

Gade Language in Nigeria

Subjects: History

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History of Gade Language in Nigeria and the Africa

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1. Introduction

Empirical evidences & historical records reveal that "Babye" better known as "Gade" are of "Maguzawa" origin who had migrated from the Western Sudan to Kano & settle at a place called "Gadawar" in the present Jigawa State in 1068 A.D. The migration was in search of farmland.

2. History

The name Gade was a corruption of the Gade word "Ngade" meaning "I said". The Hausa people who wanted to distinguish between Gade & Maguzawa in Kano adopted the name Gade. There are several written source pertaining to the origin of Gade people & their migration. Traditional had it that the Gade people were part & parcel of the Kwararafa lineage. The Gade had migrated from Kano & traveled South-eastwards to join the Jukuns who were also migrate southwards. The evidence of the presence & settlement of Gade people in Kano is their salt industry called "GISHIRIN GADE". The Gade under their powerful leader called "GAKUNGAKIMA".

In the course of their migration, they joined other Kwararafa lineage such as Jukuns, Igala, Alago, Afo, Korn & Egburra. As a result, there was scramble for suitable farmland.

The Gade first settled at the present day Doma in Doma L.G.A & later moved to westwards probably due to leadership tussle with the Alago to settle at their present places of abode in 1750. While moving out of Doma a section of Gade decided to break away & moved eastwards across the River Benue to settle in the present idoma land & now bear the name "IGEDE". The Gade begun to establish themselves over a vast empty land around the present Keffi area.

According to MR. H.E PALMER C.B.G, in his book title: "HISTORY OF NORTHERN NIGERIA TRIBES, KINGDOMS AND CHIEFDOMS" "the original inhabitants of the country that is those occupying the land at the time of the earliest records were the GADE AND YESKWA".

This was re-affirmed by S.J Hogben, in his book titled: "THE ISLAMIC STATES OF NORTHERN NIGERIA", (PAGES 302-307).

Its therefore quite clear that the Gade had already settled comfortably in this land hundreds of years b/4 the invasion from Zaria by Abdul Zanga, Keffi, 1802; Makama Dogo, Nasarawa, 1835 & Abu Danja, Abuja, 1838. Another Colonial Administrator, Mr. T.E Leachworth, in his report on: "THE GADE TRIBE IN NASARAWA STATE", Dated 20 June, 1936, stated that: "The Gade tribe occupy the North-West corner of Nasarawa Emirate, Gwargwalada District & extend a few miles".

The report further indicated that "the area is however, compact and the boundaries are well defined". Major J.E.C Blakeney & Mr.W.Morgan, "The traditional home of the Gade is between River Suma (Keffi) & North West of Nasarawa Division where they were situated b/4 1750". The Gade have always been friends of Kolo (Abokin Wasa). From 1750-1801 the Gade Kingdom under the "Gomo" had flourished & grew stronger b/4 arrival of Hausa invaders on horse raid the Gade settlements & consequently establish supremacy with their flag from Usman Danfodio.

B/4 the arrival of Hausa invaders from Katsina & Zazzau, the Kingdom was flourishing & was comparable to the Nupe, Opanda & Igala Kingdoms.

The Gade had ancient city walls (Ganuwa) which fortified them against external attack. It's on record that no Gade settlement was conquered by the invaders, rather a treaty was made by individual independent Gade Chiefs. Such treaties were made to protect the chief against external aggression. The Gade under their Gomo paid tributes to Zaria. To buttress this, Mr. Leachworth rightly pointed out that: "in any case Kujekwa (in Gwargwada District) & Sabye, Odu(Iki) & Karmu in Nasarawa District were never subjugated & no agreement reached by Ahmadu were with the individual villages & that there was no agreement with a general Gade Council or Assembly. When the British colonial master arrived, a pseudo-emirate system was established in compliance with the Indirect Rule System. To quote Mr. Leachworth, "up till 1913 tribute was collect more & there was no district administration in the strict sense of the word. Complaints were heard & deal with as they arose.

The FADAN GADE DISTRICT was created in 1913 with initial headquarters at Gwargwada & a Prince from Beni Makama Dogo Ahmadu was made the first District Head. In the same vein, KUJE DISTRICT in Niger Province was created in 1913 under the GOMO KUJE. The District Head Fadan Gade District was however, deposed in 1924 for embezzling fifty pounds (£50) tax money & for three (3) months, the village Head of Gwargwada acted as District Head. It was later proposed that the Gade units of Karmu, Odu & Sabye hitherto in Nasarawa District should be included with Gwargwada District to form a GADE TRIBAL AREA.

Leachworth, believed that they were allotted to Nasarawa District "probably owing to the fact that they were not subdued but until relatively late and put under more immediate control of the Emir". It needs to be pointed out here that the GADE CHIEFDOM had already been established under the name GWARGWADA DISTRICT, which was later changed to FADAN GADE DISTRICT from 1936-1970, with the initial headquarters at Gwargwada, then Buga & later the present Gadabuke. It was therefore no accident of history that the DISTRICT and the NATIVE COURT, were named Fadan Gade District & Gade Native Court, respectively.

The Gade whose main pre-occupation is farming, are endowed with a rich culture. Apart from talent in music and dances, we have such masquerades as: Adakpu(Ashama), Zhizhi-nuba, Lishakpa, Kaka maiwa, Atsanah & Zhizhi-Nukpukpu. Which appear during festivals, memorial ceremonies and occasions such as the Annual Gade Cultural Festival.