The Role of the Fulfulde and Hausa Islamic Verse in the Success of the Sokoto-Jihad

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FOREWORD

Many Muslim scholars in Africa feel that there is a pressing need for a journal to bridge the academic gap between Africa and the rest of the Muslim world, and also to serve as a forum through which scholars can exchange ideas and develop research ties.

This task is being taken up by the INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF AFRICA. This is an academic institution set up for the purpose of strengthening Islamic culture in “Africa South of Sahara”. One of the challenges which we have to face is the lack of accurate information about this area and the many misunderstandings about its history and societies. Such areas of study have, in the past, been the monopoly of a few Western scholars who have not always been unbiased vis-a-vis Islam and African Muslims. The time is now ripe for Muslim scholars, who specialize in this area, to come forward and bring some balance to the world of research.

We are accordingly inviting our readers, to join hands with us, so that we may set this project moving. We hope that you will be able to participate by sending papers on any of the subjects mentioned below. It will also help if you would kindly circulate this journal among your colleagues and (or) draw our attention to any scholars whom you feel will be able to help in realizing this project.

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The Role of the Fufulde and Hausa Islamic Verse in the Success of the Sokoto-Jihad(1)

Dr. Al-Amin Abu-Manga *

1. Introduction:
The 19th century jihad movement in present-day Northern Nigeria, which led to the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate (1804-1903) is unique in its kind, because it is more of an 'intellectual revolution' than a political movement. Its leaders, who were all sound scholars in the field of Arabo-Islamic literature started by seeking ways and means of bringing out knowledge acquisition from the narrow circles of elites to generalize it to the public. As noted by A.M. Kani, Shaykh Usman, the Sokoto-Jihad leader, "must have realized right from the beginning that in order to bring about a change .. he should first of all concentrate his efforts on the education of his people with a view to establishing an exemplary society" (2). This is because the change in question had to be made through these people and for their own interest. If so, then they had to be spiritually and emotionally prepared and be ready for that. One way of bringing them to such a state of readiness is to discern to them the ideological dimensions and religious objectives of this change and the proper means of achieving them. But the bulk of the public was illiterate in the intellectual medium of that time, i.e. Arabic, therefore, as a pragmatic way-out the jihad leaders decided to address them in their mother tongues (Fufulde, Hausa and Tamashek). They adopted for this purpose the art of versification (Nazm) and other poetic forms, whose techniques they borrowed from Arabic (or Arabo-Islamic) literature. Religious poems and versifications in local languages occurred to be among the most effective means of enlightenment and mobilization of people for the cause of the Jihad. They, thus, helped in creating a congenial atmosphere for the success of the Sokoto reform movement and the survival of the Caliphate established thereout for a century.

Yet, while documenting for that Caliphate, historians rarely give due attention to that literature. So, the purpose of this paper is to show the importance of these poems and versifica-

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Yet, while documenting for that Caliphate, historians rarely
give due attention to that literature. So, the purpose of this
paper is to show the importance of these poems and versifica-
tions (in Fulfulde and Hausa) (3) for the history of Sokoto-
Jihad and their contribution to the success of that movement.
However, this literature covers quite numerous themes (ad-
monition, criticism of syncretic practices, jurisprudence, Ma-
hadism, etc), which cannot be treated in a single article. There-
fore, our paper will confine itself to the theme of Jihad in its
narrow sense, i.e. waging war against the infidels and the re-
lating issues. But before embarking on the actual analysis of
the Jihad poems some notes will be made on the development
of versification art in Hausaland, coupled with a brief study of
the external structure of the Sokoto-Jihad poem. It is note-
worthy that the terms poem and versification may be used
here interchangeably.

2- Development of Versification Art in Hausaland

Versification in local languages (Fulfulde and Hausa) which
blossomed in Hausaland during the Sokot-Jihad did not de-
velop from nothing; it is rather a peak of a gradual develop-
ment of a tradition which started two centuries before.

The foundation of the tradition of scholarship in Hausaland
was laid by the famous North African scholar Muhammed Ibn
Abdel Karim al-Maghili al-Talmasani, who stayed in Katsina
and Kano during the last decade(s) of the 15th century (4). By
the beginning of the 16th century small circles of local Muslim
scholars in Kano and Katsina started to appear and become
points of attraction for the later migrants from other Islamic
regions, especially North Africa and Egypt (5). These, in fact,
were the roots of literacy in Arabic language in Hausaland,
which continued to grow and eventually culminating in the in-
tellectual revolution, which accompanied the establishment of
the Sokoto Caliphate.

In his Infaq al-Maysur ..., Muhammed Bello Ibn Usman Ibn
Fodio documented for a number of scholars in Hausaland,
Borno and Bagirmi. The earliest among these are the three
17th/18th century Hausaland scholars, viz: Ibn al-Sabbagh
(Dan Marina, d.1655) and Dan Masani of Katsina and Ab-
dullahi Sikka of Kano. The three of them were known to have
written only in Arabic, and mainly in the form known as
"Nazm" (versification) (6). Abdullahi Sikka wrote a versifica-
tion titled al-Attiya lil-Mu’ti’ (The Gift for the Giver) on Ibadat
(Act of worship) which "represents the earliest example of locally composed Nazm, may be a proto type that helped this tradition about") (7).

Among the 18th century Borno scholars prominent in the field of versification were Muhammed Ibn Abdul Rahman al-Barnawi (d.1755) and al-Tahir Ibn Ibrahim al-Fallati (8). One of the valuable works of al-Barnawi is al-kaukab al-Durrī fi Nazm ma Ja’a ft al-Akhḍari (The Shining Star in Versification of the Content of al-Akhḍari) (9). Al-Fallati, on the other hand, owes his fame to his work Nazm al-Aquida al-Kubra (Versification of the Major Ideology) on the science of Unity (Tawhid).

At almost the same time Bagirmi witnessed the flourishing of a scholar equally versed in the art of versification: that was Muhammed al-Wali. Al-Wall composed a Nazm (based on existing material) to refute the arguments of certain medieval philosophers that creation is co-eternal with God (10).

This poetic art, thus, continued forward increasing momentum with the progression of the 18th century. Towards the last decade of that century a significant and sound versified work appeared, which created a wide stir on the religious-political arena of that time. That was Jibril Ibn Umar’s (11) Shifa’ al-Ghafl (The Quenching of Thirst) which was believed to be the strongest open protest against the unscrupulous practices of Islam, moral evil and political corruption of a pluralistic society (12). As a master of both Shaykh Usman Ibn Fodio and his brother Abdullahi, Jibril links directly with the Sokoto-Jihad movement and one of the scholars who inspired that movement, as can be understood from the following statement by Shaykh Usman himself:

"I wonder whether we would have been guided to the right path, had it not been for this shaykh. For the destruction of customs contrary to Islam in our Sudanese country was initiated by him and was completed by us" (13).

However, with the rise of the Sokoto-Jihad the art of versification, so far recorded to have been exclusively in Arabic, came to witness a turning point in its history of development. New circumstances trigged off the necessity of bringing out knowledge - as we have mentioned above - from the narrow circles of privileged elites to the hands of the public; hence, versification and composition in local languages - mainly, Fulfulde and, later on, Hausa.

The purpose of poems in Fulfulde and Hausa was initially two-fold:

1- To divert the populace from the worldly useless (praise)
songs which were sometime akin to shirk (polytheism):

2- To enlighten and educate the people the fundamentals of Islam through an effective means and guarantee their wide circulation, their preservation and communication to subsequent generations.

The last point is true especially with regard to the cattle Fulani, who, being constantly wandering in the bush, might not have the opportunity to attend admonition and preaching gatherings.

Shaykh Usman Ibn Fadio, the initiator of composition in local languages, was known to have been conversant in the widely spoken languages of his area, i.e Fulfulde, Hausa and Tamashak (14) - in addition to Arabic, of course. All the three languages were used by him in his preaching gatherings, according to necessity. Yet, when it came to poetic composition, he was found to have composed mostly in Fulfulde(15), whereas composition in Hausa was left to his brother Abdullahi. His son, Mohammed Bello, too composed and versified in Fulfulde, whereas his daughter, Asma, and his last born, Isa, concentrated their efforts on translating and versifying his Arabic and Fulfulde works (poetry and prose, respectively) into Hausa. Bello Sa’id (16) provides three personal reasons for Shaykh Usman’s composition in Fulfulde more than Hausa:

1- Because Fulfulde is his mother tongue, which he knows better than any other language.

2- To conform with the Quranic injunction (directed to the Prophet Muhammed (P. B. U. H) “Warn your close relatives” (17) and his close relatives”, i.e. the cattle Fulani, did not understand Hausa.

3- As a means of preservation of Fulfulde, which by that time had already shown signs of recession before Hausa.

To conclude, we have seen that poetic composition in local languages, which was one of the salient features of the Sokoto-Jihad did not start from zero. It rather developed as an off-shoot of the West African Arabo-Islamic literature, for which Nazm had been the best form of expression.

3- The External Structure of the Sokoto-Jihad Poem

The Sokoto-Jihad poem, whether versification or composition proper, adheres to a uniform external structure, which seems to have been typical of this genre of Islamic literature since its inception. The poem starts by words of thanksgiving and gratitude to the Almighty Creator and recognition of one or
more of the bounties He bestowed upon His creatures. In some instances, specific bounties are particularly mentioned, which make hints to the subject matter of the poem. For example the opening verse of "Yimre Jihadi" (The Poem of Jihad) expresses thanks to Almighty Allah for destroying Yunfa, the King of Gobir, against whom jihad wars were fought:

**Mi gettoyi ma Allah geudo Yunfa**
**Konuujit dam nga moobunoo fu tilfa**

Thank to Thee Allah, Who destroyed Yunfa
May all the battles he had prepared (against us)
become unsuccessful.

Next comes the Prophet Muhammed (P.B.U.H), usually described as the beloved of Allah, the selected among the selected apostles, the seal of messengers, etc. This formal introduction is concluded by prayers to Almighty Allah to extend his blessings to the family of the Prophet, his companions and to all those who supported the cause of the religion (i.e. Islam). The body of the poem concerns itself with the main topic(s) under treatment. The poem is then closed by the customary formal conclusion, wherein the Creator is prayed for acceptance and salvation - with the Prophet (P.B. U.H.) as intercessor. The poet sometimes prays for his parents, his brothers and sisters, his in-laws, his distant relatives and then for the Muslims in general. In most cases symbol-words or phrases are given in reference to the date of comosition (18).

Although the introductory and concluding forms of the Sokoto-Jihad poems display a high degree of uniformity, their style differ so much depending on their general themes (admonition, education, eulogy, Sufism, etc.) context (victory, hardship, protest, discontent, etc.) and on individual composers. Educational poems, for example, are composed in a particularly serious style, handling specific topics in Fiqh (jurisprudence) or Tawhid ( oneness of God ). Such poems are usually versification of already existing works in Arabic (19). A poem of this kind can be compared to a scientific research paper - to use the modern academic language: every piece of information is well documented, with the Quran, Hadith and famous Muslim authorities quoted as sources and references. An example of these is again Shaykh Usman's poem 'Yimre Jihadi' in which he quoted 2 verses from the Quran, 3 Hadiths
and 21 of the best known authorities in the field of Fiqh till that time. Muhammed Bello's poem 'Boneoji Julbe Hausa' (Troubles of the Muslims of Hausaland), moreover, is divided into chapters corresponding to distinct themes; it starts by a brief review of his father's opinions on the issues under treatment (literature review). Briefly speaking, educational poems or versifications of that time are, in fact, scholarly research works scrupulously modified to enlighten the layman.

4. Thematic Analysis of the Sokoto-Jihad Poems

As mentioned in the introduction, the term 'Jihad' stands here for the holy war against infidels. The poems in question deal with jihad as a religious institution: they handle issues regulating this institution and included in it. For the purpose of convenience we classify these poems into three groups: the first group is of those concerned with the theoretical basis of jihad; the second one is of those which are composed for mobilization and encouragement of warriors, whereas the third group handles the problem of irregular possession of jihad booties and spoils.

4.1 The Theoretical Basis of Jihad

Towards the end of the 18th century the hostility between Shaykh Usman and his jama'a (followers), on the one hand, and the ruling circles of the Kingdom of Gobir, on the other hand, started to become acute, which made the former realize that his tongue-jihad would sooner or later develop into armed-jihad. In anticipation of such a development, he started to give special attention to the question of jihad war. This resulted in the production of his two most important Arabic works on this issue: Bayan Wujuub al-Hijra ala al-Jihad (On the Injunction of Emigration on Worshippers) and Masa'il Mushimma (Important Matters). As soon as the (armed) jihad was declared in 1804, Shaykh Usman, relying on the material of the above works, compos'd a lengthy poem (versification) in Fulfulde titled 'Yimre Jihadi' (The Poem of Jihad) with the purpose of providing the ordinary (non-scholared) folk with full information on this subject. Though consisting of 87 doublets, this versification is still a one-theme poem handling exclusively the question of armed-jihad: the theoretical basis of its injunction upon Muslims, the categories of people against whom it is to be waged, treatment of captives, distribution of booties and spoils, the proper appearance and behaviour of warriors.
while fighting, etc. As mentioned above, arguments on every
sub-issue in this poem is supported by quotations either
from the Quran, Hadith, renowned Muslim jurists or from the
three of them.

After the customary introduction the composer starts by as-
certaining the illegality of staying of Muslims in the land of in-
fidels (dar al-kafr) and the obligation of hijra (religious emigra-
tion) from it:

7- Ferki to heeferbe gonti yo waajibi
   Feundo dum fiewi yo kaasibi

8- Deftere sunna haakaza ijma' u
    Hakilkatan waddi toye nizaa'u

7- Emigration from (the land of) the infidels is
   obligatory;
   He who says the opposite is no doubt a liar.

8- The book of sunna as well as ijmaa (consensus);
   Indeed have esablished this; where is the dispute?

He similary ascertains that jihad fighting is incumbent upon
all Muslims, as legislated by the Quran, supported by the sun-
na and clarified by the Muslim jurists:

15 - Jihadi boo yo waajibi misaal u
    Dum’ kutiba alykum-ul-kitaalu '

19- ‘Ndaardo Kawaantina, Risaala, Mukhtasar
    Mas' ala kaa tauma dum he laabi tar .

15. Jihad is obligatory as in the example:
   “Warfare is ordained for you” (20)

19- He who consults al-Qawanin, al-Risala and al-
    Mukhtasar (21):
   Will find this matter to be quite clear.

With regard to the categories of people against whom jihad
wars are to be fought, Shaykh Usman lists in this poem: the
dissolute (faajir), the unjust (zalim), the infidel (kafr) and the
thieves and robbers. However, the most controversial issue in
this matter at that time relates to that category of people who
appear to be Muslim (by uttering the shithdatain (that is de-
claring that there is no God except Allah and Muhammed is the Messenger of Allah, praying, fasting, etc. and yet entertain syncretic practices: in other words, those who mix Islamic practices with pagan ones (e.g. veneration of certain trees or hills, practising of witchcraft, etc.) On this category of people Shaykh Usman says:

**35-Be kufuri saahiriji simtiraibe**
*Yo go, he ben naa yo simtiraibe*  
**36-Jihadi mabbe laatoyii yo awla**  
*Magili non fitti ka jom be daua*

35 - Those who utter the *shihadatain* and (yet) become engaged openly in infidels' deeds;  
Are equal with those who do not utter the *shihadatain*

36 - Waging jihad against them (i.e. the former) is even preferable;  
This is (according to) the juristic (*fatwa*) al-Magili made for the state people.

So, on the basis of the *fatwa* (juristic opinion) (22) made by Muhammed Ibn Abdel Karim al-Maghili al-Talmasani for Askia Muhammed, the Emperor of Songhal (referred to in the open as state people) at the beginning of the 16th century (23), Shaykh Usman re-ascertains that this category of people is to be treated as proper infidels (24).

In this poem the composer does not neglect even the minor details connected with the subject of jihad, such as carrying of banners, beating of drums, facial expression of warriors while fighting, their outer appearance (i.e. clothing) etc. He explained what is allowed of these and what is not:

**72- Suura mo yimbe mbadooee mo haiba**  
*He kolte laamu fu ngalaas sunuuba*

72- Peoples' appearance should be made respectable;  
and there is nothing sinful in wearing valuable clothes(by leaders).

It is worthy to note that, among the many Sokoto-Jihad
scholars, it was only Shaykh Usman who handled thoroughly the theoretical basis of jihad. Others - as will be seen below - also composed on jihad but they were rather concerned with other aspects.

4.2 Mobilization and Encouragement of Warriors

In practice, it was Muhammed Bello, son of Shaykh Usman, who carried out the task of mobilizing people to join the jihad, as well as of their training, even though his jihad poems do not reflect this fact (25). However, Shaykh Usman’s early mobilization measures were narrated by his daughter Asma’ in her Hausa poem, “Al-Amurran Shehu” (Shaykh’s matters), where she says:

- Ya ce masa su yi bakkuna da kwararuwa
Hakana takubba kun jiya foro nasa

- Hakana dawaki kai a damra annia
Na shirin jihadi yaf fada da fadi nasa

- Dada yai takarda ko’ina ga garuruwa
A sanad da kowa masu jin magana tasa

- He told the men to allow their beards and prepare arrows;
As well as swords. You have (now) heard his directives.

- Also horses (should be prepared) and people are to strengthen their intention;
Of preparing themselves for the jihad - so said he in his own words.

- And then he dispatched messages to all towns and villages:
That all those who listen to him should be notified.

In fact, there are no whole poems composed especially for mobilization of people similar to that of 'Yimre Jihadi ' on the theoretical basis of jihad. Doublets encouraging Muslims to join the jihad or spend for it are found here and there in relevant poems. Such are the doublets No. 88 and 89 in the above poems (i.e. Yimre Jihadi) where Shaykh Usman says:

88- Titnoree jihaddi kaafirina
Al-Amin Abu-Manga

Walau be njillorii he Muslimina

89- Tiinoree bo yobango konuujii
Fodde no mbaawudon dalee sulmuujii

88- Be zealous for jihad fighting against the infidels;
Even if they are living among the Muslims

89 - And be zealous for spending for (Jihad) wars;
To your ability - abstain from injustice.

Tightly connected with mobilization poems are those composed in commemoration of gained battles. This is because such poems are also composed with the intention to encourage others to join the jihad by describing the delight of victory, worldly gains derived out of them (battles) and the heavenly merits and reward for participating in them. This is one of the dominant themes in Abdullahi Ibn Fodio's poems, both in Arabic and Hausa. His Taziyin al-warraqat (Decoration of papers) includes a number of such poems in Arabic wherein battles are meticulously described: the big gathering of the pompous enemy, the sudden attack by the mujahidin, the fright and flight of the enemy, the booties left behind, etc. Towards the end of the poem the composer usually reminds of the Hell fire which awaits the perished among the infidels and the Paradise which will be the eternal abode for the martyr among the jihadists. In one of these poems (in Arabic) commemorating the victory at the battle of Tabkin Kwatto (June 1804) between the mujahidin (led by the composer himself) and the Gobir army (led by their king Yunfa), Skaykh Abdullahi makes a detailed description of the camping enemy before the attack, reproduced by M. Hiskett as follows:

"They then waited the night out toasting spitted meats around their camp fires, regaling themselves noisily on fine wheaten cakes, ghee, and honey, and cocksure of an easy win in the coming battle" (26).

The poem continues describing the sudden attack by the jihadists and the total collapse of the enemy's army:
- Their gathering dispersed, thirsty; Bewildered like a mob of locusts

- We killed them and obtained all their wealth (belongings); Which they left scattered in every valley.

- We killed Kabuge and Na-Madagi; As well as Waru al-Qiyama; they all perished.(27)

In another similar poem shaykh Abdullahi concludes:

Those whose dead are eternally in Hell fire;
And those who are in Paradise are not equal.

Shaykh Abdullahi Ibn Fodio composed many other poems in Hausa on similar occasions and for the same purpose (i.e. mobilization of people). Besides description of the delight of victory, the composer used to take recourse to satire, sarcasm and mockery while projecting the picture of the the bewildered defeated enemy. An instance of that is his poem on the fall of Alkalawa, the Headquarters of Gobir Kingdom. In this poem Shaykh Abdullahi shows how the self-confident and well-established Gobir people, together with their allies, the Tuareg (Asbinawa) got defeated by the simple wandering (cattle) Fulani, whom they used to regard as primitive and naive:

*Mun kashe alkafirawa*
*Ce su wa na , Gobirawa*
*Suna sahen Asbinawa*
*Sunka taso don dagawa*
*Sun taho su duk da sarki*

*Sun gudano maso taggo*
*Yan haware masu faggo*
*Masu yin daki da kalgo*
*Sunka kore Yunfa raggo*
*Zasu sui gadon saraki*

We killed the infidels
Who are these? The Gobir people
Together with a faction of Asbin (Tuareg) people
They came for gaining a status
They came along with the king

They confronted the people with short dresses (cattle Fulani)
The riding people, those who carry bundles
Who construct (their) rooms with wood out of kalgo tree (28)
They (the bundle carriers) chased away Yunla the coward
They will inherit his Kingdom

In his Hausa –as well as Arabic- mobilization poems Shaykh Abdullahi usually keeps reminding the enemy of their severe defeat at previous battles, many of which are mentioned by name, as he did in his poem commemorating the victory at the Kalambaina battle (29):

Da yakin Arewa da yakin Zabarma
Da Dandi da Burgu ina Kambazawa.

And the battle of Arewa and the battle of Zabarma
And those of Dandi and Burgu; remember the Kambaza people!

Similarly, before concluding he promises the enemy continuous humiliation all during their life-time and in their graves:

_Da yarda ta Allah da girman fiyaye
Ku koshi da zilla ta nan har kushewa_

With the consent of Allah and for the sake of the Superior (the Prophet)
You will be replete with humiliation here and in your graves.

4.3 Irregular Possession of Booties and Spoils

One of the basic aspects of the jihad institution is that its booties and spoils are distributed according to clear and strict rules, whereby one fifth of whatever is captured by warriors (known as _khumus_) should go to the Muslim treasury (batul-al-mal). Transgression of this rule by individuals' hiding of all or part of the booties is known in Fulfulde as _nguluulu_ and in Hausa as _gulul_ (from Arabic _ghulul_). _Gulul_ seems to have been practised regularly by some warriors, which made it appear as one of the major worries for the Sokoto-Jihad leaders, especially in the later stages of the jihad, after the death of Shaykh Usman.

While writing on the theoretical basis of jihad, Shaykh Usman did not give much attention to _gulul_, probably not ex-
recting to have among the jihadists people with such a had habit. All what appeared in his poem 'Yimre Jihadi' in this connection was a call on the Muslims to give out the *khums* (one fifth of the booties):

75- *Hayya fa julbe ndocketee khumsuujji*
    *Hayya fa julbe ndocketee fay'uuji*

Oh Muslims! Give out the one fifth.
Oh Muslims! Give out the ordained part of the *fay*, (30).

But as soon as the jihad fighting started the *ghulul* phenomenon emerged, together with some other blame-worthy practices. These practices became a source of disappointment for both Shaykh Usman and his brother Abdullahi, to the extent that the latter decided to give up the entire reform business and desert his country for the Holy Land (31). It was at that time that Shaykh Usman composed his famous Fulfulde poem 'Tabbat Hakiikan' (Sure Indeed), written in a frightening style, with images of after-death affliction and torture. Regarding *ghulul* he says in this poem:

*Non ben nyamoyaibe faudi nguluulu*
*Bena bo fa ngulla jahngo tabbat hakiikan*

And so for those who enjoy themselves on ghulul wealth;
These (people) will cry in the Here-After, sure indeed.

Shaykh Abdullahi also shows some concern to this phenomenon in his late writings. In one Hausa poem on the Islamic system of leadership we find that 'escaping ghulul' is also mentioned as a pre-requisite for being a citizen of a true Muslim state:

*Gululi duk shi bar shi shi tswaraci Allah*
*Ku saurara sarautal kafirina*

He is to abstain from ghulul and fear Allah
And now listen to the infidels, way of ruling

However, this phenomenon of *ghulul* seems to have continued and become more serious during Muhammed Bello's rule (1817-37). For the lengthiest of his poems (101 doublets - In Fulfulde), i.e. 'Boneeji Julbe Hausa' (Troubles of the Hausa-land Muslims) treats mainly this issue.

Boneeji ... is characterized by a harsh, uncompromising and
severe style. This severity of style on the part of the composer at that particular time can be attributed to many factors. Bello was a military leader who participated in almost all the jihad campaigns. His strong adherence to discipline constituted, later on, one of the major factors of his success as an administrator. Moreover, the religio-political atmosphere at the beginning of his rule was tense and provocative. After his father's death some of the prominent personalities refused to pay him homages, while others rebelled against him (32). Thus, exposing the young state to the danger of disunity. Some others exploited their power for their personal interests. Although such people were not very many, Bello could not tolerate their actions. This is why his style in addressing all these wrongdoers - especially the ghulul people - in this poem came out sharp and decisive. In it there are more than twenty words pertaining to wrong-doing and punishment, ranging from haram (prohibited) to boole ylle (cudgels of fire). There is even an instance in the poem when a scene of this 'fire' was described in detail, with the word 'fire' repeated four times. This part of the poem is frightening indeed. It is only towards the end when the composer starts calling for repentance that his style cools down.

Structurally, 'Boneej' like 'Yimre Jihadi' is written in a research-paper form, divided into chapters and with a number of Muslim jurists cited as references (33). The chapters concerned with the phenomenon of ghulul begin by establishing the legal basis of its being unlawful (haram):

49) Nguluulu dum haram dalee nizaa'\u
He deftere he sunna non ijmaa'\u.

Ghulul is unlawful, cease disputing (about that),
(This is ) in the Quran and sunna and by the consensus.

The composer then continues advancing the different views of the Muslim orthodox jurists on the ways jihad booties and spoils are distributed and the proper ways of their possession. However, these chapters concentrate particularly on the position of ghulul doers during their life-time and after their death.

A ghulul doer in this poem is compared to an outcast who should never be allowed to enjoy ordinary interaction with his fellow muslims:

66 - Jaule mu'um zakka walla he ma'je
Zama maral timmayi don he ma'je

67- Baraji boo walaa he dokkitirki
Si dokkitirki kin yo dum bustirki

71- O setdataako bo he yaire kiita
Zama o fasikijo non o hiita

66- His riches are not liable to zaka alms:
   For possession of them is not (legally) complete.

67- There are no merits in giving voluntary alms out of them
   Doing this may just reduce (sins).

71- He cannot bear witness in courts
   For he is regarded as vicious.

The after-death fate of ghulul doers is even worse; in fact
most of the frightening images of torture and affliction de-
scribed above relate to that :

86- Tikkire Allah don wi'aa o roondoyiti
Non fassiroobe filli, ayyu sakhdu filloyi

88- Nguluulu bo he habboyee he haire
Nde yoftoyee he nder bo yiite maire

89- Saba'tina nden o umroyee o takka nde
O tokkiree bo boole faa a wadda nde

86- He (the ghulul doer) is carrying the wrath of Allah;
   See what kind of wrath commentators have clarified.

88- Ghulul will be tied to a stone;
   And then will be thrown into the Hell fire.

89- (After) seventy years he will be ordered to follow it;
   Then he will be beaten with cudgels (of fire) until he brings it out.

All these horrible images are still insufficient for the com-
poser to describe the fate of ghulul doers. He concludes that
troubles in ghulul are too many to enumerate:

91- Boneejit fii nguluulu limtataake
Boneefi gondi don kurum ketataake

91- Troubles in ghulul are too many to mention; The troubles therein cannot be delimited.

Treating of the matter of ghulul with such seriousness indicates how the Sokoto-Jihad leaders were keen about order and discipline, especially regarding warfare.

Conclusion

We have tried in this paper to focus on the important role played by the Fulfulde and Hausa religious poems and versifications in the success of the Sokoto reform movement. By doing so we also intended to draw the attention of both historians and readers to the valuable material contained in these literary works.

We have seen that poetic compisition in local languages, which characterizes the intellectual history of the Sokoto Caliphate, links directly with the deep-rooted tradition of Nazm in Arabic attested among the 17th and 18th century West African scholars.

With regard to jihad as a religious institution, we have tried to show how serious the Sokoto-Jihad leaders were in enlightening the populace on its rules and regulations and how strict they were against any irregularities therein. It remains to remind the readers that hundreds of other poems and versifications were left by the Sokoto-Jihad leaders, which handle other matters in the same manner and with equal thoroughness.
Footnotes

1. Unless otherwise is specified, all examples of Fulfulde poems and versifications are taken from Abu-Manga & Mukoshy (see bibliography) or from the author's personal collection. The author would like to thank Dr. Mohammed Al-Busairi, Dept. of linguistics, Univ. of Khartoum for going through the first draft and making useful remarks.


3. Few examples in Arabic are also provided.


10. See M. Hiskett (1975), op.cit., p. 15.

11. Jibril Ibn Umar of Agadez (Ahir) was the most renowned scholar of his time, and master of Shaykh Usman Ibn Fodio and his brother Abdullah.


15. Only seven Hausa poems (out of ca. 480) are attributed to him, and only three out of the seven have been so far recovered. cf. B. Said, "Muhammadin adabin Hausa na farko wajen tarihun jihadin Sokoto", a paper presented to the Sokoto Seminar (undated, unpubl.).

16. See ibid.


18. Each consonant in these words or phrases stands for a number. The data is worked out by conversion and addition.

19. cf. Shaykh Usman’s versification of whole chapters from his books ‘Nur al-Albab’ and ‘Siraj al-Ikhwan’ in his two poems ‘Moddinmoo’ (The Educating Poem) and ‘Boneji Lesdi Hausa’ (Troubles of Hausaland ). cf. also the versification of his book ‘Bayan Wujub al-Hijra ala al-Ibad’ by his son Isa; examples of this are in B. Said, op.cit.


22. On this legal opinion see Shaykh Usman Ibn Fodio, ‘Nur al-Albab’ (unpubl.) and his Fulfulde poem ‘Moodinmoo’.

23. See H.R. Palmer, op.cit., pp. 94-4
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24. The difference between them and the proper infidels is in the way their wives and children are treated. See Shaykh Usman 'Nur al-Albab', op.cit.


27. These were their outstanding commanders.


29. It took place in 1818 after the death of Shaykh Usman, when a number of Hausa clans jointly rebelled against Shaykh Abdullahi.

30. Fay = wealth captured without fighting.

31. He got stopped in Kano and after some time he was persuaded to return. See his book Tazyin al-Waraqat, op.cit.

32. For example his own uncle Abdullahi and his father's close friend Abdul-Salam, respectively.


Bibliography


--- Said, B. (1980): Jigon rubutattin wakokin Hausa na jihad (The themes of the written poems by the jihad leaders), a paper presented to the Sokoto Seminar (unpub.).

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