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A Critical Analysis of Ancient Arabic Manuscript Repository in Arewa House Archives and the State of their Preservation

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Abstract

Arabic / Ajami manuscript collection of Arewa House Centre for Historical Documentation and Research, ABU Zaria, Nigeria composed of pre-jihad and 19th century literatures. This literary tradition had its origin in the Islamic intellectual culture which developed in Nigeria since the 11th century A.D. The influx of scholars like Imam Suyudy (Born 1 Rajab 849/3 October 1445 and died 19 Jumada Ulaa 911/ 18 October 1505), and Sheikh Al-Magheeli (d. 1504) into the country as well as the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate in the 19th century led to the production of hundreds of thousands of manuscripts on various topics and branches of Islamic sciences in Arabic and Ajami. The Center was founded in 1970. It houses a large library with over 50,000 volumes of printed books and a section dedicated to Arabic manuscripts containing about 1500 scripts of various sizes, and subjects. The subjects covered by the manuscripts include history, historiography, mathematics, grammar, Sufism, Panegyrics on the Prophet of Islam, and Theology. Thirty samples of the manuscripts are clearly provided in this paper with the authors’ names, titles of the scripts, sizes, number of leaflets, and brief notes on them. The establishment of museums in Nigeria in 1957 as well as the commencement of work in Arewa House in the 1970s led to the procurement of Arabic scripts from local ulama for easy preservation and for research purposes. However, the collection is not without problems, ranging from lack of conservation facilities, inadequate funding for the advanced training of the managers of the manuscripts as well as complete absence of paper conservation laboratory for the treatment of dilapidated manuscripts. The aim of this paper is to critically analyse the state of Arewa House Arabic / Ajami manuscripts collection and the state of their preservation.
Introduction:

Islam came to West Africa in the late 8th and early 9th centuries. After the Arab expansion in North Africa, occasional commercial missions and the more regular movements of pastoral Berber-speaking tribes across the Western Sahara, assist in spreading Islam south of the Sahara in its earliest phase. It was from the northern parts of Africa that the Islamization of the peoples of Africa South of the Sahara started. As early as the seventh century, Muslims from North Africa used the famous trade routes as a means of propagating Islam as well as the expansion of trading activities (Muhammad 1976). Scholars like J.D Fage and Abdullahi Smith, for example, submitted that the trans-Saharan trade routes provided immediate means for the penetration of Islam into Kanem-Borno, especially during the period of the Sayfawa dynasty (Mustapha 1987). This route was also a transmitter of culture and ideas, and had been described as the most ancient, shortest and easiest of all the routes across the sahara. Islam reached Borno some time before the 11th century of the Christian era, while its appearance in Kano (Hausaland) was dated to a period between 10th and 11th centuries A.D (Palmer 1928).

With the advent of Islam in Kanem-Borno and later Hausaland, many itinerant Scholars settled in these areas and became integrated into the communities. This gave rise to indigenous intellectual and scholarly activities that developed the teaching of Islam in all its ramifications, such as rituals, jurisprudence, politics and general literacy among the muslims. Moreover, in order to effectively ensure general literacy among the people, ajami (the writing of indigenous language in Arabic scripts) was introduced. The period between the 10th and 18th centuries witnessed a tremendous expansion and development of Islamic scholarship in the Western and Central Sudan in an unprecedented manner. This situation resulted in robust intellectual activities in these areas which led to the eruption of reformist movement (jihad) in Hausaland and other parts of the region in the 19th century.

The Background of Arewa House Kaduna

The history of Arewa House as a Centre for Research and Historical Documentation dates back to the year 1970 when the History of Northern Nigerian Committee was given the
responsibility of writing a book on the history of northern Nigeria (Ikara 1988). This was after the dissolution of the three regional governments in the country and the creation of twelve states. This situation led to the establishment of the *Joint Interim Common Services Agency* (ICSA) to oversee the common assets and liabilities of the six newly created northern states (Ibid). It was in this respect that the residence of the late premier of the former Northern Region, Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto, was formally approved to serve as an office for this project, with the name “Arewa House”.

The House is concerned, not only with research and documentation of the history and culture of the people of Northern Nigeria, but also with contemporary studies on Policy, Peace and Conflict Resolution and Leadership (Ikara 1988). As a research Centre, the House is primarily concerned with procuring, preserving, analyzing and discussing issues of national and International interest, especially as they affect the development of Northern Nigeria.

Professor Abdullahi Smith, one of the founding members of the Dept. of History, A.B.U. Zaria, was appointed as its first Director. In 1975, the control of Arewa House was transferred to Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria on the directive of the then Federal Government of Nigeria (HNNP/11th ICSA White Paper 1975). Under Professor Smith, a solid foundation was laid that made Arewa House a unique place for research and historical documentation in the whole of West Africa. Arewa House is today one of the few reputable research centres with an enviable core collection of books and manuscripts, including higher degree dissertations from various Universities in Nigeria and abroad. These dissertations cut across different fields of study, particularly in humanities and social sciences. Most of these dissertations are of thematic interest to the study of Northern Nigeria.
The Arewa House collections are further strengthened by a rare collection of Arabic manuscripts, the late Premier’s office records, government publications, Newspapers and other serial publications which are housed in the Archives. The Centre also accommodates students, scholars and researchers. It provides research affiliation to students from all parts of the world conducting research on any aspect of the state and society of Northern Nigeria. (Ikara 1991).

**The State of Arewa House Arabic Manuscript Collection:**

Arewa House as a center for Historical Documentation and Research has a long history of work in the area of Arabic manuscript preservation in Northern Nigeria. Since its establishment in the 1970s the founding Director, Professor Abdullahi Smith had initiated many programs for the procurement and preservation of Arabic manuscripts in Northern Nigeria. There were many photographs, microfilms and few copies of original manuscripts procured during his time. However as at to date, Arewa House has about 1400 original manuscripts from four different private collections deposited in its archives. Below is the brief description of the repository and the problems that are associated with the collection.

**(i)-Modibbo Ahmadu Fofure Collection:**

This collection consists of approximately 600 original manuscripts deposited in Arewa House. It is the personal collection of the late Modibbo Ahmadu Fofure of Yola (1889-1960). He was born in the year 1885 in Fufore, Adamawa Emirate, to Alkali Muhammadu Fufore. His ancestors migrated from Ngazargamu then to Kukawa, before moving to Dikkwa, all in the Borno Empire. From Borno they settled at Ribadu, and then at Fufore, before they finally moved to Yola, the Headquarters of Adamawa Emirate. Moddibo Ahmadu was introduced to Islamic education
early in life by his father. Later, he was taught by renowned scholars in Adamawa, such as Modibbo Hammadu, Modibbo Mahmudu son of Alkalli Hamman-joda, the most remarkable Islamic judge in the history of Adamawa Emirate who studied in the Middle East and taught for sometime in the Al-Azhar University in Egypt. Having passed through these great Islamic scholars, Modibbo Ahamadu became very versatile in various fields of knowledge, such as Jurisprudence (Islamic Law), Tafseer (Qur’anic exegesis) Hadith, Arabic Grammar, Logic, Poetry, Arabic literature, Astronomy, Mathematics and Medicine.

His first appointment in the Adamawa native Authority was in January, 1917 as Malamin Kasa, (The District Scribe) in Wuro Marafa, Vere District and later Alkalin (Judge) of Ribadu/Fufore in 1935. He was later transferred to Jada as Alkali in 1940, and subsequently moved to the Grand Khadi court in Yola as the Grand Mufti under his teacher, Modibbo Mahmudu. Thereafter, he worked under some notable Alkalis like Hamidu and Hamman Gabdo in Yola before he was himself appointed Alkalin Alkalai (Grand Khadi) of Adamawa Province in 1953, which coincide with the installation of Lamido of Adamawa, Alhaji Aliyu Musdafa, as the 11th Lamido of Adamawa.

Apart from his achievements in the judicial services with the Adamawa Native Authority from 1917-1957, his greatest achievement was the number of notable Islamic scholars in Adamawa and Cameroon he produced. These included Modibbo Umaru Ngaundare, one time Imam of Yola Central Mosque, Modibbo Barkindo, Imam of Yola Central Mosque, Modibbo Ahmadu Danburam, Modibbo Umaru Mbamba, Modibbo Abbasi Ribadu, Modibbo Yahya Ribadu, Modibbo Muhammadu Alkalin Garua, Modibbo Ibrahim Alkalin Ngaundare, and the Lamido of Adamawa Alhaji Aliyu Musdafa. Modibbo Ahmadu was an honest and pious Islamic judge and scholar. His thoughts, words and deeds were guided by the dictates of the sacred book, the Holy
Qur’an and until his death in 1960 he was a strong believer in Islam and all that it teaches. His Manuscript Collection is a clear testimony of the long intellectual history of Muslims in this country and their effort to promote all the branches of sciences. These works have played a central role in the cultural development of Muslims and the history and civilization of Northern Nigeria.

The collection is one of the largest of its kind in Adamawa Emirate so far recovered. The many scholarly treasures it contains and the breadth and scope of the subjects they cover make this collection one of the most important storehouses of Islamic knowledge and Northern Nigeria documentary heritage. The collection contains about 600 copies of Manuscripts out of which 370 were catalogued. They bear various titles as they were inherited from their great grand fathers in the period between the 14th and 20th century AD.

The collection is unique for two reasons. First, it contains many important items, that is, some of the finest illuminations and calligraphy with a variety of scripts of the Holy Qur’an, calligraphic art works, and other high-quality copies of many important works. Secondly, the collection is one the most diverse in terms of the subjects that are covered by it. These include copies of the Holy Qur’an, works of Qur’anic sciences, Hadiths (reports from the Prophet and the Imams), Tawheed or theology, Islamic law, prayers and sermons, mysticism, philosophy, ethics and politics, biographies, history, geographical works, Arabic and Fulfulde and Hausa grammar, lexicography and philology, poetry and prose, anthologies and other literary works, alchemy, astronomy, traditional medicine, traditional pharmacy and pharmacology, and most importantly a large body of correspondences on Mahdism, etc. This outstanding collection is now accessible to the public in Arewa House Archives Kaduna (Musa 2009)
Sheikh Ahmad Arabi Jos Collection:

This is the second Arabic manuscript collection in Arewa House Kaduna. It belonged to the late Sheikh Ahmad Arabi of Jos in Nigeria (1910-1973). Sheikh Ahmad Arabi was born in 1909 in Nafada in the present Gombe state. He pursued his elementary school in Dukku, after which he worked briefly as court scribe. Sheikh Arabi later moved to Jos where he continued his Islamic education under his uncle, Alkalin Jos, Mallam Abubakar. He was appointed an Arabic Teacher at Jos NA Elementary School. Arabi’s search for knowledge took him to the famous School for Arabic Studies (SAS) Kano, after which he became a teacher there. He was called back by the Jos Native Authority in 1950. In 1947 he founded the Islamiyya Nizamiyyah School in Jos. He was appointed as the Deputy Grand Khadi for the defunct Benue Plateau and North Eastern States, and Chairman of Benue Plateau State Pilgrim Welfare Board. He died in 1973 at the age of 63 (Musa 2008). As for his the Arabic scripts most of them were written in Naskh script with some Kufic letters. The Naskh has some Maghrib style, especially the curative lettering and the placing of the dots for letters qaf and faa. Diacritical points were not omitted and orthographic colour is different from that of the texts. Special reeds were used in writing these manuscripts. Even the later ones are not written with pens or fountain pens. This is still observed in many places in Northern Nigeria. The ink itself was locally made and prepared by the copyists. The paper is of various kinds and comes mainly from European Countries. This is indicated by the watermarks. Various beautiful figures were represented by the trade marks

However, Mallam Musa, the Arewa House archivist, did his best to catalogue the collection using the names of both the authors and books with spelling as given in the manuscripts themselves. It was rather difficult to identify authors in some cases, because their names are usually given after two pages or more in the texts. Sometimes, the first pages were missing, and in many cases the authors’ names were given in many manuscripts. His collection consist of 156 copies of handwritten manuscripts, including volumes of hadith and fiqh works, some dating from the eighteenth century.
(iii)-Mallam Musa Ganan Daji Jos Manuscript Collection:

The owner of this valuable collection is a Nupe by tribe who travelled far and wide in Nigeria for the purpose of seeking knowledge and trade and he finally settled in a village to the North of Jos. He has more than 220 copies of original Arabic and Ajami manuscripts written in the period between the 19th and 20th centuries. The subjects covered by the manuscripts include Islamic matters such as interpretation of the Qur’an, Sufism, Astrology, Poetry, Sociology and Political Economy.

(iv)-Mallam Iliyasu Dalhat Katsina Collection:

The collection has about 30 copies of original manuscripts written in the period between 18th - 20th centuries. It belonged to Mallam Musa Ilyasu Dalhat in Katsina state of Nigeria. The subject covered include Sufism, and islamic law and theology. The entire collection was purchased by Arewa House from Mallam Iliyasu Katsina in May 2009 and researchers have full access to the entire manuscripts in the Arewa House Archives in Kaduna.

Samples of Arabic Manuscripts in Arewa House Repository

**Manuscript Title:** Kitabu Attasrif; = Book of Etymology
**Name of Author:** Anonymous
**Name of copyist:** Anonymous
**Call Number:** MAF /6 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
**Date:** Not Indicated
**Number of leaflets:** 4
**Scripts Type (or Style):** magribi
**Ink colour(s):** Black and Red
**Number of lines per page:** 32
**Manuscript Size:** 25cm/17cm
**Text Size:** 21cm/15cm
**Language:** Arabic

**Content/Abstract:** Tasrif : The study of the sources and development of words; the Manuscript is from Modibbo Ahmadu Fufore Collection. Was in good condition
Manuscript Title: Α Summary on Medical Science
Name of Author: Anonymous
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF/9 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not Indicated
Number of leaflets: 13
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): black
Number of lines per page: 24
Manuscript Size: 25cm/17cm
Text Size: 21cm/16cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: Traditional Islamic Medicine, the manuscript was in good condition from Modibbo Ahmadu Fufure.

Manuscript Title: مختصر Fi Ilmi Addib
Name of Author: Anonymous
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF/13 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not Indicated
Number of leaflets: 2
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 12
Manuscript Size: 18cm/16
Text Size: 16cm/14cm.
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: Poem praising Modibbo Adama the founder of Adamawa Emirate (d. 1848)

Manuscript Title: كفایة ضعفاء السودان في التفسير للقرآن الكريم
Name of Author: Abdullah Bn Muhammad Bn Othman Bn Fodiy (born 1178 = 1764 or 1180 = 1766 d Muharram 1245 = 8 July 1829).
Name of copyist: Ahmad Bn Bukhari Bn Hammajam
Call Number: MAF/16 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not Indicated
Number of leaflets: 300
Scripts Type (or Style): Sudani
Ink colour(s):
Number of lines per page: 22
Manuscript Size: 22cm/17cm
Text Size: 18cm/16cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: Commentary of the Holy Qurʾn. The manuscript in good condition was written by Abdullahi b Muhammad b Uthman b Salih known as Dan Fudiyo. See GAL Suppl. II p 894. E J Arnett, Gazetteer of Sokoto Province, London 1920, born 1178 = 1764 or 1180 = 1766, died Muharram 1245 = 8 July 1829.

Manuscript Title: Kitabu Alqaulil Man Ut Fi Annafaqat = The Book on the Obligation of Husband
Name of Author: Sultan Muhammad Bello Bn Fodiyo
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF 24, Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not Indicated
Number of leaflets: 1
Scripts Type (or Style): sudani
Ink colour(s): Black
Number of lines per page: 28
Manuscript Size: 24cm/12cm
Text Size: 18cm/13cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: The manuscript is about the obligation of husband towards his wives, was written by Muhammad Bello b Uthman Fodiyo the Khalifat of Sheikh Uthman b Fodiyo born 1195 = 1781, died 25 Rajab 1253 = 25 October 1837.

Manuscript Title: Qasidatun Yarsulu Biha Adama Ila Amiril- Muminina Muhammu Bello= Poem of Adama sent to Amir Muminien Muhammad Bello
Name of Author: Mudibbo Adama
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF 27, Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 1
Scripts Type (or Style): sudani
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 15
Manuscript Size: 21cm/17cm
Text Size: 18cm/13cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: Correspondence Letter written by Moddibo Adama, the founder of Adamawa Emirate (d. 1848) to Sultan Muhammad Bello b Uthman Fodiyo the Khalifat of Sheikh Uthman b Fodiyo (b. 1195 = 1781 d. 25 Rajab 1253 = 25 October 1837) popularly known as Sultan of Sokoto.

Manuscript Title: Raudul Jinani = The Biography of Sheikh Uthman bin Fodio
Name of Author: Gidado b Laima the Waziri of Sokoto
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF 67, Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 16
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black
Number of lines per page: 20
Manuscript Size: 23cm/17cm
Text Size: 20cm/15cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: This Manuscripts is about the History and Biography of Sheikh Usman Bn Fodio written by the Waziri of Sokoto Uthman b Abibakar b Umar b Ahmad, generally known by the Hausa form of his Fulfulde name, Gidado dan Laima b.c. 1190/1776, d. 1267/1851 see John O Hunwick: Arabic Literature of Africa Vol.2

Manuscript Title: بيان نور الإمام المهدي Bayanu Nuril-Imam Muhammad Mahdi = Explanation on the light of Imam Mahdi
Name of Author: Sheikh Muhammad Bn Suleiman Bn Fadhil
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF/116 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 9
Scripts Type (or Style): sudani
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 22
Manuscript Size: 23cm/17cm
Text Size: 20cm/15
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: On Mahdism: the Islamic Political Propaganda. Written by Sheikh Muhammad b Sulaiman B Fadhilil Al mahdi

Manuscript Title: ضياء السياسة Dhiya Ussiyasah = the Light of Politics
Name of Author: Sheikh Abdullahi b Fodiyo
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF/121 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 35
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black
Number of lines per page: 22
Manuscript Size: 23cm/17cm
Text Size: 20cm/15
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: The manuscript is in good condition, it discusses politics and good governance. It was written by Sheikh Abdullahi b Muhammad b Uthman b Salih known as Dan Fudiyo See GAL Suppl. II p 894. E J Arnett Gazetteer of Sokoto Province London 1920 born 1178 =1764 or 1180 = 1766 d Muharram 1245 =8 July 1829
Manuscript Title: Kitab Lamiyat Ajami= The Book of Lamiyat Ajami
Name of Author: Ustaz Alhassan Bn Aliyu Adda Araniy
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF/124 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 9
Scripts Type (or Style): Kufic
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 
Manuscript Size: 23cm/15cm
Text Size: 21cm/13cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: poetry: written by al Husayn b Ali al Isfahani al Tugharai d. 515/1121 see ALA John O Hunwick 1995

Manuscript Title: Qasidat fie ilm al falaq=Poem on Universal Knowledge
Name of Author: Sheikh Abu Zaidin Abdurrahman Alakhdariy
Name of copyist: Mallam Abubakar
Call Number: MAF/222 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 16
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black
Number of lines per page: 8
Manuscript Size: 20cm/16cm
Text Size: 18cm/14cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: The manuscript is in good condition; teaching astronomy, written by Sheikh Abizaid Abdurrahman Al akhdari

Manuscript Title: Risala Min Ahmad ila amir Al Zak-zak Usman= Letter from Ahmad to the Emir of Zakzak Usman
Name of Author: Sheikh Ahmad b Abdullah
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF/248 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 1
Scripts Type (or Style): sudani
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 23
Manuscript Size: 19cm/17cm
Text Size: 18cm/15cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: The Correspondence Contains Praise Poem on Emir Of Zakzak Usman, written by Sheikh Abdullah of Adamawa
Manuscript Title: قصيدة الشكر لما زار شيخ موديبو آدم ببولا  Ashshukri  Lamma Zara Sheikh Modibo Adama Bi Yola= Poem of appreciation when paid  courtesy visit to Modibbo Adama in Yola
Name of Author: Waziri  Junaidu
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF /250 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: 26/5/1374ah
Number of leaflets:1
Scripts Type (or Style):Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black
Number of lines per page: 16
Manuscript Size: 19cm/12cm
Text Size: 17cm/13
Language:Arabic
Content/Abstract: A poem written by Waziri of Sokoto Junaidu: praises Modibbo Adama the founder of Adamwa Emirate, when he paid a courtesy visit to Lamido of Adamawa in the year 1374 AH.

Manuscript Title: Alhilyah=
Name of Author: Qadi Muhammad Fufore
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number:MAF/270 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets:4
Scripts Type (or Style): Kufic
Ink colour(s): Black
Number of lines per page: 14
Manuscript Size:23cm/17cm
Text Size: 20cm/14cm
Language: Arabic and Some Ajami/ Fulani Words
Content/Abstract: The Manuscripts is on Islamic Traditional Medicine written by Muhammad b Qadi Fufore

Manuscript Title: Qasidatu Haqaiqu Al Aufaq= The Real of Aufaq Knowledge
Name of Author: Sheikh Dahir Bn Ibrahim Alfullatiy 1158 =1745-6
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF/276 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 9
Scripts Type (or Style): magribi
The manuscripts is Good, but the edges are damaged. Written by Sheikh Al Tahir b Ibrahim b Harun b mali al Fullani al Fullati al barnawi al Tarazi alFayrammi known as Dahiru Feroma d after 1158 =1745-6

**Manuscript Title:** اﻟﻬﻴﺌﺔ ﻓﻲ اﻟﻜﻴﺌﺔ اﻟﺪرﻋ Addar’ul Kiat fie ilm al Haiat= On Cosmological Education
**Name of Author:** Anonymous
**Name of copyist:** Abdullah Muhammad Bali Bn Usman
**Call Number:** MAF/309 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
**Date:** Not indicated
**Number of leaflets:** 6
**Scripts Type (or Style):** sudani
**Ink colour(s):** Black and Red
**Number of lines per page:** 21
**Manuscript Size:** 23cm/17cm
**Text Size:** 21cm/15cm
**Language:** Arabic
**Content/Abstract:** This manuscript teaches cosmographical knowledge, Its among Modibbo Ahmadu Fufore Manuscripts collection. The manuscript is in good condition

**Manuscript Title:** ﻓﻮﻓﺮي ﻣﺤﻤﺪ ﻗﺎﺿﻲ اﻟﻰ ودي ﻏﻮﻧﻲ ﻣﻦ اﻟﺮﺳﺎﻟﺔ Risala min Goni Wadai ila Qadi Muhammad Fufore= Letter From Goni Wadi to Qadi Muhamamdu Fufore
**Name of Author:** Goni Wadai
**Name of copyist:** Anonymous
**Call Number:** MAF/358 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
**Date:** Not indicated
**Number of leaflets:** 1
**Scripts Type (or Style):** Sudani
**Ink colour(s):** Black and Red
**Number of lines per page:** 32
**Manuscript Size:** 22cm/15cm
**Text Size:** 21cm/14cm
**Language:** Arabic
Content/Abstract: Letter encouraging Modibbo Muhammad Fufere and Muslim Community of Adamawa on the Principle of Mahadism. Was written by Goni Wadai. It was among Modibbo Ahmadu Fufere Collection.

Manuscript Title: الرسالة من غوني ودي محمد بن سليمان الي أمير يمنين ببو أحمد Risala Min Goni Wadai Muhammad b Suleiman ila Amir Yemen Bobbo Ahmadu= Letter from Goni Wadai Muhammad b Sulaiman to Amir of Yeman(Adamawa or Fombina) Bobbo Ahmadu
Name of Author: Goni Wadai Muhammad b Sulaiman
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF/359 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 1
Scripts Type (or Style): Kufic
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 26
Manuscript Size: 22cm/16cm
Text Size: 21cm/13cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: The manuscript was written by Goni Wadai Muhammad b Sulaiman to Lamido of Adamawa, Bobbo Ahmadu Advising him on Governance [1901-1909]

Manuscript Title: السعيد بن حياة الرسالة Risala Ila Hayat b Saeed. Letter to Hayat b Saeed
Name of Author: Muhammad b Abdullah
Name of copyist:
Call Number: MAF/361 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 5
Scripts Type (or Style): sudani
Ink colour(s): Black
Number of lines per page: 18
Manuscript Size: 16/11cm.
Text Size: 14/10cm,
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: The Letter by one of the Mahdi’s follower named Muhammad B Abdullah to Hayat b Saeed b Muhammad Bello, commonly known as Hayatu b Said b.c 1256/1840-1 d 1315-16 1898 See ALA John Hunwick 1995. The manuscript is from Modibbo Ahmadu Fufere [d 1960. ]

Manuscript Title: كفاثية ضعفاء سودان Kifayatu Dhu Afa Is-Sudan= Commentary of the Holy Qur’an
Name of Author: Abdullah Fodio 1180 = 1766 d Muharram 1245 =8 July 1829
Name of Copyist: Muhammad b Muhammad Tukur b Abubakar
Call Number: MAF/362 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna -Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of Leaflets: 177
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink Colour(s): Black and Red
Number of Lines Per Page: 25
Manuscript Size: 22/16cm,
Text Size: 19/15cm
Language: Arabic

Manuscript Title: ﻋﺘﻴﻖ ﺑﻜﺮ أﺑﻲ ﻣﻦ ﺍﻟﺮﺳﺎﻟﺔ Risala min Sultan Abubakar Atiku Letter from Sultan Abubakr Atiku
Name of Author: Sultan Abubakar Atiku of Sokoto
Name of Copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MAF/368 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of Leaflets: 2
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink Colour(s): Black
Number of Lines Per Page: 13
Manuscript Size: 17/11cm,
Text Size: 13/9cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: A Proclamation Letter to Muslim Ummah commanding them on what is good for them and Leaving What Is Bad. Written by Sultan of Sokoto, Abubakar Atiku b Uthman b Muhammad Fodiye b.c 1198/1784-5 d 20th Shawwal 1258/24th November 1842 see ALA John O Hunwik 1995

Manuscript Title: ﻤﻐﺮﻏﻲ ﻟﺎ ﻓﻠﻮ ﺗﻮاﻟﻎ ﻮاﻗر ﻧا ﻓﺎراqi Wakar Nagargai = A Poem of Nagr gai
Name of Author: Mallam Pate Liman Na Alhaji Haruna Zaria
Name of Copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MGD/ar/ class mark: 10 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of Leaflets: 4
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink Colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 15
Manuscript Size:
Text Size:
Language: Hausa/Ajami Non-Arabic written with Arabic characters
Content/Abstract: Poetry on Sociology: Explaining the behaviour and character of Ankwai Women in Plateau State, North Central Nigeria. Was written by Mallam Liman Pate Zaria. From the collection’s of Mallam Musa Gana daji, Jos The poem was composed in the month of April, 1348 AH = 1917

Note: Hausa is the language of the Hausa People widely spoken in West Africa south of the Sahara.

Manuscript Title: ﻋﺒﻦ ﻣﻮدي ﻓﺮوا وا ﻣﻮدا ١٣٤٨ ﻏ. ﻫ. ﻟ. ﯽ. ﺷ. ١٩١٧
Name of Author: Anonymous
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MGD/Ar/ class mark: 15 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 11
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 16
Manuscript Size:
Text Size:
Language: Hausa/Ajami
Content/Abstract: A Hausa poem on Political History: describing the character and behaviour of the rulers. The manuscripts are well preserved from the collection of Mallam Musa Gana daji, Jos.

Manuscript Title: وَاَرْفُ ُرُؤِبُتَ ١٦
Name of Author: Mallam Ruwaibilu
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MDG/ar/ class mark: 16 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 6
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 17
Manuscript Size:
Text Size:
Language: Hausa/Ajami
Content/Abstract: On Political Economy, Comparing and Contrasting between poverty and wealth and the importance of seeking wealth. Well preserved it was written in two type of ink-red and black; the poem is among the manuscripts dealing with political economy from the collection of Mallam Musa Gana Daji, Jos

Manuscript Title: تحلة الفلاح = Article of Success
Name of Author: Sheikh Ahmad b Salih Chudga
Name of copyist: Mallam Muhammadu Rahab Ajami
Call Number: MDG/ar/ class mark: 17 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 14
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 10
Manuscript Size:
Text Size:
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: Sociology: On sex education, the manuscript is from the Collection of Mallam Musa Gana Daji, Jos, Some edges of the papers were damaged by stain of water,

Manuscripts Title: شعر النفي Shi’ir Nupe= a Poem of Nupe
Name of Author: Anonymous
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: MDG/ar/ class mark: 18 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 6
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 16
Manuscript Size:
Text Size:
Language: Nupe/Ajami
Content/Abstract: the manuscript was written in Nupe Language in Arabic Character teaching Islamic religion knowledge, on Salat Prayers, Zakat Tithe, fasting and other aspects on Islam. It is in good condition.
Note: Nupe is a language widely spoken in some states of the central part of Nigeria eg Niger, Kogi and Kwara.

Manuscript Title: شعر الفلاني Shi’ir Fulfulde= A Fulfulde Poem
Name of Author: Sheikh Ahmad Arabi, Jos
Call Number: AAC/153 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 20
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black with Red ink
Number of lines per page: 15
Manuscript Size: 30cm/19cm
Text Size: 28cm/12cm
Language: Fulfude/Ajami
Content/Abstract: The Manuscript was written in Fulfude language, by Sheikh Ahmad Arabi Jos, papers is brittle at the edges of the manuscript, it was from the collection of Sheikh Ahmad Arabi, Jos, a former Deputy Grand Khadi for North Eastern State and Benue Plateau, Chairman of Muslim Pilgrims Board, d 1973 (Musa S M 2008)
Note: Fulfule is the language of the Fulani (Peulle) People who are spread throughout West and Central Africa, with Major concentration in Northern Niger, Northern Cameroon’s, Mali, Niger and the Senegambian region.

Manuscript Title: Halal Wal Haram = The Legal and Illegal
Name of Author: Muhammad b Alhaji Abdurrahman Al Barnawi
Call Number: MAF/213 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 4
Scripts Type (or Style): sudani
Ink colour(s): Dark Yellow
Number of lines per page: 16
Manuscript Size: 20cm/15cm
Text Size: 18cm/13cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: Poetry on Islamic Finance, describing the treasury system; written by Sheikh Muhammad b Alhaji Abdurrahman Al Barnawi Al Asháry, the manuscript is in good condition.

Manuscript Title: Taqribun-nazami li Sheikhina bn Fodio = A Poem for our Sheikh Uthman b Fodiyo
Name of Author: Sheikh. Muhammad Raji bn Aliyu
Call Number: MAF/. 231 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 3
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black and Red
Number of lines per page: 9
Manuscript Size: 20cm/17cm
Text Size: 18/15cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: Poetry on Astronomy written by Sheikh Muhammad Raji B Ali b Abubakr (b. 1790, d.1282/1865) Muhammad Raji regarded as the founder of the Islamic scholarly tradition in Adamawa. He also introduced the Tijjania Tariqa in the area He is related to sh. Usman b fodiyo on his Mother’s side. He intended to go Makka for Pilgrimage, but found the road through was Bagirmi blocked, He settled then in Yola where he taught and spread the Tijjaniyya order. See ALA John O Hunwick 1995.

Manuscript Title: غانا و الشام االرض في سياهة الغني الملك نظحة athatul mulk al Ganiy fi Siyahat li ardo Bamako wa Ghana= on Travelling of Land of Bamako and Ghana
Name of Author: Aliyu bn Ahmad Tijjani.
Name of copyist: Anonymous
Call Number: AAC/42 Arewa House Archives, Kaduna-Nigeria
Date: Not indicated
Number of leaflets: 12
Scripts Type (or Style): Magribi
Ink colour(s): Black
Number of lines per page: 12
Manuscript Size: 17cm/14cm
Text Size: 15cm/12cm
Language: Arabic
Content/Abstract: The manuscript written by Aliyu b Ahmad Tijjani a poem containing the praises of the almighty Allah showing gratitude to him for his bounties on the writer and gave him ability to travel to Bamako and Ghana.

Conclusion:

It is evident from this paper that lack of proper preservation, coupled with inadequate storage facilities, constitutes one of the major problems of African documentation. Arewa House is not an exception. The sad consequence of this age-long problem is that many of the vital
Arabic manuscripts in Nigeria are now in an advanced stage of deterioration. We have equally made it clear that the repository where the ancient manuscripts are kept has a number of problems, ranging from lack of paper conservation laboratory for the treatment of dilapidated scripts, complete absence of conservation facilities for proper archiving, shortage of manpower to inadequate funding. However, we are recommending the following measures for any meaningful progress to be made:

(a) Since the Arewa House Arabic manuscripts collection has a heavy insect infestation it should be placed in an anoxic environment without delay. This, according to conservation experts, is the preferable means for non toxic insect eradication.

(b) The federal, state and local governments of Nigeria should as a matter of urgency increase their financial funding and technical support to Arewa House, Kaduna for the execution of various programs for the preservation of Arewa House manuscript collection and other private and public manuscript repositories in northern Nigeria.

(c) There is an urgent need for a paper conservation laboratory and a big well equipped training center. This will serve as a training unit for the execution of the train the trainer program which will generally benefit all manuscript holders and public officers working in the preservation of Arabic /Ajami scripts in Nigeria.

(d) Arewa House staff working on Arabic manuscripts needs advanced training in the area of paper and material conservation. A conservator trained in both paper and book conservation would be even more useful because he can also train others.

(e) There is need for Arewa House to expedite action in the area of recovery of original Arabic manuscripts from the local ulama in the ancient cities of Nigeria. Time is not on our side as many of the original holders are dying.

(f) There is also the need for Arewa House to publish and freely circulate all the proceedings of all the workshops and conferences held on Arabic manuscripts in order to capture the interest of those in the tertiary institutions and government agencies.

(g) There is need to organise series of workshops for local ulama (scholars), imams and the people involved with manuscripts to sensitize them on the importance of preserving these rare, unique and fragile documents and promoting increased access and use.

(h) Additional Professional expertise on ICT is needed in the Arewa House Arabic manuscript collection to kick start the manuscript digitization program as well as to raise the awareness and expertise of digital preservation issues.
(i) Where highly resourceful owners of manuscripts are discovered, preservation equipment should be provided to such people. Such equipment should include protective manuscript albums, fire proof metal boxes to keep the manuscript albums inside and whatever other tools that are useful for preservation. These items and whatever additional confidence building measures that would enhance the process of acquiring and preserving manuscripts and enhance confidence in the resource persons assisting in the process, should be adopted as ethical principles.

(j) There is urgent need to translate, edit, and analyse the content of the Arewa House Arabic manuscripts into English or Hausa in order to broaden the areas of research.

References:


HN. HNNP/7th Meetings: Arewa House History of Northern Nigeria Project 1970-1971

_________ Arewa House, History of Northern Nigeria Project 1973


Usman S. (1999), Arewa House as an Educational Resources Center: An Exposition. A Dissertation submitted to the Center for Museuology Institute of Archaeology and Museum Studies, Jos, in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the award of post-Graduate Diploma in Museology.