

urbanization and influenced the organization of urban space. Delancey shows how traditional African social organization, environmental concerns, and the input of Islam played fundamental roles in the spatial organization of economic, social, and religious spaces in the cities of the Sokoto Caliphate. For the Fulbe, pastoralist and gender concepts of spatial structures were integrated into the location of the cattle corral and the residential areas. While Islam enhanced the importance of a central religious space and the mosque replaced the palace as the center of urban space, in most instances it did not usurp previous forms of social organization. The differences in the perception of built space between the settled nomadic cultures, like the Fulbe, and sedentary ones, like the Hausa and Kanuri, were lessened in part by Islam, which helped introduce Fulbe built forms into Hausa society.

The second and third essays of this section focus on the influence of European ideas on the development of built space in French colonies and in Namibia. Michael Ralph's essay combines Islamic and European ideas of built space, showing how French stereotypes of Islamic and African civilizations permeated their colonial sentiments on urban planning and led to a distinctively different set of policies in North Africa and in sub-Saharan Africa. In Rabat, Morocco, colonial urban planning attempted to blend the modern with some of the Arabic and Islamic features while still controlling the nature of urban development. In contrast, the French essentialized their view of sub-Saharan Africans and attempted to impose a single architectural style that would reflect French efforts to build civilized spaces to replace indigenous ones. This representation of built space was evident in Dakar, Senegal. It helped to reshape colonial ideas, which in turn, instigated a process of shifting representations.

Those in power often control the planning and development of urban space with particular intentions in mind. The apartheid government in Namibia solidified the policy of separate development by managing the creation and expansion of African townships to rid the urban centers of African residences. In her study of Opuwo, Fatima Müller-Friedman illustrates the difficulties of rising beyond the modernist rhetoric of apartheid actions in the post-apartheid era. In the latter period, income replaced race as a residential requirement but the perceptions of a town (white) and a location (black) remained very much the same. Previous distinctions based on racial categorizations have continued in other forms in the present and have become associated with perceptions of modernist spaces. All of the essays in this section emphasize these links between the historical past and the present and between indigenous and external or imposed urban styles.

# 1

## MOVING EAST, FACING WEST

### ISLAM AS AN INTERCULTURAL MEDIATOR IN URBAN PLANNING IN THE SOKOTO EMPIRE

Mark Dike DeLancey

When I arrived in Ngaoundéré, Cameroon to conduct my dissertation field research in 2000, I was told that the palace of the Fulbe ruler, or *laamiido*, had been built when the city was founded in 1830 as the capital of an emirate in the Sokoto Empire. The palace is currently located on the eastern side of the historical city facing west toward the *qibla* wall of the central mosque (see figure 1).<sup>1</sup> I was surprised to discover later that the palace had originally been founded to the west of the mosque, in a position more central to the urban plan.<sup>2</sup> It was moved to its current location only in the late nineteenth century.

While local sources claimed that the palace was moved solely in order to construct a larger and more magnificent establishment, I suggest that the relocation of the palace represents nothing less than the renegotiation and recoding of conceptual space both within Fulbe culture, as well as with respect to other cultural constituencies of the Sokoto Empire. I begin by investigating the plan and orientation of commonplace nomadic pastoral Fulbe residences, as constructed in eastern Fulbe cultures. This is followed by a comparison of eastern and western nomadic pastoral Fulbe associations with the cardinal directions in order to understand their links to the natural environment. I then examine the implications of nomadic pastoral Fulbe culture for the palaces of sedentary rulers in the Sokoto Empire, established by Usumanu dan Fodio in an early-nineteenth-century

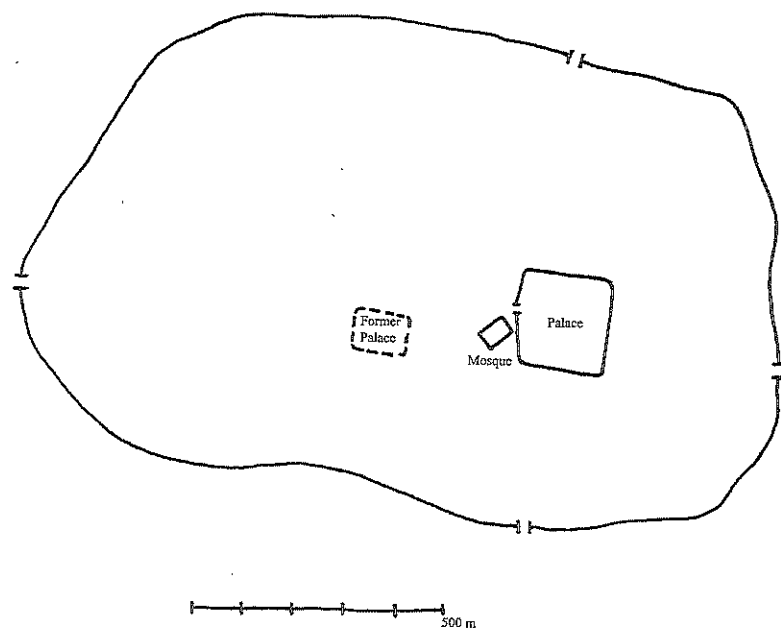


Figure 1. Ngaoundéré.

jihād to renew and expand the faith of Islam in the region. This material is compared to the ideal orientation and urban location of the palace in the pre-jihād Hausa and Kanuri cultures, both of which were extremely influential in the Sokoto Empire. It is then shown that the Fulbe found a reflection of their understanding of conceptual space in an early Islamic model of urban planning. The Islamic credentials of this model seem to have justified the reorganization of urban space to other constituencies such as the Hausa and Kanuri. Finally, I discuss the movement of the palace of Ngaoundéré in part as a reflection of the urban plans of capital cities throughout the Sokoto Empire, and in part to inscribe Ngaoundéré with a Fulbe understanding of conceptual space through reframing along the lines of an early Islamic model.

### Eastern Nomadic Pastoral Fulbe Residences

The term *wuro* in Fulfulde, the language of the Fulbe, connotes several ideas. The more general, originating meanings concern the cattle herd and

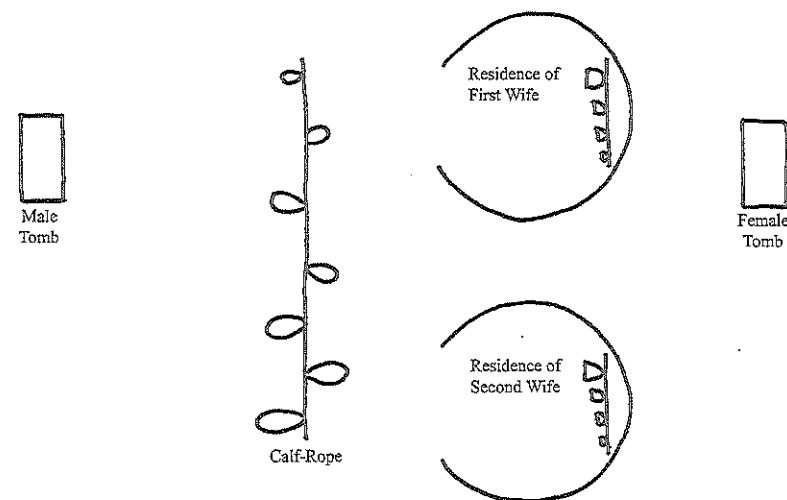


Figure 2. Nomadic Fulbe Wuro.

the place that it stays. The herd is at the center of Fulbe culture, especially their ideas of home and settlement. In the nomadic pastoral Fulbe context, the homestead of an individual family accordingly is also called the *wuro*.<sup>3</sup>

As a number of authors have noted, the nomadic Fulbe *wuro* is normally arranged according to the cardinal directions. While all have agreed upon the actual orientation and organization of the homestead, the underlying reasons have been more difficult to discern. F. W. de St. Croix, in his 1945 publication entitled *The Fulani of Northern Nigeria*, notes that the nomadic Fulbe residence always faces west, toward the area where the cattle are corralled (see figure 2).<sup>4</sup> This observation is validated by the work of all later authors working on nomadic Fulbe in this region, including C. Edward Hopen,<sup>5</sup> Derrick J. Stenning,<sup>6</sup> Marguerite Dupire,<sup>7</sup> and most recently Mette Bovin.<sup>8</sup> Hopen indicates that this arrangement might be altered in the occurrence of mitigating environmental factors, in which case the cattle would be given the best ground possible and the family would camp nearby.<sup>9</sup> In other words, the preferred orientation and arrangement of the household is ultimately subordinate to the needs of the herd.

More commonly, however, the homestead is divided into two basic areas, a western cattle enclosure and an eastern residential area, separated

by the rope running down the middle to which calves are tied at night. It is commonly thought that these two areas are gender specific. The eastern household area is a feminine domain, while the cattle corral is a masculine domain. The principal male activities are performed in the western cattle area. The east is mainly accessible only to females with the exception of the male head of the household and children too young to stay with the herd. These gender divisions are kept at all times, even in death when women are buried behind the household, to the east, and men to the west.<sup>10</sup> Hopen even suggests that these divisions have been enshrined in language. He states that, "The root *gor* is unequivocally common to >man= (*gorko*) and >west= (*gorgal*, in Sokoto dialect); while the root *rew* (>follow=) is duplicated in *rewbe* (>women=, lit. >those who follow=)."<sup>11</sup>

Within the residential, or eastern, half of the homestead, the individual residences of wives, if there are more than one, are arranged along a north-south axis. The senior wife has her individual residence, or *suudu*, in the northern-most position while those of her juniors are arranged to the south according to marriage-order.<sup>12</sup> Stenning points out that "A senior wife is described as *wailaajo* (>north-one=) and any junior wife as *fombinaajo* (>south-one=)."<sup>13</sup> In a similar manner, a woman's collection of calabashes is arranged by size within the residence with the largest in the northern-most position and the smallest in the southern-most position.<sup>14</sup>

When more than one family from the same lineage camp together, both Stenning<sup>15</sup> and Dupire<sup>16</sup> indicate that their homesteads are arranged according to the seniority of the males. The marking of male seniority is exactly the inverse of the feminine case, with the senior-most male establishing his homestead in the southern-most position and those of his juniors stretching to the north. At night, a man also attaches the family's calves to the calf rope, dividing the corral from the residence, in order of age with the oldest toward the south and the youngest toward the north.<sup>17</sup>

The philosophical reasons for the gender and age associations with the cardinal directions are in greater dispute than the actual arrangement of the camp. St. Croix provides only negative associations for north and east when he states: "If facing North, it is said that spirits will cause the occupier to leave the place for elsewhere, after but a comparatively short stay. If facing east, the occupants will never be free from sickness."<sup>18</sup> Hopen recalls that, "They give no reason why they prefer to keep their herd to the west of the shelter except that >it is our custom= (*dum al 'ada amin*)."<sup>19</sup> Dupire explains that, "The house always open toward the west—an orientation

which is attributed to the counsel of Usumanu dan Fodio (!) and which cannot be modified without fear of attracting misfortune upon the family—divides the terrain into two sectors."<sup>20</sup> Stenning and Bovin give no explanations at all for Fulbe associations with the directions.

## Eastern and Western Fulbe Compared

In a 1965 article entitled "L'initiation chez les pasteurs peul," Germaine Dieterlen examines the myth *Koumen*, taught to youths during initiation, for information regarding Fulbe culture.<sup>21</sup> The text of this myth appears to be known only in Senegal, and therefore, Dieterlen's conclusions can do no more than provide clues as to directions for further research among other Fulbe groups. She suggests that initiates are taught a series of conceptual relationships through the understanding of *Koumen*.<sup>22</sup> These relationships tie the cardinal directions to the four originating Fulbe clans, to certain colors of cattle, and again to the four elements. In one chapter of their 1996 publication *Drawn from African Dwellings*, in which they treat the architecture of the semi-nomadic Waalwaalbe Fulbe of northern Senegal, Jean-Paul Bourdier and Trinh Minh-Ha expand upon Dieterlen's text.<sup>23</sup> A summary of the relationships delimited by these authors is as follows:

East is related to the clan *Dyal*, the color yellow, the element of fire, the rising sun, golden light, knowledge, and the Orient, invariably indicated as the origin of the Fulbe.

West is related to the clan *Ba*, the color red, the element of air, sunset, wisdom, and secret knowledge. Included as types of secret knowledge are the feminine powers of fertility and the giving of life.

North is related to the clan *Bari*, the color white, the element of earth, and the barren sands of the Sahara desert. The dangers of the Sahara, particularly for a pastoral society, are obvious. This direction therefore has negative connotations.<sup>24</sup>

South is related to the clan *So*, the color black, the element of water, and the humid sub-Saharan forest regions. Forest regions provide ideal breeding conditions for the tsetse fly which spreads trypanosomiasis, also known as "sleeping sickness." This disease is deadly to cattle, and to humans. Forest regions, therefore, are just as dangerous to cattle as the desert.

It appears that the associations made with the cardinal directions in Fulbe culture may find their origins in environmental realities. If this is true,

then we may understand the negative associations with north and south as resulting from conditions in these directions that are inhospitable to cattle.

If they are environmentally linked, however, one must take caution in using the series of associations in the texts of Dieterlen and Bourdier and Minh-Ha, since it would suggest that a change of environment might produce a corresponding change in the associations. For example, the Waalwaalbe of northern Senegal normally place the entrance to a residence on the southern side. This is clearly at odds with the norms in eastern Fulbe culture. Bourdier and Minh-Ha suggest that the principal reason for this arrangement relates to the desire to avoid the Harmattan winds which blow from the northwest during the dry season.<sup>25</sup> It is instructive to compare the orientation of the Waalwaalbe house to the Trarza and Brakna nomadic Arab tents in Mauritania. Odette du Puigaudeau, in a 1965 article entitled "Arts and Customs of the 'Moors,'" states that these populations, in order to evade the Harmattan winds, orient their tents with the doors to the south as well.<sup>26</sup> In the areas inhabited by the eastern Fulbe, by contrast, the winds blow predominantly from the northeast.

The gender divisions of the Waalwaalbe also appear to be at odds with—even the exact opposite of—eastern Fulbe. In other words, the Waalwaalbe relate west with femininity, and all women's items are kept on the western side of the house, while east is associated with masculinity. This explains the association, in Bourdier and Minh-ha's text, of west with secret knowledge, fertility, and the giving of life. One must assume that these attributes would be associated with the east in an eastern Fulbe context, although this has yet to be concretely shown. In short, spatial concepts, architecture, and indeed Fulbe culture in general appear to vary in different locales.

### Settled Fulbe

As the once nomadic Fulbe of Cameroon settled into sedentary communities in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the concept of the *wuro* expanded from the single encampment to the larger unit of the city. The connotation of *wuro* as "city" is one peculiar to Adamaoua dialects of Fulfulde. The individual homestead became known as the *saare*.<sup>27</sup>

During an interview that I conducted in 2000 with the ruler of Banyo, an emirate of the Sokoto Empire in the southwest of Adamaoua province in Cameroon, Laamiido Mohaman Gabdo Yaya explained to me the significance of the cardinal directions in sedentary Fulbe culture.

He declared that Fulbe palaces always face west as this is the "direction of power." One can relate this association to a nomadic Fulbe insistence on west as a masculine domain, and thus powerful. He furthermore stated that the *laamiido* is usually seated facing west, and doorways open west whenever possible. East, on the other hand, he described as the direction of knowledge and religion. This, I suggest, must be related to the importance of Islam in settled Fulbe life and identity in Cameroon. Laamiido Mohaman Gabdo Yaya pointed out that if doorways do not open to the west, then they inevitably open toward the east.

North and south are considered inauspicious directions, toward which a palace never faces. Laamiido Mohaman Gabdo Yaya related south to poverty and north to misfortune. His explanation for the latter statement was that the toes of the dead, when buried according to Islamic custom in Cameroon, point north while the body faces east, the back faces west, and the head points south. I wondered at the time if the negative associations with north and south might also have to do with environments in which the Fulbe's cattle herds might thrive. Indeed, one is reminded of the associations pointed out by Dieterlen and Bourgeois and Minh-Ha, in which south is related to black, water, and the forest, while north is related to white, earth, and the desert.

In the small village of Idool, I received yet another response to my queries concerning the orientation of the palace of the *jawro*, a subordinate of the *laamiido* of Ngaoundéré. The founder was a nomadic pastoralist prior to founding the village in approximately 1958. In this case, the palace faces west southwest. I noted to myself that this was exactly the same orientation as the palace of the *laamiido* of Ngaoundéré. I assumed that the *jawro* was merely following the example of his superior. The brother of the *jawro*, however, explained that it was in order to place the back of the residence to the prevailing wind. This is similar to Bourdier and Minh-Ha's explanation for the southerly orientation of Senegalese Waalwaalbe houses.

The variety of responses suggested above indicates that the nomadic pastoral Fulbe associations with the cardinal directions are related to environmental factors. While the brother of the *jawro* of Idool recognized the importance played by environmental factors in the orientation of the palace of that village, the inhabitants of which have only recently abandoned a nomadic pastoral life, the nomadic Fulbe associations have more often been recoded in an Islamic understanding of the urban situation. It is in this context that we may comprehend Laamiido Mohaman Yaya Gabdo's interest in maintaining the negative associations for north and south of nomadic Fulbe culture. Instead of environmental factors, the philosophical reasoning

for these negative associations has been reframed in terms of the directions in which the head and feet of the deceased point when buried according to Islamic principles. Similarly, east and west may have originally gained meaning from the rising and setting of the sun, but have acquired new meaning in the Islamic context due to the eastward direction of prayer.

### Hausa Cities

While the early-nineteenth-century jihad of Usumanu dan Fodio, under whose banners most of the Fulbe cities of northern Cameroon were founded, was clearly a multiethnic struggle, there is little doubt that the majority of the leadership was Fulbe.<sup>28</sup> This situation required the tempering of Fulbe cultural norms with those of other major cultural constituencies, in order to gain acceptance and stability for the new regime. The difficulty of bridging the two is clearly shown by a conflict between the new Emir of Kano, Suleimanu, and his fellow Fulbe. The Fulbe, fearing that Suleimanu and his children would become as corrupt as the recently deposed Hausa ruler of Kano, forbade him to enter the palace. Usumanu dan Fodio himself directed Suleimanu to take up residence in the palace and to remove any individual that opposed him.<sup>29</sup> Clearly, Usumanu dan Fodio wanted to gain the legitimacy of the Hausa palace in the eyes of the Kano population.

There is, at first glance, surprisingly little consistency in the orientations of palaces in Hausa cities, and their relationships to the central mosques. In Zaria, the palace is situated in the center of the city facing the central mosque directly to the west across a square (see figure 3). The palace was constructed on this site long before the introduction of Islam. The mosque, however, has only existed since the jihad. Previously, the congregational mosque was located in Juma ward, to the west and outside the Madarkaci walls.<sup>30</sup> Thus, at Zaria the palace historically was at the city center, while the central mosque was later placed in its direct vicinity.

At Kano, the palace faces south with its back to the Friday mosque (see figure 4). The palace itself is located somewhat to the south of the city center. It was moved to this location in the late fifteenth century from an undetermined location by the famous ruler Mohammad Rumfa. Local histories state that the ruler of the original inhabitants of Kano lived atop Dalla Hill, geographically in the center of the old city.<sup>31</sup> Rumfa also constructed the central mosque on its current site, just north of the palace. Prior to this date, the central mosque was located at one of two possible locations, both

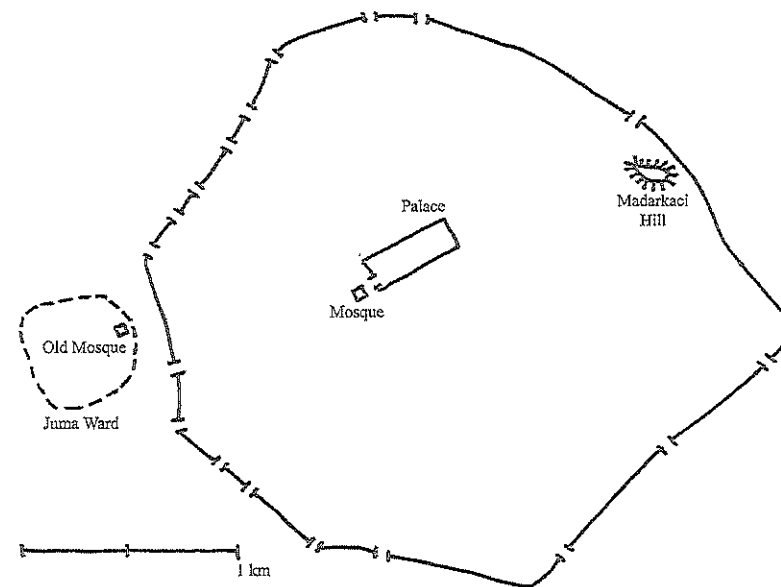


Figure 3. Zaria.

in the forest that surrounded the location of the central market. The first possibility is Sharifai quarter, where the reputed descendents of the fifteenth-century North African sheikh al-Maghili live. The second possibility is Yan Doya quarter, where the descendents of the fifteenth-century Muslim immigrants from Mali, the Wangarawa, live.<sup>32</sup> In either case, it is clear that Rumfa, wishing to proclaim his adherence to Islam and his role as the leader of the Muslim community in Kano, moved the congregational mosque into close proximity with his newly constructed palace.

Although at first there does not seem to be much in common between these urban plans, one can say that originally the palace in both examples was at the center of the city. The central mosque was a later institution which appeared only with the conversion of the ruler, and was subsequently placed in the direct vicinity of the palace, often with an open space between the two. The palace does not necessarily open in the direction of the mosque, however, and the palace is primary with the mosque placed in relation to it.

The French anthropologist Guy Nicolas conducted research in Niger among the descendents of Hausa who had fled the jihad of Usumanu dan

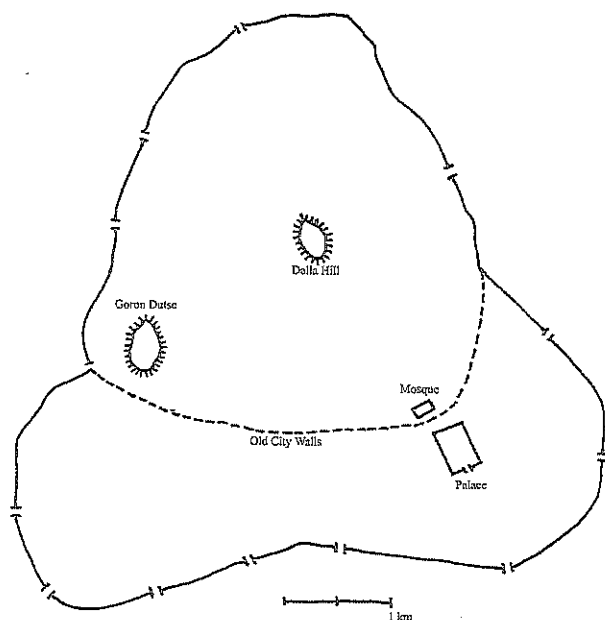


Figure 4. Kano.

Fodio. The author describes the founding of a house in terms which sound almost identical to those described in the literature on nomadic Fulbe homesteads:

For those who respect traditions, the opening of these residences must be turned toward the west, in such a way that one enters always facing to the east. Moreover, the residences of the wives of a single husband are disposed along a line oriented north-south. The first wife always has her habitation to the north, and the last to the south, each being north of the wife who entered the house of her husband after her, the order of entrances defining a hierarchy which regulates the reciprocal behavior of the wives. This is why the first wife (*matar fari*), who has the rank of lady of the house, and carries the title of "mother of the house" (*uwal gida*), is often called "the woman of the north" (*matar arewa*), and the last "the woman of the south" (*matar gusum*).<sup>33</sup>

Nicolas's observations indicate that there is significant overlapping between Fulbe and Hausa cultures regarding the proper orientation of the homestead and arrangement of wives' residences.

In describing the founding of a city, on the other hand, Nicolas provides a conceptual framework for understanding the perceived centrality of the palace, a practice distinct from that of cities founded by Fulbe after the jihad. He points out that, based on information gleaned from the refounding of Maradi and Tsibiri in Niger after the previous sites were flooded in 1945, the ideal Hausa city plan is square with the sides oriented toward the cardinal directions, doors in each wall, and the palace at the center.<sup>34</sup> Nicolas explains that the cardinal directions may be understood in anthropomorphic terms, through the study of Hausa mythology, as the four children of a father who resides at the intersection of the polar axes.<sup>35</sup> The ruler is, by analogy, the "father" of the population.

### Kanuri Cities

Unfortunately, there is very little scholarship concerning architecture and urbanism of the Kanuri. Most references concern structures built following the destruction of the historic capital of the Kanuri state of Bornu by the forces of Sokoto in 1812. The later capitals of Bornu, such as Kukawa and Maiduguri, appear to reflect the impact of the Sokoto Empire in that the mosque is placed at the center of the city with the palace to its east. I believe one should understand this phenomenon in terms of waging an ideological battle with the Sokoto Empire.

Bivar and Shinnie's sketch plan of Birni Ngazargamu, the capital from 1470 until 1812, clarifies the central position of the palace of the ruler.<sup>36</sup> Not only is this ruin identified as the palace by its central location and size, but also by its materials of construction. Unlike the majority of architecture in this region, which is constructed from earth, this structure was built of baked brick. The orientation of the palace, however, is impossible to determine from this plan. One can only state that the Kanuri, like the Hausa, appear to emphasize the centrality of the ruler in the urban plan of the capital.

### The Fulbe Model in Relation to Hausa and Kanuri Models

The Hausa and Kanuri practice of placing the palace at the center of the city differs remarkably from the practice of the Fulbe during and after the jihad. Data relating to Fulbe practices are taken from the numerous

*ribats*, or fortified towns, that were founded for the protection of the frontiers, as well as from the reorganization of some older cities. According to Murray Last, the houses of both Shehu Usmanu dan Fodio and Muhammadu Bello, the Shehu's son and eventual successor, faced west in the manner of pastoral Fulbe homesteads.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, in looking at most Fulbe *ribats*, and at most of those cities founded in Adamaoua by the Fulbe, one finds that the palaces are generally on the eastern side of town facing directly west toward the *qibla* wall of the central mosque. In this arrangement, if anything is topographically central, it would be the mosque.

The placement of the palace to the east of the mosque reflects several important differences. First, I suggest that the palace has been replaced by the mosque as the central element of urban planning in order to indicate clearly the ideological basis for the jihad. That is, the centrality of God is stressed under the Sokoto Empire, rather than the centrality of the ruler.

Second, I believe that the change in the location of the palace, from its central position to an eastern location, represents a fundamental difference in the understanding of space in Fulbe as opposed to Hausa and Kanuri culture. Labelle Prussin, in her 1995 publication *African Nomadic Architecture*, states the following concerning perceptions of space:

To understand nomadic boundaries, we need to think of the built environment and its spaces in the context of movement: the movement of people, the movement of one's world of material culture. Movement, however, is also an essential part of our cognitive experience. For the nomad, home cannot be understood except in terms of journey, just as space is defined by movement.<sup>38</sup>

For nomadic cultures, this movement is constant, rather than being a single event of relocation. For sedentary cultures, however, space is a much more centralized experience. When we travel, we do so from one point to another, from one center to another. It is this emphasis on a center that characterizes Hausa and Kanuri conceptions of space. Despite transforming their culture from a nomadic to a sedentary one, I believe the Fulbe had not developed the same sense of the center that quite clearly dominates Hausa and Kanuri experiences of space.

Furthermore, Mette Bovin has pointed out that Fulbe architecture, and indeed many different aspects of their culture more generally, are based on ideals of balance. In the nomadic *wuro*, this translates into a division

of the homestead into two equally important gender-specific areas. In terms of the city of Ngaoundéré, and almost every other Fulbe capital that I visited in Adamaoua and North provinces in Cameroon, we may speak of the ruler to the east and the population to the west.<sup>39</sup> The two are equal halves of a whole unit. This view of the city is an expansion upon the concept of the male head-of-the-household who rules the nomadic pastoral Fulbe family from the eastern half of the compound. The *laamiido* is positioned in a sedentary context as the male head of the household, while his conceptual offspring submit to his rule in the western half of the city. This replicates the paternalistic message intended by the Hausa placement of the palace at the center of a city.

### The Jihad and Early Islamic Models

The relationship created between mosque and palace also reflects a model used to establish urban centers during the seventh-century expansion of the Islamic empire from the Arabian peninsula. Muhammadu Bello, son of and eventual successor to Usmanu dan Fodio, encouraged the construction of fortified urban centers, known as *ribats*, to protect the borders of the Empire.<sup>40</sup> Murray Last explains the source of this policy:

Bello derived the inspiration for these policies from the history and the textbooks of the Arab conquest. He was therefore sure of their success and the rightness of enforcing them. Undoubtedly the sanction given by the Arabic authorities which Bello so often quoted helped to win acceptance for his policies and to generate enthusiasm for the dangerous life in the *ribats*.<sup>41</sup>

It has been clear for quite some time, therefore, that Bello was following early Islamic models in the establishment of *ribats* throughout the Sokoto empire. What has not been clear is just how closely these models were followed. The close resonance in urban planning in the early Islamic empire and the Sokoto Empire is illustrated by the city of Kufa, established in southeast Iraq in 638 (see figure 5).

The first construction on the site of Kufa was the mosque.<sup>42</sup> From the mosque, an archer then shot an arrow in the direction of Mecca, and three others at 90-degree angles from the first. These arrows established the outer boundaries of the town, conceived in a square with the mosque at the center. The quarters of the town were divided and given over to the different

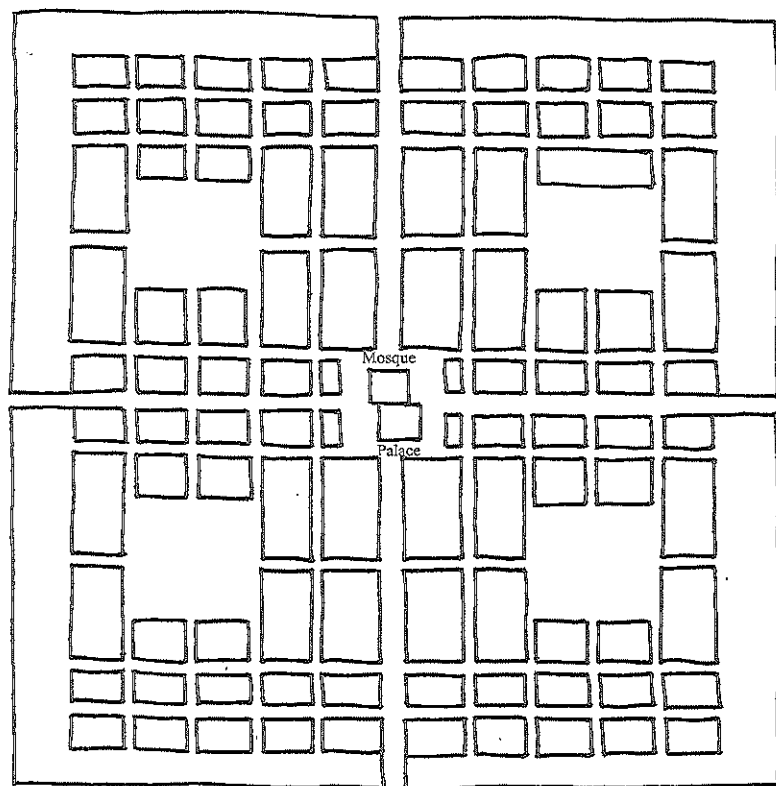


Figure 5. Kufa.

Arab tribes as residential areas. Roads were established parallel to the mosque, although one supposes that the central axis roads radiated from it.

The palace of the governor, containing the public treasury, was originally separate from the mosque. According to the medieval historian al-Tabari, active in the late ninth to early tenth centuries, it was attached to the *qibla* side of the mosque in order to better protect the public treasury after it had been robbed.<sup>43</sup> The idea was that someone was always in the mosque either praying or meditating, and therefore able to witness any suspicious activity. Indeed, in a later improvement, the two structures were rebuilt as one continuous monument.

At Sokoto and Bauchi, both founded after the jihad of Usumanu dan Fodio in the early nineteenth century, the palace was built facing the

*qibla* wall of the mosque, following the example of Kufa. The *qibla* from Nigeria and Cameroon is due east. The *qibla* wall of the central mosque of each of these cities therefore faces east. The palace of the ruler was built to the east of the central mosque facing west toward its *qibla* wall. In order to follow the arrangement of mosque and palace at Kufa therefore, the eastward oriented *qibla* wall in Cameroon and Nigeria faces the westward-oriented palace entrance. At Zaria, as was previously noted, the congregational mosque was moved to the city center so that its *qibla* wall was directly opposite the palace entrance. In other words, once again the eastward-oriented *qibla* wall and the westward-oriented palace entrance face each other. Shifting the mosque to the city center simultaneously repositions the palace to a more easterly location. As was pointed out previously, an easterly position in Fulbe culture implies the father-like status of the ruler. Thus, the emphasis on the central location of the ruler in Hausa and Kanuri culture was recast in an Islamic idiom that was more comprehensible in Fulbe culture.

### Ngaoundéré

The city of Ngaoundéré was founded by a Bata servant and a group of Kanuri religious scholars in the name of Ardo Njobdi, a Fulbe leader under the authority of the Sokoto Empire.<sup>44</sup> The original arrangement of mosque and palace reflects a Hausa-Kanuri spatial arrangement—that is, the palace was originally in the center of the city where the Grand Marché is currently located. The mosque was positioned directly to the east of the palace.

In the late nineteenth century, the palace was moved to its current position east of the mosque and opening west toward its *qibla* wall. This occurred at a time when the descendants of Ardo Njobdi were becoming more and more independent of the Sokoto Empire, controlling a massive territory of their own. While it is claimed that the palace was moved purely in order to allow for its expansion, the new arrangement also seems to indicate a desire to reintroduce a Fulbe organization of space and to bring Ngaoundéré into line with the other great capitals of the Sokoto Empire.

From the reorganization of the historic Hausa capitals, and the urban plans of newly established cities, it becomes clear that Islam was used as a mediator in the negotiation of conceptual space in intercultural relations in the Sokoto Empire. The settling of the Fulbe in urban



environments coincided with an increasing emphasis in Fulbe culture on adherence to Islam, which in turn led to the early-nineteenth-century jihad of Usumanu dan Fodio. In their newfound position of leadership, the Fulbe discovered elements of urban planning in the early Islamic tradition that resonated with their own culture. Thus, the mosque, previously on the outskirts of town in most cases, was moved to the center as an emblem of the ideological basis for the jihad and the ensuing empire. This replaced the central position of the palace in Hausa and Kanuri urban planning. The palace was relocated to the east of the mosque in a position that, in Fulbe culture, implied the father-like status of the ruler. The rearrangement of urban space was made palatable to the Hausa and Kanuri members of the population because it was wrapped in the guise of Islamic tradition. In attempting to understand a seemingly unimportant shift in the urban plan of Ngaoundéré, one begins to understand the extent to which the jihad of Usumanu dan Fodio constituted a period as much of acculturation as of religious and cultural conflict.

## Notes

1 The *qibla* wall is that which faces toward Mecca, indicating the direction of prayer in Islam.

2 The site of the former palace is now occupied by the Grand Marché (Great Market) of Ngaoundéré, built by the French colonial regime.

3 Galina Zoubko, *Dictionnaire peul-français*, Senri Ethnological Reports 4 (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 1996), 524.

4 F. W. de St. Croix, *The Fulani of Northern Nigeria* (Reprint Westmead, Farnborough, Hants: Gregg International Publishers, 1972), 26.

5 C. Edward Hopen, *The Pastoral Fulbe Family in Gwandu* (London: Published for the International African Institute by the Oxford University Press, 1958).

6 Derrick J. Stenning, *Savannah Nomads: A Study of the Wodaabe Pastoral Fulani of Western Bornu Province, Northern Region, Nigeria* (London: Published for the International African Institute by Oxford University Press, 1959).

7 Marguerite Dupire, *Peuls nomades: Etude descriptive des Wodaabe du Sahel nigérien*, Université de Paris, Travaux et mémoires de l'Institut d'ethnologie 64 (Paris: Institut d'ethnologie, 1962). The close resonance in urban planning in the early Islamic empire and the Sokoto Empire is illustrated by the city of Kufa, established in southeast Iraq in 638.

8 Mette Bovin, *Nomads Who Cultivate Beauty: Wodaabe Dances and Visual Arts in Niger* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2001).

9 Hopen, *Pastoral Fulbe Family*, 57.

10 Stenning, *Savannah Nomads*, 111.

11 Hopen, *Pastoral Fulbe Family*, 111. Also noted in Dupire, *Peuls nomades*, 157. Zoubko ascribes usage of *gorgal* to mean "west" to the following dialects: Western Niger, Voltaic, Macina, Gambia, and Eastern dialects. Zoubko, *Dictionnaire peul-français*, 165.

12 Hopen, *Pastoral Fulbe Family*, 59; Stenning, *Savannah Nomads*, 107; Dupire, *Peuls nomades*, 156.

13 Stenning, *Savannah Nomads*, 107.

14 Dupire, *Peuls nomades*, 156; Bovin, *Nomads Who Cultivate Beauty*, 65.

15 Stenning, *Savannah Nomads*, 39.

16 Dupire, *Peuls nomades*, 157.

17 Ibid.

18 St. Croix, *Fulani of Northern Nigeria*, 58. The fear of aimless wandering is expressed well in Cyprian Ekwensi's novel *Burning Grass: A Story of the Fulani of Northern Nigeria* (London: Heinemann, 1962). The main character, Mai Sunsaye, is a Fulbe pastoralist afflicted with *sokugo*, or "the wandering illness."

19 Hopen, *Pastoral Fulbe Family*, 57.

20 "La case toujours ouverte vers l'ouest—orientation que l'on attribue à un conseil d'Uthman dan Fodio (!) et que l'on ne pourrait modifier sans crainte d'attirer un malheur sur la famille—apportonne le terrain en deux secteurs." Dupire, *Peuls nomades*, 157. Author's translation.

21 Germaine Dieterlen, "L'initiation chez les pasteurs peul," in *African Systems of Thought*, edited by M. Fortes and G. Dieterlen, 314–27 (London, New York: Published for the International African Institute by the Oxford University Press, 1965).

22 Ibid., 316.

23 Jean-Paul Bourdier and Trinh T. Minh-Ha, *Drawn from African Dwellings* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 22–61.

24 Bourgeois and Minh-ha indicate that north is associated with the "grazing fields of the Fulbe cattle." Ibid., 44. I find this highly unlikely, however, and suggest that a more probable association with this direction would be the barren earth of the Sahara.

25 They are quick to point out, however, that environmental factors are not sufficient alone to explain the orientation of Waalwaalbe residences. "But such an explanation cannot stand by itself since there are—albeit very rarely—instances in which the southern (and western) direction proves not to be the most important factor in orienting the house. If, for example, a dome-shaped dwelling opens to a direction other than the south, it will invariably be the north, in spite of the inconveniences caused by the harmattan. In this case, what the dwelling does conserve is precisely the east-west ordering and gendering of interior space as described earlier, with the altar of milk (*kaggu*) consistently on the western side when one enters the north-oriented door. It seems, then, that over the physical factor prevails the cultural heritage, whose main principles are still maintained across generations and geographical borders, despite the adaptive variations that necessarily occurred with the widely changing contexts of Fulbe migration across Africa." Ibid. The material presented in this article suggests that while there are cultural continuities, difference do arise between eastern and western Fulbe cultures, based in part at least on environmental variations.

26 Odette du Puigaudeau, "Arts and Customs of the 'Moors,'" in Labelle Prussin, *African Nomadic Architecture* (Washington, DC, and London: Smithsonian Institution Press and The National Museum of African Art, 1995), 74.

27 It is somewhat ironic that *saare* is the term used in western Fulfulde to refer to "city." In western Fulfulde, the term *saare* is used to refer to the concepts of "village," "town," or "city," while the term *wuro* is retained for the denotation of the individual residence, or homestead.

28 On the multiethnic nature of the jihad, please see H. M. Maishanu, "Trends and Issues in the History of Bilad al-Sudan: The Sokoto Caliphate in Colonial

Historiography," in *Islam in Africa: Proceedings of the Islam in Africa Conference*, edited by Nur Alkali et al. (Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 1993), 59–80.

29 S. J. Hogben and A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, *The Emirates of Northern Nigeria: A Preliminary Survey of Their Historical Traditions* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 198. Also see Nasiru Ibrahim Dantiye, "A Study of the Origins, Status and Defensive Role of Four Kano Frontier Strongholds (Ribats) in the Emirate Period (1809–1903)" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1985), 109–10n36.

30 See A. W. Urquhart, *Planned Urban Landscapes of Northern Nigeria: A Case Study of Zaria* (Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press, 1977), 14–15. The name of the ward "Juma" makes this clear, as it is derived from the Arabic term *jum'a*, meaning Friday, from the root *jam'a*, meaning "to gather."

31 See, for instance, H. R. Palmer, "The Kano Chronicle," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 38 (1908): 63.

32 For a more in-depth discussion of this issue, please see Mark Dike DeLancey, "From Dalla Hill to Kano: An Example of Pre-Colonial Urban Development in the Central Sudan" (M.A. thesis, Harvard University, 1998), 32–38.

33 "Pour ceux qui respectent la tradition, l'ouverture de ces habitations doit être tournée vers l'Ouest, de sorte que l'on y entre toujours face à l'Est. Par ailleurs, les habitations des épouses d'un même homme sont disposées sur une ligne orientée dans le sens nord-sud. La première épouse a toujours son habitation au Nord, et la dernière au Sud, chacune étant au Nord de celle qui est entrée après elle dans l'enclos de l'époux, l'ordre des entrées définissant une hiérarchie qui règle le comportement réciproque des épouses. C'est pourquoi la première épouse (*matar fari*), qui a rang de maîtresse de maison, et porte le titre de 'mère de la maison' (*uwal gida*), est souvent appelée 'la femme du Nord' (*matar arewa*), et la dernière 'la femme du Sud' (*matar gusum*)." Guy Nicolas, "Essai sur les structures fondamentales de l'espace dans la cosmologie Hausa," *Journal de la Société des Africanistes* (Paris) 36, no. 1 (1966): 78. Author's translation.

34 Ibid., 73–75.

35 Ibid., 83–85.

36 A. D. H. Bivar and P. L. Shinnie, "Old Kanuri Capitals," *Journal of African History* 3, no. 1 (1962): 2.

37 Murray Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, Ibadan History Series (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1967), 184.

38 Prussin, *African Nomadic Architecture*, 40.

39 My dissertation, entitled "Representing Rulership: Palace Architecture, Spatial Orientation, Ritualized Movement, and Secrecy in Northern Cameroon" (Ph.D., Harvard University, 2004), is based upon research at fourteen palaces in Adamaoua and North provinces of Cameroon.

40 Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, 75.

41 Ibid., 80.

42 This brief summary of the foundation of Kufa is based on the account of Nezar AlSayyad, *Cities and Caliphs: On the Genesis of Arab Muslim Urbanism*, Contributions to the Study of World History 26 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991): 55–65. For a more extensive inquiry into the foundation and history of the city of Kufa, please see Hichem Djaït, *Al-Kūfa: naissance de la ville islamique*, Islam d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, 29 (Paris: G.-P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1986).

43 In the case of Kufa, the *qibla* is due south, since that is the direction in which Mecca lies from this site.

44 Eldridge Mohammadou describes how these Kanuri religious scholars were sent by Ardo Njobdi: "Nine of these malams were selected by Ardo Njobdi, the Fulbe ruler of Bundang and founder of Ngaundere, to compose the first batch of pioneers who were to settle in Ngaundere. Their names have been recorded: Malum (K. *mālam*) Monguma, Malum Aliyu Jetawa, Malum Ibrahim, Malum Kadir, Malum Mukhtamu, Malum Mustafa, Malum Musa, Malum Firna, Malum Yusufu. Their particular assignment was to set up the first mosque in the new town, the first Koranic schools where they would be teaching, and to officiate the various ceremonies for the new community. These malams founded the Kanuri ward of scholars in Ngaundere known as Malumri, from where was created the second Kanuri ward of the city named Kormari and where resided the Mai-Borno or head of the Kanuri community of the town." Eldridge Mohammadou, "Kanuri Imprint on Adamawa Fulbe and Fulfulde," in *Advances in Kanuri Scholarship* edited by Norbert Cyffer and Thomas Geider, Westafrikanische Studien 17 (Cologne: Rüdiger Köpe Verlag, 1997), 271.



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## AFRICAN URBAN SPACES IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Edited by

*Steven J. Salm and Toyin Falola*



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