

**AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED ROYAL COURT SONGS OF ZAZZAU EMIRATE**

**BY**

**ABDULLAHI, Rabi**

**P16AREN8233**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS,  
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA, NIGERIA.**

**DECEMBER, 2018.**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE  
STUDIES, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTERS DEGREE OF ARTS (M.A)  
DEGREE IN LITERATURE.**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES, FACULTY OF ARTS,  
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA NIGERIA**

**DECEMBER, 2018**

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled ‘An Analysis of Selected Court Songs of Zazzau Emirate’ has been carried out by me in the Department of English and Literary Studies. All the information derived in the review of related literature has been duly acknowledged in the list of references. No part of this thesis was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

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**Rabi Abdullahi**

.....  
**Signature**

.....  
**Date**

## **CERTIFICATION**

This dissertation titled “An Analysis of Selected Court Songs of Zazzau Emirate” by Abdullahi, Rabi meets the regulations governing the award of the Degree of the Masters of Arts in Literature of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. It is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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**Prof. A.A. Sani**  
Chairman, Supervisory Committee

---

**Date**

---

**Dr. S.A. Jaji**  
Member, Supervisory Committee

---

**Date**

---

**Prof. T.Y. Surakat**  
Head, Department of English and Literary Studies

---

**Date**

---

**Prof. S.Z. Abubakar**  
Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies

---

**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to Almighty Allah (SWA) who is the source and strength of my success and also to my late mother Hajiya Aisha and my late sisters Hassana and Hussaina Abdullahi. May Aljanat Firdaus continue to be your abode, amin

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

My profound gratitude goes to Allah (SWA) for giving me the opportunity to carry out the research successfully. My special appreciation goes to my committed supervisor, Prof. Sani Abba Aliyu for his guidance, encouragement and his meticulous interest shown towards the accomplishment of this research. I am very grateful to him and I pray to Allah to reward him abundantly. I am equally indebted to my second supervisor Dr. S.A. Jaji who attends to me on issues pertaining to the research. May Allah reward him too.

I will not hesitate to show my appreciation by acknowledging Prof Isma'il Tsiga. He is indeed an inspiring father. May Allah continue to prolong his life for the benefit of humanity. I remain grateful.

My appreciation cannot be completed without some word of appreciation to members of my immediate family. My dear husband, Shehu Maikaita Tsiga deserves to be appreciated for his encouragement, patience and understanding. This research would not have been possible without permission, the specific and the general and generous assistance rendered by him. May Allah continue to increase you in good health. To my lovely children Isma'il, Bilal, Aisha and Sadiq and then to their cousins Abdulmalik, Muhammad and Lawal, thank you all.

My profound gratitude goes to my father Alhaji Abdullahi Musa Kwantakwaram for giving me the greatest legacy which is education. May Allah reward him abundantly and to my step mothers most especially Hajiya Hajara, you are indeed a mother. My appreciation also goes to my siblings, thank you all for words of encouragement. May Allah bless you and see you through in all your life endeavours.

I want to specially appreciate Prof. Saidu Ahmed Babura and Prof. S.M. Gusau for the interest shown in this work. I appreciate. My colleagues such as Malam Abdullahi Yusuf,

Malam Sule Jinjiri, Mrs. Safiya M. Balarabe, and many others who contributed in one way or the other towards the completion of this work. Thank you and may Allah bless you all.

My M.A. course mates such as Madam Salome, Madam Hajara, Ramlat, most especially Kayode were of tremendous help to me towards the success of this research.

## ABSTRACT

*This research explores the court praise songs of Zazzau Emirate. This particular research focuses its attention on who are these singers, what are their songs about and what constitute the themes and the literary styles employed in their royal court songs. The study features the songs of court singers in Zazzau Emirate such as Sarkin Sankiran Zazzau, Wazirin Zagi and Barayan Sarki. It also includes Rabi Bazamfara who is the only female court singer in Zazzau Emirate that chants epithets within the inner compound for the Emir and his wives. These royal praise singers were randomly selected. To foreground the society it discusses, the formation of Hausa States and the myths of the origin of songs in Hausa land and a brief biography of the Emir of Zazzau is given. The research adopts the functionalist approach as its theoretical framework. The aim of using the functionalist approach for this research is to explore the unique nature of Hausa oral art forms particularly the praise poetry, using the field work method and also to explore the different factors of Hausa culture. The researcher also analysed the various literary and stylistic devices found in the selected songs such as the themes of praise, eulogy and satire; also the figures of speech such as metaphor, simile, personification, allusion, repetition, have all been analysed. The significance/functions and the role of the court singers are well discussed. The convergence and divergence of the themes of the songs were also looked at. Finally, the state of praise singing has also been discussed.*



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

To talk about poetry raises the question of what relationship, if any oral poetry has to do poetry. Talking about the two we are essentially talking about the culture of a group of people. This culture is given expression by the language of the people. It is poetic language that is used to express their ideas. Words and common words are spoken everyday by the masses in communicating with one another. When these words are spoken, it presupposes that the listener is not mute. The listener is also able to speak and make appropriate responses. Poetry here refers to as rhythmical form of words which expressed the imaginative-emotional intellectual experience of the poet in a way that creates a similar experience in the mind of the reader or listener. This pronouncement shows that the poet uses a combination of words-symbols to convey his ideas. Whether or not he succeeds depends on how well he manipulates the word-symbols. He uses common words that touch us emotionally and spoken orally.

Oral poetry is poetry that lives in the mouth of the people and is transmitted verbally from one person to another.

The concise Oxford Dictionary defines “oral” as “spoken, verbal, by word of mouth”.

Oral poetry is unwritten poetry. According to Finnegan (1970:14).

‘Oral tradition’ (including whatever should now call oral literature) is passed down word for word from generation to generation and thus reproduced verbatim from memory throughout the centuries or alternatively, that arises communally from the people or the ‘folk’ as a whole so that there can be no question of individual authorship or originality.

Oral poetry essentially circulates by oral rather than written means. In contrast to written poetry, its distribution, composition or performance is by word of mouth and not through reliance on the written or printed word. Cuddon (1977:465) says;

Poetry belonging to this tradition is composed orally or made up as the poet goes along. As a rule it is usually sung, chanted or recited and it is the earliest of all poetry, in the sense that it precedes written poetry.

This is the poetry that is fading away in many parts of Hausa lands because of the fast emerging technology that comes with modern musical equipment. As literacy is now speeding throughout the entire world at a rapid rate, oral poetry seems destined in time to disappear if it is not collected and stored in accordance with one of the objectives of this study.

Praise poems exist in many different parts of Africa, its laudatory verse is addressed to Emirs, chiefs, and even ordinary persons including children. In a way the term “praise poetry” is a misnomer since such poems contain elements of satire and at times whole passages can be abusive. The subject of the praise poem may include anything from people to lifeless objects. In this way we may talk of poems composed in praise of practically anything. The poem may be partially narrative or wholly descriptive. When the praise poem is in the form of narrative, it glorifies the deeds of individuals and gives details of successful battles waged. When it is descriptive, some attributes of the addressed is usually sighted out for extended treatment.

### **Historical Evolution of Oral Songs in Hausa Society**

In the writings of Leo Africanus, Al Magriz; and Ibn Batuta in Bargery, (1933) the term Hausa is not found, but other names of countries or peoples being used made it clear that the forerunners of the present Hausas are intended. It is, however, most interesting that in the earliest of all the writings mentioned, those of Ibn Said (died 1286), the form al Hausin is found. It is used to designate a tribe living west of Lake Chad and spoken of as a branch of Zaghawa, a people who lived in Kenem. This corresponds to a modern term Aussa reported as sometimes found now in use among peoples of the Chad Basin, and in particular, as used

among people living in the certain shores to denote the people living on the Western side. It can be argued from this that, the ancestors of the Hausas lived in the farther East than the Hausas of today. Bargery, (1933)

A somewhat fuller record was gotten from Leo Africanus (1492 – 1526: his book was published in Latin in 1556). Although he mainly described the several regions which are now part of the Hausa land and in which Hausa was spoken and is spoken. These are Gubar (i.e. Gobir), Agades, Kano, Kesena (Katsina), Zegzeg (i.e. Zaria), Zamfara, and Guangara (i.e. Wangara). From his description of the people of Agades and Gobir, it is clear that he is describing rather Berber tribes who had come from the north in the former and Berber or Fulbe (Fulani) herdsmen in the latter, then Hausa as we know them today. Bargery, (1933)

### **Tradition Concerning the Origin of the Hausa**

It has often been said that the Hausa is rather the name of a language than of a people or tribe, and it is the fact that many of the tribal groups who speak Hausa as their only language today and are described as Hausas have little or nothing in common in respect of their ethnological origin. Nevertheless, it would appear true to assume the existence of a basic Negro stock, which has been expanded, and in fact, transformed by immigration from the north and east, the group being in turn further enlarged by commercial, political and other influences. Bargery (1933)

The Hausa distinguished between seven proper Hausa ‘States’ which are called *Hausa Bakwai* and seven spurious Hausa, *Yan’uwa bakwai*, the latter being tribes who have been under Hausa influence for a long time and have therefore partly or wholly adopted the language and civilization of the Hausas. The *Hausa Bakwai* are Biran, Katsina and Zegzeg, Kano and Kano (S.W. of Kano) Gobir, Daura. The *Yan’uwa bakwai* are Zamfara, Nupe, Kebbi, Gwari, Yauri, Yomba and Kororofa. In both these lists, some names are disputable and the Yan’uwa bakwai can be called Hausa States, only in a very limited sense. How far

the seven Hausas were each one political unit, we do not know, but it is certain that they were independent of each other, connected only by language and a certain type of civilization Bargery, (1933).

According to tradition, Daura was the original home of the Hausas but Daura again is personified as the forefather of Hausa came from Bornu, and the female ancestor Daura was derived from a family of hunters who lived east of Lake Chad. Daura and her husband went westward and finally settled in the country later named Daura.

Whether Daura and Biram are considered as persons or names of places which were later personified, it is certain that, in most traditions these two places are seen as the earliest settlements of the Hausas. The several offices which according to tradition, the children of Bawo inherited from their father were as follows: Gobir became *Sarkin Yaki*, war leader, Kano and Rano were established as *Sarakunan* baba, chief of indigo, Katsina and Daura as *Sarakunan Kasuwa*, chief of the market, Zegzeg are *Sarkin bayi*, chief of slaves.

Nachtigal in Bargery, (1933) is of the opinion that, the Hausa come from the east, and he is supported by Marguart, who maintains that the Hausas lived up to the ninth century immediately west or North West of Lake Chad. Barth on the other hand is convinced that they are a branch of the Berbers (Amazigh) in North Africa, that they lived for a long time in the region between Damerghus and Azben (Air) and immigrated into their present residences about AD 1000. On the origin of the Hausa, Barth in Bargery (1933) gives same tradition as given above, but instead of placing the home of the 'mother' of the Hausa people in Bornu, he asserts that, it belonged to the Degara, a small Berber tribe north of Munio. He also says that Azben was formerly called the country of the Gobir people and emphasizes the fact that Hausa is very widely spoken in Azben. Both authors based their views not only on oral and partly written traditions, but also on linguistic affirmatives of the Hausa language with Logone and with the Buber dialects respectively, Bargery, (1933).

## Myths on oral songs in Hausa Land

To state the history of how oral songs came into being is very difficult. There are different versions of stories on how oral songs started in Hausaland. History has it that, human beings created songs in the process of looking for what to eat “hunting” From there people looked for other means of surviving and “farming songs” became a household name. In another version, some are of the belief that traditional worship also contributed to the growth of Hausa oral songs, Gusau (2003).

Among the different versions given, some are of the belief that songs in Hausaland started with a certain praise singer called “Sasana”. Scholars think that oral singers are grandchildren of this man called Sasana who spent his life in Asia, some of his children migrated to Hausaland. According to Gusau (2003), the word “Sasana” means praise singer in French. It also be argued that he was one of the first men to praise-sing in Hausa. He praised people in order to get something in return (Ibrahim, 1983: vii) in Gusau, (2003).

The praise singer Sasana is the leader of those who know the ethics and knowledge of praise singing. He has travelled and stayed in so many countries, he never stays in one place. This family name is Bani-Sassana Gusau, (2003).

Shehu Sarki from Blind Street in Sokoto said, that the word “Bani-Sasana’ means ‘praise singers’ which he depicted in one of his songs saying:

*Malamai da sunke malelo*  
*Sunke saki tazbaha na lilo,*  
*Sun koma bani sassana*  
Gusau, (2003).

### Translation:

When Islamic scholars came,  
They left rosary hanging,  
They then went back to ‘bani sasana’



In another version, scholars are of the opinion that Hausa people learn to sing from some empires in West Africa like ancient Ghana and Mali. At that time, Mali Empire had already had royal praise singers and they had a good relationship with Hausa singers. After the collapse of the Mali Empire, then, the Songhai Empire took over during the reign of Sarki Askiya Muhammadu Ture (1493 – 1528) whereby some Hausa States were under his Emirate. From then on, some Hausa Emirs learned from their predecessors thus, Royal Praise-singing became prominent (Ibrahim, 1983: vii in Gusau 2003).

With the Jihad of Usman Danfodio, the Hausa state and some towns were captured by the Jihadists but it did not stop the Royal praise singers from praising their Emirs during war. What followed after the reign of Usman Danfodio was ethnic clashes between cultures in Hausa land until the coming the Europeans into Hausa land. The war continued until the Sokoto Caliphate was championed and became under European control in 1903 (King 1980:2 – 6 in Gusau 2003).

After war songs, some of the praise singers decided to go back to the Emirs court and sing for them. In the songs, they praise the Emirs showing how courageous their grand fathers were during wars. Royal praise singers are the ones who replaced war singers. Among them were Abubakar – Akwara Sabon Birni, Buda Dantanoma Argungu, Muhammadu Dodo, Mai Tabshi Sakwito, Ibrahim Gurso Talatar Mafara, Jibo Magajin Kuwaru Gwadabawa, Salihu Jakidi Sakkwato, Abdu Kurna Maradun, Musa Nadada Sabon Birni, Nagaya Zurmi, Zamnau Raba, Aliyu Dandawo Argungu, Ibrahim Narambada etc, are some of the first prominent court singers in the Hausa Land, Gusau (2005).

### **History of Zaria**

According to Smith (1960), Zaria is situated in the centre of Northern Nigeria. It is a country of many names, Zazzau, Zakzak, Zazzeg, or Zaria the last being also the name of the

capital city. The people of Zaria are still called in Hausa Zagge-Zagi, Zazzagawa warrior queen called Zaria in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

Writing of Zaria in the early years of the sixteenth century, Leo Africanus in Hogben and Kirk-Green (1966) noted that:

The South-East part thereof bordereth upon Cano, and is distant from Casena almost an hundred and fifty miles. The inhabitants are rich and have great traffique with other nations. Some part of the kingdom is plaine and plaines intolerably hot. And because they can hardly endure the sharpness of winter, they kindle great fires in the midst of their houses, laying the coler thereof under their high bedsheads and so betaking themselves to sleep...

According to Fagaci (2016), Zazzau is one of the descendants of Abu Yazid (Bayajidda). They were under Habe rulership of Gunguma that is why Zazzau is one of the towns called Hausa Bakwai. According to history, Habe ruled for a period of sixty years. It was Usman Danfodio's Jihad that brought the down fall of Habe. It brought back the formation of Fulani rule in the Usman Danfodio caliphahte in 1804, that was within the control and leadership of Malam Musa Sarkin Zazzau who was the first to rule under Usman Danfodio Empire. The Fulani rule brought so many changes that differ from the way the Habe ruled in terms of their tradition and culture while the Fulani ruled through the use of Islam guide. Fagaci, (2016)

According to Fagaci, (2016) the Emir of Zazzau is the leader that is chosen to lead the entire Emirate and also is the person that has the responsibility of protecting his Emirate and the entire people. He is also responsible for bringing law and order and peace into the Emirate. In Northern Nigeria, each Emirate has an Emir, the Emir of Zaria is called Sarkin Zazzau. Among those that ruled Zazzau were Malam Muhammadu Lawal Kwasau (1897-1903), Dan Sidi (1903-1920), Malam Dalhatu Yaro (1920-1924), Malam Ibrahim Kwasau (1924-1936), Malam Jafaru Isiyaku (1936-1959), Alhaji Muhammad Aminu Kwasau (1959-1975) and then the present Emir His Royal Highness Alhaji Shehu Idris (1975-to date). Zaria is just part of the different towns that falls under his Emirate. His palace is in Zaria, he is not

the first Emir with the title Sarkin Zazzau but even those that ruled before him have used it because it is the only title given to those that rule Zazzau.

Fagaci, (2016) went further to say that the Emir is the overall leader within the Emirate but he has some district heads that help him overlook the activities in their respective areas and they report directly to him. For example, there is Sarkin Yamman Zazzau, Sarkin Kudun Zazzau, Sarkin Tudun Wada etc. the Emir has the power to turban a district head and also has the power to dethrone him whenever he is found wanting. Apart from district heads, there are also some important title holders that are there to guide and advice the Emir on certain issues concerning the Emirate and also serve as the king makers in terms of choosing a new Emir. They are Waziri, Fagaci, Galadima, Sarkin Fada, liman (imam) and Makama. Other title holders are those that live within the palace and their responsibilities do not go outside the palace but within. For example there is shantali, Shamaki, Kilishi, Baraya, Sarkin Dogarai, Sarkin Sankira, Sarkin Zagi, Sarkin Lema, Maja Sirdi, Jakadiya etc. These are some of the house helps whose duties are within the palace.

The Emir of Zazzau is highly respected both within and outside the Emirate. For the great respect the people have for him, they cannot just have called him “Sarki” (Emir) but must add *Mai Martaba Sarkin Zazzau or Mai Girma Sarkin Zazzau* (His Royal Highness the Emir of Zazzau).

### **Introduction to the Study**

Scholars have classified literature into two: the oral and the written. The Oral has been in existence since time immemorial among the Hausa, while the written is new because it was introduced with the coming of Arabs and then later the Europeans.

Hausa Orature is also called traditional literature (adabin gargajiya), which to the people as it is the literature that is passed from one generation to another by the word of mouth. Orature comprises of song, stories, riddles, jokes etc. Songs which this research

focuses on play very important roles in society by entertaining, educating and informing the people. Gusau, (2014) has likened singing to a conveyer belt charts paths for the cultural memory and relevance of the society by relaying what they feel is good and morally upright; and and therefore worth preserving for the benefit of generations.

Gusau, (2014) further notes that, societies world over have since time immemorial built up unique ways of life that are not just valuable to them but also they become custodians of such ways of life for which they could become well known. He further argued that, there is no society where some form of singing is not found. He gave examples with Europe, Asia, and African societies such as Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa and Fulani societies. He also classified Hausa oral songs into two namely: traditional/classical and modern/contemporary songs. He argues that traditional or classical songs are songs that are composed orally, presented in gatherings or in public or in any of the homes memorized by the composer/singer. And again, he argues that all oral songs are the same in performance pattern, mode of composition between solo, choruses or without chorus, music or melody patterns, rhyme and rhythmic pattern and communicating pattern.

The Hausa oral songs are also classified into different groups according to their specialty, Ibrahim (1983) classified the singers into two namely: Royal praise singers (Emir's court singers) and singers for the wealthy. There are those classed based on their professions: like hunting, boxing, wrestling etc., but his research is more focused on Royal Praise Singers or the courtly praise songs in Hausa land.

Ibrahim (1983) defined royal praise singers as singers that are devoted to singing the virtues of a patron, such as a sultan or Emir, Praise singers are accompanied by kettle drums and *kalangu* (talking drums) along with the *kakaki* (a long trumpet) Looking at them, one will know that they are part and parcel of the Emirate. They don't wear ordinary flowing gown but the gown with royal designs. They are also title holders for example Sarkin Taushin

Katsina, Sarkin Kida Jankidi, Galadiman Kotso etc. It is hardly possible to get someone from outside the troupe claiming to be part of them because its hereditary. That is why they know so much about the history of their patron. In trying to praise the Emir, they make sure they mention the great grandparents of the Emir. The whole narrative of the family chain is committed to their memories. They don't sing outside their Emirate except with the permission of the Emir.

According to Ibrahim (1983), these praise singers classed according to their musical instruments and the type of songs they compose, but they can be classified into three:

The first are those that sing accompanied with musical instruments, example Narambada, Musa Dan Kwairo, Saidu Faru, Jankidi etc. They are first generation praise singers.

The second class is the instrumentalists that pass information with the sounds of the instruments used. They are found in Kano and Zazzau Emirate.

The third are those that praise the Emir by words of mouth without musical instruments. These kind of praise-singers are not in groups. They are individuals, such as Sarkin Bambadawa, Soko, Gawaji in Kano Emirate or Kakaki in Katsina Emirate and Madakin Magana in Zazzau Emirate.

This research is based on the analysis of the third category of court singers in Zazzau Emirate that is the bards. They try to show their talent when it comes to uplighting the names of their patrons through praise singing. The themes and literary styles of the songs will not be left out.

## **STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM**

In Hausa society, there are lots of writings on oral songs but not much exists on Royal praise singers. Scholars have also focused more attention on occupational songs and praises of the spirits of '*bori*'. Thus, royal praise singing is purposely chosen area of coverage and

deepened knowledge of the Hausa songs. This particular research on the court singers of the Emir of Zazzau focuses on who these singers are, what are their songs about, and what constitutes the themes and the literary styles employed in their royal court songs.

## **AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The aim of this research is to analyse the Art of royal praise singing with a view to project its continued relevance among the Hausa speaking people. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To consider epithets (kirari) and how the singers use their talents in praising Emirs of their land and to examine epithets as a literary device by praise singers in Royal courts.
2. To examine the functionality of praise singing within the Hausa speaking people.
3. To document the songs for posterity, because some group of young talented youths have come with their own version of songs using modern musical equipment to attract attention. With this, people can leave the old songs for the new ones in the process losing the old completely.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The major sources of information in this research is data collection via interview and recording of live performance with the performer at the Emir of Zazzau's palace on 11/05/2015 and 11/08/2015. Available oral literary materials obtained from secondary sources about Zaria praise singers are also reviewed. A few people like Malam Haruna Abbas has experience with praise singers through his travels was interviewed in his house in Zaria city on 14/12/2014. At the end, the songs are transcribed in Hausa and translated to English language for analysis. The study focuses on the people's culture by giving detailed explanation through the collection and documentation method. The study also utilises

relevant text books, articles in newspapers, magazines, the internet as well as other unpublished sources.

## **SCOPE AND DELIMITATION**

This study looks into selected royal praise singers in Zazzau. Although oral songs are classified into different groups like war songs, wrestling songs, hunting songs etc, this research is limited to songs sung in the Emir's court. It means this research is based on only Hausa oral songs and not written ones.

This research also delimits its focus to praise singing (epithet) as a literary device that brings out the beauty of a song.

The research further delimits its scope to just male and female royal praise singers and will come up with examples of selected songs from the court praise singers only.

## **JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY**

This research will be of great importance to students of literature for them to really know more about traditional oral songs. Through this study, the relevance, social content and context, and the nature of royal praise singing in Hausa land revealed. There is no doubt that the ancient repositories of orature are passing away and it is on this premise that this research is necessitated to document royal praise songs for the purpose of posterity. It is true that Westernization and Modernization have affected the culture of the people as they are fast disappearing without proper record being kept and the younger generation shows little or no interest in these royal praise songs. They prefer modern light-hearted entertainment songs that make use of modern musical instruments.

Lastly, another aspect of this research is how it will portray oral singers in the eyes of the people interested in their songs, and how they put to the tests, craftsmanship and singing prowess in entertaining the people.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholars and researchers have written a lot in the field of orature in Africa. There are books on Hausa orature in general and oral songs in particular. Some scholars have written on the historical aspects of the singing while others wrote on the structure and functions of these songs. Royal praise singers are probably the most important singers in Hausa land because they deal with the royalty who are highly placed and respected by all. That is why books on orature in Hausa land cannot be concluded without mentioning court singers and the role they play in the society.

Bala (2010) says that many of the so-called standard critical texts (scholarly journals apart) in the field of Hausa literature have indeed been written either by foreign scholars (non-Hausa, even non-Nigerians, mostly Europeans or Americans) in English or have been published mainly by multi-nationals.

This does give the wrong impression that Hausa literature is largely promoted by expatriate scholars. Some scholars stayed for a very long time with Hausa people and learned much about the culture. They include: Graham Furniss, M. G. Smith etc.

Furniss in his book *Poetry, Prose and Popular Culture* in Hausa, states the differences between poetry and song. He also delineates the importance of royal praise singers in Hausa society thus:

Even though much power and administration has mixed to the state and federal governments of Nigeria, the praise singer remains part of the trappings of constitutional monarchy. Over the years, the focus of most attention as far as song and music are concerned has been courtly praise – song... Furniss (1966).

Smith, in a paper titled, ‘The Social Functions and Meaning of Hausa Praise Singing’, wrote a detailed analysis of praise singing which Finnegan (1970) quotes. She devotes a chapter to the discussion of the panegyric in Africa, she examines primarily, praise poems



directed at kings and chiefs composed and recited by members of their entourage'. The first part of the work takes a general overview of the nature, occasion, composition and social significance of the panegyric. She states:

A final well-known West African example is that of the Maroka teams of praisers still associated with the wealthy and cultivated Islamic Emirates of the Hausa of Northern Nigeria. These highly specialized terms are attached permanently to the office of the king to a lesser extent to that of district head... Finnegan, (1970).

In trying to emphasize her point on the praise singers, she quotes Smith where he describes the king's team as:

The king's musicians and Maroka form an organized group containing one or more titular series and effective authority hierarchies. The group is both more numerous and specialized in its musical functions and more permanently attached to the title than the teams linked to District headships, which are similarly organized. Many of the royal maroka proudly describe themselves as royal slaves, and point to the fact that their ancestors held titles as royal musicians under earlier kings. It seems that there is at least a core of such maroka hereditary attached to the throne. The king's musical troupe is also peculiar in containing one marokiya (female praiser), who formerly had the title of Boroka in Zaria, but is nowadays known as Zabiya (guinea-hen) from the shrill ululating sound which it is her function to let out at odd moments, such as during the king's address to his assembled subjects after *sallah*. Other specialized musical functions in the royal troupe include blowing on the silver horns or shorter wooden ones, playing on the *taushi* (a small hemispherical drum), and singing the royal praises in Fulani...

Smith had done a lengthy analysis on royal praise singers in Hausa land. He states that these praise singers are hereditarily attached to the throne which means it must have started from their grandparents. It means they are part and parcel of the Emirs the survival under the Emirate.

Mark (1981) based the entire research on women praise singers. She described the praise singer's songs as "Wakoki (songs) produced in *cikin gida* (inner compound) area by

women of the palace community and performed for what may be the most strict and selective of all audiences...” She selected three women praise singers from the Northern part of Nigeria whom she interviewed and then analysed their songs. Among them is Yar Shehu who is the royal praise singer of the Emir of Kano while the other two (Binta Gwaram and Binta Katsina) are non-royal performers. She said that a woman’s version of this kind of performance is delivered by royal *zabiya* (praise singer), she may be accompanied by women who chant epithets for the Emir. She further said that, the performer’s styles vary among women depending on the type of song they deliver. Mark (1981) puts more emphasis on those who perform *yabo* (praise declamation) for the Emir as she posits that,” they follow a performance pattern more rigid than that of the non-royal performers”. The whole of her research is based on women praise singers in Northern Nigeria but dwelled more on the side of women royal praise singers. This thesis is similar with this research because both focused on theme of *yabo* (praise declamation) for the Emir as a literary device.

Ibrahim (1983) did a lengthy analysis on royal praise singers. He delineates the praise singers into three types: the first, are those that sing with the accompaniment of musical instrument like drums, talking drums etc. While the instrumentalist are the second category of royal praise singers. These are set of royal praise singers that do not sing but pass information using instruments like horns, trumpets etc. The last which this research focuses on are the royal bards who do not use any musical instrument. Ibrahim, (1983) mentioned them as:

Royal praise singers that do not sing with musical instruments but chant epithets to the Emirs in figurative language.... Maybe it became pertinent that traditional institution are able to hold and uphold the virtues of praise singers because they say whatever that comes out of their mouth without fear of the outcome.... This type of royal praise singers are not in group.

He is referring to the bards as talented people that use effusive language in praising the Emir and then ridicule the Emirs adversaries without the fear of what may become of them. They do not chant in group but each performs his or her best to show their talent.

He further mentioned some of the major themes found in royal praise songs as ‘yabo’ (praise), ‘zuga’ (eulogy) and ‘habaici’(satire). Apart from the themes, he mentioned some literary devices that are commonly found in most of their songs like simile, metaphor, personification and they sometimes the royal praise singers borrow words from English and Arabic language to use in their songs. Most of them use Sokoto dialect in praising. His contribution will be of assistance to this research because it has to do with the literary aspect of the songs.

Another Hausa scholar that has contributed to Hausa orature is A. Dangambo who wrote *Rabe-Raben Adabin Hausa* (1984) (The Classification of the genres of Oral Literature). He classified literature into oral and written forms. He defined orature as:

The literature that has been in existence in Hausa land since time immemorial that no one can say the precise time that the people started practicing it because the people were practicing it before the coming of the Arabs and the British... the difference between the two types of literature is that “adabin gargajiya” (orature) is not written and is passed from one generation to the other in spoken form.

He went further to mention the different types of traditional singers in Hausa land and their functions. He also mentioned the musical instrument of Hausa people; he listed some examples of royal praise singers. He asserts that, the singers don’t sing for any other person except their masters (Emirs) and if it warrants them to sing for another Emir, they seek permission from their masters before they do it. These singers have great respect for their masters.

Maza Waje (1985) did his analysis entirely of royal praise songs. He defines fada (court) as a place where the Emir lives and rules his people. He made his analysis on some

selected royal praise songs performed by prominent royal praise singers such as Buda Dantanoma, Ibrahim Narambada, Musa Dankwairo and Saidu Faru. He analysed some of their songs and in the process discussed the themes of *Yabo* (praise), *Zuga* (eulogy), *Zambo* (satire) and *Habacici* (innuendo) in the songs. This research is more particular on the literariness of the paper which is on the themes of the praise songs. He also said that, “the royal praise songs contain criticism and praise...” he adds that, the special position held by the praisee enables him to criticize, with impunity certain aspects of the Emirs personality or action. The work is especially relevant to this research since he analyzed some of the themes discussed in this research.

Gusau (1987) analyzed the biographies of court praise singers in Hausa society. He classified royal praise singers into two groups. He posits that there is the first generation comprising of royal praise singers like: Buda Dantanoma, Abubakar Akwara, Muhammadu Dodo Maitabshi, Salihu Jankidi, Ibrahim Narambada etc and second generation praise singers like Saidu Faru, Sani Aliyu Dandawo, Muhammadu Ango Maitabshi among others. Again, he listed and wrote the songs they performed for their patrons (Emirs). There is a biography of each Hausa oral singer and the analysis of their songs. The similarity here is that the above listed praise singers are also part and parcel of court singers because they eulogise the Emir the way other court singers do. The only difference is that this type of praise singers, use musical instruments in their performance.

Keku (1992) in “Salihu Jankidi da Wasu Wakokinsa” (Some Selected songs of Salihu Jankidi) portrays Salihu Jankidi and some of his songs. Salihu Jankidi is a Royal praise singer who has sang many royal praises for his patron. Keku gave the biography of the praise singer and also analyzes the major themes in his songs, such as *Yabo* (praise), *Habaici* (innuendo) and *Zambo* (satire). Keku (1992) defines theme (jigo) as: “the theme is what comprises of a song or the foundation in which the singer composes his song”. He went further to say that,

“royal praise singers in Hausa land use the themes of their praise songs with chosen words in order to praise their patrons through praising, eulogy and to ridicule their patron’s adversaries through satire and innuendo”. This work is also important in the field of Hausa orature.

Gusau (1993) presents a history of Hausa land where he described it as:

a very wide area that is in the middle of Sudan and shares border with neighbouring countries and towns within Nigeria. From the north, Hausa land shares border with Niger Republic, from south it borders with Benin Republic with towns of Gbagi, Kambara, etc. To the west, it borders with towns like Zabarma and to the east it borders with Borno

Gusau (1993) notes that there are Hausa states found in northern part of Nigeria like Sokoto, northern part of Kaduna, Kano, northern part of Bauchi. He said that the language and culture of the Hausa people does not just stop in Nigeria but other neighbouring countries like Niger, Ghana, Chad. He used a small section under the different types of oral songs to define court songs as:

Songs that are performed for Emirs and other traditional institutions. Among the prominent royal praise singers are: Ibrahim Gurso, Ibrahim Narambada, Salihu Jankidi, Musa Dankwairo etc.

He presents a small part for Emir’s court singers. The book is more on the oral sounds in songs. He gives examples as the rise and fall of songs and then stress in lines of stanza. This is a general work but nevertheless, is still important because it talks on the historical aspect of this work.

Gladys E.A. (1993) in “An Analysis of Ekpoma Court Poetry” did her research on Ekpoma court poetry found in the North East of Edo State. The research focuses on the traditional culture of the poems as a partial expression. Such poems analysed in this research are incantations which are mainly of religious significance, which deal with other socio cultural aspects of life, praise poems for chiefs and then dirges which are performed during final burial ceremony. The researcher says, “The praise poem is the most popular and most

commonly used in Ekpoma court... the praise poem celebrates the Oojie, eulogies are addressed to him, and his ancestors are glorified using lofty and effusive language”. The most important aspect in this research work, is that the research focuses on the themes of praise songs and then the literary analysis of some of the poems. The similarity is that this research has to do with aristocracy and also it focuses on the themes of praise and then the literary analysis of some of the poems.

Yakawada (2002), in his PhD dissertation titled “Eulogues, The Building Blocks of Hausa Praise Songs: A Thematic and Structural Examination” defines eulogue thus; “It is used to refer to all words used with the aim of praising somebody. It is coined to serve as an extension of words used in referring to the act of praise or eulogy”. From the above definition, it shows that the research is on praise songs and to eulogise is to highly praise or recommend a person. He further discussed eulogue as:

A term or concept in Hausa as a gem of words of praise. Eulogues may be a word, group of words/phrases or a sentence. It is usually employed to praise a patron in a metaphoric or symbolic way via comparing him with some powerful animals, object, natural phenomenon and mysterious things. They are also words or phrases/sentences that describe the physiques, character and gait of the patron aimed purposely at eulogizing and uplifting the status or position of the patron and may in the process of doing so dwarf that of his opponents or foes.

It clearly shows that all eulogues can be *kirari* (praise). This shows that eulogue is same as *kirari* (praise) which this research is also interested in. There is much similarity in Yakawada’s and this research because both deals with the thematic interpretation of Hausa eulogues and some other literary devices.

Dhliwayo (2007), in “A Critical Study of the Praise Singer Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow”, writes in details on whom a praise singer is and how they praise during occasion. Dhliwayo, through Damane and Saunders (1974:24), posits that ”a praise singer is a seloki (praise singer) who composes or recites praises”. She said that he is a special person

with a peculiar talent and a special memory and in African setting, the person is commonly man. In another definition of a praise singer, she said that an *imbongi* (praise singer) is “someone who records the praise names, the victories and glorious qualities of the chief and his ancestors and recites these in lengthy high sounding verse on occasions which call for public adjuration for the ruler”. This definition has to do with the theme of praise declamation because it has to do with the virtues and qualities of the chief or king. Despite the fact that she analysed other types of praise singers which consist of: traditional praise singer, war praise singers, love praise singers, intimate praises. She also discussed on praise singing and gender equality, praise singing and politics and then praise singing and religion, she placed more emphasis on *seloki* or *imbongi* (royal praise singers).

The link here is that, a ‘seloki’(praise singer), an ‘imbongi’ in Zulu(praise singer) and sankira or maroki in Hausa(praise singer) are linked by the fact that they all recite praises, be they of chiefs, Emirs or kings. The issue remains that they praise sing whereby they need special ability and special memory for they have to memorise the names of the chiefs or Emir’s ancestral lineage to perfection.

Another scholarly contributing factor in the field of orature more especially Hausa oral songs is Gusau (2008) who has written many books on Hausa orature and Hausa oral songs in particular. In most of his books, he dwells more on royal praise singers. In his book, *Wakokin Baka a Kasar Hausa: Yanaye – Yanayensu da Sigoginsu* (2008) (The structure and functions of Hausa oral songs), Gusau classifies oral praise singers into two: royal praise singers and freelance singers. He focused more on royal praise singers where he defined them as:

Singers that perform the art of praise singing solely for royalty through singing and drumming to eulogise the Emirs, other title holders, children and the Emir’s siblings.... Among those that chant epithets at the palaces of Emirs in Hausa land include men and women but women are mostly found in the art of chanting praises.

Praise singers are those that chant praises for Emirs, district heads, ward heads and other title holders within the Emirate and the descendants of the throne

Gusau further categorized the royal praise singers into six types: court chanters, court praise singers that use drums, the instrumentalist, those that use 'jauje', 'banga' and 'ganga' (musical instruments use in praising Emirs), those praise singers that do not go outside the Emirate to praise another Emir except with the permission of their patron and lastly, those that mix royal praise singing with farming songs. Among the six types highlighted, only the first one (court chanters) and Gusau depicts them as

Those that chant epithets for Emir, in their performance, they eulogise the Emir without the use of any musical instrument. Among them is Musa Magajin Dan-musa danma'abba na Sarkin kabin Argungu, Sarkin Roko Sabo danma'abban Sarkin Daura etc.

Gusau depicts Hausa singers as unique and no less idiosyncratic (like other artistes) in as much as they are expected to behave and perform in certain ways consistent with their professional standing. For example, court singers invariably "imitate" their patrons (traditional rulers). Then appeared, both expansive and expensive and a symbol of the traditional authority, and the singers themselves are adept at pointing this out in their songs. He gave example of Salihu Jankidi's praise song for the Sultan of Sokoto, Abubakar III where in an elevated, almost even exaggerated tone, describes his clothes with a view to showing both their importance and their expensiveness, which closely reflect the test and symbolism of the Sultan's own clothes.

In a B.A. project titled "A Study of Royal Praise Poetry from Katsina Emirate" by Gide (2011), the research is similar to this only in the sense that it is also based on royal praise. He gave various definitions of praise from different scholars. His first definition is from an Online International Dictionary where he uses the following terms

Praise is an act of expressing commendation and admiration;  
that praise is the rendering of homage and gratitude to a deity;



that praise is to commend someone highly, that praise is to proclaim the glorious attributes of someone or a deity with homage or thanks giving.

Gide (2011) classified praise singers into two: the Aristocratic performers and freelance performers. The former comprises of royal singers that perform for the Emir and other royal aristocrats. He mentioned Alhaji Mamman Sarkin Taushin Katsina as a Royal Praise Singer of the Emir of Katsina. The latter is contrast to the art form of aristocracy, they perform for anybody from whom they anticipate monetary gains or other financial assets like cars, houses, clothes etc

Gide further discusses the literary and stylistic technique in the praise songs. He mentioned eulogistic praises as one of the major themes that boost the moral values of the patron and makes him quiver and proud from what is said. On the other hand, he mentioned satire and innuendo as themes that he said “are usually applied to vilify, castigate and stigmatise the opponents of the patron in the eyes of his people, so as to uplift, enhance and elevate the status of the patron”. Other literary devices used in his work are metaphor, image, alliteration, assonance, repetition, refrain, enjambment, apostrophy, hyperbole etc.

The researcher here made his analysis on royal praise singer, that is, he used Sarkin Taushin Katsina who is among the first generation royal praise singers. The royal praise singer uses musical instruments and is performed in group praise with chorus. This work is similar with this research on royal praise singers in because of the literariness of the work whereby he mentioned the themes, figures of speech and styles and technique used by the praise singers.

Olugbayo, (2015), in “The Aesthetics of Ado-Ekiti Praise poetry”, focused attention on the traditional praise poetry among Ado-Ekiti people. He sees praise poetry as “a form of oral composition that deals with innovation, adoration, or condemnation of the objects of praise”. The research is categorized into different types of praises like praise poetry for

supernatural forces which are epithets applied to gods, men, animals, plants and towns; poetry for kings and princes which is perform for king to acknowledged his powers and to show the extent to which he was respected and revered by his subjects; praise poetry for animate and inanimate objects shows that Yoruba people reveals that they also create *oriki* for their animals and praise poetry for individuals. The similarity between Olugbayo`s work and this research is that the researcher used *oriki* (bards) as praise poet and their role in praising the king and princes at the palace.

The works reviewed by the researcher are very much in line with the research. This is because most of the works reviewed in one way or the other share something common or similar with this research. For example, the history or formation of Hausa States, types of royal praise singers, the role and functions of the praise singers and then the literary devices found in the court songs. The area they based their work is generally on the role of royal praise singers, especially those that sing with musical accompaniment and the instrumentalist but none has devoted the whole work on the court chants as the researcher did. Another area that they have not discussed is on the state of praise singing in the modern era which the researcher has done a lengthy analysis on.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This research adopts the Functionalist approach as its theoretical framework. Ahmad (2000) defines Functionalism as, “the creative composition of functioning society, dynamic not static, integrated not isolated, central not peripheral components of culture”. The premise of this school is therefore that folklore comprises all aspects of knowledge of traditional society, and in order to ensure continuity, the knowledge is transmitted usually from the elders of the society to the younger ones. From this angle, folklore is not only an intellectual tool which ensures continuity of traditional society, but also a means of enlightening the younger members about the norms and values that are held sacred. The songs particularly the

praise poetry as form of the folklore plays this vital role in ensuring continuity in transmitting traditional knowledge to the younger generation.

According to Finnegan (1977:44), ‘‘the functionalists are concerned with the question, what role literature play in the society?’’. However, in the work of some analysts, the mediating role of literature is not taken seriously. She also states that, ‘‘others stress the active and functional aspect of literature. Several who have described how literature can play a part in the maintenance of social control or the socialization of children through the ‘lesson’ it teaches’’. She furthers says that the role of literature can either reflect the society or uphold its status quo. The functionalists also buttressed the point that any cultural phenomenon that does not exist in the society will not endure. Ikeokwu (2007) notes Udeh (1994) as saying that, the functionalist literature or functionalism is a valid approach to literary study. Its principles are based on those of ‘‘Social Commitment’’ Udeh (1994). Similarly, some poems like hymns, secret society songs, or initiation verse can be shown to contribute to the solidarity and self-awareness of certain groups. This aspect is brought out by the Functionalists anthropologists like Malinowski or Radcliffe Brown and their followers. Others also point out that ‘‘political songs can make impact during an election campaign’’. As a result of this; songs play an important role in every community. This lends weight to why Finnegan (1977: 45) asserts that ‘‘literature is a social and not just a private phenomenon’’.

Bronislaw Malinowski (1927), the father of field work as well as the creator of the school of functionalist thought proposed the method for field work. He posits that ‘‘field work is the retrieving of data usually by first hand observation in the social and cultural context which is being studied’’. Ethnography is a further branch of Malinowski’s (1927) idea of field work which is the account of a culture or community. Malinowski also stressed the inter relation of customs and that practicing field work or ethnography would lead one to examine the entirety of society.

In addition, Malinowski's (1927) theory of Functionalism is extremely crucial for a cultural anthropologist to utilize this method of "participant observation" by which field workers attempt to achieve ethnographic understanding through an artful synthesis of "insider observation". His view to a very large extent will serve as basis for this research. Brown (1922) on the other hand was influenced by Malinowski, but he came to a conclusion that one cannot study culture as a whole which is the point of convergence among the functionalists. Malinowski (1927) and Brown (1922) studied communities in the Pacific in the Trobriand Islands and Andaman Islands respectively and wrote extensively about the people. Other scholars studied and discussed African societies such as Evans (1940) who explores the Nuer society. Bascom (1969) concentrated on the Yoruba society and Nadel (1942) focused on the Nupe in Nigeria.

In relation to the Functionalists approach, Okpewho (1992:9) argues that "scholarly studies in orature have moved from a more general interest in culture to a more specific interest in society". (P.9) Therefore, as more scholars visit and live in various traditional societies all over the world, they become increasingly aware of the danger in making general statements about human nature and human culture. Their interest and focus is on the specific details of life such as language and other habits which make one society different from another, for the Functionalists, these differences are more interesting than the similarities.

The Functionalists also study every society in its own right, and to record as much of the various aspects of the people's folklore as possible. It is in this sense that Okpewho (1992:10) emphasises the importance of the record. He argues that, "the first point to discuss is the social context of folklore, its place in the daily affairs of the lives of those who tell it". Bascom (1969) in view of this also spells out other factors stating when and where the various forms of folklore are told, who tells and who composes them, dramatic devices employed by the narrator, audience participation and the attitude of the people towards

categories of folklore. Therefore, Bascom's notion of recording will also help in given this research work a guide in the process of data collection.

The Functionalists believe that everything in the society has a function and that everything has to work together in order to make the society harmonious. Schaefer (2001) has the same view that "Functionalism is that which thinks of the society as a living organism in which the organism contributes to the survival of the society". (Cited in Nelson p45) Founding fathers of the Functionalist approach include Bronislaw Malinowski (Polish born, British Anthropologist) A.R Radcliffe Brown (British) Franz Boas (American) E.E Evans Pritchard, Geoffrey Lienhard, William Bascom (on Yoruba) and S.F Nadel.

Functionalism is an approach that provides the necessary tool that enables a researcher to explore a society from a specific angle by collecting the people's data and trying to bring out the role that literature plays in that particular society with the role of the five W's and H . This means that what kind of literature is performed in the society? How is it performed? When is it performed? And who are the performers? The functionalists are also interested in the differences in culture and not the similarities.

However, the aim of using the Functionalist approach for this research is to explore the unique nature of Hausa oral art form particularly the praise poetry using the field work method and also to explore the different factors of Hausa culture. The Functionalists are concerned with the differences and similarities in culture. Using the Functionalist approach will serve as a guide in looking at the Hausa praise poetry and its functions. The Functionalist theory will also serve as bases in discussing other aspects of poetry performers in Hausa society; how such poetry is performed among the Hausa people, who composes them among others. In the same light, the social content and context of Hausa praise poetry will be considered using the Functionalist theory. It is in view of this that the Functionalist approach is considered appropriate for this research.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **ROYAL PRAISE SINGERS IN HAUSALAND**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In Africa and probably other parts of the world, praise is regarded not only as a medium of artistic expression but also as providing an avenue for individual and corporate expression of experience. Royal poetry is one of the most developed and elaborate oral poetic genres in Africa which is directed to either public or privately to kings and their chiefs. Several scholars have devoted their attention to orature and to be precise, royal poetry.

#### **CLASSIFICATION OF ROYAL PRAISE SINGERS**

According to Ibrahim (1983), the royal praise singers are classified according to their musical instruments and types of songs they compose. He however said that, they can be classified into three groups viz:

- a. The instrumentalists are those group of royal praise singers accompanied with musical instruments that pass information through the sounds of the instruments they use. He further subclassifies them into two: there are those that accompanied the sounds of the instruments with songs and then those that only pass information with the sounds alone without the use of the human voice in any form. Those that use instruments according to Mai Daura in Ibrahim (1983) make use of trumpet (kakaki), horn (kaho) farai (an instrument like trumpet but shorter in shape) and algaita (similar with farai). The trumpet is the oldest instrument used in the royal palace in the Hausaland. It was first used in Kano by the Emir of Kano Muhammadu Rumfa in the fifteenth century. In Kano, it is only used for the Emir and the District Head of Fage. The same applies to Katsina. But in Zaria, according to Sarkin Busa, he said apart from the Emir, the Galadima and Qaura also benefit from it. These are examples of the words coming out of the royal trumpet.

*Allah ne Sarki,*

Allah is the ruler,

<i>Mai Sama ne Sarki,</i>	The owner of the universe is the ruler,
<i>Allah ne da gaskiya,</i>	Allah is trustworthy,
<i>Mai Sama ne da gaskiya,</i>	The owner of the universe is trustworthy,
<i>Allah maganin kafa-nike-yi,</i>	Allah the provider of everything,
<i>Ubangiji shi bada basira,</i>	Believe everything is from God.

Ibrahim (1983).

In some Hausa towns like Katsina and Zazzau, they also make use of Farai. In Kano, Sarkin Busa kaho (horn) is the overall leader of the group. He is the first person that announces the arrival of the Emir to the palace and also announces and honours important guests to the palace, Ibrahim (1983).

Algaita (a double reed wind instrument) is important in the royal court music. The algaita sound goes together with drumming and singing. According to Ibrahim (1983), the song comes first then the algaita player follows in with the rhyme that fits the song. It is in the form of call-and-response-pattern. Example of song by Dandada Mai Algaitan Tafidan Kano:

<i>Mai waka:</i>	<i>Tafida ruwa malle Tafida danda Kano keso</i>
<i>Mai busa algaita:</i>	<i>(Zai busa wakar a cikin algaitarsa)</i>
<i>Mai waka:</i>	<i>Dan sarki duka laya ne amma Tafida Alkur'ani ne</i>
<i>Mai busa algaita:</i>	<i>(Zai busa wakar a cikin algaitarsa)</i>

Ibrahim (1983)

### ***Translation***

Singer:	Tafida water everywhere, Tafida the favourite of Kano people
Sound of Algaita:	(the sound will echo exactly the way the song was sang)
Singer:	Princes are not reliable but Tafida is the standard one
Sound of Algaita:	(The sound will be echoed exactly the way the song was sang)

- b. Another category of Royal Praise Singers are those that do not use musical instruments but rather recite chants or praises to Emirs and chiefs in the palace. There are

male and female royal praise singers and they are attached to various Emirs. For instance, they are known as ‘maroƙa’ while the female praise singer is known as ‘maroƙiya’.

In Yoruba land, they also have same set of royal praise singers like those in Hausaland with some slight differences. According to Adeyemi (2004) in Adeyemi (2013) posits that, the Yoruba praise singers are known by various appellations such as Akigbe-Oba (those who acclaim kings), Arokin Oba (chroniclers of genealogies), Akewi – Oba (the kings poets), Apohun-Oba (the kings bards) or Onirara-Oba (the king’s praise singer). The Yoruba use different musical instruments to accompany the chants they recite for the king such as ‘seeker’ (guard rattles), ‘Aro’ (meal chronicle) ‘dundun’ (talking drums), Adeyemi (2013).

According to Ibrahim (1983), Emirs may have already accepted this group of praise singers because they are talented. And also that whatever comes out of their mouths to the Emirs would be favourable. The royal praise singers are expected to recite the praises of previous rulers and compose new ones to commemorate the achievements and qualities as well as ideologies of the society at the time of the incumbent Emir. In each of these performances, the ruling monarchs and the past ones are glorified in praise songs and their deeds are also recorded in effusive and lofty language.

According to Sanƙiran Sarkin Zazzau in an interview, he noted that there are different types of praises for title holders in the Emirate. For example, in informing the Emir of the arrival of a dignitary like ‘Wamban gari’, they praise him thus:

<i>Dan giye da ƙasa,</i>	Son of the soil,
<i>Dan giye da gari,</i>	Son of the soil,
<i>Tete guragu amale,</i>	That moves along with people,
<i>Wamban bajimin saraki,</i>	A guide to the entire Emirate,
<i>Dan Uban gabasawa,</i>	A defensive wall of the Emirate
<i>Dan cigari dodon gabas</i>	<i>The conquerer the beast of the wall</i>

Sanƙiran (2015)



### **Praise for Sarkin Ladanai**

<i>Zakaran ma'aikin Allah</i>	A cock that calls prayer,
<i>Zakaran da baya yankuwa</i>	A cock that never fails,
<i>Sarkin Ladanai Bajimin Saraki</i>	The arch-cock of the Emirate

### **Praise for Dan Madami,**

<i>Faskara kora kafin damisa,</i>	Daring the Dan Madami
<i>Ki da nono gobarar ku Fulani,</i>	Is like daring the devil
<i>Dan madamin bajimin sarki,</i>	The chief warrior of the Emir
<i>Dan uban Gabasawa.</i>	A defensive wall of the Emirate

Sankira (2015)

According to Sarkin Sankiran Zazzau (Interviewed at the Emir of Zazzau Palace on 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2015) the above epithets (Kirari) cut across other northern Emirates. This means that similar praises are chanted in other Emirates whenever any title holder pays a courtesy visit to an Emir.

- c. The third group of royal praise singers are those that combine praising with musical instruments. They use their drums and talking drums (kalangu) in setting their songs. They make sure they organize songs that are meaningful and full of praises for their masters (Emirs) and then ridicule royal rivals. According to Gusau (1993), there are praise singers for Emirs and those that have the blood of royalty. Royal praising to them, is an inheritance as such they do not take it as a joke. They sing the praises judiciously to their Emirs only without singing for any other person no matter the gifts promised to them. They are found in the royal palaces and they reside permanently in the palace close to their patrons. They are taken care of by the Emir who provides all their needs including shelter and clothing so they took the chant as their means of survival and daily job. Royal praise singers are some of the best troupe of oral singers in Hausaland because they religiously follow the culture and

tradition of the people. The example of such praise singers are Salihu Jan kida, Narambada, Muhammadu Sarkin Taushi Katsina, Saidu Faru, Aliyu Dandawo etc, Gusau (2008).

The example of such a royal praise song is by Sarkin Taushin Katsina, Alhaji Muhammadu, for the Emir of Zazzau, Muhammadu Aminu (1959 – 1975). In the song,

Singer: *Mutane wani baya yin zamanin,*  
*Komi da zamaninai,*  
chorus: *Wani baya yin zamanin wani,*  
*Komi da zamaninai,*  
Singer: *Wani baya yin zamanin wani ko can,*  
*Wata hudu sanyi, watan tara aka yini ruwa,*  
*Maza su yi shibke – shibkensu sarkin Tabshi,*  
*Ku tabbata duk dai abin da ka shibka,*  
*Zai hitowa ga hili,*  
Singer: *Kowa abin daya shibka x 2*  
*Zai hitowa ga hilin gona x 2*  
Singer: *Mun taho Zazzau x 2*  
*Tafi kyau inda sabon sarki x 2*  
*Aminu amincinka nak kai ka zama sarki.* Gusau, (2009)

### **Translation**

Singer: People should know that everybody spends just his time,  
Chorus: Everything has a right time,  
Nobody claims another's reign,  
Singer: Everything has a right time,  
Chorus: Ever in the days of Yore, nobody claims another's reign,  
Harmattan comes before raining season,  
It is then time for planting, Sarkin Tabshi,  
It is certain that whatever a man sows,  
That he shall reap,  
Singer: Whatever a man sows 2x  
Chorus: That he shall reap 2x  
Singer: Alas! We are in Zazzau 2x

Chorus:                                Glamour with the new crowned Emir 2x  
   Aminu that has been the reward for good deeds

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE EMIR AND THE ROYAL PRAISE SINGERS**

Royal praise singers have long been known as the praisers of the Emirs. Most of them inherited the art of singing from their fore fathers and also most of them have patrons. Ibrahim Narambada's patron was Sarkin Gobir na Isa; then Buda Dantanoma whose court praises were for Sarkin Muhammadu Sama of Argungu. But for Dankwairo, research shows that he did not have a specific patron that he praised. He did not stick to one patron but sings anywhere the situation warranted him. He differed from other royal praise singers like Saidu Faru etc, Mazawaje (1985).

Gusau (1993), states that the royal praise singers are taken care of by the Emir and he provides all their needs. Hitherto, the royal praise singers relied solely on their patrons for sustenance. With changes that have occurred in the society, and also with the coming of modernization, many praise singers of nowadays are now fully engaged in farming, trading, driving and so on and they only take the artistic performance as a part-time job, Gusau (1993).

Royal praise singers do not just sing any how but usually have a rehearsal session for themselves where they practice their songs of genealogy of the Emirs, the principal events of their lives and other notable events in the history of their land. The singers praise the grandparents of their patron whose reigns existed before the praise singers' time. They praise the Emir in such a way to show or remind him that he has inherited the good deeds of his ancestors. They also do mention names of those people that they know are very close to the Emir, Mazawaje (1985).

The attachment between the praisers and their patrons is the reason why the royal singers rehearse their songs with their troupe before the main day. They always try to sing the

best songs in which their patron is well praised whereby no other singer can do. This is the reason why royal praise singers are best when it comes to *Zuga* (eulogy), *kirari* (praise), *Zambo* (ridicule), *Habaici* (innuendo) etc, Mazawaje (1985).

In addition to singing in the service of their Emir, some of them are in the habit of entertaining guests at public functions. They praise particular people in a way that the guest may in turn appreciate them with gifts. Today, royal praise singers are still attached to the court of many prominent Emirs, where they continue to produce well coded oral art to edify the ruler as stated in an interview with Sarkin Sankiran Sarkin Zazzau.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF ROYAL PRAISE SINGERS IN HAUSALAND**

The presence of royal praise singers (palace chanters, singers and drummers) is noticed at the palace of most, if not all the important Emirs in Hausaland. According to Sarkin Sankiran Zazzau, these royal praisers sing and chant in honour of the Emirs and they also announce and honour the arrival of important guests by drumming or piping the names and attributes of such guests as they arrive. Since royal praisers are found all over Hausaland, the praisers make use of any of the Hausa dialects especially that of Sokoto (Sakkwatanci) to deliver to their clients. In other words, the style of delivery of the royal bards might differ from one Hausa dialect to the other but the content and the praising remains virtually the same. This was said and demonstrated by Sankiran Sarkin Zazzau during a performance:

#### **Praise for Head of Cripple**

<i>Koya ya taka kaya ya zama naka</i>	Whoever limps pays you homage
<i>Domin kuwa duk wanda ya taka kaya</i>	Whoever matches a thorn
<i>Wajibi ne ya yi d'ingishi</i>	Must limp
<i>Ko mutum ya zauna, ko ya tsugunna</i>	All sorts of cripples
<i>Yana karkashin mulkin ka kenan</i>	Are serving under your authority

Sankira, (2015)

Another epithet goes with the arrival of the custodian of water in the palace:

<i>Banbaro na bakin Sarki giye</i>	Oh ye so dear to the Emir
<i>Na bakin labi,</i>	You that follow a path
<i>Sarkin Ruwan Bajimin Sarki,</i>	So esteem the custodian of water
<i>Dan uban gabasawa dan cigari amalen</i>	So prosperous and beloved by the Emirs
<i>sarakuna</i>	
<i>Dan Dodon gabasawa mai yammawa</i>	He who engulfed both east and western
	Cardinals

SanKira, (2015)

This is how they introduce dignitaries with effusive and loud praises in front of the Emir. Although only the male royal praisers are often found at the main entrance to the palace, this does not dismiss the existence of the female royal praisers (maroikiya) who often stay within the palace but sometimes escort the Emir outside with epithets of praises.

Royal praise singers are palace entertainers for the Emir, his chiefs and visitors. Their chants are rendered mainly for entertainment but occasionally also for the purpose of obtaining remuneration either in cash or in kind.

According to Abbas (2014), every morning they are expected to pay homage to the Emir with their chants and musical accompaniments. They acclaim the king at intervals by citing the king's names, attributes and appellations verbally or with the musical instruments. Royal praises refer to the qualities of the character or physical appearance of their patrons when chanting to entertain them. Such qualities and descriptions are highly specific as in this chant:

<i>Daga Allah muka faro</i>	We are from God
<i>Daga Allah muka komawa</i>	And to Him we shall return
<i>Gobara daga teku</i>	An inferno
<i>Maganinta Allah</i>	That is controlled by God
<i>Karya garin tawaye</i>	Harbor to whoever refuse to succumb

*Kama garin maki gudu*

And shun any sign of contempt

*Ci gari uban gabasawa*

Town conqueror so prosperous and so full of esteem

*Abbas, (2014)*

Royal praise singers are also regarded as the repositories of tradition and as chroniclers of the Emirs' geneology, reminding people of histories and great deeds of his predecessors, in such a way as to uphold the tradition. In the following royal songs, the singers gave a list of all the past and present Emirs in a chronological order. This song is an extract from Ibrahim Narambada in praise of Emir of Zazzau, Alhaji Muhammadu Aminu:

*Jagora: Gulbi ka wuce kwalhewa*

*Yan Amshi: Mijin Nana Yalwa dān sanda*

*Jagora: Tuna kakanka Sambo yai sarki*

*Kuma Abdulkarimu yai sarki*

*Mamman Yalwa ja sarauta (x 2)*

*Gusau (2009)*

### ***Translation***

Leader: You are the water that never dries up

Chorus: The husband of Nana Yelwa, the police man

Leader: Remember the reign of your grandfather, Sambo

Then his successor Abdulkarimu

Then you, Mamman Yalwa, continue to reign 2 x

Another extract of such a type of song is by Sarkin Taushin Katsina Alhaji Muhammadu for Emir of Hadejia, Haruna:

*Jagora: Gidan nan Sambo ciki yai mulki*

*Buhari gidan nan yay yi sarauta*

*Umaru an ce yayi sarauta*

*Muhammadu an ce ya yi sarauta*

*Haruna da Haruna sunyi sarauta*

*Kuma Abdulkadir yayi sarauta*

*Har Usmanu yayi sarauta*

*Yan Amshi: Haruna Muhammadu Kaine sarki*

*Jagora: Haruna*

*Yan Amshi: Muhammadu kai ne sarki*

*Gusau, (2009)*

### ***Translation***

Leader: In this Emirate, Sambo reigned  
Buhari was also ruled in this Emirate  
Umaru was also said to be an Emir  
Muhammadu also ruled in the same Emirate  
Haruna and Haruna were also Emirs  
Then also Abdulkadir was an Emir  
Even Usmanu was also an Emir  
Chorus: Haruna Muhammdu it is now your reign  
Leader: Haruna  
Chorus: Haruna Muhammdu it is now your reign

In another praise song by Salihu Jankiki, he did not just go back to history but also showed that Sardaunan Sokoto, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello was a descendant of Prophet Muhammadu. This was to show how great Sardauna was in the following extract from the song:

Jagora: *Annabi shi ya haihi Fatsima x 2*  
Y/Anshi: *Fatsima ta haihi Hassan x 2*  
*Hassan kuma shi ya haihi Mamman*  
*Mamman shi ya haihi Isa*  
*Isa kuma ya haihi Mamman*  
*Mamman shi ya haihi Tanimu Bakarinmu*  
*Tanimu shi ya haihi Amadu*  
*Ahmadu shi ya haihi Badanu*  
*Badanu shi ya haihi Wardu*  
*Wardu shi ya haihi Yusha'u*  
*Yusha'u shi ya haihi Kusayyu*

*Kusayyu shi ya haihi Hatimu*  
*Hatimu shi ya haihi Hurmuzu*  
*Hurmuzu shi ya haihi Abdul-Jabbaru*  
*Abdul-jabbaru shi ya haihi Abdullahi*  
*Abdullahi shi ya haihi Abdul-Hassan Ashazaliyu*  
*Abdul-Hassan shi ya haihi Amadu*  
*Ahmadu shi ya haihi Mubaraku*  
*Mubaraku shi ya haihi Salis*  
*Salisu shi ya haihi Abdul-Razzaki*  
*Abdul-Razzaki shi ya haihi Aliyu Yambu'u*  
*Aliyu Yambu'u shi ya haihi Shahihi Amadu*  
*Shahihi Amadu shi ya haihi Muhammadu*  
*Muhammadu shi ya haihi Hauwa'u*  
*Hauwa'u ita ta haihi Shehu Usman*  
*Shehu Usmanu shi ya haihi Mamman Bello*  
*Mamman Bello shi ya haihi Abubakar*  
*Abubakar shi ya haihi Ibrahimu*  
*Ibrahim shi ya haihi Sardauna Amadu*  
*Duk wanda ad da asaba hakanga*  
*Duk duniya ga wa iya ja mai*  
*Kuma Lahira ina masu ja.*

Gusau (2009:25).

### ***Translation***

Leader: Fatsima the daughter of the Prophet 2x  
 Fatsima the mother of Hassan 2x  
 Mamman descendant from Hassan  
 Isa came through Mamman  
 Isa gave birth to Mamman the second  
 Tanimu Bakarimu the descendant of Mamman the second  
 Tanimu the father of Ahmadu  
 Ahmadu the father of Badanu  
 Badanu the father of Wardu  
 Wardu gave birth to Yusha'u  
 Yusha'u the father of Kusayyu



Kusayyu the father of Hatimu  
 Hatimu gave birth to Hrmuzu  
 Hurmuzu the father of Abdul-Jabbaru  
 Abdul-Jabbaru gave birth to Abdullahi  
 Abdullahi the father of Abdul-Hassan Ashazaliyu  
 Abdul-Hassan gave birth to Amadu  
 Amadu gave birth to Mubaraku  
 Mubaraku the father of Salisu  
 Salisu gave birth to Abdul-Razzaki  
 Abdul-Razzaki the father for Aliyu Yambu'u  
 Aliyu Yambu'u gave birth to Sheikh Amadu  
 Sheikh Amadu gave birth to Muhammadu  
 Muhammadu the father of Hauwa'u  
 Hauwa'u the mother of Shehu Usman  
 Shehu Usman the father of Mamman Bello  
 Mamman Bello gave birth to Abubakar  
 Abubakar the father of Ibrahimu  
 Ibrahimu descendent of Sardauna Amadu  
 Anybody with the said chronology  
 Fears nothing in the world  
 And in the hereafter

Apart from reminding the Emir of histories and great deeds of their predecessors, the Emir's praise singers also document major events associated with the tenure of each of the Emir's in their chants. For instance, in the following chants by Muhammadu Sarkin Taushi, for Emir of Zazzau, Aminu, the royal singer gives information on the accession of:

Jagora:        *Ai Muhammadu ranar nadin sarauta,*  
                   *Manyan sarakunamu kowa yazo,*  
 Y/Amshi:     *Zama ga sarkin Katsina wurin,*  
                   *Ga sarkin Musulmi da Sarkin Gwandu,*  
                   *Ga Kuma sarkin Kano da Sarkin Daura,*  
                   *Suna nan da sarkin Gwari,*

*Da Ministoci ga firimiya Sir Ahmadu Bello,  
 Ga Gwamna shi ma ya zo,  
 Ga kuma manyan ma'aikata tare da larabawa,  
 Da yan makaranta,  
 Muhammadu Sabkaka sando kas shiga rumfa,  
 Kana karanta takarda,  
 Kana gai da sarki Sarki,  
 Sai bayan kayi ka gama,  
 Sannan gwamna ya tashi shi ma yayi,  
 Duk tarihinka gwamna ya bada,  
 Kana yabba ka kayan girma,  
 Jagora: Tarihinka gwamna ya bada,  
 Y/Amshi: Kana yab ba ka kayan girma,  
 Kana yabba ka kayan sarki,*

(Gusau 2009:74).

### ***Translation***

Leader: Oh Muhammadu on the day of your coronation  
 All the royal highnesses witnessed the occasion  
 Chorus: The Emir of Katsina was present,  
 The occasion also graced by the presence of Sultan  
 and Emir of Gwandu  
 Also on the row were Emir of Kano and Emir of Daura  
 They were together with Emir of Gwari  
 The Northern Premiere Sir Ahmadu Bello and his Ministers  
 were all in attendance.  
 The governor was not left behind  
 Senior civil servants and Arabs also  
 Graced the occasion  
 Other dignitaries were not left behind  
 His Royal Highness Muhammadu climbed the podium  
 And read his speech  
 Sending greeting to all the royal highnesses  
 It was after he finished his welcome address

Then the governor took over  
 The governor read your biography  
 He presented the staff of duty to you  
 Leader: The governor read your biography  
 Chorus: Then presented the staff of duty to you  
 Then presented royal documents to you.

The royal praise singers' ultimate concern is to chant to the satisfaction of their patrons. Therefore, there are a lot of exaggerations and distortions embedded in the songs. For example, the last song by Sarkin Tabshi for Emir of Zazzau, Aminu is full of exaggeration. The way he listed the dignitaries is like the whole of Northern Emirs and politicians attended the accession, here, priority was given to the Emirs before the premiere, governor and the ministers. Another example of distortion is in the song of Salihu Jankidi for Sardauna Sokoto where he mentioned that Sardauna is a descendant of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He made sure that the lineage goes down well from Fatsima down upto Sardauna, this shows how great Sardauna was in the Northern region.

Royal praise singers are however in constant attendance in the palace. Virtually, the aristocratic performers are not expected to perform anywhere for any person without the approval of the Emir. What is real about most of them is that, the praise singers are so much attached to the Emirate and therefore spend most of their times in the palace.

## **FORM AND CONTENT**

The content of the praise songs are analysed in various forms. Epithet (Kirari) and other literary devices are well defined and fully explained. The themes of *Yabo* (praise) and *zuga* (eulogy) as well as *zambo* (satire) are defined and analysed in terms of *kirari* (epithet) literary devices such as simile, metaphor, repetition etc are as well analysed from examples of epithets. According to Kafin Hausa:

The term epithet (*kirari*) can be defined as a word or words that are said in a literary stylistic way so as to flatter or incite or praise a person or something. Thus, a person can use these words in order to flatter oneself. These words are said in a kind of voice that is high and deep so that the listeners will differentiate it from the normal discourse, (Kafin Hausa, 1997 in Mode 2013).

On the other hand, Yahaya as quoted by Kaura (1997) believes that epithet (*kirari*) is an artistic statement using words that are poetic in form that one deploys on oneself or that are deployed on someone or something such as animal or town so as to praise oneself or explain ones behaviour, features or history.

In trying to analyse the phrases or sentences of epithet (*kirari*), these definitions are very much in line with the examples of epithets that will be analysed in this chapter. It can be said that the Hausa *kirari* (epithet) can be words, phrases or sentences that are aimed at praising, eulogising, flattering, describing or criticizing someone or something.

Moreover, in relation to the theme, Umar in Yakawada (2002) says:

They fell within the bounds of *yabo* (praise), *zuga* (incitation) and *zambo* (satire). This is what is obtained in court songs, with the theme of *yabo* (praise) being the most recurrent, (Umar in Yakawada, 2002).

## **PRAISE/EULOGY AS A TOOL FOR NURTURING AMBITION**

In praising the Emir of Zazzau, the most reoccurrent themes according to Sankiran Zazzau (2015) are *yabo* (praise), *zuga* (eulogy) and *zambo* (satire) which is done for those that aspire the throne of the Emir.

In analyzing the themes, *Yabo* (praise) and *zuga* (eulogy) will be first discussed since they have to do with praising. The examples of such come from Sankiran Zazzau (2015).

*Toron Giwa sha zamani*

Bull Elephant with long life span

*Gam da hari mugun magani*

A lethal that is never tasted

*Nushin ciki sa doro*

A punch that must be felt

<i>Gamo da sarki yafi gamo da damina</i>	The king who showers like a spring
<i>Gamo da sarki yafi aje gwanja</i>	Meeting the king is more prosperous than going to <i>gwanja</i>
<i>Lauje mai wuyan Kube,</i>	The sickle that has no scabbard
<i>Jama'a ko da mai gwadawa?</i>	Whose boldness can dare that of the king?
<i>SanKira (2015)</i>	

These are praise and eulogies meant for only the Emir and no one else can be praised as such. The Emir here is metaphorically compared to a bull Elephant which is a giant animal. A bull elephant is a strong and big animal that is respected and feared. That is the reason why the praise singers refer to the Emir as someone that is strong and feared among the people in the Emirate and is not because he is wicked. He is feared because he has the authority to punish anyone that goes astray. This was more relevant under the British colonial rule who gave Emirs total control of the courts, the police as well as the prisoners. Wherever mentioned, the whole Emirate knows that is only the Emir that is comparable to a bull Elephant.

In another epithet (kirari), SanKira praised him as such:

<i>Kyauren gabas</i>	Shield to the east
<i>Tufeniyar gabas</i>	A cover to the east
<i>Dodon gabas</i>	Beast of the east
<i>Maci yammawa</i>	The conqueror of the west
<i>Zakin duniya</i>	A son of the lion of the world
<i>Dan Zakin duniya</i>	descendant of the Lion of the world
<i>Giwa mai keta fa'ko</i>	The Elephant that cannot be trapped
<i>Gwanki sha bara,</i>	A Hippo not easily trapped
<i>Yaro cene kafasa</i>	He who sends the children to flee

Here, the Emir is associated with extra ordinary powers and strength of *Zaki* (Lion) which represents strength, majesty and sometimes fierceness. With his strength, nothing will

harm his people because he has protected all the entries to his Emirate from east to south and north to west. He is also compared with an elephant that is also powerful and strong in the animal kingdom. Human beings also feared dodo (beast) that is if a beast guards the entrance, then no one dares to enter the kingdom. This is a warning to the enemies of the Emirate not to attempt anything foolish or evil on the Emir because even if done, the Emir will by pass it.

In another praise or eulogy, the praise singers make sure that they praise their patron in such a way that no other can be praised as:

<i>Ubangijin bawa da baiwa</i>	The Emir who is just to his subordinate
<i>Adali mai massalacin juma'a</i>	Whose palace houses the juma'at mosque
<i>Mai horo abi Allah</i>	He who instills the fear of God in the hearts
<i>Dan mai horo abi Allah</i>	His father also instilled the fear of God in the hearts
<i>Jikan mai horo abi Allah</i>	The grandfather also instilled the fear of God in the hearts
<i>Sadauki dan Idrissu</i>	The brave one, the descendant of Idrissu
<i>Alfanda maganin marassa imani</i>	The grandson who forces the people to follow ways of God
<i>A shekara dubu ana yakin ruwa</i>	No matter the level of water, the calabash still floats.
<i>Bazai ci sakaina ba</i>	

*Sankira (2015)*

This stanza describes the Emir as someone that likes the masses using law and order and whoever goes astray will be punished. The lineage here shows that the Emir has a respectable status. Sankira praised the Emir as somebody with good qualities to be followed and then linked the Emir to his ancestors as the son who follows the footsteps of his father and also that of his grandfather. It shows that the Emir acquired leadership qualities from their family roots. Nobody can ever confront the Emir and succeed.

Barayan Zazzau and Wazirin Zagi are also the Emir's praise singers. They have their own style of chanting in praising and eulogizing the Emir. These two come forward every morning in order to guide the Emir on the way to his office. They don't just chant the words

or phrases openly but are full of poetic devices and other selected qualities of poetic language. The moment Wazirin Zagi notices that the Emir is about to come out of his room, he stands to chant as such

<i>Haikawa lafiya Zaki</i>	Waddle gently Lion
<i>Haikawa lafiya ci gari</i>	Waddle gently the town conqueror
<i>Haikawa sannu a lafiya ci gari</i>	Waddle gently and slowly the town conqueror
<i>Inka dāuka alheri</i>	You stretch out for good
<i>Inka miqa da nufin alheri</i>	You give out for good
<i>Ka daga da ƙarfin Allah</i>	You descend with good intention
<i>Ka maido da nufin Allah</i>	Walk with the will of Allah
<i>Gaban ka Allah</i>	And stop in the will of Allah
<i>Bayan ka Annabi</i>	You are guided by Allah
<i>Dama da hauni,</i>	And the holy Prophet
<i>Ikon lillahi</i>	You are guided by Allah
<i>Wahidun ƙaharu Zaki</i>	The strong one, the Lion

Wazirin Zagi (2015)

These are epithets (kirari) that guide the steps of the Emir daily on his way to the office or out of it. In walking, taking steps, the praise chanters become the eyes and ears of the Emir. They deem him to be blind and wait to be told direction to the pace to take when walking. As Wazirin Zagi mentioned earlier, he said that the Emir walks majestically and in doing so he said, “our utterances guide his way because he is accustomed to the language we use”. The word ‘Haikawa’ (carefully) is used in place of ‘hankali’ which is a common word used in everyday speech. They also use loan words from Arabic language, for example ‘*wahidun*’ (one) ‘*kaharu*’ (strength) and *lillahi* (God) to praise the Emir.

Barayan Zazzau who is also a courtier in the Zazzau Emirate said that wherever the Emir is, the courtiers must be there to praise him and also guide his steps until he reaches where he is heading . His own epithets are similar to that of Wazirin Zagi and at the same time different. He praises the Emir as such.

<i>Kofa lafiya Zaki</i>	Be careful with the entrance ahead Lion
<i>Kofa lafiya Zaki</i>	Be careful with the entrance ahead Lion
<i>Sun kuya ba wada</i>	Bend through the entrance provider
<i>Sun kuya ba wada</i>	Bend through the entrance provider
<i>Gangare saukawa lafiya Zaki</i>	Walk gently through the slope Lion
<i>Masgaye ba wada</i>	Tilt through the entrance provider
<i>Jingine dama da hagu</i>	At liberty to lean to your right and left
<i>Ramni kasa ka kyau</i>	Walk gently the area is slippery
<i>Bisa haikawa lafiya Zaki</i>	Up! Waddle gently Lion
<i>Zamna lafiya ba wada</i>	Adjust your sitting position
<i>Zamna lafiya kimtsi</i>	Sit down carefully the provider
	Adjust carefully
<i>Lafiya zamna gari ki tashi</i>	Sit well the throne remains yours
<i>Gyara kintsi</i>	Adjust your sitting position

*Barayan Sarki (2015)*

The epithets do not just guide the steps of the Emir but also serve as a signal to other courtiers to take their various seating positions that the Emir will soon be in the palace. The epithets are not just guide to the steps of the Emir but are done to the hearing of all in the palace so as to announce the arrival of the Emir. There is the continuous repetition of Zaki (Lion) and many unusual verbs like ‘*masgaye*’, ‘*jingine*’, ‘*ramni*’ ‘*sunkuye*’ and ‘*gangare*’ which are not ordinary words used in day to day speech but they are words used only for the Emir.

In some praise epithets by Sarkin Zagi, which are also meant to guide the steps of the Emir but are done in another poetic style. For example, any time the Emir is going out, Wazirin Zagi has these epithets to chant.

<i>Haikawa lafiya nan</i>	Waddle gently here
<i>Haikawa lafiya nan</i>	Waddle gently here
<i>Haikawa lafiya ci gari</i>	Waddle gently the town conqueror



<i>Gwabri kasa dai dai wadaida</i>	Walk on, the place is safe
<i>Karka shagala</i>	Do not relent
<i>Karka shagala</i>	Do not relent
<i>Ba shagala, ba manko, ba gaggawa</i>	Do not relent, do not forget, do not be hasty
<i>Ba garaje ci gari</i>	Do not be speedy the town conqueror
<i>Haikawa sannu a lafiya sarkin yakin manzon Allah</i>	Waddle gently war commander of the prophet
<i>Haikawa sannu a lafiya ci gari mai tawaye</i>	Waddle gently the leader that can crush any rebel
<i>Haikawa sannu lafiya gadon aska a hauka da lura</i>	Waddle gently the town conqueror that crushes rebels
<i>Haikawa sannu a lafiya ci gari Maci tawaye</i>	Waddle gently the leader that can crush any rebel
<i>Lafiya kashe mai kashe wani</i>	It is well you temper justice with mercy
<i>Hamdulillahi Zaki</i>	Praise the lord Lion
<i>Daukawa sannu a lafiya kashe kafiri</i>	Deal with unbelievers
<i>Ki kafiri gaba da maki sallah Zaki</i>	Deal with unbelievers and bring them back to the right path
<i>Lafiya ci gari</i>	It is well the town conqueror
	<i>Sarkin Zagi (2015)</i>

Here, the praise singers use different styles of chants to praise and eulogise the Emir is because each and every courtier wants his own chants and eulogy to be the best among his contemporaries that is why whenever one of them steps out, he makes sure that he chants the epithets in a unique style that will display his unique talent. The Sarkin Zagi makes sure that he repeats the chants carefully and continuously mentioning vocabularies like ‘*gwabri*’, ‘*manko*’, ‘*ci gari*’ ‘*Haikawa*’, etc. The epithets above are phrases that guide the Emir from his room up to the court. They will not stop chanting until he is fully seated.

The courtiers continue chanting praises and eulogy in guiding the steps of the Emir and does so even while he is on a horse. The process is captured by Barayan Zazzau thus:

<i>Bisa haikawa lafiya Zaki</i>	Up waddle gently Lion
<i>Bisa lafiya Zaki</i>	Up waddle gently Lion
<i>Kama zuru linzami</i>	Handle the reign firmly
<i>Zauna dai dai kada ka shagala</i>	Be up and doing
<i>Zirawa gaba</i>	Do not relent
<i>Jinkiri ba wada gaba ta tushe ne</i>	Have a pause the provider
<i>Yi hankali da aikin moro</i>	Tread carefully to avoid the peasants plantation
<i>Lafiya mai ado da kurar doki</i>	He who uses entourage of the horse for adornment

Barayan Sarki (2015)

All these chants are said to the Emir of Zazzau whenever he is about to climb a horse or after he has climbed the horse on special occasions.

They make sure that they use their flowing gowns to circle the area and cover the Emir whenever he is about to mount his horse. They do this in case the Emir mistakenly loses his steps. In the process, they will be chanting ‘mount carefully’, ‘mount carefully Lion’. Whenever they come across bridges along the way they chant ‘becareful’ with the work of the peasants’. For Sarkin Zagi, he has his own unique style of praising and eulogising the Emir whenever he is about to climb a horse for a ride. He starts by chanting:

<i>Jinkiri ba wada</i>	Have a pause the provider
<i>Jinkiri gwaaron giwa</i>	Have a pause the Bull Elephant
<i>Bisa lafiya Zaki</i>	Waddle gently Lion
<i>Bisa lafiya Zaki</i>	Waddle gently Lion
<i>Zauna dai dai Zaki</i>	Adjust the sitting position Lion
<i>Karka shagala ba wada</i>	Concentrate fully
<i>Amincin ka yafi ga linzani</i>	Do not relent
<i>Kada ka shagala</i>	The animal is insane
<i>Kasan dabba ba hankali gareta ba</i>	Adjust the sitting position
<i>Zauna dai dai</i>	Do not relent Lion
<i>Kada ka shagala Zaki</i>	From your left to the right,

<i>Gaban ka Allah</i>	You are guided by Allah
<i>Bayan ka Annabi</i>	And the holy Prophet
<i>Dama da hauni ikon lillahi</i>	You are guided by Allah
<i>Wahidin Kaharu Zaki</i>	The strong one, the Lion
<i>Alheri gagara gasa</i>	Your generosity is incomprable
<i>Lafiya ci gari maci tawaye</i>	It is well our conqueror who wins over enemies

Sarkin Zagi (2015)

This epithet is composed and performed especially, to praise the Emir with the expectation of pleasing him, his family and friends and sometimes his peers. This shows that, the courtiers are always ever ready to impress their patron.

Royal praise singing in Zazzau is not only a male dominated, public affairs which scholars have tended to focus on. There is an important, female, in doors and privately praise singing dominated by female followers. In Zazzau, there are also female royal praisers who reside within the household of the Emir. They perform kirari (praises) declarations for the Emir. Rabi Bazamfara is the only surviving female praise singer in the Emir's palace. Her repertoire is well arranged, geared to an accounting of historic facts and praises for the Emir and his beloved wives. She chants the epithets using gestures like raising her hands high above, shaking them and stressing specific epithets with her voice high above all others. As she mentioned in an interview, Bazamfara said she makes sure that she chants epithets of praises to the Emir every morning which does not stop within the household only but she also escorts him outside and chants in the mist of other male praise singers until he enters his car. She chants the praises like this:

<i>Lafiya na Katau</i>	It is well, the provider
<i>Lafiya toya matsafa</i>	It is well, the burner of fetish groves
<i>Lafiya uban talakawa</i>	It is well, the leader of the masses
<i>Lafiya mai gabas da yamma</i>	It is well, for your rule, the cardinal points
<i>Lafiya mai hagu da dama</i>	It is well, for your rule in both side
<i>Lafiya uban Kabiru baban Bello</i>	It is well, father of Kabiru and Bello

<i>Lafiya baban Sambo</i>	It is well, father of Sambo
<i>Lafiya sarki uban sarakuna</i>	It is well, the father of Emirs
<i>Taka da karfin Allah</i>	Waddle gently, you are guided by Allah
<i>Ka shiga da ikon Allah</i>	Enter by the will of Allah

Bazamfara (2015)

In these kirari (epithets), Bazamfara praised the Emir in her own unique style of repeating ‘lafiya’ almost throughout the chants which shows the kind of great respect she has for the Emir. In the epithet, she equates the Emirate to be “the provider, the burner of fetish groves and the leader of the masses”. What this means is that, whenever one is in need of help, the person runs straight to the palace and the Emir provides. With his reign after the Danfodio Jihad (after the period of ignorance), all the devilish acts done at that time are no more in place. The Emir is for all within the Emirate, that is why she mentioned the four cardinal points and then right and left side of the Emirate. Paedonyms (identification through ones offspring) is used to praise the Emir. “It is well the father of Kabiru and Bello, it is well father of Sambo”. These epithets are frequently used in reference to royalty.

In another kirari (epithet), Bazamfara used a similar repertoire with the above in praising the Emir but also satirizes some people within the palace.

<i>Allah ja zamanin sarki</i>	May your reign last long
<i>Allah ya taimaka ka taimaki</i>	May you be favoured by Allah
<i>Jama'ar ka</i>	you favour your subordinates
<i>Ubangijin rahama ya biya sheka</i>	May Allah the merciful reward you
<i>Ubangijin rahama gagara gasar mahassada</i>	A venom does nothing to the back of a tortoise
<i>Sai dai mahassada suji kunya</i>	Whoever plans evil will surely fail
<i>Ku barshi sai ta Allah tayi</i>	It is destiny that decides for him
<i>Lafiya baban Sambo</i>	It is well father of Sambo
<i>Dan Sambo jikan Sambo</i>	The son of Sambo and the grand
<i>Dan Aminatu dan Aminatu</i>	The son of Aminatu, the son of Aminatu

Bazamfara (2015)

Bazamfara prayed for the reign of the Emir to last long and then ridiculed those that are envious of the throne within the Emirate. As she said “whoever plans evil will surely fail, it is destiny that decides for him”. It means that whoever plans to dethrone the Emir will never succeed since the Emir has a life period to rule. As far as the Emir is still alive, no one dares take the throne from him except if the Emir dies, that is when the successors can move forward to declare their intention of ruling the Emirate. She then addressed the Emir with epithets that include allusion to parentage, praising him as such “father of Sambo, son of Sambo and grandson of Sambo”. This refers only to the Emir of Zazzau because Sambo is a historical name in Zazzau Emirate, he ruled the kingdom from 1881-1890. He is the grandfather of the incumbent Emir that is what the epithet goes with Sambo

As a woman, Bazamfara has the privilege to go to the Emir’s wives sections every morning unlike her male counterparts that are not allowed to go there. She praises the wives every morning in order to have ‘*na goro*’, token of appreciation. She starts with the first wife:

<i>Yar Ali, maman Aliyu</i>	The daughter of Ali and the mother of Aliyu
<i>Uwar gidan sarki</i>	The first wife of the Emir
<i>Insha Allahu muna gaisheki</i>	With the special grace of Allah we pay homage to you
<i>Munzo kuma mucu ariziki</i>	With due respect
<i>Mubar arziki a mazauninshi</i>	We are here for your generosity
<i>Yar Muqaddas munzo gaisheki</i>	Daughter of Muqaddas, we have come
<i>Uwar Aliyu, uwar Kabiru, uwar Bello</i>	Mother of Ali, mother of Kabiru and Bello
<i>Kuma maman Bello, maman Aminatu</i>	To pay you homage and also mother of Bello, mother of Aminatu

Bazamfara (2015)

The epithet starts with the allusion to parentage which goes with identifying her through her offsprings. She first used Ali as a son and then as a father to the Emir’s wife. Bazamfara said that the wife will be pleased to hear such the great name of her father and

then given to her son, before extending her request to her. In the chanting, she does not forget to mention ‘uwar gida’ (senior wife) confirming her seniority and leadership for all the Emir’s wives. The chanter also celebrates her motherhood of boys, potential successors such as Ali, Bello, and Kabiru. Bazamfara said that she feels acknowledged and grateful because she gets kolanut as a gift and if they don’t have it, they give her money to buy. She did not specify the amounts. They never fail to reward her accordingly.

From the first wives section, she goes to the fourth wife

<i>Yar Abubakar</i>	Daughter of Abubakar
<i>Yar Maiturare</i>	Daughter of Maiturare
<i>Yar Bello, yar Mu’azu, yar Hassan</i>	Daughter of Bello, Daughter of Mua’zu, Daughter of Hassan.
<i>Nazo in gaisheki</i>	I have come to pay you homage
<i>Nazo rokon arziKi in koma</i>	With due respect am here for your generosity
<i>In ci in barshi mazaunin shi</i>	We will receive and let it remain
<i>Saboda haka nazo in gaisheki</i>	Because of that, I have come to pay you homage
<i>Allah ya jikan Bello</i>	May the soul of Bello rest in peace
<i>Allah ya jikan Abubakar</i>	May the soul of Abubakar rest in peace
<i>Allah ya jikan Maiturare</i>	May the soul of Maiturare rest in peace
<i>Allah ya kuma jikan shehu</i>	May the soul of grandson of Shehu rest in peace
<i>Allah ya jikan Ibrahim</i>	May the soul of Ibrahim rest in peace
<i>Allah ya jikan Muhammadu</i>	May the soul of Muhammadu rest in peace

Bazamfara (2015)

This epithet is meant for the fourth wife who is from a highly respected home, she is a descendant of Shehu Usman Danfodio of the Sokoto Caliphate. In the above epithet, Bazamfara, in order to boost her ego, creates a chain of all the past Sultans in a chronological order. Just as the first wife, the fourth wife’s epithet starts with identifying the reign of her fore fathers ‘a daughter of Abubakar, daughter of Maiturare, daughter of Bello etc. This personalized praising naturally paves way to present her request before her majesty. After the first link, at the end, she prayed for the repose of the souls of the past sultans.

Jakadiya (palace emissary) is another important unheralded female person within the household of the Emir. Like Bazamfara said “She is our head”, they take orders from her. Bazamfara has a special way of praising Jakadiya

<i>Jakadiyar toya matsafa</i>	Jakadiyar burner of fetish groves
<i>Jakadiyar uban talakawa</i>	Jadiyar the father of the peasant
<i>Jakadiyar mai gabas da yamma</i>	Jakadiyar the ruler of the cardinal points
<i>Kudu da arewa</i>	Jakadiyar trusted ally of Emir
<i>Jakadiyar sarki uban sarakuna</i>	A venom does nothing to the back of a tortoise
<i>Jakadiyar sarki gagara gasar mahassada</i>	Whoever plans evil will surely fail
<i>Sai dai mahassada suji kunya</i>	Whoever plans evil will surely fail
<i>Ya riga ku yace Allah</i>	He has submitted to the will of Allah

Bazamfara (2015)

Jakadiya is the house mistress that heads and takes care of all house helps within the household. She has her own apartment within the household. She is close to the Emir that is why Bazamfara praised her as “Jakadiyar ally of Emirs, Jakadiyar the ruler of the cardinal points” etc. She makes sure that Jakadiya’s name is mentioned together with the great deed of the Emir. It shows that Jakadiya is loyal to the Emir, she never disappoints him and makes sure that things are being taken care of within a shortest possible time. She is respected by all. Apart from praise singing, Bazamfara runs errands for Jakadiya. For example, the first time I went in search of Bazamfara at the palace, I was first taken to Jakadiya’s apartment. Bazamfara could not meet me directly but through Jakadiya’s order. She was the one who told me that I cannot meet her that day because she (Jakadiya) had sent her on an errant. All women workers within the Emir’s household are answerable to the Jakadiya.

The role of the king makers in the Emirate is also analysed under the songs of *zuga* (eulogy) and *yabo* (praising). These king makers are there to assist the Emir and on the death of an Emir, the king makers play an important role in deciding the succession to the throne. The courtiers have different methods or styles of praising the kingmakers in the Zazzau Emirate. The king makers are six in number. Each Emirate has a different title and role for

each kingmaker. The Sankiran Zazzau named them in the Emirate as Ibrahim Aminu (Waziri), Nuhu Aliyu (Galadima), Abbas Ahmed (Sarkin Fada), Umaru Muhammed (Fagaci), Umaru Mijin Yawa (Makama) and Mal. Dalhatu Kasim (Limamin Juma'a). According to Sankira, these six king makers are not princess or any how related to the king but they are well respected in the Emirate. These set of people cannot and do not vie for the Emirship of Zazzau. He said they may in other Emirate but it differs in Zazzau. They play an important role after the death of an Emir deciding whom to be the next Emir.

### **Kirarin (epithet) Waziri**

He is the second in command in the Emirate of Zazzau. Whenever the Emir is not on seat, he acts on behalf of the Emir and he represents the Emir during occasions. Sankira praised him as such:

<i>Waziri babba gwadabe</i>	Waziri the paved way
<i>Lawali abin biya</i>	The only paved way
<i>Abi hanya a daina rates</i>	The only way that can lead
<i>Kowa yai rates</i>	Whoever leaves the paved way,
<i>Kaya zai taka</i>	Lands in thorns
<i>Ko bebe yasan hadari</i>	Even the deaf knows the storm
<i>Ko kankanin yaro yasan wuta</i>	Even a child knows an amber
<i>Ko yaro na goye ya san baaba</i>	Even a child knows when he is to be weaned
<i>Ko ba'a dasa ba</i>	No need to be told
<i>Rakumi yasan chau</i>	The waziri is the paved way

Sankiran (2015)

Ibrahim Aminu is the present 'waziri' of zazzau Emirate. Since he is the second in command in the Emirate, Sankira praises him as the only person that receives visitors before taking them to the Emir and if anyone dares go straight to see the Emir, then Sankira said the person 'lands in thorns' which means will be in trouble. In modern terms, the waziri functions as chief of staff and protocol officer to the Emir. He is someone that is very close to



the Emir which without him, there is no how one can get access to the Emir. He is being praised by the courtiers as “Waziri the paved way” he leads the way for any visitor to see the Emir. From the epithet, it shows that whenever a guest arrives to the palace, he goes straight to Waziris office for introduction.

Another important prominent person in the Emirate is the Galadima. The following epithet goes to him:

<i>Babba Galadima</i>	Galadima the esteemed
<i>Babba galadima</i>	The might of the town
<i>Daudu karfin birni</i>	So close to the Emir like the cloud to the sun
<i>Dab da rana da hazo</i>	So powerful within and outside
<i>Agidi babba a dawo babba</i>	Object of scolding at dusk
<i>A yini zagin babba,</i>	Object of scolding at dawn
<i>A kwana zagin babba,</i>	Object of scolding when the cock crows
<i>Dole da safe ace babba ina kwana</i>	When the sun rises, must be greeted
<i>Gunu shama kosani</i>	The brave that withstands all rigours
<i>Chomo jiniyan gari</i>	Nightingale the siren of the town
Sankira (2015)	

The throne of ‘Galadima’ goes to any trusted and loyal person within the Emirate. Nuhu Aliyu is one of the kingmakers of the Emirate, Sankira (2015). He is praised as “so close to the Emir like the cloud to the sun, so powerful within and outside” This shows how close or related Galadima is to the Emir. As the courtier said that no matter the scolding from adversaries either within or outside the palace, the Galadima is so brave to withstand all challenges rigourously.

The third is Abbas Ahmed (Sarkin fada), his epithet goes like this:

<i>Amar na fada</i>	Bride of the palace
<i>Kerarren sarki</i>	The Emir’s warrior
<i>Amariya mai fada</i>	The bride, owner of the palace
<i>Garbu zancen sarki</i>	The entrance, the spokesman of the Emir

<i>Garbu sankata kora</i>	The entrance, barricade to the palace
<i>Yaro na fadancin doki</i>	The servants look after the horses
<i>A baka yaron</i>	You look after the servants
<i>A baka dokin harda kaya nai</i>	Both the servants and the horses are under your care

Sankira (2015)

This is a responsibility and office that is given to a highly distinguished person in the Emirate. He is the mouth piece of the Emir. He is in charge of the administrative work in the palace that is why he is praised as “the entrance, the spokesman of the Emir”. He settles quarrels within the palace and also takes those that disobey the Emir’s orders to court for justice.

The next person is Umaru Muhammed (Fagaci), and he is praised as:

<i>Bini babba dakin sarki</i>	The avenue to the Emir
<i>Dakin kasa da kasa,</i>	So close to the Emir
<i>Inda gobara tai kunya</i>	That can never be separated
<i>Masu gari Ahmadu</i>	The owner of the town, Ahmadu
<i>Masu kasa Ahmadu</i>	The owner of the country, Ahmadu
<i>Masu duniya Ahmadu</i>	The owner of the world, Ahamdu

Sankira (2015)

‘Fagaci’ stands as a liason officer of the Emir. He is also the mouth piece of the Emir because he delivers the Emir’s message to those concerned in the Emirate. That is why he is praised as “so close to the Emir that he can never be separated”. Since he has the privilege, then whatever he tells the Emir will be accepted immediately. He is praised as the only person that owns everything within the palace and the Emirate.

The fourth person Umaru Mijin Yawa goes with the title ‘Makama’ his epithet goes as such:

<i>Abdullah makama</i>	Abdullah the great warrior
<i>Togai rumfar sarki</i>	He who protects the Emir
<i>Sankara wuya Kashin Karaya</i>	So little but painful

*Kashin karaya sankara wuya*  
*Abdullah sa gari gudu*

So painful but little  
Abdullah the chaser  
Sankira (2015)

Makama is a title that is given to a courageous and brave person. He is so powerful that he takes care of things or disputes within the household of the Emir. He is also a representative of the Emir in activities. The chief imam and other religious leaders are answerable to Makama. That is why he is praised as ‘so little but painful, so painful but little’, which means he seems insignificant he plays a big role in the affairs of the Emirate.

The last but not the least is the chief Imam, who is among the six king makers in the Emirate. He is praised as such.

*Imamu shugaban addini*

Chief Imam, a leader in Islam

*Imamu shugaban sahu*

Who leads in the mosque

*Iman dan liman*

Chief Imam, the son of the Chief Imam

*Kowa ya zarta liman baya da sallah,*

Whoever acts before the imam

*In mallam ya so ka, ka so mallam*

If the imam directs, you succumb

*In mallam ya ki ka, ka so mallam*

When you are astonished, you also succumb

*Gama malam baya son ka*

For when the Imam directs,

*Sai saboda Allah*

He directs the will of Allah

*Malam baya kinka*

When the Imam astonishes

*Sai saboda Allah*

It is for the will of Allah.

Sankira (2015)

Chief Imam takes care of religious activities within the Emirate of Zazzau. He also leads prayer at the palace mosque. Whenever he comes to the palace to pay homage, he is praised by the courtiers as ‘Chief Imam, a leader in Islam who leads in the mosque’. He directs through the will of Allah and leads people to the right path.

From what has been discussed above, one will realize that the whole epithets are meant to eulogise and praise the Emir in different styles and ways. Also the kingmakers are

not left out because the courtiers have different epithets for welcoming each king maker to the palace when they come to pay homage to the Emir.

The element of form and content in praise singing brings out the aesthetics of the chants. The literary devices in relation to royal epithets (kirari) are metaphors, repetitions, similes, allusions and other stylistic devices. All these poetic devices enhance the aesthetics of royal epithets (kirari).

### **Metaphor:**

Metaphor is a figure of speech that has received worldwide recognition from scholars and students of literature and other related fields. Shipilov in Yakawada (2002) states that, metaphor is a substitution of one thing for another or the identification of two things from different ranges or thoughts. In another definition, Cuddon (1977) defines metaphor as a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another. According to Mack, (1981) metaphor is praise epithet as such “a kirari (praise song) functions by the juxtaposition of two images, it involves calling a person by a nick name which indicates something about that individual, thus implying a metaphoric connection between the two”.

The chanters in most cases use metaphor to emphasize a point or an idea, as seen in the following lines:

Bull elephant  
Gamda hari poisonous medicine  
The sickle that has no scabbard  
Beast of the east  
The elephant that cannot be trapped  
Waddle gently lion  
Be careful with entrance ahead lion  
Walk gently through the slope lion  
Praise the lord lion  
Have a pause the bull elephant  
Adjust the sitting position lion  
Do not relent lion

Bull elephant is a common oppositive for an Emir, implying his position as the mightiest, the most impressive. To Mack (1981), “Bull Elephant is full of strength and impressively large, contributes to the sense of importance the poet wishes to convey about the Emir”. Another metaphorical image is that of ‘lion’ which represents strength, majesty and is sometimes fierce.

Hausa praise singers employ the use of both wild and domestic animals and also use terrible spirits feared by the people as phenomena of comparison. For example ‘beast (Dodo) of the East’ ‘Dodo’ is a feared spirit. These animals are referred to as giants of the forest. They have some certain qualities which other animals do not have. The lion is referred to as the king of the jungle or forest and the elephant is also a big animal that has the strength and charisma to lead. The use of animals here is to instill fear and respect in the minds of the people because of certain qualities which the Emir has and others do not.

### **Simile:**

Another figure of speech used is simile. It is the comparison between two things of different nature or class but with a striking similarity in a particular aspect by the use of such words ‘as’ and ‘like’, example of simile in the praise epithets are as follows:

The might of the town  
So close to the Emir like the  
Cloud and the sun

It looks like you are near  
But still far away  
Bamboo fibre difficult to climb  
Settles well on people

Simile is used here to show how close the Emir is to his peasants but cannot be harmed which means he is far away. The two words near and far away are compared to show how the Emir can rule his masses. Another example is:

Longing for the throne  
Is like seeing the donkey’s horn  
Longing for the throne

Is like seeing the teeth of a hen

The comparable words here are throne and donkey's horn and then the throne again and teeth of a hen which are different but have a striking resemblance in terms of those that envy the Emirs throne for one or somebody to get the throne is like having a donkey with a horn or seeing the teeth of a hen which is impossible as far as the king is still alive.

### **Repetition:**

Repetition is a common feature in orature as such Finnegan (1977) opines that, there is hardly any oral piece without repetition and an oral piece cannot be divorced from the wider version of repetition. In most cases, the praise singers use repetition to achieve different goals such as retaining the attention of the audience. For example, in some of the stanzas below, repetition is used repeatedly like:

Waddle gently here  
Waddle gently here  
Waddle gently the conqueror  
Do not relent  
Do not relent  
Do not relent, do not forget  
Do not be hasty and do not be speedy

Here, the praise singer is sending specific information to the Emir in order to be careful as he walks to enhance or as he mount a horse. The emphases on these phrases show the importance of the message sent to the Emir

It is well the provider  
It is well the burner of fetish groves  
It is well the leader of the masses  
It is well for your rule, the cardinal points  
It is well for your rule in both side  
It is well father of Kibir and Bello  
It is well father of Sambo  
It is well the father of all Emirs

‘It is well’ is repeated almost throughout the stanza. The style used here by Bazamfara shows the great respect she and other praise singers have for the Emir. Most of the epithets by the praise singers carried repeated version of “it is well”.

There is no might before the Emir  
There is no prestige before the Emir  
There is no status before the Emir  
All these before the Emir are not up to scratch

This epithet contains repetition of “there is no” which is an emphasis that there is nobody no matter his traditional status or prestige who is comparable to the position of the Emir in the Emirate.

**Allusion:**

There are also epithets that include allusion to parentage which identifies the royal family through their offspring. In praising the Emir, the praise singers make sure that they perform kirari (praises) declamations for the Emir, that is well arranged and geared to an accounting of historic fact and praises for the Emir. Bazamfara (2015) said on their methodology that they enquire about the background of the Emir then they follow his lineage to show that the Emir is of a recognized respectable background. The praise singer starts the allusion to parentage which goes with identifying the Emir through his off springs. Same goes to his wives. Bazamfara (2015) said that most of the Emir’s wives are either from a royal or respectable family in Zazzau society. That is why the praise singers invoke history to know more facts about them. For example, Bazamfara praised the Emir as such:

It is well father of Sambo  
The son of Sambo  
And the grandson of Sambo  
The son of Aminatu, the son of Aminatu

Such terms ‘son of’ (dan) or grand child of (jikan) with parents or grandparents names are frequently used in reference to royalty. Sambo here is being referred to the father, son and

grandson, Sambo therefore is a historical name in the Emirate. The Emir's mother is not left behind the name Aminatu is also been praised.

The first wife is praised through the use of her father and children.

Daughter of Muqaddas  
Mother of Ali, mother of Kabiru  
And also mother of Bello, mother of Aminatu

The fourth wife is a descendant of Sokoto Caliphate Bazamfara made sure that she has the names of the rulers in the exact order of the way they ruled for example:

Daughter of Abubakar  
Daughter of Maiturare  
Daughter of Bello  
Daughter of Hassan

These are ways or styles used by the praise singers to impress their patron in such a way that no one may ever do.

### **Hyperbole:**

The figure of speech is 'bold overstatement or the extravagant exaggeration of facts or possibility'. Abrahams (2005)

The might of the town  
The owner of the town Ahmadu  
The owner of the country Ahmadu  
The owner of the world Ahmadu

Galadima and Makama are just title holders and king makers within the Emirate but the epithets above are exaggerated as those that own everything in town as well as the whole world. This is an exaggeration because the might of the town is no other person than the Emir.

From the foregoing, we can see how poetic devices are used by Hausa praise singers to convey information, feelings or attitudes and served as a mirror through which an oral poet describes a person or an event in a positive form or a negative one. The language is compressed and reinforced with a hidden meaning. Therefore, for one to appreciate the songs,



one has to be conversant with the poetic devices and specialized language used in any particular epithet.

### **Satire as a Tool for Correction**

The second theme to be discussed or analysed is Zambo (satire). The main function of the royal praise singers is to incite and praise the Emir all the time but sometimes, they chant to debase or vilify the patron's opponents. To actually understand the meaning of satire, Abrahams (2005) defines it as:

The literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward its attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn or indignation... satire derides that it uses laughter as a weapon and against a butt that exits outside the work itself.

The royal epithets (kirari) are not far from this definition of satire as described by Abrahams in the above definition. The chants diminish and derogate the characters of the individual that the artist is chanting about or the ills that exist in the general public which is the "butt that exits outside the work". For this reason, the research will consider some royal epithets that are satiric in nature. They are meant to ridicule an individual or a society or in the Emirate angle of such are:

<i>Komin girman mai girma</i>	There is no might before the Emir
<i>Komin fadin mai fadi</i>	There is no prestige before the Emir
<i>Komin tsawon mai tsawo</i>	There is no status before the Emir
<i>In yazo gaban ka allura ta fishi girma</i>	All those before the Emir are not worth a needle.

Sanĳira (2015)

This is satire (zambo) that is meant to ridicule those that take themselves so high in public because of the position they hold in government parastatals. They boast and feel they are above all but that is not the case while in front of the Emir. Just as Sankira (2015) said "no might, no prestige and no status before the Emir". It means that no matter one's position

whenever the person is in front of the king, he goes so low that he is not “worth a needle before the Emir”.

In another epithet for the Emir’s opponents, Sankira chants it this way

<i>A shekara dubu ana sarar ruwa,</i>	The venom of a viper does nothing to the back of a tortoise
<i>Ba zai yi tabo ba</i>	
<i>A shekara dubu ana tuyan kosai, cikinsa fari ne</i>	Through thick and thin, the back remains the same

Sankira (2015)

This satire (zambo) is meant for rebels within the Emirate whose struggle every day is only to see the down fall of the Emir. But despite their effort to dethrone him, he will remain the ruler. These kinds of people will never see the downfall of the Emir. This epithets according to Sankira have no specific time that it takes place but it comes in during an occasion and in the process of praising the Emir, the praise singers then sight either those princess that envy the throne they then ridicule them.

Another example of satire (zambo) is:

<i>Gwangwala a hauka a zame</i>	Bamboo sticks difficult to climb
<i>Ka hau mutum ka zauna dai dai</i>	Settles well on people
<i>Gaka kamar kusa</i>	It looks near
<i>Amma kayi ma yaro nisa</i>	But still far away

Sankira (2015)

This satire (zambo) is meant to ridicule the enemies of the reigning Emir within the Emirate. The Sankira praised the Emir as a ‘bamboo fibre’ which is slippery and cannot be climbed but the Emir can settle well on people which means the Emir has the right to punish offenders. No one dares attempt to hurt the Emir as Sankira says here, “it looks like you are so near” which means the enemy is within the palace as someone close to the Emir ‘but still far away” it means the Emir is so far that no particular human being can harm him.

In another epithet by SanKira, he chants as:

<i>Kowa yace yana son yaga jaki</i>	Longing for the throne
<i>Yai kaho,</i>	Is like seeing the donkey's horn
<i>Yana wahalar banza</i>	Longing for the throne
<i>Kowa yace yana son yaga kaza tai hakori</i>	
<i>Yana wahalar banza</i>	Is like seeing the teeth of a hen
<i>Fan dari da riga</i>	one hundred pounds and a flamboyant gown
<i>Basa baka sarki</i>	Cannot place you on the throne.

SanKira (2015)

This stanza is a satiric praise directed at the princes and other close relatives of the Emir that are aspiring for the throne. As Sankira said, for them to have the throne is “like a donkey with a horn or seeing a hen with a set of teeth”. From this statement, it shows that the mission will never be accomplished as far as the Emir remains alive. In line 5, he mentioned one hundred pounds and a flamboyant gown”. Here Sankira tries to show the image of a wealthy prince that has the money and attire but all that cannot give him the throne as far as the Emir is still alive.

In another stanza, SanKira decides to use another style to mock adversaries.

<i>Ba'a gaya wa bebe hadari,</i>	The deaf is not informed of the coming of the rain
<i>Tsawar farko yakanji a jikinsa</i>	But he feels it through thunder and lightening
<i>Harsashe makarinka a kwanta</i>	One bends to avoid destruction by a bullet
<i>Makar in gaba da kai mutum yace na tuba</i>	No one dares malice against you without
<i>Ismul azim maganin mai tsafi</i>	Soliciting for forgiveness later
<i>Yasin maganin munafiki</i>	Yasin that prevents hypocrite
<i>Tasani maganin dan tauri</i>	Tasani (dagger) that prevents the knife charmer

SanKira (2015)

Here, Sankira used another style to send his message to people. In the 1<sup>st</sup> line of the stanza, he used a deaf person, someone that neither hears nor speaks to show the esteem and

prestige of the Emir. Because of these qualities the Emir has, he does not need to be introduced before one knows that he is the Emir. He used some Arabic words and prayers from the Holy Qur'an like '*Ismul azim*' and '*yasin*' which are very important prayers from the Holy Qur'an that prevent evil in case the Emir encounters one. He described the Emir as one that is above all others within the Emirate.

The stanza below is another satiric stanza that is a mockery to the adversaries of the Emir:

<i>Hayaniya baya komi da itacen kasuwa</i>	Bickering can never fell a tree in the market
<i>Shiga da fita bata komi da kofa</i>	Passing in and passing out does not hamper a door
<i>Aikin banza harara a duhu</i>	Glaring in the darkness is useless
<i>Gafara kwado</i>	Stay away the frog
<i>Gafara kifi</i>	Stay away the fish
<i>Zamui Magana da kada</i>	Our discussion is with the crocodile
<i>Cifansa maci tawaye</i>	Vengeance that clears adversaries
SanKira (2015)	

Idiomatic expressions are used in the first 3 lines. The expression here means that no one dares harm the Emir because no one confronts him face to face but behind doors, which is useless. The adversaries have not reached the level to confront the Emir as SanKira describes them as frogs and fish which are nothing in front of the crocodile. The Emir is the only person that can clear the enemies within a blink of an eye. He is the Emir and still the ruler that cannot be compared with any other person

In another epithet, the Emir is praised as:

<i>Sarki Sakon Allah</i>	Emir, God's message
<i>Sarki abokin zama idan ya yarda</i>	Emir, a friend when he likes
<i>Yaro ci sarki kaji dadi</i>	For enjoyment, occupy a throne
<i>Bakai sarkin duniya ba,</i>	If you do not rule,
<i>Ina kasan wani dadi,</i>	Enjoyment is unknown to you

<i>Ci tuwo mai da nama,</i>	Eat well, garnished food
<i>Ka kwanta a bayan mota marsandi</i>	
<i>Ko mota akward</i>	Be driven in a Mercedes or a Honda Accord car
<i>Amma dadɓin duniya sai kai sarki</i>	But the real enjoyment of the world starts when you are crowned
<i>Kai ke Kira a zo</i>	You are the one who summons
<i>Ba kai a ke Kira kaje ba</i>	And not to be summoned
Sankira (2015)	

The first two lines are praises and eulogies for the Emir. He is praised as ‘God’s message and a friend at will. There are a lot of exaggerations from the praise singers to convince people that there is no person either within or outside the Emirate that is more powerful than the Emir but the situation is not like that because the Emir is now answerable to the state governor while the district heads are answerable to the chairman of their respective local governments. But Sankira (2015) said that whenever they are praising the Emir they take him above his limits. But the remaining lines are mockery for those that envy the throne. The chant is a satire for the wealthy and privileged people within the Emirate as Sankira said “if you do not rule, enjoyment is unknown to you”. These rich people ride in flashy cars, eat well garnished food but they are not happy because they do not have the crown. Sankira chants as “But the enjoyment of the world is when you become an Emir”. His commands must be followed.

<i>Sama tayi ma yaro nisa</i>	The sky is too high for the child
<i>Kasa tayi ma yaro zurfi</i>	The earth is so deep for the child
<i>Tsakiya tayi ma yaro faɗi</i>	The in between is so wide for the child
<i>Akurkin dundu,</i>	A thorny cage,
<i>Mai tuge bindin kaza</i>	Removes the hen’s feathers
<i>Tankon Giwa mai take na Rakumi</i>	The Elephant is not a size to the camel
Sankira (2015)	

The chant above is a satire for those that envy the throne. The throne is not given to anyone no matter the person's status but is meant for those who deserve the position. The first 3 lines shows that the crown is not something that one can easily get but is far beyond the reach of any ordinary person as Sankira describes it as a thorny cage that cannot be entered easily and also that the size of an Elephant is uncomparable to the size of a camel because Elephant is far bigger than the camels. It shows that the Emir of Zazzau is ahead of all within the Emirate.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE

This discusses the similarities and differences in the themes of Yabo (praise) and Zambo (satire) in the Zazzau royal praise songs. Having seen how these two aspects praise and satire have been analysed in chapter three, there appear to be more similarities than differences between praise and satire. Also, the contemporary state of praise singing will be fully discussed in relation to changes in the society.

#### CONVERGENCE

The royal praise singers in Zazzau Emirate are the same set of praise singers that praise the Emir and at the same time ridicule other people that envy the throne. For example, in the following lines, the praise singer is subtly attacking other royals who wished that the Emir should die to enable them succeed him on the throne. But it should be noted that the following praise songs happens strictly within the context or confines of the court, thus:

<i>A shekara dubu ana sarar ruwa</i>	The venom of a viper does nothing
<i>Bazaiyi tabo ba</i>	to the back of a tortoise
<i>Ashekara dubu ana tuyan kosai</i>	through thick and thin, the back
<i>Cikinsa fari ne</i>	remains the same

Sankira (2015)

Another example goes like this:

<i>Komin giman mai girma</i>	There is no might before the Emir
<i>Komin fadin mai fadi</i>	There is no prestige before the Emir
<i>Komin tsawon mai tsawo</i>	There is no status before the Emir
<i>In yazo gaban ka allura ta fishi girma</i>	All these before the Emir are not up to scratch

Sankira (2015)

From these two stanzas, it is clear that these praise singers do not just ridicule or mock other people without connecting it with the praising of the Emir. It shows here that, these Zazzau praise singers do not have separate songs just for mockery. They try to praise their patron in between lines. It means satire comes to them naturally in the process of

praising the Emir “The venom of a viper does nothing to the back of a tortoise”. This is a praise epithet for the Emir and is at the same time a satire directed at his enemies. In the second stanza, the chant goes as follows, “There is no might, no status, no prestige before the Emir. All these before the Emir are not up to scratch”. This chant is also similar to the first one because the praise singers make sure they praise the Emir and in the process lower the status of any one who wishes to ascend the throne

In another epithet, the Emir is praised as:

<i>Sarki saƙon Allah</i>	Emir, God’s message
<i>Sarki abokin zama idan ya yarda</i>	Emir, a friend when he likes

Sankira (2015)

These two lines are praises for the Emir and in the same stanza Sankira ridicules the people from the Emirate who desire the Emir’s throne. As he said:

<i>Yaro ci sarki kaji dadī</i>	For enjoyment, occupy a throne
<i>Bakai sarkin duniya ba</i>	If you do not rule,
<i>Ina kasan wani dadī</i>	Enjoyment is a stranger to you
<i>Ci tuwo mai da nama</i>	Eat well ganished food
<i>Ka kwanta a bayan mota marsandi</i>	Be driven in a mercedes or Honda Accord car
<i>Amma dadin duniya sai kai sarki</i>	But the real enjoyment of the world
	starts when you are crowned
<i>Kai ke kira azo</i>	You are the one who summons
<i>Bakai a ke kira kaje ba</i>	And not to be summoned

Sankira (2015)

This is another similarity between praising and satire. The Sankira started by praising the Emir in the first two lines above and he used the remaining lines to mock the wealthy princes who aspire for the throne; where he said, “if you do not rule, enjoyment is unknown to you... Be driven in a Mercedes or Honda Accord car but the enjoyment of the world is when you are crowned”. He ends the last two lines of the stanza with a praise for the Emir as



someone “who summons for and not to be summoned for”. Sankira showed how powerful an Emir can be on the throne.

Another similarity is between the female and male praise singers. In praising the Emir, the praise singers make sure that they perform kirari (praises) declarations for the Emir, which is well arranged and geared towards accounting for historic facts and praises for the Emir, for example, Bazamfara praised the Emir as such:

<i>Lafiya baban Sambo</i>	It is well father of Sambo
<i>Dan Sambo Jikan</i>	Son of Sambo, Grandson of Sambo
<i>Dan Aminatu dān Aminatu</i>	The son of Aminatu the son of Aminatu
<i>Lafiya uban Kabiru Baban</i>	<i>Bello</i> It is well father of Kabiru and Bello
<i>Lafiya Baban Sambo</i>	It is well father of Sambo
<i>Lafiya sarki uban sarakuna</i>	It is well leader of Emirs
<i>Taka da karfīn Allah</i>	Waddle gently, you are guided by Allah
<i>Ka shiga da ikon Allah</i>	Enter by the will of Allah

Bazamfara (2015)

In another similar epithet Sankira praised the Emir this way:

<i>Ubangijin bawa da baiwa</i>	The Emir who is just to his subordinates
<i>Adali mai masallacin juma'a</i>	Whose palace houses the Juma'at mosque
<i>Mai horo abi Allah</i>	He who instills the fear of God in the hearts
<i>Jikan mai horo abi Allah</i>	His father also instilled the fear of God in the hearts
<i>Sadauki dān idrissu</i>	The brave one, the descendant of Idrissu

Sankira (2015)

The lineage here showed that the Emir indeed has a respectable status. Both Bazamara and Sankira, that is, the female and male praise singers start with allusions to parentage which goes with identifying the Emir through his offsprings – Sambo in Bazamfara's epithets is being referred to as the father, son and grandson. Sambo therefore is a historical name in Zazzau Emirate.

These epithets as mentioned earlier are the same that are chanted by the same set of praise singers that always praise the Emir. As Sankira mentioned, “In Zazzau we do not have separate praise singers that ridicule people but we perform both, that is, praise, the Emir, and then mock other princes and wealthy people that wish to ascend the throne”. That is the reason why satiric epithets come continuously in between praises for the Emir.

## DIVERGENCE

There are a few differences between the themes of praise and that of satire. The difference is that, while praise is the composition of words in favour of the Emir which serves as an addendum to his prestige, satire on the other hand through an epithet, is meant to ridicule or mock enemies or princes that wish to ascend the Emir’s throne. For example, the following epithets are praises. For the Emir:

<i>Lafiya na katau</i>	It is well the provider
<i>Lafiya toya matsafa</i>	It is well the burner of fetish groves
<i>Lafiya uban talakawa</i>	It is well the leader of the masses
<i>Lafiya mai gabas da yamma</i>	It is well for your rule, the cardinal points
<i>Lafiya mai hagu da dama</i>	It is well for your rule in both side
<i>Lafiya uban Kabiru baban Bello</i>	It is well father of Kabiru and Bello
<i>Lafiya babban sambo</i>	It is well father of Sambo
<i>Lafiya Sarki uban sarakuna</i>	It is well the leader of Emirs
<i>Taka da karfin Allah</i>	Waddle gently you are guided by God
<i>Ka shiga da ikon Allah</i>	Enter by the will of God

Bazamfara (2015)

Below is an example of satiric epithet

<i>Kowa yace yana son yaga jaki yai kaho</i>	Longing for the throne
<i>Yana wahalar banza</i>	Is like seeing the donkey’s horn
<i>Kowa yace yana son yaga kaza tai hakori</i>	Longing to the throne
<i>Yana wahalar banza</i>	Is like seeing the teeth of a hen
<i>Fan dari da riga</i>	One hundred pounds and a flamboyant gown
<i>Basa baka sarki</i>	Cannot place you on the throne

Sankira (2015)

The difference between the first and second stanza is that, the first epithet is full of praises and eulogies for the Emir and the repetition of ‘it is well’ throughout the stanza. The words are carefully chosen and arranged by Bazamfara in order to make her work unique from others so as to endear her to the Emir.

The latter part is a satirical that ridicules the princes and wealthy ones within the Emirate. Here, Sankira ridicules them by comparing all those longing for the throne, “to the possibility of seeing the donkey’s horn and at the same time seeing the hen’s teeth. “This is impossible as long as the Emir is still alive and on the throne. The wealthy people that are from the Emirate that wish to ascend the throne are also mocked as he said “ten pounds and a flamboyant gown cannot place you on the throne”. The praise singers do not just come out directly to confront the enemies or adversaries of the Emir but they make sure they pick words that are figurative with hidden or multiple meaning.

In another epithet Sankira ridicules the ‘enemies’ that live within the Emirate as such:

<i>Hayaniya baya komi da itacen kasuwa</i>	Bickering can never fall a tree in the market
<i>Shiga da fita bata komi da kofa</i>	Passing in and passing out does no harm to a door
<i>Aikin banza harara a duhu</i>	Glaring in the darkness is useless
<i>Gafara kwado</i>	Stay away the frog
<i>Gafara kifi</i>	Stay away the fish
<i>Zamui Magana da kada</i>	Our discussion is with the crocodile
<i>Cifansa maci tawaye</i>	Vengeance that clears adversaries

Sankira (2015)

It means that the enemies in the land are worth nothing to the Emir. Sankira degraded them as mere fish, and frogs in the river who are nothing in front of the crocodile. The Emir here has no time for them because people of their status cannot dare the Emir not to talk about doing something evil to him. The praise singers hurt the feelings of those that they ridicule and at the same time try to correct the ills in the society.

According to Mack (1981) a Hausa critic distinguishes between male and female performances saying that “only men chant *gargadi* (admonitory verse) while women chant only *yabo* (praise) and both perform *tarihi* (history). The researcher after gathering data is of the same opinion with what Mack (op.cit) said concerning the differences between the male and female praise singers. In Zazzau Emirate, for instance, Bazamfara who is the only female royal praise singer only chants *Yabo* (praise) to the Emir. Her epithets are full of praises for the Emir which goes like this:

<i>Lafiya na katau</i>	It is well the provider
<i>Lafiya toya matsafa</i>	It is well the burner of fetish groves
<i>Lafiya uban talakawa</i>	It is well the leader of the masses
<i>Lafiya mai gabas da yamma</i>	It is well for your rule, the cardinal points
<i>Lafiya mai hagu da dama</i>	It is well for your rule both sides
<i>Lafiya sarki uban sarakuna</i>	It is well the leader of Emirs
<i>Taka da karfin Allah</i>	Waddle gently you are guided by God
<i>Ka shiga da ikon Allah</i>	Enter by the will of God
Bazamfara (2015)	

These are chants of *Yabo* (praise) by the only female praise singer in Zazzau palace. The epithets are full of *Yabo* (praise) for the Emir but for the male praise singers, is a mixed of praise and satire. For example, SanKira praise the Emir as such:

<i>Toron giwa sha zamani</i>	Bull Elephant with long life span
<i>Gam da hari mugun magani</i>	A lethal that is never tested
<i>Nushin ciki sa doro</i>	A punch that must be felt
<i>Gamo da sarki yafi aje gwanja</i>	The king who showers like a spring
<i>Kuje mai wuyan kube,</i>	Meeting the king is more prosperous than going to <i>Gwanja</i>
<i>Jama'a ko da mai gwadawa?</i>	Whose boldness can dare that of the king?
SanKira (2015)	

The difference between the female and the male royal praise singers is that, the female praise singers have the privilege to be within and inside the household of the Emir and so has the privilege to chant some epithets for the Emir's wives almost on a daily basis. The male, on the other hand, with no access to the wives of the Emir, gear their epithets only to the Emir, other title holders and the district heads within the Emirate. Even though among the royal praise singers, Sarkin Zagi's epithets are only geared to the Emir just as he said 'apart from the Emir, I cannot praise any other person. This shows that there are some particular praise singers within the palace that do not praise title holders except the Emir. Unlike Sarkin Sankira, Barayan Sarki etc, that chant for other title holders.

## **STATE OF ROYAL PRAISE SINGING**

Hausa society has undergone many changes over the past few centuries evolving through continued changes. The change factors include religion, technology, urbanization, revision in men's and women's social roles all have effects on praise songs.

## **RELIGION**

Religion is a factor that has interfered with the profession of praise singing whereby some Islamic scholars refer to it as 'a bad innovation' which is denounced by Islam. Dr. Yahuza Ahmad of Arabic Department, F.C.E, Zaria in an interview said that, the prophet (SAW) had some poets called Hassanu bn Thabit and Abdullah bn Rawwaha. These were the prophet's praise singers. They chanted praises for him and he did not stop them. It was even said that in the process of praising, the prophet (SAW) gave Hassanu a gown as a gift.

He further said that Islam only frowns at those praise singers that abuse or mock and then exaggerate and tell lies on things that they have no knowledge of. He also said that Islam has forbidden those that roam the streets praising and begging for alms. Mallam Jinjiri of English Department, F.C.E, Zaria, in an interview, further said that since praise singing had existed since the prophet's time and he did not stop it, then it is acceptable in Islam as long as

it will not contradict or the praise singers will not voice and say something that is contrary to the teachings of Islam.

On the other hand, Malam Musa Aliyu Kona of Arabic Department F.C.E, Zaria, in an interview, recited the last four verses of surah 26 – Ash –Shu’ara Juz 19 as follows

224: As for the poets, the erring ones follow them,

225: See you not that they speak about every subject (praising  
people-right or wrong) in their poetry?

226: And that they say what they do not do

The commentary of these verses by Mallam Kona has to do with the four prophet’s praise singers named as Hassan bn Thabit, Abdullahi bn Rawawaha, Ka’af bn Zuhair and Hensa’u, the only blind female poet. These praise singers, reigned during the *Jahilliya* period (days of ignorance) and also during the prophet’s time. What they did after accepting Islam was to stop using words that were not allowed in Islam and then used the good ones to continue praising. Mallam Kona said that, the first three verses show the bad side of praise singing. After its revelation, the four praise singers came to the prophet (SAW) crying saying that what they were doing was not accepted by Allah. Then God revealed the last verse and they were relieved and they continued with their praising. Mallam Kona said that there was satire during the prophets time because whenever the unbelievers abused the Prophet (SAW) the Prophet will tell his praise singers to reply them back using satire.

He further said that praise singing is allowed in Islam as far as the praise singers will abide by the teaching of Islam in order not go against it. He said some Islamic scholars rely on the first three verses of the surah to condemn praise singing but with the revelation of the last verse, things were resolved.

227: Except those who believe (in the oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous deeds, and remember Allah much, and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged [by replying back in poetry to the unjust poetry (which the pagan poets utter against the Muslims)]. And those who do wrong will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned.

Qur'an V. 224 – 227

## TECHNOLOGY

In term of history, Sankira said that the '*Sankira*' was not the actual name they used to refer to praise singers in the Emirate but they were called '*masarta*,' that is the town criers. Their main function was to pass information or messages from the Emir to the people on certain issues, for example citing of the new moon for the month of Ramadan is very important information that everyone must hear so as to get prepared that night for the fasting on the following day. But with the coming of technology, a great change has come upon the institution of praise singing. According to Dangambo in Ujorha (2016), said that

With the coming of modern technology, the function of Sankira seems to be declining" he said that even the current upsurge in advertisements in the country is affecting the old unforgettable role of Sankira. He further said that in the olden days you rely on 'maroki' to inform people about what is available.

But now instead of using maroki or sankira, people use the radio to advertise or announce an event. If you compare the extent of coverage, certainly the radio and television cover a wider area. So people will rather go there and advertise rather than use the sankira or maroki.

Something happened at Zazzau Emirate, according to Sankiran Zazzau (2015). He said that with the coming of technology, the Emir now prefers to send information through the radio broadcast which conveys the message faster and people respond as soon as the

information is passed. This is unlike before when the message had to be passed from one person to another but now people walkabout with their radio sets in their work places.

The use of microphone has drastically reduced the work of the praise singers. It used to be that whenever the Emir wants to say something, or address an occasion, his words are heard only from the praise singers mouth because traditionally, the Emirs voice is supposed to be low. So whatever the Emir says, the praise singer will amplify it out to the hearing of the people but now the Emir uses a microphone to address his people directly, Sankira, (2015).

Technology also affected performances because people now sit at home to watch performances or listen to the performance live on their radio rather than going to the palace to watch it live. For example, during the Sallah festival, one has to be at the play ground to watch the performances live but with the coming of technology, people now rely on radio and television sets to listen and watch the performance live at home. Some of the performances are recorded in CD plates and radio cassettes for people to buy and watch or listen to the praise singers performing in the privacy of their room.

## **URBANIZATION**

Urbanization also has its effect on royal praise singing. As Abubakar says in Ujorha (2016), The villages are dying as people and cultures move to big cities, implying in the same context that soon, in a remarkable turn of events, the villages will become the new curiosity: today, politicians appoint their own praise singers. This takes away from the high standards which praise singing is associated with. According to SanKira Zazzau (2015);

Nowadays, any person who wished to join the profession will just do so without studying the values and codes. For instance, every person has his own type of praise. The Emir and District Heads have different praise styles, but now everything is just mixed up. Before now a District Head, ward Head or Emir appoints a praise singer, but today all of a sudden a prominent politician will appoint a praise singer. We need to form an association to regulate the activities of members.



The praise singers are now many in the society and all they are after is what to put in their pockets (money). As Sankira said, even some of the royal praise singers within the Zazzau Emirate go outside the palace to attend some events that have no connection with royalties like weddings and naming ceremonies, they go there to praise the dignitaries that attended the events in order to receive gifts.

Malumfashi in Ujoha (2016) is of the opinion that;

The politicians can employ or appoint a Sankira. It does not mean that Sankira nci is dying. It is just a threat to the formal style which they inherited from their parents. Everyone now, out of sheer laziness is becoming a Sakira. It used to be a reserved profession for those who think they have the guts to please even the professional singers

According to Gusau (1993), the royal praise singers are well catered for by the Emir and he produces all their needs including shelter and clothing so they took the chants as their means of survival and daily job.

Previously, the royal praise singers relied absolutely on their patrons for sustenance. With changes that have occurred in the society and also with the coming of modernization, many royal praise singers of nowadays are now fully engaged in farming, trading, carpentry etc and they only take the artistic performance as a part time job. Sarkin Sankira in Zazzau for example, is the overall leader of praise singers in Zazzau Emirate. He is a graduate and a civil servant. He works in Kaduna State Government House. He inherited the craft of Sankira n Zazzau from his father. To him now, praise singing is done occasionally. So if there is a need for him to perform at the palace, he makes sure he attends the event and performs. But for Wazirin Zagi that is almost 80 years of age, he has no other means of livelihood except through royal praise singing. He is always at the palace, without seeking for other means of earning a living.

## **SOCIAL ROLE**

For Bazamfara, she is the only female praise singer at the palace. She said that she did not inherit praise singing but a late son of the Emir of Zazzau (Kabiru) was the person that brought her to the palace and since then became a successful royal praise singer, self taught. Deciding to learn proper *Yabo* (praise song) she endeavoured to learn the history of Zaria royal family tree, learning about the history and royal lineage. She said that, she has daughters but none of them has expressed interest in learning their mother's profession, choosing instead to assume domestic roles of the Emir's wives. They don't see it as a good job that will sustain them. She said that there is no female that is learning the art of praise singing from her. If she dies, there is no one to take over from her. This is almost what Sanfira said, that because of Western education, their children have no interest in the profession so none of his children is showing interest but unlike the female praise singer, the male praise singers within the Emirate are many as such if one is not there, the other can represent him.

## **SECURITY CHALLENGES**

This is a major problem that is facing the profession. Sanfira said that the scale of their work has now reduced considerably in such a way that, if there is any occasion, the royal praise singers take their time to praise the patrons in front of everybody before the occasion starts but now with security challenges, time is not wasted as soon as the Emir arrives, the occasion starts immediately.

Dangambo (op.cit.) comments on the power of tradition as he said, tradition is a very powerful aspect of life in Africa generally, and people view tradition as something of utmost importance. It is a symbol of their heritage. It is a sign of who they were and what they are.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded that, praise singing is on the rise because the praise singers change and assume new forms as society changes in terms of technology, social role and urbanization but retain the essential characteristics in several ways. They keep on adapting in order to become more relevant, more available in order to stay within the centers of social and cultural activities. There are modern technological systems, but people still prefer to stick to the traditional ones. It means praise singing will not die completely, but its function and strength are diminishing and changing with many challenges faced by the profession. Oral poetry is sung in such a way that is so alluring and didactic in form. That is to say oral songs are melodious, figurative and full of wisdom. There is an argument about the consideration given to praise singers on the way they are highly placed in the society. The usual answer here is, a praise singer has enough words and has full of figurative expressions that can convey messages through the use of lofty words. For this, it can be adduced that a praise singer has a wide range of words in his functional vocabulary.

The art of royal praise singing is an important cultural issue in the Hausa society, which can hardly be dispensed. These singers normally list their patron's exceptional prowess and virtues, emphasize their solidarity, relationship with kinsmen and courtiers and describe them rhetorically with laudatory personification and images drawn from what seems to be a conventional repertoire (register). They still contribute immensely to the development of Hausa language and culture in addition to the entertainment value which they provide to their hearers. Since songs play an important role in all aspects of Hausa life, there is hardly an occasion or any traditional occupation that does not have a praise singer. Royal praise singers can mobilize their audience to accept or reject anything which they consider to be relevant or

otherwise. Zazzau royal praise singers earn a lot of respect from their hearers, control of the Hausa language and display of the literary terms in their songs.

Royal praise singers in Zazzau usually select qualities of leadership of the Emir to popularize their activities and to create expectations or set public standards for leadership. Their epithets are sung orally for the Emir. They also mirror the society in terms of going on with the passage of time.

At this point, people are expected to know that creativity is something that gives praise singers the ability to go into language and use it in a way that best suits the composer of songs. The ability to compose a song is innate via inspiration.

From the forgoing, we have seen how poetic devices were used by royal praise singers to convey information, feelings or attitude and served as a mirror through which the praise singers describes a person or an event in a positive form or negative one.

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## APPENDIX I

K. Assalamu Alaikum?

A. Wa'alaikumussalam

K. Ni dalibace suna na Rabi Abdullahi, ina rubutu akan “Kirari a Fadar Zazzau”. Da farko ina son inji tarihin ka?

A. Suna na Jibril Muhammad Sani, an haife ni 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1967 a Zaria kuma a nan na tashi kuma nayi makarantar allo, makarantar islamiyya, nayi primary, nayi secondary, nayi polytechnic, nayi NCE, yanzu kuma gashi ina karatu a ABU.

K. Ina so inji wannan sana'a taka ka gaje ta ne ko haye kayi?

A. Eh na gada ne kuma sarautar sarkin Sankira n zazzau na gada ne wajen mahaifina wanda ya rasu a 1990.

K. Ya sunan mahaifin naka?

A. Sunan shi Muhammad Jibril.

K. A yaushe ka samu wannan sarautar?

A. Na sameta a 1991, na same ta a kalla shekara daya bayan rasuwar mahaifina aka nada ni Sankira n sarkin zazzau.

K. To yanzu ina son kayi mani kirari da ku ke wa sarki?

A. Toron giwa sha zamani

Gam da hari mugun magani

Nushin ciki sa doro

Haure sa tagumi na yayan sarki

Kowa yayi zurum kai ya tuna

Gamo da sarki yafi gamon damina

Gamo da sarki yafi aje gwanja

Kuje mai wuyan kube  
Jama'a ko da mai gwadawa  
Kyauren gabas, tufeniyar gabas  
Dodon gabas maci yammawa  
Zakin duniya, dan zakin duniya  
Jikan zakin duniya  
Giwa mai kefa fako  
Gwanki sha bara, yaro ce ne ka fasa

K. Sarki kawai kuke wa kirari ko kuwa harda sauran hakimai?

A. A'a, a zaria muna da hakimai da kuma masu da rike wasu sarautu so kowa da irin nashi a zaria muna da masarautu guda shidda masu girma anace masu "king makers" wato inba sarki suke zama su zaɓi sabon sarki.

K. Ko zaka iya yi mani kirarin da kuke yi ma wadannan 'king makers' din?

A. Eh akwai Waziri, Galadima, Sarkin fada, Fagaci, Makama, da limamin juma'a.

Kirarin waziri:

Waziri babba gwadabe  
Lawali abin biya  
Abi hanya adaina ratse  
Kowa yayi ratse kaya zai taka

Ko bebe yasan hadari  
Ko kankanin yaro yasan wuta  
Ko yaro na goye yasan baaba  
Ko ba'a dasaba, rakumi yasan chau

Kirarin Galadima:

Babba Galadima D2  
Daudu karfin birni  
Dab da rana da hazo  
A gida babba a dawa babba  
A yini zagin babba  
A kwana zagin babba  
A tashi zagin babba  
Dole ace babba ina kwana  
Gunu shama kosani  
Chomo jiniyar gari

Sarkin Fada:

Amar na fada  
kerarren saraki  
Amariye mai fada  
Garbu zancen sarki  
Garbu sankata kora  
Yaro na fadancin doki  
Kai kana fadancin yaro  
Abaka yaron, abaka dokin harda kayane

Fagaci:

Bini babban dakin sarki  
Dakin kasa da kasa  
Inda gobara tai kunya  
Masu gari Amadu  
Masu duniya Amadu

Makama:

Abdulla makama

Togai rumfar sarki

Sankara wuya kashin karaya

Kashin karaya sankara wuya

Abdullah sa gari gudu

Limamin Juma'a:

Imamu shugaban addini

Imamu shugaban sahu

Liman dan liman

Kowa ya zarta liman baya da sallah

In malam ya so ka, ka so mallam

In mallam ya ki ka ka so mallam

K. ko ku kan yi zambo a kirari kuma yana da lokacin da kuke yin shi?

A. Eh muna zambo a kirari amma babu wani takamaiman lokaci da muke yi sai dai in mun hango wadanda zamu yi wa zambon cikin taro sai muyi kamar haka:

Komin girman mai girma

Komin fadin mai fadi

Komin tsawon mai tsawo

In yazo gabanka, allura tafishi girma

Ashekara dubu ana sarar ruwa

Bazai yi tabo ba

Ashekara dubu ana tuyan kosai

Cikin sa fari ne

Gwangwala a hauka a zame

Ka hau mutum ka zauna dai dai

Gaka kamar kusa

Amma kayi ma yaro nisa

Kowa yace yana son yaga jaki

yai kaho

Yana wahala wahalar banza

Kowa yace yana son yaga kaza

tai hakori

Yana wahalar banza

Fan dari da riga basa baka sarki

Ba'a gaya wa bebe hadari

Tsawar farko ya kanji a jikinsa

Harsashe makarin ka a kwanta

Makarin gaba da kai mutum yace na tuba

Isimul azim maganin mai tsafi

Yasin maganin munafiki

Tasani maganin ɗan tauri

Hayaniya baya komi da itacen kasuwa

Shiga da fita bata komi da kofa

Aikin banza harara a duhu

Mai horo a bi Allah

Dan mai horo abi Allah

Jikan mai horo abi Allah

Ashekara dubu ana yakin ruwa

Bazai ci sakaina ba

Gafara kwado

Gafara kifi

Za muyi Magana da kada

Cifansa maci tawaye

Sarki sakon Allah

Sarki abokin zama idan ya yarda

Yaro ci sarki zaji dadi

Bakai sarkin duniya ba

Ina kasan wani dadi

Ci tuwo mai da nama

Ka kwanta a bayan mota marsandi

Ko mota akwad

Amma dadin duniya sai kai sarki

Kai ke kira azo

Bakai ake kira kaje bah

Sama tayi ma yaro nisa

kasa tayi ma yaro zurfi

tsakiya tayi ma yaro fadi

Akurkin dundu mai tuge bindin kaza

Takon Giwa mai keta na Rakumi har kayansa

- K. Sankira tambaya ta anan ita ce wannan sana'a taku ada ansan cewar fada itace cinku da shanku to yanzu da lokacin ya canza ya abin yake ne?
- A. Zan maki wani dan gyara saboda kina bincike ne kinga ko ada a fada ba'a cewa maroka ana cewa 'masarta'. Sarki a Zazzau baida wasu maroka sai dai masarta. Abinda ake nufi da masarta shine masu isar da saƙo suna (passing information) na sarki. In kika tuna babu media so wadannan masarta a lokacin su suke aikin da media keyi yanzu. kinga ko ada can sunayin sana'o'i don lokacin dana taso na same shi yana dinka manyan riguna, alkyabba da rawani na sarakuna. Gaskiya yanzu da yawa daga cikin al'adunmu sun lalace don saboda zaka ga mutum yazo ya zauna yana maula ga mutane saboda bai da aikin komi. Har yanzu akwai wa'anda fada ce cinsu da kuma shansu kamar ni nayi gado amma banyi aikin fada ba don nayi makarantar allo kuma nayi na boko, ina kuma cikin gwamnati to sai ya kasance ba kullum nika zama ba. Ya kamata ake duk inda sarki yake sankira yana nan. Ni (as example) ban zuwa fada sai dai in occasion ya kama sai inje inyi kirari daga nan kuma in koma aiki.
- K. Nagode kwari da gaske sai na kuma dawo wa.
- A. Ni ke da godiya Allah ya bada sa'a.

### TRANSLATION

- Q. May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon you?
- A. Same to you.
- Q. My name is Rabi Abdullahi, a student of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. I am writing my thesis on Royal Praise Songs of Zazzau Emirate. First of all, let me know your brief biography.

- A. My name is Jibril Lawal Muhammad Sani, I was born 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1967 in Zaria. I attended Islamiyya School, Primary School, Secondary School, Polytechnic and N.C.E in Zaria. I am currently an undergraduate student of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria
- Q. Did you inherit it as a profession or you learnt it?
- A. Yes, I inherited the throne of Sarkin Sankira n Zazzau from my father who died in 1990.
- Q. What was his name?
- A. Muhammadu Jibril.
- Q. When were you turbaned?
- A. In 1991, that is, a year after my father passed away.
- Q. I will like you to chant some praise for the Emir.
- A.           The Bull Elephant with long life span  
               A lethal that is never tested  
               A punch that must be felt  
               Everybody awaits your words  
               The might that stands for power  
               The king who showers like a spring  
               Meeting the king is more prosperous than going to *gwanja*  
               The sickle that has no scabbard  
               Whose boldness can dare that of the Emir  
               Shield to the East, cover to the East  
               Beast of the East, the conquer of the West  
               A son of the lion of the world  
               A decedent of a Lion of the world



A grandson of the Lion of the world

The Elephant that cannot be trapped

A Hippo not easily trapped, he who suds the children to flee

Q. Do you only recite praise to the Emir and the district heads are as well?

A. No, in Zaria Emirate we have heads and other title holders. We have a unique way of praising each of them and for example, in Zaria, we have the most senior title holders who are called “king makers”. These six king makers decides and choose an incoming Emir.

Q. Can you please recite their praises?

A. Yes, there is Waziri, Galadima, Sarkin Fada, Fagaci, Makama and the Imam of Juma’at Mosque.

Praises of Waziri:

Waziri the paved way

The only paved way

The only way that can lead

Whoever leaves the paved way, laid in thorns

Even a child knows when he is to be weaned

No need to be told the camel

Knows its food

Praises for Galadima:

Galadima the esteemed

The might of the lion

So close to the Emir like the cloud and the sun

So powerful within and outside

Object of scolding at dusk

Object of scolding at dawn  
Object of scolding when the cock crows  
When the sun rises must be greeted  
The brave that withstands all rigors  
Nightingale, the siren of the dawn

Praises of Sarkin Fada:

Bride of the place  
The Emir's warrior  
The bride, owner of the place  
The entrance, barricade to the palace  
The servants look after the servants  
Both the servants  
And the horses are under your care

Praises of Fagaci:

The avenue to the Emir  
So close to the Emir  
That can never be separated  
The owner of the town Ahmadu  
The owner of the country Ahmadu  
The owner of the world Ahmadu

Praises of Makama:

Abdallah the great warrior  
He who protects the Emir  
So little but painful  
So painful but little

Abdallah the chaser

Praises of Imam of Friday prayer:

Chief Imam, a leader in Islam

Who leads in the Mosque

Chief Imam the son of the chief Imam

Whoever acts before the Imam,

The person's prayer will not be accepted

If the Imam directs, you succumb

When the Imam astonishes.

It is for the will of Allah

Q. Is there a satiric praise in your chants and what time do you chant such praises?

A. Yes, we recite satiric praises but these types of praises have no specific time or occasion for them. The moment we sight the Emir's advisers or his children that wish to ascend the throne then we chant as such:

There is no might before the Emir

There is no prestige before the Emir

There is no status before the Emir all

Those before the Emir are not up to.

The venom of a viper does nothing to-

The back of a tortoise

Through thick and thin the back remains the same

Bamboo sticks too difficult to climb

Settles well on people

It looks near but still far away

Longing for the throne is like seeking to see  
The horn of a Donkey  
Longing for the throne is like seeking to see  
The teeth of a Hen  
One hundred pounds and a flamboyant gown  
Cannot place you on the throne  
The deaf is not informed of the coming of the rain,  
He feels it through thunder and lightning  
One bends to avoid destruction by a bullet  
No one dares malice against you

Bickering can never fall a tree in the market  
Passing in and passing out does not hamper a door  
Glaring in the darkness is useless  
He who instills the fear of Allah in the hearts  
His father also instills the fear of Allah in the hearts  
The grandfather also instills the fear of Allah in the hearts  
No matter the level of water, the calabash still floats

Stay away Frog  
Stay away Fish  
Our discussion is with the Crocodile  
Vengeance that clears adversaries

Emir, Allah's message

Emir, a friend when he likes  
For enjoyment occupy a throne  
If you do not rule,  
Enjoyment is unknown to you  
Eat well garnished food  
Be driven in a Mercedes or a Honda accord car  
But the real enjoyment of the world  
Starts when you are crowned.  
You are the one who summons and not to be summoned.

The sky is out of the child's reach  
The earth is so deep for the child  
The inbetween is so wide for the child  
A throny cage that removes the Hen's feather  
No animal is a match to the Camel

- Q. Another question is that before now, palace used to be where you eat, cloth, etc but with changes that have occurred is it still the same?
- A. Let me correct you because you are writing a research, in the palace we are called town criers not praise singers. These town criers are informants that pass information the Emir to the society. Before the coming of technology, they serve the role of the media. Frankly speaking, some of the praise singers have one or more occupations that they practice apart from praise singing. My father had an occupation of designing Emirs flowing gowns and their turbans. Modernism has really affected our profession because some of these praise singers have no other means of survival but depend on

praising and they go out praising people on the street to get something. There are still some praise singers that feed and clothe themselves using it as their means of livelihood. On my side, i am a civil servant so I only go to the palace occasionally.

Q. Thank you so much, till we meet again.

A. I am most grateful, may God help you, Amin.

## APPENDIX II

- K. Assalamu Alaikum.
- A. Amin wa'alaikumus-salam.
- K. Ni dalibace suna na Rabi Abdullahi, ina rubutu na akan “Kirari a Fadar Zazzau”. Da farko Baba ina son insan sunanka, cikakken sunanka.
- A. Suna na Adamu, sarauta ta wazirin zagi.
- K. Baba don Allah ina son dan takaitaccen tarihin ka?
- A. Ni dai haifaffen makarfi ne ni, amma Sarkin Zazzau Aminu shi ya dawo dani nan, a hannun shi. Ina nan ne duk abubuwan da sarkin nan Allah ya kaishi gareshi yanzu ina nan a nan duk ya faffaru a gabana.
- K. Yanzu Baba zakai kamar shekaru nawa kenan a duniya?
- A. Ina jin kamar tamanin da dori ko.
- K. Kuma sannan Baba wannan kirari gado ne kayi ko ko ra'ayi ne?
- A. Ba gado ne ba ina zamana, doki shine sula, doki shine hanyar zama na nan gidan saboda a gida ina gaban mahaifina zanje fada ta hakimi tun madaki aka kawo fagaci, uban wannan fagacin. Ina nan sai na kama kiwon doki kuma ina zuwa makarantar boko, in an taso sai in kama kiyon doki na. idan Aminu yazo rangadi (Sarki Aminu) ta wajen dawakin zai wuce.
- K. To Baba a wane lokacin ne ka fara kirari?
- A. Anan ne, kirarin wajen hakimi ai daban, eh tun tuni ina yiwa hakimi amma kirarin hakimi ai daban na sarki yafi wuya.
- K. To Baba ko zaka taba man na hakimi?
- A. Na hakimi ai na wuce wannan ni, ni na wuce wannan fagen tunda ba ina tare da hakimi ba.
- K. Sai dai na sarki kawai kake?

- A. Na sarki kawai nake.
- K. To Baba ka ɗan yi mani na sarki inji?
- A. Anya yanzu, a cikin mutane bazan maki ba (sai nayi masu magana) kudan taimaka ku bamu wuri.

Ni ina cikin masu fito da sarki, shine nan ni ne nan kamar yadda muke da ke yana daga kafa zai shiga:

Haikawa lafiya zaki

Haikawa sannu lafiya ci gari

Haikawa sannu a lafiya ci gari

Inka dauka alheri

Ka daga da ƙarfin Allah

Ka maida da nufin Allah

Gaban ka Allah

Bayan ka Annabi

Dama da hauni

Ikon Lillahi

Wahidun ƙaharu zaki

Idan anzo zai shigo nan yanzu ai gini ne da nan da nan to zan dinga.

Shafa jingine dama da hagu ci gari

Shafa garuwa dama da hagu

Kada ka shagala

Ba shagala, ba garaje, ba gaggawa zaki

Haikawa sannu a lafiya cika sarari

Lafiya numfashin duniya

Kafin dai a kawo nan inda zai zauna, ana zuwa kofa aka nufa zance:



Haikawa lafiya nan 2d

Haikawa lafiya ci gari

In anzo step wannan step irin wannan wanda zaka taka matakala:

Gwabri kasa dai dai wa daida

Karka shagala 2d

Ba shagala, ba manko, ba gaggawa, ba garaje ci gari

Haikawa sannu a lafiya Sarkin Yaƙin Manzon Allah

Haikawa sannu a lafiya ci gari maci tawaye

Lafiya kashe mai kashe wani

Hamdulillahi zaki

Daukawa sannu a lafiya kashe kafiri

Ki kafiri gaba da maki sallah zaki

Alheri zaki

In zai zauna sai mu kara rigunan mu ya zauna.

Gyara sannu a lafiya

Numfasawa sannu a lafiya zaki 3d

Mai kira kudu da gabas, yamma da arewa su ansa

A lafiya baƙon ruwa da ciyawa

Hamdullahi baƙon tilas 2d

In zai hau doki kuma:

Jinkiri ba wada

Jinkiri gwawron giwa

Bisa lafiya Zaki

Bisa lafiya ci gari

Zauna dai dai Zaki  
Karka shagala ba wada  
Amincin ka yafi ga linzami  
Kada ka shagala  
Kasan dabba ba hankali gareta ba  
Zauna dai dai  
Kada ka shagala Zaki  
Gaban ka Allah  
Bayan ka Annabi  
Dama da hauni ikon Lillahi  
Wahidun Kaharu Zaki  
Alheri gagara gasa  
Lafiya ci gari maci tawaye

Kamar yanzu in anzo wajen duwatsu wato wurin duk duwatsu ne kafin mu karasa  
wajen zance:

Gyara kimtsi da kyar zaki 2d  
Banzar turba kada ka shagala  
Kasa duba dai dai wa daida  
Kada ka shagala, ba manko, ba gaggawa  
Ba garaje ci gari  
Ba garaje, ba gaggawa ci gari maci tawaye

- K. To yanzu baba ya kake ganin kirari ga wadancan masu tasowar?
- A. Ai duk shirme ne nasu na yanzu wanda sukai maki kinji yayi dai dai da nawa? Bazai  
yiwu ba basu sani ba kuma baza'abi ba balle in koya wa mutum, babu biyayya da

zarar na fadi wannan kirari ya tafi to sai dai in bake da kike dauka yanzu ko nawa zaki zube mutum bai isa ba, ba zai iya ba.

K. To kamar yanzu banda fada kana da wata sana'ar hannu da kake ne ko kuwa fada ce cinka da shanka?

A. Fada ce amman yanzu bata zama ci na da sha na ba. Tunda zanzo nan gurin in koma gida ko abinci bazan ci ba. Amma da ina nan lokacin Aminu ko baka da mata daga fan daya har fan biyar, sule daya har sule goma babu wanda baza ka samu ba. Da ina gidan nan ko ruwa bana sha na famfo lokacin turawa sai dai Fanta kwabo uku.

K. Na gode Baba sai na dawo wani karon.

A. To madallah.

### TRANSLATION

Q. May the peace and blessing of Allah be upon you.

A. Same to you.

Q. My name is Rabi Abdullahi, a student of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. I am writing my thesis on "Royal Praise Songs of Zazzau Emirate". First, I will like to know your real name.

A. My name is Adamu and my title is Wazirin zagi.

Q. I will like to know your brief history.

A. I was born and brought up in Makarfi, it was late Emir Aminu that brought me here. I was here when this present Emir is turbaned as the Emir of zazzau.

Q. How old are you Baba?

A. I think am eighty or a little above eighty.

Q. Did you inherit the profession of praising or you learnt it?

A. I did not inherit it, rearing of a horse was the cause of my coming to this house. When I was small, I always go to the palace and in the evening go back to my father's house to sleep. This was how my routine was school, palace and then home.

Q. When did you start praising the Emir?

A. I started with praising a district head but know a chant of a district head is different from that of the Emir.

Q. It means you only recite praises for the Emir?

A. Yes.

Q. Then Baba recites the Emir's praises for me.

A. I can't chant in the mist of these people (cuts in) can you please excuse us? We do escort Emir from inside to the palace so his steps are guided by our chants like:

Waddle gently lion

Waddle gently the town conqueror

Waddle gently and slowly the town conqueror

You stretch out for good

You gave out for good

You descend with good intention

Walk with the will of Allah

And steps in the will of Allah

You are guided by Allah and the holy prophet

Both right and left

You are guided by Allah

The strong one lion

If he wants to pass this area as you see that here and there are fence so I will be reciting praises saying:

Waddle both right and left town conqueror2x

Do not relent

Do not relent, do not forget and do not be hasty

Waddle gently the esteemed one

It is well the ruler of the masses

The moment he reaches here, that is his seat, then I will chant these praises:

Waddle gently

Waddle gently the town conqueror

The moment we reach the staircase, I mean this type of staircase, I will chant:

Walk on, the place is safe

Do not relent

Do not relent, do not forget, and do not be hasty

Waddle gently war commander of the prophet

Do not be speedy the town conqueror, who can crush any rebellion

Waddle gently

Waddle gently the town conqueror that can crush any rebellion

It is well, temper justice with mercy

Praise be to God, Lion

Waddle gently, deal with unbelievers

Deal with unbelievers and bring them back to the right path

It is well the town conqueror

Blessing, Lion

When he comes to sitting position, we all stand to give him a cover with our flowing gowns and we recite these chants:

It is well, adjust

It is well, gently Lion

You who call from the four cardinal points and must be answered

Then if he mounts a horse, there are praises that we recite like:

Have a pause the provider

Have a pause the Bull Elephant

Waddle gently Lion

Waddle gently the town conqueror

Adjust the sitting position Lion

Do not relent

Concentrate fully

Do not relent

The animal lack common sense

Adjust the sitting position

Do not relent Lion

You are guided by God

And the holy prophet

From left to right is the doing of God

The strong one, Lion

Your generosity is incomparable

It is well the town conqueror who wins over adversaries

Q. How do you see praise singing in future?

A. The youths that just praised the Emir did nothing but worthless praises, is not like my own. They don't respect us and they think they are too big to come and learn.

Q. Apart from this profession do you have another occupation?

A. No, this is where I used to earn my living but now things have changed. I can come here and go back home without eating food unlike before during the reign of Aminu when food and money are provided for us even if you don't have a family. In this house, I take Fanta as my drinking water for just three kobo, but now I can stay from morning to evening without eating food.

Q. Thank you so much Baba.

A. Is my pleasure.

### APPENDIX III

K. Assalamu alaikum

A. Wa'alaikumus salam

K. Ni dalibace suna na Rabi Abdullahi, ina rubutu na akan “Kirari a Fadar Zazzau”. Ko zaka fada mana sunanka?

A. Suna na Alhaji Shehu Ahmed Barayan sarki.

Alhamdulillah

Baraya na cikin gida wanda yake ita kanta Barayan tana nufin “uwar daka”. Ana nada mutum biyu ne amintaccen sarki ko surukin sarki, ko wanda suka ba ‘ya ko wanda sarkin yake auren sister dinshi, shine ake ba baraya saboda aminci domin most of the malaman sarki are under him.

K. Wato gado ne kenan?

A. Eh to dan haka shine mai martaba sarki yaga cancantar da ya kamata ya nada ni.

K. To kenan ku a sarautar ku ba kwa mashi kirari?

A. Eh mukan yi mashi kirari kamar haka:

Lafiya mai ado da kurar doki

Kofa lafiya zaki 2d

Sunkuye ba wada 2d

Gangare, saukewa, lafiya zaki

Masgaye ba wada

Jingine dama da hagu

Ramni kasa ka kyau

Bisa takawa lafiya zaki

Yi hankali da aikin moro



Zamna lafiya ba wada

Zamna lafiya kimtsi

Lafiya zamna gari kitashi

Bisa lafiya zaki

Kama zuru linzami

Zauna dai dai kada ka shagala

Zirawa gaba

Jinkiri ba wada, gaba ta cushe ne

Haka dai muke wa sarki kirari har sai ya isa inda zashi.

K. Lalle kam nagode kwarai Alhaji.

A. Ni ma nagode.

#### TRANSLATION

Q. May peace and blessing of Allah be upon you?

A. Same to you.

Q. My name is Rabi Abdullahi, a student of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. I am writing my thesis on Royal Praise Songs of Zazzau Emirate. May I please know your name?

A. My name is Alhaji Shehu Ahmed Barayan sarki. Thanks be to Allah, Baraya means inner room which means an insider who is close to the Emir. Baraya must be someone that is trusted by the Emir or the Emir's in-law.

Q. Does that mean you inherited the throne?

A. Yes that is why His Royal Highness turbaned me with the tittle of Baraya.

Q. Do you chant praises for the Emir?

A. Yes, I praise him as such:

Be careful with the entrance ahead Lion

Be cautious of the entrance provider 2x  
Walk gently through the slope Lion  
Tilt through the entrance provider  
At liberty to lean to your right and left  
Walk gently the area is slippery  
Up! Waddle gently Lion  
Tread carefully to avoid the peasants plantations

Adjust your sitting position  
Sit down carefully the provider  
Sit well the throne remains yours  
Up waddle gently Lion  
Handle the reign carefully  
Be up and doing  
Do not relent  
Have a pause the provider.

This is how we praise the Emir until he is seated.

Q. This is a nice one, thank you Alhaji.

A. My pleasure.

#### APPENDIX IV

K. Assalamu alaikum.

A. Wa'alaikumus-sallam

K. Ni dalibace suna na Rabi Abdullahi, ina rubutu akan “Kirari a Fadar Zazzau”. Ina son inji tarihin ki.

A. Sunana Rabi Bazamfara. Kinga dai nasan jiya nasan yau ko ba haka ba. Takaitaccen tarihi na yanzu haka shekarata tamanin da bakwai. Ni kuma lokacin Sarkin Musulmi Abubakar mun same shi akan karaga ta mulki sai duk inda za'ayi taro danshi ke zuwa wato Maccido wanda ya rasu amma ni Allah ya sani ban zauna gida ba can zamfara.

K. Amma a can aka haife ki?

A. A zamfara aka haife ni, wani miji da na aura Abubakar shine ya kawo ni Samaru, Zaria. A lokacin da aka kashe Murtala ran juma'a to Monday muka zo garin nan. Dalilin zuwana cikin zaria city kuwa, wani wawan sarki sunzo sunyi wasa, anan irin wasan mu na balwai wasan bori sai yaya ta tace inzo. Shine na zauna gidan Halima daga nan Kabiru dan sarki (Allah jikan rai) madaki shi ya tsaisha ni nan. Yana cewa inzo gidan nace ni tsoron gidan sarki nika. Ya kaini wajen uwarshi yace gafa tawa wadda zata rika shigowa.

K. Yanzu kenan gadon kirari kikayi?

A. Kirari da nika ban gada ga uwa ba, ban gada a uba ba, ban gada ta ko ina ba. Amma ikon Allah shi ya bani fasahar da in naga abu ina iya mashi kirari in wuce saboda wannan aljanin sarkin makada shi ya zauna a kaina kuma ikon Allah bamu cewa ba aljannu , ko cikin kur'ani ai anga suratul jinnu saboda haka wani lokacin ban san sanda zanyi kirarin ba.

K. Ina son inji kina ma matan sarki kirari ko kuwa sarkin kadai kike ma?

- A. Idan sarki ya fito ina masa kirari da uwargidan sarki da mai bi mata. Galibi nafi yi ma jakadiya da uwar gandu, matan sarki ko nafi yi ma yayansu, sai yar garin mu yar Sakkwato wato matar sarki.
- K. To yanzu ina son mu fara da kirarin da kike wa sarki tunda shine babba kuma a kamar yausha kike mashi kirari?
- A. Inya fito da safe kuma kamar da rana in ya fito in zai wuce nakan daga hannuwa na in mai kirari amma ba tsayawa zai yi ba. In ya dawo ko kuma kamar yanzu da jiniyar shi ta wuce, to ina wurin zan tsaya inyi kirari na.
- K. To ina so in samu kirarin?
- A. To haryanzu dai baki gajiba.

Lafiya toya matsafa

Lafiya uban talakawa

Sarki uban sarakuna

Sarki a barka sai ta Allah tayi

Sarki uban sarakuna

Baban Kabiru baban Bello

Allah yaja zamaninka sarki

Allah ya taimake ka, ka taimaki jama'ar ka

Ubangijin rahama Ya biya sheka

Ubangijin rahama gagara gasar mahassada

Sai dai mahassada suji kunya

Ku barshi sai ta Allah tayi

Lafiya baban Sambo

Dan Sambo, jikan Sambo

Dan Aminatu, dan Aminatu

In kuma ya dawo zan tsaya wurin ince:

Lafiya na katau

Lafiya toya matsafa

Lafiya uban talakawa

Lafiya mai gabas da yamma

Lafiya mai hagu da dama

Lafiya uban Kabiru baban Bello

Lafiya baban Sambo

Lafiya sarki uban sarakuna

Taka da karfin Allah, ka shiga da ikon Allah.

To kinji yadda nika mai, ba shakka nakan tsaya in mai kirari amma da yake tafiyar mota ce sai a wuce. Inna bigi iska sai inje daga kofar dakin shi a waje ba daga ciki ba sai in tsaya in mai kirari na in fito sai kuma in koma ga jakadiya:

Jakadiyar toya matsafa

Jakadiyar uban talakawa

Jakadiyar mai gabas da yamma kudu da arewa

Jakadiyar sarki uban sarakuna

Jakadiyar sarki gagara gasar mahassada

Sai dai mahassada kuji kunya

Ya riga ku yace Allah

To kinji yadda kirarin yake dan har ance asa mani baki abin Magana nace abarni haka bana so.

K. To sai na matan sarki.

A. Akwai ta gaba wato uwargidan sarki, ita muke kira baaba, mai bi mata Dada ita ma sunan ta Fatsima:

Yar Ali maman Aliyu

Uwar gidan sarki

Insha Allah muna gaisheki

Munzo kuma mucu arziki

Mu bar arziki a mazaunin shi

Yar mukaddas munzo gaisheki

Uwar Ali, uwar Kabiru, uwar Bello

Kuma maman Bello, maman Aminatu

Ita kuma mai bi mata ina mata kirari da:

Yar Abubakar

Mamman Kasimu, maman Zaliha

Yar Abubakar

To naso goro kenan, inje in ansa. Ita kuma waccen yar wajen su Iya ban cika shiga sassanta ba don kirari, amma ina zuwa in gaisheta in Allah ya hore mata goro tace “Rabi ga goro”.

Ita ko wannan yar sakkwato itama nakan je in mata kirari:

Yar Abubakar

Yar Maiturare

Yar Bello, yar Mu’azu, yar Hassan

Nazo in gaisheki

Nazo rokon arziki in kuma ci in barshi a mazaunin shi

Saboda haka nazo in gaisheki

Allah ya jikan Bello

Allah ya jikan Abubakar

Allah ya jikan Maiturare

Allah ya kuma jiƙan Shehu

Allah ya kuma jiƙan Muhammadu

Allah ya kuma jiƙan Ibrahim

Allah ya kuma jiƙan Maiturare.

To kinji ai ita yar gidan sarakuna ce, yar sarkin musulmi ce Abubakar wato kanwar Maccido.

K. Kamar yanzu wannan kirarin da kike yi akwai mata masu taso wa suna yi ko kuma suna binku ko kuma cikin zuri'ar ku akwai wanda zai taso ya maishe ku?

A. Ni 'ya'ya na duk sunyi aure ba masu son suyi, ni kadai ce keyi.

K. Yanzu ya kike ganin kirari nan gaba?

A. Nan gaba idan Allah ya kawo mai so to ayi in kuma babu to shikenan duk an huta.

K. Yanzu babu wani mai son yaga yana yi?

A. Babu.

K. Yanzu ke kadai ce mai kirari?

A. Nan dai ni kadai ce babu kowa.

K. Ya kike ganin kirari bayan ba ku?

A. Sai dai wannan da kuke dauka.

K. A fada nike Magana?

A. Akwai maza suna mashi kirari.

K. A'a mata nike nufi?

A. Wallahi basu, tunda koni kauda kunya nike in dake wallahi tallahi.

K. Mi kike ganin yasa mata basa son yin kirari?

A. Galibi yanzu basu suke ba ace ana kaza ana kaza, to niko na riga na tsufa bani tsoron ta kife. Ni bani tsoron in mai kirari, nan muke ci nan muke sha, suturar mu ma duk anan take.

- K. Yanzu babu wata sana'a da kike ta hannu?
- A. Wallahi bani da ita tunda bani da jari ko ba haka ba. Nan muke ci nan muke samun abun rufar mu. Idan biki ya tashi na dan'uwa muje muyi abinda kuma Allah ya hore aka bamu muje mu bada.
- Anji kirari daga wajen Hajiya Rabi Bazamfara a Fadar Sarkin Zazzau. Ranar sha daya ga watan takwas ta dubu ashirin da sha biyar.

### TRANSLATION

- Q. May peace and blessings of Allah be upon you.
- A. Same to you.
- Q. My name is Rabi Abdullahi, a student of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. I am writing my thesis on Royal Praise Songs of Zazzau Emirate. I will like to know your biography.
- A. My name is Rabi Bazamfara. As you can see, i am not a young person, I am 87years old. I know the reign of Sultan Abubakar and his son Maccido who represents him in day to day activities. I did not live in Zamfara.
- Q. Were you born there?
- A. Yes, it was my husband Abubakar that brought me to Zaria. My coming to Zaria city was through a clown of the Emir who performs bori show who after the show brought me to Zaria and I stayed in Halima's house from there Kabir (late) the Emir's son brought me to the palace.
- Q. Did you inherit praise singing?
- A. I did not inherit it but Allah gave me the talent to do it. I also praise with the help of the jinn spirit in me. You know there is a verse in the Holy Quran (suratul jinn) that was revealed to the prophet on spirits. At times, I only find myself praising the Emir.
- Q. Do you praise the wives of the Emir?



- A. I do for the Emir and his wives. Even the Jakadiya is not left.
- Q. What time do you normally praise the Emir?
- A. When he comes out in the morning and noon, I then follow him and raised my hands up.
- Q. Let me hear you praise him.
- A. You are not tired?

It is well, the provider

It is well, the burner of fetish groves

It is well, the father of Emirs

It is well, destiny that decides for him

It is well, the leader of Emirs

May your reign last long

May you be favoured by Allah, you favour your subordinator

May Allah the merciful reward you

The venom that does nothing to the back of a tortoise

It is destiny that decides for him

It is well father, of Sambo

The son of Sambo and the grandson of Sambo

The son of Aminatu, the son of Aminatu

If he comes back, I will stand in one place and recite these chants:

It is well, the provider

It is well, the burner of fetish groves

It is well, the father of the peasants

It is well, for you rule, the cardinal points

It is well, your rule on both sides

It is well, father of Kabiru and Sambo

It is well, father of Sambo

It is well, father of Emirs

Waddle gently, you are guided by Allah

This is how I praise the Emir, sometimes I go to his door and praise him then move inside and praise jakadiya as such:

Jakadiyar burner of fetish

Jakadiyar the father of the peasants

Jakadiyar to the ruler of the cardinal point

Jakadiyar father of Emirs

Venom does nothing to the back of a tortoise

Whoever plans evil will surely fail

He has submitted to the will of Allah

This is for jakadiya, there is a time it was decided that I should be turbaned as the ‘baki abun magana’ but I said prefer the way I was.

Q. Then the wives of the Emir.

A. There is the first wife we call her Baaba and second wife Dada.

The daughter of Ali and the mother of Aliyu

The first wife of the Emir

With the special grace of Allah we pay homage to you

With due respect

We are here for your generosity

Daughter of Muqaddas, we have come to greet you

Mother of Ali, mother of Kabiru

And also mother of Bello mother of Aminatu

Then I praise the second wife as such:

Daughter of Kabiru

Mother of qasimu and Zaliha

Daughter of Abubakar

The moment I finish praising her, she gives me kolanut. I don't normally praise the third wife but I go to her and she gives me kolanut.

The fourth wife is from Sokoto, I praise her as such:

Daughter of Abubakar

Daughter of Maiturare

Daughter of Bello, Daughter of Mu'azu, daughter of Hassan

I have come to pay homage

With due respect, am here for your generosity

We will receive and let it remain

Because of that I have come to pay you homage

May the soul of Bello rest in peace

May the soul of Abubakar rest in peace

May the soul of Maiturare rest in peace

May the soul of Shehu rest in peace

May the soul of Muhammadu rest in peace

May the soul of Ibrahim rest in peace

You know she is from royalty, the daughter of late Sultan of Sokoto Abubakar sister to late Maccixo.

Q. Are there women learning this profession from you or you have a child or relative that wants to become a praise singer?

A. My children are all married, they never show interest.

- Q. How do you see praising in future?
- A. Is only time that will tell because if nobody comes forward, then female praise singing will die in the palace.
- Q. Are you the only female praise singer?
- A. Yes, i am the only one.
- Q. How do you see praising in future?
- A. Except this one that you are recording.
- Q. I mean in the palace
- A. There are male praise singers that chant praises to the Emir
- Q. I mean female praise singers.
- A. Frankly speaking none,I do away with shyness that is why I am here.
- Q. What is the main reason why women don't go into practicing the profession of praise singing?
- A. Well, I think it has to do with the changes in the society,the moment one wants to start this profession,you hear a lot of gossip going round.As you can see I am not afraid of anybody so nobody can stop me from praising the Emir.This is where I get the means of my livelihood.
- Q. Do you have another trade or occupation apart from this?
- A. Frankly speaking I do not, since I don't have any capital.This is where I get the means of livelihood and even support some of my relatives.

This interview was recorded on 11/8/2015 at the Emir of Zazzau's palace.