

Origin of the Sullubawa

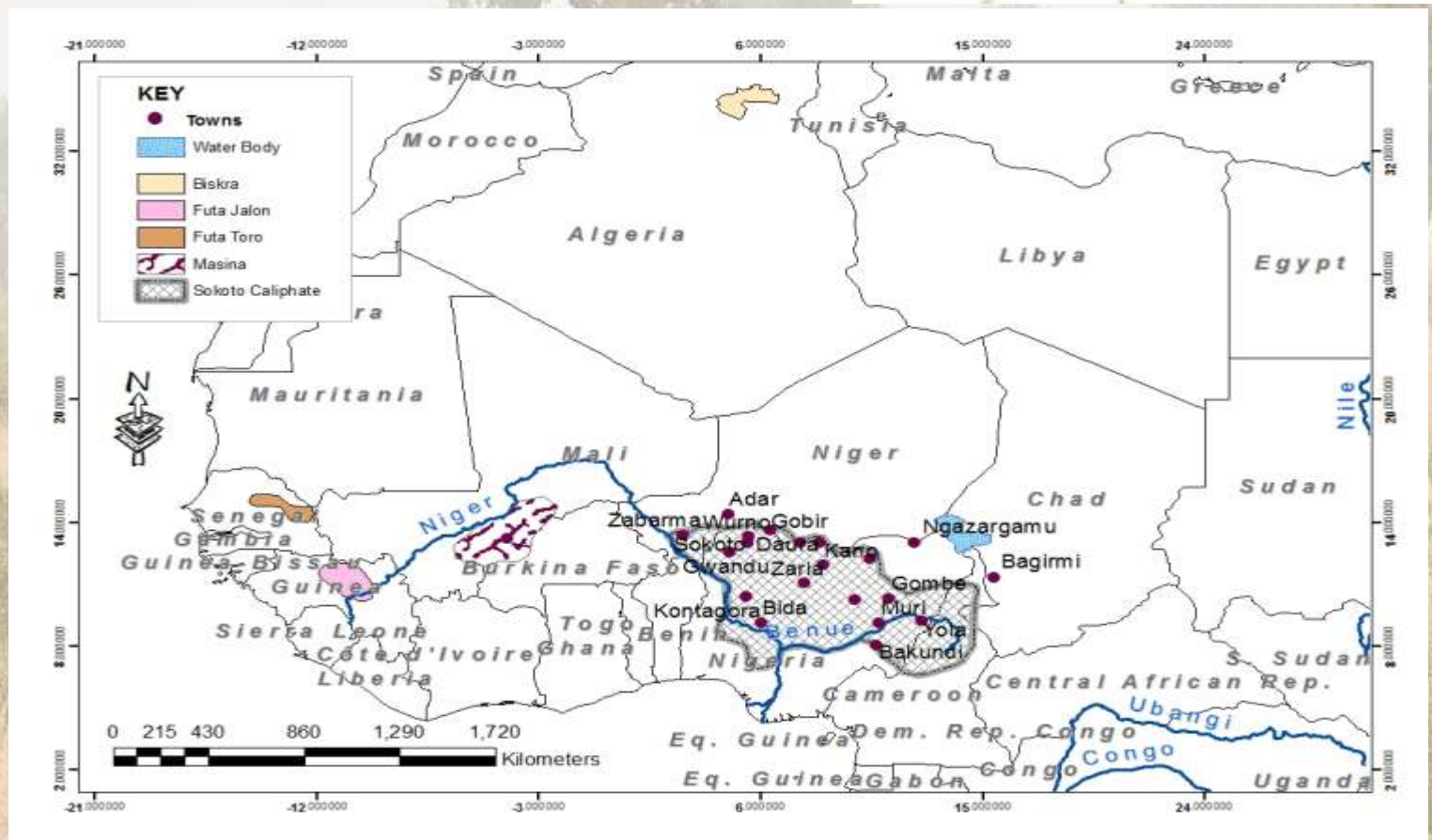
The Sullubawa Clan is one of the Fulani Clans in West Africa. *Fulani* is a *Hausa* plural word with the singular *Ba-Fillaci* of the people who call themselves *Fulbe* (singular *Pulo*) in their own language of *Fulfulde*. In French, they are called “Peuls or Peulhs” while in Arabic they are known as *Fellata* with masculine singular *Fellati* and feminine singular *Fellatiyya* (Hunwick 1966: 36-37). *Torankawa* (singular, *Ba toranke*) is the *Hausa* word (Hunwick 1966: 305 note 4) for all the *Fulfulde* speakers who originated from Futa Toro of Senegal and in *Fulfulde* they are called *Toorobbe* or *Toorodbe* (singular *Toorodo*), Toucouleur in French (Klein 1968: 66) and *Takrur* in Arabic (Iliffe 1995: 72). But they belong to different tribes and clans such as Ba'en, Jallube, Yirlaabe, Wolarbe and Ferrobe (Idrissou 1979: 340). In fact some of them distinguish themselves as a separate entity distinct from other Fulbe thus they became identified as Toronkawa in Nigeria.



There are several versions of the origin of the Fulani people. Wazirin Sokoto Junaidu was the leading authority on the history of the Fulani and he traced their origin to Biblical Esau. Who was the son of the Prophet Ishaq (AS), the son of Prophet Ibrahim (AS). They moved from Sinai and settled at Toro in West Africa, where they got their name of Toronkawa (the people of Toro). Uqbat Ibn Naif the great Muslim Leader converted them to Islam and married Bajju Manga the daughter of their Chief.



Wazirin Sokoto Junaid, an erudite scholar



Map of Africa showing Biskra, Futa Toro, Fata Jallon and Sokoto Caliphate

The word *Sullube* that is the singular of the *Sullubawa* perhaps originated from *Sisillo* the ancestor of the Sullubawa and husband of Cippowo sister of Uthman Toroddo ancestor of Shehu Usman Danfodio. This relationship made the Sullubawa to be regarded as cousins of the Toronkawa. The Sullubawa belong to the Wangarawa stock, they have Mandigo element in their ancestry and they are also related to the Mandika. They spoke Wakore before they became absorbed into the Fulani group, thus they lost their original language and adopted Fulfulde. Today most of the descendants of Ibrahim Dabo Dan Mahmud the first Sullube Sarki of Kano cannot speak Fulfude.

Fulani cattle rearers and their cattle
Ajingi Local Government



The Sullubawa were among the earliest Fulfude speaking clans to emigrate from Futa Toro to Hausaland. By the middle of the twelfth century *Hijra* the Sullubawa had established their chiefdom at Zandam with the Sarkin Sullubawa as their tribal chief. They dispersed to various parts of Hausaland particularly the Sokoto-Rima area, Zazzau region, various parts of *Kasar* Katsina and the *Kasar* Kano. In Kano their main settlements were Kanwa, Kiru and Fagwalawa. The reasons for their migrations were not obvious but they must have been associated with increase in their number, political loyalties and probably the contention over the title of Sarkin Sullubawa.

*Fulani settlement near Godiya
Kabo Local Government Area*

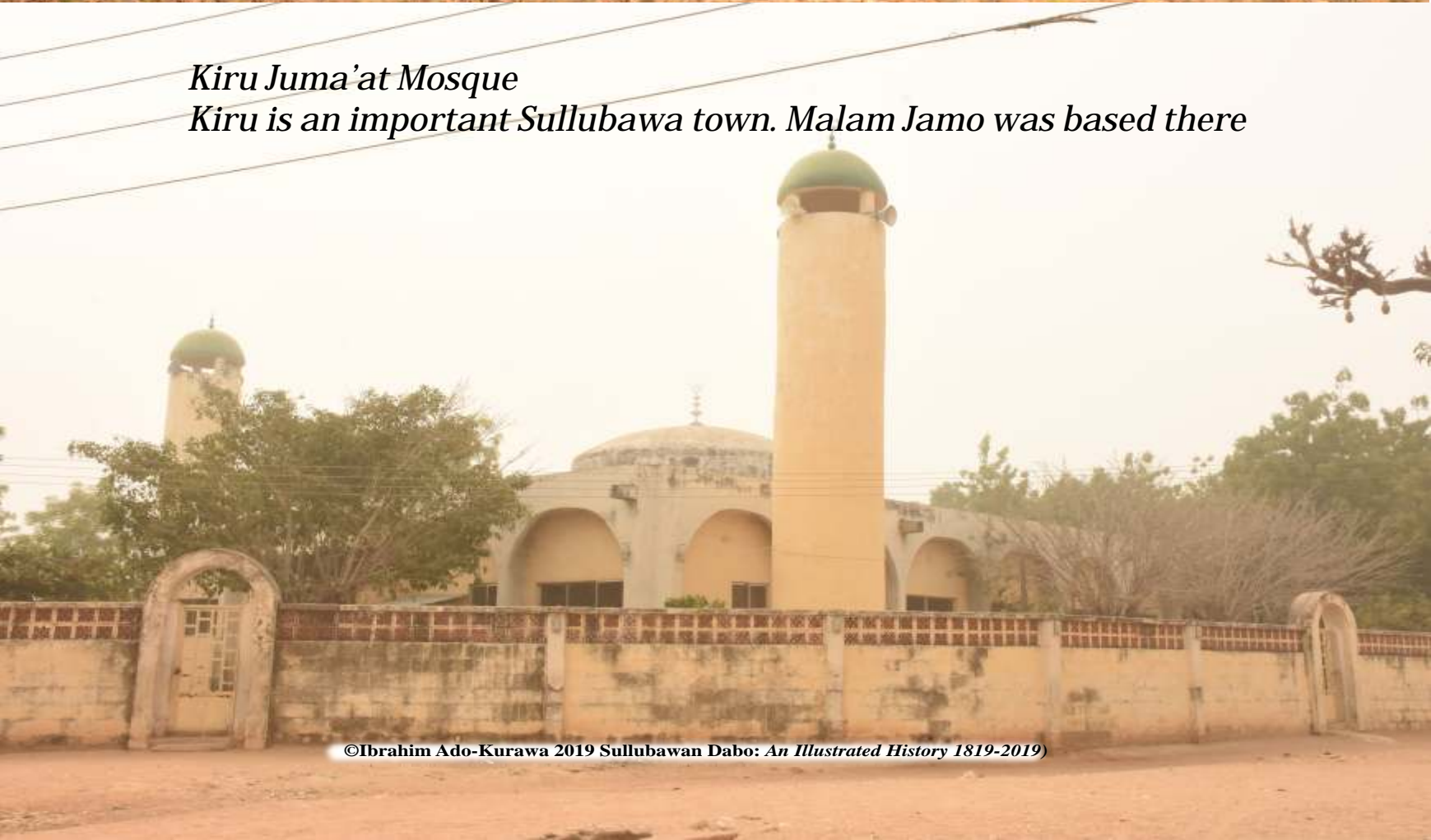


*Fulani settlement near Kanwa
Madobi Local Government Area*





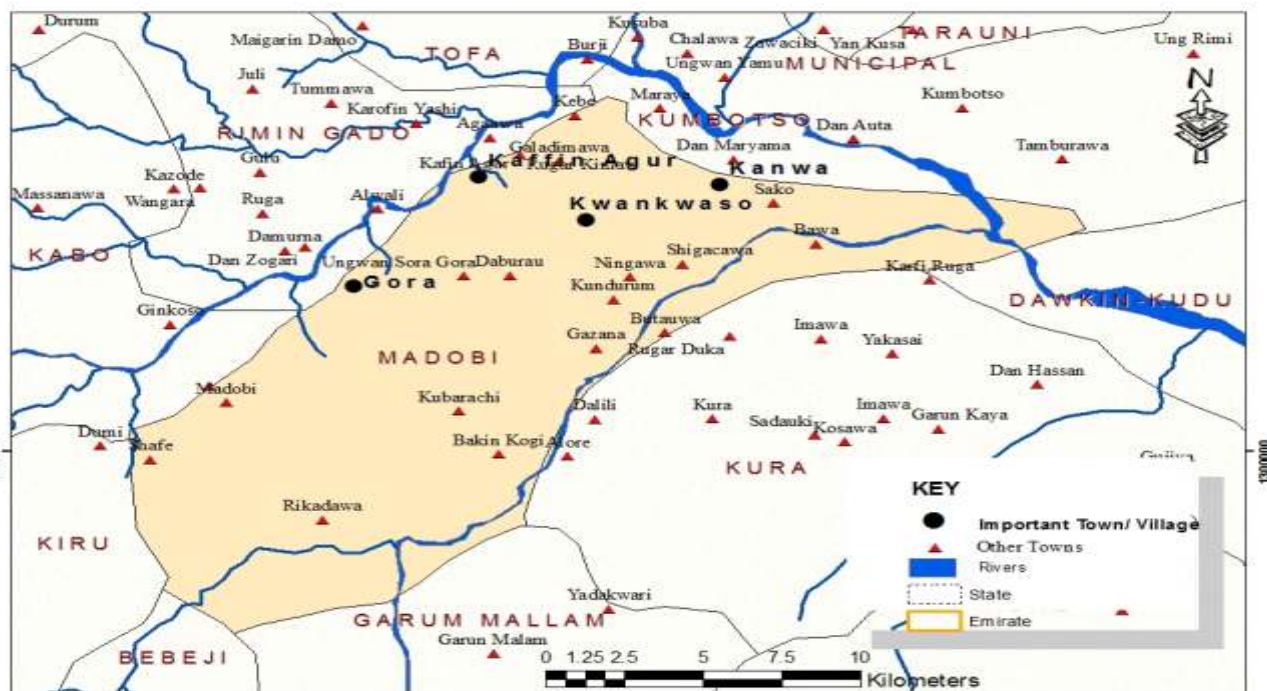
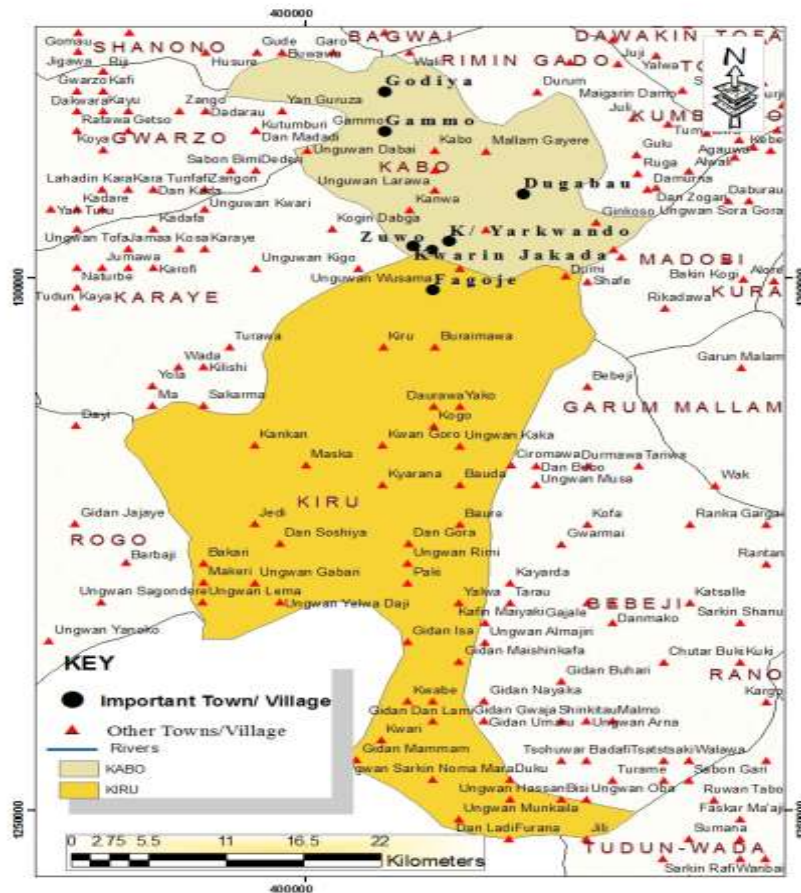
Fulani Hut in Gwarzo



Kiru Juma'at Mosque

Kiru is an important Sullubawa town. Malam Jamo was based there

Map showing major Sullubawa towns and villages in Kiru, Kabo and Karaye Local Government Areas



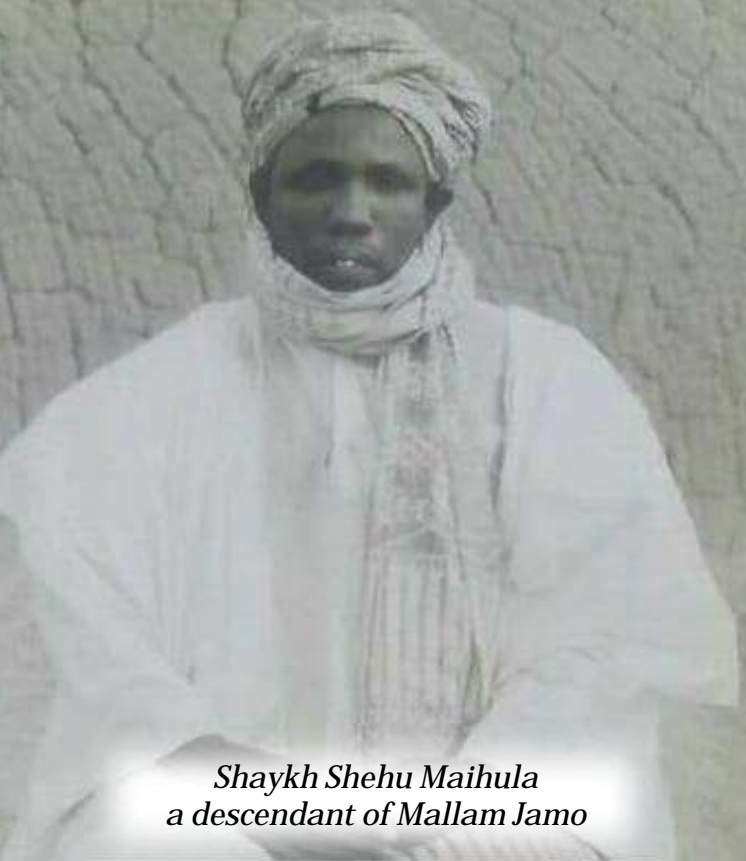
Map showing major Sullubawa towns and villages in Madobi Local Government Area

It has been suggested that they migrated from *Kasar Katsina* to other parts of Hausaland in the eighteenth century in order to get away from the war between Gobir and Katsina. The Sullubawa were perhaps the most organized of all those considered to be *Fulbe Siiri* (settled Fulani), they had their communal leadership even before the Jihad. Katsina tried to use them against Gobir and the latter against Shehu Usman. A few supported Gobir while most of them supported Shehu Usman during the Jihad campaigns.

Fulani cattle rearers Sumaila



The Sullubawa were one of the largest Fulani clans in *Kasar Kano* before the Jihad of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio. Many of them became settled in various towns and villages especially in Southern part of Kano in the present Karaye, Madobi Kiru and Bebeji Local Government Areas. Many of them were farmers and cattle owners. There were also scholars among them who earned the titles of *Modibo* (Fulfude title for a Learned person) and *Hafiz* (Title for the Learned in Qur'an). Mallam Jamo elder brother of Sarkin Kano Ibrahim Dabo was mentioned in Raud al-Jinan as one of the scholars of the 19th century Hausaland and disciple of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio. Some descendants of Jamo have maintained that tradition Shaykh Shehu Maihula of Kano was one of the most prominent of his time. His school still flourishes. Professor Isa Hashim *Jarman Kano* is also a descendant of Jamo he was an authority on Local Government Administration during his academic career.



*Shaykh Shehu Maihula
a descendant of Mallam Jamo*



*Jarman Kano Professor Isa Hashim
a descendant of Mallam Jamo*

The Sullubawa were and are still amongst the most influential Fulani clans in Nigeria. They are the ruling dynasty in Kano and Katsina as well as Zaria where they alternate with other Fulani Clans. In Katsina the Assistant Resident Richmond Herbert Palmer replaced the Dallazawa Ruling Clan, who were, the Emirs since the Jihad with the Sullubawa who were previously holding the title of Durbin Katsina. This was because the reigning Emir, Sarkin Katsina Abubakar (1887-1904) who was deposed for flimsy reasons despite the fact he surrendered to British without any fierce resistance and Yero (1904-1906) was also deposed. Dikko who was the Durbi from the Sullubawa Clan was installed as the Emir in a major dynastic change. Durbi Dikko was rewarded with the Emirship because he was able to build a defensive fort for Katsina against the Satiru uprising which the Emir and his leading officials were unable to do. Assistant Resident Palmer asked Durbi what he wanted in return and he requested for the Emirship. It is also noteworthy that Palmer also intended to replace the Sullubawa Dynasty in Kano. Palmer had also effected a dynastic change in Daura as well where he replaced the Fulani descendants of Isiyaku with the Hausa. He was considered anti-Fulani colonial officer.

In Kano both Residents Cargill and Palmer contemplated replacing the Ibrahim Dabo Dynasty but they were unsuccessful. Cargill elevated Dan Rimi Allah Bar Sarki to the title of Waziri. The patience and perseverance of Sarkin Kano Abbas saved the dynasty they would have been replaced as the Dallazawa were replaced in Katsina. During the Second Republic Governor Abubakar Rimi created Emirates to diminish the status of Sarkin Kano and his successor abolished them. Sullubawan Dabo the Kano Royalty survived several challenges in the last 200 years.



*Sarkin Kano Muhammad Sanusi II CON, Magajin Dabo
(Successor of Dabo) with Bakan Dabo one of the regalia of Sarkin Kano*