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## Reflections on Taṣawwuf in the Sokoto Caliphate

Shehu Abdur-Rahman Aboki\*  
Ja'far Makau Kaura\*\*

### Abstract

This research offers an observation of the history and development of Sufism in the Western part of Africa in early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The authors focus on the contribution of Sokoto Caliphates such as Shaykh 'Uthmān bn Foduye (d.1817), his brother Shaykh Abdullah bn Foduye (d.1828) and Muhammad Bello (d.1837), the son of Shaykh 'Uthmān to the development of Sufism of the northern part of Nigeria. The research employs the qualitative methodology in which historical, textual and comparative analysis are applied on materials that are related to the topic. Finding reveals that the moderate (*Sunnī*) and philosophical (*falsafī*) Sufism flourished during the Sokoto caliphate as all of them are well versed in the Islamic law (Sharī'ah) and Sufism.

**Key Words:** *Taṣawwuf*, *Sufi order*, Sokoto Caliphate, Islam, History.

### Introduction

*Taṣawwuf* had played and is still playing important role in the life of Muslims in general and Sufis in particular. The spiritual uplift derived from it is therefore necessary not only for the benefit of Sufis but also for the generality of the Muslims. Yet, *Taṣawwuf* to non-Sufis is considered as a controversial phenomenon in the history of Islam.

*Taṣawwuf* had its roots in Islam, considering the prophetic tradition, then the revelation,<sup>1</sup> the spiritual activities of the *Saḥābah* represented by *Aṣḥāb' al-Ṣūfah* and the renunciation of the world and material enjoyments during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods. Yet, some sources claim that the Islamic devotional exercise (*Taṣawwuf*) must have its roots in non-Islamic tradition.<sup>2</sup> But a neutral source considers

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<sup>1</sup> This normally refers to 'the act of retreat adopted by the Prophet (SAW) before he received revelations.

<sup>2</sup> The non-Islamic traditions include the revealed religions like Christianity and Judaism and Greek philosophy.

*Taṣawwuf* as a natural phenomenon that is common in all religions. Meanwhile, *Taṣawwuf* goes together with Islam wherever the latter finds itself and it is thus, believed that *Taṣawwuf* is part and parcel of Islam.

However, *Taṣawwuf* went through condemnations in its development and had withstood these condemnations. Part of the condemnations was directed "at the phenomenon itself" where it has been labeled as an innovation. More so, the Sufis of both early period like Dhun Nun al-Misri, Muhasab and Mansur al-Hallaj, and late period like *Shaykh* Ahmad al-Tijani have all been accused of one thing or the other.<sup>1</sup> But because of the vitality of *Taṣawwuf* as a spiritual force and the determination and belief of *Ṣūfī* leaders of the genuine context of their mission, *Taṣawwuf* survived and grew stronger all the times. This is equally true of reformists and jihadists.

‘Uthmān bn Foduye, ‘Abdullāh bn Foduye and Muhammad Bello professed moderate *Taṣawwuf* which largely deals with the compulsory form of *Taṣawwuf* – adoption of praiseworthy and rejection of blameworthy characteristics. But Sufis like Muhammad Sambo bn *Shaykh* ‘Uthmān, Muhammad al-Bukhārī bn *Shaykh* ‘Uthmān and ‘AbdulQādir bn al-Mustafa concentrated on philosophical *Taṣawwuf* which is non-compulsory.<sup>2</sup> They did not concern themselves much with the spiritual and social benefit of *Taṣawwuf*, an ideal pursued by moderate Sufis. They instead examined the speculative aspect relating to prophetology, knowledge of the Unseen, the concept of perfect man, man as vicegerent of Allah on earth, and the concept of *Tawḥīd* from speculative *Ṣūfī* perspective. It however, seems that even though the thought was professed by these Sufis, it was only ‘AbdulQādir bn al-Mustafa who committed it to writing. He displayed his wealth of experience which he acquired through the study of different *Ṣūfī* works.<sup>3</sup> The Sokoto Caliphate was a religious and political entity, a vast territory - the Central Sudan -which in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was administered from Sokoto and Gwandu in Hausaland.<sup>4</sup> It is calculated to have covered

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<sup>1</sup> Dhun Nūn was accused of holding the view that Qur'an was created, al-Muhāsabī's writing were called innovations, Mansur al-Hallāj was executed for *Shathāt* and Ahmad al-Tijānī was accused of professing unbelief under the veil of Tijāniyyah Order

<sup>2</sup> Non-compulsory *Taṣawwuf* deals with the history of *Taṣawwuf*, the concepts of *Ma'rifah*, and speculative thought of *Taṣawwuf* among others.

<sup>3</sup> Works of celebrated Sufis like al-Ghazālī (d.1111), Ibn ‘Arabī (d.1240) and al-Jīlī (d. 1424) were in circulation during the time.

<sup>4</sup> M. Adamu, "A General History of the Sokoto Caliphate", in A. M. Kani, & K. A. Gandhi, (eds.), *State and Society in the Sokoto Caliphate*, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, 1990,p. 1.

approximately 240,000 sq km in area.<sup>1</sup> No doubt, it was an Islamic State and in fact a product of Sokoto *Jihād* of 1804, an event which was brought about by the Islamic reform movement, started in Hausaland in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by *Shaykh* 'Uthmān bn Foduye.

It is suggested that Islam had reached Hausaland through ancient Gobir as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> century CE through Muslim merchants and traders.<sup>2</sup> By the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Islam had become part and parcel of the life of the people so much that leading revivalists of the time were not concerned with proselytization, but with reform.<sup>3</sup> However, Islam in the pre-1804 Hausaland was more or less the preserve of the ruling classes, while in many areas the populace had not smelt a fragrance of Islam.<sup>4</sup> This was because by this time, Islam seemed to have entered into a period of decadence in Hausaland with people openly engaging in major vices, mixing Islam with paganism and local practices and the government not only tolerated it but appeared to even encouraged it.

The Islamic reform movement of *Shaykh* 'Uthmān bn Foduye thus started, aimed at peacefully making Muslims in Hausaland to practice Islam in its pristine purity. In the *Shaykh's* movement were also *Shaykh* 'Abdullāh ('Uthmān's younger brother and his chief adviser), *Shaykh* Muhammad Bello ('Uthmān's son) and many other able lieutenants. The *Shaykh* started with teaching and preaching tours to different places at the age of twenty years.<sup>5</sup> He also wrote books and poems in Arabic and Fulfulde and a few in Hausa to demonstrate his points of view and appropriately citing his authorities. This created for him a large following in Hausaland to the extent that the king of Gobir in whose territory the *Shaykh* had settled together with his family became alarmed. Tension and hostilities began to build up and war eventually broke out

<sup>1</sup> K. S. Chafe, "The Transformation of Socio-Political Policies of the Leaders of the Sokoto Caliphate: A Preliminary

Study of the Impact of the Socio-economic Programmes and Policies on Political Integration", in A. M. Kani, & K. A. Gandi, (eds.), *State and Society in the Sokoto Caliphate*, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, 1990, p. 32

<sup>2</sup> M. Adamu, "A thousand years of Hausaland participation in the Trans-Saharan Trade", a paper presented at the International Seminar on the Trans-Sahara Studies, organized by the Centre for Libyan Studies, Tripoli, 1980

<sup>3</sup> M. Adamu, "A General History of the Sokoto Caliphate", in A. M. Kani, & K. A. Gandi, (eds.), *State and Society in*

*the Sokoto Caliphate*, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, 1990, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> U. B. Fodiyo, "*Nural-Albab*- Enlightening Minds", (Translated by Muhammad Isa Aliyu), in A. B. Yahya (ed.), *Selected Writings of Sheikh Othman Bn Fodiyo*, vol. 3, Iqra'a Publishing House, Gusau - Nigeria, (ndp), p. 5.

<sup>5</sup> M. Adamu, "A General History of the Sokoto Caliphate", *Op cit*, p.4.

between the forces of Gobir and community of the *Shaykh*. This was the Sokoto *Jihād* launched in 1804 that culminated in the long run into establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate.<sup>1</sup>

### Conceptual Definition

Different groups of people have tried to define the term *Taşawwuf* according to their background and approach adopted to represent the meaning of what they considered to be *Taşawwuf*. While some of them were ardent Sufis, some others were merely theoretical. Hence different definitions were given by both Muslims and non-Muslims on one hand and Sufis on the other. Yet, *Taşawwuf* to non-Sufis is *considered* as a controversial phenomenon in the history of religion. They have even linked it to the precepts of some religions like Christianity and Judaism. Thus non-Islamic root-word as the derivative of *Taşawwuf* has also been ascribed to it, intended to expunge it from Islam.

*Taşawwuf* is the means through which the soul finds solace in the worship of Allah (SWT). It is keeping away from the evils of the self and lowering the attributes of the soul. Similarly it is clinging to the knowledge of the Reality and doing what is good, giving good counsel to all, fulfilling all promises and covenants from Allah (SWT) and following the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).<sup>2</sup> *Taşawwuf*, according to this definition, is nothing more than checking the excesses of the carnal soul. Its aim is the Reality and its objective is serving humanity and the medium of achieving them is following the foot-steps of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

However, a common definition adopted from the prophetic tradition portraying *Taşawwuf* as *Ihsān* has now been accepted as the meaning of *Taşawwuf*. It shall be noted that in all the definitions, *Taşawwuf* is linked to consciousness of the Reality in mundane and spiritual activities which is the real meaning of *Ihsān* as explained by the Prophet (SAW) in his famous *Ḥadīth*.<sup>3</sup>

### *Taşawwuf* in the Sokoto Caliphate

The practice of *Taşawwuf* in Hausaland dated back to the fifth century when Qādiriyyah Order was introduced into Hausaland by Muhammad bn ‘Abdulkarīm al-Maghīlī. This is one of the gifts brought by Islam to

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<sup>1</sup> M. Adamu, "A General History of the Sokoto Caliphate", *Ibid*, P. 5.

<sup>2</sup> A.T. Iyad, *Al-Taşawwuf al-Islām*, Angilo al-Misriyyah, Cairo, 1970, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> Sayyid Hossein Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1975, p. 134. *Ihsān* is to adore Allah as thou didst see Him, and if thou don't see Him, He nonetheless sees thee.



Hausaland; and therefore they pursued it with fervor ever since.<sup>1</sup> But *Taṣawwuf* in the Sokoto Caliphate started with the *Jihād* leaders under the leadership of *Shaykh* 'Uthmān bn Foduye. Born in 1754 to a scholarly family *Shaykh* 'Uthmān spent most of his youth either seeking for or imparting knowledge. His first contact with Qādiriyyah could be through *Shaykh* Jibrīl bn Umar who was known to have shaped his thoughts towards reforms in Hausaland.<sup>2</sup> It was *Shaykh* Jibrīl who initiated him into Khalwatiyyah and Qādiriyyah Orders. But the *Shaykh* received the word of testimony from Alhājj 'Aliyu al-Magharībi and also al-Najīb Abūl-Tauḥīq 'Umar bn Jibrīl.<sup>3</sup>

Some contributions made by *Jihād* leaders are found in the area of *Wilāyah* (sainthood), *Karāmah* (charisma), *Shafā'ah* (intercession) *Istigāthah* (succor). They displayed their wealth of experience which they acquired through association with *Sūfī* scholars and study of different *Sūfī* works.<sup>4</sup>

To them *Wilāyah* (sainthood) does not only mean piety and holiness, but it as well mean acting according to the wishes and commands of Allah. They identified two types of saints; the saint who acquires his *Wilāyah* through his own efforts and the saint whose *Wilāyah* was a gift from Allah. *Karāmah* (charisma or divine privilege), as perceived by the Jihadists, is a token of benevolence of Allah on His servants and could be bestowed upon any chosen Muslim at any given time. However, it seems that they did not give much weight to practical aspect of *Karāmah*.<sup>5</sup>

*Jihād* leaders had exhibited sense of tolerance in their association with Tijāniyyah Order and its leader in the Western Sudan, al-Hājj Umar al-Fūti was accorded warm reception by Muhammad Bello as against the treatment meted on the former by Muhammad al-Kanemi of Bornu when al-Fūti was returning from pilgrimage. Long after al-Fūti left Sokoto there was no report of intimidation of Tijāniyyah followers. Muhammad Rāji who left Gwandu with some of his fellow Tijjanites complained of lack of freedom for his followers to profess Tijāniyyah in Sokoto Caliphate. But he was granted such freedom in Adamawa which is part of the Caliphate. This may indicate a different reason for which he left Gwandu. There was also no report indicating the Caliphate participation in the war between al-Futi's army and

<sup>1</sup> M. Hiskett, *The Sword of Truth*. Oxford, London, 1973, Pp. 59-60.

<sup>2</sup> P. M. Holt, &co; (eds.), *Cambridge History of Islam*, Cambridge Press, London, 1970, p. 367

<sup>3</sup> U. B. Foduye, *Salasilal-Dhahabiyyah liSadat al-Sufiyyah*, "MS", C.I.S., 1/6/91, ff.6a and 6b.

<sup>4</sup> Works of celebrated Sufis like al-Ghazālī, al-Jīlī and *Ibn* al-Arabī were in circulation during the time.

<sup>5</sup> J. M. Kaura, "The *Sufi* Dimension in the Sokoto Caliphate", Ph.D Thesis, Department of Islamic Studies, UDUS, 1991, p. 7

the Oādiriyyah state of Masina, a stand which depicts the tolerance preached by Islam that was strictly adhered to by the *Jihād* leaders.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Sūfī* Genre of *Shaykh* ‘Uthmān bn Foduye**

Muhammad Bello, one of the sons and biographers of the *Shaykh* posited that spiritual attainment was evident in the *Shaykh* since his boyhood. According to him:

...and know that this *Shaykh* grew up in the service of calling to the way of Allah. And surely, Allah supported him with numerous illuminations; and drew him to His presence and uncovered to him the essence of Divine deeds, Names and Attributes... as a result of which he became among the saints of Allah.<sup>2</sup>

According to Bello, *Shaykh* ‘Uthmān taught *Taṣawwuf* as an independent field of study. He made distinction between laymen and learned ones. In the curriculum of both categories, *Taṣawwuf* found a place. As for the laymen, the *Shaykh* stressed the need to polish their hearts from evils, temptations and anything detrimental to spirituality. He was teaching them that the characteristics of the soul are of two types, the destructive and the redemptive.<sup>3</sup> According to him, the destructive characteristics are vanity, conceit, rancor, miserliness, sanctimoniousness, love of leadership and material well being for show of pride and forming evil opinion of a Muslim. These characteristics he posited destroy the soul and render its engagement in this world a useless venture. That the soul could only be redeemed from destruction through adopting other Godly characteristics such as repentance, sincerity in worship, patience, asceticism, trust in Allah, piety and fear of Allah.<sup>4</sup>

The teaching of the two characteristics of the soul to laymen by *Shaykh* ‘Uthmān, was a means of bringing to his audience, the obligatory aspect of *Taṣawwuf* that must be known and adopted by every Muslim. This is elementary form of teaching *Taṣawwuf*.

The *Shaykh* also taught the advanced form of *Taṣawwuf* which requires a great deal of mental exercise to comprehend. This form of *Taṣawwuf* was taught by the *Shaykh* to learned scholars and students. He adopted two methods of teaching this form of *Taṣawwuf*. The first

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, Pp 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> M. Bello, *Infāq al-Maisūr*, (ed.) by Whittings, C.E.J Lucas and Company, London, 1951, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> M. Bello, *Op Cit*, p. 57.

method involved teaching selected books on *Taṣawwuf* in a conventional way. He for example taught *Insān al-Kāmil* on theory of perfect man to Muhammad Bello and Muhammad Sambo.<sup>1</sup> The second method involved spiritual training known as *Tarbiyyah* which denotes initiating and taking a *Murīd* (novice) along *Sūfī* practices and "experiences". In this area, the *Shaykh* had trained many individual Sufis. He confirmed this in *Ta'dhīr al-lkhwān* thus:

... I trained people on the path of *Taqwa* (piety) which is keeping to the commands of Allah and keeping away from his prohibitions in pursuance of the characters of the Messenger of Allah. But as for the saying that I train people to attain *Kashf*, as the perfect men from among the saints used to do, is totally untrue.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, the *Shaykh* trained his *Sūfī* students on the obligatory *Taṣawwuf* which bordered on *Zuhd*. Gidādo bn Lema has provided a list of such Sufis who were trained by the *Shaykh*.<sup>3</sup> He gave about forty-nine names of such students. One interesting thing about the list is that it cuts across tribes, gender and age. Some of the students were Fulanis, Hausas, Tuaregs, males, females, young and old. This list includes friends, relatives, wives, sons and daughters as well as normal students of the *Shaykh*. On top of the list was Umar alKammu, the friend of the *Shaykh*; followed by his brother 'Abdullāh. Mention was also made of three sons of the *Shaykh* namely-Muhammad Sa'ād, Muhammad Bello and Muhammad Sambo. The three were known *Sūfī* figures in the Caliphate. There are also two daughters of the *Shaykh* namely Khadījah and 'Āishatu. Wives of the *Shaykh* also mentioned include Maimūnatu, 'Āishatu, Hawwā' and Khadījah. Other known Sufis mentioned include al-Mustafa the chief scribe of the *Shaykh*, Muhammad Kwairanga, *Imām* Muhammad Zangi, Khalīl bn Abdullāh and a host of others.<sup>4</sup>

*Shaykh* 'Uthmān had written extensively on *Taṣawwuf*. He had also abridged some *Sūfī* works like *Mulakkhas min Asrar al-Shaykh al-Faqih al-Muhasabi*, a Sufi work authored by al-Muhāsabī and *Tarīq al-Jannah min Asrār Kalām Abī Hāmid al-Ghazālī*. Two independent works on

<sup>1</sup> M. Bello, *Infāq al-Maisūr*, *Op Cit*, p.190; *Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān Limā Ashkala min Kitāb al-Insān*, *Op cit.*, f.1a

<sup>2</sup> U. B. Foduye, *Ta'dhīr al-lkhwān*, n.p., n.d, Pp. 30-31.

<sup>3</sup> G. I. Lema, *Raud al-Jinān*. Npp. n.d... Pp. 72-75.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 76.

Qādiriyyah were known to have been written by the *Shaykh*.<sup>1</sup> This is in addition to general works on *Taṣawwuf* contained in other works credited to him. Among such works are those writings related to refutations and attack on some corrupt *Sūfī* ideas. For example, he refuted the allegation that he was a *Murabbī* (a *Sūfī* master that trains novice) to the way of *Kashf* in his book *Ta'dhīr al-lkhwān*. He also condemned the way some Sufis attempted to seek for obscurity with unpleasant conditions, branding themselves with fire to increase devotional exercise and tying themselves with chains in order to punish the sinning body.<sup>2</sup> The *Shaykh* disapproved celibacy and abstaining from what is necessary in life as a means of attaining *Zuhd*, likening it to a forbidden innovation.<sup>3</sup>

Muhammad Bello had also discussed the attacks made by the *Shaykh* on some Sufis who misconceived *Taṣawwuf*. According to him:

...an example of this is his attack on a group of people that appeared in this land ... and showed that they possess *Kashf* (contemplative knowledge) despite the fact that they have not guarded themselves against the Shavian and their whims, but do not even know what is obligatory on them pertaining to *Furūd al-A'yān* (personal individual obligations). They have read some books on *Taṣawwuf* and grasped veneration and hermitage as a fashion for the world providence ... and fought anyone who held a different view from theirs.<sup>4</sup>

### ***Sūfī* Genre of 'Abdullāh bn Foduye**

'Abdullāh bn Foduye<sup>5</sup> also wrote some works on *Taṣawwuf* in the Caliphate. He was first initiated by his teacher *Shaykh* Jibril bn Umar in Khalwatiyyah Order and latter in Qādiriyyah. He was also among the *Sūfī* students trained by the *Shaykh*. His *Sūfī* inclination manifested when he became dissatisfied with the conduct of the Jihadists. He found a solution in isolating himself from the *Mujahidun*, the *Sūfī* concept he always advanced in his *Sūfī* writings. Therefore he abandoned the army temporarily with some of his close companions and travelled Eastward,

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<sup>1</sup> These works are; *Al-Salāsīl al-Dhahabīyyah Lisādāt al-Sūfiyyah* and *Al-Salāsīl al-Qādiriyyah*

<sup>2</sup> U. B. Foduye, *Bayān al-Bida' al-Shaytaniyyah*, p.p., n.d., p.36.

<sup>3</sup> U. B. Foduye, *Hisn al-Afham minJuyush al-Auham,r\p.*, n.d., Pp.51-52.

<sup>4</sup> M. Bello, *Infāq al-Maisur*, *Op cit*, p. 44

<sup>5</sup> He was the second in command in the *Jihad* waged by his brother *Shaykh* 'Uthmān bn Foduye to cleanse Hausaland. He was a student and colleague of the *Shaykh* during his days of itinerant scholarship.

intending to perform *Hajj*.<sup>1</sup> Even though 'Abdullāh could not perform the *Hajj* as intended, his intension portrayed him as a committed *Sūfī* who saw '*Uḏlah* (isolation) as a remedy to associating himself with corrupt people among the *Mujāhidūn*.

*Shaykh* 'Abdullāh's commitment to *Taṣawwuf* and belief in the theory of perfect man as represented by the Prophet (SAW) influenced his translation of panegyric *Daliyah*, the poetic composition of his brother, the *Shaykh*, from Fulfulde to Arabic.<sup>2</sup>

Another important aspect of *Sūfī* life of 'Abdullāh was related by Hiskett on the authority of *Shaykh* Abubakar Mahmūd Gummī. According to Asif:

...When the town of Kalem̄bina (Kalambaina) was sacked around 1236/1820, a copy of the *Ishriniyyat* was found in the ruins. 'Abdullāh have jokingly claimed this as his share of the booty.<sup>3</sup>

The above observation indicates that 'Abdullāh had respect for anything that has connection With *Taṣawwuf* so much that he could forsake his material share of the booty sanctioned by the *Sharī'ah* for only a panegyric composition which he might have a copy at home; and which he had studied under the *Shaykh*.

Khalīl bn 'Abdullāh, a onetime *Sūfī* student of the *Shaykh* might have also continued with *Sūfī* studies under 'Abdullāh more especially after the Western Emirates were placed under the supervision of 'Abdullāh. Similarly, the same division which placed Western Emirates under 'Abdullāh may compel one to assume that 'Abdullāh may have made effort to see that *Taṣawwuf* and Qādiriyyah in particular were fully established in the Emirates under his control.

'Abdullāh had written on *Taṣawwuf* generally and Qādiriyyah in particular. His works which deal with *Taṣawwuf* as a science and as seen by a practicing *Sūfī* include *Minan al-Mannān*, *Shukr al-Iḥsān alā Minan al-Mannān*, *Sabīl al-Najāt*, *Ṭarīq al-Ṣaliḥīn*, *Sabīl Ahl al-Salāh ilā al-Falāh* and *Tahdhīb al-Iḥsān min Khiṣāl al-Shayṭān*. Others are *Matiyat al-Zād ilā al-Ma'ād*, *'Alāmāt al-Muttabi'īn li al-Sunnah al-Rasūl* and *Ḍiyā' al-Qawā'id*.<sup>4</sup> In these works, 'Abdullāh treats *Taṣawwuf* in all its

<sup>1</sup> A. B. Foduye, *Tazyīn al-Waraqāt*, Pp. 45-46.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> A. F. Asif, "The *Qadi Riyyah* and its Impact in Nigeria", p.184.

<sup>4</sup> Quite a number of these works have been edited, translated into both English and Hausa languages and published by Iqra' Publishing House Gusau, Zamfara State of Nigeria, in a collection entitled; "Selected Writings of Sheikh Abdullahi Bn Fodiyo",

ramifications. He also wrote a monumental work in which he limited his discussion to the Khalwatiyyah and Qādiriyyah on the essentials of *Sūfī* Orders entitled *Bayān al-Arkān wa al-Shurū' al-Tarīqah al-Sūfīyyah*.

In his general works where he discussed *Taṣawwuf*, mention could be made of *Ḍiyā' al-Siyāsāt wa Fatāwī al-Nawāzil*.<sup>1</sup> In the work 'Abdullāh treated the definition of *Zuhd* and *Taṣawwuf* including their classifications. He also touched the relationship between *Taṣawwuf*, *Fiqh* and *Tauhīd*. He has also highlighted both obligatory and non-obligatory *Taṣawwuf*.

### ***Sūfī* Genre of Muhammad Bello**

Muhammad Bello, the son of *Shaykh* 'Uthmān,<sup>2</sup> was also another pillar of *Taṣawwuf* in the Sokoto Caliphate. He started learning *Taṣawwuf* from his father when he was young. It was later in life that he became deeply involved in *Taṣawwuf*.<sup>3</sup> During his scholarship outside the family, Bello came across *Sūfī* scholars, who broadened his *Sūfī* perception. A possible example was a Qādirī *Sūfī* scholar *Shaykh* Muhammad al-'Afiya. Even though Bello did not mention that he read any *Sūfī* work under him, he mentioned that he received Qādirī litanies from *Shaykh* Muhammad al-'Afiya, who in turn received it from *Shaykh* Mukhtār al-Kuntī, a famous Kuntī saint.<sup>4</sup> However, Bello's perception of *Taṣawwuf* owed most to his association with his father.<sup>5</sup>

At the age of forty, Muhammad Bello involved himself in reading works and stories of great *Sūfis* around 1819. A source claimed that he acquired *Ism Allāh al-A'ẓam*, the greatest name of Allah, around this period which was facilitated by his father, the *Shaykh*.<sup>6</sup> His interest and services to *Taṣawwuf* could be seen from the number of works he had undertaken in that area.

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Volumes 1-3, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, under authority of the Sokoto Sultanate Council. The collection of works by both *Shaykh* 'Uthmān bn Foduye and Muhammad Bello have also been published in the same manner.

<sup>1</sup> The work has been edited by late Prof. A. N. Kani and Published in 1988.

<sup>2</sup> *Shaykh* 'Uthmān bn Foduye had several other children but Muhammad Bello appeared to be more popular and most learned of all.

<sup>3</sup> M. T. M. Minna, "Sultan Muhammad Bello and his intellectual contributions to the Sokoto Caliphate, Unpublished P.hD Thesis, University of London, 1982, p.350.

<sup>4</sup> M. Bello, *Infāq al-Maysūr*, *op cit*, p. 203-204.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> S. U. Balogun, "The Works of Abdul-Qādir bn Gidādo in the Context of Nigerian History", published P.hD Thesis, Birmingham, 1984, Pp. 168-169.

Research shows that he wrote about 145 works out of which about thirty were mainly on *Taṣawwuf* apart from casual references to it in many other works.<sup>1</sup>

It has been discovered that Bello wrote two works on Qādiriyyah. One is entitled *Al-Budūr al-Zāhiriyyah fī Salāsīl al-Qādiriyyah*<sup>2</sup> in which he treated the chain of transmission of Qādiriyyah Order. The other one is *Fath al-Bāb fī Dhikr Ba'ad Khasā'is Shaykh 'AbdulQādir*<sup>3</sup> which deals with the biography and *Karāmāt* (charisma) of *Shaykh* Abdul-Qādir. Some of the works written by Bello in general *Taṣawwuf* include: *Al-Nasīhah Al-Wadī'ah fī Bayān anna Hubb al-Dunyā Ra's Kulli Khatī'ah*, *Raf al-Ishtibāh fī Ta'alluq bi Allāh wa bi Ahl Allāh*, *Al-Tanbihāt al-Wadī'hāt fī mā jā'a fī al-Bāqiyāt al-Sālihāt*, *Al-Burd al-Yaman fī Akhbār 'Uwais al-Qaranī*. Others are *Tahqīq al-Murabbīn wa al-Mushaqqiqīn*, *Al-Nisrīn fī mā Balagh min al-'Umūr al-Arba'in*, *Al-Nisrīn fī mā Qīla fī Abnā' al-Sittīn* and *Wathīqah Amīr al-Mu'minīn Muhammad Bello*.<sup>4</sup>

Muhammad Bello was a committed Qādir *Sūfī* who considered it a noble duty to propagate Qādiriyyah Order among his family, close associates, and the Emirates under his control. 'Abdul-Qādir bn Gidādo documented that Bello was keen in initiating his family into Qādiriyyah and teaching them the litanies of the Order. He used to promise them that whosoever perseveres in the recitation of the litanies, Bello would stand as a surety for him on the Day of Judgment. Similarly, Abdul Qādir confirmed that those who attended Bello's assembly were followers of Qādiriyyah and that he used to initiate those who wished to join the Order.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from the three principal leaders of the *Jihād*, other Sufis who were either the children of the *Shaykh* and his brother 'Abdullāh, or students of the *Shaykh* and his viziers, or viziers of his children and grand children contributed to the teaching of *Sūfī* doctrines and Qādiriyyah in the Caliphate. They include Muhammad Sambo, Muhammad al-Bukhārī, Khalīl bn 'Abdullāh, Abdul Qādir bn al-Mustafa and Muhammad Tukur al-Fullāti. The vizier Gidādo bn Lema and his son AbdulQādir were both important figures in the history of *Taṣawwuf* and Qādiriyyah in the Caliphate. Gidādo bn Lema had in addition to

<sup>1</sup> S. U. Balogun, "Arabic Intellectualism in West Africa: The Role of Sokoto Caliphate", in *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol. 6, no. 2, the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs, London, n.d, Pp. 405-408.

<sup>2</sup> See note 32.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> See note 32.

<sup>5</sup> A. I. Gidādo, "*Mawāhib al-Rabbāniyyah*", "MS", C.I.S. 4/3/38, f. 12b.

teaching *Taṣawwuf* wrote works in the discipline like *Raud al-Jinān*<sup>1</sup> on the *Sūfī* charismatic deed of the *Shaykh*; *Raf al-Niqāb* and *Radd al-Jawāb 'alā man Yastahiqq al-Su'āl*.<sup>2</sup>

### **Moderate *Taṣawwuf* in the Caliphate**

The first phase of *Taṣawwuf* in the Caliphate could be described as a moderate one. In this phase, the Sufis were occupied by the need to reform their corrupt society through the use of ascetical methods which seek to purge the soul of destructive tendencies. That could explain why the *Sūfī* thought of the *Jihād* leaders such as the *Shaykh*, 'Abdullāh and Muhammad Bello encouraged the pursuit of good and highly esteemed moral life as against the philosophical thoughts. In other words, they were concerned with the compulsory form of *Taṣawwuf* which was in keeping with the ideals of the *Jihād*. Thus they dealt with the definition of *Taṣawwuf* from ascetic or *Zuhd* perception as redemptive and a means of purifying the soul which has been polluted by the destructive characteristics.

The *Jihād* leaders being aware of controversies surrounding the conception of *Taṣawwuf*, perceived *Taṣawwuf* from definitions which conform to *Sharī'ah*. 'Abdullāh bn Foduye for instance, viewed *Taṣawwuf* as:

Stripping off from the soul what is not Allah's in order to allow the soul to direct its attention to Him who deserves its conduct.<sup>3</sup>

Such act can only be possible when the soul is cleansed through the guidance of Allah and concentration in recollections. To their understanding therefore, *Taṣawwuf* connotes '*Ihsān*' as also used by 'Abdullāh based on the *Hadīth* of the Prophet (SAW) which declares:

...*Ihsān* is to adore Allah as if you see Him, for if you could not see Him, He nonetheless sees you.<sup>4</sup>

Elaborating the meaning of the *Hadīth*, *Shaykh* 'Uthmān observed that *Ihsān* is nothing more than emulating the Prophet (SAW) in all facets of life whereby a *Sūfī* presumes that he is in front of Allah and that He sees him, which is in line with the answer given by the Prophet

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<sup>1</sup> This work is found in manuscript in the Center for Islamic Studies, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto.

<sup>2</sup> This work is found is found at Bayero University, Kano, Graduate Research Section, catalogued "Ms no, 510".

<sup>3</sup> See note 32, Selected Writings of *Sheikh* Abdullahi Bn Fodiyo", Vol. 1, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, p. 353.

<sup>4</sup> This *Hadīth* is reported in *Sahīh al-Muslim* as used by *Shaykh* 'Abdullāh bn Foduye, *Diya' al-Siyāsāt*, edited by A. M. Kani, 1988, p. 187



(SAW).<sup>1</sup> Thus, it is evident from this *Hadīth* that *Taṣawwuf* is one of many aspects of Islam which Angel Jibrīl explained to the Prophet (SAW) who in turn taught it to his *Sahābah* (Companions R.A).

It is therefore believed by the *Jihād leaders* that learning the aspect of *Taṣawwuf* which allows one to adopt good virtues and shun vices is compulsory like the remaining aspects of Islam.<sup>2</sup>

The attempt here is to portray all the Islamic sciences like *Usūl al-Fiqh* and *Taṣawwuf* as components of Islam having their root in the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. 'Abdullāh argued that while '*Usūl* deals with command and prohibitions and *Fiqh* deals with the application of outward regulations, *Taṣawwuf* deals with the Reality in the light of the *Sharī'ah*. Thus, one finds no contravention of regulations in the conduct of *Taṣawwuf* since a *Sūfī* employs the necessary means laid down by the *Sharī'ah* for his *Sūfī* activities.<sup>3</sup> Hence, *Shaykh* 'Uthmān opined that:

... the knowledge of *Taṣawwuf* is of two types. The knowledge which affords one to adopt the way of life of the Prophet (SAW); which is compulsory on any responsible man, and the knowledge of *Taṣawwuf* which affords the realization of the Truth which is specifically meant for the *Sūfī* saints.<sup>4</sup>

The *Shaykh* further explains that the first type involves keeping away from pride, arrogance, anger, envy, greed and high expectations. He considered these as destructive characteristics of the soul. It also involves adopting redemptive characteristics of the soul which include repentance, sincerity, piety, patience, asceticism, trust in Allah and hope for His mercy. To the *Shaykh*, the knowledge of these destructive and redemptive characteristics of the soul is obligatory on all Muslims. The second type of *Taṣawwuf*, the *Shaykh* expounded, deals with the principle of initiation, hierarchy of the saints and the knowledge of manifestation of the Divine Deeds, Names and the Truth. This type according to the *Shaykh* is reserved specifically for ardent Sufis.<sup>5</sup>

The *Jihād leaders* attached great importance to *Zuhd* (asceticism) because it has relation with *Tajdid* (reform) which seeks to purge the souls of evils, vices and lust for materialism. According to them, *Zuhd*

<sup>1</sup> U. B. Foduye, *Ihyā' al-Sunnah wa Ikḥmād al-Bid'ah*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, p.p., p. 230.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, '*Umdah al-Bayān*', "Ms", C.I.S., 1/7/115, f. 10a.

<sup>3</sup> *Shaykh* 'Abdullāh bn Foduye, *Diya' al-Siyāsāt*, edited by A. M. Kani, 1988, p. 192.

<sup>4</sup> U. B. Foduye, *Hisn al-Afhām*, "Ms", n.p., p. 51

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, *Fath al-Basā'ir*, "Ms", C.I.S., 1/3/211/ff. 10b and 11a.

means renunciation of forbidden things, obscurity and excessive lust for lawful material enjoyment of this world.<sup>1</sup> Through this the *Jihād leaders* divided the soul into three. The first one is the soul, in which the fear of Allah is engraved; such soul cannot be overcome by the devil. The second one is the soul that has been abandoned and neglected which is a prey to pleasure; such soul is prone to the influence of *shaytān*. The third one is the soul that is between *Imān* (faith) and *Shahwah* (pleasure). In this situation *shaytān* tries to influence the *Rūh* (spirit) while the Angel tries to influence the *'Aql* (reasoning faculty). The struggle between the two goes on until one overcomes the other.<sup>2</sup> Therefore the soul is important since it determines the relation with the "Reality and as such a *Sūfī* should as much as possible polish it.

*Shaykh* 'Uthmān gave four prescriptions as ways through which the soul could be polished against the whispers of *shaytān*. According to him, a *Sūfī* should always seek refuge in Allah from the whispers of *shaytān* and try to shun its temptations. The second prescription is engagement in the remembrance of Allah with both heart and tongue. In the third place he shall contemplate over the proofs of the existence of Allah from the view point of *Ahl al-Sunnah* which is free from the views of philosophers and Mu'tazilites. And finally, the *Shaykh* gave encouragement to consult *Sunni* scholars on matters pertaining to the purification of the soul.<sup>3</sup>

The *Jihād* leaders advocated *Al-'Uzlah* (isolation), *Tawbah* (repentance), *Tawakkul* (trust in Allah) and a host of other concepts with the intention of reforming their already corrupted society. The conception of *al-'Uzlah* is keeping away from backbiting, listening to falsehood and evil things. However, allowance is made for a *Sūfī* to meet people when the environment or atmosphere guarantees non-occurrence of evil things and also he can meet people for his intellectual needs.<sup>4</sup> *Tawakkul*, according to them, curtails excessive quest for material pleasure. However, a *Sūfī* must obtain his lawful share from the bounty of Allah within the provisions of *Sharī'ah*.<sup>5</sup>

Repentance is also considered by them as an effective weapon with which sins are whipped away. They classified sins into three: abandoning obligatory duties imposed by Allah on His servants like *Salāh* (prayer) and *Sawm* (fasting), the sins committed by a servant

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<sup>1</sup> U. B. Foduye, *'Umdah al-Bayān*, *Op cit*, f.22a.

<sup>2</sup> A. B. Foduye, *Tahdhīb al-lsān*, "Ms", C.I.S., 2/2/22, ff. 4b-5b.

<sup>3</sup> U. B. Foduye, *Ulūm al-Mu'āmalah*. *Op Cit.*, f. 15a

<sup>4</sup> U. B. Foduye, *Tarīq al-Jannah*, n.p, n.d, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> A. B. Foduye, *Tahdhīb al-lsān*, *Op cit.*, f. 7a.

between him and Allah like taking interest and alcoholic drinks. In both situations a servant is required to show remorse, repent and promise not to repeat the sin. The third one is the most difficult. It is the sin between man and man. It involves things like wealth, dignity and religion. In this case reconciliation with the wronged is necessary but if it seems impossible, the matter should be left to the mercy of Allah who may stand surety for the servant on the Day of Judgment.<sup>1</sup>

The last important aspect of their contribution to *Taşawwuf* could be seen from their numerous works on the history of *Taşawwuf* and particularly Qādiriyyah from its early period to their time. The three principal leaders of the *Jihād* had each written on the genealogy of Qādiriyyah and *Taşawwuf*.<sup>2</sup> It is believed by them that Angel Jibrīl brought down *Taşawwuf* to the Prophet (SAW), and the Prophet (SAW) administered it on his *Sahābah* in groups and on certain individuals. *Khalīfah* 'Alī bn Abī Tālib (RA) was singled out by the Prophet (SAW) for a special initiation.<sup>3</sup> They also gave historical accounts of some important *Sūfī* personalities like the legendary Uwais al-Qarnī<sup>4</sup> and *Shaykh* 'AbdulQādir al-Jaylānī.<sup>5</sup>

On Qādiriyyah, the leaders wrote extensively on the conditions governing the correct practices of the Order<sup>6</sup> and then developed basic elements for its successful observance.<sup>7</sup> It was later however, that the philosophical *Taşawwuf* emerged, which sharply contrasted the moderate form professed by the *Jihād* leaders even though its root goes down to the teachings of the Jihadists.

### Philosophical *Taşawwuf* in the Caliphate

The transformation of *Taşawwuf* from its moderate form developed by the *Jihād* leaders to philosophical *Taşawwuf* took place gradually under the students of the *Jihād* leaders. Even though the leaders were aware of philosophical *Taşawwuf*, they did not pursue it possibly because of situational conditions. They rather occupied themselves with the reformation of their society. Moderate and *Zuhd* elements of *Taşawwuf*

<sup>1</sup> U. B. Foduye, *Ulūm al-Mu'āmalah. Op Cit.*, f. 27a.

<sup>2</sup> It is noticeable that *Shaykh* 'Uthmān wrote *Salāsīl al-Qādiriyyah*, *Salāsīl al-Dhahabiyyah* and *Tabshīr al-'Ummah al-Ahmadiyyah*. 'Abdullāh wrote *Bayān al-Arkān wa Shurūt Tarīqah al-Sūfiyyah* and Bello wrote *Al-Budūr al-Zāhiriyyah*.

<sup>3</sup> M. Bello, *Al-Budūr al-Yamāni*, "Ms", C.I.S., 3/10/40.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, *Fath al-Bāb fī Dhikr Ba'd Khasā'is Shaykh 'AbdulQādir*, C.I.S. 3/9/113.

<sup>6</sup> A. B. Foduye, *Bayān al-Arkān*, "Ms", C.I.S., 2/1/10, ff. 1b and 2a.

<sup>7</sup> M. Bello, *Al-Budūr al-Zāhiriyyah. Op Cit.*, ff. 7a and 7b.

were the likely tools capable of meeting that situational demand. Possibly, the time was not ripe for philosophical *Taşawwuf* since the populace was handicapped by lack of sufficient knowledge of *Sharī'ah* and *Tarīqah*. It therefore became necessary for the *Jihād* leaders to adopt *Zuhd* in their dealing with the populace. On the other hand, the conduct of the *Jihād* and the administration of the Caliphate did not give room for indulging in Philosophical *Taşawwuf*. They however imparted it on their learned students.

Some elements of philosophical *Taşawwuf* were perceptible when Muhammad Sambo was reported to have studied *Insān al-Kāmil* in a conventional way from his father, the *Shaykh*. He in turn taught it to his student, 'AbdulQādir bn Mustafa, the proponent of philosophical *Taşawwuf*.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the writings of the *Jihād* leaders contain elements of the thought which might have found its way into the hands of their students who developed philosophical *Taşawwuf*.

It has been mentioned that works on philosophical *Taşawwuf* like *Futuhat al-Makiyyah* of Ibn Arabī and *Insān al-Kāmil* of al-Jilī which were assumed to be in circulation among the '*Ulama*' may have been studied and digested by them. Similarly some works and activities of the *Jihād* leaders contain some elements of philosophical *Taşawwuf*. For instance, in describing the *Shaykh*, Muhammad Bello remarks that:

...he possessed *Karamat* (charisma) Divine secrets, Holy knowledge and Divine illumination on the true nature of things... unseen was transmitted through him and wonders and charismatic deeds manifested through him.<sup>2</sup>

Though *the Shaykh* did not openly indulge in Philosophical *Taşawwuf*, his life activities represent that of a mystical *Sūfī* who attain Divine gnosis. This might explain why the *Shaykh* did not forbid his advanced-*Sūfī* students from pursuing philosophical *Taşawwuf*. He allowed the learned Sufis to consult the works of divinely illuminated Sufis provided that they are versed in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He discouraged those who could not fathom the contents of such works from reading them because of their incapability

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<sup>1</sup> 'AbdulQādir bn *al-Mustafa*, *Al-Kshf wa al-Bayān lima Ashkala min Kitāb al-Insān*, "Ms", Private collection of Bashir Ahmad, C.I.S., Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto - Nigeria, f. 1.

<sup>2</sup> M. Bello, *Infāq al-Maysūr*, *Op. cit.*, p.41.

to understand the advanced *Sūfī* knowledge. Hence his conclusive remark that it is not allowed for such a *Sūfī* to read their works.<sup>1</sup>

This may be the reason why only very few people were known in this field. However, ‘AbdulQādir bn al-Mustafa had listed the names of some of the students and associates of *Shaykh* ‘Uthmān who were deep in *Zuhd* and graduated from there to speculative *Taṣawwuf*. One of them, Muhammad Kwairanga, was described as an expert in Divine illumination and who was constantly mentioned by the *Shaykh*. He was one of the *Sayyāhīn* (saints constantly on *Sūfī* mission); one of such missions was said to have taken him to mount *Qāf*.<sup>2</sup> Aliyu Dambai was a contemporary of Kwairanga in the school. Al-Mustafa related a number of strange happenings as exactly foretold by Dambai. Aliyu Dambai was said to have visited Khidr and dined with him.<sup>3</sup> These and other examples<sup>4</sup> are clear pointers to the fact that philosophical *Taṣawwuf* was in the making during the period of the *Jihād* leaders. But it was not vigorously pursued and taught to the populace as was the case with the moderate *Taṣawwuf*.

Some of these stories like meeting Khidr and dinning with him are very difficult to understand by a layman. Khidr who had died several years before the 18<sup>th</sup> century could come back with a corporeal body to dine with someone is a story that remains incomprehensible to a layman. However, this is an aspect of the beginning of philosophical *Taṣawwuf* in the Caliphate.

The proponents of philosophical *Taṣawwuf* in the Caliphate could be many but the most notable among them include Muhammad Sambo, Muhammad al-Bukhari, Khalil bn ‘Abdullāh i and ‘AbdulQādir al-Mustafa. Al-Mustafa described Sambo, Al-Bukhārī and Khalīl as *Ahl al-Sha'n* - meaning men of speculative or philosophical *Taṣawwuf*. This is their advanced *Sūfī* thought not the *Zuhd* type. Sambo for instance related that he had perceived the Reality through the light of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and was accorded intimacy, friendship and love.<sup>5</sup> His efforts were rewarded by the Reality with supernatural powers. His student ‘AbdulQādir al-Mustafa observed that:

<sup>1</sup> U. B. Foduye, *Ihyā' al-Sunnah wa Ikhlād al-Bid'ah*, *Op cit.* p. 235.

<sup>2</sup> ‘AbdulQādir al-Mustafa, *Salawāt al-Ahzān*, "Ms", C.I.S. 4/6/10, F.4a.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, f. 4b.

<sup>4</sup> These examples are some of the elements of philosophical *Taṣawwuf* that compelled some scholars to attack *Taṣawwuf*. However, they should be understood from metaphorical sense as the products of ecstasy.

<sup>5</sup> W, Junayd, 'Urf al-Rihān, edited by S. U. Kaura, B. A. Project, Department of Islamic Studies, University of Sokoto, 1981, pp.27-29.

Surely Allah has endowed him with power of walking in the space and on water; and was given the ability to halt (while walking in the space and on water). And surely he had seen the white soft earth, a remainder from the clay of Adam.<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad al-Bukhārī was known to possess the Knowledge of illumination, influenced by his mentor, Muhammad Sambo and had experienced *Jadhb* (trance).<sup>2</sup> He was reported to have seen and possibly converse with Khidr<sup>3</sup> not only in his sleep but also while awake during trance. However, seeing and conversing with Khidr should not be considered literally. A *Sūfi* according to Sufis receives inspiration about hidden things while asleep and also in trance. Trance itself is like sleep and even more than sleep as far as unconsciousness is concerned. Therefore Muhammad al-Bukhārī might have seen Khidr while awake to the world but unconscious and transported to another world of Reality to use the *Sūfi* Terminology.

The philosophical Sufis in the Caliphate looked at the issue of creation from the context of speculative Sufism through the medium of prophetology. They viewed the creation of man from non-existence to his perfection in the light of the career of Prophets of Allah. They symbolized Prophet Adam (AS) with the circle of creation from non-existence into existence, since he was the first human being created by Allah (SWT) from whom the generations of human beings evolved. Prophet Nun's (AS) career was perceived as preservation of mankind from extinction and the security of existence bestowed upon humanity by the Reality.<sup>4</sup> Prophet Ibrahim (AS) represents the distinguished position of friendship with the Reality by mankind, while Prophet Musa (AS) symbolizes the manifestation of the Reality through whom mankind is saved and given law for their welfare. The life career of Prophets Dawud and his son Sulaiman (AS) represents the gift and favour of the Reality on mankind. Similarly, the life of Prophet Isa (AS) and his mother Maryam (AS) signify chastity and Divine power of creation.

Finally the career of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) represents the power of the Reality, defeat of mankind by the Reality and the appearance

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<sup>1</sup> A. B.al-Mustafa, *Salawāt al-Ahzān*, *Op cit*, f. 2b.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, f. 4b.

<sup>3</sup> This is the servant of Allah whose story of an encounter with Prophet Musa (AS) is told in *Surah al-Kahf* 0.18:60-82.

<sup>4</sup> From the *Sūfi* perspective especially the philosophical *Taşawwuf*, nothing is real except Allah (SWT). So reference to Reality is a reference to Allah (SWT).

of the Truth for mankind.<sup>1</sup> Through this process therefore man's creation followed the use of reproductive system, the distinguished position of man's authority, revelation sent down to mankind, chastity given to mankind and establishment of one Reality for mankind.

The theory of Perfect Man as perceived by the philosophical Sufis regards man (as the vicegerent of Allah on earth), to possess the capability of controlling the universe when he attains *Kamālah* (perfection), not in its literal sense. He can control the high creations and communicate with Angels, in the same way he can control the lower creations and communicate with Jinns. He therefore trends in the shoes of Prophets, saints, *Quṭb* and the seven *Abdāl* (substitutes) who have been endowed with that power by the Reality.<sup>2</sup> AI-Mustafa used Al-Jilī to illustrate this theory. Al-Jilī, the author of *Insān al-Kāmil*, was believed to have stepped into the shoes of Angel Israfil and as a result of which he (al-Jilī) acts accordingly.<sup>3</sup>

AI-Mustafa indicated that there is a vast difference in control of the universe by the Angels and the *Kummāl* (perfect men). While the former's activities are not from their own initiative but from the command of the Reality, the latter's activities in the universe emanate from their perfection. Therefore, mankind is, in this respect much more favoured over the Angels by the Reality.<sup>4</sup> According to the philosophical Sufis, even though some animals, Jinns and Angels are more powerful than mankind, still man by his perfection stands as the most favoured by the Reality.<sup>5</sup>

According to Hiskett, the idea of perfect man as studied from al-Jilī's *Insān al-Kāmil* receives the attention it deserves from *Shaykh* 'Uthmān who versified the idea in a poem on Prophet Muhammad (SAW). For example, the first couplets' of the poem runs thus:

*All created beings; Ahmad (Muhammad) excels them in truth;*

*Truly, you (Muhammad) have been singled out;*

*Among the excellent ones (Muhammad) has been chosen;*

*The most perfect of us all - Gods Messenger.*<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'AbdulQādir bn al-Mustafa, *Maqāmāt al-Ambiyā'*, "Ms", Private collection of Bashīr Ahmad, C.I.S., Sokoto, ff. 1b and 2a.

<sup>2</sup> M. J. AbulFath, *Allāh wa al-'Alam wa al-Insān fī al-Fikr al-Islāmī*, Dār al-Ma'arif, Egypt, 1971, p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> 'AbdulQādir bn al-Mustafa, *Maqāmāt al-Ambiyā'*, Op, Cit., ff. 4a & b.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, ff. 4b & 5a.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> M. Hiskett, *The Development of Islam in West Africa*, Op.Cit., p. 24.

‘AbdulQādir bn al-Mustafa's understanding of Al-Jili's book was so deep that he selected some chapters he felt were ambiguous for analysis and comments, in order to simplify the complicated discussion in the book for the benefit of seekers. This he did with the knowledge that the language of the *Qawm* (Sufis) can only be understood by them.<sup>1</sup> From the foregoing discussions it will be intelligible that philosophical *Taşawwuf* received the attention it deserved in the Caliphate even though it remains a controversial aspect of *Taşawwuf*.

### Conclusion

The paper reflected on the practice of *Taşawwuf* in the Sokoto Caliphate. It shows that the principal *Jihād* leaders namely *Shaykh* ‘Uthmān bn Foduye, ‘Abdullāh bn Foduye and Muhammad Bello as well as some of their associates were ardent Sūfis who practiced the moderate *Taşawwuf* even though they taught some elements of philosophical *Taşawwuf* to their very learned and advances students and associates. The main concern of these leaders was reformation of character and perfection of spiritual wellbeing. This led them to contribute immensely in the teaching and development of *Taşawwuf* through literal works and *Da'wah* endeavors. The general expectation therefore is to practice *Taşawwuf* in congruence with the teaching of Prophet Muḥammad SAW.

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<sup>1</sup> AbdulQadir bn Al-Mustafa, *Al-Kashfwa al-Bayanfi ma Ashkala min Kitab al-Insan*, C.I.S., UDUS, f.1



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