy.

⁴⁵⁷ Muḥammad al-Dāghirī 1966, 1969, 1.

⁴⁵⁸ The poet refers to *Ittiba' uttazyili fii Ṣalāt 'alā 'l-sayyid al-jalīl* here.

⁴⁵⁹ It is evident that the model used by al-Dāghirī for this poem was the panegyric by

⁴⁶⁰ Prophet Muhammad is referred here.

فغشّي على كل الحوائج ظلّها بغشيان ليل كلّ شيء ومر صد

V5. (Contains) things whose shadows accommodate the entire needs (of man) as night gloom covers everything including passage.

غرست به مئة وسبعين صيغة تلي أربعا واطب عليها وردد

V6. I implanted in it (I put in this book) 174 different types of *Salawat* (prayer), so, keep doing it repeatedly.

On some occasions the Shaykhs do not divide their works into chapters. This, most likely, happens when they deal with one topic or question. In such a work the Shaykhs go straight to inform the reader about the purpose of writing the book. This of course will be after the usual standard of the content of their works. The Shaykh's works have a distinctive quality; not only are they divided into chapters with a list of contents and precise chapter headings, but in his quotations they use the exact words of the earlier scholars and call the attention of the reader to the end of the quotation, thus distinguishing his work from those of other writers where it is not always easy to detect when quotation ends and their own argument is resumed. Sometimes, the Shaykhs' scholarly writings indicate their sources at the foot of the pages as there is no separate bibliography as in modern printed books, especially the works of al-Fallātī. Al-Dāghirī used to give reference to other works he wrote. For example, in his *At-taqriiz fii Itbaa'ut-tazyiil*, he wrote that:

لنا كتب أسماءها مسرودة جهاز وتذييل النتائج في يد⁴⁶¹

V14. (Indeed), we have some books whose titles are quoted as follows: *Jihaazu, Tadhyeel, An-Nata'ij* at hand.

وإتباع تذييل وسور ممتّع فخذها جميعا في الصلاة لأحمد

V15. And *Ittiba'uttazyili* and *Surrul al-mani'u*. Take all for the *Salawat* of Aḥmad (prayer to prophet).

5.3.4 Sources and References of their works

The writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, in prose and verse, is full of quotation from the sources of Qur'an and Hadith. Qur'an is regarded by Muslims as directly revealed word of God from which Islamic beliefs and dogmas first originate. The second source of such ideas is Hadith, the record of the acts and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, passed down in oral forms by his Companions, and then recorded in writing by later generations. Other Islamic sources for ideas were *Ijmā'* (consensus of the '*Ulamā*')⁴⁶² and *Qiyās* (analogical deduction of the '*Ulamā*') as well as classical Arabic literature as the principal sources of their Islamic doctrines.

However, The Shaykhs being Sufis and adherents of al-Malikī School of Jurisprudence (*Madhab*) and also adherent of the Ash'arī School of Theology, and in most cases, when passing judgement or making a verdict they refer to the work of the 'Ulama of these schools. They used the *Sahih al-Sittah*, (the six authentic collections of ahadith) as their sources, which includes, *Sahih*

⁴⁶¹ Explaining the available books he authored.

⁴⁶² The consensus of a body of Muslim scholars living in a area; it may also mean precedent.

al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Jami al-Tirmidhi, Sunan Abi Dawud, Sunan al-Nasa'i, and Sunan Ibn Majah. They equally used many books that were written on fiqh of Imam Malik. The Maliki School of Law is still prevalent in Nguru.

The basis of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, as alluded above, was the Islamic tradition of scholarship as developed in the Islamic world, especially in the Middle East and North Africa. Thus, the Shaykhs were, for instance, quite familiar with the works of such great Middle Eastern scholars. Nearer home, the Shaykhs and other twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars were also quite familiar with the works of the Timbuktu, Borno and Hausa land scholars such as Aḥmad Baba of Timbuktu (1556 – April 22, 1627), Shaykh ‘Uthmān Dan Fodio (1754–1817), Abdullahi Dan Fodio (c. 1766–1828), Muḥammad Bello (1781-1837), Nana Asma’u (1793-1864).

The Shaykhs were followers of Tijānīyya brotherhood, within the brotherhood certain scholars were said to have influenced the writings of the Shaykhs. Eventually, these scholars have had a great impact on the Shaykhs’ trend of thought. One of these scholars as reasonably expected, the Shaykhs appeared to have found the germ of much of their thought in the teachings of Aḥmad al-Tijānī and in the writings of the Sufi mystics.⁴⁶³ The Shaykhs attributed many of their success to this pious man. This experience was mentioned by the Shaykhs themselves in several their works. For instance, al-Dāghirī, to show devotion and sincere adherence to al-Tijānī, devoted one of his panegyric poems to al-Tijānī. The work is *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*. Another eminent scholar whose ideas were cherished in the works of the Shaykhs was Niasse (d. 1975) see *Qaasidat al-Tarhiib* of al-Dāghirī. The great impact they made on the thought and writings of al-Dāghirī will be discussed in the subsequent chapters. Al-Fallātī was tremendously influenced by the works and ideas of al-Dāghirī, yet also selectively reshapes them; further, he creatively integrates countless works from his own voluminous library.

5.3.5 Images and Sufi Inclination of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī

For proper understanding of the themes and contents of a scholar, his images and doctrinal inclinations shall be mentioned since some of his works could be on his dogma and canons or reactions to defend them. Image and religious inclination are the statement or word, which indicates exactly from which *madhhab*, sect, *tariqa* etc. of Islam, the author belongs to. The images of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī created for themselves can be understood from their writings. In the first instance, like many other Muslim scholars and authors, they always referred to themselves as

⁴⁶³ See for instance *Jauharatul Fardi* wherein he extensively quoted Ahmad al-Tijani.

al-Faqīr, signifying a poor servant seeking their Lord's blessings and favour. Besides this, what was commonly found in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī was the inclination towards Tijānīyya brotherhood, they personally regarded and tagged themselves *Khadim Hadrāt al-Tijānīyya* meaning "servants on the platform of Tijānīyya Sufi order." They took this epithet after they become popular to all and sundry through the calibre of students they had produced, and their several works they have written. The significance of the epithet could be seen in their deep sense of humility, modesty, self-denial, devotion to their *tariqa* and service to their followers whom they were ready to serve at all time. This therefore is a practical demonstration of a cool headedness, politeness, and humility Sufism teaches.

Their image and religious inclination could also be deduced from the content of their works as they provided a number book strictly on Tijānīyya brotherhood like *Da'awaa-tul at-Tijaanii* of al-Fallātī. As well, they usually devoted a chapter to Tijānīyya even in their work which is not on Tijānīyya like *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*. Sometimes, the inclination can be deduced from the cover of the works by indicating the Sufi order or Islamic school of thought they belong to. Al-Dāghirī, for instance, in his famous book, *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii* after mentioned his name as author of the book, it was also indicated that he was a follower of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī and I quote:

سیدنا ومولانا شیخ العارفین ومرشد السالکین محمد غبریم بن محمد الداغری المالکی الأشعری التجانی
 Authored by: Saayyadna and Maulana Shaykh of scholars, and guide of followers Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī bin Mohammed al-Dāghirī al-Maliki al-Ash'arī al-Tijānī.

5.4. Literary Oeuvre of al-Dāghirī

Taking into consideration the works of twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars among whom was al-Dāghirī, the need to study and produce a list of his works, in prose and poetry, cannot be overemphasized. An attempt will therefore be made to present an up-dated list of all the known works of al-Dāghirī. But up till now, there is no last word on the actual number of his works due to lack of unanimity in the number of works ascribed to him. According to Munir, al-Dāghirī's son, his father may have written as many as three hundred and sixty works, but he was only able to give me sixty titles both published and unpublished, some of which are dubious. Thus, the number of works ascribed to him varies from one researcher to another, for instance, Hunwick ascribed seven works to him.⁴⁶⁴ Atamma at the end of his B.A. long essay gives a list of nineteen

⁴⁶⁴ Hunwick 1994, 406-407.

works said to be written by the Shaykh.⁴⁶⁵ Tahir estimated their numbers at about nineteen compositions, but points out that the list he provides are only one third of his publications. There are many unpublished written materials that could not be published before he died.⁴⁶⁶

According to Sanda, al-Dāghirī has written about twenty books in different subjects, such as grammar, morphology, literature, language, mysticism, jurisprudence and religion.⁴⁶⁷ Isma'eel Bakare credited fifty-two books to him, and some of the works are dubious. He also admits that only 50% of his writings were published and came to the limelight.⁴⁶⁸ In trying to explain this, Sani who attempted on different occasions to list the Shaykh's works together with his biography rightly remarked that:

He has written many books and on various fields of knowledge, poems and other Islamic Fatwa even though most of the works were not published before his death, but substantial ones published went to his credit.⁴⁶⁹

In his PhD thesis which was written in 2017, Sani listed these thirty-six works believed to have been written by the Shaykh.⁴⁷⁰ Many of the Shaykh's works were included in the list, he could not indicate in the list as far as possible where each work could be located. In this research work, we have attempted to give the most up to date list of all the known works of the Shaykh based on the relevant ones among the previous attempts discussed above. At the end of the compilation we have gathered sixty (60) titles that are credited to him, but we have presented the list to the family, they insisted that many of the Shaykh's works are still to be recovered.

Out of the sixty (60) titles ascribed to him during my fieldwork, forty-seven (47) works and one handwritten Qur'an were physically accessible to us which are available in various libraries, schools, and book vendors in Nigeria and beyond. Seventeen out of them are poems while thirty-two are prose, and each work contains valuable knowledge. Eleven of the identified works are still in manuscript form while twenty-five works in lithograph and thirteen in typograph. Most of the works were published in Nigeria while few were published by either Maṭba'ah wa Maktabah al-Muṣṭafá ibn 'Abd al-Mālik Bābī, Cairo or Dar al-Kotob al-Ilmiyah, Beirut. All these confirm that al-Dāghirī can be regarded as a prolific writer, especially on Sufism.

⁴⁶⁵ Al-Qadiri 1979.

⁴⁶⁶ Tahir 2006, 86-89.

⁴⁶⁷ Sanda 2016.

⁴⁶⁸ <http://shaykhmuhammadgibrima.blogspot.de/2014/03/shaykh-muhammad-gibrima-b-muhammad-al.html>.

⁴⁶⁹ Idris 2010, 75.

⁴⁷⁰ Idris 2017, 189-194.

Only a part of al-Dāghirī's writings became known to the readers from outside the local Muslim communities in northern Nigeria. The most widely known and partially exploited in scientific literature, is the one entitled *Jihaazus Saarih* and *An-nawaafihul Itriyyati*, and *Nataa'ijus-Safar*. None of his work either prose or poetry has been translated into English or Hausa and only few of them reprinted with some introductory remarks.

5.4.1 Subject Matter of His Works

As a matter of fact, al-Dāghirī's literary works cannot be confined to one particular area. Although al-Dāghirī wrote on a variety of Islamic subjects, *Salat 'ala an-Nabī* (Prayers upon the Prophet) is the first that most engaged in his intellectual activities. He also repeated many of his ideas in more than one work. In an attempt to classify al-Dāghirī's works, according to the themes, they may be grouped into nine categories: *Salat 'ala an-Nabī* (Prayers upon the Prophet), *Du'a* (Supplicatory Prayer), *Madh* (Panegyrics), *Al-rithā'* (Elegy), *Taşawwuf* (Sufism), *Nahw* (Arabic grammar) *Lughā* (linguistic sciences), *Tawhid* (Theology), *Hisab* (Numerology), History and Educational literature, though sometimes it is not possible to draw a clear line. For instance, biographical history is expressed in a philosophical manner or interpreted mystically. Again, his Sufi experience could be spelt out through his philosophical disposition.

(i) *Salat 'ala an-Nabī* (Prayers upon the Prophet)

The importance of the prayer on the Prophet Muḥammad is stated clearly in the Glorious *Qur'an* and prophetic Hadith. Thus, Muslims are instructed by Allah to send their prayers upon the Prophet Muḥammad. For instance, in the *Qur'an*, Allah says: "Indeed God and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who have faith! Invoke blessings on him and invoke Peace upon him in a worthy manner."⁴⁷¹ However, the prophet has also commanded Muslims to send their prayers upon him and he taught them how to pray for him. The *Sufi Turuq* believed that constant prayer on the Prophet allows the aspirant to enter the presence of the Prophet (*al-hadrāt al-Muḥammadiyya*) and reach illumination (*fathi*). Despite this, however, composing *Salat 'ala an-Nabī* or specified litanies by Sufi masters is an accepted norm within the Sufi circle. Most of the books of *Salat al-Nabiy* (Prayer on the Prophet) are written in a complex language, dense with inner allusions to the esoteric doctrines of the *Sufis*, only the most accomplished Sufi Shaykh usually engage in this genre of writing.

⁴⁷¹ Qur'an 33:56.

He excelled in the fields of *Salat al-Nabiy* and was one of the Sufi scholars that transcended to his greatest spiritual pedestal, with the *hurmat* (sanctity) of *Salat al-Fatih* which he sent upon the *rūh* (soul) of the Prophet. Al-Dāghirī was referred to as *Sahib al-Fatih* (Master of the *Salat al-Fatih*). In extolling the virtues of al-Dāghirī, Niasse said and I quote: If it was that one, the number of (recitation of) *Salat al-Nabiy* was what would make one attain the position of (Gawth/ Divine Succour), then al-Dāghirī would have been the *ghawth Zaman/* Divine Succour of the age; But Niasse is the occupier of the position.

The works are testimony of al-Dāghirī's immense love, eulogizing and longing for the Prophet Muḥammad and gratitude as well as praising of Allah. His most popular work on *Salat 'ala an-Nabī* is *Jihaazus Saarih*. It is the first book authored by al-Dāghirī while he was on a journey to Makkah for pilgrimage in 1363. The work contains quite several different *Salawat* of the Prophet Muḥammad. All the *Salawat* in the book were built up upon *Salat al-Fatih*. After he composed books, his reputation went beyond the confines of his homeland through the whole Islamic West Africa and North Africa. The magnitude of his writing in this area is great and could be divided into two categories. The first category are works on offering *Salat al-Nabiy* (sending prayers and blessings to Prophet Muḥammad Adornment of the Last Day) with the hope of getting reward from Allah.

In these works, he praises Allah and testifies his gratitude to Him. He explains the position of love and obedience to the Prophet Muḥammad, the founders and leaders of Tijānīyya as an obligatory act in Islam. He also mentions hellfire as the final abode of those who dislike them. Then, he draws the attention of the Muslims to love the Prophet more than everything including their parents. In addition, *Salat al-Nabiy* was one of the most prominent themes that run through his extensive and diverse range of publications. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category are five (5) in number out of the forty-six (46) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 10.2 per cent).

(ii) *Du'a* (Supplicatory Prayer)

This category are prayer books, most of which centre on *Salat al-Fatih* which all contain *Ismu-l-Azam*, i.e. how to make efficacious prayers, e.g. asking Allah in the morning and getting response before evening, etc. In our context and for the sake of our analysis, it refers to the discourse that demonstrates prayer as an invocation or supplication in requesting something from Allah through constant recitation of *Salat al-Nabiy*. The manifestation of this type of discourse in

our data testifies heavenly support from Allah. It also includes works on blessing and salutations of Allah which are requested for the Prophet Muḥammad and other prophets as well as saints.

For instance, the work of al-Dāghirī's *Nataa'ijus-Safar*. The work contains certain invocations for the elimination of calamities, illness, and malignancies. The reasons for which the work was written, according to author, was the need of Allah's protection against malignancies caused by man or jinn as well as indeed all ill-mannered beings. However, al-Dāghirī wrote an extensive interlinear commentary on *Qāsidat al-Burda* (The Cloak) of Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sa'īd al-Būsīrī (d. 694/1296). In extolling the virtue of the poem, on the front cover, al-Dāghirī emphasized that its recitation will assist in obtaining a vision of the Prophet. Moreover, al-Dāghirī narrated that a certain man recited it daily without success. On asking a Shaykh for the reason for this, he was told that he must recite al-Būsīrī's 'prayer for the Prophet' after every verse, or at least after every section of the poem. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number eight (8) items out of the forty-six (46) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 16.3 per cent).

(iii) *Madḥ* (Panegyrics)

The third category found under this class are mainly concerned with praising the Prophet Muḥammad, the founders and leaders of Tijānīyya brotherhood, saints and other important Islamic figures; and inspires their effort in relationship with Allah, Prophet Muḥammad and inviting followers to follow and love their leaders. It also contains ideological and doctrinal eulogies which refers to the religious superiority of the Sufī saints and the inevitability of death. Al-Dāghirī composed many *Qāsidat* in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad, the founders and leaders of Tijānīyya to inculcate their love into the hearts of their disciples and the public. In these works, he often prays for his children, parents, mentors, wives, relatives, his disciples, students, lovers, followers and *Khadims* (assistants). He also prays for *shafa'a* (intercession) for his followers to be *mahfuz* (kept safe) and to be true Muslims, followers of *Qur'an* and Prophet Muḥammad as well as true Tijānīyya members.

Related to this is, *Sīra* (biography of the Prophet) which contains information on the life of the prophet and so on). Examples of this category are discussed in the next chapter. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number twelve (12) items out of the forty-six (49) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 24.4 per cent).

(iv) *Al-rithā'* (Elegy):

This category consists of works on expression of grief over the death of someone. The only work I came across during my fieldwork is *Ar-risaa 'u fii Shaykh Abubakar Atiiq*. According to the findings and analysis, there is only one (1) work in this category out of the forty-six (49) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 2.0 per cent).

(v) ***Taşawwuf* (Sufism):**

Mystic work has always been the subject of interest to Sufi scholars and has received great attention from al-Dāghirī himself. Mysticism and major works on Sufism in this category are those works which seek to express the ideas of the mystics. Mystical discourse is conceived as a discourse on themes of Islamic mysticism: Indeed, the general theme of Sufi orders which include *zuhd* (asceticism), *tazkiah* (chastise), *Akhlāq* (moralism), *ma'arifa* (divine conception and cognizance) and *ubudīya* (servanthood) all are found within the content of the mystical discourse. Al-Dāghirī had written much on Sufism and Tijānīyya Brotherhood and sometimes elaborates the works of others. The number of his writing in this orb is great. The available literary works of al-Dāghirī on Sufism are of two categories. The first are works on *Sufi* manuals and the second are on praising the Prophet Muḥammad, leaders of the Tijānīyya Sufi order and its virtues.

The first category of al-Dāghirī writings on Sufism are on providing guidance, identifying obstacles, challenges, and difficulties that a seeker of spiritual perfection might encounter during his spiritual journey. The works also outlined the clear path that a spiritual perfection seeker can adhere to achieve his goal. The works also provide a guideline on how a spiritual perfection seeker can become true servant of Allah alone, follower of Prophet Muḥammad and a good Muslim. Some *Sufi* terms, concepts as well as questions asked are discussed. The works have comprehensive and detailed information on spiritual journey, Tijānīyya *Tariqa* and Sufism in general.

In most of his works, Sufism and Brotherhood is the second category in which he tries to elucidate the significance and virtues of the Tijānīyya litanies, and guiding principles by which the brotherhood is operated. These conditions and the fundamentals are the basis upon which the litanies are built. In some of his writings, he emphasised the role played by the Tijānīyya brotherhood, the order that originated and developed. He wrote pamphlets and books in both prose and poetry to elucidate the historical background of the order. He also registered his praises abundantly in panegyrics to the well-known leaders of the Order such as the founder Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī, their leader Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse (d. 1975), and their relatives.

Among the major works on Sufism and Tijānīyya Brotherhood elaborated and diversified by al-Dāghirī is *Ar-risaalatul Mutawajjahatu ilaa Sayyid Abdullah*. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number three (3) items out of the forty-six (46) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 6.1 per cent).

(vi) Nahw (Arabic grammar) and Lughā (linguistic sciences):

The works in this category cover both *Nahw* (Arabic grammar) *Lughā* (linguistic sciences) which includes grammar and poetry. This is the subject on which many works were written by al-Dāghirī. Arabic, which includes major lexicon, lexicology, morphology, syntax, rhetoric, and prosody. One of the principal works on Arabic language is his work entitled *Murakkabul 'eatimaad fii ma'arifatil A'adaad*. Apart from this, he also made commentaries, abridgement, and versifications of books of the traditional curricular corpus of Arabic grammar, morphology, semantics etc. In this context, al-Dāghirī also wrote a general and convincing commentary on *Al-Wasail al-Mutaqabbala*, popularly known as *Qāsidat al-Ishriiniyyaat fii Madḥ Saiyidna Muḥammad* or simply *al- 'Ishriiniyyaat* (The Twenties) of 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Yakhlaftan al-Fāzāzī (d. 627/1230). This is one of the mystical poems praising the Prophet Muḥammad and has been of great importance in the Sufi circle, al-Dāghirī's commentary on it must be counted as a seminal work. The first commentary was made by Imam Abu-Bakr Muḥammad bin Mahib, who elaborated the poem into *takhmis* to explain the original poem in five volumes, but it is difficult to understand. The vocabulary used was difficult and incomprehensible to understand because it was too advanced, beyond a learner's capacity. He devoted his time to simplify the vocabulary used in the original work. Al-Dāghirī, thus, made it simpler and easier to understand. He purposely made the commentary for his disciples and adherents of Tijānīyya Sufi order, but it gained great acceptance throughout the Islamic world.

He also made commentary or textual criticism on the work of Shaykh Jamaluddin bin Hajib Abu Umar bin 'Uthmān bin Amr al-Maliki (d. 664 A.H.), who was a prolific writer and authored many works on different subjects. Jamaluddin bin Hajib's poem is on irregular feminine nouns in 23 verses. Al-Dāghirī noticed some accomplishment of lapses in the poem and made a commentary on it. To correct the mistakes, al-Dāghirī followed the same pattern and style of the original poem in terms of rhyme and language arrangement. Added to this, al-Dāghirī provided the simple explanation of certain vocabulary in the footnote in line with Arabic grammatical rules. The motive which had driven al-Dāghirī's mind to make such a commentary has to do with his deep research

in Arabic language. As a result, the author arrived at the fact that what escaped from the knowledge of Jamaluddin bin Hajib in this work proved higher than what appeared. That is, Irregular Feminine Nouns. Al-Dāghirī thus endeavoured to accomplish the lapses observed. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number four (4) items out of the forty-six (46) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 8.1 per cent).

(vii) *Tawhid* (Theology)

Tawhid means bearing witness that there is no deity, but Allah, and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah. Anyone who testifies to the above statement is called a Muslim. Al-Dāghirī has a great deal of literature on theology (*tawhid*) on which is also an interesting field. The works on theology concentrated on Islamic theology and philosophical thought especially Islamic science of *tawhid* (unity of God), which al-Dāghirī has fascinating works. The works of al-Dāghirī, in prose and poetry, on *tawhid*, that affirms the Oneness of Allah, His attributes and qualities, and describe Muḥammad's unique prophetic role, provide an insurance against the ordeal of the interrogation in the grave. This category comprises poems on the Islamic theology (*tawhīd*) which concerns the unity of God, philosophy, and articles of faith or cardinal principles of Islam. A typical example of this type of poem is *Qar'u abwaabin-Nawaal bi asmaa'illaahil muta'aal* of al-Dāghirī. It is a kind of poem in which the author lists and explains the attributes of God. With the composition on *tawhid* in this work, the Shaykh intended to teach his followers the ninety-nine names of Allah (that it is obligatory for every Muslim to know them) and how to use them in their daily prayers. Another principal work on *tawhid* is *Kitaabu Bayaanil Kalimaatil Mushkilaatil Mufradaat fii Sharhil aqiidatil murshidah*. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number four (4) items out of the forty-six (46) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 8.1 per cent).

(viii) *Hisab* (Numerology):

There are many works on supplicatory prayer in the works written by al-Dāghirī. They include works on the invocations for protection against illness, calamities, good fortunes, blessings, and spiritual medicine. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number eight (8) items out of the forty-six (49) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 16.3 per cent).

Numerology constitutes of one of the most important categories of al-Dāghirī work. Numerology (*hisabi*), as a subject, is a kind of medicinal formula, to forecast horoscopes,

manufacture charms and sometimes for divination purposes. A typical example of this type is *Al-ealaamul haa'ij fii ma'arifatil hisaabi bi uqoodil asaabi'i*. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number two (2) items out of the forty-six (46) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 4.0 per cent).

(ix) History and Educational literature:

This category covers works on education, trade, travels, political writings, and maps. *Khuṭbah* constitutes a considerable part of this category. A typical example of this category is a book called *Majmoo'u ihdaa ashara khutba Annaafi'a min khutbatil Jumu'ati ilaa khutbatil Maulid (naming ceremony)*, which contains eleven *Khuṭbah*. There are many letters which he sent to different communities on various issues which are yet to be published. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number ten (10) items out of the forty-six (46) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 20.4 per cent).

5.5 The Literary Oeuvre of al-Fallātī

Any description of al-Fallātī seems to start with the remark that he was not only a bibliophile and a book reader; he was also regarded as a prolific writer. However, this does not quite imply that he was productive in the fullest sense of the word; rather, without stating it too bluntly, the expression conveys a certain reservation about the quality of the output. Some scholars have no qualms about airing their disregard for him. Writing was thus the career which al-Fallātī took to, perhaps in order to express and spread his views. His writings cover various aspects of Islamic studies, especially *taṣawwuf*. He also composed poems in Fulfulde and Arabic, on various aspects of Islamic law and education. There are other unfinished texts and poems of various categories. At time, al-Fallātī started writing is not known to the present researcher. Al-Fallātī had also sponsored publishing and distribution of several books, other works were abridged works of other authors which he has indicated on the cover pages.

Al-Fallātī is reported have written more than a hundred works. These works were written over a period of forty years and they cover many issues raised in his time. Many scholarly attempts to list the works of al-Fallātī have been made over the years. One of the earliest attempts to list his work was made by his son, Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī. At the end of his list Baffa informs us that the Shaykh has written more than fifty works.⁴⁷² In 2010, however, Sani contributed in his Master's

⁴⁷² Interview with Baffa 'Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

thesis, came up with the list of forty-three works⁴⁷³ while, Hamza said that he had more than fifty books to his credit.⁴⁷⁴ Al-amin ascribed forty-three works to him: twenty-six were authored by him, four works were either summarized or translated by him while thirteen were either published or circulated by him.⁴⁷⁵ Sani reports one of his senior students and disciple, Malam Adamu Nurul Aulad who categorically stated that with his naked eyes he saw fifty published books written by al-Fallātī, apart from a collection of prose and poems of different sizes which are yet unknown to the general public because they are not standardized into book form.⁴⁷⁶ We discovered that fifty-six (56) titles were attributed to him on various subjects by his disciples and children, but only fifty-three (53) works are accessible to me which are also available in the Shaykh's library as well as book vendors and his contemporaries' libraries.⁴⁷⁷ As far as the works are concerned, some works are still in manuscripts form, others are in lithograph and typograph forms. Both the lithograph and typograph are published in Nigeria and none of them are known to the international community of Islamic world. All these confirm that al-Fallātī can be regarded as a prolific writer especially on Sufism and Islamic law.⁴⁷⁸

5.5.1 Subject Matter of al-Fallātī Literary Oeuvres

The works of al-Fallātī are of subject matters, apart from those on *taṣawwuf* (Sufism) there are some of his works which based on pure Arabic, Islamic Jurisprudence, science of Islamic monotheism as well as Ajami Fulfulde. Generally, the following areas could easily be identified as the major themes and categories incorporated within al-Fallātī's works. These include: Law (*fiqh*) and Principles of Islam (*Mabadi al-Islam*), *Fada'il* (Virtues conduct in general), *Madhī* (*Panegyrics*), Sufism and Tijānīyya Brotherhood, Islamic Education and Literature, *Du'a* (Supplicatory Prayer), History and biography, and Arabic Grammar and Literature. We are now going to examine some of these in greater detail to see how they are reflected in his writing.

(i) Law (*fiqh*) and Principles of Islam (*Mabadi al-Islam*): The works written by al-Fallātī in the category are works on the tenets of Islam or writings based on the fundamentals of Islam such as *tawhid* (theology), *Salat* (ritual prayer), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), all of them are written based on the

⁴⁷³ Idris 2010, 62-63.

⁴⁷⁴ Hamza 2001, 31.

⁴⁷⁵ Al-amin 2016, 116-119.

⁴⁷⁶ Idris 2010, 61.

⁴⁷⁷ But Alhaji Salisu, his *Khalifa* revealed that his father once told him that sometimes the late Shaykh used his wisdom and knowledge to identify some missing writings in some books which were eaten up by termites.

⁴⁷⁸ See appendix for the distribution of his works.

al-Maliki al-Ash'arī Schools. Most of his writings under this category are meant to simplify certain Islamic devotional aspects; for instance, rules of purification, ablution, ritual bath, praying etc. Some of his works in this category are: (a) *Kitaabu Ruuhussalah* (The book on spirit of Prayer), *Kitaabul wafiy fii ahKaamis Salaati. Wayalihi Ahaadiis fii Fadlis Sallati Waz-zajari Anit-tahaawuni Bi Haa* (The Comprehensive Book on provisions of Prayer, followed by Traditions on Virtues of Prayer and Warning about its Negligence). Another work on this aspect is entitled *Kitaabu Aadaabul Ibadah* (The Book on Ethics of Prayer). These works also cover a wide range of topics including admonition and religious advice designed to encourage deeds of virtue. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number five (5) items out of the forty-three (43) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 11.6 per cent).

(ii) Fada'il (Virtues conduct in general): The work in this refers to the works on the virtues, conduct and excellent qualities of the lives of the prophets, particularly Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) and his companions. Most of the works he wrote on these two topics are books and pamphlets he copied from original sources such as Bukhari and Muslim. Some of the works in this category are *Kitaabu Fadaa'ilul Sayyidil Mustafa* (Virtues of Al-Mustapha), *Kitaabu Fadaa'ila wa Manaaqibihii Saiyyidnaa Aliyyu bn abi-Dhaalib* (The book of Virtues and Rank of Ali bn Abi Talib), *Kitaabu Maraatibu Abi Hafsat Umar wa Manaaqibuhuu* (Abi Hafsat Umar: His Rank and Virtues) etc. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number three (3) items out of the forty-three (43) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 6.9 per cent).

(iii) Madḥ (Panegyrics): Yet another very important category are panegyric poems in praise of God, the Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) his companions, and Sufi brotherhood leaders. This includes: *Wasa'ilul Musammatu* (The Means of Achieving Known As.....) and *Kitaabu Sabiilinnajati* (Path of Salvation). According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number two (2) items out of the forty-three (43) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 4.6 per cent).

(iv) Taṣawwuf (Sufism) and Tijānīyya Brotherhood: The works in this category are works on mysticism, but specifically regarding the virtue (*fada'il*) of the Tijānīyya Sufi order. One of the principal works on Sufism in general, and the Tijānīyya in particular, is the work entitled *Thalaathatu Majaalis* (The three Sessions). Another work under this category is *Da'awaa-tut-Tijaanii* (Supplications of Tijānīyya). According to the findings and analysis, works in this

category number five (5) items out of the forty-three (43) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 11.6 per cent).

(v) Islamic Education and Literature: This category contains works on mundane sciences as distinct from fiqh, the religious legal literature. It also contains some on the virtues, bounties and importance of reading, listening to the Qur'an and Hadith or mastering and knowing secrets of a Surat or Ayat of the Qur'an. *Kitaabu Fadaa'ilul Qur'an* (The Virtues of Qur'an), *Nurul Qulub* (Light of the Hearts) are few examples. According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number fifteen (15) items out of the forty-three (43) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 34.8 per cent).

(vi) Du'a (Supplicatory Prayer): Al-Fallāṭī had many works on *Du'a* or *Addu'a*, meaning prayer or supplication. The entire works of this category are primarily for divination which contains various kinds of supplications and prayers designed for multiple objectives or designed to assist one in attaining a high status in life or protect him from illness, evil acts etc. Most of the prayers contain the greatest names of Allah which are used to accomplish the desired goal in physical and spiritual realms. In one of his works entitled *Khuṭbatu-sh-shaykh Hassan Dam* (The Sermons of Shaykh Hassan Dam). Another book of prayer written by al-Fallāṭī is *Kitaabu Sirril Fatihati* (The Book on the Secrets of the Opening Chapter). Closely related to this work is *Sihaa-mul isaabati fii Da'awatil Mustajaabah* (Arrows of Achieving Goal). Another piece on Du'a in the form of medicinal prayer is *Hizbul Amaani* (The Team of the Faithful Ones). Also, on prayer is *Kitaabu Durrul- a'ala* (Uttermost Pearl). The other work is entitled *Kitaabu fada'ilus-sallah* (Virtues of Prayer). According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number eight (8) items out of the forty-three (43) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 18.6 per cent).

(vii) History and biography: Al-Fallāṭī works on history are not that much, as he did not strictly write history of his area, though there are some materials identified. In the field of religious biography, the most important work is the biography of Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.) entitled *Kitaabu Nuurul Arwaahi* (The Book on Light of the Souls). Among the important biographical histories, of which reliable versions would lead to a better understanding the life history of the four rightly guided caliphs, one can mention two works. The first of such works is *Kitaabu Maraaitibu Uthmaan bn affaani wa manaaqibuhuu* ('Uthmān bn Affaan: His Rank and Virtues). According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number two (2) items out of the forty-three (43) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 4.6 per cent).

(viii) Arabic Grammar and Literature: Arabic grammar is another major area in which al-Fallātī had also authored several works. He also wrote, as earlier noted, an Arabic grammar to simplify certain grammatical rules. Al-Fallātī’s own knowledge of Islam, rather than specific sources, seems to be most important to their work. One of them is a book entitled *Kitaabu Bismi-ma huwa fil’irabi* (Terminologies of Arabic Grammar Analysis). The other book on grammar is *Kitaabu Shazratuzzahbi* (The Book on Golden Nuggets). While another one is *Tuh-fatuz-sigaar fil-li’raab* (A Little Masterpiece). According to the findings and analysis, works in this category number three (3) items out of the forty-three (43) collected during field work (i.e. approximately 6.9 per cent).

5.6 Similarities and Differences between the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī

Features	al-Dāghirī	al-Fallātī
Originality	Authorship of his own work and commentary on the work of other scholars	Authorship of his own work and commentary, translation, compilation, summary and publication of the work other scholars
Genre	More of poetry, less prose	More of prose, less poetry
Theme & content	Sufism, Arabic language and Education (<i>bāṭin</i>)	Sufism, Arabic language, history, Education (<i>zahir</i>)
Style	Typically traditional	Mixed: traditional and modern
Language	Complex and rich	Simple, lucid and explicit
Size	Voluminous	Small works ⁴⁷⁹

Fig. 2: Similarities and Differences between the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī

5.7 Relevance of their works to Present Time

The works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were very much relevant to their time, because people of northern Nigeria and beyond, are extremely in need of awareness concerning their religious obligations. Similarly their works are relevant even in our present time as few of them have been researched by many B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. theses. There are still many manuscripts

⁴⁷⁹ Idris stated that “In my contact with his before his death, he told me that this time when people are no longer interested in scholarship big publication get the lazy one scared and that is one of the factors militating against scholarship so most of my books are between 3-45 pages.” Interview with Muhammad Sani Idris in Maiduguri on 15th December 2015.

written by al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī that need to be published for intellectual and academic progress.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the Sufi literary works and their features; and it revealed that the approach of moderate whose aim was to bring about change in the corrupt society differs from the approach of philosophical Sufis who deal with prophetology concept of the unseen and similar issues in their writings. Features of the Tijānī Sufi writings are multifarious i.e. Islamic religious knowledge, providing spiritual guidance, hagiography, legal status of Sufism, moral teaching among many others. The works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were identified, collected; and the central themes of the works and the motives behind writing the works are briefly highlighted. In the final analysis, any Tijānī Sufi literary works and other Sufi literature that have connection with Sufi themes irrespective of the author or writer are considered as Sufi work.

In view of the above, the manuscripts and facsimiles gathered and reviewed from the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī substantiate our claim that they are renowned Islamic scholars in that territory. However, they could not write much due to certain circumstances beyond their control. Even though, it is evident that al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are prolific Sufi writers. The number of their works collected, according to my finding is sixty (60) titles for al-Dāghirī, while fifty-sixty (56) works are collected for al-Fallātī. This shows that the total number of their works are less than what was previously ascribed to them. That notwithstanding, the Shaykhs can still be regarded as prolific writers. These works of the Shaykhs are divided into major categories of different themes and of unequal sizes. Going through the list one can see now that the works are in verse and in prose. For the purpose of our study, content and thematic analysis, the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī shall only be analysed. In the case of al-Fallātī his prosaic writings will be considered.

CHAPTER SIX

Codicological and Palaeographical Features of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's Writings:

Popularity, Distribution, Functions

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the codicological and palaeographical features of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's manuscripts and facsimile: lithographed and typographic works in the northern Nigerian context.⁴⁸⁰ It also looks at some of the issues surrounding the popularity, distribution, functions of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's mystical writings. The chapter submits that the unlike printed works, the manuscripts are distinct and unique. It also revealed that works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are palaeographically not typical northern Nigerian tradition, and they are popular and the methods through which their works are distributed are many but the huge impact of the works is yet to attract the attention of scholars.

6.2 The Qur'anic and Non-Qur'anic works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī

The corpus for this study is comprised of Qur'anic and Non-Qur'anic manuscripts produced by al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. The single copy of the Qur'an in the corpus was attributed to al-Dāghirī, as a custom, perhaps it was written when he graduated from *makarantar allo* and in the process of becoming a *hafīz*.⁴⁸¹ This is based on the local tradition of Nguru and other parts of Borno which requires all memorizers to write their own copy of the Qur'an off heart. The primary function of the al-Dāghirī Qur'an as a written manuscript, like any other handwritten Qur'an in Nguru and other parts of northern Nigeria, is for recitation and teaching. Hence, certain mnemonic devices have been developed to aid the reciter that have become part of the Qur'anic tradition and its calligraphic arts in northern Nigeria, as will be discussed below. Hand-copied and printed non-Qur'anic works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, on the other hand, contain prose, poetry, correspondences, and talismanic works which cover the wide range of subjects previously described.

⁴⁸⁰ See appendix viii-v.

⁴⁸¹ The person who committed the whole Qur'an into his memory.

In order to have a good grasp of the corpus, it is important to briefly provide the close similarities and differences between Qur’anic and non-Qur’anic manuscript. One of the differences is that writing a text of a non-Qur’an is less complex and the text is normally written in one colour of ink, usually black or brown, with some few exceptions. However, there is no decoration such as *zayyana* or pattern works in non-Qur’anic manuscripts. Another difference is absence of diacritical marks or other means of vowelisation in non-Qur’anic work, except in the case of poetry. This is because, the poetry and Qur’an require recitation and correct pronunciation. The folios in the Qur’anic manuscript are kept orderly using *matashi* (catchword),⁴⁸² while the folios and pages in the non-Qur’anic works are numbered by using numbers alone or in combination with *matashi*. Unlike the Qur’anic manuscript, the pages of non-Qur’anic works are framed with lines or framing designs. But ruling in the Qur’anic works in order to balance the margin are also used in the Qur’anic manuscript. However, the significant features of the Qur’anic manuscript will be discussed here.

6.2.1 Al-Dāghirī’s Qur’anic manuscript

In my corpus, which is the subject of our discussion, is the copy of the Qur’anic manuscript of al-Dāghirī which was exclusively written on the narration of Imam Nafi’ al-Madani’s reading of *Warshi’s* recitation (*qira’at*) which is more acceptable in Nguru as in other parts in northern Nigeria.⁴⁸³ The Qur’an is written on loose paper or folios, unbound and bears no title page, fitted exactly into a magnificent hand-made leather case.

⁴⁸² *Matashi* or catchword is the first word of the following folio, which is written at the bottom of the preceding page, to aid recitation and help order unbound folios. For more a discussion of *matashi* or catchword see ‘foliation and pagination’ below.

⁴⁸³ There are ten *qira’at*, with slight variations among them, attributed to the original revelation. For a detailed discussion of the *qira’at* of Qur’an, see also Hassan 1992, 73. However, It was recently noticed that there are some typographical dissimilarities between our local Borno Qur’an written in the narration of Warsh by Imam Nafi’ al-Madani and other copies of the Qur’an, particularly the Moroccan ones, which are also written in the narration of Warsh, particularly in the areas of control, methods of naming chapters and position of some verses. Such typographical errors and dissimilarities were recently harmonized by producing a standard copy of the Qur’an known as *al-Khatt al-Barnawi* (Borno Calligraphy) or “*al-Mushaf al-Barnawi*” or (the Borno Qur’an) sponsored by Yobe State Government under guidance of Sheikh Sheriff Ibrahim Saleh.



Fig 3. 3a The Qur'an written by al-Dāghirī himself and 3b is recent handwritten Qur'an from Nguru. Images courtesy of Malam Munir Muhammad al-Dāghirī.

Al-Dāghirī did not use page number and instead he used *matashi* (catchword) to aid the reciters in ensuring the continuity of the reading process. The manuscript's text, including the catchword, is written in the same hand, indicating that one scribe undertook the task of transcription. The calligraphy is executed in brown ink. Script in black ink fills the preface and some other folios. Red ink was used to write the name of the verses and the vowels.⁴⁸⁴ The text is written in what has been called the *kafe* 'traditional cursive' style.⁴⁸⁵ This calligraphic style is the common variant of *Maghrebi script*, employed in a version used in Nguru and other parts of northern Nigeria.⁴⁸⁶ This is characterised by heavy angular letters and full vowelisation. The manuscript features brown laid paper of various shades and slightly different size. The Qur'anic condition point to a production in the early twentieth century before the widespread importation of Arabic printed material and modern inks in the 1930s.



Fig. 4: (a) shows the example of *matashi* (catchword) bellow the last line in the page; and (b) shows the *surat* in red ink.

⁴⁸⁴ Three colours of inks were used in its style instead of four colours, as obtained in the recent market edition Qur'an in the area and Andalusian (Spanish) and ancient Moroccan copies of the Qur'an. Qur'an. For discussions of the inks in Nigerian written artefacts see chapter three.

⁴⁸⁵ Hassan calls this style traditional cursive. The script is called Ajami Bihar and Hassan in order to distinguish it from other variant of Maghribī style while Brigaglia prefers to call it Kanawi. For discussion of this theme as it relates to Arabic script in northern Nigeria, see Bihar 1968, Hassan 1992, and Brigaglia 2011.

⁴⁸⁶ Regarding the basic features of Qur'anic calligraphic style of northern Nigeria see Brigaglia 2011.

Like other popular calligraphers,⁴⁸⁷ al-Dāghirī uses *zayyana* (decoration), which appears at the beginning of every quarter of the Qur'an.⁴⁸⁸ It marks the beginning of every fifteen *ahzab* of the Qur'an. The Quran in its complete form comprises of sixty *ahzab*, therefore, *zayyana* appears four times in the sixty *ahzab* of the Qur'an. *Zayyana* is decorated with colours that makes it ravishing and captivating to the mind of a reader. The title of the *sura* (and at times including some *āyas* of the *sura*) that marks the beginning of a quarter of the Qur'an appears at the centre of each *zayyana*. Another feature is the indication of each *hizb* (sixtieth) of the Qur'an. The beginning of every *hizb* is indicated by a *hizb* marker. The marker comes in the form of a circular motif, with each of the circular motif embedded with different decorations.⁴⁸⁹ Like *zayyana*, the decorations embedded in each *hizb* marker are appealing to the eyes. The *hizb* is further divided into *nisf* (one half of *hizb*), *rub* (one fourth of *hizb*), and *thumb* (one eighth of *hizb*). *Nisf* is recognizable by the Arabic letter *nūn*, *rub* is recognizable by the letter *bā'*, while *thumb* is recognizable by the letter *thā'* (see the picture below for diagrams of *hizb*, *nisf*, *rub* and *thumb*).⁴⁹⁰

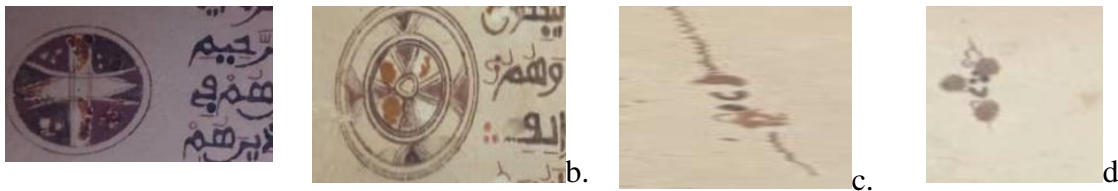


Fig. 5a and b are *hizb* (sixtieth) markers. 5a has no number of the *hizb*, while 5b has the number of the *hizb* written in Arabic number but it is not readable. Fig. 5c is *rub*, (one fourth of *hizb*) and it is recognizable by the letter *bā'*, while 5d is *thumb* (eighth of *hizb*) and it is recognizable by the letter *thā'*.⁴⁹¹

Another feature is the use of *āya* (verse marker),⁴⁹² which indicates the end of a verse in the Qur'an. The Qur'an in its complete form has 6214 *āyas*.⁴⁹³ Each *āya* is represented by three oval-shapes, with the first oval on top of the other two ovals. A dot is added at the top of the first oval-shape. Closely related to *āya* are *khumsa* and *Kuri* or *ushra*. These terminologies also serve the purpose of signalling the end of verses but are different from *āya*. *Khumsa* (five) is used to

⁴⁸⁷ One of the most renowned calligraphers of the twentieth century in northern Nigeria is Mahir Sharif Bala Gabari. For more discussion on his biography and works see Brigaglia 2011.

⁴⁸⁸ For a general description of the handwritten Qur'an produced in northern Nigeria see Bivar 1968, Brigaglia 2011, Bondarev 2014, and Mutai 2014.

⁴⁸⁹ *Hizb* is drawn using a mixture of black, red and yellow ink. A compass, usually produced by the local blacksmith (known as *makeri* in Hausa), is used to draw the circle and each scribe used his initiative to choose and design different markers for each maker.

⁴⁹⁰ For a further discussion of this theme see Jibril 2018, 68-75.

⁴⁹¹ The *nisf* (one half of *hizb*) and it is recognizable by the Arabic letter *nūn*, but it is missing in our data.

⁴⁹² It is a sign that looks like three overlapping circles see Fig. 4a.

⁴⁹³ The number of (*āyas*) verses used is in conformity with that of Madinan and ancient Moroccan copies of the Qur'an, which stands at 6214 verses.

indicate a group of five verses, while *Kuri* (circle) or *ushra* (Arabic word for ten) is applied to mean a group of ten verses. The scholars use the word *Kuri* because the symbol that represents a group of ten verses of the Qur'an in *Warsh* is circle. *Khumsa* appears 1,242 times in the Qur'an, while the number of *Kuri* is 621. The use of *khumsa* and *Kuri* ease the process of counting the number of verses of the Qur'an. If the number of *khumsa* and *Kuri* does not tally with the aforementioned figures in sixty *ahzab* of a Qur'an, then it means the penman of the Qur'an either skipped or added verses to his Qur'anic writing (see figure 3a, b, c, d, and e for diagrams of *āya*, *Khumsa* and *Kuri*).

Another feature is the use of black ink for consonantal body of a text, yellow for *hamzat al-qaṭ* green for *hamzat al-waṣl*, and red for vowels, marginal notes and title of *suras*.¹⁹ The title of each *sura* comes with the name of the *sura*, where it was revealed (i.e. Mecca or Medina) and the number of *āyas* the *sura* entails.

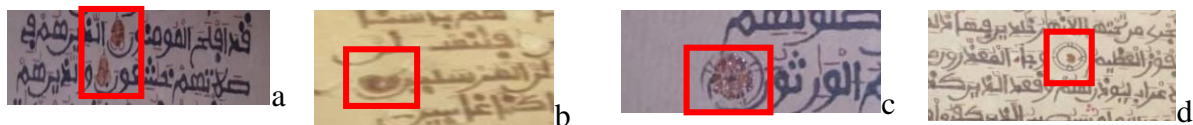


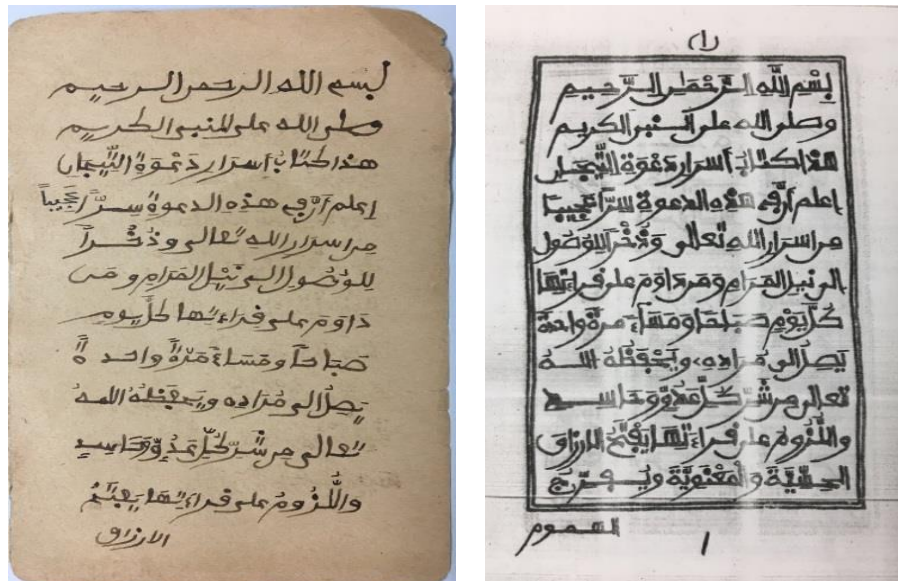
Fig. 6a is *ayā* (one verse mark), 6b is *khumsa* (five verse mark), while 6c, and d, are '*ushra* or *Kuri* (ten verse mark). '*Ushra* is represented by circle made up of different decorations, as can be seen in Fig. 6c, and d.

Another feature of his Qur'anic writings is the *duā* of *khatm* (supplications invoked after the complete recitation of the Qur'an). The *duā* comes at the end of his work. The rationale behind the inclusion of the *duā* is to serve as a reminder for a reader (who has knowledge of it) after the completion recitation of the Qur'an or to expose a reader (who has no knowledge of it) to the *duā*. Similarly, the various locations for *sajda* (prostration) markers in Qur'ans are skillfully decorated in the same manner. All of the aforementioned features of his Qur'an had been employed by other *Ifriqi* Qur'anic writers in writing the Qur'an. There are some other features which will be discussed concurrently with non-Qur'anic text later in this chapter.

6.3 The Non-Qur'anic texts: manuscript, lithographed and typographic book Analysis

Having provided a general overview of the Qur'anic manuscript of al-Dāghirī, we now turn to a discussion of the non-Qur'an works. The greatest portion of non-Qur'anic works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, as earlier mentioned, are found either as manuscript book (al-Dāghirī 24 per cent and al-Fallātī 1.7 per cent), lithographed book (al-Dāghirī 11.1 per cent and al-Fallātī 71.4 per cent) or typographic book (al-Dāghirī 14.8 per cent and al-Fallātī 3.5 per cent) while unidentified is al-Dāghirī 48.1 per cent and al-Fallātī 23.2 per cent). Both lithograph and typograph descended

from manuscript, but how? In practice, the production of the manuscript, as earlier noted, is done in two steps: it is firstly written by al-Dāghirī and al-Fallāī in less calligraphic style than the style of the copyist, and secondly gets its definitive form in the hands of their copyists who beautifully copies it in more calligraphic style and make it ready for transformation into lithographic⁴⁹⁴ form prior to the onset of printing and mass-production. Lithograph or autographed manuscripts, as previously explained in chapter 3, were reproduced for the purpose of wide distribution, circulation, and market sale. The significant codicological and palaeographical difference between manuscripts and lithographs, which are apparent by direct comparison of page one from two books of the same title ‘*Da’awaa-tul at-Tijaanii,*’ one in manuscript and the other in lithograph, is given below as in Fig. 7:



The manuscript was written by al-Fallāī while the lithograph was written by his copyist, Malam Audu Nabara. While flipping through the pages of both manuscript and lithographed copies, I found out that there is no consistency in the number of lines per page in the manuscript, total of 239 lines; whereas there is consistency in the lithographed copy in the number of lines per page and each page consists of eleven lines in the first page with the last page having nine lines: a total of 262 lines. In the manuscript copy, only catchwords were used, in the lithographed copy both numbers and catchwords were used. However, in the lithographed copy frame was used,

⁴⁹⁴ Most of the copyists, as noted earlier in chapter 3, were products of the Qur’anic schools. According to Brigaglia, the copyists were either unprofessional or semi-professional who were locally educated in traditional system of Islamic education see Brigaglia 2011, 54.

whereas in the manuscript, no frame was used. Among the difference evidenced is in the colophon, while in the case of the lithographed copy, the date of completion is mentioned and title page as well, but in the manuscript, the date of completion is only written in the title page. Opening and closing doxology are mentioned, while the name of the copyist is not mentioned in both. While the lithographed copy looks fine, bold, and straighter and more consistent, and gives the full picture of the local calligraphical standard of the region, the manuscript has a lot of omissions, corrections, and insertions. The *Basmallah* in the manuscript is not vowelised and letter ‘*wa*’ is also omitted. For these obvious reasons, the lithographs are extremely important for the study of northern Nigerian and West African calligraphic styles, as they provide more consistent hands and some changes in the style of individual copyists. After these preliminary comments on the manuscript, lithographic and typographic books, let us return to the codicological and palaeographic analysis.

6.3.2 Book cover and Binding

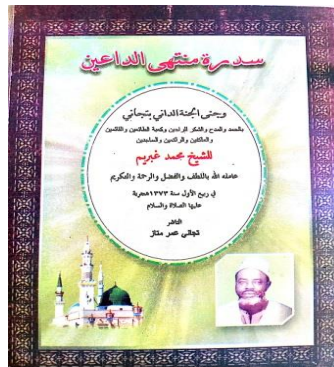
In the context of northern Nigeria, prior to the third decade of the twentieth century, cover page and bindings were not normally regarded as part of the manuscript book (see chapter 3) but were commissioned specially by the purchaser. Thus, all the manuscript books (Qur’anic and non-Qur’anic alike) are written on loose paper and are never stapled together nor are they stitched as a single book talk less of cover. The majority of the manuscripts of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī that I found have no cover while others have carton as immediate protector. Therefore, binding and cover page were not usually considered part of the ideal copy and not included in codicological description until the period in which books began to be sold with covers between 1930-1990s. Such covers (typograph exclusive) were produced in brown papers with an identifiable pattern (frames, diagonals, diagrams etc.) and consist of two covers (front and back). The front covers always contain the title of the book, the name of the author, opening doxology and brief about the book as in Fig. 6a. Whereas the back covers contain the name of the publishers, place of publication, address of the publishers and telephone number written in Arabic and English. The names of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are sometimes featured as the publishers as in Fig. 6a and 6b.

The typographs, during the computer age, have multiple colour covers with artwork designed not only to imitate the artistic designs of Islamic books from Middle East and North Africa but also to speak for the Islamic content of the book. With the new wave of technology and proliferation of beautifully designed books in the 1990s and 2000s, the publishers started to show photos of either mosques or the author on the front cover of the book. This was stimulated again

by the open practice of appropriating Islamic literature from the Islamic world, a process which the publishers felt they could replicate on their covers at least, to flow the trend (to look Islamic) or draw attention to the books. The characters used for title pages on the typographs are also different from the ones for the text of the book. The title and the name of the book was generally set prominently in bold or different ink above the mechanical centre of the page. Here are the two typical examples of the cover pages.



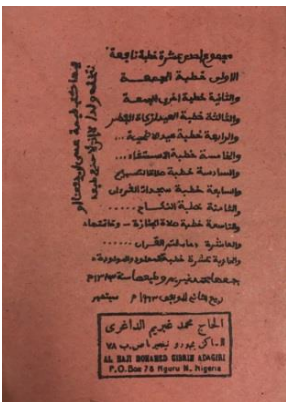
8a. lithograph



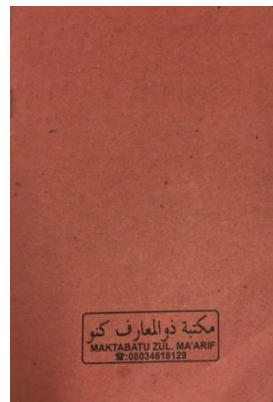
8b. typograph

Fig. 8: Cover pages of lithograph and typograph

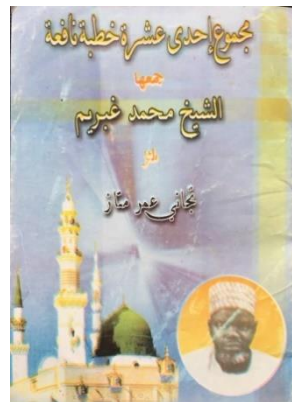
The book cover decoration in lithograph works of Shaykhs are on the front cover, but not always decorated in the same way and grouped them into five categories: square frame cover, crossbar frame cover, triangular frame cover, glossed cover and frameless cover.⁴⁹⁵ Whereas the book cover decoration in the typographs appear on front and back. To consider



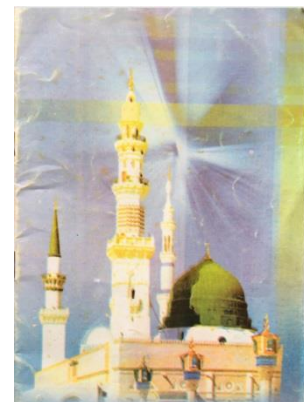
a. front cover



b. back cover



c. front cover



d. back cover

Fig. 9: Back and front covers of lithographs and typographs

⁴⁹⁵ It is worth observing here that the artworks on the lithographs using black ink as a literary technique and an emergent Islamic calligraphy is a brilliant handiwork of the copyist and the printers.

6.3.3 Title Page:

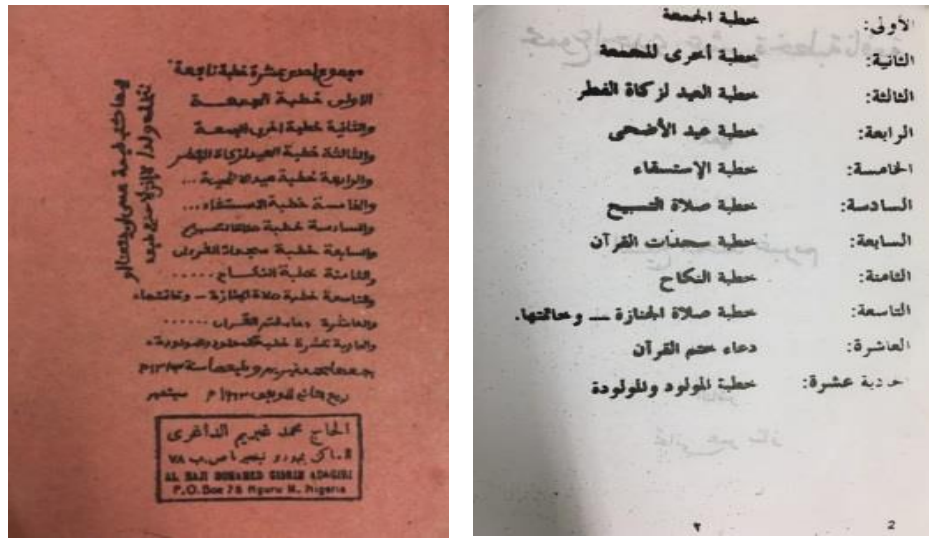
All in all, the non-Qur'anic works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī whether in manuscript, lithographs or typographs are identified by their titles which always reflected the subject of the work, but not all have a title page. At title page is the page which carries the title of the non-Qur'anic work and other information pertaining to its authorship and transmission.⁴⁹⁶ As already noted, the title-page is, to all intents and purposes, an invention of the age of printing and in many ways is therefore the equivalent in manuscript culture of the incipit used to identify a manuscript. The title page in the manuscripts and lithographs, is sometimes optional, as in some cases, is combined with the doxology or incorporated in the preface. In fact, many lithographs retained the manuscript preference for an incipit rather than a titlepage. The titles are normally written on the top of the verso page centred in the middle of the work and usually consisted of seven parts: (a) the title of the book (*al-kitāb al-masmū'*). The titles usually, but not always, begin with the words such as e.g. *hadha Kitāb....., hadhi Kitāb....., Kitābu.....etc.*, especially in the works of al-Fallātī; (b) and sometimes the titles are preceded by the *basmalah*, the *ḥamdalah*, *salawat*; (c) and the name of the author (*musmi'*), (d) reason for and benefits of the book, (e) the date of the composition or publication (*ta'rikh*), (f) copyright and contents, (g) the name and address of the publishers.⁴⁹⁷ The concise title page gives only the name of the work and the name of the author as well as the date of completion. Whereas in the typographs, the title page was usually a separate page and contains the same information as in manuscript and lithographs, but sometimes the name of the author is accompanied by the name of the patron who sponsored the publication of the edition on behalf of or consent of the family of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. Unlike the manuscripts and some lithographs, the title in the typographs was always placed on the recto.

6.3.4 Table of contents

In the context of northern Nigerian manuscript and print tradition, the use of table of content in the lithographs and typographs, from the codicological perspective, has also been noted. There is single work of al-Dāghirī with table of contents in both lithographed and typographic form. In the lithograph the table content is written on the cover pages as in Fig. 10a while in the typograph the table of content is written on a separate page immediately after title page as in Fig. 10b.

⁴⁹⁶ Gacek 2009, 277.

⁴⁹⁷ The place where the works were written is always mentioned attached to the name of the author.



a

b

Fig. 10: Examples of the table content in the works of al-Dāghirī: (a) lithographed form, (b) in typographic form.

6.3.5 Text Proper (*matn*)

The body of the text proper Arabic manuscript tradition is known as *matn* and it comes after the doxology,⁴⁹⁸ preface/introduction. Like in modern literature, the main body of the manuscripts and printed works, forms the largest part of the works in terms of pages. The narrative style adopted in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī was closely patterned on classical Arabic literature. In order to achieve greater clarity in the body of the main text, they used chapter headings (*tarājim, abwāb, fuṣūl*), rubrics (*kitābah bi-al-ḥumrah*), bold characters (*qalam ghalīz*) are used, not always, indicated by saying (*juz'*), or (*kitāb*).

6.3.6 Colophon or Tail of the text (*jard al-matn*)

This is an inscription at the end of the manuscripts and lithographs, usually on the last page or at least at the conclusion of a specific text. The colophon gives information about the production of the work, like information found today in the title page of a contemporary printed book or on the copyright page. The information contained in the colophon varies from one text to another as there is no strict rule. The typical colophon contains the date of completion of the work by the author, in addition to the date of completion of the copying or date of publication. The copyist's name does not always appear. As in the case of the title page or conclusion, the colophon also follows a traditional style of composition and involves a doxology or praise for Allah and Prophet

⁴⁹⁸ For more detailed information on doxology see next chapter of this thesis.

Muhammad. The colophon is not always written as different from the main text but sometimes is written in a pattern of decoration. This decoration is not as beautiful or colourful as the ones found in Qur'anic manuscripts. The colophons were occasionally arranged in a special way in twentieth century Nguru. The two styles of colophon are found in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī: (a) in particular, they were frequently written in a triangular block at the end of the manuscript or lithographs as in Fig. 11a; others were written in a triangular format as in Fig. 11b. So, with typographic books, the methods of composition and imposition, the format of the colophon disappeared.

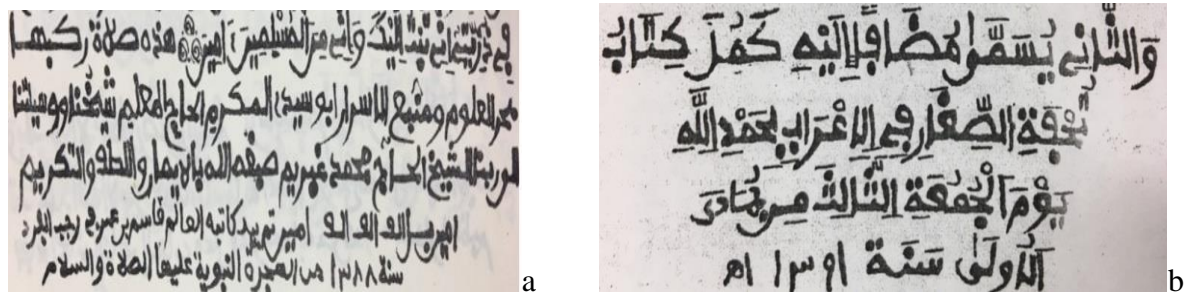


Fig. 11: Two examples of colophon pattern in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī: (a) colophon in rectangular form; (b) colophon in triangular form

6.3.7 Dates and dating (*ta'rīkh*)

The greatest palaeographers have been forced to admit that the dates in Arabic manuscripts are usually recorded in words and/or figures, giving the day, month and year. Before the introduction of printing technology, the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are dated according to the Islamic calendar, the Hijrah year (Anno Hegirae, A. H.) referred to as *al-sanah al-hijrīyah* (*al-qamarīyah*).⁴⁹⁹ However, with the introduction of printing press, a majority of the works have dates according to Gregorian calendar. The date can refer to either date of composition, copying or publication, and sometimes the distinction between composition and publication were made.

Not all al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's works are dated. In fact, out of the thirty manuscripts and lithographs of al-Dāghirī I collected 16.6 per cent contained the date they were written or copied on, while the rest bear no date. In total, fifty-six manuscripts and lithographs of al-Fallātī collected 16.0 per cent are dated while the rest have no date.⁵⁰⁰ The date is normally indicated in writing on the cover, title page or colophon; either by number as in Fig. 12f and words.⁵⁰¹ The most frequent

⁴⁹⁹ This calendar begins with the Hijra (emigration) of Muhammad from Makkah to Madinah, which took place on July 16th 622) and it is based on lunar as opposed to the solar year see Gacek 2009, 60-61.

⁵⁰⁰ The practice in which explicit dates of composition were not given is a long-standing tradition in northern Nigeria.

⁵⁰¹ The system of dating manuscripts in northern Nigeria sometimes is based on *ilm al-Huruf* or *ramz* calculations (chronogram) see for instance Hassan 1992, 188-189; see also Dahiru 2014, 75-80.

method of dating in the works varies but the complete date contains day of the week as in Fig. 12c, name of the month and the year. The name of the month is usually abbreviated as in Fig. 10a but the year is always written in full and preceded by the word *sana* as in 12c or more often, ‘*ām*-used as a logograph in the form of a long stroke below which is written the date as in Fig. 12a and e. The dates of those which are at present known are recorded in the following figure.

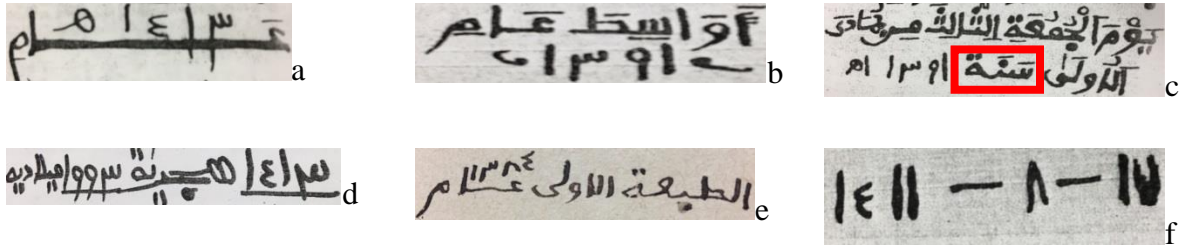


Fig. 12: The different date style and its components

6.3.8 The separators: Textual dividers and Paragraphs

One of the main features of a prose composition of twentieth century Nguru Tijānī Sufi scholars is the use of a variety of textual dividers, paragraphs (*tarqīm*) and punctuation marks and capitalisation but not in the modern sense.⁵⁰² However, the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī contain some phrases which were used as textual dividers and separators to indicate a different section or paragraphs, or meaningful phrase (*ayah* or *hadith*) as in Fig. 13. The texts under discussion record the following practices of indicating paragraph:

God, Glorified and	قال عزوجل
Sublime be He, said:	
The prophet Peace Be Upon Him, sai	قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم
The poor Shaykh said:	قال الشيخ الفقير
The knower of Allah Said:	قال العارف بالله تعالى
Islamic scholars say:	قال العلماء
In which Islamic Scholars said:	قال فيها العلماء
To proceed: I, the poor servant of my God, say	وبعد فأقول وأنا العبد الفقير لربي
To proceed:	اما بعد

⁵⁰² There was no standard system of paragraph and punctuation marks of Arabic texts in the classical or medieval periods, even twentieth century northern Nigeria.

Fig. 13: Examples of the most frequently separators found in the works of Shaykhs and their sources.

In the manuscripts, lithographs and typographs of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī there were theoretically different marks (*fawāṣil*) used as textual dividers and punctuation marks and below are some examples of them: (a) *ayah* (b) three dots (c) comma (d) hash & hash with dots (e) one dot (f) two dots (g) invited comma (h) bow mark (i) floret.⁵⁰³

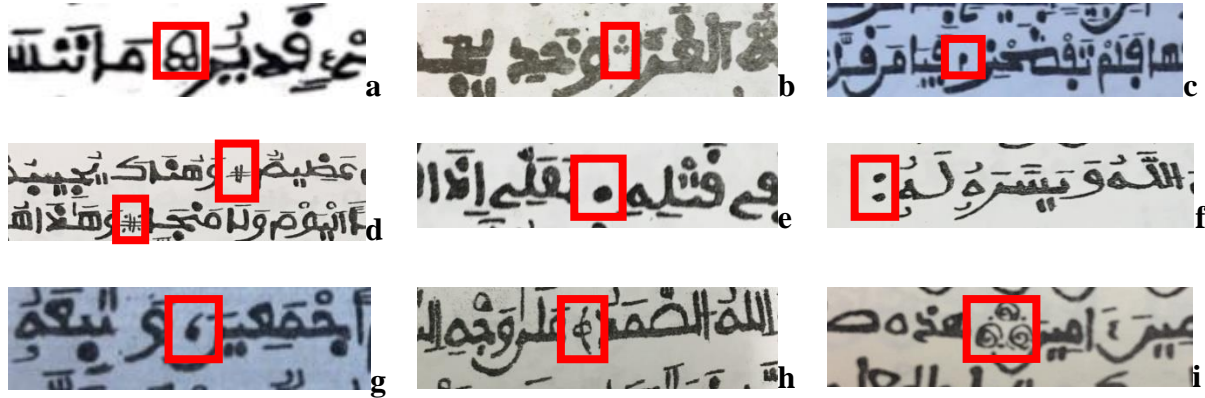


Fig. 14: Examples of the most frequently punctuation marks found in the works of Shaykhs

6.3.9 Foliation and Pagination

There are two main ways of keeping the folios and pages in order or sequence found in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī: foliation⁵⁰⁴ and pagination. Foliation can only be applied to manuscript while pagination can be applied to the lithographs and typographs. Before the introduction of printing press, in the manuscript books of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, the symbol used to number the sheets are called ‘*matashi*’ (catchword). *Matashi* or catchword (Ara. *ta’qīb* or *ta’qība*)⁵⁰⁵ is a word (s) written below the last line of each folio or page that repeats the first word (s) of the following page.⁵⁰⁶ The primary role of *matashi* is not only to aid the readers in ensuring the continuity of the reading process but also to perfectly serve the purpose of organising the pages and keeps the folios in order. However, when the printing press started gaining ground in northern Nigeria, and the manuscript of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were either printed or typographed. Both the lithographed and typographic works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were paginated by adding

⁵⁰³ For similar practice in other parts of the Islamic world see Roper 2013, 107.

⁵⁰⁴ Foliation is the numbering of folia in the manuscript as opposed to pagination see Gacek 2009, 105 and Deroche 2005, 65-101. The foliation AMT was not usually written by the original scribe but added at a later point in history of the manuscript.

⁵⁰⁵ Deroche added that other terms are sometimes used such as *ka’b* (stub), *waṣla* (link), or even *raqqāṣ* (dancer), but Gacek gives only *ta’qība* see Gacek 2009, 50 & 176; and Deroche 2005, 97.

⁵⁰⁶ The tradition of *matashi* is also found in handwritten Qur’an as will be seen later. For detailed discussion of the catchword see Gacek 2009, 50 & 176; see also Deroche 2005, 97.

either Eastern or Western Hindu-Arabic numerals to the catchwords, and sometimes all three methods of numbering (*matashi*, Eastern and Western Hindu-Arabic numerals) were used on a page.⁵⁰⁷

Numbering thus became an artistic feature of the page in rare cases. In the case of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, the catchwords, in their works were either written (a) obliquely (b) horizontally below the rule-border, (c) inside or above the rule-border (d) on the rule-border. Moreover, in most all the lithographs and typographs, Eastern and Western Hindu-Arabic numerals were written at the top of the page and at the bottom of the page or both as in Fig. 13e.



Fig. 15: Examples of the catchwords found in the works of the Shaykhs

6.3.10 Arabic script and *Ajami* script

The Arabic script of the Maghrebi type which according to Zahradeen was derived from the ‘Kufic’ style is the type that had been predominantly used up to the present especially in the numerous Qur’anic schools in northern Nigeria.⁵⁰⁸ The *ulama* in northern Nigeria combined the *Maghrībī* (also called Western or *Ifriqi*) script and elements of the Egyptian (Eastern) variety used commonly in print to develop locally used Arabic script. For instance, the following letters ف (*fa’un*); ك (*kafun*); ص (*sadun*); ح (*ha’un*); م (*mim*); (ha) and some others are written in a distinct way developed locally by the scholars in northern Nigeria. The ‘fa’ in northern Nigeria has a dot beneath and not above while the ‘qaf’ is written with a dot on top which is different from the Egyptian (Eastern) type that has two dots on top. Majority of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were written in the above-mentioned style.

⁵⁰⁷ Still based on the information I got during interview, the Hindu-Arabic of 123 on the pages of the lithographs and the publishers added typographs. Since the books are obviously intended for an Arabic literate-audience, the readers prefer to use the catchwords as a simpler guide to the reading process of the book while the numbers as reference to individual pages.

⁵⁰⁸ Zahradeen 1976, 13.

6.3.11 Scribal variant and Hands Identity

There are several major divisions of script in AMT such as *Kufic*, *Maghrebi*, *Naskh* etc., but here we referred to what Adam Gacek defines as the model that a writer has in mind when he/she writes while a “hand” is what he/she actually puts down on the page.⁵⁰⁹ Both script and hand display a strong identity of the manuscript and tell exactly who produces it and where it comes from due its certain palaeographical features.⁵¹⁰ Thus, a manuscript may be written in several ‘hands,’ all belonging to basically the same ‘script;’ on the contrary, a particular scribe may be able to write in more than script. In Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria, there are three major styles of writing in either Arabic or Hausa, Kanuri, Fulfulde *Ajami* form.⁵¹¹ The first is generally called *kafe*, meaning the vertical and horizontal strokes are equal in thickness and thinness, in this kind of writing as in Fig. 16a.⁵¹² This is what probably Andrea Brigaglia refers to as *Kanawi* script due to its thicker decoration. The second is *jirge*, diagonal type of writing which can slant in either direction or the vertical stroke is thinner while horizontal stroke is thicker as in Fig. 16b. The last, but not the least in significance, is *maida kama*, the exact copying of either of the two or any manuscript from another parts of the Islamic world.⁵¹³ The manuscript and lithographed books of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were written in the first form, *kafe*, in which they demonstrated a distinctive style in *Barnawi* and *Kanawi* scripts.⁵¹⁴ The handwritings are fine (*khatt daqīq*, *kitābah daqīqah*, *qarmaṭah*), clear, and bold (*khatt ghalīz*). But there are two works of al-Fallātī in which the copyist makes use of the technique of horizontal elongation of the tails of certain letters as in Fig. 16d; and sometimes elongated the letters (*madd*, *maṭṭ*, *mashq*) as in Fig. 16c.

⁵⁰⁹ Gacek 2009, 241. However, he pointed out that for the traditionalists, accuracy and clarity of handwriting were more important than its calligraphic quality (*ḥusn al-khatt*) see Roper 2013, 107.

⁵¹⁰ Deroche 2006, 219.

⁵¹¹ Gacek 2009, 241. However, in Nguru the influence of the Borno and the Kano of handwriting were felt as observed in the twentieth century Nguru calligraphic styles.

⁵¹² For one to produce *kafe*, the nib of the calamus must be in square nib form (also known as *bakin kurciya*) displayed in chapter two.

⁵¹³ Gacek argues that this attitude of imitating the scripts of the manuscripts they copied, which could have been written in another region or country is what led to the difficulty in the classification of Maghrebi scripts and absence standard calligraphy in the region see Gacek 2009, 147-150.

⁵¹⁴ Despite the fact, the northern Nigerian hand in Arabic script attracted the attention of European scholars from the beginning of the colonial period, its typology is still a subject of controversies among scholars. For a more detailed analysis of the theories, debates, features and origins of the typology of the scripts see Brigaglia 2011.

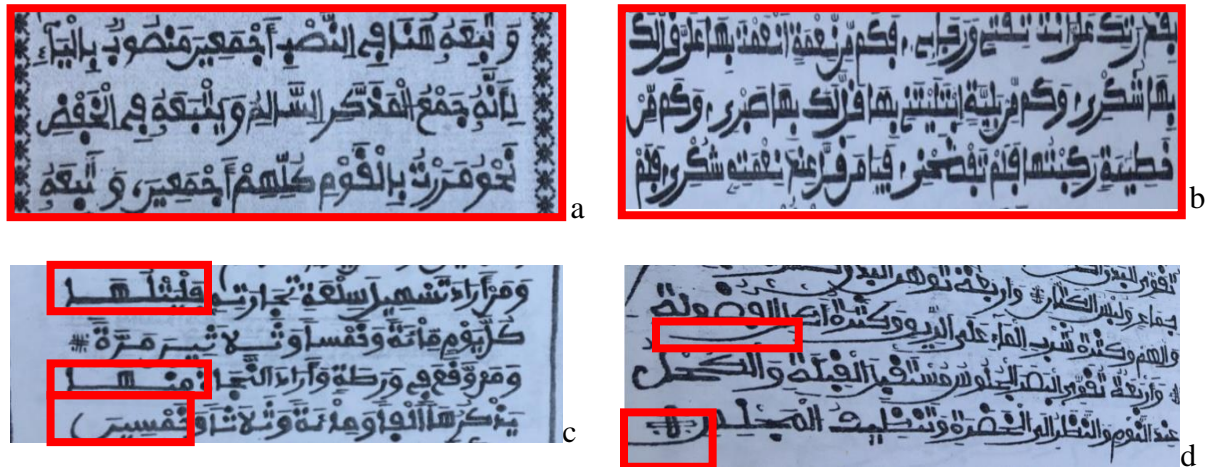


Fig. 16: Fragment copies from the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī showing the examples of (a) *kafe*, (b) *jirge*, (c) *mashq* (d) elongation of the tails of certain letters

6.3.12 Cacographic errors and Corrections

Scribal errors (*khaṭa*, ' *ghalaz*) and making a corrections (*taṣḥīḥ*, *iṣlāḥ* or *bayān*) in Arabic manuscript tradition can be either unintentional (unwitting) or intentional (deliberate).⁵¹⁵ Unintentional mistakes are caused by a number of factors such as spelling, cacography,⁵¹⁶ and grammatical error, replacement of a sentence or passage.⁵¹⁷ The works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are not devoid of the scribal errors. In the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, there are many ways of correcting these errors such as spelling out of the affected word in the margin by writing it out in isolated letterforms, or repeating the word next to the affected word. There are several symbols to indicate the corrected word, sentence or passage in the main text such as simple stroke, small circle, letter *tā*, un-pointed *bā*, holograph,⁵¹⁸ a reversed *mīm* or deleting the mistake.⁵¹⁹ One of the excellent examples of such cacographic errors can be found in the *Da'awat al-Tijāniyya* of al-Fallātī.

⁵¹⁵ Gacek 2009, 234.

⁵¹⁶ Gacek defines cacographic errors as scribal errors (mistakes) which occur when the word is written illegibly or smudged due to too much ink at the of the pen. Others were lack of familiarity of the subject or script while copying the text, omissions, additions, substitutions, metathesis, *taṣḥīf* etc. see Gacek 2009, 234-235.

⁵¹⁷ Lliteras 2017, 157-158. However, the correction can be carried out by the author, copyist or proof-reader.

⁵¹⁸ A short draft by the author for replacement or adding to the mistaken section see Lliteras 2017, 158.

⁵¹⁹ Lliteras 2017, 158.

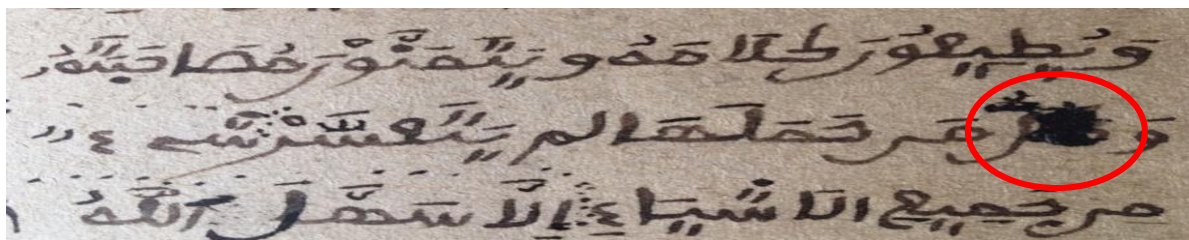


Fig. 17: Cacographic errors identified in the work of al-Fallātī's *Da'awat al-Tijānīyya*.

6.3.13 Omissions and insertions

Omissions are among the most common scribal errors in the manuscripts and lithographs of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. The word (s) omitted in the process of transcription (*saqat, isqāt, naqṣ*) were either inserted between the lines, (i.e. in the interline), if the space allows, or in the margin (*takhrīj, ikhrāj, mukhraj*).⁵²⁰ In order to indicate the exact spot where the omission occurred (*mawḍi' al-naqṣ, mawḍi' al-sāit*) a reference mark (*khaṭṭ al-takhrīj, 'alāmat al-takhrīj, takhrījah*) or dotted lines (*nuqaṭ mutatāliyah*) were used linking the place of omission with the insertion as in Fig. 18a and b.⁵²¹ The omission thus restored becomes in effect an insertion (*laḥaq*). An interesting example of making omissions and insertions are found in the works of al-Fallātī as given in Fig. 18.

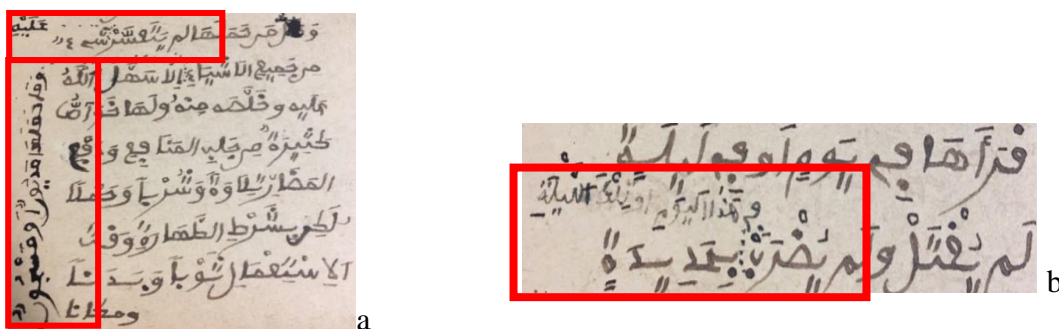


Fig. 18: Two examples of omissions and insertions (a) omitted words placed in the inner margin, (b) omitted words inserted in between the lines

6.3.14 Erasures and cancellations

There are also number of erasures and cancellations in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. The most frequent way to remove superfluous words (*ziyādah, takrār*) in their works are: (a) *kasḥ*, i.e. erasure with a penknife, also known as *bashr* (scrapping) or *ḥakk* (rubbing);⁵²² (b)

⁵²⁰ Gacek suggests that these words are primarily associated with omissions/insertions and thus synonymous with *laḥaq* (also *ilḥaq, mulḥaq*) see Roper 2013, 110.

⁵²¹ The method, however, was said to be disliked by al-Qāḍī 'Iyād (1083-1149) and Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (1181-1245) who rightly point out that it was not satisfactory as it could obscure the text, particularly if many insertions were to be made see Roper 2013, 110.

⁵²² This method, however, involves removing a diacritical point (*nuqṭah*) or vowel (*shaklah*).

maḥw, removing the ink by using paper eraser; (c) *ḍarb* (also known as *al-shaqq* in Maghreb), i.e. cancellation and can be effected by either drawing a continuous line (*khatt, mumtadd, khatt muttaṣil*) over the word (s) to be cancelled, or by drawing, in similar fashion, an interrupted line (*khatt munfaṣil*) on the affected area (s). The cancelled word (s) are replaced by writing new word (s) above the cancellation or next to it.⁵²³

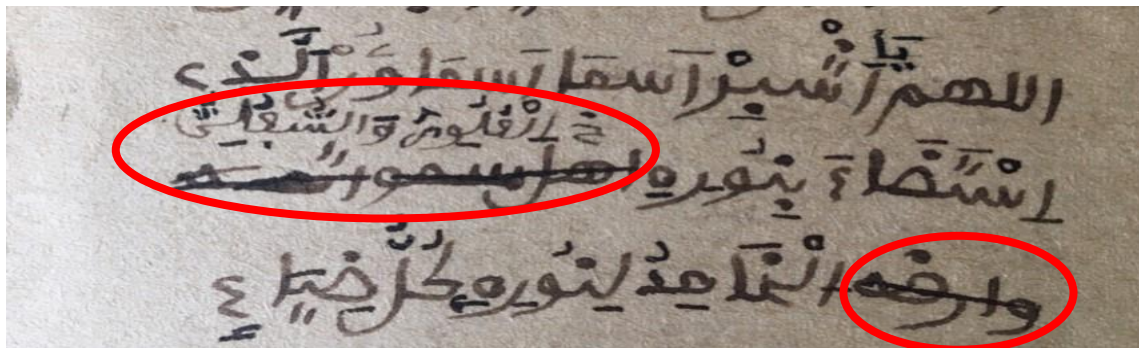


Fig. 19: Examples of the most frequently erasures and cancellations found in the works of Shaykhs

6.3.15 Scribal Qur’anic and poetic verses

Scribal poetic verses in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī can be Qur’anic verse (s) or poetic verse (s) added beneath or around the colophon in the form of a prayer or some dictum.⁵²⁴ Frequently encountered are the following Qur’anic and poetic verses: (a) Qur’anic scribal verse, Q. 37.107;⁵²⁵ (b) poetic verse.⁵²⁶

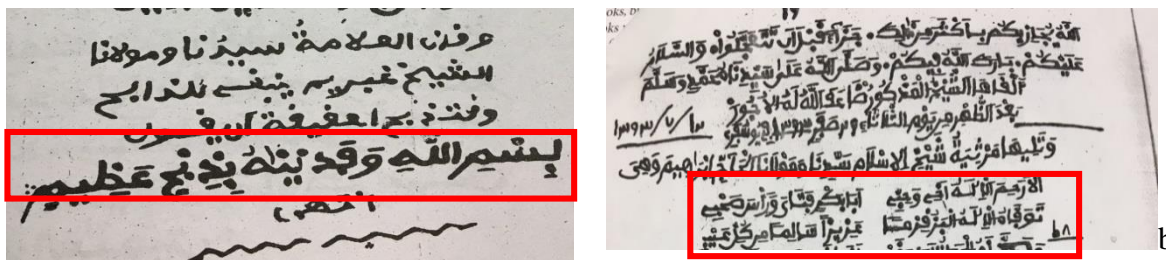


Fig. 20: Examples of the scribal Qur’anic and poetic verses found in the works of Shaykhs

6.3.16 Critical Apparatus

This is the process in which the scribes, copyist, proof-reader and the author placed additional information either in the margin or between the lines (interline and interlineations), and

⁵²³ Gacek pointed out that *maḥw* is better than the *kashf* as it inflicts less damage on the writing surface and *ḍarb* is better than the two.

⁵²⁴ Gacek, gives only the first form and does not attribute the meaning of the second form ‘poetic verses’ which is my own coinage.

⁵²⁵ Al-Dāghirī, *Majmoo’u ihdaa ashara khutba Annaafi’a min khutbatil Jumu’ati ilaa khutbatil Maulid*, 64.

⁵²⁶ Al-Fallātī, *Thalaathatu Majaalis*, 18.

sometimes beneath the colophon as an attempt at establishing the transmitted text. The added information is not in any way an explanation of the text as in the case of gloss and scholia or insertion of missing information, but an entirely different information the scribe or scholars decided to add to the text. This process could also involve one or several people at different times. When two or more scholars are involved it is often easily detectable because of the different styles of writing present in the manuscript or printed edition; and due to this process, textual variants or ink colour are usually exposed. In the case of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, the critical apparatus is found in manuscripts, lithographs and typographs.

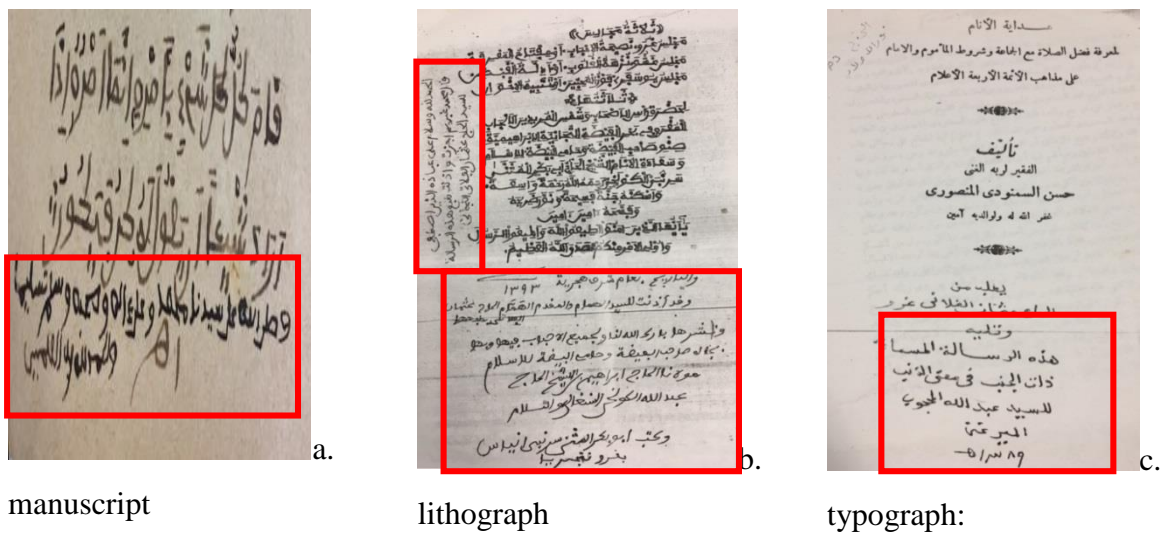


Fig. 21: Example of critical apparatus from the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī (a) in the manuscript, the *salawat* was added in more blackish ink than that of the main text; (b) in the lithograph, handwritten information was added in the margin and beneath the main text, using very light ink; (c) in the typograph, handwritten information was added beneath the main text, using nearly the same ink.

6.3.17 Ownership (*tamlīkāt*, *tamalukāt*) and Copyright Statements

Ownership or ownership statement is another feature of Arabic manuscript and facsimile, which are generally found at the beginning or ending after the colophon of a manuscript. It also gives the owner, date, circulation, and price, collections of a library and even the value of a manuscript.⁵²⁷ While copyright means a legal right to copy, or to restrict or control the right of copying. In the case of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, the legitimacy of the copyright is recognised in some books and it is stated clearly on both the lithographs and the typographs that whosoever infringes the copyright would face the wrath of law. Few works could be copied but subject to authorization of the author and no part of the work would be changed or removed. The

⁵²⁷ Lliteras 2017, 148.

ownership and copyright statements were boldly written on either the front cover page or title page of the lithographs and typographs. The detail of the copyright statement is given below.

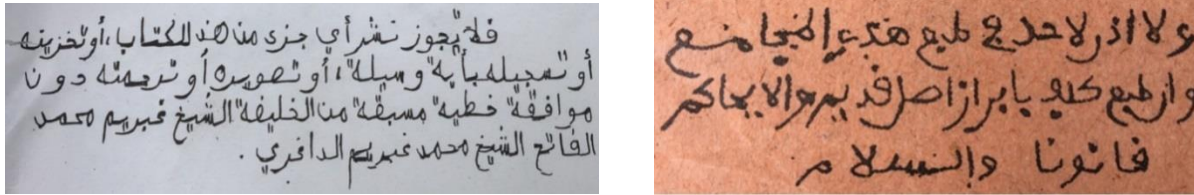
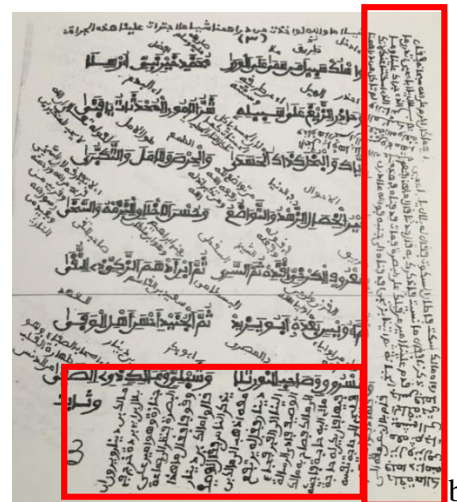
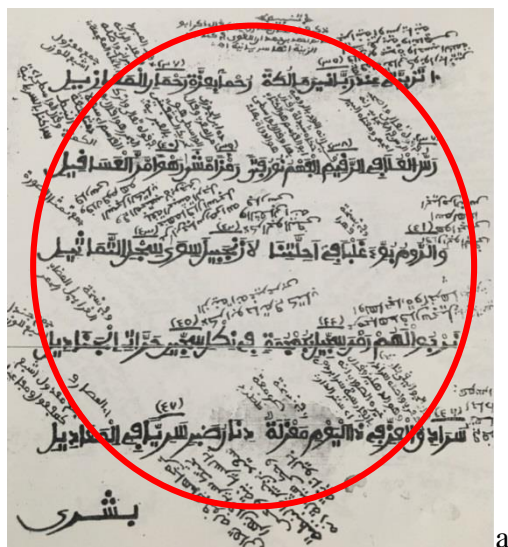


Fig. 22: Examples of the Ownership and Copyright found in the works of Shaykhs

6.3.18 Glosses and scholia

A gloss (also known as scholium, pl. scholia) is defined as marginal comment and/or interlinear annotation denoting or explaining a word or group of words in the main text (*matn*).⁵²⁸ The glosses and annotations (*ḥawāshin, fawā'id, tanbīhāt*) concerning mistakes, variants and the like, in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, are written in the margin.⁵²⁹ Glosses are often indicated by writing above them or at their ends *ḥāshiyah, fā'idah*, the letter *ḥā'* (initial form) or *ḥā* and *shin* (joined together). In the manuscript, the marginal glosses apparently written in the same hand as the text, but in a smaller script than in the main text, and frequently obliquely or upside down in order not to confuse it with the main text. Throughout the works, the usual way to introduce glosses was to write the word *tasbīh* above the gloss in full or in the form of an abbreviation. Most of the glosses in their works are *sharḥ* often in the form of logographs.



⁵²⁸ Gacek 2009, 114.

⁵²⁹ The glosses and annotations are not only written within the text, but sometimes also on the title pages.

Fig. 23: Two examples of glosses in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī showing numerous (a) interlinear and (b) marginal glosses

6.3.19 Ruling and Page layout

Rules are simply lines (vertical and/or horizontal) used by the scribe or copyist to form a straight line(s) (*sutūr*) or border, while page layout is the arrangement of various elements of the main text on the page including the margin, borders and decorations as well as the relationship between these different elements.⁵³⁰ The most visible sign of a decision to organise the area of the page is undoubtedly the ruling, by which is meant the line or lines traced on the writing material in such a way as to allow the copyist to write as straight and as evenly as possible.⁵³¹ Throughout the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, the body of the texts were arranged in square block or column without lines in the manuscripts, but in some lithographs, frames were used to limit the writing,⁵³² although the pattern of ruling and the frame varied significantly in all the lithographs. As Adam Gacek's illustrations demonstrate, word-division (*faṣl*) was discouraged in Islamic manuscript tradition, however, in order to avoid the word-division at the end of the line, the writing-on-line is extended sometimes to the margin as in Fig. 24.⁵³³

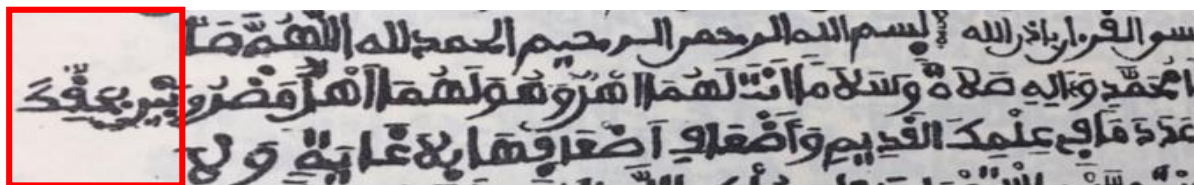


Fig. 24: Examples of extension of writing to the margin

6.3.20 Borders and Frames

The rule-border and frames are also identified in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, particularly in the lithographs. The rule-border is usually a single line, or several parallel lines (rules) drawn around the main text in black colour as in Fig. 25a, e and f. While the frame, in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, is a decorative pattern or band drawn around the text, and sometimes even on the front cover. It is usually designed and drawn by a machine and has a

⁵³⁰ Gacek 2009, 177; see also Deroche 2005, 167.

⁵³¹ In order to produce straight lines, the papers were ruled in blind by means of the fingernails (*tazfir*) or by using a device called *miṣṭarah*. Deroche 2005, 160.

⁵³² In a chapter of Deroche which was devoted to ruling and page layout, he suggests that the codicologist should try to find out whether the scribes and the copyists used the laid lines of the paper for evenness of the page layout see Deroche 2006, 159.

⁵³³ Gacek argues that word-division at the end of the line, particularly when this involved the word Allāh (e.g. 'Abd Allāh, Rasūl Allāh) was common in the early Islamic manuscript tradition but it was recently discouraged. Thus, three divergent methods were used: elongation (*maṭṭ*), contraction (*jam*) and superscription (*ta'liq*). For detailed discussion and examples see Gacek 2009, 146-147; see also Roper 2013, 107.

beautiful flowery design as in Fig. 25b, c and d. The rule-borders and frames were often provided after the page or manuscript was copied and could have been done by a ruler/frame maker (*mujadwil*), the person who specialised in this type of decoration. However, frame making is part of arts and crafts and held in high esteem in northern Nigeria.

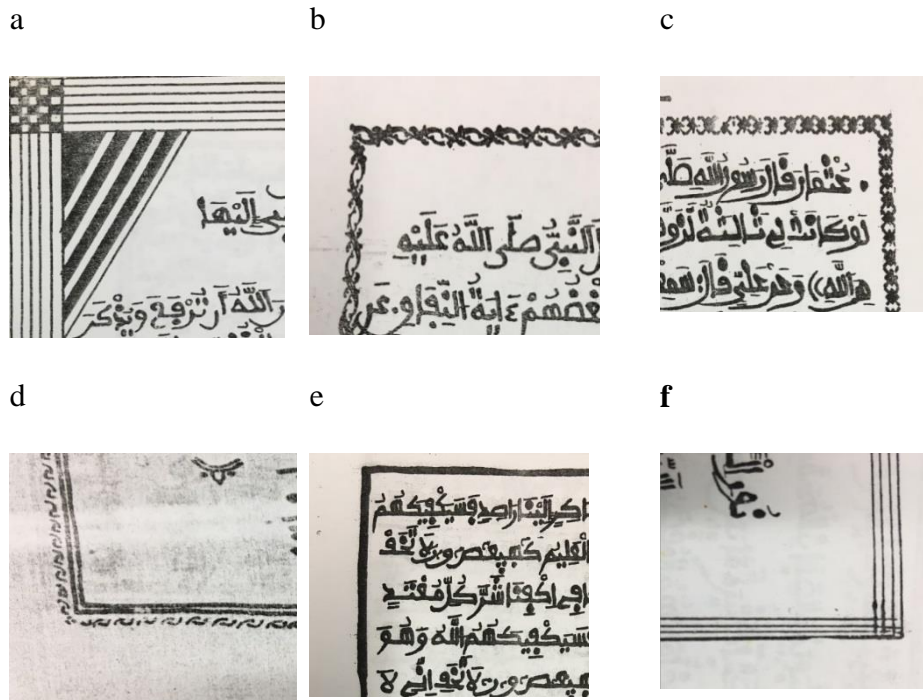


Fig. 25: Various types of rule-borders and frames

6.3.21 Diacritical marks and vowelisation

One of the major problems in the palaeographical analysis and textual criticism of the early manuscripts is that without either diacritical mark or vowelisation, the chances of scribal error in copying were enormously increased. Gacek pointed out that the most common errors made in Arabic manuscripts are misplacement of either vowels or diacritical marks (*tahrīf*) or an outright misspelling (*taṣhīf*). The use of diacritical marks and vowelisation of unclear or ambiguous, or proper names was necessary in order to avoid such mistakes.⁵³⁴ The works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were heavily diacritized and vowelised,⁵³⁵ they are clear throughout, though there a few instances where the text did not have vowels or was partially vowelized as in Fig. 26a. The diacritical marks were part of the script and were therefore written in the same ink as the next using

⁵³⁴ Roper 2013, 109; see also Deroche 2005, 219.

⁵³⁵ For more discussion on the use of diacritical marks and vowelisation in AMT see Gacek 2009, 288-290.

the same calamus, but vocalization was executed using different calamus because the vowel-signs were thinner than the conventional writing in the main text. The cover or title page carrying the title of the works of al-Dāghirī, (nearly 80%) in manuscript, lithograph and typographic forms are un-vowelized or partially vowelized as in 26b.

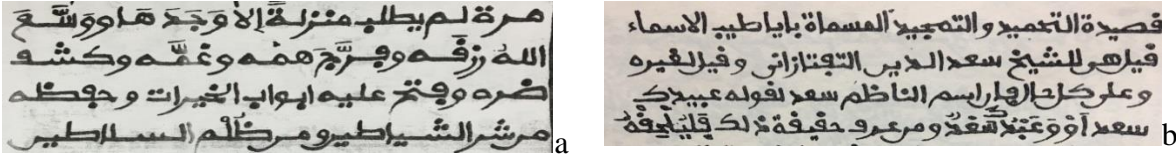


Fig. 26: Examples of Diacritical marks and vowelisation found in the works of the Shaykhs

6.3.22 Paper (Hau: *takarda*, in Ara. *qirṭās* or *waraq*)

Inasmuch as there is hardly any evidence of local manufacturing in Nguru and other parts of northern Nigeria, all the manuscript books of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī without exception are written on smooth and brown papers, bearing watermark, but some papers do not bear a watermark (perhaps woven paper).⁵³⁶ The laid paper is the type of paper which shows a pattern of lines (laid and chain) which are the result of the natural pressure exerted by the weight of the pulp in the mould.⁵³⁷ This was proved by the watermark on the papers as in *Da'awaa-tul at-Tijaaniyya* of al-Fallātī. The woven paper on the other hand, is a type of paper in which no laid or chain lines are visible.⁵³⁸ The sheet formats and sizes are varied considerably: Some manuscripts are composed of bifolia produced by folding a single sheet in four, and they bear no trace of stitching or bounding.⁵³⁹ In the period of the machine-made book: lithograph and typograph, however, it may be impossible to determine the original size of the paper before folding. The lithograph and typograph formats are as follows: unfolded (broadsheet/broadside), folded one, folded twice (quarto), folded thrice, folded four times (for more discussion on paper see also chapter three of this thesis).

⁵³⁶ Watermark is the image on paper which can be seen when viewing a sheet against light or through filigranology. However, Gacek suggests that the woven paper used in AMT in the 19th and 20th centuries might have imitation watermarks see Gacek 1984, 2009, 292; see also Biddle 2017, 27-68.

⁵³⁷ For good analysis of the paper see Gacek 2009, 139; also, Deroche 2005, 47-63; Biddle 2017, 27-68.

⁵³⁸ Gacek 2009, 292; see also Deroche 2005, 47-63.

⁵³⁹ Bifolium is a rectangular piece of writing material folded down the middle so that it forms two leaves or folio having two sides, called pages. The first side of the folio to be read is called recto while the second called verso. A good example of bifolium in my corpus is *Da'awat al-Tijānīyya* of al-Fallātī. For more information see Deroche 2005, 65.

6.3.23 Signature and Autographs

Autographs, in manuscript studies, refers to the short note which contains a writer's signature or brief statement signed by him.⁵⁴⁰ The issue of autographs and signature in which the writers identify themselves is a major problem in the case of Tijānī Sufi writers and poets in twentieth century Nguru. Although some of the writers were able to write their names usually at the end of the work, many of them wrote without names or signature and this writer is yet to know the wisdom behind such attitude. In the case of the works written by al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, all of them are carrying the names of the Shaykhs. Even if a writer disregards self-identification, there is another way of identifying a writer. This is possible only if one can get the manuscript in which the name of the author is usually written immediately after the opening and closing doxology or mentions his name in the work, especially poem. For instance:

محمد المدعو غَيْرِيْمٌ⁵⁴¹ ساقه * به يطلب الرضوان عند إمام

V38. It is one named Shaykh Muḥammad Ghibrīma delivered (this message) who with it looking for the appreciation from my leader (prophet Muḥammad).⁵⁴²

6.4 Popularity and Distribution of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's works

Importance of literary text and its public presence or absence is determined by the nature of popularity, distribution, readership, and function of the text. This section mainly focuses attention on some of the issues surrounding the popularity, distribution, functions of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's mystical writings. The manuscripts and facsimiles of al-Dāghirī were in circulation in Egypt, Beirut, Nigeria, Ghana, Niger, Sudan, Cameroun etc. I will specifically look at their popularity, distribution, and functions within Nigeria as a case study. The section finally shows al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's access to their audience for the transmission of knowledge through their writings. It also submits that the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are well-known and read throughout Nguru, almost all the cities and towns in northern Nigeria and in the neighbouring countries of West Africa.

6.4.1 Popularity and Distribution of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's Manuscripts

As mentioned earlier, al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī wrote several works which were published and sold in large numbers. However, at the initial stage of his writings, al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's works were not published and disseminated in handwritten copies among the Muslims especially

⁵⁴⁰ Lliteras 2017, 150 citing Gacek 2009, 14-16.

⁵⁴¹ This is the name of the author.

⁵⁴² Al-Dāghirī, *Inhaa'us-salaam*.

the Tijānī Sufi scholars throughout northern Nigeria. This was because right from the early days of their writings, al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī became noticed for the richness of their works. Their manuscript books were obtainable both in cities and rural areas, but a great concentration of the literature remains with the Sufi scholars of the rural settlements.⁵⁴³ These manuscript books were distributed and circulated through six major ways: Firstly, they were absolutely circulated in manuscript form whereby those who gained access to texts and made copies for themselves.⁵⁴⁴ Secondly, manuscripts in the possession of a Sufi were copied by his disciples in the course of their religious studies (*darasu*) under his tutelage.⁵⁴⁵

Thirdly, the preachers helped greatly in the wider circulation of the manuscript books during this period. They were said to have tended to spread the manuscripts even more than the authors based on house to house distribution and preaching.⁵⁴⁶ The fourth method in which the manuscript works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were disseminated is through the use of mosques as a preaching ground. In this regard the congregation of the Friday prayer offers an important opportunity for addressing a larger audience. During the prayer (on Friday) the preacher will read as many texts as possible in the Muslim gathering and this offers a great chance for the non-literate Muslims to know more about the tenants of their religion.⁵⁴⁷ The fifth channel of distribution was the singing or recitation of the texts, particularly *Madh* literature during *Maulud an-Nabi* or as a means of livelihood of destitute to which the text had been given as alms.⁵⁴⁸ These methods of distribution of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī remained important in the circles of communities in northern Nigeria and some parts of Niger Republic.⁵⁴⁹

6.4.2 Popularity of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's Facsimiles

By the term “facsimile” in the context of northern Nigeria, I refer to the locally printed books, in lithograph and typograph forms, which Hunwick called “market edition.” Muhammad al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are among those authors whose facsimiles, years after they died, are still visibly present in the libraries, religious bookshops, and pavement bookstalls of the modern Sufi world. For instance, their facsimiles are available in almost any bookstore in Kano, Nguru and

⁵⁴³ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

⁵⁴⁴ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

⁵⁴⁵ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

⁵⁴⁶ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

⁵⁴⁷ This tradition still exists in Nguru central, but it now monopolized by Shi'a preachers.

⁵⁴⁸ Furniss 1995, 13.

⁵⁴⁹ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

other cities and towns in northern Nigeria, one cannot fail to notice the presence of books such as the *Jihazū Saarih*. There are many possible factors for the popularity of their facsimiles such as the existence of the Tijānī writings in printed forms and their availability in the markets throughout Nigeria.

In relation to this, northern Nigeria has the highest concentration of Sufi Shaykhs and *Murids*, especially Tijānī followers. Apart from religion (Islam), two agencies helped to spread of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī among the people inside and outside Nigeria. These were Tijānī connections or networks and the arrival of the printing technology in northern Nigeria.

6.4.2.1 Tijānī writings are for all

The Tijānī writings are not limited to any social or religious class; they are writings for the entire Muslims, of all strata of society. For instance, the Tijānī writings of twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars, particularly the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, reveals that even at this time Tijānī writing was quite popular among the non-Tijānī readers. For instance, many Wahabi/Salafi students and teachers claimed to have read many writings of al-Dāghirī, and one of them had this to say:

Even though, he has demonstrated his belief in the virtues (sic) life of Sufism in book of his books, *Nata'ij assafar fi salat ala Sayyidil Bashar (Mafaatihū Judi fi salati ala Sayyidil wujūd)* is a complete description of one's attachment with his beloved Prophet. It served as a source of inspiration to me, to always reaffirm my loyalty to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) it is indeed an intellectual work worthy of praise.⁵⁵⁰

That is borne out by the charisma of the Shaykh contributed to the wider acceptance of the works even by non-Tijānī Shaykhs and murids.

6.4.2.2 Fayda Tijāniyya network and the commencement of *Mawlud an-Nabiy*

Fayda Tijāniyya network and the commencement of *Mawlud an-Nabiy* in northern Nigeria contributed to the dissemination and popularity of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī through its use in the public devotional gathering and spiritual activities. As earlier noted in the previous chapter, some of the poetry and prose were composed for zāwiya's occasional and annual celebration performances such as *Mawlud an-Nabiy*. The same small books vendors and stallholders also display the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī during the celebration of *Mawlud an-Nabiy*, and I bought several books there. It is now common in most of the mosques in the urban areas of northern Nigeria, the small books vendors and stallholders are the suppliers for the

⁵⁵⁰ Tahir 2006, 87-88.

Tijānīyya brotherhood agents who travel the country from one place to another selling the Tijānī works including the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. This has led to wider circulation and popularity of Tijānī works and an increase in the number of the Tijānī writers.

6.4.2.3 Arrival of printing technology

Another factor that contributed to the popularity of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī is the arrival of printing technology. After the arrival of printing technology, the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī became even more popular with the publication of their works in both lithograph and typograph forms. As a prolific writer with an entrepreneurial mind, al-Dāghirī later ventured into book publication business and started publishing his works by himself. The reason why he started taking his works for publication by himself was because in the late 1950's, al-Dāghirī realized that the Nigerian book market, due to increase in printing facilities, was rapidly expanding beyond its traditional borders. It was for this reason that al-Dāghirī started taking his works for publication to Gaskiya Corporation in Zaria and Northern Maktabat Printing Press in Kano from the 1960's. After his works have been published, they were distributed to various book markets in Kano by himself and his disciple Alhaji Mohammed Sani Kurna.

6.4.2.4 High concentration of Tijānī audience

High concentration of Tijānī audience is another factor that contributed to the popularity of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, as well as the arrival of printing technology. In northern Nigeria, for historical reasons, there is a high concentration of Tijānī audience in the cities, towns, and villages. They are also found in the municipality, and in the metropolitans, such as Bauchi, Kano, Kaduna, Sokoto, Katsina, Maiduguri, Zaria, Sokoto, Plateau, Zamfara, Gombe, Katsina, Niger, Abuja, Kebbi, Nassarawa to mention a few. At present, there are also many works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī in individual libraries and in the market throughout in the above-mentioned cities. Take the most populous city Kano, for instance, being the commercial capital of northern Nigeria and the headquarters of Tijānīyya in West Africa and, has of course, the greatest concentration of Tijānī audience.

In addition, most of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are published in the city of Kano and it has the highest marketing outlets for Tijānī works. Interestingly, Nguru, famous as a centre of Tijānī manuscript culture, and the town where al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī lived and died, has a concentration of Tijānī audience. Within the township, there are several works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, but outside the town, in all regions and districts, and in most villages, there few works.

Nguru has a shortage of publishing presses; none of their works was published in the town. In the south-western parts of Nigeria, such as Lagos, Ibadan, Oshogbo, Ilorin, Abeokuta, Akure, there are teeming Tijānī audience. The works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī facsimiles are found in all these cities. This fact is easy to establish by considering the numbers of their followers in the areas due to al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's frequent visits to particularly Lagos and Ibadan formerly being the headquarters of the Tijānīyya in the region. Some countries in West Africa have been included in the survey.

From my survey, it appears that outside of Nigeria, the works of al-Dāghirī are mainly found in Niger Republic, Ghana, Cameroun, Togo, Benin, Senegal, Mali, and of course, Chad. All in all, for the time being we can safely state that, geographically, the facsimile works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are currently enjoyed in at least seven countries in West Africa: Nigeria, Niger Republic, Ghana, Cameroun, Senegal, Mali, and of course, Chad. The works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are still used in teaching the doctrines of Tijānīyya in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Lebanon which are less accessible to me and other areas which are therefore unknown. The popularity of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī solely depend on the channels of distributions and circulation of the works.

6.4.3. Distribution of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's Facsimiles

The production of facsimiles is the way in which printing presses facilitated availability of printed reading materials as discussed above. The facsimiles of al-Dāghirī were in circulation in Egypt, Beirut, Nigeria, Ghana, Niger, Sudan, Cameroun etc. I will specifically look at their distribution and circulation within Nigeria as a case study. The spread of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's facsimiles to other major cities in northern Nigeria began from Kano. The importance of Kano as a centre of their facsimiles was strengthened by the *fayda* Tijānī distribution facilities for such writings. Pamphlets and books have spread through the *zāwiya* system to almost every village in northern Nigeria. All the major cities, from within Nigeria and abroad like neighboring countries, have booksellers, usually from Kano, who are the brotherhood's agents.⁵⁵¹ Kano remains a major distribution centre in northern Nigeria to date. The printed works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī produced for wider circulation in Nigeria had been distributed to the reading public or audience through various ways as follows:

⁵⁵¹ Paden 1973, 141, However, for more discussion on the marketing the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, see chapter four.

6.4.3.1 The Market distribution

The primary distribution mechanism of the manuscripts and facsimiles was the market. The book market of northern Nigeria as earlier noted, began to develop in the fifteenth century as a period of book-boom, which extended from Timbuktu as far as Hausa land and Bornu. Yet, in the nineteenth century, it was Kano that assumed primary importance as a commercial centre port, a position it has never relinquished.⁵⁵² Initially, the booksellers were merely dealers and distributors of books, which had been supplied to them directly by the authors themselves; but with the passage of time, some booksellers became publishers, buying from authors the copyright of fast selling books and even manuscripts.⁵⁵³ The booksellers purchase books in volume and give the author/publisher in instalments. Today, the booksellers have become bookshop owners, publishers all in one.

According to Umaru Matazu, they do not only sell published books of al-Dāghirī, but also print whenever there is dearth and paucity of a particular title in the market such as *Jihaazus Saarih*: they sponsor its reprinting, and after the production of the text, they finance the plating, publication, binding and distribution.⁵⁵⁴ After they sell the titles, they may give the family their share. Today, these books are selling at the following prices: *Ittiba'uttazyili* at 250 Naira, *Nataa'ijus-Safar* at the cost of 400 Naira, *Jihaazus Saarih* at 400 Naira, *Hidhbus-surul manii'i at 100 Naira*, *Tadhyeel* 300 Naira, *Khutbatul Munbariyyah* at the cost of 150 Naira.⁵⁵⁵

6.4.3.2 Distribution through major bookshops

Writing Islamic books in manuscript and publishing have been a tradition among Islamic scholars. It is also a source of income for many Islamic writers who choose to be financially self-dependant. This is because, Islamic books are of high value in Muslim societies and as such those who are skilful in writing them can earn a living either by rendering their services as scribe or by writing and publishing their works by themselves for sale. Writing and trading in books, as earlier noted in chapter four, were the main occupation of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī and they remained the sources of their livelihood during his lifetime. Most of their publications were sold in their own established bookshops and houses.

⁵⁵² Mohammed 1978, 4.

⁵⁵³ Brigaglia in one of his articles described how the books written by local scribes, such as al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, were distributed to the market see Brigaglia 2011.

⁵⁵⁴ Interview with Alhaji Umaru Matazu 26.3.2019.

⁵⁵⁵ Interview with Alhaji Umaru Matazu 26.3.2019.

In the case of al-Dāghirī, for instance, as earlier noted, al-Dāghirī ventured into book publication business and started publishing his works by himself. As the business started to expand rapidly, al-Dāghirī opened his own bookshop at Unguwar Gabari in Kano in 1951 which served as an outlet for the sale of his works and other Islamic books. The shop was placed under the supervision of his disciple, Alhaji Mohammed Sani Kurna, who was also an importer of books.⁵⁵⁶ The bookshop was linked to the University of Al-Azhar, Cairo for update on and supply of Islamic books.⁵⁵⁷ All his publications which were published inside, or outside Nigeria were sold in his bookshop in large quantity or single copy. I also found out that his name and that of his bookshop were written on almost all his works in lithographic forms.

In the case of al-Fallātī, as earlier noted in chapter four, he started his writings because he had interest in it and also because of financial reasons. Al-Fallātī is a prolific writer whose writings earned him lots of income in Nigeria and in many other African book markets.⁵⁵⁸ Apart from Nigeria, other places in Africa where his works are sold include Chad, Ghana, Sudan, Mali, Senegal, and Cameroon.⁵⁵⁹ He was also an entrepreneur, one informant, Baffa Usman, confirmed in our oral interviews that his father was certainly involved in trade in books. He established his business in his house where he used to sell his publications.⁵⁶⁰

6.4.3.3 Distribution through major publishing companies

The successful distribution of the facsimiles works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī in Nigeria had been attributed to major publishing companies inside and outside Nigeria. In the context of outside Nigeria, one respondent who happened to always be together with al-Dāghirī and at several occasions the Shaykh used to send him to Egypt and many other publishing companies in Nigeria to publish books for him, confirms that the publishing companies were responsible for the distributions of the books. In the context of northern Nigeria, the works were distributed by published companies such as Northern Maktabat Press (‘Yan Kasa), Adebola Press, Bolaprint Limited, Oluseyi Press, Maktabatul Zulma ‘arif, Jola-Ade Press, Alhaji Sunusi Dantata Printing Press, Umar Matazu (recently printers and marketers). These publishers had an arrangement with established bookshops in Zaria, Kaduna, Jos and Zamani Bookshop in Kano which sell all types

⁵⁵⁶ Tahir 2006, 88.

⁵⁵⁷ Sani 2010, 74.

⁵⁵⁸ Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁵⁵⁹ Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

⁵⁶⁰ Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 18.03.2018 at Nguru.

of book from secular educational books such as textbooks or stationery which were used in formal school systems to religious books whether poetry or prose.⁵⁶¹ These bookshops which were the major books distributor used to buy books in reasonable bulk across all the whole of the publications from NNPC whether in cash or credit.

6.4.3.4 Distribution through book traders

The above-mentioned publishers also used to supply some book traders whose main occupation is religious texts in Arabic in northern Nigeria. In Kano, for instance, the Kurmi market, being the oldest book market in northern Nigeria, became the market for the finished products including of the publishing companies within the city. During our period of discussion, the shops of the book vendors were situated on the environs of the old market and not amongst the stalls in the bookseller's section in the interior of the market.⁵⁶² According to Salah 1992, in the twentieth century Kano, the oldest and most famous bookstore is the one established by an Egyptian merchant in 1927, which was taken by his partners from Sudan.⁵⁶³

Almost all the printed works of al-Dāghirī, those which are published inside, and outside Nigeria are obtainable in the market. The major distributors of his works were Alhaji Malam Sa'adu and Malam Umar Kazaure. Today, his books are sold and distributed by Muhammad Datti and Alhaji Umar Matazu whose name frequently appear on the typographic works of al-Dāghirī. They claim to have sold the following copies yearly:

Print genre	copies
<i>Itbaa'ut-tazyiil</i>	3000-
<i>Jihaazus Saarih</i>	5000-
<i>Nataa'ijus-Safar</i>	5000-
<i>An-nawaafihul Itriyiyati</i>	1000
<i>Hidhbus-surul manii'i</i>	8000
<i>Sidratul Muntahaad-daa'iin</i>	7000
<i>Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud</i>	3000
<i>Tadhyiil</i>	2000
<i>Al-majaami'ul Mahmuudah</i>	3000

⁵⁶¹ Furniss 1978, 449.

⁵⁶² Furniss 1978, 449.

⁵⁶³ Hassan 1992:37.

Fig. 27: The number of al-Dāghirī's works sold and distributed by Muhammad Datti and Alhaji Umar Matazu yearly

6.4.3.5 Distribution through smaller book vendors and stallholders

Most of the books sold to the major distributors and bookshops circulate upon resale back in the market amongst the stallholders who sell a few pieces or at times single copies. Most of the works of al-Dāghirī and other Tijānī scholars printed by other printing presses in Nigeria, and the books imported wholesale from the Middle East are retailed by market stall-holders from a small stock held in the market.⁵⁶⁴ These stall-holders, according to Furniss, retail to the urban buyers who come to the market and in this way they are barometers of demand for a certain author. Both from the quantities of sales and by discussion with their customers, they can assess popularity and suggest to their suppliers who have the necessary capital either a reprinting or, more recently, the publications of some item that is much in demand in the market but not at the time published,⁵⁶⁵ and these public requests for books arise from the hearing of new titles.

At times, these small book vendors and stallholders sell their books at local markets or Islamic bookshops that are located by the central mosques of some cities in northern Nigeria. They likewise tend to be displayed in front of the mosques on Fridays and Nguru is not an exception to this rule.⁵⁶⁶ The small book vendors and stallholders usually employ the services of young men working for them to travel with books on wheelbarrows from one place to another or from village to village.⁵⁶⁷

Related to this, Brigaglia states that the works were marketed through the scholarly networks of northern Nigeria zāwiya (centers of devotional activities linked to a particular Sufi order), or by itinerant booksellers travelling from town to town, from village to village, and from mosque to mosque.⁵⁶⁸

6.4.4 Readership

The production, distribution, circulation, and popularity of the facsimiles of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī have been complemented by the rise of readership among the Sufis in general and Tijānīs in particular. The readership was facilitated by the desperate need for literacy and education

⁵⁶⁴ Furniss 1978, 449.

⁵⁶⁵ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

⁵⁶⁶ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

⁵⁶⁷ Interview with Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri 27.3.2019.

⁵⁶⁸ Brigaglia 2011, 57.

among the lower and middle classes who buy the printed materials. In Nigeria, as earlier noted, is the most populous country in Africa with over 201 million people, with high considerable number of Muslims, and members of Tijānīyya brotherhood. Readership in facsimile texts produced by al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī is very wide. One way in which al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī and other Tijānī Sufi scholars have captivated their readers is by their zeal in mentioning Sufi themes close to their religious fantasies, hearts, and the themes that the readers identify with as part of their experiences.

6.5 Functions of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's Mystical writings

The purpose of this section is mainly to reveal the function of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's mystical writings. The discussion was done bearing in mind the northern Nigerian socio-economic and politico-religious contexts and the Sufi life of northern Nigeria. This is important for my study as it puts the works of the Shaykhs in their proper religious, educational, and social contexts. The Sufis, anti-Sufis, academics, and other professionals have variously commented on the place and function of Tijānī writings in twentieth century Nigeria. The published works on them have addressed them as in Brigaglia⁵⁶⁹ and Oladiti's case,⁵⁷⁰ for devotional and didactic functions or as in the case of Hiskett and Ogunnaike⁵⁷¹ who says the mystical verse composed by Tijānī Sufi scholars were used for didactic, homiletic, devotional function and they are also recited during begging by professional beggars as well as an instrument for circulation of information.⁵⁷²

Sufi scholars, poets and authors, wrote for a purpose. One of the most important functions of the writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī is the promotion of Islamic knowledge and intellectualism. Their writings not only contribute to literacy they also contribute to creative thought and enhance the reading culture. The following are some specific functions of their writings:

6.5.1 Didactic/instructional Function

Didactic/Instructional function mainly concerned with works whether in verse or in prose, particularly meant to help disciples to memorize a given subject such as Arabic grammar, Qur'anic recitation, morphology, semantics etc., in the *Makarantar ilmi*, the school of higher Islamic

⁵⁶⁹ Brigaglia 2013/4, 106-8.

⁵⁷⁰ Oladiti 2017, 13.

⁵⁷¹ Ogunnaike 2020, 1-72.

⁵⁷² Hiskett 1975, 196.

knowledge as earlier explained.⁵⁷³ Brigaglia's writing on the types and purposes of Tijānī literature in twentieth century Nigeria defines didactic writings as works "aimed at being used as a support for teaching classical corpus of knowledge."⁵⁷⁴ Take, northern Nigeria including Nguru, for example, Brigaglia points out that works of commentaries, abridgement and versifications of books of the traditional curricular corpus of Islamic knowledge are meant as didactic for the study of these subjects, the discourse takes place at specific times in the *zāwiya* or in the houses of the scholars.⁵⁷⁵ Hiskett also narrates the story of Malam Muhammad ḍan Amu who stated that he used to compose religious poetry to help young students understand Islamic law and theology.⁵⁷⁶ With the emergence of the Tijānīyya, its members in most of their activities use poetry to preach Islam and some of their Qāsidas were used to learn Arabic and literature. Muḥammad al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī being members of the order had composed and used poetry as method to teach their students and the public tenets of Islam. The style of their teaching through poetry is based on all aspects of Islamic sciences. This includes Islamic rituals, Arabic language and literature, Sufism, and morality in Islam which as a result of such they composed and published considerable number of Qāsidas.⁵⁷⁷

Al-Dāghirī made commentaries, abridgement, and versifications of books to simplify them for his disciples and the public. For instance, he wrote an extensive interlinear commentary on *Qāsidat al-Burda* (The Cloak) of Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sa'īd al-Būsīrī (d. 694/1296). He also made a commentary on authentic Hadith in his work entitled *I'alaamul Haajii*, with the sole aim of simplifying the content of the Hadith. His work entitled *An-nawaaḥihul Itriyyati* is another important abridgement of the *al-'Ishrīniyyāt* of al-Fāzāzī (d. 1230). *Istidraak alaa Muannasatis-samaa' iyyath* is another commentary or textual criticism on the work of Shaykh Jamaluddin bin Hajib Abu Umar bin Usman bin Amr al-Maliki (d. 664 A.H.) on Irregular Feminine Nouns.

However, a great portion of the works of al-Fallātī are also purposely meant for didactic purposes. He also used to collect some manuscripts on Islamic themes that he realized would benefit the Muslim Ummah in time, he wrote commentary on them, published, and marketed them.

⁵⁷³ See also Hiskett 1975, 196.

⁵⁷⁴ Brigaglia 2013/4, 106-8.

⁵⁷⁵ Brigaglia 2013/4, 106.

⁵⁷⁶ Hiskett 1975, 196.

⁵⁷⁷ The style of teaching, learning and preaching Islam through the aid of poetry is very relevant under Islamic point of view. It conveys message faster than any other means. This method was also in practice during the life of the Prophet life. There were notable companions who use it to propagate Islam like Hassan ibn Thabit, Abdullahi ibn Rawaha and Tumadir bint Amr Al-Sulamiyyah, popularly known as Khansa'u Tahir 2006, 96-7.

However, whenever al-Fallātī discovered that a book was difficult to understand, he used to simplify it by either adding a comment or footnote to the text. Some of such works include among others: *Nurul Qulub* (Light of the Hearts). The treatise is basically on the *Jami'us Sageer* of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Khūdayrī al-Suyūfī (1445–1505) which is a widely utilised set of Hadith traditions that is in two volumes in northern Nigeria. Al-Fallātī explains the position of the text in the study of the Prophetic tradition and the bounties and virtues of reading the texts. Another work is *Sai Gere* or *Wasa'ilul Musammatu*. The text was originally composed by 'Uthmān Dan Fodio, commented, and published by 'Uthmān al-Fallātī.

6.5.2 Devotional and Veneration Function

Past research on Tijānī writings in twentieth century Nigeria highlighted them as an integral part of the *Maulud Nabi* festival. Brigaglia, for instance, observes that the great portion of the Tijānī writings in the twentieth century Nigeria are purposely composed in order to be recited privately or collectively during *Maulud Nabi* or during communal religious gatherings.⁵⁷⁸ He also pointed out that almost all the *fayḍa* Tijānīyya zāwiya across Nigeria have at least one writing on this genre.⁵⁷⁹ Among the twentieth century Tijānī scholars of Nigeria whose writings is recited or sung at the *Maulud Nabi* celebration in Brigaglia's observation is al-Dāghirī, while al-Fallātī's writings are absent from Brigaglia's analysis.

The works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, especially *Madh* which eulogized and exalted Prophet Muhammad and Sufi leaders are purposely composed for recitation and listening during *Maulud Nabi*. These writings are recited as an act of devotion, and for veneration of the prophet or Sufi leaders as they emphasised, mirrored, and depicted the history of the life of the prophet or Tijānī Sufi leaders. In the case of the *Mawlid an-Nabi* organised by the family of al-Dāghirī, his mystical poems such as *Bassus-shauqi*, *Inhaa'us-salaam*, *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* etc. are recited, while his prosaic works such as *Nataa'ijus-Safar*, *Jihaazus Saarih* are read and explained to the participants.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁸ Brigaglia 2013/4 106-107; Hiskett 1975, 185-6.

⁵⁷⁹ Brigaglia 2013/4 106-107. ⁵⁷⁹ Hiskett adds that these praise poems are not only meant for veneration of the Prophet or Sufi leaders, but they are described as heroes of Islam and partaking in their praise is a way of identifying oneself with Islam as well as a particular Sufi order because among the most frequent occasions for the recitation of panegyrics are the *Maulud* celebration and the ending of the Ramadan fast, both of which involves communal public worship. See Hiskett 1975, 185-6.

⁵⁸⁰ Interview with Ahmad Mai Zare 24.03.2019, Bulabulin, Nguru.

On the other hand, my respondent revealed that during the *Maulud Nabi* organised by the family of Shaykh ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī, his works such as *Kitaabu Sabiilin-najati* and *Kitaabu Taa niyatus-Subki* are recited and read.⁵⁸¹

6.5.3 Festivity Functions

Devotional purpose is more closely associated with ‘*Eid-Fitr* and ‘*Eid-Kabir* festivals, weddings, naming ceremonies and funerals as they contributed to these socio-religious colourful festivities. The families of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī saw festivities as platforms to disseminate the message contained in the works of the Shaykhs to the listening audience.⁵⁸² The two families and disciples as well as admirers of the Shaykhs assembled at the residence of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī respectively to recite and read the works. Most of the recitations were duly recorded in radio cassettes and more recently GSM phone by the participants.⁵⁸³ Sometimes, loudspeakers blare the recording of these mystical poems in the market, home and religious gathering during socio-religious festivities.

Moreover, some of the disciples of both Shaykhs I interviewed said that they usually recited and read the works of their Shaykhs during the month of Ramadan. Others said that they only recited and read certain works of the Shaykhs during the ‘*Eid-Fitr* and ‘*Eid-Kabir* festivals, weddings, naming ceremonies and funerals but in their own residence. These socio-religious festivities also served as an avenue for the families to exchange pleasantries and gifts.⁵⁸⁴

6.5.4 Homiletic Function

Homiletic function is used here in the sense that the Tijānī writings have some message of warning and admonishing, which gives directives on behaviour and actions on religious consciousness and social tone: an implication of heavenly support. There are many works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī that admonish religious and doctrinal principles of Islamic education including interrogations of the grave. These works are in verse and prose. A typical example is al-Dāghirī’s *Ad-durratul Faakhirah*. The work is generally on exhortation, admonition and preaching for the Muslims to be far from Hell and close to Paradise. He explains the philosophy of life in this world and hereafter. Another example is al-Fallātī’s works entitled *Gaflataka*. This treatise is mainly on exhortation on the good and bad habits in Islam.

⁵⁸¹ Interview with Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī on 26.03.2019 at Nguru.

⁵⁸² Interview with Baffa Usman and Munir Muhammad on 24.3.2019, at Nguru.

⁵⁸³ Interview with Baffa Usman and Munir Muhammad on 24.3.2019, at Nguru.

⁵⁸⁴ Interview with Baffa Usman and Munir Muhammad on 24.3.2019, at Nguru.

6.5.5 Prayer and Requestive Function

The mystical works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, especially *Madḥ* in praise of the prophet or Sufi leaders and works on *Salat al-Nabiy* (Prayer on the Prophet) are frequently used as prayer or request books for wealth, health, success, forgiveness and heavenly support. The Sufi scholars believed that constant recitation of either *Madḥ* or *Salat al-Nabiy* allows the aspirant not only to enter the presence of the Prophet (*al-hadra al-Muhammadiyya*) and reach illumination (*fathi*) but also to achieve his desired demand and request. Related to this, some mystical works which express appearance and virtues are recited as *dhikr* and make *tawassul* with them for the intercession of the Prophet Muhammad on the Day of Judgment. For instance, in extolling the virtue of the *Qāsidat al-Burda* (The Cloak) al-Būsīrī (d. 694/1296), al-Dāghirī emphasized that its recitation will assist in obtaining a vision of the Prophet. Moreover, al-Dāghirī narrated that a certain man recited it daily without success. On asking a Shaykh for the reason for this he was told that he must recite al-Būsīrī's 'prayer for the Prophet' after every verse, or at least after every section of the poem.

For instance, al-Dāghirī's *Jihaazus Saarih* is a good example of this prayer or request book. The book contains *Salat ala an-Nabī* which emphasizes gratitude to Allah, seeking divine succour and affirmation of Allah's absolute oneness for heavenly support from Allah to grant requests and wishes. Closely related to this, is al-Fallātī's works entitled *Sihaa-mul isaabati*, which contain supplicatory prayer with their references from Hadith. In this treatise, emphasis is also given on the *asrar* prayers (secret supplications) when used Allah would answer the prayers or requests instantly.

6.5.6 Social and religious criticism

One of the functions of the Sufi literary works, in verse and prose, is the social and religious criticism. Society is mirrored in it while nameless individuals or their bad (or contrary) behaviours are either denounced or condemned. Thus, for the Sufi scholars in northern Nigeria literary work, especially poetry became an instrument for criticising society within the spirit of upholding the good and condemning evil. The anti-Sufi scholars, for instance, are strongly condemned in various poems by the twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars for their actions of attacking Sufi ideologies, teachings and practices. A good example is al-Dāghirī's *Ar-risaa 'u fii Shaykh Abubakar Atiiq*, he writes:

وخصمت أعداء الإله الذين هم منعوا لذكر الله بل هم أجدد

V11. You went against the enemy of Allah –those hindering people from mentioning the Name of Allah. Indeed, they are deniers.

جاهدت أعداء النبي الذين هم منعوا الصلاة عليه بل هم أعتد

V12. You fought against those enemies of the prophet who restrain people from reciting *salawat* (seeking peace and blessings of Allah upon prophet).⁵⁸⁵ Indeed, they turned away from it.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter examined the codicological and palaeographical features of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's manuscript and facsimile: lithographed and typographic works in the northern Nigerian context. The works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were initially distributed in manuscript form. The print culture has provided new ways of distribution and wider circulation of facsimiles in lithograph and typograph forms, this encouraged and promoted Arabic literacy, Islamic education, and propagation of Islam. The works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are bought for the purpose of devotional, homiletic, festivity and didactic activities. The works also function as prayer or request book or a manual of spiritual perfection for spiritual journey. This greatly advanced the case of social criticism in literary work in twentieth century Nigeria. The importance of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī lie in the fact that it helps us to reconstruct *taṣawwuf* and Sufi activities of the period in addition to cleansing immoral vices of our time if properly used.

⁵⁸⁵ *Jami'u al-Ahkham al-Qur'an*, volume 1, 669.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Thematic Translation and Content Analysis of the Mystical Poems of al-Dāghirī

7.1 Introduction

The literary works written by al-Dāghirī are in both prose and poetry forms. In line with the objective of this thesis, only mystical poems will be given attention. This chapter, therefore, presents an English translation and content analysis of five mystical poems of al-Dāghirī within the context of the history of his time. All the five mystical poems to be analysed here are closely related genre and still in manuscript form and content. Three of them belong to the genre known as *madahu* or *madih* (Ar. *madḥ*) repetitive panegyrics, one belongs to that category of Arabic poetry known as *marthiya/rithā* (elegiac verse), while the last but not the least belong to the genre known as *at-taqrīz* (encomium or endorsement) genres would be translated and commented upon.

7.2 Mystical Poems

Sufi poetry is defined as ideas, thoughts, and feelings about Sufism expressed in the form of poetry.⁵⁸⁶ Hiskett defines a mystical poem as a verse through which Sufi poets used to convey their ideology to people, which are contrary to the teachings of jurists and theologians, by using allegory and symbolism.⁵⁸⁷ Contrary to this, the main goal of mystical poetry is, according to Choudhury, not only to convey Sufi doctrines but also to revive mystical knowledge and emotion to make the audience to recollect.⁵⁸⁸ Choudhury argues that there is no sharp division between mystical poetry and non-Sufi poetry, but he also opines that mystical poems are thematically contrary to other Arabic poetry.⁵⁸⁹ According to him, this is mainly due to the nature of mystical poetry as it is “fluid, freer to express and arouse personal mystical feeling unlike Qur’an and Hadith which constitute the textual core of the Sufi’s spiritual life, as they do for other Muslims.”⁵⁹⁰ The major themes in the mystical poems are love of God, *Fanaa* (annihilation), *Jama wal Farq* (assembling and diversity), projection and expanding the motion and indication of Sufism, divine awareness, unity of religion, certainty of Muḥammad whose sacred love leads one to God.⁵⁹¹

This research observes that, in the context of northern Nigeria, the themes of Sufi poems include *Hubb al-Ilaah* (Divine Love), *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, *al-’Israa’i’ wal-Mi’raaj*,

⁵⁸⁶ Al-Tunji, *Al-Mu’jam Al-Mufasssal Fi Al-Adab*, 550-551.

⁵⁸⁷ Hiskett 1975, 73.

⁵⁸⁸ Choudhury 2015, 183.

⁵⁸⁹ Choudhury 2015, 185.

⁵⁹⁰ Choudhury 2015, 183.

⁵⁹¹ Choudhury 2015, 183.

Mu'jizah, *at-Tawassul* (Fervent plea for help), *al-Istighaathah* (call for help), *Quṭb al-aqṭaab* (the supreme pole of a saint) or *khatm al-awliyyaa'* (the seal of the saints), *ghawth az-zaman/Sahib al-Fayḍa*, intercession (*shafa*) of supplication to the dead, visitation to the Prophet's grave as opposed ideas of the jurists and theologians. Sometimes, the poets used much of satirical criticism of the world and its transitional values by personifying it with an old harlot, the features of which will be discussed in the subsequent sections. However, in the context of northern Nigeria including Nguru, according to Hiskett, the most prolific exponents of this type of poem are members of the Qadiriyya and Tijānīyya brotherhoods.⁵⁹² But what distinguishes the mystic poems of Tijānīs and Qadiris using Sokoto and Zaria is the Tijānī's "intensity of their allegorical expression, their oblique, allusive style, and their departure from the rigorous classical discipline of their predecessors."⁵⁹³ Contrary to the nineteenth century Qadiri poets from Sokoto who constantly invoke the saintly founders and early luminaries of their orders.⁵⁹⁴ The fact to our finding is that, al-Dāghirī adopts the style of both regions.

7.3 Muḥammad al-Dāghirī's Mystical Poems

Al-Dāghirī, as earlier noted, was a remarkable poetic visionary who composed great number of poems on many themes. He was considered by Tijānī poets as one of the most prolific and important poets in twentieth-century northern Nigeria. His fame rested on his almost inexhaustible energy, his keen reflective mind and his deep religious fervour. He displayed talent, perhaps more than any other Tijānī poet since the reformative and revivalist period of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse (often regarded by historians as the peak period of Tijānī mystical poetry in West Africa) for probing and analysing the psyche of the believer. For instance, al-Dāghirī was awarded the best African Islamic poet in 1962 by Almanac Islamic organisation Beirut.⁵⁹⁵ Mohammed Suleiman, who accompanied him to receive the award as it happened to him many times in his life remarked that:

One day, Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī was invited to be honoured with an award being one of the best Islamic poet (sic) in Beirut. After the occasion it dawned upon me to realise that what was awarded to him could attract millions of Naira at home. But to my surprise (sic) this gentle scholar went on and donated the whole

⁵⁹² Hiskett 1975, 90.

⁵⁹³ Hiskett 1975, 75.

⁵⁹⁴ Hiskett 1975, 75.

⁵⁹⁵ Idris 2017, 188.

amount to the needies (sic) of that country. In fact (sic) we had to even buy the flight ticket that brought us back home.”⁵⁹⁶

In style, content and theme, al-Dāghirī’s mystical poems are in line with the definition, observation and analysis of mystical verse in northern Nigeria made by Hiskett and Brigaglia, but with some distinguishing features. Al-Dāghirī’s mystical poems are written in a complex language, dense with inner allusions to the esoteric doctrines of the Sufis. Other similarities of the poems are confirmed by some stylistic features such as the layout of the poems that lack any logical sequence of its motifs, as well as its symbols and imagery, all resemble those of the other Arabic mystical poems composed by other Sufi scholars and Sufi poet in the region. His mystical poems might be described as making poetry the vehicle of social commentary, and reflections on Sufi ideologies of his time.

In this research, it is discovered that there are three categories of mystical poems composed by al-Dāghirī which cutting across different genres. Three of them belong to the genre known as *madahu* or *madih* (Ar. *madḥ*) panegyrics, one belongs to that category of Arabic poetry known as *marthiya/rithā* (elegiac verse), while the last but not the least belong to the genre known as *at-taqrīz* (encomium) genres. All of them can be generalised as “praise” with a slight difference. The first striking difference between *madḥ*, *rithā* and *at-taqrīz* is their basic characteristics, while the former is characterised by semantic depth, the other two were characterised by semantic focus. In other words, *madḥ* is highly “cryptic and allusive; and ...that allusion is inseparable from semantic depth,”⁵⁹⁷ while *rithā* and *at-taqrīz* invoke with a clear word picture. Similarly, al-Dāghirī’s *madḥ* contain more semantic depth than the semantic focus, they are not deprived of in-depth religious and literary content. The following lines from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* reveal this:

مزن به ملأالذين تعرضوا لسكوبه المشفوه فاض ديومه

V164. He is a nimbus with which its flood shed and the dishes of those exposed to its shedding are filled.

يدع صبور ثابت ذوعزة قرم⁵⁹⁸ شهيد مشفق وكسومه⁵⁹⁹

V165. He is the perfect, the forbearing, the perseverant, the exalted, the leader, the witness, and the compassionate, and, at the same time, the tough.

تاج الوجود بأسره إكليله مفتاح جود الله وهو حكيمه

V166. He is a crown and garland of the entire beings, the key to divine treasure and its controller respectively.

بحر أحاط بكل معلوم الورى للبحر موج لايزول حسومه

⁵⁹⁶ Tahir 2006, 90.

⁵⁹⁷ This feature of Arabic and ‘*ajamī*’ poetry in northern Nigeria including Nguru has been suggested by Hiskett see Hiskett 1982, 444.

⁵⁹⁸ Simply means the leader.

⁵⁹⁹ Simply means harshness.

V167. He is the ocean surrounding the entire knowledge of creatures.⁶⁰⁰ Indeed, for the ocean, there is continued waves.

جل عزيز فاضل متعطف كافي جليل عاقب وشميمه

V168. He is the great one, the cherished, the excellent, the sympathetic, the sufficient, the venerated, the final and the highly elevated.

ظل ظليل دائم تظليله شاف كبير جامع وقتومه⁶⁰¹

V169. He is the umbrella which casts everlasting shade, the persuasive, the elderly, the universal and the benefactor.

سيف صقيل قاطع من قد أبى دين الإله وحله مسمومه

V170. He is a shape sword the killer of those resisted to abide by the divine commands.⁶⁰² And soon, its poison (shape of the sword) will descend upon him.

Again, when compared to *rithā* and *at-taqrīz*, the poets who compose *madh* always refer to events and names; and also make use of evocative words, “relying on the power of association to achieve his effect.”⁶⁰³ The imagery of light, which I will extensively discuss in the next chapter is an Islamic context invoked with the prophet’s a miraculous birth and the miracles of *Israa’i wa Mi’raaj* as well as the doctrine of *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The real essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality), is, of course, one obvious aspects of semantic depth. According to this doctrine, the first thing that was created was the light of the Prophet Muḥammad (*an-Nuur al-Muḥammadi*) which was created from the light of God; and when God decided to make the world, he made it from the primal *an-nuur al-Muḥammadi* and all other things were created. Brigaglia states that a good *madh* is usually one in which there is a frequent mentioning of the doctrine of *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* and continues moving back and forth from the historical Muhammad to the metaphysical Muhammad scattered throughout the poem. This doctrine is the foundation stone of the spiritual practices of the Tijānīyya, al-Dāghirī belongs to, and other Sufi brotherhood. In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*, we read:

نور تكون قبل نشأة آدم صحت نبوته وقام رسومه

V116. He is a light existed prior to the creation of Adam (as) and his prophetship also became valid by then, and his presence was established.⁶⁰⁴

وراه جبريل منيرا طالعا قد ظنه نجما وبان نديمه

V117. And the Angel Gabriel saw him as lighting thinking that a star,⁶⁰⁵ but eventually turn to be his intimate friend.

ياسابقا للخلق طرا نوره يا ذا الذي أحيا الأنام قدومه

⁶⁰⁰ As discussed above.

⁶⁰¹ Simply means kindness.

⁶⁰² *Jami’at al-Tirmidhī*, Hadith number 2810 (Arabic version).

⁶⁰³ Hiskett 1982, 444.

⁶⁰⁴ This Hadith was narrated by *at-Jami’at al-Tirmidhī*. He said that it is Hasan (good), and it is accurately authenticated by al-Hakim 2:609 as *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) and narrated by Ibn Abi Shayba in his famous *Musannaf* 14:292, and *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* in his *Tarikh* volume 7:374.

⁶⁰⁵ The star refers to the light created prior to the creation of Adam. According to the Hadith, Angel Gabriel witnessed the appearance of the star 5,184,000,000 times.

V149. O whose light descends on the entire creature⁶⁰⁶? O that whose advent revive the creature.

نور لأكوان و برق أسطع لسطوعه السبع الطباق تشيمه

V163. He is a light⁶⁰⁷ of being and glitter whose reflection is derived by seven heavens.

Once More, in comparison, the *madh* has many advantages over *rithā* and *at-taqrīz* to the poets as it allows them to express their own spiritual stations.⁶⁰⁸ For instance, *madh* is a genre through which the poets realize spiritual perfection in the Prophetic model. In this sense, Prophet Muhammad is considered the subject of praise and the “beautiful model” (*uswa hasana*) or *Imitatio Muḥammadi* of the spiritual perfection. About this advantage, *madh* as a genre is also considered as more suitable to the spiritual etiquette (*adab*) of the Sufi scholars while *rithā* and *at-taqrīz*.⁶⁰⁹ Besides, Brigaglia distinguishes *madh* from other lyric genres including *rithā* and *at-taqrīz* by claiming that it has a twofold *raison d’etre*. The first side of the coin, it always allows the Sufi scholars and Sufi poets to frame their spiritual accomplishment as the repercussion of their love for the Prophet Muhammad and of their complete annihilation in his *ḥaḍrā* (spiritual presence) being a central aspect of their mystical practice.⁶¹⁰ On the other side of the coin, it helps in producing Sufi text that could be recited by Sufi’s disciples during the communal and religious events such as Mawlid, to satisfy and entertain the listeners.⁶¹¹ The following lines from his *Bassus-shauqi* illustrate this:

إلى أحمد المختار وجهت وجهي وفي القلب حاجات تعز لفوهت⁶¹²

V1. Toward the Aḥmad⁶¹³ the chosen prophet I paced my direction. My heart are full of needs and desires that is hardly for me to pull it out all.⁶¹⁴

ألا يا رسو الله إنك عدتي ألا يا نبي الله إنك عمدة

V2. O you the messenger of Allah, you are indeed my asset. O the prophet of Allah, verily, you are my pillar.

ط⁶¹⁵ إيحاد كل الخلق رب البرية ألا يا رسول الله يا من به أنا

V3. O, the messenger of Allah, o around whom the Lord of creatures hangs the emanation of beings.⁶¹⁶

Another remarkable difference between *madh*, *rithā* and *at-taqrīz* is the introduction of *Mu’ujizāh* (which I also described in the next chapter), in the former often use by the composer of

⁶⁰⁶ Hadith discussing the age of Angel Gabriel.

⁶⁰⁷ As discussed above.

⁶⁰⁸ Brigaglia 2017, 194.

⁶⁰⁹ Brigaglia 2017, 194. However, for more differences between *madh* genre and others see same source.

⁶¹⁰ Brigaglia 2017, 195.

⁶¹¹ Brigaglia 2017, 195.

⁶¹² Simply means to pronounce.

⁶¹³ The name Ahmad “The praised one” is one of the names given to the Prophet Muhammad.

⁶¹⁴ This style was used by Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse when he said:

تكرمت لي من قبل ما كنت ملزما أذكر حالي أم كفاك فإنما

⁶¹⁵ Means hang, attach, suspend.

⁶¹⁶ See Al-Hakim at-*Jami’at al-Tirmidhī*, *Jami’u Jami’at al-Tirmidhī*, 2000, 2024; See also *al-Muwaahib al-Laduniya*, vol. 1, 12.

madh to achieve his purpose. When the poet mentions the following miracles in his *madh* for a Muslim audience. The following lines from his *Bassus-shauqi* demonstrate this:

ألا يا رسول الله يا من له القمر قد انشق تصديقا له أي شقة

V99. Indeed, O the messenger of Allah, O for whom the moon splits to testify the messengership of the prophet (saw)?⁶¹⁷

ويا من يرى من خلفه كأمامه ويا من نأى عنه نبات كظلمة

V100. O you who sees at his back as though he sees in the front.⁶¹⁸ And, O who the flies stay away from his sacred body as does his shadow?

ومن صلت الرسل الكرام بخلفه ومن أبرأ الألام من كل علة

V101. And he is one who all the Messengers prayed behind him and, who cured the pains from its all disease.

They will not only create the mental picture but also the whole stories, together with moral and mystical connotations profound emotive association. Through this association of events, ideas and stories such the intermediary role of Muḥammad on the Day of Judgement, the allusion become so obscure which is not possible for the Muslim audience who do have the Islamic background that the poets assume, to comprehend the meaning of the verses.⁶¹⁹ For instance, in his *Bassus-shauqi*, al-Dāghirī says:

وإن استنبأه أحق فقلت إي وربّي إن المدح حق الحقيقة

V245. And, if were asked that, “is the praise of prophet true?⁶²⁰” I will answer that, “for God, it is true and real.”

ألا يا شفيع الناس فاقبل شفاعتي فشفعني في والديّ وولدي

V246. Indeed, O the mediator of the people, grant my intercession. Assign me to intercede for my parents and children.

وصحبي وأشياخي ومن قد عهدته بخير وجيران وكل عشيرتي

V247. Added to them are my friends, my teachers as well as those that I wish well for them such as my neighbours and my relatives respectively.

Without much explanation of the verse, not everyone could grasp the deeper meaning of it. Such allusion may also occur in any other poetry including *rithā* and *at-taqrīz* but not as often as in *madh*.

The influence of classical *al-Jāhilī* poetry on *madh* is another distinguishing feature from *rithā* and *at-taqrīz*. The pre-Islamic poetry (*al-Shi'r al-Jāhilī*) which became of the traditional school curriculum is visible from the beginning of the *madh* composed by the Sufi scholars and Sufi poets of northern Nigeria including Nguru. As will be seen in the al-Dāghirī's *madh*, this

⁶¹⁷ Compare with *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Hadith Number 3637, 3869, 3636, 3638; see also *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Hadith Number 2800, 2802; see also *Jami'at al-Tirmidhī*, Hadith Number 2182.

⁶¹⁸ Compare with *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, volume 3, 188-Hadith number, 985 (Arabic version).

⁶¹⁹ Hiskett 1982, 445.

⁶²⁰ Compare with *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Hadith number: 15 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 44 anass.

influence of classical *al-Jāhili* poetry is visible at the very beginning. The following lines from his *Bassus-shauqi* illustrate this:

إلى أحمد المختار وجهت وجهي وفي القلب حاجات تعز لفوّهت⁶²¹

V1. Toward the Ahmad⁶²² the chosen prophet I paced my direction. My heart is full of needs and desires that is hardly for me to pull it out all.⁶²³

Madh differs from *rithā* and *at-taqrīz* genres because of its typical feature of ambiguity and impossibility of praise and description of Prophet Muhammad. Its composers always found themselves in a state of what Brigaglia describes as “continuous tension between self-effacing enunciations of Prophetic praise and bold assertions of spiritual authority.” Likewise, there are many *madh* in which al-Dāghirī, while enumerating the qualities and attributes of Prophet Muhammad, comes to a similar standstill. For instance, in his *Bassus-shauqi*, realizing that he is incapable of conveying the entire qualities and attributes of Prophet Muhammad, al-Dāghirī further generalizes this impossibility stating that:

إلى ما وراء الحصر من حسن وصفه ومما دراه الخلق من حسن سيرة

V23. His exaltation is beyond counting and all beings never know him because of his beautiful attributes.

وصنع كل وصف من محاسن وصفه بهمزة تفضيل وتعجيب صيغة

V24. And compose any description from his beautiful attributes using interjection as well as the superlative form of adjectives.⁶²⁴

لتعلم أن المصطفى أبدع الورى وتعلم أن الوصف خارج طاقة

V25. To know that the elected prophet is the most beautiful among the creatures and that his full description is beyond ability.

عليك صلاة كالسلام تدوم من إلهي ما مرت دهور وكرت

V26. Continuous blessing as well as peace of Allah be upon you like the rotations of seasons.

All the features above portray al-Dāghirī’s mystical: *madh*, *rithā* and *at-taqrīz*, which will be analysed and discussed in more in detail in this chapter. I will now move to the method employed in the translation and content analysis of al-Dāghirī’s mystical poems.

Some Remarks on the Thematic Translation and Content Analysis al-Dāghirī’s Mystical Poems

Drawing from the Hiskett and Brigaglia’s approach, this section is thus, an attempt to translate and analysis five of al-Dāghirī’s mystical poems and render them into English with brief commentaries. To facilitate the reading of the poems with their translation and content analysis, they were categorized into their respective content and themes: *madh*, *rithā* and *at-taqrīz*

⁶²¹ Simply means to pronounce.

⁶²² The name Ahmad “The praised one” is one of the names given to the Prophet Muhammad.

⁶²³ This style was used by Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse when he said:

تكرمت لي من قبل ما كنت ملزما أذكر حالي أم كفاك فإنما

⁶²⁴ Compare with Qur’an 68:4.

categories. In introducing the poems, more attention will be given to the thematic structure of the poems. While analysing, the salient and major Sufi doctrine literarily imbued in the poems, references will be made to the Qur'an and Hadith as well as other poems written by other Sufi scholars and poets, especially al-Būsīrī, al-Fāzāzī, al-Tijānī, Niasse, trio-Jihadists⁶²⁵ and others, for they are the sources that, al-Dāghirī had in mind during discussion. Suffice it to say, in rendering the translation of these poems from Arabic into English, absolute honesty is being employed to the original work, this forms the guiding principle as one tries, in some instances, to avoid a word-to-word translation of the original text. The first is *madh*, panegyric poem in praise of Prophet Muḥammad and Tijānī luminaries, it is going to be the first to start with.

7.3.1 Category I: The Mystical *Madh* (Panegyric poem)

The first category is known as Sufi or mystical *madh* genre which is based on panegyrics of the Prophet Muḥammad.⁶²⁶ It is praise, panegyric, eulogy usually addressed to Prophet Muḥammad including narrative sections dealing with his life history, miracles, good manner and character, it may also be addressed to certain other saintly personalities such as Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1815), the founders of Tijānīyya, ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 1166), the founders of Qādiriyya or prominent religious figures.⁶²⁷ This type of poems were closely related to *sira*, a poem which strictly appears to be more of a biography of the prophet than his praise. It deals more with historical matters than praise because the poem was based on the description of the prophet's carrier in a chronological order starting the main events in each year especially after Hijra to Madinah. Some scholars argued it remains *Madh* if composed in honour of the Prophet Muḥammad, whether during his lifetime but if composed after the death of the prophet, it is referred to in Arabic as *rithā* or *marthiya* (elegy).⁶²⁸

⁶²⁵ Shaykh ‘Uthmān Dan Fodio (1754–1817), his brother, Abdullahi Dan Fodio (c. 1766–1828), his son, Muḥammad Bello (1781-1837) including his daughter, Nana Asma’u (1793-1864).

⁶²⁶ The people of Nguru, particularly the Hausa speaking ones, they used *yabō*, *kirārī* and *bēgē* as the synonyms of *madh*. For detailed discussion on the usage of the word in the vernacular Islamic verse in northern Nigeria see Hiskett 1975, 21-26. Among such poems are *Imfiraji* (Songs of Comfort) written by Aliyu Na Mangi. In this poem, the author expresses his love and yearning for the Prophet and he fervently pray for the mystical union with the Prophet. This poem is to this day sung by devout beggars, who are most often blind and who recite from memory poems which were given to them, as alms (*sadaka*), by people.

⁶²⁷ Hiskett opines that in the context of northern Nigeria those Sufi leaders were praised and elevated to a status equal to the Prophet Muḥammad see Hiskett 1975, 74.

⁶²⁸ Raji 1986.

7.3.1.1 Thematic Translation and Content Analysis of *Inhaa'us-salaam ilaa Imaami kulli Imaamin* (S.A.W)

About the Poem: Authorship and Introduction

The poem *Inhaa'us-salaam ilaa Imaami kulli Imaamin* (S.A.W), (Henceforth *Inhaa'us-salaam*) which is the subject of translation and content analysis, is still the most popular of al-Dāghirī's poems. It is a panegyric poem which is essentially dealing with praise of the Prophet Muḥammad being the leader of all prophets and messenger of Allah in a respectable manner. It also shows intense feeling in which al-Dāghirī succeeded in expressing the urgency and passion of his desire to worship and conveyed his spiritual experience of a close, personal relationship with the Prophet. It also determined to praise the members of his family and extending salutation blessings and compliment to his first and second successors: Khalīf Abū Bakr 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Quḥāfa aṣ-Ṣiddīq (d. 634 AH) and Khalīf Abū Hafṣ 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 644).

He composed this panegyric poetry on the Prophet Muḥammad on his way to Mecca and Madinah to perform pilgrimage in 1370 A.H./1950, was recited many times at the Prophet's tomb as a present to him. *Inhaa'us-salaam* is an Arabic lexeme which means "rhyming in *mim* 'm' of *Bahr ṭawīl*" (one of the many styles of rhythm in Arabic poetry). The number of verses in it mounted to 52 verses. This poem has never been published, at least as far I know. My translation and content analysis are based on the manuscript preserved in the library of the poet. The manuscript is unvocalized, and the handwriting is of the *Maghrībī* type whose characteristics are as follows: the letter fa is written with a dot under it, and the letter *qāf* with a single dot above it; the final *yā* and *nun* are written without dots while letter *sād* and *dād* have no little curling before their ending part. For a better comprehension of the Islamic allegories, a literary translation has been avoided in this edition.

About the Content

It is considered classic to northern Nigeria including Nguru because the poem exists only in manuscript copies in the possession of Sufi scholars in every part of the region and indeed some parts of West Africa. The content of the poem, of course, belongs to Islamic eulogy as it embodies certain features that are characteristics of that category of Arabic Sufi poetry known as *madh*, panegyric, but *Inhaa'us-salaam* displays certain features in a more rounded fashion than the other examples of Arabic Sufi poetry that I earlier illustrated. Moreover, the content and format of the poem, unlike other *madh Nabiy*, looks like an epistle or letter written to someone. According to

some members of the Tijānīyya in northern Nigeria, the poem is not just the poet's strong love for the prophet Muḥammad, but also it could touch and spirits of its reciters because it is mixed with a personal expression of feelings of the poet towards Prophet Muḥammad and visiting his grave in Makkah; in admiration of the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah praising them. It has certain expression such as *As-salāmu 'alaykum* (peace be upon you), and it has one unifying theme that cannot effectively be divided up into separate topic sections.

There is an inspiring story about the reason for which the poem was composed in that format. According to the poet, the poem was composed based on the saying that: "O you who have believed, when you [wish to] privately consult the Messenger, present before your consultation a charity. That is better for you and purer. But if you find not [the means] - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful" (Q58:12). To comply with the above verse, al-Dāghirī wrote this poem in form of letter or epistle so that upon his visit to the prophet's tomb, he would read it by himself to the prophet as a gift, present or charity as prescribed in the above verse. The topical or thematic structure of this poem can be viewed as follows:

- (a) The Opening
- (b) Sending peace to the Prophet (2 – 7).
- (c) Wishing to travel to the Madinah (8 – 13).
- (d) Invocation to the eulogized Prophet to attain his intercession (14 – 19).
- (e) Showing a burning desire to meet the Prophet (20-23).
- (f) Repeating blessings on him (24 – 33).
- (g) A Request to report greetings from Allah to the Prophet (34 – 39).
- (h) Renewal longing to meet the Prophet: (44- 46)
- (i) Taking permission to return to Madinah (40 –42).
- (j) Quoting a Qur'anic verse on the importance of answering invocations: (47-49)
- (k) The poem ends with a closing (50-52)

The poem is preceded by a brief introduction in which the poet frames the verses that will follow within his panegyric experience. In the introduction, he sets a framework of the theme of his poem, that is, praise with a mixture of supplication as well as different forms of invocation for blessings (*salawat*) on Prophet Muḥammad, to achieve the direct witnessing God's reality. This is unconventional incipit as it was given in a prosaic way which is similar to Hausa *kirārī* as follows:

This is to the honour of Messenger of Allah, Muḥammad the son of Abdullāh,⁶²⁹ the son of Abdul Muttalab,⁶³⁰ son of Hashim SAW.

Peace be upon you O you father, the headmost, the origin and reliant.

Peace be upon you O you, who is the first and last, apparent and imminent.

Peace be upon you O you, who is only bright, the perfect, since there is nothing unless it entrusts upon you...

The first verse begins with themes of *nasīb*, in which al-Dāghirī emphasizes his personal feelings and his determination in sending peace to the great prophet Muḥammad by describing the prophet as the “*Afdal al-khalq* or *al-Insān al-kāmil*, (the most excellent of creation, the Ideal and Perfect Man), that means Prophet Muḥammad is a unique human being and best of the best, who excels every other rank. According to the poet, like other Sufi scholars and Sufi poets, believes Prophet Muḥammad, in qualities of character and charisma, is the most excellent of the entire creatures. This one of the Prophet Muḥammad’s excellent qualities that make the central notion “*most high*,” as extensively discussed in the next chapter of this thesis. This theme frequently features in the *madḥ* in the classical Arab mystical poem and twentieth-century northern Nigeria including Nguru. Interestingly, this illustrates al-Dāghirī’s familiarity with well-known verses from the mystical poems of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Yakhlaftan al-Fāzāzī (d. 627/1230), Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sa’īd al-Būsīrī (d. 694/1296), Shaykh ‘Uthmān Dan Fodio (1754–1817), Abdullahi Dan Fodio (c. 1766–1828), Muḥammad Bello (1781-1837), Nana Asma’u (1793-1864) to mention a few.

The poet argues that the magnitude of the blessings and prayers cannot in any way be compared a considerable amount of scent or incenses. A similar illusion occurs in al-Fāzāzī *al-Witriyya* v10, when he says, “For neither musk nor camphor is sweeter than his fragrance.” This What al-Dāghirī did here was expressing his intense passion towards his object of love, i.e. Prophet Muḥammad.

إلى خير خلق الله أنهى سلامي * سلاما بنند⁶³¹ والكبا⁶³² لم يسام

V1. Towards the best of Allah’s creature,⁶³³ I extend my salutation. A salutation whose weight or aloeswood cannot be compared with any weight or high hill.

He then continues sending peace to the Prophet Muḥammad from lines 2 to 7. The poet continues sending his good praise to the prophet, his subject of praise, describing him with the most beautiful descriptions that appeal well to the ears of the listeners, and please the sights of the

⁶²⁹ It is the name of Prophet Muhammad’s father.

⁶³⁰ He is the name of grandfather of Prophet Muhammad.

⁶³¹ I translated it as high hill.

⁶³² Simply means Heavy weight or large crowd of people or the like.

⁶³³ He is referring to Prophet Muhammad.

viewers, and prepare the hearts of the lovers for praising more the great prophet. Then the poet boasts of the great status he reached because he praised the prophet. He asks the Prophet to intercede for him and be his means to get all his wishes. He keeps asking God to bless the prophet day and night.

سلاما يفوح كلما مرَّ أعصر * سلاما طما رباه كل أنام

V2. The salutation that produces fragrance with the passage of generation. A salutation which its irrigation will ascend over all the creation.

سلاما سليما لا يسامى بعنبر * سلاما هوى من تحته كل طام⁶³⁴

V3. A salutation which is free from any division and cannot be compared with scent of ambergris. A (highest) salutation brings down anything that is exalted under it.

سلاما حوى فخرا وعزا ومنصبا * سلاما ينال الوصل حلف غرام⁶³⁵

V4. A solution comprising glory, eminence, and status (respectively); a salutation that causes for infatuated lovers to get contact.

سلاما ينال الصب خير شفاة * سلاما حوى ذو الجهل كل مقام⁶³⁶

V5. A salutation that brings about the effective cure for infatuated, a salutation that secures exalted position to this ignorant.

سلاما عليك كل مسي وبكرة * سلاما متى ما خط كل قلام⁶³⁷

V6. A solution unto you (o Muhammad) in each day and night; a salutation that will repeat whenever a text is written with a pen.

عليك سلام كلما ذكر اسمه * سلاما فيض الرزق فيض غمام

V7. Peace be upon you with the repetition of mentioning your name; a peace that overflows wealth as though as cloud overflows the rain.

He then goes on to expresses his wish to travel to the Madinah from 8 to 13 and paraphrases the prophetic tradition that discusses the peculiarities of the messenger. The poet eulogized after he presented in his hands a set of fragrant blessings. He called him with the best of his descriptions, and then gave him a peace that includes his longing and wanders. He explained that he wishes to walk to his gracious abode in Madinah, but the long-distance prevents him from attaining his goals, in addition to the episodes of this land. Hence, he confirmed his hope in God, who will one day return him to the city of the Messenger of Allah, by his bounty, covering this long distance in the desert as thunder lightens in the space, to reach his destination. His hope was accompanied by blessings mixed with a request for safety, from death, and the horror of the Day of Resurrection.

V8. O who's the flag of commendation in his hold, the salutation of the one who was infatuated with love be upon you from behind the prison of ardent love.

ومتى ما يروم السير نحو حماكم * حماه عن التسيار بعد مقام⁶³⁸

V9. Whenever attempts to walk toward your end, he is hindered by the distance of his position.

واني متى أعزم عليه يردني * عوادي⁶³⁹ هذي الدار دون مرام

⁶³⁴ Referring to plant with nice smell, "hawaa" fall, "taamin" high or big.

⁶³⁵ I translated it as infatuate.

⁶³⁶ I translated it as love.

⁶³⁷ I translated it as pen.

⁶³⁸ The letter "wa" at the beginning of the verse may be unnecessary addition.

⁶³⁹ Simply means difficulties.

V10. And, whenever I decide to visit your home, the condition of this worldly living sends me back against my wish.

عسى اللطف من رب الورى أن يردنا * إلى دار خير الخلق خير أنام

V11. I hope the time of grace (and mercy) comes from the Lord of mankind to rescuer me and direct me toward the domicile of the best of a creature and best of mankind.

وذاك بمحض الفضل منا بلا أذى * أجوب الفلاح جوب البروق الموامي⁶⁴⁰

V12. Thus, in the bounties of Allah and His gift without proud, I am crossing through desert (in the cause of journey toward Madinah) as though lightening (and cloud) cut-across large area of the desert.

سلام عليك منك يا مسند الورى * سلاما ينيل الأمن يوم حمام⁶⁴¹

V13. Peace be unto you from you O the dependent of mankind; a peace that provides me with security in my doom day.

What follows is then the prayer to the eulogized and praised Prophet to attain his intercession (14–19). The poet prays to his eulogized Prophet (Peace be Upon Him), to be his intercessor with God, for him and his children, and all in his care, in the day of resurrection, the day when all messengers are horrified by the intensity of the events they encounter. He also begged the Almighty to bless him with a good ending on capturing his soul, wishing safety from the misfortunes of life and after death. Then he prays to God the almighty asking him to save him from all the evils of all creatures. This is followed by a greeting to the prophet and his abilities with a fragrant lasting greeting, fulfilling some of the poet duty of praise, hoping to be cured of all diseases and ailments.

سلاما مشوب باشتى باق عليك يا * شـفيع جميع الناس يوم قيام

V14. A salutation mixed with excitement be unto you O the mediator of entire people in the hereafter.

إذا ما جميع الرسل خافوا لهول ما * دهاهم⁶⁴² فشفيعني أخير إمام

V15. When the entire messenger fear to intercept for the fright of jumbling of that day, then intercept me O my best leader,

وأصلي وفرعي ثم صحبي وصحبهم * وأهلي ومن قد كان تحت ذممي⁶⁴³

V16. Together with my root (fathers), branches (sons), friends and those under my care (followers).

إذا بلغت نفسي التراق وقيل من * يعالج فالمسؤول حسن ختام⁶⁴⁴

V17. When my soul reaches my throat and (relatives) said who can treat? (Q: 75—V: 26—30), then my request is excellent termination.

أمانا أمانا في الحياة وفي المما * ت من كل هول خيف قبل اقتحام⁶⁴⁵

V18. My request is security over security in worldly life and hereafter respectively from all sort of fright and horror that is being feared.

سلاما سلاما يا سلام أجرين من * شرور جميع الخلق شر سهام⁶⁴⁶

V19. (we need) peace (over) peace O, Ya Salaam (-name of God), protect me against maliciousness of the entire creature. And that is the worst arrow.

⁶⁴⁰ Refers to area of desert. (simile).

⁶⁴¹ I translated it as death (*mjm-ra'id*).

⁶⁴² Simply means befall, strike.

⁶⁴³ I translated it as custody. (*wsit*).

⁶⁴⁴ I translated it as sound end.

⁶⁴⁵ I translated it as dive into (*mjm al-wasit*).

⁶⁴⁶ I translated it as arrows.

Up till now, we see al-Dāghirī's burning desire to meet the prophet (20-23). The poet shows his engagement and burning desire to meet his beloved (Peace be Upon Him) in his holy mosque in al-Madinah. His eagerness spread to all the parts of his body, leading him to the sacred spot in which the beloved, Allah's Messenger (Peace be Upon Him) lies. He makes it plain that he no alternative unless forwarding his gratitude to the honour of the prophet. Thus, he greets his beloved to send him his acknowledgements and his generous companions. This may be compared with *al-Burda*, V55.

سلام عليك مبلغ الحمد دائما * سلاما أنال منه برء سقامي

V20. Unlimited peace be unto you as much as repeating praise (of Allah) for eternity, a peace that I will be provided with complete cure of my illness.

وفي كل عضو فيّ في كل ساعة * أشاك بشوك الشوق دام هيام

V21. Every time on every organ in my body, I fill the tear of torn of excitement. (indeed), my excitement persists.

إلى حيث خير الخلق مضطجعا ثوى⁶⁴⁷ * أقاد بشوق جاذب بزمم

V22. Towards the area on which the best of mankind lies, I am pulled by my infatuation with my halter.

سلام عليك مبلغ الشكر والرضا * سلام على الأصحاب بعد سلام

V23. Peace be upon you as much as flows of thanksgiving and appreciation, and, peace be unto companions of peace.

Verses (24 – 33) repeats sending blessings on prophet Muḥammad. The poet directed his calling to his beloved saying: O, the One whom Allah conferred his blessings upon, with blessings accumulated as clouds over clouds, referring to God's saying in Surat al-Ahzab: Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels (ask Him to do so). O you who have believed, ask (Allah to confer) blessing upon him and ask (Allah to grant him) peace. Then the poet continues his invocation to the Prophet who breached all veils and got the approval of God with praise on Him alone and no one else but Him. The poet kept repeating his blessings on his beloved in different terms and expressions to reach to the righteousness and the golden target. He also asked God to confer his blessings on the prophet Muḥammad continuously and without stopping to lengthen the poet's age without sickness, to get the highest status and save him forever. He wished to get a pardon and good health in this world and the hereafter, fulfilling all his wishes.

سلام لذيذ لا يقاس ببلذة * على المصطفى المدعو بدر تمام⁶⁴⁸

V24. A well tasted peace that cannot be compared to any taste be upon the selected prophet (the prophet Muḥammad saw) who is called 'the full moon (that is 14 days old moon).'

أيا من سلام الله منه إليه كالصلاة عليه مثل فيض ركام⁶⁴⁹

V25. O whose Allah's peace from Him to him as though His blessings upon him like a flow of water over the hill.

⁶⁴⁷ I translated it as emplaced.

⁶⁴⁸ The full moon refers to Muhammad.

⁶⁴⁹ I translated it as cumulonimbus (*mjm al-wasit*).

فبالحمد والإثناء لله وحده * خرقت جميع الحجب دون زحام

V26. With the thank giving and praising to Allah alone, I (opportune) to penetrate the entire veils without the crowd.

عليك صلاة الله ثم سلامه * به يهتدي الإنسان قصد قوام⁶⁵⁰

V27. Peace and blessings of Allah be upon you, and with this, the entire people be directed to the right path.

فسلم إلهي للرسول محمد * سلاما به يشفى حليف هيام

V28. Oh, Allah send your peace to the (prophet) Muḥammad (saw), a peace with which the infatuated would be cured.

سلاما حوى لطفا خفيا يزينه * سلاما يطيل العمر دوم سقام

V29. (Goes to him again) the peace contained (divine) mercy that adorns him; a peace that prolongs one's life in the healthiest condition.

سلاما يرقينا على كل من علا * رقي من استعلى بنيل مقام

V30. (Goes to him again) a peace that uplifts us to a position over dignified people, the way those uplifted in securing a high status.

سلاما يديم الستر لي كل لمحة * إلى آخر الأباد غير انفصام

V31. (Also goes to him) an endless peace that provides us with permanent security in the rate of eye glances to the end of all times without interrupting.

سلاما ينيل العفو والعافيات لي * بدنيا وأخرى جامعا بمرامي

V32. The peace that provides me with courtesy and wellbeing in both worldly and hereafter enclosing my ambitions.

سلاما يرينا الحق حقا بعينه * ويفتح عين القلب مثل عيام⁶⁵¹

V33. The peace that shows us the pact as an essential right and opens the eyes of our heart like the opening of the morning.

He then continues his request to report greetings from Allah to the Prophet: (34–39). Surat al-Ahzab, ayah 56. The poet asks the Almighty God to inform his greetings and good conversations, warm regards, and his submissive words to the Holy Prophet. He also asked to confer his blessings upon him, with blessings which may purify his heart from all the worldly ailments and rust attached to it, with which life in all its hours and minutes be pleasant, he is a requester of guidance wishing to win his desire. His name is Muḥammad known as Ghibrīma, weaved this praise poem, requesting satisfaction and acceptance from his *Imam* the faithful Prophet, offering it in the hands of his Prophet as a gift looking forward to having a good drink to extinguish the heat of his thirst and longing for his meeting:

يفتح لي أبواب كل فضيلة * يغلق لي أبواب كل ملام⁶⁵²

V34. That will open the doors of entire bounties and shut down against me the doors of entire blames.

فيارب بلغ للنبي محمد * جميع تحياتي وطيب كلامي

V35. O my Lord extend to the prophet Mohammad all of my salutations as well as my polite dictions.

فسلم عليه كالصلاة متابعا * سلاما ينقي القلب رين رغام⁶⁵³

V36. (O Allah,) provides peace entangled with blessings (to the Muḥammad SAW), a prayer that purifies the heart from the impurity of dust (sin).

سلاما يطيب العيش لي كل ساعة * سلاما من المهدي ألفي مرامي

⁶⁵⁰ I translated it as straight path.

⁶⁵¹ I translated it as morning.

⁶⁵² I translated it as blameable (*Mu'jam al-wasit*).

⁶⁵³ It simply means dust, but connotatively refers to sin. (*mu'jam al-wasit*).

V37. Kind of peace that cheers my life at all time, a peace that causes me to realize my ambitions from the director (the prophet Muḥammad saw).

محمد المدعو غبريم⁶⁵⁴ ساقسه * به يطالب الرضوان عند إمام

V38. It is one named Shaykh Muḥammad Ghibrīma delivered (this message) who with it looking for the appreciation from my leader (prophet Muḥammad).

يقدمه بين يدي نجواه طالبا * لمروي مننه لفرط أوام⁶⁵⁵

V39. Presents it (message) before their confidential talk⁶⁵⁶ demanding satisfaction from his extreme burning thirst.

In verses (40 –42), al-Dāghirī seeks permission to return to Madinah.⁶⁵⁷ The poet reveals what is folded in his conscience, a burning desire to meet his beloved chosen prophet. He asks permission to return to the Madinah and hopes to be told by the prophet to enter with peace and safety and to accept his gift, the satisfaction he seeks, and the forgiveness of his sins. All this to prove the bounty of his hospitality, the generosity of the host (Peace be Upon Him). Al-Dāghirī mentions that all he did in this work is merely present to the honour of the prophet as a way to which will to satisfaction of his request. The request is his praised prophet to let him drink from the water of *al-Kawthar* river.⁶⁵⁸ According to the poet, the water of *al-Kawthar* may extinguish his thirst and purify his body.

وأطلب إذنا للرجوع لطيبة * وقل لي فادخل آمنًا بسلام

V40- I seek permission to come back again to Madinah and said to me by then: “get in with peace and security.

قريتك يا ضيفي ببشراي بالرضا * وفتح ونصر ثم حظ أثم⁶⁵⁹

V41. (and say to me), I welcome you O my guest with glad tidings of appreciation; with triumph and victory as well as forgiveness of your sin”.

لك الكوثر المروي أفض لي بمائه * لإنقاء⁶⁶⁰ أبداني وفطر صيامي

V42. (O Prophet), the satisfactory water of *Al- Kawthar*⁶⁶¹ belongs to you please, pour upon me its water to purify my body and for the breaking of my fast.

Verses (43- 46) describes the poet’s renewal longing to meet him, peace be upon him. The poet shows his longing for the Holy Prophet, and the mere mentioning of his name shakes his feelings and renews his longing for him. The hour of forgetting to mention the name of the beloved, Mustapha; passes as a full year weight on him. Thus, he kept wooing to the prophet, asking for his sympathy and compassion, dispensing with him for everything else, if he won his friendliness and

⁶⁵⁴ This is the name of the author.

⁶⁵⁵ I translated it as burning thirst.

⁶⁵⁶ Compare with Qur’an 58:12.

⁶⁵⁷ Madinah, the burial-place of the Prophet, lies about twelve days’ journey to the north of Makkah during the period when the poem was composed. A visit to the Prophet’s tomb is not regarded as an essential part of the pilgrimage, but as a highly meritorious action whereby many sins may be expiated.

⁶⁵⁸ *Kawthar* ‘Abundance’ according to the Qur’an is the name of the principal and noble river in the heaven, which cleanses all souls entering Paradise. For detailed poetic discussion ‘*Kawthar*’ see Knappert 1967, 224 & 263.

⁶⁵⁹ It simply means sin, but connotatively it refers to all sort of shortcomings.

⁶⁶⁰ I translated it as purification or purifying.

⁶⁶¹ Compare with Qur’an 108:1.

compassion. He then presents him a blessing from the depths of his loving heart, full of the gloom of not being able to visit him. The poet insists that the Prophet accepts his gifts; because the Prophet does not usually return gifts, keeping order in everything.

تجدد لي شوق متى ما جرى اسمكم * وساعة نسيان على كعام

V43. (O prophet Muḥammad), an excitement renews to me whenever your name is mentioned, and (I never forget) forgetting for a second, appears to me as a complete year.

وإن صبح منك الودّ فالغير كالهيا * كطيف خيال بل كطيف منام⁶⁶²

V44. (O Prophet), if my love is valid and accepted by you, the other than you, to me, is as the flight of wind (I have no concern no matter what is it), as an image and as a nightmare.

فهاك سلاما ساقه ذو صبابة * يهيم بقلب بالكأبة طام⁶⁶³

V45. Here is salutation forwarded by one infatuated with love suffering from highest grievances (on failure to meet his loved one).

وخذ من هدياتي إليك فأنت لا * ترد الهدايا راضيا بنظام⁶⁶⁴

V46. (O Prophet), accept my gift to you, knowing that you are not declining the gift, (accept it) as an appreciation of my work.

He then quotes Qur'anic verse on the importance of answering invocations: (47-49). The poet cited a verse from the Qur'an, which is: And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet [in return] with one better than it or [at least] return it [in a like manner]. Indeed, Allah is ever, over all things...He cited this verse after he gave the Prophet, the messenger of mercy, all prayers and greetings as gifts of his appeals and longings to him. He asked God to give him a return to visit the tomb of the chosen Prophet. He also appealed to him return the greeting with one better, or at least return it in a like manner as mentioned in the previous verse. The poet stood waiting, listening, with attentive ears, to what his eulogized would answer may God confer on him the sincerest and best prayers.

وقد جاء في القرآن أمر إلها * إذا أنتم حييتم بسلام

V47. Verily, came a command in the holy book that" whenever you are greeted with a salutation.⁶⁶⁵

فحيوا بأحسن لأخر آية * لتقرا وكن مستفهما بمرامي

V48. Answer with a better than it ..." read up to the end of the verse and understand what I mean, (that is" or at least, answer with the same..."

فها أنا مصغ رد ما أنت قائل * بأحسن منها أو بعين كلامي

V49. Here am I inclining to hear what you will say of better than I did or the same with my words.

The poet concludes his poem with praising Allah who made it easy for him to verify and organize it. And asked the almighty God to confer his blessings and peace on Muḥammad, the unlettered Prophet who is called by the finest names, together with the honoured victorious members of his family, the righteous companions, whenever a reciter recites this poem, and sings

⁶⁶² It simply means phantom but connotatively means nightmare (*mu'jam al-wasit*).

⁶⁶³ Refers to anguish, grief or dejection.

⁶⁶⁴ Simply means arrangement of verses in poem.

⁶⁶⁵ Compare with Qur'an 4:86.

The Content of the poem

Although the thematic content of the poem espouses the status, good virtues and roles including some of the qualities ascribed to al-Tijānī in lovely panegyric statements, one can glaringly see other aspects integrated. A summary of the content of the poem is as follows: the poem is purely a Sufi mystical poem in both principle and contents because the poet enumerates many Sufi ideologies and peculiarities of al-Tijānī. It also depicts the same features that dominate the poetic compositions on the Tijānīyya brotherhood which are largely produced in the northern Nigeria including Nguru and West Africa in general. The poem could be considered a vivid document that reflects typical Muslim perspective of a Tijānī *Muqaddam* of the twentieth century. The poet proposes an understanding of the Tijānīyya *ṭarīqa*, its implications and the dynamics of its religious structure by emphasizing the sense of superiority over the other Sufi brotherhoods and of its founder, al-Tijānī who declares to be *khatm al-awliyā*, 'the seal of all saints. The complex issue, according to Viola, points to the double function of the seal: the first is as an instrument through which revelation can be made, and the second is as an instrument that permits the authentication of that revelation. Having declared to be *khatm al-awliyā*, Aḥmad al-Tijānī became a unique case that has given rise to severe criticism. Despite this, the Tijānīyya brotherhood has confirmed its power of attraction all over Africa. Additionally, this superiority claimed by Tijānī allows him to guarantee his followers special protection against the Divine Judgement and eternal safety. Having explained the duties of a good Tijānī, he asks an elementary question: "Who has a litany like ours?" and in this way, he emphasises the originality of their *wird*.

The poet talks on the spiritual status and position of al-Tijānī to the extent of comparing him with a prophet among his people. He does not miss out a single spiritual quality and position of al-Tijānī in the minds of the Tijānīs in the northern Nigeria. For instance, apart from *khatm al-awliyaa*, the *quṭb al-aqṭaab* (the supreme cosmic pole of the saint), one of the highest ranks in the Sufi's spiritual hierarchy, is the other term chosen by the poet to refer to Aḥmad al-Tijānī because of his generous nature and his extraordinary merits among which his countless miracles are included. One can mention some other points made by al-Dāghirī which are of great interest: the consciousness of being nothing and the struggle against ego, the fear of God and the submission to the irresistible divine power. The qualities of Aḥmad al-Tijānī and references to his deeds are constantly stressed to remind his followers the importance of the founder of the *ṭarīqa* and his supremacy over all the other religious figures.

The extent to which the poet narrates what he knows of the behaviour and attitudes of the members of the Tijānīyya brotherhood presents him as a preacher. He forewarns the believers and teaches them about the danger of the Day of Judgement. He points to the dangers which are facing those who do not respect the sequence of al-Dāghirī's consciousness. The relationship between the poet and listener seems to be very intimate. The text displays the narrator's adoration for Tijānī, and the vehemence of his words can be explained by the young age of al-Dāghirī at the time of his composition as well as by his enthusiasm as a consequence of his new mystical choice.

Tracing linkages of the Tijānīyya is also significant because it gives evidence to the strength of the spiritual links over the blood bond, even though the names mentioned in *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii* are not commented upon which makes the poem comprehensive only to those familiar with the Sufi terminology, and especially the Tijānī followers. This sort of secrecy, which distinguishes the Sufi brotherhood, is also confirmed by the presence of a *Ramzi* in stanza 78 and 83.

The use of the first person "I" permits the poet a sort of performance in which as a *Muqaddam* he can demonstrate his qualities of a spiritual leader, his reputation for piety and his knowledge in the metaphysical domain. Throughout, quarters of the poem he recalls the need of avoiding various dangers in order to obtain the salvation of the soul in the Hereafter. To substantiate his message, he displays in details certain aspects of the divine reward. Al-Dāghirī describes the Day of Resurrection and some of its peculiarities most especially he depicts the prosperity in the Paradise. In stanzas 72 to 86 he intervenes on behalf of his spiritual interests, and touches a delicate issue of the *tawassul*, benediction and intercession of Prophet Muḥammad in his favour as well as in the favour of those around him. He amply demonstrates the mastery and command of the Arabic language and Sufi knowledge which attests to his erudition.

Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii is a poem which elucidates the image of the Tijānīyya brotherhood, records of local information concerning the *ṭarīqa*, and provides a further example of the typical Tijānī *madḥ* poem that would serve prosperity. Another reason for which the poem was composed could be summarized as to expose the good virtue of Aḥmad al-Tijānī and his contributions in the development of Islam; to encourage Muslim to embrace the Tijānī ideology appreciates the good attributes of al-Tijānī mentioned in the poem; and to encourage the Tijānīs and other Muslim alike to be wary of the deceptive tendencies of this world and rush for the next life; this is one of what Sufism advocates. The poet also mentions the wrath which comes on those

who disbelieve the spiritual position of Aḥmad al-Tijānī as *khatm al-awliyyaa*. By so doing, the poem, like many others, can be used as a source which enriches our knowledge on the Tijānīyya brotherhood; and its position in northern Nigeria including Nguru, and West Africa in general. Equally important is the imprint left by the poet who tried to keep his teachings alive, and to defend the Tijānīyya doctrine through a pious attempt.

The poet does not start his poem in the unusual way of most of the northern Nigerian poets: he does not start by showering praise on the prophet and His Lord, which has become as customary. In the first verse, al-Dāghirī directly goes to show his intention “I terminate my poem in Aḥmad al-Tijānī. I headed my gloomy heart toward him.” This is a clear description of the hopelessness and grievances the poet finds himself during the composition of the poem. And right from the beginning, he conveys the object of praise in the poem to the people. He says:

إلى أحمد التجاني أنهى قصيدي قصدت إليه بالفؤاد الكميد

V1. I terminate my poem in Aḥmad al-Tijānī. I headed my gloomy heart toward him.

From stanza 2 to 9, the poet continues to explain the degree of he had while yearning for his master; and his intense feeling and personal relationship with a protagonist of his poem, Aḥmad al-Tijānī whom became the target of the poet and subject praise of the poem. He describes Aḥmad al-Tijānī as the grandson of Prophet Muḥammad under his lineage because he originated from the primal light of Muḥammad which I shall explained later. The following lines focus on the wider implication of the status of Aḥmad al-Tijānī vis-à-vis the founding saints of the Sufi brotherhoods. According to the poet, al-Tijānī being the *khatm al-awliyyā*, naturally acquired all other qualities of the past *al-awliyyā* (saints), which shows the preference for his master over all others. He continues narrating the distinguished qualities of his master, Aḥmad al-Tijānī in the corridor of *al-awliyyā* (saints). He writes:

أجوب بلمح العين كل تنوفة أهيم لشوق في الفؤاد عتيد

V2. With the blinking of an eye, I cross all desert with eyes blinking, thirsty for a fascination in the heart that is ready for any hardship.

فلقلب طي للفيافي بلمحة وللعين طي للسماء البعيد

V3. With just a glance, the heart can fold a large distance, in the same way, the eye folds a distance of heaven.

وللصب شوق يعترني كل ساعة وللدهر شأن كل يوم جديد

V4. For the love, there is fascination agitating at all time, in the same manner, that every period has its new topic.

أجوس خلال الشوق أطلب منتهى فلا منتهى إلا وصول مفيد

V5. I am searching out the destination amidst the infatuation, but I realized that no destination other than reaching the desired result.

وماذاك إلا أن سلطان حبه أعز وأقوى من قوي شديد

V6. This is nothing but only that the influence of his love is powerful and stronger than any other power.⁶⁶⁸

وما ذاك إلا جذبهم لمريدهم فللمغناطيس إنجذاب حديد⁶⁶⁹

V7. And this is nothing but their magnetizing to their disciple.⁶⁷⁰ Indeed, the magnate has strong magnetization to iron.

ومن طبعه جمع الجوامع كاسمه ومن هو زبد النور خير وليد

V8. And he is one who naturally acquires a huge amount of knowledge as does his name-Aḥmad that encompasses everything, a product of light and a noble son.⁶⁷¹

ومن قبضه مع الهوامع للآلى به قصدوا وامسكوا بالمجيد

V9. And all benefactions in the custody of other trustees (*al-awliyā*) who adhered to his path and embrace the glorification (of Allah) are in his hold.⁶⁷²

Then al-Dāghirī in verses (10-20) continues to confirm the superiority of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, over all Sufi saints in the world. In verse 10, he uses the phrase ‘exalted position’ which does not only describe Aḥmad al-Tijānī as *khatm al-awliyā*⁶⁷³ but also as the leader of saints to show his knowledge of Tijānīyya. The poet makes his stand clear on the matter of the sainthood of al-Tijānī, for instance, he goes on to tell the people that he believes in al-Tijānī and urges the non-Tijānīs to also believe in him because whosoever does not believe in him would eventually regret in the hereafter. He then depicts al-Tijānī as the man of wisdom, power and guidance. It also illustrates doctrinal eulogy of the founder of the order as a true leader and not based on falsehood. This is an attempt to make people respect, belief and accept al-Tijānī as a spiritual leader even more. Al-Dāghirī goes on to tell people that he might even sacrifice his life for the order of Tijānī.

He then discusses the concept of *Nur Muḥammad* (Muḥammadan reality) about the pre-existing of prophet Muḥammad that Muḥammad was created in form of light before the creation of Adam; when Adam was created the light was injected into Adam and subsequently Muḥammad was born. According to this concept, Muḥammad was the first creation on the earth and all other creatures emanated from him. He thus describes the Shaykh as a component of the light of the prophet Muḥammad. Of particular interest again, is that the poet sees the paternity of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, not a distinct spiritual influence but as a manifestation of the same light embodied in

⁶⁶⁸ The members of the Tijānīyya claim that their brotherhood is the best and the strongest, Aḥmad al-Tijānī being the *khatm al-awliyā* is not only seal of all saints, but also “the most powerful saint and stronger than any other powerful.” They also refer to themselves as “the proud ones.”

⁶⁶⁹ It conventionally means metal but connotatively used here to indicate client.

⁶⁷⁰ See *Irshad aqlis-salim*: volume 2, 110.

⁶⁷¹ Aḥmad al-Tijānī is believed to be a mystical nephew of the Prophet Muhammad and Muhammad light is a symbol of his soul.

⁶⁷² Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jelānī or Kaylānī (1077-1166), founder of the Qadiriyya brotherhood and others, is meant here.

⁶⁷³ Aḥmad al-Tijānī proclaimed himself *khatm al-awliyā* (the seal of all saints), the title which is recognized by all his followers even if it said is in the (Qur’an 33:40) that Muhammad is the last of the seals. For more detailed and comprehensive discussion on this Sufi doctrine see the next chapter.

Prophet Muḥammad. According to the poet, the secret of parents usually slinks to the offspring. He, therefore, means Aḥmad al-Tijānī inherited the honour and that he descended from the Prophet Muḥammad's light through Hassan, the grandson of the prophet. This leader should not be compared with other men among the creatures regarding genealogy and spiritual position. Al-Dāghirī uses a simile here when he says “the secrets of the fatherhood transmitted to offspring as though the secret of dates palm transmits to dates.” He compares the transmission of genes/DNA found in human which is being transferred to its offspring with that of a date tree.” The next thing the poet conveys to his readers is the concept of *khatm awliyā* which is one of the most important teachings of the Tijānīyya brotherhood. He indicates that al-Tijānī is the last and final saints, as such all the secrets of Muḥammad's prophethood are given to al-Tijānī. Here the poet refers indirectly to his society as most of the parents love their last born and confer all other secrets and favours to him. He writes:

لقد فضل الله التجاني أحمدًا على الأوليا النجباء غير بديد

V10. Indeed, the Allah favoured Aḥmad al-Tijānī and elevated him over the entire excelled *al-awliyā*, with none compared to him.

فمن شاء فليؤمن بما قد رويته و من شاء فليكفر بكل سدسد

V11. Whoever wishes should believe in what I said or if he wishes, let him falsify all truth.

فمن شاء فليؤمن فإني حلفت بالـ إله العزيز والحكيم الرشيد

V12. And, if you wish, trust me for I have taken oath by the Lord, the omnipotent, the omniscient and the judicious.

لئن تسألني عن حقيقة أحمد أجيبك بقول صح تحت الوريد

V13. Certainly, if you ask me about the reality of Aḥmad (Tijānī), surely, I will welcome your question with correct answer which I prefer to die for.

فما هو إلا صرف نور محمد تبين بعد الكتم عند الحميد

V14. And he is not but the component of the light of Muhammad (saw) exposed after it was concealed, with whom he excessively praised-the Allah.

وذا نجله حقا كما هو نوره وها هو خير الجنس خير حفيد

V15. That was his real offspring as though he was light from him. And here is he-the best descent and best grandson.⁶⁷⁴

وسر أبو في البينة قدسرى كما سر نخل في النوى والبيد

V16. The secret of the father lies in his offspring as the secret of date-palm (paste) in date-stone and the like.

وسر نبو في الولاية كامن وسر أب يسري سرى للوليد

V17. And in the same way, the secret of prophecy is concealed in *Awliyā*. Indeed, the secret of a father spreads to the child.

وأذهب رجب عنهم ثم طهروا لأجل نبي الله خير عقيد

V18. Thus, all the impurities were removed from them, and then they were purified for the sake of the prophet of Allah that is my best ideology.

عجبت انتقاد الجاهلين لجهلم من الترجمان من رسول شهيد

⁶⁷⁴ Aḥmad al-Tijānī was an offspring of the Prophet Muhammad in spiritual and mystical world known as *Waḥdat* or *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The real essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality), also called the Reality of Realities (*Ḥaqīqa al-Ḥaqā'iq*).

V19. I am surprised at the criticism of those ignorant for their unfamiliarity (and misperception) with the interpreter of the prophet (saw)-the Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī.

فللورق والدينار دفن لمدة فيخرج عند الإحتياج الشديد

V20. Indeed, the silver and gold are hidden for some time (eventualities) and are brought when the keen need arises.

Verses (21-30), discusses the concept of Muḥammadan reality. But here the poet confirms to his readers that whosoever accepts and believes in al-Tijānī spiritual leader being the *khatm al-awliyā* and grandson of the prophet is on the right path and would be part of Muḥammad's light, but whosoever does not believe in him has gone astray. It is believed among the Tijānīs in Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria, that al-Tijānī is the “*cikamakin waliye*” (the seal of the saints). The poet goes further to enumerate the esteemed status of the Shaykh as the trainer of his followers. He goes on to situate al-Tijānī as the vicegerent of Allah on the earth, particularly in an environment where the settlers believe Allah as the only deity which is in accordance with the teaching of the Qur'an (2:30). What is meant by the word vicegerent is to improve the world for and on behalf of Allah, to rule people, to apply the orders and recommendations of Allah among people, animals and non-living things. All these are compatible with Islamic teachings as seen in the Qur'an and in other religious books. According to the poet, as believed by other Muslims, only Allah knows the rationale behind it. He says:

تتوره من يسعد الله ثم من عن النور يعشو في ضلال بعيد

V21. Those favoured by Allah will attain and witness his light and, those who are blindfolded against the light deeply go astray.

يربي مريدا أمه بعد موته وما هو إلا النقل للمستزيد

V22. He dry-nurses any disciples that endorses him even after his death. And this is not but transporting those striving for upper level.

وإن شاء يظهر للمريد مريبا على حسب الإقبال من مستفيد

V23. If he wishes he may expose himself dry nursing his client. It depends how the degree of love shown by the client.

فإن يسخ فالمرجو كشف الحجاب كي نراه على التحقيق غير حفيد

V24. And, if he may offer, our aspiration unveiled from our faces to make it viable to see him in reality.⁶⁷⁵

يفيض علينا كل علم وحكمة معلمة من جده والشهيد

V25. (Not only to see him but also) continuation of overflow of knowledge and wisdom learnt from his grandfather.⁶⁷⁶

فيغسل رين القلب صفو رحيقه لكي أتطلى بالباس الجديد

V26. And clean the spot in my heart with his pure alcohol (water) for me to adorn with new attire.

وربي عسى أن يهديني سواء نهـ حجه كي أروى بالرحيق الرغيد

V27. May my Lord guide me to the right path so that I can be satisfied with sufficient alcohol (hidden knowledge).

لقد كان حيث الله رب خليفة و غوثا يرببهم بفيض مديد

⁶⁷⁵ The members of the Tijānīyya brotherhood are always eager to see Aḥmad al-Tijānī in dream or in the state of wakefulness. Having seen him, it is believed to grant *Jannat al-Firdaus*. He also has the power to grant *Jannat al-Firdaus* even to the unbelievers if they see him on Friday or Monday night.

⁶⁷⁶ Prophet Muhammad is meant here.

V28. Indeed, regarding his position at the side of Allah-my Lord, he is vicegerent as well as succour,⁶⁷⁷ dry-nursing them by excessive overflow of assistance

وقد كان قطب الأولياء جميعهم وجامهم في كل خير نصيد

V29. And he became the leader of entire the trustees (*al-awliyā*)⁶⁷⁸ and, invited them to all benefactions.

وذاك هو القطب المكتم أمره وبينهم حجب بقصر مشيد

V30. And that is a leader of trustees whose issue was concealed. And, between them is bar of well-built lofty castles.

Then, from verse 31-34, the poet brings again the issue of the spiritual position of al-Tijānī as *khatm al-awliyā* and the leader all Sufi and non-Sufi saints on earth. He explains the matter so thoroughly that all other saints have prepared the ground for the emergence of al-Tijānī. Next to the prophethood, he is the channel through which the entirety of saints gain (their sainthood ability). He goes on to make his stand clear on the matter of *ghawth az-zaman* (saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era) when he says that the only thing one could get for the position from al-Tijānī is his blessings. However, the seeker of the position should go to Allah, He alone can give the position. The poet confirms to the Tijānīs and non-Tijānīs that only Allah can give the position to whosoever He wishes but through the blessings of Prophet Muḥammad and al-Tijānī; their support and blessings are sought by showering blessings and prayers to them. The poet indirectly expresses his feelings towards those who erroneously believe that saints, particularly Aḥmad al-Tijānī can answer prayers or give position. It is believed in Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria, that all prayers to God can also be answered by Aḥmad al-Tijānī, to the extent that some people erroneously swore by the name of Aḥmad al-Tijānī which is incompatible with Islamic principles and condemned by many poets in northern Nigeria. The poet in verse 34 acknowledges that Aḥmad al-Tijānī can intercedes on behalf of his members in this world and on the Day of Judgement in the Hereafter. He writes:

سوى جده المختار يعلم أنه يوارثه في الختم ثم الوليد

V31. Except his grandfather (prophet saw)⁶⁷⁹ who knows that he will inherit his signet, (thus his grandfather is a seal of messengers while he is a seal of trustees (*al-awliyā*)).

وله مقام خصه الله في الأزل مقام تناهت دونه كل بيد

V32. And, he has a dignity which was prepared for him by Allah eternally, a dignity that excelled and left behind all that perished.

وما فوقه إلا مقام نبوة له كل علم دونها بالوصيد

V33. And, that position is high enough that no space is left ahead except the position of prophethood⁶⁸⁰. All knowledge behind that position is as doorstep for him.

يفيض على الأغواث غيبا ومشهدا وليسو على إمداده بشهيد

⁶⁷⁷ See *Bahrul madid*, tafsīr of Aḥmad *ibn* ‘Ajṭbah al-Ḥasanī, volume 4, 578.

⁶⁷⁸ See *Bahrul madid*, tafsīr of Aḥmad *ibn* ‘Ajṭbah al-Ḥasanī, volume 4, 578.

⁶⁷⁹ Prophet Muhammad is meant here.

⁶⁸⁰ See *Bahrul madid*, tafsīr of Aḥmad *ibn* ‘Ajṭbah al-Ḥasanī, volume 2, 169.

V34. He gives the assistance to the needy while living and after death but, they are unaware of the time of the flow.⁶⁸¹

And, from verses 35-52, the poet confirms to his readers that one can seek blessings from Aḥmad al-Tijānī and thus channel his request to him, and then goes on to describe himself as an inconsequential caller for his request to be answered. It is clear from this verse that al-Dāghirī had also wished the position of *ghawth az-zaman* for himself.⁶⁸² Perhaps, the poem was composed when al-Dāghirī sought for the position of *ghawth az-zaman* (saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era) and *Sahib al-Fayḍa* (the bringer of *fayḍa* or man blessed with the spiritual flood), therefore he is seeking the blessings and support of al-Tijānī for him get to the position.

Then, he goes on to conceal his knowledge of Arabic prosody and law of rhymes in Arabic poetry when he says he that apologies for his shortcoming in the fields. Here, the poet ironically is unduly humbled when he confesses that he is ignorant of those things. But his own poems expose him because he explains the matter of Arabic prosody so thoroughly that can hardly comment on those which he does not include. Here the poet also indicates to us that there is still need for him to compose poems in praise of al-Tijānī when he says that if he were master of the Arabic prosody he would have composed thousands of verses in praising the honour and virtues of his master, Aḥmad al-Tijānī. Then, al-Dāghirī goes further again to seek blessings and intervention of al-Tijānī, by describing him as one who supports those in need.

He continues to reveal the special favours attributed to the Tijānīyya by the virtue of the belief that it originated from a direct visionary encounter between Aḥmad al-Tijānī and Prophet Muhammad. Thus, he emphasizes to the people that there is abundantly reward for those who embrace the Tijānīyya and praise al-Tijānī to the extent that he describes them as “the lucky one is he who adhered firmly to the system” because they would finally find themselves in *Jannah* (paradise). He goes further to encourage and mobilize his audience to love al-Tijānī because of the power and ability of his master.

أيا أحمد التجاني يا غاية المنى نزيلك نادى طالبا بزهد⁶⁸³

⁶⁸¹ The poet refers to the intervention in this world and intercession on the Day of Judgement, entering the Paradise without any judgement and punishment. Aḥmad al-Tijānī is believed to grant it even to the unbelievers if they see him on Friday or Monday night.

⁶⁸² The *ghawth az-zaman* (the reformer or saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era) and *Sahib al-Fayḍa* (the bringer of *fayḍa* or man blessed with the spiritual flood) is one of the highest ranks in the Tijānī's Sufi spiritual hierarchy, which was proclaimed by Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niase for himself. Concerning the discussion on it see next chapter of this thesis. The mystical meaning of the Arabic word “*zaman*” is explained by Christelow 1997, 95-115.

⁶⁸³ Means fractional.

V35. O Aḥmad al-Tijānī! O the extreme ambition⁶⁸⁴, your visitor is calling, looking for a small amount of your benefaction.

أخذت سبيلا واصلا شيخنا إلى الرسول ويهديني لنهج وطيد⁶⁸⁵

V36. I follow the path conveyed by our Shaykh to the Prophet, guide me to the steady path.⁶⁸⁶

كأني الذي أحتاج للوصل واللقا وللعائد الموجود خير عهيد

V37. I am looking like one who needs union, and, certainly, for a present and regular visitor is the confederate and promise.

عسى أن يجود وصلة أشتقي بها عن الغير أستغني بخير قعيد

V38. With the hope that I may be given access (to get contact directly) with that I will be healed and with the best companion that I will be satisfied against any other (*waliyy*).

يعجل ما قدكان لي ضامنا به ويجمع شملا لي بلم أكيد

V39. Hasten what was guaranteed to me and accumulate for me permanently all scattered in best of accumulation.

وإني وإن كنت العروض عرفتها لذبتت عن شيخي بألفي قصيد

V40. Verily, if I mastered the prosody, I would have protected against my Shaykh with as much as 2000.

وباعي قصير في صناعة أبيت وليست القوافي في الغنا بمجيد

V41. But my ability in composing poem is very minimal. Also, I am not veteran in composing rhyme or rhythm in poetry.

فما لاينال كله من مهمة فليس بخال جملة كاللحيد⁶⁸⁷

V42. Whatever mission that cannot be reached fully it should not be left empty at all like throwing away the carcass.

ولكن خيط النور من شيخنا يجب ص شق فؤادي بالرضى ومزيد

V43. But only that the thread of light from my Shaykh⁶⁸⁸ is enough to sew the crack in my heart with thread of appreciation and advance.

بلطف خفي من عناية ربنا يفوز الفتى من شيخه كالعبيد

V44. With the hidden affection sponsored by our Lord, a child achieve benefits from his Shaykh as does the servant.

أيا صاحب الأنوار والأسرار والـ معارف والأحظى ببخت جريد

V45. O the owner of lights, secrecy, divine knowledge and fortune who was endowed with perfect share?

ويا دور أنوار ودور إحاطة ويا ملجأ الملهوف خير عميد

V46. O the cycle of lights, the haven of the helpless and best pillar?⁶⁸⁹

عليك بحاجاتي نزلت فأعطني وما خير كم للحب غير⁶⁹⁰ فقيد

V47. Before you are my needs and aspirations, grant them to me, please. Indeed, the best lover of you will never lose.⁶⁹¹

فكم من مرید نال فوق مراده وكم من مرید نال خير زعيد

V48. How often, that your disciples gain higher than his requirement?⁶⁹² How many of your client got the best portion?

فيا فوز من يأتي لوردك وارتوى ويا فوزه يافوزه من سعيد

V49. What a best achievement for those who are fully registered with your sect!

هو الخير كل الخير في ورده لمن يريد صراط المستقيم بجيد

⁶⁸⁴ Compare with Qur'an 31 : 15.

⁶⁸⁵ Means steady, strong.

⁶⁸⁶ The poet points to the superiority of the Tijānīyya over the antagonist brotherhood, that is, the Qadiriyya.

⁶⁸⁷ Simply means grave.

⁶⁸⁸ Aḥmad al-Tijānī is meant here.

⁶⁸⁹ It is believed by the members of the Tijānīyya brotherhood that Aḥmad al-Tijānī is their helper and defender in this world and on the Day of Judgement in the Hereafter.

⁶⁹⁰ Added to accomplish the verse. The verse is meaningful without it.

⁶⁹¹ The members of the Tijānīyya brotherhood believed that they would never be losers because even if they had committed sins. People without sins are believed to fly like birds towards the Paradise.

⁶⁹² Compare with Qur'an 14:7.

V50. He is a blessing, and the entire blessings are with his sect prepared for anyone wishing to be truly guided in the straight way.⁶⁹³

تمسك بحب الشيخ أحمد ذي الوفا ومن هو في الإنجاء خير عميد

V51. Cling to the love of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī (RA)⁶⁹⁴ the promise keeper and who in the fulfilment of promise is best reliable.⁶⁹⁵

تمسك به إن أعضل الدهر في العدى فما هو إلا النجح⁶⁹⁶ للمستفيد

V52. Adhere to him for when an era intricates to enemies, he will be the way-out for his beneficiary.

In verses 53-71, the poet returns to the issue of *khatm al-awliyā* and *Nur Muḥammad* by discussing some virtues and preference of Aḥmad al-Tijānī. Here he tries to show to the people that many saints yearned and wished the virtues of al-Tijānī for themselves but could not obtain them. The poet rhetorically uses metaphor to expose the eagerness of these people when he says: “riders of fast horses.” He compares the wish of the saints for the position of *khatm al-awliyā* with the fastest running horses. In northern Nigeria, a horse is a symbol of strength and speed. Ahmadu *ka tsere sa'a ba su cim maka ba*. He therefore returns to the issue of *khatm al-awliyā* by referring to al-Tijānī not only as seal of the saints but also as one who terminated the power and ability of the previous saints who were unable to reach his end: “his extreme end is not in the ability of any hunter to fetch.” Here too he uses metaphor to make his poem more effective when he compares the saints with hunters. He goes on to confirm that al-Tijānī is the last and final saint as the prophet Muḥammad is the last and final prophet of Allah on earth.⁶⁹⁷ Also, he uses two similes when he compares prophethood with sainthood “With him, Allah sealed the *Wilayatship* as does his best grandfather.” In this sense, according to the poet, after the appearance of al-Tijānī as *khatm al-awliyā*, the spiritual path established by previous Sufis ceased to be fully effective, just as the religions of old were invalidated by the appearance of Prophet Muhammad, “the seal of the prophets.”

Thereafter, the poet uses an effective metaphor when he compares the esoteric meaning of the Qur'an and Hadith with light. In Nguru and other parts of northern Nigeria light stands for good things while darkness represents evil things. Sometimes, the light itself is also represents Islam, while darkness is a symbol of other religions. The poet continues to develop the theme introduced in the previous verses, that is, the spiritual position of al-Tijānī as *khatm al-awliyā* and

⁶⁹³ The poet is also referring to the superiority of the Tijānīyya over other Sufi brotherhoods.

⁶⁹⁴ As discussed earlier.

⁶⁹⁵ Aḥmad al-Tijānī promised to his followers that he would intercept for them on the Day of Judgement and *Jannat al-Firdaus* would be granted to them.

⁶⁹⁶ Simply means Success.

⁶⁹⁷ This does not mean that there no saint after him, but it means no saint will occupy position bigger than him, so his position among the saints is like the position of Prophet between the prophets.

the leader of all Sufi and non-Sufi saints on earth. Of particular interest again, is that the poet describes al-Tijānī as the Prophet's grandson by virtue of his Ḥasanī lineage. He, thus, reiterates the special qualities attributed to al-Tijānī. The poet goes on to tell the people that whosoever believe al-Tijānī and his virtues is the true Muslim and those whoever denies such is not only going to *Jahannam* (Hellfire), but they are the woods and fuel of the fire.⁶⁹⁸

فكم من كرامات له فانت المدى تناقلها الركبان كل عتيد

V53. How many charismas⁶⁹⁹ did he have which are being conveyed by riders for the past many years?

وكم من علوم غامضات حكين في الـ خفاء السهاج⁷⁰⁰ لي بغير قليد

V54. How many ambiguous knowledges with hidden meaning as that minimal star (named Suhaj) but simply exposed?

وكم نشرت أوراده المنجيات في الـ قرى وحواليها بنشر قميد

V55. How widespread does his delivering Auraad⁷⁰¹ (litanies) over cities and environs in the way locust spread.

وما زلت أستسقيه من فيض جوده لأروى و يرويني بماء صريد

V56. I am continually seeking for drink from his flow of gift so as to supply me with water and satisfy my thirst with its cleanliness and purity.⁷⁰²

بدايته للأوفياء نهاية نهايته لم يحوها كل صيد

V57. His beginning for other perfect (men) is terminal. And his terminal will never be hunted by any hunter (those looking for the position of *Wilayatship*).

لذا فاق كل العارفين بربهم وله اختصاص من علي شهيد

V58. He therefore excelled the entire knowers of their Lord. And, he has special regard from the Glorious and Omnipresent Lord.

ولهم مقامات لغير عليه مقام التجاني من عل وحريد

V59. And the other trustees have their own position but below that distinguished position of Aḥmad al-Tijānī (ra)

هو المرء لا يشقى جليس له ولا يذاد بلا علم بخير عقيد

V60. He is a man whose associate will never go astray and will never be expelled out of ignorance due to his sound ideology.

به ختم الله الولاية كلها كما جده في الختم خير جديد

V61. With him, Allah sealed the *Wilayatship* as does his best grandfather.⁷⁰³

وجاء بما يسبي عقول أولي لنهي بإيضاح تفسير القرآن جديد

V62. And he brought what will capture the brain of intelligent people with new but comprehensive commentary of Qur'an.

كذلك حديث المصطفى جددت لنا عباراته إجلاء معنى مهيد

V63. Not only the Qur'an, but also the tradition of selected prophet-the Prophet Muhammad (saw). He refreshed their meaning through wide explanation of the meaning embedded in it.

⁶⁹⁸ The meaning apparently is that for the good or evil actions performed in this world a man will be repaid to him in the next. The Muslim Hell is composed of seven sections, each destined for a special kind of sinners: *Jahannam* for bad Muslims. *Lazā* for Satan and his followers, *Sa 'ir* for Christians, *Jahīm* for idolaters, *Saqar* for Sabians, *Hāwiya* for hypocrites, and *Huṭama* for Jews.

⁶⁹⁹ *Adwaa'ul Bayaan* (Kahf), volume 3, 218.

⁷⁰⁰ It is a name of a very small star.

⁷⁰¹ An Arabic word for daily recommended services.

⁷⁰² Probably *Salsabīl* is meant here, which was mentioned in Qur'an 77:15-17. See also next chapter for detailed discussion on *Salsabīl*. Those who worship God and are close to him will go to the source of Paradise and drink water, the *Salsabīl*. Rivers of milk in the Paradise are mentioned in the Qur'an 47:15.

⁷⁰³ The grandfather is a reference to Prophet Muhammad.

ونسبته تكفيك فضلا ومنصبا إلى خير خلق الله خير أصيد⁷⁰⁴

V64. Indeed, his link to the best vicinity of the best of mankind is quite enough to ascertain his hierarchy and status.

وأكرم به جدا وأبدع به أبا وأفضل به من معتزى وحشيد

V65. What a best grandfather!⁷⁰⁵ And, what an excellent father! What a wonderful descendent!

له نسب عال على كل معتل إلى أن علا سبعا بغير جحيد

V66. He has a relationship that ascended upon all dignitaries up to the seventh *wilāya*. There is no contrary opinion to this statement.

تحيط به في كل وجه فضائل كما قد كفاه الله كل تليد

V67. He is surrounded by blessings all over, as though Allah (swt) supplied him enough power to overwhelm the entire authorities.

فمن فضله يومن فذاك مومن ومن يكفرنه فهو شر وقيد

V68. And, whoever ascertains his nobility is a believer, and, whoever goes against him that is worst fuel.

أيا منبع الأنوار والعلم والعطا أيا مخزن الأسرار للمستفيد

V69. O the fountainhead of lights, knowledge, and gift. O the store of secrets for the benefit of man?

أيا نور أنوار ودور إحاطة أيا مفتاح الغيب للمستزيد

V70. O the bright of lights and a surrounding cycle. O that uncovers hidden knowledge for those wish to advance.

ويا كنز أسرار وخير مولد لأحمد ذي الإفضال خير عميد

V71. O the centre of secret and, the best child? For the sake of the Ahmad-the owner of bliss, my best lover and a leader.

In verses (72-78), al-Dāghirī introduces the main theme of his poem, which has been the reason for the composition of the poem. He makes it clear that he offers the praises to al-Tijānī so that he could answer all his requests and demands and also get blessings and support, probably for the position of *ghawth az-zaman*. The poet composes the poem with the anticipation that al-Tijānī would give him wisdom as he promised. Then al-Dāghirī exposes his readers to the kind of Arabic meter he used in the composition of this poem, which is *ṭawīl* in Arabic prosody. *Ṭawīl* meter is very popular among the Arabic poets and among the Sufis in northern Nigeria as expressed below.

مدحتك أرجو السؤل والفضل والمنى ومن يعط ما لم تعطه لليليد

V72. I express my eulogy in hope that you will grant my requests, dignity and ambitions. And who will give what you do not grant to this indolent?

وأرجو عطاء من لذك وحكمة وتربية موعودة من شهيد

V73. And I desire gift and wisdom from you as well as breeding promised from the knower-the Allah.

وكشف الغطا والفتح والسر والرضى فكفك مبسوط لغمر كسيد

V74. And (grand me), uncovering of veil, success, secret and ratification. And, indeed, your hand is always opened to this unskilled and inactive.

وقد قال خير الخلق من أمانا يجب علينا له حق بغير طريق

V75. Indeed, the best of creature/being says: "he who endorses us as leader, it is incumbent upon us to grant and protect his right without banishing."⁷⁰⁶

وأنت له في كل حال متابع وأنت له في السير خير وليد

V76. And you are in any circumstance obedient and, with regard to an operation, you are the best child for him (the grandfather).

⁷⁰⁴ Refers to vicinity.

⁷⁰⁵ Prophet Muhammad is referred here.

⁷⁰⁶ It is a Prophetic Hadith.

قصدتك دون الخلق طرا فمن يرد لساحتك الوسعى يفز بالحشيد

V77. I directed my mind towards you leaving behind the creatures. And, whoever gets to your large arena will certainly achieve a large portion.⁷⁰⁷

ببحر طويل قد عرفنا مديحه فما هو إلا مده للنشيد

V78. With *Bahar Tawil*,⁷⁰⁸ I scooped this eulogy. This is not but support (*madad*) from him (Aḥmad al-Tijānī) to the eulogizer.

Towards the end of the poem (79-86), the poet to invoke Allah's blessings upon Aḥmad al-Tijānī, and he implores Allah to pass his message to him. He finally reveals that the dream he had is what has inspired him to compose this poem as acknowledgement of divine favour. Here the poet indirectly makes it clear to his readers that what he dreamed of is divinely good. It might be what he saw in his dream that he got the position of *ghawth az-zaman*. Allah knows best. He writes:

فيا رب بلغ للتجاني مدائحي وما كان فيها من سؤال شديد

V79. O my Lord extend my praise and what its content of strong requests to (Aḥmad) Al-Tijānī.

قصيدي تهنيئى لرأيا رأيت في الـ منام فهزتي لشكر حميد

V80. This my poem is congratulatory and was stimulated by what I have seen in my dream,⁷⁰⁹ thus, agitated me to offer thanks to the praised.

فيا ليت شعري هل يحصل لي رضى لشعري لدى ذي الجود غير صديد

V81. How I wish I know whether I will achieve glorification and the Lord will favour me for the sake of my poem?

فهذا قصيدي فيه ما فيه من منى فما هو إلا وردة لسعيد

V82. And this is my poem and its content of ambitions. It is not but to reach the blessed one- the Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī.⁷¹⁰

وللبيت "نزل" ثم شعبان شهره وتاريخه في كل غدر بديد

V83. The number of stanzas for this poem is 87 (The chronogram refers to the numerical value of n, z and l but of Arabic text) and, was composed in the month of Sha'abaa. And, the year is 1394 A.H., (refer to the value of the latter available in the sentence of: "في كل غدر بديد"⁷¹¹

The poet goes further to invokes Allah with praises and thanks for the wisdom He has bestowed upon him from the beginning of the poem and its completion. Then he prays for Prophet Muḥammad's family and his companions, and then for all of mankind (Muslims) in general. Confirming the poem was composed in praise of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, *khatm al-awliya* and the founder of the Tijānīyya brotherhood, he writes following lines:

فحمدا و شكرا للإله الذي به الـ ختام كيدا في قضاء غريد

V84. All praises and thanks go to the Lord who with His wisdom is the beginning and completion of this poem.

صلاة وتسليم على النقطة التي بها دارت الأكوان غير جعيد

V85. Peace and blessings of Allah be upon the point at which the entire beings are surrounded (the prophet), no contradiction (on this statement).

مع الأل والأصحاب ما قال قائل إلى أحمد التجان أنهي قصيد

⁷⁰⁷ See *Kanzul Amal*, volume 7, 651(20743).

⁷⁰⁸ This term used by poet to denote one of the 16 style of poem.

⁷⁰⁹ *Adwaa 'ul Bayaan*, volume 125/ volume 9, 15.

⁷¹⁰ The members of the Tijānīyya brotherhood refer to themselves as "the blessed ones."

⁷¹¹ There is a mistake in the chronogram, perhaps, a copyist's mistake.

V86. Together with his noble families and companions as much as one says: “I headed my gloomy heart toward the Aḥmad at-Tijānī.”

7.3.1.3. Thematic Translation and Content Analysis of *Qasiidatu Tarheebi bi Saahibil Faidatit-Tijjaaniyyati* (The welcoming poem in praising the owner of Tijānīyya brotherhood)

About the Poem: Authorship and Introduction

One of the most important mystical compositions of al-Dāghirī is his poem, *Qasiidatu Tarheebi bi Saahibil Faidatit-Tijjaaniyyati* (Henceforth *Qasiidatu Tarheebi*). It is the third in the series of his panegyric poems of praise to be translated and analysed in the *madḥ* category. He composed it in respect and honour of the international Sufī master and spiritual leader, Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse al-Kawlākhī (d. 1975), who was affectionately nicknamed baye (father) by his Senegalese disciples and *baba*, by his Nigerian disciples.⁷¹² The man got the spiritual flood of the Tijānīyya brotherhood, singular succour (of the age) discussed in chapter two of this thesis.

From the religious point of view, this poem cannot only be considered a praise poem but also a sign of allegiance and loyalty. We must recall that al-Dāghirī sought for the position of *ghawth az-zaman* and at the end he accepted the leadership of Niasse as the second spiritual leader in the Tijānīyya brotherhood. Al-Dāghirī and his contemporaries who accepted the spiritual leadership of Niasse started to compose poems that presented their leader as a great miraculous Shaykh who should be followed and whenever he was visiting Nigeria, they used to compose welcoming poems for him.

This eulogy was composed in respect of this international Sufī leader, Niasse during his visit to Nigeria in 1945. In its introductory part, al-Dāghirī clearly states the reason for which the poem is written. He says that one fellow brother told to him that Niasse came to him on a Saturday night and taught him two verses of the poem in a dream. He reads the verses to al-Dāghirī. Thereafter, al-Dāghirī deems the dreamed verses fit to multiply them. He, therefore, composes this poem by adding as many verses as possible using the initial style. Indeed, He starts with his verse followed by the two dreamed verses, then he adds as many as possible after. Structurally, the poem is called a *Mīmīya*, because it rhymes in the consonant *mīm*, the final syllable of each stanza being *mīm*. It contains seventy (70) verses. The analysis of the poem is concerned with some themes which are more relevant to our discussion. As will be seen below, al-Dāghirī eulogizes Niasse with

⁷¹² Brigaglia states that he was also fondly referred to as *Shehi* (Shaykh) in order to distinguish him from *Shehu* (Dan Fodio).

certain unique and special attributes, which portray him as a creative scholar and a poet. This shows the originality and authenticity of his mystical poems. Even though, there are considerable use of repetitions which does not in any way affect their originality.

The Category and content of the Poem

The poem falls within the Sufi themes because it is purely a eulogy of a Sufi leader, i.e. Niasse. In this poem, al-Dāghirī does not only rain praises on Niasse but also expresses his support for the ideological outlook of Niasse reformed Tijānīyya. He makes an open statement of allegiance and mentions many of the qualities he perceived in Niasse. The poem, from the religious point of view, is generally embedded with many Sufi doctrines and specifically Tijānī teachings. The topical or thematic structure of this poem can be viewed as follows:

- a) Welcome Address;
- b) The appearance of *ḥayḍa* in the hand of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse;
- c) Proclamation of Niasse as *ghawth az-zaman*;
- d) Special and exclusive peculiarities of Niasse;
- e) The poet's love for Niasse and how he is perceived by the poet.

The poet boycotts the conventional opening theme, technically *nasīb*, which shows the emotions of the poet for meeting his second spiritual leader of his order. Instead he starts his poem in a traditional way of welcoming a visitor or stranger in the Islamic way, which is “أَهْلًا وَسَهْلًا” literarily *ahlan* means family and *sahlan* means easy while the phrase is technically translated as “welcome.”⁷¹³ In the classical Sufi fashion in the first five verses 1-5, the poet makes it abundantly clear that he is welcoming his leader and he expresses his feeling towards his spiritual leader. All round, they contain expressions of great joy and portray the exalted position of Niasse to the poet. Here, the poet confirms that he accepts Niasse as a second spiritual leader of the Tijānīyya whose speeches and words are important and exciting to him.

Then, al-Dāghirī claims that the soul and body are already saved from Hellfire even before his death. In the next line, the poet, however, admits that nobody can describe or quantify the praises his spiritual leader whose efforts make their time bright spiritually. He then makes one of the controversial statements in the teaching of the reformed Tijānīyya in northern Nigeria when he says, “a leader through whom people achieved their goal by just sighting of his gleeful face.” The verse is perhaps taken from Niasse's statement in his book entitled *Nafaḥaat al-malik al-ghanii*

⁷¹³ It is suggested that the phrase is taken from “May you arrive as part of the family and tread an easy path.”

(“Scent of the Self-Sufficient King”) which contains the account of his visit to Guinea and neighbouring countries.⁷¹⁴ In this book, Niasse says that “*man yuḥibbunii wa-man yaraanii fii jannat al-khuld bi-laa buhtaani* (Those who love me and those who see me will dwell in the Garden of Eternity that is not a fabrication.)”⁷¹⁵ That statement, according to the non-Tijānīs, is incompatible with Islamic teachings as seen in the Qur’an and other religious books. Therefore, they continue to criticise Niasse himself, his disciples and Tijānīyya brotherhood. The poet also states that at the arrival of his spiritual leader, blessings have been witnessed, perhaps, he refers to the spiritual attainment or enrolment into the *Fayḍa* Tijānīyya. This is presented in the following lines:

- أهلا وسهلا أيها القمقام بقدمكم يحلو لنا الكلام
- V1. We delightfully welcome you O the leader! With your arrival, all the voices turn to be pleasant to us.
- أهلا وسهلا مرحبا بقدم من طابت به الأرواح وأجسام
- V2. We delightfully welcome the arrival of whom, the soul and bodies were salvaged.⁷¹⁶
- أهلا وسهلا مرحبا بقدم من تعيي لكتب مديحه الأرقام
- V3. We welcome the arrival of whose commendations the pen fails to write.
- أهلا وسهلا مرحبا بقدم من زانت ببهجة وجهه الأيام
- V4. Welcome the arrival of the one by whose gracious face the days are decorated.
- أهلا وسهلا مرحبا بقدم من فازت بروية وجهه الأقوام
- V5. Welcome the arrival of the one who at the sight of whose face, the people achieve their aspiration.
- أهلا وسهلا مرحبا بقدم من فاضت ببركة جنبه الأنعام
- V6. Welcome the arrival of the one whose honour the bounties overflow.

The six lines above assert that every member of Tijānīyya brotherhood in the twentieth century was under Niasse and must obey his authority. So, after the welcome address and greetings, the poet describes Niasse as the custodian of the divine law and he is elevated and exalted in appreciation of his efforts by his Lord. He admits that Niasse attained the position which many saints including the poet himself thought they would assume.⁷¹⁷ They had sleepless nights, praying, and doing *dhiikr* for that sake, but in vain. There is a first reference to the appearance of the awaited *fayḍa* (flood) at the hands of Niasse. The *Fayḍa* referred to as reformed Tijānīyya, so according to the poet, the laws and injunctions of the order are reformed in honour of his spiritual leader. Some of these reforms were on *tarbiyya*, offering the ritual by folding arms (*Qabd*) during *Salat* and the crowd form of *Maulud an-Nabiy*.

⁷¹⁴ Seesemann 2009, 317.

⁷¹⁵ Seesemann 2009, 317.

⁷¹⁶ These are the phrase used to politely welcome strangers and other friends. It literally means “you encounter the real household not strangers, step on soft not rough! You hit the wideness not narrowness.” But contextually mean we delightfully welcome the arrival of whom, the soul and bodies were salvaged.

⁷¹⁷ It was reported that he adhered to the teachings of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse after series of *Istikhārah*.

Due to these reforms, according to poet, a rapid acceptance of their *fayḍa* “by millions of Muslim Ummah especially, in West Africa was achieved.”⁷¹⁸ In addition to this, the *Fayḍa* Tijānīyya overflows due to the individual effort of Niasse. The poem in its next lines also states the idea of reforms, but the above-discussed idea is presented below:

لما اجتباك الله قدما بالرضى رفعت بك الأحكام والحكام

V7. Since you have been exalted by Allah out of appreciation, the laws and custodian of laws are elevated for your sake.

إذ أنت عين العين عين مراتب رمزت ونامت عندها الأفهام

V8. Since you are the reality-essential position at which the thoughts paused and slept.

متشكلا متشكلا متشكلا متشكلا بجنايك الأحكام

V9. In your honour, the laws and injunctions were reformed.

وأفضت فيض الفيض فيض مفضل ملئت به الأنهار والآكام

V10. And you flow the flood of bounties the way the favoured one flows. With your overflow, the rivers and other high land were felt.

من مثل صاحب فيضة صمدية فيصي ألوف ساعة أى هاموا

V11. Who can be as owner of the eternal overflow (Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse) so that he should admonish the thousands of people at the same time? No! they all shocked!

إذ لا العبارة تستقل أقل ما قد خصكم من فضله القيام

V12. Since no phrase can carries the least of what you were specialized of favours by self-existence of God.

جل الإله وجل كل صفاته كل الخلائق عن درككم قد ناموا

V13. The Lord is great and His attributes also are glory!! All creatures failed to rich your position-they slept along the line.

تعنو المناصب والمراتب الذي تعنو إليه الأرض والأعلام

V14. The dignities and status are linked to where the land and hills were linked.

قد صار حبل الجذب فيض بيمينكم وبه تفاخر صحك العالم

V15. The magnetizing rope is indeed the overflow of your hand and with this your followers are very proud.

The following lines discuss another type of reform, the poet claims that Niasse is a spiritual heir of Prophet Muḥammad, and he has reformed some of the teachings of the Prophet. He invokes the prayer of the Prophet Muḥammad. According to the poet, what Niasse reformed and taught his disciples was revealed to him by Angel Gabriel. The last line shows the magnanimity of the Qur’an which the poet describes as the “mother of all books.” According to this line, Niasse taught the Qur’an and used it for the training of his disciples as well as developing his *Fayḍa*. This theme reads like this:

أحييت شرعا للنبي محمد فعليه صلى الملائك العالم

V16. You have reformed the law of the Muhammad. May the prayer of learned angels be upon him!

فكأن جبرائيل أوحاك الذي تملي على الطلاب يا مضمضام

V17. What you teach the students with, indeed, is as an inspiration inspired by Angel Gabriel.

سبحان من أدراك أم كتابه ليكمل التدريب والعالم

V18. Glory to who taught you the mother of His book (al-Qur’anic Kareem) to accomplish the training and development.

⁷¹⁸ Tahir 2006, xxiv-xxv. The Tijānī considered this fulfilment of the prophecy of the founder of the brotherhood, Aḥmad al-Tijānī who predicted that at the end of the hour, people would be joining the order in multiples through *Sahib al-fayḍa*.

The poet continues to state the reason Niasse is lucky to have the position of *ghawth az-zaman* and *sahib al-Fayḍa Tijānīyya*. The first reason, according to the poet, is that Aḥmad al-Tijānī, the founder of the order, prophesized the appearance of *fayḍa* among his followers and that a large number of people will be initiated into the *Ṭarīqa Tijānīyya* towards the end of the last hour.⁷¹⁹ Such person, according to the poet, is Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse, which as a result of his effort, *Fayḍa Tijānīyya* is spread everywhere on earth.

Before the emergence of Niasse, a person known as Zaid claimed to have been the *ghawth az-zaman* and *sahib al-Fayḍa Tijānīyya*, but his claim was denied; knowing that the person who was prophesized to be the *ghawth az-zaman* and *sahib al-Fayḍa* must be learned, verified, and certified, and all were possessed by Niasse. Another reason Niasse is lucky to have the position is his effort in strictly following the Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad. In the description, he stands firmly on the path of the prophet Muḥammad and he cannot be moved or uprooted, he was like a rock and mountain. The following lines of the poem demonstrate this:

لولا مخافة كاشح مترقب أظهرت سرا حازه الكرام

V19. If it were not for the fear of those secret revellers, I would have exposed the secrets embodied by this entertainer (Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse).

قال التجان الختم تاتي فيضة عم العوالم خيرها الجمّام

V20. Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī-the seal of the saint had said: “there will come to you a *Fayḍa* (overflow-that was Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse) whose abundant blessing will encompass the universe.”⁷²⁰

ملنت به في الأرض معموراتها وتعم من فيضانها الأكام

V21. Its development would overwhelm everywhere on the earth and, its abundant flow would be worldwide.

وقد ادعاها مرة زيد ونخـرى غيره يحظى بها المقدام

V22. Indeed, once, the Zaid had claimed to be one of the wrong thinking of his that a blockheaded can achieve it.

لم يقض الأ الذي بيمينه خطّ الشهادة شدّها الأبرام

V23. Would not be appointed except one with certificate and confirmed with verification.

وبدا ثباتك في اتباعك سنة فكأنك الصفوان والأعلام

V24. And your qualification for the position conferred on you by your adherence to the path of the prophet (saw). And you are as firm as rock and mountain.

ءوذيت كل إذابة توهي الصفا فصبرت صبورا زانه الإجمام

V25. You were tortured to the extent that even the Safa (stone) would be agitated.⁷²¹ But you exercised patience coloured with forbearance.

The poet then asserts that only Allah knows the amount of love he has for Prophet Muḥammad whom Allah praised and blessed. He goes on to point out that Niasse was tortured to the extent that he should have shunned the Muḥammadan way but his patience on the path gave

⁷¹⁹ Nazifi 1984, 135-137; Nazifi, *Yaqutat*, 7; Seesemann 2011, 65-70 and Seesemann 2004, 79-81.

⁷²⁰ Compare with Qur’an 55:1-4.

⁷²¹ See *Bahrul madid* of Aḥmad ibn ‘Ajībah al-Ḥasanī, an-Nahl, volume 4, 27.

what he was not expecting. This can be explained in the sense that Niasse might have been criticised by the people or tested by Allah for his love for Muḥammad. The poet states that nobody can quantify the degree of love, Niasse has for Prophet Muḥammad and Aḥmad al-Tijānī, the founder of the Tijānīyya Sufi order, as well. He also describes Niasse as the “ocean of knowledge” which cannot be quantified by anybody except God Himself. He is also determined to change the world through his beautiful eulogies and eloquence. The poet, however, pleads to Allah to accept the good deeds of Niasse. The following lines reflect this:

لله فرد للعوالم جامع إذ ليس ينكر جمعه الفهّام

V26. What a great *Fard* who encompassed all divine worlds. Since none of the intelligent can deny that this encompassing.

لله صبرك من صبور حامد يتعجب المتعجب الشهام

V27. What a great endurance of this tolerant and an extoller as well. Indeed, those with deep understanding would be impressed.

لله جودك من جواد مكرم وكان جود يمينك السجام

V28. What a great hospitality of this esteemed benevolent. Indeed, your hand gives as faster as gush.

لله همتك التي من دونها همم الدهور وتحتها الأيام

V29. What a great determination under which the entire day's and global efforts are ranked.

لله طلق لسانكم من مقول وصلت بمدح جنا بك الأرحام

V30. What a great eloquent of your tongue is. And, due to eulogization of your honour, all the relationships exist.

لله فيضك عارضا متبحرا يحيى بفيض علومك الأنام

V31. The overflow of your knowledge comes from Allah! O you the ocean of knowledge, with the dissemination of your knowledge, mankind survives.

لله حبك للنبي محمد وعليه صلى البارئ العالم

V32. The knowledge of your intense love for prophet is with Allah alone.⁷²² May the Learned Creature pray for him!

لله حبك للتجاني أحمد عنه الرضى والعز والإكرام

V33. Indeed, the extent of how you intensely love the Shaykh Tijānī is known to Allah alone. May Allah accept his deeds, esteem, and accept him.⁷²³

Towards the end of the poem, the poet discusses the undying he has for him by praising Niasse. According to the poet, Niasse has achieved what many saints have not achieved, particularly the position of *ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa* of the al-Tijānīyya brotherhood and multiple enrolments into the order. Finally, the poet asks his spiritual leader for more love in his heart so that unpleasant condition would not hinder his sense of love.

So, as we can read from the lines, the poet claims that people of low estate would excel once they relate or attach themselves to Niasse and his *Fayḍa*. The poem shows the tradition of

⁷²² Compare with Qur'an 31; see also *Durrul Mansur*, volume 1, 366 and *Kanzul Amal*, volume, 1, 37; Hadith number, 66.

⁷²³ See *Ibn Kathir*, volume 7, 150.

the order, according to the members of the *Fayḍa* that whosoever accepts Niasse and his *Fayḍa*, his wealth and greatness would overflow and flourish just as the movement did.

فهو الذي أعطاك كل فضيلة قصرت بروم أفلها الأرقام

V34. It is he who granted you all these bounties which people (saints) could not have the smallest part of it.

يامن يمد الكائنات جميعها زدني فيرضا زادك القيام

V35. O you who reinforces the entire mankind;⁷²⁴ add me to the flow (of reality) as the Independent God Has done for you.

فاربط على قلبي المحبة دائما يامن يعز بربطه الروام

V36. Attach the continuous love to my heart, O you with whose attachment the entire destitute is exalted.

7.3.2 Category II: Mystical *Marthiya/Rithā* (elegiac verse)

The second category of al-Dāghirī's mystical poems is *Marthiya/Rithā*. It is an elegiac genre that mourns the dead. The poet enumerates the great loss and description of the life of the deceased as well as his contribution to knowledge, and prayer on his soul constitutes the base of its contents. There are three main characteristics which could be described as the basic themes of *Marthiya*: it expresses grief and sadness, praises the deceased for his/her good deeds and finally, solace. The poet seems to concentrate on all of them. All the themes are common mourning for the dead.

The poet usually opens his poem with an ascetic prelude in which the poet enjoins his brother to abstain from the temporal life and its vanities. The deceased is then introduced, usually, by his name, and his virtues highlighted and praised. Considering death as a decree from God, the community is satisfied. But it could weep some over the collapse of one of its axes. The poet then prays for the deceased to be drenched in a shower of forgiveness (*ghuyūth al-afw*) and conclude the theme in ascetic verse.

7.3.2.1 Thematic Translation and Content Analysis of *Ar-risaa'u fii Shaykh Abubakar Atiiq* (An Elegy for Shaykh Abū Bakr 'Atīq)

About the Poem: Authorship and Introduction

The poem to be translated and analysed in this category of *Marthiya/Rithā* (elegy) is entitled *Ar-risaa'u fii Shaykh Abubakar Atiiq* (Henceforth *Ar-risaa'u*). It is composed by al-Dāghirī following the death of Shaykh Abū Bakr al-'Atīq b. Khiḍr b. Abī Bakr b. Mūsā al-Kashināwī (known in Hausa as Shehi Abubakar Atiku Sanka; 1909–74) of Kano 1974.⁷²⁵ This

⁷²⁴ See *Bahar Madid* of Ali Imran, volume 1, 421; see also *Tafsīr* of Ibn Qayyim, volume 1, 74.

⁷²⁵ Shaykh Abu Bakr Atiq was one of the most prolific Tijānī Sufi writers among the Nigerian Sufis in the twentieth century Islamic northern Nigeria. For more detailed information about his biographical notes and works see Solagberu 2009, 89-101 & 129-170.

elegiac poetry commiserates the death of ‘Atīq and it contains eighteen verses lamenting the loss of this great scholar. In the *Jamā’at al-fayḍa* circle in northern Nigeria, as in the rest of West Africa, ‘Atīq is considered one of their defendants and spokesmen. Similarly, in al-Dāghirī’s poem, ‘Atīq is received with honour as one of the leaders of Tijānīyya brotherhood in West Africa and the poet elevates him to the status of the saint of Allah. The poem elicits pity for the dead person where the elegist mentions the characters of the deceased and demonstrates the poet’s feeling of sorrow after having lost his friend.

The poem is, in terms of structure and contents, comparable to the *Marthiya/Rithā* written in the twentieth century northern Nigeria which includes Nguru. With some numerous peculiar features and characteristics that are not found in other elegies, for instance, the poet after expressing his sad feeling for the lost friend, his family, disciples and followers, he concentrates more on the peaceful nature of the dead world that exists forever. The poet after having mentioned the good sides of death and the beauty of the next world, indicates that the world cries badly because it loses a man of many good qualities. Most of the numerous peculiar features included in its fragment which runs its theme are his passage to the peaceful dwelling place, his contributions to knowledge and how he fought who prevented people from *salawat* on the prophet.

In this poem, al-Dāghirī uses simple and clear language. Unlike his other poems like *Ibaa’ut-tazyīl fī salaati alas-sayyidil Jaliil*, *Qasiidatu Tarheebi*, al-Dāghirī avoids the use of complex Arabic words, which is incomprehensible for the readers to understand unless necessary. This shows that the al-‘Atīq’s death is sudden, unexpected, and abrupt. Moreover, al-Dāghirī, like other *Marthiya/Rithā* poets, employs a technique of the constant switch from the third person to second person presumably to create a sense of immediacy and individual involvement. There are also in the poem some shades of irony, and he sometimes makes direct reference to local personages. He also uses metaphor; for instance, death is described as “sleep” and grave is metaphorically described as “comfortable bed.” Moreover, the popularity of the personality of the deceased makes the poem very popular.

He also metaphorically portrays the world as the greens of the dunghill (*khaḍrāu al-adimn*), the snake in the grass, a mirage or a hag, decked on expensive make-ups to ensnare the inexperienced young men. ‘Atīq’ as a true believer, who departed from this world, is congratulated for escaping from the abode of delusion (*dāru al-ghurūr*) to the abode of felicity (*dāru al-na’im*).

With the hope that he would be soak in a shower of forgiveness, the bereaved ones are consoled and assured his intercession on the Day of Judgement by Prophet Muḥammad.

The content of the Poem

According the lines from the verse 1 to 4 men will die to another world after living in the world for some time. Al-Dāghirī tries to create an image of Allah having His world for special creatures, perhaps, the poet refers to (*dāru al-na'im*). He personifies death as a call of Allah (H. *kiran Allah*) that everybody must respond to whether he likes it or not. According to the poem, Allah urgently needs 'Atīq very close to Him because he does not want him to love anything other than Him. He therefore calls upon him to join Him in another world specially created for His loved ones. Using these lines, the poet figuratively claims the subject matter that death is a glorification of the saint. The poet extends this idea by describing the image of the call saying, "He called upon you the way lovers call the loved ones for mercy." With this line, the poet poem in addition is telling the good side of death, considering the death of 'Atīq as if it is a deliberate action to leave this world. As can be seen in this line, 'Atīq is testified as the true lover of God and he is called upon to receive the mercy of his Lord, and he immediately responded to. According to the poem, Islam and Tijānīyya brotherhoods are the right paths and best ways to Allah. Allah has promised mankind that everyone who dies on these paths would receive mercy, thus, 'Atīq was lucky to die on them. After receiving mercy, the next line of the poem shows where 'Atīq dwells in the next world.

فجع القلوب ورود نعي مفعج أعني عتيقا وهو رجل يحمد

V1. The hearts were tormented by the advent of the afflictive death, I mean The Atiq who is praiseworthy man.

ودعاك ضمنا أن يراك لغيره مستخلصا مستانسا تستجد

V2. (Your Lord has) called upon you simply because He does not want to find you in total inclination to any other than Him; nor having intimacy with them and looking for glorification.

فدعاك دعوة راحم متحيب فأجيبته بإجابة تستحدف

V3. He called you as lovers call for mercy for the loved one. And you too responded to the call immediately.

فخبأك خبوة محسن مستخلص لمراده ويرحمة يتغمد

V4. Then He took your life in the best way for His will and covered you with his mercy.

In line 5, the poet describes the dwelling place of 'Atīq as a jar which is made of rock. Using this poem, the poet portrays the future of man and what happens to him as a result of death; he also describes the beauty of the house waiting for the saints and righteous people in the next world. The poet considers the death of his friend as sleeping or lying (H. *bacci*) forever without disturbance because the world where the deceased has gone is a peaceful one. Thus, according to the poet his dead friend is now comfortably sleeping and resting (H. *hutawa*) on his bed in *dāru*

al-na'im. According to Sufis “the saints of God die not, but merely depart from one habitation to another.”⁷²⁶ So we imagine his death brings about sadness and happiness to the poet when he says that his friend has left him but has gone away to live in a special place with his Lord. By this, the poet says that we should not cry for the death of ‘Atīq. The following illustrates this idea:

وخبالك تحت حجارة محروفة خزفا ففي خير المضاجع يرقد

V5. He concealed you under a rock that changed to a jar. Thus, he sleeps in a comfortable bed.

In the next line poet enumerates the reason ‘Atīq, (who the poet describes “precious”) receives such hospitality and good treatment from his Lord. One of the reasons is that the deceased strictly followed the teachings of the Qur’an (Sharia and divine law). From the line, we understand that the Qur’an is the book that abrogated the previous divine law which was revealed to the past prophets and messengers of God. The second reason is that the deceased abided by the rules and regulations enshrined in the Qur’an. The following line show this subject:

وكفأك عزا أن تبعت شريعة نسخت جميع الشرع إنك تسند

V6. You are considered precious since you adhered to the legislation that abrogated the entire laws.⁷²⁷ Indeed, you abided (by the law).

In the next lines of the poem for instance, the poet continues praising the deceased; mentioning the reasons he deserves such kind of special treatment from his Lord. Another reason for the reward is because he adhered to the teachings of his religion (Islam) and he loved his Lord. The concept of love is all encompassing in this regard, the poet refers to divine love as (*Mahabbah*).⁷²⁸ The poem explains this in detail. Suffice it here to say that every *waliyy* (saint) must acknowledge the Prophet and his household because, to them, he is the source of everything. Another reason for such kind of hospitality in the Hereafter for the deceased, according to the poet, is his contributions towards the dissemination of knowledge. In line 10, he states that all the treatments and kind of hospitality, the deceased received from his Lord show the acceptance and appreciation of his efforts by his Lord. Such kind of treatments are meant only for those who have divine love. According to these lines we understand that those who accept Islam as their religion and have love towards their Lord are the lucky ones in the next world.

The other thing mentioned is that the deceased is a man of good service for the society; hence his demise is a loss of great talent because he devoted his whole life in the service of Islam and dissemination of Islamic education. The following lines reflect this:

⁷²⁶Subhan1960, 107. For more detailed information on the concept of death and the *ziyārat* of Prophet Muḥammad’s tomb see chapter six of the thesis.

⁷²⁷ See *Muwatta* of Imam Malik, transmitted by *Muhammad* ibn *al-Hasan* al-Shaybani, volume 3, 80.

⁷²⁸ I shall not spend time illustrating this here since I have done so in detail in the previous poem.

وكفالك فخرا أن تكون لدينه مستحسنا مستمسكا تستجهد

V7. Your excellent adherence and endeavour to the Islamic religion are worth being proud of.

وكفالك دينا أن شغفت بحبه مر الدهور فمثل ذاك يؤكد

V8. You are always satisfied with religious adherence and your enthusiasm for His love.⁷²⁹ (Indeed), this was confirmed.

وكفالك ثبنا أن بثنت علومه بين التلامذ والتلامذ تشهد

V9. Your reliable demonstration and (reference) dissemination of Islamic education among scholars is worth being proud of.⁷³⁰ Thus, the students are the witness.

وضع القبول لمن تقرب بالهدى عند الإله وأنت ذاك الأسعد

V10. The acceptance and appreciation of Allah are meant for those who are in intimacy with Allah through following the right path.⁷³¹ And, you are lucky to be one.

In the following section, the poet portrays the Tijānīs as being those who originality does vocal *dhiikr*. Their enemies, on the contrary, are presented as unbelievers. In line 10, for instance, the poet narrates how ‘Atīq reacted against the non-Sufi who criticizes Sufi for their vocal *dhiikr* of the names of Allah which is usually performed in the congregation at the regular Friday service known as *hadrāt*.⁷³² This ritual is the rapid recitation of the ‘There is no god but God’ (*laa ilaaha illaah Allaah*), or ‘There is no god but God and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God’ (*laa ilaaha illaah Allaah Muḥammadun rasuulu llaah*), the short form is *Hailalah* formula, chanting “Allah, Allah!” There is also the invocation of the *Shahadah* in a rhythmic, continuous repeating in unison as a means of realizing the Reality of Muḥammad. The poet did not mention name of those who criticise this type of *dhiikr*, but it is obvious that he was referring to members of Izala⁷³³ raised a number of questions concerning perversion and twisting religious creeds and injunctions by Sufi scholars and their followers, which led them and even tagged them as unbelievers. The poet therefore describes and brands them as unbelievers or deniers too.

While in line 12, the poet states that the deceased condemned those who criticize the Sufis for their vocal *dhiikr*, the invocation of blessings upon the Prophet (*ṣalāt ‘alā al-nabī*). The poet describes them as those who deviate from the right path. This type of *salawat* is accordance with the Qur’anic verse, “Indeed God and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who have faith! Invoke blessings on him and invoke Peace upon him in a worthy manner.”⁷³⁴ The Prophet Muḥammad was reported to have said that “The closest to me on the Day of Judgement will be the one who

⁷²⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, volume I, Hadith number, 177.

⁷³⁰ *Jami’at al-Tirmidhī*, volume 11, Hadith number, 3154.

⁷³¹ *Jami’at al-Tirmidhī*, volume 13, Hadith number, 3952.

⁷³² Mohammed 1978, 44.

⁷³³ Izala is a short form of *Jama’atu Izalatil Bid’a wa’ikamatis Sunnah* (The Islamic Organisation for Eradicating Innovation and Establishing Sunnah), which was launched on 12th March 1978 in Jos, Central Nigeria. For more discussion *Izala* see Ben Amara 2011; for more on Abu Bakr Mahmud Gumi see Tsiga 1992.

⁷³⁴ Compare with Qur’an 33:56.

invokes blessings upon me most abundantly, and in another tradition “Whoever invoked blessings upon me one, God will invoke blessings upon him ten times.”⁷³⁵

As result of this, the Sufis claim that the invocation of blessings upon the Prophet (*ṣalāt ‘alā al-nabī*) is the quickest way to enter the Divine Presence because the Name is separable from the One named.⁷³⁶ The Sufis belief that the invocation of blessings upon the Prophet Muḥammad is the most effective way to visualize Prophet Muḥammad because of the presence of the invoked (*madhkūr*) in the invocation (*dhīkr*).

From these lines we understand that, according to the poet, those who attacked those who practice vocal *dhiikr* with the names of Allah and sending prayers upon Prophet Muḥammad are nothing but unbelievers who deviate from the right path. So, the death of the deceased is a great loss for the Sufis and Tijānīyya. The following lines demonstrate this theme:

وخصمت أعداء الإله الذين هم منعوا لذكر الله بل هم أجد

V11. You went against the enemy of Allah –those hindering people from mentioning the Name of Allah. Indeed, they are deniers.

جاهدت أعداء النبي الذين هم منعوا الصلاة عليه بل هم أعتد

V12. You fought against those enemies of the prophet who restrain people from reciting *salawat* (seeking peace and blessings of Allah upon prophet).⁷³⁷ Indeed, they turned away from it.

As we can see in the lines 13 and 14, the poet wishes for Shaykh Abū Bakr al-‘Atīq to have *Khalifa* (successor) who will take over the responsibilities of the deceased such as teaching and leading his institution. Following the Sufi tradition, immediately after the death of prominent scholar or saint of such magnanimity, his *Khalifa* would be appointed. According to the poet, the person must be a good ambassador, learned and educated who would continue propagating both exoteric and esoteric knowledge. The following lines pinpoints this theme:

والله تخلف وهو خير خليفة في الأهل والأصحاب ها يتأبد

V13. May Allah provides good successor, (and, indeed, He is the best successor) who will be the vicegerent in his family and friends forever.

وينوب عنك مؤدبا ومعلما من فيض تعليم المهيم ترشد

V14. And a good representative, learned and educated person who will takeover in the dissemination of authoritative knowledge and guidance.

In the following lines 15 and 16, the poet prays for ‘Atīq. He asks Allah to forgive his shortcomings and grant him Jannat al-Firdaus. The poet also touches on the Prophet Muḥammad’s mediation and intercession (*ash-shafā’a*) on the Day of Judgement. It is a tradition among the Sufis and non-Sufi brotherhoods that the difficulties of the day of judgement are reduced by the

⁷³⁵ Ogunnaike 2020, 44-45.

⁷³⁶ Ogunnaike 2020, 44-45.

⁷³⁷ *Jami’u al-Ahkham al-Qur’an*, volume 1, 669.

intercession of the Prophet Muḥammad. It is believed that all other prophets will fail to intercede on behalf of their people, only Muḥammad will be given the favour. They will ask all other prophets to intercede for them, but they will be directed to Prophet Muḥammad. The poet, thus, gives assurance that Prophet Muḥammad would intercede for ‘Atīq on the Day of Judgement.

More so, enjoyment in the grave is another expectation of the Muslims for the good and righteous ones. It is believed that the righteous ones in their graves will drink and eat from the food, fruit and vegetables of Paradise. So, the poet wishes for the deceased to have a comfortable resting place. He says:

والله يغفر ما جنيت من الخطايا والله يستر والشفيع محمد

V15. May Allah forgive what you have committed as a mistake, and may He conceal (your shortcomings). Indeed, the mediator is the (prophet) Muhammad.⁷³⁸

وسقى ضريحك ديمة منهل من فيض رضوان الإله فتسعد

V16. May He wet your esteemed tomb with the moisture of perpetual rainfall from the flow of divine appreciation for you to prosper.

As usual, the poet concludes his poem by thanking Allah and invoking His peace on the Prophet Muhammad, his family, companions, and the righteous believers who follow his footsteps.

The following lines shows this:

صلى عليه الله مبلغ حمده ومع السلام وسيلة تتجدد

V17. May Allah’s blessing upon him (prophet) equal to the praise utterances together with peace which are the best intermediary.

وعلى صحابته الجميع وءاله والمقتدين وكل من يتشهد

V18. (May He bless) his companions and families as well as the good followers and those who testified (that there is no god except Allah).

Conclusion

The poem has major issues of the sad effect of death for al-Dāghirī who lost his friend, ‘Atīq. Instead of the poet to lament and express his sad feelings about the loss of his friend, his family, disciples, and followers, he mostly mentions the good nature of the dead person. He describes his friend’s death as one who has gone to a quiet, comfortable, and beautiful place or transition to a peaceful place. This poem does not mourn ‘Atīq, rather it expresses its sympathy for his family for the loss of their breadwinner, as well as his disciples and followers.

7.3.3 Category III: Mystical *At-Taqrīz* (Encomium or Endorsement poem)

The third category is the Sufi or mystical *at-Taqrīz* (encomium) genre which deals with lovely praise text or panegyric poem which is composed by another author or the poet himself. In this type of poem, the poet categorically states the intentions of the book or draws out the major

⁷³⁸ Compare with Qur’an 52:20; see also *Jami’u as-Sagīr Hadith* of Suyūṭī, volume 41, Hadith number, 45322/45321.

themes of the reviewed book. The following poem was composed by al-Dāghirī in praise of his book entitled *Ittiba'uttazyili fii Ṣalāt 'alā 'l-sayyid al-jalīl*, (Encomium for Annexation of the book 'Tazyeel' on the invocation of Allah's peace and blessings on Prophet Muḥammad).

7.3.3.1 Thematic Translation and Content Analysis of *at-Taqrīz fii Itbaa'ut-tazyīl fii salaati alas-sayyidil Jalīl* (Encomium for Annexation of the book 'Tazyīl' on the invocation of Allah's peace and blessings on Prophet Muḥammad) About the Poem: Authorship and Introduction

Daliyya is an Arabic lexeme which means "rhyming in "dad'un," all the verses of the poem end with 'd.' Al-Dāghirī also uses a rhyming meter which is called *Bahar Tawil*, one of the sixteen (16) Arabian poetic styles. *Bahar Tawil* is well known and can easily be recited. His use of this particular rhyme meter makes his poem very popular. The total number of the poetic verses are nineteenth (19). The poem is considered as an x-ray and the lovely praise text for the prosaic work is *at-Taqrīz fii Itbaa'ut-tazyīl*.⁷³⁹ The content of the poem, from the religious point of view, is directly an admonition for the weak believers encouraging them to become alive to the *salawat* of the Prophet Muḥammad. From the literary point of view, the poet exposes the major themes of the prosaic work in question, *Itbaa'ut-tazyīl*. In the following pages, I will provide the translation of the poem with brief commentary.

The Content of the Poem

The *Sufi Turuq* believe that constant prayer on the Prophet allows the aspirant to enter the presence of the Prophet (*al-hadrāt al-Muḥammadiyya*) and reach his illumination (*fathi*). Despite this, however, Muslims are very weak in practising *salawat/dhiikr*, coupled with the emergence of anti-Sufi movements, particularly Izala. Izala scholars constantly attacked the Sufis, not only for the content of the *salawat*, but also how the *salawat/dhiikr* was practiced in northern Nigeria including Nguru during this period.

Al-Dāghirī was Tijānī Sufi who wanted to see Muslims go back to the original Islam, the kind of Islam practised before the emergence of anti-Sufi movements, in which Muslims constant pray to the Prophet Muḥammad for their spiritual and material needs in this world and Hereafter. He, therefore, selects *salawat* which are powerful and effective in a book. The book entitled *Itbaa'ut-tazyīl* contains 174 different types of *Salawat* (prayer). At the end of the book, he composes a poem stating the major themes of the work such as the place of the composition, the

⁷³⁹ For more information on this book see chapter five of this thesis.

number and importance of the *salawat*, and the advertisements of other works by the same author. This action of al-Dāghirī therefore throws some light on his character because he expresses very definite views about how he feels *Salawat/dhiikr* should be practised in his society.

The topical structure of this poem can be viewed as follows:

- (a) The Opening doxology
- (b) Exposition of the intention and topic of the book for the audience
- (c) The importance of *salawat/dhiikr*
- (d) The number of the *salawat/dhiikr* in the prosaic work
- (e) The message of the poem
- (f) Advertisement of other prosaic work on the same topic by the same author.
- (g) Granting the copyright
- (h) Closing doxology

The poem begins with one prelude in which the poet praises Allah alone for the opportunity given to him to finish the book he is about to praise. Furthermore, he mentions the place of the completion of the work, which he describes as the “best dwelling place.” According to my research, the poet started the prosaic work, *Itbaa’ut-tazyil* in Makkah and completed in Madinah.⁷⁴⁰ The following line depicts this:

ختمت وأن الحمد لله وحده كتابي إتباعا بأسعد مقعد

V1. I ended my work (my book) in the best dwelling place with the help of Allah, (praise be to Him alone).

After the prelude, the poet then goes on to show the content of the praised book and expresses his intention to the audience that the work contains nothing but carefully selected *salawat* on the Prophet Muḥammad. He, therefore, starts with a form of an address to his imaginary audience in a dramatic way, with an image of himself calling upon his audience to stop and listen to him “O my fellow brother passer-by hold on” which was drawn from local personage. The poet’s address to fellow brothers contains an invitation to grab the copy of the praised work and supplicate with *salawat/dhiikr* therein. The poet goes on to elaborate on the categories of these carefully selected *salawat/dhiikr*. There are two categories of them: in the morning and the evening. He, therefore, enjoins the audience to use them in showering praise on Prophet Muḥammad in the morning and the evening. By so doing, the aspirant would receive what the lucky ones achieved in this world and Hereafter.

⁷⁴⁰ Interview with Shehu Goni Aisami at Nguru on 15.03.2019.

The next line contains the first reference to the specific practices of Muslims (and, in particular, Tijānī) method of *salawat/dhiikr*. Every Muslim is expected to recite them daily, in the morning and evening. During or after this recitation the Muslim asks for forgiveness, salvation, protection and success in this world and Hereafter. Moreover, according to the poem, those who recite *salawat/dhiikr* in the morning and evening are the lucky ones. The following line depicts this:

ختمت وأن الحمد لله وحده كتابي إتباعا بأسعد مقعد

V1. I ended my work (my book) in the best dwelling place with the help of Allah, (praise be to Him alone).

أخي أيها المجتاز مهلا فهذه صلاة على المختار خذ وتزود

V2. O my fellow brother passer-by holds on, here is a book⁷⁴¹ enclosing *salawat* (prayer) upon the selected prophet (Muhammad saw), take and make provision with it.⁷⁴²

وصلّ عليه كلّ مسي وبكرة تفرّ فوز ذي حظّ عظيم بسؤدد

V3. Pray for him⁷⁴³ in the morning and evening respectively to obtain the status the way lucky one achieves.

In the next lines of the poem, the poet continues to expose the content of the work. According to the poet, *Itbaa'ut-tazyil*, is so special and expensive, and it illuminates the heart. Illumination of the hearts is believed in the Sufi mythology to be the constant remembrance of Allah (*dhiikr*). The heart is purged of sin and evil thoughts, then the light of certainty strikes upon it and makes it a shining mirror, through this, the heart becomes illuminated. Thus, the devil cannot approach it without being observed. The spirits of saints (*al-awliyā*) are free from the darkness of material substance and have been released from the prison of their bodies, thus, their hearts are illuminated, this is the reason they can perceive what ordinary minds cannot perceive to them being veiled is a serious punishment. It is premise that the Shaykh supplicates for the illumination of the heart, as could be gleaned that it forms the basis of his supplication. In this sense, the poet is situating his poem within the framework of the doctrine established by classical Sufi scholars; this means he must have read many Sufi literature. The following lines indicate this:

وأودعت فيه كلّ مضمون جوهر يسرّ به قلب المحبّ المجدد

V4. I placed in it (book) much expensive content that can make the hearts of dignified lovers happy.

Then, al-Dāghirī continues to develop the theme introduced in the previous line by exposing to his audience the goal of these carefully selected *salawat/dhiikr* (praised work). According to the poet, another goal and importance of *salawat/dhiikr* is achieving one's purpose, and no matter how big they are, one can achieve them by the constant use of these carefully selected

⁷⁴¹ The poet refers to *Ittiba'uttazyili fii Ṣalāt 'alā 'l-sayyid al-jalīl* here.

⁷⁴² It is evident that the model used by al-Dāghirī for this poem was the panegyric by

⁷⁴³ Prophet Muhammad is referred here.

salawat/dhiikr. Here he uses a good simile to make his poem more effective when he compares the magnanimity of *salawat/dhiikr* with the gloom of the night which covers everything.

فغشّى على كل الحوائج ظلّها بغشيان ليل كلّ شيء ومر صد

V5. (Contains) things whose shadows accommodate the entire needs (of man) as night gloom covers everything including passage.

Al-Dāghirī then goes on to tell the people the different forms and number of these carefully selected *salawat/dhiikr* in the praised work. He also enjoins his audience to repeatedly use them daily. This theme reflects the following lines:

غرست به مئة وسبعين صيغة تلي أربعا واضب عليها وردد

V6. I implanted in it (I put in this book) 174 different types of *Salawat* (prayer), so, keep doing it repeatedly.

The poet tries to show to the people the importance of these carefully selected *salawat/dhiikr* contained in the praised work. The poet personifies *salawat/dhiikr* as “a tree with many branches.” The branches, meaning the *salawat/dhiikr*, were supported by the Qur’anic injunctions and Prophetic tradition. Here too, the poet compares the power and workability of the *salawat/dhiikr* with the way cloud gather in the sky with the support of the Lord. The shade of a tree is always a place of rest, relaxation and protection. For instance, when a person is tired from the hard work of the day, or when there is rain or storm, he goes and sits under the shade of the tree to either relax, hide or cover himself from the storm. The poet compares the relaxation and protection found in the shade of a tree with these carefully selected *salawat/dhiikr* to the sufferings found in the Muslims who do not recite of these carefully selected *salawat/dhiikr*. The following line shows this:

سما فرعها والفرع يقوي بمنبت وظلل تظليل الغمام المؤيد

V7. Its branches were highly elevated. (Indeed), branches are supported by the stem, so, these branches formed a shadow the way the cloud forms its shadow with support.

The poet continues by encouraging the Tijānīs to be steadfast in their practice of the *salawat/dhiikr*. In particular, the carefully selected *salawat/dhiikr* in the praised work when he says if one continues reciting them, he will have a channel of blessings, which will continue to flow in this world and the Hereafter. These blessings, according to the poet, are not merely elevation, glorification, nobility or wealth, but everything on the earth regardless of where the aspirant is residing. He adds that even if the aspirant wants recognition, prestige, love or veneration from his followers, he will find all of them by reciting these carefully selected *salawat/dhiikr*. The following lines reveal this:

ترى بركات الأرض تاتيك والسما مفتحة أبوابها في تأبـد

V8. (If you continue doing it, you will see (the overflow of) blessings in abundance both in the heaven and on earth, opening their channels for you forever.

V8. (If you continue doing it, you will see (the overflow of) blessings in abundance both in the heaven and on earth, opening their channels for you forever.

ويأتي إليك العزُّ والمجد والعلو
ورزق من الآفات في أيّ مشهد

V9. Descend upon you the precious, glory, nobility and wealth in all directions wherever you are.

وتعلوك في كلّ المجالس هيبية
وحبّ وتعظيم بأفضل مقصد

V10. (You will see) the recognition, prestige, love and veneration in good faith unto you at all gatherings.

Al-Dāghirī goes on to educates his readers on how to use the content of the praised work.

According to the poem, the aspirant should first the read these carefully selected *salawat/dhiikr* and then say his request. His requests will be granted for the sake of Prophet Muḥammad. This is mainly because showering praises on Prophet Muḥammad is the right way of glorification. The poet goes further to shower countless praises on him.

وتسئل من بعد الصلاة حوائجا
ليقضيه ربي ببركة أحمد⁷⁴⁴

V11. Ask for your needs after reciting the content of the book, Allah will answer your request for the sake of Aḥmad (the prophet saw).

فهذا صراط مستقيم لمجدت
فهذا طريق بالغ لمحمد

V12. (Indeed), this is the straight path to glorification, and this is the way to (prophet) Mohammad.

عليه صلاة الله ثم سلامه
زها ملء ملك الله فوق معدّد

V13. Unquantifiable blessings and peace of Allah following the power of Allah, be upon him.

Salawat, as noted in the previous chapter, is one of the major areas where al-Dāghirī worked extensively on. The poet, thus, goes further to advertise to his readers some of his works which have the same content with *Itbaa'ut-tazyiil*. He writes the titles of the works thus: *Jihaazus Saarih*, *Nataa'ijus-Safar*, *Hidhbus-surul manii'i*, *Tazyiil*. All the above-mentioned works have similar content with the praised work.

لنا كتب أسماءها مسرودة
جهاز وتذييل النتائج في يد⁷⁴⁵

V14. (Indeed), we have some books whose titles are quoted as follows: *Jihaazu*, *Tadhyeel*, *An-Nata'ij* at hand.

وإتباع تذييل وسور ممّتع
فخذها جميعا في الصلاة لأحمد

V15. And *Ittiba'uttazyili* and *Surrul al-mani'u*. Take all for the *Salawat* of Aḥmad (prayer to prophet).

The issue of copyright is a big problem in the northern Nigeria including Nguru during the lifetime of the poet because the legitimacy of the copyright of some of his works are not recognised.

According to the poem, in the case of the above-mentioned titles, the permission to copy and reprint the books is granted to all Muslims during his lifetime and subsequent generations. He appeals to God to accept his works as a service to Islam and reward for his works. He also asks his Lord to bless him and his works, and righteous Muslims. The following lines illustrate the discussion point:

⁷⁴⁴ He explained how to perform the prayer.

⁷⁴⁵ Explaining the available books he authored.

أجزت جميع المسلمين جميعها لمن هو في عصري ومن بعد مجتد⁷⁴⁶

V16. I grant to reprint this book to the entire Muslim ummah—including those in my generation and beyond as well as generation yet unborn.

فيا ربّ فاقبلها وبارك لنا بها مباركة عممت على كلّ مهتد

V17. And O my lord, accept these works and bless us because of them, a blessing that covers the entire righteous person.

Finally, verses 18 to 19 bring the poem to its conclusion by invoking Allah’s peace on the Prophet Muḥammad, his family and companions as well as his good followers who come after him, not only in this world but in the Hereafter. This picture is given by the following lines:

وصلّ على خير الوجود محمد وسلّم عليه كلّ آن وفي غد

V18. And pray for the best of being, the (prophet) Mohammad (saw). And provide peace and security for him at all time –worldly and hereafter.

مع الال والأصحاب والمقتدي به بمبلغ حمدالله في كل مشهد

V19. Together with (his) family and companions as well as good followers of him equal to the utterances of the praise to Allah by creatures at everywhere.

7.4 Structural and Textual structure and Poetic Techniques Analysis

The purpose of this section is to look at how the texts of al-Dāghirī’s mystical poems are organized and how various structural features of al-Dāghirī’s mystical poems are dealt with. It also identifies textual structure, specific poetic devices, and techniques such as doxology, rhyme, meter, length, date and chronogram system are used by al-Dāghirī to express themes the themes of his mystical poems. In addition, this part presents the use of language, symbols and images, figures of speech and anthropomorphism. Structurally, al-Dāghirī’s mystical poems are usually divided into three parts: opening doxology or exposition, the main body and the closing doxology.

In the opening doxology, (which will be fully discussed below), the poet starts his works with a prayer of protection against the cursed devil and seeks Allah’s guidance. This is followed by praising Allah and invoking Allah’s blessings on Prophet Muḥammad. In the main body of the text, in his usual way, the poet expresses the message he wants to pass to his audience. In *madḥ* for instance, the poet extols the Prophet’s qualities and miracles in different ways while praising and praying for him. The closing doxology is usually devoted to praise or thank Allah for giving the wisdom and energy to complete his poem; and for invoking His peace on the prophet, his family, and companions as well as righteous Muslims as exemplified below.

7.4.1 Doxology.

One of the important features of the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī is the praise of Allah, Prophet Muḥammad, his family (*ahl al-Bayt*), his companions (*Sahaba*) and Allah’s best friends (*al-*

⁷⁴⁶ This verse deficits the good habits of the Shaykh. All his work are for the benefit of the people. See how he removed the bar.

awliyā), it usually opens the poem. It occurs both at the beginning of the poem and at the end at least the first line of echo is devoted to it. The doxology is therefore divided into two: Opening and closing doxology.

7.4.1.1 Opening Doxology or Formulae

The majority of the works of al-Dāghirī deviated from this tradition as noted earlier, only few begins with the pious invocation of the name of God (*Bism Allaah al-Raḥmaan al-Raḥiim*), the formula which is also known as *basmalah* or *at-tasmiyah*.⁷⁴⁷ The other components of the doxological expression also include *ḥamdalah* or *taḥmiid* or *sabḥalah* or *tasbiih* (*al-ḥamd lil-Laah*), *ṣalwalah* (*taṣliyah*) or *shahaadah* (*tashahhud* or *kalimat al-tawḥiid*), whose text is *ṣallaa Allaah ‘alayhi wa-sallam* or *ṣallaa Allaah ‘alayhi wa-aalihi wa-sallam*. It sometimes contains seeking Allah’s blessings for the prophet Muḥammad’s family (*ahl al-bayt*) and his companion (*al-sahaba*).⁷⁴⁸ The following line of his *at-Taqriiz fii Itbaa ‘ut-tazyiil* depicts this:

ختمت وأن الحمد لله وحده كتابي إتباعا بأسعد مقعد

V1. I ended my work (my book) in the best dwelling place with the help of Allah, (praise be to Him alone).

7.4.1.2 Closing Doxology or Formulae (Subscription)

The closing doxological statement (explicit) are sometimes rhetorically different from the opening formulae in the al-Dāghirī’s mystical poems. The last and the second to the last line of the works, more especially poems, is usually devoted to praise or thanks to Allah and for invoking His peace on the prophet, his family, and companions. While the closing formulae in prose writings usually begins with a verb expressing completion such as: *tamma*, *tamm*, *khatt*, *kammala*, *intahá*.⁷⁴⁹ In many works, however, the closing doxology ends with a pious invocation for the successful completion of the work; the typical phrase being: *tammam wa-bi-Allāh al-tawfiq*. The following lines of his *at-Taqriiz fii Itbaa ‘ut-tazyiil* portray this:

وصلّ على خير الوجود محمد وسلّم عليه كلّ أن وفي غــــد

V18. And pray for the best of being, the (prophet) Mohammad (saw). And provide peace and security for him at all time –worldly and hereafter.

⁷⁴⁷ Gacek citing many authorities suggests that the use of *Basmallah* goes back to the Prophet Muhammad himself, who after Sūrat Hūd was revealed to him, ordered that at the beginning of his letter *Bism Allah* should be written. This was to replace the phrase *Bismika Allaahuma* used by the Quraysh in pre-Islamic times. The use of the full formula came after the revelation of Sūrat Naml, *āyah*. According to some scholars, the use of *basmallah* is compulsory if the work consists of *khuṭbah* (*ḥamdalah*, *taṣliyah* etc.) while others said that not every text had to begin with the *basmallah*. There are also some scholars who argued that nothing should be written on the line of the *basmallah*.

⁷⁴⁸ Throughout their works whenever the name of Allah is mentioned, it is followed by a formula of glorification (*ta‘zīm*, *tajīl*, *tamjīd*), such as *ta‘ālā* etc. Formula of benediction and eulogies (*ad‘iyah*) followed the names of prophets, angels, companions of the Prophet Muhammad, Imams and authorities and famous individuals.

⁷⁴⁹ The synonyms of these words often encountered in Arabic manuscript studies are: *faqaṭ*, *khatama*, *kamula*, *najaza* and *faragha*.

مع الآل والأصحاب والمقتدي به بمبلغ حمد الله في كل مشهد

V19. Together with (his) family and companions as well as good followers of him equal to the utterances of the praise to Allah by creatures at everywhere.

7.4.2 Rhyme (*Qafiyya*)

Al-Dāghirī's mystical poems follow strict rules of rhyming. The poems of the Shaykhs follow the strict rule of Arabic prosody. After a careful observation and analysis of their poems, the rhyme can be grouped into the following headings: the rhyme of two-line stanza, the two-line with a single stanza, the common rhyme for all the lines, the rhyme of a four-line, the rhyme of a five-line and the internal rhyme. The mystical poems of al-Dāghirī in this work are composed in the two-line with a single stanza style, with a mixture of the internal rhyme. Thus, only these two: the rhyme of two-line stanza and the internal rhyme will be discussed in detail here.

7.4.2.1 Two-line with a single stanza:

All the six mystical poems of al-Dāghirī in this study are composed in the rhyme of the two-line with a single stanza style. The two-line with a single stanza are poems in which the first line has no rhythmic style while the second line rhymes with a common syllable throughout. The following examples from his mystical poems demonstrate this style. The first example is from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, in which he writes:

وإذا تقلت على ميام مرة صارت فراتا واضمحل وخيمه

V133. And, if you spit saliva into unpleasant and bitter water, it will soon be pleasant to drink; all its toxin disappears.⁷⁵⁰

وإذا رددت بأعين مفقوءة صارت تحد وما بها تبليمه

V134. And, if you lay back the knocked-out eye, it soon turns to see, and pains disappear.

وإذا أخذت جريد نخل يابساً فيصير سيفه ما به مثلومه

V135. And, if you hold the dried date's leaf, it soon changes to a sharp sword that have no notch.

وإذا جبرت كسيرساق قد وهى صار الصحيح ولم يزل تقويمه

V136. And, if you splint broken leg that became weak, it soon recovers and will never break again.

In the above example, al-Dāghirī has not employed rhyming in the first line but used (*mi*) as a rhyming syllable in the second line throughout the poem. Because of this rhyming style, the poem is known as *Mimiyya* denoting a poem ending in *mi*. Another example is from his *Bassus-shauqi*. He writes:

إلى أحمد المختار وجهت وجهي وفي القلب حاجات تعز لفوهت⁷⁵¹

V1. Toward the Ahmad⁷⁵² the chosen prophet I paced my direction. My heart is full of needs and desires that is hardly for me to pull it out all.⁷⁵³

ألا يا رسو الله إنك عدتي ألا يا نبي الله إنك عمدة

⁷⁵⁰ A known Hadith (the virtue of his saliva turned the bitter water to pleasant)

⁷⁵¹ Simply means to pronounce.

⁷⁵² The name Ahmad "The praised one" is one of the names given to the Prophet Muhammad.

⁷⁵³ This style was used by Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse when he said:

تكرمت لي من قبل ما كنت ملزماً أذكر حالي أم كفاك فإنما

V2. O you the messenger of Allah, you are indeed my asset. O the prophet of Allah, verily, you are my pillar.

ألا يا رسول الله يا من به أنا ط⁷⁵⁴ إيحاد كل الخلق رب البرية

V3. O, the messenger of Allah, o around whom the Lord of creatures hangs the emanation of beings.⁷⁵⁵

عليك صلاة من سلام رفيقها سلام يلي أباد أباد أخررة

V4. May the blessings of Allah accompanied by peace be ever lastly upon you?

In the above examples al-Dāghirī has employed (*taa*) as a rhyming syllable in the second line throughout the poem while the first line has rhyming style.

7.4.2.2 The internal rhyme (*tarṣi*) and (*Takrir*)

Internal rhyme is another basic feature of al-Dāghirī's mystical poems, halve first stanza and second stanza in same manner. This style is only applied in first verse of *Qasiida* only. The following lines of his *Bassus-shauqi* portrays this:

ألا يا رسول الله إنك عدتي ألا يا نبي الله إنك عمدة

V2. O you the messenger of Allah, you are indeed my asset. O the prophet of Allah, verily, you are my pillar.

The second internal used in al-Dāghirī's mystical poems is known as *Takrir* whereby the beginning of the halve first stanzas are repeated. For instance, in his *Qasiidatu Tarheebi* write as follow:

أهلا وسهلا مرحبا بقدوم من طابت به الأرواح وأجسام

V2. We delightfully welcome the arrival of whom, the soul and bodies were salved.⁷⁵⁶

أهلا وسهلا مرحبا بقدوم من تعبى لكتب مديحه الأقالام

V3. We welcome the arrival of whose commendations the pen fails to write.

7.4.2.3 Meter Scheme

Metre, according to Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, is defined as "the arrangement of strong and weak stresses in lines of poetry, that reproduces rhythm" while The American Heritage Dictionary of the English language defines metre as "the measured rhythm characteristic of verse; and a specialist rhythmic pattern of verse usually determined by the number and kinds of metric units in a typical line."⁷⁵⁷ There are sixteen meters in Arabic prosody, Hiskett establishes that ten out of the sixteen meters in use can be conveniently applied in writing the Arabic mystical poems in northern Nigeria including Nguru. These are: *basīt*, *kamīl*, *khafīf*, *mutadārik*, *mutaqārib*, *rajaz*, *ramal*, *sa'ī*, *tawīl*, and *wāfir*. The idea of which poem falls which meter is outside this study,

⁷⁵⁴ Means hang, attach, suspend.

⁷⁵⁵ See Al-Hakim at-Jami'at al-Tirmidhī, *Jami'u Jami'at al-Tirmidhī*, 2000, 2024; See also *al-Muwaahib al-Laduniya*, vol. 1, 12.

⁷⁵⁶ These are the phrase used to politely welcome strangers and other friends. It literarily means "you encounter the real household not strangers, step on soft not rough! You hit the wideness not narrowness." But contextually mean we delightfully welcome the arrival of whom, the soul and bodies were salved.

⁷⁵⁷

therefore I will only briefly show how *Bahar tawīl* and *al-kamīl* meters are frequently used in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. For instance, al-Dāghirī, in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, employed *Bahar al-kamīl*. The following lines from the poem show this:

والبحر منه كامل كصفاته متناسب الأجزاء ثم تميمه

V255. And the Bahar (this is a terminology used by poets to indicate the style, rhyme, and rhythm of a poem. They are conventionally 16.) used in this work is “Kaamil” (perfect) as his attributes.

The *Bahar al-kamīl* meter’s feet are as follows:

Mutafaa’ilun Mutafaa’ilun (vv-v-, vv-v-)

Mutafaa’ilun Mutafaa’ilun (vv-v-, vv-v-)

Bahar tawīl is the most popular meter among not only the scholars, but also among the Muslims in general. It was the meter used by al-Fāzāzī in his *Ishrīniyyāt*. In his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*, al-Dāghirī uses *Bahar tawīl*. The following lines of the poem portray this:

ببحر طويل قد عرفنا مديحه فما هو إلا مده للنشيد

V78. With *Bahar Tawil*,⁷⁵⁸ I scooped this eulogy. This is not but support (*madad*) from him (Aḥmad al-Tijānī) to the eulogizer.

The feet of *Bahar Tawil* is as follows:

Fauulun mafaaiilun fauulun mafaailun (v--v--- v--v---)

Fauulun mafaaiilun fauulun mafaailun (v--v--- v--v---)

7.4.3 Length

Al-Dāghirī has written a considerable number of mystical poems both short and long. The longest work of al-Dāghirī which I came across is *Sa'ad Su'ad*. It contains 260 stanzas, while the shortest composition among the works I have seen contains only seventeen lines that is *Ar-risaa'u fii Shaykh Abubakar Atiiq*. However, there are poems ranging from one hundred and eighty stanzas to about three hundred stanzas. The number of the verses are sometimes given by using *ramz* calculations as discussed below.⁷⁵⁹ The use of *ramz* to document years or number of stanzas in Arabic poetry is very common in the northern Nigeria. This is because its usage helps tremendously in condensing information in a poetic form without tempering with the meter.⁷⁶⁰

⁷⁵⁸ This term used by poet to denote one of the 16 style of poem.

⁷⁵⁹ *Ramz* is a method of condensing numerical count of date, time and occurrences into an alphabet. This method is also used in marking dates on manuscript. The other words *ramz* are *ḥisāb al-jummāl* and *ta'miyah*). The chronogram in verse is called *chronosticon* and it is of three types. For detailed explanation of this method see Gacek 2009, 58-59. see also N. W. Khalid 2010, 281-303.

⁷⁶⁰ Khalid 2010, 289.

7.4.4 Dating and the Chronogram System

Al-Dāghirī gave the number of verses in his poems the Arabic alphabets and the date of the completion in the Hijrah year (Anno Hegirae, A. H.) referred to as *al-sanah al-hijrīyah (al-qamarīyah)*.⁷⁶¹ Both number of the verses and the date are given by using *ramz* calculations. That is, assigning the Arabic alphabets (*huruf al-abjad*) some numerical values as contained in the Fig 28 below.

Arabic Alphabet	Numerical Numbers	Arabic Alphabet	Numerical Numbers
<i>alif</i>	1	<i>ṣād</i>	60
<i>bā'</i>	2	<i>'ain</i>	70
<i>jīm</i>	3	<i>fā'</i>	80
<i>dāl</i>	4	<i>ḍād</i>	90
<i>ḥā'</i>	5	<i>qāf</i>	100
<i>wāw</i>	6	<i>rā'</i>	200
<i>zāy</i>	7	<i>sīn</i>	300
<i>hā'</i>	8	<i>tā'</i>	400
<i>ṭā'</i>	9	<i>thā'</i>	500
<i>yā'</i>	10	<i>khā'</i>	600
<i>kāf</i>	20	<i>dhāl</i>	700
<i>lām</i>	30	<i>zā'</i>	800
<i>mīm</i>	40	<i>ghain</i>	900
<i>nūn</i>	50	<i>shīn</i>	1000

The Fig. 28 table is *Hisāb Maghreb* used in Northern Nigeria including Nguru. It is noted that there are differences between *Hisāb Mashriq* and *Hisāb Maghreb* order. For instance, whereas in the *Hisāb Mashriq* *sīn* equals 60, in *Hisāb Maghreb* system it equal 300. While in *Hisāb Mashriq* system 1000 is represented by *ghain*, in *Hisāb Maghreb* system it is represented by *shīn* to mention a few. However, for the conversion of dates from Hijra to the Gregorian calendar I have used the following formula which was supplied by Muḥammad Baba Gidado. From Hijra to Gregorian era: $G = H - H + 622 \div 33$, while from Gregorian era to the Hijra: $H = G - 622 + G - 622 \div 32$.⁷⁶²

The typical example of the use of *ramz* is that of al-Dāghirī in his spurious work, *Bassus-shauqi*:

⁷⁶¹ This calendar begins with the *Hijra* (emigration) of Muhammad from Makkah to Madinah, which took place on July 16th 622) and it is based on lunar as opposed to the solar year see Gacek 2009, 60-61.

⁷⁶² Dahiru 2014, xx, 76-77.

وأبياته نور وشهر نظامه ربيع نبي تاريخها خطم نسخة

V249. And, the number of verses in the poem are 256, (refer to the numerical value of the Arabic letter: "n", "w" and "r", that is 50+6+200 respectively and, the month of the work is Rabi'ul Awwal. and the year is 1350 which symbolizes $nun=50$, $sin=300$, $kha=600$ and $ta=400$, that is, around July 1931.

The following example is from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*:

والبحر منه كامل كصفاته متناسب الأجزاء ثم تميته

V255. And the Bahar (this is a terminology used by poets to indicate the style, rhyme, and rhythm of a poem. They are conventionally 16.) used in this work is "*Kāmil*" (perfect) as his attributes.

أسميه "سعد السعود" وبيته "كرم" يشير بعده غبريمه

V256. I called it as "*Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*". And the number of the stanzas available are: (k) =20; (r) = 200 and (m) = 40. That is 260 stanzas. Note: the "k", "r" and "m" are representing the Arabic text, please.

7.4.5 Language

The relationship between language and literary works is something akin to the relationship between speech and writing. A discussion on one almost inevitably leads to the other. Literary work, as part of human culture, can only be truly expressed in some form of language and, no doubt, best expressed in human language.⁷⁶³ Thus, language becomes the vehicle through which literary work is conveyed to its destination. Obviously, the fortune language, like the theme which it unfolds, fluctuates according to the literary taste of the poet.

Al-Dāghirī resorted to a judicious and efficient use of language as a vehicle through which he conveys his message to people and in achieving his religious objectives. All the poems discussed here are written in a carefully chosen language, depicting the poet's mastery of the Arabic language and subject matter. The language used in al-Dāghirī's mystical poems falls between two relevantly related registers. The most important is the language of religion and secondly the idiom of eulogy. Having said this, the prominent linguistic feature that fascinate much attention is the syntactic style. The syntactic style provides the semantic base upon which language is used to appeal to the reader. The syntactic choice is structured in such a way that it enables the poem to project itself in the open. The language is both metaphorically and literarily intelligible. In the following lines from *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*, al-Dāghirī uses *Bahar tawīl*:

أجوب بلمح العين كل تنوفة أهيم لشوق في الفؤاد عتيد

V2. With the blinking of eye, I cross all desert with eyes blinking, thirsty for a fascination in the heart that is ready for any hardship.

فللقب طي للفيافي بلمحة وللعين طي للسماء البعيد

V3. With just a glance, the heart can fold a large distance, in the same way, the eye folds a distance of heaven.

⁷⁶³ Argungu 1991, 87.

وللصب شوق يعتري كل ساعة وللدهر شأن كل يوم جديد

V4. For the lover there is fascination agitating at all time, in same manner, that every period has its own new topic.

أجوس خلال الشوق أطلب منتهى فلا منتهى إلا وصول مفيد

V5. I am searching out the destination amidst the infatuation, but I realized that no destination other than reaching the desired result.

وماذاك إلا أن سلطان حبه أعز وأقوى من قوي شديد

V6. This is nothing but only that the influence of his love is powerful and stronger than any other power.⁷⁶⁴

وما ذاك إلا جذبهم لمريدهم فللمغناطيس إنجذاب حديد⁷⁶⁵

V7. And this is nothing but their magnetizing to their disciple.⁷⁶⁶ Indeed, the magnate has strong magnetization to iron.

The above example also, serves as a remarkable illustration of how grammar conveys meaning in literary work. The unique impact of al-Dāghirī's poetry on his guidance, is explained by the fact that the underlying semantics is surfaced in the grammar in a structure that characterizes individual clauses as their distribution in the text. The following lines from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, which employed *Bahar al-kamīl* show this:

هذي طباع سيئات طبعن لي هذي دهنتي والزوال أرومه

V198. These worse habits in fact, have rooted in me. Indeed, I was stroked by these and, the salvation I need.

يا سيدي يا عمدي أنا كالذي أحتاج ما يحتاجه ويرومه

V235. O my master my defender, I am as if I like what he likes and looking for.

أنا حائر أحيّر من ضبّ الكدى ضلت مذهبته وتاه حلومه

V236. I am agitated; indeed, my agitation is worse than that of desert gator. It missed the direction and lost its memory.

The above quoted verses also tell us not only the kind of clauses that occur in the text but also the linguistic function of the said clauses vis-à-vis the subject matter of the text. Lastly, al-Dāghirī's poems exhibit the uniqueness of al-Dāghirī's style, in other words a lightened style. These styles permeate all though his mystical poems as extensively discussed in the next chapter.

7.4.6 Symbols and Images

One of the apparent characteristics in the mystical poem of al-Dāghirī is the recurrence of particular and specific images and symbols (*al-talmīh*) These images occur to the extent that it is almost impossible to fail to notice them. For instance, al-Dāghirī's approach to expressing images and symbols is limited by the natural environment and traditional culture of northern Nigeria including Nguru. Some of the images and symbols that considerably feature are: the sun, the full

⁷⁶⁴ The members of the Tijānīyya claim that their brotherhood is the best and the strongest, Aḥmad al-Tijānī being the *khatm al-awliyā* is not only seal of all saints, but also "the most powerful saint and stronger than any other powerful." They also refer to themselves as "the proud ones."

⁷⁶⁵ It conventionally means metal but connotatively used here to indicate client.

⁷⁶⁶ See *Irshad aqlis-salim*: volume 2, 110.

moon, the heavy shower, the fruited tree, the brighter star, the light, the darkness and the world. The following sub-section discusses only some of these symbols.

7.4.6.1 The Light

Light is one of the most recurrent images in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. The term ‘*nur*’ or light (Hausa: *Haske*) means brightness, beauty, enlightenment, moral excellence etc. In a technical sense, the term encompasses all the good physical and moral virtues.⁷⁶⁷ The light was therefore technically used by al-Dāghirī to depict the image of Prophet Muḥammad, which epitomizes the Sufi perception of the prophet. The light which frequently appears in the mystical poems of Sufi scholars and Sufi poets is thus not an ordinary light, and this primeval light is known as *An-Nuur al-Muḥammad*, that is, the Muḥammad light. The Light of Muḥammadan is believed to have been created before all things.⁷⁶⁸ From this theory, the Sufi developed the idea or doctrine known as *Waḥdat* or *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The real essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality), also called the Reality of Realities (*Ḥaqīqa al-Ḥaqaa’iiq*). A typical example is seen in his *Bassus-shauqi* in which al-Dāghirī refers to the Prophet Muhammad in the following terms:

وإنك نور لامع تملأ السما ونلت لنفري كل علم وتحفة⁷⁶⁹

V92. And, verily, you are the glittering light that lighted the seven heavens,⁷⁷⁰ and you obtained it so as to read all knowledge and masterpiece.

فأرني جسما صيغ بالنور كاملا منيرا إذا ما الشمس في الليل ضلت

V120. And show me a body created with light fully lightening in the night when the sun disappears?

ونور علي الوجوه بالنور منك في مواجهة إياي قابل حقيقتي

V190. And brighten my face with light emanated from you while turning toward me and accept my reality.⁷⁷¹

In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*, we read:

نور تكون قبل نشأة آدم صحت نبوته وقام رسومه

⁷⁶⁷ The term was more appreciated and cherished by the Sufis because even Allah attributes it to Himself by saying “God is the light of the Heavens and the Earth.” Qur’an 24: 35. For more information on the use of the term in the context of northern Nigeria see Abu-Manga 1981, 12.

⁷⁶⁸ Al-Hujwīrī, (1911, 261-6.

⁷⁶⁹ It refers to part of book or something expensive (*mu’jam Al-ra’hd*).

⁷⁷⁰ The poet is referring to the seven divine *hadrāt*.

⁷⁷¹ This is a reference to the Light of Muhammad: If the mystical may not see God in this life (as indeed the orthodox maintain), he prays that he may at least behold the Light of Muhammad, for Muhammad saw God on the Night of the Heavenly Journey. But possibly the reference is rather to the desire of the early Ṣaḥīḥ Muslims, who had not been privileged to meet the Prophet Muhammad, to search out someone who had been so privileged, to receive from his lips the authentic words of Muhammad; this interpretation would rule out any reference to a desire to see God Himself, and would fit in better with the general character of the poem and al-Dāghirī’s conventional imagery.

V116. He is a light existed prior to the creation of Adam (as) and his prophetship also became valid by then, and his presence was established.⁷⁷²

ورآه جبريل منيرا طالعا قد ظنه نجما وبان نديمه

V117. And the Angel Gabriel saw him as lighting thinking that a star,⁷⁷³ but eventually turn to be his intimate friend.

ياسابقا للخلق طرا نوره يا ذا الذي أحيا الأنام قدومه

V149. O whose light descends on the entire creature⁷⁷⁴? O that whose advent revive the creature.

نور لأكوان وبرق أسطع لسطوعه السبع الطباق تشيمه

V163. He is a light⁷⁷⁵ of being and glitter whose reflection is derived by seven heavens.

مصباح فضل سيد متجرد عن حب دنيا قد صفا حيزومه

V183. He is a light of bliss, the leader who was averted from the desire of worldly life and whose heart was clarified.

The imagery of light is also used in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī to denote right path, that is, Islam. The following line from his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*, portrays this:

تنوره من يسعد الله ثم من عن النور يعيشو في ضلال بعيد

V21. Those favoured by Allah will attain and witness his light and, those who are blindfolded against the light deeply go astray.

Other examples are from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*:

وأجارهم من كل ما قد شانهم فأنار دهرنا من ظلام يضيّمه

V61. He protected them against all evils that destroyed them and brought the universe to light from the coverage of darkness and its grievance.⁷⁷⁶

نور على نور ومن يهدي به ذاك السعيد وغير ذا محرومه

V159. He is an accumulated light whom with which Allah guide those favoured. But otherwise, remain underprivileged.

7.4.6.2 The Sun

This symbol frequently appears in almost all the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī where it is associated with Prophet Muḥammad. I previously mentioned the reference to Muḥammad as primeval light, he imparts knowledge very generously like the sun light. The symbol of sun encodes light, piety and the perfection associated with Prophet Muhammad. Frye states that the sun is the symbol of the epiphany between the apocalyptic world and the cyclical world of nature.⁷⁷⁷

The following line from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* reveals this:

شمس⁷⁷⁸ على فلك الكمال مضيئة بدر⁷⁷⁹ على فلك العلى ديمومه⁷⁸⁰

⁷⁷² This Hadith was narrated by *at-Jami'at al-Tirmidhī*. He said that it is Hasan (good), and it is accurately authenticated by al-Hakim 2:609 as *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) and narrated by Ibn Abi Shayba in his famous *Musannaf* 14:292, and *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* in his *Tarikh* volume 7:374.

⁷⁷³ The star refers to the light created prior to the creation of Adam. According to the Hadith, Angel Gabriel witnessed the appearance of the star 5,184,000,000 times.

⁷⁷⁴ Hadith discussing the age of Angel Gabriel.

⁷⁷⁵ As discussed above.

⁷⁷⁶ Similar to Qur'an 3:103.

⁷⁷⁷ Wamitila 2001, 162.

⁷⁷⁸ Means prophet.

⁷⁷⁹ Means the prophet.

⁷⁸⁰ It simply means desert but connotatively used to indicate scope of roaming about.

V19. He is the light of the sun spinning in the orbit of perfection;⁷⁸¹ and he is a moon everlastingness on the prestige the orbit.

شمس تستر حولها إذما بدت كل الكواكب إذ بها تسنيمه

V106. He is the sun who at his expose enclosed by stars since it is the cause of his upliftment.

In the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī, the word for sun, “shams” is used. Sometimes, poetic expression or reference to the sun is achieved through metaphorical mapping between the sun and lamp as in the following examples extracted from *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*:

صبح بدا من غير سبق دجنة والصبح يسبقه دجى ويهيمه⁷⁸²

V158. He is a bright of morning appeared but unprecedented by darkness of night whereas normally, the light of morning is driven by gloom of night.

نور على نور ومن يهدي به ذاك السعيد وغير ذا محرومه

V159. He is an accumulated light whom with which Allah guide those favoured. But otherwise, remain underprivileged.

7.4.6.3 The Cloud

Cloud, as sometimes opposite of sun, is another symbol used in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī to denote Prophet Muhammad. The following line from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* reveals this:

كالشمس يحجبها السحاب مع الصفا والشمس شمس والسحاب يضيئه

V225. (thus, overshadow them) as though the cloud overshadows the light of the sun despite its shining. The sun is certainly sun, but the cloud covers it.

Another example is taken from al-Dāghirī’s *at-Taqriz fii Itbaa’ut-tazyil*, He writes:

سما فرعها والفرع يقوي بمنبت وظلل تظليل الغمام المؤيد

V7. Its branches were highly elevated. (Indeed), branches are supported by the stem, so, these branches formed a shadow the way the cloud forms its shadow with support.

7.4.6.4 The Moon

The use of the image of the full moon also denotes Prophet Muhammad’s features in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. Muhammad is considered as the full moon (*al-badr*) whose brilliance illuminates the whole world. The following line from his *Inhaa’us-salaam* reveals this:

سلام لذيذ لا يقاس ببلذة * على المصطفى المدعو بدر تمام⁷⁸³

V24. A well tasted peace that cannot be compared to any taste be upon the selected prophet (the prophet Muhammad saw) who is called ‘the full moon (that is 14 days old moon).’

There is also a noticeable use of this symbol in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*.

شمس⁷⁸⁴ على فلك الكمال مضيئة بدر⁷⁸⁵ على فلك العلى ديمومه⁷⁸⁶

V19. He is the light of the sun spinning in the orbit of perfection;⁷⁸⁷ and he is a moon everlastingness on the prestige the orbit.

⁷⁸¹ Compare with Qur’an 5:15.

⁷⁸² It simply means darkness (*mjm al-wasit*).

⁷⁸³ The full moon refers to Muhammad.

⁷⁸⁴ Means prophet.

⁷⁸⁵ Means the prophet.

⁷⁸⁶ It simply means desert but connotatively used to indicate scope of roaming about.

⁷⁸⁷ Compare with Qur’an 5:15.

7.4.6.5 The Star

The imagery of star is frequently reflected in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī where it is associated with the Prophet Muhammad. He is always among his students, like a star to whom he imparts his knowledge. The following lines from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* demonstrate this:

سعد السعود وسعد كل مسعد منه استمد وزانه ترحيمه

V156. A blessing star and, a bliss with which the entire favoured person is assisted and adorned by affection.

شمس تستر حولها إذما بدت كل الكواكب إذ بها تسنيمه

V106. He is the sun who at his expose enclosed by stars since it is the cause of his upliftment.

The following lines from his *Bassus-shauqi* demonstrate this:

ألا يا رسول الله يا من رآه جب رنيل منيرا طالعا قبل نشئة

V6. O the messenger of Allah, who was seen by Gabriel as lighting star emerging prior to the creation?⁷⁸⁸

رأى النور نجما ثاقبا متعددا بتكعيب⁷⁸⁹ آلاف بع⁷⁹⁰ أي حقبه

V7. (the Gabriel) saw the light as star penetrating repeatedly as much as it means for longest time.⁷⁹¹

7.4.6.6 The Sleep

The sleep is a symbol that is usually associated with death in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. The following line from *Ar-risaa'u fii Shaykh Abubakar Atiiq* illustrates this symbol:

وخيالك تحت حجارة محروفة خزفا ففي خير المضاجع يرقد

V4. He concealed you under a rock that converted to jar. Thus, he sleeps in a comfortable bed.

7.4.7 Figures of Speech

Figures of speech are important components of literary stylistics. Garba relates that Crystal and Olusegun and Adebayo say that literary style is mostly concerned with the devices used by an artist to ornament his text especially through the use of figures of speech. Mukhtar posits that figures of speech can be divided into grammatical and lexical categories, phonological categories and tropes. He adds that tropes are those figures of speech that arise from departures from linguistic codes. Tropes can also be described as those figures of speech which use words in a sense beyond their literal meanings. The major figures of speech that are agreed upon as tropes include metaphor, simile, personification, synecdoche etc. These figures of speech are used in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī to represent certain meanings that transcend their nominal senses.

⁷⁸⁸ Compare with Qur'an 5:15, "A Light and a Clear Book have come to you from Allah." The star refers to the light created prior to the creation of Adam. According to the Hadith, Angel Jibril witnessed the appearance of the star 5,184,000,000 times.

⁷⁸⁹ Means cube.

⁷⁹⁰ Means 72000 (thus 72000 cube).

⁷⁹¹ This star refers to the light of the Prophet Muhammad as discussed above.

7.4.7.1 Metaphor (*'Isti'āra*)

Metaphor is used to express a comparison between two essentially unlike things, idea or action or distinctly different kinds of thing so as to suggest some common quality shared by the two.⁷⁹² There is a number of metaphorical images in al-Dāghirī's mystical poems, for instance, where he compares the wish of the saints for the position of *khatm awliyā* to the fastest running horses. In addition, he compares the esoteric meaning of the Qur'an and Hadith with light. But of course, another striking metaphorical image is when he directly compares the saints who are aspiring for the position of *khatm al-awliya* to hunters. Thus, in his *Bassus-shauqi*, al-Dāghirī compares his emotional state and distance to the Madinah with to visit the Prophet. He compares the cause of his journey towards Madinah with the "lightening (and cloud) roaming about to cut the desert" in his *Inhaa'us-salaam*. In another verse, al-Daghiri compares the *salawat* on the Prophet with overflows of wealth and cloud overflows the rain. He also compares Allah's salutation on the prophet with flow of water over the hill. The following lines from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* reveals this:

نور لأكوان وبرق أسطع لسطوعه السبع الطبايق تشيمه
V163. He is a light⁷⁹³ of being and glitter whose reflection is derived by seven heavens.

مزن به مألذنين تعرضوا لسكوبه المشفوه فاض ديومه
V164. He is a nimbus with which its flood shed and the dishes of those exposed to its shedding are filled.

يدع صبور ثابت نوعزة قرم⁷⁹⁴ شهيد مشفق وكسومه⁷⁹⁵
V165. He is the perfect, the forbearing, the perseverant, the exalted, the leader, the witness, and the compassionate, and, at the same time the tough.

تاج الوجود بأسره إكليله مفتاح جود الله وهو حكيمه
V166. He is a crown and garland of the entire beings, the key to divine treasure and its controller respectively.

بحر أحاط بكل معلوم الورى للبحر موج لايزول حسومه
V167. He is the ocean surrounding the entire knowledge of creatures.⁷⁹⁶ Indeed, for the ocean, there is continued waves.

ظل ظليل دائم تظليله شاف كبير جامع وقومه⁷⁹⁷
V169. He is the umbrella which casts everlasting shade, the persuasive, the elderly, the universal and the benefactor.

سيف صقيل قاطع من قد أبى دين الإله وحله مسمومه
V170. He is a shape sword the killer of those resisted to abide by the divine commands.⁷⁹⁸ And soon, its poison (shape of the sword) will descend upon him.

⁷⁹² Baldick 2004, 153.

⁷⁹³ As discussed above.

⁷⁹⁴ Simply means the leader.

⁷⁹⁵ Simply means harshness.

⁷⁹⁶ As discussed above.

⁷⁹⁷ Simply means kindness.

⁷⁹⁸ *Jami'at al-Tirmidhī*, Hadith number 2810 (Arabic version).

7.4.7.2 Simile (*tashbīh*)

Simile expresses a comparison using specific words or phrase such as like, seems, and as if. Simile is used in mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. For instance, there is simile, where the smells of the Prophet's *salawat* excels any scent or incense, and perhaps where he says that the taste of the Prophet's *salawat* surpasses the full moon (that is 14 days old moon) in light.⁷⁹⁹ The following lines from his *Inhaa'us-salaam* show this:

سلاما يرينا الحق حقا بعينه * ويفتح عين القلب مثل عيام⁸⁰⁰

V33. The peace that shows us the pact as an essential right and opens the eyes of our heart like opening of the morning.

وإن صبح منك الودّ فالغير كالهيا * كطيف خيال بل كطيف منام⁸⁰¹

V44. (O prophet), if my love is valid and accepted by you, the other than you, to me, is as flight of wind (I have no concern no matter what is it), as an imagination and as nightmare.

The following line from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* reveals this:

بيكي بكاء ثواكل و نوادب حتى يسيح بخذّه لهمومه

V5. Crying persistently as though who lost lover or as woman lost husband till the tears run over his cheek. The following lines from his *Bassus-shauqi* reveal this:

عليك سلام تابع وصلاته من الله ما دامت إفاضة رحمة

V8. The peace followed by bless from Allah be upon you as much as the flow of blessing that exists.

عليك صلاة عاطف تسليمها من الله يترى كرة مثل ديمة

V128. A blessing followed by peace of Allah ascending successively and repeatedly as does the rain fall be upon you.

The following lines from his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*, portray this:

فما هو إلا صرف نور محمد تبين بعد الكتم عند الحميد

V14. And he is not but the component of the light of Muhammad (saw) exposed after it was concealed, with whom he excessively praised-the Allah.

وذا نجله حقا كما هو نوره وها هو خير الجنس خير حفيد

V15. That was his real offspring as though he was light from him. And here is he-the best descent and best grandson.⁸⁰²

وسر أبو في البينة قدسرى كما سر نخل في النوى والبيد

V16. The secret of the father lies in his offspring as the secret of date-palm (paste) in date-stone and the like.

⁷⁹⁹ Hiskett speculates that the frequent occurrence of simile in the mystical poems of northern Nigeria including Nguru might be due the influence of the *Dalā'il al-Khairāt* see Hiskett 1982, 446.

⁸⁰⁰ I translated it as morning.

⁸⁰¹ It simply means phantom but connotatively means nightmare (*mu'jam al-wasit*).

⁸⁰² Aḥmad al-Tijānī was an offspring of the Prophet Muhammad in spiritual and mystical world known as *Waḥdat* or *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The real essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality), also called the Reality of Realities (*Ḥaqīqa al-Ḥaqā'iq*).

7.4.7.3 Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions are asked by the poet without expecting answers. His love for rhetorical questions is evident in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī, particularly when he asks in his *Bassus-shauqi* that:

فلينك ترضى والأنام مغاضبي ولينك ترضاني رضى كالطبيعة

V131. Ah me! Would you have accepted me while people rejected me? And, Ah me! Would you tolerate me as that of nature?

وليتك تعطي والأديم أشحة فكان الذي ترجوه مثل بسيطة

V132. Ah me! Would you give me while leathers are stings? And that one you expect is like fruitful?

أتمنعي والدار غير مسكر⁸⁰³ لقاصد هدي أو لطالب إربة

V174. Will you avert me while the house is not favourable for those looking for guidance or demands?

7.4.7.4 Personification (*al-tashkhīs, al-istiḥdār, al-kināya*)

Personification is the art of endowing human sensibility to animals, abstract ideas and inanimate objects. Personification is noticeable in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. The following lines from his *Inhaa'us-salaam* reveal this:

يفتح لي أبواب كل فضيلة * يغلق لي أبواب كل ملام⁸⁰⁴

V34. That will open the doors of entire bounties and shut down against me the doors of entire blames.

The following line from his *Bassus-shauqi* reveals this:

أتمنعي والجود منك سجية تعلم منك الصبر أجناس هضبة

V215. Would you prevent me while hospitality is your attribute and, the different variety of rocks learnt the patient from you?

Similar examples could also be found in *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*:

حبر على علم الإله معلّم فاللوح ينفذ ما نفاه نهيمه⁸⁰⁵

V20. A learned person who was taught with divine knowledge,⁸⁰⁶ and the divine slate executes what is uttered by his tongue.

7.4.7.5 Irony

Irony is the discrepancy between what is said and what is meant, what is said and what is done, what is expected and what happens or what is meant and what others understand. Several ironies are also presence in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī, for instance, when al-Dāghirī declares himself ignorant of Arabic prosody and suffering from shortage of knowledge to compose

⁸⁰³ Simply means sugared (*mu'jam al-wasit*) but connotatively unfavourable.

⁸⁰⁴ I translated it as blameable (*Mu'jam al-wasit*).

⁸⁰⁵ Simply means voice but connotatively used to denotes tongue.

⁸⁰⁶ Compare with Qur'an 3:164

several poems for Aḥmad al-Tijānī, the following lines from his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*, portray this:

وإني وإن كنت العروض عرفتها لذبيت عن شيخي بألفي قصيد

V40. Verily, if I mastered the prosody, I would have protected against my Shaykh with as much as 2000.

وباعي قصير في صناعة أبييت وليست القوافي في الغنا بمجيد

V41. But my ability in composing poem is very minimal. Also, I am not veteran in composing rhyme or rhythm in poetry.

7.4.7.6 Anthropomorphism

The theme of Anthropomorphism as used in al-Dāghirī's mystical poem should not be wrongly perceived, because it is not tenable in Sharia. Anthropomorphism involves the attribution of human characteristics to non-humans. The concept of Muhammad, according to the Sufis, is transcendental as he is beyond the imagination of human sense. In the poem, the Shaykh mentioned the requirement of the helper to save him from the torment of the grave. Only Allah has the power to do that and perhaps, Muhammad. He describes Muhammad as a "canoe." The following line from his *Bassus-shauqi*, portrays this:

أيدركني ضيم من الذنب موبق لقلّة إحساني وأنت سفينتي

V5. May I be overtaken by oppression of destructive grave sin due to lack of my generosity while you are my rescuing canoe?

Other figures of speech used in al-Dāghirī's mystical poems include pun (*tajnīs*), antithesis (*ṭibāq* or *muqābala*), allusion and metonymy (*talmīn* or *kināya*), double entendre (*tawriya*), poetic fallacy and apostrophe

7.5 Conclusion

The examined poems are enough to admit that the Shaykh was a great poet, who was intuitively endowed with spiritual eulogy. Al-Dāghirī, like many other Sufis, composed panegyric poems in which he eulogizes either the Prophet or saints (*madḥ*), his work (*at-taqrīz*) or laments the loss of someone (*rithā*); all the three genres reflect his mystical nature. Despite the fact that composing such mystical poems is one of the adopted attitudes of the Sufis, yet the approach and method adopted by al-Dāghirī actually shows the originality of his work and, by extension, the works demonstrate that al-Dāghirī is creative and versatile in his thought, especially in his panegyric poems.

Going through his mystical poems, three things are to be considered. The first is that he usually makes use of linguistic embellishments to make his poems more attractive. This is the reason his mystical poems are full of figurative speeches and metaphorical expressions. The second is the fact that he bases his expressions and utterances mainly on esoteric dimension of the

religion. This accounts for the reason the Sufis look at Prophet Muḥammad, saints and righteous people beyond their biological status. Another mystical world is created for them; that is, the doctrine of *Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*. The third is that his mystical poems reveal the rhythmic nature of typical Arabic poems, thus, the man was divinely inspired to write. Suffice it to say that composing a poem of this nature is not peculiar to al-Dāghirī alone. A careful exposition of the works of Shaykh Abū Bakr al-‘Atīq, Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse (d. 1975), Shaykh ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī to mention a few, shows that they followed the same pattern.

CHAPTER EIGHT

An Analysis of the Major Sufi themes in the Mystical Poems of al-Dāghirī

8.1 Introduction

Having translated and analysed the contents of al-Dāghirī's mystical poems in the previous chapter, this chapter sets out to analyse the major Sufi themes⁸⁰⁷ in the translated poetic which can be considered as religious thoughts of al-Dāghirī. I list the themes below and illustrate them with brief quotations.⁸⁰⁸ The style adopted in this analysis is to first of all explain the theme in question, give a brief insightful background of it and then identify and cite examples from the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. I quote passages of the Qur'an, Hadith and views of both Sufi and non-Sufi scholars that relate to the themes of the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī, only when such reference is felt to support a particular argument. In the course of my analysis, I also discuss the role which the themes play in the lives of northern Nigeria including Nguru; and consequently how they contribute to the veneration and exaltation of the Prophet Muḥammad by the people in the region. Finally, this chapter helps us to understand the nature of Sufism and popular conceptions of Islam in northern Nigeria including Nguru.

8.2 The themes of *Hubb al-Ilaah* (Love of God or Divine Love)

The first and most important theme in all the mystical and non-mystical writings of al-Dāghirī, both in prose and in verse, is the theme of the divine love. This type of love is not only an emotion or a symbol of relationship between humans, but also a divine-human relationship.⁸⁰⁹ However, divine love is a love through which the lover (follower) is united with his beloved (God, Prophet, Saints, Shaykhs, etc.),⁸¹⁰ for instance, if one loves God, it follows that one also loves God's Messenger and His pious servants. Thus, Sufis believe that divine love for God, for the prophet and his family, for the saints, for each other and for everyone is primary; it is only through love that the worship of God can be completed.⁸¹¹ They consider love as the only animating principle of life and the universe and the course of creation, and that is the desire of love that

⁸⁰⁷ I used the term "theme" to refer to the major and central ideas of the poets trying to convey beyond the surface meaning of the poem.

⁸⁰⁸ All of these quotations are taken from translated and analysed mystical poems of al-Dāghirī in the previous chapter including two further mystical poems of al-Dāghirī which are not translated and analysed were referred to in the analysis. However, there are just a few are extracted from the works of other scholars.

⁸⁰⁹ Omid Safi 2018, xxxv. However, this type of love is different from another category of love termed *Hubb al-Khass* (unique divine love) mentioned in the Qur'an 4:54.

⁸¹⁰ Abdurrahman 1989, 31.

⁸¹¹ Choudhury 2015, 182.

compelled God to create the universe; otherwise the universe would not have existed.⁸¹² This is mainly the reason Sufism is considered as a path towards the truth (God) where the provisions are love of God. Its method is to look solely in one direction (God), and its objective is God. Thus, every Sufi is expected to be consumed and intoxicated in it.

For the Sufis, there are two realms or kinds of love. They are the real (*Mahabbah al-Haqiqiyya or al-hubb al-Haqiqii*) and the metaphorical love (*Mahabbah al-Majazi*). Addiction and devotion to any being in the universe “other than Allah” (*maa siwaaa Allaah*) is a metaphorical love, whereas love for the Lord of the universe and inclination towards Him is real and divine love. The concept of this second type of love features in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. Al-Dāghirī in his strong passion for the divine love and longing for the relationship with God, wrote mystical poems which deal with the theme of divine love. He believes that divine love is the essence of the religion of Islam and the most blessed path to Allah. It is the only means for divine mercy and friendship. He adopts the style of the Sufi scholars which states that the only way to reach divine love is through the love of the Prophet Muḥammad as examined in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* V1-8. He argues that whoever immersed in this kind of love would never be intoxicated with the pleasure of this world. He mentions some people who live by this love:

من شوق ليلي والرباب⁸¹³ وزيني وسعاد والصاحي يطيب نعيمه

V2. This is due to the infatuated love to Laila, Rebab, Zainab and Sa’uda.⁸¹⁴ Whoever exempts himself from this kind of love will run smooth live.⁸¹⁵

Going through the verses of the poem them, one discovers that al-Dāghirī perceives the Sufis as lovers of God, and he intends to follow in their footsteps given the imagery of drinks and intoxication he has employed, so that he might consequently become mystically intoxicated. Nevertheless, he is not fully intoxicated as he avoids some mystical pronouncements known as

⁸¹² Solagberu 2009, 182.

⁸¹³ Al-Rabab the daughter of ‘Imru’ al-Qays Junduḥ ibn Ḥujr al-Kindīy (d. 544), the wife of late Husan-the martyr of Karbala, was a singer. After the death of her husband, many noble people needed to marry her but she rejected due to love she had with her late husband and, died a year after.

⁸¹⁴ Finding these names in Sufi literature is a symbolic of *Maqaamaat* and the position they are seeking. These will hinder them from going to Allah.

⁸¹⁵ These are names of women of historical love that poet use to set example of passionate love. Laila Aamir was born in 28 AH in a village named Naju’u (but later was named after her) four years after Majnun- son of Aamir-Al-qais who had grown together rearing sheep. But, after she became matured, she isolated herself. As a result, majnun Qais became infatuated in love with her. He was not a mad in reality, but the reason of naming him “Majnun” was, when the Qais wish to marry her, his parents refused to endorse their marriage. Due to this infatuation, he started roaming about chanting love singing, some time was seen in Sham, some time in Najd and some time in Hijaz, till was found dead in jungle. Another Sufi interpretation to these names is all means specific *maqamāt loke gawthiyya and qutbaniya*

ecstatic utterances (*Shatahaat*) like those of Ḥusayn b. Manṣūr (al-Ḥallāj) who was reported to have declared, “*Ana al-Haqq!* (I am the Truth or Reality!).” Al-Dāghirī in comparison can therefore be viewed and adjudged as a sober Sufi. It presupposes, therefore, that the Sufis express their divine/mystical love and are consequently known as mystical lovers or passionate lovers. This can be compared with the poem of al-Dāghirī in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* V9-13, where he says:

ترويه⁸¹⁶ عن قلب وعن مهج وعن عشق حواه والضلال نديمه

V9. Reminding him of the (good) heart, handsomeness, passionate- love and he made the Love as chatting partner.

Even though, the poem is capable of being misinterpreted, especially by the non-Sufi scholar, especially the Wahhābīs and the Salafist, who may not distinguish between the divine love and human love. It is possible to have someone who may erroneously believe that the context in which intoxication is used is not explicit enough. In fact, it is believed that the Sufis invented this figurative style as a mask for mysteries, which they desire to keep secret. That desire is natural in those proudly claimed to possess an esoteric doctrine known only to themselves. Al-Dāghirī in his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii* V2-7, expresses his love by saying thus:

وماذاك إلا أن سلطان حبه أعز وأقوى من قوي شديد

V6. This is nothing but only that the influence of his love is powerful and stronger than any other power.⁸¹⁷

The poem can therefore be viewed as a personal account of al-Dāghirī, who expresses his experience on divine love by using a figurative style. Comparing the poem of al-Dāghirī with other Sufi scholars who express their experience on divine love, one discovers similarity of diction. Moreover, al-Dāghirī maintains that those who are spiritually pure are also emotionally prepared to receive divine guidance and those who are sinful lack adequate spiritual stamina as to be rightly guided. However, according to him, the man who loves God and devotes his life to His service will be inevitably loved by his fellow men. He also believes that the Prophet has attained his state of perfection through his love for God. He is thus a shining example of God’s glory. He thus calls on Muslims to express their *imam* in an attitude of love for God and the prophet, as may be reflected in a life of personal piety and of mutual concern. Such love, stripped of all the impurities

⁸¹⁶ This word means to quench someone's thirst, so the meaning probably means something he mentioned before this verse will quench him from heart burning and yearning and love which it contained.

⁸¹⁷ The members of the Tijānīyya claim that their brotherhood is the best and the strongest, Aḥmad al-Tijānī being the *khatm al-awliyā* is not only seal of all saints, but also “the most powerful saint and stronger than any other powerful.” They also refer to themselves as “the proud ones.”

of mystic overtones, is active and strong. It is the most intense of human emotion, and when released, is most far-reaching. It disciplines the intellect and stimulates the conscience; it inspires hope and instils assurance and peace. Its highest aim is striving (*al-Jihād*) in the way of God and in the way of the Prophet, the sum of which striving is the fulfilment of God’s commandment. The Prophet’s perfection according to him, as will be seen below, has been attained because of his exceptional virtuous qualities.

In the final analysis, the works portray al-Dāghirī, as a Sufī who has a taste for divine love, treading the steps of early Sufī divine lovers such as Jalāl ad-Dīn al-Rūmī, Ibn ‘Arabī, Ḥusayn b. Maṣṣūr (al-Ḥallāj) among others. He can also be adjudged as a sober Sufī in the category of Shaykh Abū Qāsim al-Junaid (d. 910 C.E) whose intoxication is under control and is not known to make any mystical utterances that may possibly make him a controversial figure. Our attention in the next section will focus on the concept of Prophetic love.

8.3 *Hubb an-Nabiy’* (Love for the Prophet Muḥammad)

Related to the theme of divine love is love for Prophet Muḥammad. This is mainly because achieving Divine love must be through the Prophet Muḥammad as the only way in reaching the presence of Allah, because the gate to the divine presence is only opened by the key of Prophetic love. This is mainly because God praises himself through the praise of the existence of the Prophet Muḥammad and the Sufis respond in kind by praising God through the praise of the Prophet Muḥammad.⁸¹⁸ Thus, God can only be perceived directly in and through oneself, so therefore praising God through the Prophet Muḥammad is understood to be better than simply praising God directly on one’s own.”⁸¹⁹ Sufis believe that Allah commands Muslims to love the Prophet, and as a result, love for the Prophet Muḥammad becomes one of the most important aspects of Islamic theology. Love for the Prophet is the Muslim’s hope of salvation: love him and God will love you and forgiven your sins. In the Hadith, every Muslim must love the Prophet more than anything else. In his *Bassus-shauqi*, for instance, al-Dāghirī has this to say:

وأسقطت للحب المسمى محمدا جميع ضمير لي وكل إضافة

V97. I dropped for the sake of love of the one named Mohammad⁸²⁰ all that are parts of me (children) as well as those attached to me (friends).

⁸¹⁸ Ogunnaike 2020, 53.

⁸¹⁹ Ogunnaike 2020, 24.

⁸²⁰ The Sufis interpret *zuhuul* as a level of Sufi intoxication while *sukr* is the heart boiling when Sufi servant countered with name of his love one (Allah or prophet). The Sufi servant usually go through four levels: *Zuhuul*, *Harah*, *Sukr* and *Sahw*. So, these words are connotatively used in his poem not just a basic dictionary meaning.

The major link between Sufis and the Prophet is love as they seek to attain the peak of this love, which is for them *the merger of the lover into the beloved*.⁸²¹ The Sufis call this state, *fanā'* or *fanā' fī al-Rasūl*.⁸²² *Fanā'* can therefore only be achieved through him and it is the role of the Sufi Shaykhs to lead the *murīd* into the Prophet's presence (*ḥaḍrat al-Nabī*) and once the *murīd* has established the contact with the Prophet, he has no further need of his Shaykh.

Sufis of the early Islamic ages, therefore, became deeply absorbed with the character of the Prophet. They considered emulating the character of the Prophet as the first step leading to Allah. Also, it has long been attributed to the Sufi scholars to the extent that it has become like a literary cult of Prophetic panegyric in a Muslim community. Likewise, al-Dāghirī, in his *Bassus-shauqi*, offers all his stanzas to support this idea. He writes:

إلى أحمد المختار وجهت وجهي وفي القلب حاجات تعز لفوهت⁸²³

V1. Toward the Aḥmad⁸²⁴ the chosen prophet I paced my direction. My heart full of needs and desires that is much enough to spell out.⁸²⁵

Moreover, the Sufis see the article of the profession of faith, “there is no god but God and Muḥammad is His Prophet” as a testimony of the Prophet's elevated status. The manner this personality wrote on Prophet Muḥammad is enough to sum up that he had taken all his love this earth to the great prophet.⁸²⁶ A typical example of how this theme is expressed will be found in the following extractions from the poems of al-Dāghirī's *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V14-19:

عجبا لحب كيف كان يهمله هجر المحب و أحمد⁸²⁷ مأمومه

V14. Amazement for a lover who distresses for the abandoning of lover while his guidance is the Aḥmad (prophet saw).

Even though the language of Sufi poetry is the language of prophetic love, al-Dāghirī confesses his ability of describe the amount of love (*Muhibbah*) and yearning (*Shauq*) for the prophet. But he states his attention and requests, demands and aspirations are channelled towards the Prophet Muḥammad which would be achieved by the power of his love. If his love is accepted by the Prophet Muḥammad, then all his requests, demands and aspirations are achieved. He has nothing to do with anybody. In his *Bassus-shauqi*, he writes:

إذا صح منك الود فالقصد حاصل وكل الذي فوق التراب كثرية

⁸²¹ Abu-Manga 1981, 13.

⁸²² *Fanā' fī al-Rasūl* simply means emptying the heart of those qualities that contradict the Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad by subduing the ego.

⁸²³ Simply means to pronounce.

⁸²⁴ The name Ahmad “The praised one” is one of the names given to the Prophet Muhammad.

⁸²⁵ This style was used by Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse when he said:

تكرمت لي من قبل ما كنت ملزما أذكر حالي أم كفاك فإنما

⁸²⁶ Tahir 2006, 78.

⁸²⁷ Means prophet.

V136. If my love is approved by you;⁸²⁸ the aim was achieved. And anyone that on the dust is a typical dust.

Al-Dāghirī expresses the same idea with passionate intensity in his *Inhaa'us Salaam* V43-46. He declares:

وان صح منك الود فالغير كالهيا * كطيف خيال بل كطيف منام⁸²⁹

V44. (O prophet), if my love is valid and accepted by you, the other than you, to me, is as flight of wind (I have no concern no matter what is it), and, is as imagination or as nightmare.

In conclusion, we noted that the Sufis believe that Prophet Muḥammad is the only way to God and must be venerated. Al-Dāghirī explains the position of love and obedience to the Prophet as an obligatory act in Islam. He also mentions Hellfire as the final abode of those who dislike him. The doctrine of *Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The essence of Prophet Muḥammad) which shall be the focus of next discussion.

8.4 The Theme of *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* or *an-Nuur al-Muḥammadi* (The Real Essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality)

The doctrine of *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The real essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality) is the term which the Sufis give to the Prophet Muḥammad in the mystical world. Prophet Muḥammad is understood or believed to have a primary metaphysical significance which is intimately linked with the cosmos as a whole.⁸³⁰ The creation, according to the Sufis, began with the creation of the light of Muḥammad's prophethood (spiritual substance), out of which all other souls were created.⁸³¹ The first thing that was created was the light of the Prophet Muḥammad (*an-Nuur al-Muḥammadi*) which was created from the light of God; and when God decided to make the world, he made it from the primal *an-Nuur al-Muḥammadi* and all other things were created; the pen, the throne, the chair, the heavens, the earth, and all that is on the earth are extensions of that light. Hence, as human beings, the virtues of the Prophet Muḥammad are created; however, the essence of Prophet Muḥammad, or the light of Muḥammad, is eternal in so far as it is attributed to God.⁸³² By this doctrine, Muḥammad is said to be pre-existent.⁸³³

⁸²⁸ Compare with *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, volume 1, Hadith number, 177.

⁸²⁹ It simply means phantom but connotatively means nightmare (*mu'jam al-wasit*).

⁸³⁰ Solagberu 2009, 213.

⁸³¹ Knappert 1967, 67-8.

⁸³² Many scholars believed in the concept of *ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*; for example, Suyūfī (1445-1505) in his *Al-Khasais-ul-Kubra*, he made a commentary of Qur'an 3: 81. He confirms that the messenger mentioned in the said verse was Prophet Muḥammad and anyone perceived otherwise has made a great mistake. This in fact, according to him, is a clear indicator of the existence of the prophet hood of Muḥammad before other prophets.

⁸³³ Solagberu 2009, 213 citing Royster 1970, 255.

This story of the creation later becomes a doctrine of the reality of Muḥammad which was further extended to the fact that Muḥammad’s prophethood was attained before the creation of Adam. However, it is still uncertain who introduced the Logos doctrine into Islam,⁸³⁴ but the Qur’an is full of references to light (*Nuur*).⁸³⁵ There are at least forty-nine (49) references to *Nūr* (light) and its derivatives in the Qur’an. For instance, one of the famous verses, on which this doctrine is based, comes in the *Suurat al-Nuur* (the Chapter of Light), in which Allah clearly states that: “Allah is the light of the Heavens and the Earth” (Q24:35). Elsewhere in the Qur’an, Allah calls his Prophet a light and light-giving lamp. He says, “A Light and a Clear Book have come to you from Allah” (Q5:15). In another Qur’anic verse, Allah also says, “We sent you as a witness, a bringer of good news and a warner, one calls to Allah with His permission and a light-giving lamp” (Q33:46). Therefore, based on the above-mentioned Qur’anic verses, the Sufis claimed the doctrine emanated from the Qur’an and Prophetic Hadith. They therefore tend to refer to several Qur’anic verses frequently cited as a justification for the doctrine.

Ka’b al-Ahbar and Ibn Jubayr, for instance, while commenting on this verse, Qur’an 24:35, earlier mentioned, hold that “By the second light, He means Muḥammad. Allah says, ‘the likeness of his light...’ meaning the light of Muḥammad.”⁸³⁶ A lot more is said about this verse, and Allah knows best what it means. Moreover, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (1445-1505) in his *Khaṣā’is al-Kubra*, made a commentary on the Qur’anic verse, 3:81. He confirms that the Messenger mentioned in the said verse was Prophet Muḥammad and anyone perceived it otherwise has made a great mistake. This in fact, according to him, is a clear indicator of the existence of the prophethood of Prophet Muḥammad before other prophets.

Al-Muwrtani cites the Qur’anic verse (Q3:81), where Jesus prophesized the coming of Prophet Muḥammad. In another verse, in respect of Moses, he cites Q7:156-157 and Q3:81.⁸³⁷ All these verses, according to al-Muwrtani, are subtle indications as well as justification for the pre-existence of Prophet Muḥammad. This view is peculiar to al-Muwrtani, as some other scholars view the verses differently. For instance, al-Burusawiy in his *Tafsir Rūh al-Bayan* considers the

⁸³⁴ The doctrine of *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* was reflected in the works of early Sufi scholars such as Sahl ibn ‘Abdallah at-Tustarī (c. 818-896), al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī al-Ḥanafī (820-869), Ibn Mansur al-Ḥallāj (d. 922), Abū-‘Alī al-Ḥusayn ibn-‘Abdallāh *Ibn-Sīnā* (b. 980), Al-Tha’labī (d. 427/1035), al-Ghazālī (1058-1111), Ibn Farid (586-632/1181-1235), Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn al-‘Arabi (d. 678/1240), ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī (1365-1408), Aḥmad ibn al-Mubārāk al-Lamaṭī in about 1717, Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse (d. 1975), Umar ibn Aḥmad al-Wālī, (c. 1885).

⁸³⁵ Hiskett 1978, 428.

⁸³⁶ Qāḍī Iyāḍ 1991, 6.

⁸³⁷ Solagberu 2009, 219-221.

contents of the Qur’anic verse as glad tidings which Allah bestows on some of His messengers.⁸³⁸ “Muḥammad is not the father of any of you, but he is a messenger of God and Seal of the Prophets,” is interpreted by *Najmu ad-Dīn Kubrā* to mean that he was not of our world. As Shaykh Ahmad Radwan of Luxor (d. 1967), cited by Hoffman-Ladd, said: “God has bestowed the whole world with this light,” which is of heavenly origin. The deepest indication and broadest manifestation of such heavenly light was originally in Muḥammad, but eventually it encompasses all creation.⁸³⁹ For these reasons, some scholars like Hiskett contend that there can be little doubt that the concept of Muḥammadan reality is originally from the Qur’an.⁸⁴⁰ The concept of light in the Qur’an, contrary to the concept of Muḥammadan reality, refers to the coming out of darkness into light which is normal in every religion that has “the concept of unbelief as ignorance and belief as knowledge and enlightenment.”⁸⁴¹

That notwithstanding, the doctrine of *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, which entails the principle of pre-existence of Prophet Muḥammad is also justified by some Prophetic traditions which was *said to come from Muḥammad himself*. This popular Prophetic tradition is, according to al-Qastalani, traced to Jabir b. Abdullah al-Ansari, a companion of the Prophet who was reported to have asked Prophet Muḥammad about the first being created by God. Muḥammad responds, “The first thing created was the light of your prophet which was created from the light of God. From this light God created the Pen, the Throne, the Eight Angels who support the Throne of God, the *Kursi* (chair), the angels and the seven Heavens and earth.”⁸⁴² In some versions, “I am the Light of God and all things are from my Light.” Prophet Muḥammad asks Gabriel how old he is. Gabriel responds that he does not know, “but in the fourth veil there is a star that would appear once every seventy thousand years, and I saw it seventy thousand times.” Then, the Prophet Muḥammad said: “I swear in the glory of my Lord, that star is me.”⁸⁴³ In another tradition reported by at-Tirmidhī, Abū Hurairah narrates that when the Prophet Muḥammad was asked when did prophethood become prescribed on you? He (the prophet) replied, “I was a Prophet and Messenger while Adam

⁸³⁸ See Solagberu 2009, 221.

⁸³⁹ Hoffman-Ladd 1992, 618.

⁸⁴⁰ Hiskett 1978, 428.

⁸⁴¹ Hiskett 1978, 428.

⁸⁴² *Al-Muwaahib al-Laduniya*, vol. 1, 12. See also *al-Muwaahib al-Laduniya* ed. al-Shami, 2:583.

⁸⁴³ The star refers to the light created prior to the creation of Adam. According to the Hadith, Angel Jibril witnessed the appearance of the star 5,184,000,000 times.

was between (being) soul and body.”⁸⁴⁴ These Prophetic Hadiths were generously cited by the Sufis to justify the doctrine and back their claims about the Prophet’s light.

This doctrine was condemned and rejected by scholars like Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328)¹ who holds that their claims lack Qur’anic and Prophetic backings. Aḥmad al-Wāsiṭi (1258-1311), one of the disciples of Ibn Taymiyya, like his master, rejected the doctrine of the *Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*. Despite all the criticism by the exoteric scholars, the doctrine of the *Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya* is adhered to by all twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars including al-Dāghirī. The doctrine of the Muḥammadan reality and the Muḥammadan light were all captured and reflected in most of his major works, for instance, *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* and *Bassus-shauqi*, among others. The well-known Hadith of Abū Hurairah which I mentioned above was also found in his work, he has this to say in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*:

من ذا الذي كان النبي و آدم من بين طين والمياه قميمه⁸⁴⁵

V30. Who had been a prophet while the Adam’s structure was at a stage of water and clay?⁸⁴⁶

This is not just a metaphor, but he is surely referring to the Hadith of the prophet that talked about the divine light which the prophet confirms to his companions that he was created before everything. As earlier noted, this is the Hadith which Sufis often quote to support their claim of *Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*. According to the poet, Prophet Muḥammad had been in existence not merely prior to the entire creatures including all other Prophets, but he is the beginning of the Prophetic cycle. This also confirms the Sufis’ claim that prophethood itself originated from Muḥammad. It later transmitted to creation of other the Prophets through prophet. In his *Bassus-shauqi*, he has this to say to confirm his belief that the Prophet was created from light and his prophethood came before that of Adam:

فأرني جسما صيغ بالنور كاملا منيرا إذا ما الشمس في الليل ضلّت

V122. And show me a body fully created with light that gives light when the sun disappears in the night.

In another poem, *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* V116-120, he further makes clear the nexus of ideas that lie behind the references to light in the following stanzas:

نور تكون قبل نشأة آدم صحت نبوته وقام رسومه

V116. He is a light existed prior to the creation of Adam (as) and his prophethood also became valid by then, and his presence was established.⁸⁴⁷

⁸⁴⁴ *Jami’ at-Tirmidhi*, Vol. 6, Book of Al-Manaqib (Virtues), Hadith 3609. He said that it is Hasan (good), and it is accurately authenticated.

⁸⁴⁵ Refers to top of hill etc., the body or structure (*mu’jam al-Mufradaat*).

⁸⁴⁶ This may be compared with the Hadith number 3609 in *al-Jami’ at al-Tirmidhi*,

⁸⁴⁷ This Hadith was narrated by *at-Jami’ at al-Tirmidhi*. He said that it is Hasan (good), and it is accurately authenticated by al-Hakim 2:609 as *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) and narrated by Ibn Abi Shayba in his famous *Musannaf* 14:292, and *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* in his *Tarikh* volume 7:374.

ورآه جبريل منيرا طالعا قد ظنه نجما وبان نديمه

V117. And the Angel Gabriel saw him lighting. He considered it as star,⁸⁴⁸ but eventually (after discussing with him) realized that was not it, but his intimate friend.

Going through the above stanzas of the mystical poems, one notes that what al-Dāghirī has for the Prophet Muḥammad replicates what the Sufis consider as *Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya* or *al-Nuur al-Muḥammadi*. This is also reflected in other works of the Shaykh. For instance, in his *Bassus-shauqi* V3-10, the work is crammed with many stanzas which reflect on the doctrine of *Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*. For illustration, al-Dāghirī has this to say:

ألا يا رسول الله يا من رآه جب رنيل منيرا طالعا قبل نشئة

V6. O the messenger of Allah, who was seen by Gabriel as lighting star emerging prior to the creation (of beings)?⁸⁴⁹

In our next extract, the Shaykh also illustrates the idea of the pre-existence of the soul of Muḥammad in *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V162-167, where he has this to say on the Reality of Muḥammad:

نور لأكوان وبرق أسطع لسطوعه السبع الطباق تشيمه

V163. He is a light⁸⁵⁰ of being and glitter whose reflection is derived by seven heavens.

He explains that Prophet Muḥammad is a light of being and glitter whose reflection is derived by seven heavens. This is more than beautiful imagery, but he is surely referring to those levels, specifically the fourth level of the divine attributes. These attributes shielded the creation from the full and unbearable splendour of the divine majesty through which the prophet constantly ascends to all eternity. He also shared the same view with other Sufi scholars that Muḥammad was a prophet before the creation of Adam.⁸⁵¹ Specifically, in his poem, *Bassus-shauqi* V195 and 216:

ومن هو نبي قبل نشأة آدم وحق له من قبل ختم النبوة

V197. And who was already prophet prior to the creation of Adam (as) and whose prophecy was assented and confirmed prior to seal the prophethood?⁸⁵²

⁸⁴⁸ The star refers to the light created prior to the creation of Adam. According to the Hadith, Angel Gabriel witnessed the appearance of the star 5,184,000,000 times.

⁸⁴⁹ Compare with Qur'an 5:15, "A Light and a Clear Book have come to you from Allah." The star refers to the light created prior to the creation of Adam. According to the Hadith, Angel Jibril witnessed the appearance of the star 5,184,000,000 times.

⁸⁵⁰ As discussed above.

⁸⁵¹ The Wahhabis tried to reject this idea by giving an interpretation and hermeneutic the hadith in which prophet Muhammad said he was already prophet before the creation of Adam, they claimed that this means in the knowledge of Allah he was Prophet since then. But this interpretation is weak as all prophets were already prophet in the divine knowledge of Allah.

⁸⁵² Compare with Hadith narrated by *at-Jami'at al-Tirmidhī*. He said that it is Hasan (good), and it is accurately authenticated by al-Hakim 2:609 as *Ṣaḥīḥ* (authentic) and narrated by Ibn Abi Shayba in his famous *Musannaf* 14:292, and *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* in his *Tarikh* vol. 7:374.

There is a narration in Islam that Prophet Adam beseeched God to include Prophet Muḥammad among his people. On this issue, al-Dāghirī has this to say in his, *Bassus-shauqi* V184-185:

ومن آدم من جاهه متوسل وصلّى عليه قبل حكم الأبوّة

V188. And he is one through whose virtue the Adam (as) appealed and prayed for him (Mohammad saw) prior to be destined as his father.

Therefore, going to through various mystical poems of al-Dāghirī on Prophet Muḥammad, one will note that the concept of *Ḥaqiiqa Muḥammadiyya* is reflected in them. However, the perception of Prophet Muḥammad as exhibited by al-Dāghirī represents Sufī and Tijānī scholars' attitudes towards Prophet Muḥammad. He severally mentions that Allah was in existence prior to creation, and when He desired to be known, he caused light to emanate from His light, and it is the emanated light or a handful of light of Allah that the Sufis give as many titles as they like, such as "Light of Prophet Muḥammad" (*nuur al-Muḥammadiy*), the spirit of spirits (*rūh al-arwaah*), "The real essence of Muḥammad," (*as-sir al-Muḥammadiy*), the first Adam (*Adam al-Awwal*), the greatest father (*al-Abuu al-Akbar*). The perfect man (*al-Insaan al-Kaamil*) *Siru al-Asrar* (secret of secrets) and *Insaan 'ayn al-wujuud* (Man, the essence of existence) among many others. All these represent the understanding and perception of al-Dāghirī.

The contribution of al-Dāghirī in this regard was based on his attempt to add that the doctrine of the *Ḥaqiiqa Muḥammadiyya* will continue to appear in the saints '*awliyyaa*' (singular: *walī*) up to the Day of Judgement (*Yawm al-Qiyamah*). There is a particular interesting example in the work of al-Dāghirī where he has extended the concept of imagery of light to Aḥmad al-Tijānī which is also one of the major themes of his works. Al-Dāghirī writes in his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii* V8, 14-18 that:

فما هو إلا صرف نور محمد تبين بعد الكتم عند الحميد

V14. And he (Aḥmad al-Tijānī) is not but the component of the light of Muḥammad (saw) exposed after it was concealed, with whom he excessively praised-the Allah.

8.5 Appearance of the Prophet Muḥammad to people either in the real life or in a dream

Related to the concept of *Ḥaqiiqa Muḥammadiyya* is the appearance of the Prophet Muḥammad to people either in the daylight or in the dream. As a matter of fact, one may observe that as a result of the perception which the Sufis have of the Prophet Muḥammad, seeing him in one's dream or in a state of wakefulness is considered a great honour and privilege anyone could secure. Al-Dāghirī has some themes on the appearance of the Prophet Muḥammad. In one of his works entitled *Bassus-shauqi* V156-157, he has this to say:

ألا يا رسول الله بالله أرضني برؤياك في نوم وفي كل يقظة

V156. Indeed, O the messenger of Allah, grant me your sight for the sake of Allah both in dream and while awoken.

Going through the above stanzas, al-Dāghirī submits that it is possible to see the Prophet in both dream and daylight. His submission on the possibility of seeing the prophet both in dream and wakefulness is in conformity with the views of the Sufis. It shows that al-Dāghirī follows the footsteps of the Sufis in line with a Prophetic tradition in which the Prophet is reported to have said: “Whoever sees me in dream will see me in his wakefulness, and Satan cannot imitate me in shape.”⁸⁵³ The view of the Sufis on seeing the Prophet Muḥammad in the state of wakefulness is a reflection of their concept of *Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*.

In conclusion, it has been discussed that al-Dāghirī has many themes on Prophet Muḥammad’s light which reflects his mystical nature. Going through the submission of al-Dāghirī on the subject matter i.e. Muḥammad was created from the eternal light, Muḥammad himself is eternal-he is pre-existing, present from eternity to eternity as the Muḥammadan reality. This is what led the Sufis to focus on the metaphysical and cosmological dimensions of the miraculous birth of Prophet Muḥammad, which shall be the focus of next discussion.

8.6 The theme of the Miraculous Birth and Childhood of Prophet Muḥammad

An important Sufi doctrine which is considered a continuation and extension of the doctrine of *Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya* (Light of Muḥammad), developed by many Sufi theorists, is that of the miraculous birth of Prophet Muḥammad. The Sufis hold the view that when God decided to make the world, he made it from the light of Muḥammad and God appointed as *khalifah* (God’s vicegerent on Earth) controlling the material universe, that is earthly Adam.⁸⁵⁴ It was through this earthly Adam that Muḥammad was born, in human form, in Makkah on Monday, 12th of Rabi’ul Awwal in the year of the Elephant (570 AD). His father, ‘Abdullah bin A’bdul-Muttalib bin Hashim, died before his birth. His mother, Aminah bint Wahb witnessed many an omen before and after his birth. Nana Amina narrates that when she conceived the Prophet Muḥammad that no pain or signs of pregnancy appeared in her. And when the time of birth came, she gave birth to him without experiencing any pain. Following this announcement of his birth, there is no a single creature on the Earth that did not become aware of the birth of the Prophet Muḥammad.

⁸⁵³ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari* 6993; Book 91, Hadith 12; see also Vol. 9, Book 87, Hadith 122.

⁸⁵⁴ Abu-Manga 1981, 12.

Historians did not only record the significance of the birth of Prophet Muḥammad, but also the miracles that took place at the time of his birth or arrival.⁸⁵⁵ On the night of his birth or arrival, his mother, Amina narrates that “the baby put his hands on the ground and raise his head to the sky. A kind radiance appeared on his body which lit up everything. In that light I saw the palaces of Syria, Persia, and Yemen; and in its midst I heard as if someone were saying that the best of creation was born. Name him Muḥammad.”⁸⁵⁶ These miracles are nothing but the celebrations of the arrival of the Prophet Muḥammad who will change the world forever. The Sufi scholars and poets co-opted these miracles of the miraculous birth of Muḥammad major theme in their mystical poem. In fact, the vast amount of the composition of the mystical poems of the twentieth century northern Nigeria including Nguru Sufi takes its central theme as the miraculous birth of Prophet Muḥammad. In versifying the miracles of the miraculous Prophet’s birth, the poets follow the footsteps of other Muslim poets who had preceded them. This story about the miraculous birth and childhood of Prophet Muḥammad was also carefully captured in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. He begins by confirming the miracles that took place at the time of his birth or arrival. For instance, in his famous poem, *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*, he has this to say:

ولكم تبين وقت مولد أحمد من آية تعيي وأسس كومه

V79. And how number of miracles beyond human expectation occurred at the birthday of the Aḥmad (saw) and, that laid foundation of his glorification.

Moreover, in *Bassus-shauqi* V123-127, 135-136, he then tries to enumerate all the miracles that took place on the night of the Prophet’s birth and expresses the spiritual significance of the Prophet’s birth and life, which conveys the idea of divine favour and blessings, at the beginning of life. Apart from describing some of the miracles that took place on that very night, and he also mentions how it was felt by all beings on earth. On the day, the Prophet Muḥammad was born, a bright light illuminated palaces of Syria and Persia. The main gallery of Persia tumbled down, while the building from where he was born did not even rock. His arrival brought the religion of Islam (divine law) and widespread blessing to his community such as abundant rainfall. The fire of the Zoroastrian temple of Paris extinguished unexpectedly after burning for over a thousand years. The rivers and seas all over the world overflow; and the mountains became bigger for happiness and joy. Birds flew in the sky singing for the arrival of Muḥammad. These miracles are nothing but the celebrations of the arrival of the Prophet Muḥammad who will change the world

⁸⁵⁵ See Imam Bayhaqi’s *Dala’il al-Nubuwwah*; see also Ibn Kathir’s *Kitab al-Bidaya wa-l-Nihaya fi al-Ta’rikh*.

⁸⁵⁶ Muslim.org.

forever.⁸⁵⁷ He is a guide (light) to the people of the entire world. He also added that the birth of Prophet Muḥammad marks the continuation of *nubuwwa* (prophecy) after a very long hiatus. He writes:

ألا يا رسول الله يا من تنورت بمولده أرض لبصرى كدجلة

V129. Indeed, O the messenger of Allah! Who lighted at his birthday the city of Busra (in Syria) as the way he lighted the river of *Dujla* (a river in Asia called Tigris).⁸⁵⁸

Another miracle that took place at the time of his birth is that idols of every clan in his community house in Ka'aba suddenly broke. It was reported that there were more than three hundred and sixty (360) idols inside and outside the Ka'aba (God's house). These idols belong to almost every clan of the Arabs, as each clan has its own representative in the Ka'aba. This is also illustrated in his *Bassus-shauqi* V170. He writes:

ألا يا خطيب المرسلين ومن شوت بمولده الأصنام كل قبيلة

V172. Indeed, O the preacher of entire messengers and in whose birthday the idols of entire clans burned (broke down)?

In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V80-81 and *Bassus-shauqi* V136, al-Dāghirī refer to another well-known events which occurred on the night of the miraculous birth of Prophet Muḥammad. The drying up of the river Sawa, which was to be the major source of water for the Persians and the collapse of the Persian Khusrau's palace. He writes:

منها لساوة فيه غيظ بحارها ولقيصر فيه تشق أطومه

V80. Out of it (miraculous event), is the dry of the river of Lasawa and the crack of fence of the king of Sham.⁸⁵⁹

Of all the miracles that took place at the time of his birth or arrival of Prophet Muḥammad mentioned by al-Dāghirī in his mystical poems, the appearance of luminous stars, turning salty water into portable water, turning sour milk into sweet milk are the most mentioned. They are found in almost all his mystical poems on Prophet Muhammad. For instance, in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V82-87, he frequently mentioned them. The following excerpt illustrates how the poet versifies miracles with his birth:

وبحار دنيا صرن حلوا سائغا لبنا يلذ طعومه ونسيمه

V83. And the sea of the world turns to be portable, sweet and milk that are pleasant to drink with good smell (that is at the exact time of his birth).

Beside the above-mentioned miracles that took place at the time of his birth or arrival of Prophet Muḥammad mentioned by al-Dāghirī in his mystical poems, the miracles that took place during the childhood of Prophet Muḥammad were also mentioned in the mystical poems of al-

⁸⁵⁷ Muslim.org.

⁸⁵⁸ Compare with *Jami'u Sagir*, volume 1, 417; see also Hadith number, 3459/3460.

⁸⁵⁹ See *Fath al-Bārī* of Ibn Hajar.

Dāghirī. He narrates that since Prophet Muhammad was at a tender age, the elders in the community came to realize that he was an extraordinary person. For example, on Prophet Muhammad’s trip to Syria with his uncle Abu Talib and the adventure with a Nestorian Monk, Bahira who advises his uncle to take him back, because if the Jews see him they will harm him for they have a bad plan for him. In his poem, *Bathth al-shawq*, al-Dāghirī has this to say:

له تقلب الأعيان والنصر بالصبا وإطلاع غيب والنجا مثل عصمة

V67. To him the elders were swung as well as victory, the cognizance of hidden and exemption since at young age.

Another miracle that took place when Prophet Muhammad was growing up was that of opening and cleansing of the Prophet Muḥammad’s chest. Thuwaiba, the slave girl of Abu Lahab, the Prophet’s uncle, suckled Prophet Muhammad for a few days. He was given to Halima, a nurse of the tribe of Banu Sad in accordance with a custom of the Arabs by which new born babies were given for suckling ladies living in the desert among the Bedouins.⁸⁶⁰ When Prophet Muḥammad was together with other boys. Angel Gabriel came to the Prophet Muḥammad. He took hold of him and threw him on the ground, then opened his chest and took out his heart, from which he took out a clot of blood and said: “This was the Satan’s share of you.” Then he washed it in a vessel of gold that was filled with Zamzam. Then he put it back together and returned it to its place. The boys went running to his mother – meaning his nurse and said: Muḥammad has been killed! They went to him and his colour had changed. Anas said: I used to see the mark of the stitching on his chest.⁸⁶¹ Thereafter, Halima took him back to his grandfather after weaning him.

Al-Dāghirī in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*, he has this to say on the opening of the chest:

وفواده شق وأخرج مضغمة سوداء واستحلى وطاب نعيمه

V72. And his heart was brought out and split and a black point was extracted then it turned clean and ran pleasant live.⁸⁶²

This act of the opening of the chest subsequently endowed the Prophet Muḥammad with a high degree of purity, so that he could convey the divine message without any effect.

When Prophet Muḥammad was growing up, *Mala’ika Jibril* (Angel Gabriel) kept accompany of him. The involvement of *Mala’ika Jibril* in bringing up of Prophet Muḥammad is described by al-Dāghirī in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* as follows:

فعلية من الله في طوراته ولذلك باشر جبرئيل نديمه

⁸⁶⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, “The Book of Imam”; chapter, “The Night Journey of the Messenger of Allah to the Heavens.” Hadith number 162.

⁸⁶¹ It was narrated by Anas bin Malik that *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Hadith number 162. However, later, Prophet Muhammad experienced this again on the night of *Isra’* see *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhari*, Hadith number 349; see also *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Hadith number 163.

⁸⁶² *Isra wa Mi’rāj*, Hadith of Ā’isha.

V73. Allah bestowed upon him at all stages (of growing). For this, (Angel) Gabriel joined him as chatting friend.

In conclusion, the above-mentioned examples portray that al-Dāghirī believes that the miraculous birth is a blessing to the world. There is no doubt that his mystical poems were inspired by the works of Arabic authors of the Mamlūk period and that they shared common sources of Islamic folklore and hagiography with these earlier Arabic encomiasts. It also proves the extent to which this accretional hagiography of the Prophet Muḥammad and his companions, the folklore of popular Islam, had penetrated northern Nigeria including Nguru by the twentieth century. When such material circulates in classical Arabic as well as in vernacular languages such as Hausa, Fulfulde and Kanuri, it is reasonable to conclude that Islam is no longer the preserve of an intellectual elite but has made a significant impact upon the common culture. Furthermore, the miracles reflect the dual status of Prophet Muḥammad. These are the Muḥammad of history and universal Muḥammad. This profound miraculous birth of Prophet Muḥammad centralizes the concept of his spiritual and physical qualities, which shall be the focus of the next discussion.

8.7 The theme of *Afdal al-khalq* or *al-Insaan al-kaamil* (Most Excellent of the Creation)

Due to the nature of Prophet Muḥammad's primal existence and his miraculous birth, he is considered the best of all creation, the best manifestation and mirror of Divine qualities and Attributes.⁸⁶³ His personality, his attributes and qualities become identified with the *hadrāt* (the cosmological levels), in such a way that Muḥammad becomes the first principle of the universe and the reason for which Allah created the universe.⁸⁶⁴ The theme, according to Hiskett, is usually presented in the context of enumeration of Prophet Muḥammad's excellent qualities and that of God's choice, *zabe*; frequently too God's mention, all of which are the circumstances that go to make up the central notion of *Fiyayye*, that is, "the most excellent of the creation, ideal and perfect man (*Afdal al-khalq* or *al-Insaan al-kaamil*).⁸⁶⁵ Furthermore, the theme is usually presented in the context of recitation of the Prophet's excellent spiritual qualities and his physical appearance made him God's choice. The creative, animating and rational principle of the Universe, or the First Intellect, is the Reality (Idea) of Muḥammad (*al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*), this principle finds its fullest manifestation in the Perfect Man (*al-Insān al-kāmil*). Sufi poets, like other Islamic

⁸⁶³ Ogunnaike 2020, 52.

⁸⁶⁴ Hiskett 1978, 429.

⁸⁶⁵ Hiskett 1982, 436. However, *Al-Insān al-kāmil*, according to Ogunnaike, is a *Barzakh*, a luminal reality that both separates and unites God (*Ḥaqq*) and creation (*Khalq*), the Absolute and the relative, Being and nothingness, One and the many see Ogunnaike 2020, 58.

scholars, believe that the Muḥammadan light or reality predates his physical body.”⁸⁶⁶ He is therefore understood as the best representation (*nuskha*), description and manifestation of God in existence.⁸⁶⁷

It is one of the Sufi themes that attracted the attention of northern Nigeria including Nguru Sufi scholars. With similar vigour, al-Dāghirī employed and incorporated the theme of spiritual, physical, and noble qualities of the Prophet Muḥammad as part of the content of his works (both general and specific mystical poems), which shows the image of Prophet Muḥammad. Muḥammad al-Dāghirī, in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* V149-164, gives a positive description and lofty qualities, outward beauty of the Prophet, attributing to him the most perfect of virtues (*jaami’ kalāmaat al-faḍaa’il*) and as Divine light as discussed in the previous section. He is thus a shining example of God’s glory and mercy to mankind. The qualities are often, of course, wrapped up together with miracles. He writes:

صبح بدا من غير سبق دجنة والصبح يسبقه دجى ويهيمه⁸⁶⁸

V158. He is a bright of morning appeared but unprecedented by darkness of night whereas normally, the light of morning is driven by gloom of night.

Al-Dāghirī describes Prophet Muḥammad as a “blessing star” who showed people the right path “Islam” and “light” who removed people out of darkness. Both star and light are God’s presents and blessings to all mankind. They do not discriminate in their blessings. Such then is the Prophet Muḥammad’s character, who was never tired of giving and never tired of blessing his Umma. The belief in Prophet Muḥammad as “light” and “bright star” is popular in Islam. In the following verses, the poet summarizes all the physical and spiritual qualities of Prophet Muḥammad mentioned above. He writes in his *Bassus-shauqi* V12-21:

ومن ليس في الإمكان أبدع منه في كما لاته من كل حسن ورفعته

V12. And one like whose unique perfection in both generosity and highness is unattainable by anyone.

On the looms of imagery, al-Dāghirī has continue to weave the description of Prophet Muḥammad with an array of coloured and lofty epithets in his *Bathth al-shawq* or about 120 verses. He describes Muḥammad as someone who excelled in everything: generosity, beauty, honesty, dignity, greatness etc. He is also the spiritual leader who should imitate and followed in all his deeds and sayings al-Dāghirī, in his *Bassus-shauqi*, says:

فنور مبين جاءنا من إلها على فترة من رسله والنبوة

V126. And the manifested light came to us from our Lord upon the interval⁸⁶⁹ of His messages and Prophets.

⁸⁶⁶ Ogunnaike 2020, 11.

⁸⁶⁷ Ogunnaike 2020, 53.

⁸⁶⁸ It simply means darkness (*mjm al-wasit*).

⁸⁶⁹ Compare with Qur’an 5:19.

Apart from this, he describes Prophet Muḥammad's light and describes his state of perfection, beyond all limitations, and yet in intimate qualities and attributes. He also describes Prophet Muḥammad as one who was sent to bring the straying people back to the right path. He writes in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V58-61, that:

وأجارهم من كل ما قد شانهم فأنار دهرًا من ظلام يضيّمه

V61. He protected them against all evils that destroyed them and brought the universe to light from the coverage of darkness and grievance.⁸⁷⁰

In the following verses, he refers to Prophet Muḥammad's nocturnal journey, and ascension to the seven heavens where he saw his Lord. The people of northern Nigeria including Nguru believe that among the prophets and apostles of Allah only Prophet Muḥammad saw his Lord with his naked eyes in the state of wakefulness. In his *Bassus-shauqi*, he writes:

ونطق بليحاء ورؤية ربه وتعليمه بالسر ثم بحجة

V22. And he also described with (as) spoken through) inspirational speech, sighting of his Lord with naked eye⁸⁷¹ and impacting of hidden and open knowledge.

Another typical example on how this theme is handled will be found in the same poem, *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V207-224, where he continues praising and describing Prophet Muḥammad for about 20 verses. He compares the generosity of Prophet Muḥammad with the flow of gift which sounds like rain. According to the poet, the brightness of stars emanated from the light of Prophet Muḥammad.

فله اجتباء واصطفا ومزية وله سخاه يستهل سجومه⁸⁷²

V208. He is an Excellency who has been selected and adorned with peculiarities⁸⁷³. He is generous whose flow of gift sounds as rain fall.

Similarly, in other stanzas, *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V119-129, he stresses the Prophet's spiritual, moral, and personal attributes both outwardly and inwardly. According to al-Dāghirī, the outward appearance is more than the physical qualities, for it also includes attitudes, kindness, compassion, and generosity, even though they are qualities of the mind too. The inward appearance refers to inner spiritual qualities, all of which in the case of Prophet Muḥammad exceed those of ordinary men. He writes:

أنت الذي طرز الأنام جماله وجلاله وكماله وقدمه

V125. You are the one with whose handsomeness, highness, greatness, perfection, and advent decorated the entire being.

The Prophet's perfection, al-Dāghirī feels has been attained because of his exceptional virtuous qualities, such as possessor of divine knowledge, his truthfulness, sympathy, leniency,

⁸⁷⁰ Similar to Qur'an 3:103.

⁸⁷¹ Compare with Qur'an 53:17.

⁸⁷² Refers to stream (whose stream is noising-personification).

⁸⁷³ Compare with Qur'an 16: 121.

humility, kindness, and sublimity etc. Al-Dāghirī writes, in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V122-137, 165-175:

جل عزيز فاضل متعطف كافي جليل عاقب وشميمه

V168. He is the great one, the cherished, the excellent, the sympathetic, the sufficient, the venerated, the final and the highly elevated.

Although, the poet succeeded in summarizing some qualities of the prophet, he is not satisfied with even his description as it is impossible to give the spiritual and physical qualities of the Prophet Muḥammad. This is because, the Prophet Muḥammad is the best of his kind. Thus, the image and qualities of the prophet are unimaginable. He mentions them in his attempt to bring the picture closer to the mind of his audience. Moreover, he believes that only Allah who knows Prophet Muḥammad's position and can praise him adequately. His failure to attain his purpose is not only due to his limited ability but also to his inability to attain the subject matter itself.

8.7.1 The impossibility of the description

Related to this is the theme of the impossibility of encompassing the inexpressible spiritual, physical, and noble qualities of the Prophet Muḥammad⁸⁷⁴ Al-Dāghirī believes that the physical attributes of the prophet are beyond description due to the nature of Muḥammad's creation; being the first creature. Therefore, any attempt to reach Muḥammad's light is beyond al-Dāghirī's ability. Whatever effort, whatever words he uses to describe or praise him would not be adequate. No poet at all can describe even one tenth of his qualities, and whosoever tries would end up confusing himself. The passage dealing with this sub-theme are numerous in his *Bassus-shauqi* V66, 73-74; 222-238; in which he has this to say:

ويا من عقول الخلق في درك كنهه حيارى بتعميق المعاني وفكرة

V73. And O you who's attaining of real description will agitate and confuse the thought of people because of deep meaning and thinking.

Apart from *Bassus-shauqi*, there are many mystical poems in which al-Dāghirī, while enumerating the qualities and attributes of Prophet Muḥammad, comes to a similar standstill. For instance, in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, realizing that he is incapable of conveying the entire qualities and attributes of Prophet Muḥammad, al-Dāghirī further generalizes this impossibility stating that:

وإذا أخذت تتبعا في مثل ذا صار القلام مكسرا وقضيمه

⁸⁷⁴ Ogunnaike states that great Sufi poets like Ibn al-Fārīd (d. 1234), Ibn Juzayy al-Būsirī (1211–1294), Ibn al-Khaṭīb (d. 1374), 'Uthmān dan Fodio (d. 1817), Ahmad Bamba (d. 1927), Shaykh Nāṣiru Kabara (d. 1996), Shaykh Abū Bakr 'Atīq (d. 1974) Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse (d. 1975) admit this impossibility of encompassing the inexpressible spiritual, physical, and noble qualities of the Prophet Muḥammad see Ogunnaike 2020, 13-36.

V137. And, if you are to pursue the qualities and attributes of the prophet as these, the pen breaks and the paper cannot contain them.

Sometimes al-Dāghirī is not satisfied with even unimaginable comparison. He therefore gives a more general conclusion that attributes of Muḥammad cannot be attained in their entirety (by any other poets), such as the one in his *Bassus-shauqi* V23-41, al-Dāghirī writes:

إلى ما وراء الحصر من حسن وصفه ومما دراه الخلق من حسن سيرة

V23. (The memorisation of) his excellent descriptions is beyond (human) capacity and there are other attributes that are unknown to any creature (only God Knows).

Going by the above stanzas, the view of al-Dāghirī that whatever kind of words, phrase, or language one uses in praising the Prophet, he cannot clearly describe the good character of the Prophet may be tolerated. It is only the One who created the universe, including Muḥammad himself, who can know the limits of his positions. There are many other poems in which al-Dāghirī, while enumerating the Prophet's attributes, comes to a similar stand still when he realizes that he is incapable of conveying the entire positions and qualities of Prophet. Apart from being the best among all the creatures, and thus having qualities impossible to describe, the Prophet is also invoked in al-Dāghirī's poetry as one who is endowed with miracles since his birth. Whoever abides by the message (Islam) of the prophet, his position and status would skyrocket. In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, he writes:

وله صفة غير ذاك فإن ترد تكثير وصف زين منه يتيمه⁸⁷⁵

V222. Indeed, his attributes are beyond these, if you want to proliferate (his) adornment, he is the centre of it (adornment).

In similar terms, al-Dāghirī explains how this seemingly impossible feat is achieved. He writes:

فبصيغة التقضيل والتعجيب ضع كل الصفات لكي يثار تخومه⁸⁷⁶

V223. Use the superlative form of adjectives and interjections so as to exalt his qualities.

On the use of language, about the impossibility of portraying the ineffable reality of the Prophet Muḥammad, al-Dāghirī in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, states that:

وصنوف لغات الورى محصوره إن ريم مدحك فالقصور يصيمه

V121. And the divergent languages of all beings are restricted so that when they attempt to eulogize, the inefficiency would turn them deaf.

The language, according to Ogunnaike, requires a particularly officious kind of speech capable of handling this paradox. The language should be "a kind of transcendence-in-immanence and immanence-in-transcendence, a *barzakh* between silence and speech, even as the Prophet is a

⁸⁷⁵ The prophet.

⁸⁷⁶ It conventionally means demarcation but connotatively used here to denote dignity.

kind of *barzakh* between the Real (*Haqq*) and creation (*khalq*), between Being and nothingness.”⁸⁷⁷

From this perspective, it is the Prophet who praises himself, manifesting his qualities through the medium of the poets who are inspired by these qualities.⁸⁷⁸

8.7.2 The incomprehensibility of the description

Related to this is the theme of the impossibility of encompassing the inexpressible spiritual, physical, and noble qualities of the Prophet Muḥammad. The common theme demonstrates some qualities and attributes to the Prophet Muḥammad which are incomprehensible and unacceptable to exoteric scholars because according to them they contradict either human reasoning or Islamic religious texts. In al-Dāghirī’s *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* V122-124, he has this to say:

قد حزت من جنس الفضائل والعلی ما قد تعذر للوری تقدیمه

V122. Indeed, you gathered all forms of bounties and highness which defied the reasoning of all beings.

There are many impossibilities which contradict Prophet Muḥammad’s real qualities and attributes; thus, they are to be rejected because they are not in conformity with the teachings of Islam. Al-Dāghirī in his mystical poems, for instance, describes the Prophet Muḥammad with many qualities such as “the origin of all the creatures in general,” “distributors of the wealth of God,” “origin of all essence,” and possessor of the knowledge of unseen in this world and Hereafter. In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* V122-124 and *Bassus-shauqi* V163, he has this to say:

ومن جوده الدنيا وجنات عدنه ومن بعض معلوماته لوح حفظة

V164. And one whose generosity is in the world and paradise respectively (he is the distributor of the world’s luxury and paradise in the hereafter) and, the divine slate has only accommodated part of his knowledge.

A typical example is the description that the heart of the Prophet Muḥammad does not sleep even when his eyes be asleep. Specifically, in his poem, *Bassus-shauqi*, he has this to say:

ومن ليس يغفل قلبه غير عينه وله جمادات تقوه كهصبة

V61. And he is the one whose heart does not sleep even when his eyes sleep⁸⁷⁹. To him, many unanimated spoke such as mountain⁸⁸⁰ etc.

He also gives verse in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*. He writes:

وهو الذي ذكر الحصى بيمينه وله فؤاد لا ينام رقيمه

V115. He is the one in whose hand the stones chanted remembrance of Allah.⁸⁸¹ And indeed, he was endowed with sleepless heart.⁸⁸²

⁸⁷⁷ Ogunnaike 2020, 22.

⁸⁷⁸ Ogunnaike 2020, 22.

⁸⁷⁹ Compare with Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Hadith number, 3570.

⁸⁸⁰ Al-arimi:16 (tree bears witness...).

⁸⁸¹ See Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Manāqib number, 25, *Jami’at al-Tirmidhī*, 3633.

⁸⁸² Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī 2013; See also Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 763f, 1793.

This feature is attributed to Allah alone. This description therefore seems to go against a Qur'anic verse (Q2:225). The fact remains that the Prophet Muḥammad was reported to have said: 'O Aisha, my eyes sleep but my heart does not sleep.'⁸⁸³ Going by the above Prophetic tradition, the view of al-Dāghirī is not in any way in contradicts Islamic teachings.

8.7.3 Prophet Muḥammad is the source of all knowledge

Another incomprehensible and unacceptable quality attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad, which contradicts either human reasoning or Islamic religious texts is the issue that Muḥammad is the source of all knowledge and his memory contains the knowledge of all things including unseen. Al-Dāghirī in his *Bassus-shauqi* V39-43, he has this to say:

ألا يا رسول الله يا من بقلبه علوم جميع الخلق في كل ذرة

V39. Indeed, O the messenger of Allah, O in whose memory the knowledge of entire creatures including atom.

Prophet Muḥammad knows everything that happened and will happen in this world and Hereafter. This might enable him to guide the people on the straight path of religion. *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V124, he writes:

ولك الإحاطة بالعوالم كلها شهدت بمكنته الورى وزمومه

V124. The knowledge of different worlds is acquired by you. Indeed, the entire being have complied with his status.

Furthermore, there are many other verses in almost all his mystical poems about Prophet Muḥammad's knowledge of the unseen. Here is one of them again, taken from his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V139-140. He writes:

والمك والملكوت في قاموسه كالقطر قلا فوق ذاك علومه

V139. The knowledge stored in the heaven and earth compared to the ocean of his knowledge is as tiny as drop of water. Indeed, his knowledge is beyond that.

Sufi journey to the Reality is symbolized through 'Ilm (knowledge), *lawh al-Mahfuz* (Divine tablet), *Kursi* (Divine seat), 'Arah (Divine Throne) and *Sidra* (Nabk tree). On the Prophet Muḥammad's source of knowledge, it was narrated that during *al-'Isrā'i' wal-Mi'rāj* (Night journey and Ascension of the Prophet Muḥammad to Heaven) a miraculous journey from Makkah to Heaven via Jerusalem that the Prophet Muḥammad had to read all that was written on the *lawh al-Mahfuz* or *Umm al-Kitāb* (The preserved Tablet), it is a book in which everything that happened and will happen were written. This can be found in al-Dāghirī's *Bassus-shauqi*. He writes:

وإنك نور لامع تملأ السما ونلت لنقري كل علم وتحفة⁸⁸⁴

⁸⁸³ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhari* 2013; See also *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 763f, 1793.

⁸⁸⁴ It refers to part of book or something expensive (*mu'jam Al-ra'hd*).

V93. And, verily, you are the glittering light that lighted the sky,⁸⁸⁵ and you obtained it so that we read all knowledge and masterpiece.

Indicating that, the knowledge of Prophet Muḥammad through the channel of revelation originates from the limitless knowledge of God seems to go against some Qur’anic verses that state, “... Allah has encompassed all things in knowledge” (Q65:12). In another verse, Allah says: “... But Allah knows all that is in the heavens and on earth: He has full knowledge of all things” (Q49:16). But some human beings also have access to this full knowledge of all things including the unseen. For instance, Allah says: “The Knower of the unseen! So, He does not reveal His secrets to any. Except to him whom He chooses as an apostle; for surely, He makes a guard to march before him and after him” (Q72:26-27). However, indicating that, the knowledge imparted to Prophet Adam emanated from Prophet Muḥammad, whereas Qur’an 2:32 shows that it is Allah who imparts the knowledge to Adam.

Going by the above tradition, the view of al-Dāghirī may be tolerated. Whatever the case, the remark of al-Dāghirī is similar to that of al-Būsīrī who remarks thus: “(Oh Muḥammad) You acquired knowledge from the Omniscience who knows the hidings and secrets (of everything) (It is from your knowledge) that Adam was taught the names (of things).”

8.7.4 Prophet Muḥammad as an infallible and forgiver of sins

Prophet Muḥammad was infallible, but he was not a forgiver of sins, even though, there are some Qur’anic verses which indicate that the Prophet was reproached for certain human shortcomings. For instance, Allah says in the Qur’an, “O Prophet! Why holdest thou to be forbidden that which Allah has made lawful to thee? Thou sleekest to please thy consorts. But Allah is oft forgiving Most Merciful” (Q66:1). Related to that is Qur’an 80:1-12 and later, the Prophet is forgiven of all his shortcomings. The verse reads thus: “Verily, we have granted a manifest victory. That Allah may forgive Thee Thy faults of the past and those to follow; fulfil His favour to thee and guide thee on the straightway” (Q2:42). On the infallibility of the prophet, Al-Dāghirī in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud* V75-76, he has this to say:

حتى أتاه الوحي وهو مقدس لم يدنه غا و لا تسخيمه

V76. (So was he) up to the time of inspiration, he was purified (against shortcoming). The evil has never approached him talk less of putting him impurity.

The theme of exchanging praises for forgiveness of sins is also frequently feature in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. In his *Bassus-shauqi* V120-214 and *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*

⁸⁸⁵ The poet is referring to the seven divine *hadrāt*.

V178-179, he humbly begs Prophet Muḥammad to pardon him for the sins he committed. He writes:

ولا تنظرن لؤمي وسوء تأديبي ولكنك اصفح لا تناقش طبيعتي

V214. And watch not the blame and bad orientation in me but, pardon me do not discuss my habit.

In conclusion, we noted that al-Dāghirī, in his mystical poems, has a theme of description of the spiritual, physical and noble qualities of the Prophet Muḥammad, which have been surrounded by the imagery of light in the Qur'an. Due to the characteristics and qualities as depicted by the poet, the people of northern Nigeria including Nguru see Muḥammad as the person who deserved to be imitated in all deeds and sayings. He is a treasure and source of eminence. His generosity is not only in wealth but also in other aspects of life. The Prophet is a guide who leads people to the way of God; hence, to follow him is to follow the right way (his message). This theme of *Afdal al-khalq* or *al-Insān al-kāmil* is supported and illustrated by the *mu'ujizāt* (the miracles of the prophet Muḥammad) because they are strongly connected,⁸⁸⁶ which shall be the focus of next discussion.

8.8 The Theme of Prophet Muḥammad's *Mu'ujizaah* (Evidentiary Miracles)

In the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī, another most common theme is about the Prophet Muḥammad's miracles (*mu'ujizaah*). *Mu'ujizaah* is one of the most mentioned attributes of the Prophet Muḥammad among the Muslims, especially the Sufis.⁸⁸⁷ A miracle is an event involving the suspension of the normal course of events, because its occurrence is contrary to the natural course of event. In Islamic theology writings, miracles are categorized into five, according to the rank of the person who performs it. They are (a) miracles performed by a Prophet or a Messenger of Allah are known as *mu'ujizaat*, an extraordinary act which cannot be imitated by anyone. (b) a miracle performed by a saint is called *karāmah*, an act of honour; (c)⁸⁸⁸ a miraculous feat performed by a common man is called *al-Ma'uunah* (assistance); (d) a positive miracle performed by a liar, is known as *al-Istidraaj* (an act designed to gradually and eventually expose a liar); and (e) a negative miracle by a liar is called *al-Ihaanah*.⁸⁸⁹

⁸⁸⁶ Hiskett 1982, 437.

⁸⁸⁷ *Mu'ujizaah* are duly recorded in the stories and traditions and are also spoken of in the Qur'an. Many verses of the Qur'an alluded to the miraculous nature of Prophets like Qur'an 3:37; 27:40.

⁸⁸⁸ The most used are *Mu'ujizaah* and *karāmah*, which are also sometimes utilized interchangeably by the scholars. Both *Mu'ujizāt* and *karāmah* mean a miracle, depending on the status of the individual who performs them as earlier noted in chapter four.

⁸⁸⁹ Schimmel notes that in later times, especially in non-Arab environments, miraculous actions performed by Prophet Muhammad, his companions, family members, and great saints also came to be known by the general term *manaqib* (heroic deeds. See Schimmel 1985, 67.

In the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī, the miracle of Prophet Muḥammad miracles, besides the miracles of the Qur'an itself, are numerous and continually narrated. He mentions some of them, such as the splitting of the moon, increase of water and food, non-living things bear witness that Muḥammad is the messenger of God to mention a few. In his *Bassus-shauqi* V154 and *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V37-38; 226-225 he admits that the miracles of Prophet Muḥammad are uncountable. He has this to say:

ولو ابتغيت الحصر في آياته رمت المحال وكنت فيه تهيمه

V226. And, if you attempt to memorize the miracles attributed to him, then you are looking for trouble, thus, what you are thirsty for is impossible.

There are many miraculous stories that abound about Prophet Muḥammad in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī as earlier noted.⁸⁹⁰ Therefore I considered just a few of them here. One of the most mentioned miracles of Prophet Muḥammad is the miracle of splitting of the moon. The splitting of the moon is explained not as an eschatological sign but rather pertaining to a miracle performed by the Prophet to convince the doubting Quraysh of the truth of his message. In his *Bassus-shauqi* V100 and *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V43, he writes:

ألا يا رسول الله يا من له القمر قد انشق تصديقاً له أي شقة

V100. Indeed, O the messenger of Allah, for whom the moon split to testify his messengership⁸⁹¹

Another miracle is he sees his back as he sees his front; a fly does not touch his body and if he walks in the light, the shadow does not appear because he was a light, and the light will never produce a shadow as Yusuf an-Nabahani says: "He is a light that walking in the Earth, So he does not have a shadow, did you ever see light produce a shadow?" In his *Bassus-shauqi*, he writes:

ويا من يرى من خلفه كأمامه ويا من نأى عنه نبات كظلمة

V99. O you who sees at his back as though he sees in the front. And O who the flies stay away from his sacred body as does his shadow?

Related to this miracle, are the miraculous increase of goat's milk by mere touching it, the rock softens extolling him, the sun praises him after it sets, and gold multiplies itself obeying his command. In his *Bassus-shauqi* V106-106 and *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V47, the poet says:

ومن در ضرع الشاة في مسح كفه ورد بها باللمس عين قتادة

V109. And, who by mere touching the dried gland of a goat with his noble hand, it soon gave milk and, who returned the knocked-out eye of Qatada by mere touching.

This refers to a well-known miracle recorded, for instance in *Simṭ al-hudā*, in which Prophet Muḥammad causes a woman's elderly goat to give milk again. He also adds another

⁸⁹⁰ For similar themes, in the context of northern Nigeria Sufi mystical poems, see Nana Asma's *Qasīda fī Madh al-Rasūl* and *Ma'ama're*

⁸⁹¹ Compare with *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, Hadith Number 3637, 3869, 3636, 3638; see also *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Hadith Number 2800, 2802; see also *Jami'at al-Tirmidhī*, Hadith Number 2182.

miraculous happening, that the cloud shaded the Prophet Muḥammad from the heat of the sun, which is mentioned in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V42, 44, the poet says:

وأظله غيم لحر هجيرة والصخر لان له ودان خصيمه

V44. The cloud had cast shadow protecting him against hot weather.⁸⁹² And, the rock had softened for him (his footprint appeared on it). As a result, his enemies surrendered.

On the miraculous increase of water and food, al-Dāghirī, in his *Bassus-shauqi* V116-117; 150-151, 165, and *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V52. He writes:

ومن بطعام قل أشبع صحبه وأرواهم ماء قليلا بركوة

V154. And, who satisfied many the companions with a small amount of food and,⁸⁹³ quenched their thirst with a little water in a coffeepot?

The miraculous increase of water and food is important to the people of northern Nigeria including Nguru since it is a society where hospitality is regarded as one of the highest virtues, while the stone extolling the Prophet Muḥammad shows how the non-living thing bears witness that Muḥammad is the messenger of God, and thus contribute to the conversion of infidels

He also gives the miraculous account of the well-known and well-loved story of how Prophet Muḥammad took refuge in a cave during his flight from Makkah to Madinah. His pursuers were then deceived into thinking it was deserted when they saw a dove's nest containing eggs and a spider's web in the entrance. He writes:

أيا من وقاه الله بالعنكبوت وال حمامة في غار على ظهر هجرة

V77. O whom Allah protected against his enemies with the web of spider and a dove in a cave at the migration period.

Throughout his lifetime, Prophet Muḥammad has never read or written; this is also considered as one of the great miracles of the Prophet. His illiteracy is comparable to Mary's virginity, a symbol of purity.⁸⁹⁴ Muhammad, like Mary, was a vehicle of the Divine.⁸⁹⁵ In his *Sa'ad as-Su'uud*, Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī says:

إن قيل أمة فمدح بالعلی ولغيره سب جلا تذنيمة⁸⁹⁶

V39. When he is called *Ummiyun*,⁸⁹⁷ for him it is praise and for others it is an abuse and criticism (that word refer to illiterate-one who neither read nor write).

The mystical poems of al-Dāghirī contains the miracle of opening the Prophet Muḥammad's chest as earlier mentioned. This is interpreted by the poet as God's special way of cleansing of the chest, but for others it will be the end of their life. This act is subsequently endowed

⁸⁹² Jami'at al-Tirmidhī, *Fatwa*: 60513.

⁸⁹³ Compare with Sunan an-Nasā'ī, *the Book of Marriage*, Hadith Number 17382, 3387; see also *Jami at-Jami'at al-Tirmidhī, chapters on Tafsir*, Hadith Number 29050.

⁸⁹⁴ Waddy 1990, 14.

⁸⁹⁵ Waddy 1990, 14.

⁸⁹⁶ I translated it as disgrace.

⁸⁹⁷ Refers to Qur'an 7:157.

the Prophet Muḥammad with a degree unit of purity, so that could convey the divine message without any effect.

في شق صدر منه طاب حياته ولغيره موت يزول نعيمه

V40. The chest surgery⁸⁹⁸, for him was better life and for others is death that will seize the luxury of life.

Others who bear witness to him are the animals and trees obeying his command, his hands dispense water extolling him, date tree grows and bear fruits in a year showing his blessings. In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V454-48, the poet says:

ولكم أطاع أموره العجماء وال أشجار والعاني تدوم شئومه

V45. More often than not animals and trees have obeyed his commands.⁸⁹⁹ But the degraded remains humbled forever.

One of the most frequently repeated miracles of the Prophet Muḥammad is the power of his prayers. It is a common tradition in Islam that the prayers of Prophet Muḥammad are automatically answered by God. Muḥammad's saliva is a medicine, he cures one's eyes without pain, he also turns date's leaf into a sword, he cures one whose hand is broken and it never breaks again all are mentioned in al-Dāghirī's *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V133-136. He writes:

وإذا أخذت جريد نخل يابساً فيصير سيفه ما به مثومه

V V135. And, if you hold the dried date's leaf, it soon changes to a sharp sword that have no notch.

Al-Dāghirī succeeded in summarizing some numerous miraculous events which also occurred in the lifetime of the Prophet in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V49-56. He writes:

ولكم جبال سلمته تحية والصلد أصمت أن تغي وزمومه⁹⁰⁰

V54. More often than not, a rock greeted him as salutation. A rock is solid enough to be able to produce voice.

In conclusion, we have noted that, al-Dāghirī reproduced in his mystical poems, some of the miraculous acts attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad. These miracles are highly regarded among the people of northern Nigeria including Nguru.

8.9 Theme of Prophet Muḥammad's *al-'Israa'i' wal-Mi'raaj* (Night journey and Ascension of the Prophet Muḥammad to Heaven)

Another theme that frequently recurs in the mystical poems of the twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars is *al-'Israa'i' wal-Mi'raaj*. *Al-'Israa'i' wal-Mi'raaj* refers to the two parts of Prophet Muḥammad's miraculous and extraordinary 'Night Journey.' This story is briefly narrated in the Qur'an and in considerable detail in all the canonical collections of Prophetic Hadith, but without the esoteric embroidery with which the Sufis embellished it. This story, for instance, is mentioned

⁸⁹⁸ Compare with Qur'an 93:1,2,3.(this is event that happened in his life physically).

⁸⁹⁹ Al-Darimi:16 (tree bear witness).

⁹⁰⁰ Simply means voice.

in the Qur'an (17. *Surat Isra*) and *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith No 2375, *as-Sunan Nasā'ī*, Hadith No 1631 etc. The story of *al-'Israa'i wal-Mi'raaj* has two related parts. On the first night Muḥammad, while “in a state between sleeping and waking,”⁹⁰¹ Angel Gabriel came to him and woke him up. He was borne up on a winged horse called *Burāq*, which was also a beast used for carrying burden. This *Burāq* had the head of a woman, the body of a mule and the tail of a peacock. He travelled from the sacred mosque, *Masjid al/Haram* in Makkah to the far-off *al-Aqṣaa* Mosque “*Al-Masjid al-Aqṣaa*” (the Farthest Mosque), generally thought to be that of Jerusalem, in the twinkling of an eye.⁹⁰² This part of the long journey is what scholars refer to as *al-'Israa'i* (the night journey) because transportation of the Prophet Muḥammad occurred at night.

While in the second part of the night, which is *Mi'raaj* (ascension), from the *al-Aqṣaa* Mosque, Prophet Muḥammad ascended through the Seventh Heaven to the Throne of God, Near Presence of God,⁹⁰³ being accompanied on all but the last of the journey by Angel Gabriel. On each heaven, he met some prophets; on the first heaven he met Adam and on the second met Isa and Yahaya; on the third he met Yusuf while on the fourth he met Idris; on the fifth heaven he met Haroon and the sixth he met Musa, while on the seventh heaven he met Ibrahim. And all of them recognised his supremacy and superiority over them and their respective people. Some Sufis went so far as to declare that upon this night Muḥammad saw God, but the issue has been extensively discussed below. He then moved to *Sidrat al-muntaha* according to mainstream Islamic view, while Sufis make it more than that in a place that no one can reach it called *rafrafu*, after he went through many Hijabs to reach the Hazrat Allah where no one has ever reach except him where he received fifty (50) *raka'at* of *Salat* (prayer) which later reduced to five daily obligatory prayers which is binding on the Muslims. He toured to Hellfire and Paradise, and subsequently descended to Jerusalem, where he led angels and prophets of Islam in congregational prayer as Imam.⁹⁰⁴ He then returned to Makkah, where his wife Khadija was still sleeping.

Muḥammad ascended to the highest heaven and returned, which for the Sufis constitutes the Prophet's supreme mystical experience and an example which they may aspire to follow. This

⁹⁰¹ However, according to Ibn al-'Arabi, Ascension of the Prophet always took place during the night because night is the time of mystery and concealment. See Choudhury 2015, 183.

⁹⁰² Hiskett 1978, 432. However, this miraculous journey was said to have occurred on 27 of Rajab, 721, one before year before the *Hijra*. This date of the miraculous journey is profoundly venerated in Sufi circles in northern Nigeria including Nguru when they hold their festival

⁹⁰³ Hiskett 1978, 432.

⁹⁰⁴ Hiskett 1978, 432.

theme is however strongly connected with the doctrine of *Ḥaqiiqa Muḥammadiyya* to the extent that some scholars like Hiskett consider it a continuation of the *al-'Israa'i' wal-Mi'raaj*. Other scholars count it as one of the great miraculous stories around the figure of Prophet Muḥammad. The theme of *al-'Israa'i' wal-Mi'raaj* recurs often and oft-repeated in the Sufi mystical poetry including that of al-Dāghirī. For instance, his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V94-105; 141-147 contains many extended passages describing the *al-'Israa'i' wal-Mi'raaj* details. The following passage is typical example:

من مكة حتى انتهى الأقصى الذي فيه العجائب والصفاء ورسومه

V94. (A journey) from Makah to the mosque of Aqsa where wonders purity and his graphics were displayed.

In elucidating the doctrine, al-Dāghirī shares the same view as other Sufi scholars concerning the story that the Prophet had ascended to the seventh divine *hadraat*. He stresses that the seven heavens were folded for him. Muḥammad flies across the skies on a winged horse (*Buraaq*), while angels serve as his guides and explain to him all the phenomenon of creation, and God is his defender and light lit the kingdom of God. He passes through one celestial gate after the other on his way up to the central gate. In his *Bassus-shauqi* V241-162; 239 al-Dāghirī states that:

له الأرض قبض والسماوات طية له العرش بسط والدهور تولت

V241. For him the earth was constricted,⁹⁰⁵ and seven heavens were folded, the divine throne flattened, and the era backed.

Herein is found the Prophet's night journey and ascension to the seven heavens. The Muslims of northern Nigeria regard the ascension of Prophet Muḥammad to the seven Heavens as an extreme love of God towards his best creature on earth. The fact that angel Gabriel did not go along with the Prophet beyond the lote tree so as not to burn his wings is a reminder that Muḥammad remains the *Afdal al-khalq* and he remains the perfect man for mystics, many of whom believe that his life was surrounded by miracles, although he himself claimed that his only miracle was the transmission of the Qur'an. For instance, his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, he has this to say:

وهناك جبريل تأخر واقفا وعلا علوا ما علاه أنيمه⁹⁰⁶

V96. And, there, the Angel Gabriel stopped. Then he stepped up to where has never be reached by his friend (Gabriel).

It was during this miraculous journey from Makkah to Heaven via Jerusalem that the Prophet Muḥammad to read all that is written on the *lawh al-Mahfuz* or *Umm al-Kitaab* (The

⁹⁰⁵ Compare with Qur'an 39:67; see also Qur'an 21:104.

⁹⁰⁶ Simply means sleeping but connotatively to indicate comforter or friend.

preserved Tablet), which is a book in which everything that happened and will happen was written. He mentions that *Salat* (the five daily prayers) observed by the Muslims was made compulsory at the time of the night journey and his ascension to the Heaven. This can be found in al-Dāghirī's *Bassus-shauqi* V91-92. He writes:

وإنك نور لامع تملأ السما ونلت لنقري كل علم وتحفة⁹⁰⁷

V93. And, verily, you are the glittering light that lighted the sky,⁹⁰⁸ and you obtained it so that we read all knowledge and masterpiece.

Prophetology features in al-Dāghirī's mystical poems in which he perceived the Prophet Muhammad was much beloved by Allah than other prophets and messengers. Prophet Muhammad was reported to have led in prayer all other Messengers and Prophets of Allah who came before him, which makes them happy. In his *Bassus-shauqi*, he writes:

ومن صلت الرسل الكرام بخلفه ومن أبرأ الألام من كل علة

V102. And he is one whom all the Messengers prayed behind him and, who cured the pains from all disease.

The apotheosis of the story of *al-'Isrā'i' wal-Mi'irāj* is the meeting face-to-face of Muḥammad with his creator “without veil or screen,” at a station where not even the angels can follow as noted earlier. In this meeting, it was narrated that Prophet Muḥammad saw God with his naked eyes in the night of the *Mi'irāj*. As a matter of fact, there is still ongoing debate between the Islamic scholars as to whether Prophet Muḥammad had seen Allah, or he did not see him on the night of his ascension to the heaven. The esoteric scholars believed that the Prophet Muḥammad had seen his Lord and had a direct conversation with Him. In a Prophetic Hadith which was narrated on the authority of Abū Dharr: “I asked the Messenger of Allah. Did you see thy Lord? He said: (He is) Light; how could I see Him.”⁹⁰⁹ Prophet Muḥammad is even said to have declared, “He that had seen me had seen God.”⁹¹⁰ This view was rejected by the majority of Sufis and exoteric scholars who held to the orthodox opinion that God has never been seen in this world.⁹¹¹ They argue that the Prophet Muḥammad did not see Allah. They often cite Prophetic Hadiths narrated on the authority of Aisha who was reported to have said: “Whoever told you that Muḥammad saw his Lord was lying. He said that no vision can grasp him.”⁹¹²

Accordingly, this remains a matter of controversy, but 'Alī Ibn 'Uthmān al-Hujwīrī finds a Sufi interpretation which is as follows: “In saying that he did not see God the Prophet was

⁹⁰⁷ It refers to part of book or something expensive (*mu'jam Al-ra'hd*).

⁹⁰⁸ The poet is referring to the seven divine *hadrāt*.

⁹⁰⁹ *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 0341 cf. 0341.

⁹¹⁰ Nicholson 1914, 83.

⁹¹¹ Kalābādhī, *al-ta arruf li-madhhab ahl al-taṣawwuf* (trans. Arberry), 1934, 26-27.

⁹¹² Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhari, *al-Tawhid* 6832.

referring to his spiritual eye. Since ‘A’isha was a formalist and Ibn Abbas a spiritualist, the Prophet spoke with each of them according to their insight.”⁹¹³ In another Prophetic tradition, Prophet Muḥammad was reported to have said, “Beware of the discernment of the true believer, for he sees by the light of God.”⁹¹⁴ This proves that God is visible only to the inward sight of the ‘heart.’ Based on the above-mentioned verse, almost all the Sufis seem to agree that God can be seen by the eye of the heart (*ru’yat al-qalb*). According to the Sufis, not only Prophet Muḥammad can see Allah but devoted and pious believers and seeing Allah is considered a great honour and privilege anyone could secure.

Therefore, al-Dāghirī like any Sufi scholar submits that Prophet Muḥammad saw his Lord during his night journey. There are many verses from al-Dāghirī’s mystical poems on the seeing of Allah by Prophet Muḥammad. Muḥammad receives his mission personally from God, seeing Him eye to eye. A few of these themes are described below in one of his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’ud* V97-104, he says:

فرأى وشاهد ذالجلال بعينه ما زاغ منه الطرف وهو حميمه

V98. He sighted and witnessed that Majestic God with his naked eyes without any deviation. And indeed, he is an intimate friend of His.

In his *Bassus-shauqi*, al-Dāghirī stated other verses on seeing Allah by Prophet Muḥammad.

ونطق بليحاء ورؤية ربه وتعليمه بالسر ثم بحجة

V22. And he also described with (as) spoken through) inspirational speech, sighting of his Lord with naked eye⁹¹⁵ and impacting of hidden and open knowledge.

The above-mentioned verses explain the view of al-Dāghirī on the implication of Muḥammad seeing his Lord with his naked eyes. He believes that Prophet Muḥammad saw his Lord with his naked eyes during his night journey. Muḥammad receives his mission personally from God, seeing Him eye to eye. This reflects the apotheosis of Muḥammad, his elevation by God to the first place in the coherent system of His creation. All this provides them with a reason to venerate the Prophet Muḥammad. The submission of al-Dāghirī on the concept of *al-’Israa’i’ wal-Mi’raaj* and on the issue of Prophet Muḥammad seeing his Lord is in conformity with the view of the Sufi scholars. It shows that al-Dāghirī has followed the footsteps of the Sufis particularly Tijānī scholars who argued that Muḥammad saw God. .

⁹¹³ *Kashf al-Mahjûb* 331.

⁹¹⁴ Nicholson 1914, 51.

⁹¹⁵ Compare with Qur’an 53:17.

8.10 The theme of yearning for Hajj, the holy places and Prophet Muḥammad's tomb

Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam which concern performing the pilgrimage rites at Makkah and its environs. Allah has described the pilgrimage as duty which Muslims owed to him.⁹¹⁶ The rites of Hajj are symbolically connected with the rejection of evil in thought, words and deeds.⁹¹⁷ The Sufi believe that it is also preferable to go to Madinah and visit the tomb of the Prophet Muḥammad.⁹¹⁸ The twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars concerned with the practical aspects of the society demonstrated the necessity for visiting the Holy land by Muslims but details of the Hajj are not mentioned in the works. Al-Dāghirī has many references to Makkah and Madinah scattered throughout his mystical poems. For instance, in his *At-taqriiz fii Itbaa'ut-tazyiil*, he praises and describes Madinah as best dwelling place because it is the resting place of Prophet Muḥammad:

ختمت وأن الحمد لله وحده كتابي إتباعا بأسعد مقعد

V1. I ended my work (my book) in the best dwelling place with the help of Allah, (praise be to Him alone).⁹¹⁹

In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, he also describes Makkah as the exalted place and the centre of excellence because of the presence of the Ka'aba (the house of God) in Makkah. The following is a typical example:

أوج التعاظم مركز العز الذي لجناب كعبته الأنام تحومه

V22. He is the highly esteemed and centre of notability who for the glorification of his Ka'aba (position) people intend to it.

The way these aspects of the pilgrimage, and visits to the Prophet Muḥammad's tomb are handled can be illustrated from al-Dāghirī's *Inhaa'us-salaam*. Here he introduces the idea of the soul's loneliness and expresses this intense feeling:

وفي كل عضو في كل ساعة * أشاك بشوك الشوق دام هيام

V21. On every organ in my body, I fill the tear of torn of excitement at every time. (Indeed), the burning of the taste (of love) persists (in me).

وأطلب إذننا للرجوع لطيبة * وقل لي فادخل أمانا بسلام

V40- And I seek permission to come back again to Medina and to say to me: "get in with peace and security.

Our next extract which also illustrates the idea of the divine love and yearning for the prophet could also be found in al-Dāghirī's *Inhaa'us-salaam*. He writes:

وذاك بمحض الفضل منا بلا أذى * أجوب الفلاح جوب البروق الموامي⁹²⁰

V12. Thus, in the pure bounties of Allah and His gift without proud, I am crossing through desert (to Madinah) the way the agitated roaming trough the arid desert.

⁹¹⁶ See Qur'an 2:97.

⁹¹⁷ Dahiru 2014, 120.

⁹¹⁸ Makkah is the birthplace of Prophet Muhammad, and Madinah is his second home town, where he migrated to and died.

⁹¹⁹ He started writing the work in Makah and completed in Madinah.

⁹²⁰ Refers to area of desert. (Simile).

These lines pinpoint the poet's love and yearning for the prophet. He metaphorically describes himself as lightening in the cloud flashes the desert in the night to meet the prophet. In the northern Nigerian culture, "lightening" symbolises running fast.

In the final analysis, we have noted that the Sufis consider Muhammad as being part of the living in a strict spiritual sense; this is the basis of the Sufi theology. Al-Dāghirī's approach is quite like that of other Sufi scholars. As in the case of Muslims in northern Nigeria including Nguru, they regard Makkah as the holy place where Kaaba is located; Madinah where Prophet Muḥammad died and is buried. The site of his tomb is where the Muslims long to visit.

8.11 Theme of *taṣliyya*, a constant *dhiikr* of blessing of the Prophet (“*ṣalli ‘alā Muḥammad*”)

Another major Sufi themes which is frequently mentioned in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī is constant *dhiikr* as the most effective and practical way to be in the Presence of the Lord. The term “*dhiikr*” technically refers to the remembrance, recollection, glorification and commemoration of God; and concentration of every thought upon Allah or having Him constantly in mind and thought.⁹²¹ There are many Qur’anic verses which instruct people to remember Allah (*dhiikr*) and invoke Him by His most beautiful Names; and clearly states the spiritual value of *dhiikr*: “So remember Me; I will remember you” (Q2:152) see also Qur’an 13:28. In another verse, “Allah says, “And all the most beautiful Names belong to Allah, therefore invoke Him by them” (Q2:180). Therefore, the prophet was also said to have perpetually engaged in *dhiikr* in one way or another. His eagerness to always be with Allah through remembrance was so intense that he never slackened in this respect. He was reported to have said: “It is in pronouncing Thy Name that I must live and die.”⁹²²

The *dhiikr* is constantly practiced by using special formula and method (*suluk*) under the guidance of a Sufi shaykh who will guide and enable the aspirant to attain passionate love (*nufus*). These formulae used by the Sufis are numerous, and some of them are Divine Unity (*ash-Shahaadah*) and the Divine Names (*al-Samaa’ al-Ḥusnaa*). The best of all *dhiikr* among the Muslims, both Sufi and non-Sufi, is ‘There is no god but God’ (*laa ilaaha illaah Allaah*), or There is no god but God and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God’ (*laa ilaaha illaah Allaah Muḥammadun rasuulu llaah*) and (*ṣalaat ‘alaa al-nabii*), as a means of realizing the Reality of Muḥammad. In spite of this, however, composing *Salawat* or specified litanies by Sufi masters is

⁹²¹ Arberry 1956, 77.

⁹²² Sahih Bukhari vol. 4, 187-188.

an accepted norm within the Sufi circle. In fact, almost every Sufi brotherhood today has its own collection of special *dhikr*, for instance, Tijānīyya has *ṣalātal-Fātiḥ*, which contains the mysteries of the Tijānīyya. Reciting of it, according to Tijānī, is worth or equal to the recitation of the Qur'an more than 6000 times;⁹²³ *Jawharat al-Kamāl*, the most respected Tijānī prayer, which confirms that the Tijānīyya is a real Muslim *ṭarīqa*;⁹²⁴ and *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt* as the best of all forms of the invocation of blessings upon the Prophet (*ṣalāt 'alā al-nabī*).

The purpose of these rituals is to glorify Allah through repeating the phrases in the Tijānī ritual brotherhood unlimitedly to get union with God. The goal of the Tijānī rituals of *Salat ala an-Nabī* is to produce an ideal man (*al-rajul al-kāmil*) with clean heart free from all worldly disturbances. If the heart is not pure, it cannot accommodate Prophetic love. This is due to the Sufi belief that the invocation of blessings upon the Prophet Muḥammad is the most effective way to visualize the Prophet Muḥammad because of the presence of the invoked (*madhkūr*) in the invocation (*dhikr*). Ibn al-'Arabi, for instance, did not speak either of visualisation of the Prophet or union with him, but did strongly recommend *taṣliyya*, a constant *dhikr* of blessing of the Prophet (“*ṣalli 'alā Muḥammad*”). He narrates the account of a saintly blacksmith in Seville to whom Prophet Muḥammad “appeared” and, it seems remained visible because of this *dhikr*. He adds further that “whatever is revealed to the one who does this *dhikr*, that is the saintly blacksmith, is true and immune from error, for nothing comes to him except through the Messenger (Prophet Muḥammad).”⁹²⁵

Like other Sufi scholars, al-Dāghirī believes that the love of God and the prophet can only be attained through *dhiikr* (reciting the name God and the prophet). His love for the prophet was so intense that he even lost direction and transcended material world. He constantly prays to Allah in which he seeks union with God. Thus, he simply surrendered himself to the prophet Muḥammad, and this could be traced and digested from his several publications. For instance, in these lines, in his *At-taqriiz fii Itbaa'ut-tazyiil* V1-13, al-Dāghirī presented the issue of *dhiikr*, specifically drawing the attention of the Muslims to the benefits and virtues of the recitation *Salat ala an-Nabii* and urges them to adhere to the *Salawat* of the Prophet if they seek the blessing of Allah. While

⁹²³ See *Ṣalāt al-Fātiḥ* was claimed to have been revealed to Muhammad Bakari (at Ka'aba many years after the death of Prophet Muhammad. *Jawāhir al-ma'ānī*, vol. 1, 136-138; *Mun yatul Murid*, 17; *Ifadat al-Ahmediyya*, 40 and 195; and *Hadiyyat ul-Hadiyya* in the speech of Ibn al-Khatimi.

⁹²⁴ *Jawharat al-Kamāl* is said to have been taught to Shaykh Aḥmad at-Tijānī directly by Prophet Muhammad in a waking encounter.

⁹²⁵ Sedgwick 2005, 29-30.

trying to justify its benefits and virtues of the *salawat* to the readers, al-Dāghirī then gave a special hint to Muslims on how they are going to purify themselves for elevation and source for blessings. He states that the Muslims should recite *dhiikr* in the mornings and evenings. He also warns the Muslims from laxity during the *dhiikr*. He writes:

أخي أيها المجتاز مهلا فهذه صلاة على المختار خذ وتزود

V2. O my fellow brother passer-by holds on, here is a book⁹²⁶ enclosing *salawat* (prayer) upon the selected prophet (Muḥammad saw), take and make provision with it.

However, the mystical poems, particularly *Madḥ* is considered as a kind of *dhiikr*.⁹²⁷ It is the invocation or remembrance, and recitations of the verses of poems praising Prophet Muḥammad. These poems are often interspersed with the *dhiikr* of the *Shahada* ('there is no god but God' (*laa ilaaha illaah Allaah*)), so that they form a *dhiikr* of the two *Shahadas*: 'There is no god but God and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God.'⁹²⁸ The poets usually inserts the Divine Name of Allah in between the verses or hemstitches of poetry in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad, combining the *dhiikr* of the Name of God with verses praising the Prophet Muḥammad.⁹²⁹ In connection with this, al-Dāghirī, in his *Inhaa'us Salaam* V1-5, has similar verses, but purely on the praise of the Prophet Muḥammad. He writes:

إلى خير خلق الله أنهى سلامي * سلاما بنند⁹³⁰ والكبا⁹³¹ لم يسام

V1. I towards the best of Allah's creature,⁹³² extend my salutation which cannot be compared with aloes wood or any incense.

After exhausting the issues of *dhiikr* and stressing its importance in the above-mentioned lines, al-Dāghirī tackled the issue of illegality of the vocal *dhiikr* practice by the members of the Sufi brotherhoods. As for those who did not uphold the Sunnah of practising vocal *dhiikr* and often criticize it, especially the anti-Sufi scholars. Al-Dāghirī, in the following verses, describes them as *kufr* (unbelievers) and enemies of Allah and Islam, who turn away from the blessings and bounties of Allah. He tries to convince people not to deny it as Prophet Muḥammad has approved those who did it. In his *al-Rithā* of Abūbakar Atiq, he has this to say:

جاهدت أعداء النبي الذين هم منعوا الصلاة عليه بل هم أعتد

V12. You fought against those enemies of the prophet who restrain people from reciting *salawat* (seeking peace and blessings of Allah upon prophet).⁹³³ Indeed, they turned away from it.

⁹²⁶ The poet refers to *Ibaa'ut-tazyil fii salaati alas-sayyidil Jaliil* here.

⁹²⁷ Ogunnaike 2020, 45.

⁹²⁸ Ogunnaike 2020, 42-43.

⁹²⁹ For good example see Ogunnaike 2020, 43-44.

⁹³⁰ I translated it as high hill.

⁹³¹ Simply means Heavy weight or large crowd of people or the like.

⁹³² He is referring to Prophet Muhammad.

⁹³³ *Jami'u al-Ahkham al-Qur'an*, volume 1, 669.

Considering the analysis of several poetic verses of al-Dāghirī on the benefits and virtues of *Salat ala an-Nabī* we are inclined to ally ourselves once again with the view of al-Dāghirī that, the *salawat* is of great importance to the Sufis because they attached utmost importance to the personality of Prophet Muḥammad. He submits that *Salat ala an-Nabii* is a source of spiritual enlightenment and would make one an ideal man (*al-rajul al-kaamil*) with a clean heart free from all worldly disturbances. The impact of the submission of al-Dāghirī on the society is that it gives members of the Tijānīyya a rest of mind that one of the prescribed prayers of their order is not *bid‘a* (innovation) against the Prophet Muḥammad. The submission further encourages them to be using the *Salat ala an-Nabī* not only as part of the rites of the order but as a form of special prayers. In a nutshell, we observed that the submission exposes the creativity and the scholarship of al-Dāghirī. The way he presents the poetic verses portrays him as an original thinker, and a lover of *Salat ala an-Nabī*. Our attention in the next section will focus on the theme of love of the members of the Prophet Muḥammad’s family or house (the *ahl al-bayt*).

8.12 Theme of *Hubb ahl al-bayt* (People of the House or Love of Members of Prophet’s Household)

Another prominent theme in the mystical poems of the twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars, is on the members of the prophet Muḥammad’s family or house (the *ahl al-bayt*). The *ahl al-bayt* occupies special reverence and love not only in the writings of the Sufis but also in their minds. According to the Sufis, the Muḥammadan light was not taken away when he died, but was passed on to his heirs and their successors; both his natural descendants and the saints of God through generations.⁹³⁴ The status and the position of the family of the Prophet Muḥammad are emphasized in the Qur’an and prophetic Hadīth. The Qur’anic basis for the special status of the *ahl al-bayt* is found primarily in two verses. In the first verse Allah says, “God only wishes to remove all filth from you, people of the house, and to purify you completely” (Q33:33). The meaning of this verse, according to some Sufis, indicates that ‘Ali, Fatima, and their descendants have been purified by God and therefore share in the Prophet’s immunity from sin. In the second Qur’anic verse, Allah commands the Muslims to love the Prophet’s family. It says, “I do not ask you for a reward (for delivering the revelation) except the love of those who are next-of-kin (*al-mawadda fī’l-qurbā*)” (Q42:23).

⁹³⁴ Hoffman-Ladd 1992, 622.

It is within this line of thought that Sufism, according to some Sufis, means love for and devotion to the family of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*). This devotion involves not only practices of shrine visitation, but also doctrines regarding the universal significance of the Prophet and his family.⁹³⁵ Similarly, Hoffman-Ladd in her recent article expatiates on the family of the Prophet and cites one of the Sufis who responds that:

Sufism means love for the family of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*). The Prophet is our intercessor and the one who brings us close to God, and it is through his family that we come close to him, just as the Prophet said, "Husayn is from me and I am from Husayn. Whoever loves Husayn loves me." It is love for the family of the Prophet that causes us to be purified. This is why we come to the shrines of the family of the Prophet. Whoever loves the family of the Prophet is accepted by God, because the saints of God are close to God.⁹³⁶

The above statement made by the staunch Sufi explains the enthusiasm for a primary activity of the Sufis and justifies their unconditional love for the Prophet's family. The theme on the love of Prophet Muḥammad's household members is also found in the works of al-Dāghirī. According to them, the love of the Prophet Muḥammad's household members is obligatory upon every Muslim. They received honour not only as blood relations of the prophet but also source of blessings. This is evident in the beginning and end of their works, after mentioning the name of Allah, the prophet, then followed by the prayer on the Prophet's family. A typical example is found in al-Dāghirī's *Inhaa 'us-salaam*:

مع الال والأصحاب ما قال قائل * إلى خير خلق الله أنهي سلامي

V52. (Provide the same) together with his family as well as companions in as much as one says: "to the best of creature I extend my salutation."

In another poem, *At-taqriiz fii Itbaa 'ut-tazyiil*, al-Dāghirī has this to say:

مع الال والأصحاب والمقتدي به بمبلغ حمدالله في كل مشهد

V19. Together with (his) family and companions as well as good followers of him equal to the utterances of the praise to Allah by creatures at everywhere.

Notwithstanding, in the context of Tijānīyya, al-Tijānī is also considered the grandson of Prophet Muḥammad. Thus, Tijānī Sufi Shuyukh and their *murids* have always expressed unconditional love towards him, to the extent of mentioning his name among the names of the members of Prophet Muḥammad's family. In connection to this, in his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*, al-Dāghirī writes:

مع الال والأصحاب ما قال قائل إلى أحمد التجان أنهي قصيد

V86. Together with his noble families and companions as much as one says: "I headed my gloomy heart toward

⁹³⁵ Hoffman-Ladd 1992, 616.

⁹³⁶ Hoffman-Ladd 1992, 617-8.

the Aḥmad at-Tijānī.”

8.13 The theme of *at-Tawassul* (Mediation, Fervent Plea and Request for Help/Assistance)

Al-Dāghirī has considerable mystical verses on the theme of *at-Tawassul* (Fervent plea for help). The doctrine of *at-Tawassul* simply refers to the prayer towards Allah who is considered as *mutawassal ilayh* (the focus) seeking His divinely intervention through the Prophet Muḥammad, as *mutawassal bihii* (intermediary or mediator or intermediator) which was adopted by the Sufi scholars as a means of approaching God.⁹³⁷ It also refers to the means of seeking forgiveness from Allah because of status or virtues of Prophet Muḥammad; and supplicating Allah by means of an intermediary, saints, scholars or righteous person whether it be a living, or has passed away or a name or attribute of Allah. In this sense, the saints and scholars who are considered as *mutawassal bihii* (intermediary or mediator or intermediator) or bridge and medium because of their proximity to Allah.

The doctrine of *at-Tawassul* as a means of approaching God was originally divided into three categories. The first category of *at-tawassul* is by one’s righteous and sincere deeds of Allah. The Muslim scholars agreed that righteous and virtuous deeds like prayer, fasting, pilgrimage to Makkah, Zakat and recitation of the Qur’an can serve as legitimate means of *at-Tawassul*.⁹³⁸ The second category, according to Solagberu, is by prayers of another person seeking Allah’s forgiveness on behalf of the sinner as well as supplication to the Almighty Allah to grant one’s request.⁹³⁹ The third category of *at-tawassul* which is making a plea to Allah through a personality who is absent, such as the personality of Prophet Muḥammad, saints and pious or righteous people by mentioning their names in the course of the supplications has generated controversies between two major Islamic schools of thought (i.e. the Sufis and the non-Sufis) based on their individual differences, perception and orientation on issues.⁹⁴⁰

Al-Dāghirī like classical and contemporary Sufi scholars, believes in *at-tawassul* and he has a number of works showing regards to this important theme and he makes supplication to Allah through different personalities as well as with the glorification of His names. However, going through the various forms of *at-tawassul* in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī, it is discovered that

⁹³⁷ Related to this is the concept of *al-wasilah*, which means mediation or the method of approach to Allah and to attain nearness to Him. The concept of *at-Tawassul* (intermediation) and *al-wasilah* (means) are often interchangeably used.

⁹³⁸ This is based on Q5:35 and Q17:57.

⁹³⁹ The justification of kind of *at-tawassul* is traceable to the Qur’anic verses Q12:97-98; Q4:64 and a few Hadiths.

⁹⁴⁰ For a detailed information on the debate see Solagberu 2009, 226.

a large number of them are done through absent or dead personalities, a form of *at-tawassul*, which is unacceptable to the non-Sufi or anti-Sufi scholars. This is mainly because al-Dāghirī, like classical and contemporary Sufi scholars, believes that death does not mean a total alienation or elimination of a person but a transition between one world and another. The function of Prophet Muḥammad as mediator is a constantly recurring theme in his *Bassus-shauqi*. The following verses this poem introduces a typical example:

ومن يستجر مستنجدا بمحمد من الله يلقي الأمن في كل وقعة

V175. And, whoever seeks the refuge and help of Allah by calling the name of the Muḥammad (saw), surely, will be provided with security and will be protected against all calamities (and hardship as well).

ومن يبتغى الحاجات عند محمد يجد ربه عوناً على كل بغية

V45. And, whoever pursues his aspiration and demand through Muḥammad, verily will find his Lord in granting his demands.

The viewpoint on the intermediary position of Prophet Muḥammad in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī is best represented in stanzas 45-46, in which he makes it plain that Allah would do anything for the sake Prophet Muhammad:

ومن يعتصم بالمصطفى في نوازل⁹⁴¹ فينجيه منها ربه كالشكيمة⁹⁴²

V29. And, whoever depends on this selected prophet at the descendant of any commotion, his Lord will rescue him as though the cradle (is remove out of the mouth of horses).

He also supplicates in honour of Prophet Muḥammad, his families, his companions and Qur'an. He thus considers Prophet Muḥammad as the last hope and being capable of providing spiritual re-enforcement, granting his request. In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, he has this to say:

بمحمد وبآله وصحابه وكتابه الباقي يبذ علومه

V251. (That is) In the honour of the prophet Mohammad, his families, his companions and his permanent book that spreads his knowledge.

He also makes *at-tawassul* to Allah in respect and honour of Sufi saints (*awliyā*), and particularly through al-Tijānī, the founder of the Tijānīyya brotherhood. He also makes fervent plea through some eminent Sufi Shuyukh such as Niasse who is considered as *ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa* of the al-Tijānīyya brotherhood. Al-Dāghirī in one his mystical poems entitled *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*, makes *at-tawassul* which indicates the possibility of fervent plea in respect of al-Tijānī. He says:

يفيض على الأغواث غيباً ومشهداً وليسو على إمداده بشهيد

⁹⁴¹ Simply means calamities (*mu'jam al-ra'id*).

⁹⁴² I translated it as cradle.

V34. He gives the assistance to the needy while living and after death but, they are unaware of the time of the flow.⁹⁴³

Al-Dāghirī makes a *tawassul* in respect and honour of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse as earlier noted. In his poem on Niasse, he has this to say:

يامن يمد الكائنات جميعها زدني فيوضا زادك القيام

V35. O you who reinforces the entire mankind;⁹⁴⁴ add me to the flow (of reality) as the Independent God Has done for you.

Muḥammad al-Dāghirī, in addition to making explicit *at-tawassul* with Prophet Muḥammad, saints and righteous people, his poems often serves as a means of or even *at-tawassul* itself because he considers them as righteous services or duty in Islam. In his *Bathth Shawq* V179, V247-248. He writes:

فهذا قصيدي ضمنه شكوى شد ته منشدا مستنسا تاء رحمة

V247. And this is my poem enclosed the complaints of my hardship while singing and omitting the Arabic letter “t” which attached to “rahmatu” (and saying “irham, irham” that is in request form).

In conclusion, it has been discussed that al-Dāghirī has considerable number of stanzas on the doctrine of *at-tawassul*. However, the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī on *at-tawassul* replicates the Sufi perception on the subject matter. For instance, Solagberu cites Shaykh al-Bakri who also supplicates using Prophet Muḥammad as a means of reaching Allah.⁹⁴⁵ Shaykh Nasiru Kabara was also said to make plea to Allah through the grave of Shaykh Usman bin Fodio.⁹⁴⁶ Related to the doctrine of *at-tawassul* is the doctrine of *ash-shafaa’a*.

8.14 The Theme of ‘*ash-Shafaa’a* (Intercession)

Like the theme of *at-Tawassul* (Fervent plea for help), al-Dāghirī has considerable theme dealing with *ash-shafaa’a* (intercession). The term ‘*ash-shafaa’a*’ literarily means ‘mediation, intercession or advocacy.’⁹⁴⁷ The doctrine indicates “the joining of a man to another to assist him, especially when a man who enjoys a high rank and honour joins himself to a man of a lower position’ to intercede on behalf of the latter.”⁹⁴⁸ It technically refers to the intercession and pleading on behalf of someone with Allah in this world or on the Day of Judgement.⁹⁴⁹ The Sufis consider the Prophet Muḥammad as intercessor and mediator between God and His followers in

⁹⁴³ The poet refers to the intervention in this world and intercession on the Day of Judgement, entering the Paradise without any judgement and punishment. Aḥmad al-Tijānī is believed to grant it even to the unbelievers if they see him on Friday or Monday night.

⁹⁴⁴ See *Bahar Madid* of Ali Imran, volume 1, 421; see also *Tafsīr* of Ibn Qayyim, volume 1, 74.

⁹⁴⁵ See Solagberu 2009, 226-227.

⁹⁴⁶ See Solagberu 2009, 226-227.

⁹⁴⁷ Solagberu 2009, 229.

⁹⁴⁸ Solagberu 2009, 229.

⁹⁴⁹ The justification for the doctrine of *ash-shafā’a* is traceable to the Qur’an.

this world or on the Day of Judgement. According to Sufi tradition, not only Prophet Muḥammad, the living intercessor for his followers in this world and on the Day of Judgement but also saints, righteous people, good deeds, Qur'an, and those who die when at a tender age etc.

The justification for the doctrine of *ash-shafaa'a*, according to Sufis, is traceable to the Qur'an as there is no contradiction.⁹⁵⁰ Whereas, according to Wahabi-Salafi tradition, all forms of '*ash-shafaa'a*' are *shirk* (polytheism) irrespective of the belief, except on the Day of Judgement. They also claim that even on the Day of Judgement, only Allah has exclusive power to grant intercession, not even a prophet can intercede without Allah's consent. They also state that the Prophet will ask God's permission to intercede before him not only for good believers but also for Muslim sinners, thus, he Prophet will not intercede for anyone without His permission. Therefore, to obtain the Prophet's intercession, Wahabi-Salafi ask it from God according to His command, and attack those who seek it from any being other than Him.⁹⁵¹

The mystical poems of al-Dāghirī, for instance, contain considerably, the theme of intercession. The theme of *shafa* (intercession) in the Hereafter in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī concerns the events of the Day of Resurrection such as the trump, the standing, the receiving of the book, the weighing in the scales, and the crossing of the bridge and the intercession of the Prophet Muḥammad. The wisdom behind these themes in mystical poems is not only to remind the audience or readers of the poem about resurrection and the need for them to immediately repent, but also encourages them to love Allah, Prophet Muḥammad, his family and '*awliyā*' because these will intercede for them on Judgement Day.⁹⁵² For instance, in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V65-67, he gives the description of what is going to happen on the Judgement Day and how the Prophet Muḥammad will come up to intercede for his community (*Ummah*) and rescue them from Hell fire:

ولكم له من همة بعد الدنيا روم الشفاعة في مقام يقومه

V65. And how hard strives he has in the hereafter while several nations will be looking for interception at the position he stood.

Al-Dāghirī continues giving account of the intercession of Prophet Muḥammad and accounts of his actions on the Day of Judgement. There are many examples in his *Bassus-shauqi* V101-105; 170-174:

ومن ثم كل الخلق تحت لوائه له ثم تم الفخر عند الشفاعة

⁹⁵⁰ Q74:48; 40:18; 10:3; 21:28.

⁹⁵¹ They cite Q43:86 to justify their claim.

⁹⁵² Hiskett 1982, 424-425.

V174. And, from there, the entire being will be standing under his umbrella, then, the perfection of pride is by intercession.

This theme of seeking intercession by means of the Prophet Muḥammad, saints and righteous people is a common feature of al-Dāghirī's mystical poems, much of which is simply versified prayers for intercession and help from God by means of the Prophet Muḥammad and other sacred figures of the *tariqa*. Therefore, usually immediately after description of the Judgement Day and Prophet Muḥammad's intercession, the poets frequently include a kind of personal supplication for the mass intercession. In the supplication, he asks the prophet to intercede for his parents, family, scholars, neighbours, relatives, friends, followers/disciples who follow in their footsteps, and finally all Muslims who follow the right path of Prophet Muḥammad. For illustration, the following verses of poem entitled *Bassus-shauqi* can be cited as an example of al-Dāghirī's *shafa* (intercession):

ألا يا شفيع الناس فاقبل شفاعتي فشفعني في والديّ وولديّ

V247. Indeed, Oh the intercessor of the people, grant my intercession. And accept my intercession to my parents and children,

Similarly, al-Dāghirī, in his poetic and prosaic exposition, often approaches the prophet not only to intercede for him and his family but for help and support, being feeble to face his needs all by himself. Referring to the promised intercession on the Day of Judgement. Al-Dāghirī in his *Bassus-shauqi*, he has this to say:

لجأتك مضطرا وفي قلب حاجة لوساطة معهودة مستقيمة

V200. I recourse to you while was compelled. And, in the heart, there is needs and for the promised intercession.

In the following verses, the poet believes that the difficulties of the day of judgement are reduced by the intercession of Prophet Muḥammad. He advanced the view that all other prophets will fail to intercede on behalf of their people, only Muḥammad will be given the favour. They will ask all other prophets to intercede for them and will instead be directed to Prophet Muḥammad.

In his *Inhaa'us-salaam*, he has this to say:

إذا ما جميع الرسل خافوا الهول ما * دهاهم⁹⁵³ فشفعني أخير إمام

V15. When the entire messenger fear to intercede for the fright of affliction of that day, then intercede me O my best leader,

He also prays to the Prophet Muḥammad to relieve him of difficulties on that very day. Al-Dāghirī shared the same view both Ali and al-Ilori, believing in intercession in this life and the hereafter but a scholar his focus and emphasis is on the Hereafter. This does not mean that there is no intercession dealing with the temporary world in his works. As matter of fact, his mystical

⁹⁵³ Simply means befall, strike.

poems on intercession is of multiple dimensions, that is, dealing with both this world and Hereafter as attested to by the following line from his poem entitled *Bassus-shauqi*:

وأصلح لي في ذرياتي وعافني بدنيا وأخرى كل ضرر وفتنة

V156. And fix me and my family; improve and protect my healthy condition against any accident or commotion both in this world and hereafter!

It is clear from the above stanzas how al-Dāghirī asked the Prophet Muḥammad for intercession. This act of al-Dāghirī is in accordance with the view of a reasonable number of Sufi and Tijānī scholars. As a matter of fact, it is the tradition of Sufi to do so. In another poem entitled *Ar-risaa'u fii Shaykh Abubakar Atiiq*, al-Dāghirī asked the Prophet Muḥammad to intercede for Shaykh Abū Bakr 'Atīq.

صلى عليه الله مبلغ حمده ومع السلام وسيلة تتجدد

V17. May Allah's blessing upon him (prophet) equal to the praise utterances together with peace which are the best intermediary.

In conclusion, al-Dāghirī clearly shows that on the Day of Judgement, the Prophet will appear and intercede on behalf of his community. He sees Prophet Muḥammad as the best of mankind, who does not promise, what he cannot deliver, and he is the first one Allah permits to intercede for his community on the Day of Judgement. Muḥammad al-Dāghirī does not restrict the issue of *ash-shafaa'a* (intercession) to the Prophet Muḥammad alone, he also asks some saints and Sufi leaders to intercede for him on the Judgement Day, instead of Prophet Muḥammad. However, the method adopted by al-Dāghirī is like the works or ideas of other Sufi scholars. It is therefore mentioned that in most cases, he uses repetition too often.

8.15 The theme of *al-Istighaathah* (call for help)

The doctrine of *al-Istighaathah* (call for help) is another major theme in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. The doctrine is literally defined as appeal or call for help, but it technically refers to the calling upon an individual other than Allah for help, or assistance during the occurrence of a calamity such as “a drowning man seeking another to rescue him,” or “a prisoner seeking another to release him” “shortage of petrol in a vehicle while traveling,” “demolition and wrecking of a building,” “fire accident” etc.⁹⁵⁴ The individual or fellow human being might be a prophet of Allah, saints, or righteous people. The ultimate focus of *al-Istighaathah* through prophet of Allah, saints, or righteous people. Furthermore, Allah Himself is the only true helper and supporter and He has the real power to mitigate a difficult situation or grant prayers and request. This means that *al-Istighaathah* is only a form of prayer to be answered by God alone. The idea does not mean that

⁹⁵⁴ Solagberu 2009, 232-233.

the intermediary will grant the prayer or that he will put pressure on Allah to grant the prayer of the individual seeker.

The doctrine of *al-Istighaathah* (call for help) could be divided into three different categories. While the two categories of *al-Istighaathah* are unanimously agreed upon and accepted by both Sufi and anti-Sufi Muslims, the third category was rejected by the anti-Sufi scholars. The first categories of *al-Istighaathah* is associated with special request made by someone “on a physical object, which is assumed not to be beyond the power of the person being called upon for help and assistance.”⁹⁵⁵ The second category of *al-Istighaathah* is calling directly for help without and Allah has promised to respond to him without any intermediary. Such *al-Istighaathah* is also unanimously allowed and approved by Islamic scholars is associated with Allah.⁹⁵⁶ The third category of *al-Istighaathah* is associated with an absent or dead person which has become a discourse of debate and controversy among Islamic scholars. The Sufi scholars approve and consider it a means of *al-Istighaathah* not only through the personality of Prophet Muḥammad, but also for saints and righteous people.⁹⁵⁷ This type of *Istighaathah* is accepted by the Sufis and it was rejected by the anti-Sufi scholar.

Al-Dāghirī is one of the Sufi writers whose mystical poems contained the theme of *al-Istighaathah*. The view of al-Dāghirī on the doctrine of *al-Istighaathah* (call for help) clearly states his position and exposes his perception on the subject-matter. For instance, in his work entitled *Qar’u abwaabin-Nawaal bi asmaa’illaahil muta’aal* (Knocking of the gaining door through the exalted attributes of Allah), the Shaykh makes use of certain ninety-nine names of Allah as a means of seeking Allah’s assistance, that is, *al-Istighaathah* (call for help). This type of *al-Istighaathah* is unanimously accepted and there is no disapproval on it since names of Allah are invoked. He submits that any request through Prophet Muḥammad, Allah would render assistance and support in times of hardship and distress. His name was invoked by the Muslims of Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria, and it proved helpful. In his *Bassus-shauqi*, he writes:

ومن يستجر مستنجداً بمحمد من الله يلقى الأمان في كل وقعة

V175. And, whoever seeks the refuge and help of Allah by calling the name of the Muḥammad (saw), surely, will be provided with security and will be protected against all calamities (and hardship as well).

⁹⁵⁵ Solagberu 2009, 234. This category of *al-Istighāthah* was unanimously accepted by the Muslims. It was justified by the Q28:15; 27:38.

⁹⁵⁶ It was justified by the Q2:186; 40:60; 8:9.

⁹⁵⁷ Solagberu 2009, 236.

However, one must understand that al-Dāghirī like other Sufi scholars, in some of his works expresses himself as the situation he found himself in, by lamenting on his inability to carry out his religious duties as expected. He also considers himself as a sinner and that his sin creates fear in him. He therefore solicits the help of Prophet Muḥammad to grant his requests and aspiration because the Prophet can provide spiritual re-enforcement to man as a whole and considers him as the stepping-stone to attain one's desire, both in this world and the Hereafter. He also calls upon the Prophet to come to his rescue because he is restricted in knowledge as he does not know whether his works are accepted or not. In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V252-254. He says:

فأنل منى قلبي وأعط سؤالي لأفوز بالفوز العظيم أرومه

V252. Grant me the aspiration and requests of my heart so as to gain the great achievement I am looking for.

The third category of *al-Istighaathah*, being controversial is also focus of the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. He submits that the saints and righteous people can extend the request of a person who employed their intermediation to Prophet Muḥammad and Allah. As earlier noted, for instance al-Tijānī, the founder of Tijānīyya, being the *khaatm al-'awliyya*'' (the seal of saints) had attained the position of mediation between the servants and the Prophet Muḥammad and thus this is common among the Muslims in Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria, to invoke the name of the Shaykh in the time of need, hardship and distress. Al-Dāghirī therefore makes *al-Istighaathah* (fervent plea) through al-Tijānī.

For instance, in his poem entitled *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*, al-Dāghirī uses the work to eulogize the founder of Tijānīyya, al-Tijānī as a means of *al-Istighaathah*. He also describes al-Tijānī as defender who helps those who seeks assistance from him, and thus he therefore calls upon him to remove his hardship, soliciting for the fulfilment of his needs and aspirations. Here are a few lines from his poem entitled *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*:

عليك بحاجاتي نزلت فأعطني وما خير كم للحب غير⁹⁵⁸ فقيد

V47. Before you are my needs and aspirations, grant them to me, please. Indeed, the best lover of you will never lose.⁹⁵⁹

The name of Niasse was also invoked by al-Dāghirī as a medium through which *al-Istighaathah* was sought. He was also considered to have power to mediate with Allah and relate the request of the seeker to the Prophet. He describes Niasse as a saint whose face is blessed by Allah and whosoever sees it would be forgiven or his prayers would be answered. Al-Dāghirī

⁹⁵⁸ Added to accomplish the verse. The verse is meaningful without it.

⁹⁵⁹ The members of the Tijānīyya brotherhood believed that they would never be losers because even if they had committed sins. People without sins are believed to fly like birds towards the Paradise.

requests Niase to offer reinforcement to all of mankind and grant him many bounties offered to him by Allah. In doing so, many attributes are ascribed to Niase. This fact is even reflected in the mystical poem of al-Dāghirī, entitled *Qaasidat Tarheeb*. Here is a single line from this poem:

أهلا وسهلا مرحبا بقدم من فازت برؤية وجهه الأرقام

V5. Welcome the arrival of the one who at the sight of whose face, the people achieve their aspiration.

The verses of the Qur'an and *Salawat* (praise on the Prophet Muḥammad) were also used as medium of *al-Istighaathah*. And it is well illustrated in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. The theme of the third doctrine of *al-Istighaathah* buried in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī and other Sufi poets did not escape the criticism of anti-Sufi scholars, particularly Izala. They have constantly criticized this doctrine and linked it to polytheism. According to them, only Allah has such power to render such help and therefore resorting to the saints instead of Allah means negating the power of Allah. Muslims could therefore merely invoke the name of Allah.

In conclusion, Al-Dāghirī like many other Sufi scholars has composed some mystical poems, in which he mentioned the theme of *al-Istighaathah*, particularly the controversial one. As earlier noted, the controversy is fundamentally because of the interpretation, understanding and perception of religious texts each school of thought has regarding the status of Prophet Muḥammad, saints, and righteous people.

8.16 Theme of friendship with God and *wilaaya'* (sainthood)

The theme of friendship with God is another major theme mentioned by al-Dāghirī in many of his mystical poems. The Prophet Muḥammad said that there is no Prophet after him, but he was reported to have said, "The men of religion are the heirs of the Prophet."⁹⁶⁰ So, after his physical death, his pious servants among men of religion became his representatives who carry out all his mystical functions. These pious servants are earthly representatives of the Prophet Muḥammad who befriend God and became very close to Him. Such people are known as '*awliyyaa'*' (singular: *waliyy* saint) who befriend God.⁹⁶¹ The uprightness of their conduct and the fulness of their piety were so pleasing to Allah thus He chose them to be His "friends." The nature of this relationship is called *wilaaya* (sainthood), which simply means being in God's protection, sainthood. The '*awliyyaa'*' saints are considered as intermediaries between mankind and Prophet Muḥammad as a

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⁹⁶¹ *Walīyyat*, if the saint is a woman. In the Qur'an, *walī* was mentioned forty-six times while '*awliyyā'*' occurs forty-two times in the book, both with they have multiple usages. Qur'an 2:257; see also Qur'an 3:68; 42:9; 45:19, Qur'an 10: 63, Qur'an 2:258.

gateway of servants to Allah. They also considered capable of extending the request of a seeker who employed their intermediaries to the Prophet Muḥammad and Allah.

Tirmidhi is the first classical scholar to write on *wilaaya* (sainthood) and ‘*awliyyaa*’ in his work entitled *khaatm al-’awliyyaa*’ in which he states that every believer is a friend of God, and His beloved and that, reciprocally, God is his friend and his beloved.⁹⁶² Alī Ibn ‘Uthmān al-Hujwīrī in his work entitled *Kashf al-Mahjub* explicitly defines the concepts of *wilaaya* (sainthood) and ‘*awliyyaa*’ and he also lists many meanings of ‘*awliyyaa*’ according to Sufī use. These are: *rubuubiyyah* (lordship), *maḥabbah* (love), *tasar uf* (the power to dispose), and *imārah* (possession of command). The saints, according to him, form an invisible hierarchy, on which the order of the world is thought to depend as explained in the next section. He reveals that amongst the saints “there are four thousand who are concealed and do not know one another and are not aware of the excellence of their state, being in all circumstances hidden from themselves and from mankind.”⁹⁶³

Ibn ‘Arabī (1165-1240) marks a turning point in the history of *waliyy* (saint) and *wilaaya* (sainthood). He relates that all the prophets of Allah are simultaneously saints or friends of God, and people can still attain to the station of a saint after the death of the last prophet, Muḥammad. But that saintly aspect of each prophet is higher than the prophetic aspect.⁹⁶⁴ He takes the view that all the prophets and ‘*awliyyaa*’ derived their spirit from the light of Muḥammad, the first substance created by God. This is mainly because the historical Muḥammad is superior to all other prophets by virtue of his office as Seal of the Prophets (*khaatm al-anbiyyaa*’).⁹⁶⁵ The exoteric or anti-Sufi scholars, particularly the Salafī and Wahhābī were said to have rejected Sufī’s perception of *wilaaya* (sainthood) and ‘*awliyyaa*.’ They held the view that *wilaaya* (sainthood) is a general title of the believers. Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), the most opponent and prominent critic of Sufi doctrines, argues that the ‘*awliyyaa*’ are nothing but only and simply the *muqarrabuun* (those who are close), a Qur’anic term indicating the highest category of chosen people, who are also called *saabiquun* (the forerunners).⁹⁶⁶ According to him, *wilaaya* (sainthood) is a general title of all believers and cannot be identified in the society. He divides the *awliyā*, therefore, into the *awliyā*’ of *Shayṭ’aan* and the *awliyyaa*’ of God.

⁹⁶² Al-Geyoushi 1970, 193.

⁹⁶³ Nicholson 1966, 123.

⁹⁶⁴ *Fūtūhāt al-Makiyya* vol. 2. 65.

⁹⁶⁵ *Fūtūhāt al-Makiyya* vol. 2. 65.

⁹⁶⁶ Chodkiewicz 1986, 26.

Having introduced and explained the concept and the views of Islamic classical scholars, we can now turn to the views of al-Dāghirī on the issue. The attitude of many Sufis and members of the Tijānīyya towards to the concepts of *wilaaya*, *waliyy* and ‘*awliyyaa*’ motivated his writing on this subject matter. His views on *wilaaya*, *walī* and ‘*awliyyaa*’ are like other great Sufi scholars such as, at-Tirmidhī, ‘Alī Ibn ‘Uthmān al-Hujwīrī, Ibn ‘Arabī and many others. According to him, *wilaaya* is an extension of the light of Muḥammad (*al-nuur al-Muḥammadiyya*). In fact, all the prophets and messengers of Allah sent to this world before Prophet Muḥammad are nothing but his representatives as *awliyyaa*’ (saints) who came after him. This idea of pacing past prophets on the same level with the saints is not new and unique to al-Dāghirī but not literarily exposed. A good example is found in his poem entitled *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*. He writes:

فالأنبيا من قبله نوابه كالأولياء وخصم تكريمه

V28. And all the prophets who came before him were his representatives⁹⁶⁷ as though the *al-awliyyaa*’. They were regarded by his honour.

According to him, *wilaaya* constitutes the idea in the necessity of continuation of the spiritual authority of the Prophet Muḥammad to authorities after the prophet’s death. He therefore states that the ‘*awliyyaa*’ are only and simply the heirs and representatives of the prophets. In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud*, he has this to say:

وبهم عن الرسل الكرام قداكتفى كل الأنام لأنهم لملومه⁹⁶⁸

V29. All the nations were satisfied with them (*al-awliyyaa*’) in place of messengers⁹⁶⁹ (at the present time) because they are his party.

Al-Dāghirī, like other great Sufi scholars, he believed that there is no special attribute stipulated for being a *walii* (saint), *khaatm al-’awliyyaa*’ (the seal of saints) *al-Qutub* (pole or axis) or *al-ghawth* (succourer), apart from the fact that it is a special grace and favour of Allah. It is often attained by abiding by the commandments of Allah and refraining from the forbidden of Allah. In one of his mystical poems entitled *Qaasidat Tarheeb*, he therefore explicitly expresses this view when he writes:

وبدا ثباتك في اتباعك سنة فكأنك الصفوان والأعلام

V24. And your qualification for the position conferred on you by your adherence to the path of the prophet (saw). And you are as firm as rock and mountain.

All the secrets and attributes of ‘*awliyyaa*’ are nothing but reminiscent of the past Prophets. The emphasis is on the attributes, genes and lineages of the past prophets which was passed to the saints and concealed in them. Indeed, the successor of Prophet Muḥammad will no doubt from his

⁹⁶⁷ Compare with Qur’an 3:81.

⁹⁶⁸ Means party of followers.

⁹⁶⁹ Hadith (the scholars of my nation are like prophet of the children of Israel).

lineage. Therefore, the strict obedience to the saints and pious Ulama is necessary, and grave punishments do await anyone who despise the saints. Al-Dāghirī in his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii* has this to say:

وسر نبي في الولاية كامن وسر أب يسري سرى للوليد

V17. And in the same way, the secret of prophecy is concealed in *Awliyaa*. Indeed, the secret of a father spreads to the child.

The above verses are general, and they are applicable to every Sufi saint. Muḥammad al-Dāghirī is of the view that there is no special attribute stipulated for being a saint (*waliyy*) apart from abiding by the commandments of Allah and refraining from the hatred for Allah. He also views that being a saint (*waliyy*) does not make one infallible; however, he ought not to remain permanently in sins. The Shaykh believes that piety and steadfastness on the general teachings of Islam are the major criteria for being a *waliyy*, yet there is a problem of identification. According to him, this is because a saint is a human being who partakes in all human activities. I have arranged the extracts from his works as examples in this section in the order of this spiritual hierarchy.

8.17 Theme of *Khaatm al-'awliyaa'* (the Seal of Saints)

It can be said that *khaatm al-'awliyaa'* (seal of saints) and *khaatm al-wilaaya* (the seal of the sainthood) were the fundamental points in Sufi themes, to which most their works were devoted. Similarly, these are two of the major Sufi themes that repeatedly feature in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. The idea of *khaatm al-'awliyaa'* (the seal of the saints) is based on the philosophy of Muḥammad's status as the seal of prophecy (*khaatm al-nubuwwa*), the first substance created by God. The ideas of the *khaatm al-'awliyaa'* (seal of saints) and *khaatm al-wilaaya* (the seal of the sainthood) were first mentioned in the writing of al-Hakim at-Tirmidhī (d. ca. 295/905),⁹⁷⁰ He states that the topmost rung of the hierarchy of saints is occupied by *khaatm al-'awliyaa'* who is considered to be master of the saints, as the prophet Muḥammad is the master of the Prophets. He is not only '*Hujjat Allah*,' the manifestation by which the saints and all the believers receive proof of the grace of God.⁹⁷¹ He adds that the highest spiritual rank, almost approximating to that of the Prophets, adding that the seal of saints would live to the end of the world, and was afterwards a source of Ibn Arabī's theory of sainthood and prophetship.⁹⁷² He explicitly declares that there is also a *khaatm al-'awliyaa'* (Seal of the Saints) who is the perfect manifestation of the Spirit of Muḥammad. He further declared himself as the seal of the saints, of

⁹⁷⁰ Al-Hakim at-Tirmidhī, *Khatm al-awliyā*, trans. Othman Yahia 1965.

⁹⁷¹ Al-Geyoushi 1970, 204 citing *Khatm al-'awliyā*, 345.

⁹⁷² Al-Geyoushi 1970, 36.

his time. He says: “I am the seal of the sainthood, no doubt, (the seal of) the heritage of the Hashemite (Muḥammad) and the Messiah.”⁹⁷³ Ibn Arabī was bitterly criticized for his claim, but what most of the critics fail to understand is that he did not consider himself to be the end of the institution of sainthood.

Almost every Sufi *tariqa* has its own *khaatm al- 'awliyyaa'* (the seal of saints). In the context of Tijānīyya brotherhood, the doctrine of *Khaatm al- 'awliyyaa'* (Seal of Saints) basically states that Aḥmad al-Tijānī, was the last seal of the saints. He declared himself as *Khaatm al- 'awliyyaa'* (Seal of Saints), *quṭb al-aqṭaab* (the supreme pole of saint) and Gawth al-Samdani or heir to the prophetic mission and surrogate of divine power over human affairs and salvation. In virtue of his *Gawthiyyah* status, al-Tijānī was granted the power to give salvation to faithful members of the order and to guarantee material well-being to any community in which the order triumphs. The intercessional capacity of the *Gawth* in both spiritual and temporal matters is extended to every succeeding *Gawth* of the order and to its saints and Shaykhs.⁹⁷⁴ Having declared to be *khaatm al-awliyyaa'*, the complex issue, according to Viola, points to the double function of the seal: the first one as an instrument through which the revelation can be made, and the second one as an instrument that permits the authentication of that revelation.⁹⁷⁵ Additionally, this superiority claimed by Tijānī permits him to guarantee his followers a special protection against the Divine Judgement and an eternal safety. Having explained the duties of a good Tijānī, he asks an elementary question: “Who has a litany like ours?” and in this way he emphasises the originality of their *wird*.⁹⁷⁶

Al-Dāghirī extensively writes on the concept of *Khaatm al- 'awliyyaa'* in the Tijānīyya brotherhood. He seems to emphasize the point that the nucleus of *Khaatm al- 'awliyyaa'* comes from divine light of Prophet Muḥammad. Thus, the concept of the *Khaatm al- 'awliyyaa'* is compatible with the teaching of Islam. In his mystical poems, al-Dāghirī follows the traditional Tijānī Sufi method of writing in expressing his view on al-Tijānī as *khaatm al- 'awliyyaa'* (the seal of saints). For instance, in one of his mystical poems composed in praise of al-Tijānī, entitled *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii* V9-13, he submits that al-Tijānī is not only the *khaatm al- 'awliyyaa'* (the seal of saints) but also leader of the saints. Besides, he possesses all the qualities and blessings of the

⁹⁷³ *Fūtūhāt al-Makiyya* vol. 1, 129 & 244.

⁹⁷⁴ Tahir 1975, 505.

⁹⁷⁵ Viola 2003, 52.

⁹⁷⁶ Viola 2003, 52.

previous saints who came before him. Examples of this idea in the poem are innumerable but the following will suffice:

لقد فضل الله التجاني أحمداً على الأوليا النجباء غير بديد

V10. Indeed, the Allah favoured Aḥmad al-Tijānī and elevated him over the entire excelled *al-awliyyaa*, with none compared to him.

This submission of al-Dāghirī is in conformity with the views of other Tijānī Sufi scholars on the subject matter. For instance, Sayyid Muḥammad al-‘Arabī as-Sa’ih, in his work entitled *Bughyat al-Mustafid lisharh Maniyyat al-Murīd*, describes al-Tijānī as *Khaatm al-‘awliyyaa*’ al-Muḥammadi. This submission is also shared by Niasse, in his work entitled *Tanbiu al-‘Adhkiya’ fii Kawn Shaykh at-Tijānī Khaatm al-‘awliyyaa*’ where he labels al-Tijānī as the seal of saints. He also claims that a number of Sufi masters of many generations had earlier declared themselves to be the seal of saints, but they changed their minds after hearing spiritual voice warning them that they were not the *Khaatm al-‘awliyyaa*’. In order drive home his point, he makes a single reference to Ibn ‘Arabī as typical example. This view is also like that of ‘Atīq, which he expresses in work entitled *Taṣḥīḥ da’irat al-Haqīqat al-Ahmediyyah al-Mawjudat fi Kita bar-Rimah*.

Based on this, we disagree with Professor Omar Jah who was said to replace the concept of *Khaatm al-‘awliyyaa*’ with *al-Khatmiyyah* being an ideological basis for the movement of Shaykh al-Hajj ‘Umar b. al-Fūtī (d. 1864). As a matter of fact, the doctrine of *Khaatm al-‘awliyyaa*’ is a general ideology of the Tijānīyya brotherhood, rather than being restricted it to Shaykh al-Hajj ‘Umar b. al-Fūtī.

With similar vigour, al-Dāghirī argues that there would never be another seal of saints after al-Tijānī. He describes al-Tijānī as not only the gateway to the Prophet Muḥammad but also to Allah. He thus urges Muslims to love and obey Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī, he also demonstrated his wish for both the young and the adults strive for it. Examples of this theme feature in his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii* V28-34:

وما فوقه إلا مقام نبوة له كل علم دونها بالوصيد

V33. And, that position is high enough that no space is left ahead except the position of prophethood⁹⁷⁷. All knowledge behind that position is as doorstep for him.

Al-Dāghirī, like al-Hakim at-Tirmidhī, ‘Alī Ibn ‘Uthmān al-Hujwīrī and Ibn ‘Arabī, submits that all the prophets and saints including *khaatm al-‘awliyyaa*’ (the seal of saints) derive their status from Prophet Muḥammad. Besides, he also considers al-Tijānī as nothing but an extension of the Muḥammadan reality. On the issue of the relationship between prophecy and

⁹⁷⁷ See *Bahrul madid*, tafsīr of Aḥmad ibn ‘Ajīb al-Ḥasanī, volume 2, 169.

sainthood, al-Dāghirī submits that as the seal of prophecy (*khaatm al-nubuwwa*) was concealed in Prophet Muḥammad, the first substance created by God; the *khaatm al-wilaaya* (the seal of the sainthood) is concealed in al-Tijānī in his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii* V8, 14-18 as attested to by the following stanza:

فما هو إلا صرف نور محمد تبين بعد الكتم عند الحميد

V14. And he (Aḥmad al-Tijānī) is not but the component of the light of Muḥammad (saw) exposed after it was concealed, with whom he excessively praised-the Allah.

Considering the foregoing submission, we observe that the view of al-Dāghirī on *khaatm al-'awliyyaa'* is a replica of the view other Tijānī Sufi scholars who submit that there are seven mystical circumferences in all. Stating that the fourth one of the seven is the circumference of *khaatm al-wilaaya* (the seal of the sainthood) which according to him, is al-Tijānī, the founder of the Tijānīyya brotherhood. This can be seen in the following stanza from his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*:

له نسب عال على كل معتل إلى أن علا سبعا بغير جعيد

V66. He has a relationship that ascended upon all dignitaries up to the seventh *wilaaya*. There is no contrary opinion to this statement.

In mystical poems, the Sufi poets and scholars usually invoke al-Tijānī in which the poet seeks mediation, intercession and intervention of their leader and *khaatm al-wilaaya*. Moreover, the spiritual position of al-Tijānī, his wisdom, his generosity and kindness qualify him to be a mediator, an intercessor and provider. For instance, in his *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii*, in the following verses, al-Dāghirī presents his ambitions and demands before al-Tijānī whom he describes as a lover and leader:

مدحتك أرجو السؤل والفضل والمنى ومن يعط ما لم تعطه لليليد

V72. I express my eulogy in hope that you will grant my requests- bounty and ambitions. And who will give what you do not grant to this indolent?

In the final analysis, the submission of al-Dāghirī on the issue shows that his view represents the position of some Tijānī Sufi scholars, yet the way he articulates it with relevant evidences shows the originality of his thinking and portrays him as a Sufi conformist. *Khaatm al-'awliyyaa'* (the Seal of Saints) was not mentioned in the Qur'an and Prophetic Hadith. The doctrine was therefore considered heretical by both Salafī and Wahhabi scholars from its inception. Related to the concepts of *khaatm al-'awliyyaa'* (the seal of saints) and *khaatm al-wilaaya* (the seal of the sainthood) are the concepts of *ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa*.

8.18 Theme of *ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa*

Having explained the existence of *khaatm al-'awliyyaa'* (the seal of saints) in the realm of the *Ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya, it is only logical to say that *gawthiyyah* itself is also a continuation of the

nubuwwa (prophethood) and the *khaatm al-wilaaya* (the seal of the sainthood), which is also one of the major themes in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. Aḥmad al-Tijānī had, as earlier noted, prophesized the appearance of *fayḍa* (overflowing of spiritual flood) among his followers and that a large number of people will be initiated into the *Ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya towards the end of the last hour.⁹⁷⁸ The *fayḍa* would be spearheaded by *ghawth az-zaman* (the reformer or saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era), *Sahib al-Waqt* or *al-Fayḍa* (the bringer of *fayḍa* or man blessed with the spiritual flood). The case of *ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa*, in the view of Tijānī Sufi scholar, is like that of the saint and the seal of saints. As discussed in chapter two, Niasse claimed to be one and al-Dāghirī who aspired to become the *ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa* upon hearing of the emergence of Niasse as *ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa* paid allegiance (*bay‘at*) to him. Here are a few lines from his *Qaasidat Tarheeb*:

قال التجان الختم تاتي فيضة عم العوالم خيرها الجمّام

V20. Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī-the seal of saint had said: “there will come to you a *Fayḍa* (overflow-that was Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse) whose abundant blessing will encompass the universe.”⁹⁷⁹

He considered Niasse as a representative of al-Tijānī, and whatever is due to al-Tijānī is equally due to him. According to him, the institution of *Khalifa* (succession) in the *Ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya is an expression of a status, which is attained through divine grace as prophesized by al-Tijānī. Al-Dāghirī explains that, the spiritual flood (*Fayḍa*) of the Tijānīyya brotherhood predicted by al-Tijānī came to pass in Niasse. Al-Dāghirī in his discussion on the spiritual status of Niasse considers him as *Khalifa* (successor) of al-Tijānī against other Tijānī Sufi scholars who claimed that Sayyid at-Tayyib ibn ‘Illāl ought to be considered the lawful of *Khalifa* of al-Tijānī, because of his blood relation with the Shaykh that is, being his grandson. This fact is even reflected in the following stanza, in his *Qaasidat Tarheeb Saahibul*:

وقد ادعاها مرة زيد ونذخ — رى غيره يحظى بها المقدام

V22. Indeed, once, the Zaid had claimed to be one of the wrong thinking of his that a blockheaded can achieve it.

Al-Dāghirī claims that Niasse had abundant blessings which as a result he had initiated many people into the Tijānīyya brotherhood and converted several non-Muslims to Islam; referring to the prediction that the spiritual flood (*Fayḍa*) of the Tijānīyya brotherhood would flood all over the world through Niasse. Here are a few lines from his *Qaasidat Tarheeb*:

من مثل صاحب فيضة صمدية فيصي ألوف ساعة أى هاموا

V11. Who can be as owner of the eternal overflow (Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse) so that he should admonishes the thousands of people at the same time? No! They all shocked!

⁹⁷⁸ Nazifi 1984, 135-137; Seesemann 2011, 65-70 and Seesemann 2004, 79-81.

⁹⁷⁹ Compare with Qur’an 55:1-4.

Al-Dāghirī believed that all forms of blessings, knowledge and code and conduct of the brotherhood are made available through Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse. The emergence of Niasse as *Ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa*, according to al-Dāghirī, was due to his belief in the Divine law (Qur’an) because of his knowledge of Allah and the Divine law as well as the protection of the Islamic law. This is because, *gawthiyyah* cannot be attained by neglecting the Sharī’a, and that *gawthiyyah* is a destined state which cannot be acquired by ordinary prayer, fasting etc., but only by the knowledge of God bestowed on the chosen person. It is the result of Divine guidance and direction. This submission of al-Dāghirī is like that of The Sufī Muḥammad al-Fadl al-Balkhi. This fact is even reflected in the following stanza, in his *Qaasidat Tarheeb*:

لما اجتباك الله قدما بالرضى رفعت بك الأحكام والحكام

V7. Since you have been exalted by Allah out of appreciation, the laws and custodian of laws are elevated for your sake.

He adds that another quality which qualified Niasse to be chosen as *Ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa*, was his love for the Prophet and steadfastness on the Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad. Love for the Prophet and observing his Sunnah is not new to the Sufī irrespective of the generation, but in the recent years, it seems to have been emphasized by Niasse. The fact that all the activities and programmes of the *fayḍa* Tijānīyya under Niasse are considered adherents to the Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad. Almost all his writings are *Diwani* composed in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad. He was therefore considered as deputy to the prophetic mission and the power of Allah over the universe for auspicious causation (*jalabi*) and protection against inauspicious causation (*dafa’i*), is exercised through him. The following stanzas, in his *Qaasidat Tarheeb* exemplify this fact:

وبدا ثباتك في اتباعك سنة فكانك الصفوان والأعلام

V24. And your qualification for the position conferred on you by your adherence to the path of the prophet (saw). And you are as firm as rock and mountain.

According to the poet, another added advantage to Niasse, which makes him to excel to the position in question is his love and respect towards al-Tijānī. He said that only Allah knows and can quantify the love Niasse has for Prophet Muhammad and al-Tijānī. Furthermore, al-Dāghirī, like many other Tijānī Sufī scholars in northern Nigeria used to mention some mystical utterances of Niasse and associating him with miraculous power. One such mystical utterance of Niasse mentioned by al-Dāghirī, which are opened to different interpretations is states as follows: “Whoever loved or saw me, would, without any dispute, be in paradise forever.” This utterance of Niasse generates considerable controversy and his critics interpreted it against him His critics

interpret such statement as a *shirk* (associating partner to Allah).⁹⁸⁰ Al-Dāghirī in his *Qaasidat Tarheeb*, then stresses the statement under discussion and the similar one, which goes as follows:

أهلا وسهلا مرحبا بقدم من فازت برؤية وجهه الأقدام

V5. Welcome the arrival of the one who at the sight of whose face, the people achieve their aspiration.

Going through the views of al-Dāghirī on the above topic, we observe that he intends to put it on record that Niasse was the *ghawth az-zaman* (the reformer or saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era) and *Sahib al-Fayḍa* (the bringer of *fayḍa* or man blessed with the spiritual flood) even though he was not the biological son of al-Tijānī, the founder of the Tijānīyya. In the final analysis, al-Dāghirī has attempted to justify the status of Niasse as a successor (*Khalifa*) of al-Tijānī, as well as the reality of his prediction. And finally, the utterance made by Niasse that whoever sees his face would enter paradise is legally accepted in Islam. The submission of al-Dāghirī on the theme portrays him as one of the obedient members of the order. He submitted to the prophecy of al-Tijānī and claims of Niasse, putting his wish to become the *Ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa* aside by presenting this case for his readers and the public.

8.19 The Theme of *Tawbat* (Repentance and Remembrance of Death) and Interrogation in the grave

Reference had already been made to the repentance, remembrance of death and resurrection as they occupy an important place in the doctrine of the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī. Repentance (*Tawbat*) is described as the waking of the soul from the slumber of obliviousness, so that the sinner becomes aware of his evil ways and feels repentance for past disobedience.⁹⁸¹ The Sufi scholars and Sufi poets cunningly draw the attention of their followers and audience to purify their inner soul and work for their success in the hereafter. The logic used by them is to “describe the temporal world in terms of the stock Islamic, especially Sufi, image as vile, fickle, transient, etc., in contrast to the hereafter, which is pure, eternal and so on.”⁹⁸² The Sufi scholars and Sufi poets, therefore, use this build-up to urge and persuade their followers and audience on the necessity for immediate repentance.

⁹⁸⁰ There many works written by members of Tijānīyya in defence of such utterance made by Niasse that whoever sees his face would enter paradise. Shaykh Abū Bakr ‘Atīq. They, for instance, attempts in the work, *Risālat Tahsīl al-Amāni fī bayān qawl*.

⁹⁸¹ Nicholson 1966, 31. However, the theme of repentance emanated from the notion of impermanency, and character of the world (*Halin Duniya*), according to Hiskett, is essentially the *contemptus mundi* of the Medieval Christian theologians. Much of it is concerned with the notion of *Sic transist gloria mundi*, which often illustrates in great detail by reference both to general Islamic history and local history.

⁹⁸² Hiskett 1982, 418.

The following good example is taken from al-Dāghirī's *Inha 'u Salaam*, where he expresses the impermanency of this world in a simple and straightforward manner. He writes:

أمانا أمانا في الحياة وفي المما * ت من كل هول خيف قبل اقتحام⁹⁸³

V18. My request is securing from fright that is being feared in both worldly life and hereafter before I dive into it.

The poet's intention is to make his audience become acquainted with the impermanency of this world and the idea that man is mortal. Since man is mortal, he should be in a continuous state of purity and preparedness for the journey to God through death.⁹⁸⁴ In his *Bassus-shauqi*, al-Dāghirī confesses that he simultaneously do good and bad acts, and he was happy as he repents. He also laments the lack of compassion among his fellow Muslims and reminds them their final destiny and the judgement of God. He warns about delaying repentance because nobody knows the day, he/she will die. He writes:

وصالح أعمالي خلطت بسيئي ويفرحني في اليوم تجديد توبتي

V185. And I mixed my good deeds with bad one. But the renewal of my repentance today makes me happy.

This theme also gives the description of interrogation in the grave by Munkar and Nakīr.⁹⁸⁵

Muslims believe the dead must undergo an ordeal during the first night in the grave, when the soul will return to the body and the dead person will be questioned about his faith by the two terrifying angels Munkar and Nakīr. It was narrated that on the first night in the grave, the deceased is visited by Munkar and Nakīr, who will question him about his belief in God and the Prophet. If the answers are satisfactory, he is left in peace in the grave until the Day of Resurrection: if not, then Munkar and Nakīr beat him with cudgels of iron and he suffers immediate punishment in the grave as a prelude to future torments in Hellfire. In his *Bassus-shauqi*, al-Dāghirī pleads the Prophet to teach him the answers to the questions he would be interrogated in a grave, the ordeal that The interrogation in the grave is expressed:

ألا فاحضرن عند السؤال ملقنا جوابا صحيحا غير عي وقهة

V171. Indeed, visit me at the time of grave inquiry, coaching me on the authentic answer without stammering or over confidence.

Here, the failure to answer the question is the cause of the torment. Muslims of northern Nigeria adhere to the life after death which will start in the grave (*Barzakh*) before the end of the

⁹⁸³ I translated it as dive into (*mjm al-wasit*).

⁹⁸⁴ This theme of remembrance of death (*Tuna Mutuwa*) which is similar to the Medieval Christian *Memento mori*, according to Hiskett, is essentially of the uncertainty of life; the sudden onslaught of sickness often describes the terminal illness and the death-bed scene.

⁹⁸⁵ These two angels of the grave and others are greatly revered by the Muslims of northern Nigeria. They believe that the belief in angels is as important as belief in God and prophets of Allah. The angels do not possess any divine power but are created to assist man in his capacity as vicegerent on earth. The angel of death is not mentioned by name in the Qur'an although tradition calls him *Izrafīl*.

world and subsequently Judgement Day. The journey of the soul after death held a place of paramount importance in the mystical poems of Sufi scholars. From what has survived of their writings there appears the soul's ascent to Heaven to meet God. For instance, the poem of al-Dāghirī's *al-Rithaa* of Atiq reflects the nature of death comparing it to ascension. The poet considers death as a call by God or a way of meeting Allah in heaven. He writes:

وخبالك تحت حجارة محروفة خزفا ففي خير المضاجع يرقد

V5. He concealed you under a rock that changed to a jar. Thus, he sleeps in a comfortable bed.

He also compares the tomb with a beautiful room and to a bed where the deceased sleeps comfortably. He also compares death to sleep. From these lines we know that there are some ideas about death. One of the ideas is the reality that happens to every human being. The other idea is that we must prepare for it by turning to God. The poet compares death to sleep, and tomb to room to differentiate the death of scholars. The Sufis were well-known for this kind of esoteric interpretation of death.

8.20 Theme of and Resurrection, Torment of the Hellfire, and the Joys of Paradise

Another aspect of the theme pointed out by the Sufi scholars in mystical poems is the issue of resurrection, divine punishment and reward. To begin with, the theme of resurrection (*Tashin Kiyama*) dwells on the events on the Day of resurrection, the trump, the standing, the receiving of the book, the weighing on the scale, the crossing of the bridge, the intercession of Prophet Muḥammad. The purpose of the theme is to persuade Muslims to believe and practice Islam accordingly and seeks to use them to emphasize the urgency for immediate repentance. It explains the philosophy behind the Last Day. It is to remind mankind that his existence has a purpose and that he will meet his Lord, and that his success lies in his being righteous. His activities are being recorded by the Angels and shall be accounted for. Paradise⁹⁸⁶ and hell fire⁹⁸⁷ are provided as an abode according to the deeds of a person. In his *Bassus-shauqi*, al-Dāghirī has this to say:

يخوفني إنذار ربي بناره يقوي رجائي إنكالي لرحمة

V183. The warning of Allah with hellfire frightens me but my dependence on His mercy encourages me⁹⁸⁸.

Like other Muslims, al-Dāghirī explains that the Hell and torment lie in wait for the sinner and the unbeliever. But for the Sufi, as a true believer will that awaits him, with beautiful houses,

⁹⁸⁶ The enjoyment in the Paradise such as rivers of milk is mentioned in the Qur'an 47:15.

⁹⁸⁷ The Muslim Hell is composed of seven sections, each destined for a special kind of sinners: *Jahannam* for bad Muslims, *Laḥā* for Satan and his followers, *Sa'īr* for Christians, *Jaḥīm* for idolaters, *Saqar* for Sabians, *Hāwiya* for hypocrites, and *Huṭama* for Jews.

⁹⁸⁸ This verse shows how Ghibrīma is struggling between the position of *Al-khauf* (fear) and that of *Ar-raja'* (hope).

wives, and many more eternal delights in the Paradise, in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, has this to say:

ماكان يجحد فضله إلا غبي أوجاهل غمر توج جحيمه

V77. Never deny the bounties bestowed to him by Allah except mentally defected or unskilled ignorant whose hellfire is flaming.

The poet's purpose is to show that these divine events are already just around the corner: and to use them to persuade and coerce his listener (or readers) into repentance. As they repent, they will enter paradise. What remains now is to describe the pleasure of the paradise. Al-Dāghirī, like other Muslim scholars, has tried his best in portraying the picture of paradise to us in most of his mystical poems.⁹⁸⁹ As for the paradise, the Sufi scholars and Sufi poets usually content themselves with an allusive references to the Lakes of *al-Kawthar and Salsabīl*, which is usually considered the sweetest and most invigorating drink of the faithful in paradise. These Lakes are considered as the most colourful description of the delights that await the good Muslim. Al-Dāghirī writes on issues pertaining to pleasure and the enjoyment in Islamic Paradise in his *Inhaa 'us-Salaam*, in which he has this to say:

لك الكوثر المروي أفض لي بمائه * لإنقاء⁹⁹⁰ أيداني وفطر صيامي

V42. (O prophet,) the satisfactory water of *Al-Kawthar*⁹⁹¹ belongs to you please, pour upon me its water to purify my body and for the breaking of my fast.

In his *Bassus-shauqi*, he also mentions that:

وأسق بماء السلسبيل وكوثر شرابا بلا ظمأ لصاحب شربة

V75. Water me with the water of *Salsabīl*⁹⁹² and fount a drink which drinker will never thirst again.⁹⁹³

To drink from the water of *al-Kawthar and Salsabīl* metaphorically means to enter paradise.

To conclude the discussion on the theme of torment of the Hellfire and the joys of Paradise, al-Dāghirī sees the world as the temporary abode for man. Must therefore organize his worldly life in constant self-examination for the inevitable journey to the next world. He must lead a life of constant purity, piety and penance. Al-Dāghirī's firm conviction of the need for spiritual purification as the only way to salvation is consonant with the basic principles of Islam and the practice of mysticism of which is a faithful follower. Al-Dāghirī, like other Sufi scholars and poets,

⁹⁸⁹ The pleasure is immeasurable and innumerable see Qur'an 16:18.

⁹⁹⁰ I translated it as purification or purifying.

⁹⁹¹ Compare with Qur'an 108:1.

⁹⁹² Like *al-Kawthar*, it is a name of the principal and noble river in the heaven, which cleanses all souls entering Paradise. For detailed poetic discussion see next chapter of this thesis.

⁹⁹³ To drink from water of *al-Kawthar and Salsabīl* metaphorically means to enter paradise.

has always tried to explain and describe to his audience the details of torment and hell and the trouble associated with it, and enjoyment of the Paradise.

8.21 The Theme of the Qur'an and the Hadith

Yet another very common theme of the mystical poems is Qur'an and Hadith, which are both referred to as "primary and fundamental sources of Islamic law (Sharī'a)." The first source is a word of Allah which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad through Angel Gabriel. It contains 6,666 verses divided into 114 chapters. The second source refers to the comprehensive records of the Prophet Muhammad such as his speeches, deeds and actions, silent approval of the actions of others, sometimes it is called Sunna.⁹⁹⁴ This theme is, obviously, capable of innumerable adaptations and permutations in our area of study, northern Nigeria including Nguru.⁹⁹⁵

The warm reception accorded to the Qur'an in the region, also influenced the Sufi scholars and poets in composing much on the importance of the Qur'an. Al-Dāghirī made use of Qur'anic verses during his preaching and writing, he did not write any book on the science of the Qur'an. But he has works in which he urges the Muslims to adhere to the teachings of the Qur'an. In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud* V88, 89, 188, 204, 236 and 241, he believes and confirms that the Qur'an was revealed to all creatures as a guide through Prophet Muḥammad, who he called the "the owner of the Holy Book."

According to al-Dāghirī, the Qur'an is a "divine light of God" and "divine law" which shows the clear path, the right from the wrong, and the truth from the false. The rejectors of the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad will also be punished in Hellfire. He describes Qur'an as the complete Islamic law and enjoins the Muslims to undertake the studies of the Qur'an seriously and memorize it.

ياصاحب القرآن والنور الذي نار السماء به فشا تهريمه

V188. O the owner of the holy book and the light that casts its light over the sky? Indeed, with this, his highness prevailed.

Nur (light) mentioned in the verses refers to the Divine light of God which shows the clear path, the right from wrong, the truth from the false. The poet here uses a very common place metaphor to express the spiritual significance of the Prophet's birth and life: "He is indeed the total light..." "the light that eradicated the entire gloom has come." the pole of Islamic Sharī'a has flourished." This metaphor conveys the idea of the divine message and completion of the religion

⁹⁹⁴ Waddy 1990, 38.

⁹⁹⁵ Hiskett 1982, 442.

of Islam and Islamic law on earth. Among the people of northern Nigeria including Nguru, this light leads them out of the ignorance of darkness and evil into light of goodness and piety.

The poet believes that the Qur'an was revealed to mankind, after a long interval without a guidance (Revealed book, divine law and Prophet) through Prophet Muḥammad. This interval refers to the period when Prophet Isa (Jesus) was taken to the Heaven and the divine law he preached was broken and shattered and the people who accepted his teachings had deviated from the right path. Therefore, the divine book (the Qur'an) was sent to the mankind through Prophet Muḥammad for human guidance, to take them out of darkness and ignorance and lead them to light and knowledge. He dwells on the usefulness of the Qur'an to the Ummah of Prophet Muḥammad. According to him the Qur'an was revealed to amend all that has been destroyed after Prophet Isa was taken to Heaven. Not only that, but the Qur'an is also regarded as a protector against all sorts of evils and it is a blessing to its reciter for greater reward. There are many Qur'anic verses that provide strong evidence to this effect (Q16:89). He writes:

وأتى الورى بشريعة في فترة والناس ضلال علام عريمه

V60. He provided the nation with divine laws at the phase (interval between the prophet Isa (as) and the Muḥammad (saw).) when people deviated from the right path and they were covered by calamities and evil of deviation.⁹⁹⁶

Although the poet versifies the benefits of reading the Qur'an, he however laments his surprises on how despite the existence of divine law and Islamic knowledge, the unbelievers still rejected it and cast doubts on the teachings of the Qur'an. They therefore went astray and remained in the doom of ignorance. In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, he has this to say:

أم كيف يجهل قلبه ولديهم أم الكتاب مموجا تيميمه

V17. Or how his sense behaves ignorantly while with them was the holy book (Qur'an) flowing upon them its waves.

Almost all mystical poems of al-Dāghirī are filled with quotations and allusions to the Qur'an and Hadith, some subtle and some more direct. The idea behind quoting these two sources is to either emphasize his point or indicate the gravity of his point. In his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, he makes reference to the Qur'an. He writes:

إن الذين يبايعونك ااية فإذا قرأت فما بها تعظيمه

V228. "Verily, those who plight their fealty to you..." up to the end of verse. Indeed, if you read, then you read what his glory emanated from. Note: the completion of the said verse is: "... then they do no less than plight their fealty to Allah, the Hand of Allah is over their hand."

However, al-Dāghirī did not compose much on Hadith, but he emphasized its importance to the Muslims. On Hadith studies, for instance, al-Dāghirī made a commentary on authentic

⁹⁹⁶ Compare with Qur'an 3:164.

Hadith in his work entitled *I'alaamul Haajii*, with the sole aim of simplifying the content of the Hadith. This is unconnected with the poor understanding of the Hadith by many Muslim scholars. The Hadith is about counting of 999 with just a finger and its message was technologically rare. Moreover, Hadith has also prominently features in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī, for instance, in the sections he quotes the Hadith of Jabir on the issue of primal existence of the Prophet Muḥammad. However, in his *Al-Qasiidatu Sa'adus-Su'uud*, al-Dāghirī directly quotes a Hadith. He writes:

جاء الحديث بأن من قد أمانا وجبت عليّ حقوقه ومرومه

V203. The Hadith suggests that: “whoever endorses me as leader, it is incumbent upon me to safeguard his rights and grant him his privileges.”

In some instances, al-Dāghirī categorically states that he cited a Prophetic tradition, and indicates whether the Hadith is *Sahih* (Authentic), *Hasan* (Acceptable), *Da'eef* (Weak) and *Mawdoo'* (Fabricated). For instance, in his *Bathth Shawq*, he has this to say:

وقد جاء في الأخبار من أمانا وجب علينا له حق بغير ضعيفة

V176. And, verily, came in tradition that whoever comes to us, it is incumbent upon us to protect his rights. And, the hadith is not weak.

In view of these examples, one can draw the conclusion that since the people of northern Nigeria including Nguru are committed Muslims, it is natural and necessary for their poets to either employ themes from the Qur'an and Hadith or quote some verses from the Qur'an and Hadith to back their argument and discussion.

In conclusion, we have noted that al-Dāghirī believes that the Qur'an was revealed to mankind through Prophet Muḥammad. It contains all the teachings of the previous divine laws, and it is a light that guides mankind to the right path. He still laments and concludes that the unbelievers still rejected it and doubts its message.

8.22 Conclusion

This chapter outlines major Sufi themes in mystical poems of the northern Nigeria. As mentioned above, there is no doubt that the primary sources for the general notion of the major Sufi themes are the Qur'an, Hadith Prophetic tradition, *tafsir* (Qur'an exegetes) and a vast corpus of folkloric materials. Similarly, the themes which are encapsulated in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī are derived from the above mentioned sources. However, it has been discussed that, al-Dāghirī has two major categories of themes i.e. themes on the general ideologies and teachings of *taṣawwuf* (Sufism), where issues related to different aspects of Sufism such as divine and mystical love, the *Haqiqah al-Muḥammadiyya*, the doctrines of *Tawassul*, *shafaa'a*, and *Istighaathah* are

discussed. Another category of his mystical poems is on the *ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya order. In this category aspects of the *ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya order such as the doctrine of *khaatm al-'awliyyaa'* (the seal of saints), *khaatm al-wilaaya* (the seal of the sainthood) and *ghawth az-zaman* and *Sahib al-Fayḍa* are discussed. The major themes are many and they revolve around a central legendary figure, Prophet Muḥammad who was given a dual status. These are the Muḥammad of history and universal Muḥammad. It also portrays the position given to the Prophet Muḥammad in the mystical poems of northern Nigeria. We have also noted that the idea of *Fiyayye* (*Afdal al-khalq* or *al-Insaan al-kaamil*) is the most famous conception which undergirds the entire system of all Sufi doctrines.

Considering the different themes mentioned in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī, it is therefore observed that he shared similar views with early Sufi scholars. Despite the influence which the early Sufi scholars had on al-Dāghirī and his mystical poems, his mystical poems suggest that his works are original and he is an original thinker. This also portrays him as a creative scholar and champion, as well as the true Sufi and member of *ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya order, not only in Nigeria but also in West Africa where his works are read and patronized. However, most of these themes were not acceptable by the non-Sufi scholars especially the Wahhabis. The critics of the *ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya consist of mainly writers either against Sufism generally or against the doctrine of *ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya.

Thus, we can see that al-Dāghirī's mystical poems are characterized by extreme religious themes, particularly major Sufi doctrines. Its overall purpose appears to be to enlighten his audience by the Islamic religious ideals and Sufi ideologies, living as they are, in a society in which excessive materialism and negative allegations against Sufism seem to be rampant. The major Sufis ideologies buried in al-Dāghirī's mystical poems serve as an education to all those wise enough to listen. The following chapter will be devoted to the analysis of the themes of al-Fallātī's prosaic writings.

CHAPTER NINE

Analysis of the Major Sufi themes in the Mystical Prosaic Writings of al-Fallātī

9.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, the major Sufi themes in the mystical poems of al-Dāghirī have been analysed. This chapter focuses on the analysis of the major themes which al-Fallātī dealt with in his mystical prosaic writings.⁹⁹⁷ The themes are on general principles of Islam and major Sufi ideologies. The style adopted in the discussion is to first identify the themes as concepts, define them and relate them. This will then be followed by presenting the view and perception of al-Fallātī by quoting some portions from his works on a particular concept before appraising it. The themes discussed, therefore, did not only determine the position and perception of al-Fallātī on numerous Islamic and mystical issues but reflects the nature of Islam and Sufism in northern Nigeria.

9.2 The Major themes of al-Fallātī's Prosaic writings

Sufi prose is defined as someone's ideas, thoughts, and feelings about Sufism expressed in prose.⁹⁹⁸ The themes of al-Fallātī's prosaic writings are on position and importance of *Salat*, position and importance of *Imaam* and *Mamu*, the miraculous birth of the Prophet, *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The real essence of Muḥammad), listening to the Qur'an and admonition on the pursuance of Knowledge, *Asrar* (secret) of *Basmalah* and biography and hagiography of the Prophet Muḥammad; and virtues of the *Sahaba* (the Companions of Prophet Muḥammad). These themes found in the mystical prosaic writings of al-Fallātī are categorized into two. The first is themes on general principles of Islam and the second is on major Sufi ideologies.

9.3.1 Theme of the Position and Importance of *Salat* (ritual prayer)

Salat (ritual prayer) is one of the five fundamental pillars of Islam. It is a physical act of worship required of Muslims five times every day at specified periods individually or with others standing in horizontal lines facing *Qiblah*. Each prayer should be performed during the hours prescribed for it. Prayer should neither be omitted nor delayed because it is a sin to do so. *Salat*, according to Islamic scholars, is the only ritual that differentiates Muslims from the non-Muslims, and every Muslim who does not observe the five daily prayers is a *Kaafir* (unbeliever). Allah in

⁹⁹⁷ Prosaic work here refers to the non-metrical or non-rhymed written or spoken ordinary language that follows regular grammatical convention as opposed to poetry which usually follows a metrical structure (lines and stanzas). For more detailed discussion on the prosaic Islamic literature see Gelder 2012, 110.

⁹⁹⁸ Al-Tunji, *Al-Mu'jam Al-Mufasssal Fi Al-Adab*, 550-551.

the Qur'an commands the Muslims to observe the daily prayers in seventeen different places. The legal status and importance of *Salat* (ritual prayer) is a very important theme examined by al-Fallāṭī in one of his prose writings. The work is entitled *Kitaabul wafiy fii ahKaamis Salaati. Wayalihi Ahaadees fii Fadlis Sallati Waz-zajari Anit-tahaawuni Bi Haa* (The Comprehensive Book on provisions of Prayer, followed by Traditions on Virtues of Prayer and Warning about its Negligence). According to al-Fallāṭī, the attitude of many Muslims towards *Salat* (ritual prayer) motivated his writing on this subject matter. He observed that many Muslims were ignorant of the legal status and importance of the *Salat* (ritual prayer), while some Muslims knew about, but they ignore or neglect it. All these summed together according to al-Fallāṭī motivated him to write, to explain and to guide Muslims on the important position of *Salat* (ritual prayer) and conditions guiding the performing it.

After stating the reasons for which the work is written, he discusses the position of the five daily prayers in the perspective of Islamic law. He goes further to mention some benefits of observing the five daily prayers and warns against negligence towards them. Like other Islamic scholars, in his opinion, a Muslim forbidden from perform prayer without knowing it or without minor purification (*Tahaara*: removal of filthy) and major purification (*Ghusl Janaba*: ritual bath), and *wudu'* (ablution). Al-Fallāṭī draws the attention of those performing prayer without necessarily having enough knowledge of its rites; he says that this affects the validity and perfection of *Salat* (ritual prayer). Al-Fallāṭī, however, cites the view of experts in Islamic jurisprudence who observe that it is not permitted to pray without having knowledge of *Salat* and ablution:

قال العلماء: من دخل في الصلاة وأتى بها في الهيئة كما أمره الله تعالى.....الخ,,, فلما فرغ منها سئل عن فرائضها وأحكامها فلم يعرف من ذلك شيئا قال : أنا أفعل كما رأيت الناس يفعلون فصلاته باطلة.

Whoever performed prayer and attained it perfectly as prescribed by Allah, without overlooking any aspect of it up to the end of the prayer, then at the conclusion he was asked to specify its aspects in terms of an obligatory act, recommendable act and others; the performer answered that he does not know anything of that, but he performed it as he was seeing people doing, so his prayer proved to be invalid.⁹⁹⁹

Al-Fallāṭī, here, goes further to emphasize that performing prayer ignorantly invalidates the prayer. Notwithstanding, al-Fallāṭī states that these rules do not apply to only prayers but also

⁹⁹⁹ Al-Fallāṭī, 1960, 1.

wadu' (ablution)¹⁰⁰⁰ and major purification (*Ghusl Janaba*). He adds that whoever performs prayer without knowing its rules does not only have his deed rejected but also the doer will be classified as sinner. Al-Fallātī further says that not only prayer, ablution and purification but also fast, pilgrimage and entire service of worshipping must be performed with knowledge of its rules. Concerning this, according to al-Fallātī, there is no contradiction among scholars.

وليس في ذلك بين أهل العلم خلاف.

And there is no contradiction among the scholars.

Al-Fallātī further states that prayer is an obligatory act in Islam proved by the Qur'an, Hadith and *Ijmā*. Whoever neglects prayer while denying its obligation is *Kaafir* (unbeliever). He is considered a renegade. He will be killed as *Kaafir* and will be buried in a place other than Muslims' graveyard without purification and his wealth belongs to *bayt al-mal* (government treasury). However, whoever believed that the prayer is obligatory act, but refuses to perform it, such a person will be delayed to end of its time (*awqat ad-daruriyya*). If he refuses to perform the prayer, he will be killed as punishment, not as *Kaafir* (unbeliever) and will be buried in Muslims' graveyard. The funeral exercise is to be carried out by unimportant personalities. Shaykh, as earlier said, warns Muslims who neglect prayer. He refers to the Prophetic Hadith where the Prophet Muḥammad says

من حافظ على الصلاة أكرمه الله بخمس خصال: يرفع عنه ضيق العيش, وعذاب القبر, ويعطيه كتابه بيمينه, ويمر على الصراط

كالبرق, ويدخل الجنة بغير حساب¹⁰⁰¹

Whoever takes care of daily prayer, Allah will endow him some five characteristics: (a) Alleviate his hardship in life, (b) Ameliorate the grave punishment, (c) His letter (in the hereafter) will be served by the right hand, (d) Will scale through the *Sirat*¹⁰⁰² as lightening and, (e) Will enter paradise without accountability (with simple accountability).¹⁰⁰³

These are what al-Fallātī considers as the basic characteristics of the Muslim who constantly observes daily prayer in congregation.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Ablution is necessary before performing *Ṣalāt* and it is described as half of faith and the key of prayer.

¹⁰⁰¹ al-Fallātī 1960, 7.

¹⁰⁰² *Sirat* is a very thin, sharpened, blade-like bridge or path in Muslim eschatology which connects this world with hellfire and paradise. Every Muslim must cross this bridge or path and only the righteous can cross while the unrighteous fall to a flaming punishment under it. It was mentioned in the Qur'an 45 times.

¹⁰⁰³ Al-Fallātī 1960, 7.

ومن تهاون بالصلاة عاقبه الله بخمس عشرة عقوبة، ست في الدنيا وثلاث عند الموت وثلاث عند دخوله في القبر وثلاث عند لقاء ربه -أي موقف القيمة. وأما الأوتاي في الدنيا فالأول تنزع البركة من عمره و الثاني يمحي سما الصالحين من وجهه والثالث كل عمل يعمل لا يؤجره الله عليه والرابع لا يرفع له دعاء إلى السماء والخامس ليس له حظ في دعاء الصالحين. والتي تصيبه عند الموت والأولى أن يموت ذليلاً والثانية أن يموت جائعاً والثالثة أن يموت عطشان ولو سقي بحار الدنيا ما روي. وأما التي تصيبه في قبره والأولى يضيق الله عليه القبر حتى تختلف أضلاعه والثانية يوقد عليه في قبره ينقلب في الجمر ليلاً ونهاراً والثالثة يسلط عليه في قبره ثعباناً اسمه الشجاع الأقرع يضربه إلخ¹⁰⁰⁴

However, whoever neglects prayer, Allah will punish him with fifteen (15) types of punishments: Six (6) out of which are from the worldly life; three will occur at the time of death; three others will occur at the time of placing him in the grave, and the remaining three while standing before his Lord (on the Day of Judgment). The first six (6) are removal of blessings from his life, making one's face uglier (absence of good facial appearance), absence of reward for his deeds, his prayer will not ascend to Heaven (talk-less of acceptance), lack of having a share in the prayers of good people and his soul will be banished without mercy. The punishments he will deserve at the time of his death are: he will die in a humiliating death, he will die in extreme starvation and he will die in extreme thirsty. The punishments he will face at the grave are: tightening of his grave, igniting the fire in his grave to the extent that the grave will turn to burning coal day and night and a venomous snake named 'Shuja 'a' will be authorized to bite him while in the grave.

Reading through the virtues of prayer and warning about its neglecting by the Muslims as explained by al-Fallātī, one notices that he tries to justify the reward of observing five daily prayers and punishment awaiting for those who abstain from observing five daily prayers as explained by the Prophet Muhammad. We, therefore, observe that all the virtues of prayer and warning against the negligence of observing five daily prayers are not peculiar to them, rather, they are general to all Muslims but only emphasized by al-Fallātī. They are found in the Islamic literature in the Arabic language and many other languages in simplified form across the Islamic world. This, perhaps, accounts for the reason al-Fallātī wrote in simplified form for the consumption of the Muslims in his environment.

9.3.2 Theme of the Position and Importance of *Imaam* and *Mamu* in *Salat* (ritual prayer)

The person who leads Muslims in *Salat* (ritual prayer) is called *Imaam* while the followers are known as *Mamu*. In *Salat*, the *Imaam* recites the verses and words of prayer, either aloud or

¹⁰⁰⁴ Al-Fallātī 1960, 7.

silently depending on the type of prayer, and the people follow his movements. During the service, he stands backing the worshipers, toward the direction of Mecca. It is necessary (if were possible) to have an *Imaam* to carry out the *Salat*. The *Imaam* is often selected in the community permanently or among the Muslims who want to pray at a point in time. According to Muslim scholars, the appointment of the *Imaam* is a collective duty for Muslims. The ideal *Imaam* should be free, male, and just, should know the Sharia and should be capable of administering the *Salat*. The Wahhābīs hold that if these qualifications are present in someone from the Quraysh, he ought to be given preference. His appointment can be made by the agreement of influential people (*ahl al-ḥall wa- 'l- 'aqd*) or through designation by the previous *Imaam*.

Judging by their writings, this theme of position and importance of *Imaam* and *Mamu* in *Salat* is not an important polemical issue for the Sufis. In this connection, we will examine a few laws or conditions regarding the position and importance of *Imaam* and *Mamu* in *Salat* in the work of al-Fallāṭī entitled *Kitaabu Hidaayatil Anaami*. In this book, al-Fallāṭī encourages Muslims to observe their prayers behind an *Imaam* and warns against following ignorant *Imaam*. He mentions many reasons of which following an ignorant *Imaam* will invalidate the prayer of *Mamu* (followers). He suggests anyone who seeks the post of an *Imaam* should study very well and even if possible, a special knowledge regarding *fard* or *wajib* (obligatory) and *sunnah* (optional) of *Salat*. The Shaykh further submits that one must also memorize some portions of the Qur'an and study the rules and regulations governing the conduct of *Salat* (ritual prayer) to safeguard the prayers of his *Mamu* (followers) and himself as well.

On the means of becoming an *Imaam*, al-Fallāṭī states that there are different means to be considered: it can be by election, nomination, appointment, or selection. It may even be through inheritance, whereby a son especially the eldest among the children of a deceased *Imaam* will be appointed as the *Imaam*. One major feature of such appointment is that, in most cases, suitability and competency in terms of knowledge and moral up-rightness are put into consideration. Moreover, the Shaykh comes up with some questions and answers which would be asked and answered in the nomination or selection of an *Imaam*, this is a unique idea credited to him (no but was credited to Uthman bin Affaan). These questions are:

- إذا أردت أن تقتدي بإمام فاسئله عن أربعة مسائل إن أجابها فالقدوة صحيحة وإلا فلا.
- 1— أن يقال له صلاتك هذه من أجلك أو من القوم؟
 - 2— إتخذ ناك إماما وأنت من إمامك؟
 - 3— إقتد بذاك وأنت من اقتد بذاك؟
 - 4— قَدَّ مَنَّاك وأنت من قَدَّمْت؟

1. Is this prayer for you or for the people you are leading?
2. We consider you as our Imaam, whom do you consider as your Imaam?
3. We emulate you in our prayer who do you emulate in your prayer.
4. We put you as a guide in the prayer, who do you put as a guide in the prayer?¹⁰⁰⁵

Al-Fallātī says that if the candidate answers the above-mentioned satisfactorily, he is qualified to be an *Imaam* and the prayer led by him would be acceptable. If otherwise the candidate should not be appointed as an *Imaam*. He suggests that these questions should be adopted as conditions for every Muslim who aspires to become an *Imaam*. Therefore, if the conditions are faithfully applied, there will be sanity in the nomination or selection of *Imaam*. He goes further to answer the above-mentioned questions to help someone who seeks the post of an *Imaam*.

- 1— النية لي وصلاة لكم
- 2— إتخذ تموني إماما وأنا إتخذت القرآن إماما
- 3— إقتديتم بي وأنا إقتديت بما جاء به النبي (ص)
- 4— قَدَّمْتوني وأنا قَدَّمْت سنة النبي (ص)

1. The intention is mine while the prayer is yours.
2. You consider me as your Imaam, while I consider the Qur'an as Imaam.
3. You emulate me while I emulate the teaching of the prophet.
4. You put me as guardian to the right prayer while I put Qur'an as a guide.¹⁰⁰⁶

The above-mentioned answers, according to al-Fallātī are some of what should be known by a prospective *Imaam* before appointing him to the exalted position. He further urges the *Imaam* not to see his position as a means of misleading Muslims or means of acquiring wealth or an avenue of becoming famous and popular in the society. He similarly urges the *Mamu* to bear in mind that the *Imaam* is their leader and if he commits any mistake during the prayer, they should let him know by saying “*Subhānallāh*” (God is Glorified).

Going through his submissions on various issues concerning position and importance of *Imaam* and *Mamu* in *Salat* discussed, al-Fallātī's view relates the matters to the prevailing occurrences in his environment and to some extent, the reality on the ground. This is mainly because we observe that, in the northern Nigeria including Nguru, the post of an *Imaam* as a religious position, however, the reality of today in the region is that, it appears to be a political position. Another major problem affecting the position of an *Imaam* in the region is the issue of suitability, competency and *aqida* (creed). Many of the *Imaam*'s heirs would want to occupy the position of their late fathers without putting suitability, knowledge, and competence into consideration. However, charisma is usually put into consideration. If someone or an *Imaam*'s heir

¹⁰⁰⁵ Al-Fallātī nd. 1-2.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Al-Fallātī nd. 1-2.

who ought to possess a kind of charisma which his predecessor possessed, does not possess such, he will not be able to carry the people along. In another case, there was a Sufi Shuyukh a request who made a request that one of his biological sons or disciples should retain the post of an *Imaam* and continue to head the ritual prayers as an *Imaam*. Thus, the view of al-Fallātī on the election, nomination, appointment, or selection of an *Imaam* partially contradicts the reality on the ground.

The al-Fallātī's view on the position and importance of *Imaam* and *Mamu* in *Salat* is in line with the views of Sufi scholars in general and the Tijānīs in particular. This makes his work not to be a mere complication of ideas of the previous scholars. Although, the fact that al-Fallātī does not emphasize on the duties of an *Imaam* may perhaps mean that by the time the Shaykh was writing the work, the novices were law abiding and it was the *Imaam* who were found wanting in their responsibilities. Viewed from another perspective, the lack of emphasis on the *Mamu* (followers) may also mean that, the problem with the *Imaam* affects the *Mamu*. The Shaykh, therefore, might have thought of correcting the situation by drawing attention to the problem of the *Imaam* who is expected to be a model to his *Mamu*. Besides, the work also portrays the Shaykh as a traditionalist seeks to make people follow the traditional rules and regulations laid down for the observance of *Salat* (ritual prayer).

9.3.3 Theme of Listening Qur'an and Admonition on the Pursuance of Knowledge

In Islam, seeking knowledge is necessary for every Muslim man and woman; and it is the first thing which Allah demands His messenger to seek as mentioned in Qur'an 96:3. This is mainly because those endowed with knowledge are superior to the ignorant as stated in Qur'an 39:9. The learned are not above the ignorant in terms of intellectual maturity but "God will rise, to (suitable) rank (and degrees) those of you who believe and who have been granted knowledge; God is well acquainted with all ye do" (Q58:11). The twentieth-century Nguru Sufi scholars did not only make some attempts in encouraging Muslims to pursue education vigorously through their writings but also educated them on how to acquire the knowledge. One of the works on such subject is *Kitaabu Tabsirat al-Muminina* (The Book of high lightening and awakening believers) composed by al-Fallātī. In this book, the author enjoins the Muslims to embrace listening to Qur'an, prophetic hadith and other Islamic texts. He demonstrates that the first step of acquiring knowledge is by paying great attention to the teacher and by good listening by the learner. He says:

أول العلم حسن الإستماع بدليل ترتب الفهم عليه والفهم إنما يحصل بحسن الإستماع
لا بمجرد الإستماع فافهم وقد قيل في قوله تعالى "ولا تعجل بالقرآن من قبل أن
يقضى إليك وحيه" طه

وقوله تعالى "لا تحرك به لسانك لتعجل به " القيامة إن في ذلك تعلمًا من الله
لرسوله (ص) حسن الإستماع

The first step of education is good listening, with good listening one can understand not by mere listening. Allah says: “Be not in haste with the Qur’an before its revelation is completed...” (Q20:114). In another verse, Allah says, “Move not thy tongue concerning the Qur’an to make haste therewith...” (Q76:116). In the above verses, Allah is teaching his prophet that good listening is adaptable by everybody. Al-Fallātī further says:

بالأدب يفهم العلم وبالعلم يصح العمل وبالعلم تنال الحكمة وبالحكمة يقام الزهد
وبالزهد تترك الدنيا وبترك الدنيا يرغب في الآخرة وبالرغبة في الآخرة تنال الرحمة
عندالله تعالى With politeness understanding occurs; by
education the practices will be genuine; by practice wisdom
would be derived and by wisdom the asceticism will be adopted
and with asceticism the world will be relinquished and with
relinquished (release) of the world the excellent end would be
expected in the hereafter, and with the expectation of good in
the hereafter the mercy of Allah would be acquired.

According to al-Fallātī, good listening can only occur with extreme politeness physically and internally. However, the internal goes with purification of intention and sincerity towards what you are listening.¹⁰⁰⁷ Al-Fallātī comments that some beneficial acts ought to be carried out and students should pay attention to them, as cited below:

مما ينبغي أن يعتني به مريد المطالعة لكتب العلم أن يقول قبل الشروع
بحضور قلب (اللهم إني أستودعك جميع ما أنظره في هذا الكتاب حتى تردّه
عليّ في وقت احتياجي إليه. وهو غاية في الحفظ
والوعي.

Out of what is supposed to be undertaken by a researcher is to say before start reading “O Allah, I acquire whatever I will read from this book from You and and remind me whenever the need arises.”¹⁰⁰⁸

In a nutshell, one is inclined to accept that al-Fallātī discusses the quest for knowledge together with skills for paying great attention to the teacher and good listening by the learner which is based on the teachings of Qur’an and Prophetic Hadith to imbue members of his community. The writing on the quest for knowledge does not suggest that the members of his community are not interested in the knowledge or morally bankrupt in terms of attentiveness to the teaching and learning. Nevertheless, it does not rule out the availability of some members who may have no interest in the quest for knowledge. Whatever the case, al-Fallātī has the duty as a teacher to educate his disciples on the importance of knowledge and methods of acquiring it. However, we

¹⁰⁰⁷ Al-Fallātī 1978, 2-3.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Al-Fallātī 1978,12-13.

discover that most of the issues raised and discussed in the work are mostly supported by Qur’anic verses and Prophetic traditions.

9.3.4 Theme of Miraculous Birth and Biography of the Prophet Muḥammad

Since the third century of Islam, Muslim scholars began to record the life history of Prophet Muḥammad. Early biographies of the Prophet Muḥammad were many but outstanding among them were of Ibn Ishāq (d. 152 A.H.) and Ibn Hishām (d. 218 A.H.). To the Muslim the biography of Prophet Muḥammad is important because he is a perfect example for men and women of all ages, working in any profession, a trade to follow to obtain happiness and peace in their individual as well as collective life.¹⁰⁰⁹ Al-Fallātī has written the brief biography of the Prophet Muḥammad enumerating his virtues, miracles and all extra-ordinary events that are associated with his life. One of his major works on this theme is *Kitaabu Nuurul Arwaahi* (The Book on Light of the Souls). In the main text, al-Fallātī follows the method of the classical Muslims historians like Ibn Hishām (d. 218 A.H.) and Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (224–310 AH; 839–923 AD).

He begins his work by mentioning the main events that are associated with miraculous birth of the Prophet in chronological order starting with Abraham al-Ashram’s attempt to destroy the Kaaba (the house of God). Like other Muslim historians, al-Fallātī states that the year in which he was born is called the elephant year since the king of Habesha (Ethiopia) Abraha the son of Sabah al-Ashram sent an Army with the elephant to Makkah in the year in which he (prophet) was born in an attempt to demolish the Ka’aba and his army was destroyed by birds signifying the birth of Prophet Muhammad. He says:

وهو عربيّ قريشي عدناني أبوه عبد الله بن عبد المطلب وأمه آمنة بنت وهب ولد بمكة المكرمة في فجر يوم الإثنين

عشرة ليلة مضت من ربيع الأول (أغسطس) وسمي عام ولادته عام الفيل لأن ملك الحبشة أبرهة بن الصباح الأشرم أرسل جيشاً إلى مكة لهدم الكعبة فأهلك الله الجيش إكراماً لولادته (ص)

He (the prophet) Arab by tribe, Quraysh by dialect related to Bani Adnan, son of Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, by Amina (his mother) was born in Makkah the morning of Monday twelfth day of Rabi’ al-awwal, in the month of August 570 AD.” And the year named “An Elephant Year”, this is because the king of Habasha-Abraha ibn Sabah Al-ashram sent army to demolish the holy Ka’aba in Makkah, but were destroyed to honour the birth day of the prophet.

Another event, mentioned by al-Fallātī, which was claimed to have taken place during the birth of Prophet Muhammad is the account of the light that lighted the palace of Sham, shaking of the wall of *Kisraa*, the falling of their fourteen important shades (veranda) and the extinguishing

¹⁰⁰⁹ Rahman 1981, vi.

of the fire of the Paris ignited since thousands of years for worshipping etc., as discussed in the previous chapter. He has this to say:

فمن بعضها ظهور النور معه (ص) حتى أضاءت له قصور الشام وارتجاج إيوان كسرى
وسقوط أربع عشرة شرفة¹⁰¹⁰ من شرفته وخمود نار فارس ولم تخمد قبل ذلك بألف عام.

And, out of the events that occurred (at his birth day), is the appearance of light with him which lighted over the palace of Sham that made its hall to shake and fall down of the fourteen veranda out of its shades as well as the extinction of the fire in Paris that had never happened before for at least one thousand year.

Related to this, in another work, *Fadaa'ilul Basmalati wa ba'adi Fadaa'ilil Maulidihee* (Virtues of *Basmalah* and the *Maulud an-Nabiy*), al-Fallātī quotes Nana Amina, the mother of Prophet Muḥammad saying:

"ورأيت كأن جناح طائر أبيض قد مسح من فؤادي فذهب عني الرعب وكل ما أجد ثم إلتفت فإذا نور غالب ونسوة طوال حولي فقلت من أين علمن بي، وفي رواية إنهن قلن نحن عاسية امرأة فرعون ومريم بنت عمران وهؤلاء من حور العين.

I saw like a wing of white bird touching my chest ... then all the fear in me and pain I felt left immediately. As I turned over, I saw a glorying light and four tall women standing by my side. I said from, where did they know me? In another vision, they said: they are Asiya-the wife of Pharaoh, the Maryam-daughter of Imran, -the remaining were Hurul-Ain from paradise....."¹⁰¹¹

Al-Fallātī goes on to discuss the genealogy of Prophet Muhammad, from both maternal and paternal sides. He explains the importance of knowing the prophet's genealogy and the blessings to be derived by those who memorize it. He also narrates how Muhammad was raised an orphan under the guardianship of his grandfather, 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (c. 546–570) and his uncle, Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (600-661). He recounts the death of both his grandfather and the role of his uncle, who championed his upbringings. He also discusses the repentance of Prophet Muhammad's uncle, Hamza ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (d. 567-625) and the second caliph of Prophet Muhammad, Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 584-644). It was in the fifth year of the prophethood of Prophet Muḥammad that these two important Quraysh men repented and embraced Islam and they were described as best of Quraysh both in power and bravery wise. (The reason Hamza repent was that a woman criticised him about his reluctance to take action concerning the insult of the Amr (ū) ibn Hishām also known as Abū Jahl (556-624 on his brother's son, Muḥammad. This made him to confront the Abū Jahl which resulted in abusing and beating him with a bow, and eventually left

¹⁰¹⁰ Al-Fallātī 1992, 1-2.

¹⁰¹¹ Al-Fallātī 1992, 15.

him in his darkness (embraced Islam). The Umar also embraced Islam three days after Hamza. The author also lists out the sons and daughters of the prophet, the repentance of the Hamza ibn ‘ Abd al-Muttalib (567-625), bounties of performing the commemorating the birthday of the prophet, the qualities bestowed on him by Allah both in manner and appearance and Prophet Muḥammad’s miraculous act. He has this to say:

في السنة الخامسة من النبوة أسلم رجلان من كبار قريش مشهوران بقوة وشجاعة وهما حمزة عم النبي(ص) وسبب إسلامه إن جارية عيرته إيذاء أبي جهل لابن أخيه فتوجه إلى ذلك الشقي وغاضبه وسبه وقال كيف تسب محمد (ص) وأنا على دينه ثم أسلم فكان أحسن الناس إسلاما حتى سمي أسد الله. وعمر بن الخطاب ثاني الخلفاء الراشدين ما كان أحد ير جو إسلامه ولكن النبي (ص) قبل إسلامه قال: " اللهم أعز الإسلام بعمر", حصلت له بركة دعوة رسول الله (ص).

In the fifth year of prophet ship two important men of Quraish who were well known in term of bravery and power were embraced Islam. They: 1- Hamza-the uncle of the prophet (saw). The cause of his Islam was: a young girl degraded him for his negligence to let Abujahil harming his nephew-the prophet (saw). Then he took the direction of that miserable (Abujahal) to whom he agonized and abused telling him that, “how did you abused the Mohammad (saw) while I am in his religion?”, then he embraced Islam and he became excellent in Islam to the extent that he was nicknamed “The Lion of Allah”

2- And Umar bin Khatab- the second of rightly guided khalifs. Before his Islam no one expected him to come to Islam but, the prophet had once made a prayer in which he said: “O! my Lord support the Islam with Umar”. He gained the Islam in the virtue of the prophet’s prayer.¹⁰¹²

Al-Fallātī significantly continues to discuss the importance of *Maulud an-Nabiy* celebration, nicknames of the prophet, and special features of the Prophet Muḥammad and purifications and a good omen of his body. He also dwelled on the attitude and miracles of the prophet. Apart from discussing the Prophet’s physical strength, he also looked at the uniqueness of the Prophet’s genealogy. The author goes further to give out the account of Prophet’s death. Attached to the book is the importance of *zikr* (Allah’s Remembrance) and some quotations from the saying of Islamic scholars.

The importance of this theme is to provide religious education on the history of the prophet’s parents, his virtues, his miracles and his attitude and attributes to the Muslims. By knowing this, the young readers will understand and appreciate Prophet Muḥammad and will go a long way in

¹⁰¹² Al-Fallātī 1992, 7.

shaping the attitude and character of the Muslim *ummah*. This portrays al-Fallātī as a traditionist rather than a non-conformist. Al-Fallātī's approach, in this case, is a right step in a right direction because his intention is to make Muslims understand and appreciate their Prophet Muḥammad as reported by previous scholars rather than to preach a radical view different from the known and accepted norm. As earlier mentioned, the theme clearly demonstrates the depth of knowledge and scholarship of the al-Fallātī.

9.4.1 Theme of *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The real essence of Muḥammad) and *al-Insān al-kaamil* (The most excellent of creation)

The concept of *al-nuur al-Muḥammadiy*, as earlier noted in the previous chapter, demonstrates the Sufis' belief that it is from this primal *al-nuur al-Muḥammadiy* (the light of Muḥammad) all other things were created: the pen, the throne, the chair, the heavens, the earth, and all that is on the earth are an extension of that light.¹⁰¹³ The most important works of al-Fallātī concerning the above subject is *Kitaabu Fadaa'ilul Sayyadil Mustaha* (Virtues of Al-Mustapha).¹⁰¹⁴ It was on the secret of the *al-Haqiqatul Muhammadiy* (The Reality Essence of Prophet Muhammad) which *tajalla* (divine manifestation) on some *Arifun* (Gnostics) such as *Qutb* (pole) and with similar *maqamat* (spiritual station). In this work, al-Fallātī opines that the Prophet is a comprehensive leader of the creatures. He explains creation of Prophet Muḥammad and many realities and essence of Prophet Muhammad. Like other Sufi scholars, al-Fallātī argues that Prophet Muḥammad was created the coming into beings of Prophet Adam; he cites from the Hadith of Abū Huraira (678, 679/ 680) in which he says: they asked the messenger of Allah when he became the prophet? He answered that before the Prophet Adam's coming into being.

However, like al-Dāghirī, as earlier discussed in the previous chapter, al-Fallātī strongly believes in the concept of *Fiyayye*. According to this concept, among all the Men on earth, the Prophets and Messengers taken into account, Muḥammad is regarded "*Fiyayye*" (Ar. *Afdal al-khalq* or *al-Insān al-kāmil*, Eng. the most excellent of creation, the Ideal and Perfect Man) and *Raḥmatun lil 'ālamīn* (the Divine Mercy)¹⁰¹⁵ that has been granted to the world. Muḥammad was

¹⁰¹³ I discuss this theme at length in the previous chapter. Suffice it here to say that the notion of light as a metaphor or simile, or indeed even perhaps as a symbol for divine mercy, the knowledge of Islam and the role of Muhammad as God's messenger.

¹⁰¹⁴ It is another name for Prophet Muhammad.

¹⁰¹⁵ *Fiyayye* is the Hausa term equivalent of the Arabic terms "*Afdal al-khalq* or *al-Insān al-kāmil*" and "*Annabin Rahma*" correspond to Arabic term "*Raḥmatun lil 'ālamīn*," both of which are epithets of the Prophet Muhammad. However, a detailed and comprehensive discussion on these two epithets as relate to the Muhammad is provided in the subsequent pages of this thesis.

both prophet and a leader of all.¹⁰¹⁶ The submission of al-Fallātī stands on the bounties, uniqueness and peculiarities of Prophet Muhammad. The submission of the Shaykh is that the prophet is the best of creatures citing example with the episode where Abbas came to the prophet as if he heard something.

جاء العباس إلى رسول الله (ص) وكأته سمع شيئاً فقام النبي (ص) على المنبر فقال: من أنا، فقالوا أنت رسول الله (ص) وقال أنا محمد بن عبدالله بن عبد المطلب إن الله خلق الخلق فجعلني في خيرهم ثم جعلهم فرقتين فجعلني خيرهم فرقة ثم جعلهم قبائل فجعلني في خيرهم قبيلة ثم جعلهم بيوتاً فجعلني في خيرهم بيتاً وخيرهم نفساً¹⁰¹⁷

Abbas came to prophet (saw), like he has heard something. The prophet stepped on forum and said: who am I? They answered that you are the messenger of Allah. And he said: I am Muḥammad the son of Abd Allāh, the son of ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib. Indeed, Allah has created the creatures and put me among the best of them, then He split them into two sides, and put me among the better of the two sides; then He divided the best side into two different tribes, and put me among the best tribe out of them. Then He put them in different houses (dialect) and put me among the best and dignified house.

Al-Fallātī continues to justify his stand by making reference of the resemblance of Prophet Muḥammad and Prophet Ibrahim (AS) by citing example with the Hadith of Jabir who says:

عرض عليّ الأنبياء فإذا موسى ضرب من الرجال كأته من رجال شنوثة ورأيت عيسى بن مريم فإذا أقرب الناس من رأيت به شيها عروة بن مسعود ورأيت إبراهيم عليه السلام فإذا أقرب من رأيت به شيها صاحبكم (يعني نفسه)

The prophet said, “I was shown Prophet Musa (AS) ... I found him resembled the people of Shanu’s, ... then I met Prophet Isa (AS) ... I found that none out of the people I saw resembled to him except ‘Urwa Ibn Mas’ud. Then the prophet Ibrahim – I found him resemble the Prophet of yours (means himself)”¹⁰¹⁸

This Prophetic Hadith was generously cited by the Sufis to justify the doctrine and back their claims about Prophet’s light.

9.4.2 Theme of *Asrar* (secret) and Analysis of *Basmalah*

The theme of *asrar* (secret arts or medicine) is very wide. Here it refers to the beneficial results of writing or reciting of a particular *surah* (chapter) and *ayah* (verse) of the Qur’an, and the ninety-nine names of Allah to bring good fortune or to ward off evil of misfortune. Many works were written on this subject by the twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars. This field of protective and secret medicine is an area where the strength of al-Fallātī’s mystical works is demonstrated.

¹⁰¹⁶ Waddy 1990, 35.

¹⁰¹⁷ See *Musnad al-Ahmad*, Hadith number: 1788, vol. 3, 307, (Arabic version).

¹⁰¹⁸ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 4, Book 55, Number 647.

He was noted as a master of *asrar* and wrote several works on the subject. He also extensively wrote on the special formula of using certain names of Allah, chapters and verses of the Qur'an in supplication. One of such works is on the *asrar* of *Basmalah* (*Bismillaahi ar-Rahmaan ar-Rahiim*, in the name of God, the Most Gracious, and the Most Merciful), wherein he explains some of the merits one will obtain by reciting it. *Basmalah* is the first verse of the first chapter (*Surat al-Fatiha*) of the Qur'an. Not only does the Qur'an begin with this verse, it also heads every chapter of the Qur'an except for the ninth (9) chapter, *Surat al-Tawba*. Many exegetes consider it as the summary of the whole Qur'an because *Surat al-Fatiha* is the summary of the whole Qur'an, and *Basmalah* is the summary of *Surat al-Fatiha*.

Because of the utmost importance and benefits attached to *Basmalah*, it is also used extensively in everyday Muslim life as it is being recited before the commencement of every action because of the virtues and merits attributed to it. This accounts for the reason the *Basmalah* is frequently mentioned by the Shaykh in all his works. Furthermore, two pieces of works are dedicated to *Basmalah*. Al-Fallāṭī in his outstanding work entitled *Fadaa'ilul Basmalati wa ba'adi Fadaa'ilil Maulidihee* (Virtues of *Basmalah* and the *Maulud an-Nabiy*), deals with the *asrar* of *Basmalah* and the importance of participating in the *Maulud an-Nabiy* (the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad). He discusses the meaning of *Basmalah* as the secret of Allah's name, and, its purpose is to move closer to Allah because it is an exclusive secret of high *dhat* (Essence). It contains the secret of *Qudra* (Divine power) and *irada* (Divine willing). According to him, the *Basmalah* is also from the secret of *Surat al-Fatiha* and its alphabets. However, contrary to the popular notion that the *Basmalah* has 19 Letters of the alphabet, the *madd* (elongation) on the *mim* of *Ar-Rahiim* suggests it has 20.

The essence, significance, purpose and place of *Basmalah* can never be overemphasized because it contains the greatest name of Allah. He goes on to explain the uniqueness and superiority of the name "Allah" and, he urges the Muslims to use their sense to understand the nature of the name. He writes:

"الله" "الله" اسم الذات العلية ولا يطلق على غيره تعالى، وفي قوله تعالى "هل تعلم له سميا
 " معناها- هل تعلم أن أحدا سمي بهذا الاسم الشريف غير الله تعالى؟ وقد حكى أن امرأة ولدت
 The غلاما فسمته "الله" فاحترق (أي الغلام) في ساعته، وهو الاسم الأعظم.
 The proper name "Allah (deity)" is the name of the exalted nature (God). It is never named other than Him. The Qur'an says: "know thou of any who is worthy. Of the same name as He" (Q19:65). Meaning: have you ever known anyone that is called with the name "Allah?"

Al-Fallātī, in addition, cites example with an event that happened to a woman who named her son after the name “Allah.” No sooner the boy burnt to ashes. It is a glorious name (in which whatever you request Allah using the name, it will be granted.). He quotes another Hadith in which the Prophet Muhammad was reported to have said:

من قال: بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم, كتب الله له بكلّ حرف أربعة آلاف حسنة و محى عنه أربعة آلاف سيئة ورفع له أربعة آلاف درجة.
 ... whoever recites “*Bismillah al-Rahmaan al-Raheem*” will be rewarded for each latter 4000 of good; erased against him 4000 of sin and raised for him 4000 ranks.”¹⁰¹⁹

Al-Fallātī later explains the *asrar* of *Basmalah* because of the virtues and merits attributed to it. For instance, it is said that “Whoever recites *Basmalah al-Rahmaan al-Rahiim*, the Almighty Allah will reward him per each latter in it with 4000 good deeds, clean-up 4000 bad deeds and elevate him up to 4000 steps of dignities.” Concerning this benefit, al-Fallātī says that whoever recites *Basmalah* at bedtime, will be protected against Jinn and Satan throughout the night.¹⁰²⁰ A condition to be fulfilled in using this glorious name (Allah) for a prayer to be answered is that, one must feed from a lawful source and speak the truth always. This leads us to the next theme of the work, that is, lawful sustenance. Al-Fallātī has this to say:

وشروط إجابته التي هي
 من أكل الحلال أطاع الله شاء أو أبي ومن أكل الحرام عصى الله شاء أعظمها أكل
 الحلال وصدق المقالة. وفي المدخل: عن النبي (ص) . أو أبي
 “The highest criterion of accepting prayer through calling this name is: eating *Halaal* and speaking truth. In the book titled “*Madkhal*”, the prophet said: whoever eats from lawful he obeyed Allah whether he likes or no and whoever eats from unlawful he disobeyed Allah whether he likes or no.”

This is in line with Qur’anic verse, where Allah enjoins thus:

But seek, with that (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter and forget not your portion of lawful enjoyment in this world, and do good as Allah did to you, and do not seek to make mischief in the land. Indeed, Allah loves not those who are mischief-makers (Q28:77).

In the same vein, like any mortal in tandem with the Qur’anic verse quoted above, where Allah enjoins us on the need to strive for legitimate means for survival, Shaykh is not an exemption as he supplicates for legitimate provisions from Allah.

¹⁰¹⁹ Al-Fallātī 1992b, 2.

¹⁰²⁰ Al-Fallātī 1992, 3.

The concept of lawful substance is all encompassing in this regard. Albeit, Sufism as a doctrine, and asceticism as a practice work hand in hand, nevertheless, the doctrine is premised on the Sharī'a of Islam, thus, to seek for legitimate means of sustenance is *sine qua non* for every *Murid* (*protégé*). It is on this premise that al-Fallātī stresses the importance of lawful sustenance. Citing an example with a tradition found in the book “Madkhal.” The prophet said: whoever eats from *Halāl* whether he likes or not, he has obeyed Allah and whoever eats from an unlawful source, whether he likes or not, has breached the law of Allah? He has this to say:

والعاصي لا يستحق الإجابة

Whoever breaches the law his prayer is not deserved to be answered.

The work is an attempt on the part of al-Fallātī to undo the misconception of *asrar* of the *Basmalah*. The combined effect of all these shows that al-Fallātī writes to educate his fellow Muslims and make available to them some of the *asrar* of the *Basmalah* which are of benefit to them, not only in attaining closeness to Allah but providing solutions to their mundane problems. Moreover, the method adopted by the ‘Uthmān in presenting these benefits and virtues is comprehensive and in a straightforward language. Consequently, it portrays ‘Uthmān as an educator as far as the teachings of the *asrar* is concerned. We, therefore, observe that *asrar* of the *Basmalah*, is one of the rare issues that many Tijānī Sufi writers do not attach importance to. That does not suggest that it is a non-issue. The fact that al-Fallātī writes on it makes it a topical issue and at the same time calls the attention of scholars to it. This is based on the consideration of the environment where al-Fallātī grew which is purely a traditional set-up where people wholeheartedly believe in *asrar*. Moreover, the stand of al-Fallātī can be perceived as an advancement on what some Sufi scholars of Nguru, as in other parts of northern Nigeria started.

The originality of the work portrays the author not only as an original thinker but also as one of the champions or as masters of *asrar* in the West African sub-region. Apart from the *asrar* of the *Basmalah*, he also discusses the virtues and modes of conducting the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad. Among the lessons that can be gleaned is that a *Murid* (*protégé*) must strive for a legitimate means of livelihood, for it is a disservice to Islam and Humanity to rely on others for survival. More so, we should imbue our minds with the love of the Prophet Muhammad and members of his household; it is through it a murid can attain a lofty spiritual height.

9.4.3 Theme of *Mawlid an-Nabiy* (Celebration of the Prophet Muhammad’s Birthday)

The celebration of *Mawlid an-Nabiy* is a common theme in the mystical works of Sufi scholars in northern Nigeria including Nguru. Kramer and Gibb define *Mawlid an-Nabiy or mawlid* (plural *mawalid*) as the time, place or celebration of the birthday of a particular individual, particularly of the Prophet Muḥammad.¹⁰²¹ In Nguru, and other parts of the Islamic world, the term *Mawlid an-Nabiy* is reserved solely for the birthday of the Prophet. Its popular usage has been associated with the celebration and commemoration of the birthday of the Prophet Muḥammad that usually comes up every twelfth of Rabi’ al-Awwal of the Muslim calendar.¹⁰²² The virtues of the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad is one of the themes discussed by al-Fallāṭī. In this work, *Fadaa’ ilul Basmalati wa ba’adi Fadaa’ ilil Maulidihee* (Virtues of *Basmalah* and the *Mawlid an-Nabiy*), he discusses the virtues and modes of conducting the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad. In discussing the virtues of the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad, al-Fallāṭī starts with the miraculous events that occurred in the eve of the birth of the Prophet Muḥammad as a signal of his coming. He also discusses his growing time, his death and purification of his dead body. Closely related to these, the Shaykh discusses the importance attached to the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad, being the best of mankind. The Shaykh is of the view that conducting the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad is permissible in Islam which should be carried out by every Muslim regardless of his sectarian affiliation. Regarding the status, legality and legitimacy or otherwise of celebrating the birthday of the prophet by the Muslims, al-Fallāṭī states that there are numerous Prophetic traditions to justify it. He, therefore, cites a Prophetic Hadith where the Prophet says:

من عظم مولدي كنت شفيعا له يوم القيمة.
ومن أنفق درهما فكأنما أنفق جبلا من ذهب الأحمر في سبيل الله
Whoever venerates my birthday, I will be his
intercessor in the hereafter. And, whoever feed a single
dirham (silver money), he is equal to the one feeds the
accumulation of red gold as high as hill for the sake of
Allah.¹⁰²³

Al-Fallāṭī claims that the Prophet himself observes *Mawlid an-Nabiy*. Relatedly important is the statement credited to Prophet Muhammad thus: The prophet was asked for his fasting on Monday, he answered that “I fasted on Monday because it is my birthday.”¹⁰²⁴ The Shaykh

¹⁰²¹ Kramer and Gibb 1961, 365.

¹⁰²² Tunde 2019, 243.

¹⁰²³ Al-Fallāṭī 1992b, 4.

¹⁰²⁴ *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith number 1162 b; see also *Jami` at-Tirmidhi*, Vol. 2, Book of Fasting, Hadith 747.

considers it as a proof that the Prophet himself used to celebrate his birthday by observing fasting every Monday. Al-Fallātī also refers to another Prophetic tradition which says:

Whoever resuscitates my Sunna, so he has cherished
me. And whoever cherished me, he will be with me
in Paradise.¹⁰²⁵

While explaining this Hadith, al-Fallātī remarks that celebrating the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad is an expression of love to the Prophet and glorifying the day the Prophet was born. All these Prophetic traditions summed together according to al-Fallātī, show that celebrating the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad is permissible in Islam. This is mainly because it is not prohibited from a theological point of view. He further remarks that some ignorant people consider it as *shirk*; on the contrary, he notes that honouring the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad is compulsory from the Sufi perspective. Perhaps, this is the group that the author targets in his work on the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad. The Shaykh, therefore, enjoins Muslims to celebrate the birthday of the prophet. He calls upon people through the poem:

1—وقراءة المولود أحسن طاعة قد رغبو فيه مزيد تودد
2—يا صاح أنفق من حلالك مخلصا في يومه تجزى بخير تودد
3—ترجو الدعا أن يستجاب وتشتفي من جاهه من كل داء تبعد
4—واقرا من القرآن فيه مناسبا مثل الضحى واقرا بحسن تودد
5—إنا فتحنا أو تبارك ذاكرا ومسلما وممجدًا لمحمد
6—سلم وصل عليه ربّي دائما بدوام ملكك في مقام تزويد

1. The recitation in the process of *Maulud an-Nabiy* is the best obedience to Allah. The scholars draw the attention of people that: in it, there will be an increase of the love (to Prophet SAW).
2. O my friend, sponsor (the process of *Maulud an-Nabiy*) from your pure and lawful wealth in its days (*Maulud an-Nabiy*), you will be rewarded with the best of love (to the prophet).
3. In its virtue, there is hope of answering prayer, healing, and exemption from all sort of illness and disease in the glory of him (prophet SAW).
4. Recite some relevant chapters in the Qur'an such as "ad-Duhaa" (Q: 93) recite it with good intention and wish.
5. (Recite) such as "Inaa Fatahna and Tabaaraka" (Qur'an:48 & 67) while reminding, praying and glorifying Muḥammad (SAW).
6. Provide peace and blessings upon him (O my lord) forever with the existence of Your eternal kingdom-in the advancing position.¹⁰²⁶

Based on the above, al-Fallātī holds a view that celebrating the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad is not *shirk* (associating partner with Allah); rather it increases the love for the Prophet Muḥammad and the recitations of verses of the Qur'an and poems during the *Maulud an-Nabiy* are considered as worship and obedience to Allah. He recommended some of the chapters and verses that should be recited during the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad such as Qur'an 93 and

¹⁰²⁵ *Jami' at-Tirmidhi*, vol. 5, Book 39, Hadith number 2678.

¹⁰²⁶ Al-Fallātī 1992b, 8.

Qur'an 48 & 67. Spending of wealth for the sake of *Maulud an-Nabiy* is regarded as spending in the way of Allah which be rewarded accordingly. He also holds the view that all those who attend the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad would be relieved from all kinds of illness for the sake of their love for the Prophet. With this submission, al-Fallātī has justified that the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muḥammad is permissible in Islam. Considering the submission of al-Fallātī on the issue, we are, therefore inclined to agree with the Shaykh that the *Maulud an-Nabiy* is almost compulsory among the members of the Tījānīyya brotherhood. Furthermore, it is not universally regarded as mandatory among another Sufi *Tariq* like Qadiriyya, but it could be viewed as a recommended to be performed annually if considered from the legal point of view.

9.4.4 Theme of Virtues of the *Sahaba* (the Companions of Prophet Muḥammad)

Every Muslim, especially among the *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah*, is expected to believe in the good character and virtue of the *Sahaba*. This is mainly because Allāh has praised them in the Qur'an and they were also praised by the Prophet in many Hadiths. This indicates that they have special virtues and noble characteristics, through which they attained that great honour and high status with Him. Therefore, the twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars had written on the rank, virtues, good characters of *Sahaba* and enjoined Muslims to regard them with the highest respect. One of the works on this theme is *Kitaabu Fadaa'ila wa Manaqqibihii Saiyyidnaa Aliyyu bn abi-Dhaalib* (The book of Virtues and Rank of Alī bn Abī Ṭālib) In this work, al-Fallātī discusses the good manner and excellent qualities of Alī Abī Ṭālib (601-661). He states that there are numerous reasons he wrote on the character of Alī, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law. Among the reasons is that Alī has adopted all the characters of Prophet Muhammad. Based on that, he prefers to discuss the position of Alī Abī Ṭālib in eyes of the Prophet Muhammad together with his contributions to Islam. He however begins his discussion by mentioning the highly exalted position of Alī by saying that he was the first to embrace Islam, citing the Hadith narrated by Alī himself saying:

وعن علي رضي الله عنه قال: بعث رسول الله (ص) يوم الإثنين وأسلمت يوم الأربعاء،
وكان عمره حين أسلم عشر سنين.

The prophet was sent on Monday and I embraced Islam on Wednesday.

Based on the above, al-Fallātī submits that Alī has never worshipped idols in his life.¹⁰²⁷ By the time the Prophet migrated to Madinah he allowed Alī to stay at Makkah for three days to fulfil the Prophet's wills.

قال: لم يعبد الأصنام قط لصغره ولما هاجر صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى المدينة أمره أن يقيم بعده بمكة أياما حتى يودي عنه أمانة الودائع والوصايا.

He said: he had never worshiped idols since his young age. The time prophet migrated to Madinah, the prophet allowed him to stay after him in Makah for some days until he gives back the deposited trusts and commandments on his behalf.¹⁰²⁸

Al-Fallātī continues saying:

وشهد مع رسول الله (ص) بدرًا وأحداً وسائر المشاهد إلا تيوك، فإن النبي (ص) استخلفه على المدينة، وله في جميع المشاهد آثار مشهورة.

He (Alī) witnessed with the battle of Badr with the Prophet, Uhud and other battles except for Tabuk, the prophet allowed him to be his representative at Madinah. He has uncountable impacts in all the battle that he witnessed.¹⁰²⁹

At the end al-Fallātī says: non among companions whose exploits were mentioned were as that of Alī, citing example with the hadith of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās (595-664) who says:

(لما) أنزل هذه الآية "ندع أبناءنا وأبنائكم ونساءنا ونساءكم الآية، دعا رسول الله (ص) علياً وفاطمة وحسناً وحسيناً فقال: اللهم هؤلاء أهلي، (ح:14-15)

By the time this verse was revealed-Q3:61...". "Come let us gather together our sons and your sons; our women and your women; ourselves and yourselves..." The prophet (SAW) called Alī, Fatima, Hassan and Hussain and said: "O Allah these are my families.

The prophet says:

أنا مدينة العلم وعلي بابها

I am the city of knowledge and Ali is the gate of it (the city).

Al-Fallātī continues enumerating some of the characters and qualities of Alī as piety who seeks Allah's forgiveness, abiding by the commands emanating from Allah. He advises that, one should seek knowledge on matters relating to every aspects of Muslim life. While listing the qualities of Alī, he cites the Prophetic tradition wherein the Prophet says "I am the city of

¹⁰²⁷ There are number of similar views between Sufi and Shi'ites on the position of Alī in Islam. Sufis vigorously dedicated themselves solely to esoteric teachings of Alī while the Shi'ites were interested in both intellectual and political power teachings of Alī.

¹⁰²⁸ Al-Fallātī 1992c, 4.

¹⁰²⁹ Al-Fallātī 1992c, 4.

knowledge and Alī is the gate of the city.”¹⁰³⁰ Towards the end of his work, he cites the Hadith of Yazid ibn Hibbana:

قام رسول الله (ص) يوماً فينا خطيباً يمد يدعى خمأ بين مكة والمدينة فحمد الله و أثنى عليه
و وعظ و ذكر ثم قال: أما بعد: ألا أيها الناس فإنما أنا بشر يوشك أن يأتي رسول ربي فأجيب
وأنا تارك فيكم ثقلين أولها كتاب الله فيه الهدى والنور فخذوا
بكتاب الله واستمسكوا به فحث على كتاب الله ورغب فيه ثم قال
وأهل بيتي أذكر كم الله في أهل بيتي أذكر كم الله في أهل بيتي فقال
له حصين ومن أهل بيته يا زيد أليس نسأوه
من أهل بيته؟ قال نسأوه من أهل بيته ولكن أهل بيته من حرم
الصدقة بعده قال ومن هم قال هم آل علي وآل عقيل وآل جعفر
وآل عباس قال كل هؤلاء حرم الصدقة؟ قال نعم

The prophet said in an address he delivered, “verily.... Oh, you people, I am human like you, very soon the messenger of my lord (angel) will come to me and I will answer his call. I will certainly place with you two essential aspects, these are the book of Allah. In it, there is guiding light stick to it and adhere to its teaching-he praised the Qur’an to the extreme; and then my family. I urge you by Allah to take care of my family (he said it two times).

Then the Hussain asked the Yazid: ‘who were his family? Are his wives not among his family?’ He answered that indeed, his wives were among his family, but his family here means those who were prohibited from consuming *Ṣadaqa* (alms given) after his departure. He further asked who they were? He answered that they are: Alī ibn ‘Abī Ṭālib, Aalu Aaqeel (the family of Aqeel the brother of Ali), Aalu Jaafar (family of Ja’afar) and Aali Abbas (family of Abbas). And said all the above were prohibited from consuming *Ṣadaqa*.¹⁰³¹

In conclusion, Alī and his position in Islam are justified by the Shaykh stating that Alī adopted all the characters of Prophet Muhammad and all the qualities of *Sahaba* (companions of the Prophet). This implies that all the characters and qualities are also parts of the character of Alī. That does not mean that he avoids acknowledging the position and contributions of other companions of the Prophet; he also writes on them.¹⁰³² Perhaps he resorts to them because he believes that, all of them are of equal importance, and not prefer one to the other. Assessing the work properly, one discovers that al-Fallāṭī has a motive in writing the work. The motive is that he wants Muslims to completely emulate the characters and qualities of Alī, as they take him as their model. This accounts for another reason why the characters and qualities of Alī are discussed along with that of the Prophet Muhammad. All the features raised and discussed by al-Fallāṭī are

¹⁰³⁰ Al-Fallāṭī 1992c, 7-8.

¹⁰³¹ Al-Fallāṭī 1992c, 17-18.

¹⁰³² Compare with *Jami’ al-Usul Fi Ahadith ar-Rasul*, vol. 8, p. 556, Hadith number 6369; *Jami’u Bayaan al-Ilm Wa Fadlih*, vol. 2, 183, Hadith number 895 (Arabic version) in which the Prophet said: “my companions are like stars, whoever of them you follow, you will be rightly guided.”

available in some literature of Tijānīyya Sufi brotherhood. This shows that the Shaykh writes to explain the required information about and knowledge of the Tijānīyya Sufi brotherhood in a simple and concise language.

9.4.5 Structural and Textual structure of His Prosaic Works

Al-Fallātī was a prolific and erudite writer in the Arabic language but he has not stuck to a format; he used several methods in his writings and his style is simple to the extent that even beginners of Arabic can grasp most of the issues discussed therein. He begins his works with praising or giving thanks to Allah, praising Prophet Muhammad and other pious Muslims followed by the themes and sub-themes and ends with a prayer.

Even the arrangement and construction of the language in his works are simple and explicit. He writes usually in short staccato sentences, attractive expressions with simple familiar words such as الإحتفال (commemoration or reception or celebration or festival), الفهم دقائق (deep understanding or accuracy), العلوم حقائق (reality of knowledge), الإبل لحم (camel meat), القبور يزور (visits grave yard), الشجاعة (bravery), تشكو (you complain), الهممة صرف (discharge of determination), ربيع (residences the plural form of ربيع), ورطة (critical situation), زبون (customers), جلب (attract), تبراس (lamp or cresset), منية (death), أزمع (hasted or departed), هام (agitated). Moreover, He is more concerned with adherence to rules of Arabic grammar due to his well-built background in Arabic; and his works are also stained with artistic expressions with linguistic values as follows:

- a. عزيز الجانب (strongest and charismatic).
- b. تطهر قلبا وقالبا (purifies body and soul).
- c. يحبه أكثر من حبه لأولاده (he intensively loves him).
- d. منفعة قاصرين أمثالي (benefit of under graduate like me).
- e. من أشرك لئىما شاركه في لأمه (whoever associated with stinge he is surely associated with his stinginess).
- f. الحسود هو عدو الخفي (the jaundiced is a secret enemy).
- g. خضعت له الرقاب (people complied with him or abode by him or gave up to him).
- h. من طلب فوق قدره إستحق الحرمان (whoever looks beyond his capacity he deserved to be withheld from).

There are several emotional expressions in almost all his works, perhaps is one of the writing styles. He exposed his inner emotions and presented himself as if was in a potent war. This clearly shows that he was deeply influenced by the classical writers of Islamic world as he adopts a method and style of their writings. Thus, he combines commentary with critical appraisal. A classic example of his approach is provided in the intellectual conjectures-and –refutations and arguments of Al-Ghazālī in his *Tahafutul Faalsifa*, and Ibn Rushid’s counter commentary, *Tahafutul Tahafut*. Like any other Islamic scholar of West Africa, his writings begin with the praise of Allah, the seal of the Prophets and his family, companions and followers, and this is followed by the rationale behind the writing of the work and the proposed title of the work. Sometimes, he gives no reason or reasons for writing a book. The reasons he gives are mostly answers to questions people posed to him. The main body or main exposition of his writing comes immediately after the introduction. If the work presented is a reproduction of someone’s writings, sermon or speech, al-Fallātī makes this fact crystal clear in an unambiguous term.

In many of his writings, al-Fallātī brings out his Tijānīyya Sufi brotherhood affiliation. However, His works are always in form of small books which are aimed at encouraging people to read. For this reason, Muhammad Sani Idris states that “In my contact with him before his death, he told me that this time when people are no longer interested in scholarship, big publications get the lazy ones scared and that is one of the factors militating against scholarship so most of my books are between 3-45 pages.”³⁴ However, the cover pages of his works are always full of writings, some of which are verses of the Qur’an, Traditions of Prophet Muhammad or a poem that is related to the theme of the work.

The referencing system of al-Fallātī is not in accordance with modern system of referencing. He quotes Qur’an and Hadith in his works. Unlike Qur’an, while quoting Hadith, he refers to the sources from which he quoted. Perhaps, he did not give reference of quotation made from the Qur’an because it is compiled as a single book and well memorized by many people unlike the Hadiths which are numerous and compiled in volumes by many scholars and disciples. He also did not give account of the Hadiths he mentioned whether they are authentic or unauthentic as per their nomenclatures.

Moreover, al-Fallātī has not organized his books in chapters, except for one book. This might be due to unpopular nature of his method amongst local scholars in the region or because of

³⁴ Interview with Muhammad Sani Idris in Maiduguri on 15th December, 2015.

the sizes of the books. Some of his works lack titles and subtitles to guide readers to specific topic of their interest. There are footnotes and table of contents in some of his works.

9.5 Conclusion

I have discussed some of the themes in the prosaic works of al-Fallātī, especially those that are meant to explain the general principles and teachings of Islam and explanation on ideologies and teachings of *taṣawwuf* (Sufism). The themes, discussed include the views of al-Fallātī on conditions governing the observance of *Salat* (ritual prayer), legality and mode of celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, the concept of *al-nur al-Muḥammadiy*, the benefits and bounties enclosed in *Basmalah*, and the qualities of the character of Alī Abī Ṭālib. In the final analysis, the general views of al-Fallātī as explained in his works depict him as a faithful Muslim, and as a strict, compliant of *ṭarīqa* Tijānīyya.

CHAPTER TEN

General conclusion, Findings, Questions for further research and Recommendation

10.1 Introduction

Through a critical analysis of the themes and contents of the writings of Shaykh al-Dāghirī and Shaykh al-Fallātī, including an assessment of their popularity, distribution and their codicological and palaeographical features, this dissertation has attempted to show the depth and breadth of Tijānī Sufi manuscript and print cultures in twentieth century Nguru. This concluding chapter highlights and summarizes the main points of the research, and considers the contribution and relevance of this research to the study of Tijānī Sufi manuscript and print cultures, to Sufism, Sufi literature, Sufi doctrines and their impact on society. Furthermore, it examines the mode of transmission of Sufi literature and ideas in Nguru in particular and in northern Nigeria in general. Finally, the chapter suggests some areas of interest for further research and offers some recommendations.

10.2 General Conclusion

This study has attempted to investigate the Tijānī Sufi manuscript and print cultures in twentieth century in Nguru, with particular regard to the themes and contents of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's mystical works, together with their popularity, distribution, and their codicological and palaeographical features as a case study. For the analysis, I selected five mystical poems of al-Dāghirī and seven mystical prose writings of al-Fallātī, with the intention to look at Sufi doctrines and esoteric expressions which are contrary to the exoteric viewpoints. In order to locate the major Sufi themes in their works, extracts from each selected mystical work are analysed, with particular reference to the themes of *Hubb al-Ilaah* (Divine Love), *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* or *an-Nuur al-Muḥammadi* (The Real Essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality), *al-'Israa'ī' wal-Mi'raaj* (Night journey and Ascension of the Prophet Muḥammad to Heaven), *Mu'jizah* (Evidentiary Miracles), *Quṭb al-aqṭaab* (the supreme pole of saint) or *khatm al-awliyyaa'* (the seal of the saints), *ghawth az-zaman/Sahib al-Fayḍa* (the reformer or saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era), the position and importance of *Ṣalaat*, the position and importance of *Imaam* and *Mamu*, the miraculous birth of the Prophet, the *Asrar* (secret) of *Basmalah* etc. Through the analysis of these major Sufi themes in their mystical works, this study has indicated the importance of Sufi literary works among the Sufi shaykhs and *murīdūn* (disciples) in northern Nigeria.

Nguru, itself, which was the capital of the western Borno, evolved as a western frontier of the defunct Kanem-Borno Empire. The history of Islam in Nguru is often traced to the Kanem-Borno Empire but there is reason to doubt the authenticity of this claim. Historians differ regarding the period in which Islam was introduced to Nguru. However, Islamization and educational policy are important phenomena which opened up Nguru to the Islamic world and facilitated the influx of scholars into Nguru. Islam gradually changed the religio-cultural picture of pre-Islamic Nguru. The advancement of Islamization and the growth and development of learning was a continuous process in Nguru. Islam introduced literacy to Nguru and stimulated the production of both Arabic and Ajami literature. The intellectual history of Nguru during this period was therefore dominated by the Borno intellectual tradition until the introduction of the Tijānīyya brotherhood in the latter years of the nineteenth century. As a result, Nguru, a community whose intellectual tradition in the previous centuries had been wholly 'Borno' in its religious and mystical orientation gradually adopted the mystical tradition associated with the Tijānī esoteric episteme.

The history of Tijānīyya in the town is painstakingly traced back to the later years of the nineteenth century. In the first half of the twentieth century, Tijānīyya went through a process of transformation with the emergence of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse (d. 1975) who claimed to be the *Sahib al-fayḍa* (the repository of the divine flood); hence, he attracted the largest number of followers among the Tijānīs in West Africa. It was during this period that the Tijānīyya brotherhood was indigenised so that Nguru now operated on an Islamic and Sufi platform. In its religious convictions, Nguru became a centre of Islamic learning and of Sufism. In fact, the town is comparable to Kano in terms of *fayḍa* Tijānīyya (Reformed Tijānīyya) dominated towns in Nigeria today. Tijānī Sufi scholars actively participate in the production of Sufi works, in manuscript and in print, which entails Sufi ideologies viewed through the local perspective. This development led to the emergence of a Sufi manuscript culture in Nguru, and Al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī appear as the two leading Tijānī scholars who are not only the architects of the Tijānī Sufi manuscript culture in the town but also it is most active and famous writers.

Muhammad al-Dāghirī of Nguru was born in 1902; born in the Niger Republic, he died in 1975 in Nguru. This shaykh started his educational career under the tutelage of his father, then his uncle, Malam Muḥammad Nuzu in Duguro, and then Shaykh Muḥammad Abba Chulum (d.1944) among many others. These scholars played a positive role in his status. His five major professions, i.e. teaching, preaching, writing and the book trade, and fame contributed to his becoming an

eminent scholar and a man of influence in the society. He has more talent perhaps than any other Tijānī poet since the reformative and revivalist period of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse al-Kawlākhī (d. 1975), his writings and teaching probing and analysing the psyche of the believer. In fact, al-Dāghirī competed with Niasse for the position of *ghawth zaman*. He inspired Sufi scholars and *murids* not only in northern Nigeria, but also in West and North Africa especially those in the Tijānīyya brotherhood. Notable among them were Shaykh Aliyu Harazimi (1919-2013) and Shaykh Sharīf Ibrāhīm Ṣālīḥ (b. 1939) who were also great Islamic and Tijānīyya scholars, and prolific writers. They became Sufi Shuyukh in twentieth- and twentieth-first century northern Nigeria and had many followers in West and North Africa, and beyond. The number of for al-Dāghirī's works is, according to my findings, forty-seven (47), but sixty (60) titles were accredited to him. This shows that the total number of his works is less than what was previously ascribed to him. Going through the list, one can see now that the works are in both verse and prose. The majority of his works were published in Nigeria and others were published in the Middle East, especially Lebanon and Egypt. His most frequent publisher is Maṭba'ah wa Maktabah al-Muṣṭafā ibn 'Abd al-Mālik al-Bābī al-Halabi, one of the well-known literary houses in the Middle East.

His works can be grouped into nine categories or genres: *Salat 'ala an-Nabii* (Prayers upon the Prophet), *Du'a* (Supplicatory Prayer), *Madḥ* (Panegyrics), *Al-rithaa'* (Elegy), *Taṣawwuf* (Sufism), *Taṣawwuf* (Sufism): *Nahw* (Arabic grammar) *Lugha* (linguistic sciences), *Tawhid* (Theology), *Hisab* (Numerology), History and Educational literature, though sometimes it is not possible to draw a clear line. The focus of these works are multiple, but the major ones are to explain the so-called orthodox Islam, Sufism, and Tijānīyya. Going through the contents of his mystical works, one realises that the themes of the works cuts across different aspects of Sufism, and the Tijānīyya brotherhood. Themes such as *Hubb al-Ilaah* (Divine Love), *al-Ḥaqiiqa al-Muḥammadiyya* or *an-Nuur al-Muḥammadi* (The Real Essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality), *al-'Israa'i' wal-Mi'raaj* (Night journey and Ascension of the Prophet Muḥammad to Heaven), *Mu'jizah* (Evidentiary Miracles), *Quṭb al-aqṭaab* (the supreme pole of the sainthood) or *khatm al-awliyaa'* (the seal of the saints), *ghawth az-zaman/Sahib al-Fayḍa* (the reformer or saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era) are recurrent. These themes are open to different interpretations and can be misinterpreted by the non-Sufi as they constitute a clear-cut distinction between esoteric and exoteric views. The theme of *Hubb al-Ilaah* (Divine Love), for instance, is misinterpreted by the non-Sufi, who may not distinguish between the intoxication

of love and that of wine. The mystical writings portray al-Dāghirī as a Sufi who has a taste for divine love, treading the steps of early Sufi divine love. The image of the Prophet Muhammad is another thematic preoccupation in the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī who eulogizes those qualities of the Prophet that epitomized the Sufi perception of the Prophet Muhammad. The perception metamorphoses into a concept known as *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (the real essence of Prophet Muhammad), a concept based in the mystical world which the Sufis created around the personality of the Prophet Muhammad.

Like many Muslims, Al-Dāghirī also believes in the institutions of *al-awliya*’ (saints), *khatm al-awliya*’ (the seal of the saints), *ghawth az-zaman/Sahib al-Fayḍa* (the reformer or saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era). However, his view on the status of saints differs from that of exoteric scholars, who, taking ‘external’ or observable piety as a criterion, believe that any Muslims or believer might be a saint. One may tend to agree with Shaykh who takes the view that the only problem with the Sufi perception of the institution of sainthood (*waliyy*) is the identification of the saint. Al-Dāghirī argues this way because piety – which exoteric scholars consider as the basic criterion for a *waliyy* – is not visible or identifiable. Thus, in al-Dāghirī’s opinion, having the authentic chain of authority or performing the Sufi prayers considered as *adhkar tarbiyya* does not make all members of the Tijānīyya potential spiritual educators (*Muqaddams*) or saints. This study has shown that al-Dāghirī of Nguru (born in the Niger Republic) is one of the most prolific Islamic writers among the Sufis in twentieth-century Nigeria, particularly in the Tijānīyya circle.

Shaykh ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī al-Ghūrāwī al-Barnāwī at-Tijānī (1909 CE/1330 AH), born in Marwa (Cameroon) in 1909, was educated in Marwa under the guidance of his father. He had committed the whole text of the Qur’an to memory before the age of twenty. Later, he travelled far and wide in search of knowledge, which took him as far as Borno and Hausaland. Upon his arrival at Nguru, he joined his tutor al-Dāghirī in the arduous task of learning, teaching and preaching, aimed at promoting and expanding Islamic scholarship in Nguru. The influence of al-Dāghirī can be seen in two major aspects of the life of al-Fallātī – self-esteem cum literary style, ascetic and mystical disposition. His arrival marked a further stage in the establishment of Islam and the Tijānīyya brotherhood in the town. Al-Fallātī became by far the most prolific writer and intellectual poet, community leader and socio-cultural figure; nor can his vast knowledge be equalled by any of his Fulani contemporaries in twentieth-century Nguru. He too belongs to the

Jamā'at al-fayḍa Tijānīyya and rendered services for the success of the Tijānīyya in northern Nigeria by expressing his ideas in writing. He has a sizeable number of students and disciples from many parts of Nigeria and from neighboring countries like Cameroon and Niger; and a good number of them have become eminent scholars. Prominent among them were Malam Yahaya Mikail (1917-2003), Shaykh Lawan Bulabulin, Shaykh Idriss al-Bulatara and Malam Adamu Nurul Aulad.

Shaykh al-Fallātī's published works comprise many themes covering different fields of knowledge. Some fifty-six (56) titles were credited to him by his disciples and children, but we were only able to identify fifty-three (53). All of them are printed in Nigeria. The works are grouped according to their various genres namely; Law (*fiqh*) and Principles of Islam (*Mabadi al-Islam*), *Fada'il* (Virtues, general conduct), *Madh* (panegyrics), Sufism and the Tijānīyya Brotherhood, Islamic Education and Literature, *Du'a* (supplicatory Prayer), History and biography, and Arabic Grammar and Literature. However, only seven mystical prosaic writings of al-Fallātī were analysed, and the themes found in these writings were categorized into two groups. The first group contains themes on general principles of Islam, the second on major Sufi ideologies. The themes of al-Fallātī's prosaic writings are on the position and importance of *Ṣalāt*, the position and importance of *Imām* and *Mamu*, the miraculous birth of the Prophet, *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The Real Essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality), listening to the Qur'an and admonition on the pursuit of Knowledge, the *Asrar* (secret) of *Basmalah* and the biography and hagiography of the Prophet Muḥammad as well as the virtues of the *Sahaba* (the Companions of Prophet Muḥammad). Some of these themes have generated controversy between esoteric and exoteric scholars. The submission of al-Fallātī on some these themes is generally in conformity with the majority view of Sufi scholars and sometimes disagrees with them.

The codicological and palaeographical features of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's manuscripts and facsimiles were analysed and revealed both lithographic and typographic works written and published in the northern Nigerian context. This study shows that the calligraphic analysis involves much more than using 'manuscript samples' alone and suggests some new directions in the scholarly approach to what signifies Islamic codicological art and its history in the northern Nigerian context. Moreover, it reveals that the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are still popular and have been wide distributed and circulated in northern Nigeria and beyond since the 1940s;

they have become integral elements in the lives and education of the people of the region. They were initially distributed in manuscript form. Later, the print culture provided new ways of distribution and wider circulation of facsimiles in the form of lithographs and typographs; this encouraged and promoted Arabic literacy, Islamic education, and the propagation of Islam. The themes of the mystical writings have a further objective: they not only project the Sufi mystical life or ideologies, they also celebrate and venerate Prophet Muḥammad. This secondary objective has various communal functions for the Muslims of the northern Nigeria including Nguru. They recite or listen to these mystical writings during *Mawlid*, *Eid al-Fitr*, *Eid al-Kabir*; these writings include spiritual healings, and have homiletic, devotional and other religious functions. Such themes are known and greatly appreciated for they contribute significantly to the historical, social, cultural, as well as to the educational and religious life of the people in the northern Nigeria including Nguru.

In the final analysis, the writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are the persuasive medium through which they spread their ideas; these are mostly educative and always informative. Sometimes they write to answer specific questions, sometimes they react or comment on certain statements. That notwithstanding, it must be said that, as a rule, the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are not for beginners, often because certain details are not provided on some of the topics they discuss. However, the works taken in their entirety demonstrate the creativity and perceptiveness of the Shaykhs; they have convincingly utilized their knowledge of Arabic as well as jurisprudence, logic, Qur'anic arguments, and Hadiths to explain and defend the doctrines of Sufism in general, and those of the Tijānīyya brotherhood in particular. We are of the opinion that the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī defend the Tijānīyya brotherhood where necessary, but are primarily educative and illuminating, and defensive. On the whole, the various works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī show them to be traditionalists and conformists who strictly comply with the doctrine of the Tijānīyya brotherhood. Yet, while they advocate and defend the Tijānīyya brotherhood, they are original thinkers and creative writers.

Finally, it has been established that the Shaykhs adopted and demonstrated practical Sufi teachings such as cool-headedness, politeness and humility. Their lives and teachings can be considered as challenges for the Sufi novices of our time, who, it may be argued, will have much to learn from their writings and practical lives. Today, they are described as great Islamic and Tijānīyya scholars, prolific writers in twentieth-century Islamic northern Nigeria; their presence

in the town changed the entire pattern of social and religious life in that region. The latter statement should be seen in the context of the fact that, from 1978 onward, al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī and their works were threatened by the intrusion of Wahhabi and Salafī scholars who were against Sufism.

10.3 Findings and Contribution to knowledge

The findings of the present study are based on the objectives of the study and the research questions posed earlier, and were discussed chapter by chapter. This research has found that Nguru was a largely ignored, but flourishing centre of Tijānī Sufi manuscript culture in twentieth-century northern Nigeria and that little or no academic research was carried out on Tijānī Sufi manuscript culture in twentieth-century in Nguru. This research has therefore contributed to our knowledge by studying Tijānī Sufi manuscript culture in the town and focusing on the themes and contents of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's mystical writings together with their popularity, distribution, and codicological and palaeographical features, information which was hitherto completely unstudied. It is the present writer's hope that this research has filled a gap in our knowledge.

This study confirms the fact that the introduction of the Tijānīyya brotherhood into Nguru and other towns and cities in northern Nigeria in the latter years of the nineteenth century led to the growth of Tijānī Sufi manuscript culture; this growth can be traced to a number of important factors. Islamization and educational policy were the first important phenomena which opened up Nguru to the Islamic world and facilitated the influx of scholars into Nguru. The Tijānīyya brotherhood is the second factor that actively helped in the radical change of the Borno intellectual tradition in Nguru - from its former religious and mystical orientation to the mystical tradition associated with the Tijānī esoteric episteme. The third factor is the emergence of qualified Tijānī Sufi scholars which gave birth to a strong manuscript culture. This study offers us not only the opportunity to understand the factors that facilitated the foundation of the Tijānī Sufi manuscript culture in twentieth-century Nguru, it also explains the emergence of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī as the undisputed leaders of the Tijānīyya brotherhood in twentieth-century Nguru, a fact which was not widely known prior to this study.

The Sufi manuscript and print cultures together with Sufi literary works in Nguru, seen in the historical context of northern Nigeria was elucidated in chapter three of this work. However, the findings exposed areas of sharp contrast between Sufi literary works and mainstream or orthodox Islamic works and teachings. This disparity poses a dilemma for many students and researchers and clearly indicates the sometimes sharp between the two Islamic literatures. The

present researcher concludes that any Islamic literary work or non-Islamic literature that has a connection with Sufi themes – irrespective of the author or writer – is considered as a Sufi work. In all Islamic literary work, the Sufi ideas are actively portrayed. The study also revealed that the print culture was introduced into northern Nigeria – particularly Kano – in the 1920s. Kano Emirate Press was established in 1918 at Kofar Dan Agundi in Kano City. It started its full operations between 1920 and 1921. With the introduction of print technology in Kano, Nguru moved towards a tradition of book culture different from that of Borno due to contact with and inspiration from Kano. Print culture, then offers al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī the chance of printing and publishing their works in Kano, with very cheap prices and a wide audience. Most of the manuscripts of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were printed and distributed in Kano.

The study also sheds light on the biographies of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī in chapter four. The findings of this study reveal that, despite their popularity as writers and their contribution to the development of Islamic knowledge, only one researcher – Tahir 2006 – attempted to document the life history of al-Dāghirī; but even this study focusses only on his spiritual life rather than on his material life. For al-Fallātī, only Al-amin investigated his biography and his work is limited by space. The present research is a first time documentation of the biographies of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, touching on all aspects of their lives. This research has therefore contributed to our knowledge by giving comprehensive biography of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī who were previously understudied. The biographies of the present work reveal that Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī was probably most famous – for the remarkable breadth of his esoteric knowledge. He was the person who influenced al-Fallātī intellectually and spiritually.

This study has identified, collected and analysed the literary oeuvres of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, studies which have not been previously adequately examined. This study has also shown that there are divergent opinions about the number of works ascribed to them – and to their themes and contents; previous works woefully failed to give accurate figures of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, sometimes attributing more or less works than they actually wrote. The present findings resolve the controversy surrounding the mystical works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. According to the data elicited in this study, the actual number of the works produced by al-Dāghirī is sixty (60) while al-Fallātī is fifty-six (56); all these works were identified and outlined and a large number of them located.

Thus, the entire works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī and teachings of Sufism in twentieth century Nigeria have been documented and preserved in this dissertation. The Shaykhs are dead: some of their works cannot be found, others are endangered. Therefore, documentation of their works as done here is very important to the preservation and promotion of knowledge.

This study examines codicological and palaeographical features, the popularity and distribution of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's writings; it pointed out that previous researchers documented the writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, but the central focal point of such local scholars were list of works and life histories of al-Dāghirī. Thus, this study is the first time that a researcher has specifically investigated the popularity, distribution and codicological and palaeographical features of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's works. The study confirms that the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are available in fascimile (lithographs and typographs), although there is a small percentage of handwritten manuscripts, the form in which they were originally distributed. The print culture has provided new ways of distribution and a wider circulation of fascimiles in lithograph and typograph forms; this has encouraged and promoted Arabic literacy, Islamic education, and the propagation of Islam. Furthermore, it helps us to understand the opportunities al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī had for transmitting their knowledge through their writings, as well as how they accessed their audience. The proliferation of the mystical writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī and the writings of other Tijānī Sufī scholars, in manuscript and fascimile form, has encouraged readership across northern Nigeria and in neighboring countries, such as the Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroun, among others, where Tijānī writings are eagerly read

Furthermore, the study shows that most of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's works were didactic and are commonly seen as to promote Islamic religious knowledge and its socio-cultural heritage. Additionally, this study has revealed that, as well as being a medium for the propagation of Islam, the writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī promote education and the Tijānīyya brotherhood, and are used for the purpose of devotional, homiletic, festival activities and have other socio-cultural functions. The works also include prayer books and books of entreaty as well as manuals for the spiritual journey. One of the respondents, for instance, aptly describes it as "a religious entertainment used to buttress sermon" adding that "mystical poem is a prayer because it is gotten from the Qur'an and Hadith." Generally, the writings al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are used to promote a pious life among the people and to further an acceptable lifestyle according to the dictates of

Islam. Of course, the writings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, especially the poems, were of economic importance to the reciters as it is a means of livelihood for some of them.

In chapter seven above the five mystical poems al-Dāghirī which were hitherto unstudied were translated and analysed for the first time. However, there are two more mystical poems of al-Dāghirī which I referred in the overall analysis. This study has confirmed that all poems treated in the analysis were not only original and authentic but also of enormous literary and religious value. The result of this study clearly showcases the intensity of the integration of northern Nigeria – including Nguru – in the Sufi-Arabo-Islamic poetic tradition, and the mastery of the Sufi scholars in the region. Additionally, it has revealed the degree to which popular literary culture in the region is infused with classical Sufi doctrinal themes which prior to this study had not been properly studied.

It is important to note that most of the previous writings on al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī were not very critical of their themes and contents, nor did they offer an adequate analysis. This study is the first to select the most frequently mentioned themes in their mystical writings and analyse their contribution to the promotion of knowledge. Some of these themes analysed are *Hubb al-Ilaah* (Divine Love), *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* or *an-Nuur al-Muḥammadi* (The Real Essence of Muḥammad or Muḥammadan Truth or Reality), *al-'Israa'ī' wal-Mi'raaj* (Night journey and Ascension of the Prophet Muḥammad to Heaven), *Mu'jizah* (Evidentiary Miracles), *Quṭb al-aqṭaab* (the supreme pole of the sainthood) or *khatm al-awliyyaa'* (the seal of the saints), *ghawth az-zaman/Sahib al-Fayḍa* (the reformer or saviour of the age/supreme saint of his era), position and importance of *Ṣalāt*, position and importance of *Imām* and *Mamu*, miraculous birth of the Prophet, *Asrar* (secret) of *Basmalah* etc. Although the above-mentioned themes are generally seen as Sufi themes, the research has shown that they share the same view as orthodox scholars about some themes, like *Salat*. These themes play an important role in the lives of the people of northern Nigeria including Nguru; and consequently, contribute to the veneration and exaltation of the Prophet Muḥammad by the people in the region. Through their themes al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī can be seen as remarkable and erudite Islamic scholars, who influenced their society and became a role model to other scholars; this research shows them to have been prolific writers whose works made a positive impact on their fellow Tijānīyya in Nigeria and beyond. The present analysis helps us to understand the nature of Sufism, Sufi literary works, and popular conceptions of Islam in twentieth century northern Nigeria including Nguru. Of particular interest is the fact that the

analysis gives an indication of the degree to which the popular literary culture of the region is infused with classical Sufi doctrinal themes.

The study, in final analysis, has shown that that the works of the two Shaykhs are very original and are both educative and illuminating, and champion the beliefs and practices of the Tijānīyya brotherhood. Al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī as scholars, through their various works, are generally traditionalists and conformists. Although, they are original thinkers, creative writers, champions, and defenders of the Tijānīyya brotherhood, their works draw on classical examples, their inspiration, usages, techniques and forms. In addition, one can see the work of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī on certain issues as an attempt on their part to bridge the gap of misunderstanding between the exoteric and esoteric. They also contributed to the development of Islamic education and scholarship in West Africa through furthering literacy and stimulating intellectual outcomes and collecting both manuscripts and printed editions; their personal libraries met the intellectual needs of their disciples and public.

The study revealed that lack of reading culture, lack of proper organisation and preservation measure, insects, humidity disasters as well as inheritance of the library collections by the immediate family to the scholars are among the problems faced by the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. These relatively new findings about al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī are the modest contributions of this thesis to the knowledge of Sufism and intellectual history in general.

10.4 Questions for further research

This study cannot claim to have fully investigated the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. Considering the importance of the topic, the scope it covers is limited: there were many things the research could not uncover due to several factors. Thus, further research into this topic is necessary, and will provide the opportunity for researchers to discover significant information related to this topic. Firstly, a linguistic analysis of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī would be very profitable; additionally, some of their works should be translated for the benefit of a wider readership. Secondly, a comparative study of the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī would be profitable, highlighting their qualities and the differences. Thirdly, we are convinced that the present thesis indicates challenges to some areas in the works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, which could be further investigated by other researchers; considering the volume of letters written to al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī which are available in the Shaykhs' personal libraries, we would like to suggest that al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's personal relationship with other people be studied.

Fourthly, not much has been studied about al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī outside Sufism, we suggest that al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī's contributions on different aspects of knowledge such as jurisprudence, history, *Hisab*, Islamic theology and Arabic as well as logic among many others would be a useful topic of research. Fifthly, there are many other aspects of their lives and works which would benefit from further research. It is our sincere belief that, if these new challenges are taken up by other researchers, further information on the personalities and teachings of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī will be discovered. I hope to continue with this topic soon, since it is my area of interest.

10.5 Recommendations

The overall discussion of this study arrives at the following recommendations: My first recommendation is that there is the need for the Yobe State Government as a matter of urgency to establish a centre in Yobe State University which would review and evaluate the invaluable works of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī, together with other manuscripts and printed heritages of the state. The Centre would be responsible for the urgent recovery, effective storage, preservation and conservation, translation and publication, organization and security of the manuscripts and printed works written by these scholars and of the other collections in their libraries. In line with the primary objectives of the centre, the following should be considered: Firstly, there should be translating, printing, and reprinting of their published works for the benefit of the people as they are treasures to be proud of; it is sad that most of these works remain unpublished due to the economic constraints of the families of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī. Secondly, the possibility of using modern (digitalised) technologies in the preservation and conservation of the manuscripts should be considered. A website address in the names of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī should be created and their works uploaded so that they can be easily accessed by scholars and others. Thirdly, a fellowship programme (short and long term) concerning manuscript collection and preservation should be established. Fourthly, the proposed centre should be headed by an expert in manuscript studies who has the expertise to establish relationships that can assist in the preservation of manuscripts and other materials with sister institutions around the world. He/she can also identify sources of funding that can ensure the long-term success of the project.

Finally, there is a need for the educational experts in Nigeria to come together to incorporate the Tijānī Sufī mystical writings into the Islamic Religious knowledge (I.R.K) curriculum, thereby amending Islamic religious knowledge textbooks in the country. Moreover, we strongly

recommend that the names of al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī should be immortalised; this has been done for other scholars of the same century in Nigeria.

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S/N	Names	Age	Occupation	Place of Interview	Date of Interview
1	Alhaji Abubakar Wasiri	82	Business	Kano	27.3.2019
2	Alhaji Mai Musa Shehu	49	Civil servant	Nguru	26.03.2018
3	Mal. Musa Sani Zakariya	41	Teaching	Nguru	20.03.2019
4	Muhammad Sani Idris	53	Civil servant	Maiduguri	15.12.2015
5	Alhaji Umaru Matazu	78	Book vendor	Kano	26.03.2019
6	Prof. Abdallah Uba Adamu	64	Teaching	On phone	26.03.2019
7	Malam Tukur	76		Nguru	26.03.2019
8	Malam Bala Jafaru Suleiman	66	Teaching	Nguru	23.04.2019
9	Abubakar Suwailu	37	Teaching	Nguru	20.03.2019
10	Auwal Muhammad Hassan	38	Teaching	On phone	18.09.2019
11	Baffa ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī	42	Civil servant		18.03.2018
12	Alhaji Ahmed Ilela Fulatari	82	Business		26.08.2013
13	Ba Tijanima	65	Farming		18.03.2018
14	Munir Muḥammad al-Dāghirī	45	Civil servant		18.03.2018
15	Shehu Goni Aisami	54	Civil servant		15.03.2019

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Appendix I

Annotated List of Literary Oeuvre of al-Dāghirī

The section is on the list of the works written by al-Dāghirī. It also contains brief notes on each of the works. The works cannot be presented in a chronological order because some are without dates of writing or company of publication. The works which I have seen and touched as well as those works which are not seen but mentioned or referred to by other scholars are listed and arranged below, irrespective of their themes.

1. *Jihaazus Saarih was-saa'ih was-saabih wal aakifil Faalih fid-Taujeehaati bi salaatil faatih SAW (The Treasure of Journey to Allah's Provision of a Traveller by Road and by Sea and a wayfarer and the Settler on Prayers upon the Prophet (PBUH))*: This is the magnum opus of al-Dāghirī and the most celebrated of his writings. He wrote it before his contact with Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse d. (1975). The book evidently shows that al-Dāghirī had a deep knowledge of esoteric sciences before their meeting. A judgement that is in fact supported by both written and oral traditions, this was the first work written by al-Dāghirī. It was written during his trip to Makkah for pilgrimage; before he reached Mecca, the book was completed, which probably falls between 1932 and 1933. After he returned to Nigeria, the original manuscript was either stolen or borrowed by an unknown person. How long it had been in the possession of the borrower cannot be determined, it was later returned to the Shaykh. His disciples from Nigeria and other neighbouring countries gathered around the Shaykh to read its chapters with him and to listen to his comments thereon. It was printed in 1942/3, and its copies quickly spread all over the Islamic world including Cairo, Beirut, Makkah and Madinah. This piece of work was first published by Maṭba'ah wa Maktabah al-Muṣṭafá ibn 'Abd al-Mālik Bābī; Muṣṭafá ibn 'Abd al-Mālik Bābī, Cairo and it has been reprinted repeatedly in Nigeria by many printing presses. As noted earlier, it is considered as one of the best manuals for spiritual perfection seeker among the Tijānī in northern Nigeria. The book in fact, gained very significant acceptance within the Sufi community in West Africa.

2. *Itbaa'ut-tazyiil fii salaati alas-sayyidil Jaliil (The Annexation of the book 'Tazyiil' on the invocation of Allah's peace and blessings on Prophet Muḥammad)*: This work is on various *Salat ala an-Nabī* which could be used for seeking heavenly support to fulfil or grant special request. It can also be used for other forms of prayers as a means of supplication to Allah to provide solution to a problem. It contained 156 different styles of prayers to the Prophet Muḥammad. Al-

Dāghirī introduces the book by the name of Allah and prayer to the Prophet Muḥammad as usual. In the introductory part of the book, the author categorically states the reasons for which the book was written that he discovered the Muslim youths of his time were no longer interested in saying prayers to the Prophet Muḥammad. He thus wrote it to resuscitate their spirit and to educate them about the importance of *Salat ala an-Nabī* to the prophet, as well as to encourage them by providing basic tasks which will help them. Added to this, he pointed out that Muslims could seek the favour of God or request anything from God through the praise of the prophet. He also urged the Muslims to put more effort in the practice of saying prayers to the Prophet Muḥammad. It can be simply inferred that before his book, particularly in Northern Nigeria, there was paucity of literature on this subject.

In the book, the author begins each *Salawat* with “*Allaahuma Ṣalli ala Saiyidna Muḥammad...*” (O my Lord! Bless upon our noble leader Muḥammad) and “*Wa kulli Ilaahii walakal hamdu*” should be recited three time after reciting each form of the *Salawat*. The author outlines the condition for one to consider so as to obtain blessings from different styles of prayers to the Prophet Muḥammad mentioned in the book. He also attaches 20 different styles of prayers to the Prophet Muḥammad and concludes the work with 19 poetic verses in praise of the work. He finally said that the book has an *Ijāzāt (permissions)* to the Muslims of his time and those who might come after him. This work was written in 1383/1963 and the available copy in my possession was reprinted in 1974 by Jola-Ade Printers Kano. It is made up of seventy-six pages. The MS is available at the Borno Collage of Legal and Islamic Studies, Maiduguri, MS123.

3. *An-nawaafihul Itriyyati, almukhtasarati minan-nafhatil ambariyati fii halli alfaadhil ishriiniyyaati* (Spray of Pleasing odour as incense known as Ambar): This voluminous work is on eulogy. It provides a full explanation and commentary on *al-Wasā'il al-Mutaqabbala*, commonly known as *al-'Ishriiniyyaat*, ‘The Twenties,’ of the thirteenth-century Moroccan poet Abu Zayd Abd al-Rahman ibn Yakhlaftan ibn Aḥmad al-Fāzāzī (d. 627 A. H./1230). This is one of the mystical poems praising the Prophet Muḥammad and has been of great importance in the Sufi circle, Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī’s commentary on it must be counted as a seminal work. The work under review is an outcome of the Shaykh’s desire and willingness to explain the earlier panegyric poem, *al-'Ishriiniyyaat* to readers and admirers of the poem. This makes the poem difficult for the reader to differentiate between the original stanza and the additional one. Simply put, our local reader of the book found it difficult to comprehend the content of the work due to

difficult and strange words used by both authors. As a result, people started declining to read the book due to the boring nature of the work. Another commentary comes from Ibn Sabbagh (Hau. Dan Marina, the son of the dye pit), but unfortunately it is now lost.¹⁰³³ For the above-mentioned reasons, al-Dāghirī adopted new method of simple commentary and footnoting which helps interested readers to understand the content of al-Fāzāzī's poem. The new method adopted by al-Dāghirī in commenting on the original work is by analysing the grammatical and morphological aspect of each stanza of the work, simplifying the original (but difficult) words into common vocabulary, replacing the omitted (but conventionally accepted) words and prepositions, completing the history of the remaining part of the events touched by the original author by citing the relevant tradition as well as quoting the verses of the Glorious Qur'an; ignoring unnecessary or adding necessary phrases and simplifying and standardizing the first commentary to conform to the modern approach and style within bracket as well as providing full explanation on the poetry of the first poet.

The views of scholars, especially, that of eminent Muslim poets are taken into consideration to support this discussion. The author treated a considerable number of Arabic grammatical issues relating to rules in *Nahw* and sometimes by drawing chart for easy understanding. However, he used the Arabic alphabet 'sad' (ص) to indicate the original text and the alphabet 'shin' (ش) to refer to the commentary. This piece of work was first published by Maṭba'ah wa Maktabah al-Muṣṭafá ibn 'Abd al-Mālik Bābī; Muṣṭafá ibn 'Abd al-Mālik Bābī, Cairo in 1942/3 and it was reprinted in Cairo in 2006. It was recently reprinted by Dar al-Kotob al-ilmiyah, Beirut, Lebanon, with ISBN number 13978-2-7451-3909-2 and reference code 25422, it is made-up of 368 pages in 17 x 24 cm model. However, the copy in my possession was reprinted in the year 2012/1433 A.H. Its manuscript is available at North-western University catalogued as MS: NU/Falke, 2226.

4. *Bassus-shauqi wash-shakwaa fii talabil wasli wan-najwaa ilaa dhil fadli wat-taqwaa (Reveal of Excitement for the Need of Assembling):* This is a lengthy panegyric poem in praise of Prophet Muḥammad, requests and excitatory love for the prophet. The poem is meant to express the situation in which he found himself. The work is therefore a prayer to Allah to remove his hardship. The poet solicits for the intercession of Prophet Muḥammad. It has total of 259 stanzas and was written in the rhythm of *Bahr Daweel*, which is one of the sixteen famous Arabic poetic

¹⁰³³ Hiskett 1975, 14.

styles. Indeed, it is a purely esoteric poem on the status of Prophet Muḥammad. The author defies the existing tradition of introducing the book with the name of Allah and prayer for Prophet Muḥammad. This action shows Shaykh's enthusiasm and exhilaration for the love of the Prophet by boycotting the long tradition of writing of beginning with the opening doxology. In the poem, al-Dāghirī outlines some good manners of respect and forgiveness. He also sought for heavenly support in respect and honour of Prophet Muḥammad requesting Allah to grant Him his requests and wishes. Source of the text: MS. Ibadan (UL), 46 (in ALA).¹⁰³⁴

5. *Sharḥul Burdah* (Commentary on the Qāsidat al-Burda (The Cloak) of al-Būsīrī): This treatise is a commentary text on the three panegyric poems composed by Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Sa'īd al-Būsīrī (d. 694/1296). The first poem is *Qāsidat al-Burda* (The Cloak). In the introductory part of the work, al-Dāghirī gives an account of how and why the poet wrote the poem. Al-Dāghirī categorically stated that he himself reads the poem daily and he urges Muslims to read the poem as it solves every calamity. In his opinion, as part of its benefits, the poem could be recited during sun and moon eclipses. Another interesting part of the comment is on the uses to which the poem may be put and can be summarized as follows: if the *Qāsidat al-Burda* is recited to a sick person, God will heal him/her if his/her allotted moment of death has not arrived; a child may be protected by the poem from the machinations of the jinn and from the 'whisperings' of (Satan); a mother may be protected from illness or bodily harm; and a traveller will sell his merchandize easily and have a good journey if he carries a copy of the *Qāsidat al-Burda* in his load or in his pocket. It is also to be recited in all difficult circumstances for protection, e.g. plague, eclipse of the sun or moon, storms at sea, hurricanes.¹⁰³⁵ The second poem is *Qāsidat al-Mardiyya* while the third is *Qāsidat al-Muḥammadiyya*. This work was published in 1966 by Maktabat Zul Ma'arif and it consists of fourteen pages.

6. *Nataa'ijus-Safar fī salaati alaa sayyidil bashar* (The Outcome of the Journey in Prayer upon the dignified leader): This treatise was al-Dāghirī's first work, according to some researchers, and he had written it when he was on pilgrim journey to Makkah. It is important because it contains different styles of prayers to the Prophet Muḥammad and has a total number of one hundred and ninety-nine different forms of *Salat ala an-Nabī* corresponding to the ninety-nine names of Allah. Many of the *Salat ala an-Nabī* contained are poetic stanzas on being grateful

¹⁰³⁴ For full text and analysis of the content and theme see the subsequent chapters of this work.

¹⁰³⁵ For more discussion see John Hunwick 1996, 85-6.

to Allah for the favour and mercy of Allah on the Muslims. The author also discusses the importance and need for praising Allah by Muslims. The work as usual ended acknowledging the praise of Allah alone, with His help the composition of the work appeared simple to the author. He, therefore, indulged into praising the work in verse with twenty stanzas in *Bahar Daweel* with R-rhythm. The work was first published by Maṭba'ah wa Maktabah al-Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi, Cairo in 1942/3, but the available copy in my possession was published in 2008. The work has one hundred and sixteen pages.

7. *Hidhbus-surul manii'i lil mutasawwiri wad-dajii'i wat-tabii'i* (Safeguarding Fence for Helpless.....): This is a small book of *Du'a* (supplicatory prayer) attached to the end of another of the Shaykh's work entitled *Nataa'ijus-Safar* which seems to be an annotated edition to the earlier one. The work under review is a collection of supplications for protection against illness, calamity, diseases, misfortunes, and evil acts caused by humans and *Jinn* as well as all ill-mannered beings. He opens the work with seeking protection from the evil of Satan, *Basmallah* and *Surat al-Fatiha*. Then, followed by a prayer to Prophet Muḥammad. In the introductory part of the book, al-Dāghirī stated the reasons for which the book was written, that it is an attempt to educate the public on different prayers for protection.

The author quoted extensively the verses of the Glorious *Qur'an*, *Ahadith* of the Prophet and from eminent Sufi Shuyukh. In his opinion, Allah's refuge would only be sought and is best to depend upon in times of difficulty and hardship. Thereafter, he provides thirty-five (35) supplicatory prayers to the prophet Muḥammad to be recited while seeking heavenly support, as the central theme of the work. The work indeed contains different form and method of invocation among which the followings are observed: "O my Lord, I am seeking heavenly support from Allah to protect me from the evils of my admirers and well-wishers, and to protect me from the evil of the Jinns and mankind; and from the evil of the stubborn and arrogant people. He is helper and defender." In another methodology of the invocation, the author said: O my Lord, safeguard, protect and cover us against entire mischiefs, before us (our Lord) and all praise and thanks are yours, fortify us against the torment of hellfire." The author begins each prayer with "O my Lord" of the thirty-five prayers. This piece was written in 1389/1969 A.H, it was published the following year i.e. 1390/1970. It contains sixteen pages. The first copy available in my possession was reprinted by Maktabat Zulma ārif with brown cover while the other with a coloured cover was without the name of the publisher.

8. *Tadhyil wat-ta'aqiibun nataa'i wa as'ilatul hawaa'ij fid-salaati alas-sayyidil wujuud wa alamis-shuhuud* (Appending and Commenting on the book *an-Nataa'ij*.....):

This esoteric work is a continuation or simplified version of the work entitled *Nataa'ijus-Safar*, another work on the prayer of the Prophet Muḥammad of the same author. The work under review contains different approaches and styles of prayers of gratitude to Allah, invocations of Allah's peace and blessings on the Prophet Muḥammad, seeking divine succour and heavenly fervent plea as well as affirmation of Allah's absolute oneness known as '*salat al-auliya*' in the Sufi circle. The number of the *Salawat* are three hundred and ninety-eight except for two *Salawat* which the author attached at the end of the book. He begins the work with an account of his completed previous book entitled *Nataa'ijus-Safar*, so that it will be like a continuation of the latter. He indicates that there is a huge difference between the two works. *Nataa'ijus-Safar* was strictly written on the Sufi path as it contains some Sufi formulas and terminologies which are incomprehensible for non-Sufi. *Tazyeel*, the work under review, was composed according to Sharia, which is simpler than the previous one. This work is an outcome of al-Dāghiri's desire and willingness to explain his earlier work, *Nataa'ijus-Safar* to the readers and admirers of his book. The work under review is used as reference point. It is made up three hundred and ninety-eight forms of the praise of the prophet and many supplications to God for spiritual and material fulfilment,

In the introduction, the author requested the reader of the book to read *Surat al-Fatiha* for the soul of the author. After two pages of introduction, the author clearly stated the reason for which the book was written. He said that it was someone who in his dream saw an unknown person who taught him a special *Salawat*. The dreamer came to al-Dāghirī and revealed everything to him. He also said that the person who taught him that style of *Salawat* in the dream told that he has forty (40) *Salawat* of its kind, but he did not tell him. He therefore requested al-Dāghirī to tell him the remaining. From his account, al-Dāghirī understood the style and approach of the forty (40) *Salawat* which were not told.

The work under review contains the remaining forty (40) *Salawat* and he multiplied them times five ($40 \times 5 = 200$), and said that this is equal to the sum of '*Allaahumma Ṣalli ala Muḥammad wa Sallim*', but because the alphabet 'sad' in the numerical style is sixty (60) he thus divided the *Salawats* into seven days (7days). The reader of this book, therefore, will begin on Sunday and complete on Saturday that 56-57 different styles of *Salawat* will be recited every day. The work

was written in 1972/1392 and published by Jola-Ade Printers. It is made up of forty pages in lithograph. It was reprinted in 2007, with 220 pages, but the work in my possession was printed in 2017 by Alhaji Umaru Matazu.

9. *Al-ilaamul haa'ij fii ma'arifatil hisaabi bi uquudil asaa'bi'i* (Teaching of the Inquisitive the knowledge of Numerology): As the title of the work suggests, the work is on the various aspects of numerology based on the Sufi ideology and, is widely known and used in Northern Nigeria. Al-Dāghirī explains his motive for writing the work, which he says that there is need for all Muslims to know more about the knowledge of numerology. This work is an attempt made by al-Dāghirī to educate the general public, especially, the readers of his works on new method of performing *hisāb* (Arithmetic or numerology) which can be calculated by using fingers instead of sand, from one to ten thousand (1-10,000). It is based on the methodology of extracting some of the special and concealed names of Allah, through the means of adopting Arabic letters as a means of calculation. This method was technologically rare. This knowledge was drawn from by an authentic prophetic Hadith, but Shaykh did not mention the Hadith in its complete text rather mentions some part of it. The hadith was elaborated and commented upon by the Shaykh with the intention of simplifying the content of the Hadith. He concludes the commentary of the Hadith with the following poetic verse. “The inscription remains in paper while my finger decomposed beneath the earth.” The work is one of the most highly valued work on numerology in Islam. This work is still in manuscript form in two folios and has not yet been published.

10. *Al-jauharatul Fardu fii dhikri bi Ismil Mufrad* (The Single Jewel that cannot be divided): This work embodies numerous advantages in the remembrance of Allah using one of the best attributes of His name that is Allah, thorough glorification and praising of Allah in different styles and approaches. In his opinion, the constant recitation of the names of Allah is a basic means of curing illness of the soul. The author introduced the book with the name of Allah and prayer to Prophet Muḥammad. Al-Dāghirī, in this work, uncovers the advantages and peculiarities concealed in the said name as well as its specialisation in purifying and removing the veil surrounding the soul of those who adhered to it. Furthermore, the author explained how the assignment ought to be arranged particularly by those newly registered to the system, with or without guidance from those who have already mastered the system.

In the second part of the work, the author outlines the clear path that a spiritual perfection seeker can adhere to achieve his goal. The works also provide a guideline on how a spiritual

perfection seeker can become a true servant of Allah alone, follower of Prophet Muḥammad and a good Muslim through *khalwah* (seclusion), which he describes as a guide to the disciples. He explained the guiding principles by which the *khalwah* is conducted, giving out conditions and fundamentals which are the basis upon which the *khalwah* is built. He also discusses the duration and number of days one is required to stay in the state of *khalwah*. He also admonishes *salikān* (one who practices *khalwah* for the first time) to demonstrate pious behaviour and attitudes. He concludes the letter with an extract from another epistle written by Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī. He therefore, throughout the book, quotes and taken into consideration the views of classical Sufi scholars, especially, that of al-Tijānī severally. He finally concludes the work by quoting some words of his masters, Shaykh al-Tijānī, the founder of Tijānīyya Sufi order) for blessings. It consists of twelve pages.

11. *Istidraak alaa Muannasatis-samaa'iyath* (Correction upon the book Irregular Feminization of Noun): This is a didactic poem as a commentary or textual criticism on the work of Shaykh Jamaluddin bin Hajib Abu Umar bin 'Uthmān bin Amr al-Maliki (d. 664 A.H.), who was a prolific writer and author of many works on different subjects of the Arabic literature, language and Islamic studies. Al-Dāghirī observed some lapses in the work of Ibn Haajib discussing irregular feminine nouns in twenty-three stanzas. To fill the lacuna, al-Dāghirī composed the work under review. As usual, al-Dāghirī introduced the book by the name of Allah and prayer to the Prophet Muḥammad. In the introductory part of the work, al-Dāghirī categorically stated the reason for which the work was written, that he observed what escaped from the knowledge of Ibn Haajib in his work proved higher than what appeared, that is, irregular feminine nouns. He therefore endeavoured to accomplish the lapses observed. Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī begins by mentioning nouns that are optional-meaning they are indifferent in either gender (masculine or feminine) as follows:

إحسانه بالخلق والإحسان	1-- الحمد لله الذي قد عمنا
وصحابه للفضلا ذوي الإيمان	2-- ثم الصلاة على النبي وءاله
وإذا أردت فهات بالذكران	3-- فاذكر أخي أسماء تانيث أتت
فمذكر ومؤنث سببان	4-- أما التي فد كنت فيها مخيرا
بالضرس قداما وسر بأمان	5-- خيّر في بشر وحنوت فكل

V1. All praise be to Allah whose charity has predominated by creating man in a best form and structure.

V2. Then, the blessings (of Allah) be upon the noble Prophet and his excellent and faithful companions.

V3. Remember O my brother, the existence of feminine nouns. If you wish to know these are, they (their variables) mentioned.

V4. But those that are flexible and optional; they are those suitably fit for either gender.

V5. So you are given option to use them both for masculine and feminine gender; such as "بشر" (human being) and "حانوت" (Wine shop)... So, feel free and have confidence in this statement.

The method adopted by al-Dāghirī in commenting on the original work is by explaining the content part by part. He strictly followed Ibn Hajib's book in terms of rhythm, style and language arrangement. Added to this, al-Dāghirī in his commentary, provides footnote to certain vocabularies and full explanation on the new entries he added for simplification. He also quoted extensively from the opinions of eminent Arabic grammarians to support his argument. He finally concludes the work with invocation of Allah's peace and blessings on Prophet Muḥammad, his companions and his family as well as those who strictly followed the teachings and Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad. He also sends prayer to the honest vicegerents of the Prophet Muḥammad, namely, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī and Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse.

12. *Mafaatiihul Asraarir-Rabbaniyyah fii maqaasidit-Tijjaniyyah* (The Key of the divine Secret regarding the Tijānīyya manifestation): This is an esoteric work which embodies cogent and convincing explanation on the reality of the rites of Tijānīyya brotherhood. It contains answers to the questions raised by members of the Tijānīyya brotherhood in Ibadan to the author, al-Dāghirī on matters relating to the conditions governing the Tijānīyya order. Both conditions for validity and perfection as well as obligatory prayers and other rites of the order are discussed in the work. He also attempts to bring into the limelight the factual origin and rites of Tijānīyya brotherhood as well as the bounties and aims of the brotherhood's litanies. It is based on the methodology of excessively extracting some verses of the Qur'an, Hadith of the Prophet and from eminent Sufi Shuyukh to support his argument.

The author introduced the book with the name of Allah and prayer to Prophet Muḥammad. Thereafter, the author stated the reasons for which the book was written, that the idea of writing the book was inspired by a *khutbah* delivered by him in Ibadan on 12.08.1968/17.05.1388 A.H. He said that when he visited Ibadan city in the south-western part of Nigeria, some members of the Tijānīyya brotherhood asked him about the obligations and duties upon the brotherhoods' members. Al-Dāghirī responded that: "I considered myself a mere spectator among the members of the Tijānīyya brotherhood to watch the war not to handle the war by stabbing and killing." This is in line with the brotherhood's modesty and by the statement of al-Dāghirī, he means he is not among the brotherhood's authority. Knowing the consequences of concealing education as warned by the Prophet Muḥammad, he endeavoured to answer the question in a very convincing and cogent *Khutbah* (sermon) in which all the questions posed by those people were answered. He

provides full explanation of what is done in them, for instance, he explained the Tijānīyya *Salawat* popularly known as *Jawharat al-kamal* and the conditions attached to it. The author, al-Dāghirī, discusses the reason that accounted for the divergent views on the number of *Jawharat al-kamal* recited during the *Wazifa*. He excessively derives his point from Qur'an and Hadith. Thereafter, he discusses the benefits and virtues of *Salat Nabi* and *Salat Fatih* by supporting his discussion with prophetic Hadiths.

He claims that Tijānīyya brotherhood litanies and *Wird* are absolutely in conformity with the teachings of Islam. He made a strong warning against denial of these activities being qur'anically enjoined. He also made it clear that mystical saints and holy men are of different categories and they deserve due respect in accordance with the dignity and step from Allah. He finally concludes with poetic verses in praise of the book, with 'R' rhyme and in *Bahar Daweel*, and it has the total number of eighty-six stanzas. He thereafter narrated the account of how he conducted *Khuṭbah* in Ibadan city and the book was completed on Friday, 12.8.1968/17.05.1388. AH.

13. *Nafhatul waaridur-Rabbaanii fii madhil qutbil khatmi Ahmad at-tijjaani* (Divine Gift in praising of Aḥmad al-Tijānī (R.T.A): This work is a panegyric poem of eighty-six stanzas composed by al-Dāghirī as a personal praise of Aḥmad al-Tijānī, founder and spiritual leader of the Tijānīyya brotherhood. This work is purely an esoteric work which portrays the spiritual status of Aḥmad al-Tijānī. Al-Dāghirī commences the work by calling on Aḥmad al-Tijānī to come to his rescue because he is in a restricted condition. In doing so, the poet, al-Dāghirī, authenticates the spiritual circle, his *karāmāt*, charisma and his qualities. Many attributes are ascribed to Aḥmad al-Tijānī by the poet, for instance, he described Aḥmad al-Tijānī as component of the Prophet Muḥammad's light (*Nur Muḥammad*). He also brought the issues of the *khatm al-auliya* (the seal of saint) and he swore by Allah that Aḥmad al-Tijānī has no equal among the saints of Allah. He is described as the grandson of Prophet Muḥammad. The author explains more about Tijānīyya brotherhood and importance attached to it, being a member of the brotherhood as well as its superiority over other brotherhoods. He sums-up the work with numerical strength of "nun" which stands for 50; "zayun" stands for 7 and "lamun" stands for 30 when added will give 87. It is made-up of six sheets of papers.

14. *Qar'u abwaabin-Nawaal bi asmaa'illaahil muta'aal* (Knocking of the gaining door through the exalted attributes of Allah): It is an esoteric work on the ninety-nine names of Allah.

Perhaps this is one of the earlier writings of al-Dāghirī, before his contact with Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse. The most beautiful and greatest ninety-nine names of Allah are discussed in the work known as *al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā*. The work is an attempt by al-Dāghirī to justify some of the Sufi doctrines, especially, as regards the availability of grand names of Allah and to convince readers of his work that the grand names of Allah as well as the concealed ones such as *al-Asmā' al-Ḥusnā* are traceable to certain names of Allah as contained in the Qur'an. The author begins by authenticating the ninety-nine names of Allah which are considered the attributes of Allah. He explores the secrets behind such names which could be used to solicit Allah's blessing and mercy. As usual, he introduces the book with the name of Allah and prayer for Prophet Muḥammad. He brought all the ninety-nine names of Allah and benefits of regularly reciting them in the five daily prayers. He said that the secret of Allah's name, and its purpose is to move one closer to Allah. He quotes Qur'anic verses to support his discussion and prophetic Hadith which says Allah has ninety-nine names and whosoever committed them into his memory would enter Paradise. He also seeks heaven with them and urges the Muslims to recite those names while fervently leading or seeking heavenly support. The poem was composed in 1945/1364 A.H. It contains eighty-two stanzas in *Bahar Daweel* rhyme, and it has seven pages.

15. *Inhaa'us-salaam ilaa Imaami kulli Imaamin* (.....): This panegyric poem on the Prophet Muḥammad, composed by al-Dāghirī on his way to Makkah and Madinah to perform pilgrimage in 1370 A.H./1950, was recited many times at the Prophet's tomb as a present to him. It is a panegyric poem which is essentially dealing with praise of the Prophet Muḥammad being the leader of all prophets and messenger of Allah and extending salutation blessings and compliment to his first and second successors: Khalīf Abū Bakr 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Quḥāfa aṣ-Ṣiddīq (d. 634 AH) and Khalīf Abū Hafṣ 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 644). It is a poem of intense feeling in which al-Dāghirī succeeded in expressing the urgency and passion of his desire to worship and conveyed his spiritual experience of a close, personal relationship with the Prophet. In the introductory part, al-Dāghirī said that he was inspired by a Qur'anic verse which outlines a condition for one to consider when he/she is visiting the Prophet. He cites the Qur'anic verse, which states that "O you who have believed, when you [wish to] privately consult the Messenger, present before your consultation a charity..."¹⁰³⁶ For that reason, he said when he envisaged himself standing in the foreground of the noble tomb of the Prophet for a special meeting with

¹⁰³⁶ Qur'an 58:12.

him, he thus presents these verses of the poem as charity or present based on the command of the above-mentioned verse. The poem is similar in style and content with an epistle in the Islamic context as it begins with different styles of *Salaam* and blessings to the Prophet, as if the author is writing a letter or conveying a message to the Prophet Muḥammad. It essentially consists of fifty-two stanzas and follows the pattern of *Bahar Daweel* ending with “*Mi*,” that is *Mimiyyah* poem. This work was written in 1370 A.H./1950, and it is made up of seven pages.

16. *Al-Qasiidatu Sa’adus-Su’uud fii madhi sayyidil Wujuud (SAW) (The Lucky Star in praise of Best of mankind (panegyric poem):* This is a lengthy panegyric poem eulogizing the Prophet Muḥammad with a total of two hundred and seventy-sixty stanzas. This work is very popular and of great attraction. The author adopts a classical style; he begins the poem without the name of Allah or prayer for Prophet Muḥammad. This type of poem is called ‘*gazzl*’ in classical Arabic literature. The work is an ode and panegyric in honour of the Prophet Muḥammad. He therefore eulogizes the Prophet with different unique qualities, peculiarities as well as miracles. He used it as a means of petitioning Allah and at the same time using the names of Allah and Prophet Muḥammad as a means of intercession, and to fulfil his request in honour and respect of them. He also mentions different attributes and unique qualities of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī. He is also considered a saint whose existence is a concealment to others. The author therefore uses these attributes and names of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī to intercede for Allah’s favour and by seeking Allah’s blessings to Prophet Muḥammad.

17. *Ar-risaalatul Mutawajjahatu ilaa Sayyid Abdullah (Message directed toward the Sayyid Abdullah):* This treatise is an important esoteric work on the existence of a spiritual guide. It is a form of response to questions raised by Shaykh Abdullah, who wrote a letter to al-Dāghirī asking him the actual number of poems composed by al-Dāghirī and their categories. He also requests for an explanation of some stanzas which had earlier been written by the author. This work, containing only four pages, is a blend of prose and poetry. As usual, he introduced the pamphlet with the name of Allah and prayer to Prophet Muḥammad. In the introductory part of the pamphlet, al-Dāghirī said that you asked about the number of poems I composed, my poems are many and a majority are in praise of Prophet Muḥammad and Aḥmad al-Tijānī. In the work, some major issues that have connections with spiritual guide and Arabic prosody are discussed in both prose and poetic styles by the author. It also provides full explanation on the poetry of the same author as

requested by Shaykh Abdullah. As usual, he concludes the pamphlet with prayer for Prophet Muḥammad.

18. *Majmuu’u ihdaa ashara khutba Annaafi’a min khutbatil Jumu’ati ilaa khutbatil Maulid (Composition of Eleven Sermons....)*: This book was composed by al-Dāghirī and is a collection of eleven important *Khuṭbah* (sermon) for different religiously related devotions and events. However, the first two *Khuṭbah* are Friday sermons while the remaining ones are *Khuṭbah* on *Eid el-Fitr*, *Eid el-Kabir*, prayer for rainfall during a drought, *Salat al-tasbiih*, *Sajda* (Qur’an prostration), wedding sermon, funeral prayer sermon, Qur’anic completion prayer and naming ceremony sermon. Ten out of the eleven *Khuṭbah* were composed by al-Dāghirī, one is the second in the following sequence, which was written by Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse as *Khuṭbah al-Juma’ah*. He brought it because of its importance to the Muslims. The work was written in 1383/1963-4, and it is now in lithograph and typograph editions. The lithograph, consisting of 64 pages, was printed by Maktabat Zulma ‘aarif. The typograph, in 43 pages, with introduction by Tijani Umar was published by Alhaji Umaru Matazu. The manuscript copy of the work is available in BCLIS, Maiduguri and NU/Hunwick, uncatalogued.

19. *Sidratul Muntahaad-daa’iin* (The termination tree for invocation “Connotation of the Event which occurred in the Journey of Heaven of the Prophet (SAW”): This work contains special prayers for one to be safe from both spiritual dirt and formidability of life through remembrance of the names of Allah. To date, such kind of wonderful combination of Allah’s exalted names which is clearly a hallmark of intellectual Islamization, has become a source of panacea to the Muslims who identified and recognized the values of this work. It was written in 1953, the available copy in my possession was in typograph reprinted by Alhaji Umaru Matazu. It is made-up of 22 pages.

20. *Kitaabu Bayaanil Kalimaatil Mushkilaatil Mufradaat fii Sharhil aqiidatil murshidah* (The book that highlights some ambiguous and complex words in the book titled -The Ideology of Guidant): This was the last book written by al-Dāghirī who died seven months after it. This work is beautifully designed, and well paginated. It deals with the subject of *tawhid* (Islamic theology) or oneness of Allah according to Ash’ariyya school of thought. As usual, he introduces the book with the name of Allah and prayer for Prophet Muḥammad. It has received another introduction from Imam Mustapha Chukuriwa. He begins the work with fervent plea to Allah to guide whosoever reads the book. Throughout the book, al-Dāghirī was trying to convince his audience

that nobody deserves to be worshipped except Allah; he also emphasizes the importance of unifying Allah and urges Muslims to seek help from Allah alone. He completes the book with *La ilaha illa Allah* ‘There is no god but God,’ and this is the last book written by al-Dāghirī. This *tawhid* book which came at the end of the Shaykh’s life has attracted a lot of scholars to consider it as a glad tidings for good ending quoting from the prophetic hadith that “He who has *Lailaha illallah* as his last word will enter Jannah.” Imam Mustapha Chukuriwa said that: “I am a witness of al-Dāghirī that his last word in this book is *La ilaha illa Allah* ‘There is no god but God.’” The work is in line with most of those books written about the unity of Allah and especially those in accordance with the Ash’arite thought. The work was published by Oluseyi Press limited, Kano in 1974.

21. *Ar-risaa’u fū Shaykh Abubakar Atīq (An Elegy for Shaykh Abū Bakr ‘Atīq)*.¹⁰³⁷ This is purely an elegiac poem composed by al-Dāghirī for the death of Shaykh Abū Bakr al-‘Atīq b. Khidr b. Abī Bakr b. Mūsā al-Kashināwī (known in Hausa as Shehi Abubakar Atīku Sanka; (1909–74) of Kano 1974. The work is made up of seventeen stanzas in which al-Dāghirī laments about his sorrow and the loss of this great scholar,¹⁰³⁸ one of the leading *fayda* Tijānī scholars generally in West Africa and Nigeria specifically. The work is purely an expression of al-Dāghirī’s grief, affliction and mourning for the death of his spiritual brother, Abī Bakr Atīq. He also eulogizes him with different qualities and attributes and discusses the great love Allah had for the deceased that is why He took him away. He describes ‘Atīq as a great scholar who contributed towards the intellectual and spiritual development in northern Nigeria. He was also considered by the poet as one of the most influential scholars who contributed to the understanding, consolidation and spread of *fayda* Tijānīyya in the present-day northern Nigeria. He also mentioned some ethical behaviour or character of the deceased. Al-Dāghirī prays for the repose of his soul and seeks for his divine intercession through the name of Prophet Muḥammad. The author therefore wishes for a competent and educated *Khalifa* who would continue with his religious and social responsibilities and duties, with the kind of humility demonstrated by him. This work is mentioned in ALA and it was dated

¹⁰³⁷ This kind of work is one of personal remembrance of an individual of distinction. However, Shaykh Muḥammad al-Dāghirī was an elegist of excellence, and his subjects were chosen with mystical import in mind. As such, this work is considered mystical poem as discussed in the subsequent chapter.

¹⁰³⁸ Sheikh Abu Bakr Atiq was one of the most prolific Tijani Sufi writers among the Nigerian Sufis in the twentieth century Islamic northern Nigeria. For more detailed information about his biographical notes and works see Solagberu 2009, 89-101 & 129-170.

10th Rabī' Awwal 1374/6th December 1954 and published 18 verses in al-Amin 'Umar (c. 1988), 24-5.

22. *Qasiidatu Tarheebi bi Saahibil Faidatit-Tijjaaniyyati* (The welcoming poem in praising the owner of Tijānīyya brotherhood): The work is a panegyric ode, a poem made up of eighty stanzas, composed by al-Dāghirī as a means and form of welcoming Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse (d. 1975), the leader of *fiyda* Tijānīyya and one of the notable Tijānīyya Sufi personalities on his visit to Nigeria. The author welcomes the visitor, Niasse to Nigeria and eulogizes him as he was being welcomed to the city of Kano, describing him as a leader of spiritual leaders, light of all places, a guide to all peoples' path, and a flag bearer of guidance. He is also considered as a representative of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Tijānī, the founder of the Tijānīyya brotherhood. In the work, al-Dāghirī also aims at educating people on how an individual can link himself mystically and spiritually to Allah and His Prophet through Niasse. Al-Dāghirī seeks and requests the visitor not to forget him in his prayers and to convey his salutation to Prophet Muḥammad and all his family. He submits to the spiritual authority of Niasse and seeks divine intercession through him. Finally, he seeks Allah's blessings on Prophet Muḥammad. The work is still in manuscript form.

23. *Nuurul Fu'aad fii madhi khairil ibaad* (The heart lightening in eulogizing the best of servants (of God): The work was written in 1372/1952-3. I have not been able to lay my hands on the work. The MS is available at the Centre for Trans-Saharan Studies, Maiduguri, MS 90/507

24. *Murakkabul I'timaad fii ma'arifatil A'adaad* (The knowledge of order of compound numbers): This is a booklet of ten pages discussing about numerical arrangement of Arabic grammar, written in Maghreb script. In this work, among other things, he provides solutions to many grammatical puzzles. I have not been able to lay my hands on the work.

25. *Faa'idatul Hirdhi wal Hifdhi* (Invocations for protection): The work was written by al-Dāghirī on protective supplication for the Muslims in general and members of the Tijānīyya in particular. The work was published at the end of al-Rīḥ al-aḥmar of Abū Bakr Kēla'am b. al-Māhir Awanā. I have not been able to lay my hands on the work. The work is mentioned in ALA (copy in NU/Hunwick, uncatalogued.).

26. *Al-majaami'ul Mahmuudah* (The Excellent Collection): This work was published in 1968 by Alhaji Sunusi Dantata Printing Press. It was made up of twelve pages.

27. *Qasiidatul Tahmiid wat-tamjiid (ayaa saahibal asmaa'i.....)* (The Poem of praising and glorification titled – O the owner of the Beautiful Names): The work is generally on

supplicatory prayer. This work was published in 1968 by Alhaji Sunusi Dantata Printing Press. It is made up of twelve pages.

28. *Miqdaahu nuuril Fu'aadi fii salaati alaa Sayyidil Jaliil* (Igniting the light of the heart):

The work is a panegyric poem in praise of Prophet Muḥammad and has not been published yet.

29. *Ahlan wa sahlān* (This is Good): This poem in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad is a panegyric (*madḥ*) genre.

30. *Majmuu'u thalaathati Majaalis* (Collection of three presentations): This text is on legal opinion. It is a condensed rulebook for Muslims and for Sufi Muslims, and as such is evidence of the intellectualism of the twentieth century Nguru Sufi scholars. It informs Muslims at all levels of their duties and responsibilities based on Islamic principles.

31. *Sharhur-Risaalati Abdurrahman ibn abi Zaid Al-Qairawaanii* (Commentary on the Book Risaalat Abdurrahman ibn Abi Zaid): The work is mainly on commentary on the work of Abū Muḥammad Abdullāh *ibn* Abī Zaid Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Qayrawaanii on Islamic legislation.

32. *Kitaabun Mutadamminun Akhbaaral Muhabbat* (A book that contains history of love): This historical text is still in manuscript form.

33. *As-Saifiyyu* (As sharp as sword): This text contains supplicatory prayers for protection and has not been published yet.

34. *Ad-da'awaatul Mustajaabatu* (Effective invocations): This treatise is mainly concerned with *fawā'id* prayer, invocations and supplications. The work has not been published yet.

35. *Qasiidatur-Ra'iyyah* (R-rhythm Poem): The work is a commentary and has not been published yet.

36. *Khasaa'isun Nabiyi Sharhu alaa Mukhtasaati khasaa'isil Kubraa lis-Suyuutii* (Exceptional qualities of the prophet of Suyūṭī): This historical work is an abridgment and has not been published yet.

37. *Ar-risaalatul Wujudiyya* (The book that tells essential nature of Allah): The treatise is on ideology and has not been published yet. The work contains preaching about the qualities which lead to damnation and also taught about those traits that lead to salvation (repentance, purification of service to God, patience, scrupulousness, reliance on God, entrusting matters to God, fear of the suffering inflicted by God, hope in the mercy of God. It has not been published yet.

38. *Shathu Ummil Baraahiin* (The Root of Proof): The work is generally on *tawhid* (theology) and has not been published yet.

- 39. *Al-Majmuu'ud Da'awaat (Composed Invocations)*:** This treatise contains invocations.
- 40. *Kitaabu futuuhaatis- Samdaaniyyati fii takhmiisil Mawaahib (Book of triumphs from Everlasting (God))*:** This text is on eulogy. It is a work in honour of the Prophet Muḥammad and has not been published yet.
- 41. *Ad-durratul Faakhirah fii ashyaa'i yaumil Aakhirah (The elegance of pearl being an exposition on the events in the hereafter)*:** The work is generally on exhortation, admonition and preaching for the Muslims to be far from Hell and close to Paradise. He explains the philosophy of life in this world and the hereafter. In these works, he always reminds the public and his readers that their existence has a purpose and that they will meet their Lord and that their success lies in their being righteous. Their activities are being recorded by the Angels and shall be accounted for. Paradise and hellfire are provided as an abode according to the deeds of a person. He draws the attention of Muslims to purify their inner soul and work for their success in this life and Hereafter.
- 42. *Garaa'ibul Igtiraab (Strangest of the strange)*:** It is in manuscript form.
- 43. *Taqyidu Latiifil Mufiid (Mitigation of the book (Allatiiful Mufiid))*:** This text consists of invocations and has not been published yet.
- 44. *Khutbatul Murtaaniyyah (Sermon related to Murtaaniya)*:** As the title of the work implies, it contains a sermon and has been published.
- 45. *Manaaqibu As-haabil Adyaan (The virtues of the owners of the religions (Prophet Muḥammad))*:** The work is a eulogy. It is a praise in honour of Prophet Muḥammad.
- 46. *Markadhul Mustafiir wal Mudhiir.....?* (The treasure of hesitator and?):** The work is on *hisab* (arithmetic or numerology) and has not been published yet.
- 47. *At-taqriiz fii Itbaa'ut-tazyiil fii salaati alas-sayyidil Jaliil (Encomium for Annexation of the book 'Tazyiil' on the invocation of Allah's peace and blessings on Prophet Muḥammad)*:** The poem contains nineteen (19) verses which was meant to praise his prosaic book, *Itbaa'ut-tazyiil* and educate his readers on how to use the content of the praised work. Even if the poet did not reason for composing his poem, one can easily deduce them from the title and the content of the poem. He also advertises to his reader some his works which has the same content with *Itbaa'ut-tazyiil*. He thus brings out the titles of the works: *Jihaazus Saarih, Nataa'ijus-Safar, Hidhbus-surul manii'i, Tazyiil*. All the above-mentioned works have similar content with the praised work. They are designed for weak believers encouraging them to become alive to the *salawat* of the Prophet Muḥammad. The poem is blended in complex vocabularies.

Other works authored by al-Dāghirī

The above-mentioned works are, to the best of my knowledge, the titles of the writings which al-Dāghirī wrote. While the followings are certainly some more of which we do not know, and they may be discovered in the future.

48. *Kitaabul wabaa'I wal Amraadi wal asqaami*

49. *Annamuuzatul Jullabi fii khasaa'isin-Nabiyyi*

50. *Surul Masuun*

51. *Far'un-Nawaal*

52. *Shajaratul Kauni*

53. *As-silsilatul Qur'aniyyah*

54. *Nataa'ijul Adhkaar*

55. *Sharhu ayaa dayyibal Asmaa'i (al-musammaa bi Qasiidati "tis'a wa tis'iin {99}")*

56. *Kitaabu Mu'iinatut-taalib wa Mufiidur-raagib*

57. *Asmaa'ul Ambiyaa'i*

58. *Al-majmuu'atut-Tayyibah*

59. *Khawaasul-Latiif*

60. *Markadhul Mustafir wa Mukhlisul Mustansir*

Appendix II

Annotated List of Literary Oeuvre of al-Fallātī

The following is the list of his works which contains four major categories: (a) those books he authored himself, (b) those book published by other scholars summarizes by him to ease learning, (c) those books published by other scholars he reprints in modern outlook, (d) those books published by other scholars by translates by him into local language.

1. *Thalaathatu Majaalis* (The three Sessions): This work was apparently motivated by a lecture delivered in Nguru, Yusufari and Gashua.¹⁰³⁹ The lectures were elaborated and commented upon by al-Fallātī. The work is therefore a collection of three different lectures conducted in Nguru, Yusufari and Gashua. The work is divided into three sections. The first section consists of the text of the lecture conducted at Nguru in which the Shaykh discusses the existence of Allah and the conditions of knowing Him. He also admonishes the *murids* and lovers of the Tijānīyya. The second section consists of the text of the lecture held at Gashua in which al-Fallātī discusses the purification of the soul and the issues of folding of arms *Qabd* (*Qabari* or *Qablu*) during the observance of ritual prayers. The last but not the least contains the text of the lecture delivered at Yusufari in which the Shaykh discusses the admittance of the lovers of Prophet Muḥammad into *Jannat* (paradise). This work was published in 1973 by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of seventeen pages and it is still in lithograph.

2. *Kitaabu Nuurul Arwaahi* (The Book on Light of the Souls):¹⁰⁴⁰ This work was authored by al-Fallātī and it is generally on the life history of Prophet Muḥammad. It specifically discusses the dignity of the prophet, the repentance of Hamza, celebration of the birthday of the prophet, his miracles and qualities. The spiritual status of the Prophet Muḥammad is discussed along with different attributes and attitudes which is one of the important aspects of Sufi doctrines. A concept known among the Sufi as *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The real essence of Muḥammad). The work was published in 1992 by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano. It consists of forty-seven (47) pages and it is lithograph form.

3. *Kitaabu Fadaa'ilul Qur'an* (The Virtues of Qur'an): The work was authored by al-Fallātī, but the available sources do not give the date when this work was written, both its subject and style of composition suggest that it belongs to the early stage of al-Fallātī's career. It is likely that during

¹⁰³⁹ All of them are local government areas in Yobe State, Nigeria.

¹⁰⁴⁰ For a more detailed explanation of this work see chapter eight of this work.

this period a need for works showing the virtues of the Qur'an were keenly required. Al-Fallātī talks about revelation of the Qur'an and its significance in the teaching and learning for the entire mankind and signifies the importance of understanding of its meaning and listening of the Qur'an whenever it is recited. He also discusses the magnificence of some selected verses in *Surat al-Fatiha*, *Surat al-Kahfī*, *Surat al-Muluk*, *Surat al-Falaq* and *Surat al-Nas*. However, like most of his works, in this work he quotes almost exclusively from the tradition, using only very few verses from the Qur'an.

4. *Sihaa-mul isaabati fii Da'awatil Mustajaabah* (The Sharpshooting Arrows on Effective Prayers): Like the text mentioned above, the treatise is on the supplicatory prayer with their references from Hadith. In this treatise, emphasis is on the *asrar* prayers (secret supplications) which when used Allah would answer the prayers or requests instantly. Al-Fallātī, in his opinion, says that the prayers were used by Prophet Muḥammad and he therefore recommends the use of them in addition to some prescribed Tijānīyya litanies and *wird*. This work was published but the name of publisher and the date of publication are not mentioned. It is made up of forty-eight pages and it is in typograph.

5. *Kitaabul wafiy fii ahKaamis Salaati. Wayalihi Ahaadiis fii Fadlis Sallati Waz-zajari Anit-tahaawuni Bi Haa* (The Comprehensive Book on provisions of Prayer, followed by Traditions on Virtues of Prayer and Warning about its Negligence): This treatise is generally on position, blessings and importance of *Salat* (ritual prayer) in Islam. Al-Fallātī discusses the reward that would be given to one who properly observes *Salat* and punishment for its negligence of prayer. He encourages Muslims to be mindful towards *Salat*. This work was considered one of the best works on Islamic studies on *Salat*. It was published in 1960 by Oluseyi Press Limited, Kano, and reprinted in 1992 by the same printing press. It is made up of ten pages in lithograph form.

6. *Kitaabu Nazm abi madiyan* (The Collections on Abu-Madini): This treatise is generally on the life history of Abi Madini and his speeches on exhortation as well as poetic treatment and translation. The work is an attempt made by the Shaykh to educate the general public, especially the readers of his work on the doctrines of asceticism in the Sufi circle; and encourages adherents to embrace decent and moral brotherhood and warns against indecent acts. This text was originally composed by Shu'aibu bin Hassan. However, it was compiled, commented, annotated upon, and published by al-Fallātī. The work was published in 1970 by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano. It is made up of twenty-six pages and it is still in lithograph form.

7. *Nurul Qulub (Light of the Hearts)*: The treatise is basically on the *Jami'us Sagiir* of Abū al-Faḍl ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī (1445–1505) which is a widely utilised set of Hadith traditions that is in two volumes in northern Nigeria. The author explains the position of the text in the study of Prophetic tradition and the bounties and virtues of reading the text. It was published in 1939 by al-Fallātī. It is made up of thirteen pages in lithograph form.

8. *Kitaabu irshaadidh-dhullaab (Students’ Guide)*: This treatise was authored by al-Fallātī himself and it is mainly on the *ilm al- tajwiid* (the established guidelines governing the way in which the words of the Qur’an should be pronounced during its reading or recitation). It contains some mnemonic device used for teaching beginners the rules and names of the *tajwiid*. The work was published in 1990 by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano. It is made up of fifty pages and it is in lithograph form.

9. *Sai Gere or Wasa’ilul Musammatu (The Means of Achieving Known As.....)*: This is a panegyric poem in praise of Prophet Muḥammad. The work is divided into two parts. The first poem is in praise of Prophet Muḥammad composed in Arabic language. The second poem is also a panegyric poem in praise of the prophet, but it was composed in Arabic. The text was originally composed by ‘Uthmān Dan Fodio and it was later translated into *Ajami Fulfulde* with some comments and published by al-Fallātī. And it was now known as “Sai Gere.” It was published in 1972 by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of thirteen pages in lithograph form.

10. *Kitaabu fii Bayaani Akbaaris satiihi bi zuhuuri Nuurin nabiiyinaa Muhammad (saw) (Exposition on events that occurred at the birth of Prophet Muḥammad, (PBUH)*: The text was written by al-Fallātī and it is generally on the miraculous birth of Prophet Muḥammad. Al-Fallātī explains the events which took place before, during and after the birth of the Prophet Muḥammad. Like the presence of many elephants, a year before his birth, appearance of a radiance which lighted the palaces of Syria, Persia and Yemen etc. In his opinion, Prophet Muḥammad was the first creation of Allah and the most excellent creation. It was published in 1993 by unknown publisher. It is made up of twenty-five pages and is in lithograph form.

11. *Fadaa’ilul Basmalati wa ba’adi Fadaa’ilil Maulidihii (saw) (Virtues of Basmallah and the Maulud)*: ¹⁰⁴¹ This esoteric treatise was authored by al-Fallātī and it is generally on the supplicatory prayer. This work is divided into two parts. The first section discusses the bounties, secrets and virtues encapsulated in the Basmallah (*Bismillaahi ar-Raḥmaan ar-Rahiim*). The

¹⁰⁴¹ For a more detailed explanation of this work see chapter eight of this work.

second section investigates the benefits of performing Maulud (celebration of the birth of Prophet Muḥammad). Al-Fallātī cited a Hadith in which the prophet said: “Whosoever celebrates my birthday, I would intercede him in the hereafter.” The work was published in 1992 by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano. It is made up of twenty-nine pages and it is in lithograph form.

12. *Gaflataka (Your Negligence towards Obligations)*: This treatise is mainly on exhortation on the good and bad habits in Islam written in *Ajami Fulfulde*. Al-Fallātī preaches to the public on enjoining the good and forbidding the bad. He notes that the good habit is prayer and devotion to Allah, repentance, and devotional service on every occasion. The text was published in 1970 by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of eight pages and it is in lithograph form.

13. *Kitaabu Fadaa’ilul Sayyidil Mustafa (Virtues of Al-Mustapha)*:¹⁰⁴² This mystical work was authored by al-Fallātī and it is generally on the uniqueness and exalted miraculous nature of the Prophet Muḥammad in Islam. The text is divided into two different parts. The first part discusses the virtues of studying the traditions of the Prophet Muḥammad and his superiority over mankind. In the same vein, the author extracts the names of Prophet Muḥammad through the same means. He believes that if anyone can supplicate to Allah through hidden names, he is likely to benefit greatly. In the second part, al-Fallātī explains the complicated cases of Islamic law. The work was published by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano, but it has no date of publication. It is made up of nine pages in lithograph form.

14. *Kitaabu Aadaabul Ibadah (The Book on Ethics of Worship)*: This text is generally on the etiquettes of worship which would add more reward to the worshiper. It also covers several topics including admonition, discipline, decency, custom and culture consciousness as well as religious advice designed to encourage good deeds of virtues. The author admonishes his disciples to demonstrate pious behaviour and attitudes. He also warns that they should live in expectation of carrying out their duties and obligations. The book was originally written by Shaykh ‘Uthmān Bin Fodio and simplified by al-Fallātī. It was published in 1971 by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of thirty pages in lithograph form.

15. *Da’awaa-tul at-Tijaaniyya (Supplications of Tijāniyya)*: This text is generally on supplicatory prayers and litanies as practiced by Aḥmad at-Tijānī. It is like a substitute for the Tijāniyya litanies and it is to be read in a repeated manner, as a supplication considered to be one of the greatest names of God. These prayers are used as a means of petitioning Allah and at the

¹⁰⁴² For a more detailed explanation of this work see chapter eight of this work.

same time using the names of Allah, Prophet Muḥammad, Aḥmad at-Tijānī, his companions especially the leading members of Tijānīyya brotherhood as means of intercession. In his opinion, the thrust of the prayers is on absolute monotheism and divine power and security. One of the main purposes of such writing is to boost the morale of the brotherhood members and to give encouragement and confidence in prayers. The work is also highly researched and educative. It was authored and published by al-Fallātī in 1384 A.H./1964 by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano. It is made up of twenty-nine pages and it is in lithograph form while the manuscript contains 23 folios.

16. *Kitaabu jaliilul ifaadatil-muriid* (The excellent Book Beneficial of the Follower): This is an esoteric and philosophical treatise on the position of the globe to the people on the earth. It also contains the virtues of Prophet Muḥammad's Maulud to the public and the Tijānī *murids*. In his opinion, the sky always serving the humanity as it forms clouds and rains to the earth for people to plant seeds and farm. The work was written in 1972 and published in lithograph form by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of forty-seven pages and it is still in lithograph form.

17. *Al-Qasiidataani al'ajamiyyataani biluggatil Fullatiyya* (The Two Poems in Fulfulde): This treatise is generally on two different topics composed in *Ajami* Fulfulde. The first section is on the position and recitation of the Qur'an in Islam. The author discusses the benefits and bounties of reading it daily by the Muslims. He also highlights the position of Qur'anic reciters, and some warning against negligence of reciting Qur'an and its consequences. This first section was said to be originally written by Shaykh 'Uthmān bin Fodio. It was then commented and published by al-Fallātī. The second section pinpoints the conditions stipulated to Tijānīyya brotherhood activities and explains the bounties endowed to its adherents. This work was written in 1971 and published in lithograph form by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of six pages and it is still in lithograph.

18. *Khuṭbatush-shaykh Hassan Dim* (The Sermons of Shaykh Hassan Dim): It teaches some prayers against all forms of calamities, distress, disaster and commotion and some prayers for tangible and non-tangible richness (i.e. in this world and hereafter). The writing was originally a sermon delivered by Shaykh Hassan Dim bin Muḥammad and later published it as a book by al-Fallātī. The work was published in 1983 by Bola Print Limited, Kano. It is made up of twenty-five pages and it is in lithograph form.

19. *Kitaabu Hizbul Amaani (The Team of the Safeguard)*: This text is generally on divine grace, healing, and inspiration as well as special supplications based on selected chapters of the Qur'an. The text can also be used as an amulet for which family, or relatives against commotions, disturbances, and unrest. It also contains supplications for divine grace and protection of the environment of its occupants. It was authored and published by al-Fallātī.

20. *Kitaabu Jawaahiril-arba'a (The Book of Four Jewels (Essential))*: The work is a collection of Prophetic Hadiths on different issues. The book is divided into three parts. The first section discusses the attributes and signs of people who would enter paradise and those would be admitted in the Hellfire in the hereafter. The second section examines the importance of reading Qur'an and acquiring knowledge in Islam. Third section investigates the features and characteristics of Islamic scholars and disciples in Islam. It was authored by al-Fallātī and published by Adebola Printing Press in 1990. It is made up of seventeen pages and it is still in lithograph.

21. *Kitaabu Shurbuzzulaal (The Book of Taking Pleasant Water)*: This treatise is mainly on the position of *ḥalāl* (permissible) and *Haram* (forbidden) as well as *makrūh* (neither *halal* nor *haram*) actions in Islam. Al-Fallātī admonishes Muslims to strictly follow and use what is *halal* and abhor *haram* in their duties and obligations. The work was not authored by al-Fallātī rather he only publishes it in 1962. It consists of twenty-one pages and it is still in lithograph form without specifying the name of the publisher.

22. *Kitaabu Fadaa'ila wa Manaqibihii Saiyyidnaa Aliyyu bn abi-Dhaalib (The book of Virtues and Rank of Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib)*:¹⁰⁴³ This work was authored by al-Fallātī and as the name of the work implies, the work is on the position, qualities and ranks of Alī *ibn* Abī Ṭālib (601-661), the fourth caliph of Islam and in the sight of Prophet Muḥammad. He tries to elucidate these various ranks and virtues of Alī. Al-Fallātī enumerates the instances and circumstances in which Prophet Muḥammad demonstrated the exalted the position of Alī among his companions. It is the position of al-Fallātī in the book that Alī is the best among the companion of the Prophet Muḥammad and it is compulsory for the Muslim community to consider the exalted position of Alī. It was published in 1992 by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano. It is made up of twenty-eight pages in typograph form.

23. *Kitaabu Uyuubunnafsi (The Book on Internal Faults (soul sins))*: Like the text mentioned above the treatise is on the diseases of the soul and its remedies, that is, several ways of treating

¹⁰⁴³ For a more detailed explanation of this work see chapter eight of this work.

it. In this treatise, emphasis is on the remedies to be taken by people suffering from impurity of the soul. The author recommends the use of *dhikr* and voluntary prayers in addition to some prescribed remedy as part of medication. The work was published by al-Fallātī in 1982 by Bola Print Limited, Kano. It is made up of thirty-eight pages and it is still in typograph form.

24. *Kitaabu Shazratuzzahbi* (The Book on Golden Nuggets): The text is generally on Arabic lexicography but not written by al-Fallātī. In this work, al-Fallātī specifically enumerates, discusses and translates words other than Arabic language found in the Qur'an. The work is divided into two parts. The first section discusses in poetic form, the non-Arabic found in the Qur'an. The second section praises Prophet Muḥammad in verse. Al-Fallātī claims that the treatise is one of the highly miraculous texts he initiated. The work was published in 1972 by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of ten pages and it is now in typograph form.

25. *Tuh-fatuz-sigaar fil-li'raab* (A Little Masterpiece on grammatical analysis): This treatise was authored by al-Fallātī himself and it was generally on Arabic grammar and its importance. It was specifically designed for beginners who want to learn Arabic Grammar from scratch. In his opinion, any speech without following the grammatical rules is the same as the bark of a dog or mew of a cat, food without salt while *Nahw* (Arabic grammar) which is not in poetic form is like an endless night. This work was published in 1971 by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of thirty-seven pages in typograph form.

26. *Kitaabu Maraatibu Abi Hafsat Umar wa Manaqibuhuu* (Abi Hafsat Umar: His Rank and Virtues): The treatise was written by al-Fallātī and as the title suggests, this treatise is generally on the life history, positions, qualities and ranks of 'Umar *ibn* al-Khaṭṭāb (584-644) and 'Uthmān *ibn* 'Affan (577-656), the second and third caliphs of Islam respectively. The work was published in 1994 by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano. It is made up of twenty-four pages, in lithograph form.

27. *Al-Hikamul Qutubiyatu*: This treatise is generally on the Qur'anic science, its position and application in Islam. Al-Fallātī explains the secrets of the knowledge of Qur'anic science for *mufasurun* (experts in the Qur'anic exergies) and the importance of its application. The text was originally written by Sirri Baye, disciple and in-law of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niase (d. 1975). It was edited and compiled by al-Fallātī. The work was published in 1967 by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of twenty-two pages in lithograph form.

28. *Kitaabu kaifiyatin-nabawiyyati fii ibaadaatis-shari'ati* (The Prophets way of performing Islamic Devotions): This esoteric treatise was authored by al-Fallātī and it is generally on the concept of prophethood and the exalted position of prophets of Allah in the religion of Islam. Al-Fallātī investigates the different types of Sharia taught and practiced by the prophets and messengers of Allah. He also discusses the variety of worships performed by the prophets and messengers of Allah. In his opinion, there is a wisdom and rationale behind any type of worship performed by them. The text was published in 1964 by Bola-Print, Kano. It is made up of twenty-four pages in lithograph form.

29. *Kitaabu Hidayatil Anaami* (The Book on Guiding Muslim Being):¹⁰⁴⁴ The treatise is generally on the concept and position of *Salat* (ritual prayer) in the religion of Islam. The work is divided into three sections. The first section deals with bounties, virtues, and benefits that one would benefit in congregational prayer. That is, when he/she performs the prayer in the congregation behind an *Imam*. The second part depicts the conditions stipulated to *Imam* and *Mamu* (i.e. leader of the prayer and the followers) relating to the positions of the four schools of law (*madhhab*): Maliki School of law, Hambali school of law, Shafi'i school of law and Hanafi school of law. The treatise is one of the highly jurisprudential texts which was annotated with some additions by al-Fallātī. The work was published in 1969 by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of twenty pages in typograph form.

30. *Kitaabu asraaril al-Asmaa' al-Husnaa* (Secrets of the Beautiful Names of Allah and their Attributes): As the title of the treatise suggests, it is specifically on the supplicatory prayer using *al-Asmaa' al-Husnaa* (the most beautiful names of Allah and their attributes) in the spiritual aspects in the Muslim life. The book is divided into two parts. The first section discusses the secrets, benefits, and the secrets of the most beautiful names of Allah and their attributes. The author explains the names and the secrets behind such names. He also highlights the ways of soliciting Allah's blessings and mercy by Allah through such names. In the Muslims circles worldwide, praying to Allah in His Excellent Names is of great significance and it is efficacious. The second part is generally on the secrets of the meaning of *Basmallah* in the spiritual aspects in the Muslim life. It is generally on the methodology of extracting special prayer and greatest names of Allah from *Basmallah* (a short form of saying *Bismillaahi ar-Rahmaan ar-Rahiim*). The method adopted by the author, al-Fallātī is through the means of secrets of the *Basmallah*. The work was

¹⁰⁴⁴ For a more detailed explanation of this work see chapter eight of this work.

published in 1983 by Bola-Print Limited, Kano. It is made up of seventeen pages in typograph form.

31. *Kitaabu Tabsirat al-Muminina* (The Book of High lightening and Awakening Believers):

¹⁰⁴⁵ This work is generally on the position of Qur'an in Islam presented at the beginning of the work. In the text, al-Fallātī identified a variety of conditions for listening to the Qur'an and Hadith. He also provided methods, procedure, and ways of research of non-Qur'anic literature. It was published in 1978 by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano. It is made up of thirteen pages in typograph form.

32. *Kitaabu Minanil Manaani fil taṣawwuf Naẓm* (The Book on Divine Awards in *Taṣawwuf*):

This esoteric and didactic treatise is generally on the *taṣawwuf* (Sufism). The text was originally written by Shaykh 'Uthmān bin Fodio, edited and compiled by al-Fallātī. The work was published in 1964 by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano. It is made up of seventeen pages and is in typograph form.

33. *Kitaabu Tarbiyatul Aulaaadi* (Child Upbringing): This work was authored by al-Fallātī and it is generally on the child-upbringing in Islam. The introduction of the book is in conformity and harmony with the title and its theme. The main purpose of the work is well stated in the introduction that the author tries to remind the Muslim parents of their obligations towards their children before they reach adolescence. According to al-Fallātī, the objectives of the book includes the followings: (i) to educate the Muslim parents on how to teach their children Islamic religious knowledge; (ii) to train the Muslim parents on how to inculcate good conduct and ethics in the mind of their children; (iii) to guide the Muslim teachers on how to educate children in school.

Another theme of the book could be seen vividly from the book where the author stated that if parents can guarantee good conduct and ethics to their children, the next coming generations would be free from societal corruption. The author said: "Reformers and parents should be attentive and careful of educating their children. Training them by inculcating in them good knowledge and ethics. This role must be taken by those who specialise in Islamic education." In supporting his view, he quoted a poem: "Don't leave your children to the nannies alone, not even to a teacher whom you don't know his habit and true state of his religion because children's mind is empty, it would accept anything that comes to it whether it is good or bad." The author concludes the book with a Qur'anic verse and prayed for the prophet, his family and his companions. The

¹⁰⁴⁵ For a more detailed explanation of this work see chapter eight of this work.

book is very small in size containing only 16 pages with font 18. The copy at our disposal is printed locally in Kano by Northern Maktabat Press Limited in 1408 AH.

34. *Kitaabu Fadaa'ili binaa'il-Masjid wal juluusi Fiihaa (Virtues of Building Mosques and Sitting therein):* This work was authored by al-Fallāṭī and as the name of the book implies, it is generally on the position of the mosque in Islam as said by the Qur'an and Prophetic Hadith. Al-Fallāṭī explains the importance, benefits, and virtues of building mosques, constantly sitting in them, and making them a conducive environment as well as making them lively always. On the cover of the book, al-Fallāṭī categorically stated that he wrote the text when he was building his mosque as he clearly stated on the cover of the book that: "We started building our mosque on 2nd Rajab 1412 A. H. and completed it on 28th Shawwal 1412 A. H., which are equivalent to 7th January, 1992 and 2nd May, 1992 respectively. Immediately after the title of the work, he as usual, quoted a verse from the Qur'an and a prophetic tradition on the subject matter. Like the content of the book, the introduction also contained several verses of the Qur'an and prophetic traditions. He thanked those who assisted in building his mosque. This book was written in 1992/1412 A.H. and published by Northern Maktabat Press, Kano. It is made up of eight pages.

35. *Kitaabu Sirril Fatihati (The Book on the Secrets of the Opening Chapter):* This book gives some prayers of protection against all distress and calamities as well as some prayers that will bring about endless bounties and wealth. This book was authored and published by al-Fallāṭī.

36. *Kitaabu Durrul- a'ala (Uttermost Pearl):* The work contains various kinds of supplications and prayers designed for multiple purposes. It teaches how to seek immunity and protection from Allah. It was rewritten and published by al-Fallāṭī.

37. *Kitaabu fada'ilus-sallah (Virtues of Prayer):* The book was authored by al-Fallāṭī and it teaches the importance and blessings of prayer. The author encourages Muslims to be mindful towards prayer. He offers religious advice and encourages deeds of virtues in *Salat* to the public and his readers

38. *Du'a ul-Hisbi (Invocations for protection):* As the name of the work suggests, it contains some supplications and prayers for protection from evils acts and illness. It was published in 1969 by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of thirteen pages in lithograph form.

39. *Kitaabu maayajibu Ihtikadu ala kulli mukallafi (The Book on what is Imperative on Adult Muslim):* This pamphlet was authored by al-Fallāṭī himself and it was published in 1989 but the name of publisher is not mention. It is made up of four pages and it is in lithograph form.

40. *Kitaabu Sabiilin-najati (Path of Salvation)*: The text is a panegyric poem in praise of Prophet Muḥammad, and it was authored by al-Fallātī himself. The spiritual status of the Prophet Muḥammad is discussed along with different attributes and attitudes which is one of the important aspects of Sufi doctrines. A concept known among the Sufi as *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* (The real essence of Muḥammad). The Prophet Muḥammad is used as an intercessor by the author. He also made a fervent plea in honour of the prophet to Allah requesting Allah to save him (Shaykh), his children, his grandchildren, his disciples, his family and all those who will be under his guardianship on the Day of Judgement. It was published but the name of the publisher and the date of publication are not mentioned in the work. It is made up of forty pages in lithograph form.

41. *Kitaabu Taa niyatus-Subki (The Collections of Al-Subki)*: This work is a *Qaasidat* generally on admonition and exhortation. He treats general admonition and asceticism, by admonishing Muslims to pious behaviour and attitudes because the life in the grave is waiting for them. They therefore should be aware that the life in this world is temporary and make a provision for the longest journey to the everlasting place of eternal abode. Since death is the one fundamental characteristic common to all living things, the author naturally dwells on the necessity of preparation when he writes this work. The work not originally written by al-Fallātī rather he translates and publishes it. It was published in Kano, but the name of publisher is not mentioned. It is made up of forty-three pages and it is in lithograph form.

42. *Kitaabu Ruuhussalah (The book on Spirit of Prayer)*: This work was authored by al-Fallātī himself in order to generally teach Muslims one of the most important and basic religious obligations, ritual prayer, the others were – prayer, alms, fasting, pilgrimage, and belief in God's Oneness. In the work, al-Fallātī singled out prayer because it is the act that differentiates between Muslims and non-Muslims. The work contains pre-ablution activities (purification) and performance of ablution as well as proper performance of prayer. This work was published in 1987 by Adebola Printing Press, Kano. It is made up of thirteen pages and it is still in lithograph.

43. *Kitaabu maa wajaba alaal-mukallafi 'Imu huu wa 'itiqadu huu (Obligations of Adults to Know, Practice and Belief)*: This book teaches adults what they are supposed to do and not do in accordance with the teaching of the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet Muḥammad. It also talks about the Sufi order. This work was published in 1987. It is made up of twenty-four pages in typograph form.

44. *Kitaabu Bismi-ma huwa fil'irabi (Terminologies of Arabic Grammar Analysis)*: The work was authored al-Fallātī himself and it is specifically on grammatical analysis of the word “*Basmallah*” (*Bismillaahi ar-Raḥmaan ar-Rahiim*) in thirty-three pages. explored the etymological and syntactic aspects of *Basmallah* in the Arabic language. The style, diction and language of the book exposed al-Fallātī’s deep knowledge in Arabic grammar and his contribution to the area.

45. *Kitaabu Hizbus-subhi (The Morning Party)*: This work was authored and published by al-Fallātī

46. *Kitaabu fadlu Abii-bakr (R.A) (Virtues of Abubakar R.A)*: This work was authored and published by al-Fallātī.

47. *Taqriibud daruurii (Drawing the Essentials Closer)*: This book was not originally written by al-Fallātī rather he corrects some spelling errors, vowelises it and published for wider circulation.

48. *Kitaabu –Barzanjii (The Isthmus)*: This work was only published by al-Fallātī.

49. *Kitaabu fathu-kanzil-asnaa (The Opening of the Sublime Treasure)*: This work was only published by al-Fallātī.

50. *Kitaabu shawaarizil-anwaar (The Sprinkling Lights)*: This work was only published by al-Fallātī.

51. *Kitaabu Fauruwari (The Book of Fauruwari)*: This work was translated and published by al-Fallātī

52. *Kitaabu Hidayatul Muznibiin*: This work was corrected and commented by al-Fallātī.

53. *Risaalatul Musammatu (The Messages Known as..... or A Guide for Wrongdoers on how to be free from rights of Allah and of all His Servants)*: This esoteric work is a commentary on another work by Shaykh Umar ibn Sa’id al-Futi Tal (c. 1794–1864), one of the leading leaders of the Tijānīyya brotherhood in West Africa. The work is on the existence of spiritual guide and it is didactic in nature. It composes answers to the request put before him by an unspecified person. It is not known when or where the question was asked. The work aims at explaining the impurity of water and soul and their purifications. The book consists of an introduction, five chapters and a conclusion. The work was published in 1991 by Northern Maktabat Press Limited, Kano. It is made up of thirty-five pages.

Other works by al-Fallātī

The following are some of his many works which have not been located so far, although some respondents and researchers have mentioned them. We hope that the future research will discover these works or some of them at least:

54. *Kitaabu shurutus-salati* (Conditions of Prayer)

55. *Kitaabul-Qatiibah* (The Wisdom of Books)

56. *Kitaabul Ufi*

Appendix III

A Picture of Shaykh Muḥammad Ghibrīma ibn Muhammad Ganim ibn Ali al-Dāghirī al-Ghūrāwī al-Barnāwī al-Maliki al-Ash'arī al-Tijānī (*Dhul Ma'arif*) (1902-1975)



Appendix IV

A Picture of Shaykh ‘Uthmān al-Fallātī al-Ghūrāwī al-Barnāwī al-Maliki al-Ash’arī al-Tijānī
(1909-1996)



Allgemeine Schlussfolgerung

Das Ziel dieser Forschung ist, die Tijānī Sufi-Manuskript- und Druckkulturen im 20. Jahrhundert in Nguru zu untersuchen, insbesondere unter Berücksichtigung der Themen und Inhalte der mystischen Werke von al-Dāghirī und al-Fallātī inklusive ihrer Popularität, Verbreitung und ihren kodikologischen und paläographischen Merkmalen als Fallstudie. Für die Analyse habe ich fünf mystische Gedichte von al-Dāghirī und sieben mystische Prosaschriften von al-Fallātī ausgewählt, welche in Beziehung zu der Stadt Nguru, in welcher sie lebten, und zum Norden Nigerias insgesamt gesetzt werden. Meine Intention ist, Sufi-Doktrinen und esoterische Ausdrücke zu untersuchen, die im Gegensatz zu den exoterischen Standpunkten stehen. In der Analyse wurde auf zwei weitere mystische Gedichte von al-Dāghirī referenziert. Um die wichtigsten Sufi-Themen in ihren Arbeiten ausfindig zu machen, werden Auszüge von jedem ausgewählten mystischem Werk analysiert. Dabei wird ein besonderer Bezug auf die Themen *Hubb al-Ilāh* (Göttliche Liebe), *al-Ḥaqīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* oder *an-Nūr al-Muḥammadi* (Die wahre Essenz von Mohammed oder Mohammeds Wahrheit oder Wirklichkeit), *al-'Isrā'ī' wal-Mi'rāj* (Nachtreise und Aufstieg des Propheten Mohammed in den Himmel), *Mu'jizah* (Auf Beweisen beruhende Wunder), *Quṭb al-aqṭāb Qu'eb* (Der höchste Pol des Heiligen) oder *khatm al-awliyā'* (Das Siegel der Heiligen), *ghawth az-zaman/Sahib al-Fayḍa* (der Reformator oder Retter des Zeitalters/höchste Heilige seiner Zeit), der Standpunkt und die Bedeutung von *Ṣalāt*, der Standpunkt und die Bedeutung von *Imām* und *Mamu*, die wundersame Geburt des Propheten, das *Asrar* (Geheimnis) von *Basmalah* etc. genommen. Durch die Analyse dieser großen Sufi - Themen in ihren mystischen Werken hat diese Studie die Bedeutung der literarischen Sufi-Werke unter den Sufi-Scheichen und *murīdūn* (Jüngern) im Norden Nigerias aufgezeigt.

In der finalen Analyse sind die Schriften von al-Dāghirī und al-Fallātī das überzeugende Medium, durch welches sie ihre Ideen verbreiten; die Schriften sind hauptsächlich erzieherisch und immer informativ. Manchmal schreiben sie, um spezifische Fragen zu beantworten, manchmal reagieren sie auf eine besondere Aussage oder kommentieren sie. Ungeachtet dessen muss gesagt werden, dass die mystischen Schriften von al-Dāghirī and al-Fallātī in der Regel nichts für Anfänger sind, da oft bestimmte Details zu einigen der Themen, die sie diskutieren, nicht zur Verfügung gestellt werden. Jedoch zeigen die Werke in ihrer Gesamtheit die Kreativität und das Wahrnehmungsvermögen der Scheiche. Sie haben ihr Wissen des Arabischen sowie auch der Jurisprudenz, der Logik, der Koranargumente und Hadithen überzeugend genutzt, um die Lehren

des Sufismus im Allgemeinen und die der Bruderschaft von Tijānīyya im Besonderen zu erklären und zu verteidigen. Ich bin der Meinung, dass die Werke von al-Dāghirī und al-Fallātī die Bruderschaft von Tijānīyya verteidigen, wo es notwendig ist, aber in erster Linie erzieherisch und erhellend sind. Im Großen und Ganzen zeigen die verschiedenen Werke von al-Dāghirī und al-Fallātī, dass sie Traditionalisten und Konformisten sind, die sich strikt an die Doktrin der Bruderschaft von Tijānīyya halten. Jedoch sind sie, während sie die Bruderschaft von Tijānīyya befürworten und verteidigen, originelle Denker und kreative Schriftsteller.

Schließlich wurde festgestellt, dass die Scheiche praktische Sufi-Lehren wie Besonnenheit, Höflichkeit und Demut angenommen und demonstriert haben. Ihr Leben und ihre Lehren können als Herausforderungen für die Sufi-Novizen/Neulinge unserer Zeit betrachtet werden, die, wie man argumentieren könnte, viel von ihren Schriften und ihrem praktischen Leben lernen können. Heutzutage werden sie als große islamische und Tijānīyya Gelehrte beschrieben, als produktive Schriftsteller im islamischen Norden Nigerias des 20. Jahrhunderts. Ihre Präsenz in der Stadt veränderte das gesamte Muster des sozialen und religiösen Lebens in dieser Region. Diese letzte Aussage sollte im Zusammenhang mit der Tatsache gesehen werden, dass al-Dāghirī und al-Fallātī und ihre Werke ab 1978 durch das Eindringen von wahhabitischen und salafistischen Gelehrten, die gegen den Sufismus waren, bedroht wurden.