

Sarkin Kano

Muhammadu Abbas (1903-1919)

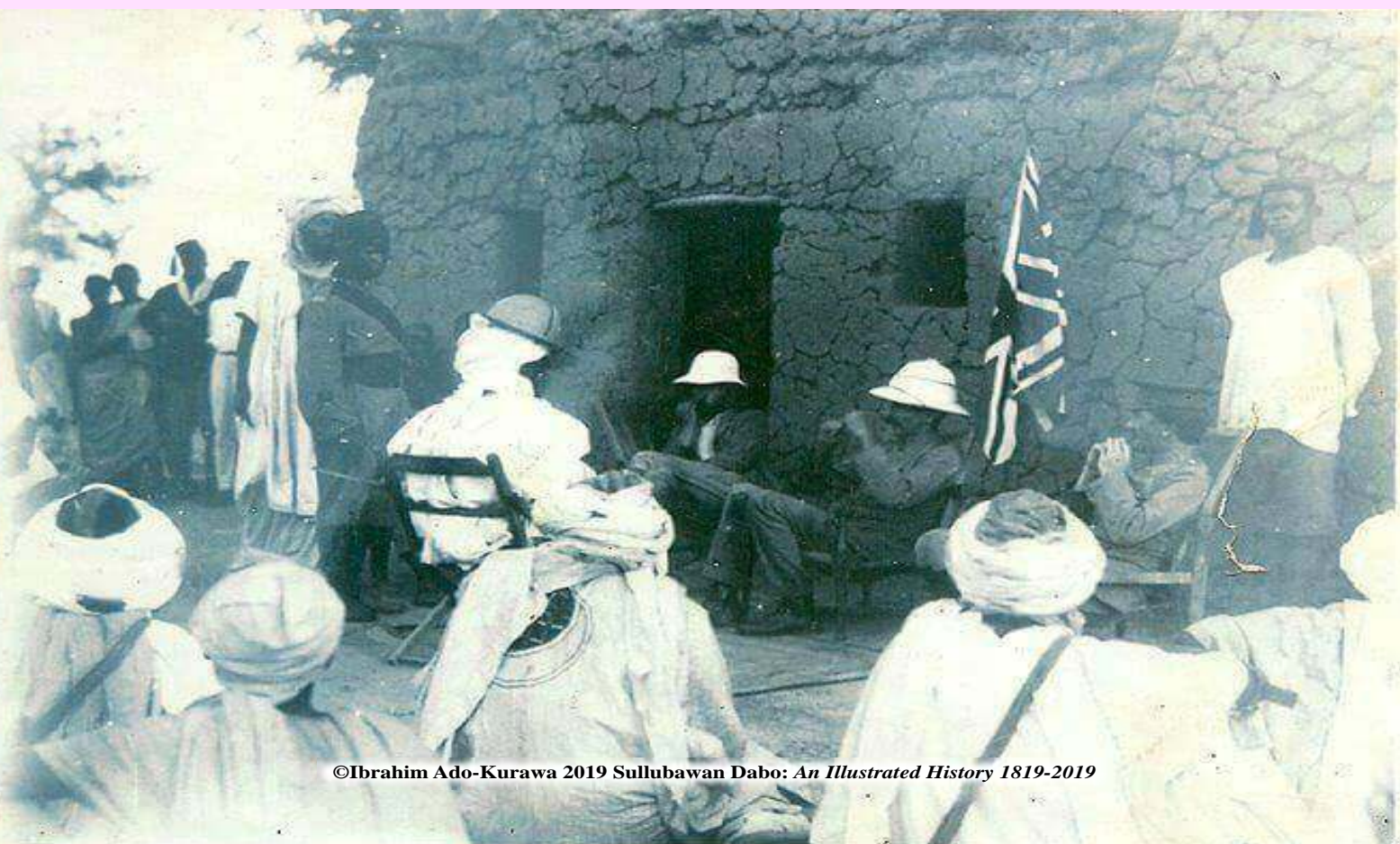
Muhammadu Abbas was one of the eldest sons of Sarkin Kano Abdullahi Maje Karofi and he was an active participant during the Kano Civil War in which the *Yusufawa* faction of the Sullubawan Dabo defeated the *Tukurawa* led by Sarkin Kano Tukur the son of Sarkin Kano Bello. He was first appointed *Sarkin Dawakin Tsakar Gida* by Yusuf before the victory. Sarkin Kano Alu later promoted him to *Wambai* after the death of Muhammadu Nakande (Fika 1978: 65). He was holding the title of *Wambai* when the British conquered Kano. He opted for *Taqiya* (Prudent consciousness) and surrendered to the invaders. This choice was according to some historians supported by the Qur'anic verse: "Let not the believers take those who deny the truth for their allies in preference to the believers- since he who does this cuts himself off from Allah in everything-unless it be to protect yourself against them in this way" (Yahya 1986). This was because, according to those who opted for this action, the British overpowered the Muslims.

Lugard came to Kano three weeks after its conquest, he declared Sarkin Kano Alu deposed, but found no effective ruler, except the Head of Kurmi Market. Ciroma Abdu Lele, the son of

Sarkin Kano Tukur joined the British contingent that captured Kano and solicited them to appoint him as the next Sarkin Kano. Consequently, he started ransacking the houses vacated by his enemies because he assumed that he would be appointed. The resident Arab merchants convinced Lugard that Lele had no support and he was therefore rejected (Saeed 2003: 56).

Wambai Abbas returned to Kano on the 7th of March 1903 with 10,000 men. Kano ruling elite chose Abbas as their leader following the martyrdom of *Waziri* Ahmadu and the absence of *Galadima* Mahmud the two most senior titleholders, this was based on Abbas's letter to Sarkin Musulmi Attahiru informing him that:

We have met together with our people who went by way of Kotorkwoshi. From among them he died who died, and he survived who survived. When we had collected everybody, they did felt it proper to make allegiance to me following their collective decision, all according to the Book and valid custom. This is in order to let you know what has befallen. Peace (Smith 1997: 399).





This was a sign of respect, because he was not obliged to do that. And perhaps he was attempting to encourage the Sarkin Musulmi to surrender this was before the latter's defeat by the British.

Abbas was appointed acting Emir by Lugard on probation. Lugard returned from Sokoto on the 2nd of April 1903 and confirmed Abbas as Sarkin Kano a day later at public ceremony in the city (Smith 1997: 398). Where he took the first oath of office administered by the British in Kano:

I swear, in the name of Allah and of Muhammadu His Prophet, to serve well and truly His Majesty King Edward VII, and his representative, the High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria, to obey the laws of the protectorate and the lawful commands of the High Commissioner and of the Resident (Gwadabe 2003: 69).

This oath is however doubtful or quoted wrongly by Flora (1964) because Muslims do not swear in the name of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him).

Abbas was then allowed to enter and reside in *Gidan Rumfa* (Emir's Palace). Thus he became the first Emir to be appointed by the British. Lugard established the colonial administration in Northern Nigeria as the representative of the British Crown with the title of High Commissioner. He ruled using the Native Rulers

whom he found suitable since he had no enough British officers to administer the vast territory of Northern Protectorate. As explained earlier, the Emir was responsible to the Resident who was the representative of the colonial government at the Province. The Kano Province comprised of Kano, Kazaure, Gumel Hadejia, Daura, Katsina, Katagum, Misau and Jama'are Emirates and it was the largest in the Northern Protectorate (Saeed 2005).

One of the first duties of Sarkin Kano Abbas was to convince the people to stop the flight to the East following Sarkin Musulmi Attahiru, who had the sympathy of the Ulama, the aristocrats and the peasants. Many titleholders deserted their positions and followed the Sarkin Musulmi. This frightened the British who feared that the resistance will continue and they relied on emirs to persuade their people not follow the trend. Some of the aristocrats who fought at Kwatarkoshi after loosing the battle followed the Sarkin Musulmi. Prominent amongst them was *Sarkin Dutse* Abdulkadir. The *Madaki* Kwairanga, known for his bravery. Kwairanga was earlier deposed and imprisoned by Alu at Kanwa, joined the Sarkin Musulmi who passed through the area. *Sarkin Bai* Abdussalami also joined the Sarkin Musulmi but was recalled by Abbas who reinstated him. There were also other Kano Chiefs who were in the contingent of the Sarkin Musulmi right from Sokoto they were those who were sent by Alu to accompany his wife to Sokoto after he deserted his troops amongst them were *Galadima* Kano Mahmud and *Alkali* Kano Sulaiman who also declined to return to Kano despite having been re-called by

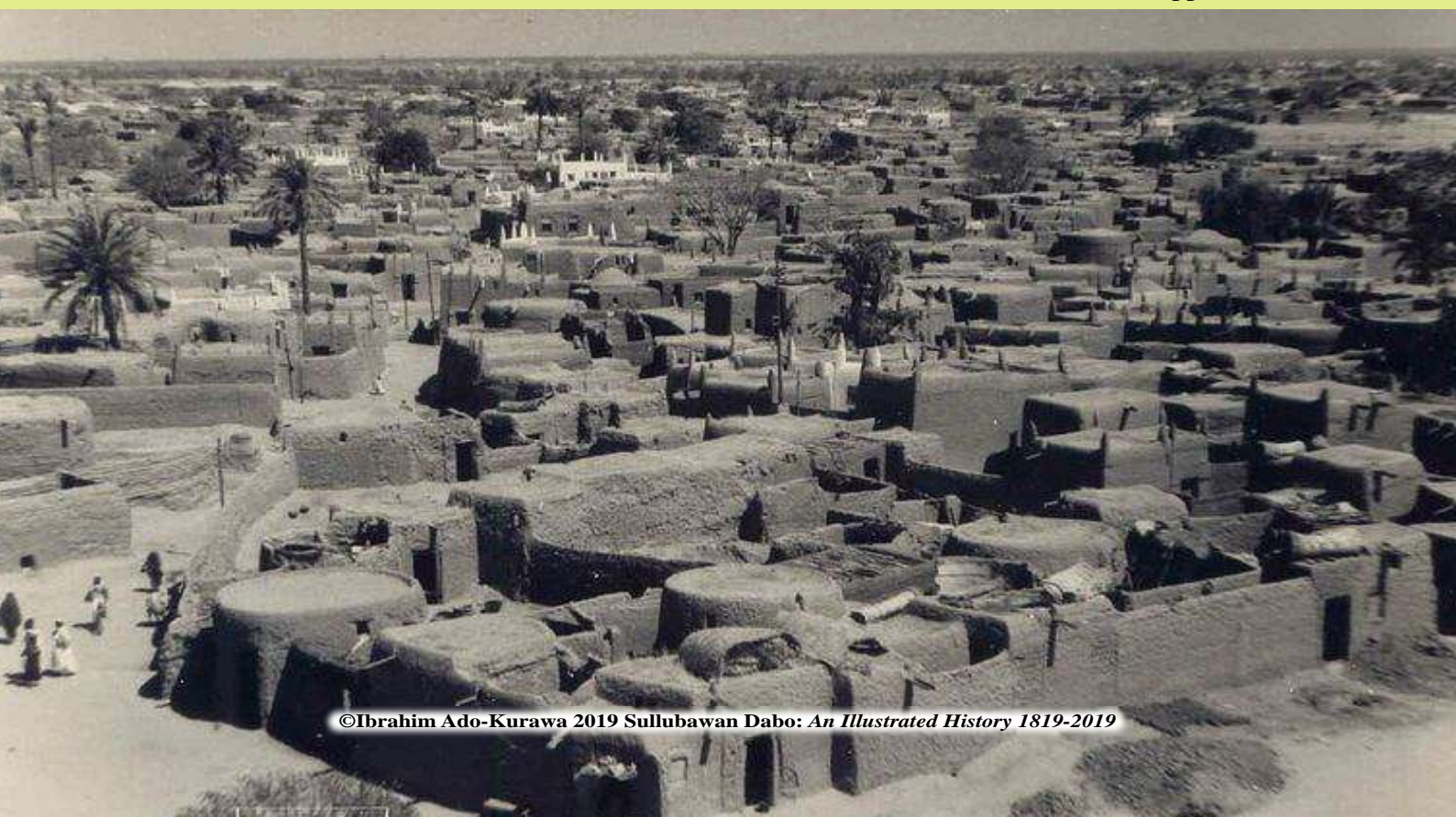
Abbas. The colonial authorities were pleased with the efforts of Abbas and Sarkin Hadejia at persuading their people against the flight and Lugard reported that:

The Emir of Kano patrolled his eastern frontiers to prevent his people from joining the pilgrimage, and Hadejia did the same... The posts of those who followed the ex-sultan were at once filled by new men, which acted as a deterrent. The movement was not in anyway directed against the Government, but was (so far as the bulk of its adherents were concerned a blind scare, combined with a religious enthusiasm prompting an exodus (Smith 1997).

As Lugard noted, Abbas filled the vacancies of those who followed the Sarkin Musulmi and those who were martyred at the battles of Kano, Kotarkwashi and Burmi. The most important title of *Waziri* was conferred on Abdu, the nephew of Sarkin Kano Abbas and the son of *Waziri* Muhammadu, the eldest son of Sarkin Kano Abdullahi Maje Karofi. The title of *Galadima* vacated by Mahmud was conferred on Umaru a brother of the Sarki. Hussaini was appointed *Madaki* since Faruku, who was appointed as a replacement of his father, went to Sokoto. *Dan Makwayo* Shehu took the title of *Wambai* the title vacated by the Sarki. Sa'adu another brother of the Sarki was appointed *Dan Makwayo* (Lovejoy, Mahadi and Mukhtar 1993:73). They all succeeded their blood relatives, who were descendants of Sarkin Kano Ibrahim Dabo. Mallam Gidado was as

appointed *Alkalin Kano* to replace Sulaiman who went to Burmi. But it has been noted that Sarkin Kano Abbas made the appointment after his return from Zungero where he stated that: "Emir Abbas took the opportunity of his return from Zungero to depose the Wazirin Kano Sulaiman Sarki and the Alkalin Kano" (Fika 1978: 112). The Waziri was not Sulaiman Sarki but Abdu, in the case of *Alkali* it may be correct because family source indicated that Sarkin Kano Abbas was waiting for *Alkali* Sulaiman to return to Kano from Burmi and take his position. After, the defeat of Sarkin Musulmi Attahiru, Sulaiman returned but was he detained and later released. Similarly the Imam of Kano also forfeited his position for accompanying the family of Sarkin Kano Alu to Sokoto. Abdullahi Bayero the eldest son of Abbas replaced *Ciroma* Abdulkadir Majeli, son of Alu who had gone to Sokoto. Rabi'u a relative of Magajin Mallam Sule took the title but died seven months later and Sule was reinstated. Those who did not follow the Sarkin Musulmi maintained their titles, for example *Makama* Umaru and *Sarkin Dawaki Mai Tuta* Mahmud (Smith 1997: 405-407).

Apart from reinstating some of those who were recalled from Burmi, Abbas even accepted those who were Tukurawa (followers of Sarkin Kano Tukur) during the Kano civil war and he was considered as practicing the exemplary teaching of *rad al-muzalim* (compensating the deprived). For example, *Magajin Mallam* Rabi'u fought on the side of the Tukurawa. Alkali Dikko was appointed Imam by Sarkin Kano Bello he was removed, because of the civil war. Sarkin Kano Abbas appointed him





Alkalin Kano. Kano *Sarauta* has been known for co-opting distinguished individuals since the pre-Jihad period. Although during the Emirate appointment was mostly based affiliation to clans and groups that participated in the Jihad known as the *Jama'a* distinguished individuals were always co-opted and given the highest position. For example Mallam Ibrahim Bazzazagi who was appointed *Magatakarda* and then promoted to the highest position of *Galadima*. Sarkin Kano Abbas continued with this tradition.

Three major examples of these elevations and co-option by Sarkin Kano Abbas provided by Smith (1997) are technically not *shige-shige* (co-opted into aristocracy) as designated because their ancestors or clansmen held positions in the 19th century during the Emirate period. In the case of Waziri Mallam Muhammad Gidado, he was appointed *Alkalin Kano* before his elevation to the title of Waziri and his elder brother was appointed Imam and Smith claimed that they belonged to the Zarawa clan. This could only be correct if the Zarawa clan includes all the descendants of Gwani Mukhtar and not only the descendants of the Gwani Muhammadu Zara. The second example, *Sarkin Dawaki Mai Tuta* Muhammadu Nata'ala was from the Yaligawa clan one of the ruling clans of Dutse a territorial chiefship in the 19th century. Nata'ala who was a favorite of Sarkin Kano Abbas, he was first

appointed *Mai-Unguwar Mundubawa*, then *Dan Iya* and finally *Sarkin Dawaki Mai Tuta*. The third titleholder was Ahmadu Gurara who was first appointed as the *Mai Unguwar Mundabawa* and then he was later promoted to the royal title of *Dan Lawal*. Smith (1997:441) noted that both Nata'ala and Gurara fought on the side of the Yusufawa during the Kano civil war. Smith (1997) further added that both Waziri Gidado and Sarkin Dawaki Maituta Nata'ala were successful in their positions, unlike Dan Lawal Ahmadu Gurara. He observed that the Waziri “served with skill and restraint until his death in 1937 and that the aristocracy assimilated his family and several of his numerous sons, including the famous Dokaji Abubakar who was also promoted to the Waziri, “an office he filled with distinction until his untimely death”. However Gwadabe (2003) observed that Waziri Gidado was also not very comfortable with some of the policies of Sarkin Kano Abbas when the Sarki and his slaves usurped the powers of the judicial and executive council committee and the made the Waziri redundant (Gwadabe 2003: 77). As a result Gidado supported the candidature of Usman against Abdullahi Bayero in 1919. There is no doubt the Waziri Gidado was an important pillar, who helped Abbas against all intrigues and it was due to his skill that this animosity never translated into open confrontation.

LIST OF HEAD-MASIKI
From 1919 - Date

#	NAME	From	To
1	Abbas Ahmad C. M. Ma'aji	1919	1923
2	Abbas Muhammad Y. Ma	1923	1927
3	Ab. Abdullahi C. M. Usman	1927	1930
4	Ab. Muhammad T. Dandaji	1930	1931
5	Ab. Kabari J. W. Gubao	1931	1933
6	Ab. Sule Abura	1933	1933
7	Ab. Tijan Usman	1933	1933
8	Ab. Shamsi Ngandu	1933	1933
9	Ab. Dahir Alga	1933	1933
10	Ab. Sule Usman	1933	1933
11	Ab. Jibiri Kigun	1933	1933
12	Ab. Shamsi Gecun	1933	1933
13	Ab. Sule Kigun	1933	1933
14	Ab. Usman Alga	1933	1933
15	Ab. Abdullahi A. Kargan	1933	1933
16	Ab. Jibiri Kigun	1933	1933
17	Ab. Muhammad Apki	1933	1933
18	Ab. Usman Waga	1933	1933
19	Ab. D. A. Usman	1933	1933
20	Ab. Gamba Usman	1933	1933
21	Ab. Sule A. Kigun	1933	1933
22	Ab. Abdullahi Usman	1933	1933
23	Ab. Muhammad A. Usman	1933	1933
24	Ab. Usman Usman	1933	1933
25	Ab. Usman Usman	1933	1933
26	Ab. Usman Usman	1933	1933
27	Ab. Usman Usman	1933	1933
28	Ab. Usman Usman	1933	1933
29	Ab. Usman Usman	1933	1933
30	Ab. Usman Usman	1933	1933

Abbas “easily disposed of officials who were proving difficult, even though in the first instance they had been elevated to their positions by the Emir in preference to other candidates”. Some of the officials dismissed include the most famous being his nephew Waziri Abdu and Ma'aji Usman. The colonial officials allowed the Emir to appoint and dismiss titleholders as he wished especially when his “personal friend” Lugard was serving as the High Commissioner (Fika 1978: 112-113). It was also argued that he favored his kinsmen and loyalists in terms of salaries and emoluments when they were introduced and the titled officials were posted to districts.

This entitlements and privileges were not based on seniority or size of district but relationship with the Sarki. Saeed (2003: 59) noted that those district heads “not in good terms with the Native Authority were given little amount, which did not correspond to their traditional position”. It was observed that:

Notably the Galadima and Wombai, although administering larger districts than any other royal officials, received much lower salaries than their brother the Turaki Manya Salihi, who was nevertheless dismissed in 1914 for embezzlement,

while his successor, Abubakar, grandson of Sarkin Kano Abdullahi was dismissed in 1919 for peculation. The Ciroma Abdullahi Bayero, Abass's chosen heir, despite his modest fief, received five times as much as the Galadima and four times as much as Wombai. Indeed the Ciroma, the Madawaki (Madaki), and Waziri Muhammadu Gidado received identical amounts, being the most highly paid officials under the emir. Of the non-royal district chief, the baYole Madawaki received the highest salary, followed by the Jobawa Makama (£800), the Sarkin Dawaki Mai Tuta (£420), and the Sarkin Bai Abdulkadiri (£260). In terms of their relative status in the traditional polity of Kano, such differentiation was clearly anomalous.

A recent study on the record of Abbas's court and his attitude towards the missionaries have justified the suggestion that he was prudently conscious when he surrendered to the British and that he was deeply committed to maintaining the Islamic tradition of his community. He refused to apply *siyasa* (politics) in *hukm* (judgment) as encouraged by the British who had wanted to abrogate the Shari'ah through that strategy (Abun-Nasr 1996). He defended the rights of Muslim women and orphans who brought their grievances before his judicial council as observed by Christelow:

“The Council's defense of widow's property rights

was closely connected to its consistent defense of orphan's rights” (Christelow 1991: 139). He was also conscious of the sensitivity of his people towards the Christian Missionaries. He refused to grant license to evangelize and did not support Europeans living in the city but supported merchants both natives and Europeans. He said: “Islam is a matter of the Heart' that their ancestors were Muslims for many generations therefore what was the use of preaching to Muslims if the Missionaries would not get converts”. E. D. Morel asked the Sarki to commit his views on these matters in writing and he did (Saeed 2003: 63). Even Palmer writing to Lugard in 1917 opposed proselytization when he observed:

It is a matter of extreme surprise to me that philanthropists and old ladies of England –unable as they are to secure acceptance for missionary teaching among their own sons, nephews, cousins and brothers –think that they are justified to force this same teaching on poor native Muslims (Saeed 2005: 150-151).

Abbas is remembered in Kano for his generosity and patience. He was very generous to Islamic schools and *Shariffs* (the descendants of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him). Despite unfavorable comments about his life by some writers he was a deeply religious person as the testimonies after his death have shown. He died on Thursday 30th Rajab 1337 AH (1st May 1919) (Last 1966).

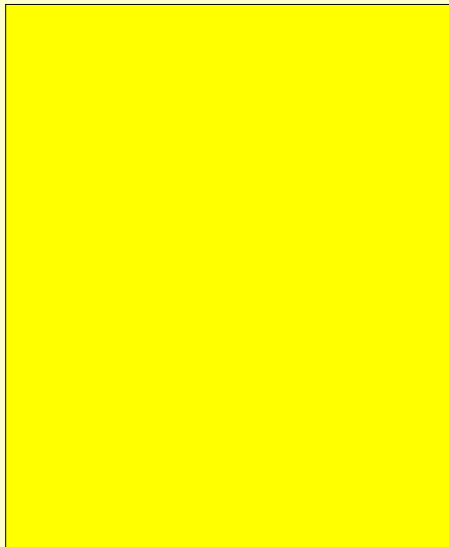
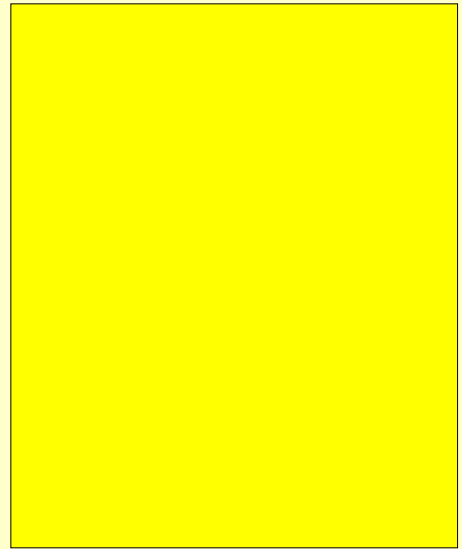
ABDULKADIR (Galadima)

Abdulkadir the second son of Sarkin Kano Abbas was born in Satatima Quarters while his father was the Sakin Dawakin Tsakar Gida in 1885. He had his Quranic education before the British occupation of Kano.

His father appointed him Ciroma in 1903 but he was later deposed by the Colonial Resident of Kano Dr. Cargill who took him to the newly established Dan Hausa School as one of the pioneer pupils. During the reign of Sarkin Kano Shehu

Abdulkadir stayed closely to his brother, Chiroma Abdullahi Bayero who was under constant intimidation of *fadawa* (courtiers).

He was appointed Dan Iyan Kano and District Head of Dawakin Kudu but he was later transferred to Fogolawa where he stayed for only six months before he was brought to Kano City as the Head of the City District Administration in 1927. He died in 1939.



Turakin Kano Hashim Abbas

He was the fourth son of Sarkin Kano Abbas. Hashim attended the Dan Hausa School (the first Western School in Kano) after completing his Qur'anic School. He also continued his Islamic Education under Mallam Shehu and Mallam Baba both of Kabara Quarters after graduating from Dan Hausa while he was working at City Hospital and later at Native Authority water works. He was able to teach members of his household the basic Islamic textbooks

because of the knowledge he had acquired from his teachers. Hashim was appointed *Dan Buran* Kano and District Head of Kumbotso to succeed Haruna who was deposed in 1932 and he was promoted to *Turakin* Kano and district head of Kiru in 1939 from where he was transferred to Sumaila where he died in 1957.

Galadiman Kano

Alhaji Tijani Hashim



He was appointed *Galadiman Kano* by Sarkin Kano Alhaji Ado Bayero to succeed *Galadiman Kano* Hamidu Bayero in 1992. Tijani Hashim was born in 1932, and he attended Bebeji Elementary School and Kano Middle School, before he started his working career at the Veterinary Department of the Kano Native Authority. He was a Minister in the Northern Regional Government; and with the collapse of the first Republic, Sarkin Kano Alhaji Ado Bayero appointed him *Dan Isan Kano* and Councilor, Kano Emirate Council. Sarkin Kano Alhaji Ado Bayero promoted him to *Turakin Kano* and District Head of Kumbotso in 1976, to Dan Iyan Kano in 1989, and finally to *Galadiman Kano*. He died in 2014. Alhaji Tijani Hashim is known for his generosity, and was highly respected all over Nigeria.



Dan Isan Kano

Alhaji Kabiru Tijani Hashim

Kabiru Tijani Hashim was appointed *Dan Isa* and District Head of Warawa by Sarkin Kano Muhammad Sanusi II in 2014. He was brought into the *Sarauta* to succeed his father Galadiman Kano Alhaji Tijani Hashim who died after several years of service to the *Sarauta* and the people of Kano. Kabiru has been in business since completing university education. One of his major businesses is leather processing. He is also very amiable, friendly and helpful like his father. His investiture was well attended by the many friends and clients of his father. He is also an alumnus of the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies.

Galadiman Kano

Alhaji Ibrahim Cigari Abbas

He was born in 1903. After completing Qur'anic School he enrolled in Murphy Adult Education School from 1914-18 from where he proceeded to Dan Agundi Vocational School and later Institute of Administration Zaria. He started his working career in the Native Authority Survey School from 1923, he was later posted to Kurmi Market where he served as the *Wakilin Kasuwa*. He joined the colonial Army and he fought for the allied forces. After the war he returned home and he was appointed *Dan Lawal* in 1945 by his elder brother Sarkin Kano Alhaji Abdullahi Bayero and posted to Garki where he remained until 1947 when he was transferred to Ungogo. He remained there, until 1951 when he was transferred to Zakirai and he was moved to Jahun in 1954 and in 1963 he became the *Galadiman Kano* and District Head of Dawakin Kudu when the incumbent *Galadima* became the Emirs. He died in 1965.





Sarkin Dawakin Tsakar Gida Isa Abbas

Isa Abbas was born in Kano in 1913 in Gidan Rumfa while his father was the Emir of Kano. He attended Shahuci Judicial School and started his working career with the Kano Native Authority in 1939 where he served in various capacities before his appointment as *Dokajin* Kano. He was promoted to *Sarkin Dawakin Tsakar Gida* by Sarkin Kano Muhammadu Inuwa in 1963 he held that position until his death in 1985 in Gwaram where he was the District Head.

Sarkin Dawakin Tsakar Gida Bashari Abbas

He was born in 1918. He attended Qur'anic and *Ilmi* Schools before he started working in the Kano Native Authority as a payment clerk. He was appointed Magajin Malam and District Head of Tudun Wada by Sarkin Kano Sir Muhammadu Sanusi in 1957. His elder brother Sarkin Kano Muhammadu Inuwa promoted him to Dan Lawal and District Head of Gezawa in 1963. He was promoted to Sarkin Dawakin Tsakar Gida in 1985 but remained as the District Head of Sumaila where he was since 1981 until his death in 1990.



Dan Lawan Abubakar Garba Abbas

He was one of the pioneer students of Shahuci Judicial School in 1928. He also attended Khartoum School of Shari'ah. He started his working career in 1941 with the Kano Native Authority where he remained until it was abolished and he was retired in 1976. He continued to teach Islamic books in his house. Sarkin Kano Alhaji Ado Bayero turbaned him Dan Lawal and District Head of Aujara in 1989. When Jigawa State was created and the District became part of Dutse Emirate he remained there and no Dan Lawal was turbaned in Kano until he died in 2001