Volume One

The Life of Sheikh Usman Bin Fodio and his Reformist Struggles

INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

I give praise to Allah, Glorified and Exalted is He, and I send blessings upon His Messenger, upon the members of his household, and upon all his Companions.

This is a book which I have titled (Sheikh Usman Bin Fodio and His Reformist Struggles), my objective is to produce a book that encompasses the history of this Islamic Caliphate which Sheikh Usman established, from its very inception up to the time of his death, and further until its downfall. However, it will place strong emphasis on scholarly and political aspects. I intended to write four books: the first, concerning the affairs of Sheikh Usman from his birth, his quest for knowledge, his preaching, and his migration; as well as his battles and the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate. The second book would focus on Sheikh Abdullahi; the third on Sultan Muhammadu Bello; and the fourth on the other rulers of this Islamic Caliphate up until its collapse in the year 1903. For now, however, only the first book has been completed; but I hope Allah grants me the ability to write the others.

I have given this book the title "The Usmaniyya Caliphate" (Daular Usmaniyya), following the footsteps of the renowned scholar, a grandson of Sheikh Usman, named Abdulqadir son of Al-Mustafa. He mentioned this in his book titled "Rawdatul-Afkar".

Furthermore, what motivated me to publish this book is the observation that, until now, there has been no book in the Hausa language that provides a satisfactory explanation of the events that transpired concerning the history of the Usmaniyya Caliphate. Another reason is that, about a decade ago, the editor

of a magazine published in Iran, titled "Sakon Musulunci" (The Message of Islam), encouraged me to produce such a work for serialisation in the magazine, but I did not have the opportunity to do so. It has taken me more than five years to write this book, and only now has Allah made it possible for me to complete it. This delay occurred because writing a work of this nature is not an easy undertaking. Additionally, there are the daily routines and responsibilities that prevent one from attaining the needed composure.

The book is divided into seven chapters. Each chapter is replete with information pertaining to various subjects. Chapter One is titled "The Lineage of Sheikh Usman" and is concise. Chapter Two discusses his birth and early education. Then comes Chapter Three, titled "The Confrontation of Sheikh Usman with the Rulers". The migration (Hijra) constitutes Chapter Four. Chapter Five provides an account of the battles fought by the jihadists during that period. Following this are further battles, that is, an exposition on the Writings of Sheikh Usman, which is the subject of Chapter Six. This exposition occupies a considerable number of pages. That, indeed, constitutes the fundamental benefit jihad. Chapter Seven, the final chapter, as anticipated, details the death of Sheikh Usman. May Allah have mercy on his soul. This chapter also includes information regarding his children, both male and female.

In writing this book, I have relied upon books written by Sheikh Usman himself. No unverified information has been utilised. However, for the history of his life, the majority of what I have written has been drawn from the book "Infaq al-Maysur" by Sultan Muhammadu Bello; and from "Rawdul-Jinani" by Gidado son of Laima. Among the other books I consulted are: "Rawdatul-Afkar" by Abdul-Qadir son Al-Mustafa, and "Labtul-

Multaqatati" by Waziri Junaidu. I have also benefited from "Tazyinul-Waraqat" by Sheikh Abdullahi Fodio, as well as the book "Al-Islam fi Nijeriya" by Adamu Abdullahi al-Ilori.

There are various other books I have read concerning this Caliphate, including those not written in the Arabic language. I have, therefore, compiled the information contained within them into this book. I hope that authors and researchers who follow the Western scholarly convention will excuse me for not adhering to their method of citing the book's title, its publisher, and the specific page(s) referenced. However, in any case, all the information I have extracted is found within these aforementioned books, or within the books authored by Sheikh Usman, the titles of which I have listed at the end of this book. For any information not contained within these books, I have provided the title of the book from which I obtained it, either within the main body of this work or in a footnote below the pages. It is for this reason that I have not listed the names of all the books consulted for this research; because I have already mentioned the most important ones at the outset, and I have also listed the names of the books authored by the Sheikh Usman towards the end of this book.

In conclusion, I hope that Allah will cause the Muslim community who read this book to benefit from it and to be benefited by it. I therefore ask all who read it to pray that Allah forgives me for any error or slip of the pen that may have occurred in this book. I also pray for Allah's forgiveness for all sins that may have been committed. May Allah forgive us. May He admit us to His Paradise. Amen.

12 Jumadah al-Thani, 1415 A.H. Muhammad Isa

16th November, 1994 A.D. Talata Mafara

THE USMANIYYA CALIPHATE

"Daular Usmaniyya" is a name given to the Usmaniyya Caliphate, which was founded by Sheikh Usman Bin Fodio with the assistance of his disciples in the nineteenth century. The name of this Caliphate is attached to the word "Usmanu" which is the name of its leader.

This Caliphate, established by Sheikh Usman, encompassed all of Hausaland and the territories in its southern region, such as the land of the Nupe. It also included a portion of the Jukun Kingdom. Furthermore, the Caliphate incorporated certain regions within the present-day Republics of Niger and Benin, and equally comprised some areas within Cameroon. This extensive expansion was achieved following the jihad waged by Sheikh Usman over a period of six years, which commenced from 1802 to 1808.[1] During these years, Sheikh Usman and his disciples contended with the rulers of the "Haɓe" kingdoms under the leadership of the King of Gobir, Yunfa, until Allah granted him victory. During this period, Sheikh Usman moved back and forth between the territories of Gobir, Kebbi, and Zamfara. During his sojourn in Gobir, the majority of the territory was conquered through warfare. Meanwhile, during his stay in Zamfara, in a place called Sabon Gari, Sheikh Usman dispatched Sheikh Abdullahi Fodio to conquer the Bussa region of Kebbi. Of particular note is battle that he named as the "Battle of Victory" (Fathul-Futuhi). It was also within these years that Sheikh...

Usman resided in Gwandu, from where Kebbi was conquered and various battles, such as the Battle of Alwasa and others, were fought. Subsequently, he later left for Sifawa, and then proceeded from there to Sokoto, where Allah decreed his

passing in the year 1232 A.H. May Allah have mercy on his soul. Amen.

CHAPTER ONE

THE LINEAGE OF SHEIKH USMAN

There exist numerous discourses concerning the lineage of Sheikh Usman and his ethnic group. However, the narrative upon which we shall rely herein is that which was cited by Sheikh Abdullahi Fodio in his book titled "Kitabun-Nasabi".

In the book, Sheikh Abdullahi stated that they are from the Toroɓɓe clan, which originated from the land of Futa. He mentioned that the Toroɓɓe are the maternal uncles to all Fulani people, and that the Fulfulde language is their tongue.

Historical records show that Uqba ibn Nafi', that great Mujahid who conquered the Western regions during the era when Amr ibn al-As was in Egypt, encountered a tribe of the Romans[2], to the extent that Uqba[3] married the daughter of their king named Bajju-Mangu. This union (marriage) is what engendered the Fulani people in their entirety.

---

2 History records that the King of the Romans embraced Islam of his own volition, without being compelled to do so through war.

3 In all of his written works concerning lineage, Sheikh Abdullahi repeatedly mentioned Uqba ibn Amir. However, the well-known narrative is that it was Uqba ibn Nafi' who conquered the Western region. It is plausible that this was a scribal error, where they wrote 'ibn Amir' in place of 'ibn Nafi'. But Waziri Junaidu wrote that it was Uqba ibn Nafi' in his book "Labtul-Multaqatati".

Sheikh Abdullahi, upon introducing this narrative in his book titled "Kitabun-Nasabi", declared: "This is what has become widely transmitted (mutawatir) amongst us, and that which we have received from trustworthy authorities who hail from Futa; I mean the learned scholars. They then spoke the language of their mother, because they did not know the language of their father; as there were very few speakers of the language at that time. The Toroɓɓe have no any other language other than that one (the language of their mother)."

In continuation of his exposition, Sheikh Abdullahi indicated that this Rum, who is the progenitor of this tribe of the Romans, was the son of Isu, son of Prophet Is'haq, son of the Prophet Abraham (Peace Be Upon Him). His mother was Nasamatu, daughter of Prophet Isma'il (Peace Be Upon Him). Sheikh Abdullahi stated that the author of "Attanwir" mentioned that Prophet Isma'il fathered twelve sons and one daughter. It was from his sons that all the Arabs originated. When his time of death approached, he made a bequest to his brother, Prophet Is'haq, to marry out his daughter, namely Nasamatu, to his son named Isu. Is'haq consented to this, and they begot Rum. Rum's skin was fair-complexioned, and for this reason his descendants came to be called "Bani al-Asfar" in Arabic; meaning 'the children of the fair-skinned one.'

From that time, this tribe dispersed and began migrating from one region to another until the era when Musa Jakollo brought this tribe to Hausa land from Futa-Toro.

The Father of Sheikh Usman

The name of Sheikh Usman's father was Muhammad, son of Usman, son of Salihu, son of Haruna, son of Muhammad Gorɗo, son of Muhammad Jaɓɓo, son of Muhammad Sambo,

son of Buba-Baba, son of Masiran, son of Ayyub, son of Musa Jakollo. The father of Sheikh Usman was nicknamed Fodio. The meaning of this in Fulfude is 'Scholar,' and a 'Jurist'.

The mother of Sheikh Usman was Hawwa'u, daughter of Muhammad son of Usmanu son of Hamma'Ali. Sheikh Abdullahi stated that: "our grandmother, who gave birth to our father was Maryamu, daughter of Jibrilu son of Hamma'Ali."

The Glad Tidings on his Emergence

Sheikh Usman Bin Fodio, as we shall see later, was the one who disseminated the religion in this land, established it firmly, eradicated innovations and corrupt customs which had become entrenched therein, and affirmed the law of Allah. Diverse accounts of the glad tidings about his emergence were received from pious men and women who foretold his advent. This is not a matter for bewilderment, for it is said that the believer sees by the light of Allah. Here is a portion of those who prophesied his coming.

The first glad tidings came from a woman named Ummu Ha'ni. This woman was among the righteous women who worshipped Allah until they became possessors of mystical unveiling (Kashf). This woman explained that a saint (Waliy) from among the saints would come to the people of this land to revive/renew their religion for them. She began by stating that anyone upon whom Allah had bestowed complete favour and distinction would obey and follow him. Similarly, this leader would become manifest and known everywhere. And both the ignorant and the scholars would all follow his example. Furthermore, his followers would be called congregation (Jama'a). Also, they would not be herders of cattle like other Fulani.

Likewise, another scholar named Sheikh Tahiru, son of Ibrahim, who was also among the Sufis, gave an explanation regarding the manifestation of Sheikh Usman similar to that given by Ummu Ha'ni.

There was also another scholar named Sheikh Jaɓɓo, who was among the learned men of this land who lived before the time of Sheikh Usman. He was one of the scholars endowed with the knowledge of spiritual disclosure (Kashf). Sheikh Usman's father used to visit him. At the time when Hauwa'u, the wife of Fodio, conceived Sheikh Usman, it was this Sheikh Jaɓɓo who would customarily lay out for Sheikh Usman's father, a mat made of animal hide each time he visited him. One day, he (Sheikh Usman's father) came and saw that he had not prepared the mat for him as was customary. He then inquired of him, saying, "Why is it that today I do not see a mat spread out for me?" He replied to him, saying, "At the time when I used to spread the mat for you, I used to see a great and abundant light with you; but presently, I have ceased to see this light with you." It was then revealed at that moment that Sheikh Usman's mother had given birth to him.[4]

These are but a few of the saints who foretold the emergence of Sheikh Usman, as recorded in the book "Qala'idul-Iqyan" by Waziri Junaidu.

Waziri Junaidu said after presenting the aforementioned account: "Many saints and righteous people gave indications

[4] I am aware that many will deny this because they consider it beyond the capacity of their intellect. However, this is not surprising, for even during the pre-Islamic period of ignorance (Jahiliyya), there were those who foretold the coming of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and it proved true. Similarly, among this community, there is a phenomenon known as "Fir'asa" (physiognomy/discernment). An explanation will come when I discuss Miracles (Karama) and Spiritual Disclosure (Kashf), God willing.

of his coming, but these indications have been lost due to negligence in recording historical events."[5]

[5] This is an indication of what Sultan Muhammadu Bello, mentioned regarding the negligence of the people of this region concerning the writing of History.

CHAPTER TWO

HIS BIRTH AND HIS PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE

Sheikh Usman was born in the town of Maratta. He was born on a Sunday, the last day of the month of Safar, in the year 1168 A.H. after the Hijrah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), which corresponds to the 13th of December, 1754 A.D.

As indicated in the previous account, Sheikh Usman's father was a learned scholar, and thus his upbringing reflected this, for he (Sheikh Usman) began his initial education under his father. He studied the Qur'an under his tutelage.

Thereafter, Sheikh Usman proceeded to study under a scholar named Usmanu Binduri Alkabawi, to acquire advanced knowledge. He studied numerous books under him, which included the "Ishiriniya".

Furthermore, Sheikh Usman studied under another scholar named Abdurrahman ibn Hammada. Under him, he studied the science of Arabic grammar (Nahawu) through various books, including the famous work known as "Alfiyyat" of Ibn Malik.

Among the disciplines that Sheikh Usman studied was Islamic jurisprudence (Furu' al-Fiqh), where he studied profound books, including the renowned book "Mukhtasar

al-Khalili". The scholar under whom he studied this book was Sheikh Usman, commonly known as Baduri ibn Amin ibn Usman ibn Hamma ibn Ali. This scholar was eminent, God-fearing, and widely known among the general public for his counsel towards benevolence and abstinence from superfluous matters. This individual was meticulous on issues that could benefit his life in this world and in the hereafter. He was one of the scholars who Sheikh Usman emulated their works and their conduct. Sheikh Usman stayed with this scholar for a period of two years. This particular scholar was renowned for his mastery of the book "Al-Mukhtasar", to such an extent that eminent scholars of that era, such as Sheikh Muhammadu Sambo ibn Abdullahi ibn Sheikh Muhammadu ibn Sa'ad, who was the grandfather of their mother (according to Sheikh Abdullahi), were attending his lessons on "Mukhtasar".

Sheikh Muhammadu Sambo was famous for his expertise concerning "Mukhtasar", and he was a man whom Allah had endowed with intellect and retentiveness. He attained such a level of knowledge of "Mukhtasar" and its commentaries that he attained a status whereby, if during a lesson the reader recited "Mukhtasar" or one of its commentaries such as "Al-Harashi" and made an error, he would correct the reader without even looking at the text.

Among the scholars under whom Sheikh Usman studied was a scholar named Sheikh Jibrilu. He studied under Sheikh Jibrilu and stayed with him for a considerable period. However, later, Sheikh Jibrilu intended to perform the Hajj (pilgrimage). They even commenced the journey together, but when they reached Agadas, the scholar sent Sheikh Usman back home because his (Sheikh Usman's) father had not granted him permission to travel.

Sheikh Abdullahi mentioned that Sheikh Usman had told him he had studied the science of Qur'anic Exegesis ('Ilm al-Tafsir) from one of the most famous scholars of this region. This scholar was Ahmad ibn Muhammad Al-Amin.

Furthermore, he also studied under a scholar named Hashim Bazamfare. Sheikh Usman said he studied exegesis under this scholar from the beginning of the Qur'an until its end.

Regarding the knowledge of Hadith (the Prophetic traditions), Sheikh Usman studied this science under Alhaji Muhammadu ibn Raji. This scholar, moreover, granted Sheikh Usman the authorisation (ijazah) to teach all sections of the knowledge for which he held transmission chains (riwayat).

In the book "Ida'u al-Nusukh", after concluding the list of the teachers of Sheikh Usman that were known to him, Sheikh Abdullahi stated: "Indeed, the teachers under whom Sheikh Usman studied are numerous; I know some of them, but others I do not know."

His Teachers and his Education

From the preceding information, we can understand that Sheikh Usman studied under various teachers. Moreover, he pursued different fields of knowledge. The acquisition of this knowledge is what elevated him to the rank of a Mujtahid (an independent juristic interpreter). However, this did not cause Sheikh Usman to go beyond the school (madhhab) of Imam Malik. On the contrary, he became a Mujtahid within the school. Further elaboration on this matter will follow, when we explain his perspective on the branches of knowledge.

What we shall add here is to identify the teachers under whom Sheikh Usman studied and the nature of the studies he

undertook with each. Finally, we will provide an explanation concerning the knowledge itself.

Qur'anic Knowledge, specifically its recitation, was acquired by Sheikh Usman from his father, Muhammadu Fodio, as previously explained. However, the possibility that he studied under his mother, Hawwa'u cannot be discounted. Some scholars, such as Sheik Adamu Abdullahi Ilori, have confirmed that Sheikh Usman studied under his mother as well as his grandmother named Rukayya.

Sheikh Usman acquired the knowledge of the science of Arabic Literature (Adab) from the renowned scholar named Usman Binduri. As for the sciences of Arabic Grammar (Nahw) and Morphology (Tasrif), he studied these under his teacher, Abdurrahman ibn Hammada. The science of Jurisprudence (Fiqh) was acquired from his teacher, Muhammad Sambo ibn Abdullahi. The one who taught Sheikh Usman the science of Qur'anic Exegesis (Tafsir) was Malam Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hashim Bazamfare.

Sheikh Usman studied the Science of Hadith under the eminent scholar Alhaji Muhammad ibn Raji. It was under him that he (Sheikh Usman) studied the six authentic books of Hadith, namely "Sahih al-Bukhari", "Sahih Muslim", "Jami' al-Tirmidhi", "Sunan Abi Dawud", "Sunan al-Nasa'i", and "Sunan Ibn Majah".

Among Sheikh Usman's teachers was Sheikh Jibril ibn Umar. Although the specific type of knowledge he learned from this great scholar is not stated, it is nonetheless reasonable to assume the Sheikh Usman studied profound disciplines under him. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to include the fields of Theology (Tawhid) and Sufism. Indeed, the knowledge that he obtained from this teacher, one can only say that Allah

alone knows it. For Sheikh Usman himself, as Sheikh Abdullahi narrated in his books "Tazyin al-Waraqat" and "Ida' al-Nusukh", everything that has been said concerning him (Sheikh Usman) is nothing but a breeze from the chamber of Jibril.

Whatever may be said (about Sheikh Usman), what Abdullahi meant was that he himself did not know the exact number of Sheikh Usman's teachers. This indicates that Sheikh Usman was a profoundly learned scholar who attained the rank of a "Mujtahid" (an independent jurist). If we refer to his books, we will see that Sheikh Usman wrote a large number books on disciplines that have not been mentioned as ones he formally studied. For example, in the field of Theology (Tawhid), Sultan Muhammadu Bello stated that he (Sheikh Usman) had written more than fifty books on this discipline alone.

Similarly, we will see that he authored works in the fields of the Principles of Jurisprudence (Usul al-Fiqh) and Sufism (Tasawwuf), and similar disciplines.

This demonstrates a great blessing that was bestowed upon this servant of Allah and upon this region. This blessing is that all of Sheikh Usman's teachers, were natives of the land – Fulani, Hausa, Tuareg (Azbinawa), and others of their kind. There was not a single Arab among them.

The Condition of the Hausa States and their Neighbours Before the Emergence of Sheikh Usman

Before the emergence of Sheikh Usman, these states, as Sultan Bello, mentioned in his book "Infaq al-Maysur", were lands filled with various forms of unbelief, heresy (bid'ah), and immoral conduct. These matters had accumulated and

overwhelmed this region of the Sudan[6], to the extent that it was difficult to find a devout Muslim except for a very few. It was rare to find those who could perform ablution (wudu), prayer (salat), give alms (zakat), fast (sawm), and other acts of worship.

The people that Sheikh Usman met can be categorised into five classes.

The first category consisted of the indigenous unbelievers who worshipped trees, rocks, streams, and evil spirits. The people of this region neither profess Islam nor seek any form of engagement with its practices. These are the ones whom Sheikh Usman mentioned in his book "Nur al-Albab" under the designation of those with no prior contact or familiarity with Islam.

The second category consists of those who have apostatised by means of intermingling Islamic practices with those of disbelief. These are the syncretic unbelievers; indeed, Sheikh Usman also mentioned them in "Nur al-Albab".

The third category comprises those who are Muslims and who claim Tawhid (Divine Unity). They also perform the ritual prayer (salat), observe the fast (sawm), and give alms (zakat); however, they are ignorant (they lack the knowledge of Islam), mixing these acts of worship with pagan customs inherited from their forefathers.

The fourth category consists of those who have mixed Islamic practice with immoral acts. These individuals persist in performing acts of immorality, as if Allah has not prohibited them. From within this category are found the so-called scholars;

---

[6] The term "Sudan" here refers to Blacks. However, there are detailed explanations of it from historians and geographers. In this context however, whenever it is mentioned, it refers to Hausaland and the neighbouring regions of West Africa.

that is, the court clerics who have inclined towards worldly gain and its acquisition. These are the ones who colluded with tyrannical rulers; who obstinately neglected the obligation of enjoining righteousness (al-amr bi'l-ma'ruf); and refrained from denouncing what is reprehensible. It is concerning these clerics that Sheikh Usman bore extreme tribulation regarding their situation.

The fifth category consists of those who are upright Muslims, who adhere to correct Islamic doctrine, and who know how to properly perform ritual acts of worship such as prayer (salat), ablution (wudu), ritual bathing (al-Ghusl as Shar'i), fasting (sawm), and so forth. Furthermore, they were distinguished by their avoidance of corrupt customs and habits. Moreover, they did not mix Islamic practices with pagan practices. Furthermore, they did not mix Islamic practices with immoral acts. However, as Sultan Bello noted in "Infaq al-Maysur", these people were very few. It was in this area that righteous scholars, who actively applied their knowledge and were emulated by others, were found.

This, in summary, was the condition in which Sheikh Usman found this part of the Sudan (Bilad as-Sudan).

It is noteworthy that most, if not all of the rulers of these areas belonged to the second category: syncretic unbelievers, who claimed Islam externally and performed some of its rites, yet simultaneously engaged in pagan practices. Another issue worthy of recall is the problem of the so-called *malaman fada* (court scholars, as previously explained), who exhibited voracious tendencies; an insatiable desire to acquire wealth and obstructed those who sought to follow the truth. These two realities illustrate the magnitude of the task facing Sheikh Usman if he were to confront them.

His Preaching and Teaching

Historical sources confirm that Sheikh Usman began calling people to the path of Allah from the age of twenty. This is documented, as Sheikh Abdullahi wrote in his book "Tazyin al-Waraqat". Sheikh Usman's preaching and teaching can be classified into two stages.

The first is his assembly for preaching and admonition. An explanation of this will follow.

The second sphere is the teaching assembly (or instruction). In this gathering, Sheikh Usman would come out after the Asr prayer or after the Isha' prayer to interpret the Qur'an for the people, and teach them the traditions of the Messenger (peace be upon him), Jurisprudence (Fiqh), Sufism, and other disciplines.

It was in these lessons of his that he would explain matters to people according to their level of understanding. His lessons consisted of five aspects:

First: An explanation of matters that the Shari'a has made obligatory, from the apparent rulings of the Shari'a to its inner realities. That is, concerning what is called Shari'a and "Haqiqa" (spiritual reality).

Second: These were lessons on the "Sunnah" of the Messenger (peace be upon him), its investigation, and urging adherence to its general precepts.

Third: Investigation into the science of Theology (Tawhid) and what is called "Ilm al-Kalam" (dialectical theology). In these lessons, he would correct the errors that students and those lacking understanding committed in this field. Also, in this assembly, he would present lessons on the field of Jurisprudence (Fiqh) and rectify the students' perspectives

concerning this field, guiding them towards what was more appropriate.

Fourth: These were lessons he presented concerning the identification of matters that have been innovated and attributed to the religion, whereas they are not part of the religion. By these, it is meant innovations (bi'dah) and reprehensible customs that have been attributed to religion. This matter is evident to anyone who has studied Sheikh Usman's books, such as "Ihya' as-Sunnah" and "Bayan al-Bida'i". Further explanation of this will come later when we discuss his books. This indicates that he had an assembly for eliminating innovations and corrupt customs.

The fifth: These were lessons he presented concerning legal knowledge, the detailed investigation of major problems, and verbally enlightening students on significant issues while also removing from them anything that troubled them. This demonstrates how Sheikh Usman imparted knowledge to advanced students and how he guided them according to the levels appropriate for them.

These are but a few of the subjects that Sheikh Usman taught his students and listeners, various branches of knowledge, each taught according to the student's level.

Regarding the second sphere, namely the preaching assembly (of Sheikh Usman), Sultan Muhammadu Bello, wrote a specific book titled "At-Tarjumanu 'an Kaifiyyati Wa'azi Shaykhu Usmanu" (The Interpreter of the Manner of Sheikh Usman's Preaching). In it, he described how Sheikh Usman preached. Furthermore, he provided a similar account in his book "Infaq". Sultan Bello indicated that what the Sheikh expounded to the people in his preaching assembly did not exceed three things.

First: An exposition on the foundations of religion, namely "Tawhid" (Theology). In this lesson, he would explain matters of "Ilahiyyat" (Monotheism), "Nabawiyyat" (Prophethood), and "Sam'iyyat" (Matters of the Unseen) – that is, explaining matters one must or is obligated to believe concerning the attributes of Allah, which constitutes "Ilahiyyat". Explanation of matters one must or is obligated to believe concerning the prophets and messengers – this is "Nabawiyyat". Similarly, an explanation of matters related to what is heard but not seen, pertaining to the affairs of the Hereafter, such as descriptions of Hellfire, Paradise, and so on. This is referred to as "Sam'iyyat". Sheikh Usman wrote a specific book concerning this. The title of the book is "Usul ad-Din" (The Foundations of Religion). The book "Usul ad-Din" is a small book (by number of pages) but contains all that is required concerning "Tawhid".

In this assembly, Sheikh Usman would explain the attributes that are obligatory to ascribe to Allah, from those pertaining to His Being, His Continuity, His Existence, and so on to the end (of the attributes). He would say: "All of creation has a beginning, and its Creator is Allah."

He would say: "The Angels are all rightly guided and obedient; they do not disobey Allah in what He commands them, and they do what they are commanded to do. They are luminous creatures, neither male nor female; they do not eat and they do not drink."

Then, he would explain everything concerning the Lord. Similarly, he would give an explanation concerning matters pertaining to the prophets; and concerning the Day of Judgment. Likewise, every issue, from the attributes that are fitting to ascribe to the Lord, to the description of the Hereafter – for every issue, he would cite its proof from the Glorious

Qur'an. Refer to his book "Ihya' as-Sunnah" in the chapter on faith. Similarly, one can refer to "Infaq" and "Tarjuman", both by Sultan Muhammadu Bello. One can also refer to the book "Usul ad-Din".

The second subject on which he gave explanation in such a preaching assembly for those with lesser knowledge of the religion was the field of "Furu' al-Fiqh"; that is, Jurisprudence. In this discipline, Sheikh Usman would teach his listeners about ablution (wudu) and how to perform it. He would also teach them about the ritual bath (ghusl) and how to perform it. And he would teach them about the dry ablution (tayammum) and how to perform it. After that, he would proceed to an explanation of prayer (salat), providing them with a description of how to perform it. Then he would explain to them about the prostration of forgetfulness (sujud as-sahw). After that, he would explain alms (zakat) and its position in Islam and its various types up to the "zakat al-fitr". Thereafter, he would give explanations concerning fasting (sawm), the pilgrimage (Hajj), slaughtering (of animals), the rulings of oaths and vows, and similarly he would elaborate on the rulings of marriage and commerce.

The point is that Sheikh Usman held an assembly in which he would explain to his listeners the aforementioned subjects from time to time. At one time, he would give an explanation on prayer; at another time, on marriage; and yet at another time, on commerce.

From this, we can see that a preacher must necessarily cover each section in his preaching. It is not the case that a single topic is always the subject of discussion.

There was also another topic that the he would speak on, which is the third subject he would discuss and explain to his listeners, namely the field of Sufism (Sufanci).

In such an assembly, Sheikh Usman would say to his listeners:

"It is obligatory upon every Muslim to guard his ears from listening to any frivolous or obscene speech. And to guard his eyes from looking at what is forbidden. And to restrain his tongue from speaking slander and anything unlawful. Similarly, to guard his hands from theft and from doing anything he is not permitted to do. And to guard his stomach from consuming the unlawful. And to guard his private parts from fornication and sodomy. To guard his feet from walking in a manner of arrogance and to places of immorality."

These are the seven limbs which, if a person guards them, then he becomes a righteous and virtuous person.

In such an assembly, furthermore, Sheikh Usman would teach his listeners the characteristics of "al-Munjiyat" (those that bring salvation), that is, the characteristics that rescue and deliver (the people) from dwelling in the Hellfire. Similarly, he would explain to them "al-Muhlikatu", that is, the destructive characteristics that cause a person to enter the Hellfire. "Al-Munjiyat" comprise Repentance (Tawba), Sincerity (Ikhlas), Patience (Sabr), Renunciation of the World (Zuhd); and even Reliance upon Allah (Tawakkul) and entrusting affairs to Him. "Al-Munjiyat" also include acceptance of Allah's decree (Rida'), piety (Wara'), fear of Allah (Taqwa), love (Mahabbah), and so on.

As for "al-Muhlikatu", Sheikh Usman would mention ten characteristics that pertain to the heart (amrad al-qulub). These are: arrogance and conceit (Kibr and 'Ujb), envy (Hasad),

resentment about the success of others (Hiqd), miserliness (Bukhl), showing off (Riya), love of fame (Hubb al-Jah), love of wealth/materialism (Hubb al-Mal/Hubb al-Duniya), boastfulness/pride (Fakhr), and having evil suspicions about a Muslim (Su' al-Zann).

In such an assembly, moreover, Sheikh Usman would give explanations concerning the Hellfire and Paradise. He would bring forth verses and hadiths concerning their descriptions. He would explain the torment of the Fire, its severity, and how the inmates of the Fire will converse with the guardian angels of Hell. At other times, he would give explanations concerning Paradise, the blessings within it, and other such matters.

This is the framework of how Sheikh Usman conducted his preaching in general assemblies.

His Religious Propagation (Da'wah) in the Towns

Sheikh Usman's residence was in the town of Dagel, which is presently within the Gwadabawa local government area of Sokoto State. During that period, this town was under the Gobir territory. It was from this town that he began preaching from the age of twenty. It was previously mentioned that the he was born in the year 1168 A.H. and began preaching when the Hijri year reached 1188 A.H. It was from here that he began preaching, calling people to the ways of Allah while also employing poems using Ajami scripts (the practice of writing non-Arabic languages using modified Arabic script). Through this method, he gained the ability to wipe out corrupt customs that contravened the Shari'a, and he became engaged in reviving the Sunnah and disseminating its knowledge throughout the regions. He did not show any weakness in this work. This is why many people from various regions began coming to him,

embracing the religion of Allah in groups. Subsequently, Sheikh Usman began travelling to other places to call people to the religion. The first region he confronted was the Kebbi region. He called people to Islam, to the purification of faith (Iman) and spiritual excellence (Ihsan), and to the abandonment of corrupt customs. Through this, many people whom he called repented, to the point that they came to him in his town of Dagel to listen to his sermons.

In his book "Labtul-Multaqatati", Waziri Junaidu mentioned that at the beginning of Sheikh Usman's preaching, he was not concerned with the rulers, nor did he go to them or engage in any interaction with them. However, when the community (Jama'a) multiplied around him, and his affairs became known among the rulers, he saw no alternative but to go to them to communicate the perfected Islam to them. Therefore, he went to the court of the King of Gobir of that time, named Bawa Jan Gwarzo, to expound to him the perfected Islam and to encourage him to establish justice within his land.

Thereafter, Sheikh Usman proceeded to the land of Zamfara to convey the message of Allah. He resided in Zamfara for five years. This was because this region was particularly steeped in ignorance and religious laxity during that period.

Based on his custom of the preaching assembly, many people would usually attend, including women. Sheikh Usman would endeavour to separate them, men apart and women apart. However, it became rumoured among the people that his preaching assembly was a mixed gathering of men and women. This led to a situation where, when he reached at the town of

Dora[7], located in the eastern part of the Usmaniyya Caliphate (which is now within Bakura territory in the Bakura Local Government Area of Zamfara State) a certain scholar named Muhtaru, also given the title "Gwani" (it is said he was a man from Borno), sent a letter to Sheikh Usman containing some poetic verses. In these verses, he praised the Sheikh for his preaching in this region. But within it, he also accused him of allowing women to attend his sermons. He called upon Sheikh Usman to prevent women from doing this.

Sheikh Usman instructed Sheikh Abdullahi to reply to the scholar's accusation. In providing his response, which he also delivered in poetic verses, Sheikh Abdullahi made clear to that scholar that they did not mix men and women in their preaching assemblies. On the contrary, they were consistently segregated. He said it was fitting for the scholar to have given them the benefit of the doubt when this report reached him.because those spreading this rumour were malicious gossipers. But consider this (said Sheikh Abdullahi): If mixing them (i.e., men and women) is for the purpose of teaching them the religion of Allah, is that not preferable to leaving them in the darkness of ignorance without them knowing the religion of Allah? Sheikh Abdullahi said, surely every reasonable and just person will support the view that mixing them to teach them the religion of Allah is better than leaving them in the darkness of ignorance. Because mixing them is indeed a religious infraction but leaving them in ignorance, which leads to dwelling in the Hellfire, is

[7] Some people assume that Daura, the historic town in Katsina State, is meant. This is not so. Others also assume that it is Dauran, located east of Kaura-Namoda, that is being referred to. This too is not so. In truth, the name of the place is Dora. It is a village to the east of Bakura, as Waziri Gidado mentioned in his book "Rawdul-Jinani". I have personally visited this place. At present, it is a village, and the majority of its inhabitants are Fulani. At the time of my visit, I met the village head named Malam Aliyu, and we conversed at length. He hosted us generously, myself and my travel companion. May Allah reward him. Amen.

disbelief (kufr). This statement is found in the book "Tazyinul-Waraqat".

This Da'awah (propagation) journey that Sheikh Usman undertook in Zamfara was highly beneficial. And this led to many people from that region embracing the religion of Allah.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CONFRONTATION OF SHEIKH USMAN AND THE RULERS

As previously reported, during the initial phase of his religious propagation, Sheikh Usman did not approach the rulers. However, later, he concluded that he had no alternative but to go to them. This is what led him to the palace of the King of Gobir, Bawa.

The increasing number of people embracing the religion, particularly within Zamfara territory, was a matter that deeply troubled King Bawa of Gobir. He then contemplated how to halt this movement or "extinguish this rising flame". Consequently, one day, the King of Gobir summoned the scholars of his land to meet him at a place called Magami. Among those summoned was Sheikh Usman. At that time, he was in a town called Faru, located near Magami. This occasion coincided with the day of the Eid al-Adha prayer.

Historians and chroniclers hold divergent opinions regarding the reason for summoning these scholars, including Sheikh Usman. Some were of the view that he (Sheikh Usman) was summoned to be assassinated, as he alone was perceived to possess the courage to demonstrate opposition to the

improper conduct of the King of Gobir. This was the opinion of Waziri Gidado in his book titled "Raud al-Jinan". In this book, he mentions: "Then he (the king) summoned all the scholars in his land to a meeting during the month of Dhul-Hijjah, among them, Sheikh Usman, in order to kill him and to kill his companions (his disciples). When Sheikh Usman arrived, the King of Gobir left for the Eid prayer, while Sheikh Usman set out among the Muslim congregation, on his camel. The moment the followers of the King of Gobir..." sighted Sheikh Usman, they inclined towards him, abandoning their king. The king witnessed this with his own eyes. After the Eid prayer was concluded, the King of Gobir sat among his courtiers, concealing what he had in his heart. Sheikh Usman, meanwhile, sat among the scholars of his time, who numbered over a thousand. The King of Gobir remained seated for more than an hour without saying a word. Then, one of his courtiers leaned forward and said, 'O so-and-so, no one has the power to take any action against this congregation concerning what you have concealed except Allah, the Almighty Sovereign.' At that moment, the King of Gobir bestowed upon Sheikh Usman the equivalent of five hundred mithqals of gold. Sheikh Usman said, "I do not desire gold, and indeed, whoever listens to (respects) me does not desire it."

It is narrated here that Sheikh Usman then outlined five conditions for the King of Gobir. These conditions were: (1) that he be permitted to preach the call to Allah throughout all the territories of Gobir; (2) that no one who heeded his call be oppressed; (3) that those who wore caps and turbans be respected; (4) that prisoners be released from the dungeons; and (5) that the oppressive tax burdening the common people not be collected.

Here, Waziri Gidado explained that all of Sheikh Usman's requests were accepted and these conditions were granted. It is narrated that, as a blessing of this petition by Sheikh Usman, a certain chief of Zamfara named Abarshi was released.

The author of the book "Raud al-Jinan" further related that King Bawa of Gobir asked for a blessing from Sheikh Usman, stating that he wished to conquer Maradi through war. Sheikh Usman promised him that indeed, Bawa would conquer Maradi. However, he (Sheikh Usman) instructed him not to go beyond Maradi. Bawa, in turn, pledged that he certainly would not go beyond it. When Sheikh rose to leave the King of Gobir escorted him. It is also narrated that he (the King of Gobir) interpreted a sign to mean that authority would indeed slip from his hands to the hands of Sheikh Usman. The matter of conquering Maradi proved true, for before he (the King of Gobir) reached the town, its people had dispersed and it fell without a fight. This was a type of miracle, as the author (of the book referred to earlier) mentioned.

However, it is related that when Bawa saw Maradi fallen, he said, "We have seen the work of Sheikh Usman; next, we shall see the work of our weaponry." From there, he advanced, but his army was routed and he was driven back in distress until he reached a place called Naya. There, he met his death.

This is the conclusion of what transpired between Sheikh Usman and Bawa. As can be seen, Waziri Gidado is of the opinion that Bawa summoned Sheikh Usman to Magami with the intention of killing him. But when he saw that this was not possible, he resorted to the politics of bribery and seeking (the Sheikh's) prayers. This demonstrates the elevated status of Sheikh Usman, due to his piety and his righteous purpose.

However, in "Tazyin al-Waraqat", Sheikh Abdullahi does not mention the reason why Bawa summoned them, but there is an indication that he had a specific objective. It is plausible that Sheikh Usman understood this beforehand, which is why, when Bawa gave gifts to the scholars, he refused to accept his, instead requesting the five conditions we have mentioned. This is why Sheikh Abdullahi stated that the scholars wallowed in worldly desire, and they (Sheikh Usman and his followers) desired a revival of the religion.

Sheikh Usman and the King of Gobir Yakubu

Following the death of Bawa Jan Gwarzo, his brother succeeded him. This brother's name was Yakubu. After ascending to power, he began to display hostility towards Sheikh Usman. Subsequently, he gathered men and assembled a war expedition, intending to avenge his brother Bawa, whose army had been routed. When he had prepared to depart, Sheikh Usman sent him a message advising him not to go. Initially, he showed signs of accepting the counsel, but his courtiers then prevented him from obeying. When news was brought to Sheikh Usman, he explained that Yakubu's affair was ruined, and he even began to say that Yakubu would not return, if Allah so willed. And thus, the matter came to pass.

All these events, which Sheikh Usman foretold, are among the miracles and extraordinary acts that Allah reserves for some of His servants.

Sheikh Usman and the King of Gobir Nafata

Following the death of Yakubu, his brother named Nafata succeeded him. He too followed in the footsteps of his predecessors in plotting hostility against Sheikh Usman. This

reached the point where one day he sent a message to the Sheikh demanding his presence. The purpose of the summons was to kill him. When Sheikh Usman arrived at his court, Nafata came out among his courtiers, sat down, and ordered the Sheikh to be called. At that time, the King was suffering from an illness that had caused a swelling in his neck. Just as Sheikh Usman arrived, this swelling burst and began to discharge blood. He (the king) was then taken home without saying anything. Sheikh Usman for his part, returned home.

When Sheikh Usman was returning to Dagel, Yunfa, the son of King Nafata of Gobir, escorted him. Gidado mentioned in "Raud al-Jinan" that Sheikh Usman informed Yunfa that his father's affair had reached its end; therefore, authority would return to his hands; Yunfa should therefore strive for it. This indeed came to pass not long after.

It is noteworthy here that throughout these unfolding events, Sheikh Usman continued preaching, teaching, and guiding people. He continued his journeys into the land of Kebbi, and on one of his travels he reached the River Niger. The Niger, as Sheikh Abdullahi noted in his book "Tazyin al-Waraqat", was the greatest river on this area. Sheikh Usman crossed this river and reached its western side at a town called Illo. He conveyed the religion of Allah to them. Similarly, during this period, he travelled to the land of the Zauma and reached the town of Zugu. The majority of those whom Allah had preordained for guidance repented.

This sustained work of Sheikh Usman in guiding the people led to a great increase in his followers: scholars, students, and the common folk. A great multitude of people were observed streaming to learn from him. The scholars who envied him were also shamed by Allah. This gathering of people around

Sheikh Usman strengthened him in the religion. These people who assembled around him came to be called al-Jama'ah (the Community). This is consistent with what Ummu Ha'ni said in her glad tidings (about his emergence).

Following this massive success, the rulers and people of fame began to show their resentment towards him, whereas earlier, they had been liking and respecting him. They had also previously sought his blessings. However, Sheikh Usman remained politically astute and composed. What incensed them was their observation of the establishment of the religion, the revival of knowledge, the diminution of their influence, and the corruption and infidelity. This was because what they had built their chieftaincies upon was infidelity, and they had contravened the Shari'a. Likewise, the majority of the practices of their governance contravened what was right.

Consequently, those scholars and rulers began to inflict harm on the people (Jama'ah), seizing their properties and instructing the ignorant among them to commit vile acts for them. They persisted in harming anyone who had any association with Sheikh Usman. Sultan Muhammad Bello, noted that Sheikh Usman was not troubled by them, let alone was his Jama'ah contemplating retaliation. Indeed, retaliation was not even something they considered. For most of them (the Jama'ah) were weak and did not even know anything about warfare.

It is noteworthy here that the majority of these people with Sheikh Usman, known as the Jama'ah in the early phase of the movement, were not Fulani, who could be considered Sheikh Usman's own ethnic group. Rather, they were Hausa, Buzaye (Tuareg), and others. This statement is evident if one examines

the book "Tazyin al-Waraqat" by Sheikh Abdullahi. Consider what he stated in it:

"Then, at the time when I saw most of the towns, their common (ignorant) people and their scholars, coming to Sheikh Usman, benefiting from his preaching, and embracing his "Jama'ah" in multitudes, but I did not see the majority of our own people doing likewise – indeed, they were the most deserving of doing so, I composed the Qasidat al-Ha'iyya (that is, a poem rhyming with the letter Ha'), and named it "Risalat al-Nasa'ih" (The Epistle of Counsels) and sent it to them. I did this so that they would reflect upon what was in it and hasten to aid the religion of Allah."

In another place in the aforementioned book, Sheikh Abdullahi stated that when the document containing his "qasida" reached the scholars of their own ethnic group, they accepted it and stood by it, professing the religion within that ethnic group. He cited examples of some scholars, but said the foremost among them was Sheikh Mustafa, who was the first to receive the document, recite it in full to his people, and command them to obey its contents. He was so committed that he expanded the "qasida" (tahmis) into a poem with five stanzas.

Sheikh Abdullahi continued in his book (Tazyin al-Waraqat), stating that when these scholars to whom he had sent the "qasida" embraced the call to the religion of Allah and to aid the religion, then activities of Sheikh Usman became widely known, and his followers multiplied greatly. It reached the point where people began streaming to him in multitudes from east and west, south and north. This even extended his influence to the land of that great, pious, and renowned scholar in the western and other regions, known by the name of Al-

Mukhtar al-Kunti. Sheikh Abdullahi said it was reported to them that this scholar was urging people to obey what Sheikh Usman was calling them to. Sheikh Abdullahi stated that it was during this time that an Arab man from the region where Al-Mukhtar resided came to them, and mentioned to them that he was one of the disciples of Sheikh Al-Mukhtar. This man's name was Al-Sharif. Sheikh Abdullahi said they honoured him with the utmost respect, asked him questions regarding the character of Sheikh Al-Mukhtar, and he described his qualities to them. When he (Al-Sharif) was about to leave, Sheikh Abdullahi stated that he wrote a panegyric poem (qasida) in praise of Sheikh Al-Mukhtar, containing his noble qualities. Sheikh Abdullahi however, said he did not suppose that the "qasida" ever reached the scholar.

My purpose in relating this account is to confirm that, by all indications, the preaching, teaching, and jihad of Sheikh Usman had an influence as far as the region of Mali. For this scholar, Sheikh Al-Mukhtar, is known by the name of Al-Mukhtar al-Kunti, and it is an established fact that he was from the Kunti town which is in Mali.

Earlier, we presented the account given by Waziri Gidado concerning the circumstances of the death of King Nafata of Gobir. Now, even before his demise, the situation of Sheikh Usman's "Jama'ah" had reached a critical point. This situation led him (King Nafata) to consult with his councillors in order to make a proclamation against the preachers: to forbid them from preaching and command everyone to return to the religion of their forefathers and ancestors. Regarding this, Sultan Bello, stated in "Infaq al-Maysur": "Nothing frightened us except the proclamation of King Nafata of Gobir concerning three matters: (1) He would not permit anyone to preach to the people

except Sheikh Usman alone; (2) He would not permit anyone to embrace Islam except one who had inherited it from his parents, and anyone who had not inherited Islam should return to the practices of his parents and ancestors; (3) Henceforth, no man should wear a turban, and no woman should wear a veil."

Sultan Bello said that the King of Gobir ordered this decree of his to be disseminated and announced in the markets. He said, however, it was not long after this that Allah delivered them from his plot, and death came to him.

In the book "Infaq al-Maysur", the account of Sultan Bello, indicates that it was precisely the proliferation of the "Jama'ah" that alarmed the King of Gobir. On this basis, he deemed it necessary to get them dispersed. Consequently, he said, "Truly, the manifest practice of the religion and the establishment of the Shari'a was not agreeable to what they desired. On this basis, they devised the stratagem of waging war between themselves and Sheikh Usman and his "Jama'ah". And they did not doubt that they would achieve victory; because they saw the weakness of his followers in warfare."

However, if we turn to the book "Tazyin al-Waraqat" by Sheikh Abdullahi, we can understand that it was the gathering of the "Jama'ah" and their procurement of weapons that frightened the people of Gobir. This is what Sheikh Abdullahi reported in his book:

"And indeed, at the time when our teacher Usman (may Allah perpetuate the greatness of Islam through him) saw that the "Jama'ah" had multiplied and were seeking to break ways with the unbelievers and to establish jihad, he then began to urge them to procure weapons. He would say to them: 'Indeed, procuring weapons is a sunnah (prophetic practice).' So, we increased our procurement of them. He, for his part, beseeched

Allah to show him the rule of Islam in these regions of the Sudan. On this basis, he composed a "qasida" of the Qadiriyya."

This Qadiri "qasida" is a tawassul (a means of seeking intercession) that the Sheikh Usman made through Sheikh 'Abd al-Qadir (al-Jailani) for the fulfilment of his desires. However, Sheikh Usman composed it in the Fulfulde language. It was Sheikh Abdullahi who rendered it into Arabic in verse.

Sheikh Usman and the King of Gobir Yunfa

It was previously stated that when Sheikh Usman was departing from the palace of King Nafata of Gobir, his son Yunfa mounted (his horse) and escorted him, whereupon the Sheikh told him (Yunfa) that he saw his father's authority as ended, and that all authority would revert to Yunfa. Indeed, this matter transpired exactly so, for after the death of Nafata, Yunfa was appointed and became the King.

Waziri Gidado stated in his book "Raud al-Jinan" that after his appointment, he (Yunfa) mounted (his horse), came to Sheikh Usman's vicinity, and dismounted near the Sheikh's house. Then he approached on foot until he stood before him. Seeing how the preceding kings had been pressuring the "Jama'ah", this act of Yunfa's impressed them, and they said they had never seen a king behaved in such a manner. Sheikh Abdullahi, however, said he saw nothing in this but deception and guile. When he finished what brought him, he bade farewell to Sheikh Usman and departed.

Waziri Gidado added that when he was about to depart, he told Sheikh Usman that he would not agree to what his fathers had consented to. Sheikh Abdullahi wanted to speak to him, but Umaru Alkammu prevented him. This Umaru Alkammu was a renowned close companion of Sheikh Usman.

After he had departed, Umaru Alkammu stated that when he (Yunfa) said he would not agree to what his fathers had agreed to, then he would see what his fathers had not seen. And indeed, the matter transpired just as Umaru Alkammu had foretold.

After his appointment, however, as Gidado mentioned, he continued plotting and using subterfuge against Sheikh Usman. In "Tazyin al-Waraqat", Sheikh Abdullahi mentioned this behaviour, indicating that they committed some vile acts against the "Jama'ah", including forbidding men from wearing turbans and women from wearing veils. This very act frightened a senior disciple of Sheikh Usman named Abdussalami, to the extent that this disciple, along with his followers, undertook migration (hijra) from Gobir to Kebbi. He migrated to a place called Gimbana.

It was during this period that the King of Gobir sent for Sheikh Usman, demanding his presence. It is known that the capital of Gobir was Alkalawa, and it was from there that Sheikh Usman was summoned whenever a summons was issued. Sheikh Abdullahi indicated that by all appearances, he (Yunfa) sought to get rid of them, but Allah did not grant his wish. Sheikh Abdullahi said three of them made this journey to his palace: Sheikh Usman, Sheikh Abdullahi, and Umaru Alkammu. At that moment, Yunfa fired a gun at them, intending to kill them. However, the fire turned back upon him and nearly burned him, causing him to recoil backward. Sheikh Abdullahi said they merely watched him, and not one of them moved from his place. Later, he returned, met with them, and spoke to them. What he told them was: "He has no adversary on earth like them." Sheikh Abdullahi said he then openly displayed his hostility towards them, and they in turn made clear to him

that they did not fear him, and that Allah would not grant him victory over them. Sheikh Abdullahi said the King said many other things. He (Sheikh Abdullahi) indicated that this incident which transpired between them and the King of Gobir, was not known to anyone except them. On this basis, Sheikh Usman instructed them to conceal this matter and to beseech Allah not to let them meet with this King again. Sheikh Usman also offered a supplication, and they responded with 'Amen'.

In "Raud al-Jinan", Waziri Gidado equally presented this account of Sheikh Usman being summoned to the palace of the King of Gobir, but he presented a detail not mentioned in "Tazyin al-Waraqat". This detail is that when Sheikh Usman arrived with his companions – namely, Sheikh Abdullahi and Umaru Alkammu, and Yunfa fired a gun at them but the fire turned back upon him, there was also a well that Yunfa had dug and covered with a mat. He stated that Sheikh Abdullahi wanted to sit on this mat, but Sheikh Usman forbade him, so he (Sheikh Usman) himself sat there instead.

It is possible that Waziri Gidado included this account to illustrate a miracle of Sheikh Usman. This book of Gidado mainly provides details particularly concerning the miracles of Sheikh Usman. Sheikh Abdullahi, on the other hand, did not mention this, as his aim was to write a concise history.

The Migration (Hijra) of Sheikh Usman and Its Causes

An account has preceded concerning how pressure was brought to bear upon the "Jama'ah", particularly in matters of dressing, for example, by forbidding them to wear turbans and forbidding women to wear veils. An account has also preceded concerning how the King of Gobir terrorised Sheikh Abdussalam, one of the disciples of Sheikh Usman, to the extent

that he migrated to Gimbana. Likewise, there is the account of how the King of Gobir intended to kill Sheikh Usman, his brother Sheikh Abdullahi, and Umaru Alkammu. The way people were embracing Islam in multitudes, and the gatherings at Sheikh Usman's house – all these matters were among the things that created a state of irreconcilable opposition between Sheikh Usman and his "Jama'ah" on one side, and the King of Gobir and his people on the other.

During this period, Yunfa launched an attack on Sheikh Abdussalam at his place of residence, which was Gimbana. Sultan Bello explained how this attack was carried out in his two books, "Infaq al-Maysur" and "Ṣard al-Kalam."

He indicated that the attack was a surprise assault. The people who were attacked were taken unawares. He showed that in the attack, many scholars and Quranic memorisers were killed. The attack was launched during the day in the month of Ramadan, while the people were fasting. Some were killed, others were captured – women and children; likewise, their property was plundered. Not only that, but books were seized and thrown to the ground and trampled underfoot. The same was done to copies of the Qur'an. Writing slates (alluna) were taken, torn apart, and used to kindle fire. Then the attackers entered, proclaiming, "Come forth and inflict upon us that which you have promised (i.e. punishment or torment), if you are truthful." They became arrogant and scornful towards the Muslims. The attack, as mentioned by Sultan Bello, occurred in the year 1218 A.H. (1803-04 CE).

Allah delivered Abdussalami and some of his followers from the attack; they escaped in a state of consternation, due to the victory the Gobir people had achieved over them and their loss of hope for getting help from others. Abdussalami sought

refuge with a Fulani town in the Kebbi region, and they granted his request. Then they wrote to Sheikh Usman informing him of what had transpired. He (Sheikh Usman) sent word to them not to hand over Abdussalami to the enemy. However, the enemy demanded that these Fulani hand Abdussalami over to them, claiming he was a fugitive and an oppressor. They also threatened the Fulani that they would attack them. But they (the Fulani) refused to hand him over, saying Abdussalami was their kinsman and they would not surrender him. When the enemy heard this, they feared provoking these Fulani and retreated. While this force of the King of Gobir was returning home, they passed through Dagel where Sheikh Usman resided. There they scorned the Muslims present, saying, "None of (the Muslims) are left except you, and soon, without delay, you will see us." Some people among the "Jama'ah" then seized some of the captives these men had brought with them.

The King of Gobir's warriors took some arrows from their quivers and showed them to the King, saying these were the arrows of the "Jama'ah" who had shot at them and seized what they had captured.

Sultan Bello, in "Ṣard al-Kalam", refers to this action by some of the "Jama'ah" as the work of some ignorant or foolish persons among them. However, Waziri Gidado was of the opinion that those who committed this act did so out of the religious zeal in their hearts. Waziri Junaidu also follows Gidado in this view in his book "Labt al-Multaqatat".

Sultan Bello, narrated that when this news reached the King of Gobir, he sent word to Sheikh Usman ordering him to depart from his place of residence along with his children and relatives, because he (the King) intended to attack the rest of

the "Jama'ah". Sheikh Usman replied that he would not abandon his "Jama'ah"; he would only depart together with them.

This same account is found in the book "Raud al-Jinan", with the added detail that the King of Gobir threatened Sheikh Usman saying: "You have achieved what you seek."

In "Tazyin al-Waraqat", Sheikh Abdullahi mentioned that after the event that occurred at Gimbana (i.e. the attack), all the unbelievers and infidels in the Gobir region intensified their persecution of the "Jama'ah", threatening them that what had happened to Abdussalam would happen to them.

Why was Abdussalam Attacked?

Abdussalam, as Sultan Bello, mentioned in "Ṣard al-Kalam", was a man from the Arewa ethnic group of the Sudan. He was also one of the disciples of Sheikh Usman and was imitating Sheikh Usman in preaching and calling people to the path of Allah. On this basis, many people from his ethnicity gathered around him.

His status as a scholar and a man of the Arewa ethnic tribe likely brought him prestige particularly among the Hausa (tribe). This may be why the King of Gobir saw that many of his commoners might leave him and join the "Jama'ah". Therefore, seeing Abdussalam as a pillar in the movement, he thought it best to begin by containing him first, and then deal with the Fulani. This is why, from the very beginning during the time of King Nafata of Gobir, one of his district chiefs carried out a military expedition against Abdussalam and got victory over him. This is why, initially, Abdussalam fled from Gobir with his followers to Kebbi and settled at Gimbana. Then many people gathered at this place he had moved to. This even reached the point where some undertook hijra from Gobir to join him.

After Nafata died and his son Yunfa succeeded him, he sent word to Abdussalam asking him to return to Gobir. Sultan Bello said that the King did this to strengthen his dynasty and for his commoners who had fled to return. On his part, Abdussalam replied to Yunfa that he would not return unless he had consulted his teacher, namely Sheikh Usman. When Abdussalam consulted him, Sheikh Usman replied that he would neither command him to return nor forbid him. Sheikh Usman said this, according to the narration, because he had no power to prevent them from wronging him; for they had previously subjected him to injustice when he was there.

On this basis, Abdussalam refused to return to Gobir and continued fortifying his town with a wall. This action infuriated the King of Gobir utterly. Consequently, he sent an expedition against him with the cooperation of the Emir of Kabi, who is optimistically presumed to be Muhammadu Hudi. This attack was launched, as previously described, in the month of Ramadan of the year 1218 A.H. (1803-04 CE).[8]

CHAPTER FOUR

THE MIGRATION (HIJRA)

When the King of Gobir ordered Sheikh Usman to depart from where he was and he (Sheikh Usman) replied that he would not abandon his "Jama'ah" but would rather undertake the hijra with them, this alarmed the King of Gobir, for he knew that Sheikh Usman was with a great multitude of people, whose departure from the land could pose a big challenge for him. Fearing this, he sent another message to Sheikh Usman asking him to stay and not undertake the hijra, but he (Sheikh Usman) refused.

In his account, Waziri Gidado stated that when the King of Gobir sent a message asking Sheikh Usman not to leave, he (Sheikh Usman) employed a stratagem, informing him that he would not leave his domain but would settle on the borders of his land, at a place called Gudu.[9]

It was in this situation that a man among Sheikh Usman's disciples who was from the Azbinawa (Tuareg), named Agali, exhibited a praiseworthy deed. This deed was urging his

[9] Gudu was located on the border between the lands of Gobir and Kebbi at that time. It is sometimes written with the name "Qudu," as it appears in the book "Tazyin al-Waraqat". At present, it is also the headquarters of a local government area in Sokoto State. Gudu is the administrative centre of the Local Government Area.

kinsmen to help Sheikh Usman in the hijra and to provide him protection from enemy attack. Sultan Bello, stated in "Infaq al-Maysur" that Agali and his people assisted Sheikh Usman in undertaking the hijra to Gudu. He also assisted many of the "Jama'ah" by facilitating for them the ability to undertake the hijra.

Sultan Bello, said he was with Agali when the Gobir force returned from the Gimbana expedition. He said, then I saw him (Agali) in profound grief, and I saw that he was overcome by a great zeal about the religion.

In "Infaq al-Maysur" there are further indications that Muhammad Bello also prevailed on Sheikh Usman to undertake the hijra. He indicated that at the time he (Muhammad Bello) was with Agali after the Gimbana attack, he heard that Agali was going to Sheikh Usman, so Sultan Muhammad Bello, wrote a letter to him (Sheikh Usman) containing some verses urging departure from Gobir, and gave this document to Agali to deliver to him. Bello said that when this document reached him (Sheikh Usman), he wrote back to him (Bello) saying that he should come to them with whatever aid he had for the hijra, for they were on the verge of undertaking it. Bello said he then went to Kebbi, distributed letters, and called people to provide aid to Sheikh Usman. He said that afterward he returned to Dagel. As soon as he returned, they undertook the hijra to Gudu.

Sultan Bello indicated that indeed Agali provided great assistance. Likewise, a disciple of Sheikh Usman named Mahmud Gwardam, and another disciple of his named Aliyu Jedo, who later became known as Sarkin Yaki (the Commander of War), also provided significant assistance. In "Raud al-Jinan", Waziri Gidado mentioned that Sarkin Yaki Aliyu Jedo built a house for Sheikh Usman at Gudu before his arrival.

Sheikh Usman undertook the hijra on Thursday, the 12th of Dhul-Qa'dah, in the year 1218 A.H. (February 21, 1804 CE).

After this, all those within the "Jama'ah" began preparing to undertake the hijra from all regions and continued doing so for a period of two months[10] Following this, an order came from the governing authorities that the "Jama'ah" be prevented from undertaking the hijra. The rulers of various regions complied with this order. So too did those connected to them among the rulers of the Buzaye and Azbin (Tuareg).

In "Infaq al-Maysur", Sultan Bello, said, "We did not cease to have some (people) arriving to join us with their families and property, others with their families but without property, and others yet coming alone, with neither family nor property."

Sultan Bello, further said that when the King of Gobir saw that the "Jama'ah" would not stop undertaking the hijra, he wrote to Sheikh Usman asking him to return to the locality he had left, namely Dagel. Sheikh Usman wrote back to him that he would not return unless the King himself had repented, purified his religion so that it conformed to that of the "Jama'ah", established justice in his land, and also restored the possessions of the Muslims that he had seized from them. If he fulfilled these conditions, then he would return to Dagel.

Sultan Bello added that when Sheikh Usman's letter reached him (the King), all his viziers and scholars were seated before him. He then proceeded to revile the Sheikh and the "Jama'ah". He sought a legal opinion (fatwa) from the scholars present concerning the affair of Sheikh Usman and his "Jama'ah". The scholars said to him, "You are upon the path of the truth, and the Sheikh and his "Jama'ah" are upon the path of falsehood."

---

[10] Sheikh Adamu Abdullahi Ilori states that the initial number of those who began the hijra was five thousand. Later, they increased to ten thousand.

Sultan Muhammad Bello said this corresponded to what the Jews said regarding the affair of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) when the polytheists asked them (the Jews) who was more rightly guided, them or Muhammad? A man called Ibn Suriyya asked them to describe their religion to him.

The polytheists said: "They slaughter camels, provide water for pilgrims, ransom captives, guard the House of the Lord, worship what their fathers worshipped, and maintain kinship ties." Then he said, "And what is the religion of Muhammad?" They said, "He is one who severs kinship ties and is with thieves who steal from the pilgrims." So Ibn Suriyya said, "You are indeed more rightly guided than him." Concerning this, Allah revealed the four verses contained in Surah al-Nisa', the fourth chapter, verses 51-54.

Sultan Bello, said a God-fearing scholar who was one of the King of Gobir's viziers informed him that when Sheikh Usman's letter was read to the King, he (the scholar) was present. But the reader altered what he wished and added what he wished. Then the other corrupt scholars who were seated gave their assent. This was for no other reason than to strengthen the King's resolve to fight Sheikh Usman and his "Jama'ah".

After the letter was read to the King, he asked the one who brought the letter to set out on his return journey; that he (the King) would assign no guide to show him the way. He told him that if Allah took him back to Sheikh Usman, he should tell him that he (the King) was there making preparations and plans to come to him. Sheikh Usman on his part, should also prepare to meet him. This messenger departed from his presence not knowing where to turn, and he found no one to accompany him, and at that time, the people of the Sudan were killing any Fulani man they saw. So this messenger turned to the left-hand side,

until he came to Agunbulu, who assigned someone to show him the way, until he managed to reach Sheikh Usman and informed him of all that had transpired.

Waziri Gidado mentioned that when Sheikh Usman arrived at Gudu and was shown the house that Aliyu Jedo had built for him, he said they should bring his pulpit (gadon wa'azi). When he ascended the pulpit, he addressed the "Jama'ah". Then he extended his hand between the heavens and the earth, clenched it, and said: "Indeed, I have nullified the plan of every adult man, and the matter is in my hand, except for what a man plans for his family." Then he extended his hand a second time, clenched it, and said: "I have seized the authority of every holder of authority in these lands, except for those who come to me." Then he extended his hand a third time, clenched it, and then said: "Whoever has expelled me from my home, he too shall be expelled from his home, by the will of Allah." Waziri Gidado said after Sheikh Usman finished, he made a supplication and then entered his house.

It is said that no one came to Sheikh Usman except for the King of A'hir, who alone retained his authority – that is, he alone qualified for the caveat stipulated by Sheikh Usman.

This pronouncement made by Sheikh Usman is among the extraordinary miraculous acts with which Allah honours His servants. A miracle is an established reality, as its evidence will be presented later, by the will of Allah.

Pledging Allegiance to Sheikh Usman

Consequent upon what had transpired as narrated previously, the "Jama'ah" understood that there was no covenant of security between them and the King of Gobir. Likewise, all those on his side among the people of the Sudan and Azbin had

followed his opinion in demonstrating their hostility toward Sheikh Usman and his "Jama'ah". There was no refuge for the "Jama'ah" among the rulers of these regions, for all of them had agreed to join forces against Sheikh Usman and his followers. Considering this situation, they considered choosing a leader to guide them, for it is not permissible for a community to remain without a leader. On this basis, they pledged allegiance (bay'ah) to Sheikh Usman upon the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The first to pledge allegiance to him, as mentioned by Sultan Bello, was Sheikh Abdullahi, then he himself, Muhammad Bello, followed by Umaru Alkammu. Afterwards, the rest of the people pledged allegiance to him. This act was performed at night. This pledge of allegiance was made in the year 1218 A.H., which corresponds to the year 1804 CE. Sultan Bello said that at daybreak, they raised banners and went to dig trenches to fortify their town. This is similar to what Salman al-Farisi suggested to the Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) regarding the Battle of the Trench (Ghazwat al-Khandaq) at Medina.

Earlier before this development, and prior to the journey of Sheikh Usman's envoy to the King of Gobir with that letter, Sultan Bello mentioned that most of the people of the Sudan were ambushing the emigrants (muhajirun) on the road. This situation provoked the "Jama'ah" until, one Thursday, they launched a surprise attack on all those perpetrating such acts in that area. They executed some, captured others as prisoners of war, and seized their property. At daybreak, after the Friday prayer was observed, Sheikh Usman stood up and delivered a sermon to the people, and he ordered that what had been seized

be returned to its rightful owners. The "Jama'ah" complied with this command.

Likewise, Sultan Bello narrated that after Sheikh Usman's envoy was dispatched to the King of Gobir, some of his district chiefs were launching attacks, but he (Sheikh Usman) was ignoring them. So, when the envoy returned and broke the news of what transpired, they hastened to pledge allegiance (bay'ah) to Sheikh Usman and to dig a trench to serve as a defence for their dwelling.

Laying the First Foundation of the Islamic Caliphate

After the allegiance was pledged to him, Sheikh Usman laid the first foundation of the Islamic Caliphate (Daula). This was done by selecting his brother Abdullahi to be his first vizier, then his companion Umaru Alkammu as his second vizier. Then he appointed his companion named Muhammadu Sambo, son of Abdurrahman, to be the Imam (for prayer) and the Judge to adjudicate disputes among them. With this, the laying of the first foundation of the Usmaniyya Caliphate was completed.

The Prelude to the Migration (Hijra)

It is beneficial to explain what Sheikh Usman was undertaking before the hijra, apart from teaching and preaching – that is, through writing. In the year 1217 A.H. (1802-03 CE), when matters had become strained and relations between him and the rulers of Gobir had deteriorated, and it became apparent that confrontation was inevitable otherwise he (Sheikh Usman) should undertake the hijra, for that is the sunnah of the prophets, he began writing fiery epistles, expounding his views concerning the Gobir dynasty. One type of these writings is the book "Al-Masa'il al-Muhimmah" (The Important Issues). This

book was written one year before Sheikh Usman's migration, for it was completed on a Tuesday during the Zuhr prayer on the 13th of Dhul-Qa'dah of the aforementioned year, that is, the year 1217 A.H. Sheikh embarked on the hijra in the year 1218 A.H., in the month of Dhul-Qa'dah, on Thursday the 12th of the month.

This book, "Al-Masa'il", discusses some major issues that it was incumbent upon the "Jama'ah" to understand and reflect upon. The issues numbered fourteen. At the beginning of the book, Sheikh Usman mentioned that: "Consequently, these are the important issues which the people of the Sudan need to understand, and likewise all those whose regions are similar to theirs among all regions and towns."

These fourteen issues are: (1) The first issue explains that religion is built upon insight and understanding, and whoever follows his own opinion is not a follower of the Shari'a. (2) The second issue explains that it is not permissible for Muslims to remain leaderless by their own choice without pledging allegiance (i.e. without choosing a leader). (3) The third issue explains the ruling on undertaking hijra from the land of disbelief to the land of Islam; and from a land where innovation (bid'a) is practiced to a land where the Sunnah is followed; and undertaking hijra from a land where immorality is prevalent to where obedience to Allah obtains. (4) The fourth issue explains the ruling concerning supporting unbelievers, that is, giving them aid or seeking aid from them. (5) The fifth issue explains the ruling concerning the wealth of a Muslim residing in the lands of disbelief on their own choice. (6) The sixth issue explains the ruling concerning the wealth of unbelievers during a state of truce and peaceful coexistence with them, without the shedding of blood. (7) The seventh

issue explains the ruling on waging jihad against unbelievers, and the distinction between fighting original unbelievers and those who have committed apostasy (ridda). (8) The eighth issue explains fighting against rebels (ahl al-baghy), and the Muslims who are with them; and also the distinction between fighting them and fighting those who secede from the authority of the Commander of the Faithful upon whom allegiance has been mutually agreed. (9) The ninth issue explains self-defence from enemies if they launch a surprise attack on the "Jama'ah" in their own country/region. (10) The tenth issue explains the ruling on buying a Fulani man of this region of Sudan for the purpose of ownership and enslavement. (11) The eleventh issue explains the purchase of enslaved persons brought from regions where the adherence to the religion of Islam by their people is widespread. (12) The twelfth issue explains what is termed permissible (ḥalal) and what is termed forbidden (ḥaram), and what is termed ambiguous/unclear (shubha). (13) The thirteenth issue explains dealings with oppressors. (14) The fourteenth issue explains the ruling on engaging with the worldly leaders (Ahl al-dunya) among the oppressors and others; because of what a person might hope to gain from it for the benefit of the Muslims, and to repel harm from them.

These are the issues which Sheikh Usman wrote and elaborated upon on the eve of the hijra. This writing, by all indications, was a reinforcement and calling the attention of the "Jama'ah" concerning what they were about to encounter in no distant time.

On the other hand, if we examine these issues, we see they describe the condition of this part of the Sudan – that is, Hausaland and its neighbours – with regard to the prevalent practices of disbelief, innovation (bid'a), and deviation. They

also explain the oppression of the rulers and their supporters. In another respect, they contain encouragement for Muslims to rise up and choose a leader who will manage their affairs.

Sheikh Usman openly explained the nature of how rulers administered governance in this region in his book titled "Kitab al-Farq bayna Wilayat Ahl al-Islam wa Wilayat Ahl al-Kufr" (The Book of Distinction between the Governance of the People of Islam and the Governance of the People of Disbelief). It is optimistically assumed that this book was written during the jihad or after it. In any case, the reality is that the book explains how things had fallen apart in Hausaland, which prompted Sheikh Usman to publish it, to clarify to the "Jama'ah" the distinction between an Islamic state and a non-Islamic one, so that the people would remain well informed. Here are some of the things he mentioned concerning how the rulers conducted their affairs:

"It is the way of the governance of the people of disbelief to follow their passion in fulfilling their desires, like animals. They also build their authority upon two things: namely, inheritance and coercion, without consultation.

Among these practices is imposing upon the people to give out wealth which the Shari'a does not permit; such as what they call cattle tax (Jangali), town levy (Kudin Gari), and festival tax (Kudin Salla).

Another aspect of their governance is consuming everything they acquire, whether lawful or unlawful, and using everything they obtain for clothing, whether lawful or unlawful. The same applies to their means of transportation and dwellings. That is, they have no concern for the lawful nature of anything.

It is part of their practice to present them with wealth as gifts under the name of a tribute or honour.

Among their practices is accumulating numerous wives in the household, to the extent that one man might possess a thousand women.

Among their practices is what is done in the market: imposing a certain amount of money or commodity on butchers and other merchants on market days. They give these practices names like *Agamu* and *Tausa*.

Among the characteristics of their rule is seizing people's animals to carry their luggage for them. Anyone who follows his animal to the offloading point gets back his animal; whoever does not do so, the animal becomes theirs.

These aforementioned matters, i.e. Imposing monetary charges on the common people under names like cattle tax (jangali), land tax (haraji), and festival tax (kudin salla), seizing the property of the common people, degrading the status of women until they become like commodities for sale, and the view that a woman in the household has no value except for what one desires of her, along with changing the laws of Allah, especially concerning inheritance, failure to implement prescribed punishments (ḥudud) and legal retribution (qiṣaṣ), and confiscating the property of strangers, particularly those who died in places that are not their own, especially travellers. In another respect, there is the conscription of common people into their military forces by compulsion, and whoever refused, then a heavy fine is imposed upon him which he must pay. In yet another aspect, there is bribery and corruption; likewise, there is the neglect of the affairs of the common people by refusing to listen to their complaints. They also forbade women from wearing veils, just as they forbade men from wearing turbans, referring to this as "the Law." Regarding greeting protocol, there is the heaping of dust on the head during salutations, and

playing music and drumming. Furthermore, the rulers were arrogant and self-willed, deceitful, and insolent. And anyone who refused to obey their corrupt dictates would be subjected to severe punishment.

These aforementioned issues are what Sheikh Usman found and which had become entrenched, to the extent that there were thousands of scholars in the land, yet none had the courage to utter a word of protest concerning them but keep silent, provided he did support it. It became incumbent upon Sheikh Usman during his time, as one desiring to bring about change, that he confronts these evils by every means within his power: preaching and using the pen, that is, writing. And this is what he did. First, Sheikh Usman used preaching and teaching. Later, he undertook the hijra. Then, he took up arms to wage jihad in the cause of Allah (fi sabilillah). This demonstrates that the call (da'wah) is a matter of stages, which must be followed in order to achieve success. These stages are: (1) Purifying one's life and striving to establish it upon the path of Allah; (2) Changing affairs both through the heart and through speech; (3) Undertaking hijra, if one is persecuted or fears for one's religion; (4) Taking up arms and undertaking jihad, if the opportunity for it exists; (5) Establishing a state and ensuring adherence to the laws of Allah.

Admonition/Clarification

Waziri Junaidu, in his book "Labt al-Mulaqatat", indicates that Sheikh Usman (may Allah be pleased with him) was the first to establish jihad in this region of the Sudan, and Allah helped him in this. But he also shows that there were those who intended to carry out jihad but were not able to do so, such as the famous ruler in this West African region named Askia, who

founded the Songhai Empire[11]. He was also the first to be called by the title Sarkin Musulmi (Commander of the Faithful) in this Sudan region.

Likewise, there was a scholar named Jibril ibn Umar, about whom it has already been reported that he was one of the teachers of Sheikh Usman. This scholar resided among the Azbinawa (Tuareg). However, because he was very strict in his teaching, the Azbinawa expelled him, and he returned to Gobir. Later, he departed for the pilgrimage (ḥajj). Waziri Junaidu states that this scholar was the first to bring to Sheikh Usman banners of victory[12]. He was also the first to pledge allegiance (bay'ah) to Sheikh Usman even before the jihad. It was concerning him that Sheikh Usman used to say that everything said about him (Sheikh Usman) was nothing but a breeze from the chamber of Jibril.

Here we can see that Sheikh Usman undertook the hijra and indeed, allegiance was pledged to him upon the Quran and the Sunnah. Now, what remains is for us to learn about the important events that occurred after the hijra. This will be presented in chronological order. Here, most of what I will mention will be drawn from the book "Infaq al-Maysur" and the book "Labt al-Multaqatat", by the will of Allah.

---

11 Songhai was an empire established in West Africa, with its centre at the city of Gao, during the time of Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr al-Ṭuri, known by the title Askia. He assumed power after the death of Sonni Ali in the year 1494 CE. It was during his reign that the famous scholar al-Maghili came to Songhai, and he (Askia) appointed him as his advisor on legal rulings (fatwa). Gao is presently in Mali.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE BATTLES FOUGHT BY SHEIKH USMAN

The First Year of his Hijrah

Among the battles fought in the first year after the Hijrah were the following: the battle of Matankari – In this battle, Sheikh Usman and his followers emerged victorious. Furthermore, within this same year, the battle of Giniga was fought. In this battle as well, the "Jama'ah" achieved victory. Fatalities were recorded on the enemy side and prisoners of war captured.

It was in the month of Rabi' al-Awwal of the same year that a surprise attack was launched against the "Jama'ah". Muhammad Bello commanded a cavalry unit of five men to repel those who had initiated the attack, prior to the main force being fully mobilised. They had set out at forenoon (the time of the Duha) prayer, but did not encounter the adversaries until towards late afternoon (the time of Asr prayer), and they returned after dusk (after the time of Maghrib prayer). Muhammad Bello recounted that they experienced severe thirst, to the extent that they were compelled to slaughter the cattle left behind by the enemy in order to drink the water contained within their

stomachs. It was during this armed confrontation that Sheikh Usman's Muezzin (the man who gives out the call to prayer), Ahmadu al-Sudani, attained martyrdom.

The Battle of Kwanni: the town of Kwanni is a historic settlement and, as Muhammad Bello indicated, was a town with many Islamic scholars, particularly of the Fulani (tribe). One of their chiefs, named Muhammadu Damaku, launched a treacherous assault upon these scholars. He massacred reciters of the Qur'an and scholars; more than forty individuals inside the mosques, and furthermore captured children and seized property. Among those who escaped this attack was a virtuous scholar named Muhammadu Sa'ad, who came and settled in Maratta in the region of Galmi. This calamity had, in fact, occurred a considerable time prior to the emergence of Sheikh Usman.

However, regarding the battle of Kwanni, it took place after the battle of Matankari in the month of Rabi' al-Awwal. The warrior who commanded this battle was a disciple of Sheikh Usman named Muhammadu Gairu. The assault on the town was launched after intelligence was received that the King of Gobir had encamped his army and was planning to attack the "Jama'ah". Thus, they pre-empted him. A fierce battle ensued, where a great many of the "Jama'ah" were slain; but ultimately, they achieved victory, killing the men and capturing the women and children. Indeed, the Chief of Kwanni town met his fate in that battle.

The Battle of Kwatto: scholars of history often compared this battle to the Battle of Badr, which the Prophet (SAW) fought alongside his Companions. That earlier battle was where Allah strengthened Islam and humbled the disbelievers at a time when the Companions were few in number, lacking provisions,

and deficient in weapons and mounts. The circumstances of Sheikh Usman and his followers at the time of their migration were similarly marked by scarcity of food, lack of mounts and weapons; and they were also few in number compared to their adversaries.

It has been narrated that the King of Gobir, from the very time that Sheikh Usman undertook the migration, began devising a plan to "extinguish this fire that had been ignited" (i.e. containing the seeming threat posed by the migration). Consequently, he wrote letters to the prominent Hausa chiefs, urging them to assist him in this matter. Despite the fact that, before the emergence of Sheikh Usman, these chiefs (of Hausaland) were never united for war, on this occasion they agreed to combine their forces to fight Sheikh Usman. On that basis, they heeded the call of the King Gobir. The chiefs to whom letters were written were: the Emir of Kano, the Emir of Zazzau, the Emir of Daura, and the Emir of Azbin. All of these accepted his invitations and furthermore displayed hostility and harassment toward anyone said to be a member of the "Jama'ah" within their territories. When the King of Gobir assembled his army, he gathered a multitude (an unlimited number of soldiers). He then marched out with his forces to confront Sheikh Usman.

On their part, when the "Jama'ah" received confirmation that the adversaries had set out to attack them, and that they had in fact engaged in conflict with and killed some members of the community residing in villages along the route, they (the "Jama'ah") then mobilised their own forces and marched out. The commander of the contingent was Sheikh Abdulahi Fodio. The two armies met at a location with a pond, called the Pond of Kwatto, from which the battle derives its name. The "Jama'ah"

drank from the pond's water, as they had an advantage, having arrived there first. Agali demonstrated great valour at the site when he advanced and drove a segment of the enemy forces away from the pond and seized some of their horses. When the "Jama'ah" advanced, the adversaries had already made adequate preparations, with all manner of weapons of war (having undertaken what is termed the full preparations for battle). The Community, however, did not have up to twenty horses. Thus, the battle commenced. They clashed and a fierce, dust-clouded battle erupted. After the cessation of hostilities, the "Jama'ah" saw that they were victorious, for the King of Gobir, Yunfa had retreated and fled. The Community acquired booty in great abundance.

Having fled, Yunfa reached a town called Tambagarka. He sought to muster another force under the command of the King of Gumi, but he was not successful. This Battle of the Pond of Kwatto was fought in the year 1804 CE, in the month of June.

It was during this same first year of the Hijrah that Sheikh Usman moved from Gudu to a place called Magabci. This movement occurred during the harvest season. It was from this new location that Sheikh Usman wrote his letters to the Hausa chiefs and others. Magabci is within the territory of Yabo, and at that time, Sarkin Kabi Muhammadu Moyijo was the king of the area. Before Sheikh Usman departed from Gudu, he received messages from the chiefs of Burmi, Mafara, and Danko congratulating him on the victory he had achieved against Gobir. They did this because of the longstanding enmity that had existed between them and the King of Gobir prior to the war.

Sultan Bello provided an exposition on the contents of the letters that Sheikh Usman was dispatching (to the Hausa

chiefs) in his book "Infaqu": namely, that he (Sheikh Usman) had issued a comprehensive clarification of the burden upon him of working to establish truth over falsehood, to revive the Prophetic tradition (Sunnah), and to eradicate innovations in the religion (bid'ah). Sheikh Usman entreated the chiefs to purify their faith/religion (for Allah). Furthermore, he admonished them to desist from all that contravenes the Sacred Law (Shari'ah). He similarly requested that they aid him against his adversaries in the jihad he was waging against them. Moreover, he cautioned them not to be swayed by the rhetoric of his adversaries concerning him. He declared that if they were to aid his adversaries against him, punishment would befall them as a consequence of such action. For truly, Allah has pledged to aid the believers, and He will disgrace the unbelievers.

Those who served as messengers to deliver these letters were: Abdurrahaman son of the renowned scholar Zamanu, and another scholar named Al-mustapha.

The Disposition of the Rulers at the Time the Letters were Delivered to them

When the letter reached the Emir of Katsina and he perused it, he was overtaken by the desire for eminence. He took the letter and tore it. Waziri Junaidu stated that the actions of this chief resembled the actions of Kisra, the King of Persia, when he tore the letter sent to him by the Prophet (SAW).

When the letter reached the Emir of Kano, he too refused (its message) and followed the path of the other chiefs. His actions bore a resemblance to the actions of Qaisar, the Emperor of Rome.

Nevertheless, when the letter reached the Emir Zazzau, he accepted it, assented to its contents, and repented. However,

this action did not please his people, who demonstrated their disapproval to the extent that the Emir fought against them. He persisted in this stance for the remainder of his life. But when he passed away, the people apostatised. They remained in that state of apostasy until Sheikh Usman gave the flag/banner to Malam Musa who went and fought them, and achieved victory over them.

Admonition/Clarification

These letters that Sheikh Usman wrote to the chiefs, he also wrote various others to the common people. It is plausible to infer that he did this even before his migration (hijrah). The title of these writings or epistles is: "Wasiqatul Ahlis-Sudan" (The Epistle to the People of the Sudan).

The English historian, Murray Last, holds the opinion that the documents which Bello disseminated in the region of Kabi prior to Sheikh Usman's migration were none other than these "Wasiqatu Ahlis-Sudan". For Bello stated: "Then I went to Kabi, distributed epistles, and called an assembly of the people."

This assertion could be accurate, and it is also possible that Bello distributed other, different documents. However, in my view, I am of the opinion that "Wasiqatu Ahlis-Sudan" was likely written, either during the midst of the jihad, just as Sheikh Usman wrote his book "Bayanu Wajubul-Hijrati alal-Ibadi" in the year 1221 AH; or it was composed during the period when he was residing in Sifawa town. I favour the second opinion more strongly, given that the subject matter expounded in the epistle does not differ from that found in the books that Sheikh Usman wrote during that period. These include, for example, "Kitabul-Amri bimuwaltil-Muminina", and the books "Sirajul-Ikhwani" and "Najmul-Ikhwani", among others. One factor that

strengthens this opinion is the observation that Sheikh Usman took the majority of the content found in "Wasiqatu Ahlis-Sudan" and incorporated it into a book he wrote while residing in Sifawa in the year 1226 AH. This book is "Nasihatu Ahliz-Zaman".

Another reason that further reinforces the argument that the epistle was composed during Sheikh Usman's residence in Sifawa is its opening. He began with: "From the Commander of the Faithful, Usmanu Danfodiyo." After he began with the invocation of the name of Allah (Basmala), praise, and gratitude to Allah, and prayers upon the Prophet (SAW), he said:

"This is an epistle from Danfodiyo, the Commander of the Faithful, Usmanu, to all the people of the Sudan and to those whom..."

Allah wills among the brethren within the towns. This is an epistle beneficial for this era. I declare this while believing that correct guidance comes from Allah. Know, O my brethren:

- Enjoining good (al-amr bil ma'ruf) is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.
- Prohibiting that which is forbidden (nahy an al-munkar) is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.
- Migration (Hijrah) from the land of the unbelievers is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.
- Appointing a Commander of the Faithful (Sarkin Musulmi) is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.
- Obedience to him (the Commander of the Faithful) and his appointed chiefs is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.
- Appointing chiefs within towns is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.

- Know, indeed, that the religious status of a country/region is determined by the status of its ruler by the consensus of scholars. If the ruler is a Muslim, then the country/region is Islamic; but if he is an unbeliever, then the country/region is un-Islamic. And migration from it becomes obligatory.
- Fighting a non-Muslim ruler who has not professed the declaration of faith (shahada) is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.
- Similarly, wresting authority from him is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.
- Fighting a ruler who has apostatised (ridda) but does not openly declare his departure from the religion of Islam – due to his claim of being a Muslim while simultaneously engaging in both Islamic and polytheistic practices, as most Hausa chiefs do – is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.
- Fighting recalcitrant Muslims who refuse to submit to the authority of the Commander of the Faithful (by not paying allegiance) is obligatory by the consensus of scholars. However, this is only after they have been called to pledge allegiance and they refuse. Thus, they shall be fought until they submit to the authority (i.e. pay allegiance).
- Know that declaring a Muslim an unbeliever for merely performing acts of religious innovation (bid'ah) is forbidden (haram) by the consensus of scholars.
- Similarly, declaring a Muslim an unbeliever for performing sinful (ma'siyah) acts is forbidden by the consensus of scholars.

- Residing within the territory of adversaries is forbidden by the consensus of scholars.
- Refusing to enter under the authority and allegiance of the Commander of the Faithful and his appointed chiefs is forbidden by the consensus of scholars.
- Fighting a Muslim residing within the lands of Islam is forbidden by the consensus of scholars.
- Enslaving the children of Muslims is forbidden by the consensus of scholars.
- Confiscating their (Muslims) wealth unjustly is forbidden by the consensus of scholars.
- Fighting the people of apostasy (ridda) is obligatory by the consensus of scholars. Their wealth, moreover, constitutes spoils of war (fay').
- However, there are two opinions concerning their enslavement. The most popular (mashhur) opinion among them is that it is prohibited. But one who commits this act does not commit a sin if he follows the verdict of the scholars who have deemed it permissible.
- Fighting rebels ('yan tawaye) is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.
- Confiscating their (the rebels) wealth unjustly is forbidden by the consensus of scholars.
- Enslaving them (the rebels) is also forbidden by the consensus of scholars.
- Fighting insurgents/revolutionaries ('yan bore) is obligatory by the consensus of scholars.
- Confiscating their (the inssrgents/revolutionaries) wealth unjustly is forbidden by the consensus of scholars.

The Return of Sheikh and his Followers to Gobir Territory

In that first year of his migration (hijrah), Sheikh Usman returned to Gobir territory. Muhammadu Bello related in his book "Infaqu" that he (Sheikh Usman) travelled from Magabci to Sifawa, where he briefly encamped. Thereafter, he departed from there to a place called Rikina. It was at Rikina that he dispatched a small military contingent under the command of Sheikh Abdussalami, which was successful in procuring food items. From there, Sheikh Usman proceeded to encamp at Sokoto[13]13. It was while Sheikh Usman was at Sokoto that the King of Gummi advised Yunfa to seek a reconciliation with him (Sheikh Usman). Indeed, he (Yunfa) agreed to this and sent one of his chiefs (Galadima) to Sheikh Usman. However, the reconciliation did not succeed, for the "Jama'ah" refused to accept a proxy in the negotiations, insisting that the King himself must come. On the King's side, his councillors prevented him from doing so. Subsequently, Sheikh Usman moved to a town called Kirare. It was at Kirare that Sheikh Agali, Muhammad Tukur, and other segments of the Community who had been left at the frontiers between Azbin and Gobir, joined them. Likewise, other members of the Community from the Katsina frontier met Sheikh Usman there.

The First Battle of Alkalawa

Prior to the first battle of Alkalawa, several minor battles had been fought. The most significant among them was the Battle of Bore. Bore, as Muhammadu Bello mentioned in "Infaqu", is approximately half a day's journey from Alkalawa.

---

[13] At that time, Sokoto was not regarded as a permanent settlement. It was not until the year 1224 AH that Bello established it as such.

Thus, after this battle was fought, all members of the Community who were in the Gobir region assembled in one place, including Namoda. At that time, they resolved to launch an assault on Alkalawa. The town of Alkalawa, as Muhammadu Bello mentioned, was a fortified city. The Gobir forces emerged with their battle formations and engaged in archery. In this battle, Sheikh Abdullahi sustained a wound in his thigh. Furthermore, many people from both sides were killed.

The Battle of Tsuntsuwa

The origin of this battle, as Muhammadu Bello recounted, was the hypocrisy (nifaq) of the Azbinawa. For they had been professing support for the Community. However, whenever they encountered the Gobir forces, they would indicate to them that they were on their side. In the end, they conspired with the Gobir forces. When Sheikh Usman encamped at Tsuntsuwa and they realised that the majority of his forces were not present, they attacked those who were there. Before a counter attack could be organised, they had inflicted significant damage. In this battle, nearly two thousand members of the Community attained martyrdom. Among them were approximately two hundred memorisers (huffaz) of the Qur'an. It was in this battle that the Chief Judge, Muhammadu Sambo, and the standard-bearer, Sa'adare, were slain. Also killed at the site were Mahmudu Gwardam, Muhammad Hamma, and the renowned scholar of Hadith, Zaidu, son of Muhammad, among others. The location where this fierce battle occurred is approximately two miles from the city of Alkalawa. This battle took place during the month of Ramadan.

The Migration of Sheikh Usman and his Followers to Zamfara Territory

In that first year of his migration, after the Battle of Tsuntsuwa, Sheikh Usman departed for Zamfara. He stayed for a short period at a place called Barayar Zaki during the remaining days of the month of Ramadan. The distance to Barayar Zaki from Alkalawa is a half a day's journey. It was at Barayar Zaki that Agali and Aliyu, the elder brother to Sheikh Usman, died. After several other minor battles fought with the adversaries in various locations, Shehu departed to Zamfara. Muhammadu Bello indicated that Zamfara maintained favourable relations with Sheikh Usman due to their enmity toward the King of Gobir. After a month's journey, the Community reached a place called Sabon Gari within Zamfara territory. At Sabon Gari, Sheikh Usman and the Community remained for a period of six months. They left Gobir territory at the beginning of the month of Dhul-Qi'dah, which marked the completion of one year since the migration, and they arrived at (a place called) Remuwa at the end of the month. They departed from there for Sabon Gari, where they arrived at the end of the month of Muharram due to minor battles fought along the route.

Significant Events that Occurred in the Second Year of his Migration

During the sojourn at Sabon Gari in the second year of the migration, Sheikh Abdullahi launched invasions into Kebbi territory, where he succeeded in conquering many towns. Among the towns captured was the major capital of the Kabawa, in which their King, Muhammad son of Sulaiman, was residing. Usman Masa was then installed as its king. Sheikh Abdullahi named these invasions conducted by him "Jaishul-Futuhi", meaning the Battle of Victory. This is because during

these battles, more than twenty towns were captured. In "Tazyin", Sheikh Abdullahi indicated that on the route to Kabi they clashed with the King of Gumi, engaging him at a place called Kunda, whereupon the king requested a truce, and they granted him a guarantee of safety.

It was also during the stay at Sabon Gari that Muhammadu Bello invaded parts of Zamfara and Gobir. The most notable among these battles was the one he fought against the Sarkin Zamfara, in which the "Jama'ah" was victorious.

Within this second year, the Battle of Kanoma was fought under the command of the War Commander (Sarkin Yaki) Aliyu Jedo. Kanoma was a town difficult to conquer, as Muhammadu Bello mentioned, because the town was situated on a mountain.

Also in this year, the War Commander Aliyu Jedo led another contingent, which included Muhammadu Bello and many members of the "Jama'ah", in an attack on Bingi. However, upon their arrival, the majority of the towns in that region had been abandoned. They proceeded to attack the main town but were not victorious.

In that same year as well, the Battle of Silame took place. It was in this town that the Sarkin Kabi Muhammadu son of Sulaiman, who had been expelled from Birnin Kebbi, was residing, and his people were launching attacks against the "Jama'ah" within their region. The War Commander led a contingent that attacked Silame and captured it.

Still in that year, the first Battle of Jata was fought. This occurred due to the gathering of a large number of Zamfara people who had rebelled in this town and who were repeatedly attacking some part of the Community. Muhammadu Bello noted that among the Community itself at that time, there were

those who had deviated from the teachings of jihad and had become lax.

Consequently, the Community decided to launch an assault on Jata. As they commenced the journey, Muhammadu Bello was afflicted with illness; hence, they turned back.

In that second year of the migration, the Battle of Bena was fought. The commander of this battle was the War Commander Aliyu Jedo. An attack was launched on Bena, and victory was achieved.

Similarly, in the second year of his migration, the Battle of Kano was fought and victory was secured. Thereafter, the scholar Sulaiman was appointed to govern it and establish justice within it.

Furthermore, in that year, the Battle of 'Yandoto was fought and the city was captured. 'Yandoto, as Muhammadu Bello stated, was a town renowned for its scholars. He explained, however, that the scholars were inclined toward misguiding the Community. Muhammadu Bello sought reconciliation with them and requested an engagement to ascertain who was on the path of the truth. This request for a discussion occurred after the people of the town had expelled all those who supported Sheikh Usman. These included even the prominent scholars, Alhaji Umar and Muhammadu, Son of Ashafa. Indeed, they harmed these scholars. When Muhammadu Bello sought to engage them in a discussion and sent Son of Ashafa, saying: "Go and inform them that I have not come to fight them; no, I have encamped to engage in a disputation with them concerning this matter. If we are on the right path, then let them repent and follow us; but if they are on the right path, then let us repent and abandon our course." They returned a response stating that they had no need for Bello, and moreover they had no need

for his father either. When Muhammadu Bello was informed of what they had said, he prepared to fight them, and Allah granted him success. In no time, the town was conquered. Following the victory, Muhammadu Son of Ashafa was appointed as the leader of the town.

The Battle of Alwasa

The Battle of Alwasa occurred during that second year of his (Sheikh Usman's) migration. The Gobir, Azbin, and some other Hausa forces combined to fight the Community. This happened while Sheikh Usman was residing at Gwandu. When the Community learned that the adversaries had encamped near them, they assembled and deliberated. Some advised going out to meet them, while others counselled waiting for them to come. However, those in favour of going out prevailed. While the Community was on the route to encounter the adversaries, they camped at a town called Koldi; in this town, there were covenant-protected non-Muslims (ahl al-dhimmah) and some other Muslim inhabitants. The Community then plundered and despoiled the town. Sheikh Abdullahi admonished them to desist, but they refused. Muhammadu Bello also forbade them, but they would not stop. Having witnessed that, Sheikh Abdullahi requested that they return home, for he knew victory would not be achieved due to the injustice perpetrated against those people. However, he received no support. They proceeded onward. When the two armies met, calamity befell the Community; they were routed, scattered, and more than a thousand men were killed. Yet, after several days of fierce confrontation, the Community later succeeded in repelling the adversaries.

Significant Events that Occurred in the Third Year of his Migration

The Battle of Katsina: In that year (the third year of migration), the Battle of Katsina was fought, and victory was achieved. Umaru Dallaje was then appointed as the leader of the town. Many events transpired concerning it.

The Battle of Borno: In that same year, certain regions of Borno were fought, and victory was secured over them, to the extent that flags/banners were presented to some of the disciples of Sheikh Usman such as Malam Zaki of Katagum, Malam Yakubu of Bauchi, and Ishaka of Daura; as well as Buba Yero of Gombe, and Alfa Adam in Adamawa, and others.

The Second Battle of Alkalawa: Within this third year, the second Battle of Alkalawa was fought. This occurred during the harvesting season. The commander of the battle was Aliyu Jedo. In this battle, there were people from Zurmi who joined the Community in the Gundumi forest. However, before the Community reached Alkalawa, news had reached the Gobir people. They emerged, and an intense battle ensued. Yet, in a short time, the Gobir forces were subdued, resulting in the death of about five of their prominent leaders, among whom was the King of Galmi.

The Battle of Kannu: Also in that year, the Battle of Kannu, a town in the Kiyawa region, was fought. The commander of this battle was Muhammadu Bello. In "Infaqu", he recounted that disputes had arisen between him and the people of Talata-Mafara, as well as the people of Burmi, on his route to Kiyawa. This occurred because Mafara and Burmi people violated the treaty that existed between them and the Community. Muhammadu Bello indicated that the Community was victorious in that battle.

The Building of Gwandu Town: In that year, the town of Gwandu was built. Muhammadu Bello stated that it was he who founded the town of Gwandu. The construction of this town, or perhaps we should say its founding, corresponds to the year 1807 CE, which aligns with 1222 AH of the Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The Fourth Year of his Migration

The major event that occurred in that fourth year of his migration was the third battle of Alkalawa. This battle is of great significance, for it was during this time that the city of Alkalawa was conquered. The conquest of Alkalawa is a pivotal event in the history of the Jihad of Sheikh Usman, for with it, whatever remained of the strength of the Hausa states crumbled, as there was no other powerful state at that time which equalled the Gobir kingdom.

In that battle, Muhammadu Bello commanded a very large army. From the beginning of the rainy season, Muhammadu Bello had been traveling back and forth to various towns where the Community resided, instructing them to prepare for the expedition against Alkalawa during the following dry season. All members of the Community made preparations for war. When the dry season set in, he set out with commanders such as the War Commander Aliyu Jedo, Namoda, and the Emir of Katsina. Initially, he encamped at Lajinge. Later, he proceeded, fought the city, and Allah granted them victory. It was in this battle that the King of Gobir, Yunfa, was killed, and his forces were scattered, and a vast amount of booty was collected. At the time that Alkalawa was conquered, Muhammadu Bello sent a messenger to inform Sheikh Usman about it. However, the messenger found that the jinn had preceded him and had already broken the news to Sheikh Usman, who had already

gone out to give the people the glad tidings. Muhammadu Bello noted that historians have said, "The jinn often take news of battles and other issues and convey it to other places before human messengers." He also stated, "It is possible that Sheikh Usman witnessed the conquest of Alkalawa through mystical unveiling (kashf)." Alkalawa was conquered in the year 1223 AH of the Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) which corresponds to the year 1808 CE.

During that year, Malam Musa was given the flag/banner to lead the Muslims in the Zakzak region. Also in that year, Aliyu Jedo commanded a force to wage war in Argungu and Augie.

The Fifth Year of his Migration

In that same year, the Community launched expeditions into the Kwara region and was victorious. Accounts of these battles are found in the book "Tazyin" by Sheikh Abdullahi. In the book are narratives, chronicles, and poetic odes he composed concerning these invasions.

The Sixth Year of his Migration

In the sixth year of his migration, Sheikh Usman departed from Gwandu and moved to Sifawa. This occurred after he had resided in Gwandu for about four years.

The Building of Sokoto: In was in this year that the city of Sokoto was built[14]14. Also, within the same year, the Community's expeditions reached the regions of Zabarma and Nupe.

Still in the year, Muhammadu Bello launched an attack on Gwari, conquered it, and brought its chief as a prisoner of war in chains. Furthermore, the greater part of Borno territory was fought, and victory was achieved.

It is also plausible to infer that the town of Katagum was founded in that year. The founder of this town was the renowned scholar named Ibrahim, but given the epithet ZAKI, derived from the Arabic phrase "Dhakil-Qalbi" (possessor of a pure heart).

An Account of the Events that Occurred Between Sheikh Usman and El-Kanemi Regarding the Wars of the People of Part of Borno

Before proceeding with this exposition, it is beneficial for the reader to know who El-Kanemi was and his origin.

Sheikh Adamu Abdullahi Ilori mentioned in his book "Al-Islamu Fi Nijeriya" that: "Among the scholars of this land was Muhammad Al-Amin El-Kanemi. He was born in Fazzan. His father was an Arab, but his mother was from the tribe of...

[14] 14 The female writer named Jean Boyd stated that, based on a poem by Mamman Tukur titled "Miyatti Jeno", the city of Sokoto was built in the year 1224 AH, instead of the sixth year of the migration of Sheikh Usman, which corresponds to 1225 AH. There are differences among writers concerning the dating of events related to this Caliphate. If one examines "Raudatul-Afkari" by AbdulQadir son of Mustapha, one will see he differs from Waziri Junaidu on many points. For example, AbdulQadir son of Mustapha places the conquest of Alkalawa in the fifth year of the migration of Sheikh Usman, but Waziri Junaidu places it in the fourth. I believe this discrepancy originates from the initial calculation that Sheikh Usman migrated in the month of Dhul-Qi'dah of the year 1218 AH, of which only two months remained in that calendar year. Some writers include these two months (in the count), while others only begin counting from Dhul-Qi'dah of the year 1219 AH as the first year. Allah is the All-Knowing.

Kanemi. He performed the pilgrimage (Hajj) and resided for some time in Medina, Egypt, and Fazzan. Thereafter, he returned to his homeland. He was among the learned scholars. However, it is not recorded that he wrote any book, save for one poetic ode (qasida) on seeking intercession through the names of Allah.... He opposed Sheikh Usman Bin Fodio in his jihad with numerous epistles, which Muhammadu Bello reproduced in his book "Infaqul-Maysur". He exerted himself greatly to defend Borno and Kanemi until he wrested them from the forces of Sheikh Usman Bin Fodio. As a result of this, he remained the ruler until his death in the year 1881. Furthermore, rulership passed to his sons and grandsons in Borno and Kanemi. They are given the title "Shehu" to this day." This, is a concise exposition concerning El-Kanemi.

The Formal Acceptance of Flags

When war broke out between Sheikh Usman and Gobir, the Hausa chiefs began to suppress anyone who had a connection with him (Sheikh Usman), especially if they were Fulani. Each chief stood up to eliminate what he perceived as sedition. What further emboldened them in this was seeing that the fire of sedition had ignited from Gobir, which was the most powerful kingdom in Hausaland at that time. Yet, behold, it had been eliminated, becoming a thing of the past. Consequently, there began a steady stream of disciples coming to Sheikh Usman to receive flags, which were symbols indicating that the bearers were granted permission to wage war. This led to Kano being fought and conquered under the leadership of Sulaiman, a king known for justice. Likewise, Katsina was fought and conquered under the leadership of Umaru Dallaje.

At this point, we can state that from the very commencement of this war, approximately twenty disciples from various regions

came to Sheikh Usman or sent emissaries to receive flags for jihad, for the advancement of the religion of Allah. Here are the names of his disciples and their respective regions of origin:

1. Moyijo, the Sarkin Kabi, from Yabo
2. Abu Hamid, the Sarkin Zamfara, from Zurmi
3. Umaru Dallaje, from Katsina
4. Is'haqa, from Daura
5. Malam Musa, from Zakzak (Zaria)
6. Sulaiman, from Kano
7. Ibrahim Zaki, from Borno (Katagum)
8. Buba Yero, from Gombe
9. Yakubu, from Bauchi
10. Modibbo Adama, from Honbina (Adamawa)
11. Sambo son of Ashafa, from Yandoto
12. Goni Mukhtar, from Borno (He conquered the city of Ngazargamu)
13. Muhammadu Wabe, from Borno (Jama'are)
14. Sambo Digimsa and Larlima, from Hadejia
15. Muhammadu Manga, son of Goni Mukhtar, from (Misau)
16. Muhammadu (Alimi), from Ilorin
17. Malam Dendo, from Nupe
18. Muhammadu Al-Baqir, from Ahiru.

These were those who received the flags and were granted permission to wage war (jihad).

In the preceding exposition, it was stated that parts of Borno were fought and conquered. The implication here is that if we observe carefully, we will see that Malam Ibrahim Zaki, Goni Mukhtar, Muhammadu Wabe from Jama'are, Sambo Digimsa and his cousin Larlima from Hadejia, and Muhammadu

Manga all originated from Borno territory and established their emirates there. Among these battles, Goni Mukhtar's expedition targeted the seat of Borno's authority; he besieged the city of Ngazargamu until he conquered it and expelled its king. However, after a few months, the king counterattacked, killed Goni Mukhtar, and reclaimed his capital. This is why his son, Muhammadu Manga, founded the town of Misau.

While these battles were ongoing, Allah brought the aforementioned scholar, El-Kanemi, to Borno. It was previously stated that he opposed Sheikh Usman in his jihad. He viewed the jihad as unnecessary, because the people of Borno were Muslims. Consequently, a written exchange began between Sheikh Usman and El-Kanemi. Muhammadu Bello stated in "Infaqu": "Nothing caused us greater apprehension than an epistle from Alhaji Aminu (El-Kanemi)."

There are numerous epistles that El-Kanemi wrote to Sheikh Usman, and the latter responded to them. However, some of these documents are not recorded in the book "Infaqu", while others are. There are about ten epistles in the book. I will take one epistle by El-Kanemi and translate it for the benefit of the readers. Then I will translate the reply given by them (Sheikh Usman and Muhammad Bello) to him. I will take the first epistle that El-Kanemi sent to Sheikh Usman. Then, I will present the response given by Muhammadu Bello. For this first epistle by El-Kanemi, three replies were issued. One was from Sheikh Abdullahi, and two were from Muhammadu Bello. However, I will translate only the two replies by Muhammadu Bello.

The First Letter from Muhammad Amin El-Kanemi Addressed to Sheikh Usman

Praise is to Allah, the Opener of the gates of guidance and the Bestower of the means to attain a share (of it). Peace and blessings be upon the one sent with the religion, a hanif, the gentle, the easy, and upon the members of his household and his Companions, those who are righteous and who manifested his Sacred Law (Shari'ah). From one who is wrapped in the garment of sins and enveloped in the veil of faults, the humble servant, who is Muhammad Al-Amin, son of Muhammad El-Kanemi – to the Fulani scholars and their leaders. Peace be upon those who follow guidance.

Thereafter, the reason for my writing to you is that when destiny compelled me to come to this land, I found the fire of sedition smouldering between you and the inhabitants of this land. I inquired about the cause, and was told: "Injustice (zulm) and Sunnah." We were perplexed by this matter. I then wrote a letter to your neighbouring brethren, seeking the cause and proof of its permissibility. They gave me a reply which was unsatisfactory, not befitting a rational person, let alone a scholar, not to mention a religious reviver (mujaddid). Moreover they cited to me the names of books, parts of which we have studied, but we did not comprehend what they understood therein. While we were filled with confusion regarding the matter, a segment of them attacked the seat of power. Then those who had emigrated came and encamped near us. We wrote to them a second time, entrusting them to Allah and seeking that they restrain their harm from us, but they intensified. They merely descended upon us; and we stood to defend ourselves; dissociating ourselves from their reprehensible actions. When the land became too confined for us, we found no place of

residence nor places conducive to mobility; and what befell us became inevitable. By the time we obtain respite, and this matter spreads, Allah alone knows what will happen next; hence, we saw it fit to write to you, even if the writing yields no benefit, it is better than remaining silent.

Know that a person of intellect should engage with speech to comprehend it, then provide a response to it, a correct reply. Therefore, inform us of the reason for fighting us and for enslaving our children.

If you claim that we did this to you because of your disbelief (kufr), then know that we dissociate ourselves from disbelief, and we are far removed from its precincts. For if performing the prayer (salat), giving alms (zakat), knowing Allah, fasting in Ramadan, and maintaining mosques constitute disbelief, then what is Islam?

These structures in which you have established the Friday prayer, are they churches or places of Jewish worship, or perhaps fire-temples? If they were not symbols of Islam, then why do you pray in them now that you have possession of them? Indeed, this is nothing but vacillation and inconsistency.

Among your greatest proofs for declaring the majority of believers as unbelievers are: the journeys that kings/chiefs undertake to certain places intending to give alms there, the practice of displaying nudity by girls, the acceptance of bribes, the confiscation of orphans' property, and injustice in judgment. Now, these five (matters) do not permit you to commit what you are committing. However, concerning the journeys of the chiefs, that is indeed a reprehensible and blameworthy innovation (bid'ah), prohibiting it is obligatory, and opposing one who performs it is (required). Yet, the one who performs it does not become an unbeliever, for no one claims it has any

spiritual effect or is intended as polytheism (shirk). No, their claim, due to their ignorance, is merely that it is better to do it in these places than in other places. Anyone who deals with the books of jurisprudence (fiqh) and understands the discourse of the scholars in the chapter on Hajj, when they discuss the prohibition of making offerings to graves and slaughtering at them, will realise the truth of what we have said. Consider that great city of Damietta (Dimyada), it is a major city of Islam, located between Egypt and the Levant (al-Sham), and it is a land of knowledge and Islam. Within the city, there is a tree where the ignorant perform actions analogous to what the non-Arabs (Ajam) do here; yet, none of the scholars rose to fight them, nor did anyone declare them unbelievers.

As for the practice of display of nudity by women, this is also forbidden; the Qur'an has established its prohibition. However, the one who commits such an act, is not rendered an unbeliever. This would only be the case if she were to engage in explicit denial, for denial indeed leads to disbelief. However, the mere failure to perform an act, without accompanying denial, is a shortcoming for which sincere and immediate repentance is obligatory. Do you not observe a young woman who prays without covering her head, and when the prayer time has elapsed, she does not repeat it? This, according to the one who holds this opinion, is well-established within the legal texts. Therefore, if she were to become an unbeliever, how could prayer be accepted from her?

Similarly, accepting bribes, confiscating the wealth of orphans, and judicial oppression; all of these are among the major sins (kaba'ir) which Allah has prohibited. Nevertheless, no one becomes an unbeliever after the certainty of their faith is established, solely on account of sin. Now, if you were to

enjoin good and forbid evil, and you distanced yourself from people who refused to heed, that would be more excellent than this conflict. For enjoining and forbidding are matters founded upon conditions. Among them is that the action should not lead to a consequence greater than itself. Thus, behold, this prohibition of yours has cast you into ruin, and has caused great harm to you, and to the Muslims. This harm, moreover, pertains to both this world and the Hereafter. Is showing disrespect to a leader after pledging allegiance to him not unlawful according to all the scholars of the Sunnah, even if immorality has become apparent in him? This issue is well-known and clear as the daylight. However, there is no stratagem and no power except with Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty.

This is a brief observation upon which no elaboration can be made. So, we concede, a contested agreement, that these acts constitute disbelief upon those who commit them. How, then, does this apply to one who. has not committed it? Furthermore, Allah, Exalted is He, has said: "Nor will a bearer of burdens bear another's burden." And He has said: "Whoever does a good deed, its reward is for him; and whoever does evil, the sin thereof is upon him." And other similar verses.

We concede, a contested agreement, that the disbelief of one person can affect another, yet this would lead to the nullification of legal principles and declaring an entire community as unbelievers. We seek refuge with Allah, the Exalted. For there is no era among the ages except that in all cities there exists countless immorality. Consider the city of Egypt, which is analogous to Borno and even greater than it; likewise, consider Syria, and indeed all the cities of Islam, wherein bribery, oppression, the confiscation of orphans' wealth, various injustices, and innovations (bidi'o'i) are

found; or immorality, from the era of the Umayyad Dynasty until today; and there is no era or city that is free except that it experiences a portion or share of innovation or immorality. Therefore, if all of them were to become unbelievers, then the books they authored would become misleading. So, by what means do you establish evidence based on their books if they were unbelievers as your statements indicate? We seek refuge with Allah from a lack of tranquility in religion and from flawed analysis.

Indeed, we have observed from among you actions which a righteous person would repudiate, and this is the disrespect you demonstrate upon books by discarding them on pathways and in filthy places; despite the fact that the name of Allah, the Exalted, is within them. Moreover, you know that whoever discards a verse of the Qur'an in a filthy place has become an unbeliever.

We seek refuge with Allah. Furthermore, we have observed from your faction those who make covenants and swear oaths, only for them to violate the oaths after having affirmed them. This is done by means of killing men and enslaving women and children. It is astonishing from you, given that you were previously among the vanguards of knowledge and religion, but then you became seekers of authority and covetous of it. Consequently, your minds have enticed (the matter) for you, and you imagined within yourselves what you imagined, and you have established proofs based on the apparent meanings of texts which were never proofs for you, despite the fact that we have heard the history of Sheikh Usman Bin Fodio, and we have seen in his books that which contradicts your actions.

Therefore, if this thing originated from his works, then, there is no stratagem and no power except with Allah, the

Exalted, the Great. Verily, we held a favourable opinion of him, but now we have become as a certain speaker said: "Indeed, we are followers of the Scholar if he stands with the truth, but if he contradicts the truth, then the truth is most deserving of being followed." We seek refuge with Allah from being among those concerning whom Allah, the Exalted, says: "Shall I inform you of the greatest losers in respect of (their) deeds? (They are) those whose efforts have gone astray in the world, while they think that they are doing good work." (18:103-104).

"Then they (i.e., the people) split their affair among themselves into sects; each faction rejoicing in what it has" (23:53). Peace be with you.

This is the letter of Sheikh Muhammad Al-Amin El-Kanemi. Muhammadu Bello said: "When his document reached us, my paternal uncle, Sheikh Abdullahi, gave him a satisfactory response. And this was with the directives of Sheikh Usman. Likewise, I also gave him a reply".

The First Reply to El-Kanemi's First Letter by Muhammadu Bello

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Praise be to Allah, the Possessor of definitive proofs and eloquent words that clarify the truth and efface falsehood, dismantling it. I testify that there is none worthy of worship in truth except Allah, Who, alone is without any partner, Who enjoins good and forbids evil and oppression – a pure testimony whose sun shines brightly. And I testify that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger, whom He sent with guidance and the religion of truth to make it prevail over all religions, and whom He aided against the people of deviant desires. May the peace and

blessings of Allah be upon him, his family, and his Companions, the possessors of profound and beneficial knowledge.

From the servant, hopeful for the mercy of his Mighty Lord, Muhammadu Bello, son of the Commander of the Faithful, Usman Bin Fodio – may Allah direct him to His pleasure and make him taste the sweetness of his piety.

Thereafter, indeed a letter has reached us from a scholar from Kanemi on the sixth day of the month of Sha'ban, inquiring about the reason for the "Jama'ah's" warfare against the people of his lands and the enslavement of their children. He wrote within it that he had written to some Fulani neighbouring them; but they gave him a reply that was unsatisfactory, which could not be said to have come from a sensible, learned scholar, let alone a reviver (mujaddid). He said they cited to him some books which he had read, but he did not comprehend what they had understood. At the time when he was in a state of anguish and confusion. behold, some Fulani attacked the seat of their kingdom. The Mujahideen camped near them, and (they) in turn wrote them a letter a second time, appealing to them by Allah and by Islam to desist from their aggression against them. However, they refused, rebelled, and advanced against them. They then stood firm to defend their brethren, dissociating themselves from the vile actions of the attackers. This occurred at a time when the land had become constricted for them despite its vastness. Then, what transpired between them transpired. Thereafter, he mentioned his reasons for dissatisfaction and set forth his proofs and arguments for that position.

We understood the substance of his exposition, to the point of the explicit declaration in his discourse that he relied upon what he had heard from those (others) to conclude that the entire "Jama'ah", themselves and their scholars, are astray. This he

extrapolated to the point of defaming them (i.e. the Jama'ah and their scholars). This, moreover, is despite the fact that he did not ascertain the truth of the matter nor stood upon its foundation; rather, reports simply reached him through channels whose transmission was not sound. From this, we understood that he is either an ignorant person or one who rejects the truth. For if he were among the people of knowledge, he would not have judged all the people to be in error based on the discourse he heard from a faction of followers who are not distinguished for knowledge. On the contrary, what was incumbent upon him was to strive to seek out the truth, and to write to all those from whom he presumed to possess sound knowledge and religion. Had he done so, that is, to have investigated all that they possess in terms of statements and discourses, then, at that point, he would have weighed them upon the scale of the scholarly knowledge at his disposal. If he had accepted that and it became clear to him that it was the truth, then he should have followed it. If, however, it appeared otherwise then he should have turned to interpretation (ta'wil) and sought for them a way out according to his ability, and thereafter refrain from further action accordingly. "Do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge." Then, if interpretation proves difficult, he should have contented himself with guiding and advising them with what he believed would guide them to the right path through dialogue and reasoned debate, and by enjoining good and forbidding evil. If the matter intensified, then he should have done whatever was most appropriate concerning them.

But our assertion – either he is a rejecter of the truth, that he knows the truth and its ways, and he knew that the discourse of those individuals could not constitute proof for casting the entire "Jama'ah" into error, let alone for finding fault with its leader, whose virtuous traits are widespread everywhere.

What led him to that was fanatical partisanship and the envy of ignorance (jahiliyya). We seek refuge with Allah.

Then we say, while seeking to encounter luck/fortune from Allah, if not because of what Allah, the Exalted, has mentioned: "And when you are greeted (answer) with a greeting..." nor because of what the Chosen Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, as reported by Al-Baihaqi and others: "A written document has the right to have its reply given, just as returning a greeting is obligatory;" for had it not been so, we would not have replied to him even with a word. We would have left him with his ilk to continue their talk. This is as the saying goes: "That one is like a donkey; do not go and argue with him. No, let donkeys meet with their own kind."

Know from the outset, Oh El-Kanemi, that we did not wage war against people at all because of what those (people) told you. No, we fought them to defend ourselves and our religion and our families; at a time when they wronged us, expelled us from our abodes, and sought to return us to that which is not lawful for us. Indeed, Sheikh (Usman) has made the truth manifest to us, and we have recognised and followed it. Then they sent the foolish ones among them to inflict harm on us and to plunder our wealth, and to commit robbery on our routes. We, however, persisted in striving to reform our religion and to disseminate the knowledge we possess, and we continued to guide those who came to us. This is our customary practice, and that is their customary practice. When they saw that we would not abandon our course, and when they saw that our affair only increased in goodness and clarity, and when they saw other people continually embracing the religion of Allah in groups, this angered them. Consequently, they directed their scheming against us to wage war upon us. And they had

no doubt that they would be victorious. This was due to what they perceived as our weakness in relation to them. Nothing frightened us except the announcements of the King of Gobir, Nafata, containing three stipulations:

* He did not permit anyone to preach to the people except Sheikh Usman alone.
* He did not permit anyone to embrace Islam except one who had inherited it from his parents; whoever had not inherited it must revert to the religion of his parents and forefathers.
* No man is to wear a turban again; likewise, no woman is to wear a headscarf again.

This was his announcement in the marketplaces. All of this was for no other reason than to enact a wicked scheme against us. Then Allah delivered us from these evil and harm reaching us; and He turned this wicked scheme and treachery back upon its deviser; then death came to him not long after.

When his son, Yunfa, assumed power, he too followed in those footsteps until he waged war against a large town from among the towns of Muslims, while its inhabitants were unarmed. They killed whom Allah willed among the scholars and reciters of the Qur'an in the month of Ramadan during the daytime, while the people were observing the fast. They plundered their wealth and captured their children. Not only that, but they also scattered books and copies of the Qur'an on the ground and trampled them. Furthermore, they burned writing slates, mocking the Muslims and saying: 'Come to us with that which you promised (i.e., punishment) if you were truthful.' After that, they repeatedly threatened the town in which Sheikh Usman was residing, to the point that their king sent word to him (Sheikh Usman) to gather his family, his

relatives, and his children in one place, for he (the king) would attack the town. However, Sheikh Usman refused, stating that he would migrate with his "Jama'ah"; and so, he went to a place called Gudu. When he arrived there, the people who had embraced Islam began migrating there in groups. The unbelievers, meanwhile, set out to intercept them, blocking their way as their king had commanded them. Then they began launching raids and attacks against us. Throughout all this, Sheikh Usman was writing to them, but they refused (to desist), asserting that their king was mustering forces to attack us. When he brought his forces against us, Allah did not grant him victory; He (Allah) dispersed his people. The King himself escaped. When he returned home, he sent to his fellow kings, such as the Emir of Katsina, the Emir of Kano, Zazzau, Daura, and Ahir warning them that he had left a small fire smouldering in his land that had spread beyond his power to contain and had overwhelmed him, and he had been unable to extinguish it, to the point that it was about to consume him; therefore, each of them should be wary lest what befell him befall them. Thereupon, each of them began killing and capturing all those perceived to have any connection to Sheikh Usman. The people fled to various places, some uniting with others until they formed a group. Then they began defending themselves, until the matter reached the state it did.

This is the truth of what we know concerning our area. However, regarding your area, we have no knowledge of what incited the war there. Except that one certain year, a man named Adamu Alhaji came to us claiming that the King of Borno, Ahmad, son of Ali, had sent him to Sheikh Usman to inquire about this matter (jihad), and he requested Sheikh Usman to prevent the Fulani from leaving his land, for he was the Commander of the Faithful (Sarkin Musulmi). Sheikh Usman

then instructed me to write him a letter. So, I wrote a letter to him, explaining our reasons. I explained to him the condition of the Hausa kings, stating that they were unbelievers, and that it constituted apostasy (ridda) for a Muslim to render help to them. Furthermore, I had also written a letter to the Fulani in his land, instructing them to maintain good social relations and seek peaceful coexistence with the King of Borno.

When his messenger returned, not long after, I received news that he had delivered the message, and that the King of Borno had even killed him at one of his (the king's) camps while he (the king) was on the way to attack Dan Abdoro. Allah is the Knower of the truth of this matter.

Now, we shall return to providing you a response concerning that which you have deemed reprehensible about us through your association with your ilk. This is alongside what you have included of deceit, while what has transpired already resides in your heart. So, I shall address them one after another. Praise be to Allah, the First and the Last.

Now, to respond to what you have deemed reprehensible about us from the information of the one who told you, "We are fighting the people of Borno and others because they are unbelievers; and I hold their disbelief due to the pilgrimage that the kings make to certain places where they intend to make offerings; and due to the exposure of the private parts (awrah) that young girls engage in; and due to the acceptance of bribes; and due to the consumption of orphans' wealth; and also due to judicial oppression – while it is well-known and an established principle that none of the sects of religion, such as the Qadariyya, Jabriyya, and others, are declared unbelievers, except the Mujassima (anthropomorphists) and those who deny Allah's knowledge of minor matters. This is for the people

of faith. So, is it not contradictory to what is established for each and every one, that no one among the people of the qibla is declared an unbeliever on account of sin?"

There is something astonishing about you. How can you assert that we were formerly among the vanguards of knowledge and religion, yet you accuse us of an ignorance about these? It is astonishing that we are fighting people because of these five matters, while they are committed frequently here among us. If we are fighting because of them, what would prevent us from fighting those who commit them here among us? It is astonishing that you claim if we declare the majority of believers to be unbelievers; we would not have been performing prayers in their mosques, as you allege. This statement of yours contradicts its counterpart.

Secondly: there is astonishment from you. How can we declare the majority of believers to be unbelievers on account of these five matters, when we have always released every prisoner of war whose belief in Islam is established, as is well-known among us? Nothing remains except that everything you have mentioned concerning us is nothing but falsehood, held onto as a means to slander and defame the Muslims. Indeed, this is far from us; what (you imagine) has transpired has already settled in your heart. Thus, you should write to your ilk and hear from them things that are not appropriate. This, either due to their deficient understanding in discerning the truth, or due to your malicious intent. Allah, the Exalted, is the Knower of the truth of the matter, and to Him all matters return.

Concerning your claim that our prohibition of evil has led to a greater evil, the matter is not so. It is well-known among us that we did not dispute with the kings to prevent them from practicing their customs that contradict the Shari'ah; we

were simply guiding whoever came to us seeking guidance to the (right) path. It was the kings who first prevented us from our religion, and who fought us and oppressed us, as I have previously outlined.

Moreover, your claim that this enjoining (good) and forbidding (evil) has caused us harm to our religion – this being the display of disrespect to a leader, while the prohibition of this is established for everyone, even if immorality is manifest in the leader – if this statement of yours also includes the kings of this land, then it is not worthy of attention. This, is due to what is established among us concerning their disbelief and their ignorance of the fundamentals of religion, and their offering of sacrifices to stones and trees, and their denial of the Day of Resurrection. This is what we know in this land of ours. However, we have no knowledge concerning your land and the condition of its leaders and kings. This is aside from what we know of your King's stance in harming the Fulani who are neighbours to you and who are followers of Sheikh Usman. This even forced them to migrate. You did this in order to give support to the Hausa kings and to help them. It is well-known that unbelievers are allies of one another, just as believers are also allies of one another. Thus, we knew that he is one who approves of their religion. This, moreover, at a time when he stood firmly in their defence and turned his back on the believers, and he supported them against the people of faith. Verily, approval of disbelief is itself disbelief. It thus becomes incumbent upon a person of intellect to flee with his religion from such a situation. Then, there is no greater ignorance from you than when you ascribed statements to us that we did not make. These statements came from a faction incapable of explaining our affairs, and they related the truth to you as it is; but then the misconception came from you, due to your mischievous intent. How could it

be possible to declare an entire community and its scholars as unbelievers, when the Prophet – may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him – said, "My community will not unite under misguidance," and numerous hadiths to that effect have been transmitted. Woe unto you! If we declared the entire community and its scholars as unbelievers, as you allege, then how could we establish evidence based on their statements?

Thirdly, this statement of yours contradicts another. Such a thing would not come from a person of intellect. Nothing remains but that you are one who desires to cast us into misguidance and one who desires to suppress the truth. For indeed, there is something (evil) in your heart.

We concede that the one giving this answer practices the things that you have enumerated. Do you not know that if an individual engages in an act that is characteristic of a particular school of thought, that action does not necessarily constitute that school of thought unless explicitly stated? This is how it is among scholars engaged in inquiry as we have previously outlined.

But regarding your statement: "We have observed from among you, to the end of that statement," know this, O El-Kanemi: I attended a battle among the battles (we fought), and we conquered a city among the cities of Katsina, and I mounted in order to assess the situation, I found some papers rising up and swirling in the air and falling in filthy places. So, I exerted my utmost effort to retrieve them, but I could not manage it due to their abundance. I then left without achieving what I had intended to do. I remained distressed throughout that entire day.

Then I called people together to find out those who had done this, in order to reprimand them, but I was not successful

in finding out any of those who did it. I consulted with people of sound judgment, and they explained to me that this had occurred unintentionally; that this is something that could happen during the commotion and tumult of looting goods, where a bundle becomes loose or is torn, and papers scatter and fly into the air. Therefore, let it not settle in your heart that this was an action of the righteous among us, nor that it was done with their approval. We seek refuge with Allah except that this discarding was done by ignorant fools.

As for us, if we had seen those who were doing this, discarding papers in open spaces and pathways, we would have disciplined them severely. If you are blaming us because of them, then consider the Children of Israel: they worshipped the calf, and some of them said to Moses, "Show us Allah openly," and so on. Would you then find fault with the Prophets because of their followers? May Allah protect us. So, thus is the matter. As for the repudiation of covenants, all these happened from abased individuals who do not know the value of covenants and keeping trusts, nor do they know that the deceitful one will have his banner of deceit erected on the Day of Resurrection, and whoever intervenes in order to deprive a person who has been deceived his rightful due also becomes a deceiver.

Again, your statement that "there is astonishment from you, after you were among the vanguards" to the end of the statement. This statement also contradicts its counterpart. For a person of intellect would not utter it. How can you testify that we possess knowledge and religion, and then ascribe ignorance and immorality to us? Were knowledge and religion taken from us at the time we sought leadership and authority? So much so that we became subservient to the deceitful glitters of life and what it displays, thus we established evidence based on

the apparent meanings of texts which are not suitable for those circumstances? Or did we know the truth, but we neglected it and followed what life beguiled us with and made to seem appealing? If you say knowledge and religion were taken from you and your condition changed, then what will you say about the hadith that says, "Indeed, Allah does not take away knowledge by removing it..." up to the end of the hadith? If you say we knew the truth but neglected it and turned to what has been mentioned earlier, then we say you are more deserving of this. For you testify to our former vanguard status in knowledge and religion, but we discarded it when we sought authority. If we have become thus, then verily you are worse than us in doing this, and you are more deserving of the stripping of (the garment) of knowledge and piety.

But your statement, "If this originated from his opinion," is a statement whose fault is evident. How can you hasten to hold a bad opinion of one whose virtuous traits are well-known and have spread throughout many places, and whom both people of insight and the ignorant, as well as scholars have praised? How can you hold onto what you heard from a faction (of people) neighbouring you, to whom no report came except a little? How can you rely on what came from them? This is sufficient to be an error. How can you establish proof with the saying of Allah, the Exalted and Majestic: "Nor will a bearer of burdens bear another's burden," and His saying, Exalted is He: "Whoever does a good deed, it is for himself; and whoever does evil, it is against himself," and then you hold onto what reached you from a faction (of people) neighbouring you? Perhaps it came from those who are incapable of explaining the truth of matters, or they are capable but refrained from doing so due to your obstinacy. So, they mentioned to you what they mentioned. This statement of yours contains contradiction.

Fourthly: Admonition. And it is an admonition on what you presume. We seek refuge with Allah from reverting to disbelief after Allah has guided us. "This is a noteworthy issue from..."

your Lord; so, whosoever understands, does so for his own sake, and whosoever is blind (i.e. decides not to understand), it is for his own sake, and I am not a guardian over you." Peace be upon you.

Muhammadu Bello's Second Reply to El-Kanemi's First Letter

"Then I gave him a second reply. Its content is as follows": In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Praise and gratitude are due to Allah, and reach Him. Peace be upon His chosen servants.

Thereafter, from Muhammadu Bello, son of the Commander of the Faithful, Usman Bin Fodio, to Alhaji Aminu. This is the reply to the substance of his inquiry. But your statement, "Inform us about the warfare you wage against us and the enslavement of our children that you practice," to the end of the discourse. So, the response is – Allah is the One who guides to what is right – know that the reason for the warfare we wage against you is because you gave support to the unbelievers of Hausaland, turning your backs on us without any threat from them (i.e. by choice), while you knew that whoever sides with the unbelievers, abandoning the believers by choice, becomes like them. This is established in the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the consensus (of scholars). Likewise, your stance in harming those of the "Jama'ah" who are neighbouring you, to the point of forcing them to migrate, and you began fighting them to demonstrate your support and help for the Hausa kings. It is no secret that you would not have supported them except because

you approve of their religion. Indeed, approval of disbelief is itself disbelief. Certainly, you know that having the knowledge (of the existence) of Allah, establishment of prayer, giving out zakat, and fasting in the month of Ramadan and maintaining mosques do not prevent warfare against you, nor do they benefit you in this world or the next, because of the confirmation of your apostasy (ridda), if indeed the authentic (teachings of) Islam had previously existed among you. If supporting unbelievers by choice (not under duress) does not constitute apostacy, then there is nothing that can be considered obligatory in religion, whether based on reasoning or explicit Islamic law.

And your statement: concerning the enslavement of free persons that we practice: this is because of what is known from the consensus of scholars regarding the enslavement of those who have committed apostasy. Refer to the reply of Al-Maghili to the questions of Alhaji Muhammadu Askiya; likewise, examine the book "Nawazil" of Sheikh Al-Burzali and you will find this.

But your statement, from the greatest of your evidences, to where you said no one has judged them to be unbelievers: we do not accept your claim that they did not intend polytheism (shirk) thereby. For if offering sacrifices to stones and trees is not disbelief and polytheism, and if using the arrows of divination for slaughter (of animals for sacrifice) is not disbelief and polytheism, then what is polytheism? This is sufficient to be an error.

Similarly, your statement, that: "Anyone who is acquainted with the books of jurisprudence..." to the end of the statement: this is manifest ignorance from you. For that statement was made concerning one who gives charity to the poor and to attendants of graves, not concerning one who intends to make

a sacrifice to a grave itself. For if making sacrifices at graves is not polytheism, then what is polytheism?

Again, your statement: "This Damietta (Dimyada)..." to the end of the statement: we do not accept that the scholars did not rise up to fight them and did not declare them unbelievers. For consider Abdurrahman ibn Yusuf al-Sharif, who cut down a tree that was at Sijilmasa and said it resembled Dhatu-Anwat, while you yourself know that Dhatu-Anwat was among the idols of the period of ignorance (Jahiliyya).

Al-Hassan Al-Yusi has stated that near the town of Tagiya, the abode of Sheikh bin Ya'aza, there is a tree similar to that one (Dhatu-Anwat) alongside a pile of stones. This is among that which must be removed. However, the scholar's sword is his tongue; for other than that, it is the duty of those in authority to handle such matters. Refer to the book "Al-Muhadarat".

And your statement, "But the display of nudity..." to where you said: "with sin," we do not accept that anyone has been declared an unbeliever on account of that. This is an error and a desire for contention from you, and it is slander and falsehood attributed to us. Allah will suffice (for us).

But your statement, "had you enjoined..." to your statement "the Hereafter," we do not accept that we transgressed the boundaries in enjoining good and forbidding evil. No, we adhered to them as is appropriate. The wars that occurred between us happened because of your meddlesomeness. And we did not prevent the rulers from practicing their customs that contradict the Shari'a; no, they began fighting us by preventing us from practicing our religion, and they forced us to migrate, and they began attacking us. "Ask the people of knowledge (Ahl al-dhikr), if you do not know."

Still on your statement, "this matter has caused harm to you and to the Muslims" to the end (of the statement): we do not accept that this matter has caused us harm. For it is well-known that this matter has brought us, and the rest of the Muslims, much good, and the Muslims have gained control of (inherited) your land.

But your statement, "We concede..." to your statement that "this is flawed analysis". This is a statement of falsehood and provocation. If there were someone who held the opinion of declaring a person an unbeliever due to an act of immorality, then what you have described would apply to him. However, this is malice from you and an act of aggression against the Muslims. And you consider this matter trivial, while in the sight of Allah it is a grave matter.

Also, your statement, "We have observed from among you..." to where you said "from the discarding": this is distortion and an attempt to cast blame. You certainly know that these actions are not the deeds of the righteous among us; no, but if such is found, it occurred at the hands of the ignorant among us. The Prophet – may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him – used to say, "Jihad is continuous; the oppression of the oppressor will not abolish it."

But your statement that "this became astonishing" up to your statement "your action": this is a contradictory statement, or rather speech resembling that of one struck by Satan. For how could you initially testify to our good, and then you testify to our evil? This is sufficient to be (seen as) madness and contradiction. How can you say we sought authority, while you know that desire is among the acts of the heart? Or did you engage in divination about the unseen? This matter from you is sufficient to be contradiction and falsehood.

Likewise, your statement concerning Sheikh Usman Bin Fodio on the testimony of a favour bestowed, and later associated him with wrongdoing. This is also clear evidence of the rancour and insanity that are in your heart. This alone suffices to constitute a fault in you.

Know that O you El-Kanemi, indeed, we disassociate ourselves of all that you have alleged against us. We are those who return to the Almighty Allah on all the things that you have imputed to us. "It is Allah whose help is sought concerning that which you describe." Peace be upon you.

These are the two replies of Muhammadu Bello to the first letter which El-Kanemi wrote to Sheikh Usman. The reader will observe the extent to which the scholars in this land excelled in their proficiency at formulating arguments and employing Islamic philosophical discourse to defend a position. In the present day, will there be any scholars trying to do such an endeavour?

The Seventh to the Thirteenth Years

It was in this (seventh) year that the "Jama'ah" intensified its military expeditions and launched attacks upon various regions, achieving victory.

In the eighth year of his (Sheikh Usman's) Hijra, the Emir of Zazzau, Malam Musa, launched attacks in various places and was also victorious. In that same year, Salih, son of Babare of Gobir, rebelled; he was captured and executed. He was able to rebel because the Azbinawa gave him their backing. It was said that allegiance was pledged to him to become the King of Gobir in the ruined town of Alkalawa.

In the ninth year of the Hijra (of Sheikh Usman), a man named Hamma claimed to be the Mahdi; he too was captured

and executed. During that year, a man named Jailani began fighting against the Azbinawa and was victorious over them.

In the eleventh year after his Hijrah, Sheikh Usman moved from Sifawa to Sokoto. The city of Sokoto was developed and expanded to become a centre for the Islamic religion. In that same year, Muhammad, son of Abdullahi Bin Fodio, went to fight in the land of Bargu, conquered it, and their king was killed.

In the twelfth year after his Hijrah, the Shehu fell ill, due to which Allah called him to His mercy. In the thirteenth year after his Hijrah, the Battle of Banaga was fought. It was during the year that Muhammadu Buhari also launched attacks into various regions of Zabarama, Gwari, and others and was victorious.

Admonition/Clarification

Waziri Junaidu, in his book titled "Labtul Multaqatati", stated that Sheikh Usman passed away during the thirteenth year after his Hijrah. I have followed his arrangement in the book that I previously mentioned, except for what I have drawn from "Infaqu", "Tazyin" and "Raulatul-Afkari". However, Abdulkadir, son of Mustapha, indicated that the passing away of Sheikh Usman occurred in the fourteenth year after his Hijrah.

Certainly, if we go back and examine the birth of Sheikh Usman, his Hijrah, and his passing away, we will see that he passed away in the fourteenth year after his Hijrah, not in the thirteenth year. For Waziri Junaidu himself, in his previously mentioned book as well as in his book of poetry (written in Arabic) titled "Kala'idul Iq'yani", indicated that Sheikh Usman was born on the last Sunday of the month of Safar in the year 1168 after the Hijrah of the Prophet – may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Likewise, in the book "Labtu",

he indicated that he (Sheikh Usman) migrated from the land of Gobir on Thursday the second day of the month of Dhul-Qidah in the year 1218 after the Hijrah of the Prophet – may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Now, if we observe, we will see that at the time when Sheikh Usman undertook the migration, he was only fifty years and three months old. Then, if we return to the book "Labtu", we will see that Waziri Junaidu said that Sheikh Usman passed away on a Sunday night in the year 1232, in the month of Jumada al-Akhir, on the third day of the month. If we calculate, we will see that in Safar of that year, Sheikh Usman attained sixty-three years (of age). Then, in Dhul-Qidah of the year 1231 after the Hijrah, he completed thirteen years since his migration. This indicates that he passed away in the fourteenth year after his Hijrah. For from the month of Dhul-Hijjah to the month of Jumada al-Akhir is seven months. This confirms what AbdulQadir, son of Mustapha, mentioned in "Raulatul-Afkari", that Sheikh Usman passed away in the fourteenth year after his Hijrah. However, son of Tafa and Waziri Junaidu all agreed that he passed away on the third day of the month of Jumada al-Akhir. From this information, we can say Sheikh Usman passed away at the age of sixty-three years, three months, and three days.

May Allah forgive him, have mercy upon him, and unite us with him in Paradise. Amin.

Sheikh Usman passed away in the city of Sokoto, and he was buried there in his house. He was the Caliph from the day allegiance was pledged to him at Gudu until his passing in Sokoto. This period spans thirteen years and seven months. He passed away in the year 1232, on Sunday, the 20th of April in the year 1817 CE.

Waziri Junaidu mentioned that Sheikh Usman remained as Caliph for the aforementioned period of ten years as the Commander of the Faithful until his death. This indicates that Sheikh Usman was the first Commander of the Faithful of this Usmaniyya Caliphate. It also shows us that he was the Commander of the Faithful until his passing. This reveals the shortcomings of what some writers have claimed, that what Sheikh Usman did by dividing the administration of the Caliphate with his brother and Vizier, Sheikh Abdullahi in the west, and Muhammadu Bello in the east – was an indication that Sheikh Usman relinquished authority, and reverted to being solely a Religious Scholar. This is a statement in which there is no truth. Sheikh Usman made that division for ease of administration, not to distance himself from the affairs of the "Jama'ah". For in Islam, there is no separation between worldly and religious affairs

CHAPTER SIX

THE WRITINGS OF SHEIKH USMAN

In this section, we shall discuss the scholarly works of Sheikh Usman. By this, we refer specifically to his written contributions, namely the books that he had written. Here, I intend to analyse these writings through an examination of the various fields of knowledge they encompass. This entails an effort to present Sheikh Usman's intellectual perspectives as reflected in his analyses of different disciplines, according to the perspectives from which he saw them (all of which are as contained in his books). I shall endeavour to confine myself to what he himself has written without departing from this framework, except where a particular explanation proves insufficient. However, even this departure will be extremely limited. I shall also aim to articulate these to the best of my understanding. Consequently, some of the points raised may differ from the interpretations advanced by other scholars, because each scholar approaches a matter according to the degree of understanding granted him by Allah.

At the end of my analysis, I shall identify the works or rather names of the books that Sheikh Usman himself wrote, in addition to those writings incorrectly attributed to him. My analysis has made it clear that some of these works are not his.

Evidence supporting this will be presented by the will of Allah. Likewise, I shall limit this study to his works written in Arabic, excluding those he composed in Fulfulde or Hausa.

Theology (Tawḥid)

The science of Theology (Tawḥid) is the discipline concerned with affirming the oneness of Allah. Its essential meaning is that worship is to be directed to Allah alone. Sheikh Usman, in various sections of his books, has addressed from different perspectives, this subject of Theology. It is both fascinating and profoundly thought-provoking for the reader to learn that Sheikh Usman engaged in sustained intellectual contention with scholars on this field (of knowledge). It would also be surprising to learn that he approximately wrote fifty-two books solely to address issues related to this discipline.

What, then, prompted him to write such a large number of books exclusively on the subject of Theology? Is Theology not already a well-established matter in relation to belief in Allah? Indeed, Sheikh Usman was of the view that time should not be wasted in debating over this subject. Far from it! He lived among scholars who believed that their understanding of Theology was unparalleled. They also believed that Muslims were very few at that time. They were convinced that anyone who did not adopt their particular doctrinal formulations on Theology – known as the science of dialectal theology (Ilm al-Kalam), could not be regarded as a Muslim. These individuals held the view that anyone who has not mastered that (theological) knowledge in the manner they have prescribed, nothing he slaughters is to be consumed: such a person could not lead prayers, could not be followed in acts of worship; and he cannot marry from others nor should others marry from him. Their judgement extended to the point that if another scholar ruled that such people were

indeed Muslim, they would declare that scholar a disbeliever. This was the doctrinal environment that compelled Sheikh Usman to write approximately fifty-two books, as a response to these scholars, refuting their claims and countering their arguments with evidence.

Sheikh Usman firmly maintained that the science of Tawḥid (Theology) is distinct, whereas the science of Ilm al-Kalm (dialectal theology) is an entirely separate discipline. The failure to differentiate between the two was, in his view, the very cause of the confusion that afflicted those scholars. For this reason, in several of his books, Sheikh Usman endeavoured to clarify the difference between the two fields in order to dispel the misconceptions surrounding them. In his book entitled "Hisnul-Afhami Min Juyushil-Auhami", Sheikh Usman distinguished clearly between these two disciplines – namely, "Ilm al-Kalam" on one hand, and "Ilm al-Tawḥid" on the other. He states as follows:

"What is referred to as the science of Uṣul al-Din (that is, the science of Tawḥid) is the discipline that investigates matters incumbent upon a person to believe in: the beginning of creation, the attributes of Allah which are obligatory to ascribe to Him, those that are forbidden to ascribe to Him, as well as those which are permissible to ascribe to Him. In addition are those which are obligatory upon His Messengers, those which are forbidden them, and those which are permitted; as well as matters related to the existence of angels, the heavenly scriptures, death, and all affairs of the "Barzakh" (the intermediate state or barrier between the physical world and the afterlife – where the soul resides after death before the Day of Resurrection) and the Day of Resurrection, in accordance with the doctrines established by Islam."

Likewise, in this same book, Sheikh Usman clarifies what is called "Ilm al-Kalam", stating: "It is a discipline in which arguments are constructed based on rational proofs, and it contains numerous philosophical discussions."

In this book, Sheikh Usman further explains that the knowledge of Tawḥid and its meaning as enumerated earlier, are commendable. However, in contrast to this, he asserts that the second one, that is, "Ilm al-Kalam" contains elements that are blameworthy on one hand, and praiseworthy on the other.

Cumulatively, Sheikh Usman wrote several books on the subject of Tawḥid as a response to these scholars. He also wrote his book "Uṣul al-Din" for the benefit of those who were not learned, so that they might learn the fundamentals of Tawḥid. This particular book is well known in the traditional Islamic schools (makarantun zaure). He also incorporated much of what he had written in the book "Uṣul" into his books "Umdatul-Bayan" and "Ulum al-Muʿamalat".

As for the more advanced and profound aspects of the science of Tawḥid, Sheikh Usman wrote numerous books. Finally, he wrote his book titled:

Muwaqatu Fatwat – Tufaili hi Kalami Muhammad Ibn Yusuf al-Sanusi, the rulings (fatwa) in which are consistent with the rulings issued by the esteemed scholar Muhammad Sanusi. In this book, Sheikh Usman listed more than twenty-seven (27) problematic issues related to the science of Theology (Tawhid). Among these, he demonstrated that he did not go outside the legal rulings issued by Sheikh Sanusi. Sheikh Usman declared that he adhered to the opinions of Sanusi, even though there were other Sunni scholars who had elaborated on these matters, but since he (Sanusi) was an authority in this field, he (Sheikh Usman) subscribed to Sanusi's opinion.

Sheikh Sanusi was a renowned scholar from Algeria in North Africa. He became famous for his expertise in the science of Theology (Tawhid) to the extent that he was referred to as "Sanusi Burhan." The meaning of Burhan is "proof" or "evidence." This epithet originated from his frequent use of the phrase, "Wa Amma Burhanu kaza," meaning "and as for the proof of such-and-such," or "the evidence for such-and-such" in his writings.

Finally, (in his writing), Sheikh Usman provided us with a conclusive result concerning the science of Tawhid, based on the discussions presented in his preceding book, "Muwafaqah", and others. Among these are the following principles:

Reason alone cannot guide a person to recognise the truth; rather, it requires revelation, which is the Qur'an, in addition to the Sunnah.

- Theology (Tawhid) means affirming the oneness of Allah.
- It is not necessary for a person to know the detailed meaning of every word in the declaration of faith (shahada) in order for his Islam to be acknowledged.
- Faith (Iman) is to affirm that which is well-known.
- Faith (Iman) is something hidden; no one can perceive it except Allah.
- Judicial rulings in Islamic law are based on what is apparent and known externally. Anyone who proclaims the declaration of faith (shahada) becomes a Muslim, and all the rulings pertaining to Islam apply to him, unless this is nullified by his own statement or action.
- It is forbidden to harbour ill thoughts regarding the faith of another believer.

- All the tenets of Tawhid (Islamic Theology) and their proofs have been firmly established by Allah in the Qur'an.
- A person can know Allah through His creatures.
- It is obligatory to be gentle and lenient when teaching creed to the ignorant.
- It is not a condition that one must seek the knowledge of Tawhid in the Arabic language. No, it can be learned in any language that facilitates understanding.
- It is not necessary to study the profound books of Tawhid.
- The practitioners of allegorical interpretation (ta'wil) are not declared unbelievers for disputing matters that are not unequivocally established in the Religion.
- A layperson (muqallid) is a believer. A muqallid here is one who accepts the truth without independent investigation.
- It is an error to interpret the term Prophethood (Nubuwwah) as meaning only one to whom an angel is sent. Rather, it refers to "one who is sent with an angel and a message to be a Prophet, but the command is specific to him alone." Sheikh Usman explained that when Surah Al-'Alaq (Iqra') was revealed to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), this indicated Nubuwwah (Prophethood), as it concerned him alone. However, when the command "Now rise and warn" (Qum Fa Anzir) was revealed, that indicated Risalah (Messengership), as it concerned the community.

These are some of the issues that Sheikh Usman addressed in this preceding book. And upon these we shall limit our study

of his views regarding Tawhid. Anyone desiring a more detailed explanation, if they know Arabic, should consult his books such as: "Irshad Ahl al-Tafrit wal-Ifrat", "Muwafaqat" Tanbih al-Talaba", "Kifayat al-Muhtadin", "Tanzih Rabbinal-Quddus", and "Shams al-Ikhwan". Other books include: "Haqiqat al-Iman", "Mi'raj al-Awwam ila Sama' Ilm al-Kalam", and others like them. Allah is the Guide.

The Qur'an and Its Interpretation (Exegesis)

According to Sheikh Usman, as he stated in his book "Ihya al-Sunnah", the Qur'an is: "The word which was revealed to Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), in order to establish a miracle, even with just one of its chapters."

This definition indicates that the Qur'an is the word of Allah, which He revealed to His Messenger Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Moreover, even a single chapter from it constitutes a miracle, for if all of mankind and jinn were to gather to produce speech of similar eloquence, rhetorical power, and excellence – even one like the chapter "Indeed, We have granted you, (O Muhammad), al-Kawthar" – they would be unable to do so. Sheikh Usman held the view that following the Qur'an is obligatory. This obligation is established within the Qur'an itself, within the Sunnah of the Messenger (peace be upon him), and is a point of consensus among the scholars.

Regarding the recitation of the Qur'an, Sheikh Usman, in his books such as "Najm al-Ikhwan", encouraged its recitation, stating that through it, Allah illuminates hearts and grants insight. Furthermore, Sheikh Usman viewed the Qur'an as the primary source for Islamic law. For this reason,

he demonstrated that every tenet of Islamic creed is firmly established by Allah with verses from the Holy Qur'an. This is what prompted Sheikh Usman to dedicate the fourth chapter of his book "Ihya' al-Sunnah", to the elaboration on faith, stating that Allah has firmly established all the fundamental principles of faith in the Qur'an. Therefore, it is incumbent upon every believer to derive his creed from the Qur'an, due to its status as massively transmitted (Mutawatir). Subsequently, Sheikh Usman proceeded to explain each point in detail, supporting his arguments with Qur'anic verses.

Concerning the chapter on worship, Sheikh Usman held that the acts of worship, from ritual purification (taharah), ablution (wudu), prayer (salah), fasting (sawm), almsgiving (zakat), pilgrimage (hajj), and all other acts of worship and social transactions (mu'amalat), are established in the Qur'an. It was for this reason that he (Sheikh Usman) wrote his books "'Umdat al-'Ulama"' and "Mir'at al-Tullabi", in both of which he dedicated specific chapters to the detailed explanation of these matters.

Regarding exegesis (tafsir), although Sheikh Usman did not write a comprehensive exegetical work, he supported those who did. For this purpose, he devoted particular attention to this issue in his book "Kashf Ma 'Alayhi al-'Amalu wa Mala". In his explanation of the third issue in the book, he presented two opinions: that of those who deem exegesis impermissible and that of those who deem it permissible. Here, Sheikh Usman clarified that exegesis is of two types. There is exegesis based on juristic judgement (ijtihadi), about which a book can be published. Sheikh Usman stated that this type of exegesis is permissible for one who possesses knowledge of Arabic and linguistics. Alternatively, it is for one who has mastered the

fifteen sciences which Imam al-Suyuti enumerated in his book "Al-Itqan". Sheikh Usman has listed these in his books "Kashf" and "Hisn al-Afham". The second type of exegete is the narrator of exegetical reports (Hikaya). That is he will only adhere to what scholars have written. For him, it is permissible to interpret the Qur'an according to the level of his scholarly training. These are the types of exegesis which Sheikh Usman endorsed.

Although Sheikh Usman supported exegesis (tafsir), he dismissed and rejected certain types. (i.e. they cannot be authentic). These are:

1. The exegesis of an interpreter who does not possess those fifteen sciences, even if he attains scholarly expertise.
2. The interpretation of ambiguous verses (mutashabihat), meaning verses whose true meaning is known only to Allah.
3. Exegesis undertaken solely to strengthen a specific school of thought (madhhab) without valid basis. This is when the interpreter takes his own school as the fundamental source and then interprets the Qur'an in a way that merely follows and reinforces it (his madhhab).
4. Interpreting with the claim that Allah intended such-and-such meaning by a particular verse, but without providing proof.
5. Interpreting to align with personal whims/passions and subjective bias, without evidence.

Finally, in the book "Hisnu" (Hisn al-Afham), Sheikh Usman indicated that exegesis is permissible for both the old and young, provided they possess knowledge. It is also permissible for a preacher to use Qur'anic verses in his sermons, for they

are the original source. He strongly condemned those who hold the view that interpreting the Qur'an causes calamities like drought. He stated that such pronouncement could lead a person to apostacy. Furthermore, he also condemned those who say the Qur'an can be interpreted in the wilderness but not in the town. Sheikh Usman declared, "But the Qur'an was revealed for the people (mankind), not for the wilderness.

As about Qur'anic recitation (Qira'at), Sheikh Usman considers it to be something in which there is no personal choice or opinion – it must be taken directly from the Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Hadith

According to Sheikh Usman, Hadith is the second source, or it may be termed the second pillar of Islamic law. After the Qur'an, Hadith follows. There is no other source besides it. For him, Hadith has the following meaning:

"That which has come from the Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), which is not the Qur'an, be it speech, action, or approval."

Thus, Sheikh Usman defined Hadith in his book "Ihya' al-Sunnah". He explained that the Sunnah of the Messenger (SAW) comprises two parts: one pertaining to worship, and the other pertaining to evidence (hujjah). He held that both of these together constitute the second source of law.

Sheikh Usman believed that obedience to the Sunnah is obligatory. This obligation is established by the Qur'an, the Sunnah itself, and scholarly consensus. Recognising this paramount importance of the Sunnah, he wrote numerous books on following the Sunnah of the Messenger (peace be upon him). Foremost among them is his book "Ihya' al-Sunnah", which

is considered his greatest work. The book contains thirty-three chapters, and at the beginning of each, he presents what is from the Prophet's Sunnah regarding that chapter, then he discusses what constitutes innovation (bid'ah). In citing these hadiths, he would cite them from Sahih al-Bukhari. He did this because, in his view, the book of al-Bukhari is the most authentic of hadith collections. Similarly, for the reason he stated in another of his books on Sunnah, titled "Sawq al-Ummah Ila Ittiba' al-Sunnah". In this book, he explained that he preferred to use the book of al-Bukhari over that of Muslim, not for any reason other than the fact that the transmission (riwayah) of al-Bukhari's collection, in his view, was what the scholars of Hadith term chains of narration received by hearing (Sama'i). Sheikh Usman studied al-Bukhari's collection under his teacher who had a connected chain of transmission (silsilah) going back to al-Bukhari himself. However, he indicated that his transmission of Muslim's collection was "Ijaza" (a certificate/license to transmit), meaning he did not study it under a scholar with a connected chain. In "Sawq al-Ummah", he provided proof from the hadiths of al-Bukhari for every religious issue.

We also see that Sheikh Usman wrote his books "'Umdat al-'Ulama'" and "Mir'at al-Dullabi", in which he established proofs for every chapter of religion with sound hadiths. His book "Sawq al-Ummah" is a complete sign/directive – if we consider the meaning of the word – that is, to drive the community towards following the Sunnah.

Beyond this, Sheikh Usman wrote his book titled "Ittiba' al-Sunnah", that is, the Book of Following the Sunnah. All these matters are indications that the issue of the Sunnah, or rather of Hadith, was a matter that greatly concerned him. He believed it was imperative to know it and follow it, for only

then would there be peace and progress. This is why, since his student days, he devoted himself to the study of Hadith until he had a transmission (riwayah) of al-Bukhari via "Sama'i" and of Muslim via "Ijaza." Here, it is beneficial for the reader to briefly know Sheikh Usman's chain of transmission for this riwayah of al-Bukhari, as Sheikh Abdullahi Fodio mentioned in his book "Tazyin". In this book, Sheikh Abdullahi said... "at the time I returned home, I found that Sheikh Usman had gone to Muhammad Ibn Raji for the study of the book of al-Bukhari. I then followed him and found that he had not yet started the study. Then we began studying the book together. He (the teacher) was reading and we were listening. This happened in the year 1200 AH. Allah is the All-Knowing."

Thereafter, Sheikh Abdullahi compiled their chain of transmission (silsilah) of the book of Bukhari up to Bukhari himself. He (Sheikh Abdullahi) indicated that Sheikh Usman studied sahih al-Bukhari from Muhammad Ibn Raji, who in turn, received it from Abul-Hassan Assindi in the city of Medina, who received it from his teacher, Muhammad Hayatu. Muhammad Hayatu studied under Muhammad Bakibde, who received it from al-Mu'allim al-Islami, who in turn received it from Ahmad Muhammad al-Ba'bili of Egypt, who received it from Abu al-Najm al-Sanhuri, who received it from al-Mu'allim al-Islami Ibn Aliyu Ibn Hajaru, who received it from Ibrahim al-Tanukhi, who received it from Ahmad al-Hajjaru, who received it from al-Zubaidi, who received it from 'Abd al-Awwal, who received it from Dawud, who received it from al-Sarhasi, who received it from al-Firabri, who received it from al-Bukhari.

This chain of transmission (silsilah) mentioned by Sheikh Abdullahi certainly demonstrates the special care and attention

that these scholars gave to Hadith, particularly their leader, Sheikh Usman (may Allah be pleased with them).

Concerning the emphasis on the study of Hadith, Sheikh Usman drew the attention of his disciples to the fact that they must dedicate themselves to the study and analysis of hadiths, for it is through them that Allah illuminates a person's insight. It is they that show how the guide of all creatures (the Prophet) lived.

Concerning the science of Hadith and its documentation – known as the science of Mustalah al-Hadith (Hadith Terminology) – Sheikh Usman addressed this in his book "Kashf Ma 'Alayhi al-'Amalu", albeit not in great depth. This is likely because, in his time, this field was not among the sciences that were subjects of intense debate. Nevertheless, in the book, he presented the opinions of scholars who held that it was inappropriate to compile hadiths into books, as doing so would prevent people from memorising them and confine knowledge to books. He brought forth the view that, in fact, the most popular and acceptable opinion is that it is permissible to compile books of hadith. Indeed, it becomes necessary to do so in order to disseminate knowledge.

However, regarding the issue of scholars of hadith who classify certain hadiths as authentic (sahih), others as good (hasan), and yet others as weak (da'if), Sheikh Usman held the view that the scholars do this based on the extent of their understanding and the conclusions of their research. However, one cannot definitively assert that this is the absolute reality of the matter, for many times one person may deem a hadith weak, while another may later see it as authentic. It is for this reason that in his book "Hisn al-Afhami", he stated: "This relies

on the apparent assessment, but not on the definitive reality of the matter."

Concerning the narration of a hadith by its meaning without its exact wording (as it was originally reported), Sheikh Usman endorsed this practice, as he discussed in his book "Kashf". In the book, he cited a hadith narrated by Ibn Mandah in his book "Ma'rifat al-Sahabah" from Abdullah ibn Sulaiman ibn Kimata al-'Ala'isi, who said, "I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, I hear hadiths from you, but I cannot relate them exactly as I heard them from you.' He said he..." would either add a letter or remove a letter. Then the Messenger of Allah (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "If you do not make the lawful unlawful, nor make the unlawful lawful, and convey the exact meaning, then there is no sin in that". He said, when this was mentioned to Hassan, he responded: "If not because of that (clarification by the Prophet), we would not have narrated (any) hadith"

Innovation (Bid'ah)

Since the preceding discussion concerned the Sunnah, it is appropriate for us to examine Sheikh Usman's view and understanding regarding its opposite, which is bid'ah (blameworthy innovation). So, what is called bid'ah? Indeed, according to scholars, bid'ah has multiple definitions. Here are some, as Sheikh Usman presented them in his book "Ihya' al-Sunnah":

1. Bid'ah is "anything that deviates from the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the Consensus (Ijma')."
2. Bid'ah is "the introduction of something into the religion that resembles it, while it is not part of it."

3. Bid'ah is "the introduction of something into the religion that resembles it, while it is not part of it. This introduction, whether by resemblance (apparent/ seeming) or real, is one and the same."

A researcher examining the definition given for bid'ah, and the one examining the books that Sheikh Usman wrote concerning the Sunnah and avoiding bid'ah, will discover that he was an opponent of bid'ah and strove diligently against it. However, despite this, Sheikh Usman held the view that there is bid'ah that is good (hasanah) and there is that which is reprehensible (qabihah). For this reason, he classified bid'ah into two categories in his book. The first category comprises innovations that must be disputed. The second category comprises those that are not to be disputed. It is because of this, that Sheikh Usman further demonstrated that bid'ah falls into five categories, as follows:

First: Bid'ah which is obligatory (wajibah). This is that which the principles and proofs of obligation in the Sharia point to. For example, compiling the Qur'an and books of Islamic law during a time when there is fear of their loss, in order to disseminate the Sharia to those who (will) come after us, is obligatory. Neglecting to do this is forbidden.

Second: Bid'ah which is forbidden (muharramah). This is that which the principles and proofs of prohibition in the Sharia point to. For example, collecting levies on goods brought into a country or market, promoting the ignorant over the scholars, and granting religious positions through this. That is, granting positions through familial ties (inheritance) while the person is not qualified.

Third: Bid'ah which is recommended (mustahabbah). This is that which the principles indicating something being

recommended are associated with, along with their Sharia proofs. For example, the *Taraweeh* prayers (voluntary prayer performed in congregation after Isha' prayer during the month of Ramadan), or adorning oneself in fine clothing for those who hold religious positions, so as to safeguard the interest of the Shari'a.

Fourth: Bid'ah which is disliked (makruhah). That is, that which the principles indicating something being disliked are associated with, along with their Sharia proofs. For example, specifying certain days of virtue for a particular type of worship (without precedent).

Fifth: Bid'ah which is permissible/neutral (mubahah). That is, that for which there is no reward nor sin. This is that which the principles indicating something being permissible are associated with, along with their Shari'a proof. For example, wearing fine clothes, building beautiful houses for residence, or doing things in order to purify or cleanse food.

Sheikh Usman held the view that it is not permissible for a person to accuse another of having committed an innovation (bid'ah), except if you know that this innovation is one which has been declared forbidden (muharramah) by the consensus of scholars. However, if there is no consensus on its prohibition, then you should only offer him corrective advice, but not accuse him of committing a forbidden act.

He (Sheikh Usman) also discussed regarding the hadith that states: "Whoever introduces into this affair of ours (i.e., the religion) something that does not belong to it, it is rejected." And similarly, the hadith that states: "Every innovation is misguidance, and every misguidance is in the Hellfire." He explained that all these hadiths refer to innovations that have been declared forbidden (haram), but they do not refer to those

that have a basis within the Islamic texts. That which has a basis within Islam, even if it was not practiced in the time of the Companions, nor in the time of the Messenger (peace be upon him), is not a blameworthy innovation. No, it reverts to the Religion. This is what he stated in "Ihya'": "The scholars (may Allah be pleased with them) explained concerning the aforementioned hadith ('every innovation is misguidance') that its meaning refers to changing the rulings and taking something that is not an act of worship as worship. Introducing something is not blameworthy if the Sharia has supported it with its own foundational evidence; this (matter) reverts to it (the religion)."

However, regarding the status of innovation (bid'ah) itself, meaning the act of introducing something new, Sheikh Usman held the view that even if the innovation is only disliked (makruh), it is not appropriate to introduce it, despite the act of doing it not being forbidden (haram). Doing so would be akin to overstepping the right of the (one assigned) to convey the Law, i.e., the Messenger (peace be upon him). He believed that adhering to what the Messenger brought without addition or omission is most fitting. However, he did not reject anything that has a basis.

In the book "Ihya'", Sheikh Usman stated the reason for abandoning innovation and the rationale for following the Sunnah. He mentioned that the proofs for this are derived from the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Messenger, and the Consensus (Ijma') of the scholars.

Regarding the proofs for following the Sunnah and opposing innovation (bid'ah), Sheikh Usman dedicated one section to explaining what constitutes the Sunnah, and another section to explaining what constitutes innovation in "Ihya'" for each chapter. He also wrote a book specifically about explaining

innovations, namely "Bayan al-Bida'i" (The Exposition of Innovations). This indicates that he exerted effort to dismantle innovation and establish the Sunnah.

Concerning the eradication of innovation, Sheikh Usman held the view that it is obligatory to combat innovation and eliminate it. However, he indicated that this must be done step-by-step. For among innovations, there are those that must be eliminated, and there are those that are merely recommended, and there are those that are permissible, and likewise there are those that are forbidden. All of these revert to considerations of the people involved, the era, and the consequences that may follow. For example, it is obligatory to eliminate an innovation that has been declared forbidden (haram). But if eliminating it would lead to an evil greater than the innovation itself would cause, then, in this case, eliminating it becomes forbidden, not because of the innovation itself, but rather because of the harm its elimination would cause. This is a major principle for eliminating all reprehensible matters.

Schools of Thought and Jurisprudence

Sheikh Usman (may Allah's pleasure be upon him) provided a history of the emergence of the schools of thought (madhahib) and the science of Jurisprudence (Fiqh), that is, the science of knowledge of the branches of Islamic law (Furu') or what we call the science of Sharia, in his book "Ihya' al-Sunnah". He sourced this discussion from the author of Al-Madkhal, namely Sheikh Ibn al-Hajj in the third chapter, from his commentary on the hadith of the Messenger (peace be upon him) which states: "The best of generations is my generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them."

Sheikh Usman narrated from the author of Al-Madkhal an explanation concerning the Companions (Sahaba), the Successors (Tabi'in), and then said:

"Then came their followers, those after them, and they are the followers of the followers (Tabi' al-Tabi'un), may Allah be pleased with them all. Among them were found jurists (fuqaha') from whom knowledge was sought, to whom problems were referred, and who were a refuge for the distressed. By the time they came, they found the Qur'an compiled (praise be to Allah). They also found the hadiths preserved. So, they gathered what was scattered, and they gained a deeper understanding of the Qur'an and hadiths based on legal principles. They extracted the principles of the Qur'an and hadiths, elucidated their benefits, refined them, established their foundations, wrote books, and made matters easy for the people. They also resolved difficulties through the process of deriving branches (furu') from their roots (usul) and tracing branches back to their roots, and distinguishing the root from its branch. Thus, everything became orderly, and the religious affairs of the community of Muhammad were established upon their efforts. Then they attained a great benefit through seeing those who had seen those (earlier generations) who had witnessed the Prophet with their own eyes. Along with this, they did not leave for those who would come after them anything to be done. All those who came after them are, for the most part, learners from them and followers of their teachings. If an understanding becomes apparent to someone contrary to theirs, or any insight which is not from them, then it is to be referred back to its proponents. What I mean by this is that they (the proponents of the new insight) added something to a ruling from among the rulings that were established, or..." they removed something, then it is to be referred back (rejected) by the consensus (ijma')

of scholars. But as for what those who came after them derived from insights that had no connection to legal rulings, these are to be accepted. Because of the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) concerning the Qur'an: 'Its wonders do not cease, nor does it become worn out due to frequent study.'"

In this same book, "Ihya' al-Sunnah", Sheikh Usman provided a lengthy explanation regarding the establishment of the legal schools (madhahib), their consolidation, and the opinions of the scholars of these schools concerning what is known as the science of Jurisprudence (Ilm al-Fiqh) or the science of Derived Rulings (Furu'). Sheikh Usman accepted the legal schools and demonstrated that all the scholars of these schools are upon guidance from their Lord. He showed that whichever one (school) a person follows, he will be admitted to paradise (Al-Jannah). He indicated that any disagreement that occurred among the scholars of the schools has a basis, and each has his proof.

Furthermore, he admonished people not to condemn someone for performing an act that contradicts what they know, unless they have verified that his act deviates from all that is known to be the Sharia. However, even if a person's action contradicts the Mudawwanah (a compiled Maliki reference on Islamic legal opinions and rulings), he should not be condemned for it.

Sheikh Usman also affirmed the permissibility of following the statements of the scholars of the schools, or their actions, provided they do not contradict a clear text (nass) from the Qur'an, a hadith text, general principles, consensus (ijma'), or an obvious or explicit analogy (qiyas jali).

In his various books, Sheikh Usman discussed the permissibility of switching from one school (of thought) to another, and the permissibility of issuing a legal opinion (fatwa) or applying the ruling of one school within another.

He issued rulings (fatwa) on the permissibility thereof. He said, provided it is found within the books of Sharia, it is not considered exclusive to a particular person (or school). He said, anything that comes from the Messenger (peace be upon him) is not the exclusive school of thought of any one person; rather, it becomes the Sharia which must be followed. Sheikh Usman's opinions concerning the schools of thought and the science of Jurisprudence (Fiqh) are very clear, for he did not advocate blind following (taqlid) of a single school. Although he was a Maliki by affiliation, and a follower of the Maliki school, nevertheless he did not hold the view of strict adherence to that school. He debated with the scholars of his time who held the opinion of strict adherence to the Maliki school and demonstrated their errors to them.

He recorded his views in books such as "Ihya' al-Sunnah wa Ikhmad al-Bid'ah", "Nasihat Ahl al-Zaman", "Najm al-Ikhwan", and "Irshad al-Ummah ila Bayan Taisiril Millat". They are also found in "'Umdat al-Muta'Abbidin Wal Muhtarifin" as well as in "Tarwih al-Ummah" and others.

In his book "Fath al-Basa'ir", Sheikh Usman discussed the subject of independent legal reasoning (Ijtihad). He provided an explanation of the types of scholars capable of independent legal reasoning (Mujtahids). He held the view that up to the present time, it is possible to find an absolute or unrestricted jurist (Mujtahid al-Mutlaq), that is, a scholar with comprehensive knowledge capable of deriving rulings directly from the textual sources of the Qur'an and hadith.

Legal Rulings

Legal rulings (Fatwa), refer to "...answering questions concerning long standing (old) and emerging issues." Is it permissible for a person to assume the role of an issuer of a legal opinion (fatwa) on his own, or is it not permissible?

Considering that this is a long-standing issue that scholars have long deliberated and disagreed upon, Sheikh Usman addressed it in his book "Kashf Ma 'Alaihi al-'Amalu".

In the book, he presented the opinions of those who hold the view that it is not permissible for a person to venture into issuing legal opinions (fatwa) on his own, due to the hadith which says: "The most daring among you regarding entering the Hellfire are the most daring among you in issuing legal opinions." Sheikh Usman explained that the well-established position according to the consensus of scholars is that issuing fatwa is permissible; indeed, it becomes obligatory for one who is qualified. The proof for the permissibility of issuing fatwa, he said, is the hadith of Abu Hurairah, Zaid ibn Khalid, and Shibl ibn Ma'bad, who said: "We were sitting with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when a man stood up and said, 'I adjure you by Allah, judge between us by the Book of Allah, and give me permission to speak.' He (the Prophet) gave him permission. He said, 'this is my son, he used to work for this man, and he committed adultery with his wife. I sought to ransom my son with a hundred sheep and a servant. I asked some knowledgeable people, and they informed me that my son should receive one hundred lashes and be incarcerated for a year, and that this man's wife should be stoned.'"

Sheikh Usman said that in this hadith lies evidence for the permissibility of issuing fatwa. Because the man said, "I asked some knowledgeable people." And the Prophet did not object

to this from him. Furthermore, he said the hadith contains evidence that it is permissible for a person to give a fatwa even if there are others more knowledgeable than him. He said, "Do you not see that they were issuing fatwa during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him)?"

Another proof for the permissibility of issuing fatwa that Sheikh Usman cited is that the Companions (Sahaba) were issuing fatwa on daily occurring matters. He said another proof is that Allah, the Exalted, said: "Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know." Since Allah commanded the ignorant to ask, this is a command for the scholars to answer them if they are asked.

However, despite all the aforementioned, Sheikh Usman stipulated qualifications for issuing fatwa, and knowledge of scholars' positions on the matter being asked about. Allah is the All-Knowing.

Politics

After the conquest of Alkalawa in the year 1223 AH (1808 CE), Sheikh Usman left Gwandu for Sifawa. He left Gwandu approximately one year after the fall of Alkalawa. Also, after the conquest of Alkalawa, he shared the affairs of governance to his vizier and younger brother, Abdullahi Fodio, to whom he assigned the western region of the state (Caliphate), and to his son Bello he assigned the eastern region.

Delegating governance to his vizier and his son is what allowed Sheikh Usman to have ample time to teach and write. For this reason, most of the works he wrote during this period bear the dates when they were written, unlike the preceding ones, most of which did not specify the time of their authorship.

During his residence in Sifawa, Sheikh Usman faced many challenges, such as the issue of the Mahdiyya, that is, whether he was the Mahdi (the prophesised leader who would appear before the Day of Judgement) or not. There was also the problem of oppression committed by some within the community, seizing the property of others without any legitimate cause. On another front, there were the accusations levelled by El-Kanemi of Borno against the Usmaniyya Caliphate, claiming it was not properly established. There was also El-Kanemi's assertion that the people whom Sheikh Usman was waging a war against (the Hausa land) were predominantly Muslims. Due to these aforementioned matters, Sheikh Usman embarked on writing books related to these highlighted issues. For example, during this period, he wrote books such as "Takhzir al-Ikhwan min Iddi'a al-Mahdiyya al-Mau'udat Akhir al-Zaman", which addresses the issue of the Mahdi; "Tanbih al-Ikhwan"; "Al-Amir bi Muwalat al-Mu'minin"; "Usul al-'Adl"; and "Siraj al-Ikhwan", upon which we will base our following explanation.

The book "Siraj al-Ikhwan" is one of about eleven books that Sheikh Usman wrote during his residence in Sifawa, to respond to the accusations of El-Kanemi and other preceding challenges. Furthermore, as we shall see, this book provides an explanation concerning the rulings pertaining to Muslims who give support to unbelievers. It also addresses the ruling on Muslims who take up arms to overthrow the Islamic state. The book also touches upon the matter of Muslims who live without coming under the banner of any of the Muslim rulers. In summary, this book is an exposition on how an Islamic state should administer the affairs of its people; the commoners, rebels, and others. It also provides an explanation concerning the functions of the state.

For this reason, I have selected two books from these (eleven) collections to expound upon as explicitly as necessary.

One is "Siraj al-Ikhwan" to examine Sheikh Usman's perspective and his opinions concerning the people within the Caliphate and those neighbouring it. The other is "Usul al-'Adl" to explain his view on establishing justice and governance. However, we will see that each of the two books touched somewhat on what the other contains. Here is a summary of what the book "Siraj al-Ikhwan" contains:

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. May peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

This is a summary and explanation of the contents of the book "Siraj al-Ikhwan" by Sheikh Usman Bin Fodio. The meaning of the title given to the book is: The Lamp (Illumination) for the Brethren Concerning the Important Matters Required in this Era. As I mentioned earlier, this book was written by Sheikh Usman. The book consists of forty pages and contains ten chapters.

The first chapter discusses the distinction between a Muslim and an unbeliever.

The second chapter explains the distinction between the scholars of religion – who are called the people of knowledge (Ahl al-Dhikr) and are the ones who strive in the cause of the religion of Allah, and the scholars who dwell in deviation or misguidance, that is, those who strive in the cause of Satan.

The third chapter discusses the ruling concerning people who utter the proclamation of faith (shahada) merely as a customary practice, without performing any Islamic acts.

The fourth chapter explains concerning people who utter the declaration of faith and perform some Islamic acts, but they intermix them with acts of disbelief.

The fifth chapter discusses the ruling on waging jihad against those who give support to unbelievers, from among the scholars, students, and the ignorant.

The sixth chapter discusses fighting against Muslims who live (in a place) without having pledged allegiance to any of the Muslim rulers.

The seventh chapter explains fighting against those among the Muslims who transgress Islamic law.

The eight chapter discusses the ruling of fighting against oppressive Muslim rulers.

The ninth chapter explains the obligations incumbent upon Muslim rulers regarding the establishment of Islamic ordinances, commanding good, and forbidding evil.

The tenth chapter discusses the truth of what is termed halal (permissible) and haram (forbidden), what is termed shubha (doubtful), and also explains the origin of what is permissible.

Chapter One

In this chapter, Sheikh Usman explains the reality of who is called a Muslim and who is called an unbeliever (kafir). He also explains that a true Muslim is one who utters the declaration of faith (shahada) and performs Islamic acts. Furthermore, he is never heard mocking the religion of Allah by using words that indicate disbelief. And he is one who does not intermix Islamic acts with acts of disbelief.

Sheikh Usman explained that whoever acts contrary to these attributes that have been mentioned, (that person) is an unbeliever, without any doubt. He also supported this statement of his with various proofs which he narrated from the books of his predecessors, such as the book "Ida'atu Dujnati", which was written by Ahmad al-Maqari, a scholar from Tilimsan (Tlemcen) in Algeria; and "Kaukab al-Satii"' which was written by 'Abd al-Rahman al-Suyuti; and other books.

In this chapter, Sheikh Usman explained that whoever intermixes Islamic acts with sinful acts and innovations (bid'ah) does not become an unbeliever, according to the position of the Sunni scholars. Such a person will be called one who disobeys Allah and His Messenger. Furthermore, he will be called a sinful transgressor (fasiq) if the disobedience he commits is among the major sins, or if he persists in minor sins.

Chapter Two

In this chapter, Sheikh Usman explained the distinction between the scholars of religion, who are called the people of knowledge (Ahl al-Dhikr) and are the ones who strive in the cause of the religion of Allah, and the people who dwell in deviation or misguidance, that is, those who strive in the cause of Satan. He explained that every scholar has two attributes. The two attributes are: Knowledge ('Ilm) and the fear of Allah (Taqwa). So, whoever possesses them is from the people of knowledge (Ahl al-Dhikr), and whoever lacks them is from the people of Satan. Sheikh Usman narrated this statement from

Sheikh al-Maghili[15], from among the answers that he (Maghili) gave to the Commander of the Faithful Askia, concerning these types of issues.

Furthermore, in this chapter, he listed those characteristics by which the scholars of religion can be recognised, so as to avoid confusion for one who wishes to know them, follow them (their teachings), and ask them about the affairs of his religion. Here is what Sheikh Usman said concerning this statement which he quoted from al-Maghili:

"It is necessary that during every era, the character of such a scholar should differ from that of the scholars of his time, by way of enjoining good, forbidding evil, and reforming the affairs of the community, and by establishing justice among them. Also, by aiding the oppressed against the oppressor. Because of this, he becomes like a stranger among them, due to his distinction in these characteristics and the shortage of scholars like him. By such characteristics, it is known that he is among the reformers. Furthermore, whoever opposes him or engages in dispute with him so as to turn people away from following him is among the misguided."

Then he mentioned some of the signs by which corrupt scholars are recognised. He said: "The major sign by which corrupt scholars are recognised is that they neither reform nor allow anyone else to do so. By illustration, they are like a boulder by the edge of a riverbank; it neither drinks water,

15 Maghili: He is Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Karim, a scholar from Tilimsan (Tlemcen). He was one of the scholars of the 9th century AH. He travelled extensively in the Sudan region. He met 'Abd al-Rahman al-Suyuti and they debated regarding the permissibility of a science called Al-Mantiq (logic or the science of reasoning). Al-Maghili died in the year 909 AH.

nor does it let others drink. Each one of such scholars is more harmful to the people than a thousand devils."

The Sheikh concluded this chapter by clarifying that it is obligatory for every Muslim to seek a scholar from among the people of knowledge (Ahl al-Dhikr) wherever he may be. He further clarified that such scholars in this era are like prophets for the communities of the past. He also explained that it is obligatory to rely upon such scholars and to go out to seek them wherever they may be.

Chapter Three

In this chapter, Sheikh Usman wrote concerning the ruling on people who utter the declaration of faith (shahada) merely as a customary practice, but do not perform any Islamic acts. He clarified that such people are unbelievers, without any doubt. He also explained that it is obligatory to fight them, kill their men, take captive their women and children, and seize their property. He supported this statement of his with the legal opinion (fatwa) that al-Maghili gave to Askia, when Askia asked him about the ruling concerning some people he had captured from a war while they were residing in his land, uttering the declaration of faith but believing that there was someone other than Allah who benefits or harms them.

Furthermore, they had idols, and they would say, "Sa'alabu said such-and-such." Or if such-and-such happened, then such-and-such would occur. They also venerated certain trees by offering sacrifice (slaughtering something) at their location. Moreover, they would not decide any matter, small or large, except through consultation and the command of the guardians of the houses where their idols were kept. Askia said he had exhorted them to abandon these things but they did not desist, so he fought them with the sword. Askia then asked al-Maghili:

"Does this render them unbelievers, making it permissible to kill them and seize their property, despite their utterance of the declaration of faith?" Al-Maghili then gave him an answer as follows:

"As for the people whose characteristics you have described, there is no doubt they are polytheists (mushrikun). For a person can be declared an unbeliever for reasons not as grave as these, let alone something greater than these. In truth, waging jihad and fighting such people is more justified than fighting unbelievers who do not utter the declaration of faith. Because these people you have described intermix falsehood with truth. This will cause the misguidance of many Muslims who do not understand Islam, to the extent of leading them to disbelief without them knowing. Fighting these people is more imperative than fighting unbelievers whose actions would not mislead Muslims. Therefore, fight them, kill their men, take their women captive, and seize their property. If they persist in their polytheism, then burn down the guardians of the idol houses and the idols themselves. This is just as Khalid ibn al-Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) did to a faction of those who apostatised and refused to pay the zakat. He burned them after the Caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) ordered him to do so."

Chapter Four

In this chapter, Sheikh Usman wrote concerning the ruling on people who utter the declaration of faith and perform Islamic acts, but also intermix them with acts of disbelief. He clarified that such people are polytheists and unbelievers, because there is no Islam with polytheism (shirk).

Based on this reason, Sheikh Usman issued a ruling of disbelief against the Hausa rulers of his time, because they

intermixed Islamic acts with acts of disbelief. He supported this statement of his by saying that the conduct of these rulers corresponded with the conduct of King Sonni Ali of Songhai, concerning whom al-Maghili issued a legal opinion (fatwa) to Askia declaring King Sonni Ali an unbeliever. He also mentioned some of their actions such as uttering the declaration of faith and similar Islamic phrases, fasting the month of Ramadan, giving charity, making sacrifices (in the form of slaughter) to mosques, as well as venerating certain trees and stones by making offerings to them and showing reverence to them. Furthermore, he (Sonni Ali) would seek help from sorcerers and magicians for all his affairs. Among his customs was also accumulating many women without marriage or the like, in a manner not stipulated by Islam. Also, among his behaviours was considering the blood and property of Muslims lawful by killing scholars who were memorisers of the Qur'an, jurists (fuqaha), devout worshippers, women, and suckling infants.

The following statement is what Sheikh Usman cited concerning the fatwa that al-Maghili issued regarding the disbelief of King Sonni Ali and anyone who acts like him anywhere and at any time.

He said: "What you have mentioned concerning the conduct of (King) Sonni Ali is undoubtedly evidence of disbelief. If the matter is as you have described, then he is certainly an unbeliever. Similarly, anyone who performs an act like his – nay, indeed a person can be declared an unbeliever for something less than this."

At the end of this chapter, Sheikh Usman clarified that it is obligatory to fight such people because they are unbelievers according to the consensus of scholars. Indeed, there is no Islam with polytheism (shirk).

Chapter Five

In this chapter, Sheikh Usman explained the ruling concerning scholars, students, and the ignorant who aid unbelievers and give them support. He clarified that such people are certainly unbelievers, and there is no doubt in their disbelief. He also clarified that it becomes obligatory to wage jihad and fight them if they engage in three actions listed as follows: (1) Intermixing falsehood with truth for the unbelievers. (2) Joining the army of the unbelievers and aiding them against the believers. (3) Permitting what Allah has forbidden.

Sheikh Usman established proof for this statement with the legal opinion (fatwa) that al-Maghili gave to the Commander of the Faithful, Askia, when the latter asked him about the ruling concerning a leader who commits forbidden acts such as the imposition of levies on goods brought into the country or markets and similar things. Even if he is told that what he was doing is forbidden, he would say, "Allah forbid that I commit forbidden acts", then he would add that everything he does is permissible, and he is more knowledgeable than these people. His custom was indeed to mix falsehood with truth. He also patronised some scholars for this purpose of his. So, whenever he intended to do something, he would ask them for a legal opinion, and they would answer him that all his actions were correct.

Then al-Maghili gave him the answer:

"Whoever it is confirmed has permitted the imposition of levies on goods brought into the country or markets and similar acts of seizing people's property wrongfully, it is obligatory to judge him to be an unbeliever. Similarly whoever denies a clear truth and intermixes it with falsehood."

Sheikh Usman also established proof for declaring as an unbeliever anyone who aids an unbeliever or supports him in fighting the believers, citing what al-Maghili mentioned in his book "Misbah al-Arwah fi Usul al-Falah", where al-Maghili said:

"What indicates a lack of faith in the testimony of the Qur'an is aiding the unbelievers, because of the word of Allah where He says: "You see many of them allying with those who disbelieve. How wretched is that which they have put forth for themselves in that Allah has become angry with them, and in the punishment they will abide eternally. And if they had believed in Allah and the Prophet and in what was revealed to him, they would not have taken them as allies. But many of them are defiantly disobedient.' (Qur'an 5:80-81). "Based on this evidence from the Lord, the Mighty and Exalted, the disbelief of anyone who befriends one of them is established, (and likewise) for anyone. This applies to every era and every place". Waging jihad and fighting them is more obligatory than any other type of jihad. Their property becomes spoils of war (fai')."[16]

Sheikh Usman said: "Whoever contemplates this carefully will realise that those who aid the unbelievers from among the scholars, students, and the ignorant are (themselves) unbelievers. Because some of them intermix falsehood with truth for those unbelievers. This is disbelief, as previously mentioned. Also, others permit for them what Allah has forbidden. That is also disbelief, as previously mentioned. Similarly, others support them by aiding them in fighting the Muslims. That too is disbelief, as previously mentioned."

Chapter Six

[16] Fai›: It is that which the enemy abandons without a battle being fought.

In this chapter, Sheikh Usman explained the ruling concerning Muslims who live in isolation without having entered into the pledge of allegiance to any of the Muslim rulers. He explained that it is obligatory to fight such people until they enter into the pledge of allegiance to the Muslim ruler and promise him obedience as Allah and His Messenger commanded. However, they are not to be fought until they are called to give the pledge of allegiance. Sheikh Usman established proof for this statement (of his) with the legal opinion (fatwa) that al-Maghili gave to Askia when he asked the former about the ruling concerning such people. He answered him:

"Know that it is not permissible for certain groups who are Muslims to remain in isolation. Allah, the Mighty and Exalted, says: 'And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided.' (Qur'an 3:103). It has also been narrated from Ibn Umar that he heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) say: 'Whoever removes his hand from obedience will meet Allah on the Day of Resurrection without any excuse. And whoever dies without a pledge of allegiance on his neck has died a death of ignorance (jahiliyyah).'"

Continuing his explanation concerning this issue, al-Maghili explained that it is obligatory for Askia to fight such people until he sees that they have entered into obedience to him, based on obedience to Allah and His Messenger. He added that this matter is among the most important types of jihads, and the most imperative.

Chapter Seven

This chapter explains the ruling on fighting the *Muharibun*[17] from among the Muslims. In this chapter, Sheikh Usman (may Allah have mercy on him) clarified that it is obligatory to fight the *Muharibun* from among the Muslims, even if there are some people with them who are not combatants. He added by clarifying that they cannot be left to continue with their affair without being fought, for the fear that those who have not placed themselves among them may perish.

As was his custom, Sheikh Usman supported this statement with the legal opinion (fatwa) of al-Maghili to Askia. When he asked al-Maghili about the ruling concerning the *Muharibun* with whom some other people live, though these people claim to be Muslims despite being with the combatants. Askia explained that when they fought the *Muharibun* and subdued them, they captured those people (the non-combatants) along with the combatants, and they explained to them that they had no choice (but to live with the *Muharibun*), for they had no means of defending themselves. For this reason, Askia said, they returned their property to them and ordered them to distance themselves from living with the combatants. Askia asked al-Maghili: Should they cease jihad against those combatants for fear of causing the perdition of the Muslims who are with them, and who refuse to separate from them? Or is it necessary. to fight them, even though harm may befall those Muslims who are with them as mentioned?

Al-Maghili then gave him the following answer: "As for the combatants (Muharibun), they must be fought, and there is no blame upon you regarding those Muslims you have captured from among them because they lived with the combatants. Any property of theirs that you are unaware of which perishes,

there is no blame upon you. However, what you do know about them, you must protect it from destruction before it is lost, and return it to its owners – provided they did not choose to live among them. But whoever chooses to live among them, or joins them, or aids the unbelievers in corruption; then he becomes one of the unbelievers. Therefore, he must be fought, his property seized, and his repentance not accepted, if Allah grants you victory over him."

Chapter Eight

This chapter discusses the ruling on fighting oppressive rulers from among the Muslim leaders. Sheikh Usman explained the obligation of fighting oppressive rulers from among the Muslim leaders who seize the property of Muslims through injustice and transgression. Fighting them becomes obligatory if it is for aiding truth over falsehood and aiding the oppressed against the oppressor.

As is his custom in this book, Sheikh Usman established proof for his statement with the answers that al-Maghili gave to Askia concerning such issues.

Askia asked al-Maghili about the ruling concerning an oppressive ruler within a Muslim land who seizes their property through injustice and transgression. Does one have the right to rise against this oppressor, even if doing so may lead to killing the oppressor? He also asked him: What is the ruling if a ruler collects illegal taxes and does not reprimand wrongdoers? Furthermore, what is the ruling concerning a ruler who confiscates the merchandise of Muslim merchants wherever he finds them, or when a stranger or a local (non-stranger) dies, he takes his property even though the deceased's heirs exist? Also, what is the ruling concerning a ruler who, when traders come to his land, orders their goods to be unloaded, inspects

what they have brought, appraises them, takes something from them, and claims that this is zakat?

Al-Maghili then answered him: "Know that for every such leader you have described, with the collection of taxes on goods brought into the country or markets, injustice, corruption, and lack of reform, if you find you have the ability to remove his oppression from the Muslims without causing them harm, and you can appoint a just ruler among them, then you should do so, even if it leads to killing many of the oppressors and their supporters, and even if it leads to the death of many of your supporters. For whoever is killed from among them is the worst of the dead. And whoever is killed from among you is the best of martyrs."

Allah, the Mighty and Exalted, says: "Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their lives and their wealth in exchange for Paradise. They fight in the cause of Allah, so they kill and are killed." (Qur'an 9:111). Removing injustice from the Muslims and changing what is disapproved of is part of the way of Allah.

"Therefore, jihad against the combatants (Muharibun) and the oppressors from among the Muslim leaders, and those like them, in order to change what is disapproved of and to defend the Muslims, is among the most important types of jihads."

Chapter Nine

This chapter discusses the obligations incumbent upon Muslim leaders to uphold the ordinances/symbols of Islam, carry out reforms in the lands, and change what is disapproved of. Sheikh Usman listed some of these things at the beginning of this chapter, saying:

"Know, O my brethren, that among the obligations upon the Leader of the Muslims[18] and his representatives in the regions are: To uphold the symbols of Islam, such as building mosques for the Friday prayer, and also (smaller) mosques and establishing the five daily prayers therein. Also, to give the zakat to those who deserve it, and to manage the various types of the wealth of Allah in their appropriate places, as He has legislated. Also, to enjoin good and forbid all that is evil"

After that, he continued with an explanation of the obligations upon the Leader of the Muslims and his representatives, establishing proofs for his statements with the answers that al-Maghili gave to Askia. The following statements detail the obligations upon the Leader of the Muslims and his representatives in summary. In some places, I will cite his exact words, but in others, I will simply explain the points he made.

Sheikh Usman said: "And among the obligations upon the Leader of the Muslims and his representatives in the towns is: Safeguarding the religion. That is, they must not allow anyone to speak about the religion of Allah, whether in teaching, judging, or issuing legal opinions, except one who is among the God-fearing. It is obligatory upon the Leader of the Muslims and his representatives in the towns to change the disapproved practices among the people, such as those who claim to know something of the unseen (diviners) through marking on sand (raml) and similar things. Or through observing the positions/ movements of the stars, or seeking information from jinn, or something related to the voices or movements of birds, or similar matters.

---

18 «Leader of the Muslims» here refers to the head of state or president. The author used the term known in his time, that the Commander of the Faithful (Sarkin Musulmi), was the head of state. Similarly, where he mentions "Nuwabu," it is translated as "representatives" who hold positions similar to governors today.

In other places in the book, Sheikh Usman explained that it is obligatory for the Leader of the Muslims and his representatives in the towns to change the evil practices of those who claim to possess things (supernatural powers) that bring about a certain benefit or ward off a certain harm; such as writing (talismanic inscriptions on slates) for gaining abundant wealth, attracting love, or dispersing enemies in battle. Also, like writings (protective inscriptions) intended to prevent metal weapon from cutting a person's body, and other similar matters from the utterances of sorcerers.

It is also obligatory for him to change the disapproved practices of the display of nudity by young girls and female slaves. He must also forbid the mingling of men and women in markets and on roads. He must also forbid the prevalent practices of not shielding a woman from (the sight) of her husband's brother, his friend, or her maternal cousin

It is also obligatory for him and his representatives to change the disapproved practices that merchants engage in, such as manipulating weights and measures (through tapering or falsifying), adulterating gold and silver by mixing them with copper; and the failure to cleanse Iron Ore from dust, as well as puffing up meat (by inflating it) or mixing milk with water.

It is also obligatory for him to change what people have made customary in neglecting the sharing of inheritance as explained by the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet. That is, such as giving inheritance share to an uncle or a cousin. This also includes the usurpation by an elder among the heirs of the inheritance, who would say: 'This property belongs to my siblings, and I am like their father, so I should safeguard and manage it to grow.' Added to these is their practice of denying wives their inheritance rights.

There is consensus of opinion between Sheikh Usman and al-Maghili on all the aforementioned issues (and others) in this book, except on one single point. That issue is concerning people who write (talismanic inscriptions) to attract a certain benefit or ward off a certain harm.

Al-Maghili held that whoever does this, if it is in the manner of sorcery, he should be killed by the sword. But if he does it using verses of the Qur'an, he should be given appropriate disciplinary punishment.

Sheikh Usman however, agreed with al-Maghili's opinion regarding one who performs these acts through sorcery, but disagreed with him concerning one who does so using verses of the Qur'an or any sacred words.

Here is what each of them said. Al-Maghili said:

"He must be placed under the sword: every sorcerer, every sorceress, and everyone who claims to possess something from the Dalasim[19] (talismans) or Aza'im[20] (magical formulas) and similar things, among matters that attract wealth or disperse enemies in war, or similar things. Whoever among them repents should be left alone. Whoever refuses (to repent) should be killed. And whoever claims to write this from the Book of Allah, or from sacred words, or similar things, is indeed a liar; do not believe him. It is also obligatory to reprimand him, and if he does not desist, he should be disciplined accordingly, in order to block this (evil) avenue and safeguard the Sharia and creed."

As for Sheikh Usman, this is what he said: "What he (al-Maghili) mentioned does not necessarily include prohibiting the use of what is in accordance with the Sharia. It is permissible

19 Dalasim is a type of sorcery.

20 Aza'im is also a type of sorcery.

to use anything that is in accordance with the Sharia. This is all the same, whether the thing is for bringing a benefit or warding off a harm. And whether it is something to be drunk or worn (as an amulet). However, what is forbidden is that which is done through sorcery."

Chapter Ten

This chapter deals with the foundational principles (ahkam) of what is termed halal (permissible) and haram (forbidden), and the origin of permissibility. Sheikh Usman clarified that the foundational principle for permissibility is that whose origin is unknown, while the forbidden is that whose ownership by another is confirmed. The doubtful (shubha) is that whose permissibility or impermissibility is not clear. He further mentioned that the ways of acquiring what is permissible (halal) are numerous, and he explained that the author of "Shurb al-Zulal" enumerated them (in poetic form). What follows is a section from among them, as the aforementioned author listed them and Sheikh Usman quoted from him:

"The origin of permissibility is the benefit of an action a person performs, or trade and occupation.

It is desired (along with) being scrupulous and truthful in dealings/transactions, having knowledge of what is being sought, and acting with benevolence.

And whatever does not involve the rights of others and is unencumbered by debts is (what is) permissible.

That is, that which is not encumbered by the right of our Lord nor by the right of another."

Up to where he said: "And all the things from which the funds of the public treasury (bait al-mal) are gathered. These

are seven items, as he mentioned them here, and in his book "Usul al-'Adl", as further details about them will come in the explanation of Sheikh Usman's view on justice and establishing governance.

1. Khums: That is, one-fifth of the spoils acquired from jihad.
2. Fai': That is, what the enemy flees and abandons without any battle being fought.
3. 'Ushur: That is, one-tenth of what unbelievers sell within the states of Muslims.
4. Jizya: Meaning the tax imposed upon unbelievers residing within the Islamic state, seeking protection from the state.
5. Land tax (Kharaj), on the land which is cultivated by unbelievers, i.e., unbelievers residing within the Islamic state.
6. Wealth which has no heir.
7. Property whose owner is unknown.

At the end of the book, Sheikh Usman stated that he wrote the book in the year 1226 AH.

Justice

The name of the book is "Usul al-'Adl li-Wullat al-Umur wa Ahl al-Fadl" (The Foundations of Justice for Those in Authority and the People of Excellence).

Date of Publication: This book was published in the year 1224 After Hijrah of the Prophet (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Contents of the Book: This book consists of two parts. The first part discusses the foundations of justice, or we could say the pillars of justice. The second part discusses the matters that a ruler should attend to in administering his governance to ensure its stability.

In the first part of this book, Sheikh Usman relied on what Imam Muhammad ibn Muhammad, famously known as al-Ghazali, mentioned in his book "Al-Tibr al- Masbuk fi Nasihat al-Muluk". In the second part, he relied on the statements of the famous scholar in this region, namely Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Karim, who is better known by the name al-Maghili. Both of these scholars are renowned and are among the major scholars upon whose authority Sheikh Usman bases his proofs in his books.

Justice: The word 'adl (justice) has many meanings in the Arabic language. But concerning our topic of interest, it means the opposite of oppression (zulm). Given the importance of justice, a researcher in the Qur'an will find that the word appears approximately thirty-six times in the Qur'an. As for its meaning from the legal (Shari'a) perspective, Sheikh Usman presented various statements in this book according to how the scholars defined it. He said: Ka'b viewed justice as:

"A man being like a father to one who is younger than him in age, like a son to one who is his senior in age, like a brother to one who is his equal in age; and prescribing appropriate punishment to a wrongdoer according to the nature of his wrongdoing."

According to Sheikh Usman himself, justice is: "The ruler giving the entitled one his right, whether that right is from him or from another. Then Ihsan (doing good with sincerity) is to be

good to a person with what one possesses; not to take from one to give to another."

Thus, as the previous explanation stated, the book has two parts. The first part explains the foundations of justice; the second part is on administration. Now we will examine the first part to hear what it contains. This part has ten sections, which Sheikh Usman said are the foundations and principles of justice. We will take each of these ten sections and discuss it briefly:

Section One: Here Sheikh Usman wrote about the importance and perils associated with leadership. Here he explained the blessing of a just ruler, stating that Allah rewards him in proportion to the number of his subjects. Then he has severe punishment if he does not establish justice.

Section Two: Here, Sheikh Usman warned rulers about the dangers of courtiers, especially the corrupt scholars. He also encouraged rulers to befriend good and righteous scholars. He distinguished between good scholars and those who are not good. He said good scholars are those who are not concerned with the wealth of the palace and do not scheme for it. Their aim is to admonish the rulers on how to establish justice. As for the corrupt scholars, they are schemers, and their goal is only worldly gain. In this section, Sheikh Usman cited many examples of scholars who admonished rulers.

Section Three: In this section, Sheikh Usman demonstrated the obligation of the ruler to abstain from injustice. Not only that, he said it is also obligatory upon him to prevent his officials from committing injustice. He indicated that any official who commits injustice, that injustice will be ascribed to the one who appointed him. For example, any injustice committed by a commissioner or a minister will be considered as if the

leader himself committed it. Also in this section, Sheikh Usman described the most prosperous, good and joyful leader as the one under whose rule the common people find prosperity, abundance, and sufficiency. And the ruler who is miserable and destitute is the one under whose rule the common people are impoverished and suffer hardship.

Section Four: It is that the leader should be forgiving and benevolent. These traits are among the pillars of governance, for these are the characteristics of the prophets and saints (awliya'). In this section, Sheikh Usman narrated the story of Imam Zain al-Abidin ibn al-Husain. He said one day he went out heading to the mosque when he met a man. The man kept insulting him. The aides of Zain al-'Abidin moved to grab the man and beat him, but Zain al-Abidin stopped them. Then he called the man and said to him, "Do you want me to tell you some of my characteristics that you do not know, so that you can refer to them to insult me?" Shame overcame the man. Then Zain al-Abidin took off his garment and gave it to the man, and ordered that he be given a thousand dirhams. The man then went away, saying, "I testify that you are among the descendants of the Messenger (peace be upon him)."

Section Five: This section discusses attending to the affairs of the common people. Under this section, Sheikh Usman showed that the leader should consider himself as if he is one of the common people. That is, he should not wish for his brother what he does not wish for himself.

Section Six: In this section, Sheikh Usman wrote that a leader's attention to the affairs of the poor is better than abundant supererogatory worship. In this part, he narrated the admonition that a son of Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz gave to his father. It is said that one day Umar sat from morning until noon

hearing the affairs and complaints of the common people and fulfilling their needs. Then he got up and went inside his house. Meanwhile, his son came in and said to him, "O my father, who has given you assurance from death? Meaning, does he feel secure that death will not come to him at this moment, while there are needy people at his door?" Umar immediately got up and went out to the common people.

Section Seven: It is obligatory for the leader to avoid the inclinations of wearing ostentatious clothes and eating delicious food. Here Sheikh Usman cited the story of a question that Umar ibn Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) asked one of the righteous (persons) if he knew anything bad about his rule? The righteous man told Umar that he did not know anything bad about his (Umar's) rule. But the man indicated that news had reached him that Umar wears two garments and puts two fried pancake (waina) in his (dining) plate. Then Umar made a pledge to be mindful and to restrain himself from doing so.

Section Eight: Compassion for the common people. In this section, Sheikh Usman cited the hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him) which indicates that any man appointed to manage the affairs of the people and shows them compassion, Allah will show compassion to him. And anyone appointed over them and treats them harshly, Allah will treat him harshly.

Section Nine: Here Sheikh Usman reminded the leader to be mindful concerning matters of the Hereafter (Barzakh), to reflect on which group he will be in on the Day of Resurrection. Will he be among the people of Paradise or among the people of the Fire?

Section Ten: Reflection and self-exhortation about the prophethood of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Here, Sheikh

Usman points out to the leader to reflect on realising the importance of the messengership of the Prophet and his being the seal of the prophets and messengers.

In the second part of this book, Sheikh Usman derived what he compiled from the renowned scholar, al-Maghili. He quoted from al-Maghili's book titled "Majmu'at al-Maghili fi Shu'un al-Imarah". In this part, Sheikh Usman discussed eight matters that a leader should attend to for the stability of his governance. The matters are as follows:

Section One: Concerning what is appropriate for the leader to be a man of good intention and be sincere (mukhlis), i.e., to purify actions for the sake of Allah. The leader should know tha he was made a leader over others so that he could protect for them their religion and worldly matters.

Section Two: It is incumbent upon the leader to be of good appearance and dignified, whether at home or while traveling.

Section Three: It is incumbent upon him (the leader) to organise his kingdom or his government according to a structure such as this:

(i) Viziers (Wuzara), that is, Ministers or Commissioners, who fear Allah, and do not fear anyone else.

(ii) Judges (Qadis), they should also be God-fearing; these are the ones who will carry out judicial rulings among the people.

Here, although Sheikh Usman mentioned Judges within the governmental structure, or what we might call the Islamic administration, it is good to know that during the time of the Messenger (peace be upon him), there was no specifically appointed judge. Rather, he himself was the judge, just as he was the leader. The function of a judge began during the time of Abu

Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him). He appointed Umar as his judge. But Umar was not called by the title 'Judge'; because when he was appointed, for a whole year no one brought a complaint or a case before him. This indicates something of great wisdom contained in the saying: "If people uphold justice amongst themselves, then the judge will be at rest (i.e. there will be no work for him)." So, at that time, people were mindful of each other's rights and were just. There was no injustice. Based on this, Umar did not receive any complaint or case. This matter, furthermore this confirms what the writers of Islamic philosophy have said: "the proliferation of judges in a country, as well as the proliferation of doctors within it, is an indication of societal deterioration, the immorality of its people, and that they are without virtue and oppress one another. That is, the proliferation of judges indicates that oppressors have become numerous in the society. And the proliferation of the medical profession indicates the spread of illness, which most often occurs due to excessive eating or lack thereof (of food). For Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) gathered the knowledge of medicine in a verse which indicates the meaning of what was previously mentioned: "And eat and drink, but be not excessive." (Qur'an 7:31).

The function of judges became widespread during the time of Ali ibn Abi Talib, when he was the Caliph, although judges existed during the time of Caliph Umar, for he was the first to begin appointing them and sending them to the major cities of Islam at that time.

(iii) Police, guards (dogarai) or law enforcement agents ('yan doka), all these terms refer to the same thing. Their job is to reprimand and prevent (the people) from committing crimes.

(iv) Soldiers who are skilled in warfare and capable of defending the territorial integrity of the country.

(v) Scholars who fear Allah and give guidance.

(vi) Accountants and auditors, who account for the government's wealth and safeguard it.

(vii) Then those appointed to collect the income (revenue) for the Public Treasury (Bait al-Mal).

(viii) Those who will assist the aforementioned revenue collectors.

(ix) Ambassadors to be sent to Muslim countries.

(x) Spies who will be infiltrating enemy countries.

(xi) Servants who will be carrying messages to and fro within the house.

(xii) Then there must be a well-organised city, abundant with food, sufficient water, and markets. The intent here is that the Muslim country should become a self-reliant country in all aspects of life, not needing food, water, or all life's necessities from elsewhere.

Section Four: It is obligatory for the leader to be cautious and vigilant. He should not let anyone get close to him except a trustworthy person.

Section Five: The obligation of investigation concerning the affairs of governance. This relates to investigating about the less-privileged from among the orphans, those for whom a will or bequest was made (wasicci), and other marginalised people (i.e., those confined, like the insane and their like). Also, investigating the affairs of the Public Treasury, (Bait al-Mal), the salaries of employees, and the functions of his officials. Through this investigation, he will reprimand the unproductive and

remove any corrupt officials. Sheikh Usman further enjoined the leader to be abreast of (the plans) of enemies by sending spies to various regions.

Section Six: The obligation of designating a specific day for meeting with the common people and hearing their complaints.

Section Seven: Concerning the wealth of the Public Treasury (Bait al-Mal). Sheikh Usman explained, that the wealth of the Public Treasury (Bait al-Mal), is derived from seven sources. They are as follows:

1. Zakat: Zakat is further divided into five categories, which can be summarised as follows: (i) Zakat on money; (ii) Zakat on agriculture; (iii) Zakat on livestock; (iv) Zakat on minerals; (v) Zakat al-Fitr (usually paid at the completion of Ramadan fast).
2. Spoils of War (Ghanimah): That is, what is acquired from the enemy after a battle has been fought.
3. Fai': That is, wealth found in enemy territory, which they fled and abandoned, without a battle being fought.
4. One-fifth (Khums) of *Rikaz*: *Rikaz* refers to something that the people of the pre-Islamic era (Jahiliyyah) had buried or concealed in the ground. Whoever finds it must give one-fifth of it to be put in the Public Treasury.
5. Land Tax (Kharaj): That is, the tax on agricultural lands that are part of the Fai' and were given to some (Muslims) to cultivate. They will give one-tenth of what they cultivated to be put in the Public Treasury.
6. Wealth that has no heir.
7. Wealth whose owner is unknown.

Section Eight: How the wealth of the Public Treasury should be managed. Here Sheikh Usman clarified that it is obligatory for the leader to use the wealth of the Public Treasury first for matters that are of primary necessity. These include, for example, purchasing weapons for war, building city walls, and so forth. Here he meant that the issue of security is the foremost priority within an Islamic state.

Following the matter of security is the salaries of employees: including judges and those who call to prayer (mu'adhdhins); including the wages and allowances of soldiers and anyone entrusted with a duty of managing the affairs of Muslims. If anything remains after these (payments), Sheikh Usman said, then, the leader should set it aside for these matters:

1. Paying the debts of those unable to pay. Meaning, in Islam, if someone incurs a debt for a necessity but repaying it becomes impossible for him, then something is taken from the Public Treasury to give him so he can repay.
2. Building mosques, bridges, and the like. Here, money from the Public Treasury is taken and used for projects essential for the people's worldly lives and life in the Hereafter.
3. Ransoming prisoners of war.
4. Helping unmarried young men to marry. Sheikh Usman meant that money from the Public Treasury can be taken to assist young men without means so they can marry.
5. Helping those whose means or resources are insufficient to perform the Hajj (pilgrimage).

At the end of this, Sheikh Usman indicated that this aforementioned explanation is how Allah has commanded the distribution of the wealth of the Public Treasury to be carried out. All of these, the Muslim leader will do with the fear of Allah and without favouritism.

This explanation that Sheikh Usman gave in this book, if leaders were to follow it and act upon it, then certainly the economic problems currently plaguing our country Nigeria, and indeed the world at large, would be reduced if not entirely eliminated.

Women

Prior to the emergence of Sheikh Usman, the women of this region of West Africa, and indeed even specifically within the Hausa lands, lived in a state of profound ignorance, servitude, and subjugation under men. Their condition was akin to that of beasts. A man could keep as many women as he desired; some rulers kept nearly a thousand women. They lacked even the liberty to cover their own bodies. They remained secluded within the home, devoid of knowledge. Their husbands neither taught them nor permitted them to attend learning assemblies. This affliction was not limited to the women of the common ignorant populace; nay, it extended even to the wives, daughters, and female slaves of the clerical scholars themselves. This calamity which had befallen women was so severe to the extent that women were seen being created for no purpose other than marital servitude, obedience to the male, and rendering him service – even if it involves disobedience to Allah. Observe how Sheikh Usman characterised the condition of women in the Hausa lands during that period:

"Among these matters is that which most of the scholars of this country do: they abandon their wives, daughters, and

female slaves in the condition of animals, without informing them of that which Allah has obligated upon them concerning their creed, the rulings of their religious obligations such as ablution, their prayer, their fasting, and similar matters among those duties Allah has placed upon them. They have reduced them to the status of a earthenware vessel which they utilise; when it breaks, they cast it upon the refuse heap; that is, a place of filth..." This was the circumstance in which Sheikh Usman found women. This is why, from the very inception of his preaching mission, he dedicated intense focus to the education of women. Furthermore, he stood firmly in advocating for their right to attend places of learning. This is the reason that, wherever he sojourned during the period of his preaching, in areas of Zamfara and Kebbi, he would gather people – both men and women – separating the men into one group and the women into another. This practice provoked opposition from a certain scholar. That scholar was Goni Mukhtar, as has been outlined in the preceding explanation.

Due to his observation of the condition in which women lived, Sheikh Usman criticised the scholars of his time for depriving them (women) of their rights and denying them their freedom to seek knowledge. He did so in his book, "Nur al-Albab". This also prompted him to write "Tanbih al-Ikhwan", a treatise which establishes the permissibility of instructing women in Islamic religious knowledge. Furthermore, it was this issue that led Sheikh Usman to compose "Irshad al-Ikhwan", in which he noted that people had become divided into two factions. One faction held the view that it is forbidden for a woman to leave her home, even for the purpose of seeking knowledge; it was deemed obligatory for her to remain at home, even if she remained in a state of ignorance. The other faction, however, believed that a woman is at liberty to go wherever

she wishes, without any restriction. Sheikh Usman stated that he wrote the book to advocate for a moderate path, one that is neither excessive nor neglectful. In this book, he presented twelve chapters which detail the places women are permitted to attend. Below is his statement in the introduction to the book:

"I have compiled twelve categories pertaining to their (women's) going out in this book. I have arranged these categories according to legal chapters, so that this may be most accessible for one who seeks to examine a specific issue according to the matters recorded therein. Explaining these categories will serve as an admonition and a reminder for those that have not..." been mentioned therein:

1. First: To go out in pursuit of primary religious knowledge (fard 'ayn).
2. Second: To go out to a place for fulfilling necessities (such as the lavatory/toilet).
3. Third: To go out to the mosque for performing obligatory prayers.
4. Fourth: To go out for the Friday congregational prayer.
5. Fifth: To go out for the Eid prayer.
6. Sixth: To go out for the prayer for rain (Salat al-Istisqa').
7. Seventh: To go out for the funeral prayer and to visit graves.
8. Eighth: To go out for a wedding feast.
9. Ninth: To go out for the performance of the Hajj (pilgrimage).
10. Tenth: To go out for buying and selling in markets and other such places.

11. Eleventh: To go out to attend a judicial court session.
12. Twelfth: To go out to foster kinship ties.

These are the places which Sheikh Usman mentioned for a woman's exiting (her home). He indicated that these are not the only ones; rather, they can remind us of other places. Does this not present a challenge to the scholars of this contemporary era to reflect upon the places for which women could exit (their homes) in this period? For the crux of the issue is that jurisprudence (Shari'a) delivers rulings on (daily) recurring matters.

In summary, anyone studying the books of Sheikh Usman will comprehend that he held the following views concerning women:

1. A woman is a creation whom Allah made like man; she has rights just as he has rights. She has a right to life like his. She has a right to ownership. The primary matter regarding her ownership is giving her dowry (mandatory bride price). Because of this, Sheikh Usman condemned the practice of rulers and chiefs who seized a woman's dowry. She has the right to inherit wealth. It is for this reason that Sheikh Usman condemned societies that denied a woman her inheritance.
2. The Right to Seek Knowledge: Sheikh Usman explained that a woman has the right to seek knowledge, just as a man does, and not only Islamic religious knowledge. Concerning Islamic religious knowledge, he stated that it is obligatory for a man to teach his wife religious knowledge; but if he does not know it, he must go and learn and then teach her. If he is incapable of that, then he must grant her permission to go and seek knowledge. If he refuses, then she should go out, even without his

permission. Furthermore, she has the right to appeal her case before a judge. And that judge is obligated to rule that she be given the opportunity to seek knowledge, just as if she were to file a complaint that she is not being provided sustenance, the judge would rule that she be maintained or that they separate.

3. Rights to Dignity and Protection from Harm: It is obligatory that, while at home, her father should oversee her upbringing. When she goes to her husband's house, it is obligatory for him to take care of the matters of her food, drink, and clothing according to his means. Likewise, he is obligated to provide her with a secure dwelling. Marriage is not a form of servitude imposed upon a woman, unless she undertakes it in seeking reward, in which case Allah will grant her that reward. Or, it becomes so if her husband is incapable of finding someone to perform domestic service; then she may undertake this responsibility, according to her capacity.
4. The Right to Maintain Kinship Ties: Visiting relatives, and going to places of similar nature, are among the other places a woman is permitted to go. The husband has no authority to prevent a woman from going out for these purposes, for the Shari'a has established it thus. However, regarding going out, Sheikh Usman clarified that it is obligatory for a woman to go out in accordance with the rules laid down by the Shari'a, and which includes avoiding adornment and applying perfume. She must not engage in conversation with men on the way, and she must refrain from any indecent act.

This is the viewpoint and position of Sheikh Usman concerning a woman. This is a viewpoint we may assert is

comparable to, or indeed surpasses, any contemporary effort striving for women's rights. This is especially the case when we consider that the era in which Sheikh Usman lived was over one hundred and eighty years ago.

Allah is the one that guides to the straight path.

Renewal/Reform (Tajdid)

Tajdid fundamentally denotes revival/renewal, or, in the terminology of the Shari'a, it means the reformation of the people's character by guiding them to the right path, and the purification of Islam from innovations, the revival of Prophetic traditions, and the establishment of Allah's decree on earth. So, what was the opinion of Sheikh Usman regarding this? His view was that there is indeed a renewer/reformer (mujaddid). This, as he articulated in his book "Ifham al-Munkirina", is indicated by a tradition (hadith) reported to show that at the end of every hundred years, a scholar will arise who will revive the religion of the community. He stated in the book that the role of this scholar is: "He will be zealous in enjoining good and righteousness deeds, prohibitive of that which is blameworthy; he will reform the affairs of the people; establish justice among them; support truth over falsehood; revive the Prophetic tradition (Sunna), dismantle innovation (bid'a), and eradicate corrupt customs."

Furthermore, Sheikh Usman elaborated on the nature of the renewer/reformer, stating that Allah will bestow upon him a manifest light by which he is distinguished among the people, and that he is upon truth, and whoever opposes him is upon misguidance; and (he is) among those who turn away from the path of Allah."

Sheikh Usman did not conclude his exposition in the book until he enumerated for us some definitive characteristics, for only when they are found in one, can one be declared a renewer/reformer. According to him, the characteristics are five:

1. He must be renowned for his knowledge.
2. He must have comprehensive mastery of every branch of knowledge.
3. His knowledge must reach all the people of his era.
4. He must be a supporter of the Prophetic tradition (Sunnah) in his statements.
5. He must appear one hundred years after the passing of a previous renewer/reformer.

These are the conditions Sheikh Usman presented for being a renewer/reformer. Allah knows best.

The Mahdi

The term "Mahdi" linguistically means "the one who guides" in Arabic. However, in Islamic discourse, it is a reference to the name of an individual who will emerge at a time when the world has become corrupt, filled with corruption and oppression; he will fill it with justice and reformation. The issue of the Mahdi is an ancient one throughout the world. Some scholars have affirmed it, while others have denied it. This has led some to believe that there is no Mahdi at all. Others hold the view that there is a Mahdi, and that he can be found in any era and in any part of the inhabited world. This is why some scholars have repeatedly claimed to be Mahdis themselves, as Ibn Tumart did in the Maghreb. Even Sheikh Usman himself was speculated to be the Mahdi, and people called him by the name of the Mahdi, but he made explicit denial, showing them that, he was not

the Mahdi. When this issue intensified, he composed poetry in the Fulfulde language to explain to the community that he was indeed not the Mahdi. The matter did not abate, until he wrote books in the Arabic language to clarify this.

In total, Sheikh Usman wrote three books in which he discussed this issue of the Mahdi. The first book is "Tanbih al-Ummati 'ala Qurbi Huijum al-Ashrat al-Sa'ati". In this book, Sheikh Usman dedicated a special chapter, which is the fourth chapter of the book, wherein he cited numerous traditions (hadiths) related to the Mahdi.

The second book is "Al-Khabar al-Hadi ila Umur al-Imami al-Mahdi". In this book, he elaborated on the issue of the Mahdi at length, relying on the statements of his predecessors, particularly Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Suyuti. In this book, Sheikh Usman explained ten points. These points are summarised as follows:

1. The emergence of Imam al-Mahdi is an established matter, for sound traditions (hadith sahihah) have been reported explaining this.
2. Whoever denies the coming of the Mahdi has committed disbelief (kufr), for successively transmitted traditions (hadith mutawatirah) have come stating this.
3. A certain scholar claimed that the Mahdi has already appeared and passed, and that the Mahdi was Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, that Caliph noted for justice. He (Sheikh Usman) said that in truth the matter is not so.
4. The truth regarding the matter of the emergence of the Mahdi is that he will not appear except at the time of the emergence of Dajjal (the false messiah or anti-Christ) and the descent of (Prophet) Isa (A.S).

5. The Mahdi (may Allah's pleasure be upon him) is from the progeny of Fatimah, upon whom is Allah's pleasure. This is indeed the case, because of the traditions (hadiths) that have been narrated explaining this.
6. The Mahdi exists in person; nay, it is not that he will be born at the end of the world. He was born on the night of the fifteenth of Sha'ban in the year 255 A.H., and he remains alive until he meets (Prophet) Isa (peace be upon him).
7. The time when the Mahdi will appear is known to Allah alone. For his emergence is one of the conditions/signs of the advent of the Hour (al-Qiyamah), while there is not a single tradition (hadith) that has come specifying the time the Hour will occur. Likewise, is the case regarding its conditions.
8. The anticipation for the Mahdi's appearance can begin as early as within the thirtieth year of the eleventh century A.H. Sheikh Usman stated that this is the opinion of Sheikh Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani in his book "Al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir".
9. The Mahdi will appear in the city of Medina, and he will go to Mecca. Furthermore, the oath of allegiance will be pledged to him there within the mosque, between the Rukn (one of the four corners of the Ka'aba) and the (Maqam Ibrahim) Station of Ibrahim (peace be upon him).
10. Sheikh Usman has a chain of transmission (isnad) for meeting the Mahdi through his teacher, Sheikh Jibril. In this aforementioned book, he denied being the Mahdi. This is how he stated it: "Through this, you will know that I am not the Mahdi, as those in ignorance of the

> traditions of the Messenger suppose. For the Mahdi is a noble descendant from the children of Fatimah, upon whom is Allah's pleasure, whereas I do not have this in my lineage, except if the matter is otherwise known by Allah...."

In another book, which is the third, "Tahdhir al-Ikhwan min Iddi'a'i al-Mahdiyya", Sheikh Usman made a determined effort to explain that he was not the Mahdi. He also warned anyone claiming that he was the Mahdi to desist, asserting that such a person was speaking falsehood. In this book, he compiled traditions (hadiths) that explain the appearance of the Mahdi, his signs, and his characteristics. He also gathered various legal opinions (fatwa) from the scholars of the four schools of thought within the Ahl al-Sunnah concerning the refutation of a man who appeared in the tenth century claiming to be the Mahdi.

Miracles

That which is meant by miracle (karamah) is something that is beyond a human being to perform. That is to say, something that contravenes customary norms. If such a thing occurs to prophets, it is called a miracle (mu'jizah); if it occurs to other individuals, it becomes a miracle (karamah), but with the condition of conformity to the religion. For the scholars of Sufism have said that the occurrence of that which contravenes the norm can happen, even to an unrighteous person. On this basis, they stipulated that it is only valid if the one to whom it occurs is upon istiqama (uprightness in the religion).

Sheikh Usman, like other Sunni scholars, accepted karamah and affirmed its occurrence; and he prohibited its denial. It is for this reason that in his book "Ihya' al- Sunnah" he said: "From among these is the denial of the miraculous powers

(karamah) of the righteous persons (Awliya'). This constitutes an impermissible innovation (bid'ah) by the consensus of scholars. The scholars have indicated that there is the fear of unpleasant ending for those who dispute it".

"Likewise laying claim to the possession of miracles (karamah) while not being among those legitimately entitled to it is also an impermissible innovation (bid'ah) by the consensus of scholars. The scholars have said that there is a legitimate apprehension about an unpleasant ending upon the claimant who is not among those entitled to it".

Mystical Unveiling/Disclosure (Kashf)

The meaning of *kashf* is, literally, 'unveiling.' However, in the terminology of Sufi scholars, the term carries a different meaning. This term, as Sheikh Usman derived from Imam al-Ghazali and cited it in his book "Tabsirat al-Mubtadi", is: "A light that becomes manifest within the heart at the time it is purified from blameworthy attributes, causing something to be unveiled by that light..."

In the book, Sheikh Usman explained that the perception of matters beyond sensory reality (ghayb) is among the categories of the knowledge of unveiling (kashf). He stated that this has its origin in the Noble Qur'an and the Prophetic Tradition (Sunnah). He said its origin from the Qur'an is the statement of Allah, the Most High, regarding the story of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him): "Then they found one of Our servants upon whom We had bestowed mercy from Us and whom We had taught knowledge from Us" (18:65).

He said its origin from the Sunnah is his statement – peace and blessings of Allah be upon him – that: "In the community, there are those who narrate stories (i.e. receive inspiration)."

He even explained that Umar was among them. This hadith is narrated by al-Bukhari.

However, although Sheikh Usman accepted the knowledge of *Kashf*, or what we may call inspirational knowledge (ilham) or divine knowledge (ladunni), he said it is not to be used as an independent proof unless it aligns with the Qur'an and the Sunnah. In another part of the book, he stated that this knowledge, as a general rule, does not apply to everyone. Nay, it is specific to its possessor.

Thus, Sheikh Usman discussed extensively the nature of *Kashf* and inspirational knowledge in the aforementioned book. He showed it to be an authentic form of knowledge, but because it is not knowledge that is learned from books, many who have not attained that status, deny what they see from the books of the scholars of *Kashf*. For this reason, he said it is not permissible for a person to study these books except for one who has the endowment in it. Furthermore, he stated in the book "Ihya' al-Sunnah" that it is not permissible for a person to look into these books except for one who has some insight into them. He should look; if he understands something, he may act upon it, and that which he does not understand, he should leave. He said this is not due to any flaw in the speaker (author); nay, but because you yourself have not comprehended the matter. He said Allah has stated, "Do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge" (17:36).

So, did any miracles (karamah) occur to Sheikh Usman? And what occurrences of unveiling (kashf) happened to him? The answer to these questions is:

Regarding karamah, many miracles did occur to Sheikh Usman. Due to their abundance, Muhammad Bello stated in his book "Infaqu" that: "They are uncountable, and there is

nothing that can contain them except a dedicated volume." However, despite this, Waziri Gidado wrote his book "Rawd al-Jinan", which mentions over forty (40) miracles that occurred to Sheikh Usman".

As for mystical unveiling (Kashf), many statements were made during his lifetime claiming that such and such occurrences of miracles or unveiling happened to him, some of which are true and others are merely fabrications. In his book "Tahdhir al-Ikhwan min Iddi'a'i al-Mahdiyya", Sheikh Usman stated that many people claimed he had reached the status of the Qutb (the leader of the awliya'), others alleged that he ascended into the sky, while others said he walked on water; furthermore, some claimed the earth was folded for him as he travelled to Mecca and Medina, just as others claimed jinn were made subservient to him, as they were made subservient to the perfected saints. Sheikh Usman said: "I stood firm to repel all these things from myself in various epistles. However, I composed them in *ajami* (writing non-Arabic languages using Arabic script)."

Sheikh Usman, in this aforementioned book, mentioned some of his epistles written in *ajami*, which he composed in the Fulfulde language. Later, he provided their translations in the book in Arabic. This is what he stated concisely:

"As for the explanation of what I mentioned in those *ajami* epistles, I will explain them gradually by the will of Allah. This is to affirm the truth and eliminate falsehood."

"But as for the claim that the earth is folded for me, or that I went to Mecca and Medina, or that I walk on water, or that I ascend into the sky, or that I have reached the status of the Qutb, these are definitive lies."

"As for the matter of sainthood, what I know is that Allah, the Most High, established for me the status of "Waridat al-Ahwal"' (receiver of divinely sent spiritual influences) from early childhood until the age of thirty-one. Then, a sudden spiritual impulse (jazb) from the divine pull, from the light of the Messenger of Allah – peace and blessings of Allah be upon him – absorbed me. This absorption occurred due to the blessing of sending prayers upon him. So much so that I felt presented before the Messenger of Allah – peace and blessings of Allah be upon him – and I was weeping. Then I intended to recite a lengthy poem (qasidah) which Abu Sufyan ibn al-Harith (may Allah be pleased with him) composed for the Prophet after his death, and the Prophet commanded me to recite it before him. So, I recited it until the place where the composer of the poem says in Arabic, which has this meaning:

'He is a Messenger who dispels doubt from us; and with that which is sent to him, he speaks; He guides us, we fear no misguidance; For indeed the Messenger is our guide.'

Sheikh Usman said that when he reached this verse, the Messenger said to him: 'Stop there.' He said, so I paused there. He said, then the Messenger gave me the glad tidings with his statement: 'I am your guide upon the straight path; you will not be misguided.'

Sheikh Usman said that the glad tiding was more beloved to him than the world and all that is within it. He said: "Then it was confirmed that his status is the status of the people of good character, and the status of the people of good character does not reach the status of the people of rank/position (maqamat), and the status of the people of rank does not reach the status of the perfected saints (awliya' kummal). With this, one may

say that I am among the perfected saints, those whom..." have become firmly established in the sacred court of the Glorified."

"As for the matter of the jinn, what I know is that they manifested themselves to me during childhood, when I was thirteen years old. Then they disappeared from me. Then they manifested again to me when I was a youth, twenty-five years old. So, from that time until now they have not ceased, manifesting to me from time to time up to this time of ours. However, all of this is by their own choice."

"But the claim that the jinn were made subservient to me as they were made subservient to the perfected saints, then this is a definitive lie."

Note that Sheikh Usman's statement that the jinn manifested to him up to "our time" refers to the time he wrote the book "Tahdhir al-Ikhwan". This was the year 1229 A.H., as he mentioned the year at the end of his book. This indicates that he lived only three years after writing the book before Allah decreed his demise. That is to say, the book is one of his last books. At the conclusion of his exposition on these issues, Sheikh Usman said:

"As for the matter of spiritual discipline (tarbiyya), what I know is that I train people upon the path of following (Taqwa), which is: obedience to the commands of Allah and avoidance of what He has prohibited. This is upon the path of uprightness (istiqama), which is: emulating the character traits of the Messenger of Allah – peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. But as for the claim that I train people upon the path of mystical unveiling (kashf), as the perfected saints do, then this statement is a definitive lie."

This is what Sheikh Usman mentioned in this book regarding miracles (karamah) and mystical unveiling (kashf).

With this statement, I am inclined to believe that the book titled "Wa Lamma Balaghtu" has been spuriously attributed to him; he did not write it. For most of what is in it, is what Sheikh Usman repudiated concerning himself in this book "Tahdhir al-Ikhwan". Allah knows best what is correct, and He is the guide to the straight path.

Intercession (Tawassul)

Tawassul is beseeching Allah by means of a righteous deed of yours, or we can say, seeking nearness to Allah through some of His chosen servants. This second type of tawassul is an issue upon which scholars have disagreed, and they have conducted extensive research regarding it. Some have prohibited it; others have deemed it permissible. Whoever wishes to examine this issue should consult my book titled "Muhimman Fatawoyi" (Significant Rulings). What I wish to present here is the opinion of Sheikh Usman on this matter. Without wasting any time, I will say that Sheikh Usman supports (the permissibility) of intercession. The evidence for this statement is his book "Ihya' al-Sunnah", at the end of every chapter of which he concludes by saying:

"O Allah, guide us to properly adhere to the Sunnah of Your Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) by virtue of his rank with You."

The second piece of evidence is that Sheikh Usman composed various poems in the Fulfulde language wherein he makes tawassul through various saints, particularly Abd al-Qadir al-Jailani. Whoever desires to see this should examine the book "Tazyin al-Waraqat" of Sheikh. Abdullahi to see the poems that Sheikh Usman composed in Fulfulde; (and) Sheikh

Abdullahi translated them into Arabic. In those poems, Sheikh Usman does indeed make tawassul through Abd al-Qadir.

The third piece of evidence is his supplication named *munajat* (intimate private supplication) and his supplication named *Yada-Sanda*. Both contain tawassul. Furthermore, he affirmed tawassul in his book "Al-Ajwibat al-Muharrara", which is known as *Shisummas*.

Visiting the Graves (Ziyarat al-Qubur)

The issue of visitation (of graves) is an established matter. The Messenger (SAW) encouraged it. However, disagreement has arisen among scholars concerning whether it is for everyone, or only for men, while women are prohibited. Also, can one seek blessings from the dead or not? The opinion of Sheikh Usman on this issue is that he affirmed visitation as the Sunnah has conveyed it. He also holds that visitation is permissible for both men and women. Furthermore, he believes that one may seek blessings from the inhabitants of the graves and seek beneficence at these noble places of theirs. He stated in his book "Nur al-Albab" that blessings are sought by visiting graves. He also stated in his book "Tabsirat al-Mubtadi" that whomever blessings are sought from during his lifetime, blessings may also be sought at his gravesite. However, he stipulated the rules of visitation: that prayers (salat) are not offered to the graves, nor are mosques built over them. He also mentioned that graves should not be touched; nor is the water on their surfaces scooped, just as no piece of clay from them should be taken.

Allah knows best.

How to Determine that a Book is Written by Sheikh Usman

As is known, Sheikh Usman produced numerous writings on various subjects. Previous studies have shown us this. Some of his books are widespread among the people and are known to be his. Others, however, have not become widely circulated. Furthermore, there are some books that have long been in the hands of the public, claimed to be written by him, but research has shown that they are not his, due to various pieces of evidence that confirm this.

A book is determined to be written by Sheikh Usman if one finds one or more of the following indicators. Likewise, it is determined not to be his if they are absent or if something contradictory to them is found. These indicators are:

(i) The Introductory Sermon (khutbah) he customarily used at the beginning of his books, which is: "Alhamdu Lillahi rabbil Alamin, Wa Alfadus-Salati Wa Atammut-Taslim Ala Sayyidina Muhammadin Wa-ala Alihi Wa Sahbihi Ajma'in, Waradiyal-Lahu Ta'ala Anis-Sadatit-Tabi'ina Wal-ulama'il Amilina Wal-a'immatil-arba'atil Mujtahidin Wa Muqallidihim Ila Yaumid-din."

Then he would say, "Amma ba'd". At times, he would begin by saying, "Qala al-Abd al-faqir, Al-mudtarru Li-rahmati Rabbihi, 'Usman ibn Muhammad ibn 'Usman, Al-ma'ruf bi-Ibn Fodio..." This introduction is famous for his books, as Sultan Muhammad Bello mentioned in the book "Infaqu". When describing how Sheikh Usman began his preachings, he said: "he (Sheikh Usman) would begin his preaching with the sermon of his Imam, Abd al-Qadir al-Jailani, then he would repeat the sermon at the end; then he would say, Al-Hamdu Lillahi Rabbil Alamin...'" There is another sermon he also used to read, but it was not so popular. Here is

how he would begin (the sermon): "Alhamdu Lillahil-lazi An'ama Alaina Bini Imatil Imani Wal Islam".

(ii) A book written by Sheikh Usman can be determined by being free from errors in Arabic; meaning the Arabic is correct with no mistakes in syntax (i'rab), that is, in the declension of pronouns within the science of Grammar (Nahw).

(iii) A book is determined as **not** written by Sheikh Usman if it contains declaration of disbelief (takfir) regarding a sin, because Sheikh Usman was an Ahl al-Sunnah, and a follower of the path of Imam al-Ash'ari. This path is renowned for the principle: "One does not declare a person of the qibla an unbeliever for committing a sin." Examine his books "Nur al-Albab" and "Siraj al-Ikhwan", among others.

(iv) If a book is found lacking strong evidence showing it is his, but it resembles his work, then if another book confirmed to be his is found to contradict the former, it should be taken that the first one is an imitation attributed to him, but is not his. This often happens with authors and poets, where the work of one is falsely attributed to another due to their similarity.

(v) If the date is contradictory, such as indicating the (date of) authorship of a book, but the date comes after the death of Sheikh Usman, then certainly the book is also not his.

(vi) If a book is seen to contradict a principle or doctrine that is well-established in his books, then the book is also not his.

(vii) A book written by Sheikh Usman can be determined if it contains a rhymed prose (saj') element in its name, that is, its middle and its end share the same place of articulation (i.e. end with the same sound). For example, like "NI" and "Ni", as seen in the name of the book "Siraj al-Ikhwani Fi Ahammi Mayuhtaju Ilaihi Fi Hazaz-Zamani". And others of its kind. This is the predominant characteristic of the titles of his books.

Any book I mention as having been spuriously attributed to Sheikh Usman is only after I have read it and found it lacking one or more of the aforementioned criteria. Also, something to note here is that there is another Hausa author named Usman bin Muhammad, whose matters are often confused by some, leading them to believe it is Sheikh Usman, although this is not the case. One must be aware of this. That author usually writes his name as Usman ibn Muhammad. At times he adds Al'hausi Al'asuri' (to his name).

Books Falsely Attributed to Sheikh Usman

1. Wasiqat al-Ikhwan:

A reader of this book will see that it is well-known and claimed to be written by Sheikh Usman, but research shows it is not his, because all the evidence mentioned indicates this:

(i) Its introductory sermon (khutbah); (ii) Its Arabic; (iii) The declarations of disbelief (takfir) due to sin contained in it; (iv) It contradicts the book "Irshad al-Ikhwan Ila Ahkam Khuruj al-Niswan", which Sheikh Usman wrote; (v) It contradicts his principles; (vi) There is no rhymed prose (saj') in the book's title; (vii) At the beginning of the book it says: 'Qala 'Usman ibn Muhammad'. This indicates it is written by Usman bin Muhammad, the Hausa author. Allah knows best.

2. Tanbih al-Ghafilin wa Tanzim al-Akhbari Wa ba'lil 'Asr.

This too is known to be a book of Sheikh Usman. But it contradicts some of the aforementioned criteria: (i) Its introductory sermon; (ii) Its Arabic is faulty; (iii) The book appears to be by Muhammad bin Mahmud al-Wankari, as is written in the book, but it has been falsely attributed to Sheikh Usman.

3. Mir'at al-Fara'id and 4. Kashf al-Ghummah.

These two books, numbered 3 and 4, compilers and authors often attribute them to Sheikh Usman, but research shows they are the work of Usman bin Muhammad Al'asuri al-Hausi. This is so because of this reason (v): The date on book (3) indicates it was completed in the year 1303 A.H., seventy years after the death of Sheikh Usman. Book (4) is a commentary on the third book. Allah knows best.

5. Tanbih al-Hukkam.

This book too is attributed by authors and compilers to Sheikh Usman. But in truth it is not his, because its composition contradicts the previously mentioned criteria: (i) Its introductory sermon; (ii) It contradicts the principles established in the books of Sheikh Usman. Another reason that should be noted is that this book is available in the History Bureau of Sokoto State, with a catalogue number such as: 1/3/134, but it is recorded as being written by a scholar named Usman, a man from Jama'are. Allah knows best.

6. Tam'yiz al-Ahl al-Sunnah.

This book, like the others, is often attributed to Sheikh Usman, but it is also not his due to: (i) The book's introductory sermon; (ii) Errors in Arabic; (iii) Declarations of disbelief (takfir) due to sin.

This book is believed to be the work of Usman bin Muhammad, an explanation about whom has already been given.

7. Lamma Balaghtu.

This book is well-known as being written by Sheikh Usman, and it has been translated into the Hausa language. Furthermore, there are poetic versions of the book which students (almajirai) recite while begging. This is because of the many miracles (karamah) the book contains, attributed to Sheikh Usman. I too (the author of this book) long held the opinion that the book was written by him. However, when I studied his book titled "Tahdhir al-Ikhwan Min Iddi'a'i Al-Mahdiyya", I abandoned my initial view. The book "Tahdhir al-Ikhwan" completely contradicts what is in "Walamma Balaghtu". For this reason, this book should be considered not written by Sheikh Usman, due to criterion (iv), as well as criteria (i) and (ii). Examine his views regarding miracles (karamah), mystical unveiling (kashf), and intercession (tawassul) in this book.

8. Al-Jawab Ala al-Su'al Fi Dalil Man'i Khuruj al-Nisa'.

This book, like "Wasiqat al-Ikhwan", is attributed to Sheikh Usman, but it is not by him. This is due to criteria (i) and (ii). It is also believed that the book is written by Usman ibn Muhammad, because its style aligns with that of "Wasiqat al-Ikhwan". Also, in one (published) edition of the book, there is a place where it says, "Wa su'ila Sheikhuna Usman," meaning "Our teacher Sheikh Usman was asked." This wording indicates it was a question put to Sheikh Usman, showing he did not write it (the book). Whoever wishes (to verify) this should obtain

the book published by a scholar named Mallam Buda from the Dutsin Assada area[21].

9. Qawa'id al-Salati.

An author named Ismail Balogun (a Yoruba), who wrote a book on "The Life and Works of Sheikh Usman," attributed this book to him. Although the scholar attributed many of Sheikh Abdullahi's books to Sheikh Usman, nevertheless, I choose to refute this one specifically; I will leave the others for the next book when I will discuss Sheikh Abdullahi. As for the book "Qawa'id al-Salati", it is a well-known book among pupils (almajirai) and students. In it, it simply says: "Qala al-Sheikh..." meaning "The scholar said:"

Which scholar? It is not known. For this reason, this book is not written by Sheikh Usman. The book also contradicts the previously mentioned criteria (i) and (ii).

10. Masa'il al-Zubabi.

This is a book that compiles issues of Fiqh; that is, jurisprudence, or its branches (furu'). But it is not written by Sheikh Usman. However, it cannot be denied that the compiler used some legal opinions (fatwa) found in Sheikh Usman's books. The book also contradicts criterion (i) from the previously mentioned criteria. It is also believed to be written by a scholar named Usman bin Ishaq. He too was from Sokoto.

11. Wasiyyat Sheikh Usman.

This book, Wasiyyat Sheikh Usman, was not known until in recent years when a retired military officer named Mustapha Haruna Jakollo, son of the Emir Gwandu, Alhaji Haruna Rashid, had it published, and it was translated into the Hausa language.

---

[21] (Mallam Buda is a well-known publisher (of books), and he sells them in the Sokoto market).

This book claims that Sheikh Usman made this testament to Sheikh Abdullahi. However, any researcher who reads Sheikh Usman's books will see that it is impossible to attribute it to him. This is due to criteria (i), (iv), and also (vi). Furthermore, it is shown that the testament did not reach Sheikh Abdullahi until two years after the death of Sheikh Usman, which hardly appeals to reason.

None of the books mentioned above are listed in the catalogue of Sheikh Usman's books listed in the book "Infaqu", where Sultan Muhammad Bello mentioned the books written by Sheikh Usman. They are also not mentioned in the book "Anis al-Muftd" of Waziri Abdulqadir, when he also wrote about Sheikh Usman's books.

Catalogue of Books Written by Sheikh Usman

The purpose of listing his books here is (to present) the books he wrote in the Arabic language, and which have been verified as his authorship, by one means or the other. I have not included those he wrote in the Fulfulde language, due to my lack of understanding of that language. I have also not brought those composed in the Hausa language, most of which are poems translated from another language. However, I cannot claim having listed all the books written by Sheikh Usman in the Arabic language.

List of the Books

1. Al-Fasl al-Awwal
2. Al-Kawa'id al-Zaruqiyya
3. Al-Farq baina 'Ilm Usul al-Din wa baina Ilm Al-Kalam.
4. Al-Munajat.
5. Addaliyatu.

6. Al-Jshriniyya.
7. Ajwibatun Muharrara an Asilatin Muqarrarah (Shisumas).
8. Amru al-Sa'ah wa Ashratuha.
9. Al-Khabar al-Hadi Ila Umur al-Imam al-Mahdi.
10. Al-Amru bi al-Ma'ruf wa al-Nahyu an al-Munkar.
11. Al-Nasa'ih al-Muhammadiyya.
12. Al-Masa'il al-Muhimma.
13. Al-Salasil al-Zahabiyya.
14. Al-Salasil al-Qadiriyya.
15. Asrar Kitab al-Muhasibi.
16. Asanid al-Faqir.
17. Asanid al-Da'if.
18. Al-Tafriqa baina Ilm al-Tasawwuf Alladhi li al-Takhalluq Walladhi li al-Tahaqquq.
19. Al-Jihad.
20. Bayan al-Bid'a' al-Shaitaniyya.
21. Bustan al-Du'a'.
22. Bayan Wujub al-Hijrah ala al-Ibad.
23. Da'awat Ibad Allah ila Kitab Allah.
24. Dariq al-Jannat.
25. Dala'il al-Sheikh.
26. Fath al-Basa'ir.
27. Hisn al-Afham min Juyush al-Awham.
28. Hidayat al-Tullab.
29. Hukm Juhhal Balad al-Hausa.
30. Hidayat al-Talibin.
31. Haqiqat al-Iman.

32. Irshad al-Ummah ila Bayan Taysir al-Millah.
33. Ifham al-Munkirina.
34. Irshad al-Ikhwan ila Ahkam Khuruj al-Niswan.
35. Ihya' al-Sunnah wa Ikhmad al-Bid'ah.
36. Irshad al-Ibad ila Had al-Rati al Ma' Bud.
37. Iqtibas al-Ilm.
38. Irshad Ahl al-Tafrit wa al-Ifrat.
39. Kashf al Ma Alaihi al-Amal.
40. Kitab al-Ittiba' al-Sunnah.
41. Kitab al-Amri bi Muwalat al-Mu'minin.
42. Kitab Farq baina Wilayat Ahl al-Islam wa Wilayat Ahl al-Kufr.
43. Kifayat al-Muhtadin.
44. Kaff al-Talibin An Takfir Awwam al-Muslimin.
45. Kata' al-Khisam.
46. Mawadi' Awham al-Talabah Fi Kutub Ilm al-Kalam li Ulama' al-Ummah.
47. Mir'at al-Tullab.
48. Minhaj al-'Abidin.
49. Muddat al-Dunya.
50. Misbah li Ahl Hadhih al-Zaman.
51. Mi'raj al-'Awam Ila Sama' Ilm al-Kalam.
52. Muwafaqat Fatwa al-Tufa'ili.
53. Misbah al-Muhtadin.
54. Najm al-Ikhwan.
55. Nasihat Ahl al-Zaman.
56. Nur al-Albab.
57. Ruju' al-Sheikh al-Sanusi.

58. Siraj al-Ikhwan.
59. Sawq al-Ummah.
60. Sawq al-Sadiqin Ila al-Hadra al-Qudsiyya.
61. Shifa' al-Nufus.
62. Shifa' al-Ghalil.
63. Shams al-Ikhwan.
64. Talkhis Asrar Kalam Abi Hamid al-Ghazali.
65. Targhib al-Ibad Ilahifz Ulum Din Allah.
66. Tahdhir Ahl al-Iman.
67. Ta'lim al-Ikhwan Ala Jawaz Ittikhaz al-Majlis li Ta'lim al-Niswan Ilm al-Furu' al-A'yani.
68. Tanbih al-Fahim Ala Hukm Muddat al-Dunya wa Khalq al-Alam.
69. Tawqif al-Muslimin Ala Hukm Madhahib al-Mujtahidin.
70. Tarwih al-Ummah bi Bayan Taysir al-Millah.
71. Tahqiq al-Ismah.
72. Tabsirat al-Mubtadi.
73. Tamyiz al-Muslimin min al-Kafirin.
74. Tanbih al-Ummati ala Hujum Qurb al-Ashrat al-Sa'ah.
75. Ta'lim al-Ikhwan bi al-Umur allati Kaffarna biha Muluk al-Sudan.
76. Tanbih al-Ikhwan ila Ahwal Ard al-Sudan.
77. Tabshir al-Ummah al-Ahmadiyyah Bi Manaqib al-Qadiriyyah.
78. Tanzih Rabbina al-Quddus Amma Yakhturu fi al-Nufus.
79. Tanbih al-Talabah Ala Annallaha Ma Rufun Bi al-Fitrah.
80. Tahdhir al-Ikhwan min Iddi'a'i al-Mahdiyyah.

81. Umdat al-Bayan.
82. Ulum al-Mu'amalat.
83. Umdat al-Muta'abbidin Wa al-Mukhtarifin.
84. Udad al-Da'i ila Dinillah.
85. Umdat al-Ulama'.
86. Umdat al-Ubbad.
87. Uqad Aqidat al-Awwam.
88. Usul al-Wilayah.
89. Usul al-Adl.
90. Usul Allati Fi Kitab al-Allamah Ahmad Zarruq.
91. Usul al-Din.
92. Wird al-Sheikh (Yada Sanda).
93. Wasiqat Ahl al-Sudan.

CHAPTER SEVEN

HIS DEATH

After his life of scholarship and teaching, migration, and being up and doing in the struggle of jihad and the exaltation of the Word of Allah (assertively defending the religion), Sheikh Usman settled in the city of Sokoto for two years before his demise. At the time he departed from Sifawa, he found that Muhammad Bello had established the city of Sokoto according to his custom of not residing in the same place with Sheikh Usman. So, when Sheikh Usman arrived Sokoto, the city was expanded and the area where his house was built was named Sabon Birni (New City). And it was at the threshold of his residence that his mosque, which is still known by his name, is located. It is said that in the year of his passing, Sheikh Usman stood firm in preaching and teaching as if Allah had revealed to him certain matters. This is why one of his disciples said in a poem:

"From the very beginning of the year, he was preaching, anyone with insight understood his sign/indication."

So, as the exposition previously given detailed the events year by year, Sheikh Usman passed away on Sunday, the 3rd of Jumada al-Akhir, in the year 1232 A.H., which corresponded to

the 20th of April, 1817 C.E. He was interred in his house; his grave is there and is being visited. May Allah forgive him and reward him with beneficence.

With this, it can be said Sheikh Usman lived for 63 years, 3 months, and 3 days according to the Hijri calendar; but according to the Gregorian calendar, he lived for 62 years and 4 months.

His Wives

As a Muslim and a leader of Muslims, and one who acted upon what Islam commands, Sheikh Usman acted upon the Islamic command concerning marriage. He also utilised the permission Islam gives to marry more than one wife if a person has need for it and fulfils the conditions stipulated by Islamic law. For this reason, Sheikh Usman married wives one after another, exceeding ten. In Islam, a Muslim is allowed to marry four wives and live with them at the same time, but more than that is not permitted. For this reason, we can say that Sheikh Usman married these women at different times, after the death of one of the wives, or after divorce. However, there is no confirmation he ever divorced a certain wife and then married a certain other, according to my extensive research. Writers such as Waziri Gidado and the author of the book "Kitab al-Nasab" only mentioned the wives he married without indicating when the events occurred. But they acknowledged that he married a certain number of them. This omission may have occurred due to the perceived lack of importance of such an issue for that society at that time.

Although divorce is permitted for a man by Islamic law, the fact that we do not have any documented evidence stating that Sheikh Usman had done it, is the reason we neither affirm

nor deny it. The most important point for us is that he married more than one wife. There is also confirmation that at the time he was twenty-five years old, he had four wives. There is also confirmation of the death of some of his wives while he was still in Dagel.

All these matters indicate that the reason that led Sheikh Usman to marry these women was death (of some of them). Another point worth mentioning here is the answer to a potential question: How old was Sheikh Usman when he contracted his first marriage? Scholars of History indicate that he married for the first time when he was twenty-one years old. The first wife he married was Maimunatu, daughter of Inna Kabo, a relation of Muhammad Fodiyo, Sheikh Usman's father. This woman bore him eleven children.

The author of the book "Kitab al-Nasab" counted the wives as twelve, but they could be thirteen if his concubine (Umm al-Walad) named Mariya is included. However, according to Waziri Gidado, the wives were thirteen, and together with Umm al-Walad they would be fourteen. What remains is to know the names of the wives. I will list their names and their nicknames as Gidado mentioned in the book "Rawd al-Jinan":

1. Maimunatu
2. A'ishatu (Gabdo)
3. Hawwa'u (Inna)
4. Khadijatu (Hajo)
5. Khadijatu
6. Jenne
7. A'ishatu (Kwagga)
8. A'ishatu (Jumbajju)
9. Hafsatu

10. Khadijatu (Kwagga)
11. Asma'u
12. Hure
13. Tabaraya
14. Mariya (Umm al-Walad).

His Children

Following his wives, mention should be made of his children: Allah, the Most High, blessed Sheikh Usman with numerous children, approximately thirty-seven. This is not counting those who did not survive to be given a name (i.e. those who died before their naming). Twenty of them were male, while seventeen were female. Gidado son of Laima enumerated these children in his book "Rawd". Waziri Junaidu also mentioned them in his book "Arf al-Raihan".

Here I will list their names, as Gidado mentioned them in the book "Rawd". They are:

Male Children

1. Muhammad Sa'ad
2. Aliyu
3. Muhammadu Sambo
4. Muhammad Bello
5. Abubakar
6. Muhammad Alsan
7. Umar
8. Muhammad Bukhari
9. Muhammad Al-Firabri
10. Muhammad Hajju
11. Al-Hasan

12. Abd al-Qadir
13. Hadiru
14. Ibrahim
15. Abul-Hasan al-Shadhil
16. Ahmad Rufa'i
17. Ahmad al-Badawi
18. Ibrahim Dasuqi
19. Muhammad
20. Isa

Female Children

1. Khadijatu
2. A'ishatu
3. Fatimatu
4. Hafsatu
5. A'ishatu
6. Saudatu
7. A'ishatu
8. Hajo
9. Asma'u
10. Hannatu
11. Aminatu
12. Safiyyatu
13. Aminatu
14. Fatimatu
15. Hajaru
16. Maryam
17. Khadijatu

CONCLUSION

This concludes the first volume on the Usmaniyya Caliphate, and I hope the reader will benefit somewhat from the material presented herein, which I have compiled from various books written in Arabic and others concerning this Caliphate.

My main objective, if the reader has noticed, is (to provide) knowledge of the history of Sheikh Usman and his endeavours so that this community will implement them as a beacon to lead them to success and to liberate (them) from the yoke of selfish desire. For indeed, history is nothing but a collection of lessons describing the character and life of past communities; to emulate their good qualities and to discard their bad ones in order to achieve success. Likewise, the life and works of Sheikh Usman contain exemplary lessons for this community until the Day of Reckoning.

In conclusion, I pray to Allah to unite us with this Mujahid in His Gardens of Paradise (Jannat al-Firdaus), along with the other Muslims who believed and followed the righteous path, Amin. The second volume, by the will of Allah, will follow. It will provide an exposition on the life of Sheikh Abdullahi Fodio.

Thanks be to Allah.