

THE SOCIAL WRITINGS OF SHAYKH ʿUTHMĀN b. FŪDĪ :
A CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY

by



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Social Writings of Ūthmān B. Fūdī

ABSTRACT

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This study shows that the Shehu's social writings are the reflection of his concept and method of implementation of *tajdīd*. The basic goal of the *tajdīd* was to recreate what he considered the ideal Sunni Islamic society. In order to achieve his objective he unfolded a plan of action which aimed at winning the support of the common people and the 'ulamā'. For the people, he mounted a mass mobilization to boost religious learning, acquaint them with local beliefs adjudged as bad innovations, and exhort them about the impending End of Time. For the 'ulamā', his plan was a reorientation of their attitudes toward moderation in theological and doctrinal matters, and accommodation of legal and religious views other than those of the Mālikī school of law. Further, he expected them to persuade the rulers of Gobir to change their un-Islamic ways and support the new movement. But when the 'ulamā' chose not only to adopt a confrontational attitude but to prevail upon the rulers to take hostile measures against his followers, the Shehu took up arms against them and finally established a caliphate.

FRENCH ABSTRACT

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Cette étude montre que les écrits sociaux du Shehu reflètent son concept et sa méthode de réalisation de tajdīd. L'objectif fondamental de tajdīd fut de recréer ce qu'il considérait comme l'idéal de la société islamique sunnite. Afin de réaliser cet objectif, le Shehu conçut un plan d'action qui visait à attirer l'appui du peuple et des 'ulamā'. Auprès du peuple, il organisa une mobilisation générale afin de promouvoir l'instruction religieuse, de faire connaître les croyances locales comme de mauvaises innovations, et de conseiller le monde dans l'imminente Fin des Temps. Auprès des 'ulamā', il les encouragea de faire preuve de modération dans les points de théologie et de doctrine, et de s'acclimater à des idées religieuses et légales autres que celles de l'Ecole de droit mālikī. En plus, le Shehu s'attendait à ce qu'ils amènent les dirigeants de Gobir à changer leurs habitudes anti-islamiques et même à soutenir le nouveau mouvement. Lorsque les 'ulamā' décidèrent non seulement de s'opposer à ses innovations, mais aussi de persuader les dirigeants à prendre des mesures contre ses partisans, le Shehu s'insurgea contre eux et établit finalement un califat.

To my wife, Rabi, whose love,
patienceandencouragement
made it possible for
me to be away
from home for
over a year
in pursuit
of this
study

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TRANSLITERATION TABLE

Consonants: ' initial: unexpressed ' medial and final: '

Arabic	Persian	Turkish	Urdu	Arabic	Persian	Turkish	Urdu
ب b	b	b	b	ص s	s	s	s
پ	p	p	p	ض d	z	z	z
ت t	t	t	t	ط t	t	t	t
ث			<u>t</u>	ك k	k	k	k
ج th	ṡ	ṡ	ṡ	ع '	'	'	'
ح h	h	c	j	غ gh	gh	g	gh
خ	ch	ç	ch	ف f	f	f	f
ق q	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ق q	q	k	q
ك kh	kh	<u>h</u>	<u>kh</u>	ك k	k	k	k
د d	d	d	d	ج	g	g	g
ذ			<u>d</u>	ث		n	
ذ dh	z	z	z	ل l	l	l	l
ر r	r	r	r	م m	m	m	m
ز			<u>r</u>	ن n	n	n	n
ز z	s	z	z	و			q
ژ	zh	zh	zh	ه h	h	h	h
س s	s	s	s	و w	v	v	v
ش sh	sh	ş	sh	ي y	y	y	y

Vowels, diphthongs, etc. (For Ottoman Turkish vowels etc. see separate memorandum.)

short: ا a; ا i; ا u.

long: ا ā; و ū, and in Persian and Urdu also rendered ō; ي ī, and in Urdu also rendered by ē; (in Urdu) ē.

alif maqṣūrah: ا ا.

diphthongs: ا ey; و aw.

long with tashdīd: ا iya; و ūwa.

tā' marbūṭah: ا ah: in idāfah: at.

FOREWORD

I wish to express my thanks to the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria, for allowing me to take a leave of absence to come to McGill University, Montréal, Canada, to complete this study. It had been a long time since I completed my residential requirements for the Ph. D. programme, but I was forced to shelve the writing of the dissertation due to a ghastly car accident in which I sustained two fractures on my leg and hand respectively, and had a bad cut on the forehead. That I was permitted to come back and complete this study is due to the kindness and understanding of both the Institute of Islamic Studies and the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, McGill University. For this, I am profoundly grateful.

As for those individuals who, directly or indirectly, rendered their help, a few names deserve to be mentioned. Special thanks are due to Dr. D. Little, Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies, and the rest of the professors through whose assistance I profited during my long association with the Institute. Dr. Little had time, in spite of his tight schedule, to read some parts of the thesis and give useful suggestions. I am particularly indebted to Dr. Issa J. Boullata whose guidance and kindness will forever be cherished. A person who is interested in Arabic culture and Islamic Studies is certainly fortunate to have him as adviser. He has shown

patience in revising the contents of this work.

I would also like to acknowledge the help I received from scholars in some Nigerian Universities. I am especially grateful to Professors Muhammad Nur Alkali, University of Maiduguri, A.I. Doi and the late Dr. Mahmud M. Tukur, both of the Ahmadu Bello University, Muhammad Sanı Zahradeen, Bayero University, and Dr. Ahmad Kani, University of Sokoto. Sanı answered all inquiries promptly and sent me photocopies of needed manuscripts. I very much appreciate his kindness.

Without the practical efficiency of the staff of the Islamic Library, Ms. S. Ferahian, Messrs. Emile Wahba and Steve Millier, my task would have been more difficult. I am especially grateful to Mr. Steve Millier who showed much interest in the study and helped to locate invaluable materials on the subject. I am also grateful to Ms. Monique Cardinal who, in spite of the short notice, translated the abstract into French.

I would further like to acknowledge the sacrifices made by members of my family, especially Lubaba, Misbah, Salah, Fatima, Zaynab, Farid and their mother, Rabi, who took very good care of them during my absence.

Finally, my thanks are also due to my friends and neighbours in Maiduguri, particularly Alhaji Muhammad Lawan Buba and his family, and Dr. Olowokure and his family, whose kindness will forever be appreciated.

I should add that the views expressed here are mine.
Any shortcomings detected should in no way be reflected on
anyone, for the responsibility is mine.

Ahmad Tahir

INTRODUCTION

Since the middle of this century, there has been a remarkable surge of enthusiasm on the part of scholars of African history to study the militant movements of West Africa. One of the most important of these movements was the one which arose in Hausaland in the second half of the eighteenth century. The movement was carried out by a fusion of various ethnic groups under the banner of Islam and the leadership of the predominantly Fulbe 'ulamā'. The successful outcome of the movement was the establishment of a caliphate, which was to have a profound influence on the historical happenings of the area.

One of the features of the movement was its exceptional literary output. Although there were some activities of this kind in Hausaland prior to it, the level of literacy and learning during this period was unprecedented. The material covered legal, political, social, economic and religious subjects. The major contributors to the literary output were the leaders of the movement : Shaykh 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, known simply as the Shehu; his brother, 'Abd Allāh; and his son, Muḥammad Bello. Now, their works, in the form of manuscripts, are kept in some Nigerian libraries and government archives (as indicated in Appendix II).

The Shehu, as discussed in Chapter II, was reported to have written over one hundred works ranging from short discourses to lengthy erudite works such as *Iḥyā' al-Sunna wa Ikhmād al-Bid'a*. This particular work demonstrates what his priorities were at the initial period of the jihad : to strengthen Sunni Islam and drive out paganism by teaching and persuasion. Also, in one of his short discourses, *Kitāb al-Farq*, the Shehu talked about the pre-jihad Hausa governments, describing the mode of succession to the throne, the different types of taxes, the legal system, conscription into the army, appointments of unqualified officials, extortion and accumulation of large harems. The Shehu also discussed the important role played by the 'ulamā' in the Central Sudanese society, whose activities and

attitudes were generally negative to the growth of Islam in Hausaland. Instead of promoting mass religious learning and discouraging un-Islamic religious practices, they busied themselves with fruitless theological disputes. One of the Shehu's works which deals with the subject is *Nasā'ih al-Umma*. The work discusses the theological disputes which were current at the formative period of the jihad movement. It categorizes the Central Sudanese society into four groups, identifying three of these as 'ulamā' who held conflicting views about the Islamization of the common people who were either grave sinners or ignorant of speculative theology. The fourth group was the common people who followed blameworthy customs. Although these works are meant to condemn the socio-religious and political conditions existing in Hausaland and in Central Sudan in general, prior to the jihad, it is obvious that they are also the reflection of the author's attitudes. Hence, this study is geared to examine the Shehu's approach to the implementation of his *tajdīd*.

The basic objective of the 'Uthmāniya jihad movement, as reflected in the Shehu's writings, was to promote the principle of *al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*. Thus, *al-ma'rūf*, in the context of the Shehu's *tajdīd*, means the restoration of the Sunni Islamic ideal to the Central Sudanese society so that it would live by the authorities of the Qur'ān, the Sunna and the *ijmā'*. On the other hand, *al-munkar*, means the rejection of local beliefs and customs categorized by the Shehu as bad innovations. In order to achieve this goal, the Shehu's major priority, beside public mobilization, was the positive response of the local 'ulamā' and their assistance in the execution of the new ideas. At this initial period of the movement, as insinuated in the writings of the jihadists, the Shehu might have considered the support of the rulers of Gobir as not constituting a problem. So, to win support of both the common people and the 'ulamā', he unfolded his plan of action. For the common people, he mounted a mass mobilization so as to boost religious learning, acquaint them with local beliefs and customs considered bad innovation, and exhort them about the impending End of Time. For the 'ulamā', he hoped to reorient their attitudes toward moderation in theological

and doctrinal matters and accommodation of legal and religious views other than those of the Mālikī school of law. Further, he expected them to assist in prevailing upon the rulers of Gobir to change their un-Islamic ways and also give their support to the new movement.

Thus, for twenty years, The Shehu, who was later elected as *amīr al-mu'minīn*, tried to disseminate his views by peaceful means through preaching, teaching and writing. But as time went on his disputes with the 'ulamā', particularly the court scholars, became more serious and the Gobir rulers, who were hitherto cooperative, came under court 'ulamā's pressure and became hostile. As a result, the Shehu adopted a militant posture which culminated in armed struggle. It was this struggle between the 'ulamā' (the jihadists versus the rival local 'ulamā', as the background of the conflict, rather than against the Habe rulers initially) that precipitated the armed confrontation. It is, therefore, only through this theory, 'ulamā' pitted against 'ulamā', that we may understand why the early Shehu's writings are devoid of political agitations and why he devoted nearly two-thirds of his Arabic writings to issues relating to the activities and attitudes of the 'ulamā'.

Although various studies have been carried out on different aspects of the 'Uthmānīya jihad movement, and some of these are reflected in chapter I of this study, no investigation has been made, as far as I am aware, on the Shehu's approach to the application of his *tajdīd*. An attempt has, of course, been made by M.R. Waldman, in her article, "The Fulani Jihad : A Reassessment", to explain the Shehu's attitudes as being gradual reactions to hostile moves by the rulers of Gobir. But this theory ignored the role of the 'ulamā' on whom the Shehu seemed to focus more of his writings.

Perhaps, a further survey of relevant articles and books will confirm this view. The early European travellers' gazetteers and diaries, as I pointed out in Chapter I, have been adequately discussed in several works. Nevertheless, a mention must be made of one name among the travellers, H. Barth, not only because of his meticulous and vivid description of

the peoples and places he visited, but for his assessment of the jihad movement on racial line which seemed to influence the views of later writers. In his *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa : 1849 - 1855*, 1965, Barth described the jihad as a racial uprising in which the Fulbe, due to their comparatively exceptional qualities, were able to seize political power from the Hausa rulers. Later British colonial administrators, including Lord Lugard, entertained this view. Pursuing the same line of argument, S.J. Hogben, the author of *The Muhammadan Emirates of Nigeria*, 1930, discounted the religious reason given by the jihadists and asserted that the Fulbe 'ulamā', having fought together with their pagan nomads, manipulated themselves to power after the pagan Fulbe, who bore more than their fair share of the war, had retired to their flocks and herds.

For some time, the history of the jihad had been interpreted along these lines. Much of the literature on the movement referred to the jihad as the "Fulani Jihad" and the caliphate as the "the Fulani Empire". But with the progress made in the retrieval of the indigenous manuscripts from private hands, indepth investigations on various aspects of the jihad have been made. I have mentioned in Chapter II names of scholars whose contributions of information on the local manuscripts helped to shed more light on the jihad movement. C.E.D. Whitting, G. Vajda, A.A. al-Ilori, W.E.N. Kensdale, A. Smith, J.O. Hunwick and H.I. Gwarzo, D.M. Last and I.A.B. Balogun, all made available, through their works, lists of manuscripts by the Shehu and other Western and Central Sudanese scholars.

Presenting a paper entitled, "A Neglected theme of West African History : the Islamic Revolutions of the Nineteenth Century", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 1961, A. Smith observed that the 'Uthmāniya jihad movement should be viewed as an intellectual movement whose real significance could not be understood unless emphasis was laid on this aspect. Although little seemed to have been done in that direction, scholars put more effort in editing and translating the local manuscripts into European languages. Several works by the

Shehu had been edited and translated by M. Hiskett, B.G. Martin, I.A.B. Balogun, A.D.H. Bivar, Fathi El-Masri and others as cited in Chapter I.

As more of the Shehu's writings became readily available to scholars, views about the nature and character of the movement also changed. Although diverse assessment of it were advanced, it was no longer seen as a cloak for racial conquest. M.R. Waldman, dispelling such view, argues in her article, "A Note on the Ethnic Interpretation of the Fulani Jihad", *Africa*, 1966, that the movement should not be viewed as an ethnic struggle between the Fulbe and the Hausa. But the conflicting interpretations of the movement raised important questions which made J S Trimingham to observe in his work *A History of Islam in West Africa*, 1962, that "... the history of the jihad of ʿUthman dan Fodio and of the Fulani states has yet to be written' (p. 195). M.G. Smith, appearing to share this view, explained in his, "The Jihād of Shehu dan Fodio : Some Problems", *Islam in Tropical Africa*, 1966, that the conflicting viewpoints of the movement were reflections of the writers' ideological preferences and personal experiences of the area. He then lamented, "...these differing viewpoints present important problems. Together, they obstruct and might well deny that an impartial historical account of these events is possible; yet the viewpoints are so opposed that instinctively one suspects the truth -- that is, the historical reality of the jihad -- to lie somewhere in between. What remains problematic is whether such 'historical truth' can be discovered at this stage or would get a fair hearing if it were". (p. 215)

As discussed in Chapter III, the jihad movement was seen, in one view, as a genuine attempt to reassert and spread Islam in the area; in another, as a political revolution against oppression and exploitation. Another view expounded by M.R. Waldman in her article. "The Fulani Jihad", mentioned above, saw the movement, primarily, in the light of the confrontation between the Shehu and the rulers of Gobir. She described the Shehu as a moderate renewalist who was pushed to militancy through acts of provocation by successive rulers of Gobir. She added that the jihadists were made up of people with different motives,

expectations and destinations. Waldman's view was shared by many scholars. M.A. Al-Hajj, in his article, "The Meaning of the Sokoto Jihād", *Studies in the History of the Sokoto Caliphate. The Sokoto Seminar Papers*, 1979, and M.R. Doornbos, in his, "The Shehu and the Mullah : The Jihads of Usman dan Fodio and Muhammad Abd-Allah Hassan in Comparative Perspective", *Genève Afrique*, expressed the above view.

Yet, Y.B. Usman argued, in the late seventies, in his article, "The Transformation of Political Communities : Some Notes on the Perception of a Significant Dimension of the Sokoto Jihad", *The Sokoto Seminar Papers*, 1979, that the importance of the jihad movement had not been properly assessed. His article was, therefore, intended to give guidelines along which a proper assessment may be sought. According to him, even noted scholars such as M.G. Smith, D.M. Last and R.A. Adeleye, could not wholly escape from the pitfalls of the early writers.

The character of the jihad movement was another subject of controversy. It was described as a fundamentalist movement with the same methodology and objective as the Wahhābiya movement. Fazlur Rahman and J.O. Voll, in their articles, "Roots of Islamic Neo-fundamentalism", *Change and the Muslim World*, 1981, and "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History : Tajdīd and Iṣlāḥ", *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, 1983, respectively, identified the eighteenth and nineteenth-century jihad movements, including the ʿUthmāniya jihad movement, as seeking to reassert the original, unadulterated Islam which is based on the authorities of the Qurʾān and the Sunna. Yet, in another view, J.R. Willis suggested in his article, "Jihād fī Sabīl Allāh - its Doctrinal Basis in Islam and Some Aspects of its Evolution in Nineteenth Century West Africa", *Journal of African History*, 1967, that it was a revival movement advocating a return to the pristine Islam. But two scholars with long exposure to the jihad literature, J.O. Hunwick and M. Hiskett, saw the movement differently from the two views advanced above. They observed in their articles, "The Nineteenth Century Jihads", *A Thousand Years of West African History*, 1967, and "An Islamic Tradition to

Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 1962, respectively, that the movement was not advocating a return to a situation similar to the early *umma* of Madina. It looked more to the classical Muslim period for guidance and established a complex administrative structure.

Two points need to be emphasized as general observation on some of the materials surveyed. Firstly, the armed confrontation, which was the culmination of the jihad movement, is seen, contrary to the proposition in this study, as a final struggle between the jihadists and the rulers of Gobir. Secondly, the question of belief and unbelief, and the disputes it generated among the 'ulamā', are interpreted in such a way that they bear little or no political significance. As a result, the political role of the 'ulamā' in the movement is minimized or lost altogether. Further problems posed by this way of looking at the Shehu's attitudes in the jihad movement, are the knotty problems of understanding the reason behind the absence of political agitations in his early writings, and the obscurity of the significance of his dialogue with the 'ulamā'.

A few observations must be made about the Shehu and his works. Strictly speaking, the Shehu was not the creator of new ideas. In my opinion, because his primary aim was to renew Sunni Islam as developed by the early Sunni jurisconsults, he put much effort in reproducing, from the classical Muslim works, those ideas he considered relevant to the need of the time. As one reads through his various works, one cannot fail to note the effort of an ardent teacher employing all the methods he knows to reach his intended readers. He writes in simple clear Arabic, produces many pamphlets which give further details on topics already discussed in larger works and converts much of such topics into Fulfulde poems. Furthermore, topics which he apparently wants to emphasize appear repeatedly in several works and in most cases verbatim. This lack of originality also, it seems to me, serves another purpose. In order to win the support of his rival 'ulamā', he had to convince them

that he was not creating something new and that his works were derived from what were generally accepted by the Sunni 'ulamā' as legitimate sources.

Another remark to be made on all primary sources is this : although the authenticity of the manuscripts to be used is not doubted and the veracity of their authors is not questionable, the political and socio-religious circumstances in which they were written make many of them coloured with a degree of bias. For this reason, they should be treated with some caution. Unfortunately, with the exception of Al-Kanemi's criticism of the jihad leaders and their course, the opponents of the jihad left us nothing against which to check the material at hand.

This study is arranged in four chapters :

Chapter I examines the four categories of source material on which the study is based : (a) Arabic manuscripts of the Shehu's social writings, (b) relevant contemporary works by his brother, 'Abd Allāh and his son, Muḥammad Bello, (c) some relevant Ph.D. theses, (d) recent works in English considered to be important for this study. Hence, I intend to demonstrate that there are enough sources, both primary and secondary, in Arabic, Fulfulde and European languages, to carry out this study. However, prior to this study, the sources in Fulfulde were rarely used, perhaps because of the lack of understanding of the language by the majority of those who carried out research in the field. Furthermore, it will be shown contrary to common belief, that the *ajami* poems of the Shehu were used as a medium of instruction to the students. Some of the poems were adaptations of the Shehu's Arabic works which would be of no meaning to ignorant common people for whom they were purported to have been addressed.

Chapter II deals with biographical data on the Shehu and analyzes his activities and the development of his thought.

Chapter III examines the global and local conditions and their impact on the thinking and attitudes of the Shehu. It also assesses the extent to which al-Maghīlī's writings and teachings were responsible for the birth of the movement. The significant role played by the Sudanese itinerant scholars as agents of scholarship and religious propagation will also be examined. Ramifications of their activities culminated in a proliferation of schools which consequently brought about increasing numbers of scholars. Some of the scholars were able to be analytically critical of the socio-economic, religious and political conditions of the land and subsequently affected the socio-religious and political change.

Chapter IV deals with the Shehu's method of application of *tajdīd* as portrayed in some of his works.

The method followed in writing footnotes and bibliographies is that of Dorothea N. Berry and Gordon P. Martin in *A Guide to Writing Research Papers*. Nevertheless, there are exceptions, for wherever an *op. cit.* is to be used, the author's full name is given instead, together with a brief title. The purpose is to make the footnotes a little less intricate. In the case of Arabic transliteration, I have closely followed McGill's method. As for Fulfulde and Hausa, the sounds of the following consonants need clarification :

<u>Fulfulde</u>	<u>Hausa</u>	<u>Arabic</u>	<u>English</u>
ḃ	ḃ	-	gb
ḏ	ḏ	ط	ṭ
ḡ	ḡ	ق	q

Arabic words like "jihad", "Ḥadīth", "hijra", "Qurʾān", "sufi", "sunna", "sharīʿa" and "ʿulamāʾ" have not been italicized because they have been anglicized in some English dictionaries. All the Hausaized forms of Arabic words are retained here, since they are used in those forms in Hausaland. Such words include : Shehu for *Shaykh*, Malam for *Muʿallim*, Alhaji for *al-Ḥājj*, etc. Furthermore, all Qurʾānic quotations are from A. Yusuf Ali's *The*

Holy Qurʾān : Translation and Commentary, unless indicated otherwise. "Uthmānīya Jihad" is used to describe the Jihad instead of the common erroneous terms : "the Fulani Jihad" and "the Sokoto Jihad". Since the Jihad was not exclusively a Fulani uprising and the Sokoto town was founded only after the end of the conflict, it is inappropriate to use either of the terms.

Finally, I use Fulbe instead of Fulani because that is the name which the people call themselves.

A Glossary of Arabic, Hausa and Fulfulde words has been provided in Appendix I.

CHAPTER I

EVALUATION OF THE SOURCES

The source materials in this study fall into two main categories : works in Arabic and Fulfulde, and works in European languages. The first category, which is the primary source, is further sub-divided into works written by the Shehu and those written by his associates. The second category consists of recent works and unpublished Ph.D. theses on various aspects of the jihad movement.

Since the main objective of this chapter is to determine the nature and the value of the sources used, I do not intend, nor do I consider it practicable, to evaluate in detail in a study of this nature all the literature by and about the Shehu and his jihad movement as listed in the bibliography. Suffice it to say that I shall confine myself to the Shehu's social writings, which are the focus of this study, and to some other selected works considered most essential because of their content and relevance to the subject of study.

Gazetteers of early European travellers are not treated here although they are used to check information provided in the indigenous sources. Such accounts are not evaluated because numerous evaluations have already been made. To my knowledge, there is no thesis on West Africa which does not attempt to analyse European travellers' accounts. Dr. Last has made a comprehensive assessment of them.¹ There is nothing new which can be added.

¹ D.M Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate* (London : Longmans, 1967) pp. xlvii-xlviii; see also R.A Adelye, *Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria, 1804-1906 : The Sokoto Caliphate and its Enemies* (London : Longman, 1971) p. 346.

Locations of Cited Manuscripts

The Arabic manuscripts referred to here are mainly from the collections of three libraries. A few of them are photocopies from private collections and government archives and libraries.²

- (1) Manuscripts from the Research Library of the Department of History, commonly known as Northern History Research Scheme, and the Arewa House, of Ahmadu Bello University (henceforth referred to as NHRS and AH respectively). Some materials consulted in AH are in photograph form made by Professor A. Smith from, among others, the private collection of Alhaji Junaidu, the Waziri of Sokoto.
- (2) Manuscripts from the Post Graduate Research Room, Bayero University, Kano (henceforth referred to as PGRR). Professor Sani Zahradeen referred to some of this collection in his doctoral thesis.³ Many of them are photocopies made from private collections in Sokoto, Gwandu and Kano. The present writer drew many of his references from the PGRR collection. Some of these do not have call numbers.
- (3) Manuscripts from the Sokoto History Research Bureau (henceforth referred to as HRB) has now moved to the state Ministry of Information Building.

There are also some locally-printed copies of manuscripts by individual copyists and by Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria.⁴ Such manuscripts are unedited and are found in market

² National Archives, Kaduna (NAK); Department of Antiquities, Jos (JM); Shahuci Judicial School, Kano (SJS); Centre of Arabic Documentation, University of Ibadan (CAD).

³ Zahradeen, M.S. "Abd Allāh ibn Fodio's Contributions to the Fulani Jihād in Nineteenth Century Hausaland". Ph.D. Dissertation. McGill University, 1976, pp. 9-10.

⁴ Dates of printing do not appear on these materials and are therefore not cited.

stalls across the northern part of Nigeria. A few copies have been acquired by this writer. These and some photocopies of manuscripts were deposited in the library of the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal (henceforth referred to as LIS).

The *ajami* manuscripts which are mainly Fulfulde poems, are the collection of the Centre for the Study of Nigerian Languages, Bayero University, Kano. The poems were converted from Arabic to Roman characters by Abu-Manga and Mukoshy, who also compiled them into a volume entitled *Gime Fulfulde*. The collection should be used with caution as there are many typographical errors.

Social Writings of the Shehu

The Shehu's professed aim was, firstly, to disseminate Islam as it should be observed and practiced by the people of Hausaland, and secondly, to prepare them for renovation and for what he perceived as an ideal Islamic society. In his attempt to achieve this onerous goal, he often repeated in his writings those religious and social issues he considered basic to his teachings. As a result, many of his shorter works were mere abstracts of some sections of the larger ones or abridgements of them.⁵ For instance, the pamphlet *Kitāb Bayān al-Bida' al-Shayṭāniya* is identical, in many respects, to the *bida'* section of *Iḥyā' al-Sunna wa Iḥmād al-Bid'a*. Again his *Naṣā'ih al-Umma al-Muḥammadiya* is similar to the section of the *Iḥyā' al-Sunna wa Iḥmād al-Bid'a* headed *Tanbihāt*. Another pamphlet, *Wathīqat al-Iḥwān li-Tabyīn Dalīlāt Wujūb Ittibā' al-Kitāb wa al-Sunna wa al-Ijmā' wa Dalīl Ijtināb al-Bid'a* corresponds largely to the *Nūr al-Albāb*. In some cases the same themes are

⁵ It is also possible that these shorter works were abstracted from larger works to serve as textbooks or answers to very important questions by his students or may even have been intended to meet the acute scarcity of books in the land. Books were so expensive that they were out of reach of many students.

repeatedly discussed in several works. The issue of anathematization of Muslims and the status of Borno and Hausaland as Muslim lands is discussed in *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām*, *Naṣā'ih al-Umma*, *Naṣīhat Ahl al-Zamān*, *Irshād Ahl al-Tafrīt*, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān*, and so on. In order, therefore, to avoid repetition of the same subjects, we have made a careful selection of the titles to be evaluated.

Belief and Unbelief

The main problems confronting the jihad leaders was the tendency of the people to intermingle Islam and paganism. Converts to Islam failed to abandon completely their pagan beliefs and un-Islamic social customs. Although they uttered the first article of faith - that there is no god but God and Muḥammad is the Messenger of God - they continued to offer sacrifices to trees and stones, as they believed that such practices were efficacious.

It was for the above reason that the question of who was a Muslim and who was not, dominated the jihad literature from the inception of the the movement to the establishment of the Islamic government. Sultan Bello reported that the Shehu alone had written about fifty books on the subject.⁶ It is not difficult to understand why this was an important issue since the leaders of the jihad had to justify their aims of taking up arms against their fellow Muslims. At the end of the war, however, there was need to pacify zealous students and other extremists among the *ʿulamāʾ* through whose activities and utterances many Muslims risked victimization. According to these zealots, any Muslim who could not explain the concept of Divine Unity, with all its intricacies, the way scholastic theologians (*Ahl al-Kalām*) did, should be regarded as unbeliever.⁷ The Shehu objected to this strongly and

⁶ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, edited from local manuscripts by C.E.J. Whitting (London : Luzac, 1951), p. 43.

⁷ Ibid.

cautioned the extremists to refrain from branding Muslims as unbelievers on such flimsy grounds.

Although the Shehu rejected extreme views, he wrote several books defining what practices were polytheistic and what were merely sinful. Listed below are some of his writings which fall into this category :

1. *Kitāb Nūr al-Albāb* (undated)

This is one of the Shehu's most famous works, one of the twenty eight cited by Bello in *Infāq al-Maysūr*.⁸ It was printed in an unedited form by the Gaskiya Publishing Company of Northern Nigeria. Copies are found in West Africa and Europe. The Gaskiya copy is used in this study, and a photocopy of another copy in PGRR, Ms. 194 is also consulted.

In the writer's view, the work represents the core of the Shehu's teachings. Accordingly it is not surprising that it is his first work to be rendered into a European language. In 1897-98, a French translation of the work appeared under the title "Nour el-Eulbabe de Chaik Otmane dan Foudiou" by Ismael Hamet.⁹ Hamet's pioneering work used a single manuscript to edit the text; consequently it contains serious errors.¹⁰

The book begins by classifying all the peoples of Hausaland into three groups : those who are pure Muslims; those who mix Islamic and pagan practices; and those who are pure

⁸ Ibid. p. 187

⁹ *Revue Africaine*, 41:227, 42:228 (1897/8) pp. 5-55.

¹⁰ Norbert Tapiero, "Le Grand Shaykh Peul 'Uthmān ibn Fūdī", *Revue des Etudes Islamiques*, 31 (1963), p. 65.

unbelievers. As the book focuses on the second category, those who mix Islam with paganism, he did not discuss the first and the last categories but chose to make brief references to them. Utterances and practices that survived the Islamization of the people and which the Shehu considered polytheistic were : denial of the resurrection of the dead; ridicule of the Faith and the practices of the faithful, such as the veiling of women; veneration of objects such as trees and stones by offering them sacrifices or pouring libations on them; divination by sand, stars, spirits, the movements or the sounds of birds; consultation of soothsayers; the superstitious placing of cotton on road-junctions, trees or stones, for protection; the placing of clothes or food on the tombs of saints; use of magic to separate lovers e.g. husbands and wives; recital of the Qur'ān to the beating of drums; and the writing of God's names or passages of the Qur'ān on unclean objects (such as bones of dead animals or heads of dogs) or with running blood.

Among the sinful acts were : numerology, the observation of lucky and unlucky days, the anointment of oneself with water or dust from tombs, practices associated with the circumcision of children, breach of contract, cheating in business transactions, bowing to leaders (members of the ruling class), practices associated with inheritance, or the free mixing of sexes.

There is also a section on 'ulamā' who neglected their responsibility to educate their families. These 'ulamā' spent their whole day teaching students, yet their wives, daughters and servants remained in the darkness of complete ignorance. More amazing still, they preached to these poor women that their salvation lay in their blind obedience to their husbands. The author did not fail to stress that it was incumbent on whosoever found himself among the syncretists either to stop them or to emigrate.

2. *Kitāb Tamyīz al-Muslimīn min al-Kāfirīn*

PGRR, Ms. 122 and in LIS photocopy. The work was undated but it was written before 1227/1812, since it was listed in Sultan Bello's *Infāq al-Maysūr* (written in 1227/1812) as one of the Shehu's twenty-eight writings. The general theme was a discussion on who was a Muslim and who was not. Judging from the mild and conciliatory tone of the author, the book might have been written immediately after the fall of Alkalwa in 1808. Because of the social benefits one could derive as a Muslim from the new establishment, the issue of belief and unbelief was relatively important. It was essential, for instance, to ascertain one's faith in order to know who was qualified to marry a Muslim, be buried in a Muslim cemetery, or even to avoid enslavement. Apprehensive that many Muslims might be victimized, the Shehu provided further explanation on the issue.¹¹ He enumerated eight categories of people in Hausaland. These included :

- (i) The 'ulamā' whose faith was sound for they performed major ablution after a state of impurity (*Ghusl al-janāba*); performed lesser ablution (*wuḍū'*) before *ṣalāt*; and abstained from performing ablution with sand (*tayammum*) except when necessary. They observed the remainder of the religious injunctions and did not show any sign of unbelief such as venerating stones and trees by offering sacrifices or libations to them; they were not heard uttering blasphemous statements denying the Message or the Day of Judgment or ridiculing practices of the Faith such as the veiling of women. These 'ulamā' were certainly Muslims.

¹¹ The Shehu as mentioned earlier wrote many books endeavouring to pacify some fanatics among the 'ulamā' particularly his students. One of these books which Sultan Bello mentioned in his *Infāq al-Maysūr* was *Kaff al-Ṭālibīn min Takfīr 'Awāmm al-Muslimīn*.

- (ii) The students (*talaba*) who did exactly as the above. They too were no doubt Muslims.
- (iii) Those ignorant people who associated with learned men and listened to their teachings and then conducted themselves in the manner of (i) and (ii). They too were definitely Muslims.
- (iv) Those who never accepted Islam; their state was clearly unbelief.
- (v) Those who embraced Islam but failed to abandon pagan practices such as veneration of stones and trees were certainly unbelievers.
- (vi) Those who accepted Islam but uttered blasphemous statements were also unbelievers.
- (vii) Those who had accepted Islam but were innovators by intentionally performing *ṣalāt* without ablution. Although no one heard them say a blasphemous statement or saw them venerate stones or trees, legal opinions varied on their state of belief. However, the accepted view was that they were disobedient Muslims (*ʿuṣāt*).
- (viii) The ignorant masses who embraced Islam but had not understood it. They professed the Faith without knowing what it was and without caring to know. They were unbelievers as far as their relation to God was concerned but believers as far as the Muslim community was concerned, except when they showed acts of unbelief.

The last category reveals the Shehu's religious tolerance and moderation. He was, in fact, saying that no one had the right to judge a person by his inner feelings; that should be

left to God alone "who knows what is concealed in hearts".¹² As for mortals, their judgment of a person should be limited to external behaviour.

The status of this eighth category created great controversy among the 'ulamā' particularly the *ṭalaba*. The advocates of speculative theology (*'Ilm al-Kalām*) set out to anathematize all those who could not explain the meaning of the first article of faith (*al-Shahādātān*) in the manner the speculative theologians had elaborated.

3. *Naṣā'ih al-Umma al-Muḥammadiya*

The text used is my personal copy but a photocopy is also available in NHRS, MS. P. 2/4. It is an undated work and appears in Sultan Bello's *Infāq al-Maysūr* as one of the Shehu's works. As stated, this work might have been intended to comprise part of a larger work, *Iḥyā' al-Sunna wa Ikḥmād al-Bid'a* which was, according to Ismail Balogun, written in 1793.¹³ If such was the case, the *Naṣā'ih al-Umma al-Muḥammadiya* must have been written earlier than 1793. The work discusses the theological disputes which were current at the formative period of the jihad movements. The author identifies four factions : a group which denies the existence of unbelief in the lands of the Sudan; a second group which anathematizes on the grounds of certain beliefs; a third group which anathematizes on the grounds of disobedience; and a fourth which follows blameworthy customs.

He describes the last faction as those who continue, despite their profession of Islam, to observe indigenous social and pagan customs. Among these anti-Islamic customs are the social mixing of the sexes during bridal feasts, and the practice of sending women to the

¹² Qur'ān 40:19.

¹³ I.A.B. Balogun, *The Life and Works of 'Uthmān dan Fodio*. (Lagos : Islamic Publication Bureau, 1981) p. 82.

market to buy and sell. Other bad customs are the salutation of leaders by prostration and the customary methods of inheritance where the inheritance is either appropriated by the strongest heir, or passes by matrilinear descent, leaving younger sons and daughters, wives and other female relations without inheritance.

In many of the Shehu's writings the recurrent reference to extremist 'ulamā' who anathematized Muslims on grounds of disobedience, such as committing grave sins, indicates how serious a problem it was during and after the jihad. He even criticized his teacher, Jibrīl, whom he loved and respected, for holding the Kharijite view concerning grave sin.

Furthermore, in dealing with issues as sensitive as the question of belief and unbelief, the Shehu always takes precaution to show that his legal interpretation of any issue is based on the legal opinion of medieval Muslim scholars.

He declares at the end of this work that everything he had elaborated upon to his listeners was not his own opinion. He was only following in the footsteps of Sunnī scholars in an endeavour to bring to the listeners attention what these scholars had said. This apologetic statement recurs in some of his writings,¹⁴ so as to win the confidence of the conservative students and 'ulamā' who could only accept legal views expressed by the medieval Muslim 'ulamā'.

¹⁴ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, 1227/1812, PGRR, MS. 16, f. 1a, and *Naṣīḥat Ahl al-Zamān*, PGRR. f. 1b.

4. *Shifā' al-Ghalīl fī-mā Ashkala fī Kalām Shaykh Shuyūkhinā Jibrīl*¹⁵

The text is a photocopy from the PGRR, Ms. 164. This undated work is mentioned in Muhammad Bello's *Infāq al-Maysūr* as one of the Shehu's writings.¹⁶ The six-page tract is an explanation of the author's disagreement with the views of his teacher, Jibrīl b. 'Umar, on grave sin. He quotes Ibn 'Umar's poem as evidence of his Kharijite views which anathematize grave sinners. In the poem Ibn 'Umar lists sins (*ma'āṣī*) he considers unbelief (*Kufr*): having more than four wives; the mixing of men and women; the ill-treatment of orphans; the custom of inheritance through the maternal line and so on.

The Shehu on the other hand considers all the un-Islamic practices listed in the poem as sins (*ma'āṣī*). He argues that a sinner is not an unbeliever (*kāfir*) unless, through his actions or utterances, he associates God with other beings or objects. To support his stand, he cites from *bāb al-ma'āṣī* in the *Saḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī; a verse from the Qur'ān¹⁷ and the view of 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī in his *Imṭā' al-Dirāyā fī Sharḥ al-Niqāyā*.

5. *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām min Juyūsh al-Awhām* (1225/1810)

The copy is from the PGRR and available in LIS as well. The work appears in *Infāq al-Maysūr* as one of the Shehu's works, and it is also one of the twenty works the author cared to date. From its content and size it appears to be the author's third major work after

¹⁵ The title reads *Shifā' al-'Alīl* instead of the well known *Shifā' al-Ghalīl* which most bibliographies of the Shehu's writings cite. Refer to M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 239, and Balogun, *The Life and Works of 'Uthmān* p. 46. Still cf. Muḥammad Bello *Infaku'l Maisuri* p. 187 : *Shifā' al-Qalīl*. The variation might have arisen from the use of the diacritic dot above the letter "ain" which can read "ghain" or "qāf". In my opinion the confusion originates with careless copyists.

¹⁶ It is written before 1812, the date *Infāq al-Maysūr* was written.

¹⁷ Q 4:48 and 116.

Iḥyā' al-Sunna wa Ikḥmād al-Bid'a and *Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra*. Although I have not seen the published copy, Dr. Last indicates that it was published in 1959 in Cairo.¹⁸ The work, which is addressed to the author's students, is an exposition of what the Shehu considers wrong interpretations of legal and religious issues. He begins by warning "that misleading imaginations are the sources of innovations and are the causes of confusions which, in turn, lead astray". He then goes on to list such imaginations beginning with the "wrong notion" held by many, that he who utters an incomplete first article of Faith - "There is no god" -and stops short of - "but God" is an unbeliever. He refutes it by citing Prophetic traditions and views of medieval scholars. He then criticizes the *ṭalaba* who anathematize Muslims on grounds of their inability to master speculative theology in the manner of rationalist theologians. He thus states .

There are those who allege that nobody should be accepted as a believer or a Muslim before mastering the creeds and their proofs, in accordance with the methods of speculative theologians (*mutakallimūn*) and is able to express himself clearly; I say that this is nothing but falsehood and confusion according to the consensus of opinion (*ijmā'*)¹⁹

This work, like the ones already examined, also contains a section on blameworthy customs which the Shehu categorizes as sinful. These are the mixing of the sexes, the failure of women to veil themselves in the presence of their male cousins or brothers-in-law or husbands' friends. The practice of men entering houses without the permission of their occupants is another custom listed as sinful.²⁰

¹⁸ M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 237; Fathi Hasan El-Masri, *A Critical Edition of Dan Fodio's Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra 'alā al-'Ibād*, (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1978) p. 17. El-Masri indicates in the footnote that the work was published in Cairo in 1957-58.

¹⁹ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām min Juyūsh al-Awhām*, 1225/1810, PGRR f. 6a

²⁰ Ibid., f. 27a.

Sufism is also discussed as a means of acquisition of self-confidence and self-discipline. The Shehu sees mysticism as optional and is not a factor in the renewal movement.

He cites, in this work as in other works, *al-Madkhal* of Muḥammad al-ʿAbdarī also known as Ibn al-Ḥājj (born 1336). Ibn al-Ḥājj describes fourteenth century North African customs, which the Shehu apparently finds relevant for his purpose.

6. *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna wa Ikḥmād al-Bidʿa* (1218/1793)²¹

Copies are available in HRB, PGRR and NHRS, MS. 6/52. The published copy from Beirut is used here. The work is undated but the authorship is confirmed as that of the Shehu's for it appears in the *Infāq al-Maysūr*. Regarded by many as his magnum opus, this work was published in Cairo in 1962. In fact, some shorter works are simply elucidations of some sections of this book. For instance *Shams al-Ikhwān* is an exposition of chapter four of the book; *Bayān al-Bidʿa al-Shayṭāniya* is an abridgement of the *Bidʿa* section; and *Naṣāʾiḥ al-Umma al-Muḥammadiya* corresponds largely to the section headed *Tanbīhāt*.

There are thirty-three chapters which can be summed up as follows : definition of the work, the importance of adherence to sunna, theology, fiqh, mysticism, and conclusion. The author states at the beginning of the work that he would try to simplify any issue discussed and this he has successfully achieved to some degree.²²

²¹ This date was worked out by Ismail Balogun; cf. his *The Life and Works of ʿUthmān*, p. 82.

²² Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna wa Ikḥmād al-Bidʿa* (Beirut · Dār al-Fikr, 1962), p. 4.

7. *Wathīqat al-Ikhwān li-Tabyīn Dalīlāt Wujūb Ittibāʿ al-Kitāb wa al-Sunna wa al-Ijmāʿ wa Dalīl Ijtināb al-Bidʿa*

I have used my personal copy, but copies are also available in NHRS, MS. P. 9/4 and HRB. Although this is a shorter work, it corresponds to the *Kitāb Nūr al-Albāb*. It is undated and perhaps one of the author's earliest works. As the title indicates, it gives reasons, quoting the Qurʾān and the Ḥadīth, why it is incumbent on Muslims to abide by the injunctions of the Qurʾān, the Sunna and the consensus of opinion (*ijmāʿ*), and to avoid innovation (*bidʿa*).

In the *bidaʿ* section all the blameworthy customs mentioned in the *Kitāb Nūr al-Albāb* are discussed including the lack of seclusion of women; denying them education by their spouses; activities of the venal ʿulamāʾ such as numerology, magic, divination by sand, stars, spirits, etc. This section also emphasizes that a good scholar is he who combines knowledge and fear of God. A country's misfortune, the author observes, is to have venal scholars and pious men who are ignorant among its citizens.

The Shehu is consistent in his attack against what he identifies as sinful practices. He also maintains that a person should be judged by his outward activities only; on this issue he differs from his contemporaries.

8. *Kitāb Bayān al-Bidaʿ al-Shayṭāniya al-latī Aḥdathahā al-Nās fī Abwāb al-Milla al-Muḥammadiya* (Beirut : Matbaʿat al-Mashhad al-Ḥusaynī, n.d.)

A personal copy is used, but photocopies from NHRS, MS. P. 7/10 and PGRR, MS. 7 are also consulted. All three are now in the LIS. This short work, as has been mentioned earlier, corresponds closely to the *bidaʿ* section in *Ihyāʾ al-Sunna wa Ikḥmād al-Bidʿa*. The author perhaps condensed the section in order that it could be used as a students' handbook. The work is undated but it must have been written before the jihad.

9. *Kitāb Ḥukm Juhhal Bilād Hausa*

This five-page treatise is undated. The authenticity of the Shehu's authorship is not disputed for it is listed under his name in the catalogue of the Bayero University, Kano and appears in Kensdale's catalogue and in Dr. M. Last's well-documented work. The text referred to here is a photocopy from the PGRR; there is a copy in the LIS.

Such a short work was perhaps written early during the Shehu's preaching tours to answer or clarify a point raised by his students, or it might simply be his lecture notes. Whatever the case may be, the work categorizes the ignorant masses of Hausaland into Muslims and non-Muslims. The Muslims are defined as those who maintain their presence with scholars and ask questions relating to religious matters. They perform ritual purification (*ghusl* and *wuḍūʿ*) before *ṣalāt*, and do not make fun of religion nor deny the raising of the dead. The non-Muslims, on the other hand, are those who do the opposite of the above.

10. *Al-Ajwiba al-Muḥarrara ʿan al-Asʿila al-Muqarrara fī Wathīqat al-Shaykh al-Ḥājj al-Maʿrūf bi-Laḡab Shiṣumaṣ Ibn Aḥmad*

This is a copy of a manuscript of twelve folios written on both sides with twenty lines on each side. The photocopy in LIS was made from the manuscript in the Emir of Kano's private collection. The undated work results from correspondence between the Shehu and the Tuareq Shaykh, who was also the leader of his community. The latter requested the Shehu to clarify fourteen questions relating to some doubtful social tribal customs, and the Shehu gave him replies in the form of this pamphlet.

It discusses such issues as the legality of enslaving the free-born; venerating stones, trees and spirits; mistakes in the recitation of the Qurʾān and the call to *ṣalāt* (*adhān*); the legal

position regarding belief in the intercession of saints; soothsaying, etc. The Shehu supported his replies with citations from the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth.

11. *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān 'alā Jawāz Itkādih al-Majlis li-Ajl Ta'lim al-Niswān*

This is a recently copied text of eight pages. Although it is legible, the handwriting is poor. Like most of his works it is not dated. Dr. M. Last and Ismail Balogun both cited this work in their bibliographies as the Shehu's work. This copy, as is the case with most of those used here, is from the collection of Bayero University, Kano (PGRR, MS. 187)

The Shehu's reasons for writing the pamphlet was to answer some 'ulamā' who disapproved of his permitting women to attend his lecture sessions. He admits that although past 'ulamā' such as Ibn 'Arafa and Ibn Ḥajar al Haythami²³ disapproved, the consensus of opinion allowed women to attend lecture assemblies to learn basic religious knowledge. He then explains that initially he used to seat men separately from women in his audience, but later he assigned specific lecture days for men and others for women. To support this position he made references to *Sharḥ al-Kubrā* of al-Shaykh al-Sanusi, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* of al-Ghazālī and *Lawāqīḥ al-Anwār* of 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha'rāni. References were also made to the Ḥadīth. He concluded by attacking the 'ulamā' for condoning the mixing of men and women in wedding feasts where the women danced in their fineries. Such 'ulamā' also failed to educate their wives, daughters and servants while they imparted knowledge to their students morning and evening. This accusation was also made in his *Nur al-Albab*.

This work, unlike the others, deals with only one aspect of social customs—the freedom of women to go out of seclusion in order to learn basic religious knowledge.

²³ Ibn al-Ḥajar al-Haythami, an Egyptian of the Shāfi'i school (*madhhab*), was the author of *Sharḥ al-Arba'in al-Nawāwiya*

12. *Irshād al-Ikhwān ilā Aḥkām Khurūj al-Niswān*

The copy used is printed by Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria, and deposited in LIS. Although the date is not known, the work is generally considered, on the grounds of content, to be one of the author's pre-jihad writings. This is also a short work dealing with a single aspect of social custom, the freedom of women to go out of social seclusion.

The Shehu is responding to two divergent views concerning this issue : those who hold that women are free to go out for whatever reason, whether to fulfil their religious obligations or to attend social demands; and those who maintain that women should not leave their homes for any reason, be it religious or social.

The Shehu holds a moderate view. He explains that women should be allowed to go out of their homes to fulfil both religious duties and their social responsibilities, which include the following : seeking basic religious knowledge when their husbands will not or cannot teach them; answering nature's call; going to the mosque for Friday prayers or other services; visiting the praying grounds during 'īd; participating in prayers for rain; attending funerals; visiting the cemetery; performing pilgrimage; participating in wedding ceremonies of their close relations; earning a living through buying and selling; attending a court of law if their presence is necessary for the execution of justice; visiting relatives.

The question of women's freedom to participate in social and religious activities was a serious one in the jihad period. Prior to the jihad, women enjoyed unlimited freedom to participate in social, religious, economic and even political activities, although small communities of 'ulamā' and foreign settlers did practice the seclusion of women.

13. *Wathīqat al-Jawāb ‘alā Su’āl Dalīl Man‘ Khurūj al-Nisā’*

This work is attributed to the Shehu in two bibliographical works.²⁴ If closely examined, however, there are reasons to doubt its authenticity. The conventional format whereby the Shehu opens a book with a special formula or prayer followed by his name and an introduction is not followed. Despite a feeble attempt to imitate this format his name was completely omitted.

Nor are the extreme views regarding seclusion of women characteristics of our author. While the Shehu maintains in his writings that anyone who permits his wife to go out of seclusion is committing an act of disobedience²⁵ in *Wathīqat al-Jawāb* such a husband is anathematized and considered "a liar if he claims to be a Muslim" ²⁶

Further evidence of forgery emerges from a citation of the Shehu's poems to support this extreme view :

Anyone who, without good reason, fails to keep his wife in seclusion after revelation of the verse : *waqama fī buyūtkunna...*²⁷ is a liar if he claims to be a Muslim. This is also the view of our Shaykh, ‘Uthmān, as is contained in some of his poems.²⁸ Such a person's *ṣalāt*, fasting, *zakāt* (canonical alms)

²⁴ The Bayero University Library Catalogue and Ismail Balogun's bibliography of the Shehu's writings are our sources of information. The copy referred to here is in PGRR, MS. 144.

²⁵ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām*. On f. 31a of this work the Shehu firmly and clearly refuted the anathematization of those who did not enforce seclusion of their women. He declares in part : "Another confusion of theirs is the belief that the abandonment of the veil by women and mixing with men, .. the taking of more than four wives, and depriving an orphan of his rights and similar acts of disobedience - which our Shaykh Jibril listed among the acts of unbelief - are unbelief and that too is wrong".

²⁶ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Wathīqat al-Jawāb ‘alā Su’āl Dalīl Man‘ Khurūj al-Nisā’* (attributed), f. 1b.

²⁷ Q 33:33. The verse is specifically addressing the wives of the Prophet enjoining them to remain at home and not to display themselves in the manner of (women) in the Jāhiliya period.

²⁸ The work refers to the Shehu's poems without identifying any.

and pilgrimage are all invalid, as explains Muḥammad Tukur²⁹ in his poem entitled *Bushrā*.

Reference to the Shehu in the third person, indicates that he was not the author of the book.

14. *Asānīd al-Faqīr al-Muʿtarif bi-al-ʿAjz wa-al-Taqṣīr* (1218/1803)

I use a photocopy of a MS acquired from Sokoto and deposited in NHRS, MS. P. 1/1. The work is a record of the author's credentials in Ḥadīth tracing the chains of authority (*aṣānīd*) for his study of Ḥadīth from his uncle, Muḥammad b. Rājī; his teacher, Jibrīl b. ʿUmar; and his son ʿUmar b. Jibrīl.

The *Asānīd al-Faqīr* is not only important as biographical material, it also helps us in understanding the Shehu's link to the eighteenth century Ḥadīth networks.³⁰ His two teachers, Ibn Rājī and Ibn ʿUmar, came under the influence of the Ḥijāzī ʿulamāʾ of Ḥadīth. Muḥammad Ibn Rājī studied under Abū al-Ḥasan al-Sindī, who was also the teacher of Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī,³¹ one of the teachers of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb. As for

²⁹ Muḥammad Tukur was a learned student of the Shehu. He joined the Shehu from Zamfara. Cf. M. Hiskett, *The Sword Of Truth* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 32.

³⁰ John O. Voll, "Linking Groups in the Networks of Eighteenth - Century Revivalist Scholars : the Mizzaji Family in Yemen", *Eighteenth - Century Renewal and Reform in Islam*, edited by N. Levtzion and J.O. Voll (Syracuse : Syracuse University Press, 1987) pp. 69-92.

³¹ Ibid., p. 77; John O. Voll, "Muḥammad Ḥayyā al-Sindī and Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb : an Analysis of an Intellectual Group in Eighteenth-Century Medina", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 38 (1975). 32-39; Louis Brenner, "Muslim Thought in Eighteenth - Century West Africa : the Case of Shaykh ʿUthmān b. Fūdī", *Eighteenth - Century Renewal and Reform in Islam*, edited by N. Levtzion and J.O. Voll (Syracuse : Syracuse University Press, 1987) p. 61.

Ibn ʿUmar, he studied under Muḥammad Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, a student of Shāh Walī Allāh of Delhi.³²

In view of the above, we can appreciate the intellectual connections of the eighteenth century *tajdīd* leaders, connections which have not hitherto been investigated. *Asānīd al-Faqīr* is larger and more comprehensive than a similar work, *Asānīd al-Ḍaʿīf*. Muḥammad Bello mentioned both and considered *Asānīd al-Faqīr* as one of the Shehu's major works.³³ He also mentioned that the Shehu had a habit of citing the *Asānīd al-Ḍaʿīf* at the beginning of his lectures.³⁴

Umar al-Nagar has commented on the qualities of the two *Asānīd* as biographical material. He observes that, if nothing else, the works demonstrated that "the gaining of pre-eminence in the Islamic sciences was in no way conditional upon leaving *bilād al-sūdān*."³⁵ He also noted the importance of the *Asānīd* in identifying Sudanic scholars who participated in the author's chains of authority.³⁶

Problems Arising from establishing the Caliphal Administration

The Shehu was faced during the campaign and after his victory with several issues which prompted him to write several books on history and law relating to unbelievers. The

³² John O. Voll, "Linking Groups", p. 78; ʿAbd al-Rahmān al-Jabartī, *ʿAjāʾib al-Āthār fī al-Tarājim wa-al-Akhhbār*, (Beirut : Dār al-Fāris, n.d.) v. 2, pp. 103-114.

³³ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 187.

³⁴ Ibid., 48.

³⁵ Umar al-Nagar, "The *Asānīd* of Shehu dan Fodio : How far are they a contribution to his Biography?" *Fontes Historiae Africanae. Bulletin D'Information*, nos 9/10 (1984-5) p. 30.

³⁶ Ibid.

establishment of the caliphal administration gave rise to disputes. His brother, ʿAbd Allāh, criticized some of the Habe's administrative institutions, and al-Amīn al-Kanemi questioned the legality of the jihad. Furthermore, new opposition groups classified by the Shehu as backsliders (*muhmilūn*), warmongers (*muḥāribūn*), and tyrants (*bughāt*) began to harass the infant government.

Within this category of the Shehu's writings there is a series of books known as "the brethren series", meant to serve as handbooks for his students. One of their primary objectives is to give detailed information on legal complexities and their interpretations to questions of unbelief.

15. *Masāʾil Muhimma Yaḥtāj ilā Maʿrifatihā Ahl al-Sūdān* (1217/1802)

The copy referred to is in PGRR, MS 119; a photocopy is found in the LIS. This short discourse of eighteen pages, beautifully written in Maghribī script, is considered to be the Shehu's first political tract which set out the ideology of the jihad. Among the fourteen points discussed, five reflect the philosophy of the movement : (1) that the foundation of Islam is the application of the Shatīʿa; (2) that it is incumbent on Muslims to pay homage to an *imām*; (3) that the *hijra* from the land of unbelief to the land of Islam is obligatory; (4) that those who support unbelievers should themselves be regarded as unbelievers; and (5) that jihad against unbelievers and apostates is obligatory.

These points were later dealt with in greater detail in his *Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra*, which he wrote in 1806.

References are made to the following works : *ʿUmdat al-Murīd al-Ṣādiq* of Aḥmad al-Zarrūq; *Sharḥ al-ʿUmda al-Kubrā*, and *Wuṣṭā* of Shaykh al-Sanūsī; *Imṭāʿ al-Dirāyā fī*

Sharḥ al-Niqāyā of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī; *Sharḥ al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawāwīya* of al-Ishbīlī; and *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī.

16. *Kitāb al-Farq bayn Wilāyāt Ahl al-Islām wa-Wilāyāt Ahl al-Kufr*

The copy used is in NHRS, MS. 2/34; a photocopy is available in the LIS. This small but very important work was undated and is not among the author's twenty-eight books listed by Sulṭān Bello in his *Infāq al-Maysūr*. It was first listed in the bibliography of the author's works by Mr. Kensdale and later by Abdullahi Smith as one of the manuscripts he found in France. The first edition and translation of the work into English was made by M. Hiskett in 1960 in Volume twenty-three of the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, under the title "Kitāb al-Farq : A Work on the Habe Kingdoms Attributed to ʿUthmān dan Fodio". Ali Merad, apparently using the Paris copy cited by Abdullahi Smith, published a French edition and French translation of the work under the title "Le 'Kitāb al-Farq bayna Wilāyāt Ahl al-Islām wa Wilāyāt Ahl al-Kufr' de Ḍan Fodio" in *Islamochristiana*, 6 (1980). He suggests that the Paris manuscript copied some eighty years after the death of the author, in 1890, contains variations from the two later copies used by Hiskett.

Ali Merad questions the appropriateness of using the word *Kitāb* in the title of the work of twenty-five folios of eleven lines each. It would have been more appropriate to call it *Risāla* unless it had been the author's intention to make it a chapter of a longer work. Merad also questioned the need for this pamphlet when there were such similar but larger works as al-Māwardī's *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniya*; Ibn Taymīya's *Kitāb al-Siyāsa al-Sharʿiya li-Iṣlāḥ al-Rāʿī wa-al-Raʿīya*, or Ibn Jamāʿa's *Taḥrīr al-Aḥkām li-Tadbīr Millat al-Islām*.

Kitāb al-Farq is a warning to the newly appointed emirs and judges to distance themselves from the vices of the Habe administration. It criticizes the Habe governments and offers an alternative in the form of Islamic government to be led by an *Amīral-Mu'minīn* assisted by a body of learned officials who hold administrative positions. It is important for this study because it depicts the historical, political and social life of Hausaland.

In accordance with the author's liberal view concerning freedom of choice of any school of law, he made references from works by jurists of the Mālikī and Shāfi'ī schools of law. From the Mālikī school he quoted works of Qādī Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 1148) and Ibn Juzayy (d. 1321), and from the Shāfi'ī school, Ibn Jamā'a (d. 1333) and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505).

17. *Al-Amr bi-Muwālāt al-Mu'minīn wa al-Nahy ʿan Muwālāt al-Kāfirīn* (1226/1811)

The text referred to is a personal copy printed by Gaskia Corporation in Zaria. In this ten-page work written in 1226³⁷ the Shehu discussed the obligation of believers to choose their leader from among themselves, citing Qurʾānic verses and Ḥadīth to support this view. Muslim acceptance of an unbelieving leader who has power over believers is governed by three conditions : (1) it is acceptable if the unbeliever is powerful and the Muslims fear for their lives; (2) it is sinful (an act of disobedience) if the Muslims expect a reward in return for their support; and (3) it is polytheistic (an act of unbelief) if they support him against a Muslim contender.

³⁷ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Al-Amr bi-Muwālāt al-Mu'minīn wa al-Nahy ʿan Muwālāt al-Kāfirīn*, 1226/1811, f. 5b; see also M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 237. He indicated that the book was written in 1227/1812.

18. *Uṣūl al-ʿAdl li-Wulāt al-Umūr wa Ahl al-Faḍl* (1224/1809)

NHRS, MS. P. 112/5. *Uṣūl al-ʿAdl* is based on the Islamic political theories formulated by Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 1111) and Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī (d. 1504). The work, written very shortly after the victory of the jihadists, was perhaps intended to serve as a handbook for the new governors (emirs). It lists ten points on the principles of justice from some of al-Ghazālī's writings, and eight points on the same subject from the works of al-Maghīlī. Both al-Ghazālī and al-Maghīlī agreed that a ruler should be selfless in discharging his duties and should distance himself from corruption and oppression of his subjects. He should appoint only qualified officials to assist him in running the state administration. On the "mode of appearance" of the ruler, the two scholars seemed to hold different opinions. While al-Ghazālī warned that a ruler should not occupy himself with his appearance and appetite, such as beautiful clothing and delicious foods, al-Maghīlī condoned majestic appearance provided that the ruler shunned silk, gold and silver. These same issues were to become a point of disagreement between the Shehu and his brother ʿAbd Allāh. The former held the view of al-Maghīlī, while the latter held that of al-Ghazālī.

The work is useful for the light it sheds on the Shehu's thoughts on Islamic political theory.

19. *Sirāj al-Ikhwān fī Aḥamm mā Yuḥtāj Ilayh fī Hādhā al-Zamān* (1226/1811)

PGRR, MS. 45 with a photocopy in LIS. *Sirāj al-Ikhwān* is one of the "the brethren series" which the Shehu wrote after his retirement in Sifawa in 1811, when the jihad was over. This beautifully written manuscript contains ten sections (*fusūl*) dealing with the following: the distinction between good and venal religious scholars, the necessity of jihad against those who profess Islam but do not practice it; the legal position of taking up arms against syncretists; the legality of waging war against scholars, students and the masses who

assist unbelievers against Muslims; the permissibility of going to war against Muslims who withhold their allegiance to an *Imām* (the *muhmilūn*); the legality of taking up arms against Muslims who declare their enmity to the Muslim community (the *muḥaribūn*); the legal position of waging war against tyrannical rulers (the *bughāt*); the obligations of Muslim rulers to establish and protect Islamic governments; and the concept of what is lawful (*ḥalāl*) and unlawful (*ḥarām*).

In dealing with the question of the venal 'ulamā', the Shehu draws much from the *Ajwibat As'ilat Askia* of al-Maghīlī. The focal point of the former's argument is that "the misfortune of a land is to have sinful scholars and ignorant pious men among its citizens".³⁸

20. *Ta'lim al-Ikhwān bi-al-Umūr allatī Kaffarnā bihā Mulūk al-Sudān alladhīna kānū min Ahl hādhihī al-Buldān* (1228/1813)

Photographic copy from PGRR, MS. 100; LIS photocopy. This is another "brethren series" written in Sifawa in 1813, five years after the establishment of the Islamic government. B.G. Martin edited and translated the work into English in 1967 in the fourth volume of *Middle Eastern Studies*, under the title "Unbelief in the Western Sudan : 'Uthmān ḍan Fodio's 'Ta'lim al-Ikhwān'". Martin's edition is invaluable in making the Shehu's writings accessible to a wide circle of scholars.

This work deals primarily with questions of unbelief and the habit of some 'ulamā' to accuse others as unbelievers. The Shehu quoted widely from the works of Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī to support his views.³⁹ He closed the work with his al-Qādirīya al-Mukhtārīya chain of authority linking him to Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī.

³⁸ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, 1226/1811, PGRR, MS. 45, f. 4a.

³⁹ The Shehu quoted widely from Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī's *Miṣbāḥ al-Arwāḥ fi Uṣūl al-Falāḥ* and his *Ajwibat As'ilat Askīya*.

21. *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān 'alā Aḥwāl Arḍ al-Sūdān* (1226/1811)

PGRR, MS. 123. Another work in the "brethren series" written in Sifawa in 1226/1811, it has been translated by H.R. Palmer as "An Early Conception of Islam", in the *Journal of the African Society*, 13 and 14 (1914 and 1915). The *Tanbīh* is apologetic for it tries to answer al-Kanemi's accusation that the jihad was a transgression of the Sharī'a since the people attacked were Muslims.⁴⁰ Like all works of this category it delves into the un-Islamic habits of the peoples of the Central Sudan.

The seven parts (*fuṣūl*) discuss : (1) the various territories of the Sudanese region; (2-4) *dār al-Islām* and *dār al-ḥarb*; (5) correspondence between the Egyptian 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505) and the rulers of Agades and Katsina; (6) correspondence between Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī (d. 1504) and Muḥammad Rumfa, ruler of Kano, and (7) justification of the hijra and the subsequent jihad against the Habe rulers. This last part is written by 'Abd Allāh as a result of the jihadists' flight and the waging of war against the Hausa nobility. It was written on the Shehu's behest and then later copied as the author's response to al-Kanemi's criticism.

The *Tanbīh* is based mainly on three sources : *Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān li-Aṣnāf Majlūb al-Sūdān* of Ahmad Bābā⁴¹ of Timbuktu, and the correspondence of al-Suyūṭī and al-Maghīlī in justification of taking up arms against the rulers of Hausaland and Borno. Although these rulers profess Islam, they retained some of their traditional pagan customs.

⁴⁰ For al-Kanemi's letter of accusation refer to Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, pp. 124-7.

⁴¹ For detailed information on Ahmad Baba's life see J.O. Hunwick, "Ahmad Baba and the Moroccan Invasion of the Sudan", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 2 (1962) 311-328.

The letters of al-Suyūfī and al-Maghīlī to the rulers of Hausaland relate to the injunction to "command what is good and forbid what is evil".

22. *Wathīqa (ilā Jamīʿ) Ahl al-Sūdān*

CAD, MS. 14. A.D.H. Bivar published a translation of this dispatch in the *Journal of African History* 2 (1961) as "The Wathīqat Ahl al-Sūdān : A Manifesto of the Fulani Jihād". The undated policy declaration contains twenty-seven pronouncements familiar from other writings of the Shehu, particularly his later works. *Masāʾil Muhimma*, *Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra* and *Kitāb al-Farq*, to mention but a few, deal with the points listed in the *Wathīqa*. From one perspective the *Wathīqa* can be interpreted as a summation of the Shehu's teachings. Among the points discussed are : commanding good and forbidding evil; flight from the land of unbelief; appointment of an *imām* and obedience to him., enforcement of the Shariʿa; the status of a territory is the status of its ruler; waging war upon mixers of Islam and paganism is obligatory, anathematizing Muslims for disobedience is unlawful; etc. Although it is certain from internal evidence⁴² that the *Wathīqa* was written after the establishment of the Islamic government in Hausaland, the exact date is unknown.

The Shehu's ideas on Renewal

The Shehu's major contribution to the concept of renewal (*tajdīd*), apart from his views on *bidʿa*, was his liberal advocacy of free choice of any legal opinion from the four schools of law. He believed that all four schools are equal. He disapproved of jurists who gave legal decisions according to a school of law to which they did not belong and stated that they did so only out of necessity (*al-ḍarūrāt tubīḥ al-maḥẓūrāt*). He wondered why an act

⁴² The *Wathīqa* discusses the situation which existed only after the victory of the jihadists, such as the backsliding Muslims, the warmongers, the appointments of officials, e.g. the *Quḍāt*, the vizier, etc.

allowed by one school of law should be regarded as forbidden by another.⁴³ A follower of one *madhhab*, he explained, could readily adopt any view from another *madhhab*. Although he was careful not to stir up controversies with the conservative ‘ulamā’ he explained in his *Najm al-Ikhwān* that unless a scholar was aware of the three hundred and thirteen ways of interpreting the Shari‘a, he should not criticize another scholar’s legal viewpoint.⁴⁴ Of the three works in this category I was successful in obtaining two.

23. *Najm al-Ikhwān* (1227/1812)

Photocopy from PGRR, MS. 16. This work is among the "brethren series" which the Shehu wrote in Sifawa in 1812. It appears that the author is responding to ‘Abd Allāh’s criticism of the Shehu’s doctrine adopted from Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghilī, that Muslims who assist unbelievers are themselves unbelievers. ‘Abd Allāh took the view that such Muslims were Muslims unless they meant to assist unbelievers in imposing unbelief on the Muslims.

The two brothers also disagreed on such matters as clothing, gold and silver, and musical instruments. While ‘Abd Allāh followed the views of most Sunni scholars in objecting to all these things, the Shehu maintained that they should not be categorically forbidden. Silk and gold taken as booty from Hausa nobility, he insisted, should be worn temporarily as a sign of thanksgiving to God and a display of His blessings.⁴⁵ ‘Abd Allāh

⁴³ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Hidāyat al-Ṭullāb*, (Zaria : Gaskiya, n d) p. 4.

⁴⁴ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 3b

⁴⁵ The Shehu defended his position by referring to what happened during the caliphate of ‘Umar when Syria was conquered. ‘Umar, it was reported, did not forbid the *Ṣaḥāba*, particularly their governor, Mu‘āwiya, from wearing silk taken as booty from the Byzantines. cf. ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, ff. 22a-23b.

demurred because he could not see how thanksgiving to God and the display of His blessings should be temporary.⁴⁶ In reply the Shehu said in the introduction of *Najm al-Ikhwān* :

I firmly undertake that I shall not make a statement without mentioning the book from which I have copied, as I normally do in most of my writings, for the souls are more likely to be satisfied with this method. I am also accustomed in most of my writings to urge the people to avoid disagreement (*khilāf*). Moreover, I normally cite the opinions of the 'ulamā' on controversial issues to give each of my brethren the opportunity to choose the opinion which appeals to him. My purpose for doing all this, though intentions are never completely free from unworthy motives, is to preserve the government of the community (*Ḥifẓ niẓām al-umma*) and banish confusion and disputes from the midst of the common people. Whoever attributes my action to any other motive, may God question him on the day when the hearts are searched and examined.⁴⁷

In a sense, the Shehu was cautioning his disciples that divergent opinions would always be prevalent in politico-religious matters as had been the case even during the classical Islamic period. There was no place for extremism. In the Shehu's opinion a scholar who adhered exclusively to his own school of law failed to take advantage of the wide options given to him by God. In essence, disagreement of jurists, as extremists must know, is a blessing to Muslims.⁴⁸

Najm al-Ikhwān is one of the Shehu's most original works; there is no better example of his ideas of renewal. Unfortunately, however, this work has not been edited or translated.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ 'Uthmān b, Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 1a.

⁴⁸ Ibid., f. 7b.

24. *Hidāyat al-Ṭullāb fī Aḥamm Masā'il al-Dīn*

Printed copy by Gaskia (no date); copy in LIS. As the title indicates, this is an outline of the Shehu's thought concerning the liberalization of *taqlīd* (blind adherence to one particular school of law). Apparently the Shehu felt that the scholars' attitude to *taqlīd* had become fanatical, so that clarification was necessary. He listed ten points, the first two of which are as follows :

- (1) All [laws] coming down from the Prophet were not known as anyone's school of law, but a Divine Law applicable to whosoever submitted to it.
- (2) Neither God in his Book, nor the Prophet in his Sunna made it obligatory to follow one particular *madhhab*, nor did we hear a single person among the learned men of the past who enjoined anyone to follow a specific school of law. If anyone had done that he would have committed a sin by not allowing people to act in accordance with the Prophetic Traditions, to which that particular *mujtahid* did not give weight.

This position of the Shehu is significant in Islamic jurisprudence since Muslim jurists had generally abandoned *ijtihād* and confined themselves to the findings of the four *imāms* of the *madhāhib*.⁴⁹

His Fulfulde Poems

As stated elsewhere, the author composed many poems in Fulfulde, his mother tongue, some of which depicted the social life of Hausaland in the eighteenth and nineteenth

⁴⁹ By the end of the ninth century, after the death of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (855), the gate of *ijtihād* was considered by the generality of the jurists to be closed. But see Wael Hallaq, "Was the Gate of Ijthād Closed?", *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 16 (1984) 3-41.

centuries. It is generally believed that these poems were composed specifically to reach the ignorant populace.⁵⁰ Through this genre, it was explained, the Shehu communicated the basic tenets of Islam to the unlettered, and warned them to distance themselves from un-Islamic practices. But in scrutinizing these poems, it is clear that not all of them were meant for the general public. Some are adaptations of parts of his Arabic works, in some cases, almost identical. For instance, *Mōdinōre* (The Instructive One) corresponds closely to *Nūr al-Albāb*. As such, the poem was meant for both students and the general public. A poem such as *Yimre Jihādi* (The Jihād Poem), on the other hand, with many references to classical Arabic books, was certainly not meant for the general public but for the author's students. A few of these poems are briefly examined here.

25. *Mōdinōre* (The Instructive One) (1204/1789)

This Fulfulde poem of one hundred and ninety-one lines, written in 1204/1789 identifies three groups of people in Hausaland : Muslims, heathens and syncretists. As in *Nūr al-Albāb* the author made only brief references to the first two groups and then dealt fully with the third group, listing polytheistic and sinful practices as explained in *Nūr al-Albāb*.

26. *Boneji Lesdi Hausa* (The Problems of Hausaland)

This undated poem of one hundred and three lines was composed to reveal the un-Islamic practices of the people of Hausaland. The author enumerated various practices

⁵⁰ D. M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 9; Nehemia Levtzion, "The Eighteenth Century Background to Islamic Revolutions in West Africa", *Eighteenth-Century Renewal and Reform in Islam*, ed. by N. Levtzion and J.O. Voll, (Syracuse : Syracuse University Press, 1987), p. 27.

(ranging from the negligence of religious rites, such as ablution and charity, to mixing of the sexes). These included :

1. Some of the problems of Hausaland are the people's performance of the prayers without ablution;
Their refusal to pay the *zakāt* for their animals.⁵¹
2. Other problems are the intermingling [of the sexes];
Men and women milling around.
3. Men and women in the company of one another for the whole day;
Retiring after each of them has sinned (disobeyed God).
4. Then they assemble in the evening to spend the night;
And that is how they lacked wisdom.⁵²

The poem is apparently aimed at the ignorant masses. The language is simple and no references are made to Arabic books.

27. *Yimre Jihādi* (The Jihād Poem) (1220/1805)

This is an eighty-seven-line poem written one year after the jihad had begun. It is a Fulfulde version of the *Masā'il Muḥimma*, combining the message of this work and his *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*. It enjoins all Muslims to take up arms against the syncretists. The Shehu enumerated other obligatory undertakings such as the pledge of allegiance to an imām and the waging of war against backsliders, warmongers, oppressors, apostates, etc. In my opinion the work is directed to students because many references to classical Islamic books are made. For example, he refers to *Jāmi'* of Ibn Ishāq, *al-Irshād* of Qastalānī, *Qawānīn al-Aḥkām al-Shar'īya* of Muḥammad b. Juzayy, *Sharḥ al-Saghir* of al-Kharāshī, *al-Zahra al-Wardīya*

⁵¹ The Fulfulde version is in A. Abu-Manga, and J. Mukoshy (compilers) *Gime Fulfulde : Gime Shehu Usmanu bi Fodio* (Kano : Bayero University, n.d.), p. 93.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 94.

of al-Ujhūrī, *Sharḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* of Shabrakhītī, *Aḥkām* of Ibn al-ʿArabī, *al-Mukhtaṣar* of Khalīl b. Ishāq, *Ajwiba* of al-Maghīlī, etc.

28. *Tanāsībūjī* (The Attributes) (1224/1809)

This seventy-one-line poem is rendered into Hausa under the title *Sifofin Shehu*.⁵³ The poem was composed, as the date above shows, a year after the fall of Alkalwa, the capital of Gobir. Even at this period of his victory the Shehu was expecting the advent of the deliverer, the Mahdi, for he informed his listeners in the poem that he was the forerunner of the Mahdi, a cloud heralding the Mahdi's rain.

The Shehu began by listing the similarities of personalities, actions and events associated with his life and with the Prophet's. He noted that the flight of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina took place in the same month as his own flight from Degel to Gudu. The Prophet was victorious in his first encounter with the Meccans just as the Shehu was victorious in his own with the Gobirawa. Many Muslims were killed in Uhud just as the Shehu lost as many in Tsuntsuwa.

Then he proceeded to describe the signs of the advent of the Mahdi. He observed that when there is social disorder, moral degeneration, political chaos - injustice and oppression become common and dissension is rife among Muslims, to the extent that good people become helpless and disenchanted - the Mahdi will then appear just as the Shehu appeared in similar circumstances. He says in part :

⁵³ cf R.A. Adelye, "Sifofin Shehu" : An Autobiography and Character Study of ʿUthmān b. Fūdī in Verses", *Ibadan, Nigeria. University. Centre of Arabic Documentation. Research Bulletin*, 2 (1966) 1-36.

Mi hokkama munasaba bo mo Mahdi
 Mi yetti Allah dou ñum ndokkoyami
 Zamanu me'en yo ñum zamanu mo Mahdi
 Mi yetti Allah ñon'en ngaddoyami
 Olamintake ma fitinaji mbangi
 Mi yetti Allah ñon bo yo lamminami
 Ko Mahdi andira yehdingo sunna
 Mi yetti Allah dou ñum ngehdirami
 Ko Mahdi andira yo waɗai jihadi
 Mi yetti Allah min bo yo ñon mbaɗami.

Which I translate as follows :

I am endowed with the attributes of the Mahdi
 I thank God for what He bestowed on me
 Our time is the time of the Mahdi
 I thank God for [living] in it
 He will not be enthroned [appear] until there are dissensions
 I thank God, for that was when I was enthroned
 The Mahdi is known for the revival of the Sunna
 I thank God, for that was what I was blessed with
 The Mahdi is known for waging the jihad
 I thank God, for that is what I am doing.

29. *Datal Aljanna* (The Path to Paradise)⁵⁴

The date of the composition of this poem is not known, but it must be an early poem since it aims at moral training for the common people. He began by encouraging his listeners to seek religious knowledge because this is a practice which will lead to paradise. Moreover they should abstain from sensuality, bad customs and egoistic behaviour; obey God's injunctions and avoid what He forbids; observe all supererogatory prayers and litanies (*awrād*). He says in part :

Kulol Allahu tokkugo ñum O Umri
 He accugo ñum O harmini renu haddi
 Mo tokkayi wakkati je fu ɓo'catako
 Ibadajiji maɗum fu yo guddi.

⁵⁴ He has written a work of the same title and content in Arabic, *Tariq al-Janna*. NAK. *Datal Aljanna* teaches *ihsān* which the Shehu regards as a form of Sufism and recommends it to all Muslims.

Which I translate thus :

The fear of God is to obey His command
And avoid what He forbids [and] observe the [divine]law
He who does not observe the prescribed times of prayers
His religious practices will always remain incomplete.

The five poems discussed above are representative of several other poems by the author on the same subject. As these latter do not contain anything new which cannot be found in his Arabic works or his other poems I will end this survey of the Shehu's social writings and continue with those of his disciples.

Relevant Works Written by His Disciples

In this section I will discuss some of the the writings of his brother, 'Abd Allāh, his son, Muḥammad Bello, and his grandson, 'Abd al-Qādir b. al-Muṣṭafā, confining myself to those works which shed some light on the Shehu. Works of history by Gidado dan Laima and his son, 'Abd al-Qādir, are not included here as they will appear in the Shehu's biography in Chapter Two. Among the writings of 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad Fūdī, therefore, are the following :

1. *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt bi-Jam' ba'q mā-lī min al-Abyāt* (1228/1813)

This is one work which does not need any special introduction to anyone with an interest in West African history. Written in 1813, the work is well known both in West Africa and in Europe. It is one of the very few African works recorded by Brockelmann and, before then, mentioned by Barth in his record.⁵⁵ In 1963 M. Hiskett edited and translated it

⁵⁵ 'Abd Allāh b. Fūdī. *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, edited with a Translation and Introductory Study of the Author's Life and Times by M. Hiskett (Ibadan : Ibadan University Press, 1963) p. 1; See Henry Barth, *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa... 1849 - 1855* (London : Frank Cass, 1965) vol 4, p. 187.

and wrote a general introduction covering the author's life with a synopsis and genealogy. *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt* is invaluable as an historical source material for the study of the jihad movement. It comprises prose and poems, but the prose is a commentary on the poems and serves to explain some points of grammar. The poems provide historical information such as the educational background of the jihad leaders, the growth of the Shehu's community, the tension between the community and the Gobir authority, the hijra and the jihad. Hiskett's edition is used in this study.

2. *Īdāʿ al-Nusūkh man Akhadhtu ʿanhu min al-Shuyūkh* (1227/1812)

This autobiographical work was written in 1812 for Fāṭima, daughter of Sulṭān Muḥammad Bello. It gives the background of the author's education, and that of his elder brother, the Shehu, providing lists of their teachers and the various subjects they studied. It was published by Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria, in 1958, a copy of which is used in this study. A published copy also appeared in 1957 in the *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*.⁵⁶ The importance of the work lies in what light it shed not only on the Shehu's education but also on the system of education and the scope of subjects covered. With *Īdāʿ al-Nusūkh* and *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt* an invaluable biography of the Shehu was bequeathed to us by ʿAbd Allāh.

⁵⁶ M. Hiskett, "Material Relating to the State of Learning among the Fulani before their Jihād", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 19 (1957) 550-578.

3. *Ḍiyā' al-Sulṭān wa Ghayrihi min al-Ikhwān fī Aḥamm mā Yuṭlab 'Ilmuḥu fī Umūr al-Zamān* (1227/1812)

The text is a photocopy from PGRR, MS. 105, but there are copies in NHRS, MS. P. 91/2 and HRB. *Ḍiyā' al-Sulṭān* is a smaller work than *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt* and was written in 1812. A poor translation of it was made in 1950 when Jeffreys converted into English the Fulfulde translation of its original Arabic.⁵⁷ The work comprises extracts from four earlier works : al-Maghilī's *Tāj al-dīn fī mā Yajib 'alā al-Mulūk* written in the late fifteenth century for the instruction of Muḥammad Rumfa, the Sulṭān of Kano from 1463 - 1499; the *Ajwibat As'īlat Askiya* by the same author answering questions presented to him by Muḥammad Askiya, the ruler of Songhay from 1494 - 1528; the *Sirāj al-Ikhwān* and the *Miṣbah Ahl al-Zamān* of the Shehu. The work is an exposition on such legal matters as the treatment of non-Muslim subjects in a Muslim state; apostasy, treasury revenue and expenditure; conduct of jihad; clothing; the use of gold, silver and musical instruments; etc.

The author and his brother, the Shehu, had disagreed on the legal interpretation of these. In his *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, the Shehu as mentioned earlier, adopted the doctrine of al-Maghilī that those who assist unbelievers are themselves unbelievers 'Abd Allāh, on the other hand, disputed the legality of this interpretation and took the view that a Muslim fighting against other Muslims should not be anathematized for that act unless he intended it to further the cause of unbelief. He also frowned at the use of silk clothing, gold, silver, musical instruments and Habe official titles.

In a rejoinder, the Shehu wrote his *Najm al-Ikhwān*, explaining, by citing the Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth and some classical works, why he permitted their use. This work of 'Abd Allāh should be read with *Najm al-Ikhwān*.

⁵⁷ M.D.W. Jeffreys, "Two Arabic Documents : Diyyā as-Sulṭān and Tazyīn l-Waraqāt", *African Studies*, 9 (1950) 77-85.

Muḥammad Bello b. ʿUthmān b. Fūdī

Infāq al-Maysūr fī Taʾrīkh Bilād al-Takrūr (1227/1812)

This is one of the best known works of the jihad literature. Over a hundred pages long, it was completed four years after the fall of Alkawa⁵⁸ and the establishment of the Islamic government. Although the date is given in letters with numerical values at the end of the work, as was the tradition in nineteenth-century West African writings, another manuscript in the possession of the Wazīr of Sokoto, Alhajī Junaidu, gives a later date of 1228/1813.⁵⁹ A text of the work was published in 1951 by C. E. J. Whitting. Although the work was collated from three manuscripts, it was not wholly free of errors. Another text based on two manuscripts, from Rabat, Morocco and Sokoto, was printed in 1964. I have not seen this copy. My source is based on Dr. Last's and Zahradeen's works.⁶⁰ E. J. Arnett's *The Rise of the Sokoto Fulani*, published in 1922 and available on microfilm is "a paraphrase and in some parts a translation" of the work. Dr. Last indicated many errors in this work and in his opinion, it is unreliable.⁶¹ This is in effect true when one compares the Arabic text collated by Whitting with this work. The inaccuracies are more pronounced in the translation.

The value of *Infāq al-Maysūr* lies in its proven authenticity and its detailed accounts of events and personalities involved in the jihad movements. Sultān Bello not only recorded defeats which his community suffered but included criticisms made against the jihad by the Borno ruler, al-Amin al-Kanemi. Abstracted below is a portion of al-Kanemi's letter to the author.

⁵⁸ Alkalwa was the capital of Hausa State of Gobir. With its fall in 1808 the resistance in Hausaland was practically over.

⁵⁹ M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. xxxi.

⁶⁰ Ibid., M. S. Zahradeen, "ʿAbd Allāh", p. 36.

⁶¹ M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. xxxi.

We believe in writing; even if it makes no impression on you, it is better than silence.... Tell us therefore why you are fighting us and enslaving our free people. If you say that you have done this to us because of our paganism, then I say that we are innocent of paganism, and it is far from our compound. If praying and giving of alms, knowledge of God, fasting in Ramaḍān and the building of Mosques is paganism, what is Islam?⁶²

In addition to honest recording, another characteristic of this work is in its fairly dependable chronology. As a whole, it is an important source of material for this kind of study, for it touches on every aspect of the jihad, including the social condition of the people.

Whitting's edition, which is in the LIS collection, is used here.

Abd al-Qādir b. al-Muṣṭafā⁶³

*Raudāt al-Afkār*⁶⁴

NHRS, MS. P. 26/8. This is another historical work which could complement Bello's *Infāq al-Maysūr*. The undated work was perhaps written around 1824. In some manuscripts even the author's name was omitted. The work deals with eighteenth century Gobir history and the early period of the caliphate. H.R. Palmer incorrectly attributed the work to Sultān Bello when he published its English translation in the *Journal of the African Society*⁶⁵ The value of this work as the only extant document on the history of Habe Gobir cannot be over-emphasized. Two scholars noted in this field, Professors Hunwick and Lange, while acknowledging this fact, also note that Palmer's published translation was not free from

⁶² Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 125; Thomas Hodgkin, *Nigerian Perspectives : an Historical Anthology*, (London . Oxford University Press, 1960) p. 199.

⁶³ 'Abd al-Qādir b. al-Muṣṭafā was a grandson of the Shehu on his mother's side. He wrote his *Raudāt al-Afkār* when he was still young. He met and befriended Barth, the German traveller, in Wurno in 1853. See Henry Barth, *Travels and Discoveries*, v. 4, p. 183.

⁶⁴ *Raudāt al-Afkār* is not the formal title of this work. The phrase only appears in the content of the work. Another title by which the work is known is *Akhbār al-Bilād al-Hausiyya*.

⁶⁵ H. R. Palmer, "Western Sudan History : The Raudthât' (sic) ul Afkâr", *Journal of the African Society*, 15 (1915-1916) 261-273.

inaccuracies. For this reason they decided to make a critical edition of the Arabic text with a new English translation and an introductory note. The new text was to be collated from four manuscripts. *Rauḍāt al-Afkār* is invaluable to this study for it enhances one's knowledge of Gobir prior to the jihad

Theses and Books

In the course of my study, I have read and examined several theses on various subjects of the nineteenth century jihad in West Africa. Of these, two dissertations deal with subjects closely related with mine. In addition two well-known books which developed out of Ph.D. theses are invaluable sources for their exhaustive treatments of some aspects of the jihad movement in Hausaland. Following this is a review of other secondary sources of importance which give either a general coverage or specific aspects of the jihad movement.

1. J.P. Smaldone, "Historical and Sociological Aspects of Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate" (Ph.D. Dissertation Northwestern University, Evanston, 1970), 318 pp.

This study covers the period from 1790 to 1817 and comprises nine chapters in addition to illustrations and tables. As the title indicates, it deals with aspects of warfare of the jihad movement, examining, among other things, the military organization of the movement, the development of cavalry warfare, defensive warfare including fortifications; the introduction of firearms and their effects; and military fanfare and political power.

This is the first study of warfare in the nineteenth century jihad in Hausaland, given the multifunctional dimensions of warfare, the value of this work is certainly great. There are however a few points where our views differ. For example, Smaldone's assertion that the Shehu's jihad was a continuation of the reform tradition which originated in the Almoravid

movement of the eleventh century is difficult to substantiate⁶⁶ even though the same view is entertained by Hiskett in his article "An Islamic Tradition of Reform in the Western Sudan from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century".⁶⁷ The effect of the Almoravid movement on West Africa was minimal. We do not know of any historical event associated with it in the region besides the overthrowing of the Ghana empire. Its activities were confined to North Africa and Spain. Even the attempt to link the two movements through al-Maghīlī's literary expression in the fifteenth century cannot be defended. While al-Maghīlī's influence on the jihad is indisputable, there is no evidence that al-Maghīlī was influenced by the Almoravid movement. As far as we know, no documents were left behind by the Almoravids which have inspired al-Maghīlī's militant ideology.

Furthermore, the assertion that the jihad was a holy war by Muslims against pagans (*Hausa-arna*) is debatable.⁶⁸ As far as the Shehu was concerned, the war was not aimed at pagans but at "Muslim syncretists". In fact, that was why the jihad was known as the "renewal movement" and its leader, the Shehu, was known as *mujaddid*. The Shehu repeatedly distinguished three groups of people in Hausaland: Muslims, pagans and "mixers of Islamic and pagan practices", and it was the last group that he took up arms against.

Nevertheless, although Dr. Smaldone, for unavoidable reasons, could not utilize the local sources, his contribution to the history of the nineteenth century jihad movement is a welcome addition to the research effort on the jihad movements of West Africa. The work has been published under the title *Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate*.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ J.P. Smaldone, "Historical and Sociological Aspects of Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate". (Ph.D. Dissertation Northwestern University, Evanston, 1970) p. 1.

⁶⁷ *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 25 (1962) 577-596.

⁶⁸ Smaldone, J. P. "Historical and Sociological Aspects of Warfare" p. 2

⁶⁹ J.P. Smaldone, *Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate: Historical and Sociological Perspectives* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 228

2. Robert R. Martenson, "The Life and Work of Usmaanu bii Fooduye, with Special Reference to the Religious Nature of the Encounter between the Hausa Muslim and the Fulbe Muslim Communities". (Ph.D. Dissertation . The Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1977), 179 pp.

This is a study of the Shehu's biography, covering the land and society in which he was raised and subsequently waged the holy war, his life and activities, the Hausa concept of Islam as against the Fulbe, and the influence of the Shehu upon present-day West Africa. As the title indicates Martenson is one of the scholars who entertain the theory that the jihad was a war between Fulbe and Hausa but the evidence of recent studies shows that the jihad was so complex that various parties and interests were involved. It is no longer feasible to interpret it as just a religious, or racial, or political movement.⁷⁰ The Shehu's denunciation of Muslims who engaged in un-Islamic practices cut across ethnic borderlines as is clear in many of his writings.

The following writings would not only clarify the above point but could have been utilized as biographical material *Asānīd al-Ḍaʿīf, Asānīd al-Faqīr, Bayān al-Bidaʿ al-Shayṭāniya, Irshād al-Ikhwān ilā Ahkām Khurūj al-Niswān, Tanbih al-Ikhwān ʿalā Jawāz Ittikhādh al-Majlis li-Ajl Taʿlīm al-Niswān, Tanbih al-Ikhwan ʿalā Ahwal Ard al-Sūdān,*

⁷⁰ M.R. Waldman, "The Fulani Jihād : A Reassessment", *Journal of African History*, 6 (1965) 333-335 ; M.R. Waldman, "A Note on the Ethnic Interpretation of the Fulani Jihād", *Africa*, 36 (1966) 286-291

Ta'lim al-Ikhwān,⁷¹ *Najm al-Ikhwān*,⁷² *Hidāyat al-Ṭullāb*⁷³ and *Ḥiṣn al-Afham*⁷⁴ all by the Shehu; *Infāq al-Maysūr* and *Ishāra wa al-I'lām* by Muḥammad Bello; *Rauḍ al-Jinān* and *Majmū' Khiṣāl al-Shaykh* by Gidado dan Laima; *Anīs al-Mufīd* and *al-Lawāmi' al-Nūrāniya* by 'Abd al-Qādir b. Gidado and 'Abd al-Qādir b. al-Mustafā's *Rauḍāt al-Afkār*. Since Martenson shows interest in Fulfulde materials these poems by the Shehu could have been invaluable : Nde Min Puḍḍuno Noddoigo (When we Began the Call), Yimre Jihadi (The Jihad Poem), Tanāsībūji (The Attributes), Boneji Lesdi Hausa (The Problems of Hausaland), etc.

However Martenson's study was confined to the following : a work on *Iḥyā' al-Sunna* by Ismail Balogun, F. El-Masri's work on *Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra*, Hiskett's article on *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, *Bayān al-Bida' al-Shaṭāniya* and *Naṣā'ih al-Umma* and another article on an edition and a translation of *Kitāb al-Farq*, plus his work on *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, and Bivar's work on *Watnīqat Ahl al-Sūdān*.

Although Bello's *Infāq al-Maysūr* is listed in the bibliography under the author's name, it is cited in two places in the text as the Shehu's work.⁷⁵ There are other inaccuracies, especially in transliteration of Arabic titles which, it is believed, occurred as a result of the

⁷¹ B.G. Martin, "Unbelief in the Western Sudan : 'Uthmān dan Fodio's 'Ta'lim al-Ikhwān'", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 4 (1967) 50-97. This work is not included in Martenson's bibliography.

⁷² *Najm al-Ikhwān*, reveals the Shehu's renewal ideas. One cannot discuss them without this work.

⁷³ *Hidāyat al-Ṭullāb* is a leaflet yet very important, for it reveals the Shehu's liberal ideas regarding *madhāhib* (schools of law) and *taqlīd*.

⁷⁴ *Ḥiṣn al-Afham* discusses the issue of unbelief and the attitude of some students who anathematized others

⁷⁵ R.R. Martenson, "The Life and Work of Usmaan bii Fooduye, with Special Reference to the Religious Nature of the Encounter between the Hausa Muslim and the Fulbe Muslim Communities", (Ph.D. Thesis. The Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1977), pp. 132 and 135.

author's writing them phonetically as pronounced by his interviewees. Fulbe, for instance, pronounce the letter "ḍ" as "b" and this is reflected wherever "ḍ" occurs in the work. Again, some titles attributed to the Shehu cannot be located among his works. For instance *Iḥām al-Muṭṭahidīn* which does not make sense, can it be *Iḥām al-Munkirīn*, one of the Shehu's writings? *Kitāb Marʿat el-Ṭullāb* is, in fact, *Mirʿāt al-Ṭullāb*.

Although I share Martensen's view that the Shehu was not a revivalist, I do not see him as a reformist. I maintain that there are three forms of Sunni reactions to change; the desire (1) to revive Islam by sticking to the Qurʾān and the Sunna and accepting nothing else; (2) to compromise; and (3) to accommodate. These will be discussed as the study progresses.

3. R.A.Adelye, *Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria 1804 - 1906: The Sokoto Caliphate and its Enemies* (London : Longman, 1971), 360 pp.

One of the best examples of scholarship on jihad in nineteenth-century Hausaland, this work covers the period from the outbreak of the jihad to the advent of the British, 1804 - 1906. Originally a dissertation, the book is based on indigenous Arabic sources, early European travellers' gazetteers, government publications and oral traditions.

Dr. Adelye begins with the political and religious problems of Pre-jihad Hausaland and outlines factors which helped the caliphate to maintain cohesion. Describing how various emirates within the caliphate related to one another and to the Sultan, contrary to some views, that the caliphate was strong, without signs of decay during the British occupation. Although the emirates were bound as a unit by various factors, each emirate acted independently in many spheres, such as defence. Other themes discussed are the introduction of firearms and slavery. Firearms were made available to emirates, particularly Nupe and Adamawa by a French agent but they were not employed effectively during the encounter with the British.

Slaves, on the other hand, were an economic and commercial commodity in the caliphate and constituted a large percentage of the population.

This excellent work of African historiography is indispensable, it is one of the dependable sources for this subject.

4. Murray Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate* (London : Longman, 1967), 280 pp.

In his excellent and comprehensive book on the nineteenth-century jihad in Hausaland, Dr. Last discusses events of the period and the role of the vizierate from the beginning of the movement to the imposition of British colonial rule. The value of the book lies in the author's reliance on indigenous Arabic material, for his knowledge of Arabic enabled him to utilize this material profitably without confining himself to translations, some of which are extremely inaccurate. In addition, he also uses European travellers' gazetteers and oral information. Dr. Last spent one year in Sokoto, collecting material for his Ph.D. thesis from which this book developed. He devoted over thirty pages on the sources and also compiled a comprehensive bibliography of the indigenous Arabic sources, among them the Shehu's writings alone comprising ninety-one titles

In the introduction, he begins by defining Sokoto and its hinterland, describing such natural disasters as droughts and famine associated with semi-desert regions. By this approach, the author prepares the reader for the hardships that the Shehu's community had to face in addition to the Habe hostility.

Dr. Last also provides full coverage of the life and activities of the 'ulamā' before the Jihād (pp. lxxvi-lxxix). Although this segment of society was unified and maintained contacts among themselves, they were alienated from the culture and values of the people among whom they lived. He also analyses the ethnic composition of the 'ulamā'. The picture

he projects, contrary to some views, is that the Muslims were not a minority prior to the jihad.

The book is then divided into three parts as follows : Part One consists of three chapters covering three topics of the period 1754 - 1817 : the *umma*, the jihad and the early caliphate. Here the author discusses the life and activities of the Shehu up to the time of the declaration of the jihad. He gives a detailed description of the Muslim community at Degel complete with names of the Shehu's relatives, friends, students and servants (pp. 16-19), and enumerates about twelve major battles fought in the jihad from 1804 to 1808. He asserts that both armies were mixed racially (p 27).

In discussing the administrative machinery of the *umma*, Dr. Last covers the election of the *imām* (p. 97) and the decentralization of power among the closest relatives and disciples of the *imām* and *umarā'*. He accounts for the successes and the failures of the caliphal administration. He defines the origin and functions of the offices that were created during the time of the Shehu, including the Wazīr (vizier), the Galadima (chief counsellor), Amir al-Jaysh (Commander of the Army), etc (p 102)

Part Two is devoted to a discussion of the maintenance of the caliphate, 1817 - 1903, whose strength was tested by revolts, crises and campaigns. The Marafa revolt of 1891 and the Kano crisis of 1893 - 1894 were damaging to the image of the caliphate. Part Three concludes the book with a detailed study of the vizierate in Sokoto from 1804 - 1903.

Dr. Last's thorough research is indispensable as a source for the history of Northern Nigeria and the neighbouring territories.

- 5 H.A.S. Johnston, *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*. (London : Oxford University Press, 1967), xvi, 312 pp.

The Fulani Empire of Sokoto is an outcome of a long and wide experience of the author during his tenure as the British colonial administrator in Northern Nigeria. The work which aims at general readership is based on various sources : the author's District Notebooks compiled in the 1950s; oral testimony collected from local people; Provincial Gazetteers compiled by other British officers; R.M. East's collections of *Labarun Hausawa da Makwabtansu* (Zaria, Gaskiya, 1932). Johnston had also used translated local Arabic material such as Arnett's translation of Bello's *Infāq al-May sur* and Hiskett's translation of ʿAbd Allāh's *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*.

Perhaps in order to emphasize the theory of the Hamitic origin of the Hausa people, Johnston opens the book with the suggestion that the Hausawa came into being as the result of a mixture of Berber immigrants from the Sahara with the sub-Saharan peoples (p. 4). This is followed by a detailed account on the jihad as it was fought in the various states in Hausaland. The fall of Hausa states was followed by the period of consolidation during Bello's sultanate and those of his immediate successors. Johnston believes that the caliphate was on the verge of collapse at the time of the British occupation.

The author has much admiration of the Fulbe which reflects in the book. He has much praise for the ʿUthmaniya caliphate for he argues that it brought peace and justice for the peoples of Hausaland. On the whole, this work is a useful contribution to our knowledge of the nineteenth-century Hausaland.

- 6 J.O Hunwick (ed. and tr.) *Sharīʿa in Songhay. The Replies of al-Maghīlī to the Questions of Askiya al-Hajj Muhammad*. [Union Académique Internationale, Fontes Historiae Africanae, Series Arabica V]. (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1985), xiv, 165 pp + [Arabic text] 48 pp.

Sharīʿa in Songhay is an outcome of thorough and painstaking investigation, a piece of scholarship which demonstrates Professor Hunwick's wealth of knowledge in Arabic and in the history of Islam in West Africa. The book contains, beside the English translation, comment and analysis of the *Replies*, its Arabic text fully annotated and a useful appendix on al-Maghīlī's scholastic pedigree.

The author begins by introducing the reader to the politico-economic and religious life of the Middle Niger before the beginning of the sixteenth century. This is followed in chapter two by detailed biographical information on Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī giving useful comments on the question of the Saharan Jews and his views concerning them as protected people (*ahl al-dhimma*). An English translation of the text is preceded, in chapter three, by a brief introduction to the text describing the manuscripts used. The last chapter discusses five key issues raised in the text : government, scholars and the state, *tajdīd*, the issue of *takfīr* and the theories of jihad.

The impact of al-Maghīlī's ideas in West African Islamic revolution, as expounded by this book, is obvious. The Shehu, for example, borrowed from him the ideas of *tajdīd*, *takfīr* and the theories of jihad. His *Sirāj al-Ikhwān* is full of quotations from the *Replies* ranging from the issues of unbelief to the activities of the venal ʿulamāʾ. For a student of Islam in West Africa this book is a must.

- 7 F.H. El Masri (ed. and tr.) *ʿUthmān ibn Fūdī : Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra ʿalā ʾl-ʿIbād*. [Union Académique Internationale, Fontes Historiae Africanae, Series Arabica I]. (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1978), xi, 194 pp + [Arabic text] iv, 147 pp.

Since the publication of Last's *The Sokoto Caliphate*, this aspect of West African history has been enriched with works of similar standard of scholarship. Dr. El Masri's study of the Shehu's *Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra* is one of such works. The importance of the work lies in the wealth of comment and analysis of both the Arabic text and the English translation which reflect the author's thoroughness in handling the study. He has, for example, traced down and documented the very many Arabic sources cited by the Shehu. Equally significant is the way he relates issues discussed in the *Bayān* to specific circumstances and problems experienced by the jihadists. This contradicts the suggestion that their works were mere compilations from early Muslim writings having almost no relevance to the jihadists' contemporary period.

However his description of the Shehu's attitudes as parochial because of the lack of wide travel may be debatable particularly in the light of the recent study. We have shown in the third chapter of this study that the Shehu, through his teachers, was in touch with the revolutionary ideas that were prevalent in the Ḥijāz and Egypt. We have also shown that his ideas, particularly the legal and mystical ones, were identical with those of the Indian renewalist, Shāh Walī Allāh. This view is further strengthened by ʿUmar al-Nagar's assertion that "... the gaining of pre-eminence in the Islamic sciences was in no way conditional upon leaving *bilād al-sūdān*".⁷⁶

⁷⁶ ʿUmar al-Nagar, "The Asānīd of Shehu dan Fodio", p. 30

- 8 M. Hiskett. *The Sword of Truth : The Life and Times of Shehu Usman dan Fodio* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1973), 121 pp.

This is a textbook on the life of the Shehu which aims largely at students of West African Studies. Hiskett, a teacher of many years in Northern Nigeria, used his immense experience in the area and his knowledge of Arabic and Hausa to produce this unique piece of work. He relies heavily on the writings of the nineteenth-century jihadists particularly the following : *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt* of ʿAbd Allāh, *Infāq al-Maysūr* of Bello and Gidado dan Laima's *Raud al-Jinān*. He has also consulted *ajami* materials such as those authored by Asmāʾ bint Shehu and her brother Isa dan Shehu

The book covers such topics as the Shehu's early life, his preaching activity, sufism, the jihad, political and religious thought. Hiskett's descriptive skill is evident in the way this work depicts the Fulbe ʿulamāʾ village life and the procedure and manner of learning in the West African traditional system of education. It has the lucidity of a good textbook. Once you start reading you do not want to put it down

- 9 M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa* (London : Longman, 1984), xi, 353 pp.

This is a comprehensive textbook on the development of Islam in West Africa. Apparently it is aimed at students and teachers of West African studies. Chronologically it covers the period between the appearance of Islam in the region and the advent of colonial rule. As for the geographical coverage, the emphasis is more on Islam in western and central Sudan. In other words, the savannah belt which lies between the the shores of the Atlantic in the west and the shores of Lake Chad in the east, and between the fringes of the Sahara in the north and the edge of the rain forest in the south. Other areas such as the Sahara, North Africa, Egypt and some places in the rain forest are discussed briefly because of their historical link with the region under study.

The book is enriched with diagrams and maps showing major routes at different times and important places mentioned in the text. On the whole *The Development of Islam in West Africa* is a welcome addition to works on West African Studies.

- 10 B.G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth Century Africa* (London Cambridge University Press, 1976), xiii, 267 pp.

This is a study of eight sufi leaders in nineteenth-century Africa : ʿUthmān b. Fūdī and al-Hājj ʿUmar Ṭal in West Africa; Amīr ʿAbd al-Qādir and Muḥammad ʿAlī al-Sanūsī in North Africa; Maʿ al-ʿAynayn al-Qalqāmī in Mauritania; Shaykh ʿUways of the Qādirīya, Shaykh Muhammad Maʿrūf of the Shādhīliya and Sayyid Muhammad ʿAbd Allāh Hasan, all of East Africa.

Professor Martin discussed each of these figures emphasizing their roles as mystics, intellectuals and revolutionaries. His brief but informative introduction stressed the following themes : the common historical background, the millennial ideas, pan-Islamism, political sufism (practiced by ʿUmar Ṭal and Muhammad ʿAbd Allāh Hasan), the concepts of *hijra* and *ijhād*, and the European encroachment. These themes and others featured in the studies

The studies are divided into three categories : al-Hājj ʿUmar Ṭal and Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Hasan, who fall into the first category, are described as "militant resisters and ideologues"; the second category, which include all the rest but Maʿ al-Aynayn, are the moderates, who taught sufism, waged the jīhad, and instituted social reforms, Maʿ al-ʿAynayn who is described as a conservative sufi leader, very little affected by modern developments, falls into the third category.

Short of Muhammad Aḥmad, the Mahdī of the Nilotic Sudan, and Shehu Aḥmad Lobbo of Masina, Professor Martin has provided us in this book with a comprehensive coverage of the nineteenth-century sufi revolutionary leaders in Africa. It is a rare

contribution to African studies considering the nature and scope of the coverage. For anyone interested in the role of mysticism in nineteenth-century Muslim Africa, *Martin's Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth-century Africa*, should be on his priority list.

- 11 Polly Hill, *Rural Hausa : a Village and a Setting* (London : Cambridge University Press, 1972), xv, 368 pp.

Dr. Hill presents in this work a detailed study of the agricultural aspect of Hausa rural economy in Batagarawa, a village in the Katsina state of Nigeria. She is interested mainly with inequality and the causes of poverty among peasants in Hausaland giving data on landholding, labour, marketing of produce and the economic relationship between rich and poor farmers. Dr. Hill emphasizes that Batagarawa, like many rural communities in West Africa, is class-less.

The book is organized into two parts : the first consists of fourteen chapters analysing different aspects of socio-economic life in the village under study ; the second part lists in alphabetical order data derived from various sources including from the notes the author had made prior to the study.

The work is useful for researchers on modern rural economy in Hausaland.

- 12 Mahdi Adamu. *The Hausa Factor in West African History* (Zaria : Ahmadu Bello University Press, 1978), 224 pp.

The book which develops out of the author's doctoral dissertation deals with the late nineteenth-century Hausa migration and culture outside Hausaland. It focuses on their contribution to the development of the neighbouring lands and on the economic and social relations between these and Hausaland. In the field of commerce, Dr. Adamu describes both the import to and exports from Hausaland and the currencies used in transactions.

His article "Distribution of Trading Centres in Central Sudan in the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries" (listed in my bibliography), is based on the original source, the dissertation.

Collections of Oral Tradition

Also included, here, are collections of oral traditions recorded by or for European officers working in and outside Hausaland. Many of these are in Hausa. Outstanding publications of this category are Francis Edgar's collections of Hausa folklore entitled *Litafi na Tatsuniyoyi na Hausa*, 3 vols (Belfast: Erskine Mayne, 1911) and R.M. East's *Labarun Hausawa da Makwabtansu*, 2 vols. (Zaria: Gaskiya, 1932). Much of Edgar's collections are transliterations from J.A. Burdon's collections which were gathered within Sokoto when the collector was the Resident there. The collections were later edited and translated into English by N. Skinner under the title *Hausa Tales and Traditions*, with a forward by M.G. Smith (London: Frank Cass, 1969). East's *Labarun Hausawa da Makwabtansu* includes Hausa translations from Arabic documents such as Bello's account of his conflict with the Arewa Hausa *ʿālim* and fellow jihadist, ʿAbd al-Salām, entitled *Sard al-Kalām fī-mā Jarā baynī wa bayn ʿAbd al-Salām* and *Taʾrīkh Kano* by an anonymous author. Also of this class are publications by the indigenous of Hausaland. Abubakar Dokaʿi's book, *Kano ta Dabo Cigari* (Zaria: Gaskiya, 1958) gives account of the history of Kano from pre-Birni period to the first half of the twentieth-century. It is useful as a supplement to the Kano Chronicle since its emphasis lies on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. *Tarihin Fulani* (Zaria: Gaskiya, 1957) by Junaid b. Muhammad al-Bukhārī, the Waziri Sokoto. The book which is the history of the Fulbe is the translation of the author's *Ḍabṭ al-Multaqaʿāt*.

There are also sources in Hausa written outside the caliphate. The most important of these are the manuscripts written by ʿUmar b. Abī Bakr b. ʿUthmān al-Kabawī al-Kanawī

al-Salagawī. Some of these relating to Hausa manners and customs are published by A. Mischlich in *Mitteilungen des seminars für Orientalische Sprachen* (1907-1909).⁷⁷

On the whole, these are representatives of both the primary and secondary sources cited in this study. Although these materials discuss the various aspects of the 'Uthmaniya jihad movement and add much to our knowledge and understanding of the revolution, none of them deals with the Shehu's approach to the implementation of *tajdid*, with which this study concerns itself.

Summary

It has been demonstrated in the foregoing that there are enough sources in Arabic, Fulfulde and European languages for the study of the "the social writings of Shaykh 'Uthmān b. Fūdī". However, in view of the impracticability of evaluating all the materials used in this study, only a carefully selected number of works considered to be representative of the bulk of the source materials have been examined. It should be noted that owing perhaps to the lack of understanding of Fulfulde, a tendency existed among scholars in this field to ignore *ajami*⁷⁸ materials, the majority of which, as far as the jihad literature is concerned, are in Fulfulde. Consequently, in this study attempts have been made to use as many of the Shehu's poems in Fulfulde as are available.

⁷⁷ For detailed information see D.E. Ferguson, "Nineteenth-Century Hausaland Being a Description by Imam Imoru of the Land, Economy, and Society of his People" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, 1973). For biography of Imām Umaru refer to pp. 6-40.

⁷⁸ Non-Arabic language written in Arabic characters. See also the glossary at the end of this work.

CHAPTER II

SHAYKH ʿUTHMĀN IBN FŪDĪ⁷⁹ : THE TEACHER AND THE MUJADDID

In order to provide the appropriate historical framework for my study, I attempt to give in this chapter a biographical sketch of the Shehu, exploring those aspects of his life which influenced his thought and shaped his career. The Shehu's full name was Shaykh ʿUthmān⁸⁰ b. Muhammad Fūdī b. ʿUthmān b. Ṣāliḥ b. Hārūn b. Muḥammad Gurto⁸¹ A prolific writer, poet, preacher and teacher, a sufi Shaykh, and a *mujaddid*⁸² of his time, he

⁷⁹ For the life of Shaykh ʿUthmān Ibn Fūdī, see F. Daniel, "Shehu dan Fodio", *Journal of the African Society*, 25 (1926) 278 - 283; F. H. El-Masri, "The Life of Shehu Usuman dan Fodio before the Jihād", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 2 (1963) 435 - 448; D. M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, pp. 3 - 60; A. R. I. Doi, "Shehu ʿUthmān dan Fodio, 1754 - 1817", *Studies in Islam*, 7 (1970) 111 - 122; I. A. B. Balogun, "The Life and Work of the Mujaddid of West Africa, ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, Popularly known as Usuman dan Fodio", *Islamic Studies*, 12 (1973) 271 - 292; M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*. B. G. Martin, "Usuman dan Fodio and the Fulani Jihād in Northern Nigeria," in his *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth Century Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976) pp. 13 - 35.

⁸⁰ The Arabic name "Shaykh ʿUthmān" localized as "Shehu Usuman" in Hausa and other languages of Northern Nigeria and "Shehu Usumanu" in Fulfulde. The title "Shehu" is synonymous with the name "Usuman dan Fodio" or "Usumanu bi Foduye". To this day a child in Northern Nigeria who bears the name "Usuman", "Usumanu", or "ʿUthmān" is given the honorific title "Shehu", which is therefore used in this study whenever he is referred to.

⁸¹ ʿAbd Allāh b. Fūdī, *Īdāʿ al-Nusūkh*, (Zaria: Norla, 1958) p. 1; M. Hiskett, "Material", p. 552.

⁸² *Mujaddid* or *Mujaddid al-Dīn* means the Renewer of the Faith. In this study the literal meaning of the term is maintained throughout. It is also argued in this chapter that there are three forms of Islamic reaction to socio-religious stagnation: (a) to revive (*iḥyāʾ*) by rigid adherence to the Book and Sunna; (b) to renew (*tajdīd*) by reasserting Sunni Islam based on the authorities of the Qurʾān, the Sunna and the *ijmāʿ*; (c) to reform (*iṣlāḥ*) by incorporating useful innovations into Islamic practices.

was known as Ibn Fūdī⁸³ in Arabic. In 1774, when he was only twenty years old, the Shehu, who was determined to bring about social change in Hausaland,⁸⁴ embarked on a series of religious activities⁸⁵ ranging from preaching, teaching, composing poems and writing religious textbooks and polemic treatises, to prevailing on his *jamā'a* to emigrate. In 1804, these activities culminated in holy wars which were waged across Hausaland, and in six years' time, all the Hausa states and parts of Borno, Adamawa⁸⁶ as well as Nupe, fell under the military might of the jihadists (*mujāhidīn*); subsequently, a new government headed by the Commander of the Faithful (*Amīral-mu'minīn*) and sanctioned by the Shari'a was established

The Shehu was a member of the Torobbe tribe of Fulbe and was born in Maratta in the land of Konni, in Gobir state, on December 15, 1754.⁸⁷ According to his younger brother, 'Abd Allāh b. Fūdī, the tribe migrated to Hausaland from Futa Toro, under the

⁸³ The name "Ibn Fūdī" is the Arabic form of "Bɪ Foduye", a Fulfulde term which means "the son of the jurist". The Hausa form is "dan Fodio".

⁸⁴ The Hausa city-states with their traditional African governments were replaced by a central administration which governed according to the laws of the Shari'a as a result of the jihad movement of the Shehu.

⁸⁵ These religious activities are known as . (A) *al-jihād al-akbar*, the greater jihad; and *al-jihād al-aṣghar*, the smaller jihad. (i) The greater jihad or self-discipline is a holy war which is to be waged by oneself against the flesh. In other words, it is a war that must be won by fighting against temptation in order to purify the soul. It is the most difficult hurdle pious people must clear before they embark on (ii) a smaller jihad which falls in two main categories. (a) The jihad of the tongue, which enjoins good and forbids evil. (b) The jihad of the hand, which concerns open warfare against persistent evil-doers. (B) The Hijra, turning away from evil. The Hijra is categorized into three parts. (i) The hijra of the heart which is to turn one's mind away from evil. (ii) The hijra of the tongue and hands which is to withdraw one's support (either verbally or physically) from forbidden action. (iii) The hijra from the land of evil which means emigration from the land of evil-doers. See J R Willis, "Jihād fī Sabīl Allāh - its Doctrinal Basis in Islam and some Aspects of its Evolution in Nineteenth Century West Africa", *Journal of African History*, 8 (1967) 399 p.

⁸⁶ In Fulfulde it was also known as Fombina, the southern emirate.

⁸⁷ D.M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 3.

leadership of their eleventh ancestor, Mūsā Jokolo.⁸⁸ This migration took place towards the middle of the fifteenth century.⁸⁹

They first settled in the city of Konni, and then scattered in other parts of Hausaland. According to M. Hiskett, Banū Āl, as the Shehu's clan was called, moved to Maratta under the leadership of Muḥammad Sa'd, his grandfather, at the beginning of the eighteenth century to escape from persecution.⁹⁰

His Early Childhood

Very little is known about the Shehu's early childhood; the only information we have is gathered from legends contained in the miraculous and charismatic (*Mu'jizāt* and *Karāmāt*) literature about him which apparently flourished after his death. Similar to the legends associated with other religious leaders including the Prophet. For example, a saintly woman named Umm Hānī bint Muḥammad al-ʿAbdūsī (d. 1455) allegedly predicted the coming of the Shehu when she said

A saint who will reform the faith, revive the *Sunna* and establish a community... Both the common people and the nobles will adhere to his commands, and those connected with him will be known as the *jamā'a*. Their sign is that their men will wear turbans, and their women will cover their faces. They will not tend cattle like their Fulbe kinsmen. Whoever witnesses the period should support him.⁹¹

⁸⁸ "Jokolo" means "hefty and strong" in Fulfulde.

⁸⁹ F.H. El-Masri, *A Critical Edition*, p. 1; M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 15; B.G. Martin, "Muslim Brotherhoods", p. 15.

⁹⁰ M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 15

⁹¹ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, pp. 29 - 30; Giḍaḍo ḍan Lāma, *Rawḍ al-Jinān fī Dhikr Manāqib al-Shaykh ʿUthmān*; also his *Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān ʿan Ba'd Aḥwāl al-Sayyid Muḥammad Bello*; his son ʿAbd al-Qādir also discussed such legends in his *Anīs*

Other stories claim that he performed miracles both in his youth and his later career. He was reported to have walked on water, made jinns appear, and in less than an hour covered distances that would normally take a day. Through his *karāma*, it is narrated that he delivered many people from danger. A woman was saved from robbers, when she vowed to reward him with three thousand cowries, and a drowning man was saved by the mere mention of his name.⁹²

The Shehu himself had not written specifically on history. He did not bequeath to us a work like 'Abd Allāh's *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt* or Bello's *Infāq al-Maysūr*.⁹³ In fact when it became necessary for him to recount the history of the jihad, he had to quote his brother, 'Abd Allāh.⁹⁴ Writing in Part Seven of his *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān 'alā Aḥwāl Ard al-Sūdān*, the Shehu actually copied 'Abd Allāh's account concerning the reasons for the hijra from Gobir, and for waging the jihad against the Hausa kings. The reason for this apparent lack of interest in historical writing is perhaps he did not consider history as one of his immediate priorities. His primary object was to provide textbooks on basic religious knowledge for the community so that they would live in conformity with the Sharī'a.

This does not mean that none of the Shehu's works was of historical value, for there are some which show the development not only of his own thinking, but also of the intellectual, social and political situations which existed in Hausaland in the eighteenth and

al-Mufīd. It is to be noted that 'Abd Allāh b. Fūdī did not mention the legends in any of his writings.

⁹² Junaid b. Muḥammad al-Bukhārī (Wazīr of Sokoto), "A Contribution to the Biography of the Shaykh Usman, Mentioning the Various Places Where he Resided", *Studies in the History of the Sokoto Caliphate. The Sokoto Seminar Papers*, ed. Y. B. Usman (Sokoto: The Sokoto State History Bureau, 1979) p. 464.

⁹³ The nearest work to an autobiography is his Fulfulde poem "Tanāsībūjī" discussed in Chapter One.

⁹⁴ H.R. Palmer, "An Early Conception of Islam", pp. 189 - 191.

nineteenth centuries. Works such as *Bayān al-Bida' al-Shayṭānīya*, *Nūr al-Albāb*, *Irshād al-Ikhwān ilā Aḥkām Khurūj al-Niswān*, *Wathīqat al-Ikhwān*, *Kitāb al-Farq*, *Naṣā'ih al-Umma al-Muḥammadiya*, *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān* and *Ta'lim al-Ikhwān* are some of his writings which reflect what he considered to be social vices that were prevalent in Hausaland at the time.

However, if we look at the historical writings of the other two leaders of the jihad, 'Abd Allāh and Muḥammad Bello, we find that, strictly speaking, although neither of them wrote about the Shehu's life, we owe much of the information on the jihad to their writings. In his work, *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, 'Abd Allāh provides us with one of the best possible sources of information on the Shehu's early career. His *Īdā' al-Nusūkh* is a useful source of information on the Shehu's teachers, and is also an indispensable intellectual work on the history of the jihad. A comprehensive account of the Shehu is given in Bello's *Infāq al-Maysūr fī Ta'rīkh Bilād al-Takrūr*, although even in this work little information is provided on his early childhood other than the legendary stories like the ones quoted earlier. Despite this apparent shortcoming it is the most reliable work available on the history of the jihad, for it includes, among other things, some damaging criticism of the jihad movement by Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Kanemī as well as unfavourable information about the movement such as indiscipline and defeat. In his *Al-Ishāra wa al-I'lām fī Ba'd Umūr Ṣilat al-Arḥām*, there is a long list totalling some ten thousand names of his forebears, beginning with that of his grandfather, Muḥammad Fūdī.⁹⁵

However, serious attempts to write the Shehu's biography and the history of the jihad were made only after his death. Here, we will refer to works⁹⁶ by Gidāḍo dan Laima⁹⁷

⁹⁵ D.M. Last, "Arabic Source Material and Historiography in Sokoto to 1864 : an Outline", *Ibadan, Nigeria. University. Centre of Arabic Documentation. Research Bulletin*, 1 (Jan., 1965) p. 6.

⁹⁶ Historian 'Abd al-Qādir b. al-Mustafā (d. 1864) is not mentioned here since his invaluable work *Rauḍāt al-Afkār* or *Akhbār al-Bilād al-Hausiyya wa al-Sūdānīya* is more useful as a

(1776 - 1851) and his son, ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Giḏāḏo (d. 1859). Giḏāḏo wrote *Rauḏ al-Jinān*, which is sometimes referred to as *Karāmāt al-Shaykh*. This is a biography of the Shehu, containing accounts of his miracles and other information about his life as well as a list of his companions and of contemporary scholars. The work is an important source of biographical data on the Shehu. Giḏāḏo's other work *Majmūʿ Khīṣāl al-Shaykh* is useful too because it contains a description of his house within the settlement.

ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Giḏāḏo (d. 1859) was also the author of *Anīs al-Mufīd*, a work in prose and poetry on the lives of the Shehu, his brother, ʿAbd Allāh, and his son Muḥammad Bello. Although much information is taken from previous works, particularly those of his father, the *Anīs* is useful as a check on other works. His *Al-Lawāmiʿ al-Nūrānīya* gives the sufi spiritual genealogy of the Shehu, Bello and himself. These works provide the earliest biographical data on the Shehu, but may not be considered to be completely reliable, because of certain exaggerations contained in them. Giḏāḏo's *Rauḏ al-Jinān* is particularly noted for most of the legends surrounding the Shehu's life.

His Education

Just as our knowledge of the Shehu's early life is scanty, so is our knowledge of his early education. What we know of it is based on his two short discourses, namely, *Asānīd al-Ḍaʿīf* and *Asānīd al-Faqīr*, and on the writings of his associates, particularly ʿAbd Allāh's.

source of historical information on the jihad and on eighteenth-century Gobir. He was the Shehu's grandson -- the son of one of his daughters.

⁹⁷ His real name was ʿUthmān b. Abū Bakr; he was the Shehu's son-in-law, who had married his daughter, Asmā³, one of the female jihad leaders who contributed to the movement by writing numerous historical and religious works. Giḏāḏo had also served the Shehu as a messenger, and later became Muḥammad Bello's Vizier. Many legends and miraculous stories about the Shehu seemed to have originated from his writings.

We have already mentioned his work *Īdā' al-Nusūkh* in which some of the Shehu's teachers and the subjects he was taught are listed. But we are not given sufficient information to help shed more light on the system of education prevalent in his time. Nevertheless, some scholars, like the late Muhammad Al-Hajj, El-Masri and Ismail Balogun, believe that the educational system was the same traditional Muslim one that existed in Timbuktu, and still survives, not only in rural areas but also in urban communities in Northern Nigeria and in some parts of West Africa.

Professors Hiskett and Zahradeen have respectively provided detailed information on how the system worked.⁹⁸ A child's education began at the age of five or six with his enrollment in a Qur'ānic school. Hiskett equates such schools with modern kindergarten classes because he observes that at this level children were only taught to recite the Qur'ān and nothing more.⁹⁹ To some extent this observation may be true, insofar as children were not exposed to the meaning of what they recited. But this is not without strong reason, for at this stage of their mental development, the main objective was to encourage them to commit to memory as many *suwar*¹⁰⁰ as they could, since the recitation of some portions of the Qur'ān formed part of the daily obligatory *ṣalāt*.¹⁰¹ More importantly, besides making the children commit the Qur'ān to memory, the schools provided the groundwork for the

⁹⁸ M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, pp. 33 - 41; Muḥammad Sanī Zahradeen, "ʿAbd Allāh", footnote 3, pp. 203 - 204.

⁹⁹ M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, pp. 34.

¹⁰⁰ Wherever it applies, I have used the word *suwar* rather than "Chapters" because in my assessment the latter word does not convey the same meaning, and in fact, the proper Arabic term for "chapter" is *bāb*.

¹⁰¹ I avoided using the word "prayer" as the interpretation of *ṣalāt* which involves lengthy rituals; I have therefore used the term *ṣalāt* itself. *Duʿāʾ* is the best equivalent for prayer.

learning of basic religious rites such as ritual cleanliness, the method of performing ablutions and *ṣalāt*. It is also at this level that they had to master reading and writing skills.

The Qurʾānic recitation was, therefore, but one of the primary objectives of the Qurʾānic schools.¹⁰² An exceptionally talented child could memorize the whole Qurʾān while still in his very early teens, and there is strong evidence to suggest that the Shehu was one of such talented children. We are told that at the age of twenty he was able to take up preaching as a career, and that he mastered enough Arabic to compose a lengthy poem.¹⁰³ This was quite an achievement for such a young man. Even today, when modern teaching methods are used, such an intellectual achievement is very rare. To appreciate what it takes to be an Islamic preacher and a poet, we need to examine the number of subjects one must cover both in Islamic sciences, as well as in Arabic and related subjects. If we assume that the Shehu graduated from the Qurʾānic school at the age of ten, after having memorized the entire Qurʾān,¹⁰⁴ he still had ten more years to study in Islamic schools of higher learning (*Makarantun Ilmi*)¹⁰⁵ before being able to embark on his preaching career.

¹⁰² A child who completes his study at the Qurʾānic school does not consider himself to be a graduate of the institution until the event is marked by a feast. Thanks are given to God, and gratitude is shown to the child's teachers. Since the teachers are not always remunerated for their efforts, they are showered with gifts by the child's parents and relatives on such occasions. Parents invite friends, relations and *ʿulamāʾ*, and the child receives new clothes and a turban. A cow is slaughtered, and food is prepared in large quantities. In the afternoon, the guests assemble in the teacher's courtyard to listen to the child reciting some verses from the Qurʾān, and after blessing him, they repair to a porch where they are served food and drinks. This is the day every child longs for and will never forget.

¹⁰³ The Shehu began to teach and preach in 1774. This was the year in which he also composed his famous poem in Arabic on the theme of "The Love of the Prophet" (An abstract of the poem is given in English in Hiskett's *Sword of Truth*, p. 33). Also see El-Masri, "The Life of Shehu Usman dan Fodio", p. 436, Balogun, "The Life and Work of the Mujaddid of West Africa", p. 275, Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 42.

¹⁰⁴ One of the qualifications of a reputable teacher is to memorize the Qurʾān. We have no cause to doubt that the Shehu had accomplished this, as his writings abound with quotations from the Qurʾān.

¹⁰⁵ M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 34.

As mentioned above, to become a preacher he had to cover a wide range of subjects in the Islamic sciences, and as such, he must have read works in the following subjects : Qurʾānic exegesis (*Tafsīr*); the Prophetic Traditions (*Ḥadīth*); Islamic Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), Islamic Legal Theory (*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*), Theology (*Tawhīd*); Sufism (*al-Taṣawwuf*), The Biography of the Prophet (*al-Sīra*). And in order to be a poet, he must have also to master the following subjects, in addition to the Arabic language : Arabic literature (*al-Adab*), Grammar (*Naḥw*); Syntax (*Iʿrāb*), Morphology (*Ṣarf*), Rhetoric (*Balāgha*); Prosody (*ʿArūḍ*)¹⁰⁶

After ten years (he could not have covered the above listed subjects in less than a decade) of strenuous studies and travelling, the Shehu must have felt confident enough to embark on preaching tours, the writing of books and treatises, as well as the composition of poems in Arabic and *ajami*. ʿAbd Allāh tells us that he was taught the Qurʾān by his father Muḥammad Fūdī.¹⁰⁷ This was most probably started when he was five years old, and continued for five years enabling him to learn the Qurʾān by heart, and master the required reading and writing skills. After graduating from school, he entered Shaykh ʿUthmān al-Kabāwī's school, where he read *ʿIshrīnīyāt* (the life of the Prophet) of al-Fazāzī and other related works. Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Hammāda taught him Arabic grammar and syntax of the language, while in *fiqh* he studied *al-Mukhtasar* under the ascetic ʿUthmān Biddūrī, his paternal and maternal uncle. According to ʿAbd Allāh, in his *Idāʿ al-Nusūkh*, this Biddūrī was well known for his learning and piety. The Shehu remained with him for two years, observing him and following in his footsteps. By the time they parted, the pious man had made a lasting impression on him, "for it was he that the Shehu imitates in word and

¹⁰⁶ For an idea of the kind of works used for the subjects listed both in the Islamic sciences and in Arabic, Aida S. Arif and Ahmad Abu Hakima's work, *Descriptive Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts in Nigeria*, will be helpful. Also see ʿAbd Allāh's *Idāʿ al-Nusūkh*, pp. 2 - 10.

¹⁰⁷ ʿAbd Allāh, *Idāʿ al-Nusūkh*, p. 4.

deed".¹⁰⁸ However, it is generally believed by the Shehu's biographers that he was influenced more by Jibrīl b. ʿUmar, who was his teacher for about a year and who is believed to have influenced his religious and political views, and encouraged him to rise against the authorities of Central Sudan.¹⁰⁹

The Shehu also learned Qurʾānic exegesis from his cousin, Ahmad b. Muhammad b. al-Amīn, and from Hāshim al-Zamfārī. He then learned the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī from his uncle, Muhammad b. Rājī b. Modibbo. According to ʿAbd Allāh, his brother's teachers were numerous so he could not remember them all. One noteworthy observation from ʿAbd Allāh's account is the fact that all the Shehu's tutors, with the exception of Jibrīl b. ʿUmar and Hāshim al-Zamfārī, were his close relatives. This confirms Hiskett's observation that among the Fulbe, the Torobbe were noted for their scholastic achievements and maintained the tradition for centuries.¹¹⁰ But more significant still was the fact that the most respected clan of the Torobbe tribe was the Banū Āl to which the Shehu belonged. This clan was noted for its learning and piety, which was not exclusively limited to its male members, women also played an important role in teaching and writing. Asmāʾ bint Shehu, for instance, was noted for her religious, political and educational works on the jihad.¹¹¹ In fact, even today, it is not uncommon to have married women running Qurʾānic schools in their homes.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 4

¹⁰⁹ El-Masri, "The Life of Shehu Usman dan Fodio", p. 438, Balogun, "The Life and Work of the Mujaddid of West Africa", p. 32.

¹¹⁰ M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 16

¹¹¹ J. Boyd, "Scholar and Revolutionary", *Afkar Inquiry*, 2 (1985) 56 - 58. Asmāʾ was described in this article as "Scholar, Sūfī, poet, Islamic revolutionary social critic, and above all, a mother of five - that was Asmaʾu Fodio, reverently referred to as *The Mother of Believers* in the Sokoto Caliphate, who rose to be, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the sole guiding spirit of the Sokoto Caliphate.. "

¹¹² Qurʾānic schools are passed from father to son, uncle to nephew, or even brother to brother. In keeping with tradition, they are run by clans who own them, except in the case of

His Preaching (1774 - 1793)

The Shehu's preaching activities lasted twenty years, from 1774 to 1793, and took the form of tours in the course of which he delivered sermons, taught and wrote textbooks, treatises and poems. The sermons and poems were in the people's languages, mainly in Fulfulde, the Shehu's mother tongue. He had to resort to tours and to composing poems in the languages of the people he was trying to reach people who were in fact Muslims but whose Islam he questioned. So from the outset he directed his movement not to the pagans who had never embraced Islam, but to Muslims who mixed Islamic practices with traditional pagan rituals which, according to him, were contrary to Islamic beliefs. That was why his movement was regarded as a "renewal" of the faith. He himself was addressed as *Mujaddid*, "Renewer of the Faith".

Strengthened by his belief that he had a divine mission to bring about Islamic religious renewal (*tajdīd*) in Hausaland, the Shehu devoted all his time and energy to the success of his movement. He was tolerant and sympathetic towards the common people, but was very critical of his colleagues, the learned men whom he accused of despising the people on account of their ignorance. Many of his works and Fulfulde poems reflect these attitudes. He declared in his *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna* that three things should be avoided in the process of educating the masses: faultfinding and unnecessary exposition of their weaknesses, despising Muslims who committed sins, condemning actions which did not go contrary to the Qurʾān and the Sunna.¹¹³ In his Fulfulde poem *Njibduji* (confusions) he criticized the ʿulamāʾ who

married women who do not need to belong to such family groups to open schools in their homes.

¹¹³ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna*, p. 7.

anathematized Muslims for not professing the full statement of the first article of the faith. He says in Fulfulde :

"Njibdu go'o darīdo *Lā ʿilāha*
Inke yo kefero nane Safāha.
Wondo yo non dā julḍo fu to simtiri,
Ko daroyaki ina warta kāfirī"¹¹⁴

My English translation is as follows :

One confusion is that he who stops at *Lā ʿilāha*,
Is to be regarded as an unbeliever, how naive!
If that were so, then any Muslim who utters the *shahāda*,
Even if he does not stop short, will become an unbeliever

The Shehu maintained that whoever utters the first part of the article of faith and believes in its concept ought to be accepted as a Muslim. He reiterated in his *Ihyāʾ al-Sunna* :

Whosoever affirms the "confession of faith" (*shahādatayn*) should be treated in accordance with the Islamic legal rules, he may intermarry with the Muslims, he may lead the prayers, the meat of the animals slaughtered by him is lawful, the Muslims may inherit his property and he may inherit their own, and when he dies, he should be buried in the Muslims' graveyard.¹¹⁵

He disagreed with those scholars who held the view that before a person is accepted as a Muslim, he must know and explain the concept of Divine Unity and the prophethood of Muhammad in accordance with the teachings of the exponents of speculative theology (*ʿUlamāʾ al-Kalām*). He dismissed such scholars as misguided, ignorant men who got themselves entangled in the sophistry of *ʿIlm al-Kalām* (speculative theology). He declared in his *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām*

¹¹⁴ Garba Saidu, "The Significance of the Shehu's Sermons and Poems in Ajami", *Studies in the History of the Sokoto Caliphate: The Sokoto Seminar Papers*, edited by Y.B. Usman (Lagos : Sokoto State History Bureau, 1979) p. 205.

¹¹⁵ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Ihyāʾ al-Sunna*, p. 41.

There are those who allege that nobody should be accepted as a believer or a Muslim before memorizing the creeds and their proofs, in accordance with the methods of the advocates of speculative theology (*mutakallimūn*), and is able to express himself clearly; I say this is nothing but falsehood and confusion according to the consensus of opinion (*ijmāʿ*). Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Qūnūnī, the distinguished scholar, rightly states in his commentary on *al-ʿUmda* of al-Nasafī, that such a stipulation had never been made by the messenger of God, nor by al-Ṣiddīq during his caliphate, when he fought the apostates (*ahl- al-ridda*). Moreover, ʿUmar, during his caliphate, did not demand such a thing from the Zatt and Anbāt people, when he conquered the Sawād of al-ʿIraq, despite their stupidity and lack of intelligence. In fact, none of the companions of the Messenger of God, nor their successors up to the present time have made such a stipulation ¹¹⁶

Thus, the Shehu had many problems to grapple with, but the main one which occupied him, as was pointed out earlier, was the lack of religious education among the masses which was further aggravated by the activities of some pseudo-ʿulamāʾ in the society.

In his *Infāq al-Maysūr*, Bello tells us that the majority of people were ignorant of the basic obligations of the faith, such as how to perform ablutions, *ṣalāt*, etc. As mentioned earlier, the Shehu composed poems in local languages, particularly in his mother tongue, Fulfulde, so that the common people would not find it difficult to understand what he wanted them to know. Some of these poems are *Modinōre* (The Instructive One), *Bege al-Qurʾān* ((The Love of the Qurʾān), *Datal al-Janna* (The Path to Paradise), *Nde Min Pudduno* *Noddoigo* (When We began the Call), *Sifāji Jaumirāwo* (The Divine Attributes), etc.

As previously stated, some ʿulamāʾ were charlatans who posed as sufi shaykhs. Not only did they claim to have had mystical experience, but they affirmed that they had the power of *Kashf* (mystical unveiling), and thereby duped the simple common people. They earned their living by means of fortune telling, the making of talismans, and by feigning to communicate with jinns. Through these magical practices they were able to wield tremendous influence over the ignorant and the superstitious populace.

¹¹⁶ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām*, f. 6a - b.

The Shehu, who was a sufi himself and a member of several *ṭuruq* including the Qādirīya Brotherhood, regarded their claims and practices as intolerable and attacked them vigorously, as he did the fanatical 'ulamā' who antagonized the common people. He even opposed his followers' attempts to attribute such powers to him, and stated in his *Taḥdhīr al-Ikhwān* :

Know O my brethren that I have never claimed the *qutbanīyya* or the *wīlaya* though that is heard from the tongues of other men. It is heard from their tongues that I can fly in the air and walk on water, that the earth is folded up for me in such a way as to enable me to walk to Mecca and Medina, that the jins serve me as they serve the most perfect saints (*al-awḥyā' al-Kummal*) and that I can guide the people not only on the path of piety and righteousness but also on the path of *Kashf*. When all these had come to my notice, I composed numerous poems in *ajamī* to refute the aforementioned claims ¹¹⁷

It was perhaps the Shehu's personality, his tolerance¹¹⁸ towards the ignorant public, as pointed out above, among other factors, that enabled him to win support of the common people. But more significant, as acknowledged by the Shehu himself, was his articulateness and tenacity as a preacher. Responding to his rival 'ulamā' who were amazed at the rapidity with which his followers were growing, he said in Fulfulde verse

Yo min ko wadi jabɓe yam buri dudugo
Mi tokkiti wa'zu fa n. jahilɓen nani
Zama fa mi wa'zoto yimbe jemmare maunde fu,
He idiji fu tukuruɓi fu mido nantina ¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ English translation from M.A. Al-Hajj's "The Meaning of the Sokoto Jihād", *Studies in the History of the Sokoto Caliphate The Sokoto Seminar papers*, edited by Y.B. Usman (Lagos : Sokoto State History Bureau, 1979) p. 9.

¹¹⁸ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Naṣā'ih al-Umma*, f. 2a and f. 32a

¹¹⁹ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, "Nde Min Pudduno Noddoigo", *Gime Fulfulde* : 1, compiled by Al-Amin Abu-Manga and Ibrahim Mukoshy (Kano : Bayero University. n.d.) p. 149.

My English translation is as follows :

As for the reason for my having more followers,
I persistently preached until the ignorant understood.
Indeed, I preached to the people every Friday night,
And also on 'Īd days, I made all the Tukrurus listen.

Bello also gave a vivid description of how his father used to conduct himself before delivering sermons and while preaching, when he wrote .

Know that I saw him more than once standing in a corner of the house for a while, uttering some words just before going out to the people outside And when I asked him what he said, he replied "I revive my faith and make a vow to God that I shall be sincere in whatever I may say when I go out (to preach) I also ask Him to help those present to understand whatever I might talk about " When he reached the audience, he greeted them in a loud voice which all could hear And when he climbed onto the pulpit, he greeted them again three times politely, gracefully and courteously Then he asked them to listen and would never get angry nor upset nor bored, though he was destined to have a group of impolite commoners who did not listen when he asked them to listen, and did not stop asking questions, when he asked them to stop Then he would give his talk in a loud voice, never directing his speech to one person apart from others, and never (being) frightened of his audience, though some may be great Shaykhs or rival 'ulamā² He would, indeed, preach to the whole congregation, of things that would benefit all of them, irrespective of the consequences (of his preaching) And if a question was asked in the course of his talk, he would stop and answer it He was resolute in matters of religion, never swayed in the path of God by the reproach of anyone, just and unaffected by the intransigence of the *jāhiliyya*, even in matters which concerned his relatives, steadfast and uncompromising in the pursuit of the Truth ¹²⁰

This, we understand from Bello, he practiced religiously whenever he gave public lectures and apparently taught his students to observe as ethics of public sermons (*da'wa*). In his *Idād al-Dā'i ilā Dīn Allāh* and *'Umdat al-'Ulamā²*, which he might have written as handbooks for preachers, the Shehu discussed not only the basic religious knowledge that a preacher ought to know but the methodology of imparting such knowledge to the public He

¹²⁰ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, pp 41 - 42. See also E J. Arnett, *The Rise of the Sokoto Fulani . Being a Paraphrase and in some Parts a Translation of the Infaku'l-Maisuri of Sultan Mohammad Bello* [Ar n Arbor : University Microfilms, 1922], p 24.

explained, as stated in his *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna* and as mentioned elsewhere in this study, a preacher should avoid fault-finding, contempt of sinners and adoption of fanatical stands on actions by ignorant Muslims, which do not contradict the Qurʾān and the Sunna. For it was the way of the Prophet, he emphasized, that a preacher should be broad-minded, kind and gentle to his listeners

The Shehu, apparently, based his teaching of the ethics of public preaching on the Qurʾānic verse (16: 25) .

Invite (all) to the way of the Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching, and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious, for the Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His path, and who receive guidance ¹²¹

which enjoined the Prophet to conduct himself in the prescribed manner whenever he addressed the public. A Yusuf Ali commenting on the quoted Qurʾānic verse in his work *The Holy Qurʾān : Translation and Commentary*, had this to say :

In this wonderful passage are laid down principles of religious teaching, which are good for all time. But where are the teachers with such qualifications? . We must do it with wisdom and discretion, meeting people on their own ground and convincing them with illustrations from their own knowledge and experience, which may be very narrow or very wide. Our preaching must be, not dogmatic, not self-regarding, not offensive, but gentle, considerate and such as would attract attention. Our manner and our arguments should not be acrimonious, but modelled on the most courteous and the most gracious example. ¹²²

Yet no less a person than his own brother, ʿAbd Allāh b. Muhammad, saw some of the Shehu's activities as insincere for they were stage-managed only for political motives. He lamented in his *Diwān ʿUlī al-Amr* that "some of the leaders of the jihad instead of telling the people the right thing to do began interpreting the Shariʿah not according to its true

¹²¹ A. Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qurʾān : Translation and Commentary*, 2nd edition (Lahore : The Muslim Students Association, 1977) p. 689.

¹²² Ibid.

interpretation but according to what the people wanted to hear because they (i.e the jihad leaders) feared that if they did not do so the people would desert their camps".¹²³

And recently Professor B G Martin seems to share this view. Citing another account by Bello on the Shehu's public appearances, he observes :

Despite Bello's natural admiration, his account seems to ring true. Bello describes his father's nocturnal teaching sessions as follows

Every Thursday night, he came out to preach to the people about what they wanted to hear ...¹²⁴

Another scholar who seems to read the Shehu's activities in the light of 'Abd Allāh's description is M. Hiskett. While refuting the opinion that the Shehu was a revivalist, Hiskett implicitly summed up the above view

The truth is, the Shehu Usman dan Fodio was an idealist, essentially the product of an era in which he lived, not of the remote past. He strove through all means open to him - by the persuasions of an ardent preacher, by the symmetry of legal argument and by the ruses and stratagems of his visionary mind. When it suited his purpose he appealed to the past. Otherwise, he made use of the proximate ideas and sentiments of his day.¹²⁵

The above observations may not be faulted if we remember that the Shehu avoided all political topics in his early writings and preachings. In twenty years, 1774 - 1794, the Shehu steered clear of politics both in his writings and preachings. He was also able to restrain his restless disciples from involving his small group of followers in confrontation with the higher authority. At this point, he was more calculating and politically more mature than his

¹²³ M.S. Zahradeen, "‘Abd Allāh", p. 250.

¹²⁴ B.G. Martin, *Usman dan Fodio*, p. 35.

¹²⁵ M. Hiskett, "The Nineteenth Century Jihād in West Africa", *Cambridge History of Africa*, 5 (1976) pp. 147 - 8

teacher, Jibrīl b. 'Umar, who had earlier unsuccessfully attempted to stir up unrest in Airs and Gobir.

Yet, the Shehu might be sincere in his public disposition. At least, Bello, his son, believed his sincerity. It may also be argued that if his motives were political he would not have retired from public life immediately after the overthrow of the Habe governments and devoted the rest of his life to writing and teaching.

Be that as it may, for twenty years the Shehu continued to teach and preach, spending weekdays teaching Islamic sciences to his students, and preaching about the tenets of Islam to the masses on weekends. In the course of this duty, he travelled widely in Gobir, Zamfara and Kebbi. His preaching tours ended in 1794, after he had a spiritual experience during which he said he had been girded with "the sword of truth" to be unsheathed against unbelievers. It was a period when his community was growing rapidly, and many of his students were preaching in various parts of the land. Perhaps it was for this reason that he decided not to undertake any more preaching tours. He remained in Degel, preaching and teaching, until he and his followers made the hijra to Gudu in 1804.

His Relations with Hausa Kings

The Shehu had a long period of good relationship with the rulers of Gobir, which lasted for over twenty years. He was cautious not to do anything which would jeopardize the good relationship.¹²⁶ He opposed any interference between the rulers and their subjects. He was reported to have said, "I will not interfere between anyone and his chief; I will not be a cause of parting".¹²⁷ The rulers of Gobir, on the other hand, respected him; they gave their

¹²⁶ Muhammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, pp. 65-66.

¹²⁷ M.R. Waldman, "The Fulani Jihād", p. 345.

approval to his preaching activities and even paid him visits at Degel.¹²⁸ The friendship began to wane when the court 'ulamā', unhappy with the Shehu's relentless attack upon them, prevailed upon the rulers to restrict the activities of his followers.¹²⁹

Some years earlier, the Shehu, realizing that he was becoming popular because of the ever-increasing number of followers, decided to have an audience with Bawa Jan Gwarzo, the king of Gobir. The meeting was successful, and 'Abd Allāh who reported it in his *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, viewed it as the Shehu's first political gain since, as he put it, even those who had no fear of God were afraid to oppose his preaching.¹³⁰ In the same work, 'Abd Allāh reported that the Shehu had initially avoided contact with the kings' courts, but some European travellers and early colonial administrators reported that he tutored Yunfa,¹³¹ the last king of Gobir, who was killed by the jihadists. This is doubtful, however, as none of the jihad writers ever mentioned it; furthermore, because of its significance, there was no way that it could have escaped their notice. In 1788, five years after his initial meeting with the king, on the occasion of 'Īd al-Aḡhā, Bawa Jan Gwarzo again invited all the learned men of his domain to go to Magamī to participate in the 'Īd prayers. We are told that at the end of the prayers, Bawa offered gifts to the scholars present which all of them accepted, save the Shehu. After having politely turning down the king's gift, he made five requests : to be allowed to call the people in the kingdom to God; to permit them to respond to his call; to

¹²⁸ D.M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 8.

¹²⁹ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, pp. 67.

¹³⁰ 'Abd Allāh b. Fūdī, *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, p. 27.

¹³¹ D.M. Last and M.A. al-Hajj, "Attempt at Defining a Muslim in 19th Century Hausaland and Borno", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 3 (1965) p. 235, also footnote 4, Yunfa was even said to have come to the throne because of the Shehu's help; J.A. Burdon, "The Fulani Emirates of Northern Nigeria", *The Geographical Journal*, 24 (1904) p. 640; M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 46.

treat any man wearing a turban with respect; to free all prisoners of conscience; not to burden his subjects with taxes.¹³²

Bawa met all his requests, and the Shehu parted from Magami feeling very pleased. It was in reference to this incident that 'Abd Allāh composed a poem criticizing his colleagues for accepting gifts. He said : "We went home to uplift God's religion, while others went back with their gifts".¹³³ No friction between Bawa and the Shehu was ever reported. From what we gather in *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, Bawa kept his promise made at Magami, and even released from prison a Zamfara prince by the name of Abarshi. It was apparent that the old king, who was noted for his chivalry and charisma, had thought it wise to comply with the Shehu's requests in order to maintain peace at home at a time when belligerency existed between Gobir and Maradi. Perhaps had Bawa been on the throne of Gobir, the Shehu might not have waged the jihad across Hausaland. What the Shehu seemed to have needed was cooperation and understanding, which the king was giving him. The story that Bawa was hostile to the Shehu and invited him to Magami only to eliminate him may not be accurate.¹³⁴ In 1788, the Shehu's followers had not yet been ordered to buy arms and therefore could not have challenged Bawa, the powerful king of Gobir, had he decided to arrest the Shehu or even to eliminate him. The king was a Muslim who was apparently interested in having Islamic scholars in his kingdom; this may be the only reason for his inviting them to join him in the 'Īd prayers, and for presenting them with gifts.

The Shehu, as a sufi and a pious man, felt that it was his duty to redirect the syncretists to what he regarded as correctly practiced Islam; as such, he could not have

¹³² 'Abd Allāh b. Fūdī, *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, p. 30. See also A.R.I. Doi, "Shehu 'Uthmān ḍan Fodio", p. 117; F.H. El-Masri, "The Life of Shehu Usuman ḍan Fodio", p. 441; I.A.B. Balogun, "The Life and Work of the Mujaddid of West Africa", p. 276.

¹³³ 'Abd Allāh b. Fūdī, *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, p. 30.

¹³⁴ Murray Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 7; M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 45.

entertained the idea of wresting political power from the king, at least at this nascent period of his movement. Perhaps his movement would have been similar to Wahhābism in Arabia : the Hausa king would have led the jihadists against the syncretists and the venal malams, while the Shehu would have been counselling him.

Even after Bawa's death in 1790, there was not much friction between his successor, Ya'qūb, and the Shehu's followers. We are told that Ya'qūb was in the habit of seeking the Shehu's counsel on matters of war. The last war in which the king was killed would have been averted had he heeded the Shehu's advice not to meet the enemy. It was reported that when the Shehu heard of the king's plans to march against the Ma'adi army, he tried to restrain him, but the king was persuaded by his court 'ulamā' not to heed the advice and perished in the war.¹³⁵ His brother, Nafata, succeeded him in 1795.

We have pointed out elsewhere that during Nafata's reign the relationship between the authority and the Shehu's community began to grow sour. One year prior to Nafata's ascension to the throne, the Shehu had his mystical experience of being girded with "the sword of truth", which simply meant that he was given a divine mission to take up arms not only against the venal 'ulamā' and the syncretists, but the government as well. The Shehu was now convinced the government had to be brought down because the Habe rulers were being swayed by the venal 'ulamā' and there was no hope they would ever abandon their un-Islamic ways. Furthermore, a territory is judged by the status of the ruler, "if the king is Muslim, the land is that of Islam (*bilād al-Islām*), and if the king is an unbeliever, the land is that of unbelievers (*bilād al-kufr*).¹³⁶

¹³⁵ M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 47.

¹³⁶ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān*, p. 22.

As mentioned above, the themes of his earlier writings and the subjects of his sermons were devoid of political issues. During this period, his activities were wholly geared towards achieving his goal through peaceful means. However, this changed towards the end of the eighteenth century as he began to articulate the grievances of the ordinary people against the authority. He accused the rulers of extortion, excessive taxation and the enslavement of Muslims.

Since the Shehu explained these excesses as vices contrary to Islam, he had by implication enhanced both his position and the status of Islam in the eyes of his listeners. It may be inferred too that it was at that time he began to win more supporters. Letters were written and poems were composed to bring into the fold those who sat on the fence. Consequently the community grew larger and then started to become restless. It urged the Shehu to rebel against the government and wage a jihad, but he cautiously advised them to begin arming themselves because "to equip oneself with arms is sunna". He addressed his followers in Fulfulde thus :

Njoge bahe moɗon worbe mete bo metali,
Zamā metali he bahe yo Sunna Muhammadu.
Njoge labbe moɗon fu yo Sunna Muhammadu,
He kāfāje ɗen bo kazā yo Sunna Muhammadu ¹³⁷

Which I translate thus :

Keep your quivers, O men, and wear turbans,
For, indeed, turbans and quivers are [part] of the Sunna of Muḥammad.
Keep your spears as well, for it is the Sunna of Muḥammad;
So also are swords [part] of the Sunna of Muḥammad.

The king of Gobir grew apprehensive when he discovered that the Shehu's followers were arming themselves and, prior to this new development, he passed an edict which was to be read in the marketplace. It barred all Muslims, except the Shehu, from preaching and

¹³⁷ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, "Sunna Muhammadu", *Gime Fulfulde* : 1, compiled by Al-Amin Abu-Manga and Ibrahim Mukoshy (Kano : Bayero University, n.d.) pp. 121-125.

forbade conversions to Islam; those Muslims who were not born in the faith were exhorted to revert to their former religion. The wearing of turbans by Muslim men and veils by women had also to stop immediately.¹³⁸ This edict ended any good will that might have existed between the government and the community. The latter looked upon the injunction against the wearing of turbans and veils, which they considered to be symbols of their cohesion and distinction, as an attempt by the authorities to humiliate them. Nafata died in 1802 and was succeeded by his son, Yunfa, whose policies only served to aggravate the situation further.

Some members of the community under the leadership of 'Abd al-Salām, a Hausa scholar, finding that they could not withstand the hostility of the authorities, migrated far from the seat of the government to a place known as Gimbana. It has been narrated that Yunfa ordered the town to be ransacked because 'Abd al-Salām had turned down his request to bless his army which was marching through Gimbana to meet the enemy. Thus, there arose a series of incidents¹³⁹ which led the community to emigrate from Degel to Gudu in February 1804 and subsequently culminated in the jihad which raged across Hausaland and the outlying areas for six years.

In a nutshell, the jihad was forced on the Shehu by a series of provocative actions by Nafata and his son and successor, Yunfa, on the one hand and the Shehu's over-zealous supporters on the other. The reluctant kings themselves were pressured by their courtiers to take a firm stance against the Muslim community which they viewed as a threat because of

¹³⁸ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 67; F.H. El-Masri, "The Life of Shehu Usman dan Fodio", p. 445. M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 48.

¹³⁹ Murray Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 15. It has been claimed that when Gimbana was sacked people were held as prisoners; the Shehu protested to Yunfa, who gave permission for their release, but later denied having done so. According to another version, the prisoners were forcibly released by 'Abd Allāh as they were being led through the Rima Valley to Alkalwa, the capital. Yunfa therefore attempted to invade Degel.

its rapid growth and restlessness.¹⁴⁰ But action was taken too late, for Yunfa, the last king of Gobir, in his appeal for help to the rulers of the Hausa States, commented : "...that they left a 'small fire' burning until it had blazed up into a conflagration too formidable to extinguish...."¹⁴¹

However, the view that the jihad was a pre-conceived idea that was nurtured by the Shehu over a long period of time cannot be substantiated. As far as we know, prior to the *Kitāb al-Wird* which he wrote in 1794, the Shehu did not commit his thoughts on the jihad or hijra to writing. We can therefore infer that he began to entertain the idea of ji'hād only after his mystical experience in 1794 concerning the "sword of truth" to which we have already alluded. Prior to that, it appears that he strove to achieve his goal through peaceful means, and the works that reflect his political views are *Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra*; *Kitāb al-Farq bayna Wilāyāt Ahl al-Islām wa bayna Wilāyāt Ahl al-Kufr*; *Kitāb al-Wird*; *Masā'il Muhimma Yahtāj ilā Ma'rifatihā Ahl al-Sūdān*; *Ta'lim al-Ikhwān bi al-Umūr allatī Kaffarnā [bihā] mulūk al-Sūdān*; *Tanbih al-Ikhwān 'alā Aḥwāl Arḍ al-Sūdān*; *Wathīqa [ilā jamī' Ahl al-Sūdān]*.

His Works

a. Retrieval Efforts

In about forty years (1774 - 1814) the Shehu produced over one hundred works which cover a wide range of subjects such as religious, social, political, legal and economic issues. As early as the first half of the nineteenth century attempts were made to list his works. His son, Muḥammad Bello, listed twenty-eight of them in his *Infāq al-Maysūr fī Ta'rīkh Bilād al-Takrūr*, and stated that his father wrote over a hundred works. In 1894, a

¹⁴⁰ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 69; D.M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 12.

¹⁴¹ F.H El-Masri, *A Critical Edition*, p. 11.

French expedition acquired a collection of Arabic manuscripts from West Africa for the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. These writings were described by G. Vajda in his article entitled, "Contribution à la connaissance de la littérature arabe en Afrique occidentale", *Journal d'Africanistes*, 20:2 (1950), and some of the Shehu's works were among those listed. In 1958, the late Professor Abdullahi Smith, an Anglo-Nigerian, identified seven of the Shehu's works from among the 223 Arabic manuscripts in the library of the Institut de France, which were collected from West Africa by the Archaeologist Georges de Gironcourt, during his expedition in 1911.¹⁴² In 1943, C.E.J. Whitting listed ninety-nine manuscript titles in his article, "The Unprinted Indigenous Arabic Literature of Northern Nigeria",¹⁴³ and attributed twenty-two of them to the Shehu. In his *Al-Islām fī Nigeria wa ʿUthmān b. Fūdī*,¹⁴⁴ Adam Abdullah al-Ilori listed the Shehu's works. It was only in 1954 that greater attempts were made to retrieve his writings together with other West African literary works when W.E.N. Kensdale of the University of Ibadan was delegated by that academic institution to collect local manuscripts from what was then known as Northern Nigeria. On the completion of his mission, Kensdale published three articles in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*,¹⁴⁵ and in one of them, on the works of the Shehu, he listed eighty-five writings, which were attributed to him. Later, D.M. Last listed ninety-one titles in his book,

¹⁴² Abdullahi (H.F.C.) Smith, "Source Material for the History of Western Sudan", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 4:2 (1959) 338 - 247. A more extended analysis of these manuscripts was made by Professor J.O. Hunwick and H.I. Gwarzo in 1967. It appeared in vol. III, no. 2 of *Research Bulletin, Centre of Arabic Documentation, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan*.

¹⁴³ C.E.J. Whitting, "The Unprinted Indigenous Arabic Literature of Northern Nigeria", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, (1943) 20 - 26

¹⁴⁴ Adam Abdullah al-Ilori, *Al-Islām fī Nigeria wa ʿUthmān b. Fūdī* (Cairo : 1950/51) p. 41; I.A.B. Balogun, *The Life and Works of ʿUthmān dan Fodio*, p. 40.

¹⁴⁵ W.E.N. Kensdale, "The Field Notes on the Arabic Literature of Western Sudan : Shehu ʿUthmān dan Fodio; Waziri Abdullahi Dan Fodio; Muḥammad Bello", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, (1955) 162 - 168; (1956) 78 - 80; (1958) 53 -57 respectively.

The Sokoto Caliphate, while Ismail Balogun cited one hundred and fifteen titles in his article "The Life and Work of the Mujaddid of West Africa, 'Uthmān b. Fūdī...", *Islamic Studies*, 12(1973) 271-292. It is by far the most up-to-date list available of the Shehu's works.

The Shehu also composed numerous poems in the local languages. D.M. Last credited him with over fifty poems written in ancient Fulfulde, but deplored the fact that they were not used for study. He confirmed having read forty of the poems which were translated into Hausa. Ahmad Kani, however, noted in his M.A. thesis entitled "Literary Activity in Hausaland in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries" that the Shehu composed up to four hundred and eighty poems, while A. Bivar suggested that he had composed up to seven hundred poems which are mostly in private hands.¹⁴⁶ It is time that serious efforts were made to retrieve these invaluable poems from private hands.

b. The Development of His Ideas

The significance of the Shehu's writings as study material on Hausaland in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries need not be emphasized. Indeed, one may venture to add that no serious work can be accomplished in the field without reference to this invaluable material. But the problem with which historians are grappling is the lack of chronological evidence for most of his works. It has been observed that only the following twenty works, arranged alphabetically, have been dated :

1. *Al-Amr bi-Muwālāt al-Mu'minīn* (1811)
2. *Amr al-Sā'ī* (1808)
3. *Asānīd al-Faqīr* (1808)
4. *Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra* (1806)

¹⁴⁶ A.D.H. Bivar, "The Wathīqat Ahl al-Sūdān : a Manifesto of the Fulani Jihād", *Journal of African History*, 2 (1961) p. 236. See also B. Adediran, "The Writings of the Sokoto Jihād in the Re-construction of Nigerian History, *Islamic Culture*, 54 (1980) p. 4.

5. *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām min Juyūsh al-Awhām* (1810)
6. *Masāʾil Muhimma* (1802)
7. *Miṣbāḥ li-Ahl Hādhā al-Zamān min Ahl Bilād al-Sūdān* (1808)
8. *Najm al-Ikhwān* (1812)
9. *Naṣīḥat Ahl al-Zamān* (1811)
10. *Al-Salāsīl al-Qādirīya* (1811)
11. *Shams al-Ikhwān* (1813)
12. *Sirāj al-Ikhwān* (1811)
13. *Tabshīr al-Umma al-Ahmadīya bi-Bayān baʿd Manāqib al-Qādirīya* (1794)
14. *Taḥdhīr al-al-Ikhwān* (1814)
15. *Taʿlīm al-Ikhwān* (1813)
16. *Tanbīh al-Fāhim ʿalā Ḥukm Taʾrīkh Muddat al-Dunyā* (1808)
17. *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān ʿalā Aḥwāl Arḍ al-Sūdān* (1811)
18. *Tanbīh al-Ṭalaba ʿalā anna Allāh Taʾālā Maʿrūf bi al-Fiṭra* (1803)
19. *Tawqīf al-Muslimīn ʿalā Madhāhib al-Mujtahidīn* (1813)
20. *Uṣūl al-ʿAdl* (1809)

Therefore, in order to study the development of his ideas, it is necessary to classify the material chronologically.

We have pointed out earlier that he had started preaching, writing and teaching in 1774 and that by 1815 he must have stopped writing and teaching, for in this year his son, Bello, moved him from Sifawa to Sokoto, apparently because of his terminal illness. We can, therefore safely say that for a period of forty-one years, from 1774 to 1814 he was intellectually active. It was during this time that he wrote most of his works - approximately one hundred and fifteen.

Two Sudanese scholars attempted to classify his works chronologically. In a paper entitled "A Tentative Chronology for the Writings of the Shehu, 'Uthmān ḍan Fodio", delivered in January 1977, in Bayero College, Kano, the late M.A. Al-Hajj classified Shehu's career into three parts :

1. The Pre-jihad Period (1774 - 1804), which he saw as the time the Shehu became preoccupied with preaching, teaching, and attracting more followers. The major problems which were reflected in his preaching and teaching during this period were, as Al-Hajj explained :

- (a) Belief and Unbelief
- (b) Education and Literacy
- (c) Local Customs and Traditions.

2. The jihad Period (1804 - 1810) is characterized by the armed struggle between the Shehu's community and the Hausa authorities which subsequently ended in the overthrow of the Hausa rulers and the establishment of the caliphate. Most of his works during the period dealt with questions of emigration from the land of unbelief to the land of Islam, the jihad and the pacification of some of his students who portrayed the new government in a bad light.

3. The Post-jihad Period (1810 - 1817) when the Shehu retired from active public life so as to concentrate on teaching and writing. His works at this time contained guidelines for the establishment of an Islamic State, and responses to his critics.

1. The Pre-jihad Period (1774 - 1793)

Prior to Al-Hajj's efforts to provide chronological data on the Shehu's works, Fathi Hasan El-Masri, in the Introduction of his Ph.D. thesis, had presented an identical scheme of dating on the strength of internal evidence

This being the case, the period during which the jihad movement was developing should not, in my view, be extended to 1804, the year the actual fighting began. Surely the

Shehu could not have started thinking of an armed struggle against the authorities the very year the jihad actually began; it is therefore more logical that his ideas on the subject were conceived prior to 1804. We mentioned earlier in this chapter that it was only after his mystical experience in 1794 that he indirectly began to mention an armed struggle as an alternative to preaching, and it is no coincidence that his preaching tours ceased that year. *Masā'il Muḥimma*, which discusses the hijra, was written in 1802, two years prior to the armed conflict. These, therefore, are points to be considered when dating his early works, and the period during which the jihad movement evolved should be recorded as being between 1774 and 1793. Also, during this time he was much closer to the people than the authorities; his knowledge of them was evident from his vivid description of their way of life. Alī Merad, when editing the Shehu's *Kitāb al-Farq*, was so impressed by his portrayal of the social life of his contemporaries that he likened him to modern journalists.¹⁴⁷

The Shehu realized from the outset that the common people were syncretists because of their ignorance of Islam and acknowledged that the solution lay in the teaching of basic principles of the faith and in the training of students, the future teachers, to carry on the jihad against ignorance. In his writings, he referred to traditional social practices and explained that any religious or social custom that did not stem from either the Qur'ān, the Sunna or *ijmā'* should be regarded as *bid'ā* (innovation). He categorized the *bid'ā* as "good", "bad", or "permissible".¹⁴⁸ Therefore, his works during the time the idea of the jihad was evolving, as M.A. Al-Hajj points out, reflect what were regarded as "bad customs", and the importance of education was also emphasized.

¹⁴⁷ Alī Merad, "Le 'Kitāb al-Farq bayna Wilāyāt Ahl al-Islām wa Wilāyāt Ahl al-Kufr' de Dan Fodio. Présentation, édition critique et traduction", *Islamochristiana*, 6 (1980) p. 183.

¹⁴⁸ *Bid'ā*, like all human acts, is classified into five categories. These are : Obligatory (*Wājib*), Prohibited (*Muḥarram*), Recommended (*Mandūb*), Undesirable (*Makrūh*), Permissible (*Mubāḥ*). These are further classified into three parts : "Good" (obligatory and recommended), "Bad" (prohibited and undesirable), and "Permissible". Innovations can therefore be categorized under these three headings.

The following are some of the many works written during this period :

1. *Bayān al-Bida' al-Shayṭānīya*
2. *Hidāyat al-Ṭālibīn*
3. *Ḥukm Juhhāl Bilād Hausa*
4. *I'dād al-Dā'ī ilā Dīn Allāh*
5. *Ihyā' al-Sunna wa Ikhmād al-Bid'a*
6. *Kifāyat al-Muhtadīn*

2. The Jihad Period (1794 - 1809)

This was the period of uncertainty and mistrust which culminated in open conflict in 1804 and subsequently brought about the defeat of his rival 'ulamā' and the Hausa rulers and put an end to their reigns in 1809. The themes of the Shehu's works at this time are as follows : the formation of the community (*jamā'a*), the imminent approach of the end of time, the refutation of some misconceptions held by some of his students, the necessity to emigrate from the land of unbelief to the land of Islam, and armed struggle against his opponents. Among his works of this period are :

1. *Amr al-Sā'a*
2. *Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra*
3. *Irshād Ahl al-Tafrīt wa al-Ifrāt*
4. *Masā'il Muhimma*
5. *Tanbīh al-Fahīm 'alā Ḥukm Ta'rīkh Muddat al-Dunyā*
6. *Uṣūl al-'Adl*

3. The Post-jihad Period (1810 - 1814)

This was the time of the consolidation and establishment of the Islamic State. The Shehu retired to Sifawa to write and teach, and left the management of the new state to his

brother ʿAbd Allāh, and his son Muḥammad Bello. His works during this period deal with the following issues : guidelines for the new administration and a response to internal and external criticism. The following are some of the works written during this period :

1. *Irshād al-Umma ilā Taysīr al-Milla*
2. *Kitāb al-Farq bayna Wilāyāt Ahl al-Islām wa bayna Wilāyāt Ahl al-Kufr*
3. *Najm al-Ikhwān*
4. *Shams al-Ikhwān*
5. *Taʿlīm al-Ikhwān*
6. *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān ʿalā Ahwāl Arḍ al-Sūdān*

As I explained earlier, the Shehu remained inactive during the last two years of his life, from 1815 to 1817. He moved to Sokoto, perhaps to be nursed by his son, Muḥammad Bello, after he fell ill.

His Writing Style

The Shehu had a distinct and a consistent style of writing, which could not be easily imitated. He often began with a special formula (doxology) which reflected his intense desire for God's mercy. This was followed by prayers for the Prophet, his family, companions, those who came after them, the scholars who practiced (what they knew) *al-ʿUlamā al-ʿĀmilūn*... an introduction or short summary of the work would then be given in simple and clear language.

Observations are often made on his habit of quoting from works of earlier Muslim authors. El-Masri noted in his book, *A Critical Edition of Dan Fodio's Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra*, that in one of his works he used no less than sixty-five quotations from different

works.¹⁴⁹ For this, Trimingham described the jihad leaders in his *Islam in West Africa* as "copious compilers".¹⁵⁰

But the reason for this might perhaps be explained from the situation of intense hostility and jealousy that existed among the 'ulamā' during that period. The Shehu's writings, and his Fulfulde poems in particular, are full of themes depicting the poor relationship that existed between him and some of the jealous scholars who were eager to criticize him and were delighted with what they regarded as evidence that he was not basing his writings on early Islamic works. Some of them even attended his gatherings to find fault with his sermons. Being aware of this, the Shehu was cautious to support anything he said by either referring to earlier works or simply by quoting from them. Most important to him was the fact that the works served the purpose for which they were written, as can be seen from his writings. For instance when assuring his readers of his *Naṣīḥat Ahl al-Zamān* he declared: "I shall never mention a word without citing the source from where I quoted it".¹⁵¹

Even later, when the Islamic State was established, the Shehu was still cautious and declared in his *Najm al-Ikhwān*:

I firmly undertake that I shall not make a statement without giving my authority, nor quote without mentioning the book from which I have copied, as I normally do in most of my writings, for the soul is more likely to be satisfied with this method.... Moreover, I normally give the opinions of the 'ulamā' on controversial issues, to give each of my brethren the opportunity to choose the opinion which appeals to him. My purpose for doing all this, though intentions are never completely free from unworthy motives, is to preserve the public order of the community (*Hifẓ niẓām al-umma*) and banish confusion and disputes from the midst of the common people....¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ F.H El-Masri, *A Critical Edition*, p. 34

¹⁵⁰ J. Spencer Trimingham, *Islam in West Africa* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1959) p. 82.

¹⁵¹ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Naṣīḥat Ahl al-Zamān*, f. 1b; *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 1a; See also his *Naṣā'ih al-Umma*, f. 32a.

¹⁵² 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 1a.

Another criticism often heard was that he had the habit of repeating himself in his writings. While this was true, it was not without reason, for he intended his works to serve as textbooks for his students; the repetitions were apparently intended to explain earlier texts.¹⁵³ Another reason could have been, as M. Last observed,¹⁵⁴ that some of his writings were notes on his sermons.

Critics saw little value in his works, since the major part of his subject matter had been dealt with by earlier scholars. For instance, they wondered why he had a pamphlet on the theory of government (*Kitāb al-Farq*) consisting of twenty-five folios of eleven lines each, when there were earlier works such as al-Māwardī's (d. 1058) *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭānīya*; Ibn Taymīya's (d. 1328) *Kitāb al-Siyāsa al-Sharʿīya*; Ibn Jamāʿa's (d. 1333) *Taḥrīr al-Aḥkām li Tadbīr Millat al-Islām*.¹⁵⁵ To this, he replied in his *Najm al-Ikhwān*, "...every scholar is more familiar with his people and the problems of his time than the previous scholars and thus the contemporary works are more valuable in enlightening the people of the day."¹⁵⁶

... so take to reading the works of my brother ʿAbd Allāh, for he is on the whole concerned with the letter of the Sharīʿa. Take to reading the works of my son, Muḥammad Bello, for he is, on the whole, concerned with the preservation of political science of the (Muslim) community, with regard to the persons, aims, time, place and (prevailing) conditions. Take to reading my works too, for I am, on the whole concerned with the preservation of both....¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Ibid, f. 42a.

¹⁵⁴ M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 9, footnote 35.

¹⁵⁵ Ali Merad, Le "Kitāb al-Farq", p. 185.

¹⁵⁶ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 41b. He repeated it in *Kashf mā ʿAlayhi al-ʿAmal*.

¹⁵⁷ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 42a.

His Religious and Political Views

a. Political and Religious Influence

The Shehu's biographers have emphasized, without exception, the influence that two of his teachers had on him. One of them was the ascetic Biddūrī, his uncle, and the other, the radical sufi Shaykh, Jibrīl b. ʿUmar. Biddūrī gave him a firm grounding in his religion,¹⁵⁸ and he learned the practice of self-discipline (*jihād al-Nafs*) during the two years of their association. However, we are told that it was his master, Jibrīl b. ʿUmar, who was instrumental in shaping his religious and political views. B.G. Martin observed, for instance, that the Shehu would have chosen to remain a teacher instead of involving himself in politics in Hausaland had he not been imbued with revolutionary ideas by the radical Jibrīl and other hard-line educators. Martin further explains that the religious syncretism which became one of the Shehu's most important themes had, in fact, been expressed earlier by Jibrīl.¹⁵⁹ Ismail A.B. Balogun also asserts that the influence Jibrīl b. ʿUmar had on the Shehu cannot be underestimated, and went on to give what he considered irrefutable evidence of this influence. Hiskett, Doi, M.A. Al-Hajj and others, all agreed that the Shehu might not have embarked on the Islamic renewal movement had he not come into contact with this teacher, Jibrīl.

The reasons for this view are that after his return from the pilgrimage in 1786, Jibrīl pledged allegiance to the Shehu, and gave him the "banner of victory", while the Shehu, on his part, loved and respected him more than he did any of the other teachers, as is seen from the reference made to this mentor in his *Naṣāʾih*: "...I do not know if we would have been guided to the way of (the renewal of) the Sunna and the quelling of evil practices, had it not

¹⁵⁸ M. Hiskett, "Material", p. 563.

¹⁵⁹ B.G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods*, p. 18.

been started by this Shaykh...."¹⁶⁰ Again he declared : "If it be said of me that which is said of good report, then I am but a wave of the waves of Jibrīl".¹⁶¹

What ought to be considered, despite the above observations, is that the Shehu's association with Jibrīl b. ʿUmar took place five years after he had begun his preaching, writing and teaching activities. No mention was ever made of a meeting between the Shehu and his favourite mentor, prior to 1779, when he studied under him. Furthermore, a short period of less than a year was really not enough for Jibrīl to have influenced the Shehu's religious and political views to such an extent. Even though he did share some of Jibrīl's views on these matters, the manner in which he applied them differed greatly. The Shehu held moderate views on religion and politics, but Jibrīl was well-known for his hard-line political and religious attitudes. They disagreed on the question of grave sin. We have also been told that Bawa could not tolerate Jibrīl's radicalism, and accordingly banished him from his kingdom; in Air, too, he incurred the wrath of the authorities¹⁶². The Shehu, on the other hand, avoided any undue conflict with the rulers.

It is possible that the two discussed religious and political issues in Arabia and Hausaland, because both men were well informed on these matters. But on the question of syncretism, the Shehu could have been influenced as well by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī whose work¹⁶³ he referred to several times. It was said that al-Maghīlī introduced

¹⁶⁰ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Naṣāʾiḥ al-Umma al-Muḥammadiya*, f. 19a.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² I.A.B. Balogun, *The Life and Works of ʿUthmān ḍan Fodio*, p. 30; F.H El-Masri, "The Life of Shehu Usman dan Fodio", p. 438.

¹⁶³ See al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm) *Sharīʿa in Songhay : The Replies of al-Maghīlī to the Questions of Askiya al-Ḥājj Muḥammad*, edited and translated with an introduction and commentary by J.O Hunwick (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1985).

the issue of syncretism into Bilād al-Sūdān in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, the Shehu must have acquired many of his political and religious ideas through his wide reading. This can be substantiated from the number of references and quotations from earlier works in his writings. He had certainly been influenced by al-Ghazālī (d. 1111)¹⁶⁵ and al-Shaʿrānī (d. 1565),¹⁶⁶ as several of his views on legal and religious matters coincided with theirs.

In the light of the above, it should be noted that the ideas the Shehu borrowed from Jibrīl did not form the cornerstone of his movement but were, in fact, only a few; his thinking was influenced for the most part by what he read. If the Shehu held Jibrīl in high esteem, it was perhaps because the latter initiated him into the Shādhilīya, Khalwātīya and Qādiriya Brotherhoods.¹⁶⁷

b. *Ijtihād and Taqlīd*

Technically the term *ijtihād* means "maximum effort to ascertain, in a given problem or issue, the injunction of Islam and its real intent",¹⁶⁸ and *mujtahid* is a jurist who is

¹⁶⁴ M. Hiskett, "An Islamic Tradition", pp. 577 - 596; cf. al-Maghīlī, *Sharīʿa in Songhay*, pp. 118 - 125 and 131.

¹⁶⁵ The Shehu made several references to al-Ghazālī's writings. In his work, *Uṣūl al-ʿAdl*, he enumerated ten principles of justice which he acknowledged to have cited from al-Ghazālī's writings. His *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna* is also similar to al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*.

¹⁶⁶ Al-Shaʿrānī was one of the three most mentioned ʿulamāʾ in the Shehu's writings. The other two were al-Maghīlī and Ibn al-Ḥājj. In fact, the Shehu accepted al-Shaʿrānī's legal opinion on the permissibility of using musical instruments in preference to the popular legal opinion which prohibits their use. See his *Miṣbāḥ li-Ahl Hādhā al-Zamān min Ahl Bilād al-Sūdān* and *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*. Two works of al-Shaʿrānī were heavily cited by the Shehu, these were *Kashf al-Ghumma* and *al-Mizān al-Shaʿrānīya*. The Shehu was also influenced by Shaʿrānī's flexible approach to *taqlīd*.

¹⁶⁷ B.G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods*, p. 24.

¹⁶⁸ A.M. Hajj Nour, "An Elementary Study in the Fiqh of Dan Fodio", in *Studies in the History of the Sokoto Caliphate. The Sokoto Seminar Papers*, ed. by Y.B. Usman (Lagos : Sokoto State History Bureau, 1979) p. 231.

qualified to make this effort. In order to do so, the jurist should be well schooled in the sciences relating to the Qurʾān, the Sunna and the *ijmāʿ*.¹⁶⁹ *Taqlīd*, on the other hand, is "to accept an opinion concerning a legal rule without knowledge of its bases",¹⁷⁰ and therefore *al-muqallid* is simply the imitator of *al-mujtahid*.

Owing to his flexible approach to legal and theological matters, the Shehu differed from his contemporaries who were inclined to favour *taqlīd*, and was therefore regarded by some scholars as being a *mujtahid*.¹⁷¹ Yet, others reasoned that since he accepted *ijmāʿ* as one of the sources of the Shariʿa, he could not be anything but a *muqallid*. Men who held this view compared him to Ibn Taymīya, whom they were willing to accept as a *mujtahid* because he advocated the supremacy of the Qurʾān and the Sunna, and lessened the importance of *ijmāʿ*.

In his book entitled *al-Masāʾil al-Sitta*, ʿAbd al-Qādir b. al-Muṣṭafā viewed the Shehu as being a *mujtahid* because of his *fatwā* or legal opinion against Borno, which was

¹⁶⁹ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Kitāb Faṭḥ al-Baṣāʾir li-Taḥqīq Waḍʿi al-Bawāṭin wa al-Zāhir*, ff 1b-3b. The Shehu listed conditions and qualities that an ʿālim must achieve before he should be recognized as a *mujtahid*. He must be a mature, sane person, a jurisconsult and knowledgeable in linguistics and religious sciences. He should be well grounded in the following: grammar, syntax, rhetorics, morphology, Islamic legal theory, exegesis and its sciences and the science of ḥadīth. These sciences are what a first-class *mujtahid* should know. The Shehu classified all Muslims into six categories according to their levels of vision (*baṣāʾir*): *mujtahid al-taʿṣīl*, *mujtahid al-tafrīʿ*, *mujtahid al-tarjīḥ*, *al-ʿālim*, *al-mutawassīṭ bayn al-ʿāmm wa al-ʿulamāʾ*, *al-ʿāmm*.

¹⁷⁰ R. Peters, "Idjtiḥād and Taqlīd in 18th and 19th Century Islam", *Die Welt des Islams*, 20 (1980) p. 135.

¹⁷¹ Abdur Rahman I. Doi, *Islam in Nigeria* (Zaria: Gaskiya, 1984) p. 207. Professor Doi observed that the Shehu was ahead of his contemporaries in the field of Islamic Law: "Looking at these discussions in his books, it becomes quite evident that Shaikh Uthman was ahead of his time since the issue of the reconciliation between the different Sunni schools of thought was a subject of recent introduction in the field of Islamic jurisprudence. Since the death of Imam Aḥmad b. Hanbal (241 A.H.), the founder of the Ḥanbalī *Madhhab* any fresh move on the side of Muslim jurists to have a different view other than that held by famous scholars was strongly opposed".

classified as a land of disbelief.¹⁷² But in his *Najm al-Ikhwān*, the Shehu denied being a *mujtahid* and played down the legal decision he had taken permitting the Muslim warriors to wear the expensive clothing they had seized as booty during the fall of Alkalwa. Apart from the Shehu's modesty, he was perhaps apprehensive because the question of anyone practicing *ijtihād* would be regarded in the circle of the fanatical 'ulamā' of Hausaland as a very serious matter. He had, therefore, to play down any legal decision he had taken on the basis of *ijtihād*. So when 'Abd Allāh, his brother, criticized him for his legal stand on some legal issues, he responded in his *Najm al-Ikhwān* thus : "If to you, what I have done [by drawing an analogy between our situation in Gobir and that of the early Muslims] is *ijtihād*, then my reply is this, it is but an analogy drawn between two situations (*ilḥāq al-naẓīr bi-al-naẓīr*), a method which even a non-*mujtahid* is allowed to practice".¹⁷³

This quotation refers to the story of Surāqa, a Companion of the Prophet, who was given the bracelets and clothings of Kisrā by 'Umar, the second caliph, as fulfillment of the Prophet's prophecy. The Shehu used this incident as a reason for allowing his followers to wear expensive clothing seized from the Habe nobility, even if temporarily. Nevertheless, in spite of the Shehu's concern not to appear to be exercising *ijtihād*, he was unmistakably practicing it albeit in a limited way.

He was also considered liberal and flexible because he advocated freedom of choice of any of the four schools of law and regarded their founders as equals. In his *Hidāyat al-Tullāb* he declared :

Whatever [law] came from Muḥammad was not known as a 'school of law'; it was called His Divine Law.... Does God in His Book or His Prophet in the Sunna make it necessary to rely on a single law school or one liberal interpreter (*mujtahid*) in particular? We have not heard a single

¹⁷² Abd al-Qādir b. al-Muṣṭafā, *al-Masā'il al-Sitta*. See also A.M. Hajj Nour, "An Elementary Study", p. 233.

¹⁷³ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 27b.

person among the learned men of the past who directed anyone to follow a specific school of law.¹⁷⁴

He thus agreed with al-Shaʿrānī that a sufi who reached the stage of *kashf*¹⁷⁵ should be free to follow any school of law because he would receive knowledge from the Prophet. Such a sufi is of the same rank as *mujtahid*, and is sometimes placed even higher.¹⁷⁶ This was perhaps the reason why early in his career as a writer he made it a habit to introduce himself at the beginning of his works as ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad Fūdī b. ʿUthmān, al-Fallāṭī *nasaban* (by genealogy), al-Mālikī *madhhaban* (by school of law), al-Ashʿarī *iʿtiqādan* (by dogma), a practice he abandoned later.¹⁷⁷

Apparently he ceased to present himself as a Malikite, for he no longer adhered to the laws of any particular school. This may also explain why many of his legal decisions such as the approval of the use of musical instruments and gold vessels were accepted by sufi jurists but rejected by the Malikite school of law. Despite his flexible approach to the above issue, the Shehu realized that the common people would get confused, and he therefore recommended that they adhere to the Malikite school of law

¹⁷⁴ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Hidāyat al-Ṭullāb*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁵ T.P. Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam* (Lahore : 1964) : *Kashf* is a mystic term meaning "unveiling".

¹⁷⁶ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 1b. He cited ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī who states in his *Yawāqīt* that "he who would reach the stage of *kashf* could find that all great jurists who practiced *ijtihād* had not gone outside the boundaries of the Book and the Sunna in their views... for they followed the tracks of the Messengers of God".

¹⁷⁷ R.R. Martensen, "The Life and Work of Usmanu bii Fooduye", p. 31.

c. Was he a *Mujaddid*?

If the Shehu was a *mujtahid*, was he also a *mujaddid* (Renewer of the Faith)? To answer this question we first have to examine the historical background of this doctrinal concept.

The concept of *tajdid*, as reported by 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī in his *Ḥusn al-Muḥāḍara*, can be traced to Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 855). He was reported to have said, "God appoints for mankind at the head (*ra's*) of every hundred years one who will teach them the *sunna* and refute falsehood about the Messenger of God. And behold, when we looked, there at the head of one hundred was 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz and at the head of two hundred was al-Shāfi'ī".¹⁷⁸ In another report the Prophet was alleged to have said concerning the *mujaddid*: "Surely God will raise up for this umma at the beginning of every century one who will renew their religion".¹⁷⁹ And in his *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, the Shehu, citing al-Maghīlī concerning this tradition, says:

... at the beginning of every century God will send a learned man to the people to renew their faith, and the characteristics of this learned man in every century must be that he commands what is right and forbids what is disapproved of, and reforms the affairs of the people and judges justly between them, and assists the truth against falsehood, and the oppressed against the oppressor, in contrast to the characteristics of the (other) learned men of the age.¹⁸⁰

These, in brief, are the characteristics of a *mujaddid*. Throughout the history of Islam, starting from the beginning of the second century A.H., the Muslim world was said to

¹⁷⁸ al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm) *Sharī'a in Songhay*, p. 115 footnote 3. see also Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-Muḥāḍara fī Akhbār Miṣr wa al-Qāhira*, vol 1 (Cairo : Dārat al-Waṭan, 1299 H.) p. 166.

¹⁷⁹ Abū Dawūd, *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Muṣṭafā*, vol II, Kitāb al-Malāḥim (Cairo : al-Tājiya, n.d.) p. 209.

¹⁸⁰ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, f. 5a.

be witnessing the fulfillment of the prophecy. 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 720), the Umayyad Caliph; Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (d. 820), the founder of the Shāfi'ī School of Law; Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī al-Ash'arī (d. 935), who brought harmony between the Mu'tazilites and the Sunnis; Abū Ḥamīd al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), who stabilized the shaky relationship between the Sunnis and the sufis; and many others, all were alleged to have fitted the above characteristics and were therefore *mujaddidūn*.¹⁸¹

According to Professor Hunwick, although the idea of *tajdīd* was an old one in Sunni Islam, al-Maghīlī might be the one who popularized it in West Africa.¹⁸² Various interpretations were also given to the doctrine as regards the number of renewers (*mujaddidūn*) to appear at a given time. Some 'ulamā' preferred to understand that the promised renewer should be a man who excelled in all branches of religious knowledge and that there should be no more than one every century. Others interpreted the ḥadīth to mean a number of persons, each specializing in one specific sphere "such as government, ḥadīth, *fiqh*, *qirā'āt*, *wa'z*, *zuhd*, etc".¹⁸³ This stand, suggested by Ibn Kathīr and reported by al-Suyūṭī, was later adopted by al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī (d. 1811) who designated Askiya Muḥammad as the *mujaddid* in government, al-Maghīlī in the Islamic sciences, al-Sanūsī in asceticism, etc.¹⁸⁴ Aḥmad Bābā (d. 1627) of Timbuktu, however, understood it to mean that every locality should have its *mujaddid*.¹⁸⁵ This is where the case of the Shehu comes in.

The Shehu was regarded as one of the renewers who were known only in their own localities. The beginning of the thirteenth century of the Muslim era witnessed, in Hausaland,

¹⁸¹ I.A. B. Balogun, *The Life and Works of 'Uthmān ḍan Fodio*, p. ix.

¹⁸² al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm) *Sharī'a in Songhay*, p. 115.

¹⁸³ Ibid., p. 116.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 117.

a growing expectation of the advent of a *mujaddid*. So when the Shehu began his call, not only was he identified as the expected *mujaddid*, some of the followers thought him to be the expected *Mahdī* (the rightly-guided one who would restore the faith and maintain justice on the earth). This he categorically refuted in many of his writings.¹⁸⁶ He declared in his *al-Naba' al-Hādī ilā Aḥwāl al-Imām al-Mahdī* :

O my brethren, my purpose in writing this book is not to affirm that I am al-Mahdī; rather to explain to you that God the exalted had favoured me with the conditions which agree with the conditions of the Imām al-Mahdī, that the 'ulamā', may God the exalted be pleased with them, have mentioned in their books. My object is to comply with the command of God the exalted : make the favour of thy Lord manifest.¹⁸⁷

What exactly does the term *tajdīd* stand for? Until recently the term has been used interchangeably to mean "reform", "revival", and "renewal" by many Islamists. However, in his article "*Jihād fi Sabīl Allāh*", J.R. Willis made a distinction between reform (*iṣlāḥ*) which is basically innovative, and renewal (*tajdīd*) which advocates a call for a return to the basic principles of Islam as contained in the Qur'ān and the Sunna.¹⁸⁸

However, he seems, in his definition of *tajdīd*, to make no distinction among the various Islamic revolutions which took place in different parts of the Muslim world in the eighteenth century. He has not, for example, seen the difference between the Wahhābiya in Arabia and the 'Uthmāniya movement in the Central Sudan. He understands, like many other scholars, the 'Uthmāniya movement as a revivalism and observes :

Attitudes toward the problem of Islam in nineteenth century West Africa were decidedly revivalist. There is not a hint of reformism -- which is to

¹⁸⁶ *Taḥdhīr al-al-Ikhwān; al-Naba' al-Hādī ilā Aḥwāl al-Imām al-Mahdī; Tanāsibūjī* (A Fulfulde poem on his Attributes).

¹⁸⁷ Ahmad Kan, "Literary Activity in Hausaland in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries", (M.A. Thesis, Ahmadu Bello University, 1978) p. 72.

¹⁸⁸ J.R. Willis, "*Jihād fi Sabīl Allāh*", p. 395. Also see J.O. Voll's article entitled "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History, *Tajdīd and Iṣlāḥ*", *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. by J.R. Esposito (New York : O.U.P., 1983) 32 - 47.

say modernism -- in the writings or actions of the leading Jihādists. For their model was the unalterable Law of Allāh and the unchanging *Sunna* of Muḥammad. Indeed in the minds of all Islamic revivalists the ideal religion was the Islam practiced by Muḥammad and the first two generations of companions, and the ideal community was the synthesis achieved during the "rightly-guided caliphate". The caliphate was held to be divinely-guided and just in the applications of divine law, the Shari'ah, whereas the rival kingships and sultanates which followed the demise of the caliphate were said to symbolize secular despotism.¹⁸⁹

But a different viewpoint has been advanced by scholars such as Hunwick and Hiskett. Hunwick observes :

It has sometimes been asserted that the Shehu was an Islamic primitivist and that he wished to restore the kind of situation that had existed during the life of the Prophet and the first four caliphs. This is certainly a misconception of his thinking, for while he looked always to the sayings and deeds of the Prophet and his immediate followers as inspiring examples for emulation, he nevertheless looked more to the later law-books, written centuries after the Prophet's death, to see how the scholars interpreted the divine Law and what rules they had laid down for the working of the judiciary, the collection of taxes, the administration of markets, the organization of the treasury and so on.¹⁹⁰

Hiskett holding a similar view explained :

This is not that of the early *umma* of Medina. It is a complex structure with a hierarchy of wazīrs (the office did not exist until the 'Abbāsīd period); ministers (*arkān*); governors; chief qāḍīs; emirs; chiefs of police; and a whole civil service down to the market inspectors of weights and measures. Not only is this the picture which the Fulani sources reflect. It is the system, an approximation to which they succeeded in establishing, as is clear from the accounts of Clapperton and Barth and from the recent researches of M.G. Smith.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ J.R. Willis, "Jihād fi Sabīl Allāh", pp. 395-396. See also Fazlur Rahman, "Roots of Islamic Neo-fundamentalism", *Change and the Muslim World*, edited by P.H. Stoddard, et. al. (Syracuse : Syracuse University Press, 1981) pp. 26.

¹⁹⁰ J.O. Hunwick, "The Nineteenth Century Jihads", *A Thousand Years of West African History* edited by J.F.A. Ajayi and Ian Espie (Ibadan : Ibadan University Press, 1967) p. 271.

¹⁹¹ M. Hiskett, "An Islamic Tradition", p. 592.

From the three quotations, it could be discerned that whereas Hunwick and Hiskett derived their conclusions about the 'Uthmānīya movement from the nature of the movement and the structure of the administration established, Willis had done nothing of the sort. Instead, he gave his readers a general definition of revivalism and made no attempt to show them how the 'Uthmānīya movement fit that definition. What he described may apply to Wahhābism and the Kharijite movement but certainly not to the 'Uthmānīya movement.

Let us now see if the points mentioned by Willis did fit the 'Uthmānīya movement. It was true that the Shehu and his associates, like the Wahhābīs, looked back with respect and admiration to the simplicity of the life of the *al-Khulafā'al-Rāshidīn*, the rightly-guided caliphs, but unlike the Wahhābīs this was, to them, only sentimental. The government they established with its hierarchy of officers as mentioned by Hiskett, clearly showed that theirs was a movement aimed at creating a politico-religious society peculiarly West African. Still, unlike the Wahhābīs who aimed at negating the past intellectual and spiritual achievements, the jihadists accepted *ijmā'* as the third principal source of the Sharī'a. The Wahhābīs had also strongly rejected sufism, a mystical doctrine which played a vital role in the lives of the jihadists. Moreover, it is clear from the dispute between the Shehu and his brother, the movement was not against kingship. The Shehu advocated kingship in his *Miṣbāḥ Ahl al-Zamān* and defended it in his *Najm al-Ikhwān* when his brother criticized the adoption of it. One important evidence that the 'Uthmānīya movement was not a revivalism was the Shehu's view concerning the historical past. Replying to Aḥmad Baba's legal decision that Hausaland and Borno were Muslim lands, the Shehu explained that although Aḥmad Baba's statement was valid during his time, since every scholar had to decide issues according to what he knew in his time, the situation might not be the same in every time. Again he wrote in his *Najm al-Ikhwān* defending his writings and those of his associates as being more relevant and beneficial to the people of Hausaland than the classical Muslim works. He states :

Every scholar knows the aspirations and anxieties of his contemporaries because (on this point) he is more knowledgeable (than previous scholars) therefore the writings of every scholar are more of use to his people than those of the earlier authors.¹⁹²

Still, in his effort to discourage his disciples from clinging fanatically to the past (*taqlīd*), the Shehu stressed that time and people's ways change. To support his view, he quoted from *Kitāb al-Naṣā'ih wa al-Waṣāyā* of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī the following : "Every era has its form of government and leaders. Therefore, there is no point for anyone to judge people with the standard of yesterday. Then how absurd for those who judge them with the standards of the Ṣaḥāba and of those who followed (*al-Tābiʿīn*)".¹⁹³

Therefore, because of the reasons enumerated above, it is clear that the Shehu was not a revivalist, nor was he a reformist (*muṣliḥ*) but a renewalist (*mujaddid*).

In view of the above, I suggest that there are three distinct types of change in Islam associated with the following three terms : Reform (*iṣlāḥ*), Revival (*ihyāʾ*), and Renewal (*tajdīd*).

1. Reform (*iṣlāḥ*) is the Islamic answer to the modern challenge, and was a reaction that surfaced in the Islamic world as a result of the Western impact. In order to modernize like the West, the reformists tried to integrate some Western concepts with the moral orientation of the Qurʾān and the Sunna. For example, the writing of constitutions by the Ottomans, Muḥammad ʿAlī's reforms, and the adjustment of Islamic concepts to Western thoughts which took place in Egypt and India in the mid-nineteenth century. Although in their methodology they advocated the adherence to fundamentals, they differed from the revivalists in that the latter's activity took the form of popular movements while theirs involved only individual thought. Furthermore, they did not ignore entirely past

¹⁹² ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 41b.

¹⁹³ Ibid., f. 11a.

developments in Islam for they looked at them as an Islamic contribution to world civilization.

But they were strong critics of conservative 'ulamā' who adhered to *taqlīd*. Muḥammad 'Abduh, a representative of this group of reformists, was reported to have said "Islam encouraged men to move away from their clinging attachment to the world of their fathers and their legacies, indicting as stupid and foolish the attitude that always wants to know what the precedents say".¹⁹⁴ It was not surprising, therefore that they not only advocated *ijtihād* but practiced it abundantly. Fāzluṣṣ Rahmān was correct when he observed that, in terms of solution to social problems through *ijtihād*, they had done much better than their predecessors who were either unwilling or did not find much which needed to be resolved through the *ijtihād* formula.¹⁹⁵

In terms of their contribution to modern Muslim world, their work was more conspicuous in areas of education, political thought and economic. In the area of education, they attributed the backwardness of Muslims in the scientific field to the exclusion of empirical sciences in the curriculum of traditional educational system. On government for the *umma* they advocated the electoral system and cited Qur'ānic statement on *shūrā* (mutual consultation) as justification. In the field of economy, they legitimized banking practices such as interest (*ribā*) which they explained as distinct from the exploitative, usurious system condemned in the Qur'ān. But the reformists had also a major shortcoming. They were selective in their interpretation of the Qur'ān, treating only those issues which in their judgment demanded solution.

¹⁹⁴ J.O. Voll, "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History", p. 39.

¹⁹⁵ F. Rahman, "Roots of Islamic Neo-fundamentalism", p. 28.

2. Revival (*iḥyāʾ*)¹⁹⁶ is a reaction of conservative, orthodox Muslims to liberal innovations. It is a call for the return to the practice of basic Islamic principles. It is rigid and uncompromising. A typical example is the Wahhābī movement which took place in Arabia in the eighteenth century.

3. Renewal (*tajdīd*) is a reassertion of Sunni Islam, based on the authorities of the Qurʾān, the Sunna and the *ijmāʿ*, after it has undergone some adaptations with customs and beliefs of people among whom it was introduced. The Shehu's and Shāh Walī Allāh's movements in the Central Sudan and India respectively are examples of this. This kind of movement differs from the Wahhābīya, in that it accepts *ijmāʿ* and all the past theological and legal accretion which the latter rejects strongly. Thus, the Shehu's role in Hausaland and the surrounding areas was to implement this renewal objective.

In view of the above, the Shehu was a *mujaddid*, a renewer of the faith. However, there were some of his followers who did not see him as a local *mujaddid*. They considered him as a *mujaddid* who represented the whole Muslim world and should be among the list of the twelve promised *mujaddidūn*. Muḥammad Dikko of Tsangaya anticipating the coming of the Mahdī, composed the following poem in Hausa in which he indicated that the Shehu was the twelfth *mujaddid*, and that the Mahdī, the awaited one, would be the thirteenth :

"Mujaddadi goma sha ɗaya ne na addini
Na sha biyunsu Waliyullahi Usmanu
Na sha ukunsu Khitamud Dini Mahdiyyu
Kowak ki bi nai fa ba shi rabo ga ghufranu".¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ Although *iḥyāʾ* is the appropriate Arabic word for revival, it has never been used, though there are books with such titles as *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna wa Ikḥmād al-Bidʿa*, and also honorific titles such as Muḥyī al-Dīn, etc.

¹⁹⁷ G. Saidu, "The Significance of the Shehu's Sermons and Poems in Ajami", p. 210.

My English translation is as follows :

There are eleven Renewers in the history of Islam,
The twelfth is the saint of God, Usman,
The thirteenth is *Khitām al-Dīn*, the Mahdī;
He who disobeys him has no hope of [being blessed with God's] pardon.

A Fulfulde poem attributed to the Shehu suggests that he was the eleventh *mujaddid*, and the Mahdī, the twelfth. The theme of this poem is also about the advent of the Mahdī.¹⁹⁸ As has already been noted above and will be seen below, the concept of *tajdīd* is linked to the doctrine of Mahdism.

d. His Stance on Mahdism

Mahdism played an important part in the Shehu's jihad movement; it is known that he composed several poems in local languages on the coming of the Mahdī and wrote some in Arabic as well. D.M. Last listed six such works in his book *The Sokoto Caliphate*,¹⁹⁹ and M.A. Al-Hajj listed ten.²⁰⁰

i The Origin of the Doctrine Among the Sunnis

The Sunni doctrine of Mahdism was a borrowing from the Shi'ites albeit with some modifications.²⁰¹ The Mahdī, whose advent was prophesied to be preceded by moral degeneration and social disorder in the *Umma*, was believed to be the harbinger of the End of Time. As a rightly guided *Imām* and the redeemer of the faithful, he was expected to lead the struggle for the renewal of the faith by restoring the unity of the *Umma* and filling the world

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 211.

¹⁹⁹ D.M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, pp. 237-240.

²⁰⁰ M.A. Al-Hajj, "The Thirteenth Century in Muslim Eschatology : Mahdist Expectations in the Sokoto Caliphate", *Ibadan, Nigeria. University. Centre of Arabic Documentation. Research Bulletin*. 3 (July 1967) p. 114.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 102.

with equity and justice. He was to be born in Medina to the descendants of ʿAlī through Fāṭima and his name was to tally with that of the prophet, while his father's name was to be the same as that of the Prophet's father. However, the Sunnis did not accept some of the Shiʿite extreme views about the Mahdī such as his infallibility, his being the incarnation of God on earth and the concept of *raǧʿa*, the appearance of the hidden *Imām*, for the Sunni believe, as indicated above, he was to be born in Medina.

As always, these beliefs needed some authentication by Prophetic traditions, and these were often not hard to manufacture. Several traditions were cited in the *Sunan* of Abū Dawūd and in similar works claiming to have been transmitted from the Prophet.²⁰² It is worth noting that neither in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī nor that of Muslim is there mention of it, though both have been accepted by the general consensus of Ḥadīth transmitters as authentic collections.

The sufis too believed in the idea of the Mahdī. According to Ibn Khaldūn, Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī (1165 - 1240) was among the prominent sufis who propagated the doctrine in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. They also adopted its Shiʿite aspects and added the sufi element of mystical "unveiling", *kashf*, to it.²⁰³ Using the power of *kashf*, they claimed they could foretell the exact time and place in which the Mahdī would appear. Ibn al-ʿArabī prophesied the year 683 A.H. (1284 A.D.)²⁰⁴ as the date of his appearance and

²⁰² Abū Dawūd, *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Muṣṭafā*, vol II, p. 207 - 209. Other works which cited such traditions are al-Tirmidhī, Ibn Māǧā, al-Bazzāz, al-Ḥākim, al-Ṭabarānī, Abū Yaʿlā al-Mawṣilī and also in the *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. See also Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddima : an Introduction to History*. Vol. 2. Translated from the Arabic by Franz Rosenthal (London : Routledge and K. Paul, 1967) pp. 156 - 185.

²⁰³ Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddima*, pp. 187 - 190.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 190.

when he failed to appear in that year the date was shifted to another year. Since then several prophecies have been made specifying new dates up till the time of the Shehu.

It is perhaps important to mention here the prophetic tradition relating to the "twelve rightly-guided Caliphs" and the effort made particularly by the sufis to link it with the doctrine of Mahdism. The Prophet is reported to have said "this religion will continue to remain firmly established until you have twelve caliphs, every one of whom is acknowledged by the *Umma*".²⁰⁵ The Ḥadīth generated various interpretations as to who exactly the twelve true caliphs were. The Sunni 'ulamā' identified the following as the caliphs : Abū Bakr, 'Umar I, 'Uthmān, 'Alī, Mu'āwīya, Yazīd, 'Abd al-Malik, al-Walīd I, Sulaymān, 'Umar II, Yazīd II and Hishām. Marwān b. al-Ḥakam was excluded from the list because during his short reign the *Umma* was divided. Syria paid homage to him, but Ḥijāz and Irāq acknowledged 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr.²⁰⁶ And Hishām was considered the last of the true caliphs because the unity of the Caliphate ended with his reign. A period of dissension and anarchy prevailed with the assassination of Walīd II (743 - 744 A.D.) and the overthrow of the Umayyads. The new Abbasid dynasty could not restore the unity of the Caliphate : the secession of Umayyad Spain and the rise of the Fatimids outlived the dynasty.

M.A. Al-Hajj explained these happenings as the "historical interpretation of the Prophetic tradition".²⁰⁷ In other words, the Ḥadīth was invented at the end of the Umayyad Caliphate to explain the political situation of the period. But al-Sūyūfī, in another interpretation, linked it with the concept of Mahdism. He explained that the reigns of ten out of the twelve true Caliphs had been fulfilled as prophesied by the tradition. The last two, one of whom would be the Mahdī, were still being awaited at his time. The ten he listed were :

²⁰⁵ Abū Dawūd, *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Muṣṭafā*, vol II, p. 207.

²⁰⁶ M.A. al-Hajj, "The Thirteenth Century in Muslim Eschatology", p. 106 footnote 2.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān, ʿAlī, al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī, Muʿāwīya, ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, al-Muhtadī and al-Zāhir.²⁰⁸ As will be seen later the Shehu, apparently influenced by al-Sūyūṭī's teaching, copied the list in his *Naṣīḥat Ahl al-Zamān* and in his *ajami* poems.

ii Mahdism in Central Sudan

Beliefs concerning the coming of the Mahdī were not new in Africa. It was Ibn Khaldūn again who was our source of information. He referred to some Maghribī sufis as responsible for spreading the beliefs. These were Ibn Qāṣī (d. 1141), Ibn Sabʿīn (d. 1226) and his disciple Ibn Abī Wāṭil. In his book *Kitāb al-Tadhkira*, Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Qurtubī (d. 1272) quoted some Traditions that the Mahdī would first appear in Massa, in the Sus, in the extreme Maghrib in 1202 - 3.²⁰⁹ Al-Sūyūṭī (d. 1505), as mentioned above, discussed the subject extensively in his *al-ʿArf al-Wardī fī Akhbār al-Mahdī*, and Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī (d. 1565) wrote about it in his book entitled *al-Qawl al-Mukhtaṣar fī ʿĀlāmāt al-Mahdī al-Muntaẓar*, which is still available.²¹⁰ Thus, it was not surprising that the concept of Mahdism played a significant role in the jihad movement, especially since the period coincided with the beginning of the thirteenth century of the Islamic calendar, which conformed to the prophetic tradition that a 'Renewer of the Faith' would appear at the beginning of each century. In addition, there was also a series of natural disasters that took place, and according to B.G. Martin, severe droughts recurred several times in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the people were forced to flee their homes. These events strengthened the belief that the Mahdī was about to appear, and that the Shehu was the *mujaddid* who preceded him

²⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 107.

²⁰⁹ W. Madelung, "Al-Mahdī", *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, 5 (1986) 1230-1238.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 1235.

The expectation of the appearance of the Mahdī was so strong that some of the Shehu's associates claimed that he was the Mahdī, but he denied this in both his Arabic writings and Fulfulde poems. Yet he did contribute to the people's anxiety and obsession about the End of the World. Just before and during the outbreak of the jihad conflict, he wrote several Arabic works and *ajami* poems alerting the people to the forthcoming appearance of the Mahdī and the imminent approach of the End of Time. Works such as *Kitāb Muddat al-Dunyā*, *Tanbīh al-Umma ʿalā Qurb Hujūm Ashrāt al-Sāʿa* and *Kitāb al-Mahdhūrāt min ʿĀlāmāt Khurūj al-Mahdī*, contain Prophetic traditions and comments on the subject without any attempt to distinguish between the "authentic" and the "spurious". As pointed out earlier, he drew much of his ideas and authority from the writings of al-Suyūṭī, the fifteenth century Egyptian sufi and jurisconsult.

It is not therefore surprising that after the war was over the Shehu found it necessary to write more works to allay the anxiety of his followers regarding the imminent doom. He emphatically rejected all prophecies relating to the approaching End of Time, and even apologized for his earlier stand on the Mahdī. He argued in his *Tanbīh al-Fāhim ʿalā Ḥukm Taʾrīkh Muddat al-Dunyā wa Khalq al-ʿĀlam* (1223/1808) that he was influenced in his earlier views by the writings of al-Suyūṭī. He said in part : "What we used to mention again and again during the gatherings for preaching that the time for the appearance of the Mahdī had come, was based on the assumptions of al-Suyūṭī. But after investigation, we admit that we do not know the time with any degree of certainty".²¹¹

Other Arabic works and *ajami* poems of this category are his *Amr al-Sāʿa* (1223/1808), *Taḥdhīr al-Ikhwān* (1229/1814), *Naṣīḥat Ahl al-Zamān* (1226/1811), *Bangare Mahdī* (The Advent of the Mahdī), *Mahdinkōbe* (The Followers of the Mahdī) and

²¹¹ M.A. al-Hajj, "The Thirteenth Century in Muslim Eschatology", p. 110.

Tanasibuji (The Attributes). Although he disapproved of predictions of the exact time in which the Mahdī would appear and denied unequivocally being the Mahdī, he accepted al-Suyūṭī's list of the 'true caliphs' and cherished the hope of being the eleventh of them just as the Mahdī was expected to be the twelfth. The list was quoted in his *Naṣīḥat Ahl al-Zamān* and *Mahdinkōbe* :

1. Abū Bakr
2. ʿUmar
3. ʿUthmān
4. ʿAlī
5. al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī
6. Muʿāwiyā
7. ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr
8. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz
9. Al-Zāhir Billāh
10. Al-Muhtadī Billāh
11. ʿUthmān b. Fūdī²¹²

In spite of the Shehu's discouragement of wild predictions, the belief in the imminent appearance of the Mahdī and the approach of Doomsday persisted generations after the establishment of the Caliphal government. The Hausaland witnessed waves of migration to the Sudan during the rise of Muhammad Ahmad, the Sudanese Mahdī, and at the British occupation of Northern Nigeria. Hayāt b. Saʿīd, the great grandson of the Shehu, maintained contact with the Mahdī. In fact, Hayāt was appointed his Caliph in Western

²¹² G. Saidu, "The Significance of the Shehu's Sermons", p. 211. See also ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Naṣīḥat Ahl al-Zamān*, ff. 23b - 24a.

Sudan.²¹³ It was not surprising that a poem by Muḥammad Dikko of Tsangaya predicted that Sultan Bello would help the expected Mahdī and be his vizier.²¹⁴

e. His Role as a Mystic

Sufism is another important religious factor in the Shehu's career. He was initiated into the Shādhīliya, Khalwatīya and Qādiriya orders by his mystic master (*murshid*) and teacher, Jibrīl b. ʿUmar.²¹⁵ As mentioned earlier, it was the mystical links (*salāsīl*) between the two men which earned Ibn ʿUmar the Shehu's glowing tribute in the *Naṣāʾih al-Umma* and *Shifāʾ al-Ghalīl*. That the mystic Ibn ʿUmar left an impact upon him would not be denied but it was the writings of sufi - jurisconsults such as al-Ghazālī, al-Shaʿrānī and Aḥmad Zarrūq which influenced his model of Sufism. These three scholars combined the use of the Sharīʿa and Sufism in their religious practices and their works are frequently cited by the Shehu. For example he described his community as those mystics who observed both the exoteric (*sharīʿa*) and esoteric (*ḥaqīqa*) sciences as practiced by al-Ghazālī and ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī.²¹⁶ He reiterated this in his *Kitāb al-Tafriqa* by a warning that "whoever assumed the role of a sufi without assuming that of a jurisconsult (*faqīh*) had indeed become a heretic (*zindīq*) and he who became a jurisconsult without becoming a sufi was also a heretic".²¹⁷

²¹³ R.A. Adelye, *Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria*, p. 106.

²¹⁴ G. Saidu, "The Significance of the Shehu's Sermons", p. 210.

²¹⁵ B.G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods*, p. 24. For his membership in Khalwatīya, refer to S. Zahradeen's dissertation, "ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Fodio's Contributions", footnote 3, p. 36; and see also ʿAbd al-Raḥman al-Jabartī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, pp. 345 - 347.

²¹⁶ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Tabshīr al-Umma al-Aḥmadiya li-Bayān baʿḍ Manāqib al-Qādiriya*, ff. 5a and 18a.

²¹⁷ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Kitāb al-Tafriqa*, f. 1b.

Other sufi works which might have influenced his mystical thought were *al-Insān al-Kāmil fī Maʿrifat al-Awākhir wa al-Awāʾil* by ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Jilī (d. 1428); *Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt* by Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Jazūlī (d. 1465), the praise-poems to the Prophet: the *Ishrīnīyāt* of al-Fazāzī (d. 1230); and *al-Burda* of Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Būṣīrī (d. 1296). These materials expound the idea of the Prophet Muḥammad as *al-Insān al-Kāmil*, the "Perfect Man" or as *Afḍal al-Khalq* the "Most Excellent of Creation". Al-Jilī discussed the subject in his work mentioned above in great detail. He explained that the "Perfect Man" is the best of all creations, He is the vicegerent of God, all existence rotates around him. Al-Jazūlī, on the other hand, compiled a collection of prayers and a list of the Prophet's qualitative names explaining those characteristics which qualified him as the "Perfect Man".²¹⁸ The Shehu's interest in the idea of the "Perfect Man" might have derived from reading such works. His writings, particularly his Fulfulde poems, are full of this mystic concept of Muḥammad. Two poems may illustrate our observation.

In *Maʿamaʿare* (The Poem Rhymed with "Maʿaʿ") he says :

2. Cuḃāḃo suḃāḃe caḃāḃo saḃāḃe,
 Mo timminiroiḃa nulāḃe maʿa.
3. Muḥammadu Aḥmadu an mbegete mī,
 Mi yōlake nder māyo bege maʿa.
4. Nde njolli mī njar mī ndiyam bege maḃa,
 Walā ka nanaī mī fu saī ka maʿa.
5. To ndāru mī fu wonī an nī ngīʿaī mī,
 Ko kettī mī fu wonī bolle maʿa...
66. Ba māḃa nanāka ba maḃa yiʿāka,
 Walā keḃetēḃo yo nandī maʿa²¹⁹

²¹⁸ M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa* (London : Longman, 1984) p. 245.

²¹⁹ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, "Maʿamaʿre", *Gime Fulfulde*, compiled by Al-Amin Abu-Manga and Ibrahim Mukoshy (Kano : Bayero University. n.d.) pp 19 and 25.

which I translate thus :

2. The chosen one among the best, the rarest of the rare,
With whom You (God) ended [the list] of Your messengers.
3. Muḥammad Aḥmad, it is to you I am expressing my love,
For I have plunged in the river of your love.
4. When I plunged and drank the water of your love,
I listened to no speech but that about you.
5. Wherever I looked I saw [nothing] but you,
Whatever I listened to I heard [nothing] but your speech...
66. One like you is not heard of and the like of you is not seen,
One like you will never be had.

And in *Fukafukare* (The Poem Rhymed with Fuka) he states :

Duniya he Barzakh²²⁰ Lahıra cuḍi tagle fuka,
Yimbe he Ginni Mala'ika'en he tagle fuka,
Lesdi he kammujı fa al-Arshi limtu fuka,
Ngam mada Allah tagoyi mobgal tagefu fuka
Wandāgi maḍa dā Allah tagayi tagefu fuka²²¹

which I render as follows :

The world and the barzakh, the hereafter, the various creations;
Men and jinns, angels and the rest of the creations,
The earth and the planets including the throne, all listed,
It is because of you that God created all the creations,
If it were not because of your esteem, God would not have created
the creations.

We may add that the interest shown in Ḥadīth by the eighteenth-century sufis might, among other implications, have influenced their attitudes to the concept of the Prophet as "Perfect Man". As pointed out in Chapter One, the Shehu's mystic master and teacher Jibrīl b. 'Umar and his teacher Muḥammad b. Rājī, both had connections with the Ḥijāzī 'ulamā' of Ḥadīth.

²²⁰ A state of the dead between the time of death and the resurrection day.

²²¹ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, "Fukafukare", *Gime Fulfulde*, compiled by Al-Amin Abu-Manga and Ibrahim Mukoshy (Kano : Bayero University. n.d.) p. 31.

i The Shehu as the Qādirīya Shaykh

It has been suggested that Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī (d. 1504) introduced the Qādirīya order into Western Sudan in the fifteenth century.²²² However it was the Sanhaja and Kel-Es-Suq who disseminated the order in the south-east of the region at the time it was being introduced in the west.²²³ By the middle of the eighteenth century, the order had begun to spread across Western Sudan through the missionary activities of the Kanata nomads and their leader, Mukhtār b. Aḥmad. According to Hiskett, these Kanata sufis were not behind the spread of the *ṭarīqa* in Hausaland; rather it was the Ineslemen of Ahir and Agades who were responsible for its dissemination there.²²⁴ He asserts that the interest in miracles and the visits to the tombs of saints which the Fulbe sufis had been noted for, were characteristics of the Agades Qādirīya. In his *al-Salāsīl al-Qādirīya* the Shehu refers to his mystical ancestry as follows :

ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jilānī
 |
 Abū Yaʿzā
 |
 Shuʿayb
 |
 Jār al-Muṣṭafā
 |
 ʿAbd al-Salām b. Mashīsh
 |
 Abū Ḥasan al-Shādhilī
 |
 Aḥmad b. ʿUmar al-Anṣārī
 |
 Ibn ʿAṭāʾ Allāh al-Iskandarī
 |
 Saʿd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Ḥasanī
 |

²²² M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 60; B.G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods*, p. 31.

²²³ M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*, p. 244.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 246-247.

Muḥyī al-Dīn b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥusaynī
 |
 Muḥammad Murtaḍā al-Ḥusaynī al-Wāsiṭī
 |
 Jibrīl b. ʿUmar
 |
 ʿUthmān b. Muḥammad Fūdī²²⁵

Apparently the Qādirīya order influenced his personal life to a large extent, and it is reported that he would take breaks from his preaching travels to make retreats.²²⁶ He had a series of mystical experiences, and in his treatise entitled *Lammā Balaghtu* he narrates :

When I reached the age of thirty-six years, Allāh lifted the veil from my eyes, removed deafness from my faculty of hearing, and strengthened my smelling faculty. He removed bluntness from my taste, hardness from my hands and legs. He removed the burden from my body and I was able to see whatever was far as near. I used to hear from afar as if it was near and was able to smell a fragrance that was sweeter than all others from those who were worshipping Allāh, and the most pungent smell from the sinners. I used to recognize the lawful food (*ḥalāl*) simply from its taste, and so it was with unlawful food (*ḥarām*). Whatever was far, used to come to my hand, and while I sat in a place, I still walked with my legs. This is the bounty of Allāh given to whomever He wants. I knew every limb of my body, every bone, muscle, flesh and each hair in its proper position.²²⁷

He had another spiritual experience when he reached the age of forty years and five months, which he describes in his *Kitāb al-Wird* :

I saw the master, Muḥammad, may the benediction and salutation of Allāh be upon him, with his Companions and (other) Prophets and saints (*awliyāʾ*). I was greeted and made to sit in their midst, then the master ʿAbd al-Qādir Jilānī gave me a green piece of cloth on which was written : 'There is no god but God and Muḥammad is the messenger of God', and a turban on which was inscribed 'Say, Allāh is one....' I was commanded to

²²⁵ Abdullahi Smith, "A Neglected Theme of West African History : The Islamic Revolutions of the 19th Century", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 2 (1960/63) p. 177.

²²⁶ H.R. Palmer, "An Early Fulani", p. 410.

²²⁷ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Lammā Balaghtu Sittan wa Thalāthīn Sana*, f. 1a; see also Plate I, after this page.

بِشِيرَاءِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
 وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا فَإِنَّ الْعَبْدَ الْبَقِيَّةَ
 الْفَقِيرَ الْوَحِيدَ رَبِّهِ عَشَقَ بَرَّ عَشَقَ
 الْمَقْرُوفَ بِابِرٍ هُوَ دِي تَقَعَهُ هُمُ اللَّهُ بِرَفَقَتِهِ
 هَامِزٌ لَمَّا بَلَّغْتُ سِتًّا وَثَلَاثِينَ سَنَةً كَشَفَ اللَّهُ
 الْغُطَّةَ عَنْ حَصْرٍ وَالْوَقْفَ عَنِ سَمْعٍ وَعَنِ شَفَا
 وَالْخَطَرَ عَنِ دُورٍ وَالْكَفَّ عَنِ رِيحٍ وَالْثَبَاتَ عَنِ
 رَيْبٍ وَالنَّشْرَ عَنِ رَيْبٍ كُنْتُ أَنْظُرَ الْبَعِيدَ كَالْقَرِيبِ
 وَأَسْمَعُ الْبَاطِنَ كَالظَّاهِرِ وَأَشْمُرُ رَيْحَ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُ
 أَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَكَ وَالْقَدِيرُ الْغَنِيُّ الْكَرِيمُ وَالْعَزِيزُ
 الْبَاحِثُ وَالْقَبِيلُ الْبَعِيدُ وَالْعَرَامُ الْكَذِبُ وَالْجَنُّ الْيَدِي
 مَا كَانَ يَحِيدُ أَوَانًا بِالسُّرْبِ فَكَانَ وَآمَنَ بِرَفِيقٍ
 مَا تَمَّ يَنْبَغُهُ الْجِدَادُ أَمَّا ذَا لَيْكَ فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ يَوْمَهُ
 مِنْ بَشَاءٍ وَعَرَفَتْ بَدَنِي عَصَا عَصَا عَصِيَّةٍ
 عَصِيَّةٌ لَيْسَتْ لَيْسَتْ شَعْرَةً شَعْرَةً كُلُّ وَاحِدَةٍ
 مِنْهُنَّ يَمُرُّ بِمِثْلِهَا وَمَا أَوْحَدَهُنَّ قَبْلَ جَدِّهِ وَفَامَسَ
 اذْهَبَ

^cUthmān b. Fūdī. "Lammā Balaghtu Sittan wa Thalāthīn Sana ."

do good and refrain from the forbidden things, then I was given the 'sword of truth' to quell the enemies of Allāh.²²⁸

Thus, he was given divine authority to unsheathe the sword against evil-doers, and the Qādirīya Brotherhood therefore served, to some extent, as a ready vehicle for the unity and the loyalty of his followers.

Further, in his *Ta'lim al-Ikhwān*, he also accepted another mystical genealogy which linked him to Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī through Sīdī al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr al-Kuntī. The latter apparently maintained contact and had a good relationship with him. Sulṭān Bello mentioned in his *Infāq al-Maysūr* that Sīdī al-Mukhtār was reported to have said of the Shehu.

The most accomplished saints (*al-awliyāʾ al-kummal*) of today are three. One, an Arab, lives beyond al-Shām; his light is the light of 'Lā ilāha illā Allāh'. The second is Fallātī who lives in the land of the Sudan and (is called) ʿUthmān Ibn Fūdī; his light is the light of the seal found on the left shoulder of the Messenger of Allāh. As for the third, his light is the light of the heart of the Messenger of Allāh.²²⁹

In his *Ta'lim al-Ikhwān* the Shehu referred to his place in the chain of transmission (*al-Silsila*) of al-Qādirīya al-Mukhtārīya which was connected to al-Maghīlī through Shaykh Nūḥ.

Sīdī Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī
|
Sīdī ʿUmar b. Sīdī Aḥmad al-Bakkāʾī
|
Sīdī Aḥmad al-Firām
|
Sīdī al-Raqqād
|
Shaykh Sīdī Aḥmad
|

²²⁸ A.R.I. Doi, "Shehu ʿUthmān", p. 118.

²²⁹ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 207; cf. A.A. Batran, "An Introductory Note on the Impact of Sīdī al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī (1729 - 1811) on West African Islam in the 18th and 19th Centuries", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 6 (1973) p. 350.

Sīdī Aḥmad
 |
 Sīdī Abū al-Niqāb
 |
 Sīdī al-Sharīf ʿAlī b. Aḥmad
 |
 Sīdī Aḥmad al-Mukhtār
 |
 Muḥyī al-Dīn b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥusaynī
 |
 Shaykh Nūḥ
 |
 Shaykh ʿUthmān b. Fūdī

Why did the Shehu agree to be initiated into the Qādiriyya a second time? Perhaps the main reason was that he did not want to reject the offer made by Sīdī al-Mukhtār, who was apparently interested in extending his influence as a Qādiriyya Shaykh in Hausaland. Secondly, he wanted to unite himself spiritually with Sīdī Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī, as stated in his *Kitāb Taʿlīm al-Ikhwān*:

God has decreed that we might have sensible relations (*al-ittisāl al-ḥissī*) with him in the Intermediate State (*Barzakh*), and in the Hereafter, as it has been decreed that we should have spiritual relations with him in this world which are symbolized by this chain of transmission ²³⁰

Just how personal was Sūfism to the Shehu? The above quotation, according to Louis Brenner demonstrates the "highly personal significance which the *ṭarīqah* affiliation held for him" ²³¹ A number of scholars seem to agree with Brenner. M.A. Al-Hajj asserted a similar view in his article "The Meaning of the Sokoto Jihad".²³² Most also endorsing this view, observed, "...the Qādiriyya as found in Sokoto tends to be individualistic and does not

²³⁰ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Taʿlīm al-Ikhwān*, f. 20a. See also B.G. Martin, *Unbelief in the Western Sudan*, p. 93.

²³¹ Louis Brenner, "Muslim Thought in Eighteenth Century", p. 57.

²³² M.A. Al-Hajj, "The Meaning of the Sokoto Jihad", p. 8.

practice group recitations. Thus there is less community of feeling demonstrated among Qādiris".²³³

On the same issue, Brenner maintained that there was no evidence that the Shehu "ever perceived the hierarchical structure of *ṭarīqah* membership as a model or means for social and political organization".²³⁴ He cited the Shehu's *Kitāb ʿUlūm al-Muʿāmalā* to explain his concept of *taṣawwuf* whereby a mystic attains internal purification by acquiring good deeds and obliterating bad ones. Why then did the Shehu join several *ṭuruq* if there was no social or political benefit to be derived from them? Brenner explained that the *salāsīl* and *asānid* would serve as communication links by means of which he would establish spiritual contact with the *awliyāʾ* just as exemplified by his statement in *Taʿlīm al-Ikhwān* quoted above and in his *al-Salāsīl al-Dhahabīya li-al-Sādāt al-Ṣūfiya*.

Professor N. Levtzion appears to disagree with this opinion. He considered mysticism as one of the external influences which helped in the mobilization of the Shehu's supporters. He argued that "Mystical experiences were of great significance in ʿUthmān's life, and are described as milestones on his road to the jihad"²³⁵ As evidence to this, he cited the 1794 visionary experience in which the Shehu was girded with "the sword of truth" to unsheathe it against "the enemies of God". This, Professor Levtzion correctly believed, was the turning point in the Shehu's career. He also pointed out that had his flight to Gudu, a prelude to the jihad, not been sanctioned by ʿAbd al-Qādir in a mystical vision, the many distinguished scholars who hated armed confrontation would have opposed the move. Furthermore, mystical verses had a mobilizing power, and ʿAbd Allāh used to employ them to attract some Fulbe who, initially, sat on the fence during the jihad.

²³³ D.M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 216.

²³⁴ Louis Brenner, "Muslim Thought in Eighteenth Century", p. 56.

²³⁵ Nehemia Levtzion, "The Eighteenth Century Background to Islamic Revolutions in West Africa", p. 34.

Both views have their points. During the Shehu's period the *turuq* were still in the process of acquiring their identities. Their lack of organization could be explained by the permissiveness which allowed a mystic to join as many *turuq* as he could. It is true that the Shehu wrote and composed many poems about the Qādirīya and ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, but this did not prevent him from being a member of the Khalwatīya and Shādhilīya orders. Unlike al-Hājj ʿUmar, who adopted the *Tijānīyaṭarīqa* as a mobilizing means in his jihad campaign, the Shehu did not use the Qādirīya as a rallying symbol. When he wanted to incite the people to intensify their attack on his rivals, it was the doctrine of Mahdism he employed rather than the Qādirīya brotherhood, despite its potential as a mobilizing power. On the other hand, the point raised by Levtzion concerning the Shehu's mystical vision was very important in interpreting some of the political decisions he had taken, particularly before the flare-up of the armed conflict. As already cited by Levtzion, he did not take up arms nor emigrate until both events were sanctioned by the mystical visions. The fact that he found it important to reduce such visions into writing was enough evidence of their social and political importance. In a nutshell, therefore, the *turuq*, at the time of the Shehu, did not play the major role that they played at the time of al-Hājj ʿUmar al-Fūtī, because they were still in the process of crystallization as identifiable groups.

To conclude, our concern in the preceding pages has been to analyse the Shehu's life, using his writings and those of his disciples as sources of information. We have shown that his early childhood is still not fully known because the scanty information is surrounded with legends and charismatic stories developed after his death. However, his education and his religious and political activities are not as obscure. The jihadists had bequeathed to us enough literature which shed light on his intellectual, religious, and political life. The sources describe the traditional system of education observed in the region, the Shehu's teachers, their specialities, and the subjects he studied under them. We are also furnished with information on his preaching tours, his ethical approach to public call (*daʿwa*) and his ability to use both

religious and political issues advantageously. In short, he played a central role in bringing about some changes in the social, religious, and political life of Hausaland. Yet, the Shehu was not an accident, he was the product of his society and times, the subject of which constitutes the next chapter.

The Shehu died in Sokoto in the year 1233/1817 at the age of sixty-three, the age of the Prophet whose life and activities he tried to emulate. As a matter of fact, he composed a Fulfulde poem, *Tanasibuji*, explaining the similarities between them. To this day his tomb is visited by Nigerians and nationals from neighbouring territories.

CHAPTER III

THE BACKGROUND OF THE ʿUTHMĀNĪYA MOVEMENT

External and Regional Influence

Over the years modern scholars have advanced various viewpoints concerning the external and internal factors that may have influenced the Shehu and the development of his movement. Some attributed the inspiration of the movement to the happenings in the contemporary Muslim world; others saw its rise as a local phenomenon; others still associated it with similar regional uprisings which began a century earlier. I shall attempt in the following pages to establish if any or all of these had impact on the Shehu and the development of his movement.

The eighteenth-century Muslim world was a period of political turmoil and socio-economic, religious and intellectual interaction. In terms of global dimensions, the Muslims were confronted with successful incursions of the European armies into *Dār al-Islām*. In 1774, exactly the year the Shehu began his preaching career, the Russians defeated the Turks and twenty-four years later the French, under Bonaparte, occupied Egypt. Elsewhere the British were entrenched in India; the Safavids, under internal and external pressures, were on the verge of collapse. In Central Asia, the Khanates were squeezed by the Russian and Chinese expansion, while in Southeast Asia, the Muslims were fighting a losing battle to keep the Dutch, the British and the French out of the region.²³⁶

²³⁶ M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*, p. 156; A.R. Doi, "The Political Role of Islam in West Africa (with Special Reference to Uthman dan Fodio's Jihād)", *Islamic Quarterly*, 12 (1965) p. 235.

Although militarily and politically, the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries could be considered as a period of decline for the Muslim world, culturally and economically, the period was a time of growing Islamic influences. In Central as in Southeast Asia, East Africa, and West Africa Muslim immigrants, merchants, itinerant *ʿulamāʾ* and sufi shaykhs were busy transacting businesses, exchanging ideas and disseminating Islam to the local people. It was in this complex environment of anxiety --- being politically and militarily powerless --- on the one hand, and of interaction and diffusion of ideas in a cosmopolitan Islamic world on the other that the Islamic revolutionary movements, in their different forms emerged.²³⁷

Yet, not all the events in the Muslim lands were felt in all parts of the Islamic world. The European invasions of Muslim territories, for one, in spite of their global dimensions, had not reached the Central Sudan. If the Shehu heard of such incursions in North Africa and India, as he might have had, it would be doubtful that he fully comprehended their implications. Perhaps he would consider the situation as a temporary set-back for the Muslims and that their armies would eventually repulse the foreign forces. For this, it would be unlikely for the invasions to have any impact on him or his movement.

The *ʿUthmānīya* jihad movement and other contemporary Islamic movements acknowledged, albeit for various grounds, the need for social change but they differed almost diametrically in their concepts and implementation of social transformation. Radical movements, such as the Wahhābīya, interpreted the plight of Muslim societies in the light of moral and social decadence caused by the historical accretions and foreign influences. Hence to purify them, they advocated a return to the true sources of Islam, the Qurʾān and the Sunna of the Prophet for guidance. They then insisted on a more literal interpretation and application of the law than was generally acceptable to many established Muslim societies.

²³⁷ N. Levtzion and J. Voll "Introduction", p. 5.

This would be bound to create disagreements or heighten the already existing ones as it certainly did, since the generality of Muslims, including the Shehu, could not see the wisdom of discarding wholesale the intellectual and theological contributions of the medieval Muslims.²³⁸ A typical example of the non-compromising stand of this class of purists was the statement reported to have been made by a Yemeni scholar Muḥammad al-Shawqānī (1758 - 1834) that "there is 'the pure path of the Qurʾān and the pure Sunna of the Messenger of God' and 'there is no third like them'".²³⁹

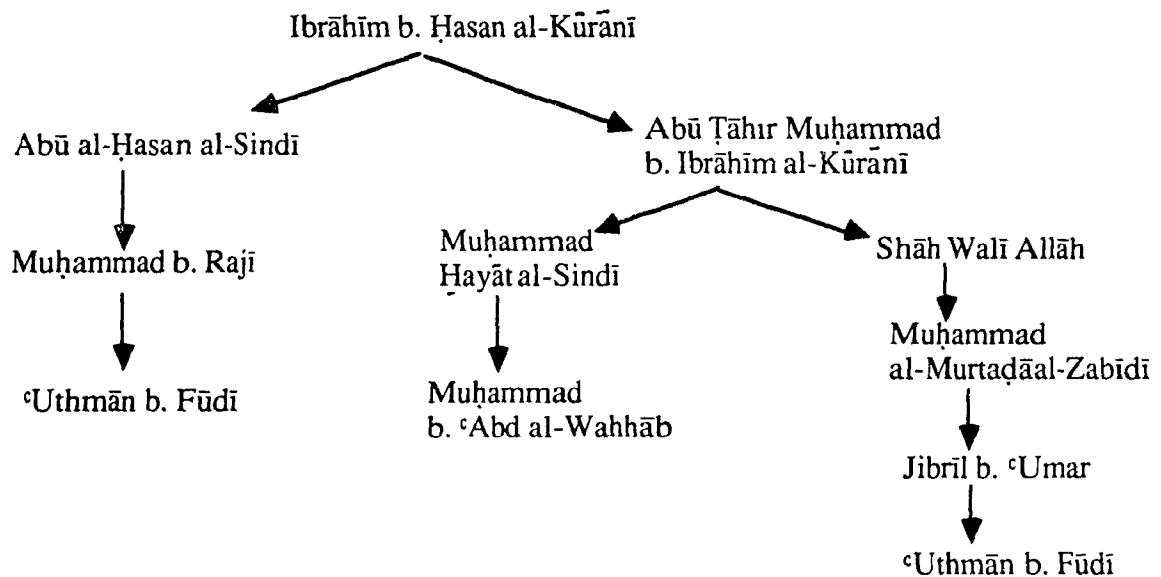
Although the ʿUthmānīya jihad movement, because of the reasons stated above, was not influenced by other contemporary Islamic revolutionary movements, nevertheless, it seemed to share, to some extent, some common origins. Recent study has shown that the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century militant movements might have derived inspiration from the Ḥijāzī networks of the Ḥadīth ʿulamāʾ.²⁴⁰ It revealed that Mecca, Medina, Zabīd and

²³⁸ J.O. Voll, "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History", p. 37.

²³⁹ Ibid., p. 39.

²⁴⁰ Part of the Ḥijāzī network of Ḥadīth ʿUlamāʾ connecting the Shehu through two of his teachers:

Cairo were centres of intellectual activity where scholars from all corners of the Muslim world met. It also showed that many notable scholars involved in the network system came from regions outside these centres. Also student-pilgrims from the peripheral regions of the core Muslim area, such as West Africa and Southeast Asia, had the opportunity to meet and interact with scholars and students from other lands. It would be possible that such students often went back to their homelands carrying with them a spirit of Islamic revolution. Some of them might even have become leaders of militant movements such as the one led by al-Ḥājj ʿUmar al-Fūdī or encouraged others to rise such as the encouragement alleged to have been given to the Shehu by his teacher Jibrīl b. ʿUmar.



Cited from N. Levtzion, "The Eighteenth Century Background to Islamic Revolutions in West Africa", p. 33; L. Brenner, "Muslim Thought", p. 61; J.O. Voll, "Linking Groups", pp. 77-88; and J.O. Voll, "Muḥammad Ḥayyā al-Sindī and Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb", pp. 32-39. Muḥammad al-Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī was also said to have initiated Jibrīl b. ʿUmar into the Qādirīya order. See M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*, p. 247.

The Reformation of Sufism

One of the outcomes of the Ḥijāzī networks of the Ḥadīth 'ulamā' was the climax of developments in the area of mysticism. The need for reforming Ibn 'Arabī's (1165 - 1240) model of sufism dated back to the time of Ibn Taymīya, a puritan jurisconsult who considered the doctrine of *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*²⁴¹ and other sufi practices as dangerously compromising the Islamic tenet of divine unity and advocated the return to Islam free from innovations. Ibn al-'Arabī's teaching was based on pantheism, placing no importance on the differences of religions.²⁴² A quotation from a letter of Ahmad Sirhindī to Khwājah 'Abd al-Bāqī (1563 - 1603), a Naqshbandī saint, when the former subscribed to the doctrine of *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*, would illustrate this pantheistic tendency.

The Sharī'ah is, alas, the way of the blind
Our way is the way of the infidels and fire-worshippers.
Infidelity and faith are the lock and the face of that beauty.
In our way infidelity and faith are one²⁴³

Ibn Taymīya's renewal attempt was re-echoed in the late sixteenth century when Aḥmad Sirhindī launched his *Waḥdat al-Shuhūd*,²⁴⁴ a reformed *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*, as a vehicle of *tajdīd* against syncretism in Mughal India. But it was in the eighteenth-century

²⁴¹ *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*: All that exists is One Being. God is that Being Who determines Himself in various forms (including the world). In short, God and the world are One Being, i.e. the world is but God's self-uncovering (*tajallī*).

²⁴² J.O. Voll, "Renewal and Reform in Islamic History", p. 42, N. Levtzion and J. Voll "Introduction", p. 9.

²⁴³ M.A.H. Ansari, *Sufism and the Sharī'ah: a Study of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi's Effort to Reform Sufism* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1986) p. 14.

²⁴⁴ *Waḥdat al-Shuhūd*: Unity of Witnessing. It negates the doctrine of *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*. It reaffirms that God is completely different from the world and absolutely other. The existence of God is not the existence of the world, but the latter proceeds from the former.

Wahhābī uprising (a movement founded by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, a member of the Ḥijāzī network of Ḥadīth) that sufism came under strong criticism. The new movement's ideas of absolute monotheism and anti-sufi doctrine spread across the Muslim world and consequently aroused the need for sufi reform.²⁴⁵ A shift from the approach of Ibn ʿArabī toward the more moderate style of al-Ghazālī was the sufis' subsequent response to the needed reform. This model of sufism, or neo-sufism as it came to be known, which combined the exoteric (*sharīʿa*) and esoteric (*al-ḥaqīqa*) sciences, heightened interest in Ḥadīth study and lessened adherence to *taqlīd*.²⁴⁶ The teacher of Ḥadīth was often also the *murshid* of his students. Their interpersonal ties were very important as evidenced by the chains of transmission of both Ḥadīth and sufism. Thus, as Jibrīl b. ʿUmar was the Shehu's teacher and sufi *murshid*, Muhammad al-Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī was Jibrīl's Ḥadīth teacher and Qādirī *murshid*.²⁴⁷

Among the many features of reformed sufism was the new emphasis on the role of the Prophet as a model of moral conduct. The *ṭuruq* (orders) took the name of *ṭarīqa Muḥammadiya* maintaining a less mystical tendency and an attitude more involved in societal transformation. Beside serving as vehicles for social reform and mobilization, *ṭuruq* became more exclusive, and memberships were only attained through initiation. Although the orders were not always politically militant there were occasions when, under certain circumstances, some charismatic leaders became militants. As a matter of fact, many of the *tajdīd* leaders were members of one or more *ṭuruq*.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*. p. 157; M. Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore : The Ashraf Press, 1951) p. 152.

²⁴⁶ N. Levtzion and J. Voll "Introduction", pp. 8-10.

²⁴⁷ M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*. p. 247.

²⁴⁸ N. Levtzion and J. Voll "Introduction", p. 10.

Naqshbandīya and Khalwātīya were regarded as the most dynamic of the eighteenth-century *ṭuruq*. Naqshbandīya was more widely observed in India and Southeast Asia. It had been associated with renewal movements in many parts of this region. Aḥmad Sirhindī mentioned above, belonged to one of its branches and so did Shāh Walī Allāh, the eighteenth-century Indian renewalist.²⁴⁹ Khalwātīya, like Naqshbandīya, was noted for its members' involvement in the renewal movements. Leading ʿulamāʾ of al-Azhar were behind its spread in Egypt and other parts of Africa to the west and southwest. Scholars such as Muṣṭafā al-Bakrī (d. 1749), Muḥammad Sālim al-Hifnī (d. 1767), Mahmūd al-Kurdī (d. 1780) and Aḥmad al-Dardīr (d. 1787) figured prominently in its dissemination beyond Egypt. In fact, Aḥmad Dardīr was one of the links in the Shehu's Khalwātīya mystical chain of authority for he initiated Jibrīl b. ʿUmar.²⁵⁰

Therefore, in view of the contact the Shehu had, through his teachers, Muḥammad b. Rajī and Jibrīl b. ʿUmar, with the Ḥijāzī Ḥadīth networks system and with the advocates of reformed sufism, we can suggest that revolutionary ideas associated with the two developments might have influenced his thinking.

Up to this point, we have attempted to examine the place of the ʿUthmānīya jihad movement in relation to global events which inspired other Islamic movements. We shall now examine whether there is any evidence that it was also influenced by some regional movements that began a century earlier. As mentioned above, the Shehu was, according to some opinions, influenced by the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century jihad movements in south-western Mauritania and Senegambia. In justifying this view Professor Philip D. Curtin drew attention to the fact that Nāsīr al-Dīn's jihad in southern Mauritania took place even

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ M.S. Zahradeen, "ʿAbd Allāh", p. 164; B.G. Martin, "A Short History of the Khalwati Order of Dervishes", *Scholars, Saints and Sufis*, edited by N.R. Keddie (Berkeley. University of California Press, 1972) p. 304

earlier than the Wahhābi uprising, the uprising considered in the past as having influenced later movements in Asia and Africa. He asserts : "...evidence suggests that the external influence of Islam in Arabia and the Middle East has been over-emphasized in West African religious history. Forces working for the reform of Islam based in Africa itself were already at work".²⁵¹

He explains further that the forces behind the nineteenth-century jihads could be traced back to the social and political setting which influenced those earlier jihads.²⁵² For instance, local clerics who found themselves under the authority of secular rulers often showed their resentment by rising up against such authorities on the pretext that "their moral superiority... gave them a claim to rule or to dictate policy. And sunni Islam suggested that they had not only a right but even an obligation to make their weight felt".²⁵³

This observation only confirms the common origins and objectives of the early and later jihads. There is no evidence from the available sources, including the writings of the ʿUthmānīya jihad leaders, which indicates direct influence of the early wars on the latter. In fact, Hiskett does not believe that the social and political condition in Senegambia at the time of the wars was the same as those prevalent at the time of the ʿUthmānīya jihad in Hausaland. He argues in part : "The Senegambia was far away from Hausaland and the wars

²⁵¹ P.D. Curtin, "Jihad in West Africa : Early Phases and Inter-relationships in Mauritania and Senegal", *Journal of African History*, 12 (1971) p. 24; N. Levtzion, "North-West Africa : from the Maghrib to the Fringes of the Forest", *The Cambridge History of Africa c. 1600-1790* (London : Cambridge University Press, 1975) p. 199.

²⁵² P.D. Curtin, "Jihad in West Africa", p. 14; I.M. Lewis, "Introduction : I. Regional Review of the Distribution and Spread of Islam", *Islam In Tropical Africa*, 2nd ed., edited by I.M. Lewis (London : Hutchison, 1980) p. 18. The jihads were those of Nāṣir al-Dīn in Southwest Mauritania; of Mālik Dauda Sy in Bondu; of Ibrāhīm Alfa in Futa Jallon and of Sulaymān Bāl in Futa Toro.

²⁵³ P.D. Curtin, "Jihad in West Africa", p. 14.

there took place under very different social and political circumstances from those that existed in Hausaland and its neighbours. It would be rash to assume a connection...." ²⁵⁴

Whatever the case may be, it might not be unlikely that the Shehu and his disciples were aware of these early jihads. Furthermore, since some of the jihads were led by Fulbe-speaking scholars, we may not rule out the possibility that some of their revolutionary ideas might have reached the Shehu through some western Fulbe pilgrims passing through Hausaland.

Another source of inspiration for the Shehu, according to Levtzion, was his ties with the Tuareg tribe Ineslemen. This tribe was subservient to another tribe, Imashaghen, but as a result of their improved economic condition during the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century southwards drift, they rose up and liberated themselves. They were said to have formed the second largest group in the Shehu's *jamā'a*. ²⁵⁵

The Complex Nature of the Indigenous Beliefs and Customs and their Place in the People's Life

While a great part of the Muslim world was experiencing political and socio-religious turmoil, in the Central Sudan, a land with substantial Muslim population, a sense of socio-religious and intellectual revolution, whose origin dated as far back as the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, was in the offing. The manner in which Islam was introduced and observed by the generality of the people in Hausaland contributed to the subsequent rise of the ʿUthmānīya jihad movement. Like other Islamic movements in areas of similar socio-

²⁵⁴ M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*, p. 157

²⁵⁵ N. Levtzion, "The Eighteenth Century Background to Islamic Revolutions in West Africa", p. 31.

religious climate, its reaction was an attempt to reassert Sunni Islamic identity where the faith had hitherto adapted and synthesized beliefs and practices of the indigenous peoples among whom it was introduced.

In West African Central Sudan, Islam had existed in Hausaland for at least four hundred years before the ʿUthmānīya jihad started in 1804. However, because of the gradual and peaceful manner in which it was introduced and propagated,²⁵⁶ devoid of military and state involvement, it remained a private religion. In fact, it had always remained a non-political religion except for a brief period in the late fifteenth century when Muḥammad Rumfa, the Sulṭān of Kano, attempted to make it a state religion. His experiment was short-lived because his successors were less enthusiastic about the faith and subsequently a general relapse of its fortune became evident throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Islam, as rightly observed by Professor Abdullahi Smith, did not eradicate the Hausa beliefs and practices.²⁵⁷ The *bori* cult continues to be practiced to this day among the Hausa communities. "The system supported a priest class (the *bokaye*) especially skilled in the mysteries of the spirits and playing an important political role in the Hausa states. The *sarki* himself seems also to have been a leader of public ritual".²⁵⁸ Smith's observation will be appreciated even more if we understand the complex nature of the Hausa beliefs and practices. Furthermore, because of the place they held and, to some extent, are still holding in the lives of the ignorant in rural Hausa communities, these local beliefs and practices had become, even before the emergence of the ʿUthmānīya movement, a subject of controversy

²⁵⁶ Islam was introduced into Hausaland through trade and then reinvigorated through waves of activities by itinerant Sudanese scholars, sufi brotherhoods and pilgrims returning from Arabia.

²⁵⁷ A. Smith, "The Early States of the Central Sudan", *History of West Africa*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, edited by J. F. A. Ajayi and M. Crowder (London : Longman, 1976) p. 190.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

among the Central Sudanese 'ulamā'. We shall, in the following pages discuss these beliefs and practices.

In its general structure, the Hausa traditional religion belongs to a class of religions common in Tropical Africa.²⁵⁹ They involve belief in a high and distant god and, in the case of the Hausa, he is called *Ubangiji*²⁶⁰ who has no direct connection with the everyday life of the people. In addition to this god there is a host of active supernatural forces that control the destiny of mankind. These forces known as *iskoki* (spirits, sing. *iska*), exist in the form of *aljan* (Arabic, *al-jānn*). According to these Hausa beliefs and customs, various spirits own various things associated with their socio-economic life. To expect a high crop yield, a good fish catch or a successful hunt, the various spirits who owned the agricultural land, the rivers, and the forest must be appeased by elaborate rituals in the form of sacrifices and spirit-possession (*bori*) as prescribed by the spirits through their intermediaries (the *bokaye*)

The spirits are also classified into good and evil and are countless. Some of them live with humans in towns and villages, whilst others, generally the bad ones, live in the bush away from human presence. However, whether they live in towns or bush, they maintain specific dwelling places such as building ruins, wells, trees, rivers, rocks, lakes, ant-hills, whirlwinds and some places associated with animals. Specific trees are reputed to harbour particular spirits; these include trees such as the baobab, the acacia and the tamarind trees.²⁶¹ In order to achieve prosperity and security, one has to cultivate close relationship with the spirit of one's choice. The spirit so chosen will be induced to move in the devotee's house by

²⁵⁹ Ibid; J.H. Greenberg, *The Influence of Islam on a Sudanese Religion* (New York: Augustine, 1946) p. 30.

²⁶⁰ This term continues to be used by Hausa-speaking Muslims and Christians, but Muslims add the Arabic Allah to it, i.e. Ubangiji Allah.

²⁶¹ M. Last, "A Note on the Attitude to the Supernatural in the Sokoto Jihad", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 4 (1967) p. 3

acquiring the object commonly identified with it. Such spirits can be used by the devotee either for positive or negative purposes.²⁶² Evil spirits are said to be responsible for all the illnesses and misfortunes in the world. They do not need to be influenced to inflict harm on mankind.

Bori

Spirit possession, as pointed out above, is one of the religious rites of the pagan Hausa.²⁶³ When required, it can be induced by playing a violin accompanied by calabash beating, changing tune from time to time as required. The possessed person can be used by the spirit as its medium to communicate with its devotees. Anyone desiring to speak with the spirit speaks directly to it through the mouth of the possessed. The subject speaks only the language of the spirit even though it might not be the language he understands. In essence, a possessed Bahaushe who does not understand Fulfulde can speak it if he is possessed by a Pullo-spirit such as Inna.²⁶⁴

The different spirits reveal themselves by different behaviours of the person possessed. If the spirit involved is Kure, a male hyena, the subject howls like a hyena. Recovery from possession takes effect immediately by imitating the particular spirit for a while; this is then followed by a sneeze.

²⁶² J.H. Greenberg, *The Influence of Islam*, p. 48.

²⁶³ Ibid. p. 28; M. Last, "A Note", p. 4; A.J.N. Tremearne, *Hausa Superstitions and Customs*. (London : Frank Cass, 1970) p. 530.

²⁶⁴ Inna is the goddess of agriculture and theft. She provides high yield of crops and punishes thieves.

The Cult of the Spirit

There are two forms of rites among the Hausa devotees of the spirits : family rites and public rites. The most common of these are the family rites in which the head of the family acts as a spiritual leader and offers sacrifices on behalf of all members of the family, excluding guests whose deities might be different from the family's. The purpose of the sacrificial act is to offer the spirit blood which is one of its principal diets. The sacrifice may include chickens, goats, sheep and even cattle.²⁶⁵ In most cases the blood is allowed to flow over an object which symbolizes the spirit. If the spirit is the god of iron-working, the symbol is an anvil; if it is that of hunting, the symbol is a bow and arrow, and so on.²⁶⁶

There are some family deities which were common to all Hausawa. The king of all the spirits is the *sarkin aljan*, "the king of the jinn". He is akin to the Greek Zeus or Roman Jupiter. Another important spirit who is regarded as the father of all spirits is *babban maza* "the great one among men". He is the husband of *Inna* the mother of all spirits. She is the goddess of agriculture and the punisher of thieves. She is of special value to farmers helping them to produce a good yield of crops and protecting such produce from thieves. Her diet consists of milk because she is assumed to be a Pullo woman. *Gajimari*, her son, is the rainbow serpent whose dwelling places are either wells or ant-hills. He is responsible for droughts, and his wife *Ra* is the goddess of Thunder.²⁶⁷

Unlike the family rites the public rites are the "communal sacrifices" known to have been in practice in the pre-jihad period. In Kano, for instance, the Kutumbawa kings were said to have been performing them at two- or three-year intervals and they were suppressed

²⁶⁵ J.H. Greenberg, *The Influence of Islam*, p. 43-45.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 29.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 39-41.

by the jihadists after their victory. The purpose of the rituals was to avert misfortune and disasters. The king, acting on the counsellors' advice, would offer sacrifices to three spirits dwelling in three different places in Kano. Among these sacred places was *Kofar Ruwa*, "the water gate", which was located near the site of the old palace. It was abandoned for a new one by Muḥammad Rumfa who reigned from 1463 to 1499. The second sacred place was the *kurmin bakin ruwa*, "the grove of black water", which contained the sacred tree called Tsabibi. The third sacred place was the well of Maiburgam noted to be the dwelling place of the spirits of Gajimari and Dan Musa, "the son of Moses". One of the evils of these ceremonies was their involvement with human sacrifice. It was reported that a very dark coloured youth would be kidnapped in the market by the king's servants for this purpose. Due to the importance of the ceremonies the king personally performed the rituals.²⁶⁸ It should be added that women participated fully in all the ceremonies and rituals. Hausa society did not prevent women from taking active roles in the social, political, economic and religious activities.

Ancestral worship is another cult which is common among Africans, but it does not play any significant role among the pagan Hausa. The fortieth day following the death of a person includes offerings of sacrifices, but it should not be regarded as ancestral worship as some scholars seem to think.²⁶⁹ It is rather borrowed from the Muslims and therefore a later invention, since Muslims observe the fortieth day after a person's death with *ṣadaqa* (pious offering). This view is further enhanced when it is realized that pagans too use the Hausaized term *sadaka* to connote the distribution of the flesh of the animals sacrificed.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 46; M. Last, "A Note", p. 4. Last indicated in a footnote that human sacrifice was thought never to have been practiced in Hausaland proper. His sources are Tremearne's *The Ban of the Bori* (London : Frank Cass, 1914).

²⁶⁹ J.H. Greenberg, *The Influence of Islam*, p. 58.

Spirits as Sources for the Cures of Illnesses

Just as the spirits are responsible for illnesses and misfortunes so also are they the sources of their cures. *Bori*, which was previously discussed, is the medium by which the spirits reveal to their devotees the knowledge of all medicinal herbs, vegetables and barks of trees as remedies for various sicknesses and protection from danger. The application of such medicine should always include offerings to the spirit responsible for the illness. It is also significant that the herbs or barks prescribed are always abstracted from the tree associated with the spirit answerable to the illness. The *boka* depends on the spirits as a source of his medicine and his prescription always includes offerings of sacrifices. These practices are retained and modified by lesser *malams* (²⁷⁰*ulamā*²⁷¹) to include incantations and amulets of some passages from the Qurʾān.

As mentioned earlier, other ethnic groups in tropical Africa, like the Hausa, believe in the existence and the powers of the spirits. The Fulbe²⁷⁰ are one of such ethnic groups. *Keni*, sing *hendu*, as they call the spirits, are invoked for positive and harmful purposes.²⁷¹ Most of the names of the spirits are borrowed from the pagan Hausa. Unlike the Hausa, there are no elaborate rituals associated with their cult.

²⁷⁰ The Fulbe are generally classified into nomadic Fulani (Bororo) and settled Fulani, but in Adamawa and Northern Cameroons one cannot fail to notice three distinct groups of Fulbe. The Bororo, also known as *Fulbe Naʿi* or *Fulbe Ladde*, and in Hausa, *Fulanin Daji*; the House-Fulani or *Fulbe Chɔʼe*, and in Hausa, *Fulanin Gida*, the Town-Fulani or *Fulbe Galluje*, and in Hausa, *Fulanin Soro*; D.J. Stenning, "The Pastoral Fulani of Northern Nigeria", *Peoples of Africa*, edited by J.L. Gibbs (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965) pp. 207-208, and *Savannah Nomads*. (Oxford: International African Institute, 1959). Stenning classifies them as pastoralists, semi-sedentary and sedentary.

²⁷¹ L.N. Reed, "Notes on Some Fulani Tribes and Customs", *Africa*, 5 (1932) pp. 441-442.

However, they have numerous superstitious beliefs (*kabbe*)²⁷² some of which include the following : that misfortune or harm will occur by eating certain foods, doing certain things, or meeting certain objects. It is believed that oxtails should not be eaten lest one's property be reduced to the barest minimum. Gazelles, guinea-fowls and francolins should be avoided in one's diet. Goat flesh and certain fish should be avoided otherwise one will be affected with leprosy. To meet a ground-squirrel or a duiker portends bad luck but to see a gazelle early in the morning is a good omen. Travelling or departure from one place to another should not be undertaken except on certain days. Friday is the best day for moving in or out of a house. Mondays and Tuesdays are good days for shavings. The entrance of a house should face west. To face north is not favoured because spirits will cause the occupiers to leave the place. They will be afflicted with illness if the entrance faces east. Superstitious beliefs, as repeatedly discussed in the Shehu's writings, are more common among the Fulbe, whether pagan or ignorant Muslims.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the indigenous religious beliefs and practices are both elaborate and complex. Therefore, it was not unexpected that Islam, which was introduced in a casual manner to the people, would find it difficult to eradicate these beliefs. In fact, for its survival, it had to adapt and synthesize some of the beliefs and practices. But this was again unacceptable to some of the 'ulamā' whose role and influence were growing daily. We shall discuss later the significant roles of the 'ulamā', particularly as they relate to the emergence of the 'Uthmāniya jihad movement.

Another socio-religious issue the Shehu has constantly complained about in his writings is the evils of the indigenous social customs. Almost all the customs he describes are to-day observed among the nomad Fulbe. The nomads have social ceremonies relating to

²⁷² Ibid., pp. 429-431 and 440-441.

circumcision, initiation, marriage and death. These ceremonies unlike those of other Africans are relatively simple and are devoid of complicated religious rituals.

Circumcision²⁷³

A boy is treated as an adult after he is circumcised. Circumcision is considered as an initiation rite, and the correct age for its performance ranges from seven to nine. The procedure is comparable among the Muslims and pagans. Since it is customarily preferable to carry out circumcision in batches, older boys are sometimes made to wait for their younger brothers to reach the age of circumcision. Boys are expected to demonstrate courage during the ceremony so that if they cry at the ceremony, they are rebuked even beaten, for putting their family to shame. The boys live in a shelter erected outside their parents' compound until their wounds are healed. They spend days in the bush with adults who give them moral instruction; at night they return to the shelter. Although clitoridectomy is common among Africans, both Muslim and pagan, it is not practiced by the Fulbe.

The Soro (Discipline) Game²⁷⁴

Soro (discipline) is another game of initiation relating to marriage among the nomads. It involves severe thrashings with specially prepared supple sticks in order to test the endurance of male youth who want to demonstrate to the public that they are adults and eligible to marry. During the ceremony marriageable girls form a circle around the space chosen for this purpose, while spectators stand behind them. The young men who are to undergo the test are brought forward in pairs and made to strip to the waist. A "challenger"

²⁷³ For bad innovations associated with circumcision see 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyā' al-Sunna*, p. 220-224.

²⁷⁴ F.W. de St. Croix, *The Fulani*, p. 44; L.N. Reed, "Notes on Some Fulani Tribes and Customs", p. 433-439. There is also a slave dance known as *daḍḍo*. There is no particular significance attached to it other than for entertainment.

moves to the centre of the circle amid drumming and singing to signal the beginning of the ceremony. He raises his arms to expose his ribs to the heavy blows of the tester. Three thrashings are normally considered enough, and no thrashing is allowed below the waist. The young "tester" is always of equal strength to the challenger and has to come from a different family. The challenger should not show any sign of pain lest he earn public contempt and rejection by the girls. In a return match the challenger is given the opportunity for revenge when he becomes the striker.

The *Gani* Festival²⁷⁵

Gani is a festival of one month's duration observed annually by the Fulbe nomads. Although they consider it to be very important, the settled Fulbe do not recognize it because of the un-Islamic practices embodied in it. During this period dances are held, mainly for young people of both sexes, and sexual promiscuity is tolerated between age-mates. Couples married for less than a year are permitted to participate, provided the women have not become pregnant, and are prepared to abide by the rules of the festival. Participants are free to choose partners. By the end of the festival, many marriages collapse and many new ones are formalized. Young men who have undergone the *soro* ordeal may have a chance to be accepted by the girls they have chosen.

²⁷⁵ J.R. Wilson-Haffenden, *The Red Men of Nigeria*. (London : Frank Cass, 1967) p. 116.

Marriage Customs²⁷⁶

The marriage rites begin with the betrothal (*kougal*) ceremony attended by the relatives of the bride and the groom. The provision of presents to the girl is the responsibility of the boy's relatives. Once the relatives of the girl respond favourably, a feast is held in which both families and friends participate. However, the actual parents of the youth are, by custom, not expected to join in the ceremony. They should not even come near the area.

Betrothals are also sometimes made by the parents on behalf of children under ten. It is more common among brothers who wish to strengthen their family ties and get their children united. It may also be arranged when two intimate friends want to strengthen their friendship. The parents of the boy in this case are expected to buy presents for the girl on two feast days : *ʿĪd al-Fitr* and *ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā* until the marriage is consummated.

The Fulbe nomads are endogamous restricting their marriages primarily to their clans. This is attributable to the fact that they highly value the solidarity of family ties. Arranged marriages especially for first cousins on the patrilinear side are not uncommon among them. Marriages of cousins on the matrilinear side are not common either and are not looked upon favourably. Justification of this custom may be the fact that the Fulbe family is structured on patrilineage and retention of property may be favoured through that order.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 103-113, F.W. de St. Croix, *The Fulani*, pp. 37-44; L.N. Reed, "Notes on Some Fulani Tribes and Customs", p. 433; D.J. Stenning, "Cattle Values and Islamic Values in a Pastoral Population", *Islam in Tropical Africa*, 2nd ed., edited by I.M. Lewis (London: Hutchinson, 1980) p. 203, "The Pastoral Fulani", p. 228-232, *Savannah Nomads*, pp. 111-146. The types of marriages practiced are: betrothal (*kougal*) arranged by the parents of the couple; contract (*muyawal*) arranged by the people who had been married before; gift (*sadaka*) arranged and paid for by the father of the bride; crossbean (*detuki*) a married woman abandoning her husband to elope with another man. This type of traditional "marriage" is not common and is practiced almost exclusively by the Wodabe tribe. For bad innovations in marriage see ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Ihyāʾ al-Sunna*, pp. 196-198.

Inheritance²⁷⁷

Should a man die his younger brother inherits all his property, marries his wife and takes care of his children under nomad customs. If he has no younger brother, his eldest son inherits the property and looks after the children. He is, however, expected to give them some cattle when they grow up and have their own families. An older brother does not marry the wife of his deceased brother. The whole idea of this traditional system of inheritance is to keep the estate of the dead person within the lineage group.

But there was and still is a social attitude among the Fulbe which is peculiarly theirs. It is suggested to have been responsible for their cohesion. It is known as *pulaku*²⁷⁸ (the Fulbe Code of Conduct). The term is a definition of the qualities which distinguish Fulbe from other races. It is also used for the rules of behaviour which guide a *Pullo* in his daily social interaction with others, including his Fulbe community.

Pulaku is recognized by both nomad and settled Fulbe, although they may differ as to what constitutes it. But three of its principles appear to be acknowledged by both societies. These are : *munyal* (patience and fortitude), *semtênde* (modesty and reserve), *hakkilo* (care and thoughtfulness).²⁷⁹ A man must have *munyal* in pain, in bereavement and in provocation. To complain of pain or break down and cry in public is "un-pulloness". One should not succumb to anger, particularly if one is deliberately provoked. *Seemtênde* is the virtue of maintaining correct behaviour in personal relations within the Fulbe community or

²⁷⁷ D.J.Stenning, *Savannah Nomads*, pp. 46-50; 'Uthmān b Fūdī, *Iḥyā' al-Sunna*, pp. 215-217. The Shehu listed a number of practices which were current at his time, and which he considered as bad innovations. Apparently the Fulbe nomads were among those who practiced them.

²⁷⁸ L.N. Reed, "Notes on Some Fulani Tribes and Customs", *Africa*, 5 (1932) pp. 427-430; D.J.Stenning, "Cattle Values", p. 197; D.J.Stenning, "The Pastoral Fulani", pp. 210-212, and *Savannah Nomads*, pp. 55-60.

²⁷⁹ D.J.Stenning, "The Pastoral Fulani", p. 211; and *Savannah Nomads*, p. 55.

other communities. One should avoid doing anything that might degrade oneself, e.g. lying, stealing or behaving insolently to elders. *Hakkilo* is to know what and when to do the correct thing.

The enforcement of *pulaku* among most Fulbe, nomad and sedentary, rests on public opinion. There are however some nomads, particularly the Woḍābe, who entrust its enforcement to some individual. The person appointed should be an elder who can command respect among the community. His title of office is *maudolawolpulaku* (the head of the *pulaku* way). He has the authority of punishing offenders by banishing them temporarily from the community.²⁸⁰

There are also initiation ceremonies relating to *pulaku*. A number of boys, approximately fifty, who reach the age of puberty are taken to the bush, under the supervision of an elder, to spend about twenty days receiving instruction on the principles of *pulaku*. In the first seven days they are made to memorize, through beatings, some recitations. This is known as *soro*. It is followed immediately by the *ginni* initiation when further passages are learnt for another twelve days. The ceremonies are completed with the *mayoma* initiation which lasts for two days, during which they are taught a short recitation. After this they are considered adults and entitled to marry.²⁸¹

It is likely that *pulaku* as a unifying force among the Fulbe might have played a significant role during the ʿUthmāniya jihad movement in attracting pagan nomads to the camp of the jihadists. Even the spontaneous uprising of the Fulbe across Hausaland and Borno during the jihad and the enduring of a loosely knit caliphate may be partly attributed to the principles of *pulaku*. Appearing to share this view, R A Adelye made the following

²⁸⁰ L.N. Reed, "Notes on Some Fulani Tribes and Customs", p. 429.

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. 440.

observation concerning the Fulbe revolt against the Borno empire : "Although they could marshall arguments of oppression, tyranny and anti-Islamic practices against the Borno empire,... it is correct to see their revolt, in a large measure, as an expression of their Fulaniness".²⁸²

The Activities of the 'Ulamā' in the Central Sudan and the Rise of the Shehu

Whatever external impact the 'Uthmāniya movement might have had, there is enough reason to suggest that the forces which played a major role in influencing the Shehu's thought and the development of his movement had been working in the Central Sudan itself since the fifteenth century. Although we cannot determine the exact date Islam was introduced into Hausaland,²⁸³ it is, however, agreed that by the fifteenth century it had been firmly established especially in Kano under the rule of Muḥammad Rumfa (1463 - 1499).²⁸⁴ Its fortune was further enhanced with the decline of the Mali empire which appeared to have

²⁸² R.A. Adelye, "Hausaland and Borno 1600-1800", p. 579.

²⁸³ M.A. Al-Hajj, "A Seventeenth Century Chronicle on the Origins and Missionary Activities of the Wangarwa", *Kano Studies*, 1 (1968) p. 8. According to the *Kano Chronicle*, the Wangarawa came to Kano during the reign of Yaji (1349 - 1385) "bringing the Mohammadan religion". See Palmer "The Kano Chronicle", Translation in *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*, 38 (1908) p. 76. A manuscript discovered in Kano by Al-Hajj put the date of the arrival of the Wangarawa a century later in the reign of Muḥammad Rumfa (1463 - 1499). According to the manuscript forty members of the Wangarawa arrived three days after the arrival of al-Maghili.

²⁸⁴ T. Falola, and K. Adebayo, "Pre-Colonial Nigeria", p. 80; I.A.B. Balogun, "The Penetration of Islam into Nigeria : II", *Nigerian Journal of Islam*, 1 (1971) p. 38; J.O. Hunwick, "Songhay, Borno and Hausaland in the seventeenth century", *History of West Africa*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, edited by J.F.A. Ajayi and M. Crowder (London : Longman, 1976) p. 264; Umar al-Nagar, *The Pilgrimage Tradition in West Africa : An Historical Study with Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century* (Khartoum : Khartoum University Press, 1972) p. 34; S.S. Nyang, "Sub-Saharan Africa : Islamic Penetration", *Change and the Muslim World*, edited by Philip H. Stoddard, David Cuthell and Margaret W. Sullivan (Syracuse : Syracuse University Press, 1981) p. 145; El Fasi and I. Hrbek. "Stages in the Development of Islam", pp. 68-81.

provoked an exodus of scholars to other parts of Western and Central Sudan including Hausaland. Their arrival stimulated Islamic learning, and Kano and Katsina particularly became centres of learning. By the end of the century and the beginning of the sixteenth century, communities of 'ulamā' were found all over the land. There was constant contact amongst these learned men residing in various parts of the Sudan. 'Ulamā' who were well-known as scholars visited Kano and Katsina on their way to and from the Hijāz and some of them accepted to remain for a while in those cities to teach and to carry out important religious functions.²⁸⁵

For example, the Qāḍī of Timbuktu and grandfather of the famous Aḥmad Baba, Aḥmad b. 'Umar b. Muḥammad 'Aqīt and Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abī Muḥammad al-Tazakhtī also known as Aida-Aḥmad passed through Katsina on their way back from Mecca. The latter was appointed Qāḍī by the ruler of Katsina and he died there in 1529. Others were simply itinerant teachers who came to Hausaland to fulfill the injunctions of the Prophetic Tradition by passing on knowledge to seekers.²⁸⁶ Scholars of this category were : Makhlūf b. 'Alī b. Sālīh al-Bilbālī (d. 1533) who studied in Timbuktu and Marrakesh and taught for some time in Katsina; 'Alī Fulān, Askia Muhammad's vizier, stopped over at Kano on his way to Mecca from Gao. That so many 'ulamā' from the Western Sudan passed through Hausaland on their way to and from Mecca suggests that the land had already become a pilgrims' route.

Of all the 'ulamā' who visited Hausaland none left a more lasting impact than Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Maghilī (d. 1504). It was even argued that he was the

²⁸⁵ For information on the movements of the 'ulamā' in Hausaland see A.D.H Bivar and M. Hiskett, "The Arabic Literature of Nigeria to 1804 : A Provisional Account", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 25 (1962) 104-113; Umar al-Nagar, *The Pilgrimage*, p. 35; J.O. Hunwick, "Religion and State in the Songhay Empire 1464 - 1591", *Islam In Tropical Africa*, 2nd ed., edited by I.M. Lewis (London : Hutchison, 1980) pp. 132-134.

²⁸⁶ Umar al-Nagar, *The Pilgrimage*, p. 35

source of inspiration for all the later jihad movements in western and central Sudan and that their militancy could be traced to him. The Shehu was known to have used his treatise, a reply to Askia Muḥammad's questions concerning syncreticism, *Ajwibat As'ilat Askia Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr*,²⁸⁷ to justify his jihad since *fiqh* books were silent on the question of "Muslim mixers". For instance, the central point of al-Maghīlī's argument in the treatise was that it was the duty of a Muslim to "command what is good and forbid what is evil". He explained further that Muslims who mix Islam with idolatry are unbelievers and that jihad against them is better and more meritorious than jihad against unbelievers.²⁸⁸

Al-Maghīlī's other contribution in Hausaland was the treatise he wrote to guide the Sulṭān of Kano, Muḥammad Rumfa, in the conduct of state affairs *Tāj al-Dīn fī-mā Yajib 'alā al-Mulūk*. He also dedicated to him his *Jumla Mukhtaṣara*²⁸⁹ which was quoted in full by the Shehu in his *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān 'alā Aḥwāl Arḍ al-Sūdān*. He popularized the Prophetic Tradition that God would always raise, at the beginning of every century of the Muslim era, a Renewer of faith who would renew the religion and obliterate injustice from the land.²⁹⁰ He was also responsible for the introduction of sufism (Qādirīya Order) in the land.²⁹¹

²⁸⁷ For detailed information see al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm) *Sharī'a in Songhay*...., edited and translated with an introduction and commentary by J.O Hunwick (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1985).

²⁸⁸ al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm) *Sharī'a in Songhay*, p. 78; M. Hiskert "An Islamic Tradition", p. 584.

²⁸⁹ A.A. Batran, "A Contribution to the Biography of Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Karīm Ibn Muḥammad ('Umar-A'mār) al-Maghīlī al-Tilmisānī", *Journal of African History*, 14 (1973) p. 391.

²⁹⁰ M. Hiskett, "An Islamic Tradition", p. 584; Abū Dawūd, *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Muṣṭafā*, vol II (Cairo : al-Maṭba'a al-Tājīya, n.d.) p. 209; see also al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm) *Sharī'a in Songhay*, p. 66 and pp. 115-117.

²⁹¹ M. Hiskett, *A History of Hausa Islamic Verse* (London : School of Oriental and African Studies, 1975) p. 73.

By the seventeenth century, the seed sown by the foreign 'ulamā' began to bear fruit. Literary activity stimulated by the local authors gathered momentum. Two such authors worth mentioning were Muḥammad al-Kashināwī, known as Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh (Hausa : Ḍan Manna) who lived, taught and died in Katsina in 1665 and his student Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Masanih b. Ghumāhu b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Nūh al-Barnāwī al-Kashināwī (Hausa : Ḍan Masani) who also lived, worked and died in Katsina in 1667. The former, Ḍan Manna, was described by Muḥammad Bello in his *Infāq al-Maysūr* as a poet and a commentator. Thus far, his works which are reported to be extant are : *Mazjarat al-Fityān*, a poem now located in Ibadan University and the Jos Museum Library, containing injunctions to youths; and a *qaṣīda* celebrating the victory of the Mai 'Alī of Borno over the Jukuns. He was also the writer of a commentary on *al-'Ishrīniyāt* of the thirteenth-century Moroccan poet, al-Fāzāzī. This work was mentioned by Muḥammad Bello in his *Infāq al-Maysūr* but is unfortunately lost.²⁹²

Many of Ḍan Masani's works are available today. His work *al-Nafahāt al-'Anbariyya fī Hall Alfāz al-'Ishrīniyāt* was also a commentary on al-Fāzāzī's *al-'Ishrīniyāt*. His book *al-Buzūgh al-Shamsiyya 'alā Muqaddimat al-'Ashmāwīya*, was a commentary on the *fiqh* work of 'Abd al-Bārī al-Rifā'ī al-'Ashmāwī.

Among the 'ulamā' of the eighteenth century was Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Fulānī al-Kashināwī who died in Egypt in 1741 on his way back from pilgrimage. His sojourn in Egypt as a guest of the family of the Egyptian historian 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Jabartī was documented by the historian.²⁹³ Al-Fulānī was an astrologer who taught the historian's father a variety of subjects including numerology and astrology and left his works in Egypt.

²⁹² Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 24.

²⁹³ 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Jabartī, *Ta'rikh*, vol. I pp. 236-238; Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 23.

These include : *Minaḥ al-Quddūs*, a verse composition on logic; and *Bulūgh al-Arab min Kalām al-ʿArab*, a treatise on Arabic grammar and sufism. His works are preserved in Dār al-Kutub in Cairo.

The famous tutor of the Shehu, Jibrīl b. ʿUmar, was well-known for his strong views on grave sins. His contributions to the religious literature are indisputable. The Shehu referred to some of his works in his *Naṣāʾih al-Umma al-Muḥammadiya* and in *Shifāʾ al-Ghalīl fī-mā Ashkala min Kalām Shaykh Shuyūkhinā Jibrīl*.²⁹⁴

From the foregoing it is clear that Islam and learning were active in Hausaland at least three centuries before the launching of the jihad movement. In the case of scholarship it is clear that it continued to expand and to produce more scholars, some of whom became increasingly critical of the social vices and the un-Islamic practices of the people and of their nobility.²⁹⁵ These criticisms were heightened in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and coincided with the rise of the ʿulamāʾ to prominence. The activities of the ʿulamāʾ were not limited to Hausaland but to Borno where they had been active as early as the reign of Idris Aloma. From about the second half of the seventeenth century, in the reign of Mai ʿAlī, the royal court became a constant scene of learned disputations in which numerous ʿulamāʾ participated and the Mai himself taking an active part.²⁹⁶ In Hausaland, ʿulamāʾ in Kano and Katsina subjected every aspect of social life to scrutiny and criticism. Market places were

²⁹⁴ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Naṣāʾih al-Umma*, ff. 15b-16b; A.D.H. Bivar and M. Hiskett, "The Arabic Literature", pp. 104-148.

²⁹⁵ R.A. Adelye, "Hausaland and Borno", p. 597. Adelye observes that with the expansion of Islamic education "the intellectual awareness, as distinct from irrational belief, lent crucial vigour to the spirit of questioning which cut at the root of traditional values and customs... by the eighteenth century the time was ripe for a revolution". See also N. Levtzion, "The Eighteenth Century Background to Islamic Revolutions", p. 26; M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*, pp. 314-319.

²⁹⁶ R.A. Adelye, "Hausaland and Borno", p. 575.

visited and the faithful were exhorted to transact businesses with honesty. Tracts were composed in verses acquainting the ordinary people with their basic religious and social responsibilities. Even the ruling class was exhorted to refrain from the abuses of power.²⁹⁷ The direct result of this development was that socio-religious and political debates became part of the lives of the learned. Subsequently, rivalry set in among the 'ulamā' as they tried to outdo one another. By the middle of the eighteenth century their attentions seemed to turn to one another. It became common for an 'ālim not only to criticize the views of his rivals but to attack his teachers if their views differed. To understand the effectiveness of these criticisms as a mobilizing force of public opinion it is necessary to examine the role and the functions of the 'ulamā' in Hausa society.

There were and still are three distinct groups of learned men in Hausa society. The first was that of those who could read and write but could not understand Arabic for they did not go beyond Qur'ānic schools, a level where they were taught to recite the Qur'ān without understanding its meaning. In addition they had elementary knowledge of Islam as a requirement for performing their religion. Such Malams were responsible for many of the social vices in the land. They used some selected Qur'ānic passages to make charms for the superstitious ignorant masses. Furthermore, they were involved in teaching and preaching which, as a result of their low level of education, did more harm than good to society. It was to these Malams that al-Maghīlī made reference in his time. Their condition remained the same to the Shehu's period for he quotes the itinerant Shaykh al-Maghīlī in his *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*: "One of their characteristics is that they are not Arabic-speaking; they understand no Arabic except a little of the speech of the Arabs of the town in an incorrect and corrupt fashion".²⁹⁸

²⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 598.

²⁹⁸ M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 128. See also al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm) *Sharī'a in Songhay*, p. 60.

The second group, on the other hand, was of 'ulamā' who devoted their lives to learned pursuits. They were influential because of their access to governing authority. They held positions of responsibility such as Qāḍī, Vizier and Imām. As part of the system, therefore, they could not be critical of the rulers and so were branded by their critics as conformists. They were, in the eyes of their colleagues and opponents, hypocrites who not only condoned the excesses of the rulers but failed to "command what is good and forbid what is evil". Also, in this group, there were 'ulamā' who, beside their intellectual pursuits, ran businesses and therefore considered it their interest to maintain the status quo.

The third group was made up of 'ulamā' as learned as those of the second group but having no link with the rulers. Nevertheless, due to their functions in society they had powerful influence over the masses. As they were under no political obligation they could afford to be militant and critical of the society and the government. The responsibility to "command the good and forbid the evil" lay with them. Their societal functions made their undertakings possible. They performed the functions of family physicians and spiritual advisers. They were the ones who presided at naming ceremonies, taught children when they reached school-age, performed wedding ceremonies, settled disputes and presided at funerals. It was therefore most probable that any religious uprising that had the sympathy of the masses had to be led by a learned man from this third group. Within this group are also 'ulamā' who adopted apathetical attitudes to the state of Islam in Hausaland. They considered most people, on grounds of minor religious offences as unbelievers. It was this group of extremists who engaged the conformists in the second group with debates during the emergence of the Shehu.

Therefore, the Shehu's movement was essentially to respond to the two rival groups of extremists and the conformists. In a sense, therefore, the movement was the ultimate consequence of ideological disputes by rival 'ulamā' on socio-religious and political life of the Central Sudan. As emphasized elsewhere in this study, the Shehu's attitude was that of

moderation and accommodation and these he tried to instill into the 'ulamā'. In addition to this, because he believed that the people's indulgence in anti-Islamic practices stemmed from ignorance, he established and promoted a policy of public education and waged the jihad when he felt it was necessary.

The Shehu asserted in his writings that his uprising was a jihad aimed at religious renewal among the corrupt 'ulamā' and half-hearted Muslims of Hausaland. However, his movement has remained a subject of various interpretations by scholars from the onset of the jihad to the present date. There are at least four schools of thought. These include : (1) those who advance the view that the uprising was a religious and intellectual revolution, (2) those who see it as a racial war between the Fulbe and the Hausa; (3) those who explain it as a "class-war"; and (4) those who see the presence of all these in the uprising.

The opinion that the war was a jihad was unmistakably pointed out by the leaders of the movement themselves in their numerous writings. Among the scholars who share this view are A. Smith, Muḥammad Al-Hājj, A. Doi, Bovill, Arnett and others. On the other hand, the exponents of the view that the movement was a racial uprising are perhaps basing their opinion on the accusations leveled against the leaders of the jihad by the leader of Borno Muḥammad al-Amin al-Kanemi. In several pieces of his correspondence with the Shehu and later with Muhammad Bello, al-Kanemi challenged them to justify their taking up of arms against the Muslims of Central Sudan. Some of the Shehu's post-jihad writings were attempts to answer these accusations. Scholars such as J S Hogben, D.H. Jones, amongst others, see this as evidence that the war was initially an uprising by the Fulbe, both Muslims and pagans, against the Hausa king of Gobir who ordered their extermination. Hogben explains that the religious reasons advanced by the Fulbe 'ulamā' are an afterthought. This happened only after the war was won and the pagan Fulbe returned to their cattle, leaving

behind the 'ulamā' kinsmen who insinuated themselves into the posts hitherto occupied by the Hausa rulers.²⁹⁹ J.A. Burdon holds this same view. He writes :

Exactly a century ago, a Fulani Sheikh, Othman Dan Fodio, a Mallam, or schoolmaster, who had been tutor to Yunfa, the then King of Gobir, forgot his position, and dared to dispute the orders of his old pupil, now his king and brave his wrath. Yunfa, incensed, ordered his death, and on his resisting, ordered the slaughter of every Fulani in the land. The natural result was that all the threatened race flocked to Othman for their own salvation; and Yunfa, coming with his army to execute his vengeance, met a compact body of desperate men, and was utterly routed. This battle of Koto, or Rugga Fakko, fought in 1804, a few miles north of Sokoto, started the Jihād, which ended in placing of Fulani rulers over most of Hausa states and several others.³⁰⁰

The third school of thought is represented by Olderogge, Hodgkin and Basil Davidson among others. They argued that the uprising was neither religious nor racial but a "class-war", a war between the feudal Hausa nobility on the one hand, and the exploited Fulbe herdsman and oppressed Hausa peasants on the other. They did not fail to find supporting evidence as the Shehu's writings and poems are full of attacks upon the contemporary form of economic exploitation, social injustice and political oppression. These criticisms, they argued, appealed to the *talakawa* (the common people) and served as a rallying point against the Hausa king.

M.R. Doornbos, M.R. Waldman, M.G. Smith and Crowder represent the fourth school of thought which is now gaining ground. They suggest that the jihad was a fusion of various interest groups fighting for various motives. Doornbos has likened the *jamā'a* to a caravan and he describes it thus - "...the Fulani jihad had much of a caravan : starting out as a small party of religiously inspired leaders, at various intervals it had additional units hooked on to it, which added new expectations and new destinations to the collective enterprise.

²⁹⁹ S.J. Hogben, *The Muhammadan Emirates of Nigeria* (London : Oxford University Press, 1930) p. 73; cf. M.A. al-Hajj, "The Meaning of the Sokoto Jihād", p. 3.

³⁰⁰ J.A. Burdon, "The Fulani Emirates of Northern Nigeria", p. 640.

Whatever was its original itinerary, by the time it arrived it had achieved a major political revolution".³⁰¹

It is clear from the foregoing that each of the opinions advanced is based on strong arguments which cannot be dismissed lightly. There is no denying that the Fulbe played a dominant role in the war and occupied almost all the positions hitherto occupied by the Hausa nobility. In view of this fact alone, the charge of racial war will appear plausible.

However, it is not difficult to find the reasons why almost all the leaders who emerged after the war as emirs, *quḍāt*, and viziers were Fulbe. One of the Shehu's criticism of the Hausa governments was the appointment of incompetent administrators. It was therefore logical that, after the war, the new authority appointed only competent people to the positions of authority. Since the Fulbe were generally well educated, they occupied those positions. Furthermore, they were to some extent holding high positions, for the same reason, in the displaced governments of Habe. Moreover, the Shehu's call for jihad did not address itself only to one ethnic group. He invited all the people of Hausaland including the ruling class. The fact that he obtained supporters among Fulbe, Hausa, Tuaregs and many defecting military men indicated that the composition of his followers cut across ethnic lines. Commenting on this point in her well-argued article, "A Note on the Ethnic Interpretation of the Fulani Jihād", M.R. Waldman asserts that "Despite the fact that the war was mainly a Fulani - Hausa one, the Fulani do not seem to have fought with an overriding prejudice against the Hausa, at least in so far as can be inferred from the attitudes and policies of their leaders : Hausa who aided Usman's course were rewarded, and in some places the Fulani divided the spoils and offices with them; Fulani who did not cooperate were attacked."³⁰²

³⁰¹ M.R. Doornbos, "The Shehu and the Mullah : The Jihads of Usman dan Fodio and Muhammad Abd-Allah Hassan in Comparative Perspective", *Genève Afrique*, 14 (1975) p. 19.

³⁰² M.R. Waldman, "A Note on the Ethnic Interpretation of the Fulani Jihād", p. 289.

Again many Fulbe refused to support him and many of them joined the Habe armies. Some learned Fulbe too, such as the Yandoto 'ulamā', openly denounced him. Even his tribesmen sat on the fence. They had to be upbraided by 'Abd Allāh in a Fulfulde poem composed for that purpose before they joined his community. Apart from the non-racial composition of his followers, one of the most respected generals was a non-Pullo scholar, Ya'qūb Bauchi, who later founded Bauchi.

As for al-Kanemi's accusation, he was adequately answered by the Shehu in his *Ta'lim al-Ikhwān*. The Shehu argued that a good Muslim should not team up with non-Muslims against Muslims. In other words, a friend of an unbeliever, according to him, is himself an unbeliever. Al-Kanemi also admitted that some of his people, including the ousted Mai of Borno, were mixing Islamic practices with idolatry. In a nutshell, most of the social abuses perpetrated in Hausaland were condemned not because Fulbe were directly affected, but because they were in direct violation of the Sharī'a.

Similarly, the "class-conflict" theory may also provide logical explanation to some causes of the war. In the eyes of a Marxist theoretician, the presence of an oppressed and exploited group in a society, and in this case the Hausa peasants and Fulbe pastoralists, provides a perfect ingredient for revolution. The Shehu is seen by these scholars as a champion of the oppressed. This, therefore, explains why the *talakawa* formed the core of his army. What the exponents of this theory did was to select social elements in the Shehu's writings and correlate them with the socio-economic and political conditions of Hausaland which gave logical explanation of the war as a revolutionary movement aimed at removing injustice in Hausa society.

While it can be acknowledged that serious symptoms of popular dissatisfaction existed in Hausaland due to maladministration, such discontent should not be separated from the complex issues involved in the cause of the war. It is true that taxes levied on the subject

people were excessive and arbitrary, extortion of properties was not uncommon in all the mini-states, incompetent judges passed judgments in favour of the highest bidders, and numerous forms of bribery became the way of life for the common people.

Yet, although these are issues serious enough to make peasants abandon their farms and pastoralists their herds to join the jihad against their oppressors, such a line of reaction might be the last option they might like to take. The Fulbe nomads, for example, instead of taking up arms against the authority would rather move away from the oppressive territory as they do even today. It is not an uncommon sight to come across Fulbe herdsmen moving across the borders between Nigeria and its neighbours. The movements are from the neighbouring countries to Nigeria, especially during the abolition of cattle tax, the *jangali*, by the various state governments of Nigeria

M Hiskett made similar observations concerning peasants' reaction to authorities' oppression. He asserts - "One way in which the peasants showed resentment against excessive taxation or other injustices was by moving out of the territory of an oppressive chief...."³⁰³

In view of the above, one cannot but agree, to some extent, with Professor A. Doi's observation that "To launch a struggle against an established authoritarian government was a risky as well as an extremely difficult undertaking. The traditional monarchical Hausa kingdom of Hebe (sic) possessed absolute power and tolerated no opposition, and the ruler governed not merely by the absolute power to condemn and to kill but also by the people's traditional submission to authority. This is the reason why he could ask people who were not Muslims by their descent to revert to paganism. Under the threat of torture or death, conditioned by traditional values and awed by supernatural forces, the common people

³⁰³ M.Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*, p. 100.

would not lightly take the road of rebellion to redress injustice and to seek relief from suffering.

It was here that religion performed a critical function, for it gave the cause of political opposition the sanction and encouragement of the Sharī'a and the pleasure of God".³⁰⁴

However, I am not, by the foregoing, ruling out the presence in the *jamā'a* of groups with interests other than the religiously inspired one. In fact, many of those who joined the *jamā'a* after the jihadists' initial successes at the battle grounds may not have been motivated by religion. The massacre at Tsuntsuwa had eliminated many of the early members of the *jamā'a* who, we may suspect, joined the *jamā'a* for religious reasons.

Whatever other motivations a jihadist might have, particularly at the initial stage of the uprising when many odds were against them, he was attracted by religious persuasion. For instance a person interested in booty may further be persuaded to join the jihadists by the knowledge that the End of Time was imminent or martyrdom would be rewarded with Paradise.

Apart from the foregoing explanations, there are other unanswered questions which the advocates of "class-conflicts" failed to address. No adequate explanation was made as to why the Sharī'a formed the basis of the Shehu's new administration. Why did religious matters form the main subjects of the writings of the jihadists? In any case, whatever the motives of the Shehu's followers were for supporting him, they would never override those of the leaders.

Faced with the ideological arguments advanced by both the proponents of "racial-conflict" and the somewhat Marxist scholars, the idea of the jihad as essentially a religious

³⁰⁴ A.R. Doi, "The Political Role of Islam in West Africa", p. 242.

one would appear to hold little credibility. Yet, the overwhelming evidence available in the writings of the Shehu and his disciples was to restore an ideal Islamic society in Hausaland, a society free of un-Islamic innovations. For the jihadists, therefore, not only should the social vices be identified and attacked, but also the persons behind them. In this case, the *‘ulamā’* and the Hausa rulers should also be exposed. This was why the Shehu adamantly insisted numerous times that a nation was what its *‘ulamā’* and ruler were. He argued in his Fulfulde poem, *Nde Min Puɗɗono Noddoigo*, that if scholars are virtuous the people will be found virtuous and contented, but if scholars are evil the people will be evil and miserable. Likewise if the ruler was an unbeliever, his country was also a land of unbelievers, even if a substantial number of Muslims resided in it. It is from the Shehu's stand that we should understand the jihad movement of Hausaland.

I have attempted in this chapter to provide an overview of the social, religious and political situation in pre-jihad Hausaland with the objective of highlighting those issues which triggered the jihad activities of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

This was followed by a discussion on the background of the Islamic militancy, which was traceable to the writings and teachings of Shaykh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī in the late fifteenth century. The religious and intellectual activities of the itinerant *‘ulamā’* from North Africa and Western Sudan were studied. Their activities were covered as they culminated in a proliferation of education, which subsequently brought about increasing numbers of scholars who were critical of the socio-political conditions of the land.

An analytical discussion of the nature of the jihad then followed. In essence I have endeavoured to highlight the various conditions in Hausaland, some of which were traceable to the fifteenth century, and all of which were responsible for the jihad.

Chapter IV

THE SHEHU'S APPROACH TO THE APPLICATION OF *TAJDĪD*

The Policy of Moderation and Accommodation

Tajdīd, as conceived by the Shehu, was the restoration of the Sunni Islamic ideal to the Central Sudanese society so that it would live by the authorities of the Qurʾān, the Sunna and the *ijmāʿ*, and reject the local beliefs and customs categorized as bad innovations. Our concern, here, is to examine the process through which the Shehu hoped to realize this ideal Islamic society. This process can be summed up as a response to fanaticism and conformism; an effort to accommodate within the fold of Islam those whose Islamization was the subject of disputes, and a mass mobilization through religious propagation and exhortation.

As mentioned elsewhere, there had been, prior to the birth of the ʿUthmāniya jihad movement, two extremely opposing views current among the central Sudanese ʿulamāʾ concerning the validity of certain aspects of the common people's Islamization. One, was the anathematization of Muslims on flimsy grounds, such as ignorance of speculative theology or commitment of grave sins. The other, was the acceptance of un-Islamic acts associated with the mixing of Islam with paganism. But with the onset of the ʿUthmāniya jihad movement, a third view of moderation was introduced. It featured as one of the major themes in the Shehu's writings. His position on women's seclusion, for example, as demonstrated in *Irshād al-Ikhwān ilā Aḥkām Khurūj al-Niswān*,³⁰⁵ and on what constitutes polytheism, as

³⁰⁵ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Irshād al-Ikhwān ilā Aḥkām Khurūj al-Niswān* (Zaria Gaskiya, n.d.) Refer also to Chapter I of this study. The Shehu responds to two extremely opposing views on women's seclusion. One group of ʿulamāʾ insists that women are free to go out at any time and for whatever reason; but the other maintains that they should not leave their homes for any reason, be it religious or social. The Shehu, holding a moderate view, lists conditions for which women should be allowed to go out of their matrimonial homes.

expounded in *Naṣā'ih al-Umma al-Muḥammadiya*³⁰⁶ are illustrative of this moderation. But nowhere has he shown concern for the negative consequences of fanaticism to his movement and to the newly established caliphate better than in his *Najm al-Ikhwān*. He devotes the first few pages of this work to warn his rival 'ulamā' and disciples, quoting from the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth to support his moderate stand.

As for the fact that the religion of Allah is ease, it is because Allah, Exalted is He, says, 'Allah desires ease for you and desires not hardship', and that 'He has laid no hardship upon you in the matter of religion'. And the Prophet, blessing and peace [be upon him], said that religion is ease....³⁰⁷

In his *Ihyā' al-Sunna wa Ikhmād al-Bid'a* he warned the 'ulamā' and the ṭalaba to refrain from being occupied with exposing other people's wrong doings and advised them to redirect with gentleness and kindness those who left the right path. He also asked them to confirm actions by laymen as long as such actions did not contradict the Qur'ān and the Sunna.³⁰⁸ The 'ulamā', apparently, had the habit of disapproving actions which did not conform to the details of Mālikī law, even though they did not contradict the Qur'ān and the Sunna.

Exactly what was the background and motive of this concern about the state of Islam in Hausaland? The 'ulamā', as the arbiters of religious practice and social behaviour, had a history of disagreements on what could constitute polytheism and what would be regarded as proper Islam. One of such disputes happened at the beginning of the seventeenth century

³⁰⁶ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Naṣā'ih al-Umma al-Muḥammadiya*, NHRS. MS. P. 2/4. Also refer to Chapter I of this study. The work describes four factions: (1) 'ulamā' who deny the existence of unbelief in the lands of the Sudan; (2) another group of 'ulamā' who anathematizes on the grounds of certain beliefs; (3) a third one which anathematizes on the grounds of grave sins, and (4) the laymen who follow blameworthy customs. Again the Shehu disagrees with all the three groups of the 'ulamā'. While he admits the existence of unbelief in the lands, he refutes the anathematization of sinners and of those who are ignorant of speculative theology.

³⁰⁷ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 1a-b.

³⁰⁸ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Ihyā' al-Sunna*, pp. 5-10; *Naṣā'ih al-Umma*, ff. 1b-2a.

between two scholars on whether the nomadic Fulbe who retained their pagan customs and social behaviour, such as *soro* and *gani*, should be considered unbelievers (*kuffār*). Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh al-Thiqā al-Fillān affirmed their faith while his teacher Shaykh al-Bakrī, whose view Sulṭān Bello shared, adjudged them unbelievers.³⁰⁹

Apparently these extremely opposing views, one strict and the other lax, persisted and became more controversial in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Books and treatises were written and poems were composed to explain various points of view. Perhaps the disagreements were heightened with the introduction of moderate views by the Shehu's sermons and writings. In his early works the Shehu classified the peoples of the Sudan into three categories : (1) genuine Muslims who observed the injunctions of the Shariʿa and did not show any signs of paganism in word or deed; (2) pure pagans who had never "smelt the scent of Islam"; and (3) nominal Muslims who mingled Islamic practices with heathenism (*al-mukhalliṭūn*).³¹⁰ The Shehu, whom Sultan Bello reported to have written about fifty books on the subject of the controversy,³¹¹ enumerated practices and utterances by the third group which he considered to be unbelievers (*kuffār*). Other lesser practices, which did not compromise the oneness of God, but contradicted the injunctions of the Qurʾān, such as marrying more than four wives, drinking, gambling, infidelity, were regarded as sins and the sinners as disobedient Muslims.

The Shehu explained further that whoever uttered the twofold confession of the faith (*shahādatayn*) : "that there is no god but God and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of God" and avoided *shirk* (polytheism) should be accepted as a Muslim. Asserting this point in his *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna*, as already quoted in Chapter II of this study, the Shehu pointed out that such

³⁰⁹ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 23.

³¹⁰ Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Nūr al-Albāb* (Zaria : Gaskiya, 1978), pp. 3-4.

³¹¹ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 43.

a Muslim should be accorded all the privileges enjoyed by other Muslims. He could, for example, intermarry with Muslims, inherit from them and be inherited by them, lead the *ṣalāt* and at death be buried in the Muslim cemetery.³¹² He then quoted from *Sharḥ Jawharat al-Tawḥīd* by ʿAbd al-Salām b. Ibrāhīm al-Laḡānī to support his position :

Confession alone is sufficient proof of a person's faith; and in accordance with Islamic legal rules, he should not be anathematized once he made the confession of faith.³¹³

But many ʿulamāʾ, including his respected teacher, Jibrīl b. ʿUmar, seemed to disagree with this interpretation of his, for they argued that confession of faith alone was not enough until it was followed by some basic ritual practices like *ṣalāt*, fasting (*ṣawm*) and the payment of canonical alms (*zakāt*).

Jibrīl b. ʿUmar, taking an extreme view, warned :

What took place in Bilād al-Sūdān in regard to those who "mixed" heathen customs with Islamic customs -- I mean the majority of the kings of these lands and their soldiers -- is not so much a matter of innovation (*bidʿa*) or alteration (*taḥrīf*) or change (*taghyīr*) or the adoption of local custom (*sunna*), as it is their original heathenism which has persisted, since we have not heard from anyone that they have ever abandoned such customs. The fact of the matter is that when they had combined their transgression with the light of prayer, fasting, and the utterance of the Divine Unity, the ignorant and the unlettered among them thought that they were Muslims, nay, they were not.³¹⁴

Jibrīl's views on syncretism were consistent. His famous polemic composition in verse was reproduced by the Shehu in his *Naṣāʾiḥ al-Umma al-Muḥammadiya*, and a portion of the same text was quoted by Sulṭān Bello in his *Infāq al-Maysūr*. A section of the poem reads :

³¹² Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna*, p. 41.

³¹³ Ibid.; Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Tamyīz al-Muslimīn min al-Kāfirīn*, f. 8a.

³¹⁴ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 184.

Covering up by fasting and *ṣalāt* against his being accused of most foul sins,
 He is in truth an obvious unbeliever because this is clearly forbidden.
 Thus, abandoning the Sharī'a, and nakedness with women, and mingling with them
 are the same,
 And depriving the orphan, and having more than four wives are similar.³¹⁵

The conformists, on the other hand, advocated the total accommodation of indigenous traditions and customs. Their argument was based on the legal principle that a people's customs (*al-ʿurf* or *ʿādāt*)³¹⁶ could be accepted as sunna. Such customs, they added, may not have to conform to the custom of Muslims in other regions. The fact that the conformists failed to draw a line between what could be accepted and what should be discarded made it difficult for even the moderate to support their position. The Shehu attacking such ʿulamāʾ declared in his *Ḥisn al-Afhām* :

Among their misconceptions is that some of them tolerate unworthy customs on the grounds of saying, which is widespread in the country, that the custom of a land is sunna. But this is falsehood and confusion according to the consensus of opinion (*ijmāʿ*) because a custom should not be condoned if it contradicts the sunna (of the Prophet) ... I was told by one of the brethren that he had heard some of them say : "Forbidding evil in a land of evil is the real evil". And for this reason they do not chide each other for committing an evil.³¹⁷

And in his Fulfulde poem, *Boneji Lesdi Hausa* (The Problems of Hausaland), he tried to explain where the conformist went wrong :

Nana Dina Allah kam he Hoini,
 Ko sāti fu wona yo wane sadni.
 Be taskitaki wajibiji ndarnete,
 Di koinatake nafilaɗi koinete.³¹⁸

³¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 31-32. Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Naṣāʾiḥ al-Umma*, ff. 15b-16b; *Shifāʾ al-Ghalīl*. PGRR, MS. 164, ff. 1b-2a.

³¹⁶ The Shehu had, in his *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna*, categorized all the local customs as good, bad or acceptable innovations. Through this categorization he was able to accept some of the Habe values and customs

³¹⁷ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Ḥisn al-Afhām*, ff. 28b-29a.

³¹⁸ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, "Boneji Lesdi Hausa", *Gime Fulfulde*, p. 91.

which I translate thus :

You hear them [reason] that the religion of Allah is simple, [and that]
Any complication must have been caused by the rigid interpretation of so and so.
They are not aware that the [religious] obligations must be strictly followed,
And ought not to be relaxed; it is the supererogatories (*naflajī*) which can be eased.

Again in his poem, *Nde Min Puddono Noddoigo*, (When We Began the Call) he states :

Be estira jahili ʔen be koitina wajibi,
Be ko'ina haram ndare ko mauni ko huldini.
To jahili ngori wajibi au ko harmuna,
Be ndoita mo dum be mbiʔai mo dum wane sattini
Hakika he be modibbe timmi he hallugo,
Be dudi bononda ngam be kalli be kallini.³¹⁹

which I translate as follows :

They deceived the ignorant by simplifying the *wājib*,
They treated the *haram* with ease, see how grave and frightening this is!
If the ignorant neglects the *wājib* or the *haram*,
They condoned his action explaining to him that it was so and so who was rigid.
Indeed, these scholars are accomplished villains,
They are full of mischiefs for they are corrupt and corrupting.

The debate persisted and the status of *al-mukhalliṭūn* in the Muslim communities of Hausaland continued to generate dispute among the 'ulamā' during and even after the jihad. So immediately after the end of the war, the Shehu gave a more detailed classification of the people of the Sudan into eight categories as outlined in his *Tamyīz al-Muslimīn min al-Kāfirīn* in accordance with their relation to Islam. We have already discussed these classes in Chapter I under the same work *Tamyīz al-Muslimīn min al-Kāfirīn*.³²⁰ Perhaps we may add that the Shehu gave exhaustive explanation to what he had earlier categorized as "true Muslims" and syncretists (*al-mukhalliṭūn*). The "true Muslims" he now subdivided into

³¹⁹ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, "Nde Min Puddono Noddoigo", *Gime Fulfulde*, pp. 146-147.

³²⁰ The list of some indigenous traditional practices and social customs are mentioned in Chapter I. For more information refer to the following works of the author : *Nūr al-Albāb*, pp. 5-9 and 10-37; *Ta'lim al-Ikhwān*, ff. 4a-12a; *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, ff. 6b-9b; *Kitāb al-Farq*, ff. 2a-5a; *Boneji Lesdi Hausa*, pp. 91-102; and *Mōdinōree*, pp. 69-90; etc.

‘ulamā’, *ṭalaba* (students) and the ignorant who associated themselves with the learned in order to understand the basic religious teachings. These three groups were good Muslims as long as they adhered to the Shari‘a. The fourth group consisted of unbelievers by birth; the fifth and sixth categories were the *mukhalliṭūn*, the former were unbelievers who mixed Islamic practices with heathenism, and the latter were the unbelievers who made blasphemous utterances. The seventh and eighth were both Muslims except that the former were disobedient Muslims, while the latter were ignorant Muslims who made no effort to learn about their religion. The status of this last group was left to God to decide since any judgment on their status should be based, in the absence of any conspicuous actions or utterances, on their inner intentions and only God knows what is in the mind of man.

Anathematization on Account of Grave Sins (*Takfīr li-Irtikāb al-Kabā’ir*)

Yet, there were ‘ulamā’, perhaps led by the Shehu's tutor, Jibrīl b. ‘Umar, who argued that the last two categories of Muslims, particularly category seven, were unbelievers because they were perpetrators of grave sins. These ‘ulamā’ insisted that the sinners violated the injunctions of the Qur’ān and, by implication, consciously denied the validity of the Shari‘a. This extreme view originated with the Kharijites who advocated it twelve hundred years earlier. The Shehu attacked it in his *Ḥisn al-Afhām*, *Naṣā’ih al-Umma* and *Shifā’ al-Ghalīl*. He defended his view that grave sinners were only disobedient Muslims and argued further that even his teacher, Jibrīl, was not serious in his anathematization of them. He pointed out in his *Ḥisn al-Afhām*

Know that our Shaykh, Jibrīl, anathematized the perpetrators of acts of disobedience merely out of extremism, not on grounds of fact. The evidence for this is his (continued) social intercourse with these men in matters of marriage, eating the meat of animals slaughtered by them, etc. If he truly believed in their anathematization, he would have abstained from any social intercourse with them.³²¹

³²¹ ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Ḥisn al-Afhām*, f. 32a; *Naṣā’ih al-Umma*, f. 18a.

From the foregoing it is apparent that although Jibrīl entertained the idea of *takfir* on grounds of grave sins, he was not so fanatical about it. That is why the claim that Jibrīl propagated the Kharijite doctrine after his return from his second pilgrimage might not be accurate.³²² The probable explanation of the propagation of this doctrine, *takfir bi al-ma'āṣi*, would be traced back to the activities of the *Ibādite* merchants in the region. These Kharijite merchants had been active in the area since the late eighth century.³²³ It was even alleged that Sonni 'Alī, the king of Songhay, was a Kharijite.³²⁴

Takfir on Account of Ignorance of Speculative Theology

Another doctrinal controversy which existed during the jihad movement, as mentioned above, was the anathematization of Muslims who could not explain the concept of Divine Unity (*tawhīd*) in the manner it was done by the exponents of speculative theology (*al-mutakallimūn*). The *ṭalaba* were among the advocates of this type of doctrine of *ʿilm al-tawhīd*, as this was evident in the writings of the Shehu who constantly attacked them. He, for example, accused them of being misguided simpletons who confused the sophistry of *ʿilm al-kalām* with the *ʿilm al-tawhīd*. He states in part :

And one of these confusions is the belief of some of them that nobody should be considered a believer or a Muslim until he understood the creeds and their proofs (*al-aqā'id wa adīlatahā*) in the manner it was done by the exponents of speculative theology.³²⁵

Again, in his *Mawāḍi' Awhām al-Ṭalaba*, he warned the *talaba* to refrain from indulging in speculative theology and reading complicated books on the subject. He

³²² F. H. El-Masri, *A Critical Edition*, p. 19.

³²³ T. Lewicki, *Arabic External Sources for the History of Africa*, p. 26.

³²⁴ This view may be doubtful. See al-Maghīlī, *Sharī'a in Songhay*, pp. 9-10 and 120.

³²⁵ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Ḥisn al-Afham*, f. 6a.

recommended that his *Mawādi*^c be given priority by any ṭālib who was interested in *ʿilm al-tawḥīd*. Among the many writings on this subject were his *Mirʾāt al-Ṭullāb*, *Kifāyat al-Muhtadīn* and *Miʿrāj al-ʿAwāmm ilā Samāʿ ʿIlm al-Kalām*.

But when the exponents of *ʿilm al-kalām* persisted in their speculative arguments, the Shehu wrote his *Kitāb al-Farq bayn ʿIlm Uṣūl al-Dīn waḥayn ʿIlm al-Kalām* attacking their activity as the source of innovation (*bidʿa*). A protracted dispute on the issue lasted to the end of the jihad. It was not surprising that it lasted so long because, as one goes through the writings of the Shehu on this issue of *ʿilm al-kalām*, one cannot fail to detect the Shehu's feeling of frustration, for he sometimes used disparaging terms to refer to his opponents. This was more pronounced in his Fulfulde poems.³²⁶ Addressing his opponents in his *Ifhām al-Munkirīn ʿAlayya tī-mā Āmuru al-Nās bihi* he declared his superiority over them as a *mujaddid* and *mushih*

If I met you in a place and we recalled our achievements and I blew upon you, you will be scattered like dust . This statement shows thanks [to God], not boasting.. If you think I am making a boast, well let that be I boast of Divine favours.³²⁷

The Shehu seemed to have won the dispute, because only passing references were made in his later works. Although the question of *tawḥīd* figures prominently in his *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām* his criticism of opponents was mild.

³²⁶ Poems such as *Mbuhri* (The Conceited Scholar) and *Hāsotōbe* (The Envious Scholars). He describes his opponents in *Mbuhri* thus :

He vainly believes to be superior to others,
Yet he is to speak on their behalf
He is above replying, 'I do not know',
Lest the common men take him to be ignorant.

³²⁷ ʿUthmān b Fūdī, *Ifhām al-Munkirīn* (Cairo : 1959), p. 27. See also F.H El-Masri, *A Critical Edition*, p 21.

Anathematization of Habe Kings (*Takfir Mulūk Hausa*)

The Shehu's writings, at the initial period of his career, were devoid of political issues for perhaps two reasons. (1) he was counting on the support of the ruling class and was encouraged by the Bawa's willingness to cooperate; (2) at this formative period, political matters were to him not the priority issues. What was important at this time was the support of the 'ulamā' in his effort to make religious education accessible to the common people. It was for these reasons, in my opinion, the Shehu had avoided getting involved in politics for twenty years, from the beginning of his career in 1774 to 1794. As mentioned in Chapter II, within this period he strove to maintain a healthy relationship with the rulers of Gobir: Bawa, Ya'qūb, Nafata and Yunfa, all respected him, listened to his exhortations and paid him visits at Degel. But the relationship went sour when the court 'ulamā', unhappy with the Shehu's relentless criticism of their conformist attitude, prevailed upon the rulers to restrict the activities of his disciples and put a stop to the growth of the new movement's membership. The Shehu's writings after this period seem to reflect his frustration with the ruling class and the 'ulamā' who supported them. He even shifted, albeit temporarily, from moderation to hardline.

Apart from the lukewarm attitude of the rulers towards Islam and their oppression and exploitation of their subjects, their submission to the pressures of the court 'ulamā' made the Shehu declare them to be unbelievers (*kuffār*). But his declaration met with strong opposition from the court 'ulamā' who accused him of extremism. Unlike the other issues of *takfir* where the Shehu was on the offensive, in this dispute he was at pains to justify his stand. As a result, all his writings on this subject were apologetic and Muhammad al-Amīn al-Kanemi did not fail to take advantage of it to wage a psychological warfare against the jihadists. For example, in his letter to Sultān Bello he writes

The reason for writing this letter is that, when fate brought me to this country, I found the fire which was blazing between you and the people of the land. I asked for the reason, and it was given as injustice by some and as religion by

others. So according to our decision in the matter, I wrote to those of your brothers who lived near us asking them for the reason... o' their transgression, and they returned me a weak answer, not such as comes from an intelligent man, much less a learned person, let alone a reformer. They listed the names of books, and we examined some of them, but we do not understand from them the things which they apparently understood. Then, while we were still perplexed, some of them attacked our capital, and the neighbouring Fulani came and camped near us. So we wrote to them a second time beseeching them in the name of God and Islam to desist from their evil doing.. Tell us, therefore, why are you fighting us and enslaving our free people. If you say that you have done this to us because of our paganism, then I say that we are innocent of paganism, and it is far from our compound. If praying and the giving of alms, knowledge of God, fasting in Ramaḍan and the building of mosques is paganism, what is Islam?³²⁸

It was this kind of strategy employed by al-Kanemi, rather than military actions, which saved Borno from falling into the hands of the Fulbe and kept the Sokoto authority from coming to the aid of their Fulbe kinsmen.³²⁹

Therefore, to understand the Shehu's temporary shift from his generally moderate stand and the dilemma regarding his rebellion against the Habe authority, it is necessary to explain why it was only through the *takfīr* of the nominally-Muslim rulers that he could justify his taking up of arms against Hausaland.³³⁰ There are two main reasons for doing this.

Firstly, the world according to the Islamic jurists (*fuqahāʾ*) is divided into the land of Islam (*dār al-Islām*) and the territory of the unbelievers (*dār al-ḥarb*). It is the collective responsibility of the Muslim community to take up arms against the *dār al-ḥarb* if the

³²⁸ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, pp. 124-125; Translation is from T. Hodgkin, *Nigerian Perspectives*, p. 199.

³²⁹ While ethnicity played no part in the jihad in Hausaland, in Borno it was a war between Kanuri and their rebelling Fulbe subjects

³³⁰ The *takfīr* of a Muslim ruler explicitly means that his Muslim subjects have withdrawn their allegiance from him and will take one of the two options : take up arms against him if they can, or emigrate from his territory. In many cases, the emigration precedes the taking up of arms.

inhabitants turn down the invitation to embrace Islam and indicate their preference to fight. Once the *dār al-ḥarb* is occupied, it becomes *dār al-Islām* and the conquered people, if they are *dhimmīs*, are protected and allowed to follow their own religion.³³¹ However, in return they pay *jizya* (poll tax) and *kharāj* (land tax).

Therefore, jihad was initially directed against unbelievers (*kuffār*), but since the first century of Islam when various Muslim factions took up arms against each other on grounds of doctrinal differences, the concept of jihad also varied depending on who was interpreting it. Exactly when a Muslim community is justified to take up arms against another Muslim community is not much known. The classical Muslim jurists (*fuqahāʾ*) were almost silent on this point. Nevertheless, Muslims had been taking up arms against Muslims in the name of Islam. Just before the ʿUthmānīya jihad, the Wahhābīya jihad movement, although dissimilar in ideology, was raging in Arabia.

Secondly, the Sunni political theorists generally prefer any kind of stable government, even if it is oppressive and tyrannical, to civil strife and political chaos. They expect Muslim subjects to give their ruler total obedience, and rebellion against him is only justified if he shows clear signs of unbelief. Their reason for this standpoint derives from the Ḥadīth : "Obedience to the Amīr is obedience to me and rebellion against the Amīr is rebellion against me".³³²

So the Shehu had to find a legal sanction to justify his taking up of arms against the Habe kings. He could not find any precedent in the history of Islam similar to the situation in Hausaland. The early wars of apostasy which took place in Arabia immediately after the

³³¹ Polytheists, when defeated, are enslaved and their property becomes booty.

³³² *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 9 (Cairo, n.d.), p. 171. See also A. Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1983) pp. 1-24.

death of the Prophet could not be correlated with the situation in Hausaland because the Habe rulers, unlike the Arabians, were not accused of apostasy but of syncretism and corruption. No one, including their accusers, disputed their Islamization; the point of contention was the degree of their Islamization.

To make matters worse for the Shehu, Aḥmad Baba of Timbuktu ruled in his *al-Kashf wa al-Bayān li-Asnāf Majlūb al-Sūdān* that Borno, Kano, Katsina, Songhay, Mali and parts of Zakzak were *bilād al-Islām* ³³³

Nevertheless, the Shehu explained in his *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān* that the inhabitants of Hausaland and Borno were unbelievers despite Ahmad Baba's ruling. He states in part,

These words [of Aḥmad Baba] we accept as valid for his time in regard to both the kings and others of these lands, since every scholar decides according to what he knows in his time. But the matter may not necessarily be the same in every time since judgment revolves around the circumstances which gave rise to it ... As for the kings they are undoubtedly "unbelievers", even though they profess the religion of Islam, since they practice "polytheism", and turn away from the path of God . " ³³⁴

Then the Shehu declared that the status of a territory was judged by the status of its ruler. "If the ruler is Muslim, the land is *bilād al-Islām*, if he is *kāfir*, the land is *bilād al-kufr* and flight from it to another is obligatory". ³³⁵ In other words, it was unimportant whether the majority of the subject people were Muslims or not; once the ruler's faith was doubted, the whole territory under his administration was considered *bilād al-kufr*

Thus, the Shehu ascribed *kufr* to the Habe kings and by that established the legitimacy of the jihad against them. He also found, within the region, an appropriate legal

³³³ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān ʿalā Aḥwāl Arḍ al-Sūdān*, f. 11a; H.R. Palmer, "An Early Conception of Islam", p. 53.

³³⁴ Ibid.; M. Al-Hajj, "The Fulani Concept of Jihad : Shehu ʿUthmān dan Fodio", *Odu*, 1 (1964) p. 50.

³³⁵ Ibid.

decision which supported his stand. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and not far from Hausaland, a North African jurist, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghilī (d. 1504) tackled identical socio-religious problems put to him by the ruler of Songhay, al-Ḥājj Askīya Muhammad Ture (reigned from 1493 to 1528).

The gist of the monarch's questions concerned the status of his predecessor Sonni ʿAlī in regard to Islam and paganism. Askīya Muḥammad Ture who wrested power from the son of Sonni ʿAlī has this to say about the latter :

Among his characteristics was that he pronounced the two-fold profession of the faith and other similar words of Muslims without understanding the truth conveyed. He only uttered that with his tongue. Perchance he would hear the name of the Prophet, upon whom be God's blessing and peace, and would say, "Glory be to Him", or the name of God and he would say, "Allah's blessing and peace be upon him" (*wa rubbamā samiʿa isma al-nabiyy, ṣallā Allāh ʿalayh wa sallam, fa qāl subḥānahu, aw samiʿa isma Allāh fa qāl ṣallā Allāh ʿalayh wa sallam*). He observed the fast of *Ramaḍan* and gave abundant alms of slaughtered animals and so forth at the mosques and similar places, and yet he used to worship idols, believe the diviners, and seek the aid of the magicians and others. He used to show reverence for certain trees and stones by offering sacrifice and alms to them and rendering prayers and vows to them, seeking the fulfillment of his wishes from them ³³⁶

Askīya described Sonni ʿAlī's subjects in a like manner. Beside venerating idols, they were superstitious : "They say, 'the fox said thus and it will be thus, and if it is so and so, it will be so and so' (*al-thaʿlab qāl kadhā wa sayakūn kadhā, wa in kāna kadhā fa sayakūn kadhā*)".³³⁷

³³⁶ al-Maghilī (Muhammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm) *Sharīʿa in Songhay*, p. 70; ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, f. 8a; M. A. Al Hajj, "The Fulani Concept of Jihād", p. 53; M. Hiskett, "An Islamic Tradition", p. 579. This description of Sonni ʿAlī as a syncretist could not be reconciled with another report by Lewicki that he was a Kharijite.

³³⁷ al-Maghilī (Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm) *Sharīʿa in Songhay*, p. 77; ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, f. 6b; M. Hiskett, "An Islamic Tradition", p. 578; M. A. Al-Hajj, "The Fulani Concept of Jihad", p. 56.

In reply, al-Maghīlī declared Sonni ʿAlī and his subjects as unbelievers and gave a ruling that the jihad against them was more meritorious than the jihad against pure pagans because "they have covered truth with falsehood in a way that makes a number of ignorant Muslims go astray".³³⁸ He then said in part :

...none of the people of the *Qibla* is to be branded an unbeliever through sin. Branding as an unbeliever is only through one of the three things : the first -- a tenet which is in itself unbelief such as the disavowal of the Creator or an attribute of His without which He would not be the Creator; or the denial of prophecy. The second -- the performance of that which is only done by an unbeliever even though it is not in itself (an act of) unbelief, for example, allowing the drinking of wine.... The third -- that he should not say something which it is known would not emanate except from one who does not know God most high -- even if the one who says it asserts that he does know God.³³⁹

Armed with the writings of al-Maghīlī the Shehu quoted particularly *al-Ajwībba* in several of his works to show the similarity of the eighteenth century Hausaland and fifteenth century Songhay. Several of his writings during and after the jihad were meant to justify the anathematization of the ruling class. Works such as *Masāʾil Muḥimma*, *Bayān Wujūb al-Hijra*, *Kitāb al-Farq*, *Tanbih al-Ikhwān*, *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, *Taʿlīm al-Ikhwān* and *Yimre Jihādi* fall within this category.

It must be pointed out, however, that the Shehu was sincerely convinced that the Habe kings were unbelievers and their governments were corrupt and un-Islamic. His honesty of purpose could be perceived in his passionate appeal to the people to help him build an ideal Islamic government after the fall of the Habe governments. He had this to say in his *Kitāb al-Farq* :

³³⁸ al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm) *Sharīʿa in Songhay*, p. 78; ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, f. 7b; M.A, Al-Hajj, "The Fulani Concept of Jihad", p. 56.

³³⁹ al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm) *Sharīʿa in Songhay*, p. 73; ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, f. 9a; D.M. Last and M.A, Al-Hajj, "Attempts at Defining a Muslim", p. 232.

In the name of God the Exalted, I ask every scholar and every devout man, indeed every Muslim in these lands, to help me to establish the foundations of the Muslims' government and destroy the foundations of the governments of the unbelievers....³⁴⁰

The Shehu's Approach to Legal Interpretation

The Shehu's moderation is also discernible in his interpretations of the law. *Najm al-Ikhwān* is one of the Shehu's works which reflects his flexibility and moderation in legal matters. In cautioning the 'ulamā' and his students he used such phrases as "do simplify religious matters and do not make them difficult" (*yassirū wa-lā tu'assirū*); "give good tidings but do not frighten (your listeners)" (*bashshirū wa-lā tunaffirū*).³⁴¹ And the Shehu consistently practiced what he preached. With the exception of his unusually strong stand against the 'ulamā' who rallied behind the Habe kings against the jihadists, the Shehu maintained a moderate stand on all issues of religion and law. He abhorred both religious extremism and laxity.

In his efforts to interpret Islam in the context of the social conditions of nineteenth-century West Africa, he refused to confine himself to only one school of law. He showed his disapproval of those who insisted on adhering to their schools of law only. He likened them to people who refused to take advantage of wide option given to them by God.³⁴² He also descended heavily on judges who apologized because they had to give legal decisions according to a school of law other than the one to which they belonged.³⁴³ A follower of one school of law, he explained, could adopt a view from another school of law.

³⁴⁰ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Kitāb al-Farq*, f. 7b.

³⁴¹ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 1b.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, f. 7b.

³⁴³ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Hidāyat al-Tullāb*, p. 4.

The Shehu accepted *ijmā'* as one of the sources of the Sharī'a just as he accepted the Qur'ān and the Sunna. But he was also a supporter of the liberalization of *taqlīd*. He felt the attitude of his contemporaries to *taqlīd* had rendered them fanatical. So, in order to put them on the right track, he wrote the following treatises for them : *Hidāyat al-Ṭullāb*, *Kashf al-Ghumma*,³⁴⁴ *Irshād al-Umma ilā Taysīr al-Milla* and *Tawqīf al-Muslimīn 'alā Ḥukm Madhāhib al-Mujtahidīn*.

In keeping with this policy of flexibility, the Shehu did not tie himself to only popular legal opinions but often opted for opinions which would be more relevant to his situation even though they may be weak ones. In order to justify this approach he often applied one of the two seemingly contradictory Prophetic traditions : "My community will not agree on error" (*inna ummatī lā tajtami' 'alā ḍalāla*);³⁴⁵ "difference of opinion in my community is a merciful concession" (*ikhtilāf ummatī raḥma*).³⁴⁶ Armed with the two traditions, he had enough room to enable him to arrive at a legal decision that affected the *umma*. He could accept popular legal opinion if it agreed with his because "the *umma* will not agree on error" so also he would accept an individual opinion, no matter how weak, if it appealed to him, because "difference of opinion in the community is a merciful concession". This approach he successfully maintained until his brother, 'Abd Allāh, who happened to be a staunch adherer to the Mālikī School of Law challenged his decisions. It was then that his liberal approach to legal and religious matters became a point of dispute.

³⁴⁴ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 4a. The Shehu refers to his *Kashf al-Ghumma* for more explanation on why a *muqallid* of a *madhhab* should not criticize legal views by other jurists unless he is familiar with the 313 *madhāhib*.

³⁴⁵ Ibn Māja, *Sunan. Kitāb al-Fitan*, (Cairo : al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1953), p. 1303.

³⁴⁶ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 4b. He who understands this *Ḥadīth*, explains the Shehu, should not do three things. He should not oppose a person for preferring an opinion out of the many opinions from a given *madhhab*; or for preferring an opinion from another *madhhab* than his; and he should not be rigid in issues of diverse opinions.

It was in the course of response to his brother in *Najm al-Ikhwān* that the Shehu threw more light on his attitude to *ijtihād*. He, for instance, cautioned the brother that there were three hundred and thirteen ways of interpreting the law, only four of which were known; and unless one knew them all one could not criticize a jurist's viewpoint.³⁴⁷ This implicitly indicated that the Shehu did exercise *ijtihād*. However, either out of humility or the desire to avoid controversy with the fanatical 'ulamā', the Shehu refused to admit that he was exercising *ijtihād*. Defending his drawing of an analogy between the situation in Gobir and that of the early Muslims in Syria, he wrote :

If to you what I have done is *ijtihād*, then my reply to you is this, it is not but an analogy drawn between two similar situations (*al-ḥāq al-naẓīr bi-al-naẓīr*), a method which even a non-*mujtahid* is allowed to practice.³⁴⁸

Legal and Doctrinal Disagreement Between the Shehu and 'Abd Allāh

The Shehu's liberal attitude towards legal interpretations covers some Habe social values and political institutions which, apparently, fall within what he considered as acceptable innovations. Although he might have expected this new step of concession to generate hostile reaction from his traditional opponents, the fanatical 'ulamā', little would he have imagined his own brother and disciple, 'Abd Allāh, to take him up on it. When confronted with the problem of legal decision concerning some Habe social values and political institutions which were deeply rooted in their culture, the Shehu and 'Abd Allāh held opposing views. Although both of them earlier denounced the Hausa ways of life, the Shehu, being a practical man, later favoured the incorporation of some of them while 'Abd Allāh took a firm stand by wanting nothing short of a break from the past.³⁴⁹ The issues around which the dispute developed were the adoption of Habe official titles, of musical

³⁴⁷ Ibid., f. 4a.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., f. 27b.

³⁴⁹ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Kitāb al-Farq*, ff. 4b-5a.

instruments, of modes of attire; and the most controversial of them all were some legal decisions taken by the Shehu amounting to *ijtihād*.³⁵⁰ These concerned the legal status of confiscated property belonging to the friends of the *jamā'a* (followers of the Shehu) by the jihad forces, and that of the learned Muslims who rallied behind the Habe kings against the jihadists. This last group was described by the jihadists as the friends of the unbelievers (*muwālāt al-kuffār*).

Adoption of Habe Official Titles

Prior to the jihadists' victory over their Habe opponents, the Shehu and his brother, 'Abd Allāh, had a common ground as critics of the Hausa system of government. They agreed the government practiced hereditary succession instead of *imāra* and *mashāwara*. Again the rulers pursued unwarranted luxuries in modes of clothing, food and accumulation of women without marriage contracts.³⁵¹ The Shehu warned his followers in *Kitāb al-Farq* :

Therefore do not follow their way in their government, and do not imitate them, not even in the titles of their king, such as Kokonnu, Galadima, Ubandawaki, Zagi....³⁵²

'Abd Allāh, on the other hand, was so disappointed with his fellow jihadists, he withdrew from the campaigns and travelled to Kano en route to Hijāz. He described the conduct of the jihadists, which was the cause of his departure, in *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, as follows :

...their main priority was to govern countries and their inhabitants for the accumulation of luxuries and acquisition of ranks, according to the custom of the unbelievers, and the titles of their sovereignty. And the appointing of ignorant men to the highest offices, and the collecting of female captives, and fine clothes and horses that gallop in the towns, not on the battlefields, and the

³⁵⁰ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, ff. 7b-41b.

³⁵¹ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Kitāb al-Farq*, ff. 2b-3a; M. Hiskett, "Kitāb al-Farq", p. 561.

³⁵² 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Kitāb al-Farq*, f. 5a.

devouring of the gifts of sanctity, and booty and bribery, and lutes and flutes, and the beating of drums.³⁵³

The two parted ways after the establishment of the caliphate and the application of Islamic governmental theory as advocated by the jihadists had become a reality. The Shehu, whose goal it was to renew the society, had no problem in adjusting himself to the reality of the moment. He could not afford to be tied up with legal theories advanced by the schools of law before his time. He embraced what he could from the Habe political institutions and practices. He wrote his work, *Miṣbāḥ Ahl al-Zamān* to explain his position.

Dissatisfied with the Shehu's new stand as revealed in the *Miṣbāḥ*, ʿAbd Allāh wrote his *Ḍiyāʾ al-Sulṭān* to disagree with the content of the work. He criticized the use of titles *malik* and *mulk* by Muslims and recommended instead the use of *amīr*. In his rejoinder in *Najm al-Ikhwān*, the Shehu argued that institutions such as *khilāfa*, *imāma*, *imāra*, *saḡana*, *wilāya* and *mulk* were not all foreign to Islam. He cited the Qurʾān and the Ḥadīth, where these terms were used to support his view. On *mulk* and *malik* he referred to several Qurʾānic passages : passages that gave accounts of David, Solomon, Ṭālūt and Muḥammad to confirm their acceptance in the Sharīʿa.³⁵⁴ However, he explained that it was prohibited to address any ruler other than God as the King of Kings (*Malik al-Mulūk*), the Owner of Properties (*Malik al-Amlāk*) or the Owner of Reality (*Malik al-Ḥaqīqa*).³⁵⁵ The Shehu, as if to reassure ʿAbd Allāh, emphasized that the title *malik* was used by Muʿāwiya and it would continue to be used by both Muslims and non-Muslims to the end of the world.³⁵⁶

³⁵³ ʿAbd Allāh b. Fūdī, *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, p. 71.

³⁵⁴ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, ff. 11b-22a.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., ff. 16b-19a.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., f. 15b.

Musical Instruments (*Ālāt al-Lahw*)

Another aspect of Hausa culture which the Shehu prohibited in his writings as un-Islamic and later reversed his decision was the use of musical instruments (*ālāt al-lahw*). Music was and still is an important social institution among the Hausa people. It played a role in Habe courts and ceremonies such as weddings, circumcisions, namings and religious rituals. Responding to ʿAbd Allāh's criticism, he explained in his *Najm al-Ikhwān*, quoting Abū al-Ḥasan al-Mālikī in his *Taḥqīq al-Mabānī* that he was not aware of any prohibition of music in either the Qurʾān or the Sunna.³⁵⁷ Furthermore, Ibn al-ʿArabī affirmed that music was not legally prohibited because the Prophet listened to it.³⁵⁸ However, the Shehu admitted that all the four schools of law considered it *ḥarām* (illegal) although sufi jurists such as ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī allowed it.³⁵⁹ In another statement it was argued by one ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Daṣṭūfī that the basic reason for prohibition of music was that it would keep people away from pursuing their worthwhile religious and worldly duties.³⁶⁰

The Shehu explained further that a person should not be considered as committing an illegal act (*ḥarām*) because he played musical instruments since there was no consensus of opinion concerning its legality.³⁶¹

However, ʿAbd Allāh, basing his opinion on the ruling of the majority of jurists, considered it unlawful. It appeared that ʿAbd Allāh was concerned that the people might

³⁵⁷ Ibid., f. 8b.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., f. 9a.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., f. 9b.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., f. 7b.

³⁶¹ Ibid., f. 9b.

revert to their former ways of life if strict Islamic principles were not applied in the new administration. But the Shehu saw it differently.

The Mode of Attire

In *Ḍatal Aljanna* (The Path to Paradise) the Shehu denounced men's wearing of silk garments and of ornaments made of gold and silver. He says :

Si worɓe yo ndogga kolte ɗe alhariri
He goduɗe kange ma du le gonɗe cardi³⁶²

which I translate into English thus :

Let the men keep (run) away from silk garments,
And garments ornamented with gold and silver.

And in another poem, *Yimre Jihadi* (The Jihad Poem) of 1220/1805, he says :

Si ai fa ɗe kange cardi alhariri,
Akul ɗe latoyi ɗe khalisiri.³⁶³

which I render into English as follows :

Except gold or silver ornamented clothes or silk garments,
Beware if these are particularly of their pure substances.

But he later allowed it when the jihadists, after the fall of Alkalwa, acquired booty in the form of clothes, gold and silver. The arguments advanced for and against this issue by the Shehu in *Miṣbāḥ Ahl-al-Zamān* and *Najm al-Ikhwān* and by ‘Abd Allāh in *Ḍiyā’ al-Sulṭān* respectively have been discussed elsewhere in this study. Suffice it here to say that the Shehu considered the wearing of silk garments and garments ornamented with gold and silver to be allowed as a temporary event in order to thank God and demonstrate His

³⁶² ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Ḍatal Aljanna*, p. 138.

³⁶³ ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Yimre Jihadi*, p. 43.

blessings (*izhār al-niʿma*).³⁶⁴ ʿAbd Allāh saw this as a weak reason for violating Islamic law. The fact that ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb gave Surāqa b. Mālik the gold bracelets of the Persian Emperor was not a demonstration of thanks to God but to confirm the miracle of the Prophet who prophesied it. Demonstration of thanks to God, he added, should not be temporary but permanent.³⁶⁵

Legal Decisions Taken After the Fall of Alkalwa

After the fall of Alkalwa, the Shehu moved fast to remove obstacles which might encourage dissatisfaction and hinder quick reconciliation among the new Muslim community. Some of these were the fate of the ʿulamāʾ and other Muslims who fought on the side of the Habe rulers (*muwālāt al-kuffār*) and of Muslim captives or their property found in possession of new converts or of non-Muslims who had earlier entered a peace treaty with the jihadists. The Shehu decided, apparently, in the interest of the new establishment but ʿAbd Allāh was not convinced and registered his disagreement in his *Ḍiyāʾ al-Sulṭān*. Throughout his renewal activities, the Shehu had consistently taken moderate positions on social and legal issues prevalent in Hausaland. But, not unexpectedly, he took a hard line concerning the question of ʿulamāʾ and other Muslims who fought on the side of the Habe rulers against the jihadists. He declared such offending Muslims as unbelievers. He arrived at this decision because they supported the Habe rulers who were unbelievers on account of their preventing people from embracing Islam. Such Muslims were treated as apostates whenever they fell into the hands of the jihadists.³⁶⁶

³⁶⁴ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 27a. The Shehu discussed the question of wearing garments ornamented with gold and silver in Chapter Six in *Miṣbah Ahl al-Zamān*. ʿAbd Allāh wrote his *Ḍiyāʾ al-Sulṭān* as a rejoinder to the *Miṣbah*.

³⁶⁵ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, ff. 26a-27a. The Shehu quoted from ʿAbd Allāh's work, *Ḍiyāʾ al-Sulṭān*.

³⁶⁶ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, f. 11a.

‘Abd Allāh, on the other hand, disputed the legality of the Shehu's position, and explained that a Muslim taking arms against other Muslims could not be declared as an unbeliever unless he acted in furtherance of unbelief. In *Ḍiyā’ al-Sulṭān* he criticized the Shehu for declaring that anyone who took one of the unbelievers as a friend apostatized and renounced the religion of Islam if his Islam had been sound.³⁶⁷

‘Abd Allāh became more disturbed with what he saw : an apparent diversion from the original course which was the setting up of an Islamic society free from the pagan practices of the Habe regime. The legal decision taken by his brother, the Shehu, the man he trusted and respected all his life, against the ‘ulamā’ who were described as supporters of the unbelievers (*muwālāt al-kuffār*) shook him even more. Then came the issue of the "fall of Alkalwa", the capital of Gobir, which became the basis for legal ruling.

The Legal Status of Seized Property Belonging to Non-Belligerents in Gobir

‘Abd Allāh became more concerned when he discovered that judges in Gobir formed the habit of asking litigants, whose property was seized by the jihad forces, whether such seizure took place before or after the capture of Aikalwa. Upon learning that the event happened before the fall of the town, the judges dismissed the cases because Gobir was *dār al-ḥarb* at the time and the security of the inhabitants and their property could not be guaranteed even if they happened to be Muslims. In other words, the ruling was done in accordance with the status of the territory in which they were living and not in accordance with their status as Muslims. However, ‘Abd Allāh was not convinced for he could not see why the fall of Alkalwa should be taken as a date for determining legal judgements.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁷ Ibid., f. 10a; *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 36b. The Shehu quoted from ‘Abd Allāh's *Ḍiyā’ al-Sulṭān*.

³⁶⁸ ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 31a. He quoted from ‘Abd Allāh's *Ḍiyā’ al-Sulṭān*.

Writing a rejoinder in his *Najm al-Ikhwān*, the Shehu explained that some groups of Tuaregs residing in Gobir during the hostility between the Gobirawa and the jihadists made a peace treaty with the jihadists. The jihad forces used to capture property belonging to the Gobirawa as well as the Tuaregs. The Tuaregs then complained to the Shehu, who ordered the return of their property. It then became a custom whenever their property was seized, it was returned to them. However, with the fall of Alkalwa such incidents increased as owners identified their belongings in market places and on individuals. This created tensions and confusion within the fragile society, as a result of which it became necessary to come up with a legal solution to defuse the situation. So, the judges were instructed to try only those cases which took place after the capture of Alkalwa and dismiss those which happened before the fall of the capital. His reason for taking this decision, as explained earlier, was that Gobir, before the capture of Alkalwa, was a *dār al-ḥarb* and this status changed with its fall to the jihadists.³⁶⁹ The implication of this decision will be seen later in the question of enslavement of Muslims.

These were the main points of disagreement between the Shehu and his brother, ‘Abd Allāh. Yet, the legal disputes reveal to us the Shehu’s generally moderate approach to social issues. His desire to make Islam firm yet accommodating in Hausaland, coupled with the absence of relevant references from past sources, pushed him to interpret the law in a way only a *mujtahid* could have done. Perhaps, ‘Abd Allāh and other religious hard liners could not understand this, because they did not realize the complexities of the situation.

The Shehu's Attitude to Enslavement and Slavery

Slavery was an important socio-economic factor in the life of the people in eighteenth-century Hausaland, both because of its economic role and because slaves

³⁶⁹ ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 31a.

constituted a numerically significant group within the population. Therefore, it was logical that the Shehu pay special attention to its legal implications, particularly when the people captured claimed to be Muslims.

The particularity of the *ʿUthmānīya* jihad, where Muslims fought Muslims, had always posed various legal problems just as the legal status of the conquered peoples had now become another issue for the jihadists. The enemies to be fought were not only the "nominal Muslim kings" of Hausaland but the *ʿulamāʾ* who instigated the kings. Since, in the *Sharīʿa*, only unbelievers could be enslaved, the Shehu had to find a legal solution to the apparent dilemma. To make matters worse Aḥmad Baba of Timbuktu, as we have mentioned elsewhere, indicated in his work, *al-Kashf wa al-Bayān li-Aṣnāf Majlūb al-Sūdān* that Hausaland and Borno were Muslim lands.³⁷⁰ The Shehu argued that Aḥmad Baba's observation might have been valid at his time, but that this had changed. The Habe rulers practiced and observed the same kinds of paganism that led Muḥammad b. *ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī* to adjudge Sonni *ʿAlī* an unbeliever. The principle was that "a country's status is judged by the status of its ruler : if he is a Muslim the country is that of *dār al-Islām*, and if he is an unbeliever the country is that of *dār al-ḥarb*"³⁷¹ In other words, the ruler and all his Muslim subjects including the *ʿulamāʾ* who rallied behind him against the jihadists were considered unbelievers. Regarding the question of what to do with them if they were defeated, the Shehu had only one legal document on an identical situation to lean on.³⁷² In his *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, he quoted profusely from al-Maghīlī's *Ajwibat Asʿilat Askiya* in which the author ruled that such offenders should be executed and their property be taken as booty

³⁷⁰ *ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, Taʿlīm al-Ikhwān*, p. 25.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*

³⁷² *ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, ff. 6a-7b. Askiya Muḥammad, the ruler of Songhay, asked al-Maghīlī a number of questions concerning the soundness of Sonni *ʿAlī*'s faith in view of his mixing Islam and paganism. The reply of al-Maghīlī to the questions was used by the Shehu as legal evidence in his decision concerning unbelief in Hausaland.

(*fayʿ*) and their wives and children should be treated like the families of apostates. Legal opinions varied on their status: some jurists favoured their enslavement while others did not. The Shehu's position was not clear whether he favoured enslavement or not.³⁷³

In spite of the Shehu's ambivalent position concerning the families of the conquered Muslims, it may not be unlikely that his followers had taken such families captives. ‘Abd Allāh's sudden departure to Kano was seen, among other un-Islamic acts by the jihadist forces, as a protest against the enslavement of Muslims.³⁷⁴

But none of the legal decisions taken after the fall of Alkalwa shocked and agonized ‘Abd Allāh more than the confirmation of the enslavement of Muslim captives and of the seizure of their property by non-Muslims. It was adjudged that non-Muslims who, before either their conversion to Islam or conclusion of peace treaty with the jihadists, captured Muslims or seized their property had the legal right of ownership to both the captives and their property. However, ransom and payment for the property were allowed.³⁷⁵

‘Abd Allāh protested the decision and declared it illegal by consensus (*ḥarām bi al-ijmāʿ*).³⁷⁶ He argued that it was absurd to allow new converts and *ahl al-amān*, because of their newly acquired status, to keep their Muslim captives or Muslim property seized at the time of their hostility with the Muslims. He added that there was nothing more abominable than the legalization of the enslavement of Muslims by unbelievers.³⁷⁷ Although the Shehu acknowledged the strength of ‘Abd Allāh's argument, he still maintained his position which

³⁷³ ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, f. 11a. See also al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm) *Sharīʿa in Songhay*, p. 74.

³⁷⁴ ‘Abd Allāh b. Fūdī, *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, p. 70.

³⁷⁵ ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 31b.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

was also the position of Ibn al-Qāsim and of the majority of jurists in the Mālikī School of law.³⁷⁸ In discussing the issues in *Najm al-Ikhwān*, the Shehu considered the question of Muslims enslaved by the newly converted Muslims separately from those under the captivity of *ahl al-amān*.³⁷⁹ There was a divergence of view concerning the former but the most popular one was for the captives to ransom themselves.³⁸⁰ This was also the decision for the latter issue.³⁸¹ The latter decision was based on the incident that took place in Medina at the time of the Prophet. It was reported that one Abū Jandal b. Suhayl fled to Medina after the Prophet had entered into a treaty with the Meccans agreeing to return any Meccan who joined the Muslims in Medina. On this ground, the Prophet sent him back to Mecca saying that he would not be the one to break a treaty.³⁸² Shabrakhītī (d. 1694-5), holding a contrary view, explained that the Prophet's action took place when Islam was in its infancy, but now that the religion was strong there was no need to abandon Muslim captives to their fate. To do so amounted to weakness and humiliation of Islam.³⁸³

However, in spite of the foregoing the Shehu did not support the enslavement of Muslims. In fact, he strongly opposed the Habe kings' habit of taking Muslim captives. He even forbade the enslavement of Fulbe because the majority of them were Muslims.³⁸⁴

³⁷⁸ Ibid., f. 32a.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Ibid.

³⁸² Ibid., f. 32b.

³⁸³ Ibid., f. 32b.

³⁸⁴ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Masāʾil Muhimma*, f. 7b; ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *al-Ajwiba al-Muḥarrara*, f. 3b.

But how were the enslaved treated? Although the Shari'a offered some means by which slaves could gain their freedom, it could not be said that it did not tolerate slavery.³⁸⁵ The emphasis among the jurists (*fuqahā'*) was not how to stop slavery but how well to treat the enslaved. But in the case of the jihadists, another reason may have to do with their desire to maintain a semblance of contentment among the slaves since they could not afford to have rebellions at the time the ousted Habe kings were carrying out raids against the infant caliphate. So, both the Shehu and his brother, 'Abd Allāh, were anxious that the legally enslaved were not mistreated by their owners. The owners were warned that it was their responsibility to feed and clothe their captives, and to avoid overworking them. Therefore, even though slaves were taken regularly, they were well treated by their owners as evidenced by Clapperton who reported the following in his *Journal* :

The domestic slaves are generally well treated. The males who have arrived at the age of eighteen or nineteen are given a wife, and sent to live at their (master's) villages and farms in the country, where they build a hut, and until the harvest are fed by their owners. When the time for cultivating the ground and sowing the seeds comes on, the owner points out what he required and what is to be sown on it. The slave is then allowed to enclose a part for himself and family. The hours of labour, for the master, are from daylight till midday; the remainder of the day is employed on his own or in any other way he may think proper. At the time of harvest, when they cut and tie up the grain each slave gets a bundle of different sorts of grain, about a bushel of our own measure, for himself. The grain on his own ground is entirely left for his own use....³⁸⁶

³⁸⁵ See Ibn Zarrūq, *Sharḥ.... ma' Sharḥ.... Qāsim ibn 'Īsa b. Nāji al-Tanūkhī al-Qarāwī.... 'alā Matn al-Risāla li-Abī Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī* (Cairo : Maṭba'at al-Jamāliya, 1914) p. 169. A slave may gain his or her freedom by fulfilling one of the following conditions :

- (a) by being a *mukātab* : a slave who enters into agreement , in writing, with his master to pay a given amount for his liberty;
- (b) by being an *umm walad* : a female slave who is the mother of a child fathered by her deceased master;
- (c) by being a *mudabbar* : a slave whose deceased master left a will for his freedom;
- (d) by being a beneficiary to his master's *kaffāra* (atonement). A sinner of specific acts of disobedience is given the option of freeing a slave in atonement.

³⁸⁶ H. Clapperton, *Journal of a Second Expedition into the Interior of Africa*. [London : Frank Cass, 1966 (1829)], pp. 213-214.

Clapperton's observation was corroborated by M.F. Smith,³⁸⁷ P.E. Lovejoy³⁸⁸ and Ibraheem Sulaiman. Sulaiman describes slaves' legal rights thus : "Slaves have their legal rights which the master should not violate. They should be fed with the same sort of food their master eats. They should be treated with dignity and be clothed decently. They should not be over-worked or made to do what is beyond their capability".³⁸⁹ Professor Hiskett has gone further to describe them thus : "...there was very little social distinction and virtually no economic distinction. Slaves could own slaves and the slaves of slaves could own slaves and so on indefinitely. Slaves could reach the highest levels of state service; they could become distinguished scholars or military commanders in whose hands the fate of kingdoms rested".³⁹⁰ M.G. Smith, on the other hand, sees them as "freer than the free" and that was why there was no slave rebellions in Hausaland. He states : "Slave officials clearly occupied a higher status than many free persons, including large sections of the royal lineage, and were wealthier and more powerful.... The position and privileges of other slaves also corresponded with those of the owners. For this reason there were no slave rebellions in Hausa society throughout the last century, despite considerable turmoil among the free population".³⁹¹ He reiterated the lack of slave rebellions in his book, *Government in Zazzau 1800 - 1950*. "It is notable that throughout the last century, despite the fact that there were

³⁸⁷ M.F. Smith, *Baba of Kano : a Woman of the Muslim Hausa with an Introduction and Notes* by M.G. Smith (London : Faber and Faber, 1954) pp. 41-42.

³⁸⁸ P.E. Lovejoy, "Plantations in the Economy of the Sokoto Caliphate", *Journal of African History*, 19 (1978) p. 344.

³⁸⁹ Ibraheem Sulaiman, *A Revolution in History : the Jihad of Usman dan Fodio* (London : Mansell, 1986) p. 43.

³⁹⁰ M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa* p. 103.

³⁹¹ M.G. Smith, "The Hausa System of Social Status", p. 242.

considerable opportunities for a successful slave rebellion in Zaria, there was never any danger or fear of such a development".³⁹²

Based on the above observations, one may surmise that owners of slaves might have heeded the exhortation of the jihadists regarding the humane treatment of the slaves. This, in turn, explains the absence of slave rebellion to which M.G. Smith refers.

We have shown in the preceding pages that the Shehu, in order to implement his *tajdīd*, had departed from the prevailing attitudes of his fellow 'ulamā', who were either religious extremists or conformists, and adopted an attitude of moderation and accommodation. He affirmed the Islamization of those who were hitherto declared by the extremists as unbelievers because of their ignorance of speculative theology or their indulgence in grave sins. In contradistinction, he refuted the faith of those who mixed Islam with paganism, thereby negating the conformists' approval of such practices. He had also pursued a liberal interpretation of the law in order to accommodate those actions by the laity which did not contradict the principal sources, and to discourage unnecessary adherence to one school of law. In the following pages, we shall examine his approach to mass mobilization.

Mass Mobilization

The Shehu sought to achieve public mobilization through mass education, the propagation of the doctrine of Mahdism and to some extent through the transmission of the Qādirīya brotherhood.

It goes without saying that mass education is the most effective means of mobilizing people for any undertaking. Without public awareness no meaningful participation is to be

³⁹² M.G. Smith, *Government in Zazzau 1800 - 1950* (London : Oxford University Press, 1960) p. 86.

expected of them. The Shehu was apparently aware of this for he acknowledged in several of his writings the necessity to make education available to all including females who were hitherto denied the privilege. *Nūral-Albāb*, *Wathīqat al-Ikhwān*, *Tanbīh al-Ghāfilīn*, and *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān ‘alā Jawāz Ittikhādih al-Majlis li-Ajl Ta‘līm al-Niswān*, are some of his works in which he abhorred ignorance and strongly criticized his rival ‘ulamā’ for their negative attitude towards female education. Further evidence of his stand on public education is found in his Fulfulde poem, *Nde Min Puɗɗuno Noddoigo* (cited in Chapter II), in which he declared in reply to his rival critics that his strong commitment to mass education was responsible for the rapid growth of his followers. He also expressed his deep concern over the dangers of ignorance and warned in his *Tanbīh al-Ghāfilīn*: "God has bestowed all that is good in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) just as he placed all that is evil in ignorance (*jahl*). Thus, the ignorant person may inflict harm upon himself, the type no enemy may have done to his enemy".³⁹³

Our knowledge of the general state of religious learning among the common people was provided by Sultan Muḥammad Bello. He lamented that the majority of the people were ignorant of the basic tenets of Islam and that very few of them performed the rituals in the proper manner.³⁹⁴ So the Shehu had to meet this social challenge with a massive educational drive by teaching, preaching and writing. He realized that classical Islamic religious books were expensive and out of reach of many *ṭalaba*. Furthermore, they did not address many of the social, political and religious problems confronting the ‘ulamā’ in Hausaland. For this he cautioned the *ṭalaba*, in *Iḥyā’ al-Sunna*, not to regard the ‘ulamā’ in Hausaland as less educated than they were. In fact, the ‘ulamā’ were well learned in both religious and other disciplines. What was missing in their scholarship was the application of this knowledge to

³⁹³ ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Tanbīh al-Ghāfilīn*, PGRR, MS. 120, f. 1a.

³⁹⁴ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku’l Maisuri*, p. 31.

the needs of the moment.³⁹⁵ So he appealed to them, in *Najm al-Ikhwān*, to read his works and the works of ʿAbd Allāh and Muḥammad Bello.³⁹⁶ He explained, "Our writings are but the expositions of what are the most relevant to our situation from the works of the early Muslim scholars just as theirs are the expositions of what was the most relevant to their situation from the Book and the Sunna".³⁹⁷ It was therefore to give them the necessary orientation in the new approach and to widen their intellectual horizons that the Shehu and his two disciples, ʿAbd Allāh and Muḥammad Bello, wrote about three hundred books and discourses.³⁹⁸

The achievement of the triumvirate in the field of education is described, today, by many scholars as the jihadists' major contribution in the *tajdīd* movement. Thomas Hodgkin, one of the scholars, made the following observation :

...the tremendous emphasis placed by the reforming leaders upon education generally -- in Arabic, for training scholars, teachers and administrators, in Fulfulde and Hausa, to popularize the basic ideas of the reforming movement among the masses -- was a means of opening access to the elite to as wide a body as possible.³⁹⁹

The ʿUlamāʾ

Just as he was unhappy with the roles of the ʿulamāʾ in other aspects of social, political and religious issues, the Shehu was also disappointed with their attitude towards

³⁹⁵ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna*, p. 279.

³⁹⁶ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Najm al-Ikhwān*, f. 42a.

³⁹⁷ Ibid., f. 75a.

³⁹⁸ M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, pp. 237-248.

³⁹⁹ T. Hodgkin, "The Radical Tradition in Muslim West Africa", *Essays on Islamic Civilization*, edited by D.P. Little (Leiden : E.J. Brill, 1976) pp. 116. See also his article, "Uthmān dan Fodio", *Nigeria Magazine*, (1960) p. 77.

public education. There was a class of charlatans among them who were minor Malams. They were considered more as agents of harmful influences on the common people. Al-Maghīlī described their negative influence in his *Ajwibat Asʿilat Askiya* which the Shehu quoted in his *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*.⁴⁰⁰ The Shehu considered them in many of his writings as unbelievers because they practiced magic and, in a figurative sense, served as a bridge between paganism and Islamic practices. He was, for instance, referring to their activities when he listed the following practices among acts of unbelief: divination by sand, stars, spirits, the sounds or movements of birds; use of magic to sow discord between husband and wife; the writing of the names of God or passages of the Qurʾān on impure objects such as bones of the dead or dogs' heads.⁴⁰¹ The minor Malams wielded powerful influence over the public who were ignorant and superstitious.

But the class of ʿulamāʾ whom the Shehu accused of neglecting their responsibilities as educators were those who adopted the apathetic attitude towards the ignorant. As mentioned earlier he described their negative attitude to teaching in several of his writings and poems.⁴⁰² However, nowhere did he descend upon them harder than in their neglect of women's education in both religious and liberal fields. Before the jihad, Muslim women were treated like chattels without any freedom. They were made to marry soon after they reached the age of puberty. They would then be confined to their matrimonial homes, ignorant and unable to perform even their most basic religious duties although, in some cases, their husbands were noted scholars.

⁴⁰⁰ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, f. 3a; M. Hiskett, "The Islamic Tradition", p. 580. See also al-Maghīlī (Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Karīm), *Sharīʿa in Songhay*, pp. 60-61.

⁴⁰¹ Refer to his following works: *Nūr al-Albāb*, pp. 5-9; *Wathīqat al-Ikhwān*, pp. 28-29; *al-Ajwiba al-Muḥarrara ʿan al-Asʿila al-Muqarrara*, f. 9a; and *Mōdinore*, pp. 70-74.

⁴⁰² ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Nūr al-Albāb*, pp. 15-17; *Wathīqat al-Ikhwān*, pp. 30-37; *Sirāj al-Ikhwān*, ff. 2b-6a; Garba Saidu, "The Significance of the Shehu's Sermons", pp. 199-200.

The Shehu encouraged the unfortunate women to attend his assemblies if their husbands were not willing to teach them. The venal 'ulamā', as the Shehu called them, were infuriated by this blatant appeal to their women to violate the cherished tradition of their matrimonial confinement. They criticized him and strongly opposed his views. 'Abd Allāh, giving the account of the situation in his *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, said : "Some devilish men gossiped that the Shehu's assembly had become a meeting place for men and women".⁴⁰³ The Shehu wondered how hypocritical his critics could be for, he argued, these same 'ulamā' showed no disapproval of women attending ceremonies such as wedding feasts, circumcisions, funerals, etc. where they danced in their fineries in the presence of men. He then accused them of neglecting their wives, daughters and captives in the darkness of ignorance while they vainly surrounded themselves with large numbers of students. He declared in his *Nūr al-Albāb* and *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān 'alā Jawāz Ittikhādh al-Majlis li-Ajl Ta'lim al-Niswān* thus :

Most of our educated men leave their wives, their daughters and their captives morally abandoned, like beasts, without teaching them what God prescribes should be taught them, and without instructing them in the articles of the Law which concern them. Thus, they leave them ignorant of the rules regarding ablutions, prayer, fasting, business dealings, and other duties which they have to fulfill, and which God commands that they should be taught.

Men treat these beings like household implements which become broken after long use and which are then thrown out on the dung-heap. This is an abominable crime! Alas! How can they thus shut up their wives, their daughters, and their captives in the darkness of ignorance, while daily they impart knowledge to their students? In truth, they act out of egoism, and if they devote themselves to their pupils, that is nothing but hypocrisy and vain ostentation on their part.

Their conduct is blameworthy, for to instruct one's wives, daughters and captives is a positive duty, while to impart knowledge to students is only a work of supererogation, and there is no doubt but that one takes precedence over the other.

⁴⁰³ 'Abd Allāh b. Fūdī, *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, p. 27. One scholar by the name of Muṣṭafā Goni from Borno met the Shehu at Daura during the preaching tours and wrote a poem criticising him for allowing men and women to attend his lectures. The Shehu asked 'Abd Allāh to reply to him which 'Abd Allāh did in verse.

A man of learning is not strictly obliged to instruct his pupils unless he is the only person in the country to fulfill this office; in any case he owes his care in the first place to the members of his family, because they have priority over every one else.⁴⁰⁴

Then sounding like a revolutionary or rather like Qāsim Amīn (1865 - 1908), the Egyptian advocate of women's emancipation, the Shehu called :

Muslim women -- Do not listen to the speech of those who are misguided and who sow the seed of error in the heart of another; they deceive you when they stress obedience to your husbands without telling you of obedience to God and to His Messenger (may God show him bounty and grant him salvation), and when they say that the woman finds her happiness in obedience to her husband.

They seek only their own satisfaction, and that is why they impose upon you the tasks which the Law of God and that of his Prophet have never especially assigned to you. Such are -- the preparations of foodstuffs, the washing of clothes and other duties which they like to impose upon you, while they neglect to teach you what God and the Prophet have prescribed for you.⁴⁰⁵

As I mentioned earlier, the Shehu's desire to educate women was not limited to religious knowledge. He enjoined his readers in his *Iḥyā' al-Sunna* that women should be trained in business transactions. Those of them who could not find trusted men to manage their businesses on their behalf, were allowed to run them themselves. However, they had to be trained by knowledgeable persons, preferably their husbands if they were skilful in such matters. He asserted :

That it is as incumbent upon a woman to try to know these matters (commercial regulations) as it is obligatory that she knows about other matters concerning her faith such as ablutions, *ṣalāt* and fasting.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁴ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Nūr al-Albāb*, pp. 15-17; *Tanbīh al-Ikhwān ʿalā Jawāz Itṭikhāḍ al-Majlis li-Ajl Taʿlīm al-Niswān*, pp. 6-7. Culled from Hodgkin's translation in his *Nigerian Perspectives*, pp. 194-195.

⁴⁰⁵ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Nūr al-Albāb*, pp. 15-17.

⁴⁰⁶ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyā' al-Sunna*, p. 208.

The Shehu did not only advocate education for women but translated into action what he preached. The female members of his household were as educated as the males. His daughters, Khadija, Asmā³, Maryam, for example, were famous scholars and participated fully in the intellectual revolution that accompanied the jihad movement. They took over the education of women and children of the communities. They interpreted some passages of the Qur³ān, wrote short religious discourses, composed poems in *ajami*, and rendered some of their father's poems in Fulfulde into Hausa. Asmā³, particularly, founded "Women Literary Organizations" on village-levels to help disseminate religious teachings to women as they concerned them. Women from villages around Kano, Katsina, Zazzau and other parts of the land travelled to Sokoto to attend her lectures. Emirs sought her advice on administrative matters. She was described as "the sole guiding spirit of the Sokoto Caliphate"⁴⁰⁷ in the later half of the nineteenth century.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the Shehu's approach to women's education has yielded a positive result. One need not over-emphasize this if one considers the immense influence they have, as mothers, on moulding the character and behaviour of their children. Although not much investigation has yet been done on the social, political and educational role played by women in the ʿUthmāniya jihad movement, activities of women such as Asmā³ and Maryam are a living example of the extent of the contribution made by women in the jihad movement.

But what was the content and methodology of the Shehu's teaching? The object of his educational drive, at the initial period, was firstly to meet two separate needs : the long and short term objectives. Secondly to acquaint the public with the local beliefs and customs categorized as bad innovations. For the long term, he needed to groom students who would guarantee the continuation of the *tajdīd* by taking up teaching in different locations in the

⁴⁰⁷ Jean Boyd, "Scholar and Revolutionary", *Afkar Inquiry*, 2 (1985) p. 56.

land. Such students must be well grounded in both religious and liberal subjects. For the short term, there was the necessity to embark on a crash program to provide basic religious knowledge to the laymen. The Shehu also included in the teaching lists of local practices associated with social activities and religious practice which he considered bad innovations.

In accordance with the Timbuktu tradition, the subjects to be offered by the *ṭalaba* were the same as those studied by the Shehu and ʿAbd Allāh, as described in *Idāʿ al-Nusūkh* and discussed in Chapter II of this study. However, in view of the needs of the time, emphasis was given on *ʿilm al-tawḥīd* (the knowledge of the essence of God) and *fiqh* (the rules of human conduct). This was necessary since the aim of the *tajdīd* was to obliterate *shirk* (polytheism) and social ills. The layman was expected to learn the essentials from the two subjects : the *īmān*,⁴⁰⁸ the rituals of *ṣalāt*, *ṣawm*, *zakāt* and *ḥajj*. Others were *iḥsān*,⁴⁰⁹ *nikāḥ* and *buyūʿ*.

⁴⁰⁸ *Īmān* (faith) has been a controversial subject among the ʿulamāʾ of Hausaland even before the beginning of the ʿUthmāniyya movement. Various views were advanced to define "what constitutes faith" The Shehu alone, according to Bello, had written no less than fifty books on the subject. In his *Uṣūl al-Dīn*, which he apparently wrote for the common people, he explains in a simple manner the nature of God. A Muslim needs only to believe that God exists; He is eternal; infinite, independent; One in essence; and so on. He also composed a versified version of it in Fulfulde, *Sifāji Jawmirawo* (God's Attributes) To prove that God exists, he composed another Fulfulde poem, *Yimre Jimīji* (A Poem Rhymed with Jim), in which he invites his listeners to observe the universe -- particularly the earth with its various contours, vegetations, climatic zones, the changing winds, the rain, heat and cold, the creatures on it and their various sizes, and man himself, from top to toe; -- all these are signs of God. He also wrote a tract on the subject, *Ḥaqīqat al-Īmān*

⁴⁰⁹ *Iḥsān* is a form of sufism which the Shehu recommends to all Muslims. In his *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām*, he classified sufism into the practices of the Prophet. (*iḥsān*) and the practices of the specialized sufi. See also his *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna*, pp. 269-272 The Shehu describes *iḥsān* as attentiveness in worship. A Muslim is expected to remember, whenever he is in worship, that he is in the presence of God. God, he is reminded, sees him even though he does not himself see Him. In addition to this he should observe some *nawāfil* (supererogatory devotions) such as prayers in specified times, fasting at least three times every month, reading the Qurʾān daily, and humility. *Iḥsān* might be one of the methods applied by the Shehu to keep his followers in check from immoral and other excesses. His Arabic work *Ṭarīq al-Janna*, which he adapted into a versified Fulfulde, *Datal Aljanna* (The Path to Paradise), is a propagation of this form of sufism.

Various methods were employed by the Shehu to disseminate this basic religious knowledge to the public. He wrote in simple Arabic and adapted some of his works into *ajami* poems for the benefit of both the students and the common people. He laid down guidelines for teaching in some of his writings, such as *‘Umdat al-‘Ulamā’*, *I‘dād al-Dā‘i ilā dīn Allāh* and *Ihyā’ al-Sunna*, so that the negative attitude which characterized the relationship between the fanatical *‘ulamā’* and the common people should be avoided. A teacher, he explains, should be gentle, kind and patient. He must distance himself from the common habit of faultfinding, despisement of the ignorant and the reproachment of laymen for actions which do not contradict the Qur’ān and the Sunna. In short, let the knowledge an *‘ālim* acquires be of benefit rather than an affliction to the community. For "whoever acquires knowledge in order to judge people by it with force and rough treatment will neither rest, nor will people rest with him; and whoever acquires knowledge for its own sake, and in order to judge people by it with kindness and mercy, he will rest and people will rest with him".⁴¹⁰

The Shehu has also appealed to the *‘ulamā’* to abandon their apathetic attitude and come out and assist in the war against ignorance. He asserts : "It is obligatory that there should be, in every mosque and quarter in the town, a *faqīh* teaching his people their religion. So also is it, in every village, obligatory that every *faqīh* who has completed his *fard ‘ayn* (obligatory duty) and has devoted himself to *fard kifāya* (limited obligatory duty), should go out to the people in the neighbouring town in order to teach them their religion...."⁴¹¹

⁴¹⁰ ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Ihyā’ al-Sunna*, p. 279. Translation from I.A.B. Balogun, *The Life and Works of ‘Uthmān*, p. 73.

⁴¹¹ Ibid., p. 280.

The promotion of mass education, as conceived by the Shehu, was the responsibility of every member of the community. A Muslim, according to him, was obligated to learn and teach what he learnt to others starting with those nearer to him. He states : "It is incumbent on every Muslim to begin with himself and to get used to practicing the obligatory duties and avoiding forbidden practices; he should then teach that to his family and relations. He should then proceed to his neighbours, then to the people of his quarter, the inhabitants of his town, the surrounding suburbs of his city, and so on to the furthest part of the world. If a near person undertakes this duty it falls off those who are further away; otherwise, everyone who is able to do so should do it - be he near or far away".⁴¹² Even a layman was obliged to teach what he knew to those who did not know. The Shehu exhorts : "whoever has studied a single problem is one of the learned in it and it is incumbent on him to teach it to others...."⁴¹³

Thus, it is clear from the foregoing that mass mobilization through education played a significant role in the realization of the *tajdīd* movement in eighteenth-century Hausaland. And because it involved every member of the *umma*, irrespective of his location from the centre of the activity, perhaps this might help explain the simultaneous uprising that took place across central Sudan, from Gobir to Borno, during the jihad.

Mahdism

The propagation of Mahdism was another method used by the Shehu to rally people to his camp. He wrote ten tracts and composed several *ajami* poems on the subject.⁴¹⁴ Although he used it effectively at the height of the conflict, he was at pains to retract what he had

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Ibid., p. 281.

⁴¹⁴ M.A. Al-Hajj, "The Thirteenth Century in Muslim Eschatology", p. 114.

consistently preached : the prophecy of the advent of the Mahdi and the approaching End of Time.⁴¹⁵ Discussing the Shehu's use of Mahdism as a propaganda weapon during the war, M.A. Al-Hajj observes that "the Shehu consciously emphasized the prophecies about the End of Time in order to instil in his followers the love of martyrdom and the renunciation of this transitory world".⁴¹⁶ The nature of this propaganda is revealed in Bello's account of the Shehu's message which he delivered to the *mujāhidīn* at Birmn Gada :

The Shehu sent me to all his followers in the east among the people of Zamfara, Katsina, Kano and Daura.... I conveyed to them his good tidings about the approaching appearance of the Mahdi, that the Shehu's followers are his vanguard and that his jihad will not end, by God's permission, until the appearance of the Mahdi. They listened and welcomed the good news.⁴¹⁷

The Shehu's campaign on the doctrine would be considered as successful in view of the exodus of people from Hausaland to the Nilotic Sudan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Muḥammad Aḥamd claimed to be the awaited Mahdi. In fact, Bello took it so seriously that during his caliphate he instructed Modibbo Adama, the emir of Adamawa, to send troops to southern Wadai and Dār Fūr to look for the expected Mahdi.⁴¹⁸

Sufism

Although the Shehu had been initiated into the Shādhīliya, Khalwatīya and Qādirīya orders, as discussed in Chapter II of this study, the Qādirīya had always remained the *ṭarīqa* with which he identified himself. He wrote tracts and composed *ajami* poems on the brotherhood and on its founder, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī. Sufism, as professors Al-Hajj and Brenner had asserted, and as discussed in Chapter II of this study, played a

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., p. 110.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., p. 109.

⁴¹⁷ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, pp. 104-105.

⁴¹⁸ M.A. Al-Hajj, "The Thirteenth Century in Muslim Eschatology", p. 111.

minor role as a mobilizing force in the *tajdīd* movement in Hausaland. This view is strengthened by the Shehu's writing, *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām*, in which he sees sufism as a form of special rituals with which the common people should not bother themselves.⁴¹⁹ Furthermore, beside the occasional mystical experiences relating to some political issues, as discussed elsewhere in this study, we are not aware of any incident when mysticism was used as a rallying point. The low-key role of the Qādirīya order in the *tajdīd* movement was even more apparent when we consider the ease with which a new rival *ṭarīqa*, *Tijānīya*, spread across the caliphate without it offering any challenge. Apparently the *nuwwāb* (emirs) were either not members of the Qādirīya brotherhood or like the Shehu, they saw it as personal.

Local Customs considered Bad Innovations

Social Contracts

Under various Islamic social activities, the Shehu listed local customs he considered bad innovations. Among the topics treated by him discussed under this heading are marriage contracts (*al-nikāḥ*) and business transactions (*al-bayʿ wa al-shirāʿ*). The discussions on these two subjects were not fully treated in his writings and the views he expressed were not different from those expatiated in the writings of the early *fuqahāʿ* (Muslim jurists) of the Mālikī School of Law. In his *Iḥyāʿ al-Sunna* he enumerated, in both marriage contracts and business transactions, practices which he explained as sunna and those which he considered innovations (*bidaʿ*). The Shehu did not elaborate on the two topics; perhaps he left such details to his brother, ʿAbd Allāh, who specialized in legal matters.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁹ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Ḥiṣn al-Afhām*, f. 35a. The Shehu classifies sufism into two : that which was practiced by the Prophet, *al-iḥsān*, and that which is special and practiced by limited people. He recommends *iḥsān* for all Muslims. See also his *Iḥyāʿ al-Sunna*, pp. 269-271.

Marriage contracts and commercial transactions were among social contracts abused by the people of Hausaland. In the pre-jihad era, it was reported that young women were forcefully taken away from the custody of their parents by the Habe notables. The Shehu describing this evil custom in his *Kitāb al-Farq*, wrote : "One of the ways of their governments is to keep many women in their houses, until the number of women of some of them amounts to one thousand or more".⁴²¹ According to Palmer, even an ardent Muslim king like Muḥammad Rumfa of Kano was guilty of this social vice for it was alleged that he had about a thousand women in his harem.⁴²²

As for commercial transactions, the people of Hausaland were historically well known as skillful businessmen. They travelled far and wide transacting business. However, not all of them conducted their businesses in accordance with the teachings of Islam, for they employed various tricks and frauds to get better bargains. This state of affairs persisted until the Shehu made it one of the issues of his renewal movement. Therefore, in his attempt to put a stop to vices associated with the two social contracts, he laid bare, in his writings, both Arabic and *ajami*, to the laity as well as the students, what practices in marriage and commercial transactions were sunna and what were innovations (*bid'a*) and therefore unacceptable.

Marriage

Marriage is a social institution which is perhaps as old as society itself. Although it is known and observed by all societies, the methods of conducting it may differ from society to

⁴²⁰ The Shehu, writing in his *Najm al-Ikhwān*, advised his followers interested in mastering Islamic law to read more of 'Abd Allāh's work, for he was more conversant with the letter of the Sharī'a. See also 'Abd Allāh's work, *Kifāyat al-Ṭullāb fī al-Nikāḥ* in which he explains the main tenets of marriage.

⁴²¹ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Kitāb al-Farq*, f. 3a.

⁴²² H.R. Palmer, *Sudanese Memoirs* (Lagos : Government Printer, 1928) pp. 111-112.

society. Muslims, for instance, conceive it as a contractual agreement between an eligible male and an eligible female, sanctioned by the Sharī'a and acknowledged by the society.⁴²³ It is expected, therefore, that marriage as a subject matter would feature in the writings of the jihad leaders. 'Abd Allāh, who was interested in law, treated the subject adequately in his *Kifāyat al-Ṭullāb fī al-Nikāh*.

As had been his policy, the Shehu was more concerned with blameworthy customs which found their way into Islamic marriage practices. In his *Ihyā' al-Sunna* he distinguished the Prophet's sunna in marriage from the local customs. He said :

One of the ways of his [the Prophet's] sunna concerning marriage is that it should be contracted as soon as one is able to do so as recommended in his tradition (*ḥadīth*) which al-Bukhārī recorded in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* : "Oh, company of youths, whoever among you is capable of fulfilling the sexual obligation of marriage, let him marry, for this serves to avert eyes [from evil deeds] and to preserve the privy parts".⁴²⁴

The Shehu was explicitly saying that although the moral and religious benefits to be derived from marriage were immense, young men should marry only when they were capable of shouldering its responsibility. He taught that people's customs of joining young children in wedlock should be discouraged until they understood the concept of marriage. Neither was this custom acceptable to him nor the habit of a *walī* (legal guardian) preventing an eligible young woman from marriage. He wrote in his *Ihyā' al-Sunna* :

It was one of the ways of his sunna in marriage that the *awliyā'* (legal guardians) should be asked to desist from restraining [women] from marrying as supported by the statement in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī regarding the Qur'ānic verse which says, "Do not prevent them from marrying their spouses..." was revealed because Ma'qil⁴²⁵ prevented his sister from marrying.⁴²⁶

⁴²³ Hasan Kāmil al-Maṭṭawī, *Fiqh al-Mu'āmalāt 'alā Madhhab al-Imām Mālik* (Cairo : Maṭābi' al-Ahrām al-Tijāriya, 1972) p. 17.

⁴²⁴ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Ihyā' al-Sunna*, p. 195.

The Shehu frowned on the type of wedding feasts (*walīma*) organized by the people of Hausaland where men and women danced in their fineries, and he recommended a sober wedding feast because of what the Prophet said to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Awf as stated in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī : "Organize a feast even if you were to kill [only] a goat".⁴²⁷ The Shehu did not, however, indicate whether a feast could be attended by both sexes. We may, nevertheless, draw an inference from the day-to-day practice in Northern Nigeria where invitations to such feasts are extended to both sexes, although each sex is seated separately.

Another blameworthy custom which the Shehu attacked strongly was the appropriation of the dower by the male elders of the bride's family. He described the practice as one of the devilish innovations (*al-bida‘ al-Shayṭānīya*).⁴²⁸ He apparently succeeded in restoring the *ṣadāq* to the brides, but in its stead, introduced separate gifts meant to be presented to the relatives of the brides by the prospective husbands. These gifts are today presented to the family of the bride at two occasions : at the time of engagement, and when the marriage contract is entered into. This practice has survived because it does not violate the Islamic teachings.

It was not only the families of the brides who exploited the bridegrooms but the brides exploited them as well. A newly-wedded woman had to be given certain gifts before she would agree to talk to the bridegroom. This is known in Hausa as *sayen baki* which literally means "buying the mouth". Other than this, there was also the practice of a bride taking something from the husband as a kind of payment for the right of bed. It appeared that this practice developed into a general habit whereby some women demanded payment

⁴²⁵ Q2:232, the verse was revealed because Ma‘qil prevented his sister from re-marrying her ex-husband.

⁴²⁶ ‘Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyā’ al-Sunna*, p. 196.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

whenever their husbands desired sexual intercourse with them. Hence, the Shehu attacked the habit and cited *al-Madkhal* of Ibn al-Hājj in which it was reported that brides in the city of Fās had a habit of demanding a piece of silver from their husbands on their first night, before allowing them the right of the bed.⁴²⁹ This bad custom reached the ears of the ‘ulamā’ who likened it to prostitution. The custom has survived and is being practiced today in the rural areas.

Commercial Transactions (*Al-Bay‘ wa al-Shirā’*)

Commerce, as an economic factor, was second only in importance to farming in Hausaland. As keen traders, Hausa merchants or *fatake*, as they call themselves, transact business (*fatauci*) in cities as far away as Tripoli, Cairo, Mecca, etc. Distinct from the *fatake* are small businessmen (*‘yan kasuwa*) who confine their business transactions (*kasuwanci*) within Hausaland. By the beginning of the jihad movement there were several commercial centres in the land. The oldest and most famous among these were Kano and Katsina which served as clearing houses for goods imported from North Africa. After the establishment of the ‘Uthmāniya caliphate, new centres were created and the old ones expanded and thrived, taking advantage of the existence of peace and harmony among the hitherto warring mini-states.⁴³⁰

However, because of the fraudulent practices and other vices associated with commerce, the Shehu considered it necessary to criticize as blameworthy such practices in some of his writings, particularly, his *Iḥyā’ al-Sunna* and *Nūr al-Albāb*. But the Shehu did not write specifically on the subject, nor did he discuss the basic principles of commercial transactions as sanctioned by the Sharī‘a. Perhaps, as I explained earlier, he left such details

⁴²⁹ Ibid., p. 198.

⁴³⁰ Mahdi Adamu, "Distribution of Trading Centres", pp. 59-104.

to his brother, ʿAbd Allāh, who authored *Kifāyat al-ʿAwāmm fī al-Buyūʿ*, to elaborate on them.

The Shehu listed what he considered to be common practices in the markets. He warned his readers to refrain from the adulteration of foods, such as milk or honey with water; the deliberate falsification of measures in order to cheat;⁴³¹ the undercutting of one another -- for this the Prophet was reported to have said : "*lā yabīʿ baʿḍukum ʿalā bayʿ akhīhi*";⁴³² and the permission of an ignorant person to take part in business contracts.⁴³³

Although the Shehu was strongly critical of the local habit where women were sent to the markets to trade and rub shoulders with men while their husbands remained at home, he considered business transactions as circumstances to which they may be permitted to attend. However, before a woman could come out of the seclusion, she had to fulfill some conditions. She must be knowledgeable in business contracts and have no representative to transact business on her behalf. In addition to these, she ought to be veiled whenever she went out of her matrimonial home.⁴³⁴

Other Social Issues Discussed by the Shehu

The Shehu had written on almost every aspect of social life in Hausaland. He criticized some social practices associated with the circumcision of young boys, inheritance, and initiation ceremonies. We have already discussed the nature of these customs in Chapter III, and in the following pages an attempt will be made to examine his views regarding them.

⁴³¹ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Nūr al-Albāb*, p. 196.

⁴³² ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna*, p. 201.

⁴³³ Ibid., p. 202.

⁴³⁴ Ibid., p. 207; ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Irshād al-Ikhwān ilā Aḥkām Khurūj al-Niswān*, p. 27.

According to him the accepted age for the circumcision of boys among Muslims should be between seven and ten.⁴³⁵ The local practice of delaying the event until a boy reached the age of puberty was un-Islamic. This is because at this stage in the child's development, it is prohibited by the Sharī'a to expose his nakedness.⁴³⁶ Further, there was a custom that children were not expected to cry at the ceremony, and when this happened the parents would feel a sense of shame and rebuke the children.⁴³⁷ The Shehu viewed such cruelty as un-Islamic and declared in one of his poems in Fulfulde :

Waɗ nazarū he fi mo julniki
 Sukabe, ɗon bo tauroyā be majjuki.
 Be kulna kon inke to kon mboyan be,
 Be zamā boiɗo ɗum jaleɗe mabbe
 Be mōba kon to ladde ton kon kaura,
 Ko ngele wartata he maire hoira.⁴³⁸

which I translate thus :

Take, for instance, the question of circumcision
 Of youth, here too, you will find them ignorant.
 They instil fear into them so that they must not cry,
 For indeed, he who cries will be poked fun at.
 They gather them in the bush together,
 And no [child] will leave until he heals.

Another subject which the Shehu treated in his writings was inheritance. There were several African customs relating to inheritance which survived the Islamization of the people and which the Shehu viewed as bad innovations. One of these was inheritance through the female line.⁴³⁹ This, he explained, was contrary to the injunction of the Sharī'a which

⁴³⁵ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyā' al-Sunna*, p. 221.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., p. 220; 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Nūr al-Albāb*, p. 33.

⁴³⁷ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyā' al-Sunna*, p. 223.

⁴³⁸ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Mōdinōre*, p. 87.

prescribed inheritance through the male line. He also attacked the practice where the eldest among the inheritors took all the possessions of the deceased. He wrote, : "One of their evil customs was their refusal to observe the rules of inheritance as stipulated in the Book and the Sunna".⁴⁴⁰ Apparently, the Shehu was very much concerned about a custom which deprived orphans of their deceased parents' possessions. Perhaps that was why he discussed the inheritance in many of his Arabic and *ajami* writings, he felt it necessary to write also a poem of one hundred and twenty lines in Fulfulde on the subject!⁴⁴¹

Nevertheless, it was on the issue of the intermingling of men and women in social ceremonies that the Shehu was more critical. He attacked it again and again in his writings.⁴⁴² Although he successfully stemmed out the custom among the Hausa, he was unable to do the same among the Fulbe. The Bororo still observe the initiation (the *soro*) and the *Gani* ceremonies. The latter event is noted for the sexual permissiveness of its participants. The Shehu emphasized the incompatibility of the *Gani* ceremony, which is also part of the Bororo courtship, with Islam. Perhaps that is why the majority of Bororo are not considered Muslims although they profess Islam. In trying to correct the erroneous belief that all Fulbe were Muslims, the Shehu wrote in his poem, *Boneji Lesdi Hausa* (The Problems of Hausaland), thus :

Wai he jogi Pullo fu julɗo noddete,
Nde feure walli to fa gonga ye'tete.⁴⁴³

⁴³⁹ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna*, p. 216; ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, "Ndongu", [Inheritance] *Gime Fulfulde*, by Al-Amin Abu-Manga and Ibrahim Mukoshy (Kano : Bayero University, n.d.) pp. 45-58.

⁴⁴⁰ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Iḥyāʾ al-Sunna*, p. 216; ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Nūr al-Albāb*, p. 36; ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, "Mōdinōre", p. 221; ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, "Ndongu", pp. 45-58.

⁴⁴¹ ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, "Ndongu", pp. 45-58.

⁴⁴² ʿUthmān b. Fūdī, *Nūr al-Albāb*, p. 28; *Tanbih al-Ikhwān ʿalā Jawāz Ittikhādih al-Majlis li-Ajl Taʿlīm al-Niswān*, f. 2a-b; *Mōdinōre*, p. 86; *Boneji Lesdi Hausa* pp. 94-95; just to mention a few.

which I translate as follows :

[They] falsely believe that every Pullo is a Muslim,
This is a lie if the truth must be told.

These are the most mentioned local practices which survived the introduction of Islam in the Shehu's writings and which are considered bad innovations.

To conclude, our focus in the preceding pages has been to analyse the Shehu's approach to the application of his *tajdīd*. We have shown that the Shehu's movement had arisen out of a doctrinal and theological conflict which existed in the Central Sudan as early as the seventeenth century. As a moderate orthodoxy, it was opposed to both religious extremism and quietism. It also pursued liberal interpretation of the law in order to persuade the conservative 'ulamā' to abandon their adherence to *taqlīd*. Furthermore, in order to promote the new attitude, the Shehu launched a policy of public education aimed at enlightening the common people regarding the basic religious practices and avoidance of bad innovations.

⁴⁴³ 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Boneji Lesdi Hausa*, p. 100.

CONCLUSION

This thesis argues that the 'Uthmānīya jihad movement was the ultimate consequence of the socio-religious disputes which had been going on among the 'ulamā' in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Central Sudan. The points of contention were the question of the Islamization of certain Muslims and the moral and social malaise of the society. The Shehu diagnosed the situation as due, firstly, to the corruption of the 'ulamā' and their wrong attitudes towards the prevailing condition, and secondly, to the depth of ignorance of the common people. Therefore, to find a solution to these problems, he advocated a social change to conform with what he considered to be the ideal Sunni Islamic society. This study, therefore, is an attempt to analyse his method of implementation of this change.

In order to realise his objective, the Shehu unfolded his plan of action. He departed from the prevailing attitudes of his fellow 'ulamā', who were either religious extremists or conformists, and adopted an attitude of moderation and accommodation. He affirmed the Islamization of those who were hitherto declared by the extremists as unbelievers on grounds of their ignorance of speculative theology or their indulgence in grave sins. In contradistinction, he refuted the faith of those who mixed Islam with paganism, thereby negating the conformists' approval of such practices. Other major actions taken were : the promotion of mass education so as to familiarize the laity with basic religious knowledge and bad innovations; the encouragement of the 'ulamā' to soften their rigid adherence to *taqlid* and to be more flexible in their application of religious and legal rules.

But in order to implement this plan of action, the Shehu considered the support of the 'ulamā' very crucial. The 'ulamā', as arbiters of religious practice and social behaviour, had a vital role to play in the Central Sudanese society. To underscore the importance he attached to

their cooperation, he wrote, according to Bello, over fifty works, nearly two-thirds of his Arabic writings, on issues concerning them. Their activities and attitudes to the state of Islam in the Central Sudan had been his focal point from the beginning to the end of his career. Other aspects of the *tajdīd*, including the overthrow of the Habe kingdoms and the subsequent establishment of the caliphate, were the outcome of the confrontation between the 'ulamā' and the Shehu.

Several of the Shehu's works contain complaints about the 'ulamā''s failure to promote the principle of *al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*. He accused them of abandoning the female members of their households in abject ignorance, neglecting their responsibilities to promote religious learning; condoning un-Islamic beliefs and customs, and failing to give good counsel to the Habe kings. Instead, he maintained, they preoccupied themselves with disputes on legal, doctrinal and theological issues. The extremists, among them, anathematized Muslims on grounds of grave sins or of ignorance of speculative theology. In addition, their rigid adherence to the Mālikī school of law made them intransigent to legal opinions by other schools of law. The quietists, on the other hand, condoned non-Islamic practices and customs on grounds of 'urf and 'āda. Both attitudes were detrimental to the growth of Islam. The extremists' views would alienate the common people and perhaps dampen their interest in religious learning. On the other hand, the conformists' position encouraged laxity which subsequently attracted more innovations into the already mixed Islam.

The Shehu invited the 'ulamā' to end these negative attitudes and join him in his jihad against bad innovations and his effort to restore proper Islam. Initially, his invitation was met with rebuff, for even his relatives stayed away from him.⁴⁴⁴ But as his followers grew rapidly and he intensified his attacks against those 'ulamā' who refused to join him, the

⁴⁴⁴ 'Abd Allāh b. Fūdī, *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, p. 41.

scholars, particularly the court 'ulamā', reacted by prevailing upon the reluctant rulers of Gobir to restrict the activities of his now restless disciples and to put a stop to his rapidly growing followers.⁴⁴⁵ It was to this development that D.M. Last was referring when he states : "Nafata issued a proclamation forbidding anyone but the Shaikh from preaching.... The proclamation is usually taken in Sokoto histories as the first shot of the jihād. These Sokoto accounts blame the Sultan's scholars and courtiers more than the Sultan for the stronger line against the Muslims".⁴⁴⁶ With the rulers of Gobir, now, joining the opposition against the *jamā'a*, the hostility against them increased culminating in a general persecution.⁴⁴⁷ Again D.M. Last observes "...there seems to have been considerable persecution of the followers of the Shaikh by the local rulers and the mallams; and this harassment must have given rise to innumerable minor clashes...."⁴⁴⁸ In these circumstances, the Shehu and his followers did what they considered to be the right thing to do. They charged the Habe rulers with unbelief (*kufī*) and the 'ulamā' with being friendly with unbelievers (*muwālāt al-kuffār*) and declared the jihad against them.

From 1774 to the close of the eighteenth century, the Shehu's activities were wholly geared towards achieving his goal through peaceful means. Such activities are consistently reflected in both his *ajami* and Arabic writings, which represent his initial thought in *tajdīd*. However, the last few years of the eighteenth century marked a departure from this peaceful approach to militancy and, therefore, served as a turning point in his career. The circumstances which dictated this shift, as already explained above, were the hostile attitudes of the rival 'ulamā'. Perhaps, the most significant conclusion regarding the 'Uthmānīya *tajdīd*

⁴⁴⁵ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 67.

⁴⁴⁶ D.M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 12.

⁴⁴⁷ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 69.

⁴⁴⁸ D.M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 15.

movement is that, contrary to what most scholars seem to believe, the confrontation with the Habe rulers had never been the Shehu's initial plan and was forced on him by the hostile activities of his fellow 'ulamā'.

The Shehu had a long period of good relationship with the rulers of Gobir, which lasted for over twenty years. His confrontation with them began only at the close of the eighteenth century. In fact, his first political tract *Masā'il Muhimma*, was written in 1802, two years before the armed struggle. Prior to this period, he was cautious not to do anything which would jeopardize their good relationship.⁴⁴⁹ He opposed any interference between the rulers and their subjects. The rulers of Gobir, on the other hand, respected him; they gave their approval to his preaching activities⁴⁵⁰ and even paid him visits at Degel.⁴⁵¹ As we mentioned in Chapter II, Bawa listened to his exhortations and consented to his five points request. Ya'qūb, Bawa's successor, sought and received his counsel,⁴⁵² and Yunfa maintained close ties with him, both for being, according to some accounts, his pupil and for receiving support in getting the kingship.⁴⁵³

Yet modern scholars seem to see the *tajdīd* movement in the light of the confrontation between the Shehu and the rulers of Gobir. Take M.R. Waldman's interpretation of the movement as an example, for she attempted to explain some knotty issues associated with the

⁴⁴⁹ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 65-66.

⁴⁵⁰ Muḥammad Bello, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p. 65.

⁴⁵¹ D.M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 8.

⁴⁵² M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, p. 47. "It is clear that Shehu exercised some influence over him, as he did over Bawa. At the end of his brief reign, which lasted for four years, Yakubu set out to avenge his brother's death by attacking the town of Magami. Again the Shehu disapproved and sent his nephew Kaumanga to order him to turn back. According to the 'Meadow', Yakubu was about to obey but his courtiers persuaded him to go on".

⁴⁵³ D.M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, p. 13.

theory, such as the long duration it took the Shehu to begin articulating political discontent, she suggests :

To do justice to the development of Usuman's movement, it is necessary to view it as the result, not of a conception complete in his mind from the start of his preaching, but as one which unfolded itself in three gradual stages. Initially, Usuman travelled from area to area teaching religion to the people. In the second phase, during his involvement with the Gobir court, he probably began to express publicly his growing discontent with the failure of the Sarkin Gobir to put his demands for reform into practice. .. In the third phase, when, because of a crisis in his relation with the Sarkin Gobir, Usuman changed his goals and called for ... political overthrow of the Hausa system rather than for reform within it....⁴⁵⁴

The writer attempts to explain the long duration it took the Shehu to begin expressing political discontent by suggesting that the Shehu's concept of *tajdid* developed in three stages. The first phase and probably part of the second phase were a period when he was politically inactive. Then his active involvement with the rulers of Gobir and the crisis that ensued forced him to advocate not only social change but the overthrow of the political system as well. But even if this theory is acceptable, it is still hard to explain the role of the 'ulamā' about whom the Shehu had written over fifty works.

Another view advanced was that the Shehu had a preconceived plan to wrest power from the Habe and was only waiting for a pretext.⁴⁵⁵ M.R. Waldman disagrees and argues : "If Usuman has merely been waiting for a pretext to declare a jihād as Delafosse and Meek contend, one can only say that he had waited a long time to seize an opportunity which must have presented itself earlier in less obvious forms. His final break with the court occurred after more than twenty years of a compromising involvement with it, and then only because

⁴⁵⁴ M.R. Waldman, "The Fulani Jihad", p. 334.

⁴⁵⁵ S.J. Hogben, *The Mohammadan Emirates of Nigeria*, p. 73.

he was faced with an anti-Muslim ruler, who not only proved unamenable to pressure, but also threatened the very existence of a Muslim community in Hausaland".⁴⁵⁶

There are other scholars who argue that the Shehu contemplated armed struggle even before the actual confrontation with the Habe rulers and therefore they disagree with the above assertion. Such scholars refer to 'Abd Allāh's report that the Shehu advised them to start collecting arms because "preparation in arms is sunna". M.A. Al-Hajj citing the report argues : "This statement contradicts the assertion advanced in the jihad literature and followed by modern scholars that the community did not contemplate armed struggle until it was forced upon it, as a defensive measure in 1804".⁴⁵⁷

The gist of the matter is that the Shehu did not contemplate taking up arms until late in the eighteenth century; perhaps immediately after Nafata's proclamation. 'Abd Allāh's report, on which Al-Hajj based his opinion, does not seem to contradict this observation.⁴⁵⁸ Furthermore, the Shehu had been advising his followers to arm themselves even during the war period. For instance, in his Fulfulde poem, *Sunna Muḥammadu*, composed in 1806, the Shehu asked his followers to keep arms because it was sunna.⁴⁵⁹

In short, the point emphasized here is that the Shehu strove to win the Central Sudanese 'ulamā' to his ideas of Islam and to utilize their support in implementing his *tajdid* programme. These were : the dissemination of religious knowledge, the abolishing of mixed Islam, the liberalization of *taqlīd* and the prevalence upon the Habe rulers to change their un-Islamic ways. When these failed to materialize after twenty years of relentless persuasion and

⁴⁵⁶ M.R. Waldman, "The Fulani Jihad", p. 334.

⁴⁵⁷ M.A. Al-Hajj, "The Meaning of the Sokoto Jihad", p. 14.

⁴⁵⁸ 'Abd Allāh b. Fūdī, *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, p. 51.

⁴⁵⁹ Cited in Chapter II.

criticism of the 'ulamā', he called for armed struggle against both the 'ulamā' and their patrons, the Habe rulers.

Another point which needs to be emphasized is the character of the movement. Scholars see it either as a revival movement advocating the return to pristine Islam or as a fundamentalist movement equating it with the Wahhābiya. One of those who hold the latter view is Fazlur Rahman. He states in his assessment of the eighteenth-century movements :

All the movements led by these reformers -- whether the Arabian, the Indian, the Libyan, the Nigerian or the Sudanese -- sought the reassertion of original, unadulterated Islam. In their view, Islam had become contaminated by historical accretions and foreign influences, and their attention therefore was fixed on the Koran and the sunnah (example) of the Prophet. These are the only definitive sources in Islam since all other theological, doctrinal, or legal views represented in medieval schools lacked basic authority.⁴⁶⁰

As explained in Chapter II of this study, there is a marked difference between the 'Uthmāniya and the Wahhābiya movements. The above view is held, apparently because the 'Uthmāniya movement advocates a return to the Qur'ān and the Sunna. But the fact of the matter is that, the 'Uthmāniya movement does not only recognize the authority of the *ijmā'* but also accepts certain past doctrinal, theological and legal accretions including some sufi doctrines strongly criticised by the Wahhābis, such as pilgrimage to the tombs of *awliyā'*, belief in their *karamāt* and the doctrine of *kashf*.

Finally, the basic objective of the 'Uthmāniya renewal movement was to restore Sunni Islam in the Central Sudan : Islam based on the authorities of the Qur'ān, the Sunna and the consensus of the past 'ulamā' and the refutation of bad innovations acquired from local beliefs and customs. But in his plan of action the Shehu considered the following as his priorities : the reorientation of the 'ulamā' attitudes towards moderation and accommodation, the campaign for mass religious education aimed at acquainting the common people with

⁴⁶⁰ Fazlur Rahman, "The Roots of Islamic Neo-Fundamentalism", p. 26.

basic religious knowledge and bad innovations, and the promotion of liberal attitudes towards *taqlīd*. But to implement these, a positive response from the 'ulamā' was crucial. However, when the 'ulamā' proved intransigent and chose not only to adopt a confrontational attitude but to prevail upon the Habe rulers to take hostile measures against the renewalists, armed confrontation became inevitable. The jihadists overthrew the Habe governments and set up a caliphal government, two significant political developments which were apparently not in their original plan.

APPENDIX I

Ajami

non-Arabic language written in Arabic characters.

Alhaji

a Hausaized form of the Arabic title, *al-Ḥājj*, the pilgrim.

Alkali

a Hausaized form of the Arabic word, *al-qāḍī*, the judge.

Amīr

a military commander; ruler of an emirate (emir).

Askiya

the title of the rulers of the Songhay empire.

Bida^c (sing., *Bid'a*)

innovations.

Birni

a walled city.

Boka

a pagan medicine-man.

Bori

spirit-possession.

Iska

a Hausa word for air or wind but it also means spirit; *Iskoki* is the plural of *Iska* which means spirits.

Bororo

Fulbe nomad.

*Fay*³

booty.

Fiqh

Islamic jurisprudence.

Fulani

a Hausa or English name for Fulbe.

Fulbe (sing. *Pullo*)
the name Fulbe call themselves.

Fulfulde
the language of the Fulbe.

Furūʿ
the derivatives of the canon law.

Galadima
a Kanuri official title, now adopted by Hausa and Fulbe.

Gari
a town.

Habe
a term used in Fulfulde to describe non-Fulbe.

Hakimai (sing. *Hakimī*)
a Hausaized term of Arabic *Ḥukkām*, (sing. *Ḥākim*) governor; but used to mean district head.

Haraji
a Hausaized form of the Arabic word *Kharāj*, a land tax.

Hendu (pl. *Kenī*)
air in Fulfulde; it also means spirit.

Hijra
migration; technically, it means to turn away from evil; Muslims' migration from hostile land.

ʿĪd
a festival.

Iḥyāʾ (revival)
a form of Sunni reaction to innovations; to revive, to bring to life exactly as it was. A desire to strictly stick to the Qurʾān and the Sunna as the only acceptable sources of religious and canon law.

Ijtihād
exerting one's effort in order to derive from the bases of the law an opinion concerning a legal rule.

ʿIlm al-Kalām
speculative theology.

Imāra
emirate.

Iṣlāḥ (reform)

a form of Sunni reaction to innovations; to reshape by making some changes to suit a given time and place. A desire to accommodate modern ideas through the application of *ijtihād*.

Jamā'a

the Shehu's followers.

Jangali

cattle tax.

Jizya

poll tax.

Kaḅḅe

a Fulfulde term meaning superstitions.

Kurḍi

a Hausa word for money

Mahdī

"the rightly-guided one", Islamic messiah

Mai

a Kanuri title for king.

Makaranta

school.

Malam (masc.) ***Malama*** (fem.)

a learned person, Hausaized form of Arabic *Mu'allim*; also used as a common Hausa title, equivalent to the English "Mr".

al-Mashāwara

consultation by Muslim elders in order to select the leader (*imām*) of the *umma*.

Modibbo

a Fulfulde term derived from the Arabic *mu'addib* meaning learned person.

Mujaddid

a renewer of Islamic faith.

Mujtahid

a Muslim jurist able to exercise *ijtihād*.

Muqallid

a learned Muslim who follows legal or theological precedents already established.

Muṣliḥ

a reformer of Islamic faith.

Pulaku

refined attitude associated with being Pullo.

al-Qāḍī

a Muslim judge.

Ṣalāt

a complex ritual performed by Muslims five times a day.

Sarki

king in Hausa.

Sharīʿa

Islamic law.

Shehu

a Hausaized form of the Arabic title *al-Shaykh*.

Soro

a Fulfulde word meaning discipline.

Tajdīd

a form of Islamic reaction to innovations; to reassert Sunni Islamic ideals by restoring the authorities of al-Qurʾān, the Sunna and the *ijmāʿ*.

Takfīr

anathematization.

Talakawa

the subject people.

Taqlīd

accepting an opinion concerning a legal rule without knowledge of its bases.

Tawḥīd

Divine Unity.

Ubandawaki

a Hausa official title.

Umma

a Muslim community; technically means the whole of the Muslim world.

Uṣūl

the principles of the canon law.

Uṣūl al-Fiqh
Islamic legal theory.

Wazīri
a Hausaized form of Arabic office title *wazīr*, the vizier.

Wuḍūʿ
a minor purification ritual to be performed with water before embarking on the *ṣalāt*.

Zakāt
Canonical arms.

APPENDIX II

Locations and Control of Nigerian, Arabic and Ajami Manuscripts (with initials in brackets as used in the dissertation and the bibliography)

1. Arewa House, Kaduna (AH)

This is the former house and office of the late Sir Ahmadu Bello, Sardauna of Sokoto, and premier of Nigeria. Professor Abdullahi Smith converted it into a centre for research on the history of Northern Nigeria. It is a fairly large centre with copying and binding facilities provided. It has also lodging quarters for visiting scholars, seminar rooms and carrels. The centre also houses a considerable collection of the nineteenth century official correspondence from different areas of the Sokoto caliphate.

2. Centre of Arabic Documentation (CAD)

The primary objective of the centre is to collect, microfilm and make available local and West African manuscripts in Arabic, Fulfulde and Hausa. It has an impressive collection of these materials with a micro-reader and Xerox copier supplied by the UNESCO.

Apart from the above, the centre has its *Research Bulletin* which began in July, 1964. The *Bulletin* carries articles and reports on West Africa from all over the world. It also serves as a vehicle disseminating information on current acquisitions of new manuscripts and their locations.

3. Ibadan University Library (IL)

The University Library, through Mr. W.E.N. Kensdale, began to collect Arabic manuscripts in 1954 and published his catalogue of the *Arabic Manuscripts Preserved in the*

University Library, 1955 - 1958. The Library has a very extensive collection of manuscripts and microfilm copies of documents which are now Xeroxed and bound in volumes. The microfilm collection incorporates, among others, copies of all the Arabic manuscripts in the collection of the National Museum at Jos, and the De Gironcourt manuscripts of the Institute de France.

4. Nigerian National Archives, Kaduna (NAK)

It is a branch of the National Archives. Besides archival documents, it houses a large quantity of books and non-book materials, among which are the Arabic manuscripts written by local scholars. Another branch of the National Archives is located in Jos, about one hundred and fifty miles from Kaduna. Drs. Arif and Abu Hakima compiled a catalogue of the collection of the Jos branch under the title *Descriptive Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts in Nigeria* (London : Luzac, 1965).

5. Northern History Research Scheme, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (NHRS)

This is a fairly large room housing a good collection of photographed and xeroxed indigenous Arabic manuscripts. It is located in the Department of History, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. For obvious reasons, its emphasis is historical and it covers books, treatises, as well as documents and letters. Professor Abdullahi Smith who was behind the scheme travelled widely in Africa and Europe to collect the materials. Field trips by researchers were also undertaken for the same objective. Among the places visited were Jos, Sokoto, Ibadan, Rabat and Paris. Some catalogues were prepared and published.

6. The Post-Graduate Research Room, Bayero University, Kano (PGRR)

This is a collection of research materials in the social sciences housed in a small area in the university library. Some of the indigenous Arabic material, which makes up half of the collection, was collected and photocopied by Professor Muhammad Sani Zahradeen and later

bound into large volumes. An Arabic index of manuscripts was prepared and compiled by a Tabīb ʿAbd al-Rahim Muhammad.

7. Sokoto History Research Bureau (HRB)

This is a collection of manuscripts and other materials brought together by the Sokoto State Government. It is housed in a room in the State Ministry of Information Building, Sokoto.

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Maʾmaʾare (The Poem Rhymed with Maʾa)
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Ndongu (Inheritance)
Njibḍūji (The Confusions)
Sunna Muhammadu (The Sunna of Muḥammad) (1221/1805)
Tabbat Haqīqa (Established Fact) (1228/1813)
Tanāsibūji (The Attributes) rendered in Hausa as "Sifofin
Shehu" (The Shehu's Attributes)
Wasuyeji (The Advice)
Yimre Jihādi (The Jihād Poem) (1220/1805)
Yimre Hoyende e Fecare (The Poem of Relief
and Abundance) (1221/1806)

ʿAbd Allāh b. Fūḍi

<i>Īdāʿ al-Nusūkh</i>	(1227/1812)	NHRS, MS P.55/3
<i>Ḍiyāʿ al-Sulṭān</i>	(1227/1812)	PGRR, MS.105
<i>Kifāyat al-ʿAwwām fī al-Buyūʿ</i>	(1224/1809)	PGRR, MS.63
<i>Kifāyat al-Ṭullāb fī al-Nikāḥ</i>	(1232/1817)	PGRR, MS.3

ʿAbd al-Qādir b. Gidaḍo

<i>Anīs al-Mufīd</i>	NAK
<i>al-Lawāmiʿ al-Nūrāniya</i>	NAK

ʿAbd al-Qādir b. al-Muṣṭafā

<i>Rauḍāt al-Afkār (Akhbār al-Bilād al-Hausiya)</i>	PGRR, NHRS, MS P 26/8
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Gidaḍo dan Laima

<i>Rauḍ al-Jinān</i>	(1256)	
<i>Majmūʿ Khīṣāl al-Shaykh ʿUthmān</i>	(1254)	AH

Muhammad Bello

al-Ishāra wa al-ʿIlām fī Baʿd Umūr Ṣīlat al-Arḥām

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