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West Africa: Patterns and Implications of the Islamic Revival



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A Research Paper

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November 1982*

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West Africa: Patterns and Implications of the Islamic Revival

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A Research Paper

This paper was prepared by [redacted] of the
Office of African and Latin American Analysis.
It was coordinated with the National Intelligence
Council and the Directorate of Operations. Comments
and queries are welcome and may be addressed to
the Chief, West-East Africa Division, ALA, on
[redacted]

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**West Africa:
Patterns and Implications
of the Islamic Revival**

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Overview

*Information available
as of 15 October 1982
was used in this report.*

In our judgment, over the past 10 years there has been an increase in political activity by Islamic groups and a significant increase in Islamic consciousness among West Africa's approximately 60 million Muslims. This has manifested itself particularly in Nigeria and Senegal through changes in government foreign policies, a rising level of domestic violence, and a proliferation of Muslim groups, ranging from those that support present governments to those that reject West Africa's state system and its leaders. We conclude that this resurgence of Islam, facilitated by the effective missionary efforts of modern Islamic organizations, is benefiting from increased urban migration and the related breakdown of other traditional institutions. Islam is expanding rapidly into regions and among social groups that have previously ignored or resisted it.

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Both Saudis and Libyans have been involved in the West African Islamic revival, primarily in the support of its fundamentalist aspects. The Saudis support Islamic groups that are politically conservative but fundamentalist in that they seek strict adherence to Islamic law and custom. The Libyans, by contrast, fund radical fundamentalist groups whose political objectives are primarily to promote regional political destabilization. Thus far, the Saudis have had the paramount foreign role in the revival.

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the philosophical impetus for the Islamic revival springs primarily from Saudi fundamentalism. In addition, Saudi influence is extended by millions of dollars each year in financial support.

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In our view, the political impact of West African Islam has been limited thus far by factionalism. Different groups respond to conflicting needs and attempt to impose religious and political priorities on each other. Only a few Islamic organizations have reached across social, ethnic, and regional lines to play an important role in local or national politics. None has succeeded in forming a significant international political following, and the evidence does not indicate the emergence in the foreseeable future of an "Ayatollah" to lead a regional political revolution.

Still, we believe that Muslim elitist voluntary associations, key fundamentalist organizations—both conservative and radical—and, to a lesser extent, Islamic brotherhood groups will become increasingly involved in the local politics of the region. The riots in Kano, Nigeria, in 1980 by radical fundamentalists and increasing political activity by Islamic groups in Senegal and Nigeria suggest a more activist role by West African Muslims.

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Of most concern to West African governments, we believe, are the developing radical fundamentalist groups, whose hostility to established political and religious institutions has attracted Tripoli's attention and support. These groups consist of such alienated elements as the urban unemployed and radical students, who seek simple, often violent solutions to the virtually intractable problems of West African societies. These fundamentalists have been responsible for numerous short-lived violent confrontations with local authorities in northern Nigeria.

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We believe that over the next two or three years, the present Islamic revival will not threaten either regional stability or West Africa's relations with the West. The governments of the moderate secular states of the region are in control of their Muslim populations, and the current Muslim leadership—recruited from traditional, business, and government elites—is for the most part hostile to Communist and Libyan interference in the region.

Beyond the mid-1980s, however, we believe a significant increase in political activity by radical Islamic groups could affect not only local political stability but also US relations with West Africa. Although a government with Muslim leadership does not necessarily dictate Islamic policies to its people, those states with predominantly Muslim populations will find it increasingly difficult to resist pressures for a greater variety of Islamic projects and institutions, such as a national Islamic court—argument over which almost disrupted Nigeria's transition to civilian rule in 1979—and state-supported Muslim schools. Yielding to such pressures, however, risks reopening longstanding ethnic and religious jealousies and provoking political violence.

Although Islamic regimes are not necessarily anti-Western, we believe the emergence of a strong, regional fundamentalist Islamic movement—whether politically conservative or radical—could also have important implications for relations with the United States. For example, in Nigeria, where the movement is strongest, we project that the growing influence of religiously conservative Islam is likely over the long run to incline a Muslim-dominated government to pursue policies that are less friendly to the West. At the same time, we expect that some of today's militant Islamic groups will eventually succeed in placing in positions of political influence members with pronounced anti-Western prejudices. These biases could complicate the degree of support Washington receives from Nigeria and other African governments in international forums and for US initiatives on regional and wider African issues.

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Evidence to date suggests that the Soviets, in the next two to three years, will not be able to develop close ties with radical Muslim groups in West Africa. Islamic leaders in Africa are offended by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, and, like conservative Islamic leaders in the Near East, fear Communist ideology in general. Over the longer term, however, we expect the susceptibility of these groups to Soviet influence will increase, particularly if there is a general growth in political instability in the area and if the Soviets pay more attention to disaffected elements. We also believe that, by being a source of instability, these groups indirectly serve Soviet aims.



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**West Africa:
Patterns and Implications
of the Islamic Revival**



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The Islamic Revival

In our judgment, the recent worldwide trend toward increased political activity by Islamic fundamentalist groups—marked by the revolution in Iran, the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, religious riots in Egypt, and the assassination of Anwar Sadat by Muslim fundamentalists in the Egyptian Army—has been paralleled by a significant increase in Islamic consciousness through much of West Africa.¹ At a time when other religions and political ideologies are faltering in their missionary efforts, numerous academic studies and US Embassy reports show that Islam is expanding rapidly. This expansion is encouraged by a flow of rural populations into cities where Islam often replaces the traditional ties and patterns of belief that are lost when people leave the land. Embassy reporting indicates that Senegal's largest Muslim brotherhood,² the Muridiya, for example, has tripled since the 1960s from half a million members to a million and a half members, with young people who had previously rejected Islam and Muslims who were indifferent believers joining up. West African Muslims today number nearly 60 million or 38 percent of the total population of the region.

nationalism championed by such leaders as Qadhafi and Khomeini.³



During the 1960s, for example, all states in the region had diplomatic relations with Israel, received technical assistance from it, and generally supported Israeli positions in the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. All the governments were secular, and although some heads of state were nominally Muslim, none played an important role in the world Islamic community. By the early 1980s, however, Islamic influence in West Africa clearly was on the rise, in our judgment. All regional governments had severed relations with Israel in response to Arab pressure during or following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. West African political leaders, particularly Sekou Toure of Guinea, Abdou Diouf of Senegal, and Seyni Kountche of Niger, now travel frequently throughout the Muslim world and have become highly visible at international Islamic conferences. Niger hosted the recent Islamic Foreign Ministers' Conference, the first such meeting that has been held in West Africa.

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In conversations with senior US officials, several West African leaders have indicated their awareness of rising Islamic consciousness in the region and its political implications. This concern has been sharpened by the willingness of Arab petroleum producers to use their oil and money to obtain international support on issues important to the Islamic world. A number of sources indicate that Islam had little influence on national policies in West Africa until the rapid expansion of financial and political activities by Arab oil producers and the impact of Arab-Islamic

In addition, the internal political climate of some West African states is changing in response to the growing strength of the Muslim community, according to academic and government sources. We note that West African leaders are facing a rising level of violence associated with Muslim activity whether their Muslim populations are large or small. In 1980 the French press reported an outbreak of rioting in the relatively quiescent Islamic community in Freetown, Sierra Leone, and an attack on police by villagers in northern Cameroon despite tight government control over the Islamic community. During the last two

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¹ In this paper, West Africa includes Benin, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Upper Volta. See foldout map, figure 4, page 21. (U)

² A Muslim brotherhood is a religious order whose followers are bound by personal loyalty to a single teacher.

³ The nationalistic legacy of late Egyptian President Nasser was, and continues to be, foremost among these external influences.

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years, fundamentalists among Senegal's highly organized and conservative Muslims have called for a revolution, to be followed by the establishment of an Islamic state. Press reports indicate that sporadic intra-Muslim violence in Nigeria—which in December 1980 reached a peak in religious rioting in Kano, the largest Muslim city in West Africa—has taken thousands of lives over the last two years. [redacted]

Press and US Embassy sources report that the rising influence of Islam has spawned a proliferation of Muslim groups through West Africa, ranging in political orientation from voluntary associations that support present governments to radical student groups that reject West Africa's state system and its leaders. We find these groups growing in numbers and influence and seeking international support for their programs from Muslim sources in North Africa and the Middle East. [redacted]

In our judgment, the West African region over the long term probably will see an amplification of present trends, characterized by increasing conversion to Islam, government policies somewhat more influenced by the interests of national and international Islamic interest groups, and increasing use of Arab sources of funding for both secular and religious institutions. There will be greater demands on West Africa's governments for economic support and for constitutional approval of a variety of Muslim institutions like Islamic courts and national ministries for Islamic affairs. [redacted]

We do not expect much alteration in these trends even in the unlikely event that Arab aid declines significantly because of reduced oil revenues. The fundamentalist groups are embracing religious and political issues that will probably continue to appeal to the region's disadvantaged people even in the absence of Arab money. [redacted]

Arab Involvement

Saudi Arabia, as the fount of Islam and the site of Mecca, has traditionally played a principal role in fostering the self-awareness of West African Muslims. In recent years, Libyan leader Qadhafi's politi-

cally radical fundamentalism has attracted many among the younger generation, who seek dynamic but simple answers to West Africa's growing economic, social, and political problems. Because both leadership and money are lacking or are scarce among regional Muslim groups, the influence of Saudi Arabia and Libya on West Africa's Islamic revival has dwarfed that of all other Arab and non-Arab Muslim countries. The kind and degree of impact that the Islamic revival will have in the long term on the governments and established elites of the area depend largely on which of the two Arab influences—Saudi or Libyan—becomes dominant. [redacted]

The Saudi Presence. Saudi Arabia has played the principal foreign role in the Islamic revival in West Africa. According to the testimony of members of the West African Muslim community, as well as a number of academic and press sources, the roots of West Africa's fundamentalist theology lie in Saudi Arabia; the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca brings thousands of West Africans into contact with Saudi fundamentalism. We believe that the Saudis seek to promote a strictly conservative position on political as well as on religious issues in West Africa. [redacted]

In our view Saudi Arabia's extensive effort to support, and increase its influence with, Islamic groups in West Africa is in part designed to counter Libya's activity. According to our estimates, Saudi aid—more than \$280 million in bilateral disbursements since 1974—far exceeds what the Libyans have provided.⁴ Riyadh also has been instrumental in setting up trusts, voluntary associations, banks, and investment groups. Evidence leads us to conclude that, in general, the Saudis support groups whose leadership is sympathetic to moderate African regimes and to Saudi foreign policies. In Nigeria, for example, US Embassy sources report that the Saudis use the Islamic Trust, an association of leading political and commercial

⁴ We estimate that of the \$1 billion annually that the Saudis provide through multilateral sources, about 20 percent goes to Sub-Saharan Africa. We are unable to estimate how much of this goes to West Africa. [redacted]

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figures who are close associates of President Shagari, to provide millions of dollars for projects benefiting the Islamic community. In Mali the Saudis directly support the "Islamic Reform Movement," an association of wealthy businessmen that is active in education and social services. Similarly, in Niger the Saudis channel assistance through "The Islamic Association" that the Nigerien Government uses to unify the Islamic community and protect it from Libyan subversion. [redacted]

The Saudis have supported the Society for the Victory of Islam (*Jama'atul Nasril Islam*) in Nigeria, which draws its following from among young intellectuals and civil servants. The Society works for the purification of Islamic practices, directly condemning the traditional Islamic brotherhoods for their mysticism, saint worship, and acceptance of traditional pagan superstitions. The JNI has obtained government approval to license Muslim preachers—and has the final word on who may go on the pilgrimage to Mecca—throughout many of Nigeria's federal states. The JNI leadership also administers aid programs related to the Muslim community and programs for disaster relief, such as support for Chadian refugees in the north. They have suggested the establishment of a national ministry of religious affairs to coordinate religious activities in the country. [redacted]

Saudi influence in West Africa was illustrated last April when Riyadh called for the African Islamic community to demonstrate unity over an attack on Muslims in Jerusalem. US Embassy reports indicate that in response the Malian Government and all Islamic institutions in Nigeria closed for a day. We conclude that Riyadh potentially could also use this leverage to gain the support of West African Muslims on Middle East or other international issues of interest to Saudi Arabia. [redacted]

Qadhafi's Methods. US Embassy reporting throughout the region indicates that Libya is taking advantage of the Islamic revival to expand its political influence south of the Sahara. Libyan leader Qadhafi has openly encouraged Islamic groups in the ethnically complex populations of such countries as Mali to agitate for secession. In our judgment, he wants

countries with a Muslim majority such as Nigeria to eliminate the constitutional separation of church and state as part of his plan for a trans-Saharan state ruled from Libya. [redacted] 25X1

We believe that, as Egypt's Nasser did before him, Qadhafi has used Islamic congresses and other international gatherings—such as the recently aborted summit of the Organization of African Unity, and the Islamic Committee for Economic, Cultural, and Social Affairs, which met in January 1982 in Tripoli—to impress his ideas of Arab/African unity and the political role of Islam upon West African Muslim leaders. [redacted] 25X1

According to US Embassy and academic sources, the Nigerian Government fears that Qadhafi wants to destabilize the country's Muslim north and encourage the activities of radical fundamentalist groups such as the followers of Maitasine Marwa (sometimes referred to as *Yan Izalla*), a revolutionary Islamic group based in Kano and responsible for the Kano riots in December 1980 that the government estimated took several thousand lives. At the time, Nigeria expelled all Libyan Embassy officials in the belief that Libyan agents were involved in the 1980 disturbances. Later, the Nigerians announced that no evidence of Libyan involvement had been found. Kano has a long-established settlement of ethnic Libyans that, at the time of the riots, included the family of Libya's Ambassador to Nigeria. Reliable US Embassy sources indicate that at one time Libya also provided funds to the People's Redemption Party, a radical Islamic populist party that has won elections in the States of Kano and Kaduna in Nigeria's Muslim north. [redacted] 25X1

US Embassy reports indicate that elsewhere in West Africa Qadhafi has used radiobroadcasts to appeal to separatist sentiments among Tuareg and Toubou Muslims in Niger and has supported fundamentalist

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Qadhafi's Pan-Islamic Vision

Academic studies indicate that Qadhafi has given his own cast to Islamic reform, reinterpreting the Koran and redefining most Islamic law (Shari'a). The Islamic revolution and state organization that he envisages go far beyond the Koran, combining Islam with socialism and Qadhafi's own idiosyncratic theories of social organization and economics. Arab nationalism is also a basic element in Qadhafi's ideology, and Arabs would dominate the trans-Saharan Islamic state he plans to create in Africa.

These theories are laid out in Qadhafi's Green Book, which was inspired in title and content by Mao's writings. Qadhafi has broadened the Shari'a to include customary law and aspects of Western law as they apply to constitutional, procedural, criminal, contract, commercial, and other law. He excludes the bulk of Koranic law and custom developed by Islamic scholars since Muhammad, discarding backward institutions such as slavery and concubinage and substituting his personal insights for traditional scholarship as a source of authority. Qadhafi uses the Koran only as it applies to strictly religious matters, such as personal morality and ethics.

Qadhafi suggests that the future pan-Islamic state is to be controlled by the masses through cell-like popular committees with only a minor role for the leader. Private wealth will be assumed by the state, which will distribute it to the people in the form of

subsidies and social welfare projects. The people will depend upon the central government for all their basic needs.

Qadhafi has undertaken the role of supreme interpreter of Islam with a high estimation of his own intellectual gifts and, according to academic studies, seems to be evolving a mystical conviction that his is a supernatural inspiration. He believes that his "Third International Theory," which unlike Marxism has left a role for religion, will ultimately replace all other ideologies.

There are many precedents in West Africa for initiating political change under the banner of religious revival and reform. During the 19th century, militant Muslim leaders, still revered as national heroes, founded a series of theocratic states that upset established patterns of rule throughout the region. In a number of states, the independence movement of the early and mid-20th century was closely allied with elements of the Islamic community. Nasser remains the prototypical Islamic nationalist for many West African Muslims. Qadhafi has yet to sell himself as Nasser's successor. Although his vision may seem self-serving and illogical, our judgment is that his philosophy appeals to many in West Africa who are dissatisfied with economic privation, corruption, and inequality and who seek easy solutions to their problems.

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extremism in Senegal. According to reports in the French press, he has financed organizations like the "Grouping of Democrats" led by Medina Soumbounou, a Mali national now living in Tripoli, which promotes an "Islamic Coast Union" of Togo, Benin, and Mali. Long before Tripoli's military intervention in Chad in 1980, Libyan propaganda focused on the subjection of Chad's Islamic northern tribes by black non-Muslims of the south.

We believe that most of Qadhafi's aid to the West African Muslim community has been carefully targeted for propaganda purposes. He volunteered to build the central mosque in Niamey, offered 40 scholarships for Muslim students to President Toure of Guinea, and provided training in Libya for a few

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highly visible fundamentalist radicals from Senegal. In Benin the Libyans are building mosques and providing Islamic/Arabic teachers, cash gifts, scholarships for study in Tripoli, and subsidies for religious leaders. A department of Arabic studies is being funded at the National University of Benin. We estimate that Qadhafi disbursed \$55 million between 1974 and 1980 in concessional aid to West African governments and has given further assistance to individual Islamic groups through the Libyan Arab Foreign Bank. However, US Government observers have found that expected Libyan funding for West African Islamic groups often fails to materialize because Qadhafi's policy emphasizes symbolic gestures with maximum political visibility rather than supplying large sums of money for more generalized assistance.

In our judgment, Libyan propaganda holds the greatest attraction for the radical Islamic groups, which are fervently opposed to modernization and to Western values. Pronouncements by various radical leaders indicate a desire to turn the clock back to a world ruled by the fundamental precepts of the Koran and a narrow interpretation of the Islamic code of law (*Shari'a*). On the basis of their present performance, these organizations probably will have the capability of provoking conflict and violence within the Islamic community.

Extent of Libyan Success. It is our judgment that the spread of militant Islam and Libyan influence has been uneven. Deteriorating economic conditions have prompted leaders of many West African states to express to US officials growing anxiety over the extent of domestic unrest and the potential for heightened Libyan interference in the internal affairs of the region. To date, this fear of what might happen is more significant than the impact of what has actually occurred.

Statements by many West African Muslims indicate that they view Qadhafi with caution, seeing him as one in a series of North African Islamic intruders who, as early as the 11th century, entered the region only to be followed by soldiers, slave raiders, and the like. Indeed, for West Africans, Islam has often been

associated with military conquest from the north and with Arab racism. Memories of such events are still fresh in the minds of peoples living near the Sahara, including the Wolof in Senegal, the Bambara in Mali, and the Djerma in Niger. There has been little if any counterpenetration of Sub-Saharan culture into North Africa, and we find that frequently a mutual lack of understanding, dislike, and even disdain have been the result. Nigerian Muslims, in particular, have expressed to US officials resentment over the patronizing attitude of the Libyans toward Nigeria's credentials as a major power in the international Islamic community. We do not believe that this antipathy has been substantially changed by participation in the OAU, by talk of African unity, or by admiration of North Africa's Nasser for his antiimperialist rhetoric.

Reporting suggests that not every group or individual accepting Libyan funding has, by any means, adopted an active, or even supportive, role in Qadhafi's plans. According to Embassy reporting, in 1973 Qadhafi provided \$3.5 million for the presidential campaign of a Muslim candidate, Sangoule Lamizana, in Upper Volta on condition that he work actively to create an Islamic republic there. The candidate won, but the plan was never realized. By the end of the 1970s, President Lamizana was turning down Libyan development aid because a significant portion of it was being directed to Islamic projects such as schools and religious institutions rather than for more important economic and social programs. The President also believed that the country's growing Muslim community was becoming a political threat, a view shared by the military.

Nevertheless, we believe that Qadhafi has met with some success in his attempt to establish a foothold among Muslims in West Africa. Embassy reporting indicates that in Upper Volta, despite poor relations between the military government and Libya, the Libyan Mission in Ouagadougou is providing clandestine financial support to the Islamic community and improving Libyan cultural programs.

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League for the Elimination of Heresy, supported by Libya, has spread rapidly in the last five years to become the largest fundamentalist group in Nigeria. The league has called publicly for the removal of Nigerian Government leaders and has frequently engaged in violence and confrontation with local government authorities. Reliable US Embassy sources within the Islamic community report the group is spreading its doctrine along northern Nigerian trading routes into nearby countries like Mali, Niger, and Benin. It is our judgment that if the Libyans could use the league and other radical fundamentalist groups to exploit economic and ethnic dissatisfactions the ensuing violence could, over the longer term, endanger the stability of several West African states. [redacted]

West African Islamic Groups

The Muslim community in West Africa with which Saudi Arabia and Libya interact is divided into many disparate local groups, each with its own leadership and organizational structure.⁵ Although some of the larger Islamic organizations in West Africa—such as the Muslim brotherhoods and the northern Nigerian fundamentalist network—cut across social, ethnic, and regional lines, in our view few of them have succeeded in fully overcoming these divisions or in crossing national boundaries. The groups are typically defined by or organized around their leaders, the occupation of their members, or their interpretation of Islamic tradition. These organizations often respond to different political stimuli, reflecting the sometimes conflicting needs of peasants, small businessmen, mystics, the elite, and the disestablished, rootless, and volatile fringes of society. [redacted]

We find that the strength and nature of the particular Islamic beliefs manifested by these groups often vary along the generational lines of their adherents:

- The oldest generation of orthodox fundamentalists—who for the most part are no longer politically active—tends to reject modernization and insists on literal observance of the Koran as a prescription for modern life.

⁵ See appendix for a survey of selected West African Islamic groups. [redacted]

- The middle-aged, Westernized reformers wish to adapt Islam to the needs of the 20th century, while the younger and more self-confident Islamic activists urge a mutual exchange between modern practice and traditional faith.
- The youngest and most radical tend to turn back to the orthodoxy of the oldest generation and insist again that society follow the dictates of the Koran. [redacted]

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The Islamic Brotherhoods. Numerous academic studies indicate that membership in either traditional or reformed branches of the Muslim brotherhoods is one of the most common forms of Islamic affiliation in West Africa. Today, the brotherhoods furnish much of the social fabric of rural life, providing social ties for their members and education for their children. They are organized into small groups of disciples bound by personal loyalty to a teacher with a reputation for piety. The brotherhoods for the most part preach a soothing, popular form of Islamic (Sufi) mysticism. [redacted]

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Some groups represent particular ethnic interests. The Muridiya Brotherhood in Senegal has actively supported Wolof tribal nationalism, although US Embassy reporting indicates that its membership is now broadening to include other ethnic groups. The Qadiriya Brotherhood in northern Nigeria is dominated by the traditional Fulani tribal aristocracy, while southern Muslims from the Yoruba tribe belong primarily to the Ahmadiya Islamic group. Local observers report that the rest of the West African Islamic community, together with the Saudis, has succeeded in barring the Ahmadiya from participating in the pilgrimage to Mecca because of its liberal mix of Christian and Islamic practice and its worship of the group's Pakistani founder, Ahmad, as a prophet equal to Muhammad. [redacted]

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The **Qadiriya** Brotherhood, named after 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani of Baghdad who died in 1166, estab-

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lished itself peacefully along West Africa's principal trade routes several centuries ago. It achieved its greatest political influence in the 19th century, when the Fulani religious thinker and political-military leader, Usman dan Fodio, conquered the Hausa States north of the Niger River. Traditional state (emirate) structures established at that time continue today within the northern states of Nigeria, and traditional leaders there still follow Qadiriya doctrine. Sokoto State in northern Nigeria is the center of Qadiriya activity under the leadership of the Sultan and is the home of Nigerian President Shagari. In our judgment the brotherhood continues to support the traditional, joint Hausa-Fulani leadership of Sokoto State that has dominated the northern region. [redacted]

Academic sources show, however, that since the late 19th century the Qadiriya has been steadily losing ground in West Africa to the **Tijaniya** Brotherhood, named for Ahmad al-Tijani, a Moroccan cleric who died in 1815. The Tijaniya spread rapidly after the Torodo (Fulani) warrior-leader Al-haj Umar founded an Islamic state on the Senegal River with political ties extending as far as the Niger. The brotherhood's strong missionary effort and appeal to those leaders seeking to break the power of traditional Qadiriya authorities, such as the Sultan of Sokoto, have produced a marked increase in Tijani membership throughout West Africa over the last 30 years. According to various US Embassy sources, a majority of West African Muslims now belong to the Tijaniya Brotherhood's largely autonomous national branches. [redacted]

During the 20th century the brotherhoods have split into subgroups largely because of pressures from younger members for greater political influence. In Nigeria, for example, conversations between local observers and US officials indicate that the reformed Tijaniya, led by young activist reformers under the former Emir of Kano, Mohamadu Sanusi, has achieved considerable political influence in Kano State in the north because of its support for Aminu Kano's faction of the People's Redemption Party (PRP). Insistence by Tijaniya reformers on establishing a federal Islamic court of appeals nearly caused the collapse of the Constituent Assembly, elected in 1978 to draw up Nigeria's blueprint for civilian rule. [redacted]

The **Muridiya**, a brotherhood founded in Senegal early in this century, has attracted a majority of the Islamic population there, according to US Embassy reports. It has built up a formidable financial empire in Senegal based on the commercialization of the peanut trade and a shrewd investment of the brotherhood's communal assets. Its members come mainly from the peasantry, but US Embassy sources report that university students and young intellectuals are now joining as a rebellious gesture against both modernization and their parents' Tijaniya affiliations. [redacted]

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US Embassy reports also indicate that the Muridiya has undertaken an active political role in Senegal under the leadership of Lahat Mbacke. Mbacke claims to speak for all Senegalese members of the Muridiya (1.5 million out of the total estimated population of 4.5 million); Embassy sources report that he is expanding his personal power. These same sources believe that the Senegalese Government consults the Muridiya on most issues of internal policy and often is responsive to its views. Dakar, for example, gave in to Muride pressure in the 1960s to withdraw a tariff on the peanut crop, the principal agricultural product of the Muride peasantry. Last year the government backed away from community development projects in Muride areas where social and institutional change is seen as a threat to the special privileges Muride leaders receive from their peasant followers. Brotherhood leaders successfully imposed their control on agricultural cooperatives in the peanut-growing regions and have manipulated the cooperatives' assets for their personal profit. [redacted]

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We estimate that the influence of the Muridiya in Senegalese political life probably will increase even more during the tenure of the current President, Abdou Diouf, a Tijani who pays careful attention to the interests of both brotherhoods. He has promoted cooperation between the brotherhoods and cultivated Muride ties in what the US Embassy believes is an attempt to avoid suspicions of favoritism toward the Tijaniya. He also has exploited his position as an Islamic leader; for example, he took a major role in the proceedings at last year's Islamic Conference at Jidda. [redacted]

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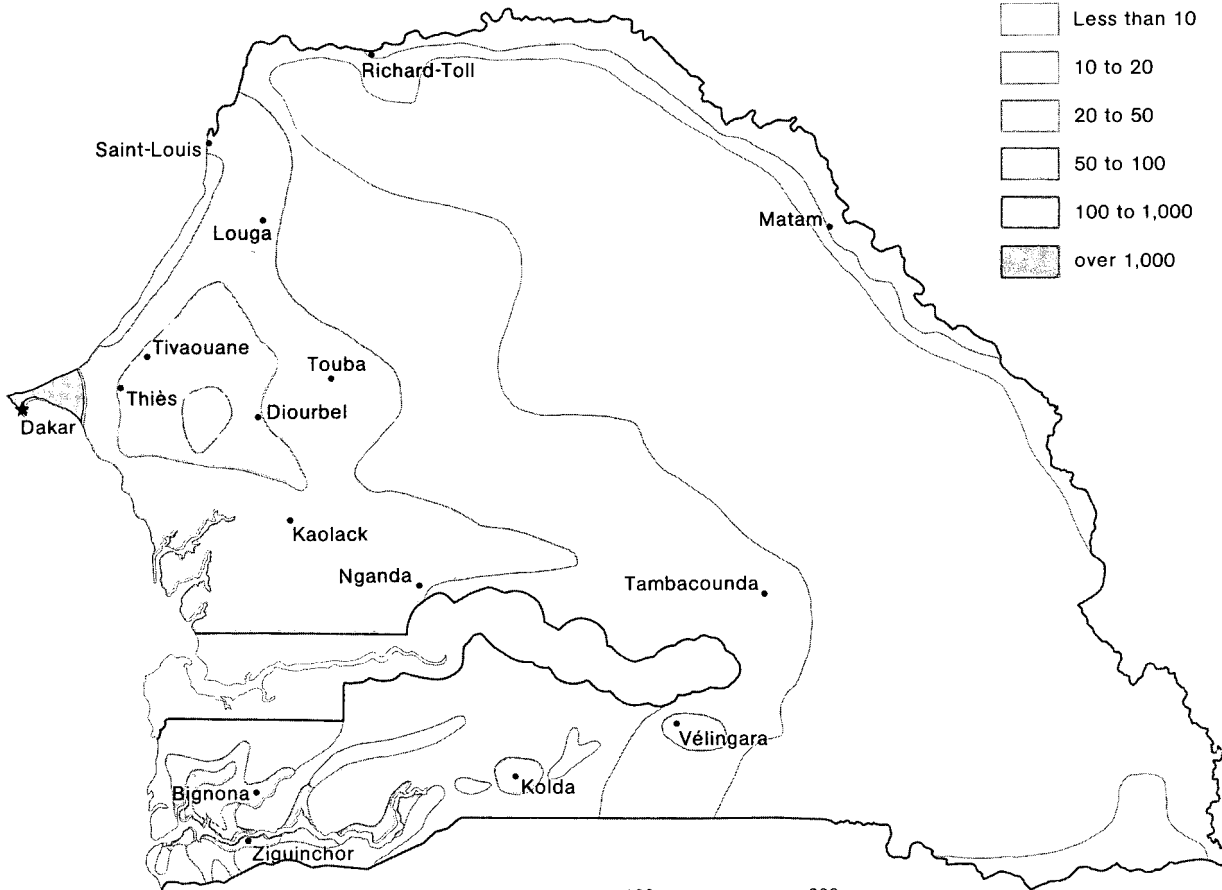
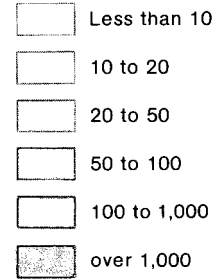
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Figure 1
SENEGAL
Population Distribution

Persons per sq. kilometer



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With its economy in disarray, we believe that Senegal is ill-prepared to meet Muride demands for larger shares of a diminishing economic pie. The restoration during the late 1970s of a multiparty system in Senegal has offered the brotherhood's leaders (*marabouts*) many possibilities for political maneuvering, but US Embassy sources expect them generally to support President Diouf in the 1983 elections.

Senegalese officials have expressed concern that deteriorating economic conditions would provide the Libyans an opportunity to establish a foothold in the country's mass-membership Islamic groups. There have been indications in the French press that Libyan money may be funding some Muride activities, although the brotherhood denies this. In 1979, Ahmad Niasse, the son of the founder of a small branch of the

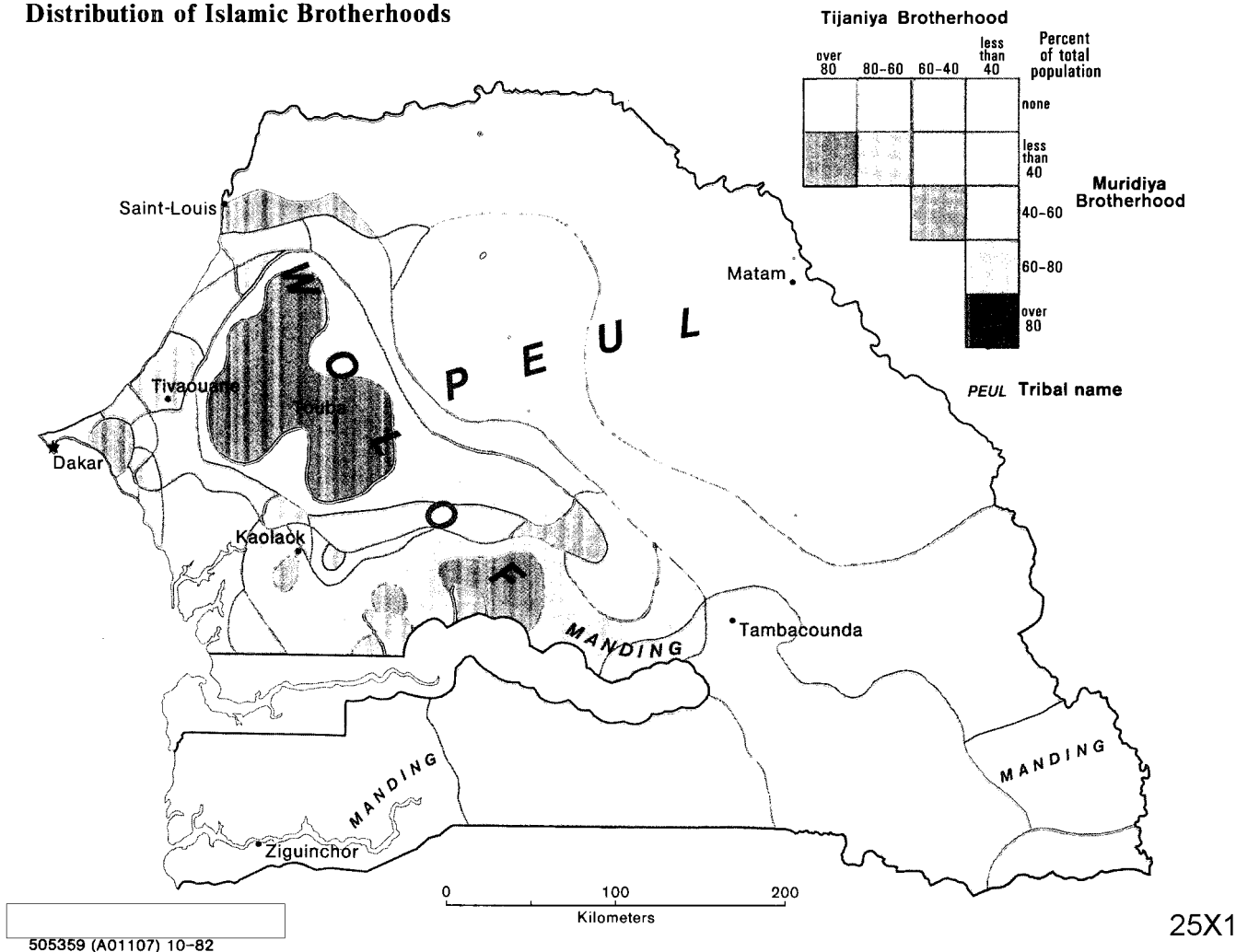
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Figure 2

SENEGAL
Distribution of Islamic Brotherhoods



Tijaniya based in the Senegalese town of Kaolack, attempted to establish a Libyan-backed political party with a platform calling for an Islamic revolution in Senegal. His group was immediately banned by the government and he fled to Tripoli. He later returned to Senegal and was disavowed by his Libyan supporters, who saw him as a barrier to relations with the Senegalese Government.

In our view, the Islamic brotherhoods enjoy considerable political influence, particularly in Senegal, because of their size, their role as spokesmen for special interest groups, and their newfound interest in cooperating with each other. Until the early 1970s tensions within the West African Muslim community resulted mainly from efforts by the brotherhoods to recruit members from each other's ranks. Recently, however,

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local US Embassy observers have remarked that the brotherhoods have drawn together to resist newer—and radical—Islamic groups that are siphoning off large numbers of recruits. We believe that over the long term the future of the brotherhoods depends more on internal dynamics, particularly the emergence of dynamic leaders, than on the availability of foreign funds. [redacted]

[redacted] Islamic Trust in Nigeria—which includes a number of senior government officials and close associates of President Shagari—solicited funds from Libya for a Muslim newspaper. The request was made even though most of the group’s support has come from Saudi Arabia—some \$13.8 million a year during the 1970s, according to our estimate. It is our judgment that although the trust and other voluntary associations in West Africa—such as the Islamic Association of Niger and the Islamic Cultural Association of Cameroon—will take money from any willing Arab donor, their conservative leadership tends to look to the Saudis for guidance. [redacted]

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Voluntary Associations. The Islamic voluntary associations are more politically significant than the brotherhoods mainly because of the personal wealth and political connections of their leaders. Groups such as the Union for Islamic Progress in Senegal, the Muslim Cultural Center in Ivory Coast, and the Islamic Trust in Nigeria draw upon privileged interest groups with powerful political ties and access to international sources of funding. US Embassy and academic sources indicate that the internal organization of the associations is fairly sophisticated—including executive boards and specialized committees for religious affairs, estates, youth, and education. Branches in major urban centers are common. [redacted]

Some of these associations have access to the highest levels of government [redacted]

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Academic studies indicate membership of the voluntary associations usually includes European-educated professionals and government, military, and religious leaders who have accepted modern Western practices and who use the associations for mutual benefit and cooperation. The groups also draw on plantation farmers, successful businessmen, and those who control internal transportation networks. Members’ Islamic credentials usually include a trip to Mecca and an elementary Koranic school education. Their dedication to the finer points of doctrine is often minimal, and many drink alcoholic beverages openly, smoke, and fail to observe the required fasts. Their prestige, however, is enhanced by the title Alhaji—denoting completion of a pilgrimage to Mecca—and by membership in an Islamic organization. [redacted]

[redacted] in Nigeria, for example, the “Kaduna Mafia,” an elite group of business, political, and military leaders in the important regional center of Kaduna, plays an important role in the Islamic Trust. Founded by the spiritual leader of Islam in northern Nigeria, Alhaji Abubakar Gumi, the trust leadership includes Minister of Agriculture Adamu Ciroma, former Minister of Internal Affairs Iya Abubakar, and the former managing director of the newspaper *New Nigerian*, Maman Daura. In addition, the mafia has maneuvered promising young men into positions of power and acts as an informal advisory group to Nigeria’s President. [redacted]

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Although relations between the voluntary associations and the traditional brotherhoods are generally correct, [redacted] there is little rapport between them because their purposes generally diverge. The brotherhoods are oriented toward the peasantry, while the associations provide a forum for commercial and political elites. The latter are also more involved in social welfare projects. We believe, however, that both the brotherhoods and the associations, particularly in Nigeria, have united against what they view as a growing threat to their political and economic position by the militant fundamentalists. [redacted]

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The associations secure money from a number of Arab sources and invest it in projects of value to the Islamic community such as mosques and schools. According to US Embassy sources, Saudi Arabia and Libya have each provided funding for association projects in their competition for influence in West Africa. [redacted]

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Alhaji Abubakar Gumi

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In northern Nigeria, [redacted] a network of Islamic organizations has gathered around Alhaji Abubakar Gumi, a Muslim lawyer and preacher at the Kaduna city mosque. These same sources claim that he is the first West African Islamic figure to see the possibilities of a radio and television ministry. The program "Abubakar Gumi's Call" has attracted a wide following among young government workers and professionals, students, peasants, and the urban unemployed, as well as members of the highest government circles. Local observers believe that Gumi has established himself as the intellectual and spiritual leader of most of the principal fundamentalist groups in Nigeria today.

with Islam are their only common bonds. Embassy sources report that these groups include the Society for the Victory of Islam and the Islamic Trust, which support the government; the League for the Elimination of Heresy, which is critical of the government and prone to violence; and the radical Muslim Student Society, which calls for revolution and the formation of an Islamic state.

Embassy reporting indicates that Gumi has a broad range of political connections: the leader of the north's principal opposition party, Aminu Kano, calls Gumi his "teacher," and President Shagari has sent him as his personal representative abroad. In the 1960s when the Arabs began to invest in African Muslim causes, Gumi succeeded, according to US Embassy reports, in making himself the principal distributor of Saudi largesse in Nigeria. With this money he has sponsored a number of groups and causes within the country.

Gumi himself publicly supports a unified Nigeria governed through the present federal system. He publicly advocates the establishment of a ministry of religious affairs to regulate the three principal religious denominations in Nigeria (Muslim, Christian, and Animist) and has registered his support for government control of Muslim preachers. According to US Embassy reporting, Gumi acts as a brake on the more aggressive radical elements in the Nigerian fundamentalist movement by publicly advising the league and students to avoid violence in their dealings with the government and other religious groups.

The groups that Abubakar Gumi leads are varied in purpose and political orientation, and in our judgment their respect for Gumi and their identification

Embassy sources believe Abubakar Gumi wishes to expand his influence as he broadens his following. Through the league, he now has the opportunity to transcend Nigeria's borders. He is in his sixties, however, has many enemies among the traditional ruling elite—particularly in Kano, a center of the Tijaniya Brotherhood—and the groups he attracts lack cohesion.

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Fundamentalist Groups. The fundamentalist groups range in size from small cell-like organizations to groups with memberships in the thousands. We believe that these groups, regardless of their political bent, are forging an increasingly important place for themselves within West Africa's Islamic community. Whether influenced by Saudi Arabia or courted by Libya, they have adopted political roles that are often

hostile to established national regimes and traditional elites. Academic studies and US Embassy reports indicate that the alienation and isolation of these groups from the centers of power create internal solidarity, while their simple, otherworldly solutions to complex problems strike a responsive chord among the urban poor and radical students. [redacted]

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In their public statements, the fundamentalists, often called Wahabi, uphold an inflexible and puritanical form of Islam, and in cases reject modernity and Westernization as heretical innovations. The fundamentalists' denunciation of the brotherhoods and other groups as un-Islamic has provoked violence between orthodox and reformed Muslims that reached its most serious proportions in 1980 with the riot in Kano, Nigeria, and brief clashes in Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Sierra Leone, and other West African countries. Even in Senegal, highly organized as it is into strong Islamic brotherhoods, there is a small but flourishing fundamentalist movement that is active in Dakar and in surrounding villages. [redacted]

In our view, the fundamentalist appeal lies in the broad popular dissatisfactions among urban West African Muslims with overcrowding and poverty. A Nigerian Government inquiry showed that the followers of one leader, Maitatsine Marwa, used this discontent to incite the Kano riot. In return for shelter and food, these disciples—primarily rural migrants—supported Marwa's militant radicalism, rejecting modern innovation and ownership of personal property and attacking other Muslims as unbelievers. By 1980 Marwa had 10,000 followers in Kano and in other areas of northern Nigeria. [redacted]

In addition to attacking other Muslims, the fundamentalists have caused problems for West Africa's secular governments by publicly criticizing them for inefficiency, corruption, and Westernization. The League for the Elimination of Heresy, with several thousand supporters the largest fundamentalist group in Nigeria, is one of the most radical of the Muslim organizations and has close ties to Libya, according to Embassy sources. Its public pronouncements have focused on such religious and political issues as the right to preach without government supervision, official corruption, and the need to impeach Nigeria's President. Informed members of the northern Nigerian Islamic community say that the group is trying to expand along Hausa trader networks through Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, and Mali. The US Embassy in Benin reports that the league has already established a branch there with the help of funds from the Libyan Government. [redacted]

Wahabi Fundamentalism

The term Wahabi, used for many West African fundamentalist groups, comes from the name of an Islamic revival and "purification" that originated some 200 years ago in Saudi Arabia. Academic studies indicate Wahabi reform was imported from the Middle East to West Africa during the colonial period and was seen as a threat to political stability by the traditional leaders of the Islamic brotherhoods and by the colonial authorities. The French systematically sought to stamp out the movement, which identified itself politically with radical parties such as the African Party of Independence in Senegal.

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In West Africa, Wahabi fundamentalists oppose Western cultural ideals introduced since the beginning of the colonial period. They urge strict observance of fasting and the pilgrimage, and prohibit smoking, drinking, and any mixture of Islamic ritual with animist superstitions. They emphasize the unity of religion and politics. They insist on the need to enforce Muslim law, to purify (Islamicize) the state, and to fight corruption. Non-Muslims are tolerated but are not permitted to control the public life of the Muslim community.

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The Wahabi maintain a strict and narrow definition of who is Muslim. For example, according to US Embassy sources, Nigerian President Shagari, who belongs to the Qadiriya Brotherhood, is viewed by fundamentalists in northern Nigeria as a "bad" Muslim because of his ties with the brotherhood and his support for a secular, pluralistic state. They maintain he should be removed from office by the Islamic community, constitutionally or otherwise.

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Radical Student Organizations. According to the press and US Embassy reports, the fundamentalist challenge to West Africa's secular governments has been joined in some states in recent years by radical Muslim students who advocate a complete reorganization of national politics and society. Some of these student and faculty groups, particularly in northern Nigeria, represent an extreme anti-Western—and anti-Christian—fringe of contemporary Islam. US Embassy sources indicate these groups are trying to extend their influence into the Islamic community as a whole and have attracted the attention and support of Libya and other radical foreign elements. At least some students have received scholarships to Libyan universities, and many returnees tell of military training for students who are encouraged to pursue anti-government activities after returning home.



In April 1982, according to press reports, members of the Nigerian Muslim Student Society and the fundamentalist League for the Elimination of Heresy joined to occupy the central mosque in Bauchi State as a gesture in condemnation of the traditional brotherhoods, which they consider "un-Islamic." The incident involved the largest clash between police and Muslim militants since the riots in the city of Kano in December 1980. We believe that the takeover also marked the first time that campus and off-campus groups have worked so closely together in an antigovernment demonstration. Local officials have indicated rising concern that such cooperation will hamper their ability to control student unrest as they have in the past by closing the universities for extended periods. We believe that the government's failure to rein in these radical student groups will almost certainly lead to an escalation of violence and antigovernment activity within the Islamic community.



West African Islam and Regional Stability

Islamic history documents that whenever Islam served as a catalyst for political reform, a single leader has emerged from within the community to channel its energies into revolutionary activity, military conquest, and the imposition of Islamic law. In our judgment, the present Muslim revival in West Africa has yet to produce such a figure or an issue capable of overcoming the ideological and ethnic divisions between existing fundamentalist groups or between Muslims divided by modern nation state boundaries. Nor, in the short term, are these divisions likely to be overcome and significant Muslim political cohesion achieved by the appeal of one or the other of the now-competing external influences—conservative Saudi and radical Libyan. In the long term, however, we believe that if networks such as that established by Abubakar Gumi or organizations with the dynamic appeal of the League for the Elimination of Heresy continue to grow, they could become an important factor in moving West Africa's Muslims from a force that is apolitical to one that advocates radical political and religious change.

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Nigeria and Senegal appear to us to be the West African states where Muslim political activities have the most visibility and the greatest potential for unrest. Senegal's Islamic majority is organized within the predominant Muridiya and Tijaniya brotherhoods, and we believe that maintaining a careful balance between the two groups is essential to the country's political stability. Competition between them strengthens the government's position, while the government relies on brotherhood leaders for social control. We believe this balance is now being threatened by the Muridiya's economic success, growing membership, and desire for political dominance. Senegal's poor economic prospects suggest to us that Dakar will be unable to fulfill the economic expectations of Muridiya members and that the brotherhood's leaders could use their financial power to challenge government policies.

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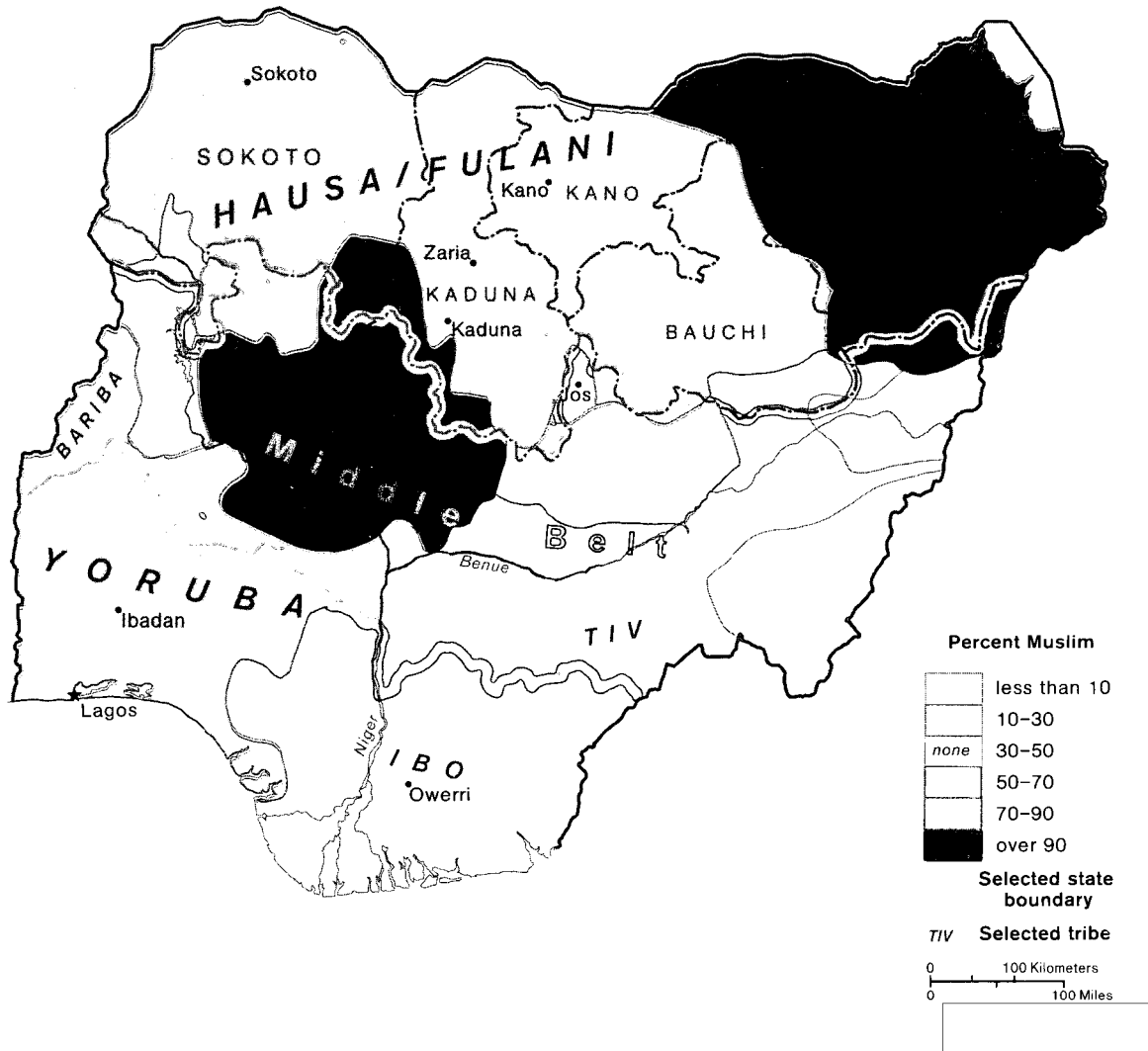
In contrast to Senegal's highly organized Islamic community, Nigeria's Muslim institutions exhibit many of the same untidy characteristics that define the country's exuberant political life. According to

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Figure 3

NIGERIA
Muslim Distribution



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US Embassy reports, the radical fundamentalists are growing in numbers and could—if the growth continues—become a threat over the long term to the stability of the north, where Nigeria’s Muslim population is concentrated. In our view the Kano riots by followers of the Maitatsine Marwa symbolize—more than any other development in recent years—the

importance of the Islamic revival. Although Embassy reporting indicates that Nigeria’s more aggressive Islamic elements are too divided to mount a national political challenge any time soon, we believe that any significant further increase in Muslim self-awareness will probably lead to stronger northern political and religious demands on the central government. Such a

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development could eventually undermine the delicate spirit of cooperation between the Muslim north and the non-Muslim southern and central ethnic groups that has sustained the Nigerian Government. [redacted]

cant radical Islamic presence in the government that might force Lagos into a more hardline position on issues of importance to Washington, like the timetable for majority rule in Namibia. [redacted] 25X1

Embassy reports indicate that governments in other West African countries—Cameroon, Mali, and Niger—already face ethnic and religious problems and could be threatened by a politicized Islamic movement. In our judgment, Qadhafi will continue his efforts to use Islam as a means of ideological and political access to the region. The model of revolution he portrays in his Green Book and the example of his own career have great attraction for Muslims living in countries where corrupt and inefficient governments are failing to keep national economies afloat or to fulfill their promises to the people. However, we expect that his ability to translate this sympathy of views into influence within the West African Islamic community will be limited by suspicion of his motives among Africans, by local government vigilance, and by Qadhafi's own financial problems, which affect his ability to provide assistance. [redacted]

Another potentially worrisome development for the United States, in our view, is the involvement of West African Islam in Middle Eastern problems. Local observers report that Saudi money is financing the voluntary associations and other fundamentalist groups and that they in turn toe the Saudi line on a variety of issues. We anticipate that Riyadh would not hesitate to call on them for support—verbal or otherwise—in any dispute with Washington over Israeli actions in the Middle East. We believe that Saudi-backed groups are particularly influential in Nigeria. [redacted] 25X1

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In our judgment, the Soviets will attempt to benefit from any general increase in instability in the region. We believe, however, that Moscow's ability to develop close ties with radical Muslims is limited by Islamic antipathy toward Communism and by Muslim objections to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. We know of no Islamic group within West Africa that accepts Soviet assistance or advocates close ties to the Soviet Union. We believe that the USSR might, however, profit from the instability that could be created by Libyan aid to such groups. [redacted] 25X1

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US Interests

In our judgment, a highly politicized Islamic movement could have important consequences for US interests in West Africa. We believe that at least some of today's radical Islamic groups will eventually place in positions of political leadership members with strong anti-US prejudices. An increased radical Islamic presence could enhance Libyan opportunities to destabilize various moderate, pro-Western governments—in Senegal, Niger, Cameroon, and Nigeria—and could undermine the support Washington receives from them on African and on international issues. In addition, Washington's continued access to such resources as Nigerian oil and the sophisticated telecommunications facilities in Liberia will be tested. [redacted]

We believe that, in the short term, the efforts of the Soviets to enhance their influence in the region also will be limited by the dissatisfaction of several West African Islamic leaders over the paucity and quality of Moscow's assistance. Nigeria has kept Moscow at some distance, in part because of an unsatisfactory Soviet military aid program that has resulted in numerous aircraft and other equipment failures. Guinea's President Toure, for many years one of Moscow's strongest African supporters, is seeking economic assistance from the United States and other Western governments while criticizing the Soviets for their refusal to be more understanding of Conakry's financial difficulties. Other governments that cite Moscow's weak economic assistance as the primary reason for turning back toward somewhat closer relations with the West include Benin, Guinea-Bissau, and Mali. [redacted] 25X1

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Of particular concern is the question of how Nigeria will exercise its regional role should Islamic influence increase within the government. Lagos has long had pretensions to leadership in West Africa and in recent years has generally supported Washington's African policies. We judge that Nigeria's willingness to continue this support could be undermined by a signifi-

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Nevertheless, higher levels of instability resulting from Libyan machinations in the region could open more opportunities to the Soviets to influence the Muslim community, particularly if Moscow targets militant revolutionary groups like the Muslim student associations or the League for the Elimination of Heresy, for significant support. Moscow would also benefit from the Muslim revival if it threatens West Africa's moderate secular governments. [redacted]

Developments related to the Islamic revival could—if they materialized—lead to greater instability in the region and jeopardize the ability of some governments to remain in power:

- A dramatic increase in violence between Muslim groups or between Muslims and Christians at the time of major political transitions, such as elections next year in Nigeria and in Senegal. The Society for the Victory of Islam, nominally a moderate Muslim group, has already called for a holy struggle (*jihad*) to register Nigeria's Muslim voters and give them paramilitary training in preparation for the 1983 elections.
- The fielding of candidates for national office by Muslim religious groups, such as the Muridiya of Senegal or the League for the Elimination of Heresy, which could lead to a struggle along religious lines for political supremacy.
- Indications that militant Islamic groups are organizing across national boundaries to enlist Muslim communities in neighboring states in joint political action.
- Evidence of sustained intergroup cooperation at the national level by Muslim organizations, such as that which has occurred sporadically between student and off-campus fundamentalist groups in northern Nigeria.
- Expanding contacts involving West African Muslims, Libyans, and Iranians, and the inability of individual West African governments to resist such activities.

- Increased activism by West African Islamic leaders in international Muslim organizations on behalf of Arab causes that conflict with US positions. [redacted]

We believe that, in the short term at least, lack of leadership, existing factionalism, and conflicting ethnic, social, religious, and regional interests will prevent West Africa's Islamic groups from becoming a threat either to the region's stability or its relations with the West. Nonetheless, each development outlined above could come about from an intensification of present trends. [redacted]

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Appendix

Selected West African
Islamic Groups

State	Group	Comments
Nigeria (population: 82.3 million; 50 percent Muslim)	Qadiriya Brotherhood	Traditional branch The group's approximately 800,000 members are under the leadership of the Sultan of Sokoto. Membership consists largely of Fulani tribesmen of Sokoto State and is scattered throughout Sokoto, Kaduna, Kano, Bauchi, and parts of the Middle Belt. President Shehu Shagari belongs to the group that supports the ruling National Party of Nigeria (NPN). Reformed branch The multiethnic, mass-participation group of some 9.5 million is based in Kano State.
	Tijaniya Brotherhood	Traditional branch Consists of about 1.9 million of the Fulani-Hausa tribesmen in Zaria and other areas of northern states. Reformed branch Multiethnic, mass-participation membership of 21 million is based in Kano city. Politically aligned with Aminu Kano's opposition People's Redemption Party, a radical socialist party. Receives some Libyan support.
	Society for the Victory of Islam (<i>Jama'atul Nasril Islam</i>)	Founded in the 1960s by Alhaji Abubakar Gumi, a Hausa, who is the principal spiritual leader of Nigerian fundamentalism. Multiethnic membership includes civil servants, traditional elites, and advisers to President Shagari. Supports the ruling NPN and undertakes welfare activities and liaison with Muslim community for the Federal Government.
	The Islamic Trust	Founded by Abubakar Gumi; includes members of the Kaduna Mafia representing commercial and political elites of the north. Membership includes several top Shagari advisers. Since 1979, it has been the principal channel for disbursing Saudi funds in Nigeria. It is politically aligned with the NPN.
	League for the Elimination of Heresy (<i>Jama'atul Izlatul Bidi'a</i>)	Largest fundamentalist group in Nigeria, numbering perhaps several thousand. Its youthful membership is prone to violence. It was originally based among Muslims in central Middle Belt states and is now spreading to Hausa communities in other West African countries. Some Libyan funding. Hostile to Shagari government and traditional brotherhoods.
	Muslim Student Association	Most radical fundamentalist group in Nigeria. Multiethnic membership; strongest on two principal northern university campuses. Strongly opposed to Shagari government, the West, traditional brotherhoods, and Christianity. Seeking ties with other Islamic groups, particularly the League for the Elimination of Heresy.
	Yan Izalla	Followers of the late Maitatsine Marwa, a Cameroonian cleric in Kano city. Membership estimated at 10,000 or more before riots in December 1980 in Kano that took thousands of lives, including Marwa's. Established branches in northern Nigeria that continue to be active. Militantly antigovernment.
	Anwaru Islam, the Ansaudeen, and the Ahmadiya	Yoruba Muslim groups formed during colonial period. Play an important role in western region's policy of universal education. The Ahmadiya, the largest of the groups, is a source of interethnic friction, and has been barred from the pilgrimage to Mecca by Saudi and northern Nigerian Muslims due to doctrinal disputes.

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**Selected West African
Islamic Groups (continued)**

State	Group	Comments
Senegal (population: 6 million; 82 percent Muslim)	Muridiya Brotherhood	Mbacke branch Bay Fal branch Membership of about 1.5 million is largely from the Wolof tribe, but the brotherhood is attracting other tribal groups, urban youth, and university students. The Caliph General of the Mbacke branch, Lahat Mbacke, is expanding his personal political power. This brotherhood is the single most important economic force in Senegal and is consulted by the government on most matters of domestic policy. Some alleged Libyan ties. Majority of the military, including Army Chief of Staff, belong to the brotherhood. Will probably support present government as long as the brotherhood's economic demands are met.
	Tijaniya Brotherhood	Sy branch Niassene branch Tall branch An estimated 1.3 to 1.5 million members are principally Wolof and include university faculty, government elite—including President Diouf—small shopkeepers, urban railroad workers, and some cattle herders. Until the last decade it was the largest brotherhood in Senegal and is still consulted by the government on most matters of domestic policy. The Niassene branch has longstanding ties with reformed Tijaniya in northern Nigeria; one of its leaders, Ahmad Niase, a radical politician and fundamentalist preacher, was in the past involved with Libyans.
	Qadiriya Brotherhood	Membership of about 300,000 is localized in southeast Senegal among Wolof peasants. Little political influence.
	Layenne Brotherhood	Brotherhood constitutes about 20,000 wealthy members of Lebou tribe living in Dakar and adjacent to Cap Vert. Politically insignificant.
Gambia (population: 635,000; 90 percent Muslim)	Gambian Muslim Association	Membership from all the brotherhoods. Although theoretically apolitical, the Association works closely with the government and the ruling party. Its program emphasizes education and welfare.
	Tijaniya Brotherhood	Multiethnic membership of about 500,000 includes Mandingo, Fulani, Wolof and Soninke tribesmen and represents the majority of the Muslim community. Some members have been recruited by Ahmad Niase, radical fundamentalist leader from Senegal, and still support his proposed Senegambian Islamic state.
	Qadiriya Brotherhood	Oldest of the Gambian brotherhoods.
	Muridiya Brotherhood	Very few members in Gambia.
Niger (population: 5.8 million; 90 percent Muslim)	The Islamic Association	The only recognized Islamic organization in Niger. It is fully integrated into the government structure and is used to assure that Islam retains traditional piety and promotes national unity.
	Tijaniya Brotherhood	Active among Toubou tribesmen in the north but enjoys little or no political influence.
	Sanusiya Brotherhood	A brotherhood founded in 19th century and supported by Libya. Has established a minor presence among the Tuareg tribesmen around Agadez.
	Qadiriya Brotherhood	Has a modest following in urban areas. Not politically active.

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**Selected West African
Islamic Groups (continued)**

State	Group	Comments
Mali (population: 7 million; 80 percent Muslim)	Tijaniya Brotherhood	Majority of brotherhood's membership is drawn from Mandingo and Fulani tribes in northwest (Kayes) and central (Bamako) regions. Follows mystic Sufi practices liberally mixed with traditional animism. Informal ties exist with government through Malian Association for the Unity and Progress of Islam, which a member of the Tijaniya leads. Brotherhood receives Saudi and some Libyan support.
	Wahabi	Group was formally banned in 1979 but is still politically active. It is the most important group economically because its membership includes Mali's wealthiest businessmen. Group has religious, commercial, and educational ties throughout the Arab world, particularly in Saudi Arabia.
	Qadiriya Brotherhood	Few in numbers, little influence. Members are largely cattle herding Fulani tribesmen in Timbuktu region.
	Malian Association for the Unity and Progress of Islam	A government association organized to control the Muslim community and mediate disputes, particularly between Tijani and Wahabi membership.
	Followers of Issa Dembele	The only known dissident Muslim group in Mali. Preaches Malian nationalist and socialist doctrines mingled with Islamic reform. Leader has traveled widely in Middle East and is supported by regime's opponents and some Malians studying abroad.
Cameroon (population: 9 million; 15 percent Muslim)	Tijaniya Brotherhood	The Tijaniya, under tight government control, has replaced in influence both the Qadiriya and Mahdiya Brotherhoods that earlier dominated the community. The group plays no political role, although the President and key government officials are members. Wealthy businessmen and security forces and army leaders belong to the brotherhood, as does the majority of Cameroon's 1.2 to 1.5 million Muslims.
	Islamic Cultural Association	Founded by government to monitor activities of the Islamic community.
Ivory Coast (population: 8.5 million; 25 percent Muslim)	Association of Orthodox Muslims of Ivory Coast (Wahabiya)	A conservative fundamentalist group of some 25,000, centered in Abidjan and with branches elsewhere. Founded in early 1960s, it is anti-Western and antimodern; heavily influenced and funded by Saudis. Granted legal status by the government in 1976. Its members have clashed violently with traditional Muslims.
	Higher Islamic Council	The official representative of Muslim community; an umbrella organization that nominally includes all Muslims in the country.
	Association of Muslim Students	Fundamentalist group founded in 1975. It is represented at all university branches and secondary schools, but as yet politically inactive.
Liberia (population: 2 million; 20 percent Muslim)	National Muslim Council	An umbrella organization founded in 1975; members keep a low profile politically and are supported on a small scale by Egypt, the Saudis, and a variety of other Middle Eastern Arab states.
	Islamic Call Society	A minor group of radical fundamentalists, receiving some funds from Libya. Almost no political significance.

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**Selected West African
Islamic Groups (continued)**

State	Group	Comments
Sierra Leone (population: 3.5 million; 30 percent Muslim)	Sierra Leone Muslim Congress	Founded in 1932, the group includes senior government officials. Supports education and gives aid to pilgrims to Mecca.
	Sierra Leone Muslim Brotherhood Mission	Runs an Arabic cultural center in Freetown.
	Supreme Islamic Council	Head of the Council is also a member of the ruling party's Central Committee, but the group's chief activities are primarily religious education, not politics.
	Ahmadiya Muslim Association	Missionary organization supporting a number of schools.
	Sierra Leone Muslim Men and Women's Association	The group, led by a charismatic preacher, Alhaji Ibrahim Turay, is growing rapidly. It is apolitical.
	Sierra Leone Pilgrims Association	Haja Danke Kabia, second wife of President Stevens, uses the Association to channel assistance from Middle Eastern states to pilgrims to Mecca.
Benin (population: 3.6 million; 15-20 percent Muslim)	League for the Elimination of Heresy (<i>Jama'atul Izalatul Bidi'a</i>)	A branch—numbering probably less than 100—of the Nigerian fundamentalist group. Partly financed by Libya. Militant Islamic fundamentalist philosophy blended with political radicalism has proved particularly appealing among traders of the Hausa tribe living in Cotonou. The only currently active Muslim group in Benin.
Upper Volta (population: 6.2 million; 35 percent Muslim)	Tijaniya Brotherhood	Led by the chief priests of Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso. All members—numbering about 1.9 million—are theoretically also members of the "Muslim Community of Upper Volta," officially constituted in 1962 to service religious and social needs of Muslims. Because political activity is banned, the group is nominally apolitical.
	Wahabiya	Fundamentalist extremists who emphasize mutual assistance; actively recruiting among the urban poor. Their membership is estimated to range from 30,000 to 80,000.

Note: In instances where membership of groups is noted, the numbers represent the most recent assessment by Embassy sources and represent an order of magnitude rather than a reliable estimate. In addition, the various groups listed do not always account for a country's total Muslim population.



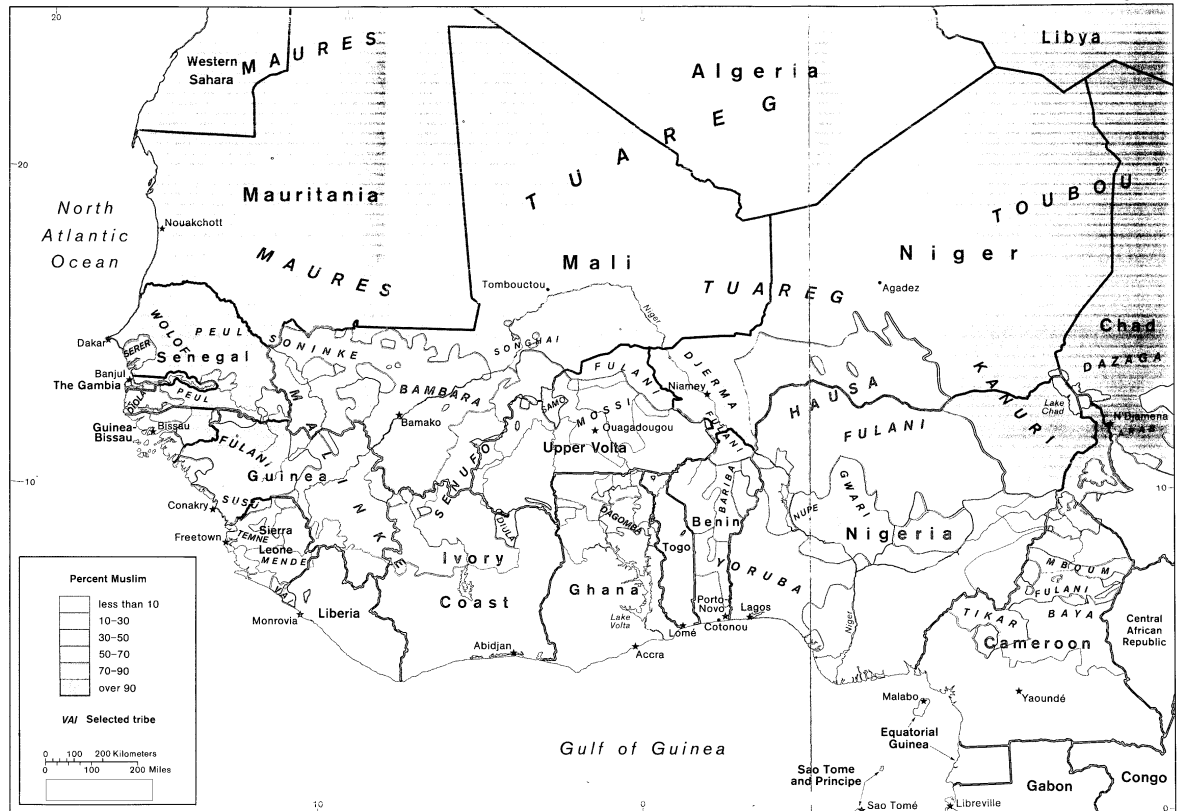
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WEST AFRICA
Muslim Distribution

Figure 4



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