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بِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَي سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَدِّ

Nur 'z-Zamaan

The Light of the Age: *Shehu Uthman Dan Fuduye'*

All praises are due to Allah, by whose remembrance hearts are made tranquil, who has made the mentioning of His *awliyya* a means through which hardships are removed, by which His mercy descends and through which sins are made to depart. Blessings and peace be upon the best of His creation, Muhammad, and upon his pure family and Companions, the elite of the *Muhajirun* and *Ansaar*, and upon those who follow them in *ihsaan* from among the righteous *awliyya*, right-acting *ulama* and the believers until the Day of Judgment.

It was our *Imam* as-Shafi` who said to us:

“I love the righteous even though I am not one of them

Simply in order to attain intercession by means of them.

And I dislike the actions of the disobedient

Although I commit evil deeds equivalent to them.”

The *Wazir* Abd'l-Qadir ibn Gidadu said in his *Anis'l-Mufeed*: “Divine strength and mercy descends with the mentioning of the *awliyya*... Verily the *awliyya* of Allah ta`ala are the doorways to His mercy. For whoever raps on their doors with sound belief and pure acceptance, will have these gates flung open for him and he will enter and attain success in all that he desires.” It is with this in mind that we should endeavor to acquaint ourselves with some of the virtues of our *Amir'l-Mumineen* and *mujaddid*, *Shehu Uthman Dan Fuduye'*, may Allah be merciful to him and cause us to inherit his stations. What I can say about him is brief, but contains the good of this world and the Next. He, the *Shehu* was born in the town of Marrata, Niger on Sunday the last day of *Safar*, 1168 (December 15, 1754). He was a descendent of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace through his maternal grandmother. Like the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; he had his first great spiritual opening at the age of 40 and some months. Like the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; he made the *hijra* at the age of 50. Like the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; he was given the oath of allegiance and *jihaad*. Like the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; he was given victory and established Islamic sovereignty. And finally, like the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace; he was blessed to pass away from this world's life at the good age of 63. In fact, the entire life of *Shehu Uthman Dan Fuduye'*, may Allah be merciful to him was a testimony to the annihilation of his self into the Self-Form of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. This is all I can say about him.

However, our *Sultan*, Muhammad Bello ibn *Shehu Uthman Dan Fuduye'* had this to say about his illustrious father: “He was the *Shaykh* of Islam, the most learned among the scholars, the regal erudite, perpetual deliverer, the scholar of humanity, the one who realized the highest stations, Abu Muhammad Sa`d *Uthman* ibn Muhammad

ibn Uthman ibn Salih ibn Harun ibn Muhammad Ghurtu ibn Muhammad Jubbu ibn Muhammad Sanbu ibn Maasiran ibn Ayyub ibn Buba Baba ibn Abu Bakr ibn Musa Jokoli ibn *Imam* Danbu. He was famous as Dan Fuduye'. He was my father. The protected friends of Allah (*al-awliya*) foretold of his coming before his appearance... From that is what was related from sound narrators on the authority of Umm Hani al-Fulani, the righteous saintly women when she said: "There will appear in this region of the land of the Blacks, a *waliy* from among the protected friends of Allah. He will renew the *deen*, revive the *Sunna* and establish the religion. The fortunate people will follow him and his remembrance will be spread throughout the horizons. The common people and the elite will obey his commands. Those connected to him will be known as the *Jama`aat*. Among their signs is that they will not heard cattle, as is the custom of the Fulani. Whoever encounters that time should follow him." In short, many of the protected friends of Allah recognized him and informed us of his affair even before his appearance and at the time of his appearance as well.

Realize that this *shaykh* was reared from the time he was young to invite people to Allah. The *Shehu* said: "As for as the matter of protected friendship with Allah is concerned, for the most that I know about myself is that Allah ta`ala had established me in a spiritual presence which manifested from a divine state, from the time I was a young boy up until the time I reached the age of thirty-one years. I was seized by an instantaneous spiritual magnetic gravitational orbit that emerged from the lights of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, due to the *baraka* of sending blessings upon him. I was extracted up until I was in the very presence of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, which caused me to continuously weep. In that presence I had an intense desire to recite the poem by Abu Sufyan ibn al-Haarith, may Allah be pleased with him, where he eulogized the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace after his death. Then the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace ordered me to recite it in his presence, so I began to recite it... When I had recited the poem and reached the point in the poem where I said: 'And he guided us and now we do not fear misguidance among us, while the Messenger is our guide on the Path'; the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace then said: "Stop there." So I stopped. He then gave me the good news by his words to me: "I am your guide on the Path of the religion, for you will not go astray." This good news was better to me than the entire world and what it contained."

Thus, Allah ta`ala reinforced him with the lights of overflowing of the Prophet and drew him to His presence by the intermediacy of sending perpetual blessings upon the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. As a result He revealed to him the presence of His divine Actions, Names and Attributes. Allah ta`ala made him witness the secrets of His Essence. By the praises of Allah, he developed into one of the protected friends of Allah and sipped from the cups of His nearness. Allah dressed him with the attire of gnosis and divine love. The Lord of Truth then invested him with the crown of His divine assistance and guidance. He made him suitable to invite people to Him and fit to be a guide to the common people as well as the elite.

He (the *Shehu*) informed me of the time when he obtained the divine attraction by means of the *baraka* of the prayer upon the Prophet (*as-salaat `ala 'n-nabiyy*), may Allah bless him and grant him peace. He was constant in sending blessings upon the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, without boredom, laziness nor laxity. As a result, Allah assisted him with the overflowing of illumination (*fayd 'l-anwaar*) by means of *Shaykh* Abd 'l-Qadir 'l-Jayli, may Allah be pleased with him, and his grandfather the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him

peace. He then witnessed the astounding things of the unseen kingdoms (*`ajaa'ib 'l-malakuut*) and realized the mysteries of the kingdom of power (*garaa'ib 'l-jabaruut*). He witnessed the phenomena of the Divine Attributes, Names and Essence. He became acquainted with the Guarded Tablet (*al-lawh 'l-mahfuudh*) and untied its remarkable secrets. The Lord of Truth gave him to drink the sweetness of inviting people to Him and crowned him with the crown of direction and guidance to Him. Then a voice from the divine presence called out: “O mankind answer the call of the inviter to Allah!” It then recited the verse: (“*Turned aside from it is he who is turned aside.*”) Then the Lord of Truth returned him to the place of sensory consciousness in order that the station of guiding others and inviting them can be given to him. Sometimes the lights of majesty (*anwaar 'l-jalaal*) would overcome him and seize him. Sometimes the lights of beauty (*anwaar 'l-jamaal*) would release him and set him at ease... He then began to establish what the Lord of Truth created him for. He made him deserving of inviting people to Him and of being a guide to Him.

He thus began calling people to Allah and guiding them to Him. Subsequently, due to the *Sunna* of Allah in this ‘mandate’, the *Shehu* was then severely afflicted by those people whose characters were loathsome with denial and ridicule. However, he continued to speak to the people according to their intellects and showed kindness towards them. He encountered from their repulsive characters that which I am unable to describe, until Allah gifted him with the permanence of success. Then a group among the believers began to listen to him attentively and he instructed them in the Truth and clarified for them the spiritual path of Truth.

The *Shehu* found among the people of these lands all types of shocking disbelief, corruption, disobedience and repulsive conditions that had spread and permeated the lands (of central *bilad 's-sudan*). To the point where there was hardly anyone who could be found whose *imaan* could be considered truly sound and whose worship was correct. The majority of its people were ignorant of *tawheed*, and illiterate of how to properly perform the ablution, prayer, alms, fasting or the remainder of acts of worship. Among them were those who were: pure disbelievers who worshipped stones and the *jinn* and who openly committed acts of disbelief. They did not pray, fast nor give alms. They denounced Allah and said things about Allah that was not deserving of His exalted rank. These included the majority of the common people of the land of the Blacks, like the Magandawaa, the insolent Fulani and Tuaregs.

Among them were those who pronounced *tawheed* with their tongues, prayed, fasted and gave alms without completing the prerequisites of these acts. Rather, they performed only the outer forms and gestures of *Islam* while at the same time they mixed these acts with open acts of disbelief that they had inherited from their fathers and their grandfathers. While some of them invented these acts themselves. The majority of the rulers of these lands, their civil servants, medicine men and scholars were from this group.

Among them were those who pronounced with their tongues *tawheed*, prayed, fasted and gave the alms without completing the prerequisites of these acts of worship, along with the fact that they were firmly established in blameworthy customs and satanic innovations.

Among them were those who were firmly fixed in ignorant disobedience, accustomed to it as if it were permissible as though there were no prohibition concerning it. This group was numerous and included many of the common people of the Fulani and some of the so-called Muslims of the land of the Blacks. In fact many

of them were originally disbelievers while some of them intermixed belief with disbelief.

Among them were those who properly believed and were correctly aware of *tawheed*, performed the ablution, prayer and alms properly in accordance with what is proper. However this group was the minority in number. Thus, the Shehu began to invite them to Allah, giving good advice to the worshippers concerning the religion of Allah, demolishing these blameworthy customs, destroying satanic innovation and reviving the Living *Sunna* of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. He taught them the individual obligations, directed them to Allah, guided them to His obedience and removed from them the darkness of ignorance and the problematic issues of the religion. He was able to transform these above-mentioned groups that were in that condition, and make them among the successful who rushed to his call and the blessed guided ones who were devoted to him. Then the common people began to enter into the religion in large groups and new comers in large groups began to follow him. He cleared for them the spiritual path (*at-tareeq*) and illuminated it for them. Consequently he eventually excelled the people of his time with regard to inviting them to Allah. People became divided into two groups: a group who believed in him; and a group who were critical and denied him. As for those who denied him they spread evil rumors about him and attributed his actions to mere passions, showing off and the like.

“Denial attacks good and seeks to belittle its face

Out of envy and malice it makes good seem deformed.”

In spite of this, *Shehu* Uthman made allowance for their detestable character and was tolerant towards their evils. He turned away from their ignorance and was silent against the harmful words they hurled at him. He stood firm with what he was reinforced from giving sound advice, guidance and inviting people to the door of Allah... This *shaykh* encountered from the scholars of these times evil and antipathy which only Allah could know or enumerate. Then Allah assisted him and aided him with a cadre from among the rightly guided scholars. They accepted him and assisted him. Realize that the *Shehu* was nurtured ethically and religiously and possessed majestic pleasing states that were unparalleled.

The *Shehu* gave an indication of the causative factor behind his virtue and high rank among the sages, when at the age of twenty he said lamenting and with sheer passion:

“Is there a way for me to swiftly travel in the direction of *Tayba*

To visit the burial chamber of the *Hashimite* Muhammad?

Since his fragrance has spread throughout its shade

And every pilgrim diminishes themselves in the direction of Muhammad,
I too come as a witness with tears flowing like a downpour

Out of ardent yearning for that Prophet Muhammad
I swear by the All Merciful One I have no virtuous qualities

Except that I possess fervent devotion for Muhammad.

Let me give an account of an affliction that cant be eroded

It is that there is no delight in Life without Muhammad

I am on the verge of flying out of passion to visit his grave

Indeed I have no joy short of visiting that spiritual Master

He is the morning sun, the crown of guidance the ocean of hope

There is absolutely no good except in following Muhammad.”

”

The *Shehu* had mastered the self and had become what US Naval intelligence officers call ‘a Super Empowered Individual’; what the Chinese sage Chang-tzu called ‘*shen-jen* or ‘Ultimate Human’; and what the Sages of Islam define as ‘*insaana kaamil*’ or ‘Perfected Human’. He himself said in his *Kitab al-Wird*: “When I reached the age of thirty six Allah lifted the covering from my sight, the covering from my hearing, the insensitivity from my sense of smell, the dullness from my taste, incapacity from my hands, the lethargy from my feet, and the sluggishness from my body. And since that time I am able to see that which is remotely inaccessible like the normal person sees the near and I can also hear the distant like the normal person hears what is near. I can also smell the fragrant scent of the obedient servants of Allah with the pleasant diverse varieties of their specific fragrances. I can also smell the stench of the disobedient ones with the distinct foul odors coming from each act they do. I can instantaneously identify what is permissible by mere taste before it reaches my throat and likewise I can directly determine what is prohibited in the same manner. I am able to grasp something extremely far away with my hands while remaining in my place. I am also able to walk in an instant the distance that a fleet stallion is unable to reach in years of running. This is Divine favor from Allah that He gives to whomever He wills. I have also become minutely acquainted with my physiognomy, each nerve, bone, muscle, organism and hair follicle, and every hierarchical aspect and function that each serves. During this self unveiling I discovered transcribed with the Pen of Divine Decree on the fifth rib on my right side ten times: ‘*All praises are due to Allah the Lord of the worlds*’. ‘*O Allah bless our master Muhammad and the family of our master Muhammad and give them peace*’; and ‘*I seek forgiveness of Allah the Mighty*’. When I discovered this I was amazed by it.” This Self discovery and mastery was the direct result of his drowning in ardent love for nearness to the Best of Creations, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. When he was thirteen when he composed an excellent ‘catechism’ or talismanic poem, a *takhtis* arranged based upon the Arabic alphabets, which describes this overflowing spiritually intoxicating love for our master Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace:

“O he to whom the most exalted assemblies ascend
 O he for whom the Veil of Divine Majesty overlap
 O he whose face is more luminous than the sun
 I have come to you with many faults, indeed you are the refuge
 So redeem me, save me! It is for this reason that you emerged.”

It is for this reason that the *Shehu* was naturally poised for human guardianship. Leadership ended with him and camels were driven to him from the east and the west. He was the standard of the scholars and upholder of the banner of the religion. He revived the Living *Sunna* and brought about the demise of heretical innovation. He dispensed sciences and removed obscurities. Intellects were dazzled by his knowledge and he joined together the divine realities (*haqiqa*) and the *shari`a*. He made commentary upon the *Qur’an* brilliantly in the presence of the notables of the scholars and the righteous. He was learned in the recitation of the *Qur’an* and acquainted with its many sciences and laws. He knew the sciences of the abrogated verses and the abrogating verses, along with the fact that he was an *imam* in the science of Prophetic traditions. His jurisprudence was astounding along with his knowledge of the science of men of narration (*ilm’r-rijaal*). He was unparalleled in sciences of the foundation of religion (*usuul’d-deen*). He defended the *sunna* and warded off obscurities. He stood firm with the Truth and possessed sound

perceptiveness, being attentive to teaching those sciences that were perplexing. He was an *imam* in the transmitted intellectual sciences.

The *Shehu* was diligent in his worship and he was ascetic in this world. He initiated learning and disseminated knowledge, filling the regions of the world with gnosis and disciples. The people of his time stopped with his teachings because he carried the banner of scholarship and was the central axis of council and legal decisions of his time. He was illustrious with the elite as was assessable to the common people. He was the *mujaddid* at the head of this century of ours who combined within his noble character eloquent oration and fluent poetry. He was a person of superior and excellent character. His companionship with others was superb and his rapport with them was unselfish. His spiritual realization was intense based upon the nobility and dignity of his character. By means of his protected friendship with Allah and the station of *qutbaaniyya* (spiritual nucleus), he was unsurpassed by the spiritual masters of his times. He demonstrated much modesty with people and was unlimited in his compassion and sympathy for others. He was completely humble seeing himself less insignificant than even the grass. He once said:

“O people do not denounce me for what I relate

I am a blind follower of what he who said ‘I am a guide’ said

Indeed I am a transgressor, I am impotent and I am ignorant

And yes I am a sinner, but I am also an ardent lover of Muhammad

I am completely aware that I am not good

At extolling the best of all the worlds, i.e. Muhammad

However, my love for him behooves me, so I let it spill out

It is not some distracting diversion from me, nor am I a comedian

And don’t laugh at my poem because I am impotent

For who is it that can properly innumerate the tributes of Muhammad?

My sins are actually chains and the chains are very heavy

So how can I truly stand up while I’m fettered and chained?

I am actually humiliated with faults and utterly veiled

Yet I hope for deliverance from all this by the rank of that Master.”

The *Shehu*’s spiritual method was completely disarming because he made no claims except that his heart was completely filled with ardent affection for the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and it was this emptiness and impotence which induced him to stop with the limits of the *shari`a* and to produce boundless scholarly publications. He encountered so much love and respect from people that he was more beloved to the hearts of people than they were to themselves. He always faced the throng with a joyous face, exquisite character and a happy demeanor. He showed forbearance and mercy towards the believers, and as a result the acceptance of people was established for him. There was unanimous agreement among men and *jinn* concerning the magnificence of his spiritual station. In short, descriptions fall short of his true merit. He was the *shaykh* of all the scholars of his time, rather, he was the spiritual pole of the *imams* in all times. These descriptions of the *Shehu* are not in need of enumerating. Does the light of the sun need a proof?

The *Shehu* was the pole of the time in spiritual states and teachings. He gave victory to the religion by his teachings and elucidations. He revived the Living *Sunna* by means of his actions. He was constant in his guidance and supervision of mankind. He was the proof of Allah to the world, who took a firm grasp of the Book and the Living *Sunna*. He was the master of his time, the *imam* of his age and one of the remarkable wonders of this period. He possessed the two lights of knowledge and action. He possessed manifest miracles, splendid spiritual stations, luminous secrets,

brilliant insight, exceptional spiritual states, unique sincerity, exalted resolution, dazzling spiritual ranks, reverent perceptiveness, illuminated indications, spiritual diffusions, unseen secrets and spectacular appearances.

The *Shehu* possessed the highest ascent in the realm of intuitive knowledge (*al-ma`arif*) and the most brilliant methodology in the realm of spiritual realities (*al-haqa'iq*). He attained the highest degree in the realm of nobility and a firm footing in the final stages of spiritual growth. He was well skilled in the sciences of arrival at Allah and was proficient in the dispersal of penetrating wisdom. He disclosed the realities of the divine signs in the most extraordinary manner and opened a multitude of meanings in the realm of direct witnessing of Allah ta`ala. He was the unique one of his time, whom Allah had manifested into existence and presented as a mercy to creation. Allah ta`ala established for him complete acceptance with the spiritually elite and he was also the shawl of the common people. Allah ta`ala declared him to the world and fixed him firmly in the sovereignty of sainthood (*wilaayat*). Allah ta`ala broke natural laws for him and made him speak with the tongue of the unseen. Allah ta`ala manifested by his hands amazing wonders and brilliant miracles.

Sultan Muhammad Bello said: "Realize, that I often saw that whenever he desired to come out to teach the people, he would stop in a corner of his home for a short time, say some words and then come out to the people. I once asked about that and he said, "I take the time to renew my intention and make a pledge to Allah that I would be sincere in the reason that I have come out to them. I then ask Allah to make those present understand whatever I speak about." It is for this reason that I, too, make sure to renew my intention in my lectures and always call to mind this pledge he took with Allah."

Whenever the *Shehu* would arrive at his lectures, he would greet the people with a all embracing greeting that would be heard by everyone present. Then when he sat upon his stool, he would salute them three times with a smile, happy demeanor and excellent character. Then the people would become silent. He would never become annoyed, showed revulsion or disdain towards those in his lectures, even though he was harried by many of the common people who possessed the most intolerable traits. They were the kind of people who when asked to be silent, would continue speaking and if they were prevented from asking questions would not cease asking. Then the *Shehu* would raise his voice not directing his words to any particular person. He was not hesitant to speak to any of the people present in his lectures; although many of the prominent *shaykhs* and envious scholars were present. Rather, the *Shehu* would speak to the entire assembly with words that were of benefit to everyone, without exception.

Sometimes people would ask questions while he was in the middle of a discourse. He would then stop teaching in order to answer their questions. The *Shehu* was steadfast in the religion and did not fear the criticism of one who criticizes concerning Allah. He would judge with justice and equity, even against his nearest of kin. He never was overcome with the angry rage of ignorance. Rather, He never swerved from the Truth in guiding people. This is a small glimpse of his noble virtues and brilliant character.

Realize that the essence of what the *Shehu* taught the people can be divided into five divisions. The first division: concerned what the *shari`a* has obligated, which are the foundations (*al-usuul*) and the branches of the outward and inward (*al-furu` `t-thaahir wa `l-baatin*).

The second division: concerned urging people to adhere to the Living *Sunna* of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

The third division: concerned discrediting the delusions of the mere amateurs in knowledge (*at-tulaba*) whose ignorance had deluded them. The *Shehu* found in these lands many factions.

Among them was the faction about whom al-Hassan al-Yusi spoke. They are a faction who study the unformulated ideas from the instigation of some *Imams* regarding the speculative arguments in the science of *tawheed*. They rebuke people for being ignorant of this and they also castigate people for having affiliation (*taqleed*) with the scholars in that. They go around questioning people about their beliefs (*`aqeeda*). They hold them responsible for giving the correct answers and then endeavor to explain the correct answers. Sometimes the people being questioned stumble in their inability to express what is on their hearts. Sometimes their tongues are befuddled from the perplexity of the expressions of *tawheed*. Sometimes they are ignorant of part of what is objectionable in the realm of beliefs (*al-`aqeeda*). In any case, these amateurs in knowledge regard them as infringing the boundaries of *tawheed*. And when they are not blaming them, they spread the idea that the common people are ignorant and disbelievers. They then spread the idea that corruption has occurred in the beliefs of the people (*`aqaa'id 'n-naas*). They set out to teach the doctrine of beliefs to the common people utilizing the language and technical terminology established and created by their faction, based upon the perimeters established in the books of the theologians (*al-mutakallimuun*).

They also spread the idea among the people that whoever is not preoccupied with the science of *tawheed* in accordance with the manner in which they learned it or teach it, then that person is a disbeliever. They also spread the idea, that the sacrificed meats of the common Muslim are not to be eaten, nor are their men or women to be married, out of fear that they will be among those who do not know the science of *tawheed*.

They do not stop there, rather after having brought shame upon the common Muslims, Allah afflicted them with trying to bring shame upon the elite among the scholars of the Muslims, as well. Their false condemnations include the jurists of their times among the people of knowledge and religion; as well as discrediting the firmly established scholars and jurists of the past.

Among those whom they condemn are those scholars who are rightly guided. However they accuse them of being in error (*dalaal*), even though they may not claim that the common people are in error. The tribulations of this faction ignited and started a fire which caused the smoke of their ignorance to accumulate until it had almost engulfed the entire region of the *bilad 's-sudan*.

Then the *Shehu* arose against them and Allah extinguished the fires of their tribulation by means of him. By means of the illumination of the *Shehu*, Allah exposed the darkness of their smoke. The *Shehu* showed the falsity of their school of thought (*madh'hab*) and uprooted the tree of their errors from the earth until their ideology became obscured. He produced many treatises refuting them which amounted to more than fifty works. There occurred many conflicts between him and them where it was witnessed that he successfully refuted them in the best manner. He was able to unveil the path of truth and reality. And all praises are due to Allah for that.

He also refuted another faction from among the amateurs in knowledge who happened upon certain books of jurisprudence, the comprehensibility of which they had not been guided to. As a result of their ignorance, they set about passing legal decisions (*fatwaa*) based upon isolated and less acceptable opinions of the scholars. Some of them came upon books whose authors were bizarre and unusual. They would

then pass legal decisions based upon what they read in these books as well. Some of them would take legal rulings from the books of the most loathsome nature.

Likewise, he refuted another faction which had become prevalent in these lands who made false claims and pretended to have unveiling of hidden knowledge, even though they had not even withdrawn themselves out of the grip of *satan* and their own corrupt passions. Many of these false claimants knew nothing of what was incumbent upon them from the individual obligations (*furuud 'l-`ayaan*). Out of their ignorance they happened upon some of the books of the science of spiritual purification (*tassawwuf*). They then shriveled their huge *nafs* into the attire of dignity and asceticism as a means of conjuring the rubble of this world's life. Out of jealousy and stupidity they would fight those who resembled them from among the true and false *sufis*.. Some of them knew nothing of the path of *tasawwuf* but only pretended to that in order to prevail upon this world and to pilfer its vanities... For how many are there who pretend that they have attained good while there is no good in them except insanity, dementia, satanic whispering or bewilderment?! However, the desolate, deceived and ignorant fall prey to them.

“This is the time about which we were warned

In the words of Ka`b and in the words of Ibn Mas`ud.

When this persist and no one speaks to rebuke

When no one will cry for the dead nor be happy about a new born.

In this age the truth has been rejected all together

While injustice and immorality in these times are not rejected.”

Rather, it is an age where mankind wishes not to remain because it has become like the saying of the Prophet, upon him be blessings and peace, “*There is no time coming except that the time after it will be more evil than it.*”

The fourth division: concerned destroying satanic innovation and refuting abominable customs. The fifth division: concerned disseminating the sciences of the *shari`a*, defining the problematic issues in them, bringing advantage by clarifying obscure issues and precisely specifying the peculiar issues in the areas of the sciences. This division is the main topic that the *Shehu* used to discuss with the people. The majority of his beneficial books and brilliant publications concerned this category. In his lectures he persisted in eliminating the complex issues from the religion from the minds of the students to the delight of those who desired this. He rectified those difficult questions and created a clear description of the uncertainties and extremities which pervaded this age. Al-Abasani said, “Our *shaykh*, Abu Abdullahi, use to say in his lectures, ‘If in the lectures of learning one does not get a clear picture of uncertainties of knowledge, then there is no benefit in sitting in his lectures.’ He also said in verse:

‘If in the lectures of a person one does not receive even a small point

Of stipulating a clear picture of the problematic issues in religion

Then avoid his circle and look to your own soul and make strenuous effort

Never neglect it for in neglecting the development of the soul is the ugliest of traits.”

Realize that the *Shehu*, may Allah be merciful to him maintained that preaching from the perspective of admonishing mankind about the affairs of the Hereafter, its terrors and what will happen in that realm along with reminder of the matters of Paradise are in two divisions:

- [1] praiseworthy; and
- [2] blameworthy.

As for praiseworthy preaching, it is admonishing people with the signs of Allah's Book and sound prophetic narratives. Allah ta'ala says: "*Remind by means of the Qur'an those who fear the threat.*" And Allah ta'ala says: "*Remind, for verily the reminder is beneficial to the believers.*" And this is the same opinion with all the verses, prophetic traditions, narratives and sound reports which many of the scholars have narrated. As for blameworthy preaching it is admonishing them with what the ignorant story-tellers have innovated from mentioning falsehood and fabricated traditions.

As for the type of preaching which is known to be prevalent in these *Sudanese* lands of ours, it is to guide the people to what is essential for them from the individual obligations to teach them and urging them to all levels of knowledge. It is obligatory upon every jurist (*faqih*) who has completed his individual obligations to then commence with his collective obligations (*fard'l-kifaaya*). It is also obligatory upon him to establish himself in every village and locale. If someone establishes this matter then it removes the responsibility from the rest of the people of that region. They should consider this action of calling people to beneficial knowledge as the best means of drawing near to Allah ta'ala and firmest means of attaining spiritual stations with Allah. This was disclosed by *Imam* al-Ghazali in his *Ihya 'l-'Uluum 'd-Deen* and Ahmad ibn Hajr al-Haythami in his *az-Zawaajir*.

As for what some of the people of these *Sudanese* lands of ours are doing - where mere students and common people commence to preach, jump to spreading knowledge and guiding the people; this is a grave affliction and a tremendous tribulation. Wherever you like you can find ignorant people who have squandered their own souls, uninformed of most of what is obligatory upon them. And the only thing that incites them 'teach others' is the enticement of Satan. They are provoked by the corrupt passions of the soul in seeking knowledge, rank and position with worldly people and pouncing upon the wealth of the people. They falsely imagine that they possess excellent intention and sincere resolution in guiding the people and teaching them. They think that they are deserving of the title of 'scholar'.

On the contrary, they even consider that their sitting and teaching is an obligation and that they have no choice but to do what they are doing because they see themselves as the best qualified. Can you not see how they actually assault real knowledge and falsely teach and violate the narrated sciences and reason, until the hearts of the common people feel awe for them. They then eventually obey them and flock to them from every direction. It is then that the religion becomes destroyed at their hands and corrupted. The people become preoccupied with what the corrupt souls of these false teachers have contrived. This is what was indicated by the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in the tradition concerning the removal of true knowledge and the people taking as their leaders ignorant ones. The people then question them and they give legal decisions without sound knowledge - until when the Prophet, upon him be peace said: "*They have gone astray and will have led others astray.*" Each one of these pretentious charlatans are more dangerous in the religion to the Muslims than one thousand devils. There can be no news like eye-witnessing. So understand!

The *Shehu* continued to disperse the knowledge of the individual obligations to the common people and propagated a diversity of sciences to the spiritually elite. He instructed the disciples (*murideen*) and those on the spiritual journey (*saalikeen*) and guided them in the courtesies of being in the presence of Allah. He persisted in this until the common people became knowledgeable of their individual obligations and were accustomed to acting in accordance with them. The students of his time

became rightly guided scholars by means of him and the disciples and those on the spiritual journey attained their spiritual goals. He used to go out every Thursday to give sermons to the people about what we have mentioned. So many people used to attend his lectures that only Allah knew their true number. He would go out in the remaining days of the week after *'isha* prayer persistently conveying the sciences of the *deen* and extraordinary wisdom. He used to go out after the *'asr* prayer to give instructions in the sciences of *tafseer* of Quran, *hadeeth*, jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and spiritual purification (*tasawwuf*).

He produced many excellent works that instructed the people in the above sciences. He used to travel to distant regions and countries in order to bring benefit and preach to the people. He would then return to his country in Degel. Newcomers to the religion of Islam converted at his hands from the east and the west. And the scholars of his time presented themselves at his door to take from his *baraka* and to become illuminated from his light. All the people benefited from his blessings in all the lands until his *baraka* spread among them. He clarified the religion with superb clarity and he behaved in accordance with the Lord of Truth.

When he had achieved these accomplishments and his following among the students and the common people became considerable and many people commenced to obey him, then Allah sufficed him from His bounty the scholars of his time and He supported him with cadre of veracious jurists throughout the regions of the *Bilad 's-Sudan* who assisted him in diffusing knowledge and reviving the glorious Living *Sunna*. As a result, worldly people and the rulers of the lands then began to manifest their enmity towards him. This was after they had shown him honor and esteem and had gained *baraka* by means of his supplications. Along with that he used to direct them and show courtesy towards them. The *Shehu* never attempted to come between them and what they craved after, nor did he place any hindrance upon them. They were simply exasperated because of what they had observed from the manifestation of the *deen* and from what had been established by his instructions of the attributes of certainty. They saw the dwindling of the splendor of what they possessed because of their own lapses, falsehood and misjudgments. Along with the fact that their authority had been mostly built upon foundations which were contrary to the *shari`a*. Most of their policies deviated from the true path of politics. Thus when the *Shehu* clarified the path, guided the successful and cleared the road for the travelers, the worldly people from among the evil scholars and rulers blindly continued in their repression. They only feared the demise of their system, the lost of their markets and their deterioration in the eyes of those who were guided. Consequently, these rulers and evil scholars began to harm the *Shehu's jama`at* by seizing their wealth. The simple-minded among them endangered the lives of the Muslims and began to cut off the way of earning their living. They used to hinder everyone who had some relationship with the *Shehu*, although the followers of the *Shehu* did not raise any objection to them. It never crossed the oppressors' minds that they were doing any wrong to the Muslims because the majority of the followers of the *Shehu* were from among the most powerless of oppressed people who had never known true political honor or social respect. Anyone who possessed any authority among the rulers of these lands persistently made effort to put out this light that the *Shehu* had lit. They used to conspire against the *Shehu* and his *jama`at*, plot and scheme for his and their extermination.

However Allah ta`ala ordained that death would come to them, thus they all died within a short time. When those after them conceived that the *Shehu* would not cease his mission, that he increased daily in distinction and discretion and the

common people continued to enter the *deen* of Allah in large numbers - the rulers began to fear him regarding their own affairs. This was because their affairs were diametrically opposed to what the *Shehu* was trying to implement in most issues. Indeed their authority was contrary to the rules of the *shari`a*. This is because they only took from their worship what was necessary to clean up their act and conceal their misdeeds. They performed the outer form of the prayer, fasting and *zakat* and even pronounced the words of the *shahadatayn*, but without adhering to the prerequisites of what they had testified to.

The system of rule that they implemented was a system they had accumulated from their ancestors who openly pronounced Islam but did not act on it themselves. The majority of their governmental authority conflicted with the Book, the Living *Sunna* and the consensus of the Muslim community as is well known. In addition to this they were deceived by ideas and actions that only emerged from those who disbelieve. So of course the manifestation of the *deen* and the establishment of the *shari`a* was not in keeping with their aims and objectives. For this reason they mustered their schemes in order to instigate war between them and the *Shehu* and his *jama`at*. They were convinced that the government belonged to them since they saw that the supporters of the *Shehu* were too oppressed to fight them. After deliberation they all agreed to penalize the disciples of the *Shehu* who invited others to Allah by preventing them from giving sermons. The rulers ordered everyone to return back to the pagan religion of his father and grandfather. Nothing frightened us except the sanctions of the ruler of Gobir, Nafata, which amounted to three:

[1] no one was to preach to the people except the *Shehu*;

[2] no one was to adhere to the religion of Islam except those who had inherited the religion from their fathers. Those who did inherit Islam were to return to the religion of their fathers and grandfathers.

And [3] no one was to wear the turban and women were forbidden from covering their breast with their head wraps.

These sanctions were posted in all the markets places. These were apart of the steps that the ruler took in punishing us. However Allah sufficed us against his plots and schemes by bringing about his death soon after that. However, when the authority was given to his son, Yunfa, he rallied all of his forces in order to execute these sanctions. Even to the point of making a military raid upon one of the larger villages of the Muslims at a time when its people were not expecting it. They killed, whom Allah willed from among the Muslim jurists and Qur'an reciters during the daylight hours of *Ramadhan* when the people were fasting. They seized their wealth and took their families as slaves. They also took their books and scattered them and the Qur'ans and writing boards they burned in a large fire. They made fun of the Muslims and said what the disbelievers in the Qur'an said: "*Bring what you threatened us with if indeed you are truthful.*"

They then turned their attention towards the village of the *Shehu*, even to the point where their ruler sent a raiding party to him in order to kill his wives, brothers and children. The main desire in that unjust action was to completely invade and demoralize the village of the *Shehu*. The *Shehu* responded by taking his community and making the immigration (*hijra*). However, Yunfa regretted his decision and desired the *Shehu* to remain in his land and to avoid leaving. He made this decision without attaching to it any conditions of safety nor any expressed evidence of reform or SOCIAL CONTRACT. In which case the *Shehu* excused himself and with his

entire *Jama`at*, made the *hijra* from underneath Yunfa's political jurisdiction in the year 1213 *hijria* (circa 1804 C.E.) in the last ten days remaining of the month of *Dhi 'l-Qa`ada* (circa February 12th).

Sultan Muhammad Bello said: "We then heard that the ruler of Gobir had dispatched a military regiment against the *Shehu* in order to kill his wives and brothers. He intended to completely destroy the village. It was then that I wrote a letter and sent it with my traveling companion as a communiqué with *Shaykh* Aghaal. The summation of what was in it was the following:

"Should I not present to my *shaykhs* an opinion
As a letter from me by which trepidations are frightened away?
That they should make *hijra* from a country whose actions are repugnant
And that they set out without delay in the transmigration quickly!
For we will soon stage raids and attacks in this land
Whose storm will fill and perturb its murky waters like dust storms
For determination is my concern and the abode and its props
And the house and kinsmen are on camels stacked like mountains
I will not, by any means, be one who is burdened with low and vile things
Truly vile things are only the burden of those who travel cumbrously!
For since you have suffered harm from a land and you have invited them
Then I will not be one who resides in a country that is not lawful!
Truly residing and living in a place of humiliation
Is impotence and blameworthy and not from the actions of perfection!
So I have set out and His promise has been fulfilled
He succeeds triumphantly who is faithful to obedience!
Regardless if war breakouts against the helpers of Gobir
Or they leave us alone now or in the future!"

Shaykh Aghaal then wrote to my father requesting him to dispatch a text that would assist us in the *hijra*. I then, Allah willing, set out swiftly for the *hijra*. I first traveled to Kebbi where I disseminated the text of the *Shehu* to the people and called them to unite with us. I then traveled until I entered the town of Degel. There I found the *Shehu* and the people preparing for the *hijra*. We then made the *hijra* from under the jurisdiction of their lands peacefully. We were assisted at that time by the jurist *Shaykh* Aghaal, *Shaykh* Mahmud Gurdimu, Ali Jeddo the general of the armies and others. We dismounted at a place called Gudu. People who had been affiliated with the *Shehu* from the furthest regions made the *hijra* to him, sometimes traveling as far as two months journey. Then the people were hindered from making the *hijra* by an order from the corrupt ruler. His armies began to cut off the roads from the *muhaajiruun* and to seize their wealth. They were assisted in this by some of their freedmen from among the wild Tuaregs. The situation continued in this manner where sometimes a group would join us accompanied by their families and wealth, sometimes with their families and no wealth and sometimes they would come to us by themselves inadvertently abandoning family and wealth."

Then when the ruler saw that the people were determined to continue with the *hijra*, he wrote a letter to the *Shehu* ordering him to return to his place in Degel. The *Shehu* wrote back to him saying that he will not return there until:

- [1] the ruler repented;
- [2] showed sincerity for the religion as is essential for rulers;
- [3] there was agreement between the Muslims and him concerning uniting behind the religion of Islam;

[4] he offered justice and equity in the lands; and

[5] he returned all the wealth and freed the captives he had seized from the *jama`at* of the Muslims.

Then the people would feel safe and secure from him, then and only then would he return to his place in Degel. This letter was sent back to the ruler at the hands of the *wazir* that the ruler sent to him. When he arrived at Gobir with the letter of the *Shehu*, he read it to the ruler. He had present with him all of his corrupt *wazirs* and evil scholars. He then began to abuse the *Shehu* and the *jama`at* and threaten them. He then sought from them a legal decision concerning the *Shehu* and his *jama`at* from those evil scholars who were present. They said to him: "You are upon the truth and the *Shehu* and his *jama`at* are in error." These evil scholars became just like the Jews when the polytheist of Mecca asked them: "Who is most guided in the Way - O assembly of the People of the Book - we or Muhammad?" Then Ibn Suuriyaa said: "Present your religion to us." They said: "We make the sacrifice of the *kumaa`a*. We give water to the pilgrims. We remove the stress from the troubled. We protect the house of our Lord. We worship what our fathers worshipped and maintain the ties of kinship." He then said: "What is the religion of Muhammad?" They said: "He is patient. He also breaks up our families and he is followed by the thieves among the pilgrims, like the Bani Amaar." He said: "Then you all are better than him and the most guided in the way." Then Allah ta`ala revealed: "*Have you not seen those who have been given a portion of the Book, how they believe in idols and false deities, and how they say of those who disbelieve: 'They are more rightly guided than those who believe'? Those are they whom Allah has cursed, and he whom Allah has cursed you will find for him a helper. Or have they even a share in the kingdom? Then in that case they would not give mankind even the speck on a date stone. Or are they jealous of mankind because of that which Allah of His bounty has bestowed upon them? For I bestowed upon the house of Ibrahim the scripture and wisdom, and I have bestowed on them a glorious kingdom.*" Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Ibn Jareer, Ibn al-Mundhir and others related the narration in the above manner.

Sultan Muhammad Bello said: "My comrade and brother, the fearful aware learned servant - Abu'l-Hassan ibn Ahmad informed me that he was present when this event occurred in the courts of Gobir. Among the things that he informed me was that the one who read the letter of the *Shehu* to the ruler, read it falsely and twisted it however he liked. He also mentioned things that had nothing to do with the affair. It was this which induced the ruler to make military raids against the *Shehu* and his *jama`at*. Thus, he agreed with the deceptions, falsities and deceptions that came from the evil scholars who were present. My brother, the fearfully aware and righteous comrade - known as Hidaahu, was present there as well. He was among those whom the ruler used to seek council and advice. He remained silent at that time not saying anything. He said then the ruler said to the courier of the *Shehu*: 'Leave! I can find no guide for you. When Allah causes you to reach the *Shehu*, inform him that I am preparing and equipping for the journey. So be ready for the encounter!'

The courier then left confused not knowing which direction to take. Nor could he find anyone who would help him. Along with this the *Sudanese* Hausa were slaughtering anyone they saw from among the Fulani. When he left the ruler, he went in the direction of the north until he reached the drummer of Aghanbal who gave him a guide who took him to the land of Azar. When he reached there, the guide was kind enough to go on with him until he reached the *Shehu*. There he informed the *Shehu* of all that had occurred and all of his council that were present.

Then we realized that the cord of hope and trust between them and us had been completely broken. Further all those who resembled them from the remainder of the *Sudanese* and the Tuaregs had joined them in enmity towards us. We realized then that there was no refuge nor recourse in the kingdoms of these countries due to their alliance in fighting us, their pertinence in that and the efforts they made in trying to reach us. We then gathered together and made consultation in our affair. We said it was not permissible for a people to be left to themselves without a governor (*waali*). We then gave the oath of allegiance (*ba`aya*) to the *Shehu*, to hear and obey, in ease and hardship. He accepted the oath of allegiance that he would follow the Book and *Sunna* on Thursday night.

The first of those to give the oath of allegiance to him was his brother and chief advisor (*wazeer*) Abdullahi, then I gave the oath of allegiance. Then, I was followed in this by his close friend and advisor, Umar al-Kamuni. Then the rest of the people gave the oath of allegiance to him. The next morning after he organized us he established for us flags. We then set out immediately to dig a trench, following the example of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, singing:

“By Allah! If it were not for Allah we would not have been guided
We would not have given in alms nor would we have prayed.
For tranquility has descended upon us
And our feet have been established in order not to be disunited
For at first they unleashed oppression upon us
If they want tribulation, then we will give it back in spades!”

The brother of the *Shehu*, *Shaykh* Abdullah continued delineating the events after the *Shehu* was appointed *Amir'l-Mu'mineen*, “We then dug trenches for a fortress. After that we began to gain victory against those who raided us by raiding them. Allah blessed us to conquer the fortress of Matankari, then the fortress of the ruler of Birnin Konni. Then the ruler of Gobir, Yunfa, came against us. They had gathered an army of Nubians, Tuaregs and the Fulani who followed him. The number was such as none knows except Allah. Then the *Amir'l Mu'mineen* (the *Shehu*) dispatched for us an army against him. He appointed me as its *amir*. We encountered Yunfa and his armies in a place called Qurdam that was near a pool of water called Kwotto. Allah destroyed his armies by means of His favor and bounty. To Him is the praise and the thanks for that. We seized spoils from their property, fought them and drove them away.”

Muhammad Bello compared the battle of Tabkin Kwotto to the celebrated battle of Badr in which the forces of Prophet Muhammad completely defeated the disbelievers of Mecca. This battle manifestly improved the chances of success for the *jama`aat* of the *Shehu*, strengthened their morale immensely and sapped that of their enemies. Because the Muslims had the disadvantage of numbers and equipment, the victory at Tabkin Kwotto was seen as direct result of Allah's Divine intervention on the side of the Muslims. Abdullahi Dan Fuduye' describes the joy and confidence which the Muslims enjoyed as a result of their victory over the forces of Yunfa.

"And there was nothing, except I saw that their waterless cloud
Had cleared away from the sun of Islam which was shining
By the help of Him who helped the Prophet against the foe
At Badr, with an army of angels gathered together.
And many a great man our hands flung down,
And axes cleft his head, spilt asunder.
And many a brave warrior did our arrows strike down,
And our swords; birds and hyenas cover him;

And we are an army victorious in Islam,
 And we are proud of nothing but that.
 Tribes of Islam - and Turudbe is our clan
 Our Fulani and our Hausa all united,
 And among us other than these, certain tribes joined together
 For the help of Allah's religion - made up the union.
 None can destroy what the hand of Allah has built.
 None can turn back the command of Allah when it comes.
 Allah's promise has been completed and the victory of His religion:
 There remains nothing but thanks to Him, and humble supplications."

It was during this momentous incident that *Shehu* Uthman composed his manifesto called Wathiqa ila Jami` Ahl's-Sudan (A Letter to All the People of the Blacklands). This treatise summed up what had been detailed in the Masa'il and it was written to the rulers as well as his supporters. It was written in the form of a 'declaration of independence', summarizing in thirty-nine points, all the fundamental aspects of the *hijra-jihad* theme. The following is a summation of the first twenty-three arguments of the 'declaration of independence' outlined in the Wathiqa. "I say, and success is with Allah, realize O brothers!:

[1] that commanding the good is obligatory by consensus (of the Qur'an, the *sunna* and the agreement of the scholars);

[2] that forbidding indecency is obligatory by consensus;

[3] that emigration (*hijra*) from the lands of the disbelievers is obligatory by consensus;

[4] that taking the believers as protecting friends is obligatory by consensus;

[5] that appointing and *amir'l-mu'mineen* (commander of the believers) is obligatory by consensus;

[6] that obedience to him and his representatives (*nuwwaab*) is obligatory by consensus;

[7] that *jihad* (struggle) is obligatory by consensus;

[8] that appointing *amirs* (governors) over the countries is obligatory by consensus;

[9] that appointing judges (*qudaa*) is obligatory by consensus;

[10] that they (the judiciary) discharge and implement the precepts of the *shari`a* is obligatory by consensus;

[11] that the judgment of a country is based upon the judgment of its ruler (this is by consensus) - if its ruler is Muslim then the country is a land of Islam - if its ruler is a disbeliever then the country is a land of disbelief which makes it obligatory to emigrate (*hijra*) from it;

[12] that fighting the disbelieving ruler who has never said ***La ilaha illa Allah*** (there is no deity except Allah) is obligatory by consensus;

[13] that taking the government from him is obligatory by consensus;

[14] that fighting the disbelieving ruler who has never said ***La ilaha ila Allah*** because of the custom of his land nor has he claimed Islam is obligatory by consensus;

[15] that taking the government from him is obligatory by consensus;

[16] that fighting the apostate ruler who has left the religion of Islam for the religion of disbelief is obligatory by consensus;

[17] that taking the government from him is obligatory by consensus;

[18] that fighting the apostate ruler who has not left the religion of Islam because he outwardly claims Islam, but he mixes the acts of Islam with the acts of disbelief (like most of the rulers of Hausaland) is obligatory by consensus;

[19] that taking the government from him is obligatory by consensus;

[20] that fighting the Muslims who keep to themselves without entering under the oath of allegiance to an *amir* from the *amirs* of the believers when they have been invited to the oath of allegiance and they refuse is obligatory by consensus;

[21] that declaring a Muslim to be disbeliever because of acts of innovation (*bid`a*) is forbidden by consensus;

[22] that declaring a Muslim to be disbeliever because of acts of disobedience (*ma`aasi*) is forbidden by consensus;

[23] that remaining in the lands of war is forbidden by consensus.”

From 1804 to 1808 *Shehu* Uthman was able to bring under his jurisdiction all the regions of the central *bilad 's-sudan*, creating a just Islamic government known as the Sokoto Caliphate. For the first time in the history of the central *bilad 's-sudan* the seven Hausa city-states: Zazak; Bornu; Kano; Daura; Katsina; Birni; and Gobir had been welded together into a cohesive empire. In addition to these the seven *Banza* (bogus) city-states: Zanfara; Kebbi; Yauri; Nupe; Yoruba; Bargu and Gurma had also been brought under the centralized unitary empire of the Sokoto Caliphate. *Shaykh* Dan Tafa said in his *Rawdat 'l-Afkaar*, “Allah helped the Muslims to victory, triumph and established them over all the authority of the disbelievers of the lands of Hausa. Allah caused many of their rulers to repent and others became his fervent supporters. The *Shehu* established *Islam* in the lands and brought tranquility and peace to all its regions. To Allah belongs the praise and thanks in this.”

The *Shehu* established 19 *emirates* under which the just rule of the *shari`a* was implemented. Over the judiciary (*al-quda`at*) the *Shehu* appointed eight judges responsible for checking the limits of the executive rulers, establishing the *shari`a* in all the regions and arbitrating between litigants and acting on behalf of the oppressed. The chief judge (*qaadi 'l-qudaa`*) responsible for reviewing and scrutinizing the judgments of the *Shehu*, was none other than his maternal uncle, the learned judge Muhammad Sanbu. Under him were seven regional judges responsible for exacting Islamic justice throughout the Sokoto Caliphate. The office of *muhtasib* (inspector) responsible for inspecting the markets, commanding the good and forbidding evil was an autonomous judge *Qadi* Muhammad Julde`. The *Shehu* also appointed the office of treasury/scribe responsible for recording governmental transactions, court transactions, government correspondence and copying rare Arabic texts. The personnel scribe of the *Shehu* and thus the chief scribe were none other than *Malam* al-Mustafa, his son-in-law and his other son-in-law Gidadu ibn Laimi.

These different posts were essential in the establishment of Islamic government. The *Shehu* said in his famous *Bayan Wujub 'l-Hijra*, “Realize that the pillars of government are four. They are the four pillars of authority by which the kingdom cannot be rectified except by them just as a chair cannot stand except with four legs.

The first of its pillars is a truthful *wazir* to the government who wakes the ruler when he sleeps, makes him see when he is blind and reminds him when he forgets. . .

The second of its pillars is a *Qadi* (judge) who because of Allah does not fear the criticism of the criticizer...He is responsible for ten things: [1] judging between two litigants...; [2] nullifying oppressors from unlawful extortion and infringements

against the law; [3] establishing the penal punishments (*huduud*) and executing the rights of Allah; [4] examining all homicide and assault cases; [5] investigating the wealth of the orphans and the insane and appointing guardians over their estates; [6] overseeing all those imprisoned; [7] executing inherited estates; [8] acting as legal guardian for women who have no guardians or when the guardians unlawfully refuse them the right to marry; [9] supervising the public roads of the Muslims and overseeing their upkeep. And [10] commanding all that is good and obligatory and forbidding all that is indecent and prohibited (even in the face of the rulers)...

The third of the pillars of the kingdom is the *saahib 's-shurta* (chief of police) who sees that the rights of the weak are taken from the strong. The fourth of the pillars is the *saahib 'l-kharaaj* (chief of tariffs) who demands it from the people without being oppressive or unjust to the subjects."

The *Shehu* continued, "Realize that the division of the government according to the *shari`a* ... is divided into twenty governmental divisions:

- [1] the overall *khilaafa*;
- [2] the advisory ministry (*wuzara*);
- [3] the judiciary;
- [4] penal punishment;
- [5] litigations;
- [6] military;
- [7] the spoils of war;
- [8] tribute;
- [9] the secretariat;
- [10] sanctuaries or chancellery;
- [11] the poll tax (*jizya*) for non-Muslims;
- [12] tariffs;
- [13] disciplinary wars;
- [14] the prayer and mosques;
- [15] the obligatory alms and voluntary charity;
- [16] pilgrimage;
- [17] public duties (*hisba*);
- [18] trade unions;
- [19] land grants; and
- [20] unused and uncultivated lands."

In 1810 the *Shehu* moved to Sifawa from Gwandu, where he amplified his lectures and teachings. His stay in Sifawa was the most intellectually productive period for the Caliphate. While there, the *Shehu* would hold lectures every morning and evening. Some days he would lecture on the Quranic interpretation, Quranic recitation, the circumstances surrounding the revelation of certain verses, and the jurisprudence of the Qur'an. He would lecture on the science of Prophetic traditions, discussing the whole range of the six sound collections of traditions, and the methodology of drawing out judgments from these. On appropriate days the *Shehu* would lecture on the circumstances of death, life in the graves, the resurrection and Day of Judgment, and the hell fires and Paradise. Some days he would teach on the corruption that would fill the world and the injustice which would lead to the appearance of the Mahdi, the Anti-Christ, the return of Jesus ibn Maryum, and the conditions of the Last Days. Some days were singled out for the study of the science of the purification of the soul (*tasawwuf*) and the methodologies of spiritual advancement. Other days the *Shehu* would entertain questions on jurisprudence and pass legal judgments. On Thursday nights the *Shehu* would teach against injustices

and oppression in the Caliphate, against extortion from the poor and against the corruption of government officials.

While in Sifawa, *Shehu* Uthman composed eleven of his most thought provoking and revolutionary works. In these latter works the *Shehu* delineated the eschatological beliefs and cosmogony necessary to imbue the Caliphate with a sense of 'manifest destiny' and placed it above all the *kafir* governments of the world and on a par with the standards laid down by the early generations. The Sokoto Caliphate saw itself as the primary example of the Prophetic model created by Prophet Muhammad centuries earlier. One of the key books which the *Shehu*, composed during his last years, was his Najm'l-Ikhwaan. In it, the *Shehu* outlined the distinguishing marks of the Sokoto Caliphate and the essentials of any true Islamic society: where he said "As for what will clarify what Allah ta'ala has conferred upon us in these times of religious and worldly blessings, so that the people of these times can be grateful for them, and whose gratitude will make us and them worthy of increase, because Allah ta'ala says, 'If you are grateful, He will increase you in blessings.' We also clarify these blessings so that every person of insight may know that we are following in the footsteps of Muhammad the Chosen Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace in all affairs. Realize, O Brothers! Allah ta'ala, has conferred upon us in these times:

- [1] a clear explanation of what is to be believed in (*aqeeda*) from the religion of Allah;
- [2] a clear explanation of what is to be done (*amal*) from the religion of Allah;
- [3] a clear explanation of what is to be avoided (*tark*) from the religion of Allah;
- [4] a clear understanding of what is highly recommended (*mubaah*) from the religion of Allah;
- [5] He has conferred upon us the removal of obscurities (*shubuhah*) from the religion of Allah;
- [6] He has conferred upon us the favor of commanding all that is good (*amri bi'l-ma'ruf*);
- [7] forbidding indecency (*nahyi `an 'l-munkar*);
- [8] frightening the people to induce them to leave disobedience of Allah;
- [9] giving good tidings to the people to urge them to the worship of Allah; Then He conferred on us
- [10] the favor of making the emigration (*hijra*);
- [11] the nominating of an *Amir'l-Mu'mineen*;
- [12] the taking up of the instruments of *jihād*...He then conferred on us
- [13] the favor of making the *jihād* with them;
- [14] the appointing of prime ministers (*wazir*);
- [15] appointing the *amirs* of the armies;
- [16] the establishment of the public treasury (*khaazin*);
- [17] the appointing of regional *amirs*;
- [18] the appointing of government secretaries (*kaatib*);
- [19] the appointing of ambassadors (*rusul*) to foreign kingdoms;
- [20] taking of servant (*khudaam*) for domestic affairs;
- [21] appointing of the judiciary (*qudaa*);
- [22] appointing of the *amirs* responsible for executing legal punishments (*huduud*); and
- [23] the appointing of the *Amir* of pilgrimage (*hajj*).

Thus, these 23 characteristics are the fundamental rites of *Islam*. And there number is like the number of years of the mission (*risaala*) of Muhammad, may Allah

bless him and grant him peace. We are grateful to Allah who has favored us with the manifestation of these fundamental Islamic rites during these Last Days.”

This cohesive self-image of the Sokoto Caliphate, connected as it was to the primary model of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace and his early Caliphate, constituted the most steadfast and most impervious shield of cultural security against cultural aggression and internal disintegration. This historical consciousness, and the historical continuity which it created, helped to revitalize the Caliphate during its long history of development and consolidation. These twenty-three characteristics so connected as they were to the reality of Muhammad, demonstrated that the *Shehu* had not only given life to the Living *Sunna* of the Prophet, but he had revived the very primordial reality of the Prophet as well.

In 1812 *Shehu* Uthman, out of love for the Hereafter and disdain for this world's life, retired from active rule and appointed his brother and son at the head of the new empire. Abdullahi, his brother, was placed over the western capital in Gwandu and Bello, his son, was placed over the eastern capital at Sokoto. In 1815 *Shehu* moved from Sifawa to Sokoto where he concerned himself with writing to consolidate the Caliphate or to check the limits of the various *Amirs*. *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye' died two years later on Sunday night 20th of April 1817, at the age of 63. After sixty-three years of striving to annihilate himself in the noble character traits of the Prophet and reviving his *sunna* - Allah ta`ala decreed that he would die the same age as the Best of Creation, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. The *Shehu* said in his Fulani song *Yimre' Tanasabuje'* (The Song of Comparison),

“I pass over other favors in silence, modesty silences me

I thank Allah, for that which I must be silent

I pass over others that were brought by miracles

I thank Allah for what has been given to me of miracles.

The attributes of Muhammad cannot be achieved in their entirety

the support which I received, with its scent have I been scented.

He is our leader, we will never go astray. The year I was made a branch of him
thus was I made to resemble him.”

The *Shehu* once foretold that his green flags would be given victory for one hundred years. He also foretold that his *tajdeed-jihaad* would not cease until it reached the Awaited *Mahdi*. Muhammad Bello said in his *Infaq 'l-Maysuur*, “I informed them as the *Shehu* informed me, that the time of the appearance of *al-Mahdi* was near. And that the *jama`at* of the *Shehu* are the vanguard and the precursors of the armies of *al-Mahdi*. He said that this *jihad* will not cease, Allah willing, until it reaches *al-Mahdi*.”

The appearance of the *Shehu* was foretold before his birth. The miracles of the *Shehu* began when he was five. The spiritual mastership for the *Shehu* began when he was ten. The social transformation established by the *Shehu* began when he was twenty. His physical perfection and development reached a ‘super empowered’ level when he was thirty six. Allah made him the *Imam* of the *Awliyya* and he was given the Sword of Truth when he was forty and some months. His political *hijra* and military *jihad* and the ‘mandate’ of *Amir al-Mu'mineen* was granted him when he was fifty. He willingly walked away from all worldly authority when he was sixty; and he passed from this life, like MUHAMMAD whom he loved with a passion at the age of sixty-three. The *Shehu* made a prophecy in 1803, that after one hundred years and twelve *Khalifs*, the British (*Ahl 'r-Rum*) or ‘neo-romans would come in 1903 and sack Sokoto, ushering in what the *Shehu* called the *Zamaan 'n-Nasaara* (The Hour or Age of the Christians). This time marked the beginning of the *hijra* to the east to meet the

Mahdi. One of the learned daughters of the *Shehu*, Maryum, may Allah be merciful to her, wrote a text describing this time where she said: “My father, the *Shehu* informed us about our eventual *hijra* from the lands of Hausa but he did not designate a specific time for the *hijra*. He, may Allah be merciful to him even informed us of the exact route that we would take during the *hijra*... He, however did not designate a specific year for our *hijra* except that he said that when the time was present no one would be unawares of it. Rather this event will be as obvious as a fire. Among the signs of the advent of the *hijra* will be the holding back of the rain until a person will try and take something from this river of ours and find nothing of water. Among its signs also are the seas of tribulations, which will occur in all of the western lands until the people would flee relocating from their countries heading in the direction of the east. However, they will not find us but will find that we have preceded them in the *hijra*. These two preceding signs are reliable based upon the narration of the two, my father, *Shehu* Uthman and his son Muhammad Bello, may Allah be merciful to them.”

The second *Khalif* Abu Bakr Ateeku ibn *Shehu* said about this time: “I will take it upon myself to inform you of something about which the *Shehu* informed me. He said, ‘The people of the *ribats* who are firmly established there, they are the ones who will eventually relocate to the Nile River and to the lands of the *Hijaz* themselves or through their descendents. These are the true remnant of the momentous affair of the *Shehu*. In them is his light and *baraka* and they are those who will be gathered with the *Imam* al-Mahdi and give the *ba`yat* to him. And with them will be the flags of the *Shehu*. Their spiritual station with Allah will be remarkable.”

The *hijra* that *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye’ foretold, finally arrived on the banks of the Blue Nile in the beginning of 1906. The head of the *hijra* and the new *Khalif* of the community of the *Shehu* in the east was *Sultan* Muhammad Bello Mai Wurno. He was the son of the twelfth *khalifa* after the *Shehu*, Muhammad at-Tahiru, who fought against the British in 1903. The town he founded was named Mai Wurno. According to Caliph Ahmed Rufai in his work Alamaat Khuruuj'l-Mahdi, this Caliph would be known as the *Amir* of Sudan; *Sarkin as Sudan* and *Mai Wurno*. *Sultan* Muhammad Bello Mai Wurno ruled his people and all those who came to him from the now defunct Sokoto Caliphate for 36 years. After him the authority was given to his son *Sultan* Muhammad Attahiru in 1940. He ruled as *Sultan* of Mai Wurno for 29 years and was one of the dearest friends to Sayyid Abd ‘r-Rahman al-Mahdi the first leader of the modern Republic of Sudan. After him the authority was given to his son *Sultan* Muhammad Bello, who died the following year in 1970.

After Muhammad Bello, the oath of allegiance was given to his brother, *Sultan* al-Hajj Abu Bakr, who still holds the office of *Sultan* and *Amir'l-Mu'mineen* of the *Jama`at* of *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye’. The authority and power of the *Sultan* of Mai Wurno is seen and felt at the end of every Ramadan, when he receives the tribute (*zakat'l-fitr*) and oath of allegiance from Fulani, Hausa and other *Takarir* (West Africans), from as far away as Chad and Ethiopia. They all regard him as the legitimate and rightful *Sultan* of Sokoto. It is enough to indicate the spiritual station of this *Sultan* and *Amir'l-Mumineen* by what has been narrated by at-Tabarani on the authority of Abu Bakr that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “The *sultan* is the shadow of Allah upon the earth. Whoever honors and respects him, Allah will honor him. Whoever shows contempt towards him, Allah will show contempt towards them.” It has been related by Abu’s-Shaykh on the authority of Abu Bakr that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “The just *sultan* who is humble is

the shade of Allah and His spear in the earth. Allah raises his actions up equal to seventy champions of Truth.” It has been related by ad-Daylami on the authority of Anas ibn Malik that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace said: “The *sultan* is the shadow of Allah in the earth. Whoever gives him sincere council and supplicates for him is guided, but whoever supplicates against him and does not give him sound council is astray.”

The people of Mai Wurno and the other West Africans (*takarir*) residing in Sudan continue to believe in the prediction of *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye’, concerning the appearance of the *Mahdi*. This neo-mahdists community has its own peculiar oral traditions concerning the role that the town of Mai Wurno will play at the appearance of the *Mahdi*. The *Shehu* is reported to have predicted that the *Mahdi* will appear in the *Hijaaz* and he will give a flag of victory to the *Sultan* of Mai Wurno through his *Wazir* from which “a great Islamic empire will be founded on the Nile, whence the Fulani will return to recover their rule in Sokoto”, and thence to conquer the entire *bilad's-sudan*. Today, thousands of Muslims in the western hemisphere, in the United States, England, the Carribean and South Africa are entering under the oath of allegiance of the *minhaj* of *Shehu* Uthman Dan Fuduye’, *nuur'z-zamaan*, preparing their souls for the appearance of the Awaited *al-Mahdi* and the heavenly descent of Jesus the son of Mary, and subsequently witness the inevitable victory over the European Romans and the termination of the Hour of the Christians, and success is with Allah.

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