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THE SHEHU 'UTHMAN DAN FODIO
THE REFORMER, THE RENOVATOR AND THE FOUNDER
OF THE SOKOTO CALIPHATE
1774 - 1817

A Thesis for the Degree of Magister of Arts in African Civilisation

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ABBREVIATIONS

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A.B.U. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

B.S.O.A.S. Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies

B.U.K. Bayero University, Kano

C.U.P. Cambridge University Press

I.A.A.S. Institute of African and Asian Studies

I.J.A.H.S. International Journal of African Historical Studies

I.P.B. Islamic Publication Bureau

I.U.P. Ibadan University Press

J.A.H. Journal of African History

J.H.S.N. Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria

K.U.P. Khartoum University Press

O.U.P. Oxford University Press

S.N.R. Sudan Notes and Records.

Glossary¹

- Al haji** courtesy title accorded to any man who has made the Pilgrimage to the Sacred Places (Mecca and Medina), the Hausa form of Haffl.
- Al kaji** a judge in a Muslim court.
- Alkalin Alkalai** Muslim Chief Justice
- Ar Do** A Fulani title, often accorded to the head of a clan or sub-clan.
- Askia** the title of the Songhai Empire after Muhammad Askia.
- Atikawa** the members of the Atilm branch of the Sokoto ruling family.
- Awa** suffix meaning ‘the people of eg, Gobirawa, the people of Gobir
- Ba** a prefix which, if followed by a place name, means ‘a man of, e.g Bagobiri, man of Gobir.
- Banza Bakwai** a pejorative term, meaning roughly ‘ the Bogus Seven used to describe the states in or adjoining Hausa land which did not belong to the authentic seven.
- Barebari Berber**
- Birni(n)** a walled town, hence a city.
Chief this title has been used to describe the rulers of the Hausa States in distinction to ‘Emir’ which has been reserved for their Fulani successors.
- Dagachi** another title originating in Bornu but adopted in Hausa land, particularly in the eastern Emirates, and retained by the Fulani.
- Dan** son of, equivalent of Arabic bin or ibn.
- Dan Galadima** a title.
- Darb el-Arba’ in name** given to Egypt-Chad caravan route.
- Emir** this title has been reserved to describe the Fulani rulers in distinction to ‘ Chief ’, which has been used for their Hausa predecessors.
- Fillani** Hausa name for the Fulani.
- Fulbe** the Fulani name for themselves.
- Fulfulde** the Fulani language
- Gaisuwa** literally ‘greetings’ but often meaning the gifts or sweeteners given by inferiors to superiors or inter- mediaries.
- Galadima** a title originating in Bornu but adopted later throughout Hausa land.
- Gida(n)** the house (of).
- HaaBe** a word used by the Fulani to describe the indigenous peoples of the Sudan.
- Haj** the Pilgrimage to the Sacred Places (Mecca and Medina).
- Hajji** courtesy title accorded to any man who has made the Pilgrimage. Sometimes, it is simply written Haj.
- Haraji** poll-tax or general tax on the farming community.
- Hausa Bakwai** the seven authentic States of Hausa land.
- Ijaza** the licence to teach.
- Jama’a** the Muslim community, hence the Shehu’s followers.
- Jangali** the tax on cattle.
- Jekada** the confidential messenger who acted as an intermediary between an absent fief-holder and his fief.
- Jihad** holy war in the Islamic sense to propagate Islam.
- Jizya** the levy that an Islamic State is entitled to impose on non-Muslim subjects.
- Kadiriyya / Qadiriyya (A)** A fraternity of devout Muslim; one of the sects or brotherhood of Islam, the followers of Abd-el kadir el-Jilani of Baghdad.

¹)N.B. :A means Arabic and H Hausa.

- Kanemina** (plural Kanembu), a native of Kanem.
- Kofa** a councillor or courtier who acted as an intermediary (literally doorway) for an outlying Emirate or fief and thus acquired special responsibility for it.
- Kurdin Kasa** general tax on the farming community.
- Lamido** title of the Emir of Adamawa.
- Madaki or Madawaki** a Hausa title, literally 'Master of the Horse'.
- Magaji** a Hausa title.
- Mai** in Kanuri the word represents the title of the Sultans of Bornu to 1846. In Hausa it is a prefix meaning the possessor of something, e.g. Mai-Futa, the flag-bearers.
- Makana** a Hausa title.
- Maktab (A)** Elementary Koranic school.
- Maliki (H)** the School of Islamic Law founded by Malik ibn-Anas.
- Mallam** courtesy title accorded by the Hausas to any man of learning, teacher, Muslim scholar
- Maqamat (A)** Adventure stories.
- Marafa** a Hausa title.
- Masu ilmi (H)** Students of higher learning.
- Mithqal** a measure of gold, about ½ ounce.
- Moddibo** Courtesy title accorded by the Fulani to any man of learning, the equivalent of the Hausa Mallam.
- Mufti (A)** Chief jurist.
- Muharram** the first lunar month of the year.
- Qanun(A)** Canon; a definitive text.
- Qara'a (A)** to read or recite.
- Qasida** Arabic ode.
- Quran (A)** see Koran.
- Sabo(n)** new, e.g. Sabongari meaning 'Newtown.'
- Sa'I** a title.
- Sansani** a war-camp or military outpost.
- Sarki(n)** Chief or Emir (of).
- Sarkin Musulmi** Commander of the Faithful, the Hausa form of the title of the Sultans of Sokoto.
- Sarkin Yaki** Captain -general.
- Seku** a corrupt form of the Arabic word Sheikh, used in the western Sudan and adopted as their title by the rulers of Hamdallahi.
- Shari'a** Islamic law.
- Shehu** the Hausa and Kanuri version of the Arabic word Sheikh, reserved in this thesis as the title of 'Uthman dan Fodio.
- Sheikh** the title of El-Kanemi and his successors, first as the administrative rulers of Bornu and after 1846 as the usurping but accepted Sultans.
- Sullubawa** a branch of the Fulani people who played a prominent role in the Jihad in Sokoto, Katsina and Kano..
- Sunna(h)** the approved customs of Islam.
- Sunni** orthodox Muslims.
- Tambari** a Tuareg title.
- Tarbiyya (A)** education with emphasis on moral discipline and character training.
- Tawhid (A)** Dogmatism, the exposition of Islamic doctrine.
- Tijaniyya (A)** a fraternity of devout Muslims
- Tijjani a** member of the Tijaniyya sect of Islam, the followers of Ahmed Tijjani of Fez.

Toronkawa a branch of the Fulani people to which the ruling families of Sokoto and Gwandu belong.

Ubandawaki a Hausa title.

Ubandoma a Hausa title.

Ulama (A) the community of Muslim scholars

Wa'azu (A) warning and admonition

Wali a Muslim saint.

Wambai a title.

Waziri vizier. Chief Minister (deriving from the Persian Vizir).

Yarima a title of Bornu origin widely adopted in Hausaland.

Zakka the Islamic tithe.

Zaria and Zazzau (Zegzeg) in the Hausa era, Zazzau was the name of the state and Zaria the name of the capital. In the Fulani and British periods, however, the use of Zazzau began to die out and Zaria was employed increasingly to describe the Emirate as well as the city. In this thesis, therefore, Zazzau has been used to denote the Hausa **State** and Zaria the Fulani Emirate. .

Zaure (H) the entrance hall in a Hausa compound.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

BIOGRAPHIES OF SCHOLARS, HISTORIANS, EXPLORERS etc...

*** Amina of Zazzau**

Amina, or to give her full name Aminatu, is described in The Kano Chronicle (Palmer, p. 109) as a Chieftainess who lived in the first half of the fifteenth century and pursued a career of conquest over a period of thirty-four years. She does not, however, appear in either of the lists of Zazzau Chiefs that have come down to us (LHdM, vol. I, pp. 43-44.) The Abuja Chronicle describes her as the daughter of Bakwa Turunku, who was Chief or Chieftainess of Zazzau a hundred years later than the date given by The Kano Chronicle and who in any case reigned for only three years. The Labarun Hausawa da Makwabtansu list does not mention Amina at all and clouds the issue by describing the Abuja Chronicle's Bakwa Turunku as Bako Turunku (thereby suggesting that he was a man and not a woman) and giving him a reign of thirty years instead of only three. Sultan Bello follows the Abuja Chronicle in describing Amina as the daughter of a Chieftain and not as a Chieftainess in her own right (Arnett, p. 12).

It is just conceivable that the Abuja Chronicle and Sultan Bello were right and that Amina was an Amazon of the ruling house who flourished about A.D. 1540, but for a number of reasons it is very unlikely. First, as already mentioned, The Kano Chronicle places her a century earlier. Secondly, if she had in fact lived about 1540 she would have overlapped Kanta in time; whereas we know that some of her reputed conquests, such as Nupe and most probably Zazzau itself, formed part of his Empire. Thirdly, her fame rests partly on her activities in fortifying towns with walls, but The Kano Chronicle (Palmer, p. 100) gives the early twelfth century as the period when walls were first built and by 1540 the art was certainly already several hundred years old.

*** Askia Mohammed I of Songhai (ruled 1493-1529, died in 1538 AD)**
Emperor of the Songhai Empire of West Africa

Sonni Baru Dao, ruler of the Songhai Empire, was also a follower of a traditional African religion and rejected all attempts to convert him to Islam by Muslims in his empire. After several weeks of negotiations and no conversion, the Muslims resorted to battle. Backed by a large section of the army, the Muslims triumphed in April 1493. This brought Mohammed Touré, a former general, to lead the empire. He took the title 'Askia' and all those who followed him took the same dynastic title.

A devout Muslim, Askia Mohammed I made a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1496. One thousand infantry and a cavalry detachment of 500 horsemen accompanied him. He also took 300,000 gold pieces. In Mecca, Askia met the Caliph of Egypt. Askia requested that the Caliph appoint him as his religious representative in West Africa. The Caliph agreed. Askia Mohammed returned to Gao in 1497, with a new title. He was now the Caliph of the Western Sudan, spiritual ruler of all the West African Muslims.

The empire Askia inherited from the Sonni Dynasty was already massive, yet he expanded north, east and west by conquest. Ultimately it would cover an area about the same size as all of Europe. By 1514 his armies captured the Hausa Confederation of northern Nigeria. Next to capitulate was the city of Agades in Niger, and finally the regions to the far west of the empire around the Atlantic. As the kingdom grew into an empire, Askia Mohammed I came up with new methods of government, establishing a strongly centralised administration. Among the most important posts were the Minister of Treasury, the Minister of Tax Collection, the Minister of the Army and Navy, and the Minister of Trade and Industry. In some territories, the Askia allowed the regional kings to rule as they had before, just as long as they paid tribute. In other territories, the Askia created a parallel post to the local governor called the mondyo (i.e. inspector), who formed the official link to the imperial Songhai government. Askia Mohammed I died in 1538 and was buried in a Step Pyramid at Gao. He is fondly remembered as Askia the Great.

*** Sarki Muhammad Rumfa of Kano (ruled 1463-1499 AD)**

Most celebrated ruler in the northern Nigeria region

Muhammad Rumfa became ruler of the Hausa city-state of Kano in 1463. He greatly extended the walls of the city and built an imposing new palace, the Gidan Rumfa, with courtly attendants adopting fashions from the nearby empire of Borno. They wore extravagant sandals of ostrich feathers and sported fans from the same bird. His principal officers built palaces of their own. Reforming the government, he appointed a nine-member council of advisors and promoted slaves to important positions. Slaves managed the treasury, staffed the palace, attended to the harem, and policed the city. He enforced Islamic law. Humiliating the Abagayawa, a non-Islamic people, he compelled leading citizens to become Muslims and built a Friday Mosque on the sacred Shamuz site. Women were kept in purdah. Additionally, Eid al-Fir, the great Islamic festival after Ramadan, was celebrated for the first time. He offered active support to scholars.

One famous scholar, Sheikh Muhammad Al-Maghili, taught Koranic studies in Katsina and law at Kano. He wrote a treatise on government for Rumfa called *On The Obligations of Princes*. One excerpt from this great work reads as follows: "The sojourn of a prince in the city breeds all manner of trouble and harm. The bird of prey abides in open and wild places. Vigorous is the cock as he struts round his domains. The eagle can only win his realm by firm resolve, and the cock's voice is strong as he masters the hens. Ride, then, the horses of resolution upon the saddles of prudence. Cherish the land from the spoiling drought, from the raging wind, the dust-laden storm, the raucous thunder, the gleaming lightning, the shattering fireball and the beating rain. Kingdoms are held by the sword, not by delays. Can fear be thrust back except by causing fear? Allow only the nearest of your friends to bring you food and drink and bed and clothes. Do not part with your coat of mail and weapons and let no one approach you save men of trust and virtue. Never sleep in a place of peril. Have near to guard you at all times a band of faithful and gallant men, sentries, bowmen, horse and foot. Times of alarm are not like times of safety. Conceal your secrets from other people until you are master of your undertaking."

In this work, Rumfa was advised to install an Ombudsman to receive complaints against the government. Rumfa put the advice into practice and Al-Maghili left for the

Songhai city of Gao in 1502. The only significant failure of his career was an inconclusive eleven year war conducted against Katsina. The Kano Chronicle says of him: "He can have no equal in might, from the time of the founding of Kano, until it shall end".

*** Muhammad Korau**

According to tradition, the kingdom, one of the Hausa Bakwai ("Seven True Hausa States"), was founded in the 10th or 11th century. Islām was introduced in the 1450s, and **Muhammad Korau** (reigned late 15th century) was Katsina's first Muslim king .During his reign camel caravans crossed the Sahara from Ghudāmis (Ghadames ,(Tripoli, and Tunis southward to Katsina...

*** Kano ruler Mohamma Sharefa dan Dadi**

Kano ruler Mohamma Sharefa dan Dadi (r. 1703-31) imposed seven new taxes to pay for military forces. After Kumbari dan Sharefa (r. 1731-43) put a tax on scholars, many Arabs left Kano for Katsina, which, as the wealthiest commercial city in the region, welcomed foreigners. Poet Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al Barnawi composed the *Shurb al-Zulal* (*Drinking of the Sweet* (that distinguished what is permissible from what is forbidden according to Islamic law. He also criticized illegal taxes, greed, and perversion of justice. Kano ruler Baba Zaki (r. 1768-76) was unpopular for exploiting the nobles and forcing them to fight as soldiers. Sacrifices of cattle to the *Qur'an* did not end in Kano until the reign (1781-1807) of al-Wali.

***Kumbari dan Sharefa**) reigned 1731–1743) was a Hausa King) *Sarkin* (of Kano .He succeeded Mohammed Sharefa and is remembered for his high taxation on the Kurmi Market.

APPENDIX II

* Boneji Hausa (the Trouble of Hausa land) which appears to be targeted at the moral decadence, corruption and injustices in the society.

- 1- Thanks be to Allah; and I salute the one who is the best among the creatures...*
2- Let us pray Allah to lead Hausa land to the right way, that its religion may become stronger and its infidelity become weak.
3- Troubles in Hausa land are many...
4- Some are seen and some are only heard about...
20- Some troubles in it are the prostration made (during salutations); you shall not salute whilst standing...
25- Another trouble in it are that women do not learn, their bodies they never cover (properly)...
68- Some have their bellies full of unlawful earnings; others are healthy, yet fond of adultery.
69- Some are sick in lust for wealth; they accumulate it just to see their riches increase...
90- They believe senselessly that every Fulani is called a Muslim; It is a lie; the truth should be spoken...
97-The religion belongs to Allah; it is not 'Fulaniness'. It is not even 'non-Fulaliness' nor the Tuareg way of life.
98-It, religion, does not follow ethnicity, but it is to be followed, Only those who follow it are worth of respect.'¹

* Yimre Jahina: The Shehu attacked on laxity, local customs and misconceptions, saying what follows:

*Oh! Muslims stop hatred and do not detract
Detractors go to hell when they die,
Also thieves, adulterers as well as,
Those who misappropriate Zakat...
Also avaricious rulers misled by worldly things...
Also a Qadi who mis-applies justice...
Also the Mallam who fail to follow what he learnt²*

*The Shehu trying to create confidence in his audience of the mercy of their Lord, he said:

*Oh God, the Forgiver, forgive my sins (committed) during the night
Forgive also the sins committed
In the day light...
The soots of my sins have taken
Root on me and sunk deep;
Muhammad's esteem shall surely keep me clean.
My sins are many that they chain me tight*

¹) 'Uthman b. Fodio, *Boneji Hausa*, (translated) by M.A. Abu Manga quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', ibid, p. 57.

²) 'Uthman, *Yimre Jahima*, (quoted in A.Garba Saidu 'The Significance of Shehu's Sermons and Poems in Ajami' in Y.B. Usman (Ed.) *The Sokoto Caliphate*, A.B.U, Lagos, 1979, p. 207.

*Muhammad's esteem shall surely free me...
My sins are many that they frighten me
Muhammad's esteem shall surely give me security'³*

* In calling and inviting people to the Authentic Sunnah, the Shehu sought to undermine the basis on which people justified the practices of innovations i.e. blind copying of people who seem to know better.

*Leave us alone with recalling what
Father used to do ...
Leave us alone with relying on what
Is practised in the east;
These are grounds for those who
Stayed astray from Sunnah
Leave us with the idea that it is
Practised at Medina
Both Mecca and Medina are inferior to the Sunnah'.⁴*

* In another identical poem, he appears even sterner:

*That religion was built on common
Sense not on following the Sheikhs (blindly)
All abodes, even Medina and Mecca are the (sic) follow the Sunnah
Wake up and listen!
He who talks be he Abdul Kadir, Sunnah
Is to be superio.⁵*

There are some Shehu's poems, which although seemingly aimed at instilling better social behaviour in his audience, have very serious consequences on the status quo. They subtly and maybe imperceptibly sought to change the tastes and values of the society and by so doing weaken the assumption on which the legitimacy of the established order rested.

*I thank you oh God for preoccupying me;
With the affairs of religion alone, which
Is a favour to me.
Oh my people, here some advice
He who accepts it is safe in these times.
Never ever sit with an oppressor;
Run away; leave him even if he is learned...
Never ever sit with a provoker...
Never ever sit with an innovator;
Refusing this poem is bad taste...
Do cultivate sitting with a teacher...
Never budge from near man of 'Sunna'
For he is superior to father and mother.⁶*

³) Ibid, quoted in Ibid, pp. 197-8.

⁴) Ibid, p. 199.

⁵) Ibid, quoted in Ibid, p. 208.

⁶) Ibid, p. 199.

* The practice of female infibulations was known to have been practised in Africa, mainly along the Nile River before the advent of Islam from the Arabian Peninsula around 619 C.E. By the nineteenth century in Hausa land, female infibulations must have been introduced to the Muslims, as the centuries of old trade routes linking Egypt, the Sudan, and Ethiopia, to Western Sudan were consolidated by the annual Pilgrimage to the Holy Lands. Both scholars and merchants were constantly importing new goods and bringing new ideas from the East⁷.

The Shehu incited the Muslims to enter with the right foot, sit, worship, and exit with the left foot. There are two prophetic prayers which are recommended to say when both entering and coming out of the mosque. When entering, you say, *'In the name of Allah, and salutations and peace of Allah be upon the Prophet of Allah, oh my Lord, open for me the gates of Your Mercy'* and when leaving, you say the same as the two first expressions and adding, *'...Oh, my Lord, I ask you of your Bounty'*...

* The Shehu explained that according to at least one of the Prophet's Hadiths that one of the signs of the last days would be a large number of mosques and a few praying people. Islamic lifestyle stresses group worship and unity. He may have been trying to discourage individuals or smaller groups from starting their own mosques when they were not necessary.

* The Shehu said about the Mosques:

*'The Mosques are the houses of Allah, so it is not befitting for the worshipper to busy himself in anything other than the worship of Allah. In a "hadith" (prophetic tradition), it states, "Whoever sits in a mosque has visited Almighty Allah, so it is right of the visited to be respected by his visitor.'*⁸

* The Shehu, then brought a detailed description of the practice of the un-Islamic forms of medicine declaring:

And in Al Madkhal, it states,

'If a person is stung or bitten by a snake or a scorpion, some people take a knife and put it on the place where the poison has reached. This is made known by the person

⁷) Refer to Umar Al-Nagar (Naqar), *The Pilgrimage Tradition in West Africa: an Historical Study with Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century*, Khartoum University Press, 1972.

⁸) Identical statements on the Sunna and Innovation of the mosque can be found in *al-Madkhal*, I; op. cit., pp. 38-60.

who was bitten when the knife is passed over his body to the place of the bite. They, then, speak in a foreign unknown tongue.'

In Al Madkhal,

'it also prohibited anything that resembled this act. That would include the unknown things that are written on paper, or engraved into the ceiling or the wall. It is believed that this would give protection from magic, the evil eye, bedbugs, fleas, ants, snakes, scorpions, rats, etc... This is prohibited by the Sharia and is an acceptable act, even if some benefit could come from it. '9.

* Within Islamic Sharia, the practice of casting spells on people by throwing special objects around their homes or on the road and the seeking of protection through charms and special formulas is considered to be magic and a form of disbelief. The Shehu here seems to be warning his followers against a specific practice of the secret arts practised in Hausa land.

* The Shehu wrote about the holy days and festivals that were not yet practised in Hausa land saying what follows:¹⁰

'And among the affairs that have caused a general misfortune in these lands is the preference for unimportant duties such as prayers at night and on special days, acting on false dreams, and forsaking clear knowledge such as performing prayers on the first Thursday in Rajab, during the night of the middle of Shaban, or the night of the twenty- seventh of Rajab. Also, paying farewell to Ramadan, or prayer of the day of Ashura, or prayer at the grave, or prayer for parents, or weekly prayers, and on every day at night in which it is preferred. All of these actions are false and fabrications against the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him '

* The Shehu, then, was attacking duplicity in religion saying,

'And among the affairs that have caused a general misfortune in these lands is the pursuit of superfluities and different lesser acts with the expectation of salvation, despite the fact they are engaged in prohibited acts, sins and mistakes which they must desist from. Inevitably, many of them neglect the obligatory duties and increase the supererogatory acts and rush to carry them out¹¹ '.

⁹) Refer to Ibid.

¹⁰) Ibid ;p. 16.

¹¹) Ibid.

* The Shehu faced the issue of looking for blessings at the grave directly, and considered it to be a great obstacle to the spiritual development of Hausa land. About this, he declared,

*'And among the affairs that have caused a general misfortune in these lands is seeking blessing by praying at a grave and building a mosque over it. That is because it is not permissible to pray at the graves or erect mosques over them. One does not wipe the graves (to seek blessings) either, since that is an act of the Christians. One should not anoint oneself with water from the grave or take up dust that is in it, for blessing is sought only by visiting the grave'*¹²

* The Shehu was also against the idea of giving special gifts and food made for the dead. He wrote,

*'And among the affairs which have caused a general misfortune in these lands is what they do in the way of almsgiving for the dead, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Madyuni said in his commentary to Fath al-Jalil. 'Spending a night with dead people is nothing but the practice of people of ignorance; likewise the food which they make for the dead on the seventh day which they hope will bring nearness to Allah for the dead and His mercy. This is an innovation which was not in what proceeded us, nor was among that which the 'Ulama praised. They said that it was not fitting for a Muslim to imitate an unbeliever, and every person should stop his family from attending such occasions'.*¹³

* The Shehu said,

*'And among the affairs which have caused a general misfortune in these lands is the lack of distribution of inheritance according to the Book of Allah, Most Glorious, and Most High, the Sunna and the Ijma. On the contrary, what they do is that when there is an elder heir, he takes possession of all that is bequeathed saying, "this property belongs to my brothers and I have assumed the position of my father." Nobody will resist him in this, until after his death when the strongest will take possession of what remains. This is prohibited in the Quran, the Sunna, and the Ijma'*¹⁴

* The Shehu said concerning this what follows,

*'You should know that we do not anathematise anyone except by means of a passage of the Quran, a passage from a Hadith Mutawatir¹⁵, or the Consensus of the scholars). This proof should verify that the statement in question could only come from a disbeliever.'*¹⁶

¹²) Ibid, pp.15-16.

¹³) Refer to A Maliki Scholar of the Berber Zenaga; Yusuf Wali, *Translated of Nur- ul- Albab.*, p. 36; Mahdi Adamu, *Hausa factor*, pp. 37-38.

¹⁴) Refer to Ibid, pp. 85-88 and N. A. op. cit.

¹⁵) The term '*Mutawatir*' means the prophetic saying, which is authentic and reported by a large number of reliable companions of the Prophet. It is considered to be on the highest level of authenticity by the scholars of Hadith.

¹⁶) Refer to ' Uthman ibn Fudi, *N.U.M.*, op.cit, p. 3.

* The Shehu incited the scholars not to seek praise and not to feel satisfied in case of being praised saying:

*'O my Brother, if people feel satisfied by the words of praise, do not yourself feel satisfied with them. Be afraid of praise since it has a sweetness which rises to the heart and only a few are safe from it, for surely there are amongst people, those who perform their deeds for the sake of Allah, not desiring by their deeds any but Him. But, then, when their virtuous deeds become apparent and they are praised for them and honoured, Satan causes them to taste some sweetness (of that praise). O my Brother, if you are tested by the sweetness of praise, struggle to refute that from your heart by hating it and by genuine fear of it... O my Brother, it is unbecoming of the mind to rejoice at anything tried to this world, so how can one rejoice at vain praise? ... Do not think that you are worthy of praise, lest you cause yourself to perish and the blessing will go away from you and your covers will break open and your hidden shames will become apparent.'*¹⁷

* The Shehu encouraged the scholars to be tolerant, openhearted and respect one another as well as to turn away from obstinacy. About this, he said:

*'O my Brother, I warn you against obstinacy, for there is no good in it and all types of evil are assembled in it. Nothing is more despicable in the sight of Allah than obstinacy. O my Brother, the types of knowledge and worship and all that with which we try to approach Allah may He be exalted, are plenty. The sensible person occupies himself with that which Allah has imposed on his heart and his limbs and in the knowledge of piety and all the apparent and hidden conditions and in working in goodwill and in sincerity of action. O my Brother, I warn you against searching about for points of disagreement. Among the people before us were brothers who agreed on matters concerning Allah, but when they were tested by searching and digging deep (in these matters), they became different sects. So leave delving into and searching into areas of disagreement. This is a deep sea in which many people before us have drowned. Hold fast to that which the Muslims have agreed on, concerning Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, His prescribed limits, the laws of His religion, and the Ijma' of the righteous predecessors (Salaf). In that there is truth and guidance.'*¹⁸

* The Shehu declared that the scholars before anyone else should constantly be ready to correct any faults that manifested from their actions saying what follows:

*'O my Brother, when people are filled with anger against the one who speaks ill of them, be not like them. Struggle to train yourself to accept criticism with satisfaction; despite the dislike and bitterness, which naturally rises to the heart and from which only few are safe. Hearken, o my Brother, to that which is hidden in the souls. Do you find sadness at the word of praise like that, which you find at the word of blame? Do you find anger against he who speaks well of you like you find against he who speaks ill of you? O my Brother, the truth of belief will never be complete until he who blames you and he who praises you are equal in your judgement at the time of claiming their rights. So be satisfied with the blame and be satisfied with the one who criticises you. Be merciful to him and say special prayers for him and respond to his needs if you are truthful.'*¹⁹

¹⁷) Ibid, pp. 45-46.

¹⁸) Ibid, pp. 33-4.

¹⁹) Ibid, p. 47.

*In defining the basis of Sufism and its relation with other forms of Islamic knowledge, the Shehu wrote:

'O my Brother, know that the types of knowledge that are compulsory upon you are three. The knowledge of Tawhid (God's Unity), the knowledge of Shari'a, and the secret knowledge or the knowledge of the heart... The compulsory part of the knowledge of Tawhid is the amount needed to understand the basis of this religion... Concerning Shari'a, you should have knowledge of everything that is mandatory for you to perform such as purification, fasting, prayer, etc... Concerning secret knowledge, you should know all that has been made compulsory or prohibited in gaining awareness of Allah, sincerity, the right intentions, integrity, and action.'

* The Shehu defined the foundation of Wilaya (Sufi Sainthood) as a state, which is not out of the reach of the ordinary, knowledgeable, practising Muslim by stating:

'Know, my Brother, that the principles and conditions of Wilaya are based on adhering to the Quran and the Sunna, leaving desires and bid'a (Innovation), enhancing the respect for the Shaykhs, considering the rest of creation to be non-existent, persistence in reading the prescribed prayers (award), and leaving allowable concessions in religion²⁰.'

He then quoted Sahl ibn 'Abdullah:

'Our principles for (Wilaya) are based on six things, the Book of Allah and the Sunna of His Messenger, eating halal (permissible foods), refraining from harming anyone, avoiding sins, repentance, and fulfilling obligations²¹.'

* The Shehu pointed out that true spirituality is achieved through some of the following:

'Everyone should follow the example of the Prophet Muhammad in all that they do in this area. Awareness of Allah by practising all of the deeds of Islamic lifestyle, whether they are compulsory acts or optional. Awareness of Allah by avoiding all of the prohibited actions whether they are minor or major. Also, avoidance of the undesirable actions... Avoidance by the worshipper of thinking that he is better than anyone else, for he does not know how he will end this life. And taking on all of the aspects of Faith which is divided into more than sixty parts.²² '

The Shehu's Mystical Experience

In Degel, the Shehu found time to intensify his spiritual training,²³ going into short periods of retreat occasionally. Soon he started to see vision in his sleep-an indication, in Sufi

²⁰) 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, *Kitab Usul al-Wilaya*, printed with Hausa translation by the Ministry of Education of Northern Nigeria, p. 2.

²¹) Ibid, p. 3.

²²) Refer to 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, *I.S*, op .cit., pp. 270-1.

²³) Refer to 'Abd al-Haq Sayf al-Ilm, 'Biography of Shaykh' Uthman dan Fodio,' in: Handbook on Islam, Norwich, Diwan Press, 1978, p. 3.

thoughts, of a high level of spiritual refinement from where one could derive inspirations. As previously stated Sufism by Shehu's time had since become associated with certain personalities whose peculiar methods of spiritual training have become solemnised into sect. Having subscribed to Qadiriyya Sect, his vision quite naturally became cast in the frame of that sect. Relating one such vision which came to him in 1794, the Shehu said:

'When I reached forty years, five months and some days, God drew me to him, and I found the Lord of Djinns and Men, our Lord Muhammad, may God bless him and give (grant) him peace. With him were the companions and the prophets, and the saints. Then they welcomed me, and sat me down in their midst. Then the Saviour of djinns and Men, our Lord Abd Al-Qadir Al-Jilani, brought a green robe embroidered with the words, there is no God but God; Muhammad is the messenger of God – may God bless him and give him peace- and a turban embroidered with the words, 'He is God the One',²⁴ he handed them to the Messenger of God – may God bless him and give him peace- and the Messenger of God clasped them to his bosom for a time, then he handed them to Abu Baker Al-Siddiq, and he handed them to Umar Al-Faruq, and he handed them to Uthman Dhu Nurain, and he handed them to Ali may God ennoble his face- and then to Yusuf- upon whom be peace- and Yusuf gave them back to my Lord Abd Al-Qadir Al-Jilani; and they appointed him to act on their behalf, and said, 'Dress him and enturban him, and name him with a name that shall be attributed exclusively to him.' He sat me down, and clothed me and enturbaned me. Then he addressed me as Imam of the saints and commanded me to do what is approved of and forbade me to do what is disapproved of; and he girded me with the Sword of Truth,²⁵ to unsheathe it against the enemies of God. Then they commanded me with what they commanded me; and at the same time gave me leave to make this litany that is written upon my risk widely known, and promised me that whoever adhered to it, God would intercede for every one of his disciples.[Wird, pp 2-4].²⁶

* The Shehu said:

'And among the Bid'a is the denial of the miracles of the Awliya. This is a prohibited innovation according to the Ijma'. The learned people have even said that the denier of miracles may have a terrible end. Also, if an unqualified person claims these miracles, it is a prohibited innovation according to the Ijma'. The learned people have even said that the one who makes these claims may have a terrible end. Also, the one who looks into the books of the people of Kashf (revelation or illumination) and cannot even distinguish between a small ant and an elephant has committed a prohibited innovation. Looking into the books of the people of Kashf is not permissible except for the scholar who knows the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. He will consequently take from them what his reason leads him to and avoid that which is not clear. He will be saved from it and not practise it.

Another Bid'a is to act on spiritual inspiration or voices heard during spiritual illumination without subjecting them to the Book of Allah and the Sunna of His Messenger or the rules set up by the Salaf (Orthodox scholars). This is a prohibited innovation according to the Ijma'.

Also, the claim that the wali has reached the level where he is no longer responsible to carry out the open practices of Islam. This is a prohibited innovation according to the Ijma.²⁷

²⁴) This is a reference to the Holy Quran, Surat al-ikhlas (Sincerity) (Sura 112) and may indicate that whole of this short Sura was embroidered on the turban.

²⁵) Arabic 'saif al-haqq'. The word 'al-haqq' is also one of the names of God; and the translation 'the Sword of God' is also possible; quoted in M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 66.

²⁶) Ibid.

²⁷) Refer to 'Uthman, *I.S.*, op. cit., pp. 277.

* Here is an example of one of the many arguments that the Shehu was in the habit of confirming his position:

There is no Tasawwuf without Fiqh (Jurisprudence) because you cannot know Allah's external rules without it. There is no Fiqh without Tasawwuf for there is no consequence in Fiqh without true inclination to Allah. And there can be neither of them without Iman (Faith), for none of them are valid without it. Therefore, it was said, "Whoever practises Tasawwuf without understanding Fiqh has committed heresy, and whoever understands Fiqh but does not practise Tasawwuf has become a disobedient sinner, but whoever combines both of them has reached the true reality (statement of Imam Malik Ibn Anas).²⁸

* **A comprehensive list of the Extant Works of 'Uthmān b. Fūdī:**²⁹

1. Adabu'l-Ādāt
2. Adabu'l-Ākhirah
3. Adabul'd-Dā'ī Ila'd-Dīn
4. Al-Akbharu'l-Hadi
5. Akhlaqu'l-Mustafā
6. Al-Abyāt 'ālā' Abdu-Qadir al-Jaylānī
7. Al-Adab
8. Al-Ajwibatu 'l-Muharrarah' ani'l-As'ilati'l Muqarrarah.
9. 'Alāmātu'l-Muttabi'in li Sunnati Rasuli'l-Lāh.
10. Al-Amr bi'l-Ma'rūf wa'-Nahy 'anil-Munkar.
11. Al-Amr bi Muwālāti'l-Mulminin wa'n-Nahy an Muwālāti'l-Kāfirin.
12. Al-'Aqlu'l-Awwal.
13. Ad-Daliyah li' Shaykh' 'Uthmān.
14. Al-Fatawa li's-Sail.
15. Al-Farq baya' ilmi Usūli'd-Din wa 'ilmi' l-Kalām.
16. Al-Farq bayna wilāyat Ahli'l-Islam wa Ahli'l-Kufr.
17. Al-Fusūlu'l-Awwal.
18. Al-Hamziyah.
19. Aj-Jāmi.
20. Jam'u Hisasin fihi dhikri Abyāti'l-Muhassalat li'bni Zakariyyā.
21. Al-Masāilu'l-Muhamah.
22. An-Niyah.
23. Anwā'mā li'l-Lah.
24. Al-Qasīdatu'd-Daliyyah fi Madhi n-Nabiyyi.
25. Al-Qawlu'l-Mukhtasar fi amri'l-Imāni ,l-Mahdī al-Muntazar.
26. Al-Qawāidu'z-Zāhiriyyah.
27. Aqīdatu'l-Awwām.
28. As-Sālasilu'dh-Dhahabiyyah li's-Salāti's-Sūfiyyah.
29. As-Salāsilu'l-Qādiriyyah.
30. Asānidu'd-Dā'ī fil-Mutashaffa bi'l-Mushaffi Ahmad ash-Sharif.
31. Bayānu'l-All.
32. Bayānu'l-Mid'ati'sh-Shaytāniyyah Allatī Ahadathahā'nNās.
33. Bayān Abwābi Millati'l-Muhammadiyyah.
34. Bināu'l-Hādī ilā'Umāru'l-Mahdī.
35. Bustānu'd-Du'ā.
36. Dalāilu'sh-Shaykh.
37. Da'watu'sh-Shaykh.
38. Dāliyatu'l-Madh.

²⁸) 'Utman, *Al-Tafriqa*, op. cit., p. 2.

²⁹) Balogun, S.U., in his recent article, 'Arabic Intellectualism in West Africa: The Role of the Sokoto Caliphate' in the journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs, London U.K. 1986, vol. 2, pp. 394-409 quoted in K. A. Balogun, 'Uthman Bin Fudi On the Characteristics of a Good Muslim,' *The Islamic Quarterly*: A Review of Islamic Culture, vol. XXXII (Number 1), The Islamic Cultural Centre, 1988 pp. 40-45.

39. Fathu'l-Basair bi Tahqīq 'Ulūmi'l-Bawatin wa'z-Zawāir.
40. Haqīqatu'l-Imān.
41. Hidāyatu'l-Tullāb.
42. Hidāyatu'l-Tālibīn.
43. Hukmu Juhhāli Bilādi Hausa.
44. Hisnu 'l-Afhām min juyūshi'l-Awahām.
45. I' dādu'd-Dā'i ilā'd-Dīni'l-Lāh.
46. Ifh̄mu'l-Munkirin.
47. Īqtibāsu'l-'ilm.
48. Irshadu'l-Ibad ilāKadrati'l-Ma'būd.
49. Irshadu'l-'Ibād ilā Masāila'l-Jihād.
50. Īrshadu Ahli't-Tafrit wa'l-ifrat.
51. Irshādu'l-Ikhwān ilā-Ahkām Khurūj'in-Niswān.
52. Irshādu'l-Sāliki'r-Rabbānī.
53. Irshā'l-Immah.
54. Ittī ba'us-Sunnah wa Tarku'l-Bid'ah.
55. Kashfu'l-Ghummah.
56. Kashfu'l-Yasīrah.
57. Kashfu mā 'alayhi'l-'amal.
58. Khamsat Kalimah.
59. Kifayatu'l?-Muhtadin.
60. Kifāyatu'l-Muslimin.
61. Kitābu'l Adāb.
62. Kitāb Amri's-Sā'ah.
63. Kitāb Bayan Wujūbi'l Hijrah.
64. Kitāb Da'wati'l-Ibād ila kitābi'l-Lāh.
65. Kitāb Ihyl's-Sunnah Wa ikhmadu'l-Bid'ah.
66. Kitāb Ihyal's-Sunnah Wa ikhmādu'l-Bid'ah.
67. Kitāb Isnādi'd-Da'if.
68. Kitāb Isnādi'l-Fāqir.
69. Kitābu'j-Jihād.
70. Kitāb Kaffi't. Talibin'an Takfir 'Awani'l-Muslimin.
71. Kitāb Mahdī al-Muntazar.
72. Kitābu'l-Mahdhūrāt min'Alāmāt Khurūji'lMahdī.
73. Kitāb Miri' miri'āti'd-Duniyā.
74. Kitābu'n-Nasīhan.
75. Kitāb Rujū'ish-Shaykhi's-Sanūsi''ani't-Tashdīd'alāl-Taqlī.
76. Kitāb Salāsili'dh-Dhahad.
77. Kitāb sawqi's-Sādiqān.
78. Kitāb Shifāi'l-Ghalīl min kulli mā shakala mīn Kalāmi shaykinā jibrīl.
79. Kitābu'l-Tafriqah bayna Du'aāti'l-Mamdūhin wa Du'aāti'-Madhmu-min.
80. Kitāb'l-Talhīs.
81. Kitāb Tamyīzi'l-Muslimīn Mina'l-Kāfirīn.
82. Kitāb Targhib 'Ibadi'Lā fi Hizf 'Ulūmidīni'l-Lāh.
83. Kitābu't. Tasawwuf.
84. Kitāb 'Umdatil'l-Ibād.
85. Kitāb 'Umdati'l-Ibād.
86. Kitāb 'Umdat'l.
87. Kitāb 'Umdati'l.
88. Kitāb 'Usull'l-Latif Kitabi'l-'Allamati'l-Fasi.
89. Kitā 'Usulil-Wilāyah.
90. LammāBalagtu sittan wa thalāthīna Sannātan.
91. Manhaju'l-Abīdīn.
92. Masāilu'l-Muhammadiyah.
93. Mawadi' Awhāmi't-Talabah.
94. Min wa yanbagī an yahfazuhu Kullu man qawwa'j-Jihād fi Sabīli'l lāh.
95. Mi'rāju'l-Awwām.
96. Mi'rāju'l-Ulūm.
97. Misbāhun'IMuhtadīn.
98. Misbāhun li Ahli Hadha'z-Zamān.

99. Muwāfawatu Kalami Tufaylī
100. Munājatu'sh-Shaykh.
101. An-Nabau'l-Hadī.
102. Najmu'l-Ikhwan.
103. Nasaihu'l-Ummah.
104. Nuru'l-Awliyā.
105. Nuru'l-Albad.
106. Qasīdatu'sh-Shakh 'Uthman ilās-Sayyidal-Mukhtar al-Kumtī.
107. Qat'u'l-Ikhwān.
108. Qawā'idu's-Salāt.
109. Qawā'idun li talabat Wusul ilā'L-Lāh.
110. Riyādatu's-Sālikīn.
111. Risālatu'sh-Shaykh ilā-sh-Shaykh al'Amin al-Kanamī.
112. Sawqu'l'Ummah.
113. Shamsu'l-Ikhwān.
114. Shifāu'n-Nufūs.
115. Birāju'l-Ikhwān.
116. Tabāshīru'l-Ikhwān.
117. Tabāshīru'l-Mubtadī fi Umūri d-Dīn.
118. Tabasiratu'l-Mubtadī fi Usulu'd-Din.
119. Tabāshīru'l-Ummah.
120. Tafriqat Bayna'ilmi't-Tasawwuf-Iladhī lit-Takhalluq wa'l-ladhi li't-Taha qquq.
121. Tahdhibu'l-Ikhwān.
122. Tahdhibu'l-Insān.
123. Tahdhiru Ahli'l-Imān.
124. Tahdhiru'l-Ikhwān.
125. Tahqīru'l-'Ismah.
126. Ta'līmu'l-Ikhwān.
127. Talkhīs Asrāri Kalām Abi Hāmid al-Ghazālī.
128. Talkhīs Kitābi'l-Hārith al-Muhāsībī.
129. Tamyiz Ahli's-Sunnah.
130. Tanbīhu'l-Fāhīm.
131. Tanbīhu'l-Talaba 'ala annal-Lāh Ma'rufun bi'l-Fitrah.
132. Tanbīhu'l-Ghāfilīn.
133. Tanbīlu'l-Khusamā.
134. Tanbīhu'l-Ikhwān 'ala jawāz ittikhādhi'l-Majilis li ajli't-Ta'lim.
135. Tanbīhu'l-Ikhwān 'ala ahwāl'ardis-Sūddn.
136. Tanbihu'l-Ummah.
137. Tanzīh Rabbina'l-Quddus.
138. Tariqu'l-Jannah.
139. Tarwihu'l-Ummah bi Bayan Taysir'l-Millah.
140. Tarwihu'l-Ummah bi Bayan Taysiri'l-Millah.
141. Tatayyub Qulubi'l-Ummah.
142. Tawfiqu'l-Muslīmin 'alā Hukmi Madhāhibi'l-Mujtahidin.
143. Tibyān.
144. Tuhfatu'l-Habīb.
145. 'Ulūmu'd-Duniyā.
146. 'Umdatul-Bayān.
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148. Al-Usūlu'l-Lati Tu'lin Kidhb Ahmad al-Zarūqī.
149. Usūlu'l-Adl.
150. Usūlu'd-Din.
151. Usūlu'd-Duniyā.

APPENDIX III

***OLD FAMOUS AFRICAN TOWNS, CITIES, DYNASTIES, EMPIRES,
NOMENCLATURES OF ETHNIC GROUPS, THEIR LANGUAGES etc...***

*** Katsina as a Trading Centre**

The first of Katsina's¹ two natural advantages over Kano as a trading centre was the fact that it lay farther north and was to that extent a more suitable terminal for trans-Saharan trade. The second was that, whereas the Kano-Bida trade route had to cross many rivers, the Katsina-Bida route mainly followed the watershed between the Niger and Chad basins. It could therefore be negotiated by caravans, particularly camel caravans, during much more of the year than the Kano route. Apart from the fact that Bida was a centre of considerable commercial and industrial importance in its own right, it also acted as the main entrepôt between the canoe-borne trade of the south and the caravan-borne trade of the north. The superiority of Katsina's link with it was therefore an important factor in Katsina's commercial rivalry with Kano.

*** Leo Africanus and the Songhai Invasion of Hausa land**

Leo's credibility as a witness is sometimes questioned because his account of his African travels was written many years after the event and because his famous mistake about the direction of the Niger's flow showed how deep into error he could fall. For the Songhai annexation of Agades there is independent evidence, but the supposed invasion of Hausaland in A.D. 1513 rests almost entirely on his evidence. Most historians have accepted it, but some have remained sceptical and have pointed out that The Kano Chronicle makes no mention of the invasion. This is perfectly true, but the Chronicle does state (Palmer, p. 112) that the Sultan of Bornu brought an army against the city in the time of Abdullahi (A.D. 1499-1509) who was compelled to go out and humble himself. As the slight discrepancy in dates is within the tolerance of historical error, this may well be a garbled

¹) Nearly all these notes are taken from [HTTP://www.pulaaku.net/defte/hasJohnston/appendix1.html](http://www.pulaaku.net/defte/hasJohnston/appendix1.html) le 15/01/01 H.A.S. JOHNSON, *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, London, 1967.

account of the Songhai invasion. On balance, this explanation certainly seems more probable than the alternative theory that Leo's account of the Songhai invasion, which goes into some detail, was all an invention.

*** Date of the Kano Chronicle**

The style of the Chronicle is unlike that of the Fulani historians of the nineteenth century and it almost certainly goes back to an earlier period. On the other hand, the chronicler, when describing two reigns in the middle of the seventeenth century, admits that there is doubt about how one Chief met his death and why the other was deposed. These two clues point to compilation at some indeterminate date in the eighteenth century.

For these reasons it is very difficult to believe that Amina lived as late as the sixteenth century and this doubt is reinforced by the shadowy nature of her legend. Even The Kano Chronicle may have placed her too late and, if wall-building is the key to her period, we may guess that it was the twelfth or thirteenth century. Alternatively, she may never have existed but simply be a myth with its roots in an earlier matriarchal era.

*** Date of Bornu's Suzerainty over Hausa land**

The Kano Chronicle (Palmer, p. 109) relates that in the reign of Dauda (A.D. 1421-38) an official from Bornu took up residence in Kano. It seems probable that he was, in fact, a Resident, in the imperial sense, and that his advent marked the beginning of Bornu's suzerainty. There is an old house in Kano city known as Gidan Shettima and, as Shettima is a Bornu tide, it is possible that this in its day was the Residency.

*** Nomenclature of the Fulani**

The Fulani go under so many different names that nomenclature presents a difficulty. They refer to themselves as FulBe and to their language as Fulfulde. To the Wolof and many French authors they are Peuls, to the Bambara Fula, to the Kanuri Felaata, and to the Hausas Fillani in the plural and Ba-Fillace in the singular. In Nigeria they are generally called Fulani, the anglicized version of the Hausa plural. In this book Fulani has been used to describe them

(in both the singular and the plural) and Fulfulde their language. Similarly, the Hausa Toronkawa has been preferred to the Fulfulde Torodobe.

*** The Fulani and their Language**

Today there are more Fulani living in Northern Nigeria and the Hausa-speaking areas of the Niger Republic than in all the rest of Africa. Among them the majority have already abandoned Fulfulde for Hausa and the remainder, as they already speak Hausa as a second language, are likely to follow suit in the foreseeable future. Moreover, it is not only for Hausa that the Fulani have exchanged their own language; Barth (vol. V, pp. 222-3) encountered a group on the Niger who had abandoned Fulfulde for Songhai. On this evidence, despite the doubt of some modern authorities, it is not difficult to believe that Fulfulde is simply a language that the Fulani picked up during a long sojourn in Senegal and that their original language, which would have given a clue to their real origin, was then discarded and lost (!). This theory is supported not only by the Fulani's own legends but also by the fact that in their writings Bello and Abdullahi sometimes refer to the Hausas and other indigenous people as Sudanese or Nubians (see, for example, Arnett, P. 53, and Hiskett, p. 109), thus implying that the Fulani belonged to an entirely different grouping. Mungo Park noted the same habit among the Fulani of Senegambia and remarked that, when speaking of different peoples, they always classified themselves as being among the whites.

*** Bello and the Sack of Yandoto**

In the controversy that arose later between the Fulani leaders and Sheikh El-Kanemi, one of the accusations made by El-Kanemi was that the Fulani had been guilty of destroying religious books (Arnett, p. 103). From Bello's answer, it is clear that he recognised the incident referred to and that it occurred during the capture of a town, which was almost certainly Yandoto. This place, incidentally, seems to have had special ties with Bornu, which helps to account for its hostility to Shehu's cause. In his reply, Bello indignantly rebutted the charge, ascribed the scattering of the books to the accidents of looting, and recounted how he had himself laboured to recover the papers and identify and punish the looters. This

APPENDIX III

denial is worth repeating because in the past some historians have accepted El-Kanemi's allegation as true.

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ABSTRACT

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The 18th and 19th Centuries saw a series of revolutionary movements in the Western Sudan; movements that brought more or less radical social, economic and political changes which lasted until the European colonization and remain significant in the contemporary states of West Africa to this day. Of these revolutionary changes - that of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio, in the then Hausa States has been the greatest and with the most lasting effects. This study is about the Shehu's movement, the impact it had up to the flight (Hijra) which preceded his (Jihad) the Holy War which took place between (1804-1810) and was crowned with the founding of the Sokoto Caliphate (1809-1812) which lasted until the advent of the British in the early years of the Twentieth Century.

The purpose of this study is to analyse the movement within an Islamic frame of reference. Its rationale stems from the fact that the approach of earlier works on this movement has been largely imperialistic or western-secular and hence unable to appreciate fully the Islamic character of this movement.

The study is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the cultural, socio-economic and political aspects in Hausa land which led to the emergence of the Shehu and his famous movement. The second one tackles the first phase known as the phase of preaching. The third chapter deals with both the phase of planning and organising as well as the phase of emigration. As for the last chapter, it is devoted to the phase of the holy war against Yunfa the King of Gobir who was a lukewarm Muslim and his subjects who were mixing Islamic with pagan ones and the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate.

The study shows that the movement of Dan Fodio was geared to the objective of the restoration of the Islamic order. In his efforts to realize his objective, the leader of this movement had the Prophet as his model and the Sacred Qur'an and the Authentic Sunnah as his frame of reference. The conception and strategy of revolution he adopted was different from other movements. For example, Sheikh al-Mahdi in the Sudan took to confrontation with the establishment from the start while Dan Fodio conceived his mission as renovation (*Tajdid*) and took his time to bring about an intellectual revolution before the physical confrontation.

Despite the shortcomings of the movement, it managed to accomplish noble achievements and made greater contributions to fighting animistic beliefs, pagan practices and heretical deeds on one side and on the other hand, the spread of true and pure Islam and the

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enlightenment of the people of Hausa land which led to the founding of the Sokoto Caliphate (1809-1812) which lasted until the advent of the British in the early years of the Twentieth Century.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Until quite recently, West African history of the last two centuries has more or less been that of European activity and influence in the region. As the treasure of the wealth of historical writings in this area is being discovered, the obscurities disappear and the significant forces of change during this period become much clearer. It is now evident that the theme of West African history in the last two centuries consists of a series of revolutionary movements which radically changed the social, political and economic complexion of the whole Bilad al-Sudan, for about 100 years before the fateful scramble for Africa led to the establishment of European rule in the region. The climax of these series of revolutionary movements, during the course of which the classical concept of Jihad found application to the local conditions, had been the Jihad of Shehu Usman dan Fodio in the Hausa city-states.

Shehu Usman dan Fodio was born to a renowned scholar Muhammad Fodio, in the Hausa State of Gobir where Islam had existed for at least four centuries. In the course of these four centuries, Islam has permeated through all sections of the society and by the 18th Century enjoyed supremacy over traditional (pagan) religion. Much of this Islamisation was achieved through the activities of Muslim traders and itinerant Ulama (scholars). But up till the 18th Century the traditional element was still persisting within the society, to the extent of supporting a number of syncretic practices. This apparently compelled the rulers to occupy the uneasy position of being the leaders of both Islamic and traditional faiths. The conflict between Islam which requires absolute devotion and traditional practices, (among other factors) developed in course of time to create grounds for revolts and uprisings so long as no powerful leader emerged. At a very early age Shehu Usman started his education in the traditional Muslim

pattern and by 1774 he had qualified as a teacher. Syncretism, corruption and charlatanism of the Ulama (all of which reflect the ignorance of the society) took Shehu's immediate attention.

He travelled far and wide to teach and preach and wrote extensively against these un-Islamic practices. In due course he emerged as the undisputed leader commanding large following drawn from all segments of the population, cutting across tribes and states. Shehu Usman and his following soon came into conflict with the rulers who saw them as obvious threat to their authority. This conflict deteriorated to open attack and hostility on the Shehu's following and initiated their Hijra in 1804, which preceded the Jihad.

Shehu's immigration which represented a final break with the rulers of Gobir (one of the Hausa City-States) did not eliminate completely the threat Shehu and his following posed to the rulers. In an apparent bid to put an end to this menace, the rulers attacked the Shehu and his people at their new found home. The defeat which the rulers suffered in the hand of this Immigrant Muslim Community was at once followed by a chain of revolts under Muslim leadership against the Hausa Rulers not only in Gobir but all over the Hausa City-states. One after the other the Hausa City-States fell into the hands of the fighting Muslims and by 1810 all the once warring Hausa City-States had been brought together into one administrative unit - the Sokoto Caliphate, with its headquarters at Sokoto.

Now that the war was over, the Shehu retired from public life to concentrate on the much more difficult task of establishing an administration based on the Islamic law and ideals while his brother Abdullah and his son Bello shouldered the weight of administering the new Caliphate. Keeping his goal in mind Shehu Usman wrote extensively on a variety of fields until his death in 1817. It should

be noted that both his brother and his son (who succeeded him) wrote with similar competence and extent towards the same goal - the establishment of an Islamic State. This however did not make the task of these three leaders hitch-free the administration of the Caliphate was not without problems here and there. The legacy of the writing of this triumvirate continued to guide the legal and political affairs of this Caliphate until British colonisation of this area in 1903. It is the teachings of the leader of this revolutionary movement in a traditional Muslim Hausa State that this study is concerned with.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

At the turn of the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century a revolutionary movement arose in Hausa land (now part of northern Nigeria) that led to the founding of the Sokoto Caliphate and to have a profound influence on the subsequent history of the area. At its centre was a man who bore the Hausa name Shehu¹ Usman² dan³ Fodio⁴. The movement he led and the successful holy war he fought to reform Islam in Hausa land brought about important changes there religiously, politically and socially. This chapter is about the rise of the leader of this movement who is known as the reformer, the renovator of Islam and the founder of the Sokoto Caliphate. But before dealing with this point, it is necessary to talk briefly about Hausa land: Its religious, political and social aspects as well as to tackle the advent of Islam and its influence on the Hausas.

¹)Shehu is a fulfulde word which means shaykh or sheikh in Arabic.

His full Arabic name was 'Uthman b. Muhammad b. 'Uthman b. Salih.

²) The name 'Usman' is also written 'Usuman' or ' 'Uthman' by some writers.

³) Dan means son in Fulfulde- the Fulani language.

⁴) The name 'Fodio' is also written 'Fodiyo' or 'Fudi'. The name Fodio is a Hausaised form of a Fulfulde word meaning 'learned man' or 'jurist'.

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1-HAUSA LAND: Its Emergence and Development up to 18th Century

Hausa land forms part of the belt of savannah, which stretches right across Africa from the Atlantic to the Red Sea. This belt is sandwiched between the desert in the north and the equatorial forests in the south.⁵ Hausa land occupies the greater part of the sector between Lake Chad in the east and the Middle Niger in the west.⁶

In the mid-eleventh century, the tribes inhabiting Hausa land probably belonged to the Sudanic or Chadic groups.⁷ They used to live in settled communities and the fact that some of these were ruled by queens⁸ and likely observed matriarchy, a custom more common among Berbers than Sudanic people, suggests that they had already been influenced by previous waves of Berber immigration.

There is no doubt that at some period, a considerable number of Berbers crossed the Sahara, settled among these people, and intermarried with them.⁹ First, for physical reasons, the migrations could hardly have occurred before the advent of camel in sufficient numbers to open up the caravan routes of the desert. Secondly, if they had happened later than the fifteenth century the migrants would have been Moslems¹⁰. Thirdly, the migrants seem to have been consisted not of tribes or clans but of small groups, mainly of men, who were glad to marry local women and settle down peacefully. This suggests that they were refugees who had lost not only their homes but very often their families as well.

The legend that the Hausas cherish about their origins tells how Abuyazidu,¹¹ a prince of Baghdad, who went to Daura, slew the monstrous snake that lived in the well and terrorised the townspeople, and was rewarded by being made the consort of the Queen. Their children and grandchildren subsequently became the founders of the seven Hausa states. It appears that this legend crystallised the folk memory of the union between the Berber migrants and the indigenous peoples of Hausa land who were

⁵) It was called the Bilad es-Sudan, the land of the blacks By the Arabs.

⁶) To know more about Hausa land's area, climate, geography, etc...Refer to Appendix III.

⁷) Recent discoveries suggest that they were not as primitive as was at one time believed. They had been smelting and working iron for at least five hundred years. R. Mauny, *Tableau Géographique de l'Ouest Africain au Moyen Age*, Dakar, 1961, p. 462.

⁸) S. J. Hogben and A. H. M. Kirk-Greene, *the Emirates of Northern Nigeria*, London, 1966, p. 147.

⁹) It is not exactly known how and when that movement occurred. Though the evidence is scanty, there are certain inferences to be drawn from it. Refer to H.A.S. Johnston. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, London. Ibadan. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1967.

http://www.amanaonline.com/Sokoto/sokoto_1.htm, web-page 2.

¹⁰) Mauny asserts that by this time the assimilation of the Berbers to the Arab way of life, and therefore to Islam, was complete (op. cit. pp. 461-2).

¹¹) The name has several variations and is sometime given as Bayajida.

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already partly Berber in blood and custom. It also suggests that the newcomers brought a higher civilisation with them and that the union came about peacefully through intermarriage and assimilation.

It is not exactly known how long the process of fusion took, but it seems that there was early intermarriage and no fighting. One of the first products of the union was the Hausa language-which certainly goes back to this period and which is now classified as belonging to the Chado-Hamitic¹² or Chadic¹³ group.

While the language was evolving, the Hausa city-states¹⁴ began to emerge as separate powers. The original seven, which are known as Hausa Bakwai, were Daura, Rano, Kano, Katsina, Zazzau, Gobir, and Garun Gabas.¹⁵ Together they cover an area of about two hundred miles square.

At a later stage, the Hausas extended their influence over neighbouring peoples who in some cases adopted their speech and in others merely spoke Hausa as a second language and led a similar way of life. This group, known as the Bansa Bakwai, which can be loosely translated as the Bogus Seven, is a heterogeneous one and comprises some peoples who are now indistinguishable from the original Hausas and others who have little in common with them. In this secondary group the States of Zamfara and Kebbi and to a lesser extent Yauri, became most closely identified with and assimilated to the Hausas.

To know about the early history of Hausa land, the searcher relies partly on the lists of Chiefs that have been preserved in most of the States, partly on oral myths and traditions which have been transmitted from one generation to another, and partly on the chronicles in which those myths and traditions have been recorded.

In the seven authentic Hausa States, with the notable exception of Gobir, the lists of Chiefs start with the appropriate son or grandson of Abuyazidu and are thereby

¹²) D. Westermann and M. A. Bryan. *The Languages of West Africa*, London, 1952, pp. 170-4.

¹³) J. H. Greenberg, *Languages of Africa*, The Hague, 1963, p. 46.

¹⁴) There were fourteen Hausa Kingdoms: The "Hausa Seven" and the "Bastard Seven". The Hausa Kingdoms began as seven states with a shared mythology with its founders being the sons of a Queen. They are known as the Hausa Bakwai meaning Hausa Seven. The states included: Daura?-1806, Kano 998 - 1807, Katsina c. 1400 - 1805, Zazzau (Zaria) c. 1200 -1808, Gobir ? – 1808, Rano, Biram c. 1100 – 1805. The growth and conquest of the Hausa Bakwai resulted in the founding of additional states with rulers tracing their lineage to a concubine of the Hausa founding father, Bayajidda. Thus they are called the 'Bansa Bakwai meaning Bastard Seven. The Bansa Bakwai adopted many of the customs and institutions of the Hausa Bakwai but were considered unsanctioned or copy-cat kingdoms by non-Hausa people. These states include: Zamfara, Kebbi, Yauri (also called Yawuri), Gwari (also called Gwariland) Kororafa (a Jukun state), Nupe (of the Nupe people), Llorin (a Yoruba state). See H.A.S. Johnston. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, op. cit., webpage 5.

¹⁵) The name of the seventh state is sometimes given as Biram, but this is in fact the name of the first legendary ruler and Gamm Gabas, which is what the village is still called, is preferable as the place-name.

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linked to the Daura Legend. They sometimes give the number of years that each Chief reigned and hence make it possible to calculate the dates when the dynasties were founded. Comparisons between these lists naturally reveal serious discrepancies, mainly in the era before 1500. The Kano chronology, for example, gives CE. 999 as the year when Bagauda, the grandson of Abuyazidu, became Chief¹⁶, whereas in Katsina the date assigned to his brother Kumayo falls a hundred years later¹⁷. In Kano, the number of Chiefs in the Hausa era is given as 43,¹⁸ in Katsina as 38,¹⁹ in Zazzau as 60,²⁰ in Daura as 48,²¹ and in Rano as 40²². Among the Banza Bakwai, Zamfara is said to have had 42 Hausa Chiefs²³ and Yauri, which was most likely a younger foundation 29²⁴.

Of the early written records, the fullest and most important is the Kano Chronicle²⁵. It is written in Arabic and purports to give the history of Kano from the tenth century right down to the early twentieth century²⁶. From then on, the Chronicle was no doubt a more or less contemporary record which was almost certainly brought up to date each time a Chief died. So far as the preceding period is concerned, though the Chronicle may have embodied earlier written fragments, it is regarded in the main simply as the first repository of Kano's oral traditions. Moreover, even if earlier fragments were embodied, they are unlikely to have been written before the end of the fifteenth century when El-Maghili, a divine and jurist, visited Hausa land and founded the tradition of Arabic letters.²⁷

Before 1475 the Kano Chronicle had to depend entirely on memorised traditions, that between 1475 and its compilation in the eighteenth century it relied partly on memorised traditions and partly on existing written fragments. These considerations, while obliging the searcher to approach the older history with great caution, do not

¹⁶) The Kano Chronicle. For an English translation see H. R. Palmer, *Sudanese Memoirs*, Lagos, 1928, vol. III, pp. 92-132; quoted in H.A.S. Johnston. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, op.cit., http://www.amanaonline.com/Sokoto/sokoto_1.htm, web-page 19.

¹⁷) F. de F. Daniel, *A History of Katsina* (bound cyclostyled copies published in Nigeria), p. 28; quoted in Ibid.

¹⁸) K Ch (Palmer, pp. 99-127); quoted in Ibid.

¹⁹) Daniel, op. cit. pp. 28-36; quoted in Ibid.

²⁰) Mallam Hassan and Mallam Shu'aibu, *A Chronicle of Abuja*, translated and edited by Frank Heath, Ibadan, 1952, pp. 36-37; quoted in Ibid.

²¹) Palmer, op. cit. vol, III, pp. 142-3; quoted in Ibid.

²²) Kano District Notebooks (henceforward DNBs), *History of Kano*; quoted in Ibid.

²³) Sokoto DNBs, *History of Anka*. Another list published by Hogben and Kirk-Greene (op. cit. p. 415) gives 44 Chiefs in the Hausa era; quoted in Ibid.

²⁴) *Gazetteer of Kontagora Province*, 1920, p. 20; quoted in Ibid.

²⁵) In addition to Palmer's English translation there is a Hausa translation in vol. II of *Labarun Hausawa do Magwabtansu (LHdM)*, published by the C.M.S. Bookshop, Lagos, 1933, pp. 22-74; quoted in Ibid.

²⁶) Kano Chronicle. See Appendix II.

²⁷) A. D. H. Bivar and M. Hiskett, "The Arabic Literature of Nigeria to 1904", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XXV, 1, 1962, p. 106.

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mean that the early passages need be dismissed as worthless. On the contrary, there is independent evidence to show that the Hausas are capable of memorising and transmitting historical facts with a very fair degree of accuracy over several hundred years.²⁸

Despite all its faults²⁹, the Kano Chronicle gives the researcher a general picture of how the civilisation of Hausa land developed. He sees, for instance, how Kano grew from a settlement to a town, from a town to a city, and from a city to a city-state. He is shown the steps by which neighbouring towns like Gaya and Karaye, which were equally ancient but happened to be less populous, were drawn into Kano's orbit. He watches the stages by which the countryside was populated, first by the voluntary movement of free men from the city to newly founded towns and villages and later by the plantation of slaves and dependents in rural settlements. He learns of an exodus of pagans in the fourteenth century and he detects in it the tensions that preceded the establishment of Islam. Finally, when Kano had already outstripped all its rivals, he sees smaller city-states like Rano and Kudu being gradually swallowed and digested. Moreover, the searcher is also able to learn from the chronicles the nature of the society which developed in Hausa land religiously, socially, and politically

1.1 The Religious, Social and Political Aspects Before the Advent of Islam

This point gives an overview of the traditional religious system, the relationship of the rulers to the ruled; the status of women and some of the important customs.

1.1.1. The Traditional Belief System

From very early times, the religious and political systems in Hausa land were solidly bound together. The *Iskoki*³⁰ belief system was the most powerful religious system influencing society. The *Iskoki* belief system had infiltrated into agricultural, pastoral and nomadic life. It was able to affect people in their daily activities such as: hunting, fishing and social pursuits. It was also capable of influencing their political outlook by being the justification for the authority of the *Sarki* and other leaders.³¹

²⁸) M. Hiskett, "The Song of Bagauda", *BSOAS*, vols. XXVII, 3, and XXVII, 1 and 2.

²⁹) *Ibid.*

³⁰) *Iskoki* is a plural word whose singular is *Iska* which means spirit.

³¹) Abdullah Rafi, Augi, 'The Gobir Factor in the Social and Political History of the Rima Basin C.1650-1808 C.E.', Ph. D. dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, 1984, 1, pp. 225-226, quoted in 'Abdullah Hakim Quick, 'Aspects of Islamic Intellectual History in Hausa land : 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, 1774-1804 C.E.', Ph D Thesis; Toronto University, 1995, p. 226.

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The Hausa concept of *Iskoki* and the impact of these spirits over human life were identical to other traditional belief systems found among West African people. According to this belief, the *Iskoki* were found everywhere: in water, the sky, the hills, the forests, the savannah, the desert and the habitats of the human beings.³² The number of *Iskoki* was said to be infinite but some of them were known by a specific name and frequented a specific place. This place could be a tree, a river, a rock, an ant hill, a well or a hill according to the liking of the *Iska* (spirit).

The *Iskoki* worshippers performed sacrifices of fowl, goats, sheep or the suitable animal to appease the *Iska* and supply the spirit with the quantity of blood needed for its sustenance.³³ Powerful *Iskoki* were known to inhabit trees, mainly the baobab, the acacia and the tamarind trees. The spirits could be either beneficial or harmful to human-beings. The evil *Iskoki* as a whole inhabited the bush, away from human presence³⁴, while the good spirits could even be protectors of human settlements as in the case of the famous patron snake of Daura town which used to occupy a well.³⁵

1.1.1.1.Ceremonial Cults of the Iskoki

These ceremonial included both individual and *Bori*³⁶ cults. Concerning the first cult, it is said that whoever believed in *Iskoki* could approach the spirits for getting benefit or seeking protection against evil. The *Boka*³⁷ would be called on to pacify a spirit that was believed to have caused a disease or done an obvious harm. Appropriate sacrifices would be made according to the needs of the particular *Iska*. Some individuals exercised a more sinister form of spirit worship by cultivating a relationship with evil bush spirits who could be brought into a compound by having available an animal sacred to the particular spirit. In secret ceremonies, *Iskoki* believers would spill the blood of the sacred animal and summon the evil spirit to bring harm to their enemies.³⁸ This cult in its turn included family and public ritual aspects.

As far as the former was concerned, the head of the family would assume the role of priest and perform a set of sacrifices convenient to the specific kind of activities

³²) Greenberg, *The Influence of Islam on a Sudanese Religion*, New York: J.J. Augustin, 1946, p. 28.

³³) Ibid, p. 29.

³⁴) Ahmad Tahir, 'The Social Writings of Shaykh 'Uthman b. Fudi: A Critical and Analytical Study' Ph. D. Thesis, Mc Grill University, 1989, p. 138.

³⁵) Murray Last, 'A Note on Attitudes to the Supernatural in the Sokoto Jihad' IV, 1, 1967, p. 3; Greenberg, *the Influence of Islam*, op. cit., p. 29.

³⁶) *Bori* (Hausa) means Spirit possession.

³⁷) The *Boka* means (spirit medium).

³⁸) Ibid, p. 48.

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carried out by the family. In case iron-working was the chief job of the family, an anvil became the sacred object and sacrifices were done over it. The sacrificial animal was to have its throat slit with an iron knife and the blood drained into a special hole.³⁹ As for the latter, they were an elaborate form of the family rites. Traditionally, the kings sacrificed the animals they chose for the welfare of their people.⁴⁰ The chief men of the villages were summoned to witness the sacrifice which was carried out according to the specific need. The high point of the ceremony happened when a black bull was sacrificed to appease the chief spirit.⁴¹

Concerning the second cult,⁴² it applies to spirit possession where the *Iskoki* enter their worshippers and communicate through them to other people. Possession may take place during a *Bori* rite involving music, rhythm and group presence.⁴³ The possessed person speaks the language of the spirits and takes on its particular characteristics. If the *Iska* is Kure, the male hyena spirit, the possessed person will howl but if the *Iska* is Buna,⁴⁴ the person will bark like a dog. Recovery occurs when the person sneezes.⁴⁵ For the Hausa traditional belief, above the world of the *Iskoki* was a high and remote god who did not interfere in the mundane affairs of human-beings.

Such was the state of affairs in Hausa land during this epoch. Shrines or fetish objects could be found in and around the houses, settlements and places of the people in Kano, Zaria, Katsina, Gobir and in all parts of the land. Most of the rural people had their own *Iska* which satisfied their personal needs. The *Iskoki* belief system was adopted as a source of magic and a superstition or as a treatment for a spiritual disorder and the basis of their relationship to authority.⁴⁶

³⁹) The primary sacrifice included a sheep, a goat, or a chicken. The main occasions of family aspects were the beginning of the agricultural season, the hot season before the rains, and the beginning of the harvest season. Refer to Greenberg, *the Influence of Islam*, op. cit., pp. 44-5.

⁴⁰) In Kano, the sacrifices were practised in three sacred places. The first was at K'ofar Ruwa, or the gate of water, near the ancient palace of the Kutumbawa kings who ruled prior to Muhammad Rumfa (1463-1499 C.E). The second sacrificial spot was the well of Mayburgami, and the third was a grove known as Kurmin Bak'in Ruwa (the grove of the black water), near Jakara, a stream which ran through Kano.

⁴¹) Ibid, p. 46.

⁴²) The plural is 'borurruka' Greenberg, *the Influence of Islam ...*, op. cit.; p. 28. See also A.J.N., Tremearne, *Hausa Superstitions and Customs*, London: Frank Cass, 1970 p. 530; and idem, *The Ban of the Boris*, London: Frank Cass, 1968, pp. 30-31.

⁴³) Greenberg, *the Influence of Islam...*, op. cit., p. 28. See also Tremearne, *Hausa Superstitions and Customs*, op. cit.; and, *The Ban of the Boris*, op. cit.

⁴⁴) *Buna* singular *Buni* means plants grown from onion or bulbs which grow in the bush used as a remedy for coughs.

⁴⁵) Greenberg, *the Influence of Islam*, op.cit, pp. 32- 33.

⁴⁶) Greenberg, *the Influence of Islam*, op.cit, p. 71.

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1.1.2. The Relationship between the Rulers and the Ruled

In Hausa land, the earliest form of society seems to be that of some agricultural communities organised around crop production. The leadership of these hamlets was based on family units whose individual head was to hold responsibilities for all matters outside agriculture. The leader whose role was slightly predominant was thought to be the direct descendants of the founding ancestor or ancestors. The most common used title for the ancient office was 'priest chief' or 'earth priest'. He mediated between the living and deceased ancestors or local spirits who had a direct effect upon the earth.⁴⁷ According to 'Abdullahi Smith, the overall leadership was invested in a *Sarkin Gari*⁴⁸ whose main authority was still linked to agriculture and whose political base was still the kingship ties and family units that had been established in the town.⁴⁹

Both the king and the chief worked within the same system for the same ends and a struggle ensued for power and authority.⁵⁰ The outside force⁵¹ won control of the town and expelled the traditional ruler to the countryside where a new power base was to be developed with its own type of autonomy. After a long series of wars and in some cases, internal coups, the urban states were able to gradually incorporate the once defiant countryside into a wider state.⁵² New towns were built and the old ones refortified to protect the centralised government.

There were many factors that could have played a key role in leading to the appearance of states in Hausa land. One of the main ones seems to be the growth of cities (*birane*)⁵³ in strategic locations. These cities developed as a result of the influx of

⁴⁷) 'Abdullahi Smith's, 'The Early States of the Western Sudan,' in *History of West Africa*, Vol. 1, edited by J.F.A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder, op. cit.; pp. 158-201; Murray Last, *The Early Kingdoms of the Nigerian Savannah*, *History of West Africa*, 3rd Edition, edited by Ajayi and Crowder, Vol. III, 1985; see also Finn Fuglestad, 'A Reconsideration of Hausa History before the Jihad,' in *J.A.H.*, 19 (3)1978, pp. 319-39, J.E.G. Sutton, 'Towards a less Orthodox History of Hausa land,' *J.A.H.*, 20, (2)1979, pp. 179-201.

⁴⁸) *Sarkin Gari* means the king of the town.

⁴⁹) 'Abdullahi Smith, 'The Early States,' op. cit.; also found in *A Little New Light, Selected Historical Writings of Professor 'Abdullahi Smith*, Zaria: Gaskiya Corporation Ltd, 1987, p. 100 quoted in Quick, 'Aspects of Islamic Social Intellectual History in Hausa land: 'Uthman Ibn Fudi: 1774-1804 C.E....', op. cit., p. 52.

⁵⁰) Fuglestad, 'Hausa History', op. cit, pp. 324-325; M. G. Smith, *Government in Zazzau*, London, 1960, pp. 34-72; K Ch (Palmer, p. 12.

⁵¹) The outside force was usually Muslim by the sixteenth century.

⁵²) Last, 'Early Kingdoms' op. cit., p. 223; ; K Ch (Palmer), pp. 101, 119.

⁵³) *Birane* (singular *birni*) were surrounded by defensive walls to protect people from outside invaders, against a prolonged siege and to provide a refuge for them of the surrounding countryside. The larger *birane* offered a thriving centre for the *Iskoki* based religious sites. Refer to 'Abdullahi Smith, 'The Early States of the Central Sudan', in F.J.A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder (eds), *History of West Africa*, Vol.1, quoted in Crowder, *The Story of Nigeria*, Lagos, 1976, p. 30.

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diverse people from the outside as opposed to inner growth from population explosion. They also appeared to be essentially founded in areas of fertile land as in the case of Kano, which rests on some of the most productive pieces of land in Nigeria; or in a strategic position for trade, as in the case of Katsina⁵⁴ which served as a terminus on the edge of the Sahara desert.⁵⁵ Another feature, also primary to the importance of the new states was the availability of iron ore which enabled the inhabitants to produce more advanced farming implements and arms. Both led to fast economic and military development and empowered the leadership of the *birane* to expand their influence spheres.

The most noteworthy aspect of the evolution of Hausa states was the development of political authority. Urban life in Hausa land with diversity and size demanded a more complex form of government. The growing *birane* necessitated a host of leaders to manage different aspects of economic, social and political life. Power was given to officials such as *Magajin Gari* (manager of the town), *Sarkin Kasuwa* (king of the market), *Sarkin Kofa* (gate keeper) and *Mai Unquwa* (ward head). All were under the overall leadership of *Sarkin Kasa* who had his seat of authority in the capital city. His authority extended to the whole of the countryside including the farmlands, and towns.⁵⁶

However, despite the apparent authority of *the Sarki*, the power of the custodians of the *Iskoki* based belief system was never wholly curtailed. On the contrary, many of the rulers had to resort to traditional rituals to overcome their obstacles and the priest chiefs still had a pivotal role in succession to power. Consequently, the institution of *Sarki* became a more evolved form of 'sacred animistic kingship'.⁵⁷ Besides, for 'Abdullahi Mahadi in his study of the *Sarauta*⁵⁸ system and the state of Kano, the distribution of wealth which was an important source of personal and regional power was not equal. It was in the hands of a select few who used it to control land, farm implements and weapons. This phenomenon was to allow a single ruler to have the upper hand over those who lacked this power and established himself and his dynasty.⁵⁹

⁵⁴) See Appendix III.

⁵⁵) Smith, 'Early States', p. 101 quoted in Quick, 'Aspects of Islamic Social Intellectual History in Hausaland': 'Uthman Ibn Fudi: 1774-1804 C.E...', op. cit. p. 53.

⁵⁶) Ibid, p. 102.

⁵⁷) Fuglestad, 'Hausa History', op. cit., p. 339 in Ibid, p. 55.

⁵⁸) *Sarauta* (Hausa) means Kinship or reign.

⁵⁹) 'Abdullahi Mahadi, 'The State and the Economy: The Sarauta System and its Roles in Shaping the Society and the Economy of Kano with Particular Reference to the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', Ph.D. Diss. , ABU, 1982, p. 159; quoted in Ibid.

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The Sarauta political system became not only a dynastic form of rule but also became a sort of feudalistic hegemony which depended on the service of its populace on one hand and on the wealth of the *Sarki* on the other. A successful *Sarki* was able to control his land, its people and its produce and surrounded himself with courtiers (*Fadawa*) and high officials who, not only aided him in the military and political affairs of the state but also became powerful fief holders and in some cases actual king-makers.⁶⁰ The Hausa society was divided into two main categories: the ruling class (*Masu Sarauta*) and the general populace (*Talakawa*).⁶¹ Sharp differences developed between both of them since the latter lacked political and military power and it had been restricted upward mobility. They in their turn were divided into wealthy business people, *Bayi* (slaves) and the general populace (*Talakawa proper*).⁶²

1.1.2.1. *The Masu Sarauta*

The *Masu Sarauta* were responsible for the general administration of their kingdoms. They had the authority to impose taxes, punish their subjects and mobilise armies for the defence of the state. They defended the borders and expanded the territory by exerting a great monopoly over the army, the implements of war and the maintenance of cavalry. They were the sole owners of horses, apart from a few rich businessmen who reached the height of influence. Moreover, the *Masu Sarauta* used to exercise their influence all over the countryside where they owned large slave estates, settled disputes between the people, protected the trade routes and often collected taxes from the caravans that passed via their territory.⁶³ To be able to carry out their functions, they developed a class of palace officials, many of whom were taken from the *Talakawa class*.

The palaces of the *Masu Sarauta* represented the zenith of luxury. The rulers used to wear the finest clothes, often embroidered in gold. They used to possess well-trained stallions and ate a variety of delicacies, many taken from recipes from the Middle East or North Africa. They also used to keep up a large retinue of domestic servants, concubines, eunuchs, musicians, drummers and entertainers. Their palaces were the places of local festivities such as wrestling and fighting which were usually held in large open areas. But fierce rivalry developed between the ruling classes of the major cities

⁶⁰) Smith, 'Early States', op. cit., p. 102.

⁶¹) Last, 'Early Kingdoms,' op. cit., p. 223.

⁶²) Augi, *Gobir Factor*, op. cit., p. 236.

⁶³) Augi, *Gobir Factor*, Ibid., p. 237.

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and with no force to check their authority, the *Masu Sarauta*⁶⁴ mobilised their subjects to iron their disputes or fight in wars.

1.1.2.2. *The Talakawa Class*

The wealthy merchant class was somehow influential. Though information about this group is scanty for this period, the large concentrations of wealth built from trade in Kano, Katsina, Gobir and Kebbi show that there were very great numbers of traders in the cities. They got their riches primarily through long distance trading and led a lifestyle comparable to the ruling class. They used to concentrate in the cities, although there seem to have been some well-off pastoralists who owned large herds of animals and wealthy farmers, as in the case of the farming elite of Zamfara.⁶⁵ The rich traders were reputed to control large households of wives, slaves and concubines; they were also able to have access to huge tracts of land. In spite of this wealth, they were not politically powerful to affect any significant change in society.

The *Talakawa* or the general populace formed the majority in Hausa land during this epoch. They supplied the labour force for the society and carried out most of the services needed to support the ruling class and the merchants. Mervyn Hiskett divided the *Talakawa* into three sections. Firstly, *Yani Birni* or the people of the town or city whether free or slave. They consisted of the craftsmen, shopkeepers, artisans, petty traders, members of other service industries and beggars. The latter in some cities formed powerful guilds and received an aid from the institution of finance. Some of them were also blind and as a means of offering a service to society, they became proficient in praise poems or vernacular religious songs.⁶⁶ Besides, there were some several categories of slaves among the townspeople. Slaves served their masters' houses or became special functionaries of the rich and powerful. There were slaves who were born into slavery and those captured in war raids or bought from the market. They represented the lowest category in society but often managed to gain upward mobility thanks to the ruling classes. Occasionally, they even ended up by owning their own slaves and wielding great power to some extent. As for the eunuchs, they were apparently either captured in that condition or had an operation on their testicles.⁶⁷

⁶⁴) The Masu Sarauta were known as the *Habe* kings by the *Fulbe*.

⁶⁵) Augi, *Gobir Factor*, Ibid, p. 239.

⁶⁶) Mervyn Hiskett, *the Development of Islam in West Africa*, op. cit, 1984, p. 98.

⁶⁷) Ibid; p. 98. Augi, *Gobir Factor*, op. cit., p. 244.

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Secondly, there was a rural population who in some cases used to live far from the cities and its people were ruled by 'village headmen' and acted as the representatives of the urban leadership. The rural people included peasants, farmers, who resided on small agricultural holdings and farmed their own land, often helped by slaves. The owner, his sons and their slaves used to work side by side and there was a little social or economic distribution between them. Larger farming units could also be found in the countryside. These units were usually possessed by merchants and noblemen who were accustomed to produce large quantities of cereals for the local market and middle distance trade.⁶⁸ Besides, the rural areas included the people of the *rumada* or slave villages which were owned by some noblemen and merchant classes. It seems that the slaves enjoyed a considerable amount of freedom, since they were able to own their own plot and be subject chiefly to the taxes of their masters.⁶⁹

Thirdly, there were the nomads,⁷⁰ cattle encampments, who used to dwell in the grazing grounds, a great distance from the towns and cities. They were subject to their own leadership in matters of grazing rights but were often to come into the cities to trade with the townspeople. The ruling class was responsible to maintain a balance between the farmers, townspeople and the nomads. Farmers were known to accuse the nomads of trampling over their property or fouling their water supplies. Their land claims were often in dispute.⁷¹ This may have led to the resentment that existed among the nomads.

1.1.2.3. The Position of Women

Traditionally, women played a focal role in religion and culture. Special positions with special titles were reserved for women of the ruling dynasty. The leader of women, a sort of Queen mother was called by different names and given various functions according to the region.⁷² The following are instances of the varying names and functions of the leading women.

NAME	PLACE	FUNCTION
<i>Inna</i>	Gobir	In charge of the royal marriages, the

⁶⁸) Ibid; Hiskett, *the Development of Islam in West Africa*, op. cit., p. 99.

⁶⁹) Ibid; p. 100; Augi, *Gobir Factor*, op. cit., p. 245.

⁷⁰) To know about the *Fulbe*, refer to Appendix III.

⁷¹) Hiskett, *the Development of Islam in West Africa*, op. cit., p. 105.

⁷²) Jean Boyd, *The Caliph's Sister, Nana Asmà (1793-1865), Teacher, and Islamic Leader*, London: Frank Cass, 1989, p. 42.

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		mother the town, and tax-collector.
<i>Sarauniya</i>	Abuja	<i>Bori</i> cult leader.
	Azbin	Leading entrepreneur. ⁷³
<i>Magajiya</i>	Daura	Leading court official, heir apparent, and military official. ⁷⁴
<i>Magira</i>	Borno	Regent Queen mother.
<i>Waymanzon</i>	Zaberma	<i>Bori</i> ritual leader.
	(South of Gao)	

In Hausa land, women played such a vital part in the early historical development, that the name of cities such as Daura, Zaria, Katsina and others were taken from leaders.⁷⁵ On the whole, not all women were given such a high rank since they were called on to help in farming, tree crop gathering, water and fuel gathering and carrying, as well as caring for small livestock around the homestead. Moreover, they used to spin, weave and process foodstuffs besides cooking, caring for children... Some of them pursued small trades and even became fixtures in the market place while others exercised spirit possession, traditional medicine and more secret arts. Only the *Masu Sarauta* women and the merchants seem to have been secluded and led a luxurious life.⁷⁶ These were the social and political and religious aspects of Hausa land before the advent of Islam. The next point revolves round the penetration of this religion and its influence on Hausa land and its people (the Hausas).

By the fourteenth century the pattern of the future had already begun to rise. Then, the states of Kano and Katsina formed the core of Hausa land, the one famous for its trade and the other for its learning. To the north, occupying the semi-desert country that is now called Air was Gobir, noted for its warriors. To the south was Zazzau, the main supplier of slaves. To the west was Zamfara. These were the five leading states. In the

⁷³) Ibid.

⁷⁴) Sa'ad Abubakr, 'Amina of Zazzau, Exploits and Impact in the Savannah Region of Nigeria', Kano Studies, New Series, No. 2 quoted in Quick, 'Aspects of Islamic Social Intellectual History in Hausa land: 'Uthman Ibn Fudi: 1774-1804 C.E.', op. cit, p. 67.

⁷⁵) Aliyu Hamza Dama, 'The Contribution of Learned Women to Islamic Education,' M.A. diss. Bayero University, 1982, p. 18, quoted in Quick, 'Aspects of Islamic Social Intellectual History in Hausa land: 'Uthman Ibn Fudi: 1774-1804 C.E. ...', op. cit., p. 68.

⁷⁶) M.G. Smith, *the Affairs of Daura*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1978, p. 42.

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second rank came Daura, Yauri, and Rano, the last already overshadowed by Kano and about to be absorbed. Of the original seven, only Garun Gabas had failed to grow at all and had remained an obscure village. The tally of the future was not quite complete; however, for in the west Kebbi was still only a province and had not yet been forged into a kingdom, while in the north-west the area which later became Gobir was also waiting for a paramount chief.

2. The Advent of Islam⁷⁷ in Hausa land and its Influence

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were periods of special importance in the history of Hausa land because, thanks to the opening of new communications with the outside world, religion⁷⁸, learning, and commerce received a new impetus. The ruling classes of Boron in the east and Mali in the west had been converted to Islam generations before and the fact that the Hausa States remained pagan for so much longer shows how far removed they still were from Arab influences.⁷⁹ The first mention of Islam in the Kano Chronicle occurs in the region of Yaji (C.E.1349-85) when Wangarawa⁸⁰ or Mandingoes were said to have introduced the new faith from Mali⁸¹ and persuaded the Chief to adopt it.⁸² It is doubtful whether he was a very firm convert, as neither he nor his brother who succeeded him took Moslem names and later his son

⁷⁷) Refer to Jean Spencer Trimingham, *The Influence of Islam upon West Africa*, Longman Group Ltd and Librairie du Liban 1968 and 1980, reprinted 1986, p. 18; Idem, *Islam in West Africa*, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1959 p. 115; Mervyn Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*, op. cit., p. 45.

⁷⁸) See Michael Crowder, *The Story of Nigeria*, op. cit.; p. 32; Thomas Hodgkin, *Nigerian Perspectives: An Historical Anthology*, O.U.P., 1975, pp. 29, 115-7; Kani, A.M., *The Intellectual Origin of the Sokoto Jihad*, Ibadan: Iman Publications, 1985; Gwarzo, Hassan, 'The Life and Teachings of al-Maghili with Particular Reference to the Saharan Jewish Community', Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1972, p. 63; Palmer, *Sudanese Memoirs*, op.cit., p. 81; A.A. Batran, 'A Contribution of the Biography of Shaykh Muhammad Ibn 'Abd- Karim Ibn Muhammad ('Umar- A'mar) al-Maghili, al-Tilimssani', J.A.H., 14, N^o.3, 1973, p. 381. J. H. Greenberg, *the Influence of Islam...*, op. cit.; F.R. Rodd, *People of the Veil, London*; 1926, pp. 291-2.

⁷⁹) E. W. Bovill, *the Golden Trade of the Moors*, 2nd Ed. London, O.U.P, 1970, pp. 18-25.

⁸⁰) *Kano Chronicle*, Palmer translation, Vol III, Lagos, 1974, pp. 104-5; from. A. M. Kani, 'The Rise and Influence of Scholars in Hausaland before 1804', unpublished paper quoted in U. M. Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study of the Movements of Uthman Dan Fodio in Early Nineteenth Century Hausa land and Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi in Late Nineteenth Century Sudan,' an M.A. Diss. in African and Asian Studies, Institute of African and Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, 1901, p. 27.

⁸¹) O. Jah, 'Islamic History in the Western Sudan'. An unpublished paper presented to International Islamic Seminar on Education, Bayero University, Kano, January 1977, p. 6, quoted in Usman. Muhammad. Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study of the Movements of Uthman Dan Fodio in Early Nineteenth Century Hausa land and Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi in Late Nineteenth Century Sudan, ' an M.A. Diss. in African and Asian Studies, op. cit., p. 26.

⁸²) Ibid. pp. 104-5.

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Kanajeji (CE.1390-1410) reverted to paganism.⁸³ It was only with the accession of the fourteenth Chief, Umaru (CE. 1410-21), that Islam was firmly established.⁸⁴

Among the other States of Hausa land, Katsina was converted at about the same time as Kano⁸⁵ and there the first Moslem Chief is identified as Muhammadu Korau who reigned from about 1380 to 1430.⁸⁶ Zazzau, however, remained pagan much longer, for no Moslem name appeared in the list of Chiefs until the early sixteenth century when the eighteenth Chief, Abu, who was installed by the invading Songhai army, succeeded to the throne. For Zamfara there is no date, but the first Chief to bear a Moslem name was the twenty-fourth, Aliyu⁸⁷, and it is possible that this was a forcible conversion dictated by Songhai.⁸⁸ So too was the conversion of Gobir⁸⁹ whose thirtieth Chief, Muhammadu, was the first to embrace Islam⁹⁰ but Yauri which escaped the Songhai invasion, remained pagan till the accession of the eleventh Chief, Gimba, in 1578.⁹¹

According to Kano Chronicle, it is clear that for several generations a struggle went on between the new religion and the old pagan beliefs. The final consolidation of Islam, directly in Kano and Katsina and indirectly in the other states, was the work of the North African divine and jurist, El-Maghili, who came to Hausa land towards the end of the fifteenth century. His visit happened to coincide with the reign of Muhammadu Rumfa who was the greatest and most enlightened of all the Hausa Chiefs of Kano. El-Maghili evidently found him an apt pupil and wrote for him a treatise on the responsibilities of rulers.⁹² The contrast between the brutality and cruelty, which characterise the early oral literature of the Hausas and the high-minded principles, laid down by El-Maghili show how Islam played an important part in advancing the civilisation of Hausa land.

⁸³) Ibid. pp. 107-8.

⁸⁴) Ibid. pp. 108-9. "The Song of Bagauda" also identifies Umaru as the first Moslem Chief. See Hiskett, op. cit. p. 369.

⁸⁵) Refer to R. A. Adeleye, 'Hausa land and Bornu: 1600-1800', in Ajayi and Crowder (eds), *History of West Africa*, op. cit, p. 560.

⁸⁶) Daniel, op. cit. p. 29.

⁸⁷) *Sokoto DNBs, History of Anka*. In the slightly longer list quoted by Hogben and Kirk-Greene, Aliyu appears as the thirtieth Chief.

⁸⁸) See Appendix III.

⁸⁹) The ancestors of 'Uthman Dan Fodio were incidentally, part of this migration, reaching and establishing themselves in Gobir, one of the Hausa States, in the fifteenth century under the leadership of one Musa Jokolo. Refer to Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 15.

⁹⁰) *Gazetteer of Sokoto Province*, 1920, p. 12. In the much longer list given by Hogben and Kirk-Greme (op. cit. p. 416) Abdullah, the fifty-fourth Chief, has the first Moslem name.

⁹¹) *Gazetteer of Kontagora Province*, p. 19.

⁹²) *The Obligations of Princes*, translated and edited by T. H. Baldwin, Beyrouth, 1932.

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Yet it was not only El-Maghili who was to contribute to this advance. There were other scholars⁹³ of high calibre who played a vital role in this noble task. Among them, there were scholars who used to spend their full-time in spreading the Islamic message, and were best furnished, most persistent as well as in persevering in this duty. Fully literate, well knowledgeable and possessed of a culture superior to that of their pagan audience, these scholars entered cities and villages with such freedom and confidence, which really impressed their observers. Such a picture is greatly and best captured by Edward Blyden, a black Christian missionary, who enjoyed the exceptional advantage of travelling widely in this region prior to its disfiguration by European colonialism. To sum up his observation, Blyden wrote:

*'It must be borne in mind that people in the state of barbarism, in which the pagan tribes are usually found, have no proper conception of humanity and its capacities. The man, therefore, who by unusual strength or cunning achieves "something which no one has achieved before him, or of which they do not understand the process, is exalted into an extraordinary being, in close intimacy with the mysterious powers of nature. The Mohammedan⁹⁴ then, who enters a pagan village with his books, and papers, and rosaries, his frequent ablutions and regularly recurring times of prayers and prostrations, in which he appears to be conversing with some invisible being, soon acquires a controlling influence over the people. He secures their moral confidence and respect, and they bring to him all their grievances for redress.'*⁹⁵

Obsessed with the cosmology of the *Iskoki*, hunted by a feeling of fear and insecurity characteristics of his society, the pagan saw and heard from the Muslim preachers at least initially the good tidings of Islam which was operating at the same level of the *Iskoki* able to ward off evil and bring luck and prosperity. This explains the numerous incidences where Muslim preachers were facing such countless pagan problems for solutions. The Muslim preachers very often succeeded in solving such problems and this earned them more respect, prestige and ready audience. With curious avidity, the pagan on-lookers felt it right to listen to the Muslim preachers explaining the secret behind this power. It was in such situations that they responded quite often favourably to the message of Islam.

⁹³) Hodgkin, *Nigerian Perspectives*, op. cit., pp. 11-57; Kani, 'The Rise and Influence of Scholars in Hausa land before 1804', unpublished paper quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit., p. 367; Priscillia Ellen Starrat, 'Oral History in Muslim Africa: Al- Maghili Legends in Kano', Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1993, quoted in Quick, 'Aspects of Islamic Social Intellectual History in Hausa land: 'Uthman Ibn Fudi: 1774-1804 C.E.', op. cit.; p. 27; J. O. Hunwick, *Sharia in Songhai: The Replies of al-Maghili*, O.U.P., London, 1984, pp. 40-1 quoted in Quick, 'Aspects of Islamic Social Intellectual History in Hausa land: 'Uthman Ibn Fudi: 1774-1804 C.E.', op. cit., p. 20.

⁹⁴) The *Mohammedan* is the follower of the Prophet Muhammad i.e. The Muslim or Moslem. See, Hammudah Abdalatti *Islam in Focus*, American Trust Publications, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1977, pp. 7-8.

⁹⁵) E. Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*, Edinburgh University Press, 1967, p. 176 quoted in U. M. Bugaji, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit., p. 30.

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The pagan chiefs and kings, like their subjects, found in the Muslim preachers a power which they were to resort to whenever their traditional gods failed them. When they found in Islam a stronger God- such as Islam's prayers and miracles carried out by Imams, saints or the like, they abandoned paganism in favour of Islam.⁹⁶ As a matter of fact, the conversion into Islam by the chiefs and Kings of the pagan communities was particularly remarkable for the Islamisation process in these lands; for in centralised societies, the religion of king and nobility almost automatically propagated among their obedient subjects. Islam spread wider and faster wherever such an incident took place.

However, the Muslim preachers did not wholly rely on such opportunities of prayer or 'miracle' for the spread of Islam. Besides, they were, for the greater part of the time, engaged in calling people to Islam and teaching those who had converted to it. They kept on doing this wherever they found the addressees whether they were in the market-place or the court during the day or at night. 'A common sight' writes McCall:

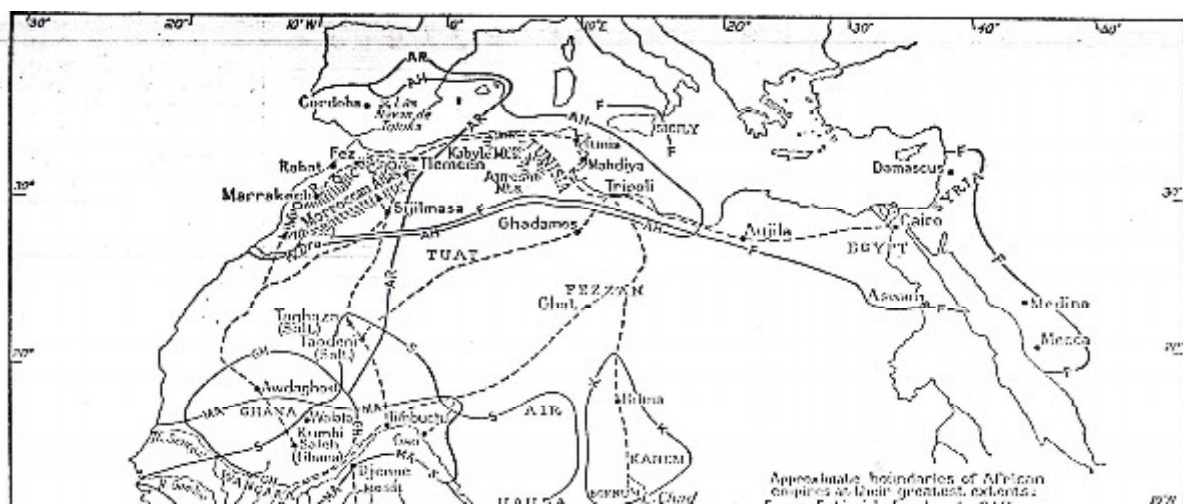
*'In the non-Muslim forest areas of Guinea Coast lands is the Muslim who is a trader by day but who in the evening gathers around him any who will listen to his explanations on behalf of his faith.'*⁹⁷

Such common sights dominated the process of Islamisation. Relying greatly on education for the spread of Islam, the Muslim preacher spent most of his time teaching. For no sooner was the pagan converted than he was taught to read and write, and the importance of knowledge was impressed upon him.⁹⁸ As Islam spread, so did literacy.

Not only owning a power superior to that of the local gods and *Iskoki* but also of literacy, wisdom and knowledge in various fields such as: geography, law and politics, did the Muslim scholars find themselves welcome guests at the courts of chiefs and kings. Soon the kings found them excellent advisors, councillors, even ambassadors.

Map 1

West Africa in the Great Age of Islam



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See Roland Oliver and J.D. Fage, *a Short History of Africa*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex. 1962. p. 87.

Gradually the administration of the states and chiefdoms passed into their hands even where the kings remained pagan. This was a development which was to further the cause of the preachers. Such alliance or maybe cooperation between the preachers and the rulers was really essential to the spread of Islam at such a time when most of the pagan subjects, who were still obedient to their rulers, had embraced Islam. Such situation of a government of basically Muslim personnel ruling over a predominantly pagan subject has been well noted by historians of the region. *Ta'arikh al Fattash*⁹⁹, for instance cited a dialogue between Askiya of Songhay and a leading scholar of Timbuktu, when the latter visited the former. Being shocked by the pagan practices among the subjects the scholar said to the Askiya:

*'I thought you were mad when I saw you doing all these. 'No', the Askiya replied 'I am not mad myself but I am the king of the mad.'*¹⁰⁰

It becomes clear that Islam spread into Ghana, Mali, Songhay, *Kasar* Hausa and beyond, through these subtle, fascinating and largely peaceful activities of its

⁹⁹) Mahmud Katti, *Tarikh al-Fattash*, trans. O.Hand M.Delafosse, Paris, 1913, p. 114 /tr. 208-210 quoted in Levtzion, 'Patterns of Islamisation in West Africa,' op. cit., p. 36. Refer to Appendix II.

¹⁰⁰) Refer to O. Jah., 'Islamic History in the Western Sudan,' op. cit.

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preachers.¹⁰¹ The apparent ease and rapidity with which Islam paved its way deep into the Western, Central and Eastern *Bilad al-Sudan* have been observed by scholars and travellers in the region. Some, like Professor Crummell, attributed this to '*The yearning of the native African for a higher religion.*' John D. Fage, who was not even sure if Islam really propagated into the region, attributed 'this show' to the need in the rulers for securing political and economic interests from the Muslim North African States.¹⁰² To Fage particularly and all those who share his view in general, one only needs to point to such examples as of Sarkin Kano Umar¹⁰³ who forsook his throne for no other than fear of getting tempted into the power and wealth.¹⁰⁴

To appreciate this overwhelming success which Islam scored in this region it is only worth recalling the fact that the Muslim preacher did not enter the country as a stranger¹⁰⁵, neither to the environment nor to the audience. Maybe the spirit of Islamic Brotherhood which cuts across all boundaries: national, racial or linguistic and the readiness to intermarry and live together, more than anything else explains this success. To this, one can add the Muslim's generosity and not the least, the good will of the message.

Lest one gets the impression of a galloping Islam sweeping the region and enlisting converts unhindered, the researcher should remember the difficulties of movements due to insecurity, linguistic barriers and the quite natural resistance of paganism and its priests that the preachers had to put up with. But for the preachers who had been inspired by goals higher than bread and butter these were no real difficulties.

¹⁰¹) Quoted in Blyden, *Islam Christianity and the Negro Race*, p. 175; quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit., p. 34.

¹⁰²) Fage. J. D., 'Some Thoughts on States Formation in the Western Sudan before the Seventeenth Century' in F. Butler (Ed.) *Boston University Papers in Africa History*. Vol. I, p. 19, quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit., p.35.

¹⁰³) Sarkin Kano Umar. Refer to Appendix I.

¹⁰⁴) Blyden, *Islam Christianity and the Negro Race*, p. 19; quoted in Ibid. Levtzion, 'Patterns of Islamisation in West Africa', op. cit., pp. 36-7, quoted in Ibid.

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2.1 Islamisation: Its Consequences and Implications

As Islam gained converts in *Kasar* Hausa¹⁰⁶, the latter did gain literacy and with it knowledge of the outside world. The mosques that rose with the rising Muslims' communities came to be not only places of worship but also a school where all Moslems could learn the Sacred Quran and Islamic Sciences a feature which to this day characterises the cities, towns and villages of *Kasar* Hausa.

As literacy increased, the flow of works in Islamic sciences, and Arabic books in diverse subjects emerged, for instance: Grammar, rhetoric, prose, and poetry. With them, the *Kasar* Hausa became bit by bit incorporated into the Islamic fraternity, becoming well informed of Islamic thoughts, the history, geography, politics, and economy of the then known world. As Islam gained more footholds in the land, its significance as pilgrimage route and centre of learning increased. By the sixteenth century reputation of some Hausa state capitals, as Islamic metropolises, Katsina and Kano in particular, was already high enough to draw the attention of many Muslim scholars as well as students. The pilgrimage to the Holy Lands (Mecca and Medina) which provided the opportunity for meeting Muslims from different parts of the world, served as another permanent link with the Muslim world and a source of continuous flow of Islamic thoughts into *Kasar* Hausa. Some of such ideas that deserve a specific mention are the Sufi brotherhoods (*Tariqas*), *Qadiriyya*¹⁰⁷ to which Dan Fodio affiliated and *Tijjaniyya* (founded c. 1194 A.H. /1780 C.E. in particular).

As books found their way through the diverse links, book publication became an important industry in the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁸ This industry made possible the dissemination of many books all over *Kasar* Hausa. Among the books that came to be so spread, *al-Mudawwana al-Kubra* of Abd al- Salam b.Said Sahoun al-Tanukhi (d. 854), (Epistle) *al-Risala* of ibn Abi Zayd al-Qayrawani (d. 996), *al-Mukhtasar* of Khalil

¹⁰⁶) *Kasar* Hausa means Hausa land.

¹⁰⁷) One of the most widely spread brotherhood at that era was the Qadiriyyah order founded by the eleventh-twelfth centuries Sufi mystic 'Abd-al qadir al jilani (Kilani) (1077/8-1066). For more information about him, refer to Majid Fakhri, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, Longman Group limited and Colombia University Press, New York, 1983, p.255; Philip K Hitti, op. cit., 436; Jacques Brosse, *Les Grandes Maitres de la Spiritualité*, Edition du Club France Loisirs, Paris avec l' autorisation des Editions Larousse-Bordas, 1998, p.143; Roger Caratini, *Le Génie de l' Islamisme*, Copyright Edition, Michel Lafon, 1922, p. 362; the best extant biography about him is in al-Dhahabi, *Tarikh al Islam*, D.S. Margoliouth in Journal Royal Asiatic Society (1907), pp. 267-310. On his miracles, see Shattanawfi, Bahjat al Asrar (Cairo, 1304), which has on its margin 78 sermons of al-Jilani entitled Futuh al-Ghayb. See *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p.321; M. Hiskett, *Development of Islam*, pp. 244-246. Refer also to Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddima*, London: Routledge and Kegan, 1967, p.

¹⁰⁸) Smith, 'Sources Material for the History of the Western Sudan', op. cit., p. 1.

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b.Ishaq the famous Maliki jurist_(d.1365 /66) and (Exegis)*Tafsir al-Jalalayn* of al-Siyuti (d. 1505) were the most reputed in addition to the Holy Quran and books of Hadith (The Prophetic Traditions),¹⁰⁹ al-Siyuti who had some association with Takrur pilgrims who passed via Egypt on their way to Mecca is said to have boasted that his books had been propagated to all parts of the Muslim World including *Bilad al-Takrur*,¹¹⁰. The fact that his and many other books enjoyed a wide circulation in the region testifies to the size and efficiency of the book publishing industry.

Along with these developments, sprang an admirable educational system, which had more in common with Timbuktu¹¹¹ than with the cities of North Africa where most of the books came. This educational system evolved a clearly defined curriculum, methodology and even certificates. The ministries of this system used to be the mosques and the planners the Sheikhs. This system begins with the reading of the Holy Qu'ran in course of which the young student learns to read and write at a tender age. After having attained a basic knowledge of religion, reading and writing in boyhood.

El-Masri describes that the aspirant scholar would then travel about to learned men and stay with them till he had perfected with each a particular science. Having completed his studies to the satisfaction of a master, he would then be given a licence¹¹² to teach this specific subject. In this way, the learner would go round to collect licences and thus establish fame as a recognised scholar. This process would not cease at a certain stage or age for whenever a scholar was found who had excelled himself in a branch of knowledge no matter whether a local man or a foreigner, he was sought by the aspirant scholar. Others would go to study under him.¹¹³ *'This is why'* he adds *'Dan Fodio continued going to study while he was himself teaching and preaching'*¹¹⁴

Such famous scholars like Ibn al-Sabbagh (Dan Marina), Muhammad al-Kashinawi (Dan Massina), al-Barnawi, Shehu 'Uthman, 'Abdullahi and Muhammad Bello were all products of such an educational system. Katsina, Yandoto and Kurnia Ranko were noted as centres of learning in the seventeenth and eighteenth Hausa land.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁹) Kani, 'The Rise and Influence of Scholar in Hausa land' op. cit., pp. 3-4.

¹¹⁰) Ibid, p. 10. Bilad al-Takrur is another name for Bilad al-Sudan.

¹¹¹) Timbuktu. See Appendix III.

¹¹²) A licence is called '*Ijaza*' in Arabic.

¹¹³) F. El-Masri, 'The Life Shehu Usman Dan Fodio before the Jihad.' *J.H.S.N.* (1963), pp. 435- 48; Alhaji and Peter, *The Ink of the Scholar*, op.cit., pp. 50- 7.

¹¹⁴) Ibid.

¹¹⁵) Kani, 'The Rise and Influence of Scholar in Hausa land ', op. cit, p. 12.

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Islam really brought to the *Kasar* Hausa literacy and knowledge and with it communication and socio-economic as well as political development. But before examining this aspect, the researcher must know that knowledge in this educational tradition does not mean the one which is today taught in primary and secondary schools. Knowledge in this and all Islamic traditions of learning, '*means all branches of knowledge, the theoretical as well as the practical, the arts, the sciences, the medical, the physical, the technological sciences and so forth.*'¹¹⁶

Just like trade led to the spread of Islam, so did Islam lead to growth and expansion of trade in Hausa land. Details of how this came about have been adduced by many writers such as Blyden whose view is that 'Mohammedanism' furnished a protection to the tribes who embraced it by effectually binding them together in one strong religious fraternity and enabling them by their united effort to baffle the trial of powerful pagan slave-hunters. Enjoying this comparative immunity from sudden hostile incursions, industry was stimulated among them; industry diminished their poverty and as they increased in worldly substance, they also increased in desire for knowledge.¹¹⁷

Prior to the diffusion of Islam the region had its own economy and remarkable market activity which was developed around the activities of such occupational groups as the *Manoma* (farmers), *Maharba* (hunters), *Makera* (blacksmiths who produced iron implements) and so forth. The increase in the flow of commerce along with the values and flavour which Islam brought did clearly stimulate the growth and expansion of the economy leading to the rise of a variety of manufacturing activity.

By the end of the eighteenth century, manufacturing activity chiefly the production of iron and wooden implements, cloth, leather and leather goods made up an important sector of the economy of Katsina.¹¹⁸ On the expansion of trade, the case of Katsina as noted by 'Uthman below, sums up the situation in *Kasar* Hausa: These

*'include patron from western provinces of Borno; mineral salt from Bilma, the Abzin, Kebbi and Awei in middle Benue Valley, Kola-nuts from Gwanja, Nupe and Oyo; tin and antimony from Jos Plateau area, horses from Borno and the Abzin goats and sheep from the Adar and Abzin, textiles, glass and metal were from Nupe; slaves from Zazzau and the south; silks, swords, paper and fineries from North Africa. The import of these commodities involved the export of goods produced in Katsina and brought from other places.'*¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶) O.S.A. Ismail, 'Some Reflections on the Literature of the Jihad and the Caliphate,' In Y. B. Usman (Ed.) *The Sokoto Caliphate*, A.B.U. Lagos, 1979, p. 177.

¹¹⁷) Blyden, *Islam, Christianity and the Negro Race*, op. cit., p. 186.

¹¹⁸) Usman, 'The Transformation of Katsina...' op. cit.

¹¹⁹) *Ibid*, p. 141.

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Simultaneously with this development was the rise of more specialised occupational groups. The personnel of the rising trade became the *Fatake* (long distant traders) *Dillalai* (general brokers), *Yandodo* (textile traders), *Attajirai* (big businessmen), *Madugai* (leaders of long distant trade) and so forth. Such specialised occupational groups 'with their extensive ramifications cutting across the territorial kinship and religious ties was an important feature of the society of *Kasar Katsina*' ¹²⁰ which for all purposes was a microcosm of *Kasar* Hausa. Concurrent with all these transformations was the development of roads and with them cities and towns. Such commercial centres as Kano and Katsina just like Gazargumo and Timbuktu were evidently the by-products of the socio-economic transformation which Islam stirred.

With such a boost in the economy, the revenue accruing to the *Sarki* proportionally increased. The *Sarki* could now afford more servants, more officials and more 'hangers-on' such as the *maroka* and *mawaka* (praise singers and musicians), all of whom lived and depended on the generosity of the *Sarki*. Actually, the boom enabled the *Sarakuna* to increase and equip their army with which they managed to guarantee their people more security which was vital to commerce. This bid to guarantee security and forestall external attacks may explain the interstate warfare that characterised Hausa land until the start of the holy war, which having created a central administration managed to bring them the law, order and security they lacked.

2.2. Islamic Political Development

Now, it is imperative to take a brief look at the socio-political transformations that were to precipitate the holy war before proceeding to paganism's response to Islamisation. The developments which tried to make the administration in conformity with the Islamic principles were particularly significant in Zaria, Kano, and Katsina, which formed the core of the *Kasar* Hausa from the fourteenth until the seventeenth century when another axis rose.

The political leadership in these three major states gave way to new and Islamic ones. These rulers have been noted for the courageous changes they effected in their administration to make it conform to the Islamic standards. This marked a milestone in the Islamisation of Hausa land. In Kano, for instance, as mentioned earlier, the *Sarki* Muhammad Rumfa went as far as to invite Muhammad al-Maghili, a North African

¹²⁰) Usman, 'The Transformation of Katsina...' Ibid, p. 162.

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Muslim jurist of international reputation to advise him on how to run an Islamic government. Al-Maghili's visit and stay in Kano was of great importance to the Islamisation of Kano and Hausa land. His books¹²¹ and edicts (*fatawas*) gained wide circulation. Of his books¹²² '*Taj al-Din fi ma Yajib ala al-Muluk*',¹²³ described as a comprehensive treatise on government was highly influential in all Hausa land.

The case of Muhammad Korau¹²⁴, the first Muslim ruler of *Kasar Katsina* is in particular interesting not only because of the Islamisation he effected in his state and its administration but also because unlike Muhammad Rumfa¹²⁵, his Kano counterpart, he was not part of the ruling dynasty from which he took over power. Tradition¹²⁶ says that he wrested power from one Kumayau of the Durbawa pagan dynasty¹²⁷.

These developments in *Kasar Hausa* at the close of the fifteenth century coincided with similar ones in Songhay which brought to power Mohammad Askiya¹²⁸ who was more like Rumfa and Korau than his predecessor Sonni Ali. Under Askiya, the Islamic culture and tradition that Sonni Ali sought to thwart was reinstated and invigorated. Under him, the intellectual activity which gave Timbuktu its repute was stimulated.

2.2.1. The Intellectual Inspirations of Timbuktu on Hausa land

¹²¹) Bawuru. M., Barkino, 'The Role of al-Maghili in the Reforms of Sarki Muhammad Rumfa (1463-1499) of Kano: A Re-examination', *Kano Studies*, N. S., (1987-88), 3, N^o.1 quoted in Quick; 'Aspects of Islamic Intellectual History in Hausaland : 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, 1774-1804 C.E. op. cit., p. 20. Abd-al Karim, Al-Maghili, *Taj al- Din Fima Yajib 'Ala al-Muluk (Taj) (The Crown of Religion Concerning the Obligations of Princes ('Mirrors for Princes')*, quoted in *Ibid.*, p.18 and ff; H.R. Palmer translated 'Wassiyat Al-Maghili ila Muhammad Rumfa known as Jumla Mukhtasara (Al-Maghili's Advice to Muhammad Rumfa known as a brief sentence)' in his article, 'An Early Fulani Conception of Islam,' *J.A.H.*, XIV.(1914-15), pp. 185-8; Dr. Kamal I.Bedri, *The Taj*, Bayero University, Kano, 1970's, p. 17, quoted in *Kano Studies*, N.S., (1974-7) pp. 1-2. Zebbadiyya, *The Arab Civilisation and the European Influence in West Africa- South of the Sahara: Studies and Texts (in Arabic)*, Entreprise Nationale du Livre, Algiers, 1989, pp. 152-6.

¹²²) Alfred Guillaume, *Islam*, Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1979, pp. 55-77; Idem, *The Traditions of Islam: An Introduction Study of Hadith Literature*, Khayat Book And Publishing Company S.A.L., Beirut, 1966, p. 10; Muhammad Ibraheem al-Geyoushi, *Teachings of Islam*, Cultural Centre, London; without date, pp. 87-90; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam*, George Allen and Unwin (Publishers) Ltd, 1966, pp. 41-65; Michel Reeber, *L' Islam*, Editions Les Essentielles, Milan, Toulouse Cédex, 1995, pp. 10-11; Abdellati, *Islam in Focus*, American Trust Publication, op. cit., p. 75 and ff.; Lamin Sanneh, 'Origins of Clericalism in West African Islam,' *J.A.H.*, 17, 1, 1976, p. 55; Maxime Rodinson *Les Arabes*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1979, p. 64 and ff.

¹²³) Kani, 'The Rise of and Influence of Scholars in Hausa land', op. cit., p. 7.

¹²⁴) Refer to Appendix I.

¹²⁵) Refer to Appendix I.

¹²⁶) Refer to E. Fugelsted in his 'A Reconsideration pf Hausa History before the Jihad', op. cit.

¹²⁷) Further investigation on this tradition should throw more light on this leadership change and hence on the process of Islamisation in *Kasar Katsina* as well as Hausa land. Refer to Appendix I, to know more about Kumayau of the Durbawa pagan dynasty

¹²⁸) Refer to Appendix I to know more about Mohammad Askiya.

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The intellectual inspirations of Timbuktu ¹²⁹ continued at least till the collapse of Songhay at the close of the sixteenth century to spur the spread of Islamic thought and ideas into Hausa land. Maybe to secure its borders and increase its power, Songhay, during the fifteenth century, extended its domain to Hausa land as far as Kebbi which it did not manage to subdue totally.

The decline of Songhay, following the Moroccan invasion at the end of the sixteenth century not only deprived Hausa land of the intellectual inspirations of Timbuktu but ushered it into series of interstate hostilities with serious repercussions and far-reaching consequences.

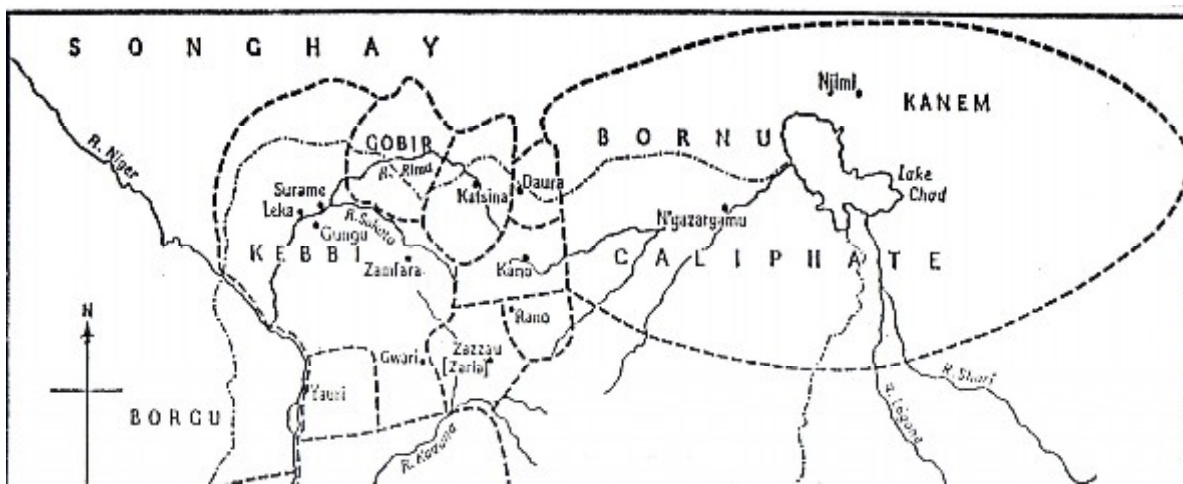
2.2.2. The Rise of Other Powers in Hausaland and their Constant Conflict

The start of the 17th century witnessed the rise of other powers in Hausa land; Gobir and Zamfara, this along with Kebbi, formed another axis of power identical to the Katsina-Kano-Zaria one which for nearly three centuries had dominated the region in knowledge, trade and military power. With the exit of Songhay, Bornu tried to extend its domains into Hausa land without much success. Till the holy war that shook it to its roots, Bornu remained a conditioning force in Hausa land and maintained an uncertain suzerainty.¹³⁰ The one effect that Bornu's adventure appeared to have led to was the exodus of a sizeable number of its scholars and their settlement in Hausa land, Zaria and Katsina in particular.¹³¹

The rise of Kwarrarafa¹³² to the south of Bornu in the same 17th century, added to the confusion that characterised the whole region until the holy war. Its threat on Bornu and Hausa land, chiefly, Kano, rendered the situation tragic.

Map 2

States of the Nigerian Region in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries



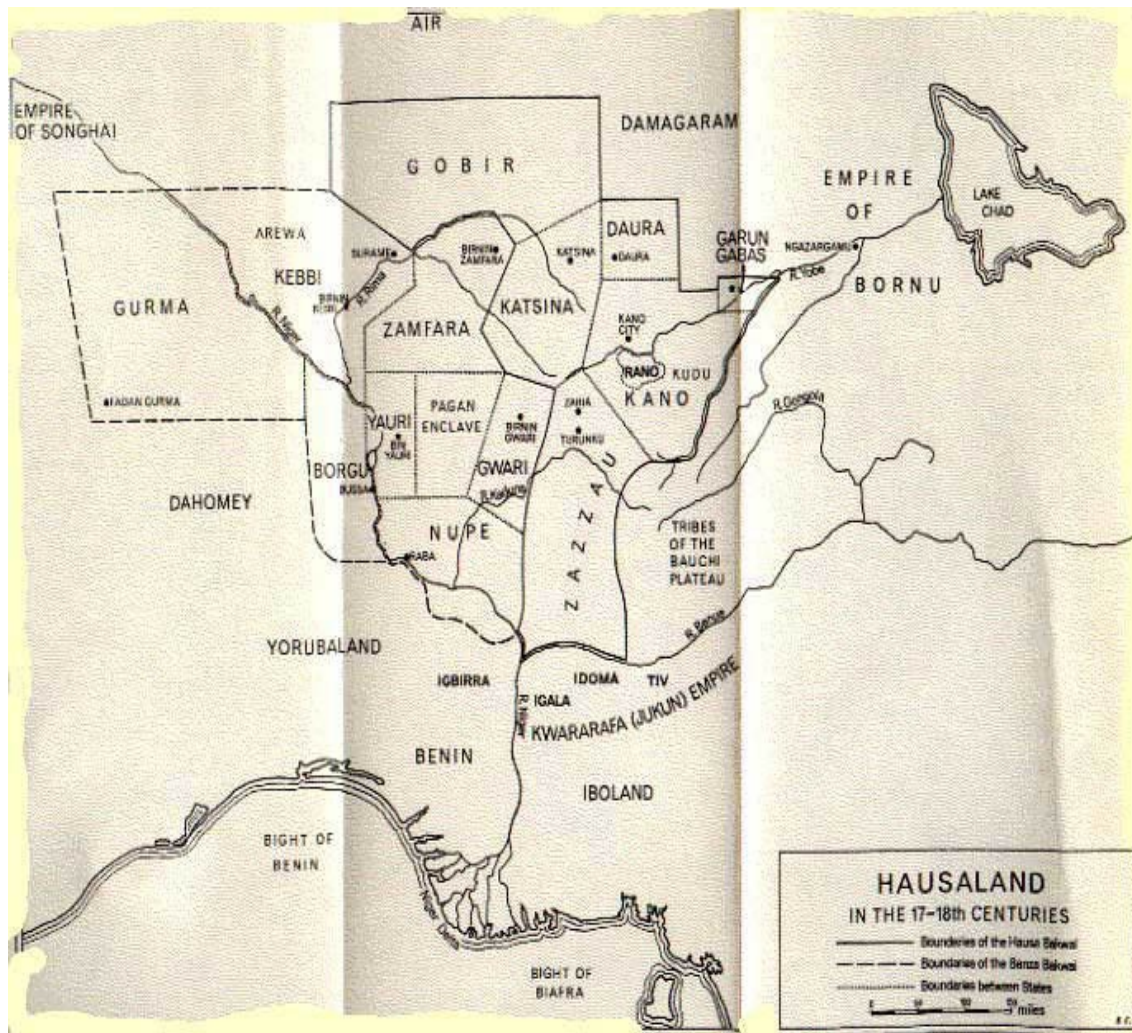
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See Thomas Hodgkin, *Nigerian Perspectives: An Historical Anthology*, O.U.P., 1975, p. 72.

Map 3

Hausa land in the 17th -18th Centuries

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Refer to H.A.S. Johnston, *the Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, London. Ibadan. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1972, p. 1.

The picture of Hausa land and its neighbours during the 17th and 18th centuries was that of a conglomeration of nearly equally powerful states engaged in a continuous and devastating warfare with one another, without a clear winner rising and all these apparently in a bid to preclude an external attack and a secure material gain. This statement is among other things an expression of absence of an influential power or authority that Hausa land and even Bornu, by virtue of their size and right, necessarily needed for stability.¹³³ This tragedy had to continue till this power and authority was found in the Sokoto Caliphate which united the Hausa States and checked the excesses of Bornu and Kwararrafa.

¹³³) Adeleye, ‘Hausaland and Bornu Hausaland 1600-1800’, op. cit., p. 596.

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2.2.3. The Consequences of the Wars on the Hausa Society:

2.2.3.1. The Fall in Commerce

The consequences of these wars were of particular interest on the Hausa society. Of immediate consequence was the fall in commerce and with it the revenue accruing to the state or as it were to the *Sarki*. The wars which continued had to be financed now through taxation, which became excessive in course of time. The case of Kano as it entered the 18th century is typical of the Hausa States.

2.2.3.2. The Rise of Taxation

For Kano the strain in the state's resources in trying to stem external war and contain internal rebellion is reflected in the rise of taxation imposed by its eighteenth century rulers. Mohammed Sharefa Dan Dadi¹³⁴ (1703-1731) is reported to have introduced seven practices for raising revenue, 'all of which were robbery.' These were Karo, Rinsua, Matafada, Yan Dawaki, Kauru¹³⁵, tax on maidens at marriage and tax on the main market Kurmi¹³⁶. Of him the Chronicler writes: 'He invented many other methods of extortion.' His successor, Kumbari¹³⁷, is said to have nearly killed Kurmi market by his excessive taxation. He taxed even the learned-men (*mallams*) and it was on account of his extortions that there were disturbances in Kano, leading to the departure of Arabs from the city for Katsina.¹³⁸

2.3. Paganism's Response to Islamisation and Some Obstacles to the Dissemination of Knowledge and Islamic Morals

Despite the continuity of learning and teaching in Hausa land during these two centuries, with movement limited, fear of menace persisting there were clear obstacles to the dissemination of knowledge. Obsessed with warfare and often desperate for success, the ruler not only gave up their role of overseeing the maintenance of Islamic standards in public matters but also engaged in things that were outright against Islam. Materialism, laxity, permissiveness and corruption thus set in. This increasingly gave a

¹³⁴) To know more about Sharefa Dan Dadi refer to Appendix I.

¹³⁵) Refer to Glossary. (Karo, Rinsua, Matafada, Yan Dawaki, Kauru).

¹³⁶) Refer to Glossary.

¹³⁷) See Appendix I.

¹³⁸) Ibn Khaldoun's Exposition of Royal Authority. Ibn Khaldun Muqaddima, F. Rosenthal (tr.), N.J. Dawood (abg and ed); p. 47 quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', Ibid.; p. 45.

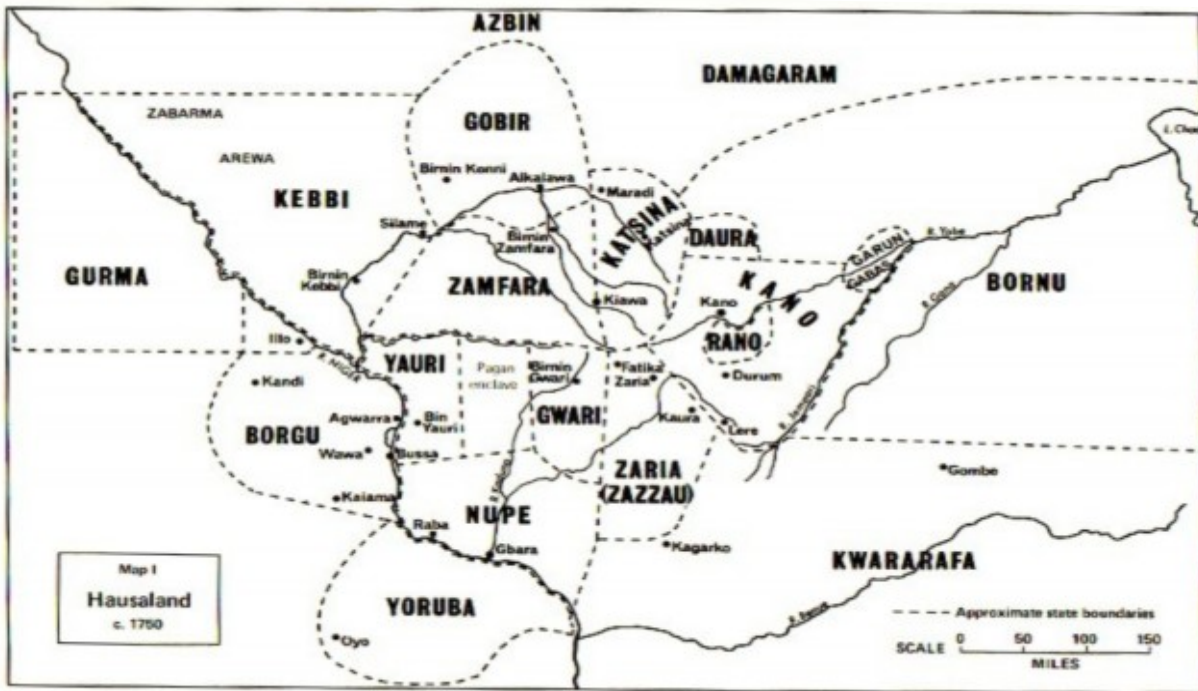
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receding paganism some chance and even those who were already Muslims found it easy to mingle Islam with some of these traditional rites.

Over and above this daunting deterioration was slavery which Islam has never approved. This phenomenon created serious discontent in the general public and the scholars in particular. Knowing as they did of the promise of their Lord to send them a renovator after every one hundred years, to re-establish Islam for them, they began to study the situation with extra concern, giving events and interpretations which conform to this belief.

Map 4

Hausa land C. 1750



See Mervyn HISKETT, *the Sword of Truth: The Life and Times of the Shehu Usman dan Fodio*, Northern western University Press, 1994, between p. 4 and p.5.

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The eighteenth century in Hausa land has been described by many scholars as a sort of 'dark age' or era of decline.¹³⁹ The traditional religion and Islam had become entirely integrated in most of the cities; but scholars, armed with Islamic conviction and keeping away from the ruling class were proliferating in the rural areas. *Iskoki* based customs that had no relationship to Islamic law were frankly practised in the courts, and all over the villages. The ruling families were living in luxury while the masses could only afford the basics of life.

The seeds of revivalism planted by early Islamic scholars and fostered, periodically, by Hausa rulers, only needed young activists willing to resurrect them among the common people and the scholars. The nomads¹⁴⁰, in particular, were ready for economic and political change. They were obliged to submit to oppressive taxes and by reason of their mobility and resentment could easily become a catalyst for revolution.

Gradually, a substantial number of the scholars came to lend support to the worsening order by joining the king's court; many withdrew into quietism, leaving only a few bold ones to point accusing fingers to the corruption and misery that was ascendant. Among these few was Jibril Ibn Umar who in fact went beyond raising accusing fingers to organise a holy war, which turned out to be abortive. It was in this emerging tide of discontent on the one hand and expectations on the other that 'Uthman Dan Fodio rose.

The following point delves into the rise and prominence of 'Uthman Dan Fodio.

3. Shaykh 'Uthman Dan Fodio: His Emergence and Prominence

3.1. The Shehu's Early Life and Domestic Environment

One of the Fulani who migrated from Senegambia (Futa Toro) due to the troubled times was a member of the Toronkawa called Mussa Jakollo. He and his followers went eastward and were able to reach Hausa land. This migration took place

¹³⁹) Levtzion, *Eighteenth Century*; op. cit., p. 16.

¹⁴⁰) The nomads here were the Fulani who go under many names. For further information on nomenclature see Appendix III. Refer also to Kevin Shillington, *History of Africa*, The Macmillan Press Ltd, London and Basingstone, 1989, p.106. D. J. Stenning, *Savannah Nomads*, London, 1959, pp. 18-19; Barth, *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa*, London, 1857, vol. IV, pp. 144-5.) Alhaji Junaidu, *Tarihin Fulani*, Zaria, 1957, p. 1.

Ahdallah ibn Muhammad, *Tazyin al-Waraqat (TW)*, translated and edited by M. Hiskett, Ibadan, 1963, p. 97. C. E. Hopfen, *the Pastoral FulBe Family in Gwandu*, London, 1958, pp. 1-3.

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in about the mid-fifteen-century (1450)¹⁴¹. Mussa Jakollo settled in *Birnin Konni*¹⁴² and his family remained there for the next eleven generations. The Shehu's younger brother and one of his biographers, 'Abdullahi ibn Muhammad claims that they settled there before the advent either of the Tuareg or the Hausas¹⁴³.

To this family, a boy named 'Uthman Dan Fodio, but who is usually known as Shehu was born at Maratta on Safar 29th A.H. 1168 / December 15th, 1754 CE. At the time of his birth, messianic prophecies were made and it was also stated that he himself was aware from a tender age that a great destiny awaited him.¹⁴⁴

His father, Muhammadu Fodio, was a pious and learned man. He was a teacher, a scribe, and the Imam¹⁴⁵ of his community. Like most of the Muslims of North Africa and the Sudan, he was a Sunni and had been reared in the Maliki School of Jurisprudence. He also belonged to the Qadiriyya fraternity.¹⁴⁶ Thanks to their father, 'Uthman and his brother 'Abdullahi were taught reading, writing, the Holy Quran and how to recite it. His mother, Hawa, also contributed a lot to his first education. For instance, when he was still a child, she used to teach him through telling him the stories of the Prophets, the stories of the Prophet Muhammad's wives and his companions mainly the four rightly-guided caliphs¹⁴⁷. Such stories fed his imagination and prepared him for the instruction, which his father had provided him with.

3.2. The Shehu as a Young Man in Degel

Though the Shehu's biographers tell little of his physical appearance, in oral tradition, he was average height, with a light complexion; but one account at least says

¹⁴¹) See the introduction to *Tazyin al-Waraqat*, translated by Hiskett, Ibadan University Press, 1963, p. 5. Fage, op. cit., p. 35, Kani, 'The Rise and Influence of Scholars in Hausaland' op. cit., p. 13.

¹⁴²) Konni which is a town in the province of Adar is located in the north of present Sokoto. It used to be one of the ancient Habe kingdom of Gobir. Wazir al-Junaid, *Dabt al Multaqatat*, p.12 quoted in Quick, 'Aspects of Islamic Intellectual History in Hausa land : 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, 1774-1804 C.E., op. cit., p. 74.

¹⁴³) In *BSOAS*, XIX, 3; 1957, p. 560, quoted in Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 15; refer also to Alhaji Junaidu in *Tarikh Fulani*, Zaria, 1957, and to F. H. El Masri, 'Life of Shehu Usman b. Fodio before the Jihad', *J.H.S.N.*, 2, n° 4, 1963, p. 436.

¹⁴⁴) Kani, 'The Rise and Influence of Scholars in Hausa land', op. cit; p. 12.

¹⁴⁵) It means the religious leader.

¹⁴⁶) The devotion of the Shehu's followers to this brotherhood can be gauged from the fact that to this day, town criers in all the villages and towns of Sokoto address the people as 'Ya-Kadirawa'. See H.A.S, *The Fulani Empire*, op. cit., ch. 3, WebPulaaku, 2001.

¹⁴⁷) The four rightly-guided caliphs are Abu-Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali. See Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit.; pp.24-

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that he was a black man, with a thin beard. He was also slender, unlike his brother ‘Abdullahi ibn Muhammad who was a bulky black man. When he reached early manhood, his piety, exceptional intellectual ability and charismatic personality started to attract disciples, chiefly from among members of his clan. Gradually, he rose as the leader of a group of young Muslim scholars with idealistic and reforming ideas as will be seen later. His relations with members of his household and companions were so warm and so friendly that he even inspired them with affection and confidence. He used to have a keen practical understanding of human psychology. He was always ready to use his religious authority to maintain conformity to what he considered as proper standards.

In the case of womenfolk, particularly, he did not hesitate to take advantage of their simple ingenuity to enforce observance of wearing the veil and avoiding mixing with men. For example, he would not allow them to go out to the market, or stray beyond the limits of their own compound. If they disobeyed him, he made sure some minor misfortune or inconvenience befell them.¹⁴⁸ But he used to impose his authority gently with humour and compassion. Sometimes, he used fear to serve his purpose but it was fear of God. On the other hand, he deplored the state of ignorance to which women were normally abandoned and advocated that they should receive a basic education in literacy and in religious sciences. He kept on encouraging his own daughter Asma to acquire such education.

From his early manhood, he lived with acute modesty, having, for example, only one pair of trousers, one turban, and one gown. He used to eat abstemiously and to be disinterested in wealth and possessions, which he regarded as corrupting. He used to earn his living by twisting rope, a job he could exercise while reading or teaching.¹⁴⁹ In this disciplined and austere way of life he was following the example of the Prophet. His friends were men of his kind kinsmen, scholars, and visionaries who shared his interests. They formed with him a close-knit community of intellectuals, deeply scornful of the pagan scene around them; and working enthusiastically together to advance the literary culture and Islamic doctrine.

¹⁴⁸) W.K.S, A.L.S, XII, 1971, p. 77, and also in RJ (Raud al-jinan).

¹⁴⁹) See the unpublished ‘Hadejia Chronicle’; M. Histett, Ph.D. thesis, p. 526. But of course, in a subsistence economy, in which money may have not been of primary importance, this was something of a gesture. There is an oral tradition that Sulaimanu, the first Fulani emir of Kano also earned his food in this way. The Shehu clearly could not have supported his considerable household of wives, and slaves by this means alone, quoted in Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 31.

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In common with most Muslims of his day the Shehu kept slaves¹⁵⁰. Some of them were inherited; others fell into his hands as a result of capture. They were fully integrated into his community. They were usually treated with consideration and affection. They were in turn deeply attached to him. There are many accounts in the written sources and in oral tradition that tell how his slaves, when offered freedom, refused it because it would mean separation from him.

Among his associates were men of many different characters and abilities. Though they respected him deeply and firmly believed in his mission, they happened to quarrel among themselves and even showed petty jealousies. But, he was often able to establish his authority and still discords through wisdom and good exhortation.

From his early days, he was surrounded by books, or rather by the manuscripts his father and others copied laboriously from the precious texts that came in from North Africa and Egypt, or were brought back by pilgrims from the Holy Lands. He was also much given to meditation. After the day's studies, he used to go off alone into the bush. Here, he would ponder on the life and character of the Prophet Muhammad. He happened to have been so profoundly affected through this imagination than he began to write long poems in praise of the Prophet. Some of these were done in Arabic and others in his mother tongue, Fulfulde.¹⁵¹ How, then, was this literary education achieved and what was the educational background of the Shehu and the intellectual milieu in which his ideas developed? This is what the following point tackles.

3.3. The Educational Background of the Shehu

As already said, the Shehu began his education at home by studying the rudiments of Arabic during his reading and memorisation of the Sacred Quran that he accomplished at the feet of his own father, Muhammad ibn Salih, a well-known Torodbe scholar. Then, he learnt *Al 'Ishriniyyat (the Twenties)* and identical works from his Sheikh, 'Uthman, known as Biddu al-Kabawi¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰)The fact that the Shehu owned the slaves not because he was in favour of it but because he did so so as to give the example when asking his community' people to free them.

¹⁵¹) The first of them, in Arabic, was completed in 1774, when he was twenty years old.1 Although this poem was an original composition, it is intensely informed by the style and imagery of a long tradition of classical Arabic verse, and springs from the Shehu's great mastery of Arabic literature. *T.W.*, p. 85 ; quoted in Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 31.

¹⁵²) Abdullahi ibn Fudi, *Ida al-Nusukh man akhadthu anhu min al-Shuyukh (the Repository of Texts-those of the Shaykhs from whom I Took Knowledge)*, translated by Hiskett in , 'Material relating to the

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In accordance with the influence of Timbuktu system of education, he learnt Arabic grammar and syntax from *Al-Khulasa*¹⁵³ and other works from Sheikh 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Hammada. He read *Al-Mukhtasar*¹⁵⁴ with his paternal and maternal uncle 'Uthman known as Bidduri. This Sheikh was so highly learned and pious that he managed to influence him greatly by imbuing the young scholar with his own piety, character, and deeds and with his somewhat magisterial reforming zeal during his accompaniment for nearly two years. As a result, the Shehu was reported to have imitated him in both character and deeds.¹⁵⁵

This quality of commanding righteousness and prohibiting evil meant that the Sheikh was not only satisfied with imparting knowledge but also applied his beliefs to the environment around him. It is in such teachings as these that the seeds of the Shehu's reformism lay. Also, during these two years, another Sheikh and maternal uncle, Muhammad Samba, was able to leave a strong impression of the importance of being precise in reporting Islamic knowledge and meticulous in storing information. He seemingly learnt and memorised most of what he read since he knew the Commentary of *Al-Karashi*¹⁵⁶ by rote and would correct the Shehu whenever he made a mistake or let something slip without looking at the book.¹⁵⁷

At this phase in his education, the Shehu was sent away in the tradition of *mulazama* where the student accompanied and often served the master of a specialised region of Islamic sciences. He went in search of knowledge to Sheikh Jibril ibn 'Umar¹⁵⁸ who was related to him through marriage and who influenced him most. The Shehu accompanied his master for a year until he reached Agades. Under this eminent scholar, the Shehu succeeded in qualifying in theology, '*Usul al fiqh*' (the Foundations of the Islamic Law), in Arabic grammar and syntax. He also studied the private writings of Sheikh Jibril and was instructed in his private conceptions of Islamic practice.¹⁵⁹ The influence of these teachings on the Shehu was so great that he held his master in great

State of Learning among the Fulani before the Jihad,' *B.S.O.A.S.*, vol .19. no, 3, 1957, p. 563; A .Brass, 'Eine neue Quelle Zur Geschichte des Fulreiches Sokoto, in *Der Islam* ', X , 1920, pp. 12-20 quoted in Tapiero, N. 'Le Grand Sheykh Peul 'Uthman ibn Fudi' *Revue des Etudes Islamiques* Année 1963, Paris (Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner), 1964, p. 54.

¹⁵³) This work called *Alfiyyat Ibn Malik* was an abridgement of *Al Kafiyah Al-Shafiyah* written by Ibn Malik al Dimashqi (d. 672 A.H., 1273 C.E.).

¹⁵⁴) *Al-Mukhtasar* is a well-known legal text.

¹⁵⁵) See 'Abdullahi ibn Fudi, *Ida al-Nusukh*, op. cit., p. 563, El Masri, *Life of Shehu*, op. cit., p. 437.

¹⁵⁶) *Al-Karashi* was a famous Maliki scholar who commented on *Al-Mukhtasar*.

¹⁵⁷) Abdullahi ibn Fudi, *Ida al Nusukh*, op. cit., p. 563.

¹⁵⁸) Sheikh Jibril was recognised as the most learned man in Central Sudan during that era.

¹⁵⁹) *Ibid*, p. 566.

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respect and wrote of him: 'If there be said of me that which is of good report, then I am but a wave of the waves of Jibril.' (I.N., p. 566).

Sheikh Jibril had been travelling and continued his way to Mecca for the Pilgrimage but the Shehu returned home to his family as he did not ask permission from his father. This short stay with Sheikh Jibril had a profound effect on the Shehu and strengthened his desire to practise his knowledge to society and bring about a real change. Sheikh Jibril who was known for having been an intense and zealous Muslim iconoclast, had tried a holy war in the Air region and had been expelled by the Tuareg as stated earlier. Moreover, he had been preaching reform in Hausa land which greatly annoyed the Hausa *Sarakuna*.¹⁶⁰

After this experience, the Shehu studied Quranic exegesis (*Tafsir*) with the son of his maternal and paternal Uncle Ahmed ibn Muhammad al-Amin (Ahmadu Dan Muhammadu Amino); and under Sheikh Hashim (Hashimu) al Zamfari (Bazamfare) who completed the explanation of the whole Quran. Then he managed to master the science of *Hadith* (prophetic tradition), completing the whole of *Sahih al- Bukhari*¹⁶¹ from his Uncle Muhammad ibn Raj (Muhammadu ibn Raji) ibn Muddibi.

Despite the fact that the sources are not quite evident at this point in the life of the Shehu, his brother 'Abdullahi in his description of the Shehu's education reported that he carried out his studies under numerous masters¹⁶² of Islamic sciences. He was really an apt student, with an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and absorbed all that his masters were able to teach him. The licence to teach was certainly conferred on him before he reached the age of twenty-five because by then he had become the instructor of his younger brother.

Throughout his career, the Shehu remained loyal to the basic teachings of Maliki Jurisprudence but his broad Islamic education considerably enabled him to benefit from the different schools of Islamic Jurisprudence or schools and a wide variety of scholars. For instance, he was deeply and greatly influenced by Sheikh 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani (d. 937 A.H.) a reputed Islamic Scholar who followed the Shafi'i¹⁶³ School of

¹⁶⁰) El-Masr, *Life of Shehu*, op. cit., p. 438; 'Abdullahi ibn Fudi, *Ida al Nusukh*, op. cit., p. 564.

¹⁶¹) A famous book compiling one of the most authentic prophetic traditions (Hadiths).

¹⁶²) Ibid; p. 565.. Refer to F.H.EL-Masri (Ed. trans.) *Bayan Wujub al-Hijra of 'Uthman Dan Fodio*, p. 2.

¹⁶³) Idris, al-Shafi'i was an outstanding Islamic scholar and well-known jurist (767-820 C.E.). He was a student of Imam Malik ibn Anas, the founder of the Maliki School of thought. Imam Al- Shâfi'i's rulings formed the basis of a new widely accepted school of thought called the Shâfi'i School.

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Jurisprudence and was famous for his flexible approach to the other schools.¹⁶⁴ Besides, the Shehu profited widely from his ideas and writings of Sheikh Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (1445-1505 C.E.), the prolific Egyptian scholar who was known to have taught many African students and corresponded with the rulers and sultans of Western Sudan. He advised them how to rule their subjects and how to avert un-Islamic practices.

Another Islamic scholar whose writings and life made a profound impact on the Shehu was Sheikh Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Karim Al-Maghili. Many of his works were still in circulation in Hausa land and the Shehu drew heavily on his philosophy of enjoining right and forbidding evil. He found parallels between the socio-political conditions of nineteenth-century Hausa land and sixteenth-century Songhay. The Shehu was quoted to have said:

‘If you contemplated what has been said by Al-Maghili on Sonni ‘Ali and his supporters and what judgement has been passed on them, you would understand beyond any doubt that these are the same political and social circumstances in which we have found the Sultans of Hausa land, their supporters, and their neighbours to the West and the Sout.h’¹⁶⁵

By 1774, Uthman had graduated from the formal phase of these advanced studies, and was free to take a career of his own and pursue further advanced studies if he wished. The career opportunities opened to this promising young scholar were abundant. In addition to the host of choices ranging from farming to trade he could begin up his own school. He could also join the lucrative court of the kings, but in that case he would have to condone or even participate in the corruption and oppression the establishment was engaged in. Thanks to his training that the Sheikh took to the career of preacher. This is a career which during his days involved holding public sessions along various itineraries. This fitted his literary and intellectual disposition for he could continue to pursue his advanced studies while discharging his preaching.

Thus the Sheikh entered his adulthood as a preacher, occupied himself with advanced studies at the same time. Having taken the task of preaching which had virtually no financial proceeds, apart from the generosity of fellow brothers, the Sheikh-as mentioned before -often had to engage in rope making to support his rigorous life.

¹⁶⁴) Kani, *the Intellectual Origin of Sokoto Jihad*, Ibadan, Iman Publications, 1405 A.H./1984/1985, p. 53. *The four orthodox schools (malhahibs) are the Hanafite School, the Malikite School, the Shâfi School, and the Hanbali School.* For more information, refer to Philips K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, Mac Millan Press Ltd, London, 1970, pp. 397-400; *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 22 ; pp. 22-32.

¹⁶⁵) Kani, *Intellectual Origin*, op. cit., p. 55. The original quote is found in ‘Uthman ibn Fudi, *Najm al-Ikhwan* (N.H.R.S).

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This austerity and simplicity appear to be more of a deliberate trial to tread on the path of the Prophet than of the making of circumstances. For in his first Arabic work a poem in praise of the Prophet composed around 1188 AH/1774-5- he described himself as a *muqtadi* i.e. one who modelled his life on the Prophet's.¹⁶⁶ It was such significant simplicity and exceptional intellectual ability which gained for 'Uthman a top place in a group of some young Muslim scholars that came to share some revolutionary ideas.

While engaged in preaching 'Uthman continued to advance his knowledge, availing himself of the best scholars of the day. The place, of a scholar in the social setting of Hausa land, is one of a symbol of truth, and a custodian of the values of the society. He admits no dichotomy between what said and what is done, nor does he ignore the aspirations of his people with whom he interacts daily and whose problems he seeks to solve. To 'Uthman as the society at large, the scholar is a model. It is not novel therefore that many of 'Uthman's teachers came to have remarkable influences on him as previously stated such as Sheikh 'Uthman Binduri¹⁶⁷, Shaykh Muhammad Sambo¹⁶⁸ and Jibril bin Umar.¹⁶⁹

As 'Uthman's mind matured under the counsel of these great scholars, his knowledge and perception increased and his thoughts and ideas developed correspondingly. He soon came to see the issue of preaching and solution to the problem of his society in the context of revival or renewal. Expressing this view in his early writings, 'Uthman wrote to say:

'God, the exalted, has ordained to send forth to the Umma at the end of every century a scholar (Alim) who would revive her religion for her. Such a scholar or Mujaddid would take upon himself the duty of enjoining the good and regulation of affairs of the people and the establishment of justice among them. He would support the truth against falsehood, revive the Sunnah and suppress innovation and denounce bad customs. As a result of his activities his condition would be different from those of the 'Ulama (Scholars) of his age and he would find himself a stranger amongst them, because his qualities are different from their own and men like him are few'.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶) *'The prosody and diction of this poem'* observed al-Masri, *'reveals a talented young man of sound training in the Arabic language, and the treatment of its theme reveals Dan Fodio as a deeply pious Sufi already convinced that he had a mission'* 'Abdullahi, *Ida al-Nusukh,...*, op. cit., Hiskett (Ed. trans.), op. cit., p. 563.

¹⁶⁷) Ibid.

¹⁶⁸) 'Uthman b Fodio, quoted in Ibid, pp. 564- 566 quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study.....', op. cit., p. 50.

¹⁶⁹) 'Uthman b Fodio, quoted in Ibid; quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study.....', op. cit.

¹⁷⁰) 'Uthman b Fodio, *Islam al-Munkirin*, quoted in M.A. al-Hajj, 'The Writings of Shehu 'Uthman Dan Fodio,' *Kano Studies* (1) 2 (1974, 77), p. 9; quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study.....', op. cit., p. 51.

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Here the Sheikh was expounding on an authentic and popular prophetic tradition. A kind of programme of action, something which the Sheikh took care to comply with, is obviously noticeable in the exposition. Though the Shehu was clearly striving to play the role of this renovator or revivalist, it is important to note that he did not at the start, not even later, declare himself the (*mujaddid*) renovator. Indeed the renovator, by the very nature of his mission, can only be known after he had accomplished his task and not before. It was the Sheikh's efforts and contribution towards this task of renewal that conferred on him the leadership of a movement that sprang out of his teachings and earned him the name of renovator as will be seen later.

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Conclusion

Here then is 'Uthman who was born of a learned family and gifted with a good intellectual ability, spent the entire of his childhood and youth learning and matured as a scholar well-grounded in Arabic and Islamic sciences. Having begun as an itinerant preacher he soon saw his mission in the context of renewal, centred as it is always on enjoining the good and forbidding the evil. How he went about fulfilling this task is subject of the next chapter.

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INTRODUCTION

As previously seen, 18th century Hausa land had truly known Islam for not less than four centuries in the course of which Islam and its culture had substantially permeated into the fabric of the society. Yet the start of the 17th century witnessed the ascendancy of strife and materialism which constrained this spread of Islam and culture. Both teaching and learning became impaired since the mass of the people was really drowning into the abyss of ignorance. Local customs and traditions regenerated, while mixing Islamic and heathen practices became rampant. Besides, bribery and oppression added to the ugliness of the scene.

Such situational problems must have occupied the minds of the scholars chiefly the preachers among them. They must particularly have occupied the mind of the Sheikh Uthman dan Fodio who by 1774 had begun holding preaching (Wa'az)¹ sessions. He must have taken some time giving thoughts to such problems and likely solutions. Renewal or revivalism² as he was soon to realise was the solution. For renewal, as it is implied in Shehu's writing *Ifham* and as Muslim history has shown, consists of endeavour, intellectual and otherwise, to pull a Muslim society out of the gulf of ignorance, corruption and injustice, regenerate it and set it once again on the path of the Holy Quran and true Sunnah, which the Muslims, at least, believe is the path of harmony, justice and progress.

Until the Shehu saw the task ahead of him in the context of revival, he was aiming at following a pattern of Malaman Wa'azi (wa'az scholars), which abounds, though in his admonishing, a strong yearning was found for change. The point in time he made explicit

¹) Wa'az (lit, admonishing) is the name by which the open sessions given by scholars are known in Hausa land. This tradition in which a scholar, in a public park and usually at sunset, is encircled by a large number of listeners began at the time Islam reached Hausa land and continues to this very day.

²) Renewal or revivalism is known as 'Tajdid' in Arabic.

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his conception of his duty as revival represents a departure from the established pattern and the launching of a novel struggle with definite objectives and mapped out programmes. This then represents the onset of a movement, which the Sheikh was soon to find himself leading. For thereafter his admonishing writings and his movements became evidently goal inspired and achievement oriented. How the Sheikh went about planning and organising his human resources for the sake of achievement of his aim is what this chapter tackles.

From the birth of the fruition of the movement four distinct phases can be identified: The phase of public preaching (1774-1793); the phase of planning and organisation of the movement (1793-1804); the phase of flight (Emigration or as it is called in Arabic (Hijra), holy war and victory (1804-1810) and finally the phase of the founding and establishment as well as the consolidation of the Sokoto caliphate and Islamic order (1810-1817).

The Shehu, his younger 'Abdullahi and his son Muhammad Bello were able to make the identification of these phases much easier. The content, tone, and sometimes the audience reveal to us the goals, objectives and even the obstacles and therefore stages of the movement. One constraint however hampers the accuracy and exactness of this study. This is the fact that not all extant works of the triumvirate and mainly the Shehu- on which this study concentrates- are dated. Though relative dating through internal evidence and cross reference as initiated by Professor al-Hajj³ does greatly alleviate some difficulties, absence of exact dating remains to be a remarkable limitation.

Because of the importance of the first phase, the lion's share will be devoted to it.

1. The Phase of Public Preaching (1774-1793 C.E.)

At the age of twenty, in 1188 A.H./1774-5 C.E., the Shehu Uthman dan Fodio began a new phase in his scholarly life. He had become confident and sufficiently well grounded in Islamic sciences to preach as well as to study.⁴ During week days, he taught his learners Islamic sciences such as Prophetic Tradition, Exegesis, Islamic Jurisprudence, Islamic mysticism, astrology etc...On weekends, he lectured to the general public. His brother, 'Abdullahi studied with him during this period and later became his trusted assistant. The

³) M.A. al- Hajj, 'The Writings of Shehu 'Uthman Dan Fodio: A Plea for Dating and Chronology', *Kano Studies*, V.12,1974 /77, pp. 5-4 quoted in Bugaje, ' A Comparative Study...', op.cit, p. 53.

⁴) The basic text for Shehu's early life, mainly this phase is Abdullahi, *Tazyin al-Waraqat*, Hiskett (Ed. trans), I.U.P., 1963 p. 85, in El Masri, *Life of Shehu*, p. 439, M.A. al- Hajj, *Meaning of Sokoto Jihad*, p. 7; Isma'il A.B. Balogun, *The Life and Works of 'Uthman dan Fodio*; Lagos, Islamic Publication Bureau, 1975, p. 33; Murray Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, London: Longman Press, 1967, p. 6; Kani, *Intellectual Origin*, op.cit., p. 31; Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, New York: O.U.P., 1973, p. 42.

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principal thrust of the Shehu's teaching seems to have been the expounding of the fundamentals of Islam and correcting the bad practices that had developed throughout centuries in Hausa land. He faced rigidity and extremism among the scholars and false claims made by pseudo mystics.⁵ From the outset, the Shehu distinguished himself from many of the traditional scholars by his concern and interaction with the common people. His brother, 'Abdullahi⁶ who was a great scholar explains in *Tazyin al-Waraqat*:

'Then we rose up with the Shaykh (Shehu) helping him in his mission work for the religion. He travelled for that purpose to the east and the west, calling the people to the religion of Allah by his preaching and his poetry in other languages and destroying customs contrary to Muslim law⁷ Some of the people from the surrounding countries came to him, and entered his community which had become famous through him'⁸

1.1 .The Nature of His Preaching

As previously stated the eyewitness account summarises the first few years of this phase, which started in 1774-75 when the Shehu in the company of few disciples (including his brother 'Abdullahi and later his son Muhammad Bello) began holding admonishing sessions in and around his hometown Degel. These open sessions were soon to be extended beyond Degel and its surroundings to cover the whole region of Gobir and later Kebbi, and even Zamfara states.

In Zamfara, 'a land over whose people ignorance was supreme and majority of those people had not smelt the scent of Islam',⁹ the Shehu and his team had to spend about five years. Shehu's audience there 'used to come gathering and mingling with their women ' and he 'segregated them, teaching them that mixing together was forbidden, after he had taught them the laws of Islam.'¹⁰ Giving a vivid description of some of such open sessions, Bello, an observant member of the mobile coterie says:

'... on arriving at the place where people were sitting he would give a general greeting audible to all those present. On setting on the chair he would politely and in a pleasant way greet the people three times. Then the people would be silent... He would then speak to them in a loud voice addressing himself to everyone without distinction... Sometimes a question will be posed while he was talking and he would stop and answer it. He was fearless in matters of religion and nobody's blame would

⁵) M.A. al- Hajj, *Meaning of Sokoto Jihad*; op. cit., p. 7; Kani, *Intellectual Origin.*, op. cit.

⁶) His brother 'Abdullahi accompanied him during most of his missionary journeys.

⁷) 'Abdullahi, *T.W.*, op. cit., p. 85.

⁸) Ibid, pp. 85-6. 'Abdullah being twelve years junior than Shehu ' Abdullahi was brought up by the Shehu in the course of his mission.

⁹) Ibid.

¹⁰) Ibid.

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make him budge from the truth...'¹¹ ...know that he represented the account of those usual fundamentals, in order and in the speech of those present...'¹²

Though the audience was often assorted, male, female, Muslims, non-Muslims, Hausa people, the Fulani, and the Tuaregs, the Sheikh did not appear to have faced any communication difficulties. Hausa, being the lingua-franca, must have been the most common language of instruction. Motivated by the situational problems of ignorance, syncretism and upsurge of innovation, the Sheikh made the fundamentals of Islam the subject of his talk. He often took time to explain the principles of (Oneness and attributes of Allah) which are central to belief in Islam. He also dealt in details with the basic acts of worship, taking care to show the true Sunnah way of performing them and the wrongs as well as the innovations that some people had introduced in them which should be eschewed. There was a great deal of common misconceptions, chiefly on the issue of belief and unbelief which he sought to clarify besides to some exposition on the Sharia.¹³ The Shehu also found time to talk about the prevailing moral laxity and oppression. He condemned them and eschewed his on-lookers from them only after he had shown their fallacy.

Although his language was simple and he gave room for questions, he knew that his audience being largely unlettered needed some ways of remembering the instructions. During his days communication aids such as cassettes, videos and the use of the Internet were unknown. Therefore, poetry was the most sophisticated and indeed the most effective mass communication aid. Since he had been well versed and greatly grounded in prosody, the Shehu found it easy to compose didactic poems which he usually did in Ajami (non Arabic languages: Fulfulde and Hausa mainly). In these poems, the Shehu found a very effective means of communication for besides simplifying the instructions, they facilitated memorisation.

Once memorised, the instructions seem fresh whenever recalled and in this way a lasting effect on the mind of the individual as well as the society at large was created. The poems, unlike the public talks, were usually specific in their themes and often pungent in their contents. They were often composed with definite purpose in mind. Typical of these

¹¹) Muhammad Bello, *Infaq al-Maysur*, op. cit., p. 42 translated for Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...' op. cit., p. 55 by professor O.S.A., Ismail, 'Towards an Intellectual History: Some Reflections on the Literature of the Jihad and the Caliphate C.1774-1793' in Y.B. Usman (ed.) *The Sokoto Caliphate*, Lagos A.B.U., 1979, pp. 165-80; also refer to Arnett, A.J. *The Rise of the Sokoto Fulani*, Kano, 1922, containing an English version of *Infaq al-Maysur* and, 'History of Sokoto' quoted in Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit.; p. 172.

¹²) Muhammad Bello, *Infaq al-Maysur*, op. cit., p. 48 quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...' op. cit., p. 55.

¹³) Ibid, pp. 42-6 quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...' op. cit.

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is *Boneji Hausa (the Trouble of Hausa land)* which appears to be targeted at the moral decadence, corruption and injustices in the society.¹⁴ Here the attack on laxity, local customs and misconceptions are very evident not unconnected with the above theme is another poem *Yimre Jahina*.¹⁵ The Shehu's message in the poems is not always negative and frightening. In many of them he tried to create confidence in his listeners of the mercy of their Lord.¹⁶

In calling people to the true Sunnah, the Shehu sought to undermine the basis on which people justified the practices of innovations.¹⁷ There are some Shehu's poems which although seemingly aimed at instilling better social behaviour in his audience, have very serious consequences on the status quo. They subtly and imperceptibly sought to change the tastes and values of the society and by so doing weaken the assumption on which the legitimacy of the established order rested.¹⁸

Apt in their expressions, passionate in their appeal, melodious in their tune, these poems spread all over the segment of the society, the street and the market places; the schools and the courts; the farms and the homes. They soon came to replace the vulgar songs which had formed a remarkable component of the Hausa/ Fulani ignorance. To the men at work and to the women in the kitchen, these poems appeared to inspire some tempo and vitality. They eventually became and still are to the ordinary men and women what books are to students and scholars.

¹⁴⁾ 1- Thanks be to Allah; and I salute the one who is the best among the creatures...
2- Let us pray Allah to lead Hausa land to the right way, that its religion may become stronger and its infidelity become weak etc...

For more information about this poem refer to 'Uthman b. Fodio, *Boneji Hausa*, (translated) by M.A. Abu Manga quoted in Bugaje, *ibid*, p. 57, in Aminu Hamajoda, "The Instrumentality of Fulbe Admonitory Poems in the 19th Century Islamic Revival in Northern Nigeria (1790-1860) quoted in *The Islamic Quarterly*, 1995 Volume XXXIX, Nb 1, p.19 and Appendix II.

¹⁵⁾ *Oh! Muslims stop hatred and do not detract
Detractors go to hell when they die, etc...*

For more information about this poem, refer to 'Uthman b. Fodio, *Yimre Jahima*, (quoted in A.Garba Saidu 'The Significance of Shehu's Sermons and Poems in Ajami in Y.B. Usman (Ed.) *The Sokoto Caliphate*, A.B.U, Lagos, 1979, p. 207 and Appendix II.

¹⁶⁾ *Oh God, the Forgiver,
Forgive my sins (committed) during the night
Forgive also the sins committed in the day light etc...*

For more information about this poem, refer to 'Uthman b. Fodio, quoted in *Ibid*, pp. 197-8 and Appendix II.

¹⁷⁾ *Leave us alone with recalling what
Father used to do etc ...*

'Uthman b. Fodio, quoted in *Ibid*, pp. 207- 208.

To know more about this poem, refer to Appendix II.

¹⁸⁾ *I thank you oh God for preoccupying me;
With the affairs of religion alone, which is a favour to me etc...*

For more information about this poem, refer to *Ibid*, p.199 and Appendix II.

1.2 .The Shehu's Style of Writing

Unlike most of the Islamic scholars and authors of nineteenth century Sudan, the Shehu's writings¹⁹ were known for their simplicity and clarity of thought. The Shehu had become proficient in Arabic language through his intensive study of Arabic grammar, syntax, rhetoric and poetry as mentioned in chapter one. Though his knowledge of Islamic sciences was comparable to any other leading scholar of his period, he was able to stand out for his documented use of Islamic sources and his ability to address the issues of different levels of society. When he wanted to write, he tailored his writing to satisfy the needs of the situation that he was facing. In addition to his writings in Arabic, he was also known to have produced works in Fulfulde and Hausa. Most of these writings, which number about four hundred and eighty on issues relating to teaching and destruction of bad customs alone, were done in poetry. Besides, he was known to have preached in Tamajek, one of the Tawariq(Tuareg) languages.²⁰

Dissimilar to other scholars such his brother, 'Abdullahi, or his son, Muhammad Bello, he did not write on a wide variety of topics. They were known to have written on prosody, rhyme, grammar, philology, medicine and history, but the Shehu confined himself to the pure religious sciences of (Fundamentals of Islamic Faith), Islamic Law or Jurisprudence, and Islamic Mysticism or *Sufism*.²¹ He wrote in a simple classical Arabic style that would keep any student away from confusion of the Arabic language. His books were filled with quotations from the classical sources of Islamic sciences: the Quran, the Sunnah, and the opinions of reputed scholars. This frequent use of other sources is actually regarded by many great scholars to be a higher form of writing as it leaves less room for subjective analysis and relies more on totally acceptable sources. The Shehu was quoted to have said:

'Nothing is my own, in all that I elaborated for you. I am only following the footsteps of traditional scholars to bring to your notice what they have said. I have

¹⁹) Over one hundred works attributed to him, many of them are short and may be mere transcripts of sermons and similar discourses. Most are likely to have been written during or after the Jihad. But the *long Ihya al-Sunna wa-ikhmad al-bida' a (the Revival of the Sunna and the Nullification of Innovations)*, this book is also termed as *(Revivication of Orthodoxy and Extinguishing of Innovation)* completed before the end of 1793.

²⁰) Kani, *Intellectual Origin*, op. cit., pp .37-8, 49.

²¹) F. H. El Masri, translation and edition of 'Uthman ibn Fudi's *Bayàn Wujuk al Hijra (Ala-al-Ibad_*, Khartoum: Khartoum University Press, 1978, p. 13.

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*never mentioned anything without ascribing it to its author. If you wish, you can look up every book which I have copied.*²²

Therefore, the Shehu wrote to meet the want of the hour and to equip his followers with the information necessary to understand and uproot the bad customs as well as to eradicate the teachings that opposed Islamic Doctrine. His writings were similar to textbooks that could be used by his students as the basis for their own instructions. In some cases, they were identical to the notes of speeches or the answers to questions given by the Shehu during his preaching tours. This kind of writing gives the searcher or the reader not only an idea of the Shehu's position on certain pertinent issues, but gives him insight into how he approached socio-political problems as well. By analysing the Shehu's poetry and Arabic writing in the light of the actual circumstances of his epoch, the student of history is capable of viewing the Shehu not only as an Islamic scholar, but also as a socio-political activist who actually succeeded in changing the opinions and lifestyle of Hausa land.

From what has already been said, one can say that the Shehu was so competent a reformer that he was able to bring about to some extent a profound change in the first and nearly second decades of nineteenth-century Sudan. His approach had mass appeal, in that he identified with the people outside the Habe courts and started to demand serious changes in their social, economic and political conditions.

It is quite important to remember that his principal thrust in the formative years of 1774-1793 C.E. was to set up the foundation of Islamic education, to correct the extremist elements among the scholars and to rid of the un-Islamic customs of the whole society. This approach was to cause an adverse reaction from those in authority. The Shehu was ready to undergo the consequences of his actions. The formative period was to lay the basis for his eventual flight, jihad, and establishment of an Islamic state. The effects of this message will be better understood through an in-depth analysis of his early teachings.

The hundreds of books and poems produced by the Shehu and the scholars of the Sokoto Caliphate preserved till now are a great testimony to their popularity and importance. They managed to produce an intellectual revolution that greatly contributed to change the ideas and customs of Hausa land to such a degree that his writings circulated in

²²) Khalil Mahmud, 'The Arabic Literary Tradition in Nigeria', unpublished paper, written at Ibadan University Library, April, 1976, p. 12; El Masri, *Bayan Wujub al Hijra*, op. cit., p.14. Original quote taken from 'Uthman ibn Fudi, *Masa'il al Ummat al Muhammadiyya*, manuscript preserved in the Ibadan University Library 1982 / 113.

the nineteenth century are still being read, analysed and applied to Hausa society today (Northern Nigeria).

1.3. The Contents of His Preaching

1.3.1. The Shehu's Comments on Social and Religious Customs in Hausa land

1.3.1.1. On Reviving the Sunna in Religious Beliefs, Social Affairs and Customs and Destroying Innovations (Ihya Al-Sunna Wa Ikhmad Al Bida'a).

Of the great number of books, poems, written by the Shehu during the first thirty year-era of his teaching and preaching career up to the holy war (1774-1804 C.E.), *Ihyà al-Sunna*²³ was the first most important work in Arabic. It seems to have been produced at a critical time after the Shehu had returned from his tours and settled in Degel.²⁴ The missionaries who were left in the cities where the Shehu had taught needed a work that would remind them about what he had preached. *Ihyà al-Sunna* provided a text-book summary of key areas of Islamic life that covered the essence of Shehu's mission and needed to be stressed on. It was so vital that chapters from it were later made into separate works to emphasise their importance. For example, the Shehu wrote *Wathiqat al-Ikhwan*²⁵, and *Sawq al-umma*²⁶, to confirm and further explain the importance of establishing the traditions of the Prophet as the basis for Islamic lifestyle. He also produced *Bayan al-Bid'a al-Shaytaniyya*²⁷ during this time to well expose and vilify the local customs and practices that were contrary to Islam. Another work of primary importance was *Kitab Nur ul-Al-*

²³) The title of the book precisely states the Shehu's primary purpose, from which all else derived. For it was his constant endeavour to revive the Sunnah and banish 'innovation'. See Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., pp. 51-53.

²⁴) I. Balogun, *Life and Works*, op. cit., p. 49; Idem, *Critical Edition of Ihya*, p. 36. See also, Norbert Tapiero, op. cit., pp. 71-2

²⁵) Full title: *Wathiqat al-Ikhwan li tabyin dalilat wujub ittiba al-kitab wa al-Sunna wa Al-Ijma wa dalil ijtinàb al-bida'a liman yudàyin bi al-Islam wa -al -dalil'ala wujub ittiba al-kitab (The Exposition of the Evidences which, oblige following the Kitab (al-Quran), the Sunna, and the Ijmà (the Unanimous Consensus of the Scholars of Islam) as well as the Evidence for the Avoidance of Innovation for the Who Follows the Religion of Islam, and the Obligation of Following the Book)*; Bashir Muhammad, Editing; Commentary, and translation of *whathiqat al-Ikhwan li-Tabyin Dalilât WujubIttiba al-kitab wa al-Sunna wa al Ijmà*, (M.A. diss. Bayero University, 1988).

²⁶) Full title: *Sawq al-Umma ila ittiba al-Sunna (Mobilizing the Islamic Nation to follow the Sunna)*; Kamaldeen Abdul Azeez (Aziz) Balogun, A Critical edition of 'Uthman b. Fudi's *Sawq al-Umma ila itiba al-Sunna*, M.A. diss., University of Ibadan, 1982.

²⁷) Full title: *Bayàn al Bid'a al-Shaytaniyya allati ahdathahà al-nàs fi abwab al-Milla al-Muhammadiyya (Exposing the Satanic Innovations that the People Have Perpetrated in the Domains of the Community of Muhammad)*; see quotations in *BSOAS*, XXV, 3,1962 quoted in Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, XXXII; in Tapiero, op. cit., p. 72.

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*bàb*²⁸ which addressed the problems of a large section of society and responded to a variety of questions.

From the outset, the Shehu in his writing of *Ihya al-Sunna* made his intentions very clear:

‘ Let the critic of this book know that my intention in it is the revival of the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) and the destruction of Satanic innovation ...My intention is neither to bring shame upon the people nor to engage in finding faults with them.’²⁹

The Shehu went to great lengths in his writings to show and prove the importance of following the Quran, the Sunnah and the Agreement of the Muslim Jurists (*Ijma*)³⁰ as a basis for all decisions.³¹ As a result, *Ihya al-Sunnah* and the works that were produced from it should not be viewed as simply textbooks of Islamic theology or laws but the Shehu’s practical guide to establishing Islamic lifestyle and wiping out the customs contrary to the Islamic pattern such as the heretical practices. They really represented the social commentary of an Islamic scholar who was able to see society through the eyes of his scholastic training and orientation.

The Shehu was a young scholar faced with tremendous criticism from the part of a well established, conservative group of learned men. By having recourse to the Islamic Consensus and the precedents set by reputed Islamic authorities, the Shehu was shielding himself from his opposition.³²

The format in this period was very academic and sometimes repetitive but its importance lied in the content which delved in the most intimate affairs of the lives of the

²⁸) This book, though not dated, (*Light of Hearts*) appears to have been written before 1804 C.E. The beginning includes a pre-jihad phase ‘(This work)...is useful, if Allah wills, for those who rely on it. I have laid the foundation in it for the rule of the Hausa land’ Also, jihad is not mentioned anywhere in the book; refer to Tapiero, op. cit., pp. 73-4; *Revue Africaine*, 41^{ème} année, n° 41, O.P.U, 1897, pp. 297-320.

²⁹) Shehu ‘Uthman Ibn Fudi, *Ihya al-Sunna wa Ikhmad al-Bid’ā*, Beirut: Dar ul-Fikr, Third Edition, 1981, p. 5. See, Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., pp. 52-3.

³⁰) Quoting from Al Suyuti in his work, *Al-Niqāyah*, the Shehu in *Ihya al-Sunna*, op. cit., p. 12, defined the *Ijmā* as ‘The agreement of the Jurists of any period on the ruling for a new occurrence in any time period.’

³¹) Refer to ‘Uthman, *Ihya al-Sunna*, op. cit., p. 11. The Shehu distinguished the Sunna from innovation in religion with the following quote from Shaykh Ahmed Zarrouq ibn. Muhammad ibn. ‘Isa b. Zarrouq Al Fasi (846-899 A.H./1442-3-1493-4 C.E.) in his work (*Umdat al-Murid, al-Sadiq*) (The Support of the True Seeker). See *Ibid*, pp.11, 14., 18-20; I. Balogun, *Critical Edition of Ihya*, op. cit., pp .84-5; ‘Uthman, *Ihya al-Sunna* pp. 13, 21-22

³²) In the classical sciences of exegesis and Islamic Jurisprudence, the most authentic works were always considered to be those which leaned greatly on proofs from the Holy Quran, the Prophetic Traditions, the sayings of the companions of the Prophet, and the leading scholars of the succeeding generations.

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Islamic community of Hausa land such as: Personal Hygiene (the acts of ceremonial purification, ablutions, etc...) The Shehu pointed out that they ought to be done in accordance to the Sunnah.³³

This intimate critique of society showed that the Shehu focussed on areas that would bring about more than an intellectual change in the minds of the people. He wanted to modify their social conduct. He stressed cleanliness and modesty as the basis of personal care and interpersonal relations. This emphasis was in direct line with the Sunnah which ordered Muslims to cover their private parts and most of their bodies and to avoid looking at the nakedness of any person, dead or alive. He laid emphasis on the fact that Islam is in total opposition to sexual relations before marriage and underlined outward modesty as a type of protection. The Shehu found it necessary to accentuate the consciousness of what was clean and how to keep away from what it was unclean in order to prepare his people to carry out their religious duties properly since worship in Islam required the proper intention and ceremonial purity to keep away its adherents from impurity which might cause diseases.

The Shehu also discussed some cases concerning women such as menstruation and childbirth. Embarking upon this aspect, the Shehu brought to light the general guidelines of the Sunnah. He warned them of the malpractices carried out by many people in Hausa land.³⁴ Besides, the Shehu tackled circumcision and female infibulations³⁵ as well. In *Ihya al-Sunnah*, the Shehu gave an in-depth analysis of circumcision and its position in Islam and in Hausa land. He stated that it was an established part of the Sunnah.³⁶ The Shehu's attitude in this regard put him in open direct opposition to the Fulbe who had established special rites unknown to the Islamic lifestyle. He seemed to be resolute to oppose any practice not conformed to Islamic laws or harmful to the people.

Furthermore, he stressed marital relations. For instance, the Shehu dealt with the corrupt practices in relation to marriage such as the dowry³⁷, the sexual union of the man with the woman and the secrecy of marital affairs. He stated that acquaintances or relatives took the dowry of the woman which was an undesirable innovation. He also deemed the

³³) Refer to 'Uthman, *Ihya al-Sunna*, op. cit., pp. 54-57.

³⁴) Ibid., pp.61-63; 'Uthman, *Sawq al Uma*, p.112; Ibn al Hajj, *Al-Madkhal*, II, p. 64; 'Uthman, *Ihya al-Sunna*; op. cit., pp. 64-65.

³⁵) 'Uthman, *Ihya al Sunna*, op. cit.; p.11. To know more about the practice of female infibulations in West and central Africa, refer to Umar Al-Nagar (Naqar), *The Pilgrimage Tradition in West Africa: an Historical Study with Special Reference to the Nineteenth Century*, Khartoum University Press, 1972 and Appendix II.

³⁶) Refer to 'Uthman, I.S., op. cit., p. 217.

³⁷) Refer to 'Abdellati, *Islam in Focus*, op. cit., p.115.

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marriage reception which was united with corrupt rituals and heretical practices as a prohibited innovation. This does not mean that he was attacking the concept of the marriage ceremony for it is a Sunnah according to the Islamic Law. Besides, he regarded as another form of innovation³⁸ the taking of a gift by the wife from her husband in order to sleep with her.

Concerning the marriage ceremony mentioned earlier, the Shehu believed that the wedding ceremony was supposed to be a time of celebration, joy and relaxation.³⁹ Seemingly, a newly married woman in Hausa land had to be offered certain gifts before she could agree to talk to the bridegroom. This was known in Hausa as *Sayen baki* which means 'buying the mouth'. The Shehu thought that this practice really lowered the concept of marriage to involve only the material aspects and took away from the spiritual aspects of marital life⁴⁰. As regards the proper union of men and women, the Shehu considered many marital relations as innovations such as having sexual intercourse while being watched, approaching the wife for sex suddenly before fondling and playing with her in preparation for intimacy and so on.⁴¹

From what has been mentioned before, it is deduced that the Shehu seemed to be concerned about strengthening the relationship between married couples. Stability in the family units could bring stability to the whole society.

In addition, the Shehu did not forget about dealing with the area of food and drinks and presenting for his followers important aspects of the proper system of Islamic custom in the sphere of eating and drinking.⁴² Concerning the evil practices in relation to eating and drinking, the Shehu stated that food and vessels that were reserved specially for the man were forbidden innovations if pride and arrogance are intended from them. If having this special arrangement was the normal way of life, it was an undesirable innovation⁴³. The Shehu, here, again, clearly displayed his concern for the social and religious well-being of his followers by bringing obviously established Islamic precedents for food and drink. He appeared to be endeavouring to weed out bad local practices and develop a

³⁸) The Shehu views this act as adultery or prostitution. See 'Uthman ibn Fudi, *Bayān al-Bid'a al-Shaytāniyya*, op. cit., pp. 23-4.

³⁹) The Prophet, himself, encourages chanting and dancing on this occasion provided that listening to lewd singing, engaging in sexually provocative dancing, and partaking of drinking of intoxicating beverages should be kept away from.

⁴⁰) Taher, op. cit., p. 208. Kani, *Al-Jihad al-Islami Fi Gharb Ifriqiya*, op. cit., p.74.

⁴¹) 'Uthman, *Bayan al-Bid'a al-Shaytaniyya*, op. cit., p. 24; Ibn al-Hajj, *al-Madkhal*, II, op. cit., pp.188-202.

⁴²) Ibid, pp. 244-6; Ibn al-hajj, *al-Madkhal*, I, p. 209-211.

⁴³) Ibid, p. 248.

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refined form of eating manners that would distinguish the Muslim families from the non-Muslim one and lead to healthier interactions.

Moreover, the Shehu tackled the affairs of the Mosque.⁴⁴ As regards the Mosque and the practices as well as customs that had developed in Hausa land through *Iskoki* forms of devotion, the Shehu was able to make a strict interpretation of the Sunnah. He said that the mosque should be strictly used for performing prayers, learning the teachings of Islam and reciting the prophetic prayers.⁴⁵ He was facing a people who had been practising a pervasive form of spirit worship that could be highly personal or collective.⁴⁶

Concerning the innovations, the Shehu was attacking customs and organisation of the *Iskoki* belief system which was known to support religious shrines and places of devotion. The Shehu was against establishing too many mosques in one location.⁴⁷ He also resisted the idea of spending too much money on spreading carpets or using fans there. Simultaneously the Shehu appeared to be overly austere in his call for the avoidance of putting carpets in the mosque or using fans. This displayed his zeal to implement the literal Sunnah of the Prophet whose mosque was described as being very simple and entirely void of any decoration; or due to his own Fulbe cultural preference for animal skins or the bare earth

Additionally, he condemned those who raised their voice in it even in teaching unless it was necessary. In addition, he considered the fact of having storytellers⁴⁸ in the mosque as an undesirable innovation⁴⁹. The Shehu's call for the forbidding of storytellers in the mosque was a very important step for the establishment of a purer form of Islamic lifestyle. The Shehu seemed to be emphasising storytellers who intended to distract the worshippers by telling stories of low moral quality. Furthermore, calling the people to

⁴⁴) At first, the Shehu's advice to show tolerance with non-Muslims chiefly in regards to their houses of worship was probably a very wise strategy in a land filled with *Iskoki* worship and powerful cult leaders. It also witnesses his early approach in the formative phase of his message. He was still lacking the position to change the practices of unbelief with his hands, so he chose a path of moderation and apparent acceptance.

⁴⁵) Refer to Appendix II.

⁴⁶) 'Uthman, *I. S.*, op. cit., p .70 and Appendix II.

⁴⁷) Refer to Appendix II.

⁴⁸) As it is widely known, storytellers and griots in the Western Sudan were traditionally the custodians of history and national customs. For transmission, they relied on oral testimony. It must be noted that the Arabic storyteller does not necessarily apply to the griot that carried the historical stories of the founding of empires, the lineages of people, or significant historical events. The Shehu seems to be emphasising storytellers who intended to distract the worshippers by telling stories of low moral quality.

⁴⁹) 'Uthman, *I. S.*, op. cit, pp. 73-5. This position was taken from the words of Imam Malik, himself, and found also in *al-Madkhal*.

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prayer with other words, different than the normal words of the call for prayer was an undesirable innovation⁵⁰.

Regarding the birth of a child and blood sacrifices, the Shehu stated that the birth of a child was an important occasion for Muslims as well as for the traditional *Iskoki* spirit worshippers. The Shehu took a very strict position on the practice of the Sunnah in this regard. He laid emphasis on the fact that the sacrifices for the newborn baby should be simple, focussing on naming the child, seeking blessings for his life and distributing the meat to the poor and the needy.⁵¹ The Shehu condemned the *Iskoki* spirit worshippers who were known to lay great stress on appeasing the spirits through the sacrifice of specific animals at specific places. He was also against their revering special objects and their connecting the flow of blood at the right time, for the sustenance of the *Iska*, with the success and protection of the sacrifice. The Shehu also criticised un-Islamic practices at birth practised.⁵²

In *Kitab Nour al-Albab* for instance, the Shehu mentioned some of the Fulbe rites along with other heretical practices. For example, the ignorant slaughtered sheep to comb wool into their hair and sacrificed the strange offspring of their cows and sheep. They also punished their youth for disobeying their parents and not respecting their elders in a manner that was not allowed by the law. They went with their youth into the desert and illegally punished them. Those acts were peculiar to the Fulani tribe who lived in those lands⁵³. The Shehu pointed out relentlessly in his writings the fact that adults in general and parents in particular should at least treat the youth properly⁵⁴ and incited them to hold fast to the true Sunnah which required from them to study and implement Islamic lifestyle as well as to take on responsibility as duty to Allah and the community.

⁵⁰) Ibid, pp. 75-7.

⁵¹) Ibid, p. 180.

⁵²) The Shehu said:

'If you said, 'What is the ruling for what some women do who put the knife that they cut the navel of the newborn baby with, by its heads?' I would say that it is an undesirable innovationIf the mother gets up, she carries the knife with her. She will do this for forty days on the justification that it is protecting her from being harmed by the Jinn. Also, a caution should be taken against the practice of some of the women. If a mother leaves her child at home for an emergency and does not have anyone to sit with the child, she leaves a jug of water and some iron.'

Spirit cults and fear of the Jinn at the birth of a child were common throughout the Middle East and Africa. Ibid, pp. 180-1; Ibn al-Hajj, al-Maddkhal, III, op. cit., p. 292.

⁵³) The Shehu referred to his own tribe as Juhhal (ignorant people) an Arabic term carrying a derisive meaning. The Shehu has been often referred to as a Fulbe leader who led a Fulbe revolution against the Hausa States. See J.S. Trimmingham, *A History of Islam in West Africa*, London: O. U. P., 1962, p. 200, E. W. Bovill, *The Golden Trade of the Moors*, op. cit., E. J. Arnett, *The Rise of the Sokoto Fulani*, Kano, 1922.

⁵⁴) 'Uthman, *I.S.*, op. cit., p. 222.

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As previously quoted, *Iskoki* worshippers had replaced the Jinn for their local spirits so as to continue their religious practices within an Islamic lifestyle. The Shehu kept on attacking this belief at the most basic level to make an entire break with the *Iskoki* system. He wrote that and among the unbelievers there was who claimed to be a Muslim and performed the duties of Islam but he wrote the names of Allah or the Quran on unclean substances such as the bones of the dead and the heads of dogs or wrote both of them with blood of animals butchered in sacrifice or wrote and washed them with water as well as split the skin of a snake and mixed them together. The Shehu took him for an unbeliever.⁵⁵ To use the ninety-nine names of Allah as a means of blessing and seeking protection was a practice considered as un-Islamic. That usage seemed to be directly linked with the *Iskoki* practice of using blood sacrifice as a medium of gaining favour of the spirit world.⁵⁶

Regarding medicine and the curing of ailments, the Shehu asserted that the best cure was that which conformed to the Islamic Law. He recommended that Muslims should follow the traditional Islamic method of seeking cures to diseases by first, praying to Allah, invoking His Blessings and then using the necessary medicine. This medicine could include reading some Quranic verses or special prophetic prayers, in case of headaches, the evil eye, or spiritual maladies; and drinking honey for stomach ailments or pains. The Shehu also prescribed some of the well known medical practices permitted by the Prophet in his time and accepted as the Sunnah. They included the cupping of blood, non-intoxicating forms of snuff, and cauterization.⁵⁷

Concerning the un-Islamic forms of medicine, the Shehu declared that regarding what the people had innovated in the area of medicine and incantations was seeking cures by using unclean substances for internal and external treatment. He considered that act as a prohibited innovation. The Shehu also regarded that seeking cures through the use of foreign words that were unknown to the people as a prohibited innovation in the Maliki School of jurisprudence.⁵⁸ By trying to bring the medical practices into conformity with the Sunnah, the Shehu was addressing a sensitive area which every person whether rich or poor would be profoundly affected by the *Iskoki* spirit system that had incorporated a system of cure through its sacrifices, invocations and rituals.

⁵⁵) 'Uthman, *N.A.*, Kaduna, Shoyemi Printing Works, pp. 5-6, Yusuf Wali, 'The Translation of the *Nur al - Albab* (of 'Uthman Ibn Fudi)', *Kano Studies*, New Series, Vol. 2, n^o. 1, 1980, p. 13.

⁵⁶) Writing the names of Allah or the Quran is a preferred act in Islam but not on the bones of the dead, the head of a dog and other unclean substances.

⁵⁷) 'Uthman, *I.S.*, op. cit., pp. 260-2. This shows that a diseased man can be treated either by using medicine, blood tests or X-ray therapy.

⁵⁸) *Ibid*, p. 263. Refer also to Appendix II.

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If Islam were to gain real supremacy in Hausa land, it would have to give solutions to the real problems of life. The Shehu must have been well conscious of this fact since he tried to link even the minutest detail of lifestyle to the belief in Allah and the following of the Sunnah. His guidance on medicine was very strict and followed methods taken directly from the Sunnah.⁵⁹ In a very clear, precise and concise manner, the Shehu distinguished between Islamic medicinal cures and *Iskoki* or magical cures. He stated that seeking cures through blowing into knots or using other magical formulas such as reading incantations on salt or metal are undesirable practices that had to be extirpated.⁶⁰ According to the Islamic Law, this was not medicine but simply magic.

The Shehu was also to face the people who pretended to be Muslims but involved themselves in magic and secretive arts. He strengthened his argument by stating that among them there was he who claimed to be a Muslim and performed the duties of Islam but he threw cotton or other things on a stone or in the road or under the trees or in the crossroads or... For the Shehu, he was an unbeliever.⁶¹ In addition, the Shehu stated that among them there existed who claimed to be a Muslim and performed the duties of Islam yet he bewitched people and separated two people who were friends or a man from his wife. According to the Shehu, that so called a Muslim was not a true believer.⁶²

Like almost all societies in Hausa land, magic and the secret arts have always been a source of great fear and superstition. The *Iskoki* belief system, though having very open practices and a world view shared by people all over Africa, contained forms of secret cult worship and practices. A great deal of people appeared to have been preoccupied with the fear of spirit possession or attack. *Bori* mediums, as stated earlier, were highly influential even on the ruling classes and were constantly consulted for predictions and protection against foes and evil forces. The use of secret practices and unknown languages was therefore a specialisation that had remarkable influence on levels of society. The Shehu adopted a firm stand against all of these practices, writing:

⁵⁹) Though the Shehu only mentioned a few of the prophetic remedies, his son Muhammad Bello, who became a great scholar, wrote a number of detailed works which were taken from well-known Arabic sources. He prescribed remedies for piles worms, eye diseases and a number of maladies which he listed alphabetical by along with their cures. Refer to Murray Last, *A Note on Attitudes to the Supernatural*, p. 8. Some of Bello's works include *Tibb al-Hayyin*; *al-Qaul al-Mâathur fi Bayan Adwiyat Illat al-Basur*; *Tambih al Ikhwān ala Adwiyat al-Didan*, and *Takhlis al-Mâqasid al Mujarrada fil- Adwiyat al-Farida*.

⁶⁰) Ibid., p. 264

⁶¹) Refer to Appendix II.

⁶²) Separating a husband from his wife or a friend from another is regarded by Islamic law to be one of the most dangerous forms of magic. In the second chapter of the Quran, verse 102, mention is made of this form of magic and its origin in ancient Babylon. The Shehu once more, decisively condemned the act even if it is the person a disbeliever but the laws of Islam do not apply to him.

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'O my Brothers, beware of using magic such as incantations, spells, and letters with an unknown meaning, as well as writing Allah's name, the Quran, or the Prophet's names in order to bring love or enmity between people... And anything connected to magic and is used to gain some benefit or ward off evil is disbelief. Allah, the Most High, has said. 'The magician will never be successful, no matter what skill he attains.' (Quran, 20:69).⁶³

In the first part of *Kitab Nur-ul-Albab*, the Shehu criticised a number of other local practices that had very serious implications. He listed them in a very simple style and left the explanation to the student or teacher who probably had some familiarity with his detailed discourse. He also classified the Hausas as three types, declaring that one group performed the acts of Islam and did not show any deed of the unbelievers. Anything which was devoid of Islam was not heard from them and they were pure Muslims. Another group was mixed; they performed the actions of Islam but they did the actions of the unbelievers and they uttered speech that which was devoid of Islam. According to him, they were pure unbelievers. A third group had never smelt the scent of Islam and did not claim it.⁶⁴

For the *Iskoki* worshippers, the tree represented an important symbol of natural power and concentration of spiritual forces. Blood sacrifices and other religious rites were performed under the shadow of many great trees in Hausa land. On the other hand, Islam has always required the believers to renounce the divinity of natural objects and focus only on the Creator. About this, the Shehu said that among those who were mixed there was he who claimed to be a Muslim and performed the duties of Islam; nevertheless he exalted trees and stones by offering sacrifices to them and giving alms or pouring a type of paste on them. The Shehu considered him to be an unbeliever.⁶⁵

It seems that the Shehu was challenging the syncretism that developed for centuries by criticising the people who tried to carry out such religious practices. In specifying exaltation, sacrifice, almsgiving and the paste pouring ritual he was attempting to rid some of the chief religious activities destined to venerating trees. No doubt, this would have a great effect on the core of the *Iskoki* religious practices. He wanted to imitate Al-Maghili and other Islamic scholars who eradicated the sacred trees for they represented idolatry.

⁶³) 'Uthman ibn Fudi, *Wathiqat al-Ikhwan*, pp.76-7.

⁶⁴) 'Uthman, *N.A.*, op.cit., pp.1-3; quoted in Abderrahmane al Mahi, op.cit., pp. 113-4 and Kani, op.cit., p. 73.

⁶⁵) 'Uthman, *N.A.*, op.cit., p. 4. This ruling is probably taken directly from the replies of Al-Maghili to the Questions of Askia Al-Hajj Muhammad. The Shehu added, 'the pouring of a type of paste on them (the trees) which seems to be Hausa-specific. This endeavour again displayed that the Shehu was influenced by the precedents set by earlier Islamic scholars but was applying them to Hausa land.' See J .O. Hunwick, *Sharia in Songhay: The Replies of al-Maghili to the Questions of Askia al-Hajj Muhammad*, (ed., Trans.)O.U.P., 1985, p. 77.

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One of the fundamental principles of the Islamic faith is belief in the resurrection of the dead and the Day of Judgement.⁶⁶ Many spirit belief systems denied the resurrection of the dead and a final time of accounting. Concerning this, the Shehu affirmed that among them there was he who pretended to be a Muslim and carried out the duties of Islam nonetheless he denied the resurrection of the dead and had no belief in the Day of Resurrection. According to the Shehu, he was an unbeliever.⁶⁷ The Shehu really established a clear demarcation between the two belief systems by relating denial of resurrection with the state of disbelief.⁶⁸ The Shehu was also pointing out the contradiction of one who claimed to apply Islam and simultaneously denied its fundamental beliefs.

The knowledge of the unseen and the future was traditionally one of the most basically attributes of the Creator in Islam. Consequently, people who pretended to see into the future or control the fate of others were considered by the Islamic scholars to be heretics. One of the most powerful claims of the custodians of the *Iskoki* shrines or the practitioners of the *Bori* rites was the ability to communicate with the spiritual world and have mastery over the knowledge of the unseen. Lashing out at this, the Shehu said that among them there used to be he who claimed to be a Muslim and performed the duties of Islam; yet he claimed to know some hidden knowledge in writing or in the sand or by the conditions of the stars or by the tales of the jinn or by the sounds of birds or their movements. The Shehu considered him to be really an unbeliever. Besides the Shehu stated that among them there was who claimed to be a Muslim but he went to the soothsayers asking them about his affairs and believed in what they said. That so-called a Muslim was not a true believer according to the Shehu.⁶⁹

From what has just been said, it is noticed that the Shehu was firmly reproofing both the soothsayers and those who visited them. He also defined some of the more common methods of fortune telling by pointing out the use of writing, sand, stars, jinn and birds. The Shehu did not spare any of his efforts in opposing all forms of these practices in his great trial to build a solid society based on the submission to Allah. This was certainly a

⁶⁶) 'Abdellati, op. cit., p. 23 and El-Geyoushi, *Teachings of Islam*, the Islamic Cultural Centre, London, without date, pp. 9-10.

⁶⁷) 'Uthman, *N.A.*, op. cit., p. 3.

⁶⁸) The notion of the afterlife and its rewards and punishments is regarded basic to the shaping of an Islamic awareness by Muslim theologians.

⁶⁹) *Ibid.*, pp .3-4.

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direct continuation of the rulings of Al-Maghili who condemned the soothsayers in Western Sudan in his *'Replies to Askia'*.⁷⁰

In the second part of *Nur-ul-Albab* the Shehu pointed out a number of customs that were exerting a severe effect on Hausa land. He described the state of affairs as a trial, a tribulation, an affliction, a misfortune or a calamity. He viewed the problem to be so widespread that it engulfed the whole population. Unlike many of his other early writings which were very calm and academic, his writing in this section took on a tone of urgency and emotion. This stress leads the reader to believe that he considered the obliteration of these affairs to be of extreme importance to the establishment of Islamic character, social dealings and lifestyle. The following are some of the most relevant issues in this category.

In trying to bring the lifestyle and habits of the Hausas into an Islamic model, the Shehu tackled the issue of establishing holidays, rites and traditions. He faced the so-called Islamic scholars and the people as a whole concerning their special days and many of their special forms of worship. He wrote that among the affairs which had caused a general misfortune in Hausa land was that several scholars pretended that some days were righteous and others were evil. Actually, that deed was a fabrication and a falsehood as well as a prohibited innovation contrary to the Sunnah and stated that none of the pious scholars in the previous and following generations did so⁷¹. That was nothing but a lie taken from the books of the Jews and the Christians who replaced and altered the Books and put the path of their prophets behind their backs by following their desires as well as leading many astray by diverging them from the right path and exhorted them not to follow the Jews and the Christians.⁷² The Shehu seemed worried about the affect of the culture of the Jews and the Christians on Islamic society. Though Christian or Jewish influence had not openly reached Hausa land by that time, the Shehu apparently wanted to forewarn his people.

In other writings, he was so intensely against taking on Christian culture that he prohibited his followers to imitate them in any way. He put into question the excuse of claiming that celebrating a special holiday or carrying out a special rite was the way of their forefathers. His writings really reflect the projections of a scholar who was

⁷⁰) Hunwick, *Sharia in Songhay: The Replies of al-Maghili to the Questions of Askia al-Haji Muhammad*, op. cit., p. 89.

⁷¹) Such as Imam Malik or Imam Shafi'i or Imam Abu Hanifa or Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal or their colleagues proceeding or following them.

⁷²) Refer to 'Uthman, *N.A.*, op. cit., pp. 12-14.

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profoundly influenced by the writings of his predecessors even to the point of mentioning holy days and festivals that were not yet practised in Hausa land.⁷³

Besides, the Shehu was addressing the basis of the people's notion of religion. He opposed those who favoured heretical acts to the prophetic deeds.⁷⁴ He declared that the carrying out of supererogatory acts in preference to the obligatory acts was one of grave importance since to fail to perform the obligatory acts brought Allah's wrath on the people and delayed the progress of Islam as a dominant way of life. By performing the obligatory acts, a Muslim was compelled to place his own cultural preferences behind the dictates of Islamic Law. That would bring about a real change in lifestyle if consistently implemented. The Shehu was trying to build his revival of Islam from the roots of consciousness of his people by questioning their most private affairs and trying to bring them in line with the Islamic Law.

The feeling of protection and security is one of the basic benefits that religion can provide. All over Hausa land, countless of people had drawn near their religious leaders for ways to defend themselves against evil and gain blessings as well as good fortune. In some if not many cases, even the dead who were considered to be pious were invoked or revered in their graves.⁷⁵ The Shehu faced the issue of looking for blessings at the grave directly and considered it to be a great obstacle to the spiritual development of Hausa land.⁷⁶ The Shehu also opposed the idea of giving special gifts and food made for the dead.⁷⁷

For the Hausas, trade has always represented a key factor in their existence. Internal trade was performed among them from the earliest times and was one of the pivotal factors in the rise of the urban centres of commerce, handicrafts, and later political power. They also greatly profited from commercial contacts with their neighbours and itinerant merchants travelling to and from their lands.⁷⁸ The Fulbe developed a symbiotic relationship with the Hausa people by selling their dairy products, meat and manure while buying from them their agricultural products and handicrafts.

⁷³) Ibid; p. 16 and Appendix II.

⁷⁴) Ibid. Refer to Appendix II.

⁷⁵) Seeking intercession or blessings from the dead is regarded illicit by Islam.

⁷⁶) Ibid, pp.15-16. Refer to Appendix II.

⁷⁷) Refer to, A Maliki scholar of the Berber Zenaga; Yusuf Wali, *Translated of Nur-ul-Albab.*, p. 36; Mahdi Adamu, *Hausa factor*, pp. 37-38 and to Appendix II.

⁷⁸) Ibid.

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The Shehu, thus, considered any deviation from Islamic norms in business affairs to be a serious obstacle in the way of the establishment of Islam. He based his attitude on direct quotations taken from al-Maghili in *his Replies to Askia* by stating that among the affairs which had caused a general misfortune in those lands was what they were doing by cheating⁷⁹ in sales such as mixing milk with water. That also included the one who bought an item, took possession of it and went away with it before he paid its owner. When he regretted having done that act or could not gain a profit in selling it or when the original owner asked for the money, he told him to take his property or wait till he sold it. He added that it was in the habit of many buyers who used to cheat in measuring by adding or reducing. That was prohibited in the Islamic Law and exhorted them to be fair while purchasing or selling.

Moreover, the Shehu presented al-Maghili's precedent for the distribution of wealth in the extended family and encouraged fair practices even behind the closed doors of the household.⁸⁰ The social commentary of the Shehu revealed here is only part of what he produced during this phase of his career as an Islamic scholar and revivalist of the Islamic Faith by which he was renowned. His mission was to reform sinful Muslims rather than convert unbelievers. Furthermore, his sermons were destined to people who were familiar with Islam but who often performed its rite incorrectly rather than to animists to whom Islamic rites and doctrines were totally strange.

No doubt his approach differed according to circumstances and the kind of people he was addressing. As a whole, he strove for the renewal of the Islamic Faith. His method was to seek out indigenous customs, attack them and seek to replace them with Islamic practices. In other words, he did his utmost to apply the Sunnah as a substitute for the traditional mores and customs in Hausa land.

It is firmly believed that the Shehu never made the Pilgrimage to the Holy Lands (Mecca and Medina) nor travelled any long distance away from Hausa land. His years of academic training and the chain of knowledge from the scholars of Western Sudan to the scholars of the Middle East enabled him to comment on the customs of his region from the eyes of the classical sources of Islamic Law. He extensively quoted from these sources and seemed to be intent on showing his followers the precedents set in earlier Islamic communities. His theological stand was strict but very much in tune with his environment.

⁷⁹) To know more about this evil practice you can refer to Ismail Kashmiri, *Prophet of Islam Muhammad and Some of His Traditions*, The Supreme Council For Islamic Affairs, Cairo, U.A.R., 1967, p. 87.

⁸⁰) Refer to Ibid., pp. 85-88 and 'Uthman, N. A, op. cit. Also refer to Appendix II.

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Few eminent scholars have tried to analyse his social critique and the solutions to practices that he believed were non-progressive and risky to Islamic development. Hausaland had been widely frequented by Islamic scholars for over five hundred years and social activists had appeared through varying eras. The Shehu was facing religious practices that were well established for centuries and superstitions and traditions that seemed to be part of the natural terrain. He, therefore, was meant to meet opposition even from the ranks of those who also claimed Islamic scholarship. This would be one of his greatest challenges as it will be seen in the following point. The task of restructuring the ideas and notions that pervaded the very foundation of Islamic thought in Hausaland.

1.3.1.2 The Shehu's Ideas on Fundamental Islamic Beliefs and Standards

1.3.1.2.1. The Shehu's Confrontation with Extremist Scholars

During the formative years, the Shehu laid stress on translating his opinions into the language of the common people and ensuring through his public preaching that they had a general knowledge of the basic Islamic teachings. His concept of a Muslim is one who confirms the basic 'Confession of Faith' or 'The Two Witnesses.'⁸¹ The Shehu also maintained that all people were born in a natural, God-fearing state and the basis of human life was submission to the Creator.⁸²

Due to the Shehu's tolerant and inclusive approach to Islamic theology and education, he was confronted with fierce opposition and bitter criticism from extremist elements among the scholars and students of Hausaland. This led him to write a number of works to defend his teachings and neutralise his opponents.⁸³ According to M.A. Al Hajj, that group of extremist theology scholars was thought of to be those who had vested interest in preserving the established order. They were denounced as venal scholars by the Shehu and were motivated by personal and opportunistic intentions⁸⁴.

⁸¹) (*There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger.*) Refer to 'Uthman ibn Fudi, *I.S.*, op.cit., p.41. The Shehu wrote poems in Fulfulde emphasising the importance of the 'Confession of Faith.' See Alhaji Garba Saidu, 'The Significance of the Shehu's Sermons and Poems in Ajami,' in Studies in the History of the Sokoto Caliphate: The Sokoto Seminar Papers, edited by Y.B.Usman, Department of History, A.B.U., Zaria, 1979, p. 206.

⁸²) The Prophet (P.B.U.H) said: '*Every child is born with a disposition towards the natural religion (Islam – submission to the Divine will). It is the parents who make him a Jew, a Christian or a Magian*' ; quoted in Ismail Kashmiri, *Prophet of Islam Muhammad*, op.cit., pp. 53-54.

⁸³) Refer to M. Bello, *Infaq al-Maisur*, pp. 68-69.

⁸⁴) M.A. Al-Hajj, 'The Writings of Shehu 'Uthman Dan Fodio: A Plea for Dating and Chronology', Kano Studies, New Series, 1, no.2, 1974 / 77, p. 8.

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As for Ahmad Kani, he divided the group into three categories: the fanatics who anathematised the laymen on the basis of scholastic theology, the venal scholastic theology, the venal scholars who were trying to justify political corruption, immorality and all sorts of evil and those placed themselves as the sole arbiters of religious practices and social behaviour.⁸⁵

F.H. El Masri did not link the theology scholars to the government but thought that they were mostly young students who rose in the context of the current wave of renewal⁸⁶. The writings of the Shehu suggest that this group represented a trend in Islamic theological thinking in nineteenth-century Hausa land that seemed among the scholars and the students whether they were the Fulfulde speaking Kabbenkoobe⁸⁷ or other scholars from the Hausa or the Tuareg.

The Shehu did not specify the language or identity of his opposition but divided them into categories and countered their ideas. In his work *Nasa'ih al-Umma al-Muhammadiyya*, the Shehu emphasised the importance of the scholar's intentions for entering into scholarly debate and discourse. He stressed that the correct intention was not to exploit the weaknesses of people or to expose their mistakes but to give sincere pieces of advice. He warned scholars and students against cursing people without a solid basis.⁸⁸

The Shehu divided the extremist scholars and students into four major categories by declaring that there were four satanic factions that had appeared in Hausa land. The first was a faction that denied fundamentally the existence of disbelief. The second faction considered people to be disbelievers based on their beliefs. The third faction considered people to be disbelievers based on committing sins. As for the fourth faction, it was made up of the followers of blameworthy customs⁸⁹.

Throughout this very sensitive criticism and rectification, the Shehu and 'Abdullahi, in his poetry⁹⁰, were very heedful to openly praise Sheikh Jibril for his valuable contribution to Islam in the Western Sudan and his reputed courage as well as his great

⁸⁵) Kani, *Intellectual Origin*, op.cit, p. 62.

⁸⁶) El- Masri, Fathi Hasan, *A Critical Edition of Dan Fodio's Bayan Wujub al-Hijra 'ala 'l- 'ibad*, Oxford: O.U.P., 1978, p. 20. Refer also to Louis Brenner, 'Muslim Thought in Eighteenth-Century West Africa: The Case of Shaykh 'Uthman b. Fudi', in Nehemiah Levtzion, *The Eighteenth Century Renewal and Reform in Islam*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987, p p. 44-46.

⁸⁷) Kabbenkoobe are advocates of kabbe's doctrines.

⁸⁸) Refer to 'Uthman ibn Fudi, *N.U.M.*, op.cit, p. 3, and to Appendix II.

⁸⁹) Ibid, p. 1.

⁹⁰) See 'Abdullahi, *Tazyin al- Waraqat*, op.cit, pp. 90-93.

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sincerity. They also separated that which was understood from Sheikh Jibril's words from his actual practice. The Shehu stated that the Sheikh was motivated to do what he did by great compassion for the Muslim Nation. The proof of the fact that the Sheikh did not actually consider Muslims who committed sins as disbelievers but was just being harsh and strict was the fact that he involved himself in the marriages of these people, ate their meat, and had other dealings with them. If he had considered them to be disbelievers, he would not have involved himself with them at all.⁹¹

From what has been previously said it is greatly felt that the Shehu emphasised that those who carried out these acts were to be regarded as disobedient sinners.⁹² In concluding his analysis of the weaknesses and deviations of the scholars, the Shehu affirmed that their greatest spiritual illness was the fact that they loved the life of this world and he firmly believed that the only way to oppose these groups was to follow the Prophetic Sunnah.⁹³

1.3.1.2.2. The Shehu's Guidance to Scholars and Students

One of the Shehu's greatest contributions in causing a profound change in the status of scholars and scholarship in eighteenth-and nineteenth-century Hausa land was to redefine the concept of a true Islamic Scholar and provide the scholars with the intellectual devices to criticise their own condition.

By reforming the scholars, the Shehu did not only intend to eradicate the corrupt elements among them but also bring about the transformation of the whole society. Most of his writings in the course of this period contained a section devoted to the methodology of change chiefly from within the individual. For the Shehu, real change had to come about initially within the scholars who because of their position as interpreters of Islamic Law could swiftly cause change in the masses of people. Of the great importance the scholars' condition, the Shehu wrote directly to his scholarly brethren saying that the well-being of the community was connected to the well-being of its scholars. The corruption of the community was connected to the corruption of its scholars.⁹⁴

⁹¹) 'Uthman, *N.A.M.*, op.cit, p. 26.

⁹²) Ibid., p. 51.

⁹³) Ibid., p. 62.

⁹⁴) 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, *Manhaj al-'Abidin*, translated by Professor M. S. El-Garh, C.A.D/ Institute of African Studies: University of Ibadan, 7, no.1, 2, December, 1971), p. 29. This work was based on the writings of the famous Jurist al-Harith al-Muhasibi (d. 343 A.H).

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In this treatise, *Manhaj al-'Abidin*, the Shehu tried to outline some of the key factors that led to the corruption of the character of the scholars and the solutions needed to effect a lasting change. In his distinct method of facing real mundane problems using the language and style of Islamic scholarship, he emphasised key weaknesses in the human personality which would hamper the development of a totally committed Islamic scholar, mystic, or leader. This type of critical analysis and resolution shows that the Shehu's concept of transformation was not superficial or politically motivated at that time. It is believed that he was facing the injustices in society from the roots of the problem which if transformed would certainly affect the whole structure.

As mentioned earlier, many of the scholars had become so close to the wealthy and powerful who were actually parts of the ruling class of Hausa land in the eighteenth century. They benefited from the exploitation and taxation of the poor and either shielded the ruling class with religious rationalisations or turned their backs to injustice.

The Shehu whose religious training and family tradition placed him outside of the direct royal sphere of influence was attempting to foster independence of personality in the scholars and dependence on the Creator. He warned his followers against amassing wealth to exceed others, exhort them to stick to what was sufficient of the permissible things and then consume it with the intention of serving Allah as the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad⁹⁵ used to do. They used to inherit legal wealth and then leave it in fear that it would corrupt their hearts. He kept on urging them to avert the path of Satan by not striving for the collection of wealth for the purpose of philanthropic deeds⁹⁶ and seeking the love of praise, glorification and ostentation; the love of high position as well as the following of one's passions.

The Shehu considered richness to be a means of fulfilling earthly needs and worldly responsibility but not an object of life. It seemed that he was doing his best to advise the scholars to avoid the struggle or desire for wealth so as to be protected from corruption. To institute Islamic injunctions and not to fall prey to bribery or fear of poverty as many of the scholars appeared to have done, the sincere scholar in the eyes of the Shehu, would have to keep away from the temptations of the ruling class and seek comfort as well as ultimate pleasure in the hereafter. This outlook would promote a kind of independence in the

⁹⁵) The Prophet is known to have given away all of his wealth and never kept more than his bare necessities. Refer to 'Uthman ibn Fudi, *Manhaj Al-'Abidin*, op. cit., p. 30.

⁹⁶) Ibid, p. 32.

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scholars and enable them to make decisions based purely on the texts of the Islamic Law and the necessities of the particular time that they found themselves living in.

In the domain of the ruling class, praise and exultation played a prominent role in seeking favour with people in powerful positions or gaining control over the vain and the haughty. Both poets and praise singers were parts of the royal entourage and allegiance was often shown by acts of open self-humiliation. The Shehu advised the scholars to distance themselves from anything that falsely raised their status or inlayed their feelings of self-worth. He incited them not to seek praise and not to feel satisfied in case of being praised.⁹⁷

The Shehu was really giving his followers a profound lesson explaining how much dangerous the leadership was. He stated that praise and glorification had always been used as a device of control over individuals who fell victims for their false sense of security. He wanted his followers to concentrate on the cause and the ultimate objective of their journey in life. In other words, he wanted them to focus on the Creator and to please Him and not to seek the rewards of this world. They would then manage to lead an Islamic life and to avert gaining a reputation or a high position in the ruling class.

Besides, the Shehu used to favour those scholars who took a liberal and inclusive approach to Orthodox Islamic thought. He greatly tried to mould the type of personality that would be emotionally and intellectually ready to accept new ideas or different Islamic methods of facing issues. The conflict of different views would usually create challenges and fertilise one another. The Shehu heartened them to be tolerant, open-hearted and respect one another as well as to turn away from obstinacy.⁹⁸

Pertaining to the four major schools of Islamic jurisprudence, the Shehu wrote a treatise called *Hidayat-ul-Tallab (The Guidance of the Students)* wherein he expounded on the basis of the founding of the schools and the acceptability of not being totally limited to one particular way. The Shehu followed these statements with a very important discourse which stirred the Muslims to follow school of Islamic jurisprudence but permitted them the flexibility to leave it if they found a proof or proofs of a better position from another scholar.⁹⁹ This sort of approach of Islamic Law had profound implications inside and outside of Hausa land.

⁹⁷) Ibid', pp. 45-46. Refer to Appendix II.

⁹⁸) Ibid, pp. 33-4. Refer to Appendix II.

⁹⁹) Kani, *Intellectual Origin*, op.cit., p. 54.

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Though having developed from very apolitical teachings taken from the leading jurists in the centuries after the death of the Prophet, the schools of Islamic jurisprudence¹⁰⁰ had become the basis for legal codes and Islamic lifestyle in the leading Islamic empires and caliphates of the world.

By breaking down the barriers of the school of thought, the Shehu was also breaking down rationalism which had developed around the practice of Islam. Besides, he was preparing his followers to make migration to other lands if necessary for they would be flexible enough to appreciate other applications of Islam and could adapt themselves to new environments. The Shehu was very cautious to never refute his school of thought and he warned his followers to be careful not to follow a scholar into decision that opposes the established sources of law.¹⁰¹

The Shehu constantly reminded his followers all over his works during the formative era that changes started from within the individual. The scholars before anyone else should constantly be ready to correct any faults that manifested from their actions.¹⁰² The Shehu must have found out that to bring about meaningful changes in the scholars and then in the society would require strong criticism and self-analysis. He, therefore, ended this treatise by prescribing in detail to his readers how to handle criticism and control pride as well as the need to be praised.

In his highly informative book, *Hisn-al-Ifham*, the Shehu summed up some of the main areas of misunderstanding that had to be corrected so as to bring about revival of Islamic awareness. He defied the scholars to face their weaknesses and quit making excuses. The following ones are a few of the most relevant areas that he covered that among their misconceptions was that some of them had attributed the inability to accomplish an act of dependence on Allah, the love of leadership to the love of calling to Allah, exaggeration to Ijtihad¹⁰³, humiliation to forgiveness, wastefulness to generosity, arrogance to dignity¹⁰⁴, fear to gentleness and bribery to gift giving¹⁰⁵.

The Shehu really vied the very essence of all that they had shielded themselves with to keep up their status quo. He seemed to be focussing on scholars who were under the control of the ruling class. Inability, love of leadership, exaggeration, humiliation,

¹⁰⁰) There are main schools of Islamic jurisprudence: the Hanafi school, the Maliki School, the Shafi'i school and the Hanbali School.

¹⁰¹) 'Uthman ibn Fudi, *Hidayat-ul-Tullab*, op. cit., pp. 4-6.

¹⁰²) Ibid, p. 47. Also refer to Appendix II.

¹⁰³) Ibid., p. 122.

¹⁰⁴) Ibid., p. 123.

¹⁰⁵) Ibid., p. 124.

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wastefulness, haughtiness, fear, and bribery were some of the qualities of subjugated scholars who served rulers known to have imposed high taxes on their subjects but wanted to be accepted as Muslims. Such appeared to be the case in Hausa land where independent thinking, speaking out, averting bribery and wealth were not qualities that would endear the scholars to the ruling class.

This type of language was intense and could be highly offensive for well-established court scholars. The Shehu did try his foremost to cause a radical change and produce the kind of leadership that would be able to confront the authorities and the un-Islamic customs that had become acceptable to society. Not only did the Shehu's prescription for revival of the scholarly spirit of the *al-Salaf al-Salih*¹⁰⁶ stop at inward misconceptions but also penetrated the heart. He went so far as to advise the scholars to purify their hearts.¹⁰⁷

Hence, it is obvious that the Shehu paid particular attention to maintaining his relation with the masses of the people. Not only did he keep on warning his disciples of the dangers of ostentation, pride and the love of the adornment of the world but also the risks of disdain at appearing humble, despising the masses and flattering the rich while oppressing the poor.¹⁰⁸

The Shehu appeared to be intent on creating the type of leadership that would not fall into this trap. He did not confine himself in his teaching to the scholarly class as did many of his peers but he tried to disseminate his teachings among the masses of the Hausas. He translated many of his Arabic works into Hausa, Fulfulde and other local languages and incited the common people to seek knowledge of their faith while averting bad customs and ignorant behaviour. In his Fulfulde poem, *Datal Jana (The Path to Paradise)*, the Shehu taught the common people belief and urged them to put the fundamentals of Islam into practice by fearing Allah, obeying His commands, avoiding what He forbids and observing the divine law.

¹⁰⁶) Al-Salaf al-Salih is also known under the name of the first generations that are known to have practised the pure form of Islam. See Talip Kuçukcan, 'Some Reflections on the Wahhabiya and the Sanusiya Movements: A Comparative Approach', *The Islamic Quarterly*, 1993, V. XXXVII, No 4, pp. 238-239.

¹⁰⁷) The Shehu said:

"O my Brother, when people avoid overt sins only, you should examine very carefully the sins of the heart, for those are the ones that bring perdition. Amongst those are feelings of security and despair, belittling of sin, delaying of repentance, persistence in disobedience, dissimulation ostentation and pride, love for the adornment of this world, vying in wealth and position, disdain at appearing humble, despising the masses, glorifying and beseeching the rich while pushing away and disdainfully treating the poor, envy, hatred, and suspicion of people, and eavesdropping and treachery." 'Uthman ibn Fudi, *Manhaj al-'Abidin*, p. 50.

¹⁰⁸) Refer to Taher, *Social Writing*, op. cit., pp.44-5.

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The Shehu's quest for inner purity and his insistence for inner purification among the scholars and the masses must have kept him pondering in one of the most problematic arenas of Islamic scholarship, the unification of the outward manifestations of Islamic Law in the lives of the Muslims and the inward manifestations of spiritualism and mystical experiences.

1.3.1.2.3. The Shehu's Sufism

Before dealing with The Shehu's Sufism,¹⁰⁹ it is better to talk about how the Shehu was introduced to Sufism.

It was Sheikh Jibril who initiated the Shehu and his brother 'Abdullahi into the *Qadiriyyah* order and later into the *Khalwatiyyah* which was founded by Sidi al-Mukhtar. Despite the Shehu's admiration for Sidi al-Mukhtar and Sidi's open support for the cause of Shehu, the Shehu was not formally introduced into the *Qadiriyyah-Mukhtariyyah* order till 1812 C.E. when Sheikh Alfa Nuh ibn Tahir, a disciple of Sidi al-Mukhtar and a mystic scholar of great renown formally brought the *wird* to Hausa land¹¹⁰. The Shehu's main early link to the knowledge of Sufism came through his Sheikh Jibril whose militant approach to changing society, radiated all over his teachings.

Sufism in this era had not taken the form of powerful orders with their own ideology and social or political aims. It seems to have been a spiritual methodology for preparing scholars and initiating them to face the difficulties of life and the suffering of establishing Islamic values in society. The Shehu and his disciples were not restricting themselves to one set of prayers or one specific form of Sufism. In spite of this flexibility, the Shehu was considered as a *Qadiri Sufi* as his spiritual bonds were expressed more closely with Sheikh al-Jilani¹¹¹ than any of the other saints¹¹².

¹⁰⁹) Refer to *Encyclopædia of Islam*, edited by M. Houtsna, Wensick, H.A.R. Gibb, etc...vol.14 (5-Z), Leyden, 1934), p.681; As-Sulami, *Tabaqat as-sufiyya al-Kubra* edited by Nuraddin, Egypt, 1953; Umar Farrukh, *Al-Tasawwuf fi 'il-Islam*, Beirut, 1947; Ali Hujwiri, *Kashf ul-Mahjub*, Beirut; Dar al-Nahdatul Arabiyyah, 1980; Ibn Taymiyya, *Al-Furqan bayna Auliya Al-Rahman wa Auliya Al-Shaytan*, Beirut: Al-Maktab al-Islami, 1962; R. A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, London, 1963; As-Sarraj, *Kitab al-Luma*, Baghdad: Maktab Muthanna, 1960; Martin Lings, *What is Sufism?*, Berkley: University of California Press, 1967; and A.I.Shah, *Islamic Sufism*, New York: S. Weiser Inc., 1971.

¹¹⁰) Batran, 'An Introductory Note', op. cit., p. 350.

¹¹¹) Abd-al qadir al jilani (Kilani) (1077/8-1066) the eleventh-twelfth centuries Sufi mystic and founder of the *Qadiriyyah* order. For more information about him, refer to Majid Fakhri, *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, Longman Group limited and Colombia University Press, New York, 1983, p.255; Philip K Hitti, op. cit., 436; Jacques Brosse, *Les Grandes Maitres de la Spiritualité*, Edition du Club France Loisirs, Paris avec l'autorisation des Editions Larousse-Bordas, 1998, p.143; Roger Caratini, *Le Génie de l' Islamisme*, Copyright Edition, Michel Lafon, 1922, p. 362; the best extant biography about him is in al-Dhahabi, *Tarikh al Islam*, D.S. Margoliouth in *Journal Royal Asiatic Society* (1907), pp. 267-310. On his miracles, see

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His mystical experience with Sheikh al-Jilani in 1794 C.E. was a turning point for his career as it will be seen later in the third chapter. The symbolic blessing of the Prophet himself through the auspices of Sheikh al-Jilani who conferred on the Shehu, in a dream, objects indicative of spiritual and moral authority¹¹³, meant that it was thanks to Sufism that the Shehu and his followers later were spiritually strengthened and his decision to wage the holy war was officially endorsed.

The Shehu's strong academic grounding in the Holy Quran, the Sunnah, and the mainstream Islamic Sciences seemed to act as a refuge keeping him within the limits of Islamic Orthodoxy. He carried on displaying his methodical, well documented style of well defining the subject matter, always leaving room for the scholar to apply the teachings to his particular circumstances but being very particular to keep away from the most controversial and vague areas in Sufism.¹¹⁴ In his treatise, *al-Tafriqa*, the Shehu declared that the crucial factors in discussing on Sufism can be summed up in four parts:

“Reminding the inner-self of praiseworthy character and purifying it of blameworthy characteristics; purging the deeds and the general condition by purifying the inner-self through good character and staying away from blameworthy characteristics; realising this purity in the general state of the individual and his dealings; realising the higher levels of spirituality and spiritual knowledge.”¹¹⁵

As a consequence, Sufism, according to the Shehu was not a separate spiritual discipline that could be properly experienced or understood by itself. He divides Sufism into two levels. The basic level is the character building and purifying phase which every Muslim should involve himself in (*Tasawwuf Li'l-Takhalluq*). The other level is the stage of spiritual realisation in (*Tasawwuf Li'l-Tahaqquq*). This level was reserved, in the view of the Shehu, for the students and scholars who had developed themselves to the point where they could benefit from a profound spiritual account¹¹⁶. It must be stressed here that

Shattanawfi, *Bahjat al Asrar* (Cairo, 1304), which has on its margin 78 sermons of al-Jilani entitled *Futuh al-Ghayb*.

¹¹²) Saints are called *Awliya* in Arabic, singular a *Wali* is one who is near God. A *Wali* can also be defined as the friend of Allah, meaning the Muslim who has come close to Allah through his sincerity, prayers, or actions.

¹¹³) The green mantle, the special turban and the sword of truth. See Hiskett, *Sword of Truth*, op. cit., pp.63-9. The Shehu at least two mystical experiences: the first one when he was 36 years old and the second one when he was 40.

¹¹⁴) 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, *Kitab Tariq al-Janna min Asrar Kalam Abi Hamid al-Ghazali*, copies of this work are found at KO, NAK, and other institutions in Nigeria, quoted in Quick., 'A Comparative Study...', op.cit., p. 175 and 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, *Kitab Usul al-Wilaya*, printed with Hausa translation by the Ministry of Education of Northern Nigeria, Refer to Appendix II.

¹¹⁵) 'Uthman ibn Fudi, *Al-Tafriqa bayna 'Ilm al-Tasawwuf Li'l Takhalluq wa 'Ilm al-Tasawwuf Li'l Tahaqquq wa Madakhil Ibliss (The Difference between Sufi knowledge for Character Building and Sufi knowledge for Spiritual Realisation and the Inroads of the Devil*, History Bureau Library, Sokoto, access n°. 310), p. 3.

¹¹⁶) 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, *Hisn al-Afham*, op.cit, pp. 112-3.

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the Shehu was extremely cautious in his writings on Sufism to avoid transgressing the limits of the Islamic Law.

In his major book on Sunnah and Bid'a, *Ihya al-Sunnah*, the Shehu emphasised that the practice of Sufism should go hand in hand with the Sunnah.¹¹⁷ Innovation, on the other hand, happens when the Sufi practitioner does not use the Sunnah as his guide but involves himself in heretical practices.¹¹⁸ The Shehu was able to make a penetrating critical analysis of degeneration of Sufism in other parts of the Muslim world and did his best to protect his followers from falling prey to it. The Shehu affirmed that *the Qadirriyya order*' in the Arab west was called the Jilalah and its practice was marked by an intrusion of '*folk Sufism*' which resulted in the corruption of the *hadra* (sacred Sufi procession)¹¹⁹ into trance dancing, and an emphasis on unusual states of mind.

These special states of mind were thought of bringing about prodigious feasts but usually proved harmful to any coherent spiritual development. This ecstatic dancing was usually accompanied by flute and drum music and often performed in public.¹²⁰ The Shehu explained that these practices were not from the Sunnah and should be avoided at all costs. Following this temperate approach to Sufi practices, the Shehu qualified his stand by confirming his cautious acceptance of the unusual claims of the Saints.¹²¹

The Shehu endeavoured to present Sufism in a practical realistic manner by separating levels of spiritual involvement. The specialised level, *Tasawwuf Li'l-Tahaqquq* did not appear from his writings to have been his major emphasis in the formative period. Reference to the system of *Shaykh-Murid* (master-disciple) can be found in his works such as *al-Salasil al-Dhahabiyya*, *al-Salasil al-Qadirriyyah*, *Tabshir al-Umma al-Ahmadiyya* and others.

In opposition to his highly orthodox stand about Innovation and Sunnah that is found in a number of his writings, the Shehu delved into areas that would have been regarded problematic to orthodox scholars of the *Salafi* approach to Islamic faith and jurisprudence

¹¹⁷) Refer to 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, *I.S.*, op.cit, pp. 270-1 d to Appendix II.

¹¹⁸) He listed some of them as follows:

'Some of the people tie themselves up with iron or rope, or burn their bodies with fire in order to strengthen themselves through hardship. This is a prohibited innovation by Ijma' for it is harmful to the person. Also secluding oneself without having medical reasons is prohibited by the agreement of scholars. Also, listening to music for spiritual upliftment with musical instruments that have been prohibited by the majority of the scholars is well-known to be a prohibited innovation.'

'Uthman, *I.S.*, op.cit, pp. 272-5.

¹¹⁹) Hadra is also defined as 'Presence of God'; Sufi ceremony.

¹²⁰) Cyril Glasse, *the Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, op.cit, p. 221.

¹²¹) Refer to 'Uthman Ibn Fudi, *I.S.*, op.cit, pp. 277 and to Appendix II. Refer also to 'Utman, Al-Tafriqa, op.cit, p. 2 and to Appendix II.

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such as *Ibn Taymiyyah*.¹²² The Shehu approved the Qadiri concepts of complete submission to the Sheikh, transferral of spiritual power through sacred objects and Sufism.¹²³ He believed that the litanies of Sheikh al-Jilani were sacred formulas that would unleash spiritual powers given to Sheikh al-Jilani and the Saints.¹²⁴

Despite these apparently, un-orthodox beliefs, the Shehu never pretended to reach any stage that implied the Sufi union with God nor did he accept any of the fantastic claims that were being made around Hausa land concerning his spiritual achievements.¹²⁵ He repeatedly described Sufism as a system of purifying and controlling the lower self to achieve true sincerity and genuine devotion to Allah. He once stated that the relationship of Sufism to Islam was the relationship of the soul to the body. It was actually the sacred place of righteousness.¹²⁶

For the Shehu, righteousness is the essence of Sufism. All Muslims, mainly the learned should constantly wage an internal jihad¹²⁷ to defeat his lower self and establish an Islamic character. When writing about mysticism, he was aiming at taking on the great challenges of establishing Islamic lifestyle. He discussed notions that were crucial factors in the interpersonal relations of people, taking into account the socio-psychological conditions of his era. In his works, '*Ulum al-Mu'amala*, '*Umdat al-'Ulama and Shifa al-Nufus*¹²⁸, the Shehu categorised and defined the destructive evils of the self and the practical solutions for avoiding or curing them. Among the main kinds he mentioned were conceit, pride, anger, envy and showing off.

According to the Shehu, conceit is one of the chief evils that destroy the personality of the individual and ruin his relations with others. He said that conceit was one of the blameworthy characteristics which was prohibited to have as it brought great harm, led to

¹²²) For a detailed study of the *Salafi* critique of Sufism, refer to Ibn Taymiyyah's *Furqan*. See also, Hitti, op.cit, pp. 689, 740, 754; Fakhry, op.cit, pp. 313, 315-8, 322-3, 347, 353; Ruthven, op.cit., pp. 179, 271-3, 282-3.

¹²³) Spiritual connection with Allah through the auspices of the Shaykh. This was considered polytheism by Ibn Taymiyyah, Muhammad ibn Abd-al-Wahhab (d.1787 C.E.), and other *Salafi* (sometimes known as *Wahhabi* scholars).

¹²⁴) 'Uthman, *Al-Salasil al-Dhahabiyya*, op.cit., pp. 26-30.

¹²⁵) El-Masri, *Bayan Wujub al-Hijra*, op.cit, p. 5.

¹²⁶) Ibid, p. 2.

¹²⁷) There are many kinds of Jihad. They are as follows: The Jihad of the Soul, The Jihad of Satan, the Jihad of the Unbelievers, the Jihad of the Hypocrites, the Jihad of the Offenders and the Fassioun. For more details, refer to Dr. Muhammad Naim Yassin, *Al-Jihad: Mayadinuhu wa Assalibuhu*, Dar Al-Irshad Li'l Nashr wa Tawzi', Blida, 1990.

¹²⁸) 'Uthman, *Kitab 'Ulum al-Mu'amala*, Zaria: Shina Commercial Press, translation was carried out by 'Aisha 'Abd ar-Rahman at-Tarjumana, *Handbook on Islam*; England J&P.Weldon Ltd,1978;Idem, *Kitab'Umdat al 'Ulama*, N.A.K; and Idem, *Shifa al-Nufus*, translated by Yaqubu Yahya Ibrahim, The Contribution of Shaykh ' 'Uthman Ibn Fodio to the Field of Tassawwuf with reference to his *Shifa al-Nufus*', M. A. diss., Bayero University, Kano, 1987.

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pride, forgetting of sin, presumption about acts of worship, forgetting the blessings of Allah, self deception, feeling oblivious to the punishment of Allah, feeling falsely pure and special in the eyes of Allah and feeling self-justified by intellect, opinion and knowledge.¹²⁹ Concerning the cure, the Shehu wrote that the cause of conceit lied in pure ignorance. Therefore, its cure was recognition and knowledge.¹³⁰ The Shehu laid great emphasis on the understanding of the reality of pride and its danger.¹³¹

The Shehu prescribed two kinds of cure, the knowledge cure and the action cure. He stressed that the knowledge cure was to know and recognise yourself and your Lord. He also advised people to ponder on the simplicity of their creation from nothing, to a tiny drop of sperm and than to a full grown adult. Besides, he urged them to constantly remember that human existence was subject to great change since at any moment, a person could become hungry, thirsty, sick, or wounded. Moreover, he incited them to reflect on how people desire objects and food which led to their destruction and often shirked remedies that led to their recovery from their illness. Furthermore, he reminded them that death was unavoidable for all people and it led to a reversion to an inanimate state from whence they originated.

Regarding wrath, the Shehu wrote:

' The essence of anger is boiling of the blood of the heart in seeking revenge. If a person is angry with someone lower than him, his blood expands and rises to the face, making it red. If he is angry at someone higher than him, his blood contracts from his outer skin to his heart and turns to sorrow. He, then, becomes pale. If he is

¹²⁹) 'Uthman, 'U.M., op.cit., p.47.

¹³⁰) Ibid, p.49-50.

¹³¹) About this subject, he said what follows:

'Concerning the reality of pride, know that there is inward and outward pride. Inward pride is a characteristic within one's self and outward pride is that which appears through the limbs ... Its root is a feeling within which produces satisfaction and confidence at seeing yourself above the others who are being scorned...When the proud person exalts his own value in relationship to others, he scorns the one below him... If it is very extreme, he may refuse the other's service and not consider him worthy to stand in his presence... When the proud person teaches, he is rude to his students, looks down on them and rebukes them... He looks at the common people as if he were looking at donkeys... It is impossible to be humble and humility is the first of the characteristics of those who truly fear Allah... It is impossible to remain truthful, abandon envy, contain hatred, offer friendly counsel or accept good counsel while there is any self-importance in the person.' Ibid, 51-3. Idem, *Shifa al-Nufus*, op.cit, pp.64-6. Pride is the root of many great sins. So, the Prophet warns Muslims to keep away from it. He says, *'He will not enter the Hell who has faith equal to a single grain of mustard seed in his heart; and he will not enter Paradise who has pride equal to a single grain of mustard in his heart,'* quoted in Ismail Kashmiri, *Prophet of Islam*, op.cit., p. 87.

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*uncertain of the station of the other person, his blood stays between contraction and expansion.*¹³²

The Shehu's knowledge remedy for anger is to contemplate over on the virtues of controlling wrath, to ponder on the dire results of rage in this life, to reflect on the ugliness of your form when furious, to think over the cause of seeking revenge and to fear the punishment of Allah in the Hereafter. His action cure is to seek refuge in Allah from the Devil at the time of anger, sit down if you are standing, lie down if you are sitting and perform ablution or take a complete bath if necessary.¹³³

The Shehu regarded 'envy' to be one of the most serious diseases of the heart which had to be rooted out in order to develop suitable relations among people.¹³⁴ The knowledge cure, as viewed by the Shehu, is to recognise that envy is only harmful to the envier. The envied person is lifted up in rank in the sight of Allah and can not be harmed by simple envy alone. The envier will be harmed twice in this life and in the Hereafter. In the present life, he will always be filled with grief and sorrow and in the life to come, he will be punished. The action cure is to make yourself do the opposite of what the envy requires.

The Shehu stated the following:

*'Its essence is the seeking of high station in the hearts of people by 'showing off': 'Showing off', for the Shehu, is one of the elusive and dangerous qualities of a diseased heart for it can be extremely subtle. It appears through showing off with the body, with clothing or appearance, with words or oratory with actions, chiefly religious practices like prayers and Pilgrimage, or just by associating oneself with people of high rank so as to win favour from them. The cure, the Shehu explained, is to recognise that 'Showing Off' is part of a person's nature from childhood. It has to be attacked from the roots. For instance, love of praise, fear of criticism, and greed for the property of others, all have to be rid of the heart. The action cure is to repel it at once whenever it comes to mind and to compel oneself to conceal acts of worship till the heart is content with only Allah knowing that they have been done.'*¹³⁵

Using the framework of Islamic theology, the Shehu was trying to cause the reformation of the character and the social dealings of his followers before society. His

¹³²) 'Uthman ibn Fudi, 'Ulum al-Mu'amala, p. 63. Idem, *Shifa al-Nufus*, pp. 85-86, 89-90.

¹³³) Ibid., p. 90. 'Uthman, 'Ulum alMu'amala, pp.68-69.

¹³⁴) He stated:

'Concerning its reality, know that envy derives only from blessings. When Allah bestows a blessing on your brother, it can produce on you one of two conditions: One is that you despise the blessing and want it to be taken away. This condition is called envy...The other condition is that you do not want the blessing to be taken away from him but you desire the same blessing for yourself. This is deeming someone to be enviable. Envy is anger at Allah's preference for one person over another.' Ibid.

¹³⁵)Ibid., pp. I04-I06; 'Uthman, 'Ulum al-Mu'amala, pp. 74-77.

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analysis of the above-mentioned diseases of the heart and others that he listed, such as miserliness, love of position, false hope, suspicion and despair are so penetrating that they can probably apply to people of various faiths and creeds as well.

His spiritual remedies centre around the consciousness of God, repentance, dependence on Allah, contentment, patience, fear of Allah's Anger and abstinIn his treatise, *al-Tafriqa*, the Shehu summarised the principal areas of weakness in people through which Satan could infiltrate into the heart of a Muslim and corrupt his character. They were as follows: Covetousness and jealousy, anger and uncontrolled desires, greed and ambition, excessive love of food and drink, haste, except in necessary acts of worship, wealth, if it exceeded the amount needed to fulfil basic needs, fanaticism for School of Islamic Jurisprudence or the following of one's own whims, hatred and contempt for those who disagreed with our opinion, burdening the common people with pondering about the essence and description of Allah more than was absolutely necessary and holding suspicion against Muslims.¹³⁶

Therefore, the Shehu clearly showed that Sufism should not be looked at as a spiritual discipline that separates the practitioner from reality and worked only on the inner existence but a practical part of his system of Islamic education. He intended for all his disciples to join the realm of character building Sufism and reserved the higher spiritual states only for those who were well versed in Islamic knowledge.

The importance of this type of training would manifest itself when the Shehu's community was obliged to emigrate and engage in the holy war. Strong faith in Allah and commitment to Islam combined with a desire and longing for the Hereafter over this world would provide his followers the will to sacrifice their materials for the sake of Allah. Fostering unity, sincerity, humility and higher Islamic qualities would assist his principles overcome differences and concentrate on their struggle.

Many historians have attributed the success of the Shehu's Jihad to the military viability of his forces but this look at aspects of his intellectual and moral training display that his early arduous work in character building must have played a vital role in the triumph and longevity of his struggle.

¹³⁶) 'Uthman ibn Fudi, *Al-Tafriqa*, pp. 4-5.

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By about 1780, his community had managed to become substantial and its fame had largely spread. And as previously mentioned, he moved from town to town, teaching and preaching as he went; but till that time, he did not use to frequent the courts of the kings. However, as he succeeded in attracting more followers and as the news of his activities were to become more widely known, he realised that he had to make contact with Bawa Jangwarzo, the chief of Gobir, because he anticipated the danger of his hostility as well as the possible advantages of his support. He therefore set out for Alkalawa, the walled capital of Gobir, where Bawa¹³⁷ held court.

Bawa Jangwarzo was both a powerful and warlike chief. He had been able to subdue the neighbouring kingdom of Zamfara, imprisoned its chief, Abarshi and then carried on conducting constant raids on towns and villages in Zamfara and across the border into Katsina in search of slaves and booty. From the evidence of praise-songs and other sources, it is obvious that his power rested on his military successes, upon a network of kinship relationships with his courtiers and upon the dispensation of patronage which drew numbers of sycophantic hangers-on to his court, among them many Muslim literati who were less uncompromising than the Shehu.

Like most of the Habe chiefs, Bawa made some claim to Islam. For instance, he observed certain of its public festivals. Yet, this adherence was incomplete since he continued to tolerate the traditional pagan cults among his subjects. The existence of Shehu's group of active Muslim reformers in his kingdom must certainly have embarrassed him. Probably the majority of his many subjects were still animists and the native beliefs and customs were deeply rooted in their way of life. Bawa, as their chief, was evidently responsible for maintaining their beliefs and customs. If he had agreed to the reformers' demands to destroy customs contrary to Muslim law, he would have undermined his own power base. Yet, the Shehu was too influential to be ignored.

As a result, Bawa tried compromise. Though the Shehu understood Bawa's difficulty, showed no disposition to make concessions. He demanded an outright allegiance to Islam in all its aspects. 'Abdullahi reported that he travelled to the Emir of Gobir, Bawa, and explained to him the true Islam and ordered him to observe it and to establish justice in his lands.¹³⁸ From this, it seems that the Shehu was really confident in

¹³⁷) Bawa was a son of Sarkin Gobir Babari, who had defeated Zamfara, and his nickname, 'Jan Gwarzo', showed that he was a man of unusual energy and drive.

¹³⁸) 'Abdullahi, *T.W.*, op. cit., p. 86; Hiskett, *S.T.*, op. cit., p. 44.

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his own authority which was due to increasing popular backing up as well as on his firm conviction that he was under the protection of God. This visit was so successful that he was able to go on summoning the people to the faith because, as, ‘Abdullahi stated that it came about that those who did not fear God, feared to deny his order because of his connection with the sultan¹³⁹.

Therefore, it is quite clear that before 1786, Bawa still felt it wise to secure the Shehu’s friendship. Maybe because he had not yet fully realised the threat to his own authority that the Shehu’s growing following represented; or perhaps he did not think it was high time for a confrontation. Besides, his hostile relations with Zamfara may have made him anxious to gain allies and loath to invite trouble in his own kingdom.

As for the Shehu, there was no doubt that he eagerly desired to convert Bawa, not to fight him. Having managed to establish relations with Bawa, the Shehu now felt sufficiently secure to travel to Zamfara in spite of the tension existing between that kingdom and Gobir. Once there, for five years (A.H.1201/A.D.1786-A.H.1206/A.D.1791), he resumed his successful missionary work. He called the people to Islam and corrected extreme positions of the scholars such as considering Muslim to be unbelievers for minor faults in their faith and refused to regard schools of Islamic jurisprudence other than the Maliki tradition. Moreover, the Shehu faced the issue of male female relationships and the exclusion of women from Islamic education as it will be seen later on.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, he focussed on correcting the bad innovations that had developed in the people’s daily lifestyle and bringing to life the Sunnah as a practical solution as previously mentioned as well.

During this same epoch, an incident occurred which shows well that Bawa had become doubtful about his friendly attitude toward the Muslims. For in A.H.1202/ A.D.1787 or A.H. 1203/ A.D.1788/9, he summoned the Shehu and the scholars to gather at a place called Maghami. The overt reason was that they ought to take part in the Islamic festival of *Id-al-adha* (the Eid of Sacrifice).¹⁴¹ But some sources allude to the fact that Bawa secretly plotted to kill the Shehu and his companions since he then recognised the growth of the Islamic faction and the power of its leaders as a menace to his own position

¹³⁹) ‘Abdullahi, *T.W.*, op. cit.

¹⁴⁰) Ibid; Kani, op. cit., p. 33.

¹⁴¹) The Islamic festival of *Id-al-adha* (the Eid of Sacrifice) is on the tenth of the Islamic month Dhu’I-Hijja: ‘Abdullahi *T.W.*, op. cit., p. 88.

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as head of the traditional cult. It appears that he had delayed too long, however. His rivals had become too strong to be ridded of by multiple murders.

In his *Raud al-Jinan (Meadow of Paradise)*, one of the Shehu's biographers, Mallam Gidado, who later became the vizier of Sokoto, describes how Bawa having decided to assassinate the Shehu and the rest of the assembled scholars, remained for some time gazing sullenly at them, hesitating because of their number. Then one of his courtiers, sensing his dilemma, got up, went to him and said, 'No one except God can do to this gathering what you secretly plotted to do.'¹⁴² Bawa then changed his mind and offered a present of five hundred mithqals¹⁴³ of gold which the Shehu considered it as a bribe and refused it. Instead, he asked Bawa for certain concession characterised in five demands: To allow him to call to Allah in Bawa's country; not to stop anybody who intends to respond to the Shehu's call; to treat with respect any man with a turban; to free all political prisoners; not to burden the subjects with taxes.¹⁴⁴ Sultan Bawa granted him all he asked. Among the prisoners set free was Abarshi, chief of Zamfara.¹⁴⁵

This move by the Shehu was very significant in that it showed his active involvement in the affairs of the people to whom he was preaching. Certainly, the freeing of a leading member of the Zamfara elite would endear him to the leadership of that area and propagate the news of his authority. The demand for a removal of taxes from the masses of the people would really prove his presence and effectiveness in forbidding evil into every home in the countryside. In addition, the Shehu solidified his ability to preach openly and took pressure of his students and followers who were known for the wearing of turbans in accordance to the Sunnah.

Sources also state that all of the scholars present at Maghami who numbered over a thousand, joined the ranks of the Shehu's following. Consequently, it is concluded that the Shehu's missionary journeys were not restricted to preaching but that he formed certain attachments and was by now able to adopt an independent attitude toward the Gobir chief, standing as a power in his own right between him and his foes. For example, shortly after the 'Id assembly', Bawa drew near the Shehu, seeking advice in his campaign against the town of Maradi, which stubbornly resisted capture. The Shehu promised him victory but

¹⁴²) Hiskett, *the Sword of Truth*, op. cit., pp. 43-44.

¹⁴³) A mithqal is a measure of gold, about 1/2 ounce or 3/7 of a dirham, refer to A .De. Berbestein KAZIMERSKI, *Dictionnaire Arabe-Français*, Tome I, Librairie- Beyrouth-Paris (Misonneuve et Cie Editions, 1860.

¹⁴⁴) Ibid, El Masri, *Life of Shehu*, p. 441.

¹⁴⁵) Ibid., p. 442.

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prohibited him to proceed beyond Maradi on pain of defeat. Bawa's forces then quickly took the town and the 'Meadow' tells how after taking rich booty, the Gobir chief turned to his captains and said, 'We have seen what the Shehu has done. Now, let us see what our spears can do'.¹⁴⁶ Although his captains demurred, he insisted and was defeated. He was killed in the battle or died shortly afterwards; during the years A.H. 1203-4 / A.D.1789-90.¹⁴⁷

After five years in Zamfara, during which, in 'Abdullahi's words, he 'accomplished his mission', characterised in preaching, forbidding evil, establishing the Sunnah and the community as stated before, the Shehu returned to Degel around 1791-2, C.E. During this period, he set out for the kingdom of Kebbi with his companions, wandering all over the region. They reached the river Kuwarra (middle Niger) and Illo, further to the west. After having preached and taught the Islamic religion, they went back again to Degel. Then, they continued their preaching tours by visiting Zauma (Zoma)¹⁴⁸ on the river Zamfara where the people, including the ruler, were highly affected by the message.¹⁴⁹

After this journey, around 1793 C.E.¹⁵⁰, he and his kinsmen learnt of the return from pilgrimage of their uncle, a famous scholar and teacher, Muhammad (Sambo). This was really an important event in their lives for Sambo brought back with him not only the latest of what was happening at the centre of the Islamic world but also of new learning acquired from scholars in Egypt and Arabia during his long journey to and from the Holy Lands, as well as new books not previously available in the Sudan. But when he reached Agades, he died. 'Abdullahi wrote a poem mourning him and deploring the loss of learning the community had suffered by his death which happened in Ramadan of 1207 /April 1793.

1.4. Increasing Involvement in the Politics of Gobir Court

Immediately after the death of Bawa, his brother Yaquba succeeded him. No doubt, the Shehu exerted some influence over him as he did over Bawa. At the end of his brief reign which lasted only four years, Yaquba set out to avenge his brother's death by attacking Magami. The Shehu again disapproved and sent his nephew Kaumanga to order him to turn back. According to the 'Meadow', Yaquba was to obey but his courtiers

¹⁴⁶) Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p.45.

¹⁴⁷) Last, *Sokoto Caliphate*, p.7, Kani, op. cit., p.36.

¹⁴⁸) Zauma, according to Hiskett could be either east of Gumi, in Kano region, or in Niger (see footnote # 6 in the translation of *T.W.*, p. 96.

¹⁴⁹) 'Abdullahi, *T.W.*; op. cit.; El Masri, op. cit., p. 442.

¹⁵⁰) After this journey, there is no more mention of travel till the famous migration of 1804 C.E. which will be dealt later on.

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persuaded him to go on. He sent a commander of the (Fulani) back with Kaumanga, to convey his refusal to the Shehu. The Shehu predicted the death of Yaquba saying, '*Yaquba is done for he will never return to his home again if God wills; but you will return if God wills.*'¹⁵¹ The prophecy proved true. Yaquba met his fate by being killed at Magami.

By 1792/3, it appears that people were flooding from all over Hausa land to Degel to learn from the Shehu's teachings, profit from his admonitions and benefit from his good manners¹⁵². His students really became well qualified and were able to preach and teach themselves.¹⁵³ The Shehu concentrated on disseminating knowledge to his eager students and addressing the needs of the numerous groups of people who came to embrace his leadership. He managed to compose a number of long poems in Fulfulde and succeeded in writing a great number of books in Arabic.¹⁵⁴ The most important work of this era was *Ihya al-Sunnah wa Ikhmad al Bid'a* (*The Revival of the Sunnah and the Nullification of Innovation*), written in 1793 C.E.¹⁵⁵ The depth of analysis and insight into the affairs of Hausa land and the Islamic solutions to pressing problems distinguishes this work from all others.

According to 'Abdullahi, a good number of people rallied to the Shehu's support, among them a scholar called al-Mustapha Ibn al-Hajj 'Uthman who accepted the message and emphasised victory what was in it.¹⁵⁶ It is evident from this that the Shehu was now consolidating his alliances and that the Muslim's attitude was hardening into militancy.

By 1794-5 C.E. Sultan Bawa and his successor Yaquba were dead. The power of Gobir, inherited by the new Sultan Nafata was on the decline and the power of the Shehu and his followers was on the rise. The Shehu's son, Muhammad Bello, in his *Infaq Al Maisur* (*Expenditure of What is Available*), recorded that the king of Hausa land started to persecute the community of the Shehu and confiscate their property.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵¹) Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 47.

¹⁵²) 'Abdullahi, *T.W.*, op. cit., p. 98.

¹⁵³) El Masri, op. cit., p. 442.

¹⁵⁴) See Appendix II on the most recent list of works of 'Uthman compiled by Balogun, *S.U.*, in his recent article, 'Arabic Intellectualism in West Africa: The Role of the Sokoto Caliphate' in the journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs, London U.K. 1986, vol. 2, pp. 394-409 quoted in K. A. Balogun, 'Uthman Bin Fudi On the Characteristics of a Good Muslim,' The Islamic Quarterly: A Review of Islamic Culture, vol. XXXII (Number 1), The Islamic Cultural Centre, 1988 pp. 40-45.

¹⁵⁵) Isma'il Ayinla Babtunde Balogun, 'A Critical edition of the *Ihya Al-Sunna wa-Ikhmad Al-Bid'a* of 'Uthman Dan Fodio, Ph.D. diss., University of London, 1967, p. 68.

¹⁵⁶) 'Abdullahi, *T.W.*, p. 101.

¹⁵⁸) Muhammad Bello, *Infaq al Maisur fi Tarikh Bilad al-Takrur*, Cairo, Ministry of Awqaf, 1964, p. 96. See also Arnett, E. J., *The Rise of the Sokoto Fulani*, op.cit., containing an English version of *Infaq al Maisur* and *History of Sokoto*, quoted in Hiskett, *Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 49.

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In this era, the Shehu had a mystical experience which he described as a meeting between himself, the Prophet, Sheikh 'Abd-al Qadir al-Jilani, and a host of saints. The Shehu reported later that he was given a green mantle¹⁵⁹, a special turban¹⁶⁰, and the Sword of Truth¹⁶¹, that he was supposed to unsheathe against his foes. This symbolised for the Shehu the acceptance of the obligation to change evil with his hand or having recourse to Jihad.¹⁶²

By 1794 C.E., the Shehu began to urge his community (Jama'a) to equip themselves with weapons of war¹⁶³ as this was part of the Sunnah. This move was to frighten the rulers of Hausa land and Sultan Nafata was to introduce certain restrictive laws and harsh measures against them. He made a public proclamation in the market place. He declared that

'None but the Shehu was to be allowed to preach; no more conversions to Islam would be permitted and those who were not born Muslims should return to their former religion; and the wearing of turbans and veils -the distinctive Muslim dress- was prohibited' ¹⁶³

These commandments represented the extreme in oppressive measures for the Shehu and his Jama'a since they were a community of Islamic Scholars whose primary mission was to spread Islam and explain its fundamentals and laws. The attempt made to clip the wings of the Shehu and his followers as well as to muzzle their mouths was unsuccessful. Conversely, the relationship between the Shehu and Nafata became more strained as a result of these restrictions and they were to provoke the Muslims to greater militancy.

¹⁵⁹) The mantle (robe) embroidered with the words, *'There is no good but God; Muhammad is the Messenger of the God.'*

¹⁶⁰) The turban embroidered with the words, *'He is God, the one.'* This is possibly a reference to the Holy Quran, *Surat al Ikhlass (Sura 112)* and may indicate that the whole of this short Sura was embroidered on the turban .

¹⁶¹) In Arabic, it is called *saif al-haqq*. The word al-haqq is also one of the names of God; and the translation *'the Sword of God'* is also possible.

¹⁶²) Hiskett, *the Sword of Thruth*, p. 66. The original source is the wurd (p. 54) of Shehu 'Uthman ibn Fudi, p. 2-4.

¹⁶³) The Shehu wrote this poem in Fulfulde whose English translation is the following:

*'Keep your quivers, O men and wear turbans,
For, indeed, turbans and quivers are part of the Sunna of Muhammad.
Keep your spears as well, for it is the Sunna of Muhammad;*

So also are swords parts of the Sunna of Muhammad. 'Refer to Taher, 'The Social Writings...' p. 86. From the poem 'Sunna Muhammadu', Gime Fulfulde: 1, compiled by Al- Amin Abu Manga and Ibrahim Mukoshy, Kano: Bayero University, n.d., pp.121-125.

¹⁶³) T.W., p. 107; El Masri, *Life of Shehu*, pp. 444-5.

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According to the 'Meadow', the deteriorating relations led to another trial by the Chief of Gobir to coerce the Shehu by force and this time, it was really carried out. Nafata seized members of the Shehu's family as hostages and then summoned the Shehu to his court and demanded him to stop his activities. But when the Shehu confronted him, a swelling on Nafata's neck burst and he had to be taken to his house. Yunfa, Nafata's son, escorted the Shehu away. The Shehu told him that his father would die and that he would succeed him. This really proved true.

Until then, the Shehu's contacts with the Gobir court were still close. Yet, the Shehu's position remained ambivalent. For despite the increasingly hostile actions of the Gobir rulers, he must still have been able to keep up his influence on the court. According to some oral traditions, the Shehu is credited to have been tutor to Yunfa, and one source, the Hausa Chronicle,¹⁶⁴ says he also backed up Yunfa's claim to the succession against his cousins. It seems probably that the support of his Fulani kinsmen, on which he was then able to rely, strengthened the Shehu's position. Moreover, he managed to win over allies among the nobility and the commoners, points to the diversity of his alliances and the complex pattern of relationships within Gobir that he was capable of exploiting.

As this phase was closing, the Shehu was finding himself at the head of a large and growing community of Muslims whose allegiance was to a faith (Islam) and not to a state (Gobir), sharing a common ideology, common aims and objectives, rules and regulations, even on matters of dressing, thus transcending all ethnic and national divisions. With such developments, the task of renewal was no longer one of admonishing towns alone but planning and organising this growing revolutionary crowd. Thus the Shehu decided in 1793 to settle down for the purpose of coordinating the next phase of a movement whose leadership had fallen on his shoulders.

¹⁶⁴) A. Burdon, *Historical Notes on Certain Emirates and Tribes*, London, 1909; quoted in Hiskett, the *Sword of Truth*, op, cit.; p. 49.

Conclusion

This phase is therefore essentially a phase of intellectual revolution which brought not only converts to Islam but gave to the Muslims the true meaning and essence of Islam. This alerted the Muslims to their responsibilities and gave them a mission in life beyond the search for bread and butter. Simultaneous with this intellectual revolution was the recruitment of a revolutionary party whose potentials became evident as this phase ended. The development of this revolutionary party to the outbreak of confrontation formed the second phase of this movement as it will now be seen.

CHAPTER THREE

3. The Phase of Hijra, Jihad and Victory

To the Sarakuna of Hausa land in general and that of Gobir- whose state harboured Degel in particular, the *Wathiqat* brought to the face a crisis which till then had been latent. To the Jama'a the *Wathiqat* came as another milestone on their path of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil and ushered them into another phase of their struggle; a phase of confrontation with what they would no doubt call disbelief forces. To the Hausa land in general, the *Wathiqat* triggered a chain of events which could transform it into battleground. The Jama'a in compliance with the demands of their circumstances began distributing the *Wathiqat* and mobilising their brethren for the Hijra with dispatch and efficiency. Mohammed Bello, for instance, who was away visiting Agali (A Tuareg Scholar) when the *Wathiqat* was released, was on return, at once dispatched to Kebbi for distributing the document and mobilising the Jama'a¹.

The decision to make the Hijra was not simply necessitated by the circumstances in which the Shehu and his Jama'a found themselves. Evidently, the circumstances contributed largely, but the sanction for Hijra came from an inspiration which the Shehu received through visions in his dreams.² The Shehu at least believed to be guided in every major move he made by Allah. The visions, which not surprisingly were characterised by the presence of the Prophet and Abdul Qadir Jilani, were to the Shehu the media through which such inspiration or guidance was received.

However, in deciding where exactly to make the flight to, the Shehu must have consulted the Jama'a. The choice of Gudu, a town at the distant borders of Gobir, about four to five days' journey from Degel,³ is therefore with a strategic consideration. Located outside the Sokoto River Valley, reasonably watered and farthest away from Alkalawa⁴, Gudu clearly offered some military advantages to the Jama'a. Soon after the decision to move to Gudu was taken, Ali Jedo, a leading member of the revolutionary personnel rushed to Gudu to build a dwelling for the Shehu while Agali supplied camels and donkeys to carry the Shehu, his group and their precious library from Degel to their new found base-Gudu.

¹) M.D. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, London, Longman 1977, p. 24 quoting Muhammad Bello in *Infaq al - maysur*.

²) See Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit. , p. 73.

³) See Last, *the Sokoto Caliphate*, op. cit.

⁴) The capital of Gobir

3.1. The Act of Allegiance at Gudu

The movement of the Shehu and a party of the Jama'a out of Degel and heading for Gudu on the 12th of Dhu al-Qida 1218H/ February 1804 C.E marked the flight. Once the Shehu reached Gudu, the Jama'a started to find their way and assembled there.

Alarmed by this mass exodus, Yunfa ordered the governors of his town to take captive all those who travelled to the Sheikh, and they began to persecute the Muslims, killing them and confiscating their property.⁵ This obvious risk, the long distance they had to cross, transport difficulties, perhaps food shortages, February being the middle of dry season did not however deter many of the Jama'a from heading to Gudu. The result was as 'Abdullahi reported:

'Some Emigrants reached us complete with their families and possession. Some only with their families; some arrived alone, with their possession, no family'.⁶

To this one could add those who fell prey to the ambush and killings of Yunfa's forces and never saw Gudu at all. The readiness with which the Jama'a faced these formidable dangers as well as difficulties and flocked to Gudu witnessed their courage and above all their commitment to their cause. The assembled Jama'a at Gudu, given the circumstances in which they had to emigrate, must have been a collection of poor people that had hardly anything but their faith. It was on this faith they appeared to have all their hopes for survival in that precarious camp-Gudu.

In line with the points he raised in the *Masail and Wathiqat*, the Shehu bade the Jama'a at Gudu to elect their (Imam) a commander to lead them in war and govern them. Despite his clear qualities and conspicuous leadership position, the Shehu did not arrogate to himself the Imam ship of the Jama'a. Several candidates were proposed; among them 'Abdullahi, yet none were fully acceptable. In the end, the people insisted the Shehu himself would be their leader. Tradition tells he was unwilling to accept the responsibility⁷ and only did so under conviction and persuasion. This shows how unworldly he was. At that time, he was fifty years old and though he had had some experience as a military adviser to the chiefs of Gobir, he had never actively commanded in the field. Besides, it appears clear from his career up to

⁵) 'Abdullahi b. Muhammad, Tazyin al-Waraqat, op. cit., p. 108.

⁶) Abdullahi b. Muhammad, quoted in a Shehu Shagari and Jean Boyd, 'Uthman Dan Fodio, Lagos, IPB, 1978; quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit., p. 90.

⁷) Refer also to Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, op. cit., p. 24, quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit.; Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p.73 & ff. quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit., p. 91.

this point that, unlike 'Abdullahi, who was a natural fighter, apt to bring matters to a head, the Shehu preferred more subtle techniques. In spite of his militant visions, he would rather have outpointed the Habe at their own devious game than fought them outright; and he may still have believed there was a hope of compromise. Circumstances, however, dictated otherwise: persuaded by his followers, now in a belligerent mood, he accepted the allegiance offered to him and became the commander of his people, in open revolt against the authority of Gobir.

The significance of this flight which continued till April 1805 when Birnin Kebbi fell to the Jama'a went beyond a mere gathering of oppressed people for the purpose of defence. To the Jama'a, it was a solemn reminder to the struggle of the Prophet against the heathen people of his time-something they must have felt privileged to repeat. Just like the case of the Prophet so with the Jama'a the migration represented a turning point in their struggle and a total rupture with the heathen authorities. Their election of Imam in a way registered the birth of an Islamic government which now had to fight for both its survival as well as its establishment.⁸

3.2. Holy War in the Way of God

However much the two chief protagonists may have wished, at the last moment, to draw back, war was now unavoidable because Yunfa had to save his face; and the allegiance at Gudu placed the Shehu beyond the hope of further compromise. For victory or defeat, the Sword of Truth was now finally unsheathed.

3.2.1 .The Terrain of the Campaigns

Before going on to discuss the campaigns that now ensued, it will be useful, to describe the kind of country over which they were fought, and the two armies that fought them. The cockpit of the war and the area bounded on the west and north by the river Rima, by the river Zamfara in the south, and by the bifurcating streams of the Bunsuru and Gegere in the east. It is in the main a flat plain of scrub savannah, dry and dusty in the hot season, but bursting into green fertility with the rains. It is an excellent country for cavalry, on which the Muslim Fulani largely relied, at least during the later phases of the war after they had captured sufficient horses from the Habe to form effective cavalry units.⁹ But it is a vast country and

⁸) Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit., p. 91.

⁹) Johnson, H.A.S., *the Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, London, 1967, p. 45 et seq.

offers limitless escape routes to defeated armies. It was thus hard to clinch an initial victory won in the open; and command of the areas as a whole relied on possession of the walled towns, which were the bases and the sally-ports for armies operating in the field. The plain, particularly in Zamfara, is often broken by huge rocky outcrops, the immediate regions of which are strewn with boulders supplying excellent cover. The heights themselves form natural strongholds, impregnable by cavalry and often difficult to scale on foot.

Farther to the west and closer to the Niger, the country becomes less dry and large swampy areas occur while to the east Lake Chad ultimately forms an enormous swampy barrier.

Northwards, toward Azbin, the terrain quickly loses even the scant vegetation of scrub savannah and becomes the gravelly plain of the Sahara.

To the south, toward Kontagora, and southeast, in Gwari, the scrub thickens into evergreen orchard bush and the landscape becomes hillier. This, too, is not good for cavalry and the incidence of a tsetse belt yet farther south eventually imposes a severe handicap on horse-borne forces for the blood-sucking tsetse fly transmits a fatal equine disease.¹⁰

3.2.2 .The Two Armies

The two armies¹¹ about to fight this war were not evenly matched. The Gobirawa and their allies certainly enjoyed superiority in numbers and in the early stages, in arms and equipment. Later, the Muslims largely overcame their initial inferiority by capture from the enemy.

The Gobir army was a mixed force. In addition to the levies of Hausa peasants available to the Gobir chief, it contained units of Tuareg-experienced desert raiders but fickle and unreliable-Fulani hostile to the Shehu's cause and they too proved inconstant allies-and people whom 'Abdullahi calls 'Nubians'¹² probably from countries east of Hausa land. Little is known of the leaders except the names of some. The Gobir war chief was a certain *Waru Alkiyama*, '*Waru the Resurrection*', a reference to his repute for dispatching his foes to await that event! The nickname proved double-edged: he himself was killed in the first major battle. Two others were *Kabuge*, also a punning nickname meaning 'You strike down' and

¹⁰) Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op.cit, p. 82.

¹¹) D.J.M., Muffet's excellent monograph in Crowder, op. cit. ,T.W.; A. D. H. Bivar's *Nigerian Panoply*, Lagos, 1964, quoted in Hiskett, *S.T.*, op. cit., p.82.

¹²) He means non-Hausa-speaking Africans.

Namadagai, derived from a Hausa word meaning ‘strong battle position’, thus ‘Always in the front line’. One party of Tuareg was commanded by their chief, *Tambari Agunbulu*; the other, a contingent from the desert kingdom of Ahir, by their chief, Hamidu. The Fulani allies of Gobir were under the command of their clan leader, Manuri, who, subsequently defected on the Muslim side.

The Muslim army consisted firstly of scholars, chiefly but not exclusively Fulani, who certainly do not seem to have been softened physically by their clerical habits for they fought fiercely and to the death. The rest of the army was made up of Fulani clansmen and Hausa peasants. The Shehu was in supreme command though he took little active part in the fighting. The armies in the field were commanded by his son, Muhammad Bello, his brother, ‘Abdullahi, and by certain Fulani clan leaders, outstandingly Aliyu Jedo and Namoda.

Both sides used cavalry, archers and infantry; though the Muslims did not acquire cavalry till they had captured sufficient horses in their first successful battles. The cavalry soldiers wore mail shirts or quilted jerkins, the *kwalkwali*, or plumed helmet, consisting of an iron frame padded with quilting. Others, mainly, the Fulani scholars, wore the *malafa*, a large straw hat with a wide brim that fitted over a tightly wound turban, which gave significant protection to the head. They also wore leg armour of leather and mail, or quilting. Their horses were protected by *lifidi*, the quilted horse armour copied from North Africa. Saddles were high and peaked and to them were attached *wangami*, bucket-shaped fighting stirrups with sharpened edges, for slashing opponents. They carried hide shields or sometimes a very small targe. Their chief weapon was the *buguden*, a broad-bladed thrusting lance. The lance arm was often weighted with stone bangles to add force to the down thrust. They also carried swords and sometimes a *kulki*, a club or mace.¹³ The Gobir cavalry was richly caparisoned and appears to have had some parade ground training for ‘Abdullahi describes them as being drawn up in properly sized ranks. Both armies carried their banners into battle and the Gobirawa used drums to sound the charge. The Muslims close-cropped the manes of their horses to deny the enemy a handhold uttering their war-cry ‘Allah is the Greatest’.

The Muslim archers that were Fulani clansmen and who seemed to have been remarkably more effective than their Gobir counterparts normally carried no protective armour and wore their traditional leather aprons. Their bow was five feet long and strung with rawhide, their

¹³) These figures represent the various weapons used during the holy war. It should be remembered that the majority of the soldiers fighting in the jihad had no firearms. Much skill and care was thus taken with the manufacture of traditional weapons, as can be seen from these drawings.

arrows un-fletched and effective at ranges up to about thirty paces.¹⁴ There was also a contingent of musketeers in the Gobir army. It is not evident whether the Muslims possessed firearms in any quantity.

Infantry were, for the most part, Hausa peasants. One or two may have carried shields or worn quilted jerkins but most of them wore no armour. They were dressed in loin clothes and a long indigo-dyed shirt gathered round the waist with a belt or cord. They also carried a cotton or hair blanket, worn across one shoulder. They had a variety of weapons but most relied on the Hausa *gatari*, a hatchet with a heavy, narrow blade, used both for agriculture and warfare, and on clubs and butchering knives. Some also carried short stabbing spears and swords.¹⁵ A few were fine, Turkish sabres, with ornate hilts and curved blades decorated with Arabesque engravings. Most were of the straight, double-edged variety, used for thrusting into the groin or belly but sometimes they were used as slashing weapons against exposed heads or limbs.

¹⁴) See Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit.; p.86.

¹⁵) They varied in pattern according to provenance and the rank of the owner; quoted in Ibid.



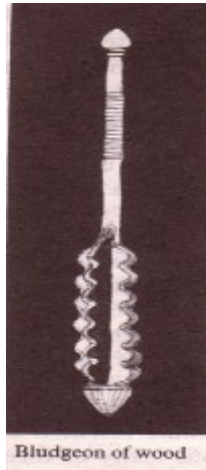
Bow

Figure 1



Sword

Figure 2



Bludgeon of wood

Figure 3



Wrist dagger

Figure 4



Quiver and arrows

Figure 5



Knife with sheaf

Figure 6

Afigbo A.E. et al. *The Making of Modern Africa: the Nineteenth Century*, Volume I, Longman Group Limited, Essex, England, 1992, p. 84.



Figure 7. Suit of Chain Mail Courtesy
Federal Department of Antiquities National

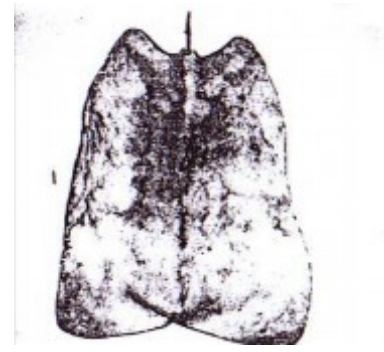


Figure 8. Hausa Shield Smithsonian
Institution, Photo N°73-2054

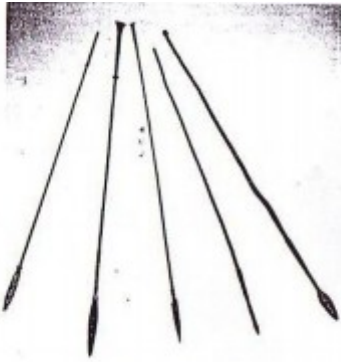


Figure 6. Assorted Hausa Spears, Smithsonian Institution, Photo No. 73-2062.

Figure 9

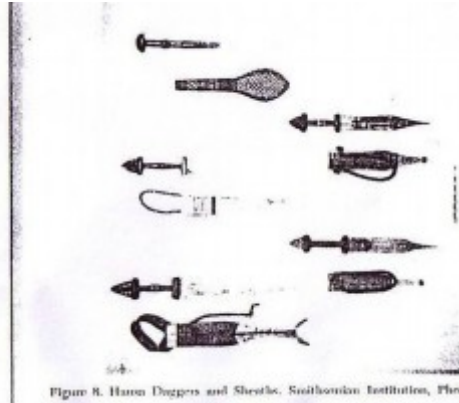


Figure 8. Hausa Daggers and Sheaths, Smithsonian Institution, Photo

Figure 10



Figure 6. Hausa Sabers and Scabbards, Smithsonian Institution, Photo No. 73-2054.

Figure 11



Figure 7. Hausa Quivers and Arrows, Smithsonian Institution, Photo

Figure 12

Smaldone .Joseph P. Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate: Historical and Sociological Perspectives, C.U.P. Cambridge, London, 1977, pp.42-45.



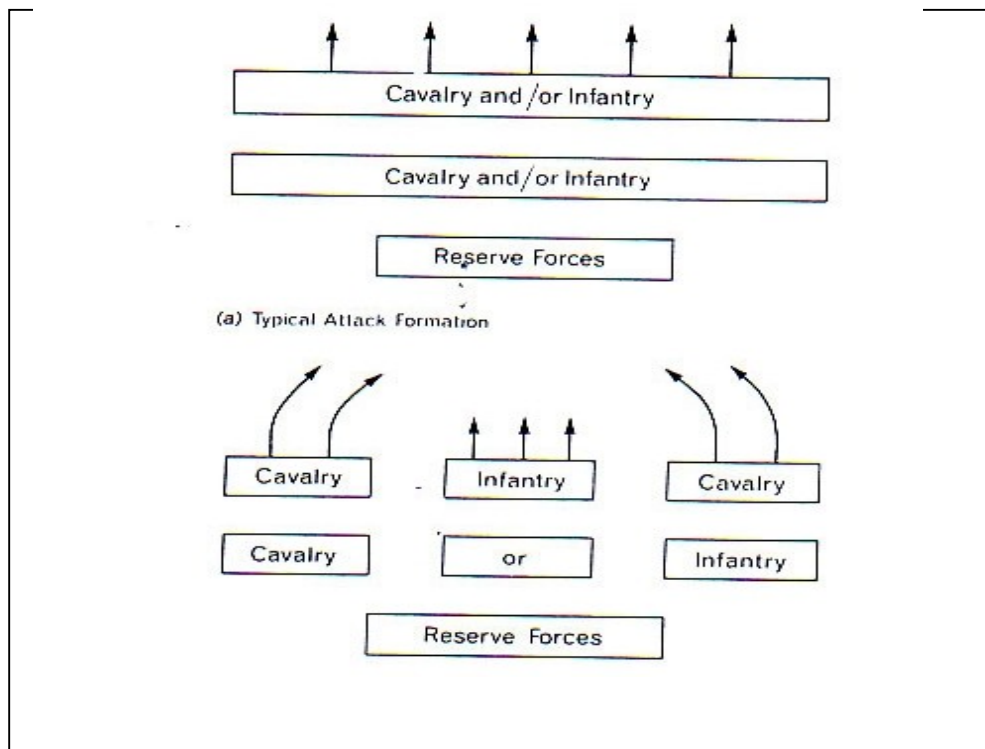
Figure 13



Figure 14

HISKETT Mervyn. *The Sword of Truth: the Life and Times of the Shehu Usman dan Fodio*, Northern western University Press, 1994, pp. 84-85.

Figure 15



Smaldone. Joseph P. *Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate: Historical and Sociological Perspectives*, op.cit, pp. 45 and ff.

Field medicine was basically preventative: it consisted of charms and amulets—some pagan, some Quranic—worn by some of the Muslim fighters, and there were specific preventatives against such hazards of battle as narrow wounds, sword and spear thrusts, and blows with blunt weapons. If these failed the treatment was cauterisation.

Capture frequently meant death. If not, the best the captive could hope for was to be sold into slavery. This was also the destiny of his women and children if they were taken. The sequel to victory was plunder and the burning of crops and villages. The baggage trains consisted of slaves and beasts of burden, including camels. On river crossings these creatures were tethered to the gunwales of large canoes and ferried across with their burdens. Both armies lived largely off the land but carried a form of biltong and roasted sorghum grain which was crushed and drunk as gruel. The Gobirawa, however, at least in the early stages of

war, treated campaigning as a picnic and carried large quantities of luxury food, while several concubines accompanied their baggage train.

3.2.3 .The Battle of Tabkin Kwotto to the Battle of Alwassa, November 1805

The campaign opened with punitive raids by the Gobirawa against Muslim villages, by which they obviously hoped to dishearten the so-called rebels and demoralise them by constant pestering. But this merely drove more of them into the Shehu's camp. Soon the Muslims learnt that Yunfa was gathering a large army to launch a full-scale military campaign to assault the Jama'a at Gudu. He appeared to have planned a surprised attack to exhaust or even nip the nascent Islamic community at Gudu before they could master any might¹⁶ but the Jama'a got to know through a Tuareg informant,¹⁷ and began to prepare, thus:

*'Then we received news that Sarkin Gobir had started to assemble his men with a view to exterminate us. We therefore dug a ditch round Gudu, learning from the example of the Prophet of Allah (P.B.U.H).'*¹⁸

Yet the Gobir commanders lacked urgency. While their feudal levies assembled, Muslims wisely decided to take the initiative. They seized the two fortified towns of Matankari and Konni, to the North of Gudu,¹⁹ hence establishing their central strategy all over the campaign—the seizure of key towns.

In Rabi'al-awal 1219 H/June 1804 C.E., the Gobir troops were ready to march. Heavily armed, the Gobir forces under Yunfa, with their colourful cavalcade, with their cavalry in their gay saddle-cloths, their plumed helmet and their long lances couched as well as heavily burdened with a 'tail' of women and baggage²⁰ met the ill-equipped and comparatively small army of the Jama'a under 'Adullahi, by the Lake Kwatto near Gurdam not far from Gudu. As stated earlier Yunfa's forces were made up of '*Nubians, Tuaregs, and Fulani who followed*

¹⁶) Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit. , p. 91.

¹⁷) M.D. Last, *the Sokoto Caliphate*, op.cit, p. 26.

¹⁸) 'Abdullahi b. Muhammad, quoted in Shagari and Boyd, '*Uthman Dan Fodio*, op.cit, p. 9.

¹⁹) In the words of one of the commanders:

'... the affair came to the point where they were sending armies against us, and we gathered together when that became serious, and appointed the Sheikh Usman ... as our commander ... built a fortress there, after that we began to revenge ourselves upon those who raided us, and we raided them, and conquered the fortress of Matankari. Then the fortress of the Sultan of Kunni.'

²⁰) Hiskett, *the Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 87.

him such as no one knows except God'.²¹ The Jama'a on the other hand, though composed of Hausa, Fulani and some Tuareg were outnumbered and equipped with only a few horses.²²

As the battle line was drawn, it was found on the Gobir side a large and heavily armed army ready to pounce on a people who had rebelled against their authority and their way of life. On the Jama'a side a small gathering of holy warriors, confident in Allah and ready for martyrdom or victory in their struggle to check the excesses of unbelief and establish Islam. The morals on both sides were necessarily different for the commitments as well as motivators were different.

Soon after the battle broke out, the Muslim fighters succeeded in routing the Gobir forces and were obliged to flee. This incidence recalls to a Muslim mind the battle of Badr.²³ Along their route, they burnt down villages and captured and slew the small bands of nomads who crossed their line of march persuading more people, nomads and peasants alike to go over to their foes. They made first for Gudu, which they sacked. 'Abdullahi, who had been put in charge of the Muslim forces, correctly anticipated this move and evacuated the camp with those of his people who would follow him. Most did but seemingly some refused to leave and must, consequently, have fallen into the enemy's hands.

'Abdullahi describes how he now shadowed the Gobir army for four days, trying to bring it to battle. Yet the Gobirawa were reluctant to meet him on the ground of his choosing.

In a trial to get behind him and cut his line of retreat, the Gobirawa moved to the west of his army and took up a position near Lake Kwotto (in Hausa *Tabkin Kwotto*), on hilly ground with a covert of thicket to their front, which they were counting on to keep the Muslims at bay. Beyond the thicket there was open ground which the heavy Gobir cavalry needed to ride down the Muslims. They then waited the night out, toasting spitted meats around their camp fires, regaling themselves noisily on fine wheaten cakes, ghee, and honey, and cocksure of an easy win in the coming battle.²⁴

'Abdullahi, having correctly guessed their plan, decided to fight them at Lake Kwotto, confident in his troops' mobility and the good-shooting of his archers. A night march brought him at aurora to the village Gurdam. Here the whole Muslim army performed prayer, piously

²¹) 'Abdullahi b. Muhammad, *Tazyin al-Waraqat*, op; cit., p. 105.

²²) M. Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, op. cit., p. 26.

²³) The commander of the holy warriors at least recalled the battle of Badr where the Muslims defeated the unbelievers.

Refer to Abdullahi b; Muhammad, *T.W.*, op. cit., p. 110.

²⁴) Hiskett, *the Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 88.

promising themselves to death or victory in the bloody battle ahead. Then 'Abdullahi drew up his line in battle. A little before midday, he assaulted. The Gobirawa, drawn up as if on a ceremonial parade received them with a volley of musketry and arrows which seemingly did little damage. The Muslims returned the fire and the Gobirawa, drums beating, charged. Both the Muslim left and right wings broke temporarily beneath the weight of the attack; but swiftly recovered and joined the centre which held firm. The battle then developed into a bloody hand-to-hand struggle, waged with axes, swords, and short-range archery.²⁵

By noon, the Gobirawa had had enough: they turned in flight, confused, like young locusts²⁶ and took cover in the thickets until nightfall enabled them to escape safely. Yunfa himself got away only with difficulty taking to his heels down the valley of the river Rima, clinging to the mane of his frightened horse and leaving his luggage-strewn throughout the battlefield for the Muslims to pick up. He was so upset and confused that he is said to have gabbled all his five prayers immediately because he dared not halt for long enough to perform each one at its appointed time. Many of the Gobir cavalry soldiers, equally panic-stricken, were trapped in the very thickets they were relying on to keep off the Muslims, and the thorns tore their clothes to rags as they struggled to reach the open ground. The Muslims gave their dead the martyr's burial.²⁷ The enemy dead were left unburied, food for vultures and hyenas.

Whatever factors scholars²⁸ might attribute the Muslim army's victory to; it is of interest to note the Muslim fighters saw the success primarily and wholly as the work of Allah. The battle of Kwatto²⁹ being the first real encounter between Gobir forces and the Jama'a, the latter's victory shook Gobir and its sympathisers and gave the Muslim fighters a higher morale and good will. 'Abdullahi may have intended to exploit this good will when he wrote soon after the battle a long poem of appeal to certain Muslims who had not yet joined them, urging them to join the victorious holy fighters.³⁰

²⁵) *And many a great man our hands flung down,*

And axes cleft his head split asunder,

And many a brave warrior did our arrows strike down,

And our swords; birds and hyenas cover him! (TW). Refer to Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit.; p.89.

²⁶) Ibid.

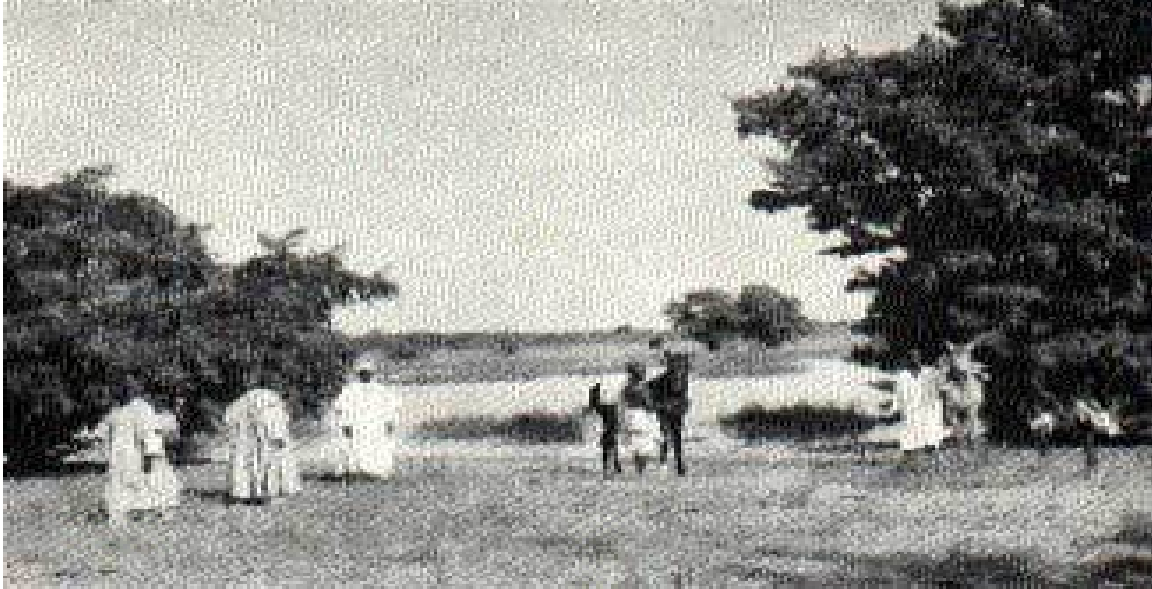
²⁷) That is to say, they buried them unwashed and enshrouded, so that they might go straight to Paradise with the honourable wounds and dust of battle plainly visible upon them for the angels and the blessed to see.

²⁸) See Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, op. cit., p. 26 and Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 88.

²⁹) Picture1.

³⁰) 'Abdullahi b. Muhammad, *T.W.*, op. cit., pp. 111-3.

PICTURE 1



Tabkin Kwatto, the lake at which the reformers drank and watered their few horses before fighting the first great battle of the jihad. Refer http://www.amanaonline.com/Sokoto/list_of_illustrations.htm to H.A.S. Johnson, *the Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, London. Ibadan. Nairobi: O.U.P. 1967. p. 1. Their few horses before fighting the first great battle of the jihad. Refer http://www.amanaonline.com/Sokoto/list_of_illustrations.htm to H.A.S.

The large influx of people that joined the Muslim fighters at Gudu soon after the battle could be attributed to this good will. It could further be argued that the majority of the people of this influx were ‘fence sitters’ who had been waiting to see the winner before they took sides. This influx, whatever its real cause was, coupled with the booty at Kwatto, increased the poor military resources of the Muslim fighters as well as their defensive and striking powers.

Even though Lake Kwotto was an echoing victory for the Muslims, its consequences were not at once favourable to them since it did not stop at consolidating the position of the holy fighters. Only the defeat of Gobir which was considered as a formidable force in Hausa land quite naturally alarmed and alerted the kings of Hausa land some of whom came to

sympathise with Gobir and even allied with it against the Jama'a. However, on the other hand, it denied the Gobirawa their objective which was to destroy the Muslims in one, crushing and decisive battle. They now had to face a long war which they did not have the will or the resources to sustain; though they were still to remain a powerful and dangerous enemy for several years to come.

To forestall another 'Kwatto' in their country, many kings began a strong assault on the Jama'a in their territory; while a commercial embargo was imposed on their brethren at Gudu.³¹ It was here that Shehu's long friendship with the rulers of Zamfara proved its worth. When the fighters became hard pressed for food, Sarkin Mafara Agwaragi, Sarkin Burnin Bakwa and Sarkin Danto Kure sent traders with food to the fighters.³² Although Bello pointed out that the amity of Sarakunan Zamfara was due rather to their enmity with Gobir than to their adherence to Islam,³³ the value of such aid to the movement at such critical time in its struggle cannot be overvalued.

As the circumstances changed following the battle of Kwatto, so did the military posture of the holy fighters. The Jihad now was no longer a matter of defence but a matter of swing the cause of Islam which the kings of Hausa land were desperately out to destroy. Thus the military posture of the fighters was to change from defensive to offensive. It is in the light of these developments that the Shehu's appointment of fourteen leaders³⁴ from the Jama'a to whom he gave flags to return to their respective communities and lead them in Jihad should be seen. It was these developments that saw the spread of the Jihad all over Hausa land and even parts of Bornu.

This offensive phase which continued up to the fall of Alkalawa was not however characterised by fighting alone. In fact a good part of the Shehu's energy appeared to have been dissipated in giving, admonishing and making peace as well as truce with the kings of Hausa land, without compromising his ideal. From Magabci for instance, where the Shehu

³¹) Mohammad Bello, *Infaq al- Maiysur*, op. cit., pp. 94-5, quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study....,' op. cit., p. 93. Commercial embargo seems to be the lot of holy war fighters of all time, for just like the Prophet of Islam faced it in Makka.

³²) Garbo Na- Dama, 'The Rise and Collapse of a Hausa State: a Social and Political History of Zamfara', an unpublished Ph.D thesis, ABU, 1977, p. 426.

³³) Muhammad Bello, quoted in Ibid; quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study....,' op. cit., p. 94.

³⁴) Balogun, *The Life and Works of 'Uthman Dan Fodio*, Lagos, I.P.B., 1975, p. 39 quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study....,' op. cit., p. 95.

stayed after the battle of Kwatto, the Shehu wrote to the Sarkunan Hausa explaining what he was doing to secure the victory of good over evil and revive the Sunna and suppress innovation. He asked them to worship God sincerely and rid themselves of all that the Shaykh opposed and was resisting. He requested them to help him in the Jihad against his enemies and not to be deceived by his foes' words for God would mete out death to those who helped his enemy against him, because he had ordained the victory of the faithful and the humiliation of the unbeliever.³⁵

But what happened when the kings of Hausa land received Shehu's letter? Waziri Junaidu continued to inform us:

*'When the letter reached the Sultan of Katsina, and he saw it, pride took hold of him and he tore it up. So God rent his kingdom apart. Also, when it reached the Sultan of Kano he was on the point of accepting it, but then refused, and followed the way taken by his brother. When the letter reached the Sultan of Zakzak he agreed to repent but his people rejected it and he fought them until he died. After his death, they rose against the Muslims ...'*³⁶

From Magabci the Shehu moved to Rikina, where the Emir of Sisilbe Manuri accepted Islam and joined the Jama'a. When the Shehu moved to Sokoto -then a small village- the *Galadima* Doshero of Gobir arrived to inform the Shehu that Yunfa had repented and was determined to accept all the Sheikh had demanded.³⁷ After consultation, the Jama'a felt that the coming of the *Galadima* was not enough, *'for they knew the trick and character of those people'*.³⁸ Gobir's failure to honour their words agreed with the Jama'a fighters confirmed the latter's doubts and put an end to peaceful negotiation.

Even though the holy war fighters continued to conquer the small towns and villages on their way, nothing short of the capture of Alkalawa could assure them the safety of their cause and give them the security they needed. Thus, soon after the harvest in October 1804, a major offensive under the command of 'Abdullahi was launched against Alkalawa. In spite of three fierce assaults the fighters were unable to conquer the fortress.³⁹ In December when the fighters withdrew to their camp to forestall an invasion by the Tuareg who took the opportunity of raiding their families in settlements left undefended by the needs of the siege,

³⁵) A. Junaidu, 'A Contribution to the Biography of the Shaykh Usman' in Y.B Usma (Ed.), *The Sokoto Caliphate*, op. cit. , p. 468 quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit. , p. 95.

³⁶) Ibid, quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', 'Ibid, p. 96.

³⁷) Ibid.

³⁸) Ibid.

³⁹) Alkalawa was reputed for a remarkable walled fortress situated in the heart of Gobir.

the Gobir forces sneaked and made their surprise and bloody attack on the Jama'a camp and managed to inflict a loss on them. Though the arrival of 'Abdullahi saved the situation, almost two thousands of the fighters had fallen as martyrs. The majority of the martyrs were top ranking scholars of the Jama'a. This loss of dear ones grieved the Shehu⁴⁰ as well as 'Abdullahi, who it appears never recovered fully from this grief throughout this phase. For the decline in discipline which followed this battle of Tsuntusua⁴¹, was to 'Abdullahi always a sad reminder of the loss of these dear souls.⁴²

It was only the strange failure of their enemies to follow up this victory because of the tendency of the Tuareg who were more interested in collecting booty than in clinching victory that saved the Muslim from disaster.

After this set-back, the Muslims rallied and again laid siege to Alkalawa for about a month; but starvation caused them to give up and they were to march south into Zamfara where they set up a new headquarters at Sabon Gari where they succeeded in winning control of that area without serious fighting. From Sabon Gari they set out, in Dhu'l -Hijja 1219 H / March 1805 C.E., to assault Birnin Kebbi, the capital of the Kebbi kingdom. The strategic importance of this city will be evident from a glance at Map 6⁴³. It lies near the confluence of the Rima⁴⁴ and Zamfara rivers and is the key to the control both of Kebbi and south-west Zamfara. The Shehu himself did not accompany the army on his campaign but it was he who ordered the attack on the city. The force was commanded in the field by 'Abdullahi. After a hard battle, Fodi, the king of Kebbi, was driven out of his capital, he fled north with his cavalry, leaving the Muslims to collect a rich haul of gold silver, the richest booty they had seized in their campaign so far.

After this, they turned east. A force under the Shehu's son, Muhammad Bello, moved up the Zamfara valley, occupying the Zamfara towns on both banks of the river and raiding into the neighbouring state of Katsina. Finally, they found themselves facing the fortress of

⁴⁰) Malam Gidado in his account of the affair, describes how the Shehu, a normally restrained and controlled man, was seized by fierce wrath when he saw so many of his companions lying dead upon the field and was for mounting an immediate attack on Alkalawa, to retaliate them. His friend, Umaru Alkammu, wisely dissuaded him from such a rash action in their then weakened and disorganised state and they turned instead to the burial of the dead.

⁴¹) This battle took place in Ramadhan 1219/ December 1804.

⁴²) Refer to 'Abdullahi b. Muhammad, *Tazyin al- Waraqat*, p.116 and to Appendix III.

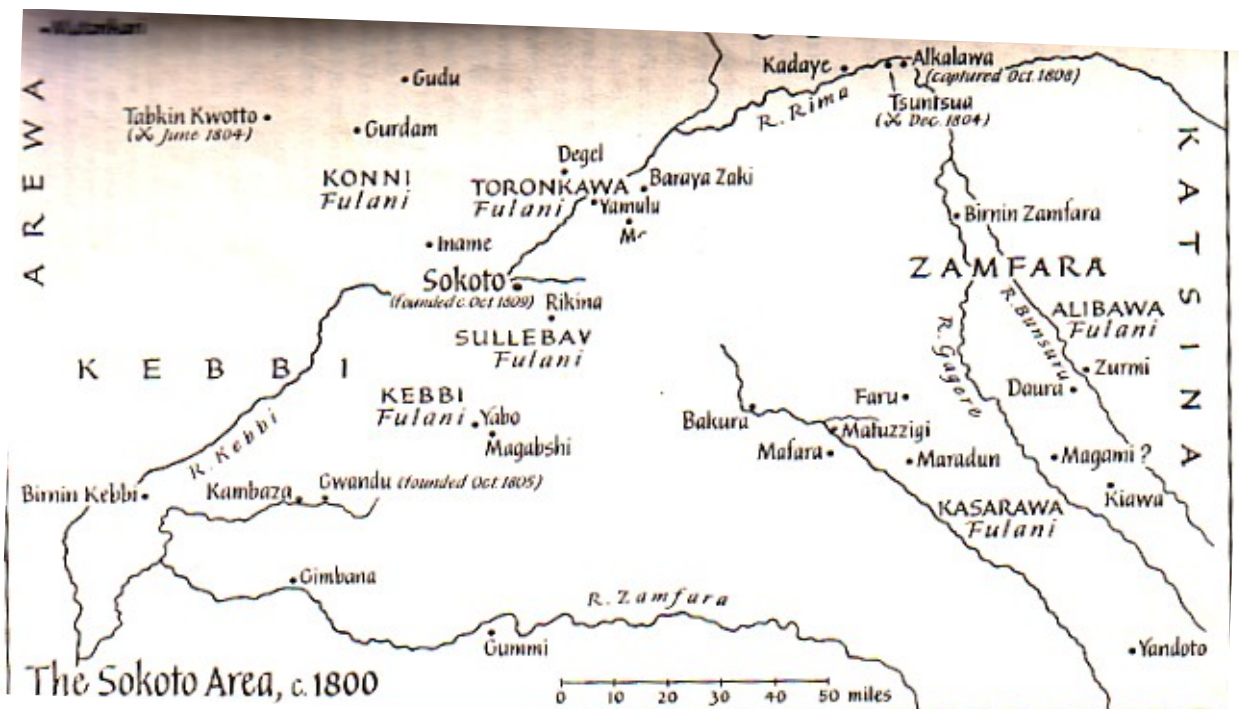
⁴³) Hiskett, *the Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p. 94.

⁴⁴) See the map of Rima River. WebPulaaku Sokoto, H.A.S. Johnston. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto* London. Ibadan. Nairobi: Oxford University Press. 1967.

Kanoma, a pagan stronghold and a hard nut to crack since it was sited at the top of a steep, rocky hill. On seeing the Muslim drawing near, the Kanoma defenders came down to intercept them in the plain and a fierce fight was to occur.

Map 5

THE SOKOTO AREA



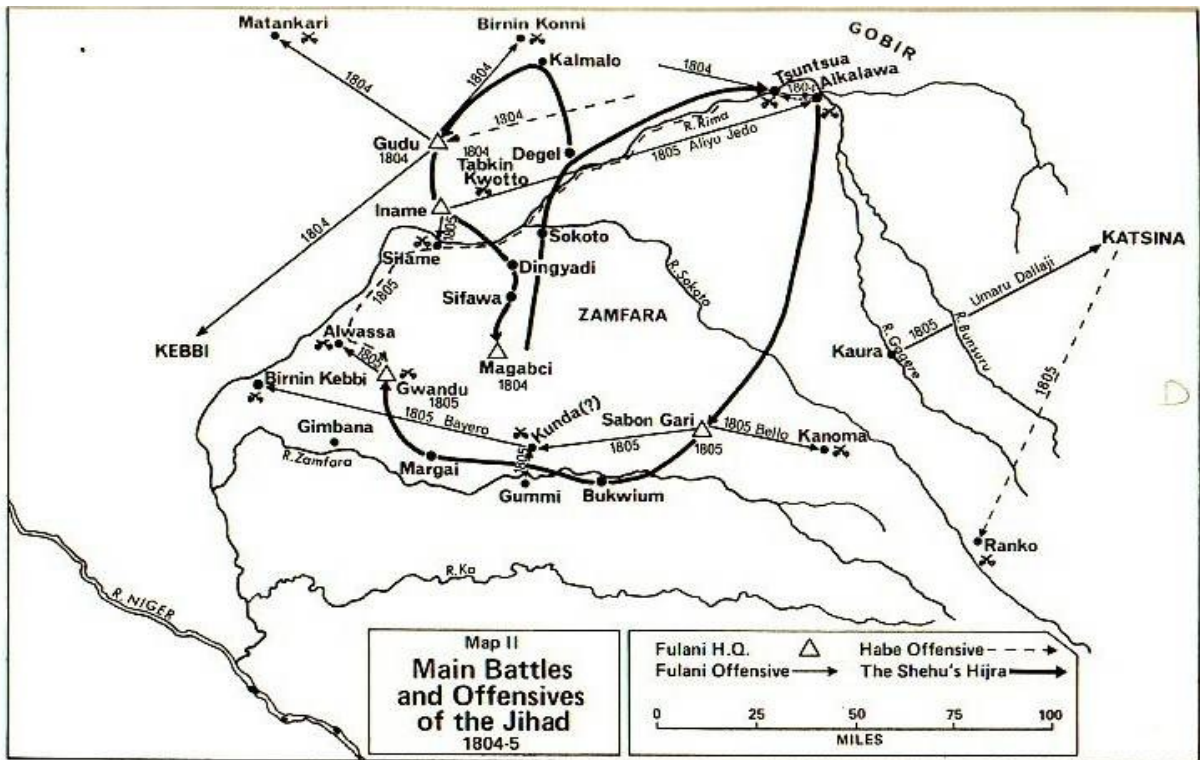
Ajayi .J.F.A. and Crowder Michael, *History of Africa*, Vol. II, Longman Group Ltd, London, 1974.p. 31.

Bello tells us that the right wing fell back and was scattered by the Kanoma assault; but the left wing stood firm and a cavalry charge dispersed the enemy and sent them scurrying in retreat back up the hill to their fortress. The Fulani cavalry chased them as far as they could and when the slope became too steep, dismounted and scrambled on foot to the peak. They attacked the city walls for the rest of the day and bivouacked on the hill top that night. At aurora, they renewed the assault. At this point accounts of the battle start to differ. Bello, who commanded, simply observes that they found the foe had escaped; and that the Muslim

cavalry pursued them and took many prisoners. Another source, however, relates that their attack was beaten back and they were on the point of despair when a lucky incendiary arrow set fire to a thatched roof. The fire spread and terrified by the growing conflagration, the defenders abandoned their town and fled. Yet a third source attributes the fire to the Shehu's miraculous intervention.⁴⁵

Map 6

MAIN BATTLES and OFFENSIVES of the JIHAD 1804-5



M. Hiskett, *the Sword of Truth*, op.cit., p. between 94 and 95.

Once more, a glance at Map 6 makes clear the importance of this victory. It secured the eastern end of the Zamfara and gave the Muslims a strongly fortified line right up the valley, with the two strongholds of Birnin Kebbi in the west and Kanoma in the east as pivots and

⁴⁵) *IM*, p. 76; *WKS*, p. 85; *RJ*, f.10; quoted in Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op.cit.; p.92.

sally-ports on each flank; while by falling back to the south bank where they also controlled the towns they could put the river in front of them if they wished.

But these hard-won military gains were largely nullified by other developments. The Zamfara population, at first friendly, quickly began to turn against the Muslims as a result of the tyrannical behaviour of some of the Fulani commanders—a fact which Muhammad Bello, with remarkable frankness, admits in his *Infaq al-maisur (Expenditure of What is Available)*. Therefore they found themselves, short of food, with their right flank in danger from the unsympathetic Zamfarawa and the Katsina Habe. The situation persuaded the Shehu to move his headquarters from Sabon Gari west to Gwandu because the western flank was now the more strongly held, and many of the Kebbewa were still well disposed toward them.

From Gwandu, the Shehu started to prepare for another expedition against Alkalawa. The Gobirawa must have anticipated this, for the Muslims now received intelligence from numbers of refugees fleeing south that a large army was massing in the north, consisting of Tuareg and other anti-Muslim elements in alliance with the Gobirawa. In Sha' ban 1220 H /November 1805 C.E., this army marched south, down the Rima valley; then struck east, catching the Muslims off balance at a Kebbi, town called Alwassa.⁴⁶ This was a strategic spot. If the Gobir commanders had been able to prise the Muslims out of their Kebbi strongholds, they would have deprived them of their strong base from which to launch the attack on Alkalawa and compelled them to pivot on the much less secure eastern flank. The fact that their plan in the end failed was due not to a wrong initial appreciation but to a bad execution.

The news of the Gobir advance found the Muslims uncertain and confused. The tyrannous behaviour of some of their commanders, and its unfortunate consequences, had already caused hard feelings among them. Now, at a council of war, some were for going out and intercepting the enemy while the rest wished to stand and fight them on their own ground. To this latter school of tactics belonged 'Abdullahi and his nephew, Muhammad Bello. The result was that they first advanced; then changed their minds and retreated, and at last advanced again. Muhammad Bello at this point wished to resign his command owing to his disease; but the Shehu ordered him back into the battle.

There now ensued six days of ragged, untidy fighting during which it was sometimes doubtful whether the divided and demoralised Muslims could muster sufficiently numerous

⁴⁶) There took place the hectic battle of Alwasa in which even the women of the Muslim fighters had the opportunity to participate.

and determined forces to hold their adversaries at a distance. Late, on a Saturday, the Muslim commanders decided the best defence was assault, but they were routed by a Gobir counter-attack. According to the usually sober and reliable Bello, a thousand Muslims died in that first encounter; the rest fell back on Gwandu. The next four days were spent in cavalry actions, in the course of which the Gobirawa sent fighting patrols to probe toward the city of Gwandu, while Bello countered with defensive patrols of his own cavalry. On the following Thursday the Gobirawa decided to launch a major attack on the city.

The Muslims seeing them advance prepared themselves for battle. Then they gathered in front of the mosque and the Shehu came out and led them in prayer. After this they deployed in front of the city walls. The Gobir cavalry tried to break them with a pincer movement, one column striking them from the front while a second assaulted from the rear. A third column advanced from the north to reinforce the frontal attack. The Muslims, after holding against the first stock, retired a little way in good order. Then they stood to fight, drawing the foe into the drenching volleys of the Fulani archers. This was too much for the Gobirawa, who broke and retreated. The Muslim cavalry then charged their flank and rolled it up, whereupon the whole force ran away in disorder, chased by the victorious Muslims.⁴⁷ The Gobir captives in this battle fared badly. They were stoned by the Muslim women and then cast out in the sun to die miserably of thirst.

The Gobirawa lost this battle through initial indecision and a subsequent error of judgement. Their plan was sound but they failed to clinch their first success and permitted the bulk of the Muslim army to retire to Gwandu. Their subsequent assault on that own was inept for they overreached themselves and apparently sent their cavalry too far ahead, unsupported by sufficient infantry. They were demoralised by the formidable Fulani archers; and Bello did not make the mistake of allowing them to retire at leisure but harried them all the way back to their own base in the town of Gumbai.

On the Muslim side, the early hesitancy and wrangling were almost disastrous. But one committed to battle the Fulani commanders fought intelligently 'Abdullahi claims credit for having rallied the initially demoralised forces. But it does seem that the real victor was Muhammad Bello. After the first set-back, he handled his cavalry brilliantly; first, as definitive patrols, breaking up the Gobir probing assaults; then, flexibly, in the main battle,

⁴⁷) Though the holy war fighters rose victorious, they suffered losses which could only be compared to Tsuntsuwa. According to Muhammad Bello not less than one thousand fighters fell as martyrs. Refer to 'Abdullahi b. Muhammad, *Tazyin al- Waraqa*, op. cit., p. 118.

making full use of supporting archery; and finally; in the classic cavalry role, which is to chase and destroy. But even this victory did not solve all the Muslims' problems. Like the Zamfarawa, many of the Kebbewa now turned against them. But by the end of C.E. 1805 /A.H. 1220) they had stamped out this insurgency, and Kebbi was again under their control.

Hence Umar Dallaji was sent by the Shehu to summon the leaders of various Jama'a engaged in the Jihad in the region, for a meeting which took place at Birnin Gada late 1805 or early 1806. The Shehu was himself unable to attend. So, he sent his message with Muhammad Bello who represented him. In the message which Bello had taken care to preserve, the Shehu told the leaders that:

*' Allah had granted the conquest of the land, but he was afraid of praying for them in case they should be corrupted by the world and became like the Hausa rulers; they should therefore take an oath that they would not be corrupted or changed by power, as were the Israelites in the desert, but they will avoid worldly aspirations, envy, mercilessness, feuds, the pursuit of wealth; that they would avoid falling into strife that makes a man a Muslim in the morning and a pagan by evening.'*⁴⁸

3.2.3. December 1805 to the Fall of Alkalawa September 1808

Except for the early fighting around Gudu, an offensive against Katsina and some raiding in the north were conducted by the efficient Fulani commander, Aliyu Jedo. There now followed a confused period, in which the war gradually spilt outwards. There were expeditions against Yauri and Borgu in the south and Bauchi in the south-east, while in the central theatre fighting shifted from the western to the eastern side.

In a trial to cut the Gobirawa off from their Katsina allies, the Muslims now thrust eastward, across the border between Zamfara and Katsina,⁴⁹ toward the town of Yandoto.⁵⁰ Muhammad Bello, who commanded the expedition, hoped to win them over by persuasion, but they proved stubborn and so he assaulted the town, which quickly fell. The Yandoto incident is interesting because it shows that not all the Islamic communities in Hausa land felt it in their interests to back up the Shehu. The Yandoto community, one which had already

⁴⁸) Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, op. cit., p. 36.

⁴⁹) This town had long been renowned as a centre of learning, with a large community of scholars; quoted in Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit.; p. 95.

⁵⁰) Refer to Muhammad Bello, *Infaq al-Maysur*, op.cit., pp. 88-89; quoted in Ibid., p.96 and to Appendix III.

achieved a *modus vivendi* with the Habe, saw the jihad as a menace to their own position as the custodians of Islam in their region and clearly they had not been influenced with the spirit of reform.

Farther north, in the town of Zurmi, a Muslim force was gathered in preparation for another attack on Alkalawa which was under the command of a Fulani clan chief called Namoda, a renowned warrior. Shortly after the Muslim victory at Yandoto, Namoda was assaulted by an army of Tuareg and Gobirawa under the command of the Tuareg chief Tambari Agunbulu, who struck out north-east of his stronghold of Kiawa. The result of this was the major battle of Fafara. Muhammad Bello has recorded- the prayer he uttered before this battle. It shows the intensity with which these ascetic warrior-clerics believed in the righteousness of their cause and their special relationship with God; as well as their fierce resentment against the enemy.⁵¹

The battle was bloody but brief. It began with the Gobirawa advancing against the town of Zurmi. The Muslims, reluctant to be trapped inside the town, came out to encounter them in front of it, near the little stream of Fafara. After the first meeting the Gobirawa retreated and the Muslims, not permitting them to regroup, charged with their cavalry, again supported by covering volleys from their archers. This was enough and compelled the foe to flee, leaving much booty on the field. Two facts concerning Muslim tactics were demonstrated in this battle, as indeed they were in the earlier battle for the city of Gwandu: First, their unwillingness to accept siege within a walled town and their preference for staking their chances on a pitched battle outside it. Second, their ability to use their archers in close support of their cavalry a tactic against which their opponents appear to have no effective answer.⁵²

Fafara was the decisive battle of the war. It opened the way to Alkalawa; for it cut the Gobirawa off from their Katsina allies, and also deprived them of the backing up of the Tuareg, who after this decisive defeat decided they had had enough and made a separate peace with the Muslims. ‘Abdullahi refers contemptuously to their leader as ‘a dying flame’ and warns them not to allow him again to ‘*kindle his fire with sin among you.*’⁵³ The Gobirawa were now pinned down in Alkalawa. They held out for nearly two years, but in the end three Muslim columns converged on them from north, east, and west. In Sha’ban, 1223

⁵¹) Refer to Muhammad Bello, *Infaq al-Maysur*, op. cit.; quoted in Ibid.

⁵²) Hiskett, *the Sword of Truth*, op. cit.; p. 96.

⁵³) Abdullahi, *T.W.*, p, 124; quoted in Ibid.

A.H. / October 1808 C.E. the city fell to a Muslim attack. Yunfa, surrounded by his bodyguard, made a last stand inside his palace, where he and they were overwhelmed and killed.

Since the battle of Alwassa and its victorious sequel at Gwandu, the Muslims had been waging war on the diplomatic as well as the military front had by no means been idle in Gwandu while his commanders were fighting in the field. He had sent letters and messages to the leaders of the various Islamic communities in Katsina, Kano, Daura, and elsewhere calling on them to back up the setting-up of an Islamic state in accordance with the Sunnah. He also reminded them that the coming of the Mahdi who was to introduce the millennium was near.⁵⁴ The psychological effect of this was considerable since Muslims believe they had a duty to reform and purify Islam in preparation for the advent of the Mahdi.

The leaders responded favourably to his call, took an oath of allegiance to him and accepted the obligation to wage holy war. This was a turning point. It meant that the Shehu's authority was no longer confined within the areas his armies had conquered; but was now accepted by Islamic communities all over Hausa land. Thus the main elements of an Islamic state, owing allegiance to an imamate centred at Gwandu, were already in being several years before the founding of Sokoto, which later became the capital of the Fulani Caliphate. The outbreak of holy war in these other Habe kingdoms also tied down forces the Habe chiefs might otherwise have sent to the aid of Gobir and her allies. The move recalled the earlier skill the Shehu had shown in winning political support during his period of missionary work in Zamfara and Kebbi. It was after he had won for them this ascension of material and moral strength that the tide turned, finally, in the Muslims' favour.

This was not the Shehu's only contribution. As was stated earlier, Alwassa marked a time of indecision and disagreement among the Muslim commanders, a disagreement that went deeper than just how to fight a battle. It is obvious from the sources that at this time—from the setting up of their headquarters in Gwandu to the fall of Alkalawa, morale was often low. Many Fulani leaders seem to have lost sight of their moral goals and allowed their campaigns to degenerate into mere plundering forays. This had the result of antagonising the Zamfarawa and Kebbewa, both of whom were initially well disposed to the jihad.

Bello made no bones about accusing certain of his associates of despotism. 'Abdullahi, discouraged, by these same corrupted motives and depressed by the loss of many of his friends, abandoned the community and set off in Sha'ban 1222A.H./October 1807 C.E.

⁵⁴) Refer to Bugage, 'A Comparative Study....,' op. cit.; p.96 & ff.

intending to go to Mecca on pilgrimage.⁵⁵ He stopped in Kano⁵⁶ and reflected better of his decision. However, he did not return immediately. He was persuaded by the people of Kano⁵⁷ to write a book to guide them in setting up an Islamic Government after their successful revolt against the Habe chief of that city. The result was his well-known *Diya al-hukkam* (*Light of the Jurists*), which subsequently became one of the chief sources of authority for the administration of Islamic law in the Fulani Caliphate.

In the meantime, back in Gwandu, the situation was made yet more difficult by the outbreak of an epidemic of fever-probably meningitis. The Shehu himself was stricken and there was fear for his life. Fortunately, he recovered, but the illness left him weak and ailing. Frail as he now was, there is no doubt it was the leadership and charisma of this remarkable man, now over fifty years of age that held the Muslim community together during this knotty period. His daughter Asma, who has described the rest of the people felt at that time, constantly dwells on the love they felt for him and on their conviction that he was divinely inspired. Their morale came nearest to breaking when they thought he was about to die.

3.2.4. Founding of the Fulani Caliphate: 1809-12.

The conquest of Alkalawa ended the campaign in Zamfara and Gobir but not the war. Therefore, fighting was to continue in several of the other Habe kingdoms. In A.H. 1224/C.E. 1809; ‘Abdullahi seized a number of towns on the west bank of the Niger by the application of the military doctrine that attack should always start from the least expected quarter: and that the overcoming of a seemingly impassable natural obstacle will usually ensure surprise.⁵⁸

After this he went on subduing the pagans of Gurma, on the west bank of the river, and he gives a gruesome account of his victory:

*...a victory for us through our spears and our arrows,
And our swords in their bellies, and in their heads.
Their children and their women taken prisoner,
And their men were slain with the axe
After the spreading of our carpet on their crops,
And after our horsemen had shattered their shields.*⁵⁹

⁵⁵) Abdullahi, *T.W.*; op. cit, p. 121.

⁵⁶) Refer to Abdullahi b. Muhammad, *Tazyin al- Waraaqat*, op. cit., pp. 120-1 and to Appendix III.

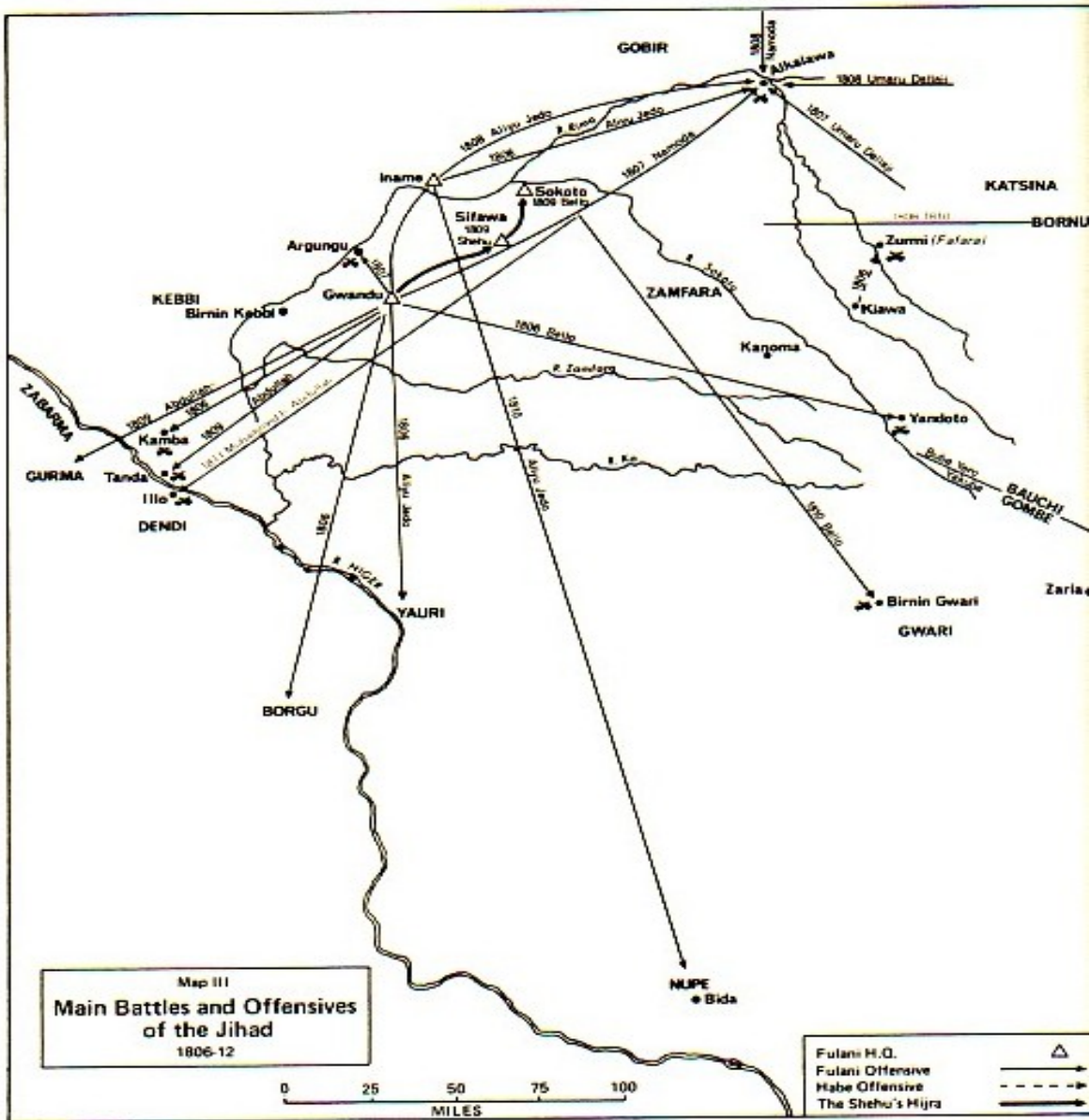
⁵⁷) ‘Abdullahi was convinced to stay in Kano where he wrote a great work *Diya al-Hukkam* on the request of holy fighters there.

⁵⁸) Refer to Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit.; p. 99 .

⁵⁹) *Ibid.*; p.126.

Map 7

MAIN BATTLES and OFFENSIVES of the JIHAD 1809-12

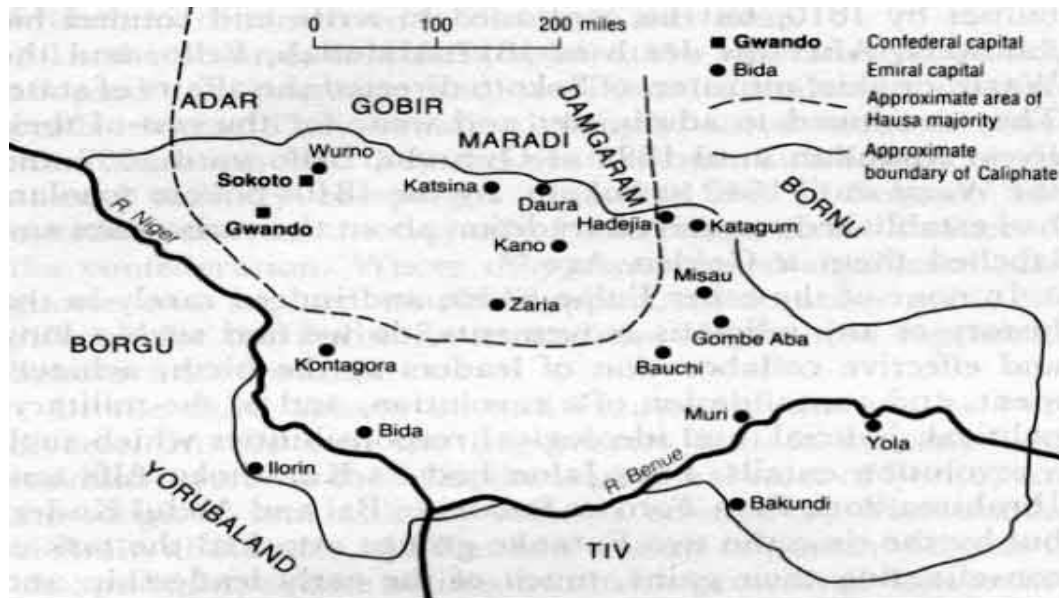


See Appendix II, p. 185.

Hiskett. Mervyn. *The Sword of Truth, op.cit, p. between 94 and 95.*

Map 8

The SOKOTO CALIPHATE in the NINETEENTH CENTURY



Joseph P. Smaldone. *Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate: Historical and Sociological Perspectives*, CUP, London, 1977, p. 55.

In A.H.1225/C.E. 1810, Aliyu Jedo campaigned successfully in Nupe, where one of the Shehu's flag-bearers, Malam Dendo, became the de facto ruler! 'Abdullahi comments sourly:

*'Then after that the armies followed each other to the country of Nupe into consecutive years, conquering many fortresses on each occasion, killing and taking prisoners, and giving self-conduct to some of the unbelievers if they asked for it. Then they broke their pact and thus the unbelievers are accustomed to break their pact every time, and they do not fear God.'*⁶⁰

In the same year some headway was made in Bornu. But the initial Fulani conquests were largely won back by the Shaykh Al-Kanemi, whom the sultan of Bornu called in to help him. Bauchi fell to Buba Yero, another Fulani leader, and was then divided into two emirates, one of which, Gombe, in the east went to Buba Yero himself, while the western half went to

⁶⁰) 'Abdullahi, *Tazyin al Waraqat*, op.cit.; p.130; quoted in Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op.cit.; p. 99.

another of the Shehu's flag-bearers, Yakubu. The country of Gwari, in what is now southern Zaria, was subjugated by Muhammad Bello, and its captive chieftain paraded in chains:

*'Then shortly after their return Muhammad Bello collected an army for war against the country of Gwari, whose people were iniquitous unbelievers who raided the countries of Islam. No king had ever conquered their country because it had many fortresses, castles, hills and wadis. Muhammad Bello travelled with his armies until he reached their country, and he conquered their fortress by the help of God, and killed and took prisoners. Their king was taken prisoner and brought in chains among the captives; and praise to be God for that!'*⁶¹

Zaria, Hadejia, and, in due course, Adamawa were also conquered and passed under the rule of Fulani emirs. In A.H. 1227/C.E. 1812 the Shehu divided what was at that moment the Fulani Caliphate - that is the early conquests in the Gobir, Zamfara, and Kebbi area-between his son, Muhammad Bello, and his brother, the former was given the eastern half while the western half, with Gwandu as its headquarters, was given to the latter. Muslim control was hence firmly established into the heartlands and was steadily extending into the surrounding areas.⁶²

3.2.5. Reasons for the Muslims' Success

What were the factors that led to the Muslims' success? Above all, the Muslims' success lay to their superior Islamic motivation since they were fighting in the way of God. Hence, they had little fear of death in battle because they believed that for this they would earn the martyr's reward of immediate translation to Paradise thus 'Abdullahi speaks of those who *'fulfilled their vow in death... And they gained the Gardens of Paradise and beautiful women and fine silks!'*⁶³ Much of their vernacular poetry also told them, in glowing descriptions, of the warm, sensuous joys that awaited them there.⁶⁴

⁶¹) 'Abdullahi, Tazyin al-Waraqat, op.cit.; quoted in Ibid.; p.100.

⁶²) As his daughter Asma puts it in a poem entitled 'The Song of the Wandering':

Nupe and Songhai and Yoruba and even Bornu,

There in the west everyone feared him,

His victory extended in every direction,

There at Illo they overcame the king of the kola-nuts! Quoted in Ibid.

⁶³) T.W., p. 119.

⁶⁴) *Fine clothes will be brought, laid out for the believers that we may mount*

Horses and camels, clothes of silk,

We shall be taking to dwellings....

The youth shall have seven towns, filled with the dark-eyed maidens,

Seventy becoming gowns shall clothe each damsel,

The charismatic preaching of the Shehu confirmed the truth of these delightful expectations. Yet the peasant levies that fought for the Habe chiefs had no such enchanting rewards to look forward to. All they could hope for, if they fell in battle, was a painful death and a return to the spirit world of their ancestors. Besides, the preaching of the Muslim revivalists and the terrifying new notions of eternal punishments that awaited unbelievers cannot have been unknown to them. Had not a fiery Zamfara preacher, Muhammadu Tukur, a friend of the Shehu and a fighter in the holy war, described ‘*a town of darkness, pain, and a thousand thousand torments ‘where’ fiends of Hell who bind their arms between their shoulders’* beat them eternally ‘*with seventy thousand cudgels that they carry on one shoulder. And on the other, seventy thousand axes?*’⁶⁵ ‘Abdullahi confidently predicted that ‘*those of them who were slain are in Hell for ever.*’⁶⁶ It would not be surprising if these conscript soldiers, many of whom must by now have been wavering adherents of a largely discredited animist cult, half-believed him and were reluctant to put the matter to the test for the sake of their Habe masters.

Another factor may have been the superior skill of the Muslim commanders. The Gobir leaders were by no means incompetent; but it seems their Muslim opponents had an edge on them in general ship. Muhammadu Bello’s mastery of cavalry tactics has already been commented on! ‘Abdullahi makes it clear in his ‘Light of the Jurists’ that he was familiar with the order of battle set out in classical Arabic military literature; that he knew the importance of organisation and firm command and understood the value of deception:

‘... and a strong fortress, self-sufficient in food and water, and swift cavalry and strong camels and brave men present in it at all times and many stout weapons and reliable physicians and leaders of the army to impose caution, and look after weapons, and prepare them for the struggle, with a firm centre made up of champions and two wings comprising the rest of the cavalry and the infantry, and a vanguard, and a rear-guard composed of the leading men... Indeed war is deception; success in war is not great numbers or speed.’⁶⁷

*She shall have ten thousand slaves to do her bidding,
As often as she desires to embrace her husband
They will embrace for full seventy years
They will do it again and again, until they are tired,
They have no other work, save the play of delight;* quoted in Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit.; pp.100-101.

⁶⁵) Quoted in Hiskett, *the Sword of Truth*, op. cit.; p. 101.

⁶⁶) Quoted in Ibid.

⁶⁷) D.H. (Diya al-hukkam), second Part, third Chapter; quoted in Ibid; p.101.]

His crossing of the flooded Niger testifies to his ability to translate theory into practice. Making every allowance for the one-sided nature of the sources-they are almost exclusively Muslim-it can be concluded that the Gobirawa did lack this flexibility, as well as a unified command.

Conclusion

This therefore is a phase in which the movement having been faced with persecution and extreme nation to launch an armed struggle to protect their cause and of course themselves as well. They started after the Hijra as a small fragmented, ill-equipped defensive force and grew into a formidable force to which the whole of Kasar Hausa and even part of Borno had to submit.

Though some scholars tried to explain the victory of the holy war fighters in terms of the disunity and military exhaustion of the warning Hausa States, the Jama'a fighters saw their victory as a gift from their Lord in whose cause they fought. In doing so the holy warriors were not ignoring the key role played by a number of groups, chiefly the rich, whose support or sympathy the Shehu was able to mobilise.⁶⁸ Such practical factors were to them part of the plan of their Lord, for theirs is the belief that '*success is from Allah*' a constant formula in the Shehu's writings.

This victory was not to the Jama'a fighters the end of the struggle. It was instead of the beginning of yet another phase of struggle- a phase of consolidation and the establishment of the Islamic order and therefore this is what the following point tackles.

⁶⁸) Material resources were obviously essential to the tasks of the holy war fighters. These resources must have come from the rich among the Jama'a and the sympathisers outside the Jama'a who came to the aid of the fighters certain critical times.

CHAPTER FOUR

4-A-The Phase of Consolidation and Establishment of the Islamic Order (1810-1817 C.E)

Having been able to fight and win, by 1810 the Jama'a found themselves in command of a large territory of about 50,000 square miles¹ standing on the ruins of the warring Hausa states. The Commander of the Believers- the Shehu's forsaking of the caliphate at the peak of this victory and retiring to Sifawa, more than just an index of selflessness is an indication of the revolution's commitment to a goal higher and beyond the acquisition of territories. The goal, as the leadership had taken pain to emphasise at relevant times is simply 'to make Allah's law supreme',² in other words to establish the Islamic Order in place of the Hausa-Fulani Darkness and Ignorance for only under such Islamic Order can the commanding of good and prohibiting of evil be practised. Thus the realisation of the movement's goals necessarily involved the termination of the un-Islamic Order. To the Jama'a therefore, the overthrow of the kings of Hausa land and the acquisition of the territories is only a means to an end, and not the end in itself.

The victory of the holy fighters, which procured the Abode of Islam³, did not however bring the fighting to an end. Many of the fighters' foes, chiefly the Kebbawa after suffering defeat escaped to Illo across the River Niger and constructed a fortress from where they continued to harass the Abode of Islam another source of insecurity was the Gwari people, who raided the countries of Islam.⁴

Lying south of Kebbi, surrounded by hills, castles and rivers, the Gwari had for many years harassed many of its neighbouring territories and proved invincible. Nupe, further south was also there to add to the threat to this new Islamic state. Even internally some of the non-Muslim peoples who had been given protection, (Dhimmis) people under pacts, broke their pacts and started to undermine the stability of the state.

¹) Y.B.Usman, 'The Transformation of Political Communities' in: Y.B.Usman (Ed). *The Sokoto Caliphate*, op. cit., p. 43.

²) Uthman b. Fodio, *Bayan Wujub al- Hijra*, op. cit.; p. 80 quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study....', op. cit. , p. 106.

³) It means Dar al-Islam in Arabic.

⁴) 'Abdullahi b. Muhammad, *Tazyin al- waraqat*, op. cit. , p. 130.

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Referring to this ‘Abdullahi says, *‘The unbelievers are accustomed to breaking their pact every time, and they do not fear God.’*⁵

Thus from within and without, the hard gained Islamic state was being menaced. In such circumstances, protecting the state was a duty no less obligatory than the initial Jihad that procured it. In other words just like the toppling of the Hausa regimes became indispensable to the procurement and external threat became vital for making the law of Allah supreme and lofty.

This task of consolidation was entrusted under the command of Bello who began with Illo, then Gwari and Nupe, bringing each under the jurisdiction of the Islamic state. This consolidation which naturally incorporated more polities into the Islamic states had to continue so long as such threats continued. But after the completion of the major phase by Bello, the task passed over to the border emirates whose very position imposed on them the duty to secure the borders of the state.

With victory, pacification and consolidation secured, the stage was now set for the establishment of the Islamic Order. Underlying the settlement of this order is the implementation of enjoining of good and forbidding of evil.⁶ It is particularly important to appreciate the fact that the revolutionary leadership was inspired by this belief. To them, the territory and what is contained in it is Allah’s property, theirs is to manage it in a way the owner stipulated and not in any way they may wish to. The extent to which they comply with these stipulations is what invariably determines their recompense from their Lord to whom they believe is their ultimate return. Overlooking this vital point, mainly in this phase of the movement would only lead with some scholars⁷ to obscurities and even contradiction.

To the movement, the establishment of this order is not just desirable, but an obligation which they owe to their Lord as well as their fellow brethren. As they set out for the task, they had as their model that order which the Prophet and his four rightly-guided caliphs

⁵) Ibid, quoted in Bugaje, ‘A Comparative Study...,’ op. cit.; p. 107.

⁶) The principle of enjoining of good and forbidding of evil is central to the life of a Muslim. Every aspect of his life is pervaded by it. He both lives and dies for it.

⁷) Here Bugaje has in mind professors M. G. Smith, Mervyn Hiskett and even Last Adeley. For the obscurities and contradictions in their views in this movement see Usman ‘The Transformation of Political Communities in Usman (ed.) *The Sokoto Caliphate*, op. cit.; p. 34.

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established. This is unmistakably evident in the Shehu's conclusion to his work on government (*Kitab Al-Farq*).⁸

Instrumental to the establishment of this Islamic Order is an Islamic government which besides ensuring security will provide the machinery through which the goals and objectives of the order will be realised. For the purpose of this government the whole state was divided into Emirates; some of which reflected former polities. These were further subdivided into districts, which were usually made up of a number of villages. Only some of the former Hausa states' capitals, like Katsina, Kano and Zaria remained capitals of the new Emirates.

At the head of the whole government is the Imam- the Commander of the Believers- who in the Shehu's time left the bulk of daily administration to his deputies 'Abdullahi and Bello, to give himself time to lay the intellectual foundations of the system they fought to establish. Administratively, the village heads are responsible to the district heads that in their turn are responsible to the governor (Emir) of the Emirate who is also responsible to the Commander of the Faithful. The responsibility of appointing the Commander of the Faithful just like their model, the Rightly-guided Caliphate is on the Consultative Assembly.

The appointment of the Governor of the emirate is the responsibility of the Imam and his consultative Assembly essential to the appointment of such officials as well as the discharge of their responsibilities is the fear of Allah. This sense of accountability to Allah is echoed by the Shehu when he said:

*'... It is incumbent upon the commander of the believers in the first place, to fear God, and to follow the habits of the Muslims in their government and avoid the habits of the unbelievers in their governments.'*⁹

⁸) The Shehu said:

'... It behoves one who concerns himself with this matter to pay strict attention to the reading of biographies of Abu Bakr, and Umar and Uthman, and Ali and Hassan and Umar B. Abdal - Aziz, for the reading of them will help to imitate them in their blessed lives.' Refer to 'Uthman b. Fodio, *Kitab al- Farq*.

⁹) *Ibid.*, p. 566.

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The Emirs and other officials that came to be appointed over the emirates and administrative offices were the scholars among the holy fighters whose integrity and loyalty to the revolution deserved them the confidence of the Commander of the Believers and his Consultative Assembly. Here at least M.G. Smith seems to be right when he observes:

*'... all owed their positions, like Abdullah and Bello themselves, to their pre-eminence as scholars and lovers of Islam. None of these men were crowned, and all ruled as Mallams (Clerics and Islamic scholars) rather than kings, administering war, justice, religion and civic affairs equally ... Leaders were thus first among equals and entitled to no special rights on personal grounds.'*¹⁰

Who else would be better in implementing the goals and objectives of the movement than those who are learned and have struggled with their properties and their lives for the purpose of its realisation? This should not make us overlook the evident fact that these are only fallible human beings and not free from making errors and mistakes. The Shehu had that in mind and was swift to remind them of a prophetic tradition, *'if we appoint an Emir, or assign to him a certain stipend, then anything which he receives other than that is fraud.'*¹¹

The details of the socio-political system which the leadership of the movement laid down had been masterfully delineated by Mahmud Tukur in his Ph. D Thesis. For the purpose of this study a rapid glance at the Shehu's relevant works will be sufficient to shed light on the foundations of the system. *The Bayan Wujub and Usul al-Adl Li Wulat al-Umur wa'L ahl al-Fadl* are very important works. Another valuable though brief work in this regard is *Kitab al-Farq Bayn Wilayat ahl al- Islam wa bayn wilayat ahl kufr* (The Book of Difference between the Governments of the Muslims and the Governments of the Unbelievers), which appears to have been

¹⁰) M. G. Smith Quoted in J.P Smaldone, *Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate: Historical and Sociological Perspectives*, op.cit.; p. 128.

¹¹) Quoted in Uthman b. Fodio, *Kitab al- Farq*, op. cit.; p. 567.

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written around 1810,¹² soon after the Shehu's move to Sifawa. Written at the start of this phase, *the Kitab al-Farq* particularly commends itself at this stage of this study.

As the title of the work implies, *Kitab al-farq* is a comparative work on the non-Muslims governments of the Hausa Kings and the new Islamic government that the movement was seeking to establish at this phase of its history. The first and in fact the longest part of the book is a description of the non-Muslims way of government of the Hausa Kings. The idea here is to avoid copying the unbelievers in their government 'not even in the titles of their Kings (government officials)',¹³. Having taken this revolutionary stance, the Shehu proceeded to say what the purposes of a Muslim government are:

*'... to strip evil things from religions and temporal affairs and introduce reforms into religions and temporal affairs, and an example of stripping evil things from religions and temporal affairs is that every governor of province should strive to fortify strong holds and wage holy war (Jihad) against the unbelievers, and the war makers and the oppressors, and set up a military station on every frontier, and combat every cause of corruption which occurs in his country, and forbid every disapproved thing. An example of introducing reforms into religions and temporal affairs is that the governor of every country shall strive to repair the mosques, and establish the five prayers in them, and order the people to strive to read the Quran and make others read it; and learn knowledge and teach it; and that he should strive to reform the markets and set the rights the affairs of the poor and the needy and order the doing of every approved thing.'*¹⁴

Clear here is the idea of a government whose very *raison d'être* is not only guaranteeing peace and security but also guiding its people in every aspect of their human endeavours; their education; their welfare; their social as well as economic activities. By combating every cause of corruption and doing every approved thing, according to Islamic doctrine, the government raises the moral tone of the society and protects its citizens from the temptations of darkness and ignorance.

Having been able to outline the purpose, the Shehu went further to give the foundations, which alone can enable a government to perform such comprehensive functions selflessly and efficiently.

¹²) Although undated the *Kitab al-Farq* seems to Bugaje to have been written between 1810-1811 for it appears to predate *Nasihah ahl Zaman* and *Najm al-Ikhaman* which were written in 1811 and 1812 respectively. See M.A. al Hajj, "The Writings of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio," *Kano Studies*, I, 2, (1974/77), pp. 5-14.

¹³) 'Uthman b. Fodio, *Kitab al-Farq*, op. cit.; p. 569.

¹⁴) 'Uthman b. Fodio, *Kitab al-Farq*, op. cit.; p. 570.

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*'...the foundation of a government are five things, the first is that authority shall not be given to one who seeks it. The second is the necessity for consultation. The third is the abandoning of harshness. The fourth is justice. The fifth is good works (deeds).'*¹⁵

As for the ministers who can be likened to pillars standing on the foundation and supporting the super structure of government administrations, the Shehu mentioned four here:

*'The first is a trustworthy Wazir (Vizier) to wake the ruler if he sleeps, to make him see if he is blind, and to remind him if he forgets. And the greatest misfortune for the government and the subjects is that they should be denied honest Wazirs... The second of the ministers of the government is a judge whom blame of a blamer can not overtake concerning the affairs of God. The third is a chief of Police who shall obtain justice for the weak from the strong. The fourth is a tax collector who shall discharge his duties and not oppress the subjects.'*¹⁶

This portion sums up for us the type of government the movement sought to establish for the realisation of its goals. Explicit here is a government based on justice, equity, consultation and kindness with public service and welfare at the top of its scale of priority. The ardent concern for selflessness, humility, and honesty of the government officials stands out unique and reflect the values the movement stood for and fought to establish.

To finance its programmes such a government, by the very nature of its values, structure and mission, must rely on lawful resources, which the Shehu did not forget to mention. Quoting from Shurb al-Zulal:

*'The kinds of the public treasury are the fifth, the tithe and Poll tax and land tax, booty and surplus, then that the owners of which are not known, and inheritance, property having no owner. These seven constitute the public treasury for him who wishes to make use of lawful things.'*¹⁷

This drastically contrasted with the way the defunct regimes of Hausa kings in which succession is by *'hereditary right and by force to the exclusion of consultation'*

¹⁵) Ibid.

¹⁶) Ibid.

¹⁷) Ibid. p. 571.

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and in which *'whomsoever they wish to kill or exile or violate his honour or devour his wealth. Oppression they do so in pursuit of their lust, without any right in the Sharia.'*¹⁸ Their (Hausa Kings) sources of revenue were numerous and hardly distinguishable from robbery. For besides *'imposing on people monies not laid down by the Sharia... janghali Kurdin ghari and Kurdin Salla.'*¹⁹ They also collected a compulsory present called gaisuwa, over and above random confiscation of subjects' properties.²⁰

In laying down the intellectual foundations of this Islamic order, the Shehu's views by virtue of his intellectual standing and his position as Imam and Commander of the Believers became prominent. But he was neither alone nor was his view necessarily final as he was *'helped and sometimes even nudged by Abdullahi, Bello and their many helpers and deputies.'*²¹ This nudging in fact led to debates on the interpretation and practice of the letters of the Islamic Doctrine; with 'Abdullahi and his few disciples on the one hand and the Shehu, Bello and seemingly the great majority of the scholars on the other.

These differences of opinions between 'Abdullahi and the Shehu could be traced to their dispositions. 'Abdullahi grew to be very ascetic and rigorous in his interpretations of the Sharia while the Shehu although equally ascetic was at times flexible and generally more practical. This is easily obvious in the legal tussle, which arose soon after the fall of Alkalawa.

'Before the fall of Alkalawa, property belonging to the Jihadists and to the Tuareg who had a covenant with the Shaykhs' community (Jamaa) was being indiscriminately looted. In this confused situation, some of the Jihadists seized Tuareg property. Thus the situation became complex to the extent that any practical investigation into the ownership of contested property would not be realistic. Uthman Ibn Fudi considered the fall of Alkalawa to be the dividing line before which no claim could be established; on the other hand, his brother ' Abdullahi could not see

¹⁸) Ibid. p. 567.

¹⁹) Ibid.

²⁰) Ibid. p. 568.

²¹) Mahmud Tukur, an unpublished Ph.D thesis A.B.U., 1977, p. 449.

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*why the fall of Alkalawa should be considered to be a dividing line in legal decisions.'*²²

The difference here is not in their upholding the letter and spirit of the Islamic Doctrine but in what is ideal and what is practical. The debate of corpus went further to cover such issues as the use or otherwise of musical instruments by the common people; the question of magnificent appearances affected by Imams, judges and governors and the validity or otherwise of certain titles for officials and the use of ornamented clothes (gold and silver).

'Abdullahi maybe in search for that ideal society of the four rightly-guided caliphs, which had all along been the gauge of the movement continued to express his discontent pointing chiefly to the worldliness of the society. The Shehu felt the need to remind 'Abdullahi and those who might share the latter's view, the achievement of the revolution.

*'Know, O Brethren, that condemning (one's) time is unrespectable attitude towards Allah and nothing will accrue from such other than bothering one's heart and tongue. Know, O Brethren that ordering good is obligatory according to the consensus and this what happened at this time... That forbidding bad is obligatory according to the consensus, and this is what happened at this time... That defending oneself, people and property is obligatory according to the consensus and this is what happened at this time. That the application and the Sharia rulings is obligatory according to the consensus and this is what happened at this time. These are ten achievements and the people of this time should thank Allah for them because they are from the greatest bounties of Allah after the faith '.1'*²³

What at last closed this debate was *Najm al-Ikwan*, one of, if not the last work(s) of the Shehu written in 1813. For the very purpose of writing the book was, *'the preservation of the order of the community, the avoidance of disturbances of the common people and closing the doors of disputes.'*²⁴ Here once more the Shehu reminded his audience with 'Abdullahi implicitly in his mind, the favour which Allah had bestowed upon them, one of which is *'the power of defending of people, of giving them good advice and urging them to worship Him.'*²⁵ The Shehu went on saying:

²²) Refer to Bugaje.; 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit.; p. 115.

²³) Uthman b. Fodio, *Nasihah ahl al-Zaman*, op. cit., quoted in Ibid, pp. 145-6 and quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit., p. 116.

²⁴) Uthman b. Fodio, *Najm al-Ikwan*; quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit.

²⁵) Ibid; quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit.

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'In a fashion which suggests that he considered them as the principal purposes of the state and government which rose from the crucibles of the holy war, to list the achievement of the movement in the areas of community formation, establishment of a government with its full complements of a bureaucracy, building up an effective military organisation, fashioning a machinery for the delivery of justice and ensuring that the welfare of the people is catered for'.²⁶

Summarising the essence of the debate Mahmud aptly observes that the point at issue between the Shehu and Abdullahi might, however, be that the former had thought he had known better just how the 'Caliphal ideal' could be more effectively achieved. What he might be saying was that in deciding on policy for the achievement of change of heart and outlook among a particular group of people, it was necessary to pay great attention not only to the ideal itself, but also to the spiritual and intellectual conditions of the group as it actually was. In other words, effective reform could not be achieved by a simple decree enumerating principles (as 'Abdullahi may have thought in his administration of Kebbi), but by a more complicated and inventive process devised after a careful appreciation of local conditions and the local cultural heritage.²⁷

It is remarkable to note that the debate never led to rift or even constraint in the running of the state, for they all lived by the letter and the spirit of the famous prophetic tradition in which the Prophet said, '*The difference of opinion among my nation is a blessing.*'

4.1. Bornu Correspondence: The Religious Controversy with El-Kanem

The theology of the Shehu and his adherents, like that of El-Maghili and the Timbuktu divines whom they broadly followed, was rooted in *Maliki* orthodoxy as said earlier and the overwhelming majority of the authorities that they quoted belonged to this school.²⁸ Nonetheless, there was about their doctrines a strong flavour not merely of reform but of radical or fundamental reform. The question therefore arises whether there were any direct links between them and the other Islamic reformers of the day, particularly the *Wahhabis* with whom they seemed to have much in common.

²⁶) Mahmud Tukur, an unpublished Ph.D thesis, ABU, 1977, p. 121.

²⁷) Ibid, pp.152-3; quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op. cit., p. 117.

²⁸) Hiskett, *AITR*, pp. 591-2.

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The *Wahhabis*, the followers of a reformer called Muhammad b. Abdul Wahhab, who flourished in central Arabia in the second half of the eighteenth century. Among his converts was Sa'ud, the founder of the royal family of Saudi Arabia, and under his dynamic leadership the *Wahhabis* first of all made themselves masters of the interior of the peninsula and then, in 1803-4, captured the Holy Lands of Mecca and Medina, which they held until 1812²⁹.

By conviction the *Wahhabis* were not merely puritans but fundamentalists who sought to rid Islam of false doctrines and degenerate practices. They favoured a literal interpretation of the Sacred Quran, banned tobacco, and frowned on silks and jewellery. Wherever they gained power they introduced theocratic *regimes* of the most austere severity³⁰.

In the works of *Mallam 'Abdullahi* there are three references to *Ibn al-Qayyim al-Hanbali*, whose writings had an important influence on *Al-Wahhab*, and this proves beyond doubt that the Fulani reformers were acquainted with the sources on which *Wahhabism* drew³¹. It is also possible that the seeds of the movement itself were brought back to Hausa land by returning pilgrims. Certainly, among those who made the pilgrimage during this period were two men who had great influence on the Shehu, namely his tutor, *Mallam Jibrilu*, and his paternal uncle, *Muhammadu dan Raji* as previously stated. *Mallam Jibrilu* seems to have come back from the pilgrimage, which may have been his second, about 1783³² and *Muhammadu dan Raji* in 1794.³⁴ This means that they were in the Hejaz well before it was occupied by the *Wahhabis*, but even so, as they both spent some time there³⁵, they must have heard about the reformers, who were already masters of the neighbouring provinces, and have known what their aims and doctrines were. It may also be significant that *Mallam Jibrilu's* doctrine that disobedience involved unbelief was characteristic of *Wahhabism*³⁶. Undoubtedly there were marked similarities between the fundamentalism of the

²⁹) D. S. Margoliouth, *Mohammedanism*, London, 1911, pp. 177-179.

³⁰) Ibid; p. 176.

³¹) Hiskett, *AITR*, p. 593.

³²) 'Abdullah, *TW* (Hiskett, p. 90).

³⁴) Ibid; pp. 94-95 and p. 3 of Introduction. 'Abdullahi described him as having remained long in Medina.

³⁵) Ibid. p. 95, and the Hausa Chronicle published in J. A. Burdon's *Historical Notes on Certain Emirates and Tribes*, London, 1909, p. 93.

³⁶) . Hiskett, *AITR*, p. 596.

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Wahhabis and the radicalism of the Fulani and between the two brands of Puritanism which flowed from these doctrines.

One point which the Shehu emphasised in his writings, for instance, was the importance of studying the lives of the early Caliphs³⁷, and his personal predilection for a system of government as starkly simple as theirs has already been noted. Similarly, many of the reforms which he advocated were similar to those that the *Wahhabis* had already introduced.

To suggest that the Shehu may have been influenced by *Wahhabism*, however, is not to say that the Fulani reformation was part of the *Wahhabi* movement³⁸. In fact, there were important differences. Even though the Shehu, himself tended to look back to the early days of the Caliphate as offering the ideal system of Islamic government, even he relied much more on the jurists of the Abbasid Caliphate than on the earlier authorities, while the administrative machine that Bello, and 'Abdullahi set up to govern the Caliphate was nothing like the simple society of Medina but a complex hierarchy akin to that of the Abbasids³⁹.

In theological doctrine, too, there were important differences of outlook. The Shehu, as it has been already noted, did not accept Mallam Jibrilu's view, shared with the *Wahhabis*, that disobedience involved unbelief and, indeed, felt called upon to refute it⁴⁰. Conversely, the Fulani reformers accepted the miracles of the saints whereas it was one of the central tenets of the *Wahhabis* to reject them⁴¹. Most important of all, the *Wahhabis'* denial of the authority of the four orthodox jurists of Islam⁴² found no place in the beliefs of the Fulani. On balance, therefore, the most that can be said is that, while the reforming movement in Hausa land was perhaps influenced by *Wahhabism*, it was definitely not inspired by the *Wahhabis* and it was always separated from them by important differences of dogma and practice⁴³.

³⁷) Shehu, *KF* (Hiskett, p. 571).

³⁸) Alhaji Junaidu does not even accept that Dan Raji and Mallam Jibrilu may have brought back the seeds of Wahhabism with them. Refer to webPulaaku Sokoto H.A.S. Johnston. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, op.cit.; Chapter Ten, web page.2.

³⁹) Hiskett, *AITR*, p. 592.

⁴⁰) Ibid. p. 589.

⁴¹) Ibid. p. 594.

⁴²) Margoliouth, , *Mohammedanism*, op. cit. p. 176.

⁴³) Hiskett, *AITR*, pp. 593-596.

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At the beginning of the nineteenth century, therefore, there were powerful influences at work in the Muslim world to purify the faith and eradicate abuses. Since then it has often been asked whether the reformers were, in fact, justified in resorting to war to gain their ends. Was the faith so sullied and were the abuses so deeply ingrained that blood had to be shed to purify them? Was there no other method of achieving the same ends? In the central Sudan these questions were asked at the time by none other than Sheikh El-Kanemi, the man who had saved Bornu, and the best way of answering them is to follow the great religious controversy which they provoked.

It will be recalled that in 1808, after the loss of Ngazargamu, his capital, the *Mai* of Bornu had enlisted the aid of Sheikh El-Kanemi, a man of outstanding ability and distinction, who had succeeded in checking the disintegration of Bornu and halting the eastward advance of the Fulani.

Now El-Kanemi, like his adversaries, was a scholar, a divine, a soldier and an administrator. Besides meeting force with force, therefore, he challenged the Fulani in their own theological field. His first move, made after his recapture of Ngazargamu in 1809, was to address the following letter to the Shehu.

'Greetings and friendship. The cause of my writing to you is that when God brought me to Bornu, I found that the fire of discord had broken out between your followers and the people of this country. When I inquired why, some said that the reason lay in religion, others that it was to be found in tyranny. Being still perplexed, I wrote to your kinsmen who live amongst us and asked them to explain their pretext for making war on Bornu. In reply I received a poor sort of justification such as would not come from a wise man, much less a learned one, and least of all from a religious reformer. They referred me to certain books and said that in these books they had learnt of the necessity of waging war. Now we on our side have examined these books and we do not find in them what they have found. Thus we remain in our perplexity. Now that there is a truce in the war we think it best to write to you ... for we believe that a wise man, when he meets an honest question, will give a truthful answer. Will you therefore tell me your reasons for going to war and enslaving our people?'

Should you say that it is on account of our heathenism, let me tell you that we are no heathens and that infidelity is far from our thresholds. If prayer and the giving of tithes and fasting in Ramadan and the restoration of mosques amount to heathenism, then what, I must ask, is Islam? I have been told that the grounds on which you accuse us of being infidels are as follows: because our chiefs are reputed to make idolatrous sacrifices, because our women go unveiled, and because our judges are said to be corrupt and oppressive. But these things do not make it lawful for you to wage war on us. They are, it is true, very great evils, and it is of course our duty to prevent their being committed, but it is not right to say that those who are guilty of them are heathens.... It was better to command them to mend their ways than to make war on them as you are doing.

The only result of your policy is to bring tribulation and suffering on your fellow Moslems, for your followers have been killing our men and capturing our women and

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children. We are astonished that you should permit such things when you claim to be reforming our religion and we perceive that your true object is the power to rule over others. Though you may conceal this aim, even in your own hearts, it is, we believe, your real ambition.

We have heard much of the character of Shehu Usman Dan Fodiyo and we have ourselves read his books.... Know therefore that if Shehu is for the truth, then we are for Shehu but if Shehu departs from the truth, then we shall leave him and follow the truth⁴⁴.

In this letter El-Kanemi had raised the controversial questions of whether disobedience was tantamount to unbelief and when backsliding became apostasy. As mentioned earlier, El-Maghili had condemned comparable deviations in Sonni Ali as unbelief and had pronounced Askia Muhammad's *jihad* to be justified and indeed meritorious⁴⁵. On the other hand, when *Mallam* Jibrilu had argued that disobedience involved unbelief and therefore justified anathematisation it was the Shehu himself who had refuted him and asserted that the orthodox authorities upheld the opposite view⁴⁶. Clearly, El-Kanemi had touched the weakest spot in the argument of the reformers.

Bello admitted as much afterwards when he said that in the whole course of the *jihad* nothing had caused the Fulani leaders as much anxious heart-searching as El-Kanemi's questioning of their claims. This was not surprising as from the very outset their cause had been established on religious foundations. It was the belief that the Shehu was God's chosen instrument and that he was destined not only to purify religion but to introduce a new order into worldly affairs that had been the source of the faith and exaltation which had carried the Fulani to victory and had seemed to justify their sweeping aside the hereditary authority of the Hausa Chiefs. The political structure of the whole Caliphate in fact rested upon these basic assumptions. Now El-Kanemi, a man of admitted learning and eminence, after probing and testing the foundations, had publicly pronounced them to be unsound.

Both Bello and 'Abdullahi wrote to El-Kanemi to refute his charges. Bello's letter, which was doubtless inspired by the Shehu, or at least approved by him, was long and forthright. After taking El-Kanemi to task for reaching his conclusions on false or imperfect information, he went back to describe the causes which had led to the *jihad*:

⁴⁴) Bello, *Inf M* (cf. Arnett, pp, 102-103).

⁴⁵) Hiskett, *AITR*, op.cit., pp. 578-586.

⁴⁶) *Ibid.* pp. 588-789.

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'Furthermore, El-Kanemi, so that you may understand the origin of this affair, let me say that we did not begin the war for the reasons that you heard. In fact our reason for fighting was simply to repel the attacks which were being made on our lives, our families and our faith... Before that we had merely been following the truth which Shehu had revealed to us but for this they began to harry and persecute us. They drove us from our homes. They confiscated our property. They robbed us on the roads⁴⁷.'

Bello then went on to describe at some length the measures which Sarkin Gobir Nafata had taken to curb the spread of Islam, Yunfa's overt hostility, the unprovoked assault on Gimbana, Yunfa's ultimatum, the Shehu's flight to Gudu, the battle of *Tabkin Kwatto*, and the manner in which the *jihad* had spread to the other Hausa States. So far as Bornu was concerned, he admitted that the *Mai* had sent them a message, but contended that the responsibility for the fighting which had afterwards broken out was nevertheless his.⁴⁸

'The Shehu ordered me to write to him. I explained to him all the reasons for our actions. I told him about the Hausa Chiefs and their heathen practices. I added that whoever went to their aid would be no better than they. At the same time I wrote to the Fulani in Bornu and commanded them to keep the peace. Not long afterwards, however, I heard that the Mai had had the messenger whom we had sent to him put to death⁴⁹.'

Bello then ridiculed the idea that the Shehu's supporters regarded the people of Bornu as pagan merely because they made sacrifices in high places, took bribes, gave unfair judgements, usurped the patrimony of orphans, and permitted their women to go unveiled. These abuses did not constitute heathenism. In fact, Bello admitted, they were common enough among his own people. He was only surprised that El-Kanemi, while acknowledging the learning of the Fulani leaders, should have believed them capable of such ignorance. It suggested that he was moved by malice and hatred. The Hausa Chiefs, who used to make sacrifices to sticks and stones as well as to persecute Muslims, were no better than heathens. That was the reason why the Fulani had gone to war with them⁵⁰.

In a second letter to El-Kanemi Bello came back to this theme:

'The first cause of our fighting against your people is that they are helping the heathen Hausas against us. You must in truth know that whoever helps infidels is no better than they. The second reason is that your people are persecuting our people and driving them from their homes.... None of your prayers and tithes, your fasting and your founding of mosques, will help you nor stop us from fighting you, in this world or the next, so long as you support the unbelievers against us.... Know you, El-

⁴⁷) Bello, *Inf M* (cf. Arnett, p. 104).

⁴⁸) Ibid. pp. 105-106.

⁴⁹) Ibid. p. 106.

⁵⁰) Bello, *Inf M* (Arnett, p. 107).

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Kanemi, that all that you have charged us with is false. God is our help against you'.
51

In the succeeding years, Bello wrote further letters to El-Kanemi, apparently in a more conciliatory vein, but these appear to have gone astray and in any case he did not record their text. Finally, however, a letter from Gidado, who was later to become Waziri of Sokoto, reached El-Kanemi and elicited from him a response which was also conciliatory and which mentioned the desirability of making peace. Unfortunately, before this reconciliation could develop, the Fulani received an earlier letter from El-Kanemi, his third in the series, which they considered contentious and provocative. In replying to it, Bello for the first time accused the Kanuri as well as the Hausas of heathen and idolatrous practices.⁵²

*'... The reason why we gave our people in Bornu authority to go to war was the full information which reached us about the character of your people. We have been told by those who have lived in the country and must know, that they make sacrifices to rocks and trees, that they practice certain observances in the river similar to those of the Egyptians on the banks of the Nile, and that there are great houses with guardians appointed over them in which these rites are carried out. To us, whoever makes sacrifices to sticks and stones is a heathen and that is why we call the people of Bornu heathens...'*⁵³

Nevertheless, Bello conceded that if it was true, as El-Kanemi had seemingly said in his letter, that the Kanuri had mended their ways, then it was the duty of the Fulani to stop fighting them. He continued to say that *Mallam* Gidado was being sent to the east to gather the Fulani leaders and suggested that El-Kanemi should dispatch an envoy to encounter him and discuss calling a truce⁵⁴. Later, at the time of *Mallam* Gidado's mission to the east, the Shehu and Bello both wrote letters which were fairly conciliatory in tone⁵⁵. In his reply, El-Kanemi first of all set out to reject and refute the charges of persecution and oppression which had been made earlier and then to prove that it was the Fulani and not the Kanuri who had been the aggressors, he said,

*'... They have raided our villages and plundered our property. They have killed our menfolk and enslaved our children. They have set fire to our houses. All we have done is to rise up and repel them. We have only retaken from them what they had first taken from us.... It was never I who began any quarrel with them. . .'*⁵⁶

⁵¹) Ibid; pp. 108-109.

⁵²) Ibid.

⁵³) Ibid; pp. 110-111.

⁵⁴) Bello, *Inf M* (Arnett, op. cit., p. 111).

⁵⁵) Ibid; pp. 113-114.

⁵⁶) Ibid; p. 114.

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El-Kanemi also told the Shehu bluntly that his followers did not always live up to his own high standards.

*'You know that your kinsmen who live among us are ignorant people. Their ambition is to conquer and rule this country.... Had they been as you are, then we would not have fought them. But... in truth they are not men of high character. Whenever I extinguish a fire which they have lit, they immediately light another.'*⁵⁷

Nonetheless, he ended on a note of conciliation.

*'I will show no enmity to any Fulani, he wrote, except to him who comes against me in war'*⁵⁸.

In another letter to Bello, which seems to have been written at the same time, he said that there was no treating with the Bornu Fulani because they were intransigent, but that it would be best if the leaders made peace⁵⁹. In answer to these two letters both the Shehu and Bello composed a long response in which they recapitulated all their arguments⁶⁰. With that the correspondence came to an inconclusive end. None of these letters are dated and so it cannot be related exactly to events in the *jihad*, but the correspondence probably began in 1810, and went on until 1812.⁶¹ By that time the war in Bornu had drifted into stalemate. It is doubtful whether these exchanges did anything to shorten it.

Although neither side can be said to have risen as the victors from the theological debate, the whole correspondence is nevertheless of absorbing interest. It shows that, though the prize happened to be a great territorial caliphate, the contest itself was basically one of ideas and opinions and that, as these letters reveal, it was fought out by men of considerable attainments.

4.2. The Sifawa Period

In 1809, after the fall of Alkalawa, the Shehu had moved again from Gwandu to Sifawa, a village not far from Muhammad Bello's new city of Sokoto, which eventually became the administrative capital of the caliphate. It was in part, the death

⁵⁷) Ibid; p. 115.

⁵⁸) Ibid.

⁵⁹) Ibid; p. 116.

⁶⁰) Ibid; pp. 116-120.

⁶¹) Gazetteer of Sokoto Province, pp. 28-29; quoted in WebPulaaku Sokoto H.A.S. Johnston, *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, op.cit., Chapter Ten, web page.8.

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of several and closest friends, including Muhammad Zangi⁶² who had been the community's prayer leader, and Koiranga, his companion in mysticism, that caused him to wish to leave Gwandu. He passed the next six years in Sifawa, until 1815.

In Sifawa, the Shehu spent much of his time in authorship and a number of his major works were written there.⁶³ However, in general, this was a time of reflection and intellectual effort, after the physical stresses of the campaigns, during which he endeavoured both to justify in theory what had been gained in practice- that is a caliphate wrested from the Habe- and to lay the theological, legal, and moral foundations for the future conduct of its affairs. He was not as totally immersed in scholarship as to neglect all practical matters of state. It was, for example, from Sifawa that much of the Bornu correspondence was conducted. Besides, it was there where he composed the long Fulfude poem *Tabbat Hakika (Be Sure of That)*, mentioned earlier and *Wallahi Wallahi (I Swear by God)* his angry indictment of administrative corruption and greed. Even so, he chose not to live within the city of Sokoto and after 1812, when he divided the caliphate between Bello and 'Abdullahi, it was they who undertook most of the routine business of running it.

His unwillingness to live in the still uncompleted city probably sprang in part, from a wish to continue the Fulani tradition of living outside city walls. Moreover, to some extent perhaps, from an ascetic dislike of the surroundings of office and a wish not to intrude upon Bello's handling of affairs. But he was linked to Bello's court through Gidado Dan Laima, who later, in 1817, became Muhammad's vizier, that is, his chief minister of state and head of the civil service. *Malam* Gidado was married to the Shehu's daughter Asma. He functioned as an intermediary, travelling from Sifawa to Sokoto, as well as to more distant parts of the caliphate, to keep the Shehu in touch with administrative affairs and the conduct of the Jihad in the still unconquered areas.

The Shehu's role during this era appears to have been that of custodian of the Islamic conscience from whom guidance was sought on matters of principle. For instance, it was he who created the core of the civil service and appointed the first generation of officials to their offices. Moreover, he was also much concerned with the appointing of emirs in the emirates of the caliphate. Indeed, he composed several

⁶²) According to Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, op.cit.; p. 51. The Shehu left Gwandu before Muhammad Zangi's death; but this not according to Asma's *WG*, quoted in Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op.cit.; p.110 .

⁶³) Refer to Appendix II.

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letters of guidance to them, laying down the principles by which they should try to rule their people. Furthermore, it was to him that they addressed their own queries and requests from time to time. Notwithstanding, he did not normally intervene in the daily running of the affairs in Sokoto. He did, however, act as a treasurer, at least for a period. One of the major causes of the dissension that had broken out in the Muslim command during the Jihad was the misappropriation of the booty of war by certain unscrupulous Fulani leaders. By controlling the treasure himself, the Shehu maybe thought to avoid any repetition of this.

His household in Sifawa consisted of kinfolk and a numbers of domestic servants and slaves. One who has been particularly remembered in his biographers' accounts was a crippled slave girl named Shekara, who acted as a nanny to his younger children. She was so devoted to him that she refused her freedom when it was offered to her because it would have meant separation from him. He showed her his gratitude by leaving her two slave girls of her own so that she could purchase manumission after his death.

At times his relatives pestered him for gifts and favours and he usually responded, giving them freely out of the booty which was his due, but which, in accordance with his self-denying rule, he did not make use of himself. His biographers constantly stress his good temper and urbanity toward those around him. But they also record one occasion when, as the battle of Tsuntsua, he showed wrath. This was when one of his nephews, Hamma Ali, brought him a present of gold and cowries, possibly to curry favour. The Shehu took great offence at this and angrily forbade Hamma Ali ever to send him such 'filth' again.

His biographers are reticent about his relationships with his several wives and concubines. One wife, 'A'isha, became well-known among her people in her right; and to these days, she is still greatly revered as a Sufi and a mystic. Certain other wives are remembered as mothers of his famous kids: thus Hawa bint *Malam* Adamu, Eve, daughter of *Malam* Adamu- who bore him Muhammad Bello; and Maimuna, whose daughter was the scholarly Asma (b. c.1794. d.c. 1863), who grew up to be an imminent poet and one of her father's biographers. The mother of his posthumous son Isa, also one of his biographers, and of his daughter, Mariam, was the concubine Mariyya.

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Of his sons three, Muhammad Bello (b. c.1781; d. 1837), Abu Bakr Atiku (b.c.1783; d. 1842), and Ahmad Rufa'i (b. c. 1816; d. 1873) succeeded to the caliphate. Among the rest, Isa (b. 1817; d. 1880) was a poet and a chronicler; Muhammad Buhari (b. c. 1786; d. c. 1840) a noted poet; and Muhammad Sambo who was a mystic. The first among them to succeed to the caliphate was Muhammad Bello.

4.3. The Death of the Shehu and the Division of Authority and the Succession

The founding of the Sokoto Caliphate was not an immediate and clear-cut act. It appears that the appointment of 'Abdullahi as governor of the western half of the caliphate and Bello of the eastern half, was an interim arrangement that simply reflected the basic Islamic principle that the Imam, or the head of the Muslim community- which is how the Shehu saw himself and was seen by others- should govern by delegation of authority to provincial governors. And even though he wrote a great deal on constitutional theory, it is uncertain whether the Shehu gave any specific instructions concerning a successor. It seems more likely he was content to leave the matter to be settled by the traditional Islamic elective process, to which he refers frequently in his writings. Although it is true that on one occasion in his writings, he did defend the principle of succession from father to son, it was without specifying his own son, Bello.

In 1816, the Shehu fell ill and in the following year he died. His death at once precipitated a succession crisis between Bello and his followers on the one hand and 'Abdullahi and his supporters on the other. There were two questions to be decided. First, was the Caliphate to be divided and, if so, how? Secondly, who was to assume the title of Sarkin Musulmi with the spiritual leadership that went with it?

At this time 'Abdullahi was just over fifty years of age and Bello a little under forty. Their claims to succeed were so even that it was difficult to decide between them. 'Abdullahi had been the first to swear allegiance to the Shehu at Gudu and had commanded the Fulani forces both at *Tabkin Kwatto* and at the capture of Birnin

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Kebbi. Bello, on the other hand, had knocked Zamfara out of the war and held the supreme command when Alkalawa had been taken. Both were men of exemplary character, high religious principles, great learning, and strong personality.

At the time of his death the Shehu was living in the new city of Sokoto. Bello was there with him, but 'Abdullahi was at Bodinga, in Gwandu some fifteen miles away⁶⁴. As soon as he heard the news he collected his followers and set out for Sokoto, certainly to pay his last respects to his brother; and perhaps, because he believed himself to have a claim to the succession. He was too late, however, for by the time 'Abdullahi and his party reached the city, they found the great gates shut and barred against them and that Bello in accordance with his father's known wishes, had already been elected caliph (*Sarkin Musulmi*)⁶⁵ by the Sokoto community during his absence

There was a good reason why the election had been held in such haste. The Fulani leaders felt that if 'Abdullahi were present it would be difficult for them to appoint anyone except him, but that if he became Sultan his descendants rather than the Shehu's might subsequently succeed and that therein lay the seeds of future civil war⁶⁶. To avert this danger and comply with the Shehu's wishes they therefore elected Bello before 'Abdullahi could stake his claim. No doubt this was a wise precaution on the part of Bello's supporters, for if the two factions had been allowed to mingle, fighting might easily have flared up between them.

Nevertheless, to 'Abdullahi the manner of his rejection must have come as a cruel blow and of course he must have felt hurt and angry. Certainly, he took it hard because he immediately withdrew to Gwandu and for nearly a year thereafter he and Bello were estranged. It was during this period that he was harassed by the attacks of 'Abd al Salam's rebellious followers who were eventually beaten at the battle of Kalemmina in 1820.⁶⁷ The quarrel between the two men was not finally made up until

⁶⁴) *Gazetteer of Sokoto Province*, p. 37, quoted in Web Pulaaku Sokoto Johnston. *The Fulani Empire of Sokoto*, op. cit., Chapter Ten, web p. 9; Last, *the Sokoto Caliphate.*; op. cit., p.64.

⁶⁵) Alhaji Junaidu, op. cit. p. 25.

⁶⁶) Hiskett, *Introduction to TW*, p. 20. Confirmed by Alhaji Junaidu; Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op. cit., p.114.

⁶⁷) Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*, op.cit.

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Bello unexpectedly appeared on the field of Kalembina to assist his uncle. It is said he was persuaded to do so by one of 'Abdullahi's wives who was related to him.

Oral tradition records that the reconciliation occurred as follows: After the battle was over, 'Abdullahi came to meet Bello in front of the gates of the captured town. Bello was about to dismount first, as befitted the younger man; but 'Abdullahi signed to him to remain mounted and himself dismounted, thus meaning that he recognised Bello as the new Commander of the Believers, or caliph, and this gesture healed the rift between them. He then turned to Gidado Dan Laima, Bello's vizier, and asked why the gates of Sokoto had been closed against him.

Gidado replied that if he had been present, they could not have appointed anyone else caliph who would have meant that his descendants, and not the direct line of the Shehu, must subsequently succeed as earlier mentioned. They foresaw in this a cause of dissension in the Muslim community. Gidado then asked 'Abdullahi's pardon for the hurt they had caused, and this 'Abdullahi granted. At the same time he took off his cloak and gave it to Gidado, implying by this dramatic and forgiving gesture that he relinquished to him the office of vizier that he himself had held under the Shehu. Thus with some inevitable friction, but with ultimate dignity and reconciliation, the problem of the succession was solved; and the consolidation of the caliphate, created by the Shehu 'Uthman Dan Fodio's leadership and idealism, fell to his son, Muhammad Bello.

When Bello succeeded as Sarkin Musulmi he acquiesced in 'Abdullahi's retaining the territories which, during the latter part of the Shehu's lifetime, he had been mainly responsible for administering. The core of the Caliphate was hence divided into two unequal parts and Kebbi became 'Abdullahi's Emirate of Gwandu. 'Abdullahi was also acknowledged to be the ruler of: Arewa, Dandi, Kamba, Zaberma which were former provinces of Kebbi. In addition it was recognised that: Yauri, Gurma which had already been brought within the Caliphate, Nupe, and Ilorin which had not yet been won but in which the Fulani were already active should fall within the sphere of influence of Gwandu, not of Sokoto.

The result of these dispositions was that, while 'Abdullahi was endowed with rank and possessions which made him almost the equal of his nephew, at any rate in theory, and which certainly raised him to a higher level than any of the other Emirs, the lion's share of the Caliphate still fell to Bello. As his Sultanate, Bello had the former territories of: Gobir, as well as Zamfara, and he became the acknowledged suzerain of: Kano, Katsina, Zaria, Bauchi, Adamawa, Daura, Hadeija, Air and Gwari.⁶⁸ Besides, having deserved the title of Sarkin Musulmi, he also inherited the Shehu's immense spiritual authority.

4.4. Abdullah B. Muhammad and Muhammad Bello

Both 'Abdullahi and Bello had played so important a part in the reform movement and the Jihad, proved very different in their approaches to tasks that the successful Jihad devolved upon them. By the time the battle of Kalemmina was fought, 'Abdullahi was over fifty and had already served as emir of Gwandu for some eight troubled and turbulent years, entirely taken up with fighting rebels. After the town of Kalemmina was sacked a copy of '*al-Ishriniyyat*, the fine Arabic panegyric to the Prophet⁶⁹ was found among the ruins. 'Abdullahi claimed this as his share of the booty.⁷⁰ But the act was symbolic since he then declared his intentions of devoting himself from that time on to the study and teaching of the Islamic religion as well as law, leaving the conducts of affairs to his son Muhammad and his nephew Buhari. Apart from an occasional intervention in the affairs of state, chiefly to bring about reconciliations with former enemies, he retired from active administration and devoted himself to teaching and authorship till he died in A.H. 1245/ C.E. 1829.

Bello, on the other hand, grasped the reins of government with the same capable enthusiasm he had brought to fighting the war. It was under him thus that the frontiers of the state got pushed further south incorporating more policies, which naturally led to the development of a more complex government apparatus and a

⁶⁸) At this time certain younger Emirates, namely Misau, Kazaure, Jama'are, Nassarawa, Muri, and Kontagora, had not yet come into being.

⁶⁹) It was composed by the thirteenth-century Moroccan poet al-Fazzazi.

⁷⁰) Ibid; p.115.

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'permanent organised and professionalized military forces.'⁷¹ In other words, he saw it as the task to protect the borders of the caliphate and establish within it the Islamic way of life. This he did by building *ribats*, the walled border fortresses of classical Islamic military traditions: by a policy of settling the restless nomads and hence integrating them more firmly into the Islamic state; but, above all, by setting up an administrative system that progressively shaped the caliphate, in practice, as the Shehu had envisaged it in theory. It was also under Bello that agriculture, industry, commerce and urbanisation boomed.⁷² His welfare programme covered not only the orphans and the poor but the captives as well.

The educational system that had served the region for centuries became overhauled and developed to serve the ideals of the government. The role women came to play in the system was particularly significant. The new system ensured that virtually everyone was instructed, male or female, rich or poor, freeborn or slave, under an educational system, which sees learning as worship and knowledge as responsibility. It was also here that the ideals, which the movement gave the society, were being cultivated and nourished.

This stage witnessed how the movement, which had risen victorious out of battle fields, launched another struggle to implement its programme. It faced the initial problem of consolidating its power and protecting its hard gained freedom; it was in this phase that the movement translated into reality the dream of its ideal society- a society based on the Nation of the Prophet and the four rightly-guided caliphs. In the process the movement managed to transform the society from one dominated by materialism and Hausa-Fulani ignorance and darkness to one based on and dominated by Islamic thoughts, ideas and aspirations.

Even though this was a phase in which the movement was holding the helm of power and authority, the task was still not easy, for the leadership had to come to grips with practical human situations. It was the ability, patience, understanding and not the least practicality and flexibility of the leadership which enabled the movement to deliver its goods.

⁷¹) Smaldone, *Warfare in the Sokoto Caliphate*, op. cit., p. 129.

⁷²) S. Abubakr, 'Aspects of the Urban Phenomenon: Sokoto and its Hinterland to C.1805' in Usman (Ed.) *the Sokoto Caliphate*, op. cit. pp. 125-139.

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Bello was, of course, not wholly successful in this task for he, too, had to contend with the realities of backsliding, jealousy and greed that had saddened his father's later years. But when he died; in A.H. 1253/ C.E. 1837, at the age of fifty-six, he left the caliphate, defended by its fortress cities, united, and at the highest peak of power it was ever to attain.

CONCLUSION

The Shehu 'Uthman Dan Fodio, the founder of the Sokoto Caliphate which was divided between his son and his brother as already stated, was buried in his new capital of Sokoto. Judged by any standards he was the most remarkable leader. In spite of the fact that he was a man of peace, he sustained a lengthy war. Besides having been an unworldly mystic, he created a great territorial caliphate. Despite the fact that he had found Islam in the central Sudan corrupt and persecuted; he managed to leave it purified and supreme. Though he had found the Fulani landless and insecure; he succeeded in leaving them a ruling aristocracy.

One of the greatest of his many gifts was his spiritual magnetism. From the time when he was still quite a young man, he had the power to draw others to him. Moreover, once they had become his pupils or followers, they remained devoted to him for life. Another characteristic was the moral courage with which he stood on his principles. He showed this trait at Gudu, immediately after he had raised his standard against Yunfa, when some of his followers got out of hand and without provocation attacked the Hausa people living in the district. In circumstances as desperate as his, even the most upright and high-minded of leaders might well have turned a blind eye or at any rate have waited until after the impending battle before asserting his authority; but not the Shehu.⁷³

Another characteristic which distinguished the Shehu was his faith in his own destiny. So intensely did it burn that it fired all those who came into contact with him. There is no better illustration of its power than the effect it had at the supreme crisis of the *jihad*, when his defeated and half-mutinous army was surrounded in the un-walled town of Gwandu. His intervention then not only rallied his demoralised followers but inspired them to win a victory which proved to be decisive. The last and in many ways most characteristic of the Shehu's

⁷³) 'On the Thursday our people fell upon the Hausas who were in the district and slew and plundered and enslaved them. But on the Friday Shehu rose up and preached to them and commanded them to release those whom they had captured and to restore that which they had taken. At this they set free their prisoners and gave back their booty' Refer to Bello, *Inf M* (cf. Arnett, p. 52).

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traits was his un-worldliness since no breath of scandal ever touched him. Furthermore, the Shehu was never dazzled by success and remained as unspoilt in triumph as he had been unshaken in disaster. To the very end, in fact, he led a life of pious and ascetic simplicity and the most significant feature of his whole career is that no sooner had he achieved all his worldly aims than he virtually renounced the world. On his achievements alone he deserves to be ranked among the greatest men whom Africa has produced. If his character and achievements are taken together, however, his place is unique.

4. EPILOGUE

4.1. The Place of the Movement in the History of the Region

The first chapter has shown how Hausa land was before the advent of Islam. It has also dealt with how Islam appeared peacefully and subtly in Hausa land. Forging links, integrating communities and establishing a superior culture with its emphasis on learning and fraternity. Besides, it tackles the consequent growth of the Hausa States and the political disputes in the neighbouring regions, Songhai in particular, in the late sixteenth century however witnessed the ascendancy of strife, insecurity and disequilibrium and the impairing of the Islamisation process. Materialism thereafter came to hold sway, while the area became characterised by despotism laxity and sufferings. This situation quite naturally gave birth to dissatisfaction, mainly in the Islamised segment of the society from among who emerged 'Uthman Dan Fodio who took the challenge.

The second and third chapters have dealt with how this scholar activist i.e. 'Uthman Dan Fodio, inspired by a sense of mission, spent nearly nineteen years roving a great part of Hausa land generating current of thoughts and ideas which permeated the whole region, Islamising its pagan population, awakening its Muslim peoples, eroding the wisdom, values and assumptions of the status quo providing a new hope for a society which had been immersed in total ignorance, oppression and strife. The following that came to rally around Dan Fodio's teaching and preaching snowballed into a mass movement that eventually had to confront the might of the status quo for the achievement of its good and indeed its own survival.

Having succeeded in surviving the confrontation, the movement found itself with a large state cutting across former borders and identities, unprecedented in scope and complexity, in which its leadership busied themselves establishing its programme: The Islamic order. It was this order, which at last managed to solve the crisis and unbalance of the peoples and polities of this vast region. Such a total and entire revolution mainly when the circumstances and level of technology is regarded is what won this movement a noble and novel position in the history of the region.

The fact that the movement realised this novel achievement through scholarship, a thoughtful planning, a careful organisation and above all faith in Allah is beyond any dispute. It can now be seen that when Adeleye says that this jihad was simply 'a product of certain

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circumstances in Hausa land'⁷⁴ he was misjudging the phenomenon. One only hopes that Adeleye was not, like his tutors, using a western secular frame to analyse a phenomenon that is neither western nor secular. The fact that the movement is neither Fulani nor Hausa let alone bourgeois or proletariat, but purely and simply Islamic needs no further emphasis. What perhaps is worth emphasising is the movement's conception of community identity. Fundamental to this identity is faith, for *'it is the evidence of willingness to strive in God's way rather than for consideration of blood relationship and marriage'* and of giving *'preference to the matter of religion over worldly interest'*⁷⁵ that determines the affiliation togetherness. Such a sense of belonging centred on faith in Allah and blind to blood, colour, language or country, has as its model the first (Muslim) Islamic nation that the Prophet founded.

The efforts of some scholars to construe this movement as expression of such alien concepts as Nigerian or African nationalism can now be seen to have no basis and therefore futile. It is this Islamic notion of identity, which made possible the spread of the impact of this movement beyond Hausa land as far as the Atlantic Ocean to the West and the Red Sea to the east. The movement's impact on the eastern part of Bilad al-Sudan is of particular interest to this study and warrant some mention.

4.1.1. The Shehu's Movement and the Mahdiyya

The belief in the coming of the Mahdi (the guided One) towards the end of time to deliver the Islamic society from oppression and injustice has been a popular one all over the Islamic world and Hausa land was no exception.

The despotism and corruption of the pre-revolutionary regimes of Hausa land only activated that belief. When therefore the Jama'a (Shehu's community) launched a holy war against the oppressing regimes, many Muslims in Hausa land thought that the close of the world was near and the Shehu then must have been the Mahdi. The Shehu however, refuted that popular claim and warned the people to desist from it⁷⁶.

⁷⁴) Adeleye, 'Hausaland and Borno: 1600-1800, in Ajayi and Crowder (eds.) *History of West Africa*, op. cit.; p. 596.

⁷⁵) M. Tukur, an unpublished PhD. thesis, A. B. U., 1977, p. 93 quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...' op. cit., p. 122.

⁷⁶) The Shehu said what follows:

'Know, O my Brethren, that I am not the Imam al-Mahdi and that I never claimed the Mahdiyya even though that is heard from the tongues of other people. Indeed, I have striven beyond measure in warning them to desist from that, and declared its refutation in some of my

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But the Shehu did not refute the idea of Mahdiyya itself, in fact he affirmed and even encouraged it since in his message to the leaders of the Jama'a which Muhammad Bello delivered on his behalf at Birnin Gada, he portrayed the Mahdiyya as movement that would succeed his Jihad.⁷⁷ Even after the stage of the Jihad, the Shehu continued to hold his view on the Mahdi, who he said would appear in the east of Hausa land.⁷⁸

Of course, hundreds of years prior to this exodus, Hausa land had been connected by several routes, plied by merchants, preachers and pilgrims, among others. It is only reasonable therefore to believe that the migration in anticipation of the Mahdi began much earlier than 1837, maybe soon after the death of Shehu in 1817 or even earlier. The grandfather of the caliph 'Abdullahi, Mahdi's right-hand man and successor was in fact part of this west-east movement of peoples. As Biobaku and al-Hajj have established:

'His great-grandfather Ali al-Karrar, came from Niger Chad region on his way to Mecca. He, however, settled among the Faisha in Southern Darfur and married a local woman'.⁷⁹

This might also explain 'Abdullahi (later Mahdi's Caliph) search for the Mahdi prior to the manifestation of Muhammad Ahmad as the Mahdi. Immediately the news of the Mahdi's manifestation reached the Sokoto Caliphate, a grandson of Muhammad Bello, Hayatu B. Said, who had reasons to take a leadership role, assembled as many followers as he could get to swear allegiance to the Mahdi and to migrate to him. Writing to the Mahdi, Hayatu said:

writings, both in Arabic and Ajami (Hausa and Fulani). 'Uthman b. Fodio, Tadkir al-Ikhwān in S. Biobaku and M. al- Hajj, 'The Sudanese Mahdiyya and the Niger Chad Region' in Lewis (Ed.) Islam in Tropical Africa, 2nd edition, London, I. A. I., 1980, pp. 228.

⁷⁷) Alluding to this message, Bello stated:

'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 this Jihad will not end, by God's permission, until it gets to the Mahdi. They listened and welcomed the good news'. Refer to Muhammad Bello, Infaq al-Maisur, quoted in S. Biobaku and al- Hajj, ibid., p. 229.

⁷⁸) The consequences were that:

'As early as the time of Amir al-Muminun Abu Bakr Atiku (1837-42) probably owing to the perturbed conditions within the Sokoto empire a number of people started to migrate from Hausa land to the Nile valley in anticipation of meeting the 'excepted Mahdi'. This created so much unrest and agitation that the Sultan had to issue a proclamation declaring that the time of the exodus had not yet come', since there is still some good remaining among us' See S. Biobaku and M. al- Hajj, 'The Sudanese Mahdiyya and the Niger Chad region' in: Lewis (Ed.) Islam and Tropical Africa, op.cit; p. 230.

⁷⁹) Ibid., p. 233.

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'My father and I and all that belong to me swore allegiance to you before your manifestation was perceived ... Sheikh Uthman Dan Fodio, recommended us to emigrate to you to assist you and to help you when you were made manifest'.⁸⁰

Hayatu was consequently appointed the Mahdi's agent in the area and he continued to lead the Mahdiyya till he died in his effort to reach the Mahdi. Following his death the leadership of the followers of the Mahdi passed over to his progeny who maintained the position to this day. This phenomenon gave rise to peoples dispersed from the Niger to the Nile valley who to this day see themselves as much part of Shehu's movement as part of the Mahdiyya. These today remain the living evidence of historical connection which contemporary political boundaries drawn by imperialism could not and cannot obliterate.⁸¹

4.2. Evaluation

As it was previously said, great efforts were made to trace the process of Islamisation from the earliest times to the onset of the movement led by the Shehu 'Uthman Dan Fodio. This is to help the movement and the holy war he fought in the proper context. It will be pertinent here to remember the fact that, in Hausa land, Islam spread extensively and peacefully during the course of many centuries, integrating communities, boosting learning and trade as well as raising states of varying complexities. The movement took off at a time when the continuity of the Islamic culture that had already found roots in the societies was being threatened by ignorance, superstition and powerful materialistic forces, represented by Sarakuna in Hausa land. The holy war waged was to check the excesses of the materialistic forces and to restore to Islam a supremacy which deserved it by virtue of its message as well as history.

4.3. Goals and Objectives

The movement was born and nurtured under a climate of discontent, and a rising tide of hope. The men who kindled and eventually led the movement were Muslim scholars who enjoyed considerable respect in their society, not only for their repugnance of the horrid state of affairs but also for their faithfulness and loyalty to their faith and cause. The Shehu's refusal to accept Bawa's gift was an expression of this repugnance motivated by their

⁸⁰) Ibid.

⁸¹) Quoted in Ibid. , p. 235.

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situational problems, the movement was geared towards the procurement of a solution, which to them was the restoration of the Islamic order.

The Shehu who began as an itinerant preacher was primarily concerned with expounding and extending the true message of Islam to his society, which was drowning in great ignorance and syncretism. His relentless campaign for the revival of the authentic Sunnah and obliteration of innovation was soon to produce the consciousness it must have been intended to. For soon his growing following realised that their society needed the Sunnah not only in acts of worship but also in its law, economy and politics. By the time the Shehu settled down in Degel, he left no one in doubt about the goals and objectives of his whole enterprise, in his own words '*to make the law of God (Allah) supreme.*'⁸² In other words, he was aiming at replacing the decadent order with an Islamic one.

Thus the goals and objectives of this movement were primarily the procurement of an Islamic state and society. Overthrowing the status quo was thus a necessary step in the realisation of his objectives. This is very clearly born out not only by what some scholars describe as their manifesto but also by their preoccupation soon after the battles that gave them a final victory.

4.4. Model and Frame of Reference

When the Shehu set out for his lofty venture to institute an Islamic order in his decaying society, the movement leadership knew that he was treading a path, which had been trodden by the Prophet Muhammad many centuries before them. He also knew that the Prophet's enterprise was meant to guide the faithful in their continuous struggle to check the excesses of ignorance and darkness and establish the message of Islam. So from the very start, the Shehu took the Prophet as his model not only by seeking to create his kind of state and society but also by seeking to be in his shoes at every stage of his venture.

As early as the age of twenty, the Shehu, in a poem praising the Prophet, declared himself to be a muqtabi⁸³ (i.e. one who modelled his life on the Prophet's). Therefore, the Shehu continued to take the Prophet as a model in his simplicity, modesty and austerity as well as his mission. His obsession with the revival of the Sunnah throughout his itinerant life and even after the holy war evidently expresses the Shehu's deep attachment to the Prophet and his way of life. The fact that his vision in which he received the sword of truth came to

⁸²) Uthman B. Fudi, *Bayan*, p. 80 quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op cit., p. 223.

⁸³) See F.H. El Masri (ed Trans) *Bayan*, p. 2 in Ibid, p. 224.

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him at the age of forty may not be a coincidence. It could be seen as an expression of a desire in the Shehu to fit into the pattern of Prophet's life who received his prophet hood at the age of forty.

As he defied the spirit of quietism and withdrawal typical of Sufism, by venturing to change his society, so did the leadership of this movement challenged the spirit of imitation and following of earlier rulings⁸⁴ in his effort to create an Islamic state and society. Though having delved into different levels of perception, the Shehu strove to derive the rules and regulations governing his Islamic state and society, directly from the Holy Quran and the True Sunnah, as he understood them. Although the Shehu did not categorically abrogate the Islamic Schools of Jurisprudence, he undermined the whole idea by arguing that '*neither God in his book nor the Prophet in his Sunnah made it obligatory that one particular Madhab should be followed (sic-followed)*'.⁸⁵

Thus in this venture to change the world, and create an Islamic state and society the model for this movement was the Prophet and his frame of reference the Sacred Quran and the Authentic Sunnah.

4.5. Character of Following

In recruiting his following, the Shehu left no one in doubt about Islamic nature of his cause. Islam by nature of its universality knew no national, regional, or tribal barrier. Thus the call of this movement appealed to Muslims irrespective of his country, region or tribe. The people that came to constitute the membership of movement came from different regions, tribes and walks of life having nothing in common other than Islam and his commitment to the movement.

The Shehu, being, a Fulani by tribe and maybe Gobir by nationality assembled around him the Hausas, the Tuaregs, and the Fulani among others, coming from all the seven Hausa states, Bornu and beyond.

⁸⁴) It means '*Taqlid*' in Arabic.

⁸⁵) Uthman B. Fudi, *Hidayat al-Tullab*, quoted in A.M Kani, unpublished M.L.S Thesis, 1978, p. 142; quoted in Bugage, 'A Comparative Study...', in *Ibid*, p. 226; M..M. Fukur, 'Values and Public Affairs: the Relevance of Sokoto Caliphate experience to the transformation of the Nigerian Polit4' Ph.D Thesis A.B.U., 1977 p. 438. The Shehu Uthman Dan Fodio, although evidently the champion, was not alone in bringing about this intellectual revolution. His large team of students and scholars, among whom 'Abdullahi and Bello featured prominently contributed a great deal, each according to his capacity.

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The term Jama'a that the Shehu used to describe his following carries no national, regional, tribal or even class connotation. This term is driven from either the Holy Quran or the True Sunnah, to describe an assembly of the faithful. Thus this term represents neither national nor tribal nor class feelings.

The overthrow of the status quo and the restoration of social justice being central and pivotal to this movement, the majority of the following naturally turned out to be the poor oppressed mass of the people. Indeed, the movement had in its following students, scholars, merchants and even a few of the nobility. Thus this movement was mass movements whose following cut across boundaries of tribe, region, country, colour, class and so on and reflected the true Islamic notion of community identity. The Jama'a having been formed over a span of three decades of itinerant preaching as well as teaching and having been led by an erudite scholar, came to be sober and scholarship oriented.

4.6. Conception and Strategy of Evolution

The Shehu set out to bring about an Islamic revolution. His focus was first and foremost on the society which in his time was plunged in ignorance, submerged in superstition and drowned in materialism. He roved a good part of Hausa land restlessly, clarifying the message of Islam, reviving the Authentic Sunnah and obliterating the innovation using all means of mass communication at his disposal. In the name of reviving the Sunnah and destroying the innovation, the Shehu called to question the '*prevailing norms and thereby the basis of social institutions and thereby the basis of social institutions and arrangements.*'⁸⁶

The difficulties, opposition and challenges he faced, prompted him to write prolifically not only to solve immediate problems and respond to criticisms but also to develop a clear vision of the alternative (Islamic) order he was unmistakably calling for. During the course of a quarter of a century of this subtle intellectual revolution⁸⁷ he caused a large body and efficient network of following; the Jama'a, who were soon to realise that the revival of Sunnah and destruction of innovation included the overthrow of the decadent Hausa Sarauta system.

Without any doubt, the Shehu knew that the task he set out for in 1774 constituted a direct challenge to the security and continuity of the existing order and would eventually

⁸⁶) 'Uthman B. Fudi *Masail al-Muhima*, quoted in M.M. Fukur 'Values and Public affairs.....' op cit, p. 438.

⁸⁷) See Dan Fodio's *Bayan* and Abdullahi's *Diya al-Hukkam*.

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culminate into a confrontation. But he did not go out of his way to announce to the world his intent till after he managed to erode the cultural and socio-political basis of the Hausa darkness and ignorance. The unavoidable confrontation the Jama'a had with the Sarauta system (the custodian of Hausa darkness and ignorance appears to have fitted well in the scheme the Shehu envisaged. For as he was opportune to say on the eve of the confrontation:

*'Before Islam is strong, Taqiyya (simulation sic. Precautionary dissimulation is permissible. But now that it is strong, there is no excuse of cooperation and collaboration with syncretic state. The community has reached a stage in its evolution when it could come out to declare its objectives openly.'*⁸⁸

In the heat of the confrontation that ensued between the Jama'a ('Abdullahi in particular) found time to spell out the details of the blue print for the Islamic order they had planned to establish after the holy war. Soon after the victory in the battlefields, the Shehu and his lieutenants dropped the swords and returned to the pen this time to put finishing touches to their blue print, address themselves to the new problems arising from the revolution⁸⁹ and pave the way for the realisation of their goals and objectives.

The Shehu conceived of this task as 'renewal or revivalism' and spent a greater part of his time raising his society's level of Islamic knowledge and consciousness, to see the necessity for an Islamic order. Conception, like perception, is a product of the individual's mental make up, which in its turn is a product of his background.

The intellectual tradition in Hausa land was based on the study of the classical literature, Exegesis, Prophetic tradition, Islamic Jurisprudence and of course Arabic⁹⁰. It is the mastery of the classical literature that confers one a position of respect, as a scholar, in the society. The Shehu naturally took to this path.

The belief in a Mahdi had spread throughout the Muslim world, including Hausa land, but the seemingly unending tyranny of the Turco-Egyptian regime and the Shehu's prophecy potentiated the belief in the Sudan.⁹¹

In the Shehu's Hausa land the stimulations for change came from internal stagnation of the Muslim society-ignorance, superstition, and syncretism which the Sarakuna as well as the venal scholars had been exploiting. Therefore, his focus was on the society at large and

⁸⁸) Ibid.

⁸⁹) Ibid.

⁹⁰) Arabic was considered to be the language of scholarship.

⁹¹) In the heat of the Jihad in Hausa land, when the Jama'a were scoring victories, some people took the Shehu Dan Fodio to be expected as a Mahdi-a point which he at once repudiated. This seems to be a popular Muslim reaction to such a crisis situation rather than an indication of Hausa land's prouess.

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the confrontation with the Hausa establishment came only after the society had reached a level of understanding and consciousness that it required the establishment of an Islamic order.

4.7. Nature Style of Leadership

The Shehu geared his movement basically towards the goals and objectives already mentioned and had the Prophet as his model and the Glorious Quran as well as the True Sunnah as his frame of reference. From the onset of his mission, the Shehu saw and distinguished himself as a scholar with a message to his decaying society. His first and immediate adherents were the students and scholars who came to partake in the preaching and the spread of his teachings to the people at large. These teachings that appealed to the mass eventually came to constitute the Jama'a. By the time the Jama'a rose as a distinct community with its grass-root network, the Shehu found himself leading a movement that had been motivated by his own teachings, centred round them and yearning their realisation. The leadership that the Jama'a implicitly conferred on the Shehu was one which his knowledge and teachings earned him to Mahdiyya.

Following the Jama'a's Hijra to Gudu and just before the outbreak of the Jihad, the movement found itself demanding a type of leadership befitting the kind of phase of struggle they were moving into. The Shehu, despite the clear leadership position he had been occupying, refused to assume the Imam ship of the Jama'a until after he had been formally and legally elected in a manner stipulated by the Islamic Doctrine. Despite the fact that he was the Imam of the Jama'a, his powers were defined by the Islamic Law, and he was duty bound to consult the Jama'a to whom he was also answerable.

Thus the leadership the Shehu adopted to lead his movement can be linked to that of the Rightly Guided Caliphates in its very nature as well as style. By helping, nudging and sometimes even challenging the Shehu's opinions, both 'Abdullahi as well as Bello and maybe other scholars, were affirming this and further expressing the fact that the Imam is like anyone of them who could make mistakes or errors and could be questioned.

The Shehu who received his work as revivalism, endeavoured to achieve his goals through teaching, preaching as well as writing. Since he had no predestined victory, he could fail as he could succeed. Therefore he needed as many hands as he could lay his hand on; students and scholars to disseminate his ideas and a revolutionary crowd to give his cause

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sufficient defensive and striking powers in the event of any confrontation. The nature of the task, the ordinariness of the leadership and the spirit of scholarship that came to pervade the Jama'a made consultative and answerable leadership a necessity.

The death of the Shehu even though definitely sorrowful to the Jama'a did not disrupt or inhibit the movement's march towards the realisation of its goals. In fact, it was under the Shehu's successor or his son Muhammad Bello that the greater part of the objectives of the revolution were realised.

4.8. Consolidation and Goal Realisation

Following the successful overthrow of the status quo in Hausa land, the movement strove to consolidate its power and realise its goals founding an Islamic state and society. In the Sokoto Caliphate, the administrative structure was immediately and radically changed from the Sarauta system to the Emirate system,⁹² which reflected the political values and philosophy of the Islamic state.⁹³ The changes in the administrative structure were accommodated by simultaneous changes in the institutions. The institutions of consultation, the vizierate, the police, the judiciary, the treasury started to take shape. The educational institutions were developed and geared towards the inculcation and preservation of the prevalent values as outlined by the revolutionary leadership.

This was not, of course, a hitch-free operation. The great and sometimes hot debate, dominated by the Shehu and his brother 'Abdullahi, soon after the procurement of the caliphate reflected some of the problems encountered. But the debate rather than constrained the goal realisation, only helped to further clarify the issues involved and to enrich the intellectual contribution of the revolution. It was after the death of the Shehu and under Muhammad Bello that the greater part of the blue print gained practical practice.

The socio-economic and political institution in particular took a deeper root in the society. Agriculture, technology, urbanisation and commerce boosted under the judicious and discreet leadership of Muhammad Bello.⁹⁴ Though Bello's epoch appears to represent the

⁹²) For details of this transformation, see T.B Usman, 'The Transformation of Katsina: C. 1796-1903', an unpublished Ph.D Thesis, quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op cit, p. 237.

⁹³) For the values and philosophy of the Sokoto Caliphate; refer to Tukur', 'Values and Public Affairs' ..., op. cit, quoted in Ibid.

⁹⁴) See A. Smith, 'The Contemporary Significance of the Academic Ideals of the Sokoto Jihad' in Y.B Usman (ed.), *The Sokoto Caliphate*, op . cit.; p. 247 quoted in Bugaje, 'A Comparative Study...', op cit, p. 237. Bello busied himself with such matters as public health, and community development, the encouragement of

peak after which things were never as good, the state continued to cherish most of its values and hold its domains till it fell prey to British imperialism in 1903.

4.9. Achievements

4.9.1. Answering the Call of Allah

Perhaps the greatest achievement of that movement was answering the call of their Lord, whose mercy they all hoped for, that:

*'Let there arise among you a community (Umma) inviting to goodness, and enjoining right conduct (ma'aruf) and forbidding indecency (Munkar). Such are they who are successful.'*⁹⁵

This call of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil is of course directed to all Muslims, of all times and climes. Answering the call starts by a clear statement of what is right and what is wrong. This is followed by a pertinent and judicious call for its implementation in society. If and when this call is physically menaced, the caller is to use all means at his disposal, in the nation force, not only toward the threat but also to secure an environment (a state) where this call can continue unhindered. The holy war the movement fought was evidently to secure the environment (State) where the enjoining of right conduct and the forbidding of indecency could be practised unthreatened.

The achievement of the movement becomes more spectacular when it is remembered that they answered this call under the most ruthless and despotic regimes. The Shehu began his call and was able to gather a good number of followers when Gobir was under Bawa Jan Gwarzo, seemingly the most ruthless of the Sarakuna Hausa land ever had.⁹⁶

4.9.2. Overthrowing the Status Quo

Considering both the material and physical handicap of the movement and the harsh circumstances under which it had to carry out its mission and not the least the military might of the powers it had to face, it was no small achievement that it succeeded in defeating and overthrowing the status quo. Even the mobilisation of people within the vast area of Hausa

agriculture and manufacturing as well as the development of communication ... urbanisation. See also Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, op cit, quoted in Ibid.

⁹⁵) The Holy Quran 3: 104.

⁹⁶) According to Hausa oral tradition, 'during the reign of Bawa Jan Gwarzo even a cock dares not crow'. This only reflected the tyranny and ruthlessness which characterised Bawa's rule. Yet it was under these same conditions that the Shehu began his 'subversive' mission.

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land, regarding its level of technology-transport and communication mainly-was no doubt a great achievement.

The members of the Jama'a that managed to reach Gudu amidst harassment and organised ambush were not only small in number but impoverished in resources. It was not till fifteen months later that they were able to secure a base for themselves. Even after securing a base, their military position remained precarious compared to their foes.

The Jama'a's spectacular victory in the battlefields did not come so much from their weapons or good planning as from Him in whose cause they fought – Allah Most High. It was this victory that enabled them to check the excesses of indecency, which the status quo had been championing, and to procure a state where right conduct could be established. Even if the establishment of right conduct had been inadequate, the fact that they challenged and overthrew the forces of indecency remains a major achievement.

4.9.3. Establishment of Islamic State

This movement strove to establish a state where the supremacy and totality of the Islamic Doctrine and the practice of enjoining right conduct and prohibiting indecency became a prime state responsibility is really significant and remarkable achievement. By this, it sought to give its society the peace, justice, equity and direction which its darkness and ignorance was unable to give to the society. Even where the state suffered set-backs, the leadership at least succeeded in raising the moral tone of its society and giving its people a purposeful leadership. The leadership's sense of mission, rectitude, and humble as well as an austere life remain to be a source of inspiration to the heirs of this movement.

In Hausa land where it lasted a whole century, it came as a solution to centuries old socio-political crisis in the region and continued this day to give the Northern States of Nigeria its administrative structure, unrivalled land tenure system and maybe more important its high moral values.⁹⁷

⁹⁷) In contemporary Nigeria the highest security to life and property is to be found in the northern states. Its very low crime figure compared to the south-east and west of Nigeria is but a reflection of the high moral values the Shehu's Jihad gave to the region. It is in the restoration of such values and not in modernising the police that hope for security lies.

4.9.4. Socio-Cultural Integration

By bringing together people from different tribes, regions and countries under one umbrella sharing the identical aspirations and fighting for the same cause, this movement managed to achieve a massive socio-cultural integration. Of course, the major integrating force is the belief in Islam, which establishes the equality of all men and women irrespective of their tribe, region, country or colour.⁹⁸ The faithful that gathered in the camps of this movement found in Islam a brotherhood which untied them together with a bond stronger than that of blood and kinship.

Even though ethnic feelings may have featured at certain times and circumstances, at no time did these question the equality and brotherhood of all believers, as well as the massive socio-cultural integration achievers. The massive socio-cultural integration achieved by this movement is what makes the task of the contemporary nation states of Nigeria much easier than it would have otherwise been. By subverting Islamic influence, the nation states are not only bruising the finger that fed them but they are, perhaps unknowingly, undermining the very basis of their own integrity. It is to be hoped that contemporary Nigeria and indeed similar nation states soon realise that the much talked about integration comes about not through propaganda and legislation but through, such deeply rooted unifying force as Islam provides.

⁹⁸) 'Oh, mankind!' Lo. We have created you male and female and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know each another. Lo! The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is Knower, Aware', The Sacred Quran. 49:13.

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GENERAL CONCLUSION

The delineation of the background of this movement reveals the peaceful manner in which Islam spread into Hausa land in the course of many centuries⁹⁹. The Islamisation process was characterised by the boosting of learning and trade, the integration of communities and the emergence of states of various complexities.

This movement rose at crucial points in time when the supremacy of Islam and its culture were at stake. The restoration of the supremacy of Islam and the establishment of its order were the rallying cries of this movement. The universality as well as the comprehensiveness of Islam was vividly reflected in this movement.

The Shehu's movement was not a 'Fulani Jihad' and did not represent a national feeling. As it has been already stated, this movement aimed at the restoration of the Islamic order. In its struggle to achieve its goals and objectives, the movement had the Prophet as its model and the Sacred Quran as well as the True Sunnah as its frame of reference. Concerning the conception and strategy of revolution, the Shehu conceived of his task as renewal or revivalism and took the pain and patience to bring about an intellectual revolution before confrontation. Concerning the nature and style of leadership as well as the extent and thoroughness of the realisation of the movement's goals, the Jama'a realised a substantial part of their blue-print in the Sokoto Caliphate.

Taking into account their level of technology and peculiar circumstances, the Shehu's movement accomplished remarkable success, their setbacks notwithstanding. By setting out to change his society when no one else dared to, by overthrowing his oppressors and instituting a state in which he and his followers strove to give their society the justice and equity they were denied, the movement made noble achievements, which continue to be a source of inspiration to their present day heirs.

⁹⁹) Islam has recourse to warlike means when it is a necessity

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