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Joseph P. Smaldone

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# WARFARE IN THE SOKOTO CALIPHATE

HISTORICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL  
PERSPECTIVES

JOSEPH P. SMALDONE

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

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*For Judy and the two boys*

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## Preface

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This book, a study of warfare in the emirates that constituted the Sokoto Caliphate in nineteenth-century northern Nigeria, was originally prepared as a doctoral thesis at Northwestern University (1970). Since then it has been revised by adding an introductory essay on the evolution of Sudanic warfare; deleting a short chapter on Islamic military practices, and distributing much of that material throughout the book; and incorporating the results of more recent research.

Regrettably, this work went to press without the benefit of research in Nigeria. Three times between 1969 and 1973 I had planned for such research, but in each instance unforeseen problems precluded its fruition. Fortunately the abundance of other accessible materials permitted the writing of a book of this nature.

Grateful acknowledgments are due to many persons. Ivor Wilks encouraged my early research into Sudanic warfare and suggested several fruitful areas of inquiry. Previous drafts of this work benefited from the comments and criticism of Margaret Priestley Bax, Paul J. Bohannan, Ronald Cohen, R. Ann Dunbar, A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, D. Murray Last, Nehemia Levtzion, Paul Lovejoy, and D. J. M. Muffett. I am especially thankful to Victor N. Low for providing me with military data on Hadejia, Katagum, and Gombe; and to M. G. Smith, who made available to me his voluminous fieldnotes and unpublished manuscripts on several emirates. The Council for Intersocietal Studies at Northwestern and the Naval Academy Research Council supported part of the research. Last but not least, Colin Jones of Cambridge University Press is to be commended for his extraordinary patience and understanding.

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## Conventions and Abbreviations

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A few explanatory notes are in order. First, although the principal subject of this study is the Sokoto Caliphate, comparative data for other Central Sudanic states have been given occasionally. Military practices in the independent Hausa states of Abuja, Gobir, Maradi, and Zinder (mixed Hausa and Kanuri, with Hausa as the predominant language) were similar in many respects to those of the emirates of Sokoto, and provide data that both complement and supplement material available for the caliphate.

Second, in matters of style, the following conventions have been adopted. Arabic and Fulani words have been used sparingly, and are indicated by (A.) and (F.) respectively. Hausa words (H.) appear frequently, particularly in Chapter 3. Unless indicated otherwise, all technical military terms in the text are Hausa; these generally appear in parentheses after the English form. An extensive glossary of such terms is provided on pp. 220–4, below. In the spelling of personal names, the more familiar Hausa forms have been used rather than Arabic.

Following the precedent of Polly Hill's *Rural Hausa* (Cambridge, 1972), the Hausa "hooked" *b*, *d*, and *k* have not been used; nor is the glottalized *y* denoted. Perfectionists and pedants may lament this editorial decision, but the absence of such linguistic technicalities is of no great moment: the specialist will not need them, and the general reader will find them pedagogically useless.

Victor Low's fieldnotes are cited simply, as for example, Hadejia Fieldnotes. On the other hand, M. G. Smith's fieldnotes are cited by book and page; for instance, data from book 4, page 10a, of Sokoto fieldnotes, are cited as Smith, Sokoto Fieldnotes, 4/10a.

The following abbreviations have been used in footnotes and bibliography.

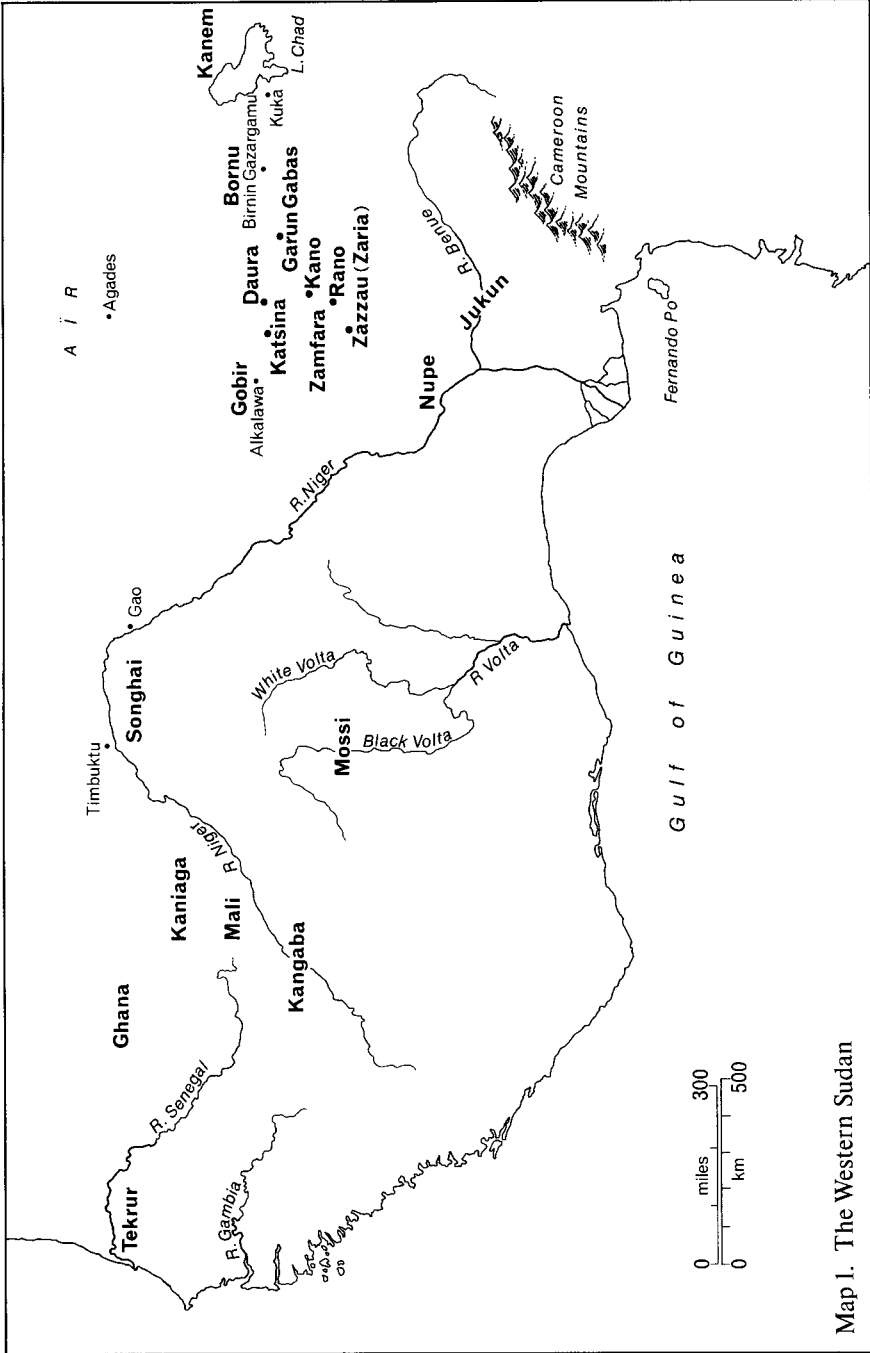
BSOAS	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
JAH	<i>Journal of African History</i>
JAS	<i>Journal of the (Royal) African Society</i>
JHSN	<i>Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria</i>
JRGS	<i>Journal of the Royal Geographical Society</i>
NNAR	<i>Northern Nigeria Annual Reports</i>
PRGS	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society</i>

## General Glossary

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<i>-awa</i>	Hausa suffix meaning “people of”; thus Kanawa, the people of Kano
<i>dan</i>	Hausa for “son of,” e.g., Usman dan Fodio
<i>dar al-harb</i>	Arabic expression to denote non-Muslim territory, legally “enemy territory”
<i>dar al-Islam</i>	Arabic for the abode of Islam or Muslim territory, as opposed to <i>dar al-harb</i>
<i>dhimmi</i> (A.)	Protected non-Muslims residing in <i>dar al-Islam</i>
<i>emir</i>	Familiar form of <i>amir</i> (A.), meaning chief, ruler, commander
<i>hijra</i> (A.)	Flight or emigration of Muslims, especially from religious and political persecution
<i>jama'a</i> (A.)	Muslim community
<i>jihad</i> (A.)	Muslim holy war
<i>ji'zya</i> (A.)	Poll tax paid by non-Muslims living in <i>dar al-Islam</i> who have accepted <i>dhimmi</i> status
<i>malam</i> (H.)	Learned one, teacher, scholar
<i>mujaddidun</i> (A.)	Islamic reformers
<i>mujahidun</i> (A.)	Muslim warriors, soldiers of Islam
<i>murabitun</i> (A.)	Garrison troops of a <i>ribat</i>
<i>-n</i>	Hausa suffix which forms the genitive of masculine nouns: e.g., Sarkin Kano, chief or emir of Kano
<i>nuw'wab</i> (A.)	Deputies, lieutenants ( <i>na'ib</i> , singular)
<i>ribat</i> (A.)	Frontier stronghold to defend <i>dar al-Islam</i>
<i>sarki</i> (H.)	Chief, king, ruler, commander, emir
<i>Shehu</i>	Hausa form of the Arabic, Shaikh, meaning scholar, learned one; the familiar title of Usman dan Fodio
<i>Waziri</i> (H.)	Hausa form of the Arabic, Wazir, the chief minister of a Muslim state

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Map I. The Western Sudan