

Syeikh Nyass and the Making of Sacred Narratives: Myths, Reincarnation, and Sufi Identity in Nigeria

Babangida Muhammad Gidado^{1*}, Samaila Ali²

^{1,2}Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia, Jl. Radio Raya No.5, Cisalak, Kec. Sukmajaya, Kota Depok, Jawa Barat 16416 | Gombe State University, P.M.B 127, Tudun Wada, Gombe, Gombe State

*babangidaauliya@gsu.edu.ng, babangida.gidado@uiii.ac.id

Abstract

Existing literature on Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass in Nigeria have largely focused on theological impact, Sufi customs and propagation of the Fayddah at-Tijaniyyah. Nevertheless, none of them have explored the novel assertions of his reincarnation or its theological consequences in Nigerian Sufism. This study examines the theological and social perception of Nigerian Sufis (mystics) regarding the claims of Sheikh Nyass's reincarnation and its significance or otherwise for Sufi practice. It uses a conceptual tool known as the Myth and Reality Framework developed by Karl Popper to distinguish between theological realities and mystical beliefs. The study adopts a Qualitative research method by employing both primary and secondary sources of data collection, ranging from interviews, review of published Scholarly works, and Sufi literature, to investigate the basis of reincarnation within the Sufi tradition and how Nigerian Sufis responded to the claim of its actualization vis-à-vis Sheikh Nyass. The study found that Sheikh Nyass has been one of the most influential Sufi figures whose influence spread across West Africa, particularly Nigeria. Nevertheless, Nigerian Sufis remarkably divided regarding Nyass's alleged reincarnation; while some adherents affirm its occurrence claiming that the spiritual power of Sheikh Nyass continues even after his death through his chosen followers, enabling them to perceive his physical presence, while others vehemently reject such possibility, arguing that it is against the tenets of Islam. The study concludes that Subsequent studies may examine the existence of this spiritual reincarnation across Sufi Orders such as Qadiriyya, Naqshbandiyya, and Chishtiyya to compare their theological perception and socio-cultural implications.

Key-words: Sheikh Nyass, Reincarnation, Sufi, and Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Sheik Ibrahim Nyass is a prominent Senegalese Sufi born in 1902 to the family of Al-Hajj Abdullah Nyass (1845-1922) in the village of Tabya, some kilometers near Kaolack. His emergence marked an important milestone in the history of the symbolic sacred Sufi order of Tijjaniyya. [1] Ibrahim Nyass was initiated into the Tijaniyyah Order by his father, who had been initiated by Shaykh Mamadu (Muhammad) Diallo of Futa Jallon in 1875. Sheikh Nyass had a transformative influence on the Tijaniyya Sufi order, particularly in West Africa. His contributions helped to expand the Tijaniyya mystical teaching, mainly in Senegal, Mauritania, Nigeria, and other parts of West Africa. [2]

In Nigeria, his legacy is preserved through the continuation of Sufi practices, annual celebrations of his birthday, and the attraction of many followers. [3] Even though followers of the Tijjaniyyah order deeply revere its founder, they predominantly adhere to the interpretation of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass, particularly his articulation of the *Faydah at-Tijjaniyyah* (the Divine Flood), a concept proclaimed by the Sheikh, which is said to have been predicted by the founder of the Tijjaniyyah order [4]. The Sufi practices of Fayḍa al-Tijāniyya (The Divine Flood), signify the spiritual illumination which the followers of Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani would experience, comprising of open and expansive practice of Tijjaniyya, unlike the way it was secretly and individually practiced (Mustapha, 2018, 64). In addition, his followers consider him as a spiritual intermediary between them and God, seeing him not only as a spiritual guide but also as a figure who embodies divine inspiration and mercy [5].

Additionally, in recent years, there have been reports in Nigeria of the apparition of Sheikh Nyass, with some people claiming that he has reincarnated. The reports claim that the late Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass's image abruptly appeared on the wall of a newly constructed building in Abeokuta. This event quickly became a notable phenomenon, attracting visitors from within and outside the state. [6].

Reincarnation in this paper is the subject of belief of the fact that the spirit or essence of the dead person can re-emerge in some other physical or visible manifestation after death. In the context of Sufi mysticism these visions are not necessarily literal resurrections, but can symbolically be expressed in the form of visions, dreams, or spiritual presence. Nevertheless, a minority of the followers of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass in Nigeria interpret posthumous visions of him as a physical reincarnation which is contrary to the orthodox eschatology of Islam which denies the belief in transmigration of souls (tanasukh al-arwah).

The notion of Sheikh Nyass's reincarnation represents a novel and contentious subject that has generated significant debate among the adherents of Tijjaniyyah Sufi order in Nigeria. The members are split into two groups: one group supports the notion of Nyass's reincarnation, citing the alleged sightings of his image on walls or in the sky and based their argument on a poem of Nyass in which he declared that even after his death his tattoo and appearance will remain as a remembrance to his followers. Conversely, the antagonists reject this assertion, giving counter-arguments that rooted in both scriptural evidences and theological orthodoxy. Therefore, this paper examines the theological implication of Sheikh Nyass's reincarnation and the divergent perceptions of Sufis to evaluate its validity and otherwise.

The study of Sufism in Nigeria, particularly in its Qadiriyyah and Tijjaniyyah conceptions, has attracted significant research exploring different beliefs and Sufi practices in the country. Nasidi explores the historical evolution of figurative sacred Sufi paintings in Kano, Nigeria, particularly relating it to Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass's emergence in the 1940s. The author describes the emergence of Nyass to be a precursor to the introduction of Sufi paintings in the city. The paper highlights that before the introduction of sacred Sufi paintings, Kano was known for its Arabic calligraphic embellishments of variant scripts and forms, which were believed to be sacred being direct excerpts from the glorious Qur'an, as well as, the presence of some sacred numerical and astronomical symbolisms in form of logos, or motifs. The author traces the historical development of sacred Sufi paintings in Kano, their roles in the socio-economic and political life of the people,

arguing that Nyass' followers consider these artworks to be a source of spiritual power. These images were initially circulated as posters and later evolved into more elaborate paintings, leading to the establishment of a distinct Sufi artistic tradition. On the other hand, he presents counter-narratives, especially of the Sunni orthodoxy against the Sufi heterodoxy with particular reference to the 'elevated' position and sacredness of such paintings amongst the followers of Sufi brotherhood, particularly of the Tijjāniyyah Sufi Order. Furthermore, the paper outlines a brief history of Sheikh Nyass, narrating the contestations over the Sheikh's proclaimed position of Sahib al-Faydah (master of the divine flood). This assertion faced resistance from Sufi scholars, particularly in Kano and Mauritania. Despite this opposition, his influence persisted, and his images became widely venerated, particularly among his Tijjāniyyah followers [7]. Razzaq's work, on the other hand, explores the history of Faydah at-Tijaniyyah (Divine Flood of the Tijaniyyah Order) in the city of Ilorin, Kwara state, Nigeria. He describes the *Faydah* as a spiritual transformation which the founder of the Tijaniyyah Sūfī Order, Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani (d. 1815 C.E.) prophesied. Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass (d. 1975 C.E.) proclaimed himself to be the person blessed with such a position. Using participatory observation and an interpretative approach of relevant materials the author analyzes the factors that led to the emergence of the Faydah, its spread, and impacts in the city. Some of the key events responsible for the emergence of Faydah in the city include Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass's visit to Kano (1937) and Ilorin (1963). The impact of Faydah at-Tijaniyyah in Ilorin, manifested in strengthening the presence of Tijaniyyah Sufi order and reinforced specific ritual practices of Tijaniyyah followers in Ilorin were influenced by Faydah teachings, including: Recitation of Basmalah (Bismillāhi ar-Rahmāni ar-Rahīm) when reciting Surat al-Fātiḥah during prayers, the adoption of Qabd (folding of arms on one's chest during prayer) instead of the traditional Maliki practice of Sadl (keeping the arms by the sides) and Increased emphasis on Tarbiyah (spiritual training) to achieve direct knowledge of God (Ma'rifah). The work, however admits that these impacts led to the serious criticism and resistance from other Islamic scholars in Ilorin who viewed them as innovations (Bid'ah) [8]. In the same vein, Isa's study on Sufi group known as Yan ḥakīka that has come to prominence in the second decade of the twenty-first century in northern Nigeria, described them to be the bona fide followers of the path of Shaykh Ibrahim Nyass. The foundational belief of this group is that "Nyass Allah ne" (Nyass is God); they also claim apotheosis of their members. Their ideology evolves from the concepts of Wahadat al-Wujud (oneness of being and unity of existence) and Tarbiyya (spiritual training), which represents a method used by Sufi sheikhs to guide their followers on the mystical journey to direct experiences of the Divine Essence (a popular method propagated by faydah at-Tijaniyyah). At the Initial phase, the group operated discretely, but in recent period, its members have attracted public attention through their strange utterances, especially during Mawlid Baaye (celebrating the birthday of Nyass). During the occasion, they express praises on Sheikh Nyass and position him above the Prophet Muhammad. Their utterances generate violent responses from both Salafi and Sufi communities to the extent that the Sufis disown them and even question the stance of their Islamic beliefs. The emergence of 'Yan ḥakīka group has altered the shape and composition of Tijaniyya in Nigeria because its central belief of deifying Nyass and its followers contradicts the core teaching and doctrine of the mainstream Tijaniyya Sufi order. [9].

Nevertheless, while these studies provide important perspectives on Sufism in Nigeria, particularly Sheikh Nyass's among Sufis. Their discussions primarily focus on artistic, ritualistic, and to some extent, his deification by some of his followers but overlook the metaphysical claims of his spiritual return. This research bridges this gap by examining reincarnation narratives, their socio-

religious significance, and their reception among Nigerian Sufi communities. The study will explore the theological implications and debates surrounding the idea of Sheikh Nyass's reincarnation. The scope covers the theological basis for such beliefs, and the contrasting perspectives within the Sufi community and limited to Nigerian Tijjaniyyah followers, without a broader exploration of similar beliefs in other countries or within the wider Islamic discourse. The article argues that Sheikh Nyass's alleged reincarnation is a divisive issue within the Tijjaniyyah community in Nigeria. Through examining these diverse perspectives, the research will shed light on the validity of the reincarnation claim and its theological implications within the domain of Sufi practices.

It is on this basis that this study will aim to explore the level to which the idea of spiritual reincarnation is aligned with the practices of Sufi and how these beliefs have been influenced and determined by the Tijjaniyyah believers in Nigeria. Namely, it examines the reaction of Nigerian Sufis to the apparition claims of Sheikh Nyass, evaluates the legal and theological soundness of the divergent opinions regarding the claim and explores how the concept of spiritual reincarnation compares and contrasts with the available Sufi teachings.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To examine the complicated and contested perceptions surrounding the views on the purported reincarnation of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass in the Nigerian Sufi context, this study adopts a qualitative research methodology based on the interpretivist paradigm. Considering the theological depths and the mystical dimensions of the subject, a qualitative method will be the best method of capturing the subjective meaning, the symbolic interpretations and the socio-spiritual implications of such beliefs. Rather than seeking empirical confirmation of metaphysical claims; however, this research focuses more on how such claims are made, expressed, and contested within the lived religious experiences of the followers.

Accordingly, this paper utilizes both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 15 purposely selected informants. These were regarded Sufi scholars, followers of Tijjaniyya who accept the reincarnation claim or reject, and independent observers familiar with the discourse. The interviews were carried out in the major centers of the Tijjaniyya movement in Nigeria, like Kano, Ilorin, and Abuja, through open-ended questions whose responses were narrative.

A large group of secondary sources was also reviewed in the study. These were scholarly articles, biographical writings, Tijjaniyya publications, Sufi poems, mystical writings, and theological treatises attributed to or centered on Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass. The modern expressions of the reincarnation claim, such as social media posts and online videos, were also described and evaluated with the purpose of determining the common acceptance and spread of the narrative. These diverse materials enriched the study's understanding, providing an increased comprehension of the dynamics of the myth of reincarnation operating at the various levels of the discourse, namely, from formal theology to popular belief. To analyze the data, thematic content analysis was employed to find out and establish recurring patterns, themes, and narratives. The language, metaphors, as well as theological arguments that are currently used by various groups were considered. The interpretation of the data was carried out through inductive and deductive analysis, especially within the boundaries of the Myth and Reality.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research utilizes the myth and reality framework theory proposed by Karl Popper in 1994 [10]. It explains the differences and the relationships between mythological tales and past realities. This framework is relevant to this research because it allows for an assessment and investigation of how the myth of Sheikh Nyass's reincarnation helps support the ideological perception of Sufis in Nigeria while at the same time instigating critical evaluation of its reality and authenticity within the concept of Islamic theology.

Sufism Definition

A significant argument exists about the lexical roots of the word "*tasawwuf*" (Sufism) and its many derivatives in Arabic, such as "*sufi*" or "*mutasawwif*" (the one who practices Sufism); "*sufiyya*" (sufism); as well as the collective form of Sufis or, "*mutasawwifa*"; the verb "*tasawwafa*" (to become or be Sufi), and the infinitive form, or verbal noun, "*tasawwuf*" (the act of being Sufi [11]. Hujwiri asserts that the Sufi is addressed with the title because he wears a woolen garment (*Jaa'ma'i Suufi*) [12]. This etymology reflects how early Islamic mystics usually wore simple woolen robes as a token of their asceticism and detachment from worldly pleasures. The School of Sufi Teaching comments that such sincere worshipers who lived during and shortly after the Prophet Muhammad were known for their coarse woolen attire [13]. Other Scholars believe that Sufi is So-called because he is in the first rank (*Saffil-awwal*). Others say it is because the Sufis claim to belong to the (*Ashabil Suffa*), the people of the bench who gathered around the prophet's mosque [14]. Still, other writers declare that the name is derived from *Safa* which translated as purity [15]. In another Western definition, the derivation of the word Sufi, refers to Greek Sophos, which means "wise" but philosophically impossible [16]. Hence, the derivation of the word Sufi from *suf*, "wool," is most widely recognized.

However, in its technical sense, Sufism is repeatedly identified as the mystical dimension of Islam and has been defined in several ways by different scholars, resulting in divergent meanings and connotations. These scholastic definitions encompass the nature of Sufism, comprising aspects of spirituality, personal transformation, and asceticism. Al-Kaisi notes that Sufism cannot be only termed as a sect as it mixes with the Islamic way of life, asceticism, and mysticism. She admits that Sufism is the expression of the purpose for which Allah has sent His Beloved prophet, thereby rendering the way to achieve the love of Allah and the creation of Allah through self-purification and purifying one's inner consciousness [17]. According to Harun Nasution cited by Rudi (2022), Sufism can be mentioned as a cognitive science that studies the means through which a Muslim can be able to achieve closeness to Allah, while it is emphatic of the fact that every single act of contrition and earnest attention to the activities of the heart is the way, i.e., Sufism encourages involvement in ascetic practices to be close to Allah. This explains the nature of Sufis as those who have undergone any transformation process to be spiritually enlightened and satisfied [18].

Moreover, another important definition is provided by Abul-Husayn an-Nuri, who defines Sufism as "the abandonment of all that is carnal" [19]. This definition emphasizes focusing on the purification of the heart from the worldly attachments of desires. Similarly, Al-Junaid defines it by stating that it is the purification of the heart from association with the creator, which clearly shows that there is a purification from worldly materialism to be spiritually uplifted [20]. Ibrahim Basuni categorizes Sufism into three variants: *al-Bidayah* (beginning), *al-Mujahadah* (struggle), and *al-Madzaqat* (experiential knowledge). According to him, Sufism consists of the

disconnection of the heart from worldly distractions, where the seeker's heart is devoid of all worldly matters and can witness only the essence of the Almighty [21]. This approach also provides insight into Sufism's stress on the *Sarāh* of the practitioners and whether they practice self-discipline and moral refinement to help elevate their self-awakening. Lastly, Al-Hallaj famously articulates that Sufism is the unity of essence, which shows the understanding of experiencing closeness to God through concentration and meditation. This description captures the aim of Sufism well; that is, to go beyond one's ego and attain the actual ultimate truth [22].

Thus, the definitions of Sufism have changed and differ significantly among researchers. However, they all seek to prove Sufism as a form of experience that draws the individual closer to God, perhaps from the perspective of mysticism, an ascetic lifestyle, or self-alteration. Sufism is still essential in Islam. Just as the definitions of Sufism differ, the modes in which Sufism is being practiced differ, which are technically known as Sufi *tariqah* (orders).

Sufi Order

A Sufi order can be described as 'an institution which has been founded by a Sufi scholar for practicing people who wish to be closer towards God [23]. This definition highlights the fact that Sufi orders are well-organized to provide guidance tailored to a specific objective or goal, in this case, the spiritual aspiration of the practitioner. Sufi orders have been referred to as 'Sufi Masters' disciple groups' which brings out the aspect of these organizations in nurturing self-discipline and moral uprightness among the followers [24].

Therefore, a Sufi Order can be described as a spiritual organization founded by a Sufi scholar to guide people in their quest for proximity to God. It is a well-organized institution meant to guide spiritual ambitions, and also a way of self-discipline and good morality. Furthermore, a Sufi Order represents a community of practice that imparts a sense of unity and shared experiences among the members who relate to one another through experiences and development in their spiritual path.

Different types of Sufi orders

There are several divisions of the Sufis based on their teachings, practices, and even timelines. Each order possesses a specific set of beliefs that are particular to it and govern its followers through the path offered. Here are some prominent types of Sufi orders:

1. Chishti Order

The Order of Chishti is said to have started in 1150 CE by Khwajah Moinuddin Chishti in India. This particular order is one of the most popular in South Asia as it promotes love and offers devotion to God. The followers of this order have been characterized by their musical gatherings of Chishti, which aim to achieve an enhanced sense of spirituality through Music and pictures [25].

2. Qadiriyya Order

Abdul Qadir Gilani founded the Qadiriyya Order during the 12th century. It is an order best known for its strict adherence to the laws of the Sharia and for fostering the inner self. Community service and sound ethical practice are some of the most central practices of this order, according to its followers [26].

3. Naqshbandi Order

Baha-ud-Din Naqshband Bukhari was a 14th-century Sufi who created the Naqshbandi Order, where the teachings and practice of mysticism use silently spoken words of *Bhikha* instead of loud chants. While other Sufi orders can use vocal or musical vocalizations, nothing of the kind is done within the reach of Naqshbandi [27]

5. Tijjaniyya Order

The Tijjaniyya Order was created by Ahmad al-Tijani in the late 18th century in North Africa. The order has distinctive features and customs that differentiate it from other Sufi orders. This Order encourages a more personal relationship with God by repeating specific prayers called *wird* (daily recitations) while using less of the intercession of saints [28]

These major Sufi orders exemplify the internal differentiation that characterizes Sufism and, as such, provide varied channels through which an individual seeks closer contact with God. Although they vary in their practices and teachings, they all have a common aspiration: to promote love, compassion, and the knowledge of God in daily life. Through their various spiritual approaches, these orders remain a source of motivation for hundreds of millions, even today.

Metaphysical Doctrines Shared by Sufi Orders

Within the various Sufi organizations that include Qadiriya, Naqshbandiyya, Chishti, and Tijani there are metaphysical shared dogmas, which constitute the spiritual and theological framework of Sufi cosmology. These doctrines assist in explaining the ways Sufis perceive the divine, the concept of sainthood, as well as a perception of unusual spiritual manifestation, visions, dreams continued posthumous presence of saints [29]. These mystical doctrines consist of concepts such as *fana* (annihilation), *baqah* (subsistence in God) *barakah* (blessings) and *sirr* (divine secret).

Fanā (annihilation of the self) is one of such fundamental concepts, where the Sufi experiences a complete effacement of the ego to replace it with the divine qualities acting through him. This is often followed by *baqā* (subsistence in God) during which the Sufi remains in communion with the Divine spiritually. These states are not purely psychological, but it is thought that they bring the saint (*walī*) to a state in which his presence could extend beyond time and space [30].

However, the other important doctrine is that of *baraka*, spiritual grace, which is thought to flow through saints, texts and places as well as by actual physical objects. This grace is not terminated with death of a saint, but it keeps being perpetuated by communities in the remembrance (*dhikr*) traits, dreams and spiritual succession (*silsila*). There is a close relationship between the idea of *sirr*, divine secret, revealed to the saint and whom he transmitted to his spiritual successors (*khulafa*). This transmission is a guarantee of continuity of spiritual authority presence, even in the case when there is absence of physical embodiment [31].

Subsequently, in the light of these metaphysical beliefs, the notion that a saint such as Sheikh Nyass can survive spiritually by means of his successors, poems, or apparitions is not viewed as literal reincarnation. Rather, it reflects the enduring *wilāya* (sainthood) and the vital *baraka* that bestows life to the Sufi societies [32]. These insights play a major role in understanding symbolic reincarnation interpretations without diminishing them to theological heresy.

Ritual practices and Religious Training in Tijjaniyyah Tradition

The Tijaniyyah Sufi order combines rigorous Islamic education with spiritual discipline. This section explores the educational and ritual practices within the order, explaining how the order integrates formal Islamic sciences with transformative Sufi ethics and communal devotion in shaping religious identity and piety among its adherents.

Pedagogical and Spiritual Training

The tradition of Tijaniyyah focuses on pedagogical training and spiritual training that entails integrating Islamic scholarship and the training of inner purity and Sufi discipline [33]. The Tijaniyyah pedagogical system incorporates the traditional studies with Islam and Sufi spiritual schooling. This includes:

1. Qur'anic and Islamic Studies

The education in the Tijaniyyah tradition is based on the Quran memorization (*ḥifẓ*), recitation (*tajwīd*) and is often conducted in Quranic schools called Tsangaya (in the case of Nigeria in West Africa) [34]. Beside this, the students are taught the foundational sciences of Islam, i.e., Arabic grammar (*naḥw*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), theology (*ʿaqīdah*), and prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*). They are normally studied in the context of Mālikī jurisprudence and Ashʿarī theology which predominate the intellectual world in the areas where Tijaniyyah is normative. The classical texts being used in the curriculum are al-Risala by Ibn Abi Zayd al-Qayrawani, al-Akhdari and commentaries on the works of al-Jurjani and al-Sanusi which guarantee both soundness and richness of mind to the students [35].

2. Sufi Ethical Training (Tarbiyah Sūfiyyah)

The Tijaniyyah gives strong consideration on ethical and spiritual upliftment, known as *tarbiyah sūfiyyah* [34]. This under the guidance of a spiritual leader known as *murshid*, the disciple (*murid*) undertakes a process of inner purification aimed at transforming the soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) and the disciplining the self (*jihād al-nafs*). This process of spiritual training instills Adab (proper behaviors), which include respect for elders, loyalty to shaykh and cultivation of humility. Such spiritual ethics is considered essential for attainment of sincerity and nearness to God [36].

3. Oral Transmission and Commentary

The Tijaniyyah movement is also based on oral tradition and direct teaching, a primary way through which knowledge is preserved and transmitted. Spiritual works, particularly when they are the work by Ahmad al-Tijānī and other influential writers such as Ali Harazim and Ibrāhīm Nyāss, are read and interpreted in great detail with recitation and commentary. A proper meditation on these teachings is not an act of academic superiority; rather, it is more spiritual and practical, and only those who display a keen mastery and ethical preparedness are granted *ijāzah*, formal authorization to teach or transmit the texts and litanies of the order [37].

4. Study Circles and Public Preaching

Learning and spiritual meditation are also promoted by holding regular *majālis al-dhikr* (gatherings for the remembrance of God) and halaqat al-ilm (studying circles). These meetings provide a platform through which group dhikr and more official teaching intersect [38]. Senior

Tijanī scholars can also be found practicing public preaching and are often known to hold Friday sermons (*khutbah*) or religious lectures where both Qur'ānic exegesis (*tafsīr*) and a spiritual exhortative (*wa'z wa-irshād*) are found. The sessions enhance the incorporation of scholarship and spirituality, which is also a feature of the Tijaniyyah way of religious life [39].

Tijjaniyya Ritual Practices

The Tijaniyya is also distinguished by the structured and obligatory spiritual practices aimed at fostering the feeling of devotion, bringing the disciple closer to Allah, and sustaining the strong adherence to the spiritual path. These practices are not merely symbolic things, rather, they constitute the foundation of both the internal and external life of the followers.

1. Wird Tijāni

The practice which lies at the center of the Tijani devotional system is the *wird*, a daily obligatory litany, whose recitation by all muqaddams (authorized leaders) and their disciples. Such a *wird* should be repeated twice a day, in other words, once after the *Fajr* prayer and again after 'Asr prayer. It is made of three basic parts: reciting *Astaghfirullah* (seeking forgiveness) 100 times, *Ṣalāt 'ala al-Nabī* (salutations upon the Prophet) 100 times and *Lilla ilaha illallah* (the proclamation of oneness of God) 100 times. It has to be recited in a state of ritual purity (*ṭahārah*), directed towards a Qiblah, and in a spirit of silence, concentration and humility intersect [40].

2. Wazīfah

Tijanīs also engage themselves in a communal spiritual practice referred to as the *wazīfah*, in addition to the individual *wird*. This is normally practiced just one time a day, either late in the afternoon or between Maghrib and 'Ishā'. The *wazīfah* contains a specified amount of *istighfār* (seeking forgiveness), *ṣalawāt* (blessings upon the Prophet) and the *Jawharat al-Kamāl* a distinct invocation of the Prophet Muḥammad which holds both deep theological and metaphysical values. The practice is typically performed as a group activity and it can involve call-and-response chanting, which contributes to unity and strengthening the communal spirit of the order [41].

3. Dhikr al-Jum'ah

The other significant rite in the tradition of Tijaniyyah is the Ḥaḍrah al-Jum'ah, the special remembrance meeting which is organized on the Fridays. Such a gathering involves recital of a major and much cherished Tijani text *Ṣalāt al-Fātiḥ*, along with selected chapters of the Quran including *al-Ikhlāṣ*, *al-Falaq* and *al-Nās*. It is a group practice known as *Dhikr al-Jum'ah* that is admittedly indicative of the focus of the Tijaniyyah on spiritual reformation and the expression of *muḥabbah* (love) toward the Prophet PBUH [42].

4. Mawlid and Celebration of Saints

The Tijani ritual calendar includes the celebration of Mawlid, and commemoration of saints. Most of these happenings are to signify the birthday of the Prophet Muḥammad as well as to celebrate the anniversary of famous members of the Tijani faith like Ahmad al-Tijani and Sheikh Ibrāhīm Niyas. Highly spiritual and cultural, these congregations are characterized by the recitation of *qasā'id* (poetic odes) using Arabic as well as local languages, a popular example being Fulani, Hausa and Wolof. These people participate in the narration of stories, recounting miracles (*karāmāt*), exhortations to follow the prophetic example. Communal meals, charitable acts, and displays of reverence and love contribute more to the fun and spiritually atmosphere this celebration [43].

5. Pilgrimage to Tijāni Shrines (*Ziyārah*)

The shrines of the Tijani saints are another important aspect of spiritual practice in the order: pilgrimage, or *ziyarah*, to them is an important part of the spiritual practice of the order. The tomb of Ahmad al-Tijānī, in Fes, Morocco, or that of Ibrāhīm Niyās in Senegal, and other local spiritual leaders are also places of pilgrimage for pilgrims. They may be spiritual retreats (*khalwah*), and may include immersion in dhikr, supplication (*du‘ā’*), and reaffirmation of one’s spiritual commitments. In a process of such visits, disciples aim to get spiritual blessings (*barakah*) and to revive their ties with the founder of the order and his teachings [44].

6. *Fanā’* (Spiritual Annihilation)

Fanā’ (the Sufi concept of spiritual annihilation in God), though not a ritual act in itself, is the **ultimate goal** toward which Tijaniyyah ritual and pedagogical disciplines are directed. It means the gradual disappearance of ego (*nafs*) and total being engrossed in the memory and realization of God. This inner transformation is envisaged through the ordered recital of dhikr, spiritual self-discipline (*tarbiyah sūfiyyah*), and adherence to spiritual guidance, all aim to foster this inner transformation. Although rites such as *ziyarah* can be inspirational and renewing to the soul, *fana* is ultimately achieved through constant adherence and cleansing of the spirit and submission to the Almighty. In this way, the rituals are the means and *fanā’* is the spiritual goal [45].

The Tijaniyyah *ṭarīqah* offers a tightly integrated system of education, piety, and community and has brought together formal Islamic learning and strong spiritual practice. Its pedagogical methods focus on the traditional Islamic sciences filled with spiritual ethics, and its practices center on *dhikr* and communal devotion. It is a structure that preserves high spiritual orders, and institutional solidarity, quite visible in the West Africa where it has significant religious, cultural and even political influence. These practices are some of the ways through which the Tijaniyyah has gone on to influence the Muslim spirituality across diverse societies

Sufism in Nigeria

In Nigeria, particularly in the Northern part of the country, Sufism has remarkably imprinted on the religious, cultural, and social settings. The advent and spread of Islam in what is today known as Nigeria’s occurred over several centuries. Initially, the spread was gradual, but it gained momentum with the rise of the Jihad [46]. From the early period of the advent of Islam up to the twentieth century Muslims in Nigeria adhered to Sunni-Islam with Sufism as the main hallmark of Sunni-Islam in northern Nigeria because a number of Sufi scholars visited the country and succeeded in persuading the early Muslims to practice Sufism [47]. The two notable orders that greatly influenced Nigerian Muslims are the Qādiriyyah and Tijāniyyah Orders. The Qādiriyyah order, started by Abdul Qadir al-Jilani in the twelfth century, was among the earliest sufi order embraced in Nigeria. The Tijāniyyah order, on the other hand, emerged later and became popular especially in the 18th and 19th centuries due to its various practices and emphasized every believer’s access to and understanding of God [48].

Conversely, local cultures and traditions have influenced Sufism in Nigeria. The local Sufi tradition of the area makes Sufism in this area different from most others due to the fusion of indigenous culture with the tenets of Islam. Such incorporation of tribal songs, dances, and poems into the ceremonies of Sufism made them relatively more manageable for the Nigerian people.

This unification has been central to the lineage and widespread acceptance of Sufi orders in Nigeria [49].

The Tijāniyyah order offers a more personal approach that appeals to the masses. The influence of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass, one of the most prominent figures of the Tijaniyya order, further compounds the popularity of Sufism in Nigeria. It is because Nyass bases his teachings on spiritual illumination, personal relationship with God, and social responsibility, so much that he succeeds in building a significant following that fortifies the Tijaniyyah order against some of the most vociferous reformist criticisms.

Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass Life and Work

The life of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass (1900-1975) defines a milestone in Islamic and Sufi scholarship as he was one of the major scholars in Western Africa. He was an influential figure not only in the Islamic world but also in the twentieth century, as his life history combines many important themes, including social justice, anti-colonial struggle, and spiritual consciousness [50]. Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass was shaped by rural Islamic scholarship trained in the Senegalese village of Kaolack [51]. He became acquainted with formal Islamic education through his father, Alhaji Abdullahi Nyass, one of the many scholars who nurtured him [53]. When he turned twenty, he had already given out his first work, which pertained to the definition of a teacher and students in Sufism called *Rūhul- 'Adab*, written in 1922 [54]. In 1931, the Shaykh produced his first extensive work titled *Kashifu il-bas an Faydatil-Khatimi Abil- 'Abbas*. In this book, he demonstrated a thorough knowledge of *Tasawuf*, especially the Tijaniyyah order [55]. His pursuit of knowledge encompassed various Islamic core elements, including Qur'anic commentary, Hadith, jurisprudence, and creed [56].

In addition, Nyass's spiritual leadership started to gain traction after he joined the Tijaniyya order. Nyass became noted for his charismatic personality and comprehension of Islamic doctrines. Nyass's most acclaimed work, *Kāshif al-Ilbās*, in the 1930s, treats the attainment of gnostic comprehension through a cycle of Sufi initiative techniques while emphasizing each step towards the experience of Divine manifestations, a concept that features much in Sufi thought [57]. Nyass's explanations went beyond the spiritual understanding of man. He reacted to the socio-political events of his time. He emerged as an opponent of colonialism and a campaigner for African nationalism. In his essay *Africa for the Africans*, he depicted colonizers as worshippers of idols and depicted their love for material wealth and their spiritual bankruptcy. He supported those who wanted to redeem their lost identity amidst colonial rule [58]. In his teachings and practice, Nyass emphasized the need to foster a sense of brotherhood and respect among various communities [59].

However, it is worth noting that Nyass's influence was not limited to Senegal, as he went all over Africa and further afield with his teachings and meetings with other Muslim leaders. Nyass was able to clearly articulate a representation of Islam that was international in scope, and for this reason, he became a Pan-Africanist. He mobilized many people who sought his teachings of spiritual redemption and social justice [60]. His leadership style was comprehensive; he opened up to people from all walks of life. It created a feeling of Islam among the Muslims and reconciled and knitted together various ethnic groups in Africa. The significance of Nyass's teachings can still be felt amongst Islamic intellectual circles in West Africa and possibly beyond. His teachings led to several strands of Sufism, which focused on mysticism and social action [61]The Nyass's

tradition, on the other hand, has remained one of the most significant Muslim movements in contemporary West Africa, with millions of followers who live by his guide. Besides, his fight for independence motivated later African leaders to become interested in reconstructing the standard of the African personality as an advocate of social justice based on Islamic principles [62].

Sheikh Nyass and the Sacred Narratives

Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass is believed to have possessed noble characteristics and supernatural abilities (*Karama*), including what was reported about his supplication to God to die on the path of Tijaniyya and promised to bear the sins of the nation of the Prophet Muhammad if he died on the path. It is also reported that Sheikh Ahmed Al-Tijjani gave glad tidings to his followers of the arrival of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass and considered him his successor after his death [63]. Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass has a unique personality among the public and intellectuals in Senegal, as it is believed that he has supernatural abilities that enable him to overcome his enemies. An example narrated is that he sent his supernatural power to the chief of an opposing tribe, and he was burned alive [64]. From his characteristics, it is believed that he was the pole of his time; people turned to him to enter God's sacred presence. He saw the Prophet, PBUH, physically in Paris during his last illness. His followers also believed that anyone who did not embrace the Tijjaniya order was doomed and had no salvation [65].

Thus, in a letter sent by Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass to the people of Kano, he mentioned: “Kano is the capital of the Tijjaniya flood and the radiance of Sunni lights, the place of knowledge and secrets, the people of virtue and goodness, among whom he said, ‘He who does not speak out of whims.’” He referred to himself, saying: “They said that they were my loved ones, people of guidance and religion.” [66]. He also stated that among his characteristics is that everyone who loves or sees him will be in eternal paradise, and there is no lie about that. His dignity was not unusually physical, as some Sheikhs think, but rather moral. An example of this is the story of a Nigerian missionary who saw Sheikh Ibrahim in a dream calling him to Islam, so he traveled to Senegal, converted to Islam at his hands, and became a caller to the Tijjaniya order [67].

Influence of Sheikh Nyass in Nigeria

Tijaniyya followers regard Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass as a prominent figure whose dominance transcends geographical and cultural boundaries. He is called “*ghawth*, al-zaman” (meaning “succor of the age”; i.e., the supreme saint of his time) and is considered to be the one who controls the blessings for the entire Tijaniyya community [68]. It arguably means the entire perception of God, whether mentally or closer, eternally and physically.

Sheikh Nyass's journey to Nigeria and his memorable visits to the major cities such as Kano and Ilorin are important in the miming and entrenching of the *Fayda* Tijaniyya. To some extent, this was achieved because Kano was always an important center of Islamic learning and commerce [69]. He invited scholars, traders, the clergy, and everyone interested in seeking his counsel when they felt the need. He used to give out lessons and conduct prayers, which became a new turning point for many followers as these gatherings became firm with the Tijjaniya path [70].

Moreover, in Ilorin, a city whose tradition has a strong Islamic base, these blessed visitations brought forth similar impacts. Contrary to a widespread perception of Ilorin as primarily an educational center with a strict Sufi orientation, the city sustained the *Fayda* Tijaniyya as one of

the key components of publishing activity. In dealings with other scholars from within the regions, Sheikh Nyass engaged in scholarly and spiritual association with such individuals as Shaykh Adam Abdullahi Al-Ilory, who made a positive impact and propelled the Tijaniyya movement in the region [71]. The local scholars and faithful assumed the role of disseminating his teachings through the Friday sermons in schools and colleges and at Sufi entertainment sessions (Majalis). His invitation to Ilorin provided a kick-start as his disciples spread the word around several towns and rural areas to see that the principles of Fayḍa were implemented appropriately [72].

The Tijaniyya followers in Nigeria see him not only as a Sheikh, or teacher, a *Muallim*, or scholar, but also as a *Murshid*, or one who, through prayers and spiritual devotion, is said to have special powers that could transform the lives of his devotees. That is why he was known as *ghawth al-Zaman*.

One of the numerous signs of the highly regarded status Sheikh Nyass left behind in Nigeria is that many people know by heart the poems he wrote and recite them, especially his Diwan (A thousand-stanza poem on the praise and glorification of the Prophet). Most of these poems are prayers and instructions in forming the way to the spiritual state; the themes include divine love, submission, and wayfaring. There are many entertainments, so-called Majalis, where the Diwān is recited with rhythm and people's empathy. These meetings are not seen simply as sessions of reading in poetry but are considered worship meetings and routes to *baraka* (blessings). Devotees believe that reading Sheikh Niass' poetry has just as many spiritual advantages since it touches on the Sheikh himself [73].

Additionally, Sheikh Nyass's visible influence is also depicted in the National and International Maulid celebration of Sheikh Nyass. In 1994, members of the Tijjaniyyah in the city of Ilorin organized their Annual National Maulid, celebrating Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass, attracting many participants from within and outside Nigeria. Some of the children of Shaykh Ibrahim Nyass and their grandchildren were honored at the event [74]. Since then, the practice has become a tradition celebrated yearly. The program, which is mainly organized and takes place in the capital city of Abuja, was a memorable event that millions of people attended. During the gathering, attendees usually claim the physical appearance of Sheikh Nyass in appreciation of his *Maulud* celebration. [75].

To sum up, the strong connection and spiritual bond with Sheikh Nyass among the Tijaniyya in Nigeria has been preserved across generations. Many families recount stories of miracles, dreams, or visions associated with the Sheikh that place him on a divine pedestal. Tijaniyya communities feel this continuity up to the present and have turned Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass into a spiritual figure who is still living in the memory of the followers. Some of his followers even claim to see him physically on some occasions.

The Question of the Acclaimed Apparition of Sheikh Nyass, its Relevance and Implications

In recent times, there emerged a debate among the Nigerian Sufis and scholars on the Sheikh's reincarnation. These discussions center around three core questions: Reincarnation rumors, the legal and Shari'ah point of view on such claims, and conformity of these assertions to Sufi tenets. This paper seeks to respond to these aspects by raising awareness of the viability and ramifications of the reincarnation discourse about the Nigerian Sufi.

a. Responses and Experiences of Nigerian Sufis on Sheikh Nyass's Reincarnation

The assertion of the reincarnation of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass has brought about varying responses, ranging from the chief acceptance and reverence by Nigerian Sufi followers to complete denial and rejection. To some believers faithful to Sheikh Nyass, the belief that he was born again proves that he is a high-ranking Sufi, and his mission continues. These individuals recount various tabernacles of violence and incidents of direct encounter with Nyass either orally in personation or through visions and dreams. One of the other interviewees expressed that: “*In our belief of kashf, Sheikh Nyass can be seen either in person, or through dream and vision*” (Chilo Modibbo 2024, personal interview). This submission points to a kind of experience narrated in such a way that is counted as an authentic spiritual encounter from a Sufi epistemological perspective, where dreams and visionary revelation (*kashf*) are relied upon heavily.

The point to look at, however, is that there is a section of the Tijaniyya community that denies the belief of Nyass’s reincarnation, arguing that such a belief is not in line with orthodox Islamic beliefs. *There is no place in the Qur’an or Hadith where reincarnation is mentioned. Once someone dies, they wait for the resurrection, that’s our belief,*” contended one Tijaniyya follower [76]. Some of these people point out that no evidence in the Qur’anic or Hadith texts supports the idea of reincarnation, which may be one of the violations of the principles of faith. To them, the finality of death and resurrection in the hereafter are the besetting features of Islamic eschatology.

b. Legal Validity and Divergent Scholarly Views on Reincarnation

In Islam, discussions on reincarnation are multifaceted and often diverge. Various sources of Islamic knowledge, especially the Quran and Hadith, do not support the belief of *tanasukhul arwaah* (reincarnation) or the transmigration of souls. It is explained in the Qur’an (2:28) that life has stages: existence, death, resurrection, and judgment. They do not make room for humanity to live in a cycle.

A few Sufi Scholars perceive the reincarnation of Sheikh Nyass figuratively rather than literally. According to them, reincarnation could refer to spiritual inheritance, and the divine secret (*Sirr*) of a particular saint (*Waliy*) is given to his successor or spiritual inheritor (*khalifa*). This understanding also goes with the Sufi concept of *fanaa’* (Annihilation) and *baqaa’* (eternal subsistence). This means that spiritual presence may rarely persist for some chosen persons [77]. Some promoters of this view based their argument on a poem by Nyass in which he asserts that even after his death, his tattoo and appearance will remain as a remembrance to his followers:

Fasurat 'iibrahim tabqaa tadhakuran

'iidha aaba lilmawlaa alealii watafakuran

The image of Ibrahim remains remembered

If he turns to the Most High Lord and lets you think about it [78]

c. The Conformity of Spiritual Reincarnation to Sufi Practices

In Sufism, there is a long-standing emphasis on preserving spiritual continuity and lineage and transmitting divine knowledge through recognized chains (*silsila*). While the classical Sufis do not

explicitly endorse reincarnation in a physical appearance, they do recognize the continuity of the nature of spiritual authority across time. Sufi literature highlights Baraka (spiritual blessing) and the constant spiritual impact of saints (*Awliya*) even after their death. Within the Tijjaniyyah setting, a claim of reincarnation of Sheikh Nyass is often interpreted in the context of spiritual inheritance. Leaders (*muqaddamun*) are seen as channels for carrying on the legacy of previous saints. Many Tijjaniyya followers believe Sheikh Nyass's spiritual presence is ongoing, guiding and uplifting his successors in a symbolic rather than physical manner. [79].

The belief system and norms promoted by these practices conform to the expectations of the Sufi tradition as they enhance devotion, provide social support, and guarantee the survival of the Tijjaniyya order. Nevertheless, the more concrete approaches to reincarnation are still quite controversial and are typically dismissed by standard scholars.

d. Relevance and Implications for Nigeria

The discussion concerning the reincarnation of Sheikh Nyass has enormous consequences for other Sufi sects in Nigeria. On a spiritual level, it strengthens the assertion of the revered Sheikh Nyass and his influence among followers of the Tijjaniyya orders. Reincarnation's adherents who accept this concept always get revived and appreciate the spiritual legacy of their order more. As for the sociological aspect, the reincarnation narrative has equally caused division among Tijjaniyya communities in Nigeria [80]. Those who accept reincarnation defend it by asserting that a Muslim's reverence and love for the Sheikh will make him feel and witness the reality of the Sheikh's reappearance [81]. At the same time, several others do not, which in turn breeds factionalism and struggles with the sect's adherents. Such divides undermine the unity of the Tijjaniyya order and provide hostile outsiders who oppose the Sufi order's practice with avenues to level criticisms against the Sufi orders in general.

Relevance of Findings to Sufi Discourse

To place the findings to the broader intellectual and practical context, this section is made to justify the results of the study and discuss its implications beyond the focus. This research study adds value to the knowledge of the theological system of Tijjaniyyah order and especially in regard to spiritual power and legacy of Sheikh Ibrāhīm Nyass. Through an examination of the claims of spiritual continuation or "reincarnation" in the Tijjaniyya tradition. The paper reveals deep existence of profound interrelationships between local religious traditions and transnational forms of Sufi identity and notions of sainthood and barakah (spiritual grace) as they evolve.

These findings, in particular, are important since they can be used to provide an insight on how contemporary followers interpret and re-evaluate classical Tijjaniyyah doctrines to suit their social and cultural realities. Although reincarnation is not a common Islamic tradition, the fashion in which Tijjaniyyah adherents conceptualize spiritual reappearance of Sheikh Nyass makes a place of local synthesis of Sufi metaphysics and communal reverence. This denotes a dynamic hermeneutics process where religious symbols are continuously reinterpreted with the aim of having spiritual continuity.

With regards to the existing knowledge, the study supports previous researches on the role of charismatic authority in West African Sufism, while also expands this body of knowledge by focusing on how their metaphysical concepts change in the hands of local people within the

postcolonial spiritual movements. to engage in deeper dialogue with local communities to understand the lived realities and evolving metaphysical interpretations of their followers. Also, for da'wah activities and conflict resolutions and prevention, recognizing such beliefs as expressions of spiritual continuity, instead of deviation, can be used to improve intra-faith tolerance and unity.

Considering the result of this research and its implications, the work strongly recommends that religious leaders should develop educational modules that affirm Tijaniyyah orthodoxy while contextualizing metaphysical interpretations within broader Sufi epistemologies.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study examines the theological and cultural affirmations and rejections surrounding the purported reincarnation of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass. Two perspectives were explored; the first advocates belief in reincarnation as a further continuation of authority over man's soul, while the second claims that the belief in reincarnation contradicts the normal and acceptable teachings of Islam. The argument highlights the dual nature of this belief. While it represents a spiritual contribution to the Tijaniyya order for some people, others portrayed it negatively, a polemical development division within the order. Furthermore, despite all these diverse assumptions, it is clear that the protagonists of Shehu Nyass's reincarnation are mainly lured by extreme love, which tends to exaggerate their hope for mediation on their shortcomings as a savior in this world through the apparition of his statue. It also affirms the belief that the symbolical practice of the Sheik Nyass spirit portrays a noble reflection of Sufi spirituality. Finally, further research should address how such theological content affects dialogue and social order in Nigeria.

In Nigeria, Sufi identity is largely framed by the spiritual power of Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass. His works, poems, and mystical philosophy of Faydah at-Tijaniyyah have become the distinguishing features of religious belonging to Tijaniyya followers. By venerating his person, attending to dhikr, maulid and diwān recitations, the followers absorb communal spiritual awareness, which focuses on adoring the Sheikh as a way of accessing divine intimacy. This is a spiritual connection that goes beyond geographical borders and nationalities creating a unifying Sufi identity that incorporates mystic experience, social solidarity, and admiration of saintly control. The discourse on reincarnation is not an exception since it illustrates this identity, showing the way in which the presence of Nyass still determines the spiritual imagination and communal belonging of Nigerian Sufis.

REFERENCES

- [1] Nasidi, A. N. (2020). Sheikh Ibrahim Niass and the Making of Sacred Sufi Paintings in Kano (1946- 1975). *Zaria Archaeology Papers Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies*, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 12, 177-195
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344877290_Sheikh_Ibrahim_Niass_and_the_Making_of_Sacred_Sufi_Paintings_in_Kano_1946-1975
- [2] Quadri, Y. A. (1985) Ibrahim Niass: The Tijjaniyyah Sheikh. *Islam and Modern Age*,. Zakir Hussain Institute of Islamic Studies, New Delhi., 16((2). 109-120

<https://www.scribd.com/document/252269062/15a-Ibrahim-Niass-1902-75-The-Tijaniyyah-Shaykh-pdf>

- [3] Quadri, Y. A. (1985) Ibrahim Niass...91
- [4] Mustapha Razzaq Balogun Solagberu. (2018). An Examination of the Emergence of Faydah At-Tijaniyyah in Ilorin, Nigeria. *Ilorin Journal of Religious Studies*, (IIOURELS) 8, 1: 63-78. <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ijrs/article/view/181092>.
- [5] Ibrahim, Mohammad Saani (2002). *The Tijāniyya order in Tamale, Ghana: its foundation, organization and role*. <https://escholarship.mcgill.ca/concern/theses/f4752h32v>
- [6] Lawal, M. (2012). September 10. 37 Years After Dying, Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass Appears in Abeokuta. Leadership Newspapers. <https://muhdlawal.wordpress.com/2012/09/10/37-years-after-dying-sheikh-ibrahim-nyass-appears-in-abekuta/>
- [7] Nasidi, A. N. (2020). *Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse and the Making of Sacred Sufi Paintings in Kano...3*
- [8] Mustapha Razzaq Balogun Solagberu. (2018). *An Examination of the Emergence of Faydah At-Tijaniyyah in Ilorin...64*
- [9] Isa, K. H. (2022). A history of ‘Yan haḳiḳa, a revisionist Islamic group in northern Nigeria. *Africa*, 92(5), 780-797. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/africa/article/history-of-yan-hakika-a-revisionist-islamic-group-in-northern-nigeria/EA7CFCCFC18ED90AFB5B2845EBB9CDA6>
- [10] Popper, K. R. 1994. *The Myth of the Framework in Defence of science and rationality* (Notturmo M.A.). Routledge 270 Madison Ave, New York NY 10016. https://api.pageplace.de/preview/DT0400.9781135974732_A24432175/preview-9781135974732_A24432175.pdf
- [11] Abu Hanieh, H. (2011). *Sufism and Sufi Orders: God’s Spiritual Paths Adaptation and Renewal in the Context of Modernization*. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/amman/08884.pdf>
- [12] Schimmel, A. (1975). *Mystical Dimension of Islam*. The university of North carolina Press Chapel Hill. <https://archive.org/download/137665622MysticalDimensionsOfIslamAnnemarieSchimmel/137665622-Mystical-Dimensions-of-Islam-Annemarie-Schimmel.pdf>
- [13] Encyclopedia of Islam. (2024). Sufism. In Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sufism>
- [14] Schimmel, A. (1975). *Mystical Dimension of Islam...14*
- [15] Knysh, A. (2010). *Islamic mysticism: A short history* (Vol. 1). Brill. <http://61.8.75.226/itblog/attachments/article/1906/Islamic%20Mysticism.pdf>
- [16] Schimmel, A. (1975). *Mystical Dimension of Islam...14*
- [17] Al-Kaisi, M. (2021). Rethinking Conceptual Sufism: A Synthesis of Islamic Spirituality, Asceticism, and Mysticism. *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam*, 11(2), 169–193. <https://jurnalfuf.uinsa.ac.id/index.php/teosofi/article/view/1764>

- [18] Rudi, M. W. (2022). Islamic Education in the View of Sufism: Critical Study of the Role of Sufism in Islamic Education. *Ri'ayah*, 7(2), 127–139. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/dde3/6a5f187f0510ceb694a72c0e2b8da436f443.pdf>
- [19] Bilqies, S. (2014). Understanding the Concept of Islamic Sufism. *Journal of Education & Social Policy*, 1(1), 55–72. <https://www.academia.edu/download/60804310/920191005-128831-73r1f2.pdf>
- [20] Bilqies, S. (2014). Understanding the Concept of Islamic Sufism...56
- [21] Rudi, M. W. (2022). *Islamic Education in the View of Sufism*...33
- [22] Rudi, M. W. (2022). *Islamic Education in the View of Sufism*...33
- [23] Ahmad, M., Aziz, A., Afad, M. N., Muniroh, S. M., & Qodim, H. 2021. The Sufi order against religious radicalism in Indonesia. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 77(4). . <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/hts/article/view/211718>
- [24] Mir, A. (2020). *Sufism in kashmir: origin, development and contribution* [masters dissertation, aligarh muslim university]. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/364698299>
- [25] Goktas, vahit, & Chowdury, S. R. H. (2023). Districts of Bangladesh Named After Sufis Manifesting the Great Impact of Sufism on Bengal Civilization: A Qualitative Study. *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization (JITC)*, 13(1), 321–337. <https://avesis.ankara.edu.tr/yayin/7aeba8f9-514f-4ddd-9ee4-a51c99f38760/districts-of-bangladesh-named-after-sufis-manifesting-the-great-impact-of-sufism-on-bengal-civilization-a-qualitative-study>
- [26] Machlis, E. (2019). *Reevaluating Sectarianism in Light of Sufi Islam: The Case-Studies of the Naqshbandiyya and Qadiriyya in Syria and Iraq*. *Sociology of Islam*, 7(1), 22-40. https://brill.com/view/journals/soi/7/1/article-p22_22.xml
- [27] Zulqarnain, M. 2020. Addendum of Sheikh Muhammad Baha-ud-Din Naqshband in the 'Principles of Naqshbandi Sufi Order' and its Effectiveness in accomplishing Psychological and Spiritual Advancement. *Journal Intellectual Sufism Research (JISR)*, 2(2), 7–13. <https://jurnal.jagadalimussirry.com/index.php/ojs/article/view/61>
- [28] Wright, Z. V. 2020. *Realizing Islam The Tijaniyya in North Africa and the Eighteenth-Century Muslim World*. The University of North Carolina Press. <https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/40109>
- [29] Chittick, W. C. (1989). *The Sufi path of knowledge: Ibn al-'Arabi's metaphysics of imagination*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. <https://reverthelp.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/The-Sufi-Path-Of-Knowledge-William-C.-Chittick-compressed.pdf>
- [30] Ogunnaike, O. (2016). Annihilation in the Messenger Revisited: Clarifications on a Contemporary Sufi Practice and its Precedents. *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies*, 1(2), 13-34. <https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/3/article/701374/summary>
- [31] Previato, T. (2025). Relationality with the dead in Chinese Sufism: Relics' agency and self-annihilation in the afterlives of two Jahriyya Shaykhs. *OMEGA—Journal of Death and Dying*, 0(0), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00302228241308931>

- [32] Bang, A. K. (2014). *Sufis and Scholars of the Sea: Family Networks in East Africa, 1860–1925*. Routledge
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291050142_Sufis_and_Scholars_of_the_Sea_Family_Networks_in_East_Africa_1860-1925
- [33] Adamu, A. I., & Abdulwahab, S. I. (2024). Waziri Tijjani and his contributions for the spread and development of Tijjaniyya Sufi order in Nigeria. *HISTORICAL: Journal of History and Social Sciences*, 3(4), 384–395. <https://doi.org/10.58355/historical.v3i4.156>
- [34] Yahya, A., Muhammad, A. Y., Ahmad, M., & Fagge, S. D. (2025). *The traditional system of Qur’anic education in Northern Nigeria (Tsangaya): Recipe for a feasible and sustainable reform*. *At-Tadzkir: Islamic Education Journal*, 4(1), 23–39. <https://doi.org/10.59373/attadzkir.v4i1.74>
- [35] Marwal, M. I., & Ilyas, M. F. (2024). Integration of Shariah and Hakikat in the Tijaniyyah Tarekat: An analysis of global and local acceptance through the perspective of Mīzān al-Shar. *Jurnal Ushuluddin*, 33(1). <https://doi.org/10.24014/Jush.v33i1.36809>
- [36] Mustapha Razzaq Balogun Solagberu. (2018). *An Examination of the Emergence of Faydah At-Tijaniyyah in Ilorin, Nigeria...*65
- [37] Maigari Tahir, M. (1979). *As-sheikh Ibrahn Nyass al-sengali, Hayatuh, wa Aara’uhu: Kaashifu al-Ilbaasi wa Tahqeequ al-Sirri al-Akbari, Dirasa wa Ta’aleeq* [Masters dissertation]. Bayero University Kano.
- [38] Maigari Tahir, M. (1979). *As-sheikh Ibrahn Nyass al-sengali...*15
- [39] Muslih, M., & Muhibudin, A. 2024. Doxology Thoriqoh At-Tijaniyah in transcendental communication perspective. *Journal of Modern Islamic Studies and Civilization*, 2(1), 35–44. <https://doi.org/10.59653/jmisc.v2i01.364>
- [40] Mustapha Razzaq Balogun Solagberu. (2018). *An Examination of the Emergence of Faydah At-Tijaniyyah in Ilorin, Nigeria...*40
- [41] Muslih, M., & Muhibudin, A. (2024). Doxology Thoriqoh At-Tijaniyah...41
- [42] Muslih, M., & Muhibudin, A. (2024). Doxology Thoriqoh At-Tijaniyah...42
- [42] Maigari Tahir, M. (1979). *As-sheikh Ibrahn Nyass al-sengali...*16
- [44] Berriane, J. (2012). *Ahmad al-Tijani and his neighbors: the inhabitants of fez and their perceptions of the Zawiya. Prayer in the city, the making of Muslim sacred places and urban life*. Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 57-75.
- [45] Maigari Tahir, M. (1979). *As-sheikh Ibrahn Nyass al-sengali...*243
- [46] Ogunnaike, O. (2016). *Annihilation in the Messenger Revisited...*15
- [47] Abdulkadir, M. S. 2011. Islam in the non-Muslim areas of northern Nigeria, c. 1600-1960. *Ilorin Journal of Religious Studies*, 1(1), 1-20. <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ijrs/article/view/90911/80332>
- [48] Isa, K. H. 2018. Sunni literary responses to the spread of Shia ideology in northern Nigeria. *Studies in African Languages and Cultures*, (52), 113-130. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=841384>

- [49] Adebayo, R. I. (2014). *Major Sufi Orders in Africa*. Lagos: National Open University of Nigeria.
https://nou.edu.ng/coursewarecontent/ISL451_MAJOR%20SUFU%20ORDERS%20IN%20AFRICA%20.pdf
- [50] Solagberu, A. R. M. B. 2012. The Impact of Sufism on the Culture of the People of Ilorin, Nigeria. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 32(3), 400–410.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2012.727298>
- [51] Ibrahim, M. S. 2011. *The Decline of Sufism in West Africa: Some Factors Contributing to The Political and Social Ascendancy Of Wahha<Bist Islam in Northern Ghana* Mohammad Saani Ibrahim [PhD Thesis, McGill University].
<https://escholarship.mcgill.ca/concern/theses/ft848v51h>
- [52] Nasidi, A. N. (2020). *Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse and the Making of Sacred Sufi Paintings in Kano...*179
- [53] Quadri, Y. A. (1985) *Ibrahim Niass...*91
- [54] Shittu, S. A. (2012). Appraisal of Tabsiratul-Anam Fī Anal ‘Ilma Huwal-Imam (Mirror to The World: That Knowledge is The Leader). *European Scientific Journal*, 8(21).
- [55] Shittu, S. A. (2012). *Appraisal of Tabsiratul-Anam...*13
- [56] Shittu, S. A. (2012). *Appraisal of Tabsiratul-Anam....*11
- [57] Wright, Z. (2010). *The Kāshif Al- Ilbās of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse: Analysis Of The Text*. Islamic Africa, 1(1). www.islamicafricajournal.org
- [58] Wright, Z. (2022). Islam, Blackness, and African Cultural Distinction: The Islamic Négritude of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Niasse. *Journal of Africana Religions*, 10(2), 237–265.
- [59] El-Sharif, F. (2024). *Models of Liberation / The Politics of Shaykh Ibrahim Niasse. In Sacred Footsteps*. <https://sacredfootsteps.com/2024/06/13/models-of-liberation-the-politics-of-shaykh-ibrahim-niasse/>
- [60] Rudiger, S. (2009). *Three Ibrāhīms: Literary Production and the Remaking of the Tijāniyya Sufi Order in Twentieth-Century Sudanic Africa*. Die Welt Des Islams, 49(3–4).
- [61] El-Sharif, F. (2024). *Models of Liberation / The Politics of Shaykh Ibrahim Niasse...*no page
- [62] El-Sharif, F. (2024). *Models of Liberation / The Politics of Shaykh Ibrahim Niasse...*no page
- [63] Maigari Tahir, M. (1979). *As-sheikh Ibrahn Nyass al-sengali3...*342
- [64] Maigari Tahir, M. (1979). *As-sheikh Ibrahn Nyass al-sengali3...* 349
- [65] Niasse, I. A. (2009). The Removal of Confusion concerning the Flood of saintly Seal Ahmad Al-Tijjani. FONS VITAE.
- [66] Maigari Tahir, M. (1979). *As-sheikh Ibrahn Nyass al-sengali3...* 350
- [67] Maigari Tahir, M. (1979). *As-sheikh Ibrahn Nyass al-sengali3...* 349

- [68] Rudiger, S. (2011). *The Divine Flood: Ibrahim Niasse and the Roots of a Twentieth-Century Sufi Revival*. Oxford University Press.
- [69] Atanda, A. S. (2023). *Shaykh Ibrāhīm Inyās: The Influence of His Mystical Sojourn in Nigeria*. Al-Basirah, 13(2.4), 40–50
- [70] Nasidi, A. N. (2020). *Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse and the Making of Sacred Sufi Paintings in Kano...*4
- [71] Mustapha Razzaq Balogun Solagberu. (2018). *An Examination of the Emergence of Faydah At-Tijaniyyah in Ilorin, Nigeria...*69
- [72] Mustapha Razzaq Balogun Solagberu. (2018). *An Examination of the Emergence of Faydah At-Tijaniyyah in Ilorin, Nigeria...*69
- [73] Mabani, Y. 2024. Recitation of Sheikh Nyass's Diwan During Majlis and Maulud [Personal communication].
- [74] Mustapha Razzaq Balogun Solagberu. (2018). *An Examination of the Emergence of Faydah At-Tijaniyyah in Ilorin, Nigeria...*70
- [75] (Aliyu Adamu Aliyu <https://www.facebook.com/share/1BPyR1sR1P/>
- [76] Sulaiman, A. (2024). Reincarnation of Sheikh Nyass, Myth or Reality [Personal communication].
- [77] Maigari Tahir, M. (1979). *As-sheikh Ibrahn Nyass al-sengali*3... 348
- [78] Abdullahi al-Tijjani, M. (n.d.). *Aqfaaqu al-Shi'iri inda al-Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass* (Vol. 2). Adbaaqu al-Shahiyyah.
- [79] Sulaiman, A. (2024). *Reincarnation of Sheikh Nyass*...no page.
- [80] Saleh, S. 2024. Reincarnation of Sheikh Nyass between Myth and Reality [Personal communication].
- [81] Duniya 2024, <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/1RkM4jzm1t/>