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DIFFERENCES OF ORAL TAFSIR IN NORTHERN NIGERIA: THE CASE OF QADIRIYYAH, TIJANIYYAH AND IZALAH

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Abstract

The Qur'an is meant to be the source for all Islamic teachings and ideologies and it is not meant to be approached with ready made ideas and thoughts to be justified. However, philosophical, political and other sectarian differences influence some Muslim scholars to interpret the Qur'an on the basis of their different inclinations. This paper discusses the ideological and methodological differences between the Qadiriyyah, the Tijaniyyah and the Izala of Northern Nigeria in the conduct of oral *tafsir*. The paper further discusses the Qadiriyyah and the Tijaniyyah coalition against the Izalah. The paper concludes that some Islamic scholars employ the transmission of oral Tafsir through popular media to spread their ideologies to a much wider audience than their usual circles. Illustrated with examples from everyday life situations, the scholars use their *tafsir* to influence their audience religiously and politically and attack on "opponents" create deep division within the Muslim community of Northern Nigeria. Efforts towards agreement between the varying factions have failed, a real conciliation seems unlikely and interaction is impaired because each faction regards the other as unorthodox Muslims.

Introduction

The Meaning of *Tafsir*

Literally, *tafsir* means elucidation (*al-īdāh*) and explanation (*al-tabyīn*) (Al-Dhahabi, 13) as Allah says, 'And no example do they bring to (oppose) you, but we reveal to you the truth and the better explanation (thereof). (Qur'an *Surat Al-Furqan*: 33).

Technically, *tafsir* is the science of understanding or exegesis of the Qur'ān. In other words, *tafsir* means the science by the help of which Qur'ānic injunctions and causes of revelation can be understood. According to Badr al-Dīn Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah al-Zarkashī, *tafsir* is a branch of knowledge through which the book of Allah which was sent to Prophet Muhammad could be well comprehended through the deduction of its religious injunctions and legislations (Al-Zarkashī, 1957:13). According to some scholars, *tafsir* is defined as a science which studies the Qur'ān on the basis of its instructions as ordained by Allah according to the capability of the human being. (Al-Zarkashī, 1957:13). According to al-Qādī, *tafsir* is the science by which the Qur'ān is understood, its meanings explained and its rulings derived. (Al-Qādī, 2002, "Defining *Tafsir* and *Ta'wīl*").

The Qādiriyyah –Tijāniyyah Differences in Modes of *Tafsīr*

The Qādiriyyah was founded by Shaykh ‘Abdul Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 561 A.H) in ‘Irāq. This tarīqah appeared to have found its way into West Africa from the time of Shaykh Ahmad al-Bakkā’i (d. 1515). As far as Hausaland is concerned, the Qādiriyyah was said to have been introduced with the arrival of Shaykh ‘Abdulkarīm al-Maghīlī (d. 1505) of Tilmisān in the fifteenth century. But the wide spread of this tarīqah did not happen until after the emergence of the Sokoto jihād movement, and the subsequent establishment of the Sokoto caliphate in the nineteenth century. The Qādiriyyah, therefore, became the dominant tarīqah of the jihād leaders and their numerous adherents. (Ahmad, 165).

On the other hand, the Tijāniyyah was founded at the end of the eighteenth century by Shaykh Ahmad Tijānī (d. 1815) at ‘Aīn Mādī, a village in the South of Algeria. The doctrines and beliefs of its followers are contained in its major book of reference the *Jawāhir al-Ma‘ānī* which was written by Shaykh ‘Alī Harāzīmī, one of the leading disciples of Shaykh Ahmad Tijānī. (Loimeier, 20). The actual time of the penetration of the Tijāniyyah into what is now known as Nigeria is not certain. It has been claimed that the Tijāniyyah reached Nigeria as early as during the life time of its founder Shaykh Ahmad Tijānī. This claim seems to be supported by some oral traditions. In Kano for example, it is believed that some Madabo ‘*ulamā*’ were Tijāniyyah followers before the arrival of Shaykh ‘Umar al-Fūtī (1794-1864). (Loimeier, 1997:20). It is said that one Malam ‘Abdurrahmān al-Suyūtī of Madabo quarters was initiated by one Malam Shāriḥ, who came to Kano from Futa. However, in 1830 ‘Umar al-Fūtī performed the pilgrimage. On his return he visited Borno and passed through a number of places like Bauchi, Kano, Zaria, Katsina and then proceeded to Sokoto. It has been said that he initiated some people into the movement in all these places. (Quadri, 1981:23).

It is very important to note that from the death of Sultān Muhammad Bello in 1837 to the appearance of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Nyās (1900-1974) in 1937 a number of developments took place within the circles of the two dominant Sūfī orders in Hausaland. By the time Sultān Muhammad Bello died, the Qādiriyyah was at its peak. It was the only tarīqah that had the total control and monopoly of almost all the imāms, judges and scholars in Hausaland. By the time the Tijāniyyah was introduced it was accepted and became very popular in Hausaland as well as in Kanem Borno. In Kano, for instance, a great number of its ‘*ulamā*’ and their disciples came to be identified with it. (Ali 9). However, the consolidation of the Tijāniyyah became very apparent in Kano with the conversion of the ruling dynasty during the reign of Emir Muhammad ‘Abbās (r.1903-1919). Since then, its strength and influence have always been increasing considerably, not only in Kano, but in Nigeria as a whole. (Anwar 22).

The strained relationship between the followers of the Qādiriyyah and the Tijāniyyah started from Sokoto, from where it spread to other places in different forms. The Sultān of Sokoto felt that it was his responsibility to protect the interest of the Qādiriyyah by preventing the Tijāniyyah from gaining ground. While this was the case in Sokoto, it was not like that in other places. In some other places the traditional rulers have joined the Tijāniyyah. Prominent among them were the emirs of Kano (Muhammad 'Abbās), Zaria (Aliyu Dan Sidi) and Katsina (Muhammad Dikko). (Quadri 374).

The mass conversion of people from the Qādiriyyah to the Tijāniyyah in the defunct Sokoto caliphate has created some problems for the followers of the two orders. Even prior to the death of Muhammad Bello, the rivalry between the members of the Qādiriyyah and the Tijāniyyah had taken a definite character. This was in spite of the respect and cordial relationship existing between Muhammad Bello and 'Umar al-Fūtī which even led the former to give the latter his daughter in marriage. In fact, the rate of conversion from the Qādiriyyah to the Tijāniyyah was very alarming to the extent that it even made some people to speculate that Muhammad Bello himself had converted to the Tijāniyyah before his death. (Ali 9).

The Qādiriyyah and the Tijāniyyah have always been rivals with each trying to dominate and supersede the other. The Tijāniyyah followers regard themselves as comprising a superior class of Muslims since Shaykh Ahmad Tijānī, the founder of the order, was regarded by them as the chief and superior of all saints – the founder of the Qādiriyyah Shaykh 'Abdulqādir al-Jilānī being no exception. The followers of the Qādiriyyah naturally would not concede to this contention. They claimed that Shaykh 'Abdulqādir was the chief of all saints and that Shaykh Ahmad Tijānī had revolted against the Qādiriyyah. As a result, some misunderstanding with regards to their Sūfī practices developed among the followers of both orders. (Ali 24). Moreover, when the Qādiriyyah reached West Africa it appeared to be the tarīqah of the ruling class, whose power and privilege the Hausa peasants resented. When later the Tijāniyyah made its appearance it was welcomed by the masses and Hausa peasants. (Ali 25).

The period from 1930's to early 1970's was marked as an important period in the intellectual history of Northern Nigeria. It was the period during which the leaders of the Qādiriyyah and the Tijāniyyah seemed to have lost their track as a result of the rising challenges. In view of this, the leaders appeared to have concentrated all their attention and activities on issues not central to the main objectives of their Sūfī orders. (Ahmad 293-295). Considerable attention was devoted to the conduct of the rituals relating to salāt and other social behaviour of the Muslim community. With regards to salāt, for instance, there emerged some major differences on issues like praying with arms folded (*qabd*) and praying with arms outstretched (*sadl*). This crisis led to the break up of the Tijāniyyah into two

groups in the 1930's under the Madabo and the Salga 'ulamā' in Kano. (Anwar 26). The Madabo 'ulamā' in alliance with the Qādiriyyah 'ulamā' opposed the Salga 'ulama' for their rejection of funeral alms (*sadakokin mutuwa*) and other related rituals. The Salga 'ulamā' were also attacked for showing their preference and the subsequent adoption of the practice of *qabd* instead of the more familiar *sadl*. Muhammad Salga attacked a number of rituals practiced by the Madabo 'ulamā'. He even wrote a treatise concerning this question *Risalāt al-Su'āl* (The Book of Questions). The Babban Malami of Madabo answered his former disciple in another booklet *Hujāj al-'Ulamā' al-Madabawiyīn* (The Argument of the Madabo Scholars). (Anwar 26).

When Shaykh Ibrahim Nyās made his first public appearance in Nigeria in 1951 he practiced *qabd*. Shaykh Nāsir Kabara, who had until then been one of the few scholars in Kano who was identified with the practice of *qabd* prior to Shaykh Nyās responded by reverting to the practice of *sadl* in order to dissociate himself from the Tijāniyyah-Ibrahimiyyah. The conflict surrounding the problem of *qabd* and *sadl* was intensified by the fact that the followers of each tarīqah refused to pray behind an Imām who practiced a position of arms different from their own. (Anwar, 1989:27). In Sokoto and Adamawa provinces, the period between 1948 and 1965 witnessed a number of violent incidents between the Qādiriyyah and the Tijāniyyah communities. This was sequel to the first major conversion tour of Northern Nigeria between 1948 and 1949 undertaken by Sidi ibn 'Umar, a direct descendant of Shaykh Ahmad Tijānī, who later became the chief Imām of the zāwiyah at 'Aīn Mādī. (Loimeir, 1997:40).

Within the stipulated period, the 'ulamā' resorted to portraying the superiority of their Sūfī orders over the others. In his book *al-Nafahāt al-Nāsiriyyah Fī al-Tarīqah al-Qādiriyyah* (The Nasirine Fragrances within the Qādiriyyah Sūfī Order) Shaykh Nāsir Kabara expressed his displeasure over the attitude of some Tijānī muqaddams for encouraging the Qādiris to change their tarīqah. (Loimeir,14). Shaykh Abū Bakr 'Atīq replied Shaykh Nāsir Kabara immediately *al-Nafahāt* was published. Shaykh 'Atīq wrote two books. In the first book *Risālah Fī Tahdhīr al-'Isābah* (Treatise of Caution In Respect of Factionalism) he disproved Shaykh Nāsir Kabara's claims and attacked him in return. In the other book *al-Sārim al-Mushrafi* he challenged the Qādiris to prove that the drumming (*bandīr*) which accompanies the Qādiriyyah rites, especially where the rites are done congregationally, was established by Shaykh 'Abdulqādir al-Jīlānī. (Ahmad, 293-295).

In view of the foregoing, some Qādiris and some Tijānis interpreted some verses of the Qur'ān to portray the basis of their Sūfī orders. For example, they interpreted verse 35 of sūrah al-Mā'idah "O you who believe! Do your duty to Allah, seek the means of approach to Him..." to emphasize the teachings of their respective Sūfī orders. Some Qādiris interpreted the verse extensively denoting that

Qādiriyyah was established in the context of the verse. They asserted that the founder of the tarīqah Shaykh ‘Abdulqādir al-Jīlānī was the Qutb al-Aqtāb (chief of all saints) and considered him as their means of approach (wasīlah) to Allah. (Anwar, 27-28).

On this, Shaykh Nāsir Kabara maintained that:

The meaning of this verse is that you should seek the means of approach to Allah through obedience, love for the prophets and the saints as well as litanies (awrād)... Do not mind those people who considered visiting saints as kufr. (tafsir cassette, Nasir Kabara, Surah Al-Ma'idah).

On the contrary, while some Qādiris considered Shaykh ‘Abdulqādir al-Jīlānī as their wasīlah to Allah, some Tijānis considered Shaykh Ahmad al-Tijānī as superior to all other saints. Thus, they regarded him as their wasīlah to Allah. The extent to which some of these ‘ulamā’ interpreted this verse in conformity with their Sūfī orders more especially some decades prior to the emergence of the Izālah was very serious. (interview with Hussain Isa 23/01/2003).

On the interpretation of verse 10 of sūrah al-Jumu‘ah where Allah says, “Then when the prayer is finished, you may disperse through the land and seek the bounty of Allah (by working e.t.c) and remember Allah much that you may be successful”. Shaykh Nāsir Kabara interpreted the verse as:”izan (idan) an gama sallah sai ku daidaita a bayan kasa ku nema daga falalar Ubangiji, ku ambaci Allah ambato mai yawa domin ku rabauta.”

He went on to state that the phrase “and remember Allah much” is the basis for the Friday dhikr and mī‘ād in the Qādiriyyah Sūfī order. Shaykh Tāhir Bauchi also considered this phrase as one of the basis of the Tijāniyyah in the Qur’ān. However, according to Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi, dhikr Allah in this context, as it appears in many verses of the Qur’ān, is never restricted to verbal dhikr. He maintained that it covers all what Allah enjoins Muslims to practice in relation to ‘ibādāt and mu‘āmalāt.

On the interpretation of verse 41 of sūrah al-Ahzāb ذِكْرًا لِلَّهِ اذْكُرُوا ءَامِنُوا الَّذِيْنَ يَأْتِيْهَا *ذِكْرًا لِلَّهِ اذْكُرُوا ءَامِنُوا الَّذِيْنَ يَأْتِيْهَا* كَثِيْرًا...

“O you who believe! Remember Allah with much Remembrance.” In this verse, the word dhikr implies *salāt*, *sawm* and all other obligations and general transactions (mu‘āmalāt) in so far as they are in line with the Qur’ān and Sunnah.

Here, Shaykh Nāsir Kabara interpreted it as, Ya ku wadanda su ka yi imani, ku ambaci Allah ambato mai yawa.

Just like in the preceding verse, Shaykh Nāsir Kabara interpreted the phrase " ذِكْرًا لِلَّهِ اذْكُرُوا ءَامِنُوا الَّذِيْنَ يَأْتِيْهَا" as the basis for the Qādiriyyah dhikr. He went further to state that the concept of the tarīqah had been clearly stated in the Qur’ān. He cited verse 16 of sūrah al-Jinn where Allah says , ‘ غَدَقًا مَّاءٍ لَّاسْقِيْنَهُمْ الطَّرِيْقَةَ عَلٰى اسْتَقْمُوْا وَاَلُوْا ‘. ‘If they

(non-Muslims) had believed in Allah and went on the (right) way, we should surely have bestowed on them rain in abundance.'

Shaykh Nāsir Kabara interpreted the verse as: 'Da sun yi daidai su wadannan kafirai a kan darika ta Musulunci, da mun shayar da su ruwa mai yawa.'

It is worthy of note here that the verse was revealed drawing the attention of the non-Muslims to embrace Islām as a religion and a complete way of life so that Allah could bestow on them His bounties like the rain and many other things. But in the process of his interpretation, Shaykh Nāsir Kabara maintained that this verse is one of the basis of the Qādiriyyah Sūfī order in the Qur'ān. In his tafsīr book Ihsān al-Mannān he chapterised this verse under the title "darikar Junaidu a cikin al-Qur'āni" that is Junaīd's Sūfī order in the Qur'ān. (Kabara, 1776).

While interpreting sūrah al-Kahf, Shaykh Nāsir Kabara emphasised much on the mystical interpretation, especially in relation to those verses where Allah talks about the people of the cave (ashab al-kahf). On the episode between Prophet Moses (Mūsā) and Khidr, he interpreted it to mean that the episode was meant to show Moses his "shortcoming" as a result of his statement that he knew no one who was more knowledgeable than him (Moses). Moses was supposed to have said that Allah is the Most knowledgeable. It was as a result of that, that Allah joined Moses with Khidr. Consequently, Moses who is one of the five most senior messengers of Allah "studied" and learnt many things from Khidr who was not a Prophet but a true servant of Allah. (Kabara, 1988, Vol.I.:17)

Muslims are generally taught from the context of this sūrah to consider knowledge as a property of Allah. He is the most knowledgeable. All people including messengers and prophets of Allah were only given some portion of knowledge from the treasury of Allah. But according to Shaykh Nāsir Kabara, the teachings of sūrah al-Kahf are far more than that. He stated that the basic teaching of the sūrah is to show Muslims that there are sharī'ah provisions on one hand and haqīqah provisions on the other. The encounter between Moses and Khidr, according to Shaykh Nāsir Kabara was a clear testimony to this assertion. He went on to state that Moses viewed all the actions of Khidr in the context of the sharī'ah; that was why he regarded Khidr's actions as not on the right cause. On the contrary, Khidr acted the way he did for he was guided by the provisions of the haqīqah (refer to sūrah al-Kahf: 65-70). Shaykh Nāsir Kabara also maintained that the fact that Khidr explained to Moses the basis for all his actions was a clear testimony that Khidr did not commit his actions baselessly. (Fieldnotes, Kabara, tafsir Cassette on Al-Kahf). Allah says, "صَبْرًا عَلَيْهِ تَسْطَع مَالَهُ تَأْوِيلُ ذَلِكَ..." That is the interpretation of those (things) over which you were unable to hold patience".

Coming to our contemporary time, Shaykh Nāsir Kabara urged the Muslims who are not proficient in sufism not to comment on it simply because they thought they are learned in some aspects of Islām. According to him, such people should at

recommendations to mankind through the dreams and visions of the sūfis, which means the sūfis would extend his sunnah in an inadmissible way. ('Yandaki, 11). He emphasized that the degree of personal faith (īmān) is determined by the intensity of a person's practice of his religious obligations. Thus, the faithfuls who support their confession of faith by deeds show that their faith is greater than the faith of those who are faithful only in their heart (ma'rifah bi al-qalb). (Loimeier, 188-189).

Moreover, he particularly criticised the salāt al-fātih and the book *Jawāhir al-Ma'ānī Wa Bulūgh al-Amānī Fī Fa'id Sīdi Ahmad Tijānī* (The Jewels Of The Meaning And The Fulfilling Of The Wishes In The Grace Of Sidi Ahmad Tijānī) which is a compilation of the sayings and deeds of Shaykh Ahmad Tijānī compiled by his disciple 'Alī Harāzimī. The salāt al-fātih according to the Tijānīs was revealed to Muhammad al-Bakrī by the Prophet himself. Ahmad Tijānī is said to have received a revelation from the Prophet (SAW) that a single recitation of that prayer equals in its blessing six complete recitations of the Qur'ān. (Loimeier, 1997:190-191). Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi also attacked the *Jaūharat al-kamāl*. According to the belief of the Tijānīs, this prayer is to be recited just like the five daily prayers only after a water ablution. (Loimeier, 1997:196). Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi went on to attack the popular Qādiriyyah book *al-Fuyūdāt al-Rabbāniyyah Fī al-Ma'āthir Wa al-Aūrād al-Qādiriyyah* (The Streams Of Divine Grace In The Glorious Deeds And In The Litanies Of The Qādiriyyah) written by Ismā'īl Sa'īd al-Qādirī. From that time onwards Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi started openly questioning the justification for the existence of the tarīqah in Islām. He argued that bandīr was nothing more than a musical instrument meant only to entertain rather than for spiritual guidance, and that it were only those under the influence of satan who could continue to preserve it. (Loimeier, 1997:196).

Already during this period Shaykh Ismā'īl Idrīs Jos (1938-2000), who was a disciple of Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi, had been taking part in the disputes between Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi and the rest of the Sūfī scholars. (Loimeier, 1997:211). Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi and Ismā'īl Idrīs noticed that the Sūfī scholars have dominated the Jamā'ah Nasr al-Islām, especially after the assassination of Ahmadu Bello the Premier of the defunct Northern Nigeria on 15th January 1966. Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi failed to enlist the support of the Jamā'ah Nasr al-Islām for his religious activities. (Loimeier, 1997:208). Shaykh Ismā'īl Idrīs had already been busy delivering Islāmic lectures in Jos, Bauchi, Gombe and some neighbouring settlements. His lectures against the Sūfī teachings were recorded on cassettes and disseminated in this way. During the course of his lectures in Jos, disputes with other Sūfī scholars broke out again and again. In these disputes Ismā'īl Idrīs elaborated his ideas through his rhetorical capabilities. (Loimeier, 1997:213).

Over time Shaykh Ismā'īl Idrīs succeeded in building up a growing core group of followers in Jos. These followers were recruited predominantly from the

Tijāniyyah, which can be explained simply by the fact that the Tijāniyyah was numerically much stronger than the Qādiriyyah in Plateau State. This group of followers supported the efforts of Ismā'īl Idrīs to establish an Islāmic organisation for the campaign against the Sūfī practices. Hence, the establishment of the Jamā'ah Izālah al-Bid'ah wa Iqāmah al-Sunnah at Jos on 8th February 1978. (Loimeier, 1997:213).

The severe attack from Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi on the two Sūfī orders was never limited to his preaching, but could be noticed even while he was conducting his Ramadān tafsīr. This is the genesis of the emergence of another mode of tafsīr popularly referred to as the Izālah (Salafiyyah) mode of tafsīr. In his interpretation of sūrah al-Ma'idah 35, Shaykh, Abū Bakr Gumi maintained that wasīlah should only be sought through obedience to Allah and Prophet Muhammad (SAW). (Fieldnotes, Gumi Cassette on Surah Al-Ma'idah). He viewed wasīlah in a quite different way from some tarīqah 'ulamā'; and he defined it thus:

Wasīlah (a means of approach) stands for any act of 'ibādah which makes a Muslim very close to Allah. However, for the 'ibādah to be a means of approach to Allah, it must be in conformity with Allah's directives as pointed out by the Prophet (SAW); it should not be in conformity with someone's directives no matter how influential he may seem to be.

The main teachings or the essence of *Surah Al-Kahf*, according to Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi is that it teaches the etiquettes of worshipping Allah, to act in conformity with the teachings of the Shari'ah and to do away with anything which contradicts the Shari'ah. Also, Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi as pointed out earlier submitted that the sūrah teaches strict adherence to the provisions of the sharī'ah and it has nothing to do with sufism. (Fieldnotes, Gumi Cassette on Surah Al- Kahf). While some Qādiris and Tijānis viewed the content of Sūrah al-Kahf especially verse 28 as the basis of sufism in the Qur'ān.

The emergence of Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi's trend of tafsīr symbolized the extent to which the Izālah doctrines penetrated into the Sūfī area of the Muslim communities in Northern Nigeria. The Izālah trend of tafsīr contributed to the subsequent emergence of some new ideas and "radical" Islāmic organisations from 1970's onwards. (Loimeier, 1997:213-214)

The Qādiriyyah and Tijāniyyah Coalition against the Izālah

The criticisms of Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi against the doctrines and teachings of the Sūfī orders in Northern Nigeria served as a major unifying factor for the Qādiriyyah and the Tijāniyyah followers. (Quadri, 1981:386-387). Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi and later with some scholars like Shaykh Ismā'īl Idrīs Jos directed all their efforts towards educating Muslims to understand what they referred to as "the existing contradiction between the teachings of the sharī'ah and the tarīqah".

(Quadri, 1981:219-220). Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi's reason for the rejection of some Sūfī doctrines such as salāt al-fātih was because of the belief of the Tijānis that it was granted by Allah to one Shaykh Muhammad al-Bakrī after the death of the Prophet. Gumi argues that since the Prophet (SAW) had accomplished his mission, no other person can receive a revelation nor is it possible for the Prophet to teach a new thing to his followers after his death. He contended that to do otherwise will be contrary to the Qur'ān (Quadri, 1981:386-388).

It was this attitude of Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi and his disciples which helped, to a large extent, in shifting the attention of the Qādiriyyah followers from their traditional rivalry with the Tijāniyyah followers over the issue of qabd, sadl and the controversies over the superiority complex of one tarīqah over the other. (Quadri, 1981:388). The attack between Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi and the leaders of the Sūfī orders reached its climax in 1972 when he published his book al-'Aqīdah al-Sahīhah Bi Muwafaqah al-Sharī'ah. In this book, he totally condemned Sūfī doctrines. In the same year, Shaykhs Nāsir Kabara and Sani Kafinga (1909-1989), wrote a rejoinder to al-'Aqīdah al-Sahīhah which they published al-Nasīhah al-Sarīhah Fī al-Radd 'Alā al-'Aqīdah al-Sahīhah (Frank Advice In Response To al-'Aqīdah al-Sahīhah) and al-Mināh al-Hamīdah Fī al-Radd 'Alā Fāsīd al-'Aqīdah (Praiseworthy Gifts In Response To The One Who Is Corrupted In His Faith) respectively. (Fieldnotes, Tahir, 24/12/2002). A similar rejoinder on Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi's book was also made in 1982 by Shaykh Sharīf Ibrāhīm Sālih of Maiduguri (b. 1939). (Quadri, 1981:393-394). He published a book al-Takfīr Akhtar al-Bid'ah Tuhaddid al-Salām (The Accusation Of Unbelief Constitutes A Blameworthy Innovation And Threatens Peace). The following year also, Shaykh Tāhir 'Uthmān Bauchi (b. 1927), wrote a rejoinder on Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi's book which he called Gaskiya Ta Bayyana (The Truth Has Emerged). (Interview with Aji 28/12/2002).

However, the book *Raf' al-Shubhāt 'Ammā Fī al-Qādiriyyah Wa al-Tijāniyyah Min al-Shathāt* (The lifting of doubts about the deviation of the Qādiriyyah and the Tijāniyyah) is the only book which was jointly published by the Qādiriyyah and the Tijāniyyah scholars against the Izālah. This book was published in 1978 by Malam 'Alī Abū Bakr Jabata (a Tijānī) and Malam Muhammad Ibrāhīm al-Nufawī (a Qādirī). The Emir of Ilorin, Sulu Gambari (b.1915), inspired the work and Shaykh Adam 'Abdullah Ilorin wrote the introduction. (Loimeier, 267).

It is this coalition between the Qādiriyyah and the Tijāniyyah against the Izālah which later on appeared as a new mode of *tafsīr* in Northern Nigeria. With this coalition some *mufasssirūn* belonging to the two Sūfī orders ignored their long existing differences in order to attack the common "opposition". In fact, Shaykh Abū Bakr Gumi's book brought the members of the two Sūfī orders together. For instance, Shaykhs Sharīf Ibrāhīm Sālih, Sani Kafinga and Tāhir 'Uthmān Bauchi did not only attempt to defend the Tijāniyyah but also the Qādiriyyah, while Shaykh

Nāsir Kabara (1910-1996), spoke in defence of the Qādiriyyah in particular and Sufism in general. (Loimeier, 1997:267).

Unfortunately, this conflict between the tarīqah and Izālah has nowadays dominated the tafsīr scene in Northern Nigeria and has created an unhealthy atmosphere among the Muslim communities. Worse still, the two camps tend to see nothing good from each other.

Conclusion

This paper demonstrates that some of the Islamic scholars strived to spread their ideologies upon holding public tafsir during the month of Ramadan. Since their tafsir lectures are transmitted on television and radio, they have the opportunity to address a much wider audience of Muslims than during their usual tafsir sessions in their respective tafsir circles. Their tafsir is usually illustrated with examples from everyday life situations. This offered them the opportunity to influence their disciples and audience not only religiously but also politically. In this way, they have the chance to attack their "opponents". This has led to a deep division within the Muslim community in Northern Nigeria. Unfortunately, all efforts of reaching an agreement between *ulama* have failed, and a real conciliation seemed to be unlikely. Some *ulama* cannot interact religiously for they regard each other as unorthodox Muslims.

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Interviews

Interview with Malam Hussaini Isa Bello of Gwale Quarters, Kano City, 23rd January, 2003.

Interview with Malam Hassan Adam Tahir at Dutsen Kogi, Unguwar Nufawa, Bauchi, on 24th December, 2002. He is a disciple of Shaykh Tahir Uthman Bauchi.

Interview with Shaykh Muhammad Abba Aji at Masallacin Mairi, Maiduguri on 28th Dec., 2002.

