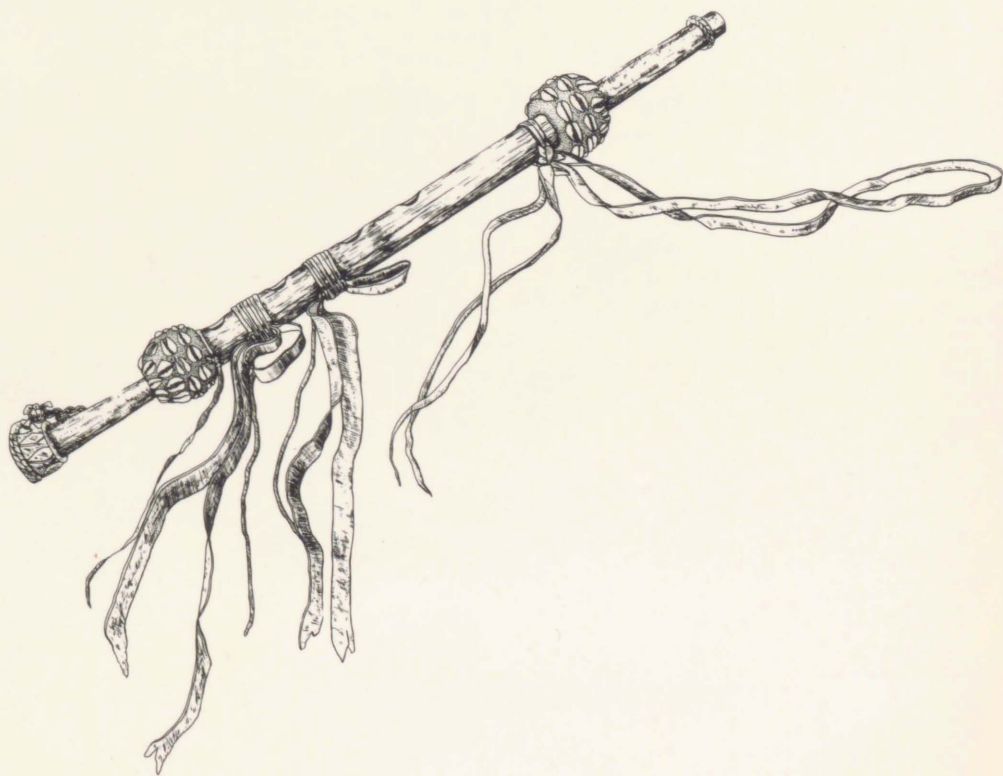
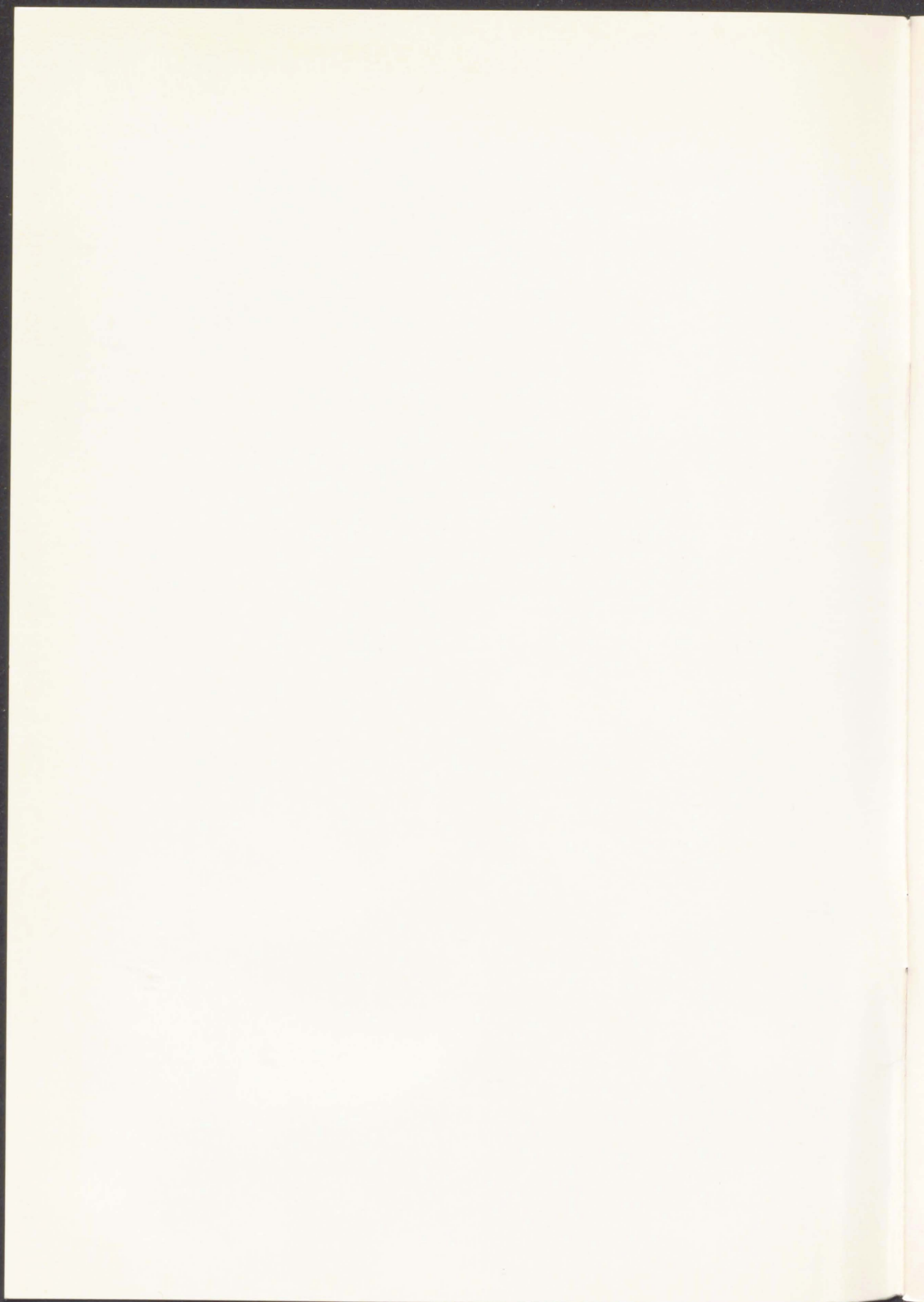


GERMAN RESEARCH  
IN NORTH-EASTERN NIGERIA





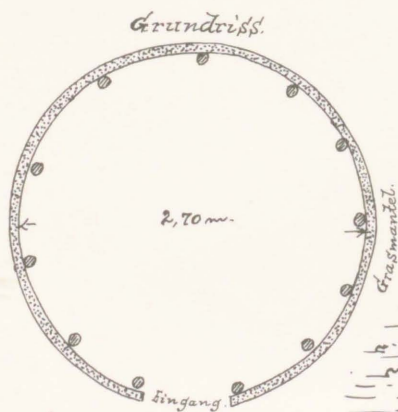
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GERMAN RESEARCH IN NORTH-EASTERN NIGERIA

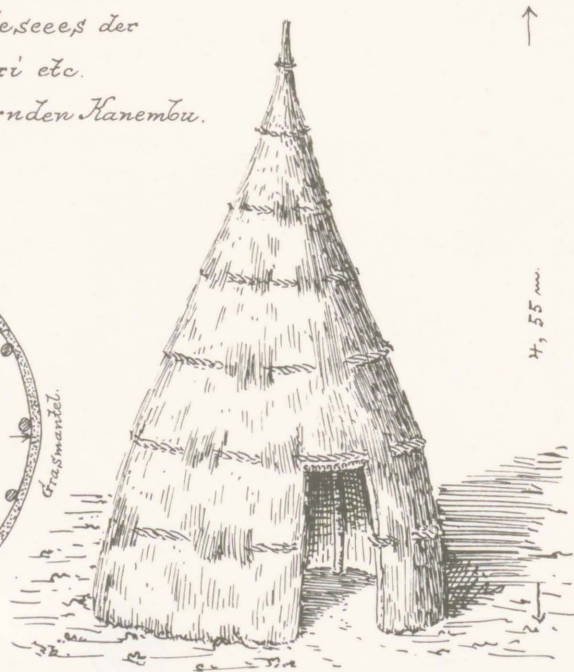


FRANZ STEINER VERLAG STUTTGART GMBH  
1991

Hütten der Wandernomaden  
 am Nordrande des Tsadeseees der  
 Kanembu, Nordkanuri etc.  
 in Garua der wandernden Kanembu.



Stangen gerüst, in die Erde  
 gelassen, mit Grasmandel.



Leo Frobenius 1911.

Hut of Kanembu on the shore of Lake Chad, drawn by Leo Frobenius on his expedition in 1911.



GERMAN RESEARCH IN NORTH-EASTERN NIGERIA

Dedicated to our Nigerian colleagues and friends



FRANZ STEINER VERLAG STUTTGART GMBH  
1991

Texts by Ulrich Braukämper, Werner Fricke and Herrmann Jungraithmayr

Layout by Gabriele Hampel

Photographs by Hannelore Kunkel and Helmut Vogler

Front cover: »Shilá« wind-instrument from Borno, collected by Norbert Cyffer  
(drawn by Gabriele Hampel)

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*Kanuri in ceremonial dress of the court (Aquarelle by C. Arriens 1911; Archives of the Frobenius Institute, Frankfurt a.M.)*



## PREFACE

This booklet is intended to draw attention to an aspect of African studies which has been largely neglected, namely the collaboration between scholars of the two countries Nigeria and Germany. A joint research project was initiated between the University of Maiduguri and the University of Frankfurt a.M. in 1988 within the context of a programme entitled »History of culture and language in the natural environment of the West African savannah«. Besides north-eastern Nigeria, in particular Borno State, Burkina Faso is included in this programme<sup>1</sup>. Academic disciplines and the research projects in which they are involved will be specified below (see chapter III).

This presentation of ongoing research will be preceded by a brief account of what has been accomplished by German scholars in north-eastern Nigeria so far. The geographical region of concern comprises mainly Borno State and some adjacent territories of Bauchi and Gongola States which are located within the academic catchment area of the University of Maiduguri. Two major periods and categories of scholarly approach can be roughly differentiated: the first being represented by travellers of a more universal interest in the 19th century and the second by more specialized researchers in the fields of ethnology (cultural anthropology), history, linguistics and geography, in the 20th century.

In former times the Lake Chad area and particularly the Empire of Borno were among the most important stations along the trans-Saharan trade routes between the Mediterranean coast and the interior of the African continent. They were, however, little known to Europeans at the beginning of the 19th century. The contribution German travellers and researchers made in establishing contacts between the different cultural spheres of Europe and central Africa has certainly been an important one. Their success was contingent on the friendship and support which they enjoyed on the part of their African hosts, such as was extended to Heinrich Barth and Gustav Nachtigal by Shehu Umar of Borno (Bornu). During the last decades, German researchers have worked in close cooperation with colleagues from Nigerian academic institutions (cf. chapter II). The University of Frankfurt a.M. and Maiduguri joint project, which is based on a system of intensive collaboration between »counterparts« of the two countries, provides a new step and perspective in these enduring relations.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. E. Haberland, *Recherches allemandes au Burkina Faso* (Wiesbaden, 1986).

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The history of the United States of America is a story of growth and change. It begins with the first settlers who came to the continent in search of a new life. They found a land of vast opportunities, but also of challenges. The early years were marked by struggle and hardship, as the settlers fought to establish a new society in a remote and often hostile environment. Over time, the United States grew from a small collection of colonies into a powerful nation. The American Revolution was a pivotal moment in this history, as the colonies declared their independence from Great Britain and established a new form of government. The years following the Revolution were a time of rapid expansion and development. The United States grew in size and power, and its influence spread across the world. The Civil War was a defining moment in the nation's history, as it fought to resolve the issue of slavery and to preserve the Union. The Reconstruction era that followed was a time of great change and challenge, as the nation sought to rebuild and to address the legacy of slavery. The United States continued to grow and to evolve, and its history is a testament to the resilience and strength of the American people. The story of the United States is a story of a nation that has overcome many challenges and has emerged as a global leader. It is a story of a people who have built a great and enduring civilization.

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## II. 19th century travellers

At the end of the 18th century a remarkable increase of interest in learning more about the African interior arose in Europe. This was largely motivated by a desire for economic and political expansion, but also by scholarly devotion. Although Germany's overseas involvement was not intense, individual citizens nevertheless participated in research expeditions to a considerable extent. Many of them travelled in the service of foreign powers, particularly Britain. They were dissimilar in respect to their social and professional backgrounds and originated from different parts of Germany. Only reports relating to north-eastern Nigeria are of concern here. Of the eight travellers briefly portrayed here in chronological order, five died during their journey in Africa, and their notes and records were posthumously published.



*Gustav Nachtigal's reception at the court of Shehu Umar of Borno (1870)*  
In: *G. Nachtigal, Sahara and Sudan. Vol. 1 (1879), p. 594*

## 1. Friedrich Konrad HORNEMANN (1772-1801)

Friedrich Hornemann, the son of a Protestant priest, was born in Hildesheim (Lower Saxony) on September 20th, 1772. After studying theology at the University of Göttingen he started attending the lectures of the famous anthropologist Johann Blumenbach, and the desire of doing research in Africa himself soon began to crystallize in his mind. Blumenbach supported this idea and recommended him to the »African Association« in London. In September 1798 he started out from Egypt with a caravan of pilgrims who were returning to Fezzan from Mecca. His intention was to travel via Borno and the Hausa states to the Atlantic coast. From the town of Murzuk he began his trip across the Sahara in January 1800. Through the analysis of reports of his travelling companions almost two decades later it could be deduced that Hornemann had stayed in Borno for about four months, before continuing via Kashna (Katsina) to Nupe, where he died of dysentery in 1801. He seems to be the first European to have mentioned the name »Zad« in connection with a large body of water, which can be identified as Lake Chad. Unfortunately, no authentic report of his sojourn in sub-Saharan Africa has been passed down.

## 2. Heinrich BARTH (1821-1865)

The seaport town of Hamburg has long been distinguished by its intensive links with the outside world. Heinrich Barth, the son of a merchant, was born there on February 16th, 1821. From earliest childhood on a desire had been awakened in him to visit those little known countries of which the seamen of his hometown were always speaking. He studied geography with Carl Ritter in Berlin and undertook an extensive journey through the Mediterranean Africa in 1845. At the time the English missionary James Richardson was preparing for an expedition from Libya to Borno in order to investigate possibilities for trade, he recruited Barth as a fellow traveller. In March 1850 Barth and a second German, Adolf Overweg (see below), set out from Tripoli with Richardson's caravan. They crossed the Sahara and reached Damerghu, the border area of the empires Borno and Sokoto, in January 1851. Via Katsina and Kano Barth proceeded to the Borno capital Kukawa, where he arrived on 2 April. Richardson died in March so that the leadership of the expedition passed over to Barth. He enjoyed the gracious hospitality of Shehu Umar, the ruler of Borno, and Kukawa became his base for journeys to Adamawa (May - July 1851), Kanem (September - November 1851), the region of the lower Logone river (November 1851 - February 1852) and Bagirmi (March to August 1852). In November 1852 he started westward for Timbuctoo and returned from there to Kukawa in December 1854. On May 4th, 1855 he joined a caravan leaving Borno for the Mediterranean coast and arrived in Tripoli on the 28th of August. The local Arabic name,



which he had adopted during his travels through Africa was «Abd al-Karim, »servant of the merciful«.

Barth's main focus of research had thus been Borno and adjacent regions surrounding Lake Chad. His contribution to the geographical, historical and linguistic knowledge of this area, published in five volumes (1857/58), is one of the most outstanding works of travel literature. From 1859 up until his death on November 25th, 1865 Heinrich Barth lived under adverse conditions as a professor of geography in Berlin.



*Heinrich Barth (1821-1865)*

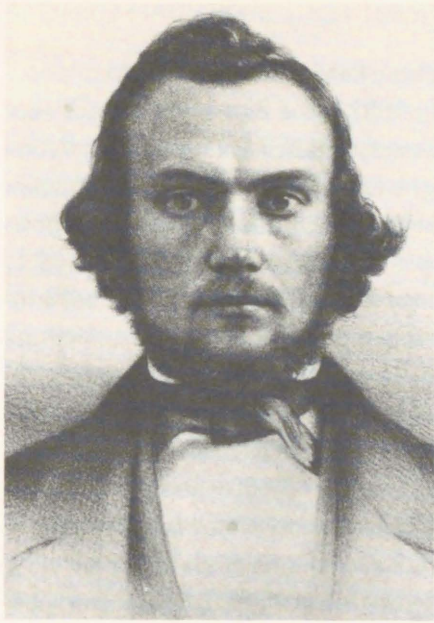
### 3. Adolf OVERWEG (1822-1852)

Adolf Overweg, the son of an iron monger, was born on July 24th, 1822 in Hamburg. After completing his studies in geology in Bonn and Berlin he grasped the opportunity to join the expedition of James Richardson and Heinrich Barth, which left Tripoli on March 24th, 1850 (cf. above). In January 1851 he separated from his European companions in Damergu and travelled via Gobir, Maradi, Zinder and Mashaena to Kukawa. He arrived in the Borno capital on May 7th, 1851 where he enjoyed the friendship and logistic support of Shehu Umar. Although in ill health, Overweg embarked on a voyage across Lake Chad in a boat, which the expedition had brought along from Tripoli, in June. After having visited many of the lake's islands, inhabited by Yedina (Buduma) people, and travelling as far east as Guraia, he returned to the port of Kukawa three weeks later. He then accompanied Barth on his trip to Kanem (September - November 1851) and participated in the Borno raid in the lower Logone region (November 1851 - February 1852). From March to May Overweg visited the southern frontier areas of Borno bordering on Bauchi, a journey which must have been very demanding on his already dwindling health, a recognition deduced from the fact that he remained in Kukawa for the next two months. In August he departed on another excursion to the Komadugu Yobe river, but shortly after his return he was overcome with high fever. At his own demand he was taken to his favourite place Maduari, where his promising scientific career was ended by his death on September 27, 1852. In 1908, Mr. Hewby, the British Resident in Borno, ordered his remains to be exhumed and brought to the »European grave yard« in Maiduguri. The Africans used to call Overweg by the Arabic name Tabib, »doctor«. The manuscripts and notes of Adolf Overweg were taken into custody by Heinrich Barth and later turned over to the German geographer August Petermann in the Thuringian town of Gotha, who presented them in a classified list. Overweg's major contribution was in the field of physical geography: he sounded the depth of shallow Lake Chad, measured the distance from shore to shore and calculated the exact positions of the islands. In the field of ethnography he provided the first descriptions of the island populations.

### 4. Eduard VOGEL (1829-1856)

Eduard Vogel, the son of a school teacher of geography, was born on May 7th, 1829, in Krefeld, Rhineland. After attending school in Leipzig he studied astronomy, physics and geography. In 1853 he accepted an invitation from Britain to join Heinrich Barth in Kukawa and to replace James Richardson, who had died on the expedition to Lake Chad two years prior (see above). When Vogel reached the capital of Borno in January 1854 he found Overweg's grave and was informed that Barth





*Adolf Overweg (1822-1852)*



*Eduard Vogel (1829-1856)*

was on his way to Timbuctoo. He then began surveying the western and southern regions around Lake Chad and travelled as far as Mandara, where he was arrested and detained for a time by the local sultan. From September to December 1854 he undertook an excursion to the western peripheries of Bornu and reached Zinder. In January 1855 Vogel left Kukawa for another trip to Gombe and Bauchi, territories then under the suzerainty of the sultan of Sokoto. He visited the source of the Gongola and made valuable scientific observations about the basin of this river and that of the upper Benue. The highest peak of the Chebchi Mountains (1690 m) was later named Pic Vogel (Vogel Peak) after him. In January 1856 he embarked on his last journey with starting point in Kukawa intending to reach Wara, the capital of Wadai, by way of Lake Fitri and Medogo (today's Chad Republic). The circumstances of his death have never been fully reconstructed, but it is certain that he was killed in Wadai in the course of that year.

Vogel's geological and geomorphological findings and conclusions remained unexcelled for many decades. He compiled a collection of stones and plants from different regions of north-eastern Nigeria. His papers describing the way of life of the Yedina provided valuable supplementations to the materials collected by Overweg and Barth. Eduard Vogel's notes and manuscripts were carefully edited by H. Wagner (1860).

## 5. Gerhard ROHLFS (1831-1896)

Among the travellers of the 19th century Gerhard Rohlfs was one of the most popular in Germany. He was born on April 14th, 1831 in the port city Vegesack near Bremen, the son of a medical doctor. He also studied medicine in Heidelberg, Würzburg and Göttingen, but soon was driven by his lust for adventures to foreign countries. He entered into the medical service of the French Foreign Legion in Algeria and became well acquainted with the Arabic Language and the Muslim way of life. From 1865 to 1867 he undertook a journey which led him from the Mediterranean coast across the African continent to Lagos at the Bight of Benin. After the Sahara crossing and a sojourn in Kukawa he visited Mandara and the southern regions of Borno during the second part of the year 1866. He passed through numerous settlements such as Magumeri, Dikwa, Marte, Ngala and set down one of the first descriptions of Maiduguri, by then a town of about 15,000 inhabitants. He then proceeded via Gudjba, Gongola, Gombe, Yakuba-Bauchi to the Niger-Benue confluence and then to Ibadan and Lagos. The observations he made along the way, and particularly those on the cultures of the Kanuri, Fulani, Yedina, Musgu and Mandara, are important ethnographic documentations of his time.

Gerhard Rohlfs frequently promoted scientific expeditions to other parts of Africa, up until his death on June 2, 1896 in Godesberg near Bonn.



*Gerhard Rohlfs (1831-1896)*



*Gustav Nachtigal (1834-1885)*



#### 6. Gustav NACHTIGAL (1834-1885)

It can be considered as one of the merits of Gerhard Rohlfs to have kindled an interest in Gustav Nachtigal in African studies. Nachtigal, the son of a preacher, was born on 23 February, 1834 in Eichstedt near Stendal (District of Magdeburg). After studying medicine he began practicing in Cologne. Hoping to cure himself of a severe lung ailment he moved to North Africa. There he became the private doctor of the treasurer of the Bey of Tunis. Holding such a position enabled him to acquire an extensive knowledge of Arabic-speaking North Africa. In January 1869, Nachtigal accepted an assignment from Gerhard Rohlfs on behalf of king Wilhelm I. of Prussia to present Shehu Umar of Borno with gifts in compensation for the support this monarch had offered to the expedition of Heinrich Barth. Travelling through Fezzan and Tibesti Nachtigal arrived at the Borno capital of Kukawa in July 1870. From there he undertook extensive journeys to Borkou, Kanem and Bagirmi. In March 1873 he departed eastwards for his return trip through Wadai, Darfur, Kordofan and then on to Cairo, where he arrived on November 22nd, 1874.

The three volumes of Nachtigal's famous work »Sahara und Sudan« (Sahara and Sudan) successively appeared in print after 1879. These books have recently been translated into English (1971-1987) and thus made accessible to non-German readers. Although the brunt of Nachtigal's investigations were focused on the region east of Lake Chad, his collection of geographical, ethnological and historical materials were an essential contribution to the study of the Borno region as well. He died on April 20th, 1885, near Cape Palmas on board of a German vessel.

#### 7. Moritz von BEURMANN (1835-1863)

Moritz von Beurmann was inspired through Heinrich Barth's books to travel to Africa. He was born in Potsdam (near Berlin) on July 28th, 1835. He entered the military service, which he however left in 1859 to study oriental languages and science. After travelling through Egypt and Ethiopia he joined a caravan in Murzuk/Fezzan bound for Borno in June 1862. He arrived at Kukawa in August and made an excursion to Yakuba/Bauchi from September to December. On January 6th, 1863 he set forth his journey to Wadai. A month later he was murdered in the Kanem town of Mao northeast of Lake Chad. Information about the circumstances of his death were later collected by Gustav Nachtigal.

Moritz von Beurmann's observations in north-eastern Nigeria, for the most part set down in letters to Heinrich Barth, were published posthumously (cf. 1973).



*Moritz von Beurmann (1835-1863)*



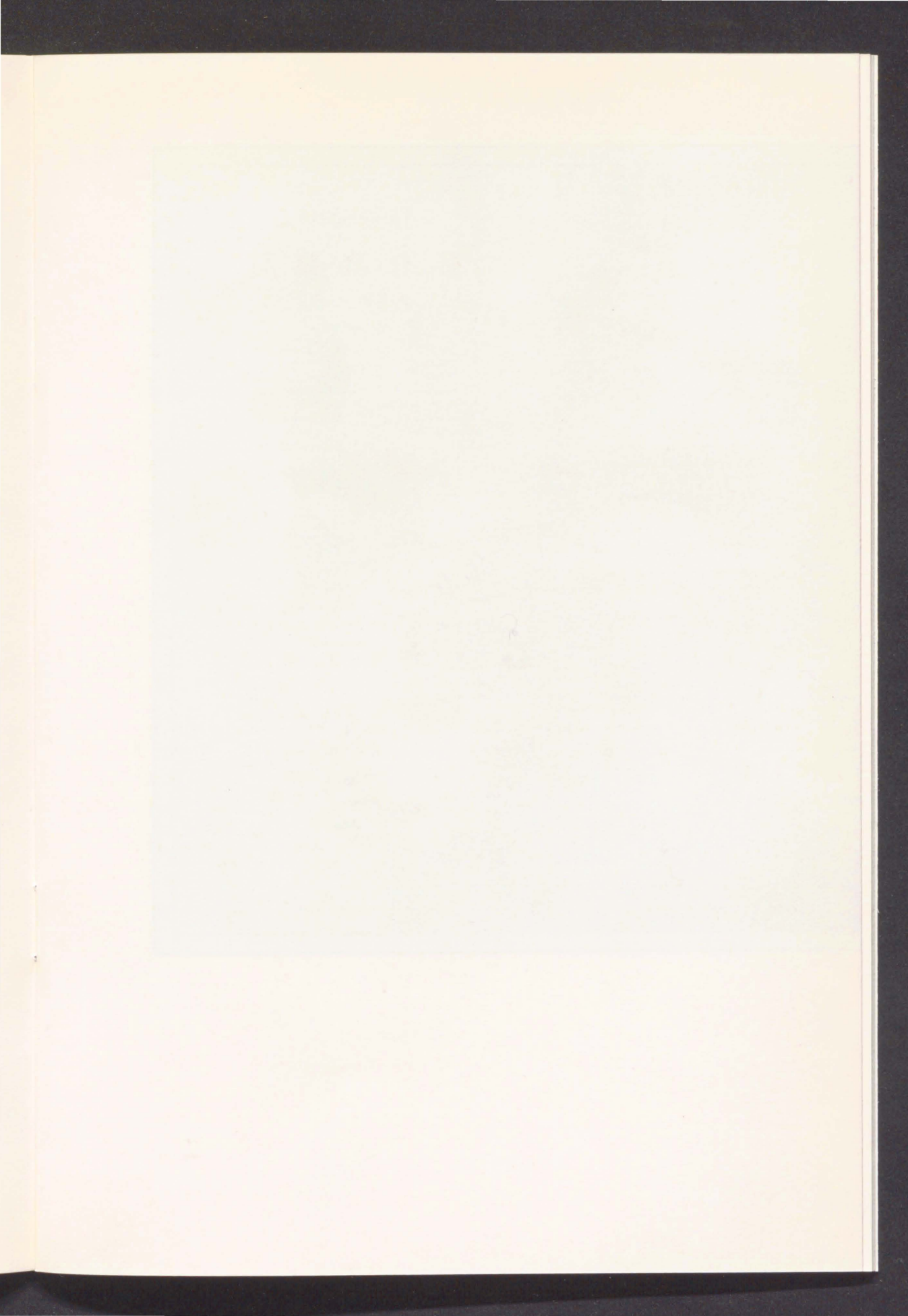
*Eduard Robert Flegel (1852-1886)*

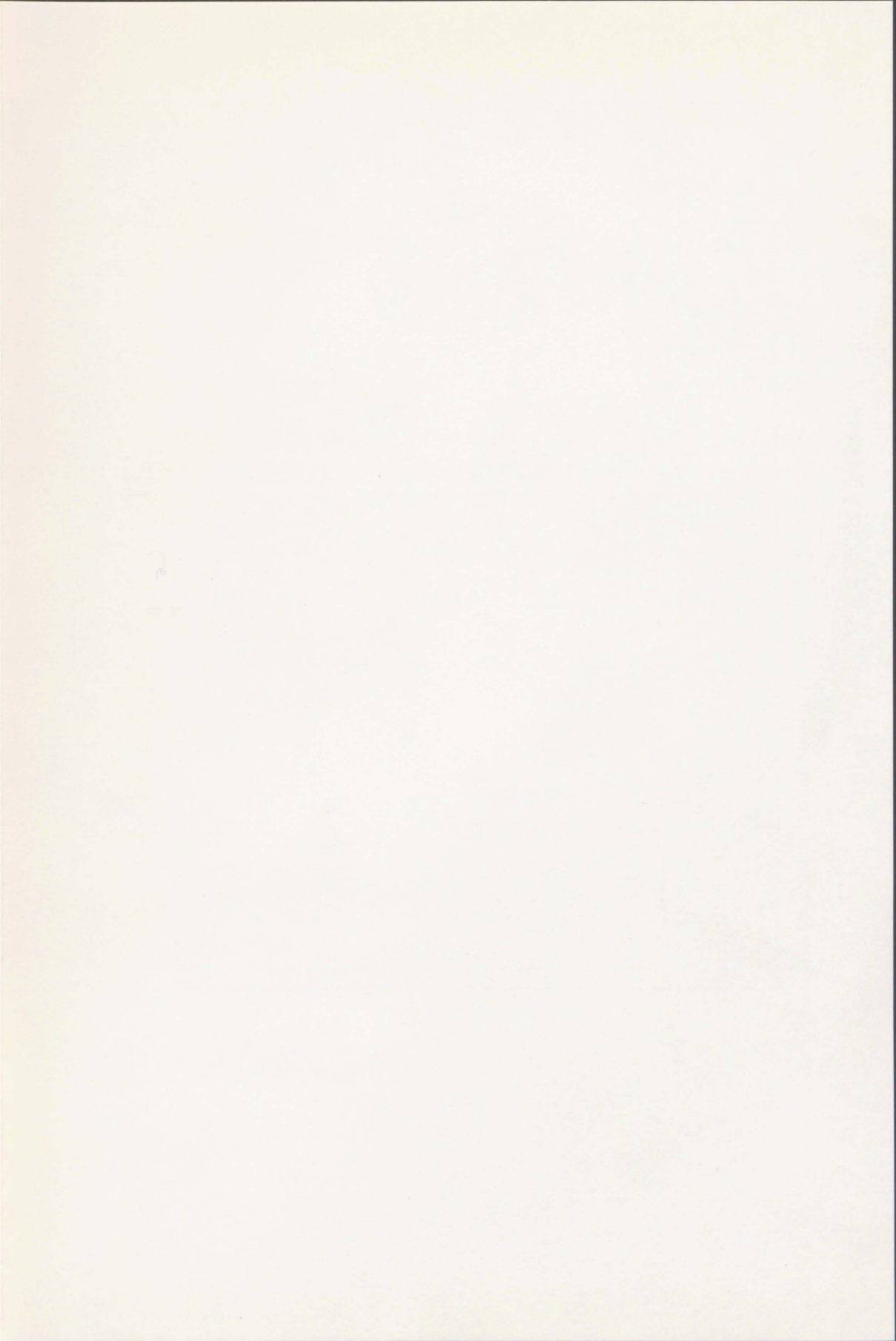
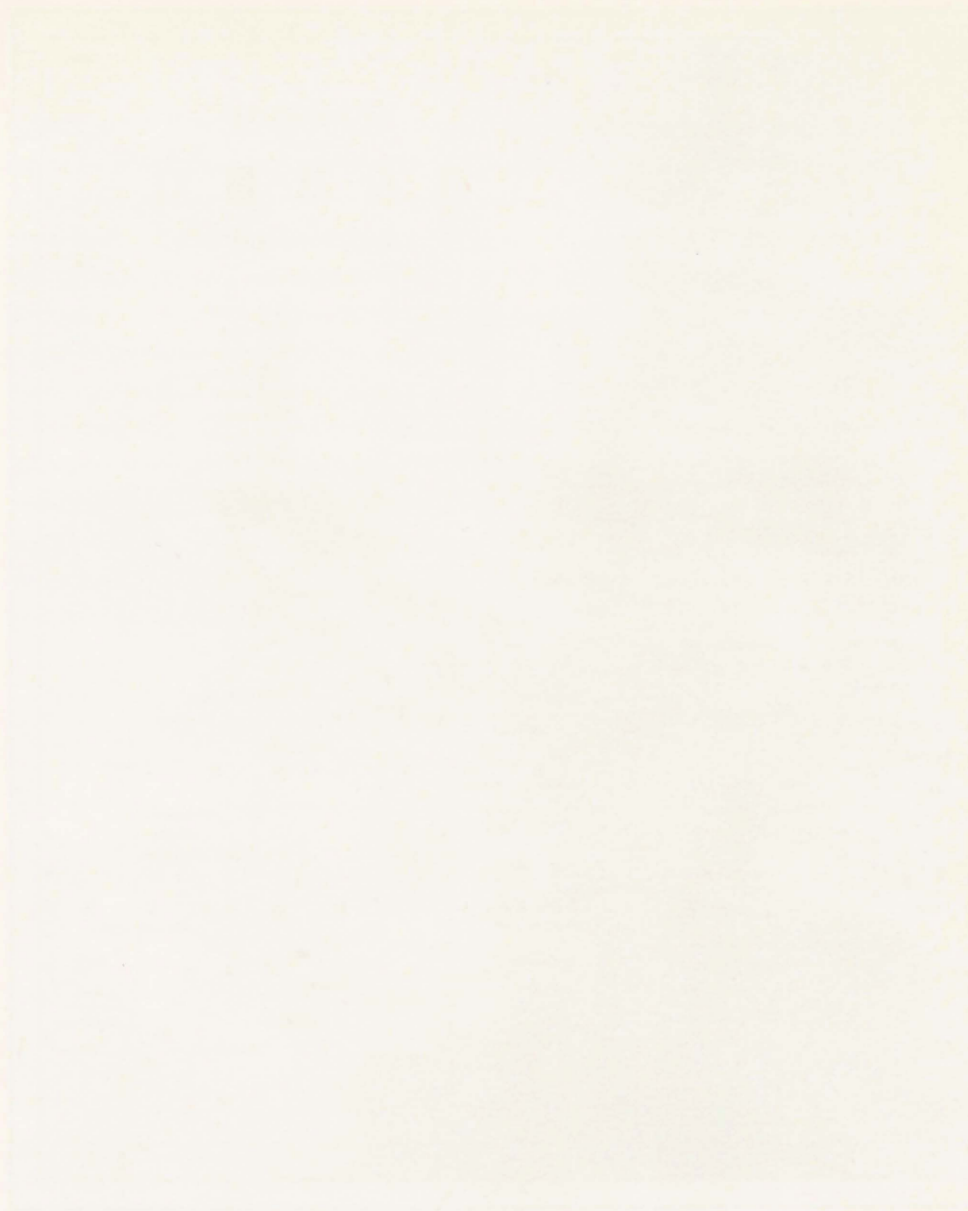
#### 8. Eduard Robert FLEGEL (1852-1886)

Eduard Robert Flegel, the son of a German merchant family, was born on October 1st, 1852, in the Lithuanian town of Vilnius. As a young man he resettled in Munich and began to devote himself to African studies. In 1875 he travelled to Lagos in the employment of a Hamburg trading company to work there in a branch establishment of this firm. From 1879 onwards he took part in research expeditions on the Niger and Benue, which were conducted with the aid of an especially equipped steam-ship, the »Henry Venn«. Upon receiving a letter of introduction from the Sultan of Sokoto, he departed for Adamawa in 1881 and journeyed as far as the source of the Benue near Ngaoundéré (Cameroon). He afterwards reassumed his research in the upper Benue region (1882-1883, 1884). He visited Germany with his Nigerian travelling companions, the Hausa men Mohamman Mai Gasin Baki and Madugu Dan Tambari, whose biographies and fieldnotes he later published. In the course of preparations for further journeys he fell ill and died on September 11th, 1886, in Brass on the Niger delta.

With regard to north-eastern Nigeria Eduard Robert Flegel transmitted geographically relevant information on the basin of the upper Benue.

















## II. 20th century research

Whereas the 19th century travellers were primarily devoted to the task of collecting basic data about regions hitherto unknown to the Europeans, from the beginning of the 20th century onwards research tended to be more specialized. At the same time, it became to some extent linked with the political and economic interests of those powers, which had established colonial rule in these areas. The lines of demarcation set up by the Anglo-German border commission of 1893 resulted in a division of the Borno empire. Its eastern regions, including Ngala, Dikwa, and Bama as well as the area of Madagali/Gwoza became part of the German colony Cameroon. Research by Germans on what is today north-eastern Nigeria was concentrated in the main in those areas under the control of their country (until 1916). Since Nigeria's independence (1960) scientific studies carried out by Germans have again been intensified. There were three major fields in which research concentrated: ethnology and history, linguistics and geography. A brief account of activities and findings of these disciplines follows below.

*Ethnic map of the Borno region*  
*In: G. Nachtigal, Sahara and Sudan. Vol. 2 (1879)*

## 1. Ethnological and historical research

### The colonial period till 1914

On April 22, 1900 Rabih Fadl Allah, who had conquered Borno with his forces from the eastern Sudan in 1893/94, was defeated and killed by a French military expedition in Kousseri at the Shari-Logone confluence. Although the Germans had never been directly involved in the fighting against Rabih, they had carefully observed these events, because the battles had taken place within the area of their colonial claim. The first substantial book on Rabih was compiled by Max von OPPENHEIM, well-known specialist on Arabic culture, who collected information about the northern parts of Africa during diplomatic missions to Cairo and other places.

In the course of the military occupation of 1902 Major Hans DOMINIK spent some time in Dikwa and in the area south of Lake Chad and wrote a book on his observations some years later (1908). Historical information about this region during the first two decades of the 20th century can also be found in periodicals on the German colonies, for example the »Deutsches Kolonialblatt« (German Colonial Gazette) and the »Mitteilungen aus den Deutschen Schutzgebieten« (Bulletin from the German colonies) and in the Central State Archives of Potsdam and Merseburg. Karl KUMM, a German missionary in British service, was active in the region of the upper Benue during the first decade of the 20th century and embarked on a journey which took him as far as the Nile. In 1910, Arnold SCHULTZE (cf. also below), an officer in the colonial service, wrote a doctoral thesis on the history and geography of the Borno empire, which was translated into English by P.A. BENTON (1913). Adolf von DUISBURG, a governor of the district called »German Bornu« of the »Residentur Deutsche Tschadsee-Länder«, published his observations and historical documents several years after having left the country (1927; 1962). In the course of his Central African Expedition Duke ADOLF FRIEDRICH of MECKLENBURG travelled from Ft. Lamy to Garoua via Wulgo, Dikwa and Bama with a staff of scientific specialists (1913). During his research expedition in Nigeria and Cameroon between 1910 and 1912 Leo FROBENIUS (1873-1938) passed along the southern peripheries of Borno and collected ethnographic data and folktales on the Karekare (Kerikeri) and the people of Mulgoy, who are a mixture of Kanuri and Margi (1912/13; 1924; 1925). He was accompanied by the painter Carl Arriens (1928).

### Fieldwork after Nigeria's Independence

With the outbreak of World War I German research in what is today north-eastern Nigeria came to a standstill for a period of several decades. Ethnological studies among the Yedina (Buduma) by Walter KONRAD (1955) was mainly undertaken



from Chadian territory. Wilhelm SEIDENSTICKER carried out investigations on urban Borno craftsmen in the early 1970s and, since the 1980s, as an academic staff member of the University of Maiduguri, he has been researching on various facets of Borno history and culture (1981, 1986). Ulrich BRAUKÄMPER studied the impact of Islam in Adamawa (1970) and Renate WENTE-LUKAS published the results of her research on the ethnography and the material culture of the non-Muslim peoples of north-eastern Nigeria and adjacent parts of Cameroon, particularly the Mandara Mountains (1973, 1977). She also compiled a handbook of the ethnic groups of Nigeria (1985). The historian Dierk LANGE provided carefully annotated editions of two important Arabic chronicles, »The Diwan of the Sultans of Kanem-Bornu« (1977) and »The Bornu Expeditions of Idris Alauma (1564-1576)« (1987). A musicologist, Raimund VOGELS, launched a »Borno Music Documentation Project« in 1988. Barbara FRANK published a monograph on the Kulere of Plateau State (1981) and Sabine WEINGARTEN contributed a study on the material culture of the ethnic groups of the Jos Plateau (1990).



*Leo Frobenius (1873-1938)*

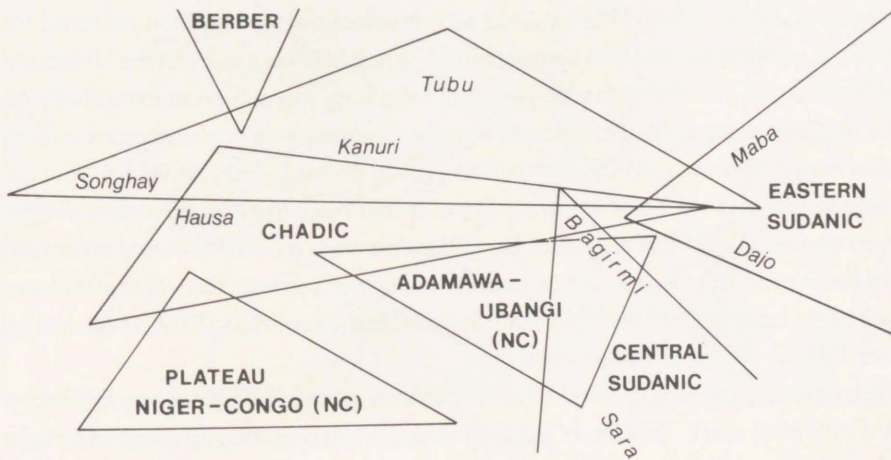
## 2. Linguistic research

In the 19th century, African languages were generally not studied by specialized Africanist linguists — the first professional Africanists were Carl MEINHOF (1857-1944) and Diedrich H. WESTERMANN (1875-1956) —, but by missionaries, orientalist, geographers and ethnologists. Thus, we owe the first information on languages of north-eastern Nigeria to Sigismund W. KOELLE (1854 a, b), a German missionary associated with the Church Missionary Society (London), who, however, did not visit the area personally but collected his data on Kanuri from freed slaves in Sierra Leone, and in particular Heinrich (wrongly: Henry) Barth, a geographer (cf. above), whose intensive studies into the languages Hausa, Kanuri, Fulfulde (Fulani), Teda (Tubu), Songhay (Djerma, Zarma), etc., published in three parts (1862, 1863, 1866), made him the founder of linguistic research in Central Africa. August KLINGENHEBEN (1886-1967), the leading Africanist and director of the Hamburg Seminar of African Languages between 1936 and 1954, made essential contributions to the study of Hausa and Fulfulde in north-eastern Nigeria, especially with his doctoral thesis (Leipzig, 1920) which is an analysis of the phonological structure of the Hausa dialect of Katagum; his Adamawa Fulani manual (1963) made him the founder of modern Fulfulde studies. Thanks to his deep insight into historical Hausa phonology, the mechanics of syllable final consonants became comprehensible; hence the notion of ›Klingenheben's law‹ (1927/28).

Johannes LUKAS (1901-1980), who based his studies of languages of the Lake Chad area partly on the work of H. Barth and on unpublished materials of Gustav Nachtigal, especially of Yedina (Buduma) (Lukas 1939), is considered the founder of Saharan (Kanuri, Kanembu, Tubu) and Chadic linguistics. In 1932/33 he spent a year of research in Maiduguri, supported by the International African Institute. Four years later his Kanuri book appeared (1937). After World War II, between 1951 and 1973, he returned to north-eastern Nigeria on several missions, mainly studying languages of the Bole group (e.g. LUKAS 1970-2). Lukas introduced the notions of ›Chadohamitic‹ and ›Chadic‹ into the comparative study of Hausa and related languages in the Central Sudan. From 1954 to 1970 LUKAS was director of the Seminar of African Languages at the University of Hamburg. His pupil, Carl HOFFMANN (\* 1925), started research into the Bura and Margi languages in the mid-fifties (cf. HOFFMANN 1963); he then spent about 20 years as a researcher and professor at the University of Ibadan. In 1962, Herrmann JUNGRAITHMAYR (\* 1931), another pupil of J. LUKAS, started work on the languages of the former district of Tangale — Waja, Bauchi State, as well as on the Angas-Sura and Ron languages, spoken on the southern plateau (cf. 1963/4, 1970 and in print). JUNGRAITHMAYR — associated with the University of Marburg/Lahn since 1963 — came to Frankfurt University in 1985. Three of his pupils continue work on the above named language



groups: Rudolf LEGER (\* 1948) on Kwami (1988) and Kupto (Bole-Tangale), spoken north of Gombe, as well as on Piya, Goji (= Kushi), and Widala (= Kodé), spoken in the vicinity of Tangale; Ulrich KLEINWILLINGHÖFER (\* 1951) on Waja (1989) and neighbouring Adamawa languages, and Uwe SEIBERT (\* 1965) on the Ron language of Daffo south of Jos, Plateau State. In collaboration with another of his students, Al-Amin ABU MANGA, JUNGRAITHMAYR elaborated and published an introduction to the Fulani language of the Gombe area (1989). Heinz SÖLKEN (1912-1980), a student of D. WESTERMANN in Berlin, after 1945 associated with the University of Frankfurt am Main, paid a visit to the Bauchi country in 1961; his principal interest lay in the study of the history of peoples, cultures and languages; cf. his research into the linguistic position of the extinct So language of Borno (1958, cf. 1967). SÖLKEN's merits also lie in the edition of materials collected by two other German scholars, i.e. on Hausa by Adam MISCHLICH (1864-1944) and on Afade (Kotoko) by Ulrich Jasper SEETZEN (1767-1811). Since the 1970s, two other students of Johannes LUKAS, Norbert CYFFER (\* 1943), presently Professor at the University of Mainz, and Ekkehard WOLFF (\* 1944), Professor at the University of Hamburg, started research on languages of Borno and adjacent areas: CYFFER's Kanuri syntax (1974) and Dictionary (in collaboration with J.P. HUTCHISON, 1990) have laid the foundations of modern Kanuri linguistics. WOLFF's research into Lamang (1980, 1983) continues and broadens C. HOFFMANN's studies on the Central Chadic languages in the Bui and Northern Adamawa regions.



*The present distribution of languages in the Central Sudanic area and their interrelations (Explanatory model by H. Jungraihtmayr, 1989)*

### 3. Geographical research

#### The colonial period till 1914

During the colonial period German research in Nigeria concentrated on the strip east of the line Dikwa, Bama, Mubi, Yola, Bali and Takun as part of German Cameroon. (In 1961 this area became Saradauna Province; today it is integrated in Borno and Gongola State.)

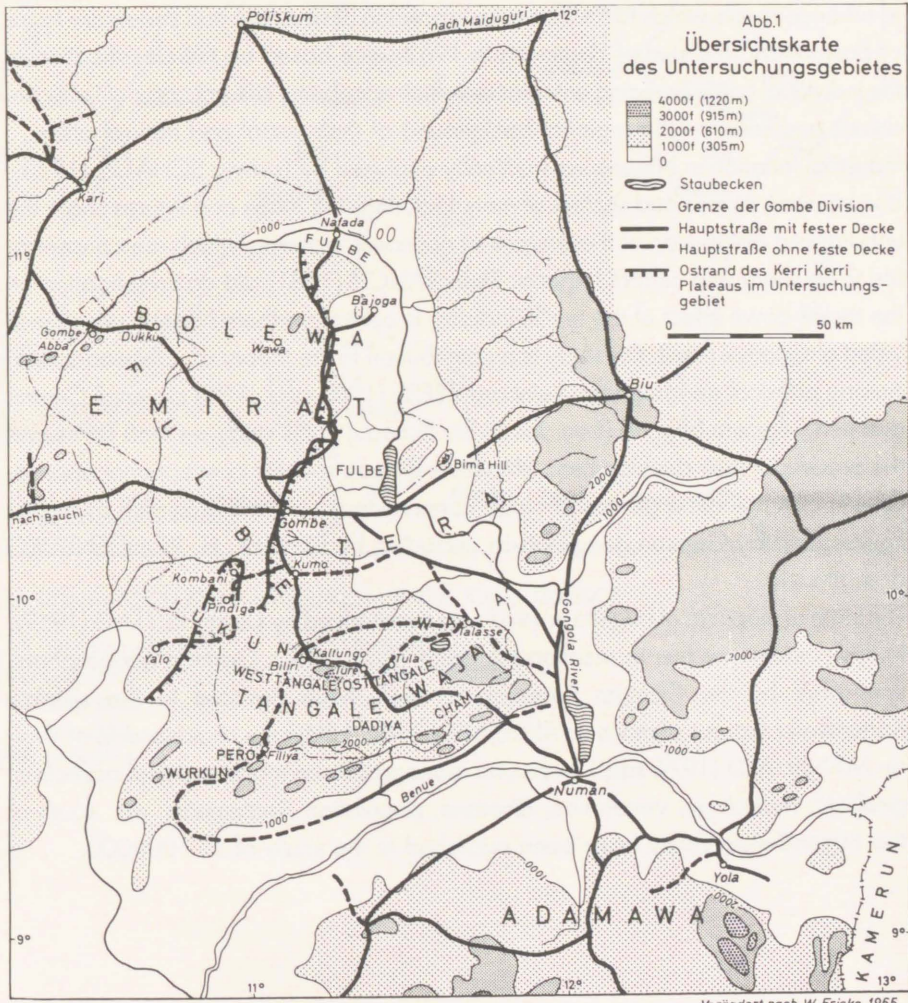
In addition to this core area of interest German administrators, army officers and geographers used their chance when travelling through Northern Nigeria, e.g. the Niger and Benue valley in order to reach Garoua via Lokoja and Yola. All this information is of interest when either referring to the state of European knowledge of the time or with respect to the construction of the historical landscape as well as history, economic and social structures. These categories can be found in the publications of Eugen ZINTGRAFF, Hugo MARQUARDSEN, Arnold SCHULTZE and K. NIEHOFF. MARQUARDSEN (1909) wrote a Ph.D. thesis on physical geography, mainly relief and hydrological problems concerning the connections between the Chad and Benue fluvial system in quaternary times. SCHULTZE used his official status as member of the British-German Border Commission 1903/04 and his service as an officer in 1905/06 for a geographical Ph.D. thesis which presents a broad collection of facts ranging from the historical development to natural and socio-economic structures in a regional geography of Borno Sultanate. From NIEHOFF's two years travels through British, French and German colonies we have a fairly good picture on relief, climate and hydrology of the catchment area of Lake Chad. Siegfried PASSARGE (1867-1958) started as a medical doctor and then received his Ph.D. in geography. In 1903 he became Professor of Geography at the University of Breslau and in 1908 at the University of Hamburg. He published extensively on the regional geography (Landeskunde) of the Cameroon colony and especially on »German Adamawa« (1909). His report (1895) on his journey 1893/94 from Lokoja, to Garoua via Yola, Maroua, Garoua and back from Ngaoundéré via the area around Vogel Peak to Mutum Biu and Ibi/Benue is a masterpiece of an empirical description of a region and its people. In comparison with this volume the content of the book on the German Niger-Benue-Chad-Expedition 1902/03 guided by Fritz BAUER (1904) is rather weak.

With regard to geological research some publications of E. STROMER von REICHENBACH (1896) and E. RESCH, F. SOLGER et al. (1904) present only a limited amount of scientific results mostly concentrated on Southern Cameroon.

From all the publications written by travellers, administrators and geographers, sometimes printed in official journals like »Deutsches Kolonialblatt« and »Mitteilungen aus den Deutschen Schutzgebieten«, one can learn more about individual concepts



concerning the colony, the policies towards local chiefs, how to become competitive with the British economy etc. Those policies and motivations reflect the euro-centric perception ranging from paternalistic to racist views. During the First World War German colonial rule, trade and research in Cameroon came to an abrupt halt and was replaced by the »Trusteeship« of Great Britain and France. Nigerian Independence offered the chance to geographical research under new conditions.



Map of the topography of the research area of W. Fricke, 1965

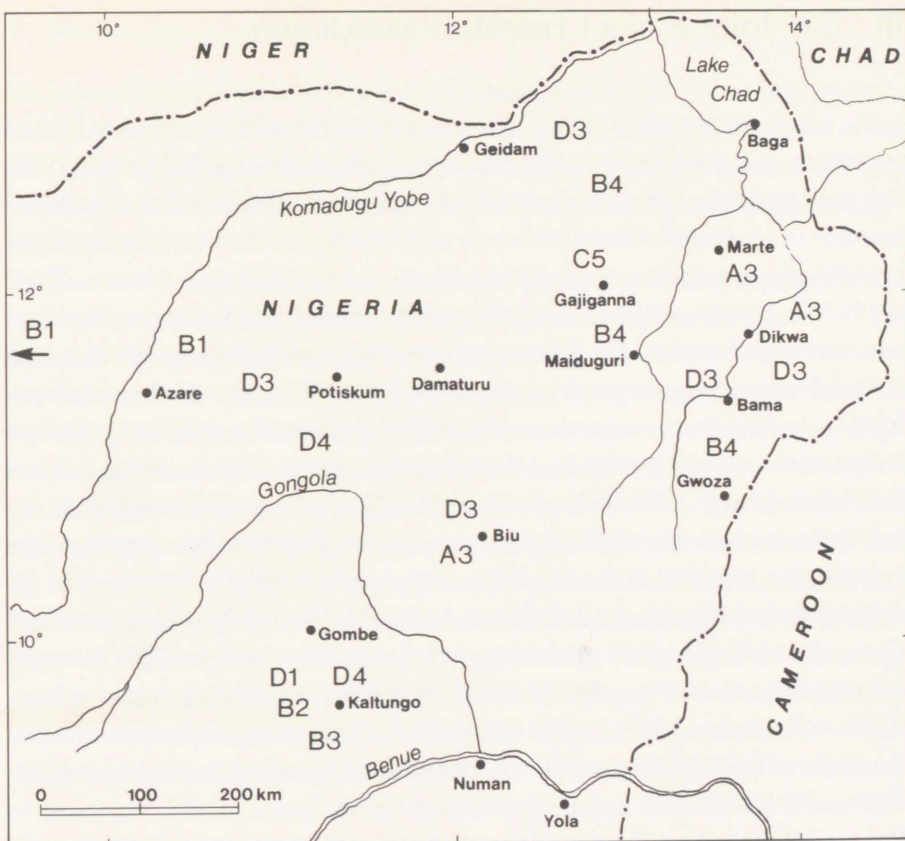


### Fieldwork after Nigeria's Independence (1960)

The concept of social areas formed by historical territories as it was developed as a model of research in highly complex European areas proved to be suitable for modern geographical approach in Nigeria. In 1961 Werner FRICKE (1965) tried to verify this approach in field work (together with Heinz SÖLKEN) in the Gombe Division of Bauchi State. The study of cattle husbandry in Northern Nigeria opened up a new scale of applied research (FRICKE 1964, 1969, 1976, 1979). In contrast to other concepts which focus on the juxtaposition of nomadic and sedentary forms of pastoralism, the studies beginning in 1962 were based on the classification of the individual cattle breeding enterprises in their economic, cultural and political conditions and seen on the regional background of their social and natural areas. Industrial location in Nigeria was critically analysed by Ludwig SCHÄTZL (1973), documenting places and sectors of manufacturing. His maps and figures show the unbalanced distribution of these types of economic activities which are concentrated in southern and central Nigeria. Theo RAUCH (1981) did an investigation on the trickle-down effect of the textile industry in central northern Nigeria which provided a negative result. His study is a contribution to the theory of »Dependencia«. Among physical geographers, Reinhard ZEESE (1983 and 1989) covered Central and north-eastern Nigeria (from Jos to Biu Plateau) in his study on land forms and the process of their development. His works include specific conceptual approaches in climatological geomorphology concerning fluvial and erosional dynamics investigated by German geographers (including H. BREMER, H. ROHDENBURG and others).

The state of mapping of Nigeria in 1967 was summarized by Ulrich FREYTAG (1969). In this context one has to mention the great efforts which German geographers, sponsored by the German Research Council, have devoted to the »Afrika-Kartenwerk« (corpus of maps on Africa) since 1962. Under the chairmanship of Walter MANSHARD (1976 sqq.) maps and monographs on many regional aspects of geology, hydrology, vegetation, diseases, population, settlements, etc. south of the Niger-Benue Valley have been published in the scale of 1 : 1000000.





REGIONAL FOCUSES OF RESEARCH OF THE JOINT PROJECT

- A3: Ethnology/History
- B1: Linguistics
- B2: Linguistics
- B3: Linguistics
- B4: Linguistics

- C5: Archaeology
- D1: Human Geography
- D3: Physical Geography
- D4: Physical Geography

### III. The Joint Project Frankfurt-Maiduguri

In the academic traditions of the University of Frankfurt a.M. a particular interest in studies on sub-Saharan Africa had already been initiated by Leo Frobenius in 1925. The institute which was named after him progressively developed as a centre of research in the field of African ethnology and history. The library of the University established a special focus of collecting literature on sub-Saharan Africa in 1964. In 1985 the Institute of African Languages which was formerly located at Marburg, was moved to Frankfurt. The African continent found an increasing attention also in disciplines such as geography and archaeology. All this provided a solid base for the interdisciplinary research project entitled »History of culture and language in the natural environment of the West African savannah« which started its work in Bourkina Faso in 1988 and in north-eastern Nigeria in the following year.

In order to establish the conditions for cooperation, delegations from Frankfurt, one including the president of the university, Professor Klaus RING, had travelled for negotiations to Nigeria, and Professor MOHAMMED NUR ALKALI, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Maiduguri, had visited Germany in 1989. Research activities began with the arrival of a multi-disciplinary team from Frankfurt at Maiduguri in December 1989. On the German side research is mainly sponsored by the National Research Council (Bonn), and further support is provided by the University of Frankfurt a.M. and by the State of Hesse.

The project focuses on the development of culture(s) and languages in time and space and emphasizes the interaction of man and his environment. Its major goal is the documentation of facts in order to enhance our present state of knowledge about north-eastern Nigeria in various fields of the humanities and natural sciences. The project is to be seen as contributing to an improved understanding of complex historical processes as well as aiding in the preservation and evaluation of the experiences of former generations in order to benefit present and future developments. The interaction of natural and human factors in the creation of environmental changes is just one example of a relevant research topic. In order to see these objectives through, intensive collaboration between German and Nigerian scholars and greater coherence between academic disciplines is sought. To date eight sub-projects have been initiated in the following disciplines: Historical ethnology (as part of cultural anthropology), linguistics, human and physical geography, archaeology. Botanists are expected to participate at a later stage. The sub-projects, their participants and their aims will be briefly characterized.



## 1. Ethnology and history

»Regional mobility and interethnic cultural symbiosis of the Shuwa Arabs (Nigeria)« is the title of an ethnological sub-project (bearing the label A3 in the frame of the joint project). Participants are Ulrich BRAUKÄMPER (Frobenius Institute of the University of Frankfurt) and ADAM S. ABDULLAHI (Institute of General Studies, University of Maiduguri).

The Shuwa of Borno represent the westernmost group of an Arabic-speaking population inhabiting the East Sudanic savannah belt as far as the escarpment of the Ethiopian highlands. Their infiltration to this vast region began in the late 14th century from the Nile valley. Once they had passed the ecological border line between the arid zones and the savannah they were compelled to give up their original base of economy, camel-breeding, in favour of cattle husbandry. This difficult cultural transition seems to have been facilitated by an intensive contact with Fulani cattle nomads. At present, most Shuwa are either sedentary or semi-nomadic, and the Kanuri, the dominant population of Borno, have exerted a strong impact on them. The history, cultural interrelationships and economic patterns of the Shuwa, including their migratory drifts and cycles of transhumance, have so far not been documented. It is thus the aim of this sub-project to fill this gap from the standpoint of an historical perspective as well as with a view to the contemporary situation. First results have already been achieved during a first period of fieldwork in the areas of Maiduguri, Dikwa, Wolgo and Marte from January to April 1990 and from October 1990 to January 1991. Because of an explicit request by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Maiduguri to intensify ethnological and historical studies on the territory of Borno State an extension of the research team is projected. The programme of the study, enlarged by the two members of the Institute of Historical Ethnology of the University of Frankfurt Holger KIRSCHT and Editha PLATTE, will deal with relevant aspects of ethnicity and the dynamics of interethnic cultural relations, such as economic symbiosis, intermarriages, technological adaptations and linguistic influences, particularly between the Shuwa, the Kanuri and the peoples of the Biu-Plateau. They cooperate with MOHAMMED ADAM of the Institute of Trans-Saharan Studies and Florence Kwache IGUN of the Institute of Anthropology of the University of Maiduguri.

## 2. Languages and oral literature

Presently, there are three sub-projects (B1, B2, B3) in process, which are carried out by members of the Institute of African Languages of the University of Frankfurt and the Department of Languages and Linguistics of the University of Maiduguri, concerning the study of languages, oral history and literatures in north-eastern Nigeria.

1) »The Hausa cultural lexicon: Origin and integration of loanwords«; members of this team are Michael BROSS, BABA TELA, David ANDERSON, Herrmann JUNG-RAITHMAYR, Peter ZIMA and MUNKAILA MOHAMMED. The Hausa language being the most wide-spread *lingua franca* in West Africa has over the millenia and centuries incorporated in its lexicon — as well as in its grammar — innumerable influences from many different linguistic and cultural sources, e.g. Mande, Kanuri, Berber, Songhay, etc.. The main aim of the sub-project is to deepen our understanding of the complex nature and history of this important ethnic group by scrupulously analysing the cultural word inventory of its language. A first step into this direction consists of investigations into the practice of crafts and the specialized vocabulary of Hausa craftsmen, mainly carried out in the region of Azare (fieldwork: January - March, October - December 1990).

2. »Culture-historical investigations into Chadic languages of north-eastern Nigeria«; members of this team are Rudolf LEGER, Jörg ADELBERGER, Mairo E. KIDDA, MUSA ABDULLAHI and Herrmann JUNGRAITHMAYR. The aim of this sub-project is to improve the situation of the documentation of the individual ethnic groups and their languages, especially of the Bole-Tangale group, to study their mutual contacts and to try to reconstruct their cultural and linguistic history.

3. »Studies on the cultural vocabulary of the Gur and Northwestern Adamawa languages«; members of this team are Ulrich KLEINWILLINGHÖFER, YAGAMANI KARTA and Mairo E. KIDDA in Nigeria, Gudrun MIEHE and Kerstin WINKELMANN in Burkina Faso. For the languages of the Waja group in the southern part of Bauchi State corpuses of lexical inventories are being established in view of comparative work envisaged between these western Adamawa languages on the one hand and the Gur languages of Burkina Faso on the other hand.

In addition to these three sub-projects a new sub-project on the historical and sociolinguistic status of the Kanuri language and people is in preparation. Its main aim is to study the history and role of the Kanuri ethnic group and its language in the Borno region. Linguistics, oral literature and history as well as musicology will initially be the prominent disciplines in this sub-project, which will be carried out by Norbert CYFFER (University of Mainz), Thomas GEIDER, Raimund VOGELS (Museum of Ethnology, Stuttgart) and the three linguists UMARA BULAKARIMA, KHALIFA DIKWA and YAGAMANI KARTA of the University of Maiduguri.



### 3. Human and physical geography

The sub-project D1 (Werner FRICKE and Dieter KAUFHOLD from the Department of Geography of Heidelberg University with their counterpart HASSAN H. BLDIYA from the Department of Geography of the University of Maiduguri) analyses present and past land use patterns with regard to natural sites and social areas in Gombe Division/Bauchi State. HASSAN H. BLDIYA is mainly concerned with the impacts of land use practices on soil fertility on the Biu Plateau and north of it. The methodological approach in Bauchi State is based on the social area concept as the research covers the same region as FRICKE did in 1961. Thus a comparison not only of maps and satellite imagery is done, but also investigations of the structural changes in the villages of the area of concern is undertaken. Special emphasis is laid on the digitized interpretation of satellite information. Dieter KAUFHOLD concentrates on present land use, change of settlement sites influenced by differences in the accessibility by means of transport.

The research work in sub-project D4 (Günter NAGEL, Karsten BRUNK and Jürgen HEINRICH, Department of Geography, University of Frankfurt) and Jacob NYANGANJI (Department of Geography, University of Maiduguri) focusses on the endogenic and exogenic dynamics in different periods since quaternary age in the Gongola Basin, which includes the Kaltungo-Balanga area. Historical and recent human impacts can be mirrored by detailed mapping of natural sites changed by farming and settlements. Interpretation of satellite imagery plus intensive ground checks form a valuable technique. The degradation of vegetation, the sheet and gully erosion can be linked with natural as well as with socio-economic processes in the past and in the present. The fact that the sub-projects B2, D1 and D4 are working in the same region of the Gongola Basin is stimulating a close cooperation between their members. From their particular approaches they contribute to a comprehensive study of an interactive relationship between peculiarities of the natural environment and its assessment by local farmers.

The team of sub-project D3 (Friderun FUCHS, Heinrich THIEMEYER, Maria GUDDAT, Guido PASS and Sylvester SCHUCHMANN from the Department of Geography, University of Frankfurt) with Joseph A. IJERE and Deborah MSHELITZA (University of Maiduguri), is concerned with the origin and recent dynamics of land forms, soils and vegetation in North-Eastern Borno State. There are three main areas of investigation: the complexes of dunes between Azare, Lake Chad and the border of Niger, the Bama Ridge and the Biu Plateau. Beside field work the construction of a geographic information system based on SPOT imagery of parts of the area is planned. The main feature is the adaptation of traditional land use to existing land forms and the dramatic changes of the vegetation cover caused by overgrazing, overfarming and firewood cutting.



Spheres of mutual interest between archaeologists (C1), cultural anthropologists (A3) and agricultural geographers (D1) are stimulating interdisciplinary discussion.



*View from the Tula Plateau towards the settlement areas of the Tongabe of Ture and Kaltungo, Bauchi State (Photograph: K. Brunk, 1990)*



*Shuwa Arabs on nomadic migration in the region of Logomani/Borno State (Photograph: U. Braukämper, 1990)*



#### 4. Archaeology

The archaeological sub-project (C5) is entitled: »Archaeological investigations on the history of early human population in north-eastern Nigeria«. It is part of an approach, also carried out in Burkina Faso, aiming at providing basic data on the widely unknown prehistory of the West African savanna belt between the Sahara and the tropical rain forest. Within this general programme the sub-project wishes to contribute to the investigation of cultural development during the holocene period in the West African savannah. Participants are Peter BREUNIG of the University of Frankfurt and two scholars of the University of Maiduguri, ABUBAKAR GARBA and IBRAHIM MAINA WAZIRI.

Because of the lack of excavations and in contrast to the outline of the later prehistory of the Sahara there is only little knowledge so far about the Later Stone Age of the savannah belt. There is evidence for drastic climatic and environmental change in the Sahara during the last 10,000 years, for which the geochronological term is the holocene. These changes must have effected a shift of the present vegetation zones south of the desert. Environment determines human culture to a considerable extent, and in relation to this the exciting questions arise: What did the environment look like in the course of the holocene, and how did prehistoric culture manage ecological changes? Which subsistence strategies were used? Why and when did these strategies finally lead to food producing (neolithic) communities? With these questions in mind excavations of Later Stone Age sites in Borno and Bauchi have been planned.

Although archaeological research in Nigeria is more intense and of higher standard than elsewhere in West Africa, so far very few investigations have been dedicated to the Later Stone Age development of the savannah. The transition from palaeolithic hunters and gatherers to farmers remains more or less unclear, and practically nothing is known about pre-Iron Age economies. The envisaged research area (Borno and Bauchi States) is of particular interest because it is situated near the Sahara, and the Later Stone Age cultures might have been influenced from there.

In the first phase of research (December 1990 to January 1991) prospective surveys were carried out in different parts of the two states in order to locate suitable sites which will be excavated. An extensive excavation is projected to start at a site near Gajiganna (north-eastern Borno State) in September 1991. Apart from a general chronological framework for the research area detailed studies will later be focused on the beginnings of food production. Finally, we hope to contribute to the knowledge of this important stage in the human history of West Africa.



House of Kanuri people in Wolgast.  
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