THE NORTH AFRICAN FACTOR IN TAJDEED TRADITION IN HAUSALAND (NORTHERN NIGERIA)

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The tradition of Tajdeed (renewal or reform) of Islamic faith has remained a continues trend in most Islamic communities in the world. Hausaland in the present northern Nigeria upholds this legacy with a persistent records of Islamic revival movements from the 15th century A.D. to present.

The event marking the 15th century tajdeed in Hauasland was the penetration of Islamic ideology in state affairs. This became traceable as the most powerful rulers of the land like that of Kano and Katsina tacitly declare Islam as a state religion. To attest to the power of Islam the most revered shrines in Kano were demolished and mosques erected on the site. Subsequently, in the 16th through 18th century there were records of emerging scholars- Du’at- throughout the region and made a remarkable impact on the Da’awa approach and practice. Consequently, in the late 18th century zealous triumvirate reformers led a jihad and established an Islamic Caliphate which covered all Hausa speaking areas and beyond with its seat at Sokoto. The Caliphate survived for a century, until the British conquest of 1903.

However, the spectre of the Caliphate refused to fade away in spite of the military subjugation through the British superior weapons. Rather, it gave way to another tactics of reform movements which characterized the colonial period and spilled over to the post colonial period. The consequent of which could be seen in the current sharia’h issue in northern Nigeria which is unique in the sub-Saharan Africa in contemporary time.

The paper therefore, intends to study these epochs in relation to the influence of North Africa. The study will look into three main issues: The influence of scholars of North African origin from the 15th century to present;( from Jalal al –Deen Suyuti and al-Maghili in the 15th & 16th centuries to al-Banna, Qutb, Kishq and Tantawee of the present) the influence of literature emanating from the region and that of educational institutions. These two specifically were marked as the most dangerous to the colonial government of northern Nigeria to the extent of banning Nigerian students to study in the area, particularly al-Azhar and literature from the region were put under special surveillance and in some cases banned for security reasons.

The paper thus addresses the following problems: What is the relationship between North African Islam and revivalism in Hausaland? What is the extent of influence of North African literature on Islamic reform movements in Hausaland past and present? How did the scholars from the region inspire the tajdeed ideology to their counterparts in Hausaland and what are their means of communication, transfer of and exchange of ideas? What are the implications of modern political system and globalization on the relationship?