

AN EXAMINATION OF THE EMERGENCE OF *FAYDAH AT-TIJANIYYAH* IN ILORIN, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The work examines the history of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* (Divine Flood of the *Tijaniyyah* Order) in Ilorin. A spiritual transformation which the founder of the *Tijaniyyah Sūfī* Order, Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani (d. 1815 C.E) prophecised Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass (d. 1975CE) proclaimed himself to be the person blessed with such position, and spread it across West Africa cities including Ilorin, Nigeria. The objective of this research is to fill the gap created in the history of *Tijaniyyah Sūfī* Order in Ilorin. The method of the research is based on both participatory observation and interpretative approach of relevant materials. The paper concludes that the advent of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* to Ilorin was due to many factors, and brought about a new understanding on the *Tijaniyyah* Order.

Keywords: *Tijaniyyah*, *Sūfī*, *Tariqah*, *Khalifah*, *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah*

Introduction

Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani, the founder of the *Tijaniyyah Sūfī* Order predicted that Divine flood would occur on his *Sūfī* disciples when people would be joining his *Sūfī* Order in multiple¹. The implication is that, at a certain period of time, someone among the *Tijaniyyah* members would emerge as *Sahib al-Faydah* (the Flag-bearer of the divine flood). Through him, people of multifarious backgrounds would be embracing the *Tijaniyyah* Order. The prediction is put in the following stanzas by Shaykh Muhammad An-Nazifi (d. 1947) a Moroccan leading scholar of the *Tijaniyyah* Order in his works entitled *al-Yaqa tat al-Faridah* and *ad-Durrat al-Kharidah Sharh ʿal-Yaqa tat al-Faridah*².

تدوم وتبقى مع دهور طويلة *** وفي آخر الزمان تأتي بفيضة
فيد خلها الورى أفواج رغبة *** لما شاهدوه من لوائح وصلة³

Meaning

1. (The *Tariqah*) will continue (to exist) and remain everlasting throughout the ages. And by the tail end of the time, the Divine flood (of the *Tariqah*) would emerge.

2. Then, people of different categories would willingly join the fold of the Order (*Tariqah*) as a result of what might have witnessed in form of visible (spiritual) connection.

Shaykh Ibrahim Niyāss in 1929 made proclamation of the status, *Sāhib al-Faydah* as well as *Khalifah* (Successor) of Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani. He made the proclamation during the annual *Mawlid an-Nabiyy* celebration of his father's family at a village called Kosi near Kaolack in the Republic of Senegal. He was eventually recognized by the people as such⁴, to the extent that the leadership of the Central *Zawiyah* of the *Tijaniyyah* in Fez, Morocco under the headship of Sayyid Abdus-Salam Sayyid in 1930s went to Kaolack, Senegal on a homage visit where all the insignia of office of *Khilafah* were submitted to him. These include a walking stick, a pair of sandals, a book of special prayers and *awrād*⁵. Through the invitation of Emir of Kano, Al-hajj Abdullahi Bayero (d. 1953), Shaykh Ibrahim visited Kano, Nigeria for the first time in 1937⁶. Although, Rüdiger Seesemann suggests that the visit took place in 1945⁷. Whatever may be the date of the visit, the *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* through Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass spread from Kano to other cities in Nigeria including Ilorin.

This paper therefore intends to study the emergence of the *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin and its sustainability in the city. As a matter fact, many works have been written on the *Tijaniyyah Sūfi* Order in Ilorin, such works include "An Appraisal of the Different *Tijaniyyah Sūfi* Groups in Ilorin, Nigeria"⁸. The history of *Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin is also examined in a paper entitled: "An Examination of the Emergence of the *Tijaniyyah* in Nigerian"⁹, as well as in a book titled: *Icon of Mystics Shaykh Ibrahim Niass al-Kawlakhy*¹⁰. All these works cannot be considered to have effectively dealt with the issue of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin. The history of *Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin during the current era is incomplete without discussing the issue of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in the city. This seems to be the vacuum which the present effort intends to fill.

Faydah at-Tijaniyyah

Faydah at-Tijaniyyah is a spiritual transformation which Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani, the founder of the *Tijaniyyah Sufi* Order between 1809 and 1815CE predicted to emerge in his *Sufi* Order¹¹, as contained in the work of Muhammad at-Tayyib as-Sufyani (d. 1843-44) on a collection of speeches of Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani (1737 – 1815). The statement runs thus:

"تأتي فيضة على أصحابي حتى يدخل الناس في طريقنا أفواجًا تأتي هذه الفيضة والناس في غاية ما يكونون من الضيق والشدة"¹².

Meaning:

Divine flood would come upon my companions, and people would be joining our order in multiple groups. This divine flood would come when the people are in their almost state of distress and hardship¹³.

The term *Faydah* is philologically derived from an Arabic word *Fada* meaning “to overflow, flow over, to inundate, flood, and deluge”¹⁴ while *Fayd* is translated to mean flood, emanation and plenty” and its plural is given as “*Fuyud*”¹⁵. Technically, the term can be explained as spiritual illumination which the companions of Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani would experience¹⁶. The fact that the statement of *as-Sufyani* does not contain a specific time when the Divine flood (*Faydah*) would emerge made the issue of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* to be controversial and attractive as many members of the *Tijaniyyah* Order Futi who had attained greatness in the Order lay claim to it. For instance Shaykh Umar al-Futi (d. 1864CE) supplicated to Allah to make him the flag bearer of the *Faydah*¹⁷. In identical with that, Shaykh Muhammad al-Hafiz b. Khayr al-^cAlawi proclaimed himself as the flag-bearer of the *Faydah*¹⁸. This accounts for the reason why Muhammad Tahir Maigari, suggests that the *Sahib al-Faydah* (the flag bearer of the *Faydah*) is not a single person¹⁹, because many scholars had proclaimed it to themselves. The suggestion which Muhammad al-Murtani refutes explaining that multiple candidates for the post does not indicate that there are multiple flag bearers for the *Faydah*²⁰. Andrea Brigaglia explains the various meanings of *Faydah*, as cited by Seesemann²¹.

The term contains a spiritual element, which manifests itself is the experience of gnosis, it has a spatial aspect that refers to the expansion of the *Tijaniyyah* both numerically and geographically, it has implications for *Sufi* teachings because *Faydah* leads to the dissemination and Deeping of esoteric knowledge; and it has social ramifications because esoteric knowledge becomes accessible to large groups of people...²²

The emergence of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* through Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass gave the Niyass family an edge over other rival *Tijaniyyah* branches in Senegal, They include ^c*Umarians* led by Sayid Nuru Tall, a grandson of Shaykh Umar al-Futi with its *Zawiyyah* in the Senegal valley²⁴. Added to that, a movement was founded out of the *Faydah* which is called *Jam^cat al-Faydah* (movement for the Divine flood) and by 1931 April, he founded a new settlement called *al-Madinah*, while between May – June 1931 he completed his celebrated work on the Divine Flood entitled: *Kashif al-Ilbas^c an Faydah al-Khatm Abu^c Abbas* (Removing the confusion surrounding the flood of the seal Abu-^cAbbas)²⁵, where he demonstrate his deep knowledge of Sufism²⁶ such as *Tarbiyah*.

Tarbiyah: *Tarbiyah* from *Sufi* perspective is considered as a system whereby a *Sufi* novice (*Murid*) strives to attain spiritual upliftment of knowing God properly²⁷. The purpose of *Tarbiyyah* is the control as well as the purification of soul and consequently becoming gnostic²⁸. *Tarbiyyah* under Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass is further explained by Imam Hasan Cisse (d. 2008) to mean the *Sufi* disciple traverses the three stations of religion. These are submission (*Islam*), faith (*Iman*), and perfection (*Ihsan*)²⁹.

The reform introduced by Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass as flag bearer of Divine Flood is not restricted to the issue of *Tarbiyah* alone, it also includes the

practice of *Qabd* (fold of arms on one's chest while offering ritual prayers). Recitation of *Basmallah* along with the *Surah al-Fatihah* during the performance of ritual prayers. Added to that is the mode of observing rituals of the order such as *Wazifah* which was commonly observed in the morning or afternoon hours, but through the reform of the *Wazifah* Shaykh Ibrahim is now being observed between *Maghrib* and 'Isha' prayers.³⁰ Despite the opposition faced by Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass as predicted by Shaykh Abdullahi al-Hajj al-Alawi³¹ he was eventually accepted as *Sahib al-Faydah* (flag-bearer of Divine Flood). The *Faydah* which emerged in the hands of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass later became an international strong movement, which some governments perceived its activities as a treat. A typical example was the Government of Northern Nigeria. By the Government removed the grand *Khalifah* (Caliph) of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass in Nigeria, *Khalifah* Muhammad Sanusi, (d. 1991) as emir of Kano in 1963. Shaykh Ibrahim continued to visit Nigeria as he used to do till the Government considered his visit as security threat to the Nation and based on that, he was banned from visiting the region³². The ban was lifted when General Yakubu Gowon came to power as Nigeria Military Head of State in 1966.

The *Faydah* movement of Shaykh Ibrahim is now perceived as a global religious movement which has spread throughout West Africa and even Nile valley and parts of Asia, Europe, the United States and few countries in South America.³³

Faydah at-Tijaniyyah in Ilorin

Sequel to the acceptance of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass as both the *Khalifah* (successor) of Shaykh Tijani and *Sahib al-Faydah* by the people, many people were attracted to the Shaykh globally. He was even viewed by Shaykh Adam Abdullahi al-Ilori (d. 1992) as a great scholar of the *Tijaniyyah Sūfī* Order who has the largest followers in West Africa. According to him, his disciples and followers visited him annually and preferred to perform pilgrimage (hajj) to Makkah with him, and if possible, to travel with him to Makkah in the same plane. He added that they always invited him to their respective places³⁴.

The combined effect of all these is that, *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* advanced to many cities in West Africa including Ilorin, and continues to be felt in the city. Certain factors might have been responsible for its emergence.

Factors Responsible for the Emergence of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah in Ilorin*

The eagerness of some adherents of the *Tijaniyyah* Order to meet with the *Sāhib al-Faydah* and *Gawth az-Zamān*, (Succor of the Age) in line with the prophecy of Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani on the appearance of flag-bearer of Divine flood of his Order: By the time Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass claimed to be *Sāhib Faydah*, many adherents of the *Tijaniyyah* Order were interested in meeting with him. Further to that, oral tradition in the city of Ilorin speculated that it was even assumed that by the time the Divine flood would emerge, it would be in the hands of Ilorin scholars, considering the number and caliber of *Sūfī* scholars

produced by the city it was even speculated that in anticipation of that, Shaykh Abdus-Salam Baba Arugbo Oniwiridi (d. 1942 CE) named one of his children Ibrahim (d. 2013)³⁵.

Another factor that contributed to the emergence and the spread of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* (The *Tijaniyyah* Divine Flood) in Ilorin was the role placed by some disciples of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass who used to propagate and advertize the issue of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin. A particular reference has to be made to the role played by Shaykh Hadi of Murtania who was a Liaison Officer of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass in Nigeria.

Many other scholars contributed in one way or the other to the emergence of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin through different means. For instance, during their visits to Ilorin, they always organize public lecture which is termed *Majlis*. At the *Majlis*, they usually advertise *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah*, by justifying the emergence of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass as *Sahib al-Faydah*. Furthermore, legitimacy are given to all the activities of the Shaykh. Occasionally they discuss issues from esoteric perspectives. The current researcher was present at a *Majlis* Oja-gboro, *Zawiyah* of at Shaykh Isa Oloro (d. 1980), where Shaykh Hasan Diam, presented *Surah Fatiah* (chapter one of the Glorious Qur'an) as a replica and summary of the Glorious Qur'an. The researcher was also present at a *Majlis* held at the house of *Khalifah* Bello Folohunsho, Asunara when Shaykh Tijani Niyass (the current *Khalifah* of Shaykh Ibrahim), educated the congregation of the *Tijaniyyah* on the significance of three *Sufi* spiritual steps known as *Takhaliya* (renunciation), *Tahaliya* (embellishment) and *Tajjaliya* (theophany). Some of the lectures delivered by the scholars are later published in a book form a typical reference is a lecture once entitled *Hujjat Wadihah* (Plain proof) delivered by Shaykh Sani Awwal (d. 1977) at *Madinat Faydah at-Tajaniyyah* Abayawo Ilorin in 1976³⁶.

The efforts of some Ilorin *Tijanīs* living outside the city, such as Shaykh Abū Bakr Miskin Tinubu (d. 1991), whom Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass who nicknamed him *Siddiq al-Akbar al-Miskinbillah* during the visit of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass to Ghana in 1949³⁷. As well as the commitment of some *Muqaddamun* of *Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin who tried to see that the notable among them were Shaykhs Muhyideen Alabidun (d. 1972), Aliyu Jabata (d. 2009), Yusuf Ayinla Irenwami (d. 2012), Abdul-Wahab Ita-Ore (d. 2007), Isa Ile-Abudu, Oja-Oba Ilorin (d. 1968), Ibrahim Okesuna (d. 2012), AbdulQadir Waliy of Popo- Igbonna (d. 1996), Mallam Balarabe of Oja-gboro (d. 1984), Abdullahi Baba Taofiq (d. 2005)³⁸ and a host of many others. These *Sūfi* masters later formed a committee on the actualization of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass visit in 1963.³⁹

The interest of the Emirs of Ilorin on the *Tijaniyyah* matters is another factor that accounted for the emergence and survival of the *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin. History had it that the Emir of Ilorin, Mallam AbdulQadir Bawa, the 8th emir of Ilorin between 1919 and 1959 was the first to initiate the move for the visit of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass to Ilorin. He sent a delegate with a letter in 1958

to Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass through some of Shaykh's disciples such as Shaykh Abdullah Yusuf Lokoja (d. 2015), requesting the Shaykh to visit Ilorin. But before the letter got to Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass, the Emir had died and a new Emir, Al-hajj Zulu (Dhul-Qarnayn) Muhammad Gambari (1959 – 1992) had emerged. Therefore when the Shaykh decided to respond to the request, he wrote the letter to the new Emir, assuring him that *Insha-Allah*, by his next visit to Nigeria, Ilorin would be among the first cities to be visited⁴⁴. It came to reality in 1963.

During the visit, most notable Islamic scholars in the city recognized the leadership status of the Shaykh. Reference can be made to a grand reception which Shaykh Kamaldeen al-Adabi (d. 2005) organized for him under the auspices of *Ansaru al-Islam* Society of Nigeria. At the reception, Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass gave the society a slogan, *Ilāl Amam* (Ever forward) which the society adopts. He even identified himself with the society.⁴¹ Added to that, another Ilorin Scholar and a *Sūfī* master, in person of Shaykh Abu Bakr Salahudeen Agbarigidoma (d. 2001) composed Ode of nineteen stanzas on the parts of it read thus:

١- بإسم اله العرش كنت مبدعا**	لإظهار ما في القلب مما يفزعا
٢- وللشيخ إبراهيم كنت موجعا	** لقلبي وإني كنت فيه مـ جزعا
٣- وكنا أناسا جاهلين شمسنا صـرنا مطلعا	** ولـكننا ألان
٤- وذلك إبراهيم كـولـخـى داره	** عمت صيته شرقا وغربا بـاجمعا
٥- لقد طلعت من ارض كولخ شمسها**	وعمت جميع الأفق نورا مـطلعـا ⁴²

Meaning:

1. With the name of Allah, the Lord of the Throne I commenced the expressing of what caused my mind to be terrified.
2. It was Shaykh Ibrahim (Niyass) that made my mind to be grievous as he had made me to become anxious.
3. We are the people who are ignorant about his shining sun, but now, we are familiar with it and had taken cognizant of it.
4. That is (Shaykh) Ibrahim, Kaolack is his domain. His voice has reached in a comprehensive manner both East and West.
5. Surely His shining sun had appeared in the land of Kaolack and its light has reflected throughout the horizon with full curiosity.

Similarly, another *Sūfī* master, a leader of *Hamahullah* group of *Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin Shaykh Ahmad Abdullahi Folorunsho Fagba (d. 2008 CE) also composed panegyric poems in honour of Shaykh during the said visit. Here is an extract from the Ode.

١. غوث غياث زمان أبو بشر جميعا	** كـولـخ مـولد شيخ ونسبه عدنان
٢. من شك في برهام لايد كالمجنون	** ومنكرى برهام سلك في الخسران
٣. كن مجتهدا بمال وجسم ثم بروح	** إلى لقاء شريف خليف شيخ التجاني
٤. من كان في الإسلام لم يلق شيخ خليل برهان ⁴³	** وإنـه مـفـقود ليس له

Meaning:

- 1- Succor of the age, father of men, Kaolack (Senegal) is his birth place (yet) his lineage is traced to ^c*Adhân* (the lineage of the Prophet).
- 2- He who doubts (the spiritual status of) Shaykh Ibrahim, surely he is an insane, He who denies (the sainthood of) Shaykh Ibrahim has gone astray.
- 3- (Oh my brothers and sisters) strive with your wealth, body and soul to welcome the noble person (*Sharif*) the Vicegerent of Shaykh (Ahmad) at-Tijani.
- 4- He who professes Islam and has never met the great Shaykh (Ibrahim Niyass), such person is non-entity, so he has no excuse (for not knowing him).

Meanwhile Shaykh Ibrahim, during his visit to Ilorin visited the graves of fore runners of the *Tijaniyyah* Order in Ilorin. Those included Shaykh Abdus-Salam Oniwiridi, Shaykh Abdur-Rahman Alabidun, Shaykh Sa'adu Ajikobi among many others. In all the palaces visited by the Shaykh the *Majlis* was emphasis on acquisition of knowledge and presented it as the only tool for the progress of the Muslim *Ummah* in this world. He also emphasized the issue of pan Islamism.

The aftermath of Shaykh Ibrahim's visit to Ilorin: With the visit of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass, Ilorin became one of the cities to be referred to as city of people of Divine Flood (*Madinah ahl-Faydah*). The teachings of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass are adopted by his followers in the city. The teachings include *Tarbiyah* (spiritual training) recitation of *Basmalah* (*Bismillahi ar-Rahman ar-Rahim*) while reciting *Surat al-Fâtihah* (chapter one of the Glorious Qur'an) during the performance of ritual prayers, the practice of *Qabd* (folding of arms on one's chest while offering ritual prayers, among many others⁴⁴). Some of these practices were not popular among the people of Ilorin by then. For instance, the issue of *Tarbiyah* was not understood by some of the members of *Tijaniyyah* Order. A number of them viewed it as a spiritual exercise specifically reserved for aged people. Similar to that is the practice of *Qabd* which was condemned by many people of Ilorin by then. All these put the issue of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in dilemma. Sequel to that, many followers of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass in the city were stigmatized⁴⁵. That notwithstanding, efforts are made to sustain the *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in the city.

Sustainable Strategy of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin

With the emergence of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin, certain sustainable strategies for the *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in the city are taken. They include the followings:

Hosting some Disciples of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass: A sustaining factor on *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah*, in Ilorin is by hosting notable leaders of the *Tijaniyyah* Order, especially senior disciples of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass. For illustration, in

1950s, the *Tijaniyyah Zawiyah* in Adangba used to play host to many senior disciples of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass, despite the fact that most members of the *Zawiyah* by then had not appreciated *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah*. It was through the *Zawiyah* that some members of *Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin came to know about the emergence of *al-Faydah at-Tijaniyyah*⁴⁶.

Similarly, Al-Hajj Audu Kondemu (Condemned)⁴⁷ of Ita-Ajia, Ilorin also hosted Sayyid Imam Aliy Cisse (d. 1982) the *Khalifah* and scribe of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass, during his visit to Ilorin in August, 1969. Later, Al-hajj Bello Folorunsho (d. 1998) who had been living outside Kwara State returned to Ilorin and was appointed the President of *Tijaniyyah Sūfi* Order in Ilorin and its environs.⁴⁸ His house served as guest house for many *Tijaniyyah* leaders from within and outside Nigeria, where *Majlis* used to be held on different aspects of *Faydah*⁴⁹. He was later appointed *Khalifah* of the *Tijaniyyah* in Kwara State by Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass⁵⁰.

International Mawlid Celebrations

Another factor responsible for the survival of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin is the National and International *Mawlid* celebrations. In 1994, members of the Reformed *Tijaniyyah* in the city of Ilorin hosted Annual National *Mawlid* Celebration of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass where many dignitaries from both within and outside Nigeria, including some off-springs of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass like Shaykh Abdullah Niyass (d. 2001) the eldest son and the then *Khalifah* of the Shaykh were in attendance. The 10th Emir of Ilorin Mallam Aliyu Abdul Qadir (1992-95) joined the *Tijanis* in hosting the programme as Al-hajj, Ibrahim Sulu Gambari the present Emir of Ilorin joined the *Tijaniyyah* to host 2017 International *Mawlid* Celebration of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass.

Activities outside the Zawiyah

Members of the Reformed *Tijaniyyah* made and still continue to make use of certain activities outside their *Zawiyah*, to advertise the *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in the city and its environs as a means of sustaining and spreading the *Faydah*. A typical examples are *Majlis* for different ceremonies such as naming, marriage and funeral ceremonies. All are done in accordance with the teachings of the Shaykh. Similar to that is chanting of Allah's name such as *Lāillah illa Allah* in the streets. This was more pronounced when people like Shaykh Abū Bakr Yusuf Agbade, a civil servant, who had been living in the far North of the country relocated to Ilorin when the state was created 1967⁵¹. Being a strange things seeing adults and elders chanting Allah's name along the streets, the act attracted the attention of the youths who began to follow them and even imitate them, while some people perceived them as beggars because their activities resembled that of the beggars.⁵²

Another activity of the *Tijanis* which sustain the *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in the city of Ilorin was the recitation of one of the works of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass entitled: *ad-Dawāwin as-sitt*⁵³. The work exposes members of the order in

particular and the general public as a whole to the Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass' thought on Prophet Muhammad. The act also unites members of the order as they used their gathering to co-ordinate themselves.

Influence of Some Works of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass on the People

The contents of some works of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass have significant influence on the people of Ilorin. They play positive role to the survival, sustainability and spread of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in the city. For instance, a large number of *Tijaniyyah* youth who are talented committed into memory a large portion of the *Diwân* of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass together with other works of the Shaykh such as *Tahni'ah*⁵⁴. They form the habit of reciting these works with different tones at various occasions like *Mawlid* celebrations, naming and marriage ceremonies.

Added to that, some works of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass are translated into various languages. For instance, *Risâlah at-Tawbah*, as one of the last works of the Shaykh that refuted the allegation that the Shaykh abandoned the *Tijaniyyah Sūfi* Order, was worked upon as an academic work and later published in a book form⁵⁵. Related to that is another book *Ruh al-Adab* which is believed to be the first work of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass was translated into both English and Yoruba by two senior *Muqaddamūn* of *Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin, i.e. Shaykh Abū Bakr Yusuf Agbade and Shaykh Aliyu Jabata (d. 2009) respectively.⁵⁶ Similarly, Abū Bakr Ishaq Imam Otte translated the work *Tahni'ah* into English⁵⁷. Likewise, Awwal Baba Taofiq (d. 21st February, 2018) translated *Ad-Dawawin Sitt*⁵⁸ into English among many others. These works expose the public to the thoughts of the Shaykh.

Education

Another factor that can be considered to have contributed to the survival of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* movement in Ilorin is the educational factor. For illustration, there emerged some anti-*Faydah* groups, who criticized some of the reforms introduced by Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass such as observance of ritual prayers by *Qabd*. Education was the method adopted to solve the problems. For instance, when the problem of *Qabd* and anti-*Qabd* came up in 1960s some mosques in Ilorin banned those observing their ritual prayers by *Qabd*. Then houses of some Reformed *Tijanīs* became educational centres where they took lessons on *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* matters. A typical example was the house of Shaykh Imam Aliy Jabata⁵⁹.

Related to that was in 1978, when some anti-*Sufi* groups advanced to Ilorin with their anti-*Sufi* activities, the major *Sufi* Orders in the city i.e. *Qadiriyyah* and *Tijaniyyah*, met and responded to the criticism, each *Sufi* Order was represented by a group, to produce a book entitled: *Raf' ash-Shubhat 'amafi Qadiriyyah wat-Tijaniyyah mina Shatahat*⁶⁰. Shaykh al-Hajj Muhammad Ibrahim an-Nafawi, Shaykh Imam Aliy Jabata headed the *Qadiriyyah* and *Tijaniyyah* groups respectively. Added to that, when the *Mawlid* celebration among the *Sufis*

was criticized, people like Shaykh Sulaiman Faruq al-Miskinbillah Onikijipa responded by writing a book⁶¹, where he educates the public on it. The combined effect of all these is that, *Faydahat-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin was sustained through different means such as education.

However, with the emergence of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin, there emerged a principle problem which almost destroyed the pure teachings of *Sūfism* and spiritual training of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass himself. The problem is on the behaviour of some of the *Tijanīs* who, having undertaken spiritual training (*Tarbiyah*), would feel too big to observe some basic principles of Islam, especially, the observation of five daily ritual prayers. Y.A. Quadri describes such people as the enemies of Islam because they “often abandon Islamic rites completely”. According to him, the only thing which they do is constant chanting of *Dhikr*⁶². This group of people perhaps, are not aware that Islam cannot be party to *Tasawwuf* that loses itself to *Shari‘ah* and taken liberties with it⁶³. This group can be considered as pseudo-*Sūfīs*, those whom Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass had once disassociated himself from. This is contained in a letter entitled: *Risālah Ash-Shaykh Alati Arsalahā Ila Ba‘d al-Ikhwan*. This letter also forms part of the contents of a book entitled *Kitāb Jawāhir ar-Rasul* under a sub-topic *Majdhub Iam Yaslik wa Sālik lam Yajdhub*⁶⁴. Here is extract of the contents of the letter.

Whoever claims to belong to us and engages in anything which is contrary to the pure noble *Shari‘ah* by setting aside the forbidden things and leaving undone what is obligatory on him, God and you are my witnesses that I do not have anything to do with such a man. i.e. those who violate His (God) order, be cautioned so that they are not met with trail of grievous punishment. Repent to... God, all of you, Oh believers.⁶⁵

A *Tijaniyyah* group called *Da‘rat al-Ja‘fariyyah* (*Ja‘afar’s circle*) is the reference point of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass. The group exists in Ilorin under its headship, *Muqaddam Zakariya Alanamu*. It continues to claim part of *Faydah* movement, even through some *Tijaniyyah Sufi* masters such as *Shaykh Nur Fayd*, a senior notable *Tijaniyyah* leader in Ilorin, and even *Muqaddam Muhammad Awwal Ibrahim Balogun* of *Popo-Giwa Compound*, Ilorin who changed the name of his *Zawiyah* from *Ja‘fariyyah* to *Zawiyat Istiqamat wal-Istijabat Faedat Tijaniyyat Popo-Giwa*, Ilorin among many others⁶⁶, all these scholars do not recognize it.

The matter is not totally restricted to that alone, one would note that some of these Pseudo-*Sūfīs* and another group known as people of theosophy or “*ahl-Haqiqah*”. They claim to have the reality knowledge of Allah, as a result of that, they are of the habit of uttering the word “Allah” on any object. With their attitude and action, it can be stated that they can no longer be part of *Faydah* movement. They contradict the stipulated teachings of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass on the teachings of *Tarbiyah*, who stipulated that a perfect *Sūfī* novice who

undertakes spiritual training (*Tarbiyah*) must be both outwardly sober (*Salik*) and inwardly drunk or ecstatic as (*Majdhub*) as the Shaykh declares.

اثنين ليسامنى ولا من الطريق فى شىء *** مجذوب لم يسلك وسالك لم يجذب⁶⁷

Meaning:

Two (types of people) do not belong to me or to the path in any way; someone who is enraptured and does not tread the path, and someone who treads the path and does not get enraptured.⁶⁸

Meaning that a perfect *Sufi* novice should be both sober and ecstatic in his attitude and actions but his sobriety should be more pronounced. With this declaration of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass, a distinction is made between the true followers of the Shaykh and the self-acclaimed followers. The fact that he had disowned those who fail to follow his spiritual training, such *Sufi* are not members of *Faydah* movement even if they claim to be.

Conclusion

Faydah at-Tijaniyyah as a spiritual transformation in the *Tijaniyyah Sūfī* Order which was prophesied by the founder of *Tijaniyyah* Order himself, Shaykh Ahmad at-Tijani. Many notable *Tijaniyyah Sūfī* masters proclaimed it to themselves, before Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass made the proclamation and people accepted him as such. Since then, the *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* has continued to spread to many cities in the Muslim World including Ilorin Kwara State of Nigeria. And currently it has become International Religious Organization with members in many countries of the globe. Certain factors are responsible for both the emergence and spread of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* in Ilorin. With such development, there emerged some impostors or pseudo *Sūfīs*, who cannot be considered as followers of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass as they fail to abide by the teachings of the Shaykh.

Going by the facts enumerated above, one may wish to recommend the need for the member of the *Faydah* movement in the city to establish more *Sufi* Academic Centres where anything related to Sufism will be taught and discussed. Effort ought to be made at both national and global levels to have university under *Faydah* movement where a department or a unit will be dedicated for Sufism.

Through these, the survival of *Faydah at-Tijaniyyah* would be continued and sustained.

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46. Informant: Shaykh AbdulQadir Bamidele Apalando informed the Researcher that Shaykh Hadi Ile-Oke used to host some disciples of Shaykh Ibrahim Niyass. It was he that introduced him to Shaykh Abu Bakr Tambuwal from Sokoto who came to Ilorin and he underwent the spiritual training (*Tarbiyah*) under him. He disclosed this at his Apalando residence on 9th November, 2007.
47. Al-hajj Audu Kondemu (Condemned) was a Sanitation Inspection Officer who used to inspect houses in the then Ilorin Province, whenever he was not satisfied with health situation of a place he would remark “this is condemned”. Due to that, he was nicknamed Audu Condemned and corrupted to Audu Kondemu.

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51. Informant: Shaykh Muhammad Nur Fayd disclosed it to the present Researcher that, Shaykh Abu Bakr Yusuf Agbade brought the idea of chanting *Laillah illa Allah* along the street to Ilorin, dated 7th February, 2016.
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