

## The notion of *Mahdiyyah* as conceived by Sheikh ‘Usmān Dan Fodio

Abba Idris Adam\* and Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim\*\*

**Abstract:** The belief in the expected redeemer or the *Mahdī* is a well-known concept in the history of Islam. However, the notion has been opened to several interpretations and misinterpretations from various Islamic sects, each asserting that its own version of the *Mahdiyyah* is authentic and valid. As a result, several Islamic movements were orchestrated under the banner of the *Mahdiyyah*; prominent among them in Africa are those of Muhammad Ibn Tumart (1080-1130), the patron of the *Muwahhidūn* State in north Africa, Muḥammad Aġmad ibn ‘Abdullāh (1844-1885), the architect of the Mahdist State in the Sudan (1881-1898) and Sheikh ‘Usmān Dan Fodio (1754-1817), the founder of the Sokoto Caliphate. This article explores the authenticity of the notion of the *Mahdiyyah* in Islam, which constitutes the basis for the main discourse of the study, namely, the status of the *Mahdiyyah* as conceived by Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio, and the resultant impact of the Sheikh’s *Mahdiyyah* on the Sudanese *Mahdiyyah*.

**Keywords:** *Mahdiyyah*, Dan Fodio, *Qur’ān*, *Ḥadīth*.

**Abstrak:** Kepercayaan kepada penebus yang diharapkan atau *Mahdī* adalah konsep yang terkenal dalam sejarah Islam. Walau bagaimanapun, persoalan tersebut telah membuka ruang kepada beberapa interpretasi dan salah pentafsiran oleh beberapa golongan Islam, setiap satunya mempunyai versinya yang tersendiri terhadap *Mahdiyyah* sama ada ia benar dan sah. Hal ini mengakibatkan terdapatnya beberapa kumpulan Islam yang sehaluan di bawah panji-panji *Mahdiyyah*. Yang paling utara antara mereka terdapat di Afrika

---

\* Abba Idris Adam is Assistant Professor, Yobe State University, Damaturu, Nigeria. Email: [abbaidrisadam@yahoo.com](mailto:abbaidrisadam@yahoo.com).

\*\* Hassan Ahmed Ibrahim is Professor in the Department of History and Civilization, International Islamic University Malaysia. Email: [hassanibrahim1310@gmail.com](mailto:hassanibrahim1310@gmail.com).

adalah mereka yang bernaung di bawah kepemimpinan Muhammad Ibn Tumart (1080-1130), penaung negara *Muwahhidūn* di Utara Afrika, Mu'ammad Almad ibn 'Abdullāh (1844-1885), arkitek Negara Mahdist di Sudan (1881-1898) dan Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio (1754 -1817), pengasas Khalifah Sokoto. Artikel ini mengkaji kesahihan idea *Mahdiyyah* dalam Islam, yang mana ia merangkumi asas bagi perbincangan utama kajian ini, iaitu kedudukan *Mahdiyyah* seperti yang ditakrifkan oleh Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio, di samping kesan akibat daripada *Mahdiyyah* yang dibawa oleh Sheikh terhadap orang Sudan *Mahdiyyah*.

**Kata Kunci:** *Mahdiyyah*, Dan Fodio, Qur'an, *Hadīth*.

## Introduction

The belief in an “expected deliverer” Hassan (2004) asserts, has been a well-known concept in both heavenly and man-made religions. These include Confucianism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, African Traditional Religions and most importantly, Christianity and Judaism. The presumed redeemer is known as the Messiah and the whole notion as Messianism. This belief has existed among Judeo-Christian communities in Europe and the Middle East long before the beginning of the Muslim era. They believed that he will come “from the unseen” towards the end of the world when it had been permeated by injustice and tyranny to fill it with justice This version of the expected redeemer of the Judeo-Christian Messianism appears to have influenced Muslim communities, who named this concept by the Arabic term “*Mahdiyya*”, which is derived from the root “*Hadā*” meaning to guide, accordingly, the *Mahdī* is the divinely or rightly guided one. The idea of the *Mahdī* in Islam is, therefore, seemingly messianic and apocalyptic. (Hassan, 2004).

Although some similarities between the Islamic Mahdism and the Judio-Christian Messianism may have been noted, the notion of the *Mahdiyya* in Islam has a distinctive Islamic colouring. The Islamic Mahdism does not consider man as being born with original sin and therefore need to be baptized and saved through spiritual regeneration. Rather it holds the view that man is not drawn in sin, so he does not need any spiritual purification. Mahdism also does not conceive of its people's salvation in nationalistic terms, with assurance of the realization of salvation in the kingdom of God in a promised land by a unique and autonomous community. (Sachedina, 1981).

According to al-Ṣādiq (1975), beside its Islamic and historical roots, the notion of the *Mahdiyya* has also been influenced by certain internal and external factors. The former could be seen in the disintegration of the Caliphate, which eventually caused division and chaos among the Muslims, thereby making them a multitude without a head, whereas the latter is reflected in the subjugations and relegations suffered by the Muslims under Western colonial rule. At that time, Muslims were reduced from rulers to the ruled, from manipulators to being manipulated and from controllers of the masses to being controlled. The combination of these internal and external factors had, thus, triggered a certain scenario where Muslims yearned for a saviour and a redeemer who would rescue the *Ummah* from these catastrophes and restore its lost glory. To this end, this paper aspires to discuss and analyze the notion of the *Mahdiyyah* in Islam and how it was conceived by Sheikh Usman Dan Fodio and his son Sultan Muhammad Bello as well as the impact of the Sheikh's *Mahdiyyah* on that of Muhammad Ahmad Ibn Abdullah of the Sudan.

### **The *Mahdiyyah* in Islam**

The notion of the *Mahdiyyah* has been a subject of disagreement among Muslim scholars and intellectuals, largely because neither the word *Mahdī* or *Mahdiyyah* is explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān. The whole notion of the *Mahdiyyah* could only be found in some fifty 'Aḥādīth scattered in the books of *Sunan*, such as Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and Tirmidhī, but, interestingly, not in Bukhārī or Muslim. Thus, the authenticity and validity of the notion has been questioned by some scholars and even doubted by others.

The advocates of the *Mahdiyyah* frequently quote the following Qur'ānic verses as a proof of the presence of the notion in the holy Qur'an:

“And we wished to be gracious to those who were being depressed in the land, to make them leaders (in faith) and make them heirs \* to establish a firm place for them in the land, and to show Pharaoh, Haman, and their hosts, at their hands, the very things against which they were taking precautions”. (28:5-6).

The Qur'an also says:

“Allah has promised those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power) as He granted it to those before them, that He will establish in authority their religion – the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state) after fear in which they (lived) to one of security and peace: They will worship me (alone) and not associate anything with Me. If any do reject faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked”. (24:55).

And another verse says:

“Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity”. (3:104).

These are the most frequently quoted Qur’anic verses on the notion of the *Mahdiyya*. It should be noted here that none of these verses explicitly mention the term *Mahdiyya* or the *Mahdī*. However, it is argued that in the first verse Allah S.W.T. has promised the believers to raise an *Imām* (from the depressed people), who will have dominance over the world. And that the “depressed people” mentioned in the verse refers to the people of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), who were subjugated and relegated by their enemies. So, Allah promised to send forth *al-Imām al-Mahdī* from among them to redeem them and humiliate their enemies. (al-Qazwini, 2005). Moreover, the second verse deals with another promise where Allah promised to grant the believers a peaceful atmosphere, free from fear and terror. According to the *Shī‘ah*, this promise has yet to materialize. They believed that this peaceful atmosphere will only come to pass with the appearance of the *Mahdī* whereby a peaceful, decent and egalitarian society will be created by the *Mahdī* himself. (al-Qazwini, 2005). In addition, Ibn Kathīr (2011) narrates a *Ḥadīth* from the Prophet (S.A.W.) which stated that the condition of the Muslim Ummah will be fine so long as they have twelve people (*Imāms*) in their midst. He then asserted that these twelve *Imāms* are not the ones upheld by the *Shī‘ah*, as the four rightly-guided Caliphs and the expected Mahdi are among them.

Moreover, beside the complete absence of the term “*Mahdī*” or “*Mahdiyya*” in the above-quoted verses, one may also note that these verses never refer to one particular person but to persons or group of persons who undertake the task of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is wrong. In this vein, some scholars, like (al-Qaraḍāwī, 2013)

gives a broader interpretation of *Tajdīd* as a task to be carried out by both individuals and groups, though he gave preponderance to the latter. Thus, he maintained, the *Mujaddid* may be more than one or even several persons: some from among the just rulers, others from the knowledgeable '*Ulamā*', a third category from the military leaders and finally from amongst pious and ascetic educators. Interestingly, these *Mujaddids* (reformers) may be dispersed in several parts of a country, or come from various countries. (al-Qaraḍāwī, 2013). This could be why *al-Imām* al-Suyūṭī considered the role of the *Mahdī* and that of the *Mujaddid* as two sides of the same coin.

On the other hand, the most quoted *Aḥādīth* on the notion of the *Mahdiyyah* are Abū Dāwūd 4282, 2485 and 2486, Ibn Mājah 4085 and 4039. But after a careful study of the above *Aḥādīth*, one may notice an apparent confusion on the actual personality of the *Mahdī*. Some of these *Aḥādīth* described him as one of the twelve *Imāms* and that he will be their last; occasionally as *al-Ā'iz bi al-Bait* (a person who will take refuge in the *Ka'abah*), frequently as a man from the *Ahl al-Bayt* (People of the House), and sometimes coming from the *Quraish* tribe. Yet a *Ḥadīth* contradicts all the above descriptions of the *Mahdī* by reporting that "there will be no *Mahdī* except 'Īsa ibn Maryam (Jesus, the son of Mary)" (Ibn Majah: 4039). Thus, the perplexity here is how the scholars of *Ḥadīth* gathered all these *Aḥādīth* in one or more compilations without reconciling, or, at least, highlighting, the confusion overshadowing them. (Hassan & Zein, 1996).

Another query to be noted here is that the reliability of most of these *Aḥādīth* is questioned by some scholars because their chain of transmitters does not reach the level of authenticity. After surveying and presenting many of them in his *Muqaddimah* under the loaded titled "*Fī Amr al-Fāṭimī*" (On the issue of *al-Fāṭimī*), (Ibn Khaldūn, 2010) criticized most of them. All in all, he appeared to have stopped short of saying that the notion of the *Mahdiyyah* is fundamentally *Shī'ī*, and has nothing to do with the *Sunnah*.

Another interesting point that requires attention is that the *Aḥādīth* on the notion of the *Mahdī* or *Mahdiyyah* does not refer to *Mahdī* as "persons" or "group of persons" but rather as a single individual from the People of the House with a clear forehead and a hooked nose. This does not seem to be in line with the Qur'ānic injunctions where all the

verses cited by the advocates of the *Mahdiyya* indicate that this task of purifying Islam from impurities will be carried out by a group of people, “*Tā’ifah*”. Moreover, these verses do not indicate whether they will come at the beginning or towards the end of time. And again, all other signs of the advent of the *Mahdī* mentioned in the *Aḥādīth*, such as the world being filled with injustice, cannot be verified in these verses. Hence, a discrepancy between the contents of these verses and *Aḥādīth* is presumably visible. In other words, there is seemingly no clear or direct link between these quoted verses and *Aḥādīth* on the *Mahdī* or *Mahdiyyah*.

However, even if they are somehow linked or connected literally, technically or even metaphorically, then relating them to the concept of *Iṣlāḥ* and *Tajdīd* seems to be wiser due to their agreement with the general meaning and guidelines of revivalism and reform. So, if these verses could be used as reference to the notion of Mahdism in Islam, then relating them to the concept of *Iṣlāḥ* and *Tajdīd* is not only prudent but also clearer since the *Mahdī* is considered to be the last *Mujaddid*.

### **Methodology of Muslim scholars in studying the notion of the Mahdiyyah**

Perhaps, one of the factors that contributed in mystifying the notion of the *Mahdiyyah* is the seemingly contradicting methodologies employed by Muslim scholars in studying the notion. This is apparently clear when we analyze the methodology of *Muḥaddithūn* (scholars of *Ḥadīth*) and that of Muslim historians. The former focus on the *Ḥadīth* transmitters and their contents without considering the socio-political state of the *Ummah* at the time these ideas were sprouted. According to (Hassan & Zein, 1996), many observations were raised regarding this, which, I believe, should be taken into consideration. Firstly, that *Imām* Mālik, Bukhārī and Muslim did not tackle the notion of Mahdism in their books per se but rather they presented some of the *Aḥādīth* in *Kitāb al-Fitan* (the book of disorder) as part of the signs of Doomsday. Secondly, the compilation of *Aḥādīth* dealing with the notion of Mahdism started in the third century, after the Hijrah, in the books of *Imām* Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and other books of *Sunan*. Thirdly, out of the eleven *Aḥādīth* compiled by Abū Dāwūd in “*Kitāb al-Mahdī*” only two recorded the name *Mahdī* clearly and vividly: These are the *Ḥadīth* of Ummu Salamah and that of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī where the Prophet (SAW) said: “The

*Mahdī* is from My household through Faṭīma” and “The *Mahdī* is from Me with a clear forehead and hooked nose”. However, the rest were metaphorically interpreted to refer to the *Mahdī* but not literally, and scholars of the *Ḥadīth* may differ whether or not such interpretations are acceptable.

Conversely, the Muslim historian’s view this whole concept from a different perspective. They argue that it is necessary to give due consideration to the socio-political state of the Muslim *Ummah* when these *Aḥādīth* were reported. For this was an era of sharp political differences and conflicts that triggered the emergence of several sects within the fold of the Islamic state, such as the *Ithnā ‘Ashariyyah* who claim that Mahdism is part and parcel of *Uṣūl al-Aqīdah* (a major pillar of the creed). (Hassan & Zein, 1996). Furthermore, the political dimension of the notion, which manifests in the over-throw of corrupt regimes and the restoration of justice, may have encouraged some individuals to claim the Mahdiship either to over-throw a corrupt and tyrant regime, or simply as a cover up to attain their own personal and political aggrandizement.

### **Who is the *Mahdī*?**

Based on the above presented *Aḥādīth* of the Prophet (S.A.W.), *Ahl al-Sunnah* argues that the *Mahdī* will be called Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdullāhi al-Mahdī. His name and that of his father should tally with those of the Prophet and his father, respectively. He should be a descendant of the Prophet through his daughter *Fāṭima*. Contrary to the *Shī‘ah* doctrine, *Ahl al-Sunnah* believes that the *Mahdī* will be born towards the end of Time, and that his appearance is one of the eschatological signs of Doomsday. (al-Ahmadi, 2003).

Contrary to the above interpretation of the *Ahl al-Sunnah*, the *Shī‘ah* maintain that the expected *Mahdī* is one of their hidden or concealed *Imāms* who enjoins spiritual specialties and will re-appear before the end of Time supported by miracles. His re-appearance will not only restore justice to the world, but also liberate the *Ahl al-Bayt*, who suffered humiliation and dehumanization at the hands of their enemies. (Jar Allah, 1955). It should be noted that this presumed hidden *Imām* has arguably not been in complete isolation from his people, but rather the pious and the religious leaders have a direct link to him, and he has instructed them on what to do and how to do. In addition, the

*Imām* or the *Mahdī* will be equipped with some special qualities which include: the norm of Nūḥ (Noah) so that he could live longer, the norm of Ibrāhīm (Abraham) to be hidden and in isolation, the norm of Mūsā (Moses) who was concealed out of fear for his life, the norm of ʿĪsā (Jesus), and the norm of Ayyūb where comfort will descend on him after the experience of discomfort. (Jar Allah, 1955).

Al-Qazwīnī (2005), maintains that the Mahdī's genealogy, according to the *Shī'ah*, consists of is: *Imām* al-Ḥassan al-ʿAskarī ibn *Imām* ʿAlī al-Hādī ibn *al-Imām* Muḥammad al-Jawād ibn *al-Imām* ʿAlī al-Riḍā ibn *al-Imām* Mūsā al-Kāẓim ibn *al-Imām* Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq ibn *al-Imām* Muḥammad al-Bāqir ibn *al-Imām* ʿAlī Zain al-ʿĀbidīn ibn *al-Imām* al-Ḥussain ibn *al-Imām* ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib. And on his mother's side, he is the son of Fāṭima, daughter of the Prophet may peace be upon him.

In another vein, the *Khawārij* did not believe in the *Mahdiyya* or the concept of *Imāmah*. Thus, they completely rejected the *Shī'ah* belief in the return of the *Imām*. However, one of the *Khawārij* groups called “*Yazīdiyyah*”, had somehow accepted the notion of *Mahdiyya* albeit in a slightly different way, as they did not restrict it to a particular person. In addition, they believed that the expected *Mahdī* will be a prophet and messenger of God, who will emerge from non-Arabs (ʿ*Ajam*). They based their claim on the popular *Ḥadīth* which says: “An ʿArab does not have superiority over an ʿ*Ajamī* (non-Arab) except with God consciousness (*Taqwa*)” (Ibn Hanbal, 23489). They also refer to the verse which states: “the most honoured of you in sight of Allah is the most righteous of you” (Qurʾan, 49:22). Moreover, they also believed that the *Mahdī* will receive a complete book at once from God. (Hassan, 1953).

Based on the above views, it can be seen that the difference between *Ahl al-Sunnah* and the *Shī'ah* on the notion of the expected *Mahdī* is that it is central in the *Shī'ah* theology, and appears to have been profoundly influenced by Indian, Jewish and Persian thoughts and traditions. This is particularly evident in the concept of *al-Imām al-Maʿṣūm* (the infallible *Imām*), *al-Ghaybah* (concealment of the *Imām*), *al-Rajʿah* (return of the *Imām*) and *al-Imām al-Ghāʾib* (the hidden *Imām*). Unlike the *Shī'ah*, *Ahl al-Sunnah* do not consider the *Imāmah* or the *Mahdiyya* as a basic pillar of Islam (*Uṣūl al-ʿAqāʾid*), but simply a way to return the faith to its original purity free from all *Bidʿah* (un-Islamic practices). The *Mahdiyya* in this sense is almost identical to the very well-known



concept of *Islāh* and *Tajdīd* (Islamic reform and revival). In other words, for the *Shī'ah*, the Mahdiyya centres around a “Person”, while for their counterparts *Ahl al-Sunnah*, it revolves around the “Book”. (Hassan, 2004).

However, according to Ibn Khaldūn (2010), the *Mahdī* is a man from the People of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*), and will be called the *Mahdī*. He will support the faith and restore the unity of Islam, and, most importantly, his manifestation will be one of the signs of the Hour (*Ashrāt al-Sā'ah*), an eschatological event preceding Doomsday. The Muslims will follow him, and he will acquire domination over the Islamic realms, and will be called the *Mahdī*. The emergence of the Antichrist and the subsequent signs of the Hour, established in the *Ṣaḥīḥ*, will ensure that Jesus will descend after him, and kill the Antichrist, or will descend with him and assist him to kill the Antichrist; and Jesus will accept the *Mahdī* as *Imām* in his prayer.

### **The notion of *Mahdiyya* as conceived by Sheikh ŪsmĒn Dan Fodio**

Sheikh Ūsmān Dan Fodio is one of the great scholars from Sub-Saharan Africa, revered not just for his *Jihād* against the corrupt Hausa regime and purification of Islamic faith in the region, but also for his scholarly writings which addressed many complicated problems of his time. After his retirement from the leadership of the Sokoto Caliphate in 1815, he dedicated his time to scholarship and writing, producing a variety of books and write-ups in the areas of religion, politics, administration, agriculture and poetry.

Mahdism received special attention in Dan Fodio's scholarship. Among the three categories of the African '*Ulamā*' on the notion of Mahdism, Dan Fodio belonged to the one which believed in the notion but did not claim the title for himself, even though his *Jamā'ah* had enthusiastically conferred it upon him. Of the two other groups, one also believed in it and claimed it for himself, that is Muhammad Ahmad ibn Ūbdallāh in the Sudan, while the other remained skeptical and doubtful of the whole notion.

It should be noted that from the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the belief in the expected Mahdi, had become popular and widely circulated in the Muslim world, and the Hausaland was not an exception. In fact,

the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate in that region in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century reactivated the notion in some parts of the continent. This is apparently clear when a group from the *Jamā'ah* went as far as believing that Dan Fodio was the *Mahdī*, and that he was waiting for a conducive atmosphere to convey the good news to his people. But upon knowing of this belief, Dan Fodio quickly and firmly refuted it by putting on record:

“Know, O my brethren, that I am not the *Imām al-Mahdī* and that I never claimed the *Mahadiyya* even though that is heard from the tongues of other people. Indeed, I have striven beyond measure in warning them to desist from that, and declared its refutation in some of my writings, both in Arabic and ‘Ajamī (Hausa and Fulfulde)” Dan Fodio (1990).

Furthermore, in a manuscript obtained by the authors titled “*al-Naba’ al-Hādī Ilā Aḥwāl al-Imām al-Mahdī*”, he categorically stated that:

“My intention to write this book was not to claim the Mahdship, but rather to inform you that Allah SWT has blessed my actions to be in conformity with those of the *Mahdī* as presented by our scholars may Allah be pleased with them.” Dan Fodio (manuscript).

However, while personally refraining from assuming the *Mahdiyya*, Dan Fodio did not refute the notion itself, but made it clear that he firmly believed in the coming of the expected *Mahdī*, and had even informed his followers that the time for his appearance had come. This position was confirmed in the message he sent to his followers through his son Muḥammad Bello, who noted:

“The Shehu sent me to all his followers in the east among the people of Zamfara, Katsina, Kano and Daura... I conveyed to them his good tidings about the approaching appearance of the *Mahdī*, that the Shehu’s followers are his vanguard and that this *Jihād* will not end, by God’s permission, until it gets to the *Mahdī*. They listened and welcomed the good news.” (Bello, 1957).

Dan Fodio’s belief in the *Mahdiyya* and his conviction that the *Mahdī*’s appearance was fast approaching was further elaborated in his book *al-*

*Naba' al-Hādī Ilā Aḥwāl al-Imām al-Mahdī*, which the authors obtained through a pleasant stroke of luck. It records:

“The *Mahdī* will appear towards the end of Time, following the footsteps of the Prophet SAW and will be free from mistakes. His rule and authority will be fully protected by God from all angles. He will revive religion and get rid of innovations and will dismantle the predominant Islamic sects. According to the consensus of the ‘*Ulamā*’, all Muslims will embrace and accept him as the *Imām* and the leader of the believers. His appearance and swearing allegiance to him will take place in the year 1200 after Hijrah.” Dan Fodio (*al-Naba' al-Hādī*).

He further noted:

“The *Mahdī* will appear in the year 1200AH. Similarly, another Hadith from the authority of Nu‘aim through Ja‘afar said: the *Mahdī* will appear in the year 1200AH. But another Hadith reported by Nu‘aim through Abī Qātil stated that the appearance of the *Mahdī* will take place in the year 1204AH.” Dan Fodio (*al-Naba' al-Hādī*).

Dan Fodio’s version of the Mahdiyyah was in a way unique, as it fixed a presumed date for his appearance. i.e. between 1200 and 1204 after Hijra.

Moreover, the conviction of Dan Fodio that the *Mahdī* will appear from *Ahl al-Shurūq* (people of the East) was seemingly instrumental in the massive migration eastwards from the Hausaland to the Sudan and the Nile Valley. (M. A. Alḥāj and Biobaku, 1990) totally agree with this view as they state:

“As early as the time of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn Abū Bakr Atīku (1837-42) probably owing to the perturbed conditions within the Sokoto Empire - a number of people started to migrate from the Hausaland to the Nile valley in anticipation of meeting the “expected *Mahdī*”. This created so much unrest and agitation that the Sulṭān had to issue a proclamation declaring that the time of the exodus had not yet come, since there is still some good remaining among us.” (M. A. Alḥāj and Biobaku, 1990).

Dan Fodio stressed that:

“The *Mahdī* will appear when the entire world would be filled with injustice and tyranny, as described in the *Aḥādīth* of the Prophet SAW. He will call people to the revival of the faith and the re-establishment of the religion. Whoever rejects him will be killed, and whoever fights him will be subjugated. He is the companion of the sword of the truth, and eagle will be flying between his hands. His supporters will be assisting him in discharging his responsibilities and in carrying the burden of the kingdom. Dan Fodio (*al-Naba’ al-Hadi*).

And then he noted:

“these are the specialties and characteristics of the Mahdi which I did not fulfill”. Dan Fodio (*al-Naba’ al-Hadi*).

After the death of his father, in order to keep alive the notion of the *Mahdiyya*, Sultan Muḥammad Bello tried his level best to maintain his father’s position regarding the appearance of the expected *Mahdī*. According to (Gishu, 2012), Bello emphasized that the path of the righteous on the issue of *al-Imām al-Mahdī* would be that he will be the last of the *Auliyā’* (pious people). Bello noted:

“The era of the Prophet Muhammad SAW will be sealed with the appearance of the *Mahdī*. With his appearance, bounties will be abundant; people will compete to touch his shoes and cane. They will be shown the hideouts of the Jews by the mountains and trees. They will conquer Constantinople by glorifying God, and all the people will come to him as commanded by the Prophet SAW: “when you see the black flags coming from *Khurāsān*, then you should come to them even if you are crawling as in them is the *Khalīfa* (vicegerent) of Allah”. That will be the *Imām al-Mahdī*, the seal of the *Awliyā’*”. Bello (*al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar-manuscript*).

In the same vein, Bello has this to say about the signs of the *Mahdī*’s appearance:

“I asked Hassan al-Balbalī about the actual time of the *Mahdī*’s appearance and he said: the *Mahdī* will appear after the appearance of two dynasties which were given the sign of *سبع*. Then he explained that the *س* has come to pass and he was al-Faqīh Sulaimān, a renowned Muslim scholar and Mujahid who led the Jihad against falsehood in the land of

Fūta, and Waliy ‘Abd al-Qādir, the just *Imām*. As for the ɛ was none but your Sheikh (Sheikh ‘Usmān Dan Fodio). Thus, his *Jihād* must continue in this land until his kingdom reaches the kingdom of Fūta and the appearance of the Fāṭimī (*al-Mahdī*) follows immediately after that.” Bello (*al-Qawl al-Mukhtasar-mansucript*).

Thus, the belief in the expected *Mahdī* was deeply rooted in the minds and hearts of the *Jamā‘ah* and the entire Sokoto caliphate, as well as the idea that Dan Fodio had commanded his followers to migrate to the *Mahdī* and join his army whenever he appeared. Knowing that Dan Fodio had instructed his *Jamā‘ah* to migrate eastward in anticipation of the *Mahdī* and to swear allegiance to him, Muḥammad Bello wrote a letter to Modibbo Adama, the Emir of Adamawa, commanding him to send some spies to the Nile valley and Dārḥūr to follow up on the news of the expected *Mahdī*. (Abdallah, 1995).

In a manuscript obtained by the researchers from Bayero University Kano entitled: *Khashf Al-Khafiy Min Akhbār Al-Imām Al-Mahdī* (Uncovering the Concealed on the news of the Imām al-Mahdī) authored by Muhammad Bello, it is clearly stated that the time for the appearance of the *Mahdī* had already come and that in the next two years or so his manifestation will be known to the public. Bello added, “Let it be known to everybody laying his hand on this book (the manuscript) that Allah SWT has unveiled to me in the night of Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> of Rabi al-Auwal, news on the expected *Mahdī* who will appear towards the end of time”. In this manuscript, Bello mentioned the following on the presumed appearance of the *Mahdī*:

“To inform you, O my brothers may Allah have mercy on you, and give you the good news of the *Mahdī*’s appearance, and that he will be visible to all after two years by the will of God, or at least something related to him that will represent him will surely appear. That passing religious verdict based on opinion has expired since the completion of 1000 years after the death of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. This trend will continue until the whole world has been filled with injustice and tyranny, and this will necessitate the appearance of the *Mahdī* who will fill the world with justice. And that before the appearance of the *Mahdī*, a group of the righteous will remain firm in their belief regarding the appearance of the *Mahdī*, who will be supported by Allah to rule with Kitāb

and Sunnah until the coming of the greater *Mahdī* (Jesus the son of Mary). These visible black flags are the flags of the *Mahdī* and their bearers will be at the foot of the *Mahdī* until he appears.” Bello (Khashf al-Khafi’ – manuscript).

Muḥammad Bello’s description of the *Mahdī* in the above quotation, as “the greater *Mahdī*”, suggests that there were other *Mahdīs*, and that the true expected *Mahdī* will be their last. Interestingly, a similar assertion was made by Abū al-A‘alā al-Maudūdī (1903-1979), whereby he considered all the *Mujaddids* that had appeared thus far in the history of Islam as “Partial *Mujaddids*” i.e. their *Tajdid* focused on one area and that the “ideal *Mujaddid*” is the expected *Mahdī*. (Maudūdī, 1985). The meeting point between Bello and Maudūdī was their description of the expected *Mahdī* as the “Greater *Mahdī*” and “Comprehensive *Mujaddid*”, from which could be inferred that there would actually be some *Mahdīs* and *Mujaddids* before the appearance of the expected *Mahdī*. Thus their statements suggest that the expected *Mahdī* will be the last *Mahdī* and *Mujaddid*.

All these writings and comments regarding the expected *Mahdī* in the Sokoto caliphate had been the driving force behind a massive migration, at an early stage, of the *Jamā‘ah* members towards the Sūdān and the Nile Valley. This exodus had started immediately after the death of *Amīr al-Mu‘uminīn* Muḥammad Bello, and before the appearance of the Sudanese *Mahdī*. It reached such an alarming proportion that it triggered the Emir of Kano Muḥammad Bello (ruled, 1883-1893) to issue a letter to Maryam, the daughter of ‘Usmān Dan Fodio, enquiring about the *Mahdī*, to which she replied that the exodus had started before its time, and that when the time comes, she will herself migrate to the *Mahdī*. (Abdallah, 1995).

Even though Dan Fodio did not claim to be the *Mahdī*, one may wonder why he gave the notion such attention, and even predicted the time of the *Mahdī*’s appearance. This may be due to one or more of the following reasons:

1. His firm belief in the *Mahdī*’s appearance between 1200 and 1400 after Hijrah; that the world will end by 1500 years after Hijrah, and that the disagreement among the scholars was only whether or not the world will exist till 1400AH.

2. Another reason for this attention could also have been the numerous claimants of the *Mahdiyya* at that time, which prompted him to explain the religious dimension of the issue and the characteristics of the presumed *Mahdī* to deter glory seekers from using the banner of Mahdism to achieve their political goals.
3. To counter the frequent moves and attempts by some members of the *Jamā'ah* to confer the title of the *Mahdī* on the Sheikh himself.
4. Some Muslims had been so eager to meet the *Mahdī* that they gave this issue priority over Islam itself.

As for the concept of *Imāmah*, Dan Fodio believed that it is compulsory, being the presumed bedrock of the Muslim society, and that the Muslim community is obliged by divine percept and not by judgment of human reasoning to appoint a just *Imām*. (Dan Fodio, 1978).

It is in this context that Dan Fodio quoted al-Laqqānī who stated:

“This law is addressed to the whole *Ummah* as from the death of the Prophet SAW until the day of resurrection, but when the influential people (*Ahl al-Ḥal wa al-'Aqd*) perform this task, it suffices for all, whether it is in the times of civil strife or otherwise. And when the term *Imāmah* is used unrestrictedly it generally refers to the Caliphate, which is an overall leadership embracing all religious and temporal affairs undertaken on behalf of the Prophet SAW”. (Dan Fodio, 1978).

In the same vein, Dan Fodio (1978), stressed that the obligation of appointing the *Imām* is based on the divine law for a number of reasons, chief among them is the *Ijma'* of the companions, who considered it so important a duty that it distracted them from burying the Prophet SAW. However, their disagreement on the suitable candidate for the office of the Caliph did not detract them from agreeing on the obligation of appointing one, and none of them had maintained the irrelevance of an *Imām*. For they, and the Muslims in general, had over the ages given it precedence over all other obligations that even if the appointed *Imām* happened to be most unsuitable candidate for the post, it did not matter. For the mere act of appointing an *Imām* was viewed as sufficient to discharge the religious obligation.

As for the obligation of obedience to the *Imām*, Dan Fodio (1978), clearly pinpointed that nobody should bypass his simple commands, though, he argued, they should be clear and in line with the rule of law. Similarly, Muslims should strictly observe and obey inwardly and outwardly the commands of their caliphs and vicegerents. For Allah says: “Obey God, obey his messenger and those of you who are in authority”. (Qur’an, 4:59).

On the same topic, Dan Fodio insisted that Muslim ‘*Ulamā*’ unanimously agree that revolting against the *Imām* is not permissible if he is just and equitable, the only exception being the *Mu’utazilites*. They, in Dan Fodio’s opinion, believed that obedience should prevail by word and deed even if a ruler had become a tyrant or unjust.

Dan Fodio concluded this section by enumerating the qualifications of an *Imām* that should be fulfilled. Firstly, an *Imām* should be a Muslim, and based on the consensus of the ‘*Ulamā*’, non-Muslims should never occupy this position. Secondly, an *Imām* should be just and never pass judgments based on caprice, for such an action will only lead to the total destruction of peoples’ rights. Thirdly, he should be a male. Fourthly, he should be a free man and not a slave. Fifthly, the *Imām* must attain the age of puberty. Sixthly, he should be sane and never have experienced madness. Seventhly, the *Imām* should attain the level of *Mujtahid* in the fundamentals of religion and its branches, or at least close to that. Eighthly, the *Imām* should be brave enough to face enemies, defend his people and implement capital punishment. Ninthly, he should possess leadership and political skills to enable him to efficiently govern his people. Tenthly, he should be courageous and charismatic to enforce law and order. Eleventh, (concerning the greater Imam) the *Imām* must be an ‘Arab from *Quraish*. Twelfth, two *Imāmships* must not exist at the same time. (Dan Fodio, 1978).

Thus, Dan Fodio’s views on the *Mahdiyya* and *Imāmah* may be summarized as that the appearance of the *Mahdī* had been established in several *Aḥādīth* reported in the books of *Sunan*, and that disbelieving in him amounted to *Kufr* (unbelief). Moreover, the *Mahdī* will appear towards the end of time, from the sons of Fāṭima and ‘Alī, and his appearance is one of the eschatological signs of doomsday. Similarly, the *Mahdī* will be guided by God, though Dan Fodio did not specify whether he will be fallible or not. Perhaps he did not spell out the issue



of *ʿIṣmah* (infallibility) in so many words because he felt that it is clearly inherent in the literal meaning of the term *Mahdī* itself (i.e. the guided one). Dan Fodio also discussed the notion of Mahdism and supported it with several *Aḥādīth*, but he did not care to examine or analyze their authenticity. And, interestingly, his view on Mahdism is basically similar to that of *Ahl al-Sunnah*, namely the *Mahdī* will appear towards the end of time and would descend from the genealogy of Prophet Muḥammad through his daughter Fāṭima.

From the above discourse, we may conclude that Dan Fodio's view on Mahdism is basically similar to that of *Ahl al-Sunnah*, particularly regarding the appearance of the Mahdī towards the end of time, the appearance being one of the *Ashrāt al-Sā'ah* (Signs of the Hour), and should be from *Ahl al-Bayt* (a descendant of the Prophet) through the Prophet's daughter Fāṭima. However, Dan Fodio differs from mainstream *Sunnism* in his assertion of a specific date for the appearance of the *Mahdī*, i.e. between the years of 1200 and 1204 after *Hijrah*.

As for his views regarding on the *Imāmah*, Dan Fodio emphasized the necessity for the appointment of the *Imām* and the prohibition of revolting against him by consensus of the Companions and '*Ulama*'. Obedience to the *Imam* was seen as compulsory. Likewise, an *Imām* should possess those religious and leadership qualities that make him eligible to occupy the post.

### **Dan Fodio's notion of *Mahdiyyah* and its impact on the Sudanese *Mahdiyyah***

Dan Fodio's version of the *Mahdiyyah* had an ideological impact on the movement of Muḥammad Aḥmad ibn 'Abdallāh *al-Mahdī* in the Sūdān and the Nile Valley. This is because Dan Fodio's movement had propagated and projected the ideology of the expected *Mahdī*, and told his adherents that the time for the appearance of the *Mahdī* was near. This assertion was contained in several books and leaflets authored by Dan Fodio, his brother 'Abdallāh and his son Muḥammad Bello. (Fadl, 1995).

Hence, the notion of the expected *Mahdī* became wide spread in the Sokoto caliphate, and was largely publicized by the followers of Dan Fodio in the Niger-Chad region. A clear sign of its then popularity in the Sokoto caliphate was when some members of the *Jamā'ah* maintained

that Dan Fodio was actually the long awaited *Mahdī*, a claim he vehemently rejected.

Yūsuf Faḍl (1995), argues that several predictions were made in the Sokoto caliphate regarding the appearance of the *Mahdī* from the East. Some maintained that he will appear in Mecca, while others forecasted his appearance around the Nile Valley. Based on this, many people, especially from West Africa, migrated to Sūdān and the Nile Valle in anticipation of the expected *Mahdī*. However, before his appearance, it was predicted that people will suffer from dry season, famine, disorder and wars in Morocco and some parts of the Sūdān.

M. A. Alḥāj (1981), also acknowledged the relationship between the Mahdist state in the Sūdān and West Africa, which started during the time of the *Mahdī* and continues to exist until today. This was due to the popularity of the notion of the *Mahdiyya* among the people of the region long before the appearance of the Sudanese *Mahdī*.

After the fall of al-Obeid in 1883, the *Mahdī* sent letters to some selected personalities in West Africa informing them of his Mahdship and calling their people to bear true allegiance to him. Amongst these addressees was Ḥayātu bin Sa'īdu, the great-grandson of Sheikh 'Usmān Dan Fodio. (M. A. Alhaj, 1981).

A copy of the *Mahdī*'s letter to Hayatu, acquired by Gishu (2012), may be translated as follows:

“From the servant of his God Muḥammad *al-Mahdī* bin 'Abdallāh to Sheikh Ḥayātu bin Sa'īd bin Amīr al-Mu'minīn the late Muḥammad Bello bin 'Usmān bin Fodi. Know O my beloved one that Allah has entrusted al-*Khilāfa al-Kubrā* (Greater leadership) to me, and I was told by the Prophet S.A.W. that I am the expected *Mahdī* and got me seated on his chair in the presence of the *Khulafā'*, saints, and al-Khidir. Allah has supported me with the angels, Prophets and saints from the time of Prophet Adam up to this time. And the believers among the Jinn will be led to the battle front by the Prophet S.A.W. himself, and that he gave me the sword of victory. And you know that I will not be defeated by anyone....”

Apparently excited by the *Mahdī*'s message, Ḥayātu quickly replied announcing his acceptance of Muḥammad Aḥmad's Mahdship, and

even declared allegiance to him. In the reply, Ḥayātu informed the *Mahdī* that his allegiance to him was fulfillment of the last will of his great-grandfather ‘Usmān Dan Fodio, who predicted the appearance of the *Mahdī* within this period. It should be recalled that in his will, Dan Fodio declared to the *Jamā‘ah* that his *Jihād* was an introduction to the appearance of the expected *Mahdī*. Dan Fodio had directed his *Jamā‘ah* to support the *Mahdī* and migrate to his abode whenever he appears. Below is Ḥayātu’s response to the *Mahdī*:

“From Ḥayātu bin Sa‘īd bin Mu‘ammad Bello bin ‘Usmān bin Fodi, may Allah have mercy on his soul. To our leader, our guide to God and the caliph of God.... We have received your letter and we warmly welcome it. Your letter has quenched our thirst, revived our hope, gave us life after death and guided us after misguidance. We want to wholeheartedly declare to you that we accept you and swear true allegiance to you based on *al-Kitāb* and *al-Sunna*...” (Gishu, 2012).

Ḥayātu’s quick response and acceptance of the *Mahdī* might have been due to two reasons. One, by his action, Ḥayātu could have found a solution to the leadership tussle between him and the *Sultān* of Sokoto which had forced him to leave Sokoto and settle in the periphery of the caliphate. Now he may have the opportunity to be the *Mahdī*’s caliph in West Africa, thus the *Sultān* and other emirs of the Sokoto caliphate would have no option but to be under his command. Alternatively, Ḥayātu could have accepted the call of the *Mahdī* out of conviction and in compliance with Dan Fodio’s directives to support the *Mahdī* when he made his appearance.

On receiving Ḥayātu’s favourable reply, the *Mahdī* responded by appointing him as his caliph in *Bilād al-Tukrūr*. The letter stated:

“Due to my love to elevate your condition and unite you, I am appointing Ḥayātu bin Sa‘īd bin Muḥammad Bello bin ‘Usmān bin Fodi as my caliph. So, you should all join him, support him and swear allegiance to him on our behalf and comply with all his commands”

However, whether Ḥayātu’s acceptance of the call of the Sudanese *Mahdiyya* was out of firm conviction or for tactical and political reasons, the *Mahdī* accepted his allegiance and appointed him as his caliph in West Africa. Hence, Ḥayātu sent letters to the emirs of various states

in the Sokoto caliphate commanding them to submission and swearing allegiance to the *Mahdī* in accordance with Dan Fodio's prediction and directives to support the *Mahdī* when he appears. In a letter sent to the emir of Bauchi obtained by the researchers, Ḥayātu bin Sa'īd noted:

“From the servant of Allah Ḥayātu bin Sa'īd to my beloved brother the emir of Bauchi al-Sheikh ibn Ibrāhīm. Greetings, peace and respect. The aim of this letter is to enquire about your condition and health, and if you ask of our condition, we are fine. This is to inform you that the Mahdī, peace be upon him, has sent us his message, which we understood, replied and exchanged letters in which he accepted us and gave us the flag of victory and prayed for our success and guidance. And you people of Bauchi should, therefore, migrate to us, for it is incumbent upon all those who believe in Allah and his messenger to answer the call of Allah, his messenger and his caliph. We, therefore, command you to follow our footsteps to be among the early disciples of the *Mahdī*”. (Gishu, 2012).

However, the Sulṭān of Sokoto, emir of Bauchi and other emirs of the caliphate turned a deaf ear to the call of Ḥayātu. Having his call rejected, Ḥayātu declared war against the caliphate and its emirs. In a decisive battle, he defeated the emir of Adamawa Zubairu, and would have invaded other towns had it not been for the predicament of the sudden rise of another military and political force in the region, namely, Rābiḥ Faḍl Allah (1842-1900). (M. A. Alhaj, 1995).

According to Gishu (2012), besides Ḥayātu bin Sa'īd, a number of well-known scholars from the Sokoto caliphate migrated and joined the Mahdist movement in the Sūdān. Amongst them was a scholar named Modibbo Dādāri, who died in 1895 during the era of Khalīfa 'Abd Allāh, and Jīkan Mūsa Tūta who died in 1882 on his way to the Mahdist camp, though his followers continued their march and reached their destination.

Hassan (2004) explains that at the time of his death, Ḥayātu left behind a nine year old son, called Sa'īdu, who grew up among the *Anṣār* of the *Mahdī* in Nigeria. Later, he assumed their leadership, and eventually wrote a letter in 1918 declaring his allegiance to the *Mahdī*'s son, Sayyid 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mahdī. Consequently, the British administrators in Nigeria arrested him for conniving with the leader of

the Mahdists in the Sūdān to revive the Mahdist movement in Nigeria. In support of their case, they presented some letters purportedly written by Sayyid ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mahdī to Sa’idu bin Ḥayātu, dated September 1919, November 1920 and July 1921. However, Sayyid ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mahdī used his good office and influenced to secure Sa’idu’s release in 1950.

The above discourse demonstrates that a massive exodus has taken place from the Sokoto caliphate to the Sūdān and the Nile Valley, and that some of these migrants had actively participated in the Mahdist movement in the Sūdān. This exodus provided a major link between the Sokoto caliphate and the Sudanese *Mahdiyya*. Had it not been for firm and rigid measures taken by the British administration in Nigeria and the Sūdān to stop the influx, the people of Sokoto and the Sudan may have been considerably mixed genealogically.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it has been clearly illustrated that the notion of the *Mahdiyyah* has been a subject of disagreement among Muslim scholars and intellectuals. This confusion could be traced back to the root of the term “*Mahdī*” or “*Mahdiyyah*”, none of which is explicitly mentioned in the holy Qur’an, but could only be found in some fifty *Aḥādīth* scattered in the books of *Sunan*, whose authenticity had been questioned by some scholars and even doubted by others. Furthermore, the seemingly contradictive nature of the methodologies employed by Muslim scholars had further contributed in mystifying the notion itself. Consequently, it appears to be clear that Dan Fodio’s version of the *Mahdiyyah* is similar to that of *Ahl al-Sunnah* with the exception of the time of the *Mahdī*’s appearance. On the concept of *Imāmah*, Dan Fodio maintained that it is obligatory upon Muslims to appoint one, and that two Imams must not co-exist. This paper also examined the relationship between the Sokoto Caliphate and the Mahdist State in the Sudan with the notion of *Mahdiyyah* playing a central role.

### Reference

- Alḥāj, M. A. (1981). *al-Mahdiyya wa Ifrīqiyya al-Gharbiyya*. Khartoum: University of Khartoum Press.

- Alḥāj, M. A. (1995). The Meaning of the Sokoto jihad. Studies in the history of the Sokoto caliphate. *The Sokoto Seminar Papers*. Zaria: Department of History, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Al-Mahdī, S. (1975). *Yas' alūnaka 'an al-Mahdiyya*. Beirut: Dār al-Qaḍāya.
- al-Qaraḍāwī, Yusuf. (2013). *Islamic moderation and renewal*. (Ḥassan Aḥmaed Ibrāhīm et. al., Trans.). Selangor: PST Enterprise Sdn Bhd.
- Al-Qazwīni, M. K. (2005). *al-Imām al-Mahdī Min al-Mahd Ilā al-Zuhūr*. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Tārikh al-'Arabī.
- Bello, Muhammad. *Al-Qaul al-Mukhtaṣar fī amr al-Imam al-Muntaẓar*. Manuscript obtained by the authors.
- Bello, M. (ed.). (1957). *'Infāq al-Maysūr*. London: C.E.J. Whitting.
- Bello, Muḥammad. *Khashf al-Khaḍiy min akhbār al-Imām al-Mahdī*. Manuscript obtained by the authors.
- Bin Fodio, 'Usmān. *al-Naba' al-Hādī Ilā Aḥwāl al-Imām al-Mahdī*. Manuscript obtained by the authors.
- Biobaku, S. & al-Hajj, M. (1990). The Sudanese Mahdiyya and the Niger-Chad region. In Lewis (Ed.), *Islam in tropical Africa*. London: Routledge.
- Dan Fodio, 'U. (1978). *Bayān wujūb al-Hijra 'alā al-'Ibād*. (F. H. El-Masri, Ed. & Trans.). Khartoum: Khartoum University Press.
- Gishu, A. M. (2012). *al-Ittijāhāt al-Muta'addidah fī qaḍiyyat khurūj al-Mahdī al-muntaẓar*. Kano: Dār al-Hikmah Li al-Kitāb.
- Ḥassan, S. M. (1953). *al-Mahdiyya fī al-Islām mundhu aqdam al-'Uṣūr ḥatta al-Yawm*. Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī.
- Ḥassan, Y. F. (1995). *Athar harakat 'Usmān Dan Fodio 'Alā da'awat al-Mahdiyyah fī Sūdān wa wādi al-Nīl*. Proceedings from International Conference on 'Usmān Dan Fodio. International University of Africa, Khartoum.
- Ibn Kathīr, I. U. (2011). *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*. Kuwait: Jam'iyyat Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-Islāmī.
- Ibn Khaldūn, M. (2010). *al-Muqaddimah*. al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Taufīqiyyah li al-Turāth.
- Ibn Majah, M. Y. (1952). *Sunan Ibn Mājah*. al-Qāhirah: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah.
- Ibrahim, H. A. (2004). *Sayyid 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Mahdī: A Study of Neo-Mahdism in the Sudan 1899-1956*. Boston: Brill.
- Ibrāhīm, H. A. & Zain, M. I. (1996). Taṭawwur fikrat al-Mahdiyyah fī al-Šinā'ah al-Ḥadīthiyyah. *Islamiyyat al-Ma'arifah*, 1(4).
- Jār Allāh M. (2005). *al-Washī'ah fī naqḍ aqā'id al-Shī'ah*. Cairo: Al-Khalīlī.

- Maudūdī, A. A. (1985). *Tajdīd wa ihyā' al-Dīn*. Jeddah: Dār al-Su'ūdiyya.
- Al-Aḥmadī, M. R. (2003). *al-Thābit wa al-Ṣaḥīḥ fīmā warada 'an al-Mahdī wa nuzūl al-Masīḥ*. Beirut: Alam al-Kutub.
- Sachedina, A. A. (1981). *Islamic messianism: The idea of Mahdi in the twelver Shi'ism*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Sa'īd, A. (1995). *Sīrat al-Sheikh 'Usmān Dan Fodio ma'a al-Ishāra li al-'Awāmil allatī sāhamat fī takwīn shakhsiyyatihi*. Proceedings from *International Conference on Usman Dan Fodio*. Khartoum, Sudan.
- Ali, Abdullah Yusuf. (1977). *The glorious Qur'an: Translation and commentary*. US: American Trust Publications.