

**CITATION
ON
ALHAJI (DR) MUHAMMADU JUNaidu, C.B.E., C.O.N., D.LITT,
WAZIRIN SOKOTO**

Dr. Junaidu, born about seventy-five years ago, apart from being an erudite scholar, poet and philosopher, is a thinker, legal expert and well grounded in the practical affairs of men. Dr. Junaidu has written over thirty books. These books written in Arabic contain materials ranging from details of Sokoto history to expositions of Fulfude Grammar, commentaries on our agricultural and medical practices, the relevance of our national institutions, basic speculative philosophy, poetry, law reform and administration. As wazirin Sokoto, he is Chief Adviser to the Sultan being Head Councillor with special responsibility for legal and religious matters. This high post has turned out to be hereditary in that the Gidado family of which he is an illustrious member has provided viziers to the Sultans of Sokoto for the past 150 years. He is thus a worthy heir to a family tradition of erudition. This prodigious scholar came early under the influence of several eminent Islamic scholars in his youth. He too later established himself as a great and widely traveled teacher very conversant with Sudan, Guinea, Senegal, Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Iraq, Jerusalem and Saudi-Arabia. In 1942, he was appointed Head of the Kadi School in Sokoto. In 1945, he was promoted to the Sultan's Council as Juris-Consult. In December 1948, Abbas. A member of the Northern House of Assembly in 1951, on Nigeria's independence, he became legal Adviser to the Northern House of Chiefs. In between these periods he traveled widely studying the legal codes of various countries particularly The Republic of the Sudan. The Jama'at Nasr al Islam has been one of his special concerns since its inception. He was awarded the C.B.E. in 1951, C.O.N. in 1965 and the Medals of Honour of Senegal, Morocco and Liya. He was awarded an Honorary degree of Doctor of Letters in 1971 by Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and later appointed the first Chairman of the Sokoto State History Bureau. All his life, Dr. Junaidu's main hobby, has been reading. He is universally recognised as the greatest living authority on the Sokoto Caliphate and the Fulani Jihad of the last century. Many successful Nigerian scholars of succeeding generations have benefited immeasurably from his great learning and possession of original and authentic source materials on Sokoto history. He is the respected guardian of the Archives of the Caliphate and has, perhaps, the largest single collection of pre-twentieth century correspondence in West Africa. He is also a leading authority on hundreds of books and poems of the great Islamic scholars of the lat century. His personal manuscript library is rated among the best in Nigeria. His commentaries on such great philosophers as Plato, Hippocrates, Ibn Khaldun and Ibn Rushd are most stimulating. His work has spanned several decades, covered diverse fields and is original and ingenuous. He is widely cited.

Dr. Junaidu has been actively involved in reform, making necessary critical evaluation of past practices and supervising the incorporation of whatever is adjudged relevant and valuable into modern practice. He has made positive suggestions for the reshaping of our universities so that they can be firmly placed within the mainstream of our culture, thus ceasing to be cultural transplants rooted in another tradition. He has advised relevance and appropriateness, pleaded that we study the works of men whose ideas actually govern the behaviour of our society and that desist from unwittingly eliminating an entire culture from the education of the children of that culture. He has invited us to meditate on our inner life, a spiritual dimension that should determine our identity and help us to rise beyond the present to greater achievement. These are all excellent

food for thought and action. To Dr. Junaidu, the pursuit or possession of knowledge is both an advantage and a responsibility. The scholar must not isolate himself from society, least of all at times of rapid change and innovation. Dr. Junaidu has provided us with a human bridge between the modern and the traditional. A man of angels' wit and singularly warm sense of humour evidenced by the spontaneity of his Arabic epigrams, his lifelong pursuit has been the study of the history and government of the societies of the western Sudan which had a strong influence on the Sokoto policy. We may appropriately quote from Abdullah Yusuf Ali in order to end the citation on this distinguished leading light.

“And this great healing light shone
Among a people steeped in ignorance,
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“Who were fit to be vehicle of this light?
Not man intoxicated with words and mysteries,
Men whom politics had debauched or tyranny
Had subdued
Men whose refinement had ended in vices
Who saw Nature only through books or artificial
Conceits,
Or in moods which bred softness, indolence, or
Luxury
Who spoke of love and justice, but practiced
Gross selfishness between class and class,
Sex and sex, condition and condition;
And had perverted their language, once beautiful,
Into jargons of empty elegance and unmeaning
Futility.”

In recognition of his outstanding and valuable contribution to our national attainment, the Board of Trustees of the Nigerian National Merit Award Endowment Fund considers it fit and proper to confer the Nigerian National Merit Award on Dr. Muhammadu Junaidu, Wazirin Sokoto.

Chairman,
Board of Trustees
Nigerian National Merit Award.

1st October, 1981