

THE HAUSA STATES

the Hausas are one of the major ethnic groups in the Sudan. They share the region with other ethnic groups such as the Fulani, Gaos, etc. long before the beginning of colonialism, the Hausas built some strong kingdoms such as Kano, Katsina, Daura, Zaria, Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, etc. Even though Hausas can be found in Niger and Cameroon, they have a large number of them who have built kingdoms in

The Sudan region around which the Hausas can be found is the border area of the Sahara region of Africa and it currently includes Niger, Cameroon, Sudan, Mali

ORIGIN OF THE HAUSAS

The origin of the Hausas can be presented in two forms which are the

- The myth of origin
- The origin of migration

According to the myth of origin, the Hausas are all descendants of a legendary figure by the name Bayajida Abuazid who is said to have migrated from Mecca to the Kanem Bornu empire where he married a wife that bore him a son by the name Biram who established the kingdom of Biram. Bayajida later left Kanem Bornu and moved westwards until he got to the kingdom of Daura where there was a giant snake that occupied the only well in the kingdom and only allowed them to fetch water on Sundays.

Bayajida was said to have killed the snake and he became a hero. The Queen of Daura by the name Daurana married Bayajida and gave birth to six sons who went by the names Kano, Zaria, Gobir, Katsina, Daura and Rano who went on to establish the famous Hausa states. These six sons born by Daurana together with the son of the Kanem Bornu princess that Bayajida had earlier married are usually referred to as Hausa Bokwai.

The legend also has it that Bayajida had seven other sons by a concubine given to him by Daurana. The names of these sons were..... and they went on to establish other famous Hausa states which are referred to as Hausa banza (Bastards)

However....

POLITICAL ORGANISATION

The Hausa city states were all known to have been ruled by Emirs who ruled them with a council of other title holders. These title holders include:

- The Waziri who acted as the Prime Minister
- The Galadima who ruled the capital of the emirate
- The Seriki Ruwa who controlled all the very very important water resources of the people in the hot Sudan region
- The Seriki Yari who acted as the head of the police to control criminals
- The Seriki Pawa
- Maigari

CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

The Hausas were animists like most other people. This means that they worshipped ancestral gods that were represented by different animals. However they gradually began to adopt Islam through interactions with neighbouring Kanem Bornu empire and other kingdoms in the Sudan which gradually received Islam from travellers and traders of the trans-Saharan trade.

An interesting fact in the history of the Hausas is that their rulers were called emirs with the

spread of Islam especially after the jihad of 1804 but before this time their rulers were known as seriki kasa.

HISTORICAL EVENTS

The major historical event that affected the Hausa states up to this day was the Jihad which was led by Othman Danfodio. He was a religious teacher (Mallam) who had studied at Agads in current day Tunisia. He preached all around the region but he became very popular in Gobir where he had a territory given to him to which a lot of people migrated.

Othma Danfodio was initially popular with some of the serikis like Nafaya who even gave him his son to train. But as he became very popular many of the serikis became uncomfortable with him especially Nafata who was the ruler of Gobir. When his son took over the throne he also began to fight with his former teacher and he even chased them away from the place where they occupied. Yu fa was also said to openly persecute a lot of Muslims and this gave rise to a lot of anger among the faithfuls many of whom were Fulani and Hausa.

So in response to the persecutions of Yunfa and other Hausa kings Othman Danfodio performed the Hijra in 1804 which in Islamic tradition means a declaration of war. This was followed by battles between Danfodios followers and the habe rulers whose kingdoms gradually lost to Danfodios men that were commanded by his brother Abdullahi and his son Mohammed Bello. By 1808 most of the Hausa states apart from kebbi had fallen to the jihadists and Danfodio rewarded the commanders with the title of Emirs over the kingdoms. Interestingly these new emirs were Fulanis and not Hausa

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE JIHAD

The jihad which was led by Othman Danfidio was very significant for three reasons

1. It led to the eradication of animism and the establishment of Islam in almost all the kingdoms
2. It united all the Hausa kingdoms and the fulanis under one sultan who ruled from sokoto
3. It gave rise to Fulani aristocracies all over the Hausa kingdoms
4. It inspired other jihads in the Sudan beginning with the jihad in macina

EVALUATION : there is a belief amongst some students and scholars of history that the Jihad of 1804 was the most significant event that occurred in the northern part of what is now called Nigeria. As young history scholars can you write a shortessay of one hundred and fifty words in support of this belief