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Diseases and Remedies of *Al-Kibr* in the Light of Uthman bin Foduye's *Shifa' al-Nufus*

ABSTRACT: This research aims at finding out the remedies for the disease of arrogance/pride that has been rampant among the people in contemporary Muslim world, particularly Nigerian Muslim society. The analysis is not on words and terms, but rather on meaning and ideas with analysis and explanations given by the “Mufassirun” and other scholars. ‘Uthman bin Foduye emerged in nineteenth-century with the mission to revive the Sunnah, and to eradicate innovations in Hausaland (West Africa) caused by the deviant teachings. This is the reason why he wrote on spiritual diseases in his book related to healing of the soul. ‘Uthman bin Foduye was influenced by al-Ghazali and particularly his book on “Ihya’ Ulum al-Din” (Revival of the Religious Sciences). He wrote this treaty in order to make it easier for the people to know the destructive evils of the heart, so as to do what Allah loves and accepts, since pride is one of the attributes of Allah alone. The appearance of the British destroyed the Sokoto Caliphate in Northern-Nigeria and burnt many of Uthman bin Foduye’s books, including the “Shifa’ al-Nufus” (Healing of the Soul), for fear that his works will inspire his followers people to rise against the oppressors.

KEY WORD: Diseases and remedies, arrogance and pride, Uthman bin Foduye, healing of the soul, al-Ghazali, revive the Islam, West Africa, British, and rise against the oppressors.

ABSTRAKSI: “Penyakit dan Pengobatan Al-Kibr (Kesombongan/Kebanggaan Diri) dalam Cahaya Shifa’ al-Nufus (Penyembuhan Jiwa)-nya Uthman bin Foduye”. Kajian ini mau mencari tahu obat bagi penyakit sombong/bangga diri yang telah berleluasa di kalangan rakyat di dunia Islam masa kini, terutamanya masyarakat Islam Nigeria. Analisis ini tidak disenaraikan dalam kata-kata dan istilah, tetapi pada makna dan idea dengan analisis dan penjelasan yang diberikan oleh Mufassirun dan ulama yang lain. ‘Uthman bin Foduye muncul pada abad ke-19 dengan misi untuk menghidupkan semula Sunnah, dan untuk membasmi amalan bid’ah di Hausaland (Afrika Barat) yang disebabkan oleh ajaran sesat. Ini adalah sebab mengapa dia menulis mengenai penyakit rohani dalam bukunya bersabit penyembuhan jiwa. ‘Uthman bin Foduye dipengaruhi oleh al-Ghazali dan terutamanya buku “Ihya’ Ulum al-Din” (Kebangkitan Ilmu-ilmu Agama). Beliau menulis risalah ini untuk membuat ianya lebih mudah bagi rakyat supaya tahu keburukan yang merosakan hati, untuk melakukan apa yang Allah suka dan menerima, kerana kebanggaan diri setakat milik Allah semata-mata. Kemunculan British telah menghancurkan Khilafah Sokoto di wilayah Utara-Nigeria dan British pula telah membakar banyak buku karangan Uthman bin Foduye, termasuk “Shifa’ al-Nufus”, kerana British takut bahawa karya-karya Uthman bin Foduye ini akan memberi inspirasi kepada para pengikut dan kaumnya untuk bangkit melawan para penindas.

KATA KUNCI: Penyakit dan pengobatan, sombong/bangga diri, Uthman bin Foduye, penyembuhan jiwa, al-Ghazali, menghidupkan semula Islam, Afrika Barat, British, dan bangkit melawan penindas.

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INTRODUCTION

In Islamic medicine, spiritual science is even more important than physical science. Spiritual science deals with the heart diseases and its remedies, while medical science deals with the physical diseases that affect the body or any of its part (Umar, 2011; Shuttleworth, 2013; and Abdullah, 2014). Therefore, according to Muzammil H. Siddiqi (2013), “physical health depends on our meaningful life and success in this world. Spiritual health, on the other hand, depends on our success and salvation both in this life and in the next world to come” (Siddiqi, 2013).

Hence, the study of heart diseases and its remedies is of great importance in order to purify our soul and cure it from any diseases, and to be dutiful to Allah and His Messenger, Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu 'Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace Be Upon Him).¹ People suffer from spiritual ailments, such as hatred, greed, lust and the like which are much more dangerous than any physical disease. Allah has referred to these spiritual ills as diseases in the *Al-Qur'an* and, hence, *Tazkiyah* is absolutely mandatory on everyone (al-Jawziyyah, n.y.; Ahmad, 2012; and Ahmad, 2013).

In order to understand the importance of medication for both spiritual and physical diseases, Jabir reported that Allah's Messenger, Prophet Muhammad SAW, as saying: “there is a remedy for every malady, and when the remedy is applied to the disease it is cured with the permission of Allah the Exalted and Glorious” (cited in al-Hajjaj, 2010).

Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (1995) also said that every organ of our body has a function; when it fails to do its functions, it means it is not well. The function of the soul

or the spiritual heart is to know its Creator, to love Him, and to seek closeness to Him. If the heart fails in this function then we must know that it is sick (al-Ghazali, 1995:3-4).

Ibn Taymiyyah (n.y.) made an important observation concerning diseases of the heart and its cure in the following statement:

All of the diseases of the heart are founded upon desires and doubts. The life of the heart and its illumination is the cause of all good to be found in it and its death and darkness is the cause of all evil to be found in it. The heart can never be alive and correct except through cognizance of the truth, loving it and preparing it to everything else. There can never be any happiness, joy or correction for it unless it makes its sole object of worship and desire of Allah alone (Taymiyyah, n.y.:2).

It is important to know the ailments that make the heart weak and sick. In the language of the *Al-Qur'an*, verse of *Al-Hajj* (22:46), it is not only the eyes that get blind; the hearts also become blind. Allah says: “Have they not travelled through the land, and have they hearts wherewith to understand and ears wherewith to hear? Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind” (cited in al-Hilali & Khan, 2010).

The *Al-Qur'an* also speaks in many places about the sickness (*marad*) of the hearts. For example, Allah says in the *Al-Qur'an*, verse of *Al-Baqarah* (2:10): “In their hearts is a disease (of doubt and hypocrisy) and Allah has increased their disease. A painful torment is theirs because they used to tell lies” (cited in al-Hilali & Khan, 2010). Moreover, when the heart gets sick, it loses its desire and ability to do right or good deeds. This affects the morals and manners of a person and his/her general behaviour (Siddiqi, 2013).

There are many diseases that affect the heart, but the most evil one is *Al-Kibr* or *Takabbur* (arrogance/pride).² It is also the most dangerous among the other inner diseases of

¹See more explanation on the heart and how it is cured from its diseases in Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (2003). He said as follows: “The hearts that are connected with the lord of the worlds - the creator of the illness and its cure and He who governs the affairs of everything and everyone – require special types of remedies that are nothing like those required for the hearts that are far away from their lord. Furthermore, whenever the soul and the heart become stronger (spiritually), they will cooperate to defeat the illness” (al-Jawziyyah, 2003:17).

²The term *Takabbur*' is an Arabic word which, according to Al-Maurid (2010:359), means: “pride, haughtiness, arrogance, superciliousness, insolence, conceit(edness)”.

the heart. Those inner diseases reside in the hearts but their destructive effects are reflected in the behaviour and conduct of the sick person, who may be prevented from entering paradise on the Day of Judgment (Al-Maurid, 2010:359).

‘Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.) defined the terms *Kibr* and *Takabbur*, as follows:

Arrogance is of two kinds: open and hidden. Hidden arrogance is the feeling of superiority. When it is expressed in actions, it is called open arrogance which is more explicit because through actions it is just like its fruits. Meanwhile, feeling of superiority in mind is called self-conceit (*kibr*). When it is expressed in actions, it is called arrogance (*takabbur*); hence, this is what is actually called arrogance (Foduye, n.y.:5).

It should be noted that the terms *Takabbur* and *Istikbar* have been defined, according to Jane Dammen (n.y.), as a form of behaviour directed towards other people on the grounds that they are inferior. It has been defined as undue assumption of dignity, authority, or knowledge, aggressive conceit, presumption or haughtiness (Dammen, n.y.:159-160).

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF UTHMAN BIN FODUYE

‘Uthman bin Muhammad bin ‘Uthman bin Salih, popularly known as Ibn Foduye,³ was born at Maratta, a town in the Hausa State of Gobir, Nigeria, on Sunday, 15th December 1754 (Bugaje, 2010:14). He later came to be known as *Shaykh* or *Shehu* ‘Uthman bin Foduye.⁴ His ancestors came from Futa Toro in

³Different terms are used in addressing Ibn Foduye. Therefore, ‘Uthman bin Foduye is the actual name to recognize him, but *ibn* is in Arabic which is equivalent to *Dan* in Hausa and *Son* in English respectively. Similarly, the word *Foduye* is the Arabized name, and *Fodio* is in English; while on the other hand, *Fodiyo* is in Hausa. It is understood that these are the reasons why some people are addressing him as ‘*Usman Dan Fodio* or *Danfodiyo* and *Foduye* respectively. In order to avoid inconsistencies, this study uses ‘*Uthman bin Foduye*.

⁴*Shehu* is in Hausa, which is equivalent to *Shaykh* in Arabic, meaning a great scholar or learned fellow in English. *Foduye* or *Fodio* is a nickname of ‘Uthman’s father. *Foduye* is the Fulani term meaning “a teacher”. Therefore, Uthman bin Foduye means Uthman “son of the teacher”.

Senegal (Fudi, 1957).

It is noteworthy that Uthman bin Foduye was a prolific Islamic scholar originated from a Fulani Family distinguished with Islamic knowledge. His life was all devoted to learning. Although, he produced a number of literatures on different aspects of Islamic learning, such as history, sociology, grammar, medicine, and among others.

About the Book or Kitab Shifa al-Nufus’.

It is important to note that the book was until now remained in a form of manuscript of Arabic version. It is yet not edited and translated into English, also it has only 56 pages. However, it is pertinent to note that Uthman bin Foduye wrote the book without detailed explanation of the *Al-Qur’anic* verses and *Al-Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace Be Upon Him); and without mentioning the number of verses of the Glorious *Al-Qur’an* and *Al-Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad SAW as well as the narrators and reporters of *Al-Hadith* incomplete. He does not divide the book into chapters, headings, and sub-headings. In spite of this, he mentioned and explained the destructive evils of the heart.

Therefore, the discussion in this article is entirely focussed on the disease of *Al-Kibr* and its remedies, it is clearly analysed in detailed for the contemporary Muslims to understand its dangers and know how to cure it in accordance with the teachings of the *Al-Qur’an* and the *Al-Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

About the Diseases and Remedies of Al-Kibr or Arrogance/Pride. The discussion here will focus on what causes the disease of pride/arrogance, and what are the remedies for such a disease? How can one get cured from the disease of arrogance?

It is understood that once the heart is ill the entire body will be sick. The heart will only be cured, when one obeys the commandments of Allah and His Messenger in order to strengthening his faith. But, in the absence of faith and piety, one will definitely be afflicted with spiritual diseases that cannot be cured

except with the remembrance of Allah the Most High.

However, we can only find the answers of those questions through the explanations given by *Shaykh* 'Uthman bin Foduye in his *ShifÉ' al-NuuÉs* and in many other explanations given by Muslim scholars in the light of the teachings of *Al-Qur'an* and *Al-Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu 'Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace Be Upon Him).

Shaykh 'Uthman bin Foduye outlines the causes of the disease of pride/arrogance. According to him, the causes of the disease of pride/arrogance are: (1) Education or Knowledge; (2) Religious Service or 'Ibadat; (3) Lineage; (4) Beauty; (5) Strength or Power; (6) Wealth; and (7) Popularity (Foduye, n.y.:9).

In order to understand each of them, it is important to know first that it is the excessive feelings of someone in one or two of the above diseases that may diagnose a person with arrogance. Arrogance as a major heart disease can only attack the heart, due to the presence of one or two of the above mentioned causes.

First, Remedies for Arrogance in Education. This is the first cause of arrogance as said by 'Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.). The learned take pride in his learning. A learned man easily takes pride owing to his learning. He thinks of himself as a great person on account of the excellence of learning.⁵ He considers others as animals, illiterate, and ignorant. He believes that he is the most respectful man among them. He cannot greet them; rather, he is always waiting for them to say *salam* to him.⁶

⁵A person is forbidden to disdain his brother, he knew not whether his brother is superior or inferior in the side of Allah; it's better for him to know that his brother has his own position as he thought that he has. The Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu 'Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace Be Upon Him) emphasizes the sin of a person who disdains his brother. He says, "It is enough of evil for a person to hold his brother Muslim in contempt. All of a Muslim is inviolable to another Muslim: his blood, his wealth, and his honor" (cited by Muslim in Imam Al-Nawawi, n.y.:112-113).

⁶It is forbidden in *Shari'ah* to meet one's brother without saying *salam* or without answering others *salam*. It is important from this point to note that whoever, deny fulfilling the rights of his brother pertaining to saying *salam*, is clearly an arrogant. Additionally, it is not the character of the believer, and also

When any one of them starts greeting him, he feels that it is because of his power, so he believes he is superior to them. He does what is not supposed to be done for them. It is better for him to be kind to them, so that they will thank him for the good he did (Foduye, n.y.:10).

Some of the signs of an arrogant person are: he/she will never start greeting or saying *salam* to people till they start greeting him. They visit him, but he will never visit them; they also visit him when he is sick, but he does not visit them while they are sick. If they lower his status, he dislikes them and considers them as slaves. He will only teach them in order to become famous among them and to be proud of his education. This is how he behaves in life but in the hereafter; a scholar will fear for them more than what he fears for himself or thinking that he is more successful (Foduye, n.y.:10).

Similarly, a scholar hopes for himself more than what he hopes for others. In this kind of situation, it is better for him to be called an ignorant than a learned person. If one asks why does knowledge cause someone to be arrogant? The answer to this question is in two ways: firstly, one would be concerned more with his learning, but in reality it is not learning. It is for argumentations and debate only. It is important to note that real learning gives knowledge of Godhood of Allah and slavehood of man.

The second cause of what increase arrogance is that when one engages in learning, but his desire is to be superior. Examples have been cited to explain the nature of such kind of learning. It says education is like rain, which

it is an indication that one does not love his brother. Saying *salam* (peace of Allah be with you) is very important, because it is greetings of the people of Paradise. On the basis of this point, one can only be cured from this kind of arrogance through spreading *salam* to his brothers. Because the Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu 'Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace Be Upon Him) said, "You shall not enter Paradise unless when you believe, you would not believe till when you love one another. Then he said: should I not tell you of something which if you do you would love one another? Spread greetings of *salam* among yourselves" (cited by Muslim in Imam Al-Nawawi, n.y.:96).

comes down from the sky and fills plants with sweetness or bitterness (Foduye, n.y.:10).

What ‘Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.) means by this example is once a person’s intention is to seek knowledge for the sake of Allah, Allah would increase his wisdom as a result of humility and sincerity. On the other hand, if someone’s intention is to seek knowledge and become famous or superior among others, Allah would not increase his wisdom, and he would not get what he expects because of his bad intention and his pride. This is the meaning that increases sweetness and bitterness.

Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (1995) makes a similar statement on education. According to him, people acquire education that changes their conduct and desires. For example, arrogance in the mind of humble is generated as a result of the acquired knowledge. Then, man whose objective of learning is to boast his pride by education, the man whose purpose is to fear Allah, his education will help him achieve it (al-Ghazali, 1995:304).

The remedy for arrogance in education is for a learned person to know that Allah’s judgment against him will be most strict than others, because the degree of education is great before Allah and in the eyes of people. As a result of this, when he is misled, he would never remove that cause except by two things: one is to know that the wrath of Allah against the people of learning or else that who disobeys Allah with knowledge his punishment is severe as a result of rejecting the bounty of Allah, that is education (al-Ghazali, 1995:304).

The second thing is that the learned person knows that pride is only entitled for Allah alone and nobody else. So, when a person takes pride, he becomes an object of wrath of Allah. ‘Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.) reminds that if a person wants honour from Allah, then, he should not take pride in himself. However, do what Allah loves and then arrogance will go away from the heart (Foduye, n.y.:10). The remedy for arrogance of education is hereby complete.

It should be noted that one of the possible ways by which one can cure arrogance, that is caused by education, is to think that knowledge is a mercy from Allah; it is a test and trial to see whether one will put it into practice or not. One should also be contented with whatever little that he knows and thank Allah to increase it, because those who can understand are always chosen by Allah. Allah says in *Al-Qur’an*, verse of *Al-Baqarah* (2:269), as follows:

He grants *hikmah* to whom He wills, and whoever is granted wisdom, he indeed is given a great good. But, none remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding (cited in al-Hilali & Khan, 2010).

Commenting on this verse, Ibn Kathir says: ‘Ali bin Abi ‘Ualhah reported that ibn ‘Abbas said, “*Hikmah*” according to the verse is knowledge of the *Al-Qur’an*. This includes the science of abrogating and abrogated. What is plain and or clear, and what is not as plain and clear, what it allows, and what it does not allow, and its parables (al-Kadri, 2010).

Similarly, another way of curing disease caused by knowledge is to remember that if the intention of seeking knowledge is to argue with people or to mislead the illiterate, he will be in the Hell fire. The Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu ‘Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace Be Upon Him) said as follows:

“Anyone who seeks sacred knowledge to vie with scholars, argue with fools, or win people’s hearts will go to Hell”. He also said: “Will never smell the fragrance of Paradise, the one who seeks sacred knowledge for the sake of worldly gain” (cited in al-Dhahabi, 2012:151).

The above mentioned *Al-Hadith* shows clearly the possible way of curing arrogance caused by knowledge. If it is for the sake of Allah, Allah would save him from any whispering of *satan*, who will indirectly mislead him to the wrong path. By the same token the Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu ‘Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace Be Upon Him)

used to supplicate to Allah saying, “O Allah! I seek refuge in you from knowledge, which is of no use” (cited in al-Dhahabi, 2012:151). Commenting on this *Al-Hadith*, ibn Mas‘ud (may Allah be pleased with him) says: “The more the scholar does not behave according to his knowledge, the more arrogant this scholar will be” (cited by Al-Tirmithi in Abu Aziz, 2011:115).

Another important remedy for *kibr* caused by education is to constantly remember that there are many people who are more knowledgeable than him, and preceded him in that path. Moreover, his knowledge did not prevent him from arrogance, and it will be evidence against him in the Hereafter (al-Jawziyyah, 751 AH:56).

Second, Remedies for Arrogance in Religious Services. ‘Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.) said that the religious men are not free from arrogance and misleading the people. He takes arrogance in religious and worldly matters. The form of arrogance of man regarding worldly matters is that he thinks it is better for others to visit him than for himself to visit them (a worshipper always thinks as a result of his piety). He wants people to come to him and not to others, and they should stand up for him to show respect and that they should broadcast his piety among the general public for popularity (Foduye, n.y.:13).

The reason for arrogance of a man in religious matters is that he thinks he has got salvation and the other people are ruined. Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (1995), in his *I‘ya’ ‘Ulum al-Din*, mentioned the *Al-Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace Be Upon Him), in which the Prophet said: when you hear a man say “Men are ruined”, know that he is ruined among them. He also said: “it is enough of evil for a person to hold his Muslim brother in contempt” (cited in al-Ghazali, 1995:305; and Muhsin, 2010:112-113).

‘Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.) then says as follows:

[...] how can this arrogant person thinks that Allah considered him like His Prophets (Allah does not punish those who cheated his Prophets in one way or another as a warning. He leaves them till the appointed time before they were destroyed. But an arrogant person thinks that someone has been punished as a result of his piety and great position before Allah. Can this be possible?). It is a trial from Allah, but he knows not. This is the behaviour of who does not understand the real message of Allah to his servants. It is important to note that this type of disease does not leave someone among the religious except the one who is saved by Allah (Foduye, n.y.:14).

Religious men, who have arrogance, are of three categories: firstly, a religious man who has arrogance in his mind. Secondly, a religious man who displays arrogance in his action by overpowering himself in the public (Foduye, n.y.:13). Thirdly, a religious man who displays arrogance through his speech which subsequently leads him to be proud and ostentatious will ask when someone is mentioned with his qualities; who he is? And what is his action?

A religious man will talk much (in order to show that others are least to him in religious services). He will continue praising himself by saying: “I do not sleep at night; I complete the *Al-Qur’an* every day, I do not break the fast since so and so date”. He is also always trying to show his virtues in order to differentiate himself from others, and he is praising and commending himself in order to show his miracles. Furthermore, because of ostentation, when a religious man gets people praying at night, he would pray more than what they are praying in order to show that he is a religious man who is staying long at night praying and reciting the *Al-Qur’an* as well as remembering Allah with *tasbih* (Foduye, n.y.:14).

It is important to know that a religious man is doing that in order to scorn others and ridicule them for not doing like him, but this is not the character of a true believer. Whatever they do is for the sake of Allah and to seek His pleasure and forgiveness. Whoever does any

religious service to show off will end up with nothing because Allah will not reward him, rather He will punish him for wanting to get the acknowledgement of others. It is a kind of associating Allah with others.

One would not get reward from anybody besides Allah. When one intends to get it from someone it is *shirk*. Thus, Allah would only judge people according to their intention, not on the basis of what they are claiming or saying. That is why *taqwah* is in the heart not in the tongue. Allah would not look at one's body rather He would look at his heart and deeds (Foduye, n.y.:13).

According to 'Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.), the remedy for arrogance in religious service is to present oneself before people in a humble manner and follow the conduct of the humble and modest.⁷ This is for the learned person, but besides him, people are divided into those whose sins are hidden and expressed. For the one whose sins are hidden, a religious person should not take pride, because he knows not whether his sins are lesser than him or not. On the other hand, one whose sins are exposed, a religious man should not show arrogance towards him (Foduye, n.y.:15).

Another remedy for arrogance is for a person to realize that on the Day of Resurrection, he will be called upon in a form like an ant, which will be trampled underfoot. Arrogant people are hated by other people just as they are hated by Allah; people love humble, tolerant, and gentle people. They hate those who are harsh and cruel to people.⁸

However, it is crucial to know the meaning

⁷It is important to know that in Islam, it is forbidden for someone to purify himself. It is only Allah who knows all what exists in the heart of his creatures. However, whoever claims purity is indirectly claiming one of the duties of Allah. That is why Allah forbids that, one should not claim purity. He is the only one, who knows the best and the pious among you (cf. Abu Dawud, n.y.; Abul Husain, n.y.; Muhammad, n.y.; Javadi-Amoli, 2012; al-Asfahini, 2014; Abi Dharr, 2015; and Milani, 2015).

⁸See, for example, Azan Abbas. (2011). "Arrogance / Types of Arrogance / Remedies for Arrogance". Available online also at: <http://dawahblog.wordpress.com/2011/06/05/arrogance/arrogance1/> [accessed in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: October 29, 2015].

of religious worships or *'ibadah*, in order to be careful of one who holds others in contempt, because of their religious services. One can be cured from this disease when he knows what Allah loves, and what pleases Him. On this basis, it is important to know that the correct concept of servitude or *'ibadah* is very comprehensive. *'Ibadah* as *Shaykh al-Islam* Ahmad ibn Abdul Halim ibn Abdussalam ibn Taymiyyah (n.y.), in his well-known and widely accepted definition, is:

A noun comprising every word or deed internal or manifest, that Allah loves and approves. This includes prayer, *zakat*, fasting, pilgrimage, speaking the truth, fulfilling trusts, doing good to parents and relatives, keeping promises, enjoining good, forbidding evil, *jihad* against the disbelievers and hypocrites, good behaviour towards neighbours, orphans, the poor, travellers, slaves and animals, prayer and supplication, remembering God and reading the Qur'an and so on.

Similarly, it includes to love Allah and His Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), to fear Him and turn to Him in repentance, to be patient in adversity and thankful in prosperity, to resign oneself to Allah's decrees, to put one's trust in His help, to hope for His Mercy, and to fear His punishment. All these form part of *'ibadah* or worship and servitude to Allah (ibn Taymiyyah, n.y.:449).

Clearly, acceptable *'ibadah* on the part of Allah is the one which comprises of all that has been mentioned by Ahmad ibn Abdul Halim ibn Abdussalam ibn Taymiyyah (n.y.). Thus, true *'ibadah* is to do what Allah obliges you to do, and to be hopeful of His Mercy and fearful of His Punishment. Therefore, remedy for any kind of pride is to do *'ibadah* for the sake of Allah, and to seek His love, and obedience through His Messenger, otherwise it would not be considered an *'ibadah* (Taymiyyah, n.y.).

'Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.), further, says as follows:

[...] know O dear reader's arrogance is among the destructive evils no one is free from it. It is compulsory or incumbent on us to remove it. It cannot be removed by mere intention, but it would undergo the treatment to uproot it. There

are two stages of treatment. The first stage is that the root of pride shall be uprooted. The second stage is that the impediments or the causes which generate pride or lead man to be pried over others have to be removed (Foduye, n.y.:15-16).

The remedy for uprooting arrogance in the heart of someone is knowledge and action. The remedy will not be effective without the combination of the two. For through knowledge, man should be able to know himself and his Creator. It is sufficient for him to remove the arrogance when he knows himself much more; he will know that glory and pride are only entitled to Allah.

‘Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.) wrote extensively on Allah, His Glory and Majesty. Those who are blessed by Allah are those who are endowed with the ability to understand. It is enough for someone to be humble and inferior. Thus, it is enough for someone to know the meaning of one verse in the Glorious *Al-Qur’an*. Off-course, in the *Al-Qur’an*, there is information about the first and last generations. Allah says in the *Al-Qur’an*, verse of *‘Abasa*, as follows:

Be cursed (the disbelieving) man! How ungrateful he is! (*‘Abasa*, 17).

From what thing (i.e. substance) did He create him (*‘Abasa*, 18).

From *Nutfah* (male and female semen drops). He created him and set him in due proportion (*‘Abasa*, 19).

Then He makes the Path easy for him (*‘Abasa*, 20).

Then He causes him to die and puts him in his grave (*‘Abasa*, 21).

Then when it is His will, He will resurrect him (*‘Abasa*, 22).

It is also significant to know that all the explanations in the above mentioned verses serve to show man the essence of his being in this world. It is clearly understood that man’s ultimate goal of his existence is to worship Allah alone and associate no partners to Him. Man should also think that he and urine came out of the same place; that he began as a

despised drop of sperm and he will end up as a rotten corpse, and that in between he is a vessel for stool. So, what does he has to feel so proud and arrogant?

Third, Remedies for Arrogance in Lineage.

Lineage is the third among the causes of the disease of arrogance mentioned by ‘Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.). He, however, does not mention its remedies in his manuscript. We can discuss its remedies, and what if man takes care would guide him to eradicate arrogance caused by lineage in his heart (Adam, 2013; and al-Hajj, 2013).

It is a great disease as regards to what is happening in our contemporary life. For example, in Nigeria, there is a short poem “who are you? And who do you know?” Meaning that do you have any governmental position or any relations with somebody in authority, or is your father somebody? As a result of this problem, one can find many people taking pride/arrogance, because of their position in governmental activities or in any higher position in the government.

Similarly, most of the people forget to know that there is only one supreme power over all of creations, and that is Allah. Hence, for the remedy of this disease, man should think that at any moment the one who is proud as a result of lineage may be replaced by somebody, or he can be removed from his power. Otherwise, he would not remain forever, because there is death. Death is just a final block of whatever chance man thinks of.

Man should think that on the Day of Judgment, his offspring, family members, blood relations, and friends would not benefit him in whatsoever case, except his good deeds and sound mind. This is the statement of Allah the Most High, in the *Al-Qur’an*, verse of *Al-Shu‘ara*, 88, as follows: “The day on which property will not avail, or sons, except him who comes to Allah with a heart free, from evil” (cited in al-Hilali & Khan, 2010).

Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (1995) explains more on the remedies of arrogance caused by lineage. According to

him, if one takes pride in his lineage, let him treat this disease of his heart after knowing two things: one of the two things is that he should know that he is getting respect not for his own quality but for that of another. He cites a poem, which is as follows: "If you take pride in your honourable ancestors, true you are. But Alas, their children are not so" (al-Ghazali, 1995:317).

A man who is arrogant because of his lineage, what benefit will he get owing to the honour of his ancestors? If his predecessor would have been alive he would have taken pride, he would have said:

Honour is for me, who are you? You are merely a drop of my urine. You have been created of the worm of my semen. He, who has been created of the worm of my semen, cannot be superior to the worm of lower animals. Honour does not belong to man, due to this worm but for his soul which comes from Allah.

The second thing is that he could not recognize his real ancestor. His father was created of an obnoxious matter and his earliest ancestor was created of earth. Allah gave this news by saying: "He created everything in the most perfect manner. He began creation of man from earth. Then, he made his successors from semen, in a mixture of contemptible water. So man's origin is earth which is trodden upon. How can he take pride in his ancestry?" (cited in al-Ghazali, 1995).

Fourth, Remedies for Arrogance in Beauty. Beauty is one of the seven causes of arrogance, said 'Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.). It is important to know that *Shaykh* 'Uthman bin Foduye does not mention the remedy for the disease of arrogance that is caused by beauty in his manuscript; he only mentioned that it was among the causes of arrogance and he gave only what would serve to be remedy for the whole heart diseases as mentioned earlier. However, the remedy for this disease can be found in other sources (Fodio, 2012; Adam, 2013; and al-Hajj, 2013).

For the remedy of beauty, man should think that to take pride in beauty is not entitled to him, because the one who created him has the absolute rights at any time to change

his creation into another shape as a result of accident. He may lose his leg, hand, or any part of his body. He may also burn his skin. These are great remedies for man to overcome this problem. That is why some sage said: "once man is not dead, his creation is not yet finished" (Fodio, 2012).

Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (1995) mentioned in his *I'ya' Ulum al-Din*, the remedy for arrogance based on beauty. He advises men to look to one's internal impurity. Look to your stomach which is filled with urine and stool. You have got stool in your stomach, urine in your urinal canal, mucus coming out of your nostril, spittle in your mouth, blood in your veins, bad smell underneath your genital organ, sweat underneath your armpit, bad smell of stool as a result of your washing it with hands. These are signs of your impurity. Your origin is from obnoxious semen mixed with the impure blood of menstruation. The sage 'U'us said to Caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz: "can he whose belly is full of stool and urine take pride?" This was uttered before he became Caliph (cited in al-Ghazali, 1995).

Fifth, Remedies for Arrogance in Strength. 'Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.) said that strength is among the seven causes of the disease of arrogance. But, he did not mention its remedy. Therefore, in this discussion, we can out 'Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.) line what would be the remedy for this disease and how can one avoid it (Adam, 2013; and al-Hajj, 2013). It is understood that the *Al-Qur'an* is the remedy for any kind of spiritual disease. Although, remembering Allah in all activities, man can easily overcome the disease of arrogance caused by strength.

It is also noted that there is neither power nor strength more than that of Allah who is omnipotent. It is good remedy for a man to think that power and strength are not being fit to anybody, but to Allah the Most High. As we have explained earlier that whoever claims to have any of the attributes of Allah would be an infidel, because Allah is not sharing any of His attributes with any of His creatures.

To recover from this kind of disease caused by strength, it is good for man to turn to Allah in whatever befalls him. It is totally forbidden for a Muslim to say whether Allah assists him or not, he can get what he wants regardless. Man must believe in the divine destiny of Allah on all of His creatures. In order to understand the good remedy for this disease, it is important to refer to what Allah says about the attitude of the pious believers. In this regard, Allah says in the *Al-Qur'an*, verse *Al-Baqarah*, 256, as follows: "Truly, to Allah we belong and truly, to Him we shall return" (cited in al-Hilali & Khan, 2010).

Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (1995) explains the remedies of pride/arrogance for strength, he has this to say, it is to know the disease which is strong. If your head gives you pain, all your strength becomes baffled. If a fly takes something from you, you cannot recover it from it. If a mosquito or ant enters your nostril or your ear, you may die. If you are attacked with fever for one day, you lose such strength as cannot be recovered after many days. So, when you have got no strength even of a thorn and you cannot recover a minor thing from a fly, should you take pride of your strength? Nobody is stronger than an elephant, or a tiger, or a camel (al-Ghazali, 1995:318).

Hence, it is significant to know that, man who is incapable of all, what has been mentioned by Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (1995), has no basis to be arrogant. It is sufficient for him to know that the power belongs to Allah alone. By remembering this always, he can easily recover from the disease based on strength. Man should also remember that since he is weak, and he is created out of weak substance. He should know that he cannot compete with his Creator. He should totally submit to His Creator, and to obey His Prophet (al-Ghazali, 1995).

Sixth, Remedies for Arrogance in Wealth. Arrogance is also caused by wealth, as 'Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.) mentioned. But, he did not mention the remedies for the disease of arrogance caused by wealth in his manuscript.

Therefore, we can find its remedies in order to understand the issue clearly (Adam, 2013; and al-Hajj, 2013).

Nowadays, wealth is the most important thing in our lives. It makes someone arrogant, because he thinks that he can get anything he wants (*cf* Picken, 2011; Mohahed, 2012; and Perkins, 2012). According to the *Al-Qur'an*, Allah tests man with fortune and misfortune. Man's reactions to both, can either gain him the pleasure of Allah or His wrath. Qarun, despite his huge wealth, he denied to give the rights of his wealth, subsequently Allah destroyed him (cited in al-Hilali & Khan, 2010).

However, in order to understand the good remedy for this disease, it is important to remember what happened to him (Qarun) as Allah stated in the *Al-Qur'an*. For example, Allah says in the *Al-Qur'an*, verse of *Al-Qa'as*, 76-78, as follows:

Qarun was one of the people of Musa, but he treated them unjustly. We had granted him such treasures that their very keys would have been too heavy a burden for a band of strong men. His people said to him: "Do not exult [in your riches]; for Allah does not love those who are exultant. Seek instead, by means of what Allah has granted you, the good of the life to come, without forgetting your rightful share in this world; and do good just as Allah has done good to you, and do not seek to spread corruption on earth; for Allah does not love the ones who spread corruption". Answered him: "I have been given this wealth only by virtue of the knowledge that I have" (cited in al-Hilali & Khan, 2010).

Commenting on this verses, Sayyid Qutb (2010), in his *In the Shade of the Qur'an*, says that this is how the story begins, naming its main character, Qārūn, and his community, "the people of Moses", as well as the way he treated his people, which was unjust. It also tells us right at the very start the reason for such injustice, namely wealth: "We had granted him such treasures that their very keys would have been too heavy a burden for a band of strong men" (Qutb, 2010:218-219).

Similarly, for the remedies of the disease caused by wealth, Abu Hamid Muhammad

al-Ghazali (1995) said: is the worst kind of pride. He who takes pride in wealth is like the man who takes pride of his conveyance and house. If the conveyance is lost and if the house falls down, one becomes sorry for them. So, how can a rich man be proud of his wealth? The Jews are the richest nation in the world in wealth, but they are kicked out of every land. It is foolishness to boast of these things. You are merely a slave and nothing is under your control (al-Ghazali, 1995:318).

Moreover, it is sufficient for a man upon knowing the above mentioned facts to cure his disease of arrogance caused by owning wealth. It is also a good remedy for him to cure this disease, because Allah Who gave him the wealth has the absolute right and power to take it away from him, and give it to others as what happened in the past generations as well as in our contemporary life.

This is particularly the case of many politicians today who got much wealth when they were elected, but after their retirement you feel sorry for them because during their time in office, their eyes were closed as they did not help the poor and needy. They refused to give the rights of the needy from out of their wealth, because of this Allah seizes it (the wealth) from them. For example, in our country, there are many politicians who got many things during their time, such as many houses, cars, plots of land, etc., but unfortunately today, they have nothing. Some are so poor that they themselves became in need of help.

Seventh, Remedies for Arrogance Caused by Popularity. Popularity is the seventh and the last element that causes the disease of arrogance, according to 'Uthman bin Foduye (n.y.). However, he did not mention its remedies in his manuscript. We will deal with it here. It is the disease that attacks most of the rulers, kings, and leaders. The rulers in most cases instead of seeking help from Allah, they solely relied on their supporters. This is what led them to be arrogant on earth. For the remedy of this disease, it is important for a

ruler to think that success comes from Allah, if he asks for His assistance definitely Allah will assist him. In this case, it is not good for him to say we can get success without saying "if Allah wills". Thus, to pray for Allah for success and equip well his supporters then, by the will of Allah they can get success (Fodio, 2012; Adam, 2013; and al-Hajj, 2013).

The rulers or kings, in order to be cured from this disease of popularity, it is significant to remember what happened to previous generations who were destroyed by Allah, because of their pride. For example, the most powerful Empires of Persia and Rome, despite their huge power, they were conquered and destroyed (cf Kandhelwi, 2010; Jasser, 2012; and Muhammad, 2013).

It is also interesting to know what Allah said to Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu 'Alaihi Wassalam* or Peace be Upon Him) on the Day of *Hunayn*.⁹ In order to take it as a great remedy/lesson to whoever boasts of his military power. For example, Allah says in the *Al-Qur'an*, verse of *Al-Taubah*, 25, as follows:

Truly, Allah has given you victory in many battle fields, and on the day of *Hunayn* when you rejoiced at your great number, but it availed you nothing and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight (cited in al-Hilali & Khan, 2010).

Allah, the Exalted and Ever High, states that victory does not depend on numbers or collecting amount of weapons, and shields. Rather, victory is from Him the Exalted. He says in the *Al-Qur'an*, verse of *Al-Baqarah*, 249, that: "How often has a small group overcome a mighty group by Allah's will? And Allah is with the patient" (cited in al-Hilali & Khan, 2010).

Ibn Kathir, as cited by Fakhruddin al-Razi (n.y.); Muhammad H. Mar'iy (2010); Ahmad ibn Hanbal (2013); and Sayyid Abul Ala al-Maududi (2013), said that Allah, then,

⁹It is the battle that occurred after the victory of Makkah, in the month of *Shawwal* of the eight year of *Hijrah*. For further information about this event, see Abi Ja'afar Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Ubairi (n.y.); Muhammad Fu'ad Abdul-Baqi (2013); and Abdurrahman ibn Nasir al-Sa'adi (2014).

mentioned the handful of sand that His Prophet threw at the disbelievers during the day of *Badr*,¹⁰ when he went out of his bunker. While in the bunker, the Prophet invoked Allah humbly and expressing his neediness before Allah. He, then, threw a handful of sand at the disbelievers and said, “Humiliated be their faces”. He, then, commanded his companions to start fighting with sincerity and they did. Allah made this handful of sand enter the eyes of the idolaters, each one of them was struck by some of it, and it distracted them from making each of them busy. Allah said in the *Al-Qur’an*, verse of *Al-Anfal*, 17, as follows: “*And you threw not when you did throw, but Allah threw*” (cited in al-Hilali & Khan, 2010).

Therefore, it is Allah Who made the sand reach their eyes and made busied them busy with it, not you (O Muhammad). Muhammad bin Ishaq said that Muhammad bin Ja’afar ibn al-Zubair narrated to him that ‘Urwah bin al-Zubair said about Allah’s statement: “*That He might test the believers by a fair trial from Him*”. So that the believers knew Allah’s favor for them by giving them victory over their enemy even though, their enemy was numerous, while they were few (cited in Basit Khan, 2014).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that *Shaykh* ‘Uthman bin Foduye emerged in the nineteenth century with the mission to revive and spread Islam in the Western Sudan (West Africa). He played an important role out of his sincerity, which he displayed in carrying out his mission. He demonstrated his devotion and his sincerity to revive the *Sunnah* and eradicate innovations that prevailed in the *Hausaland* (West Africa). He came at a time when the *Hausaland* characterized

by paganism and idol worshipping.

Shaykh ‘Uthman bin Foduye wrote *Shifa’ al-Nufus* owing to the spiritual diseases that were attacking Muslims, in order for the Muslims to be cured from these kinds of diseases for which a doctor has no medicine except to return to Allah with obedience, and practiced what He exactly commanded. It is on this basis that the whole discussion has focussed. This paper is an invitation to the Muslim community to return to the teachings of ‘Uthman bin Foduye whose *Jama’a* (his companions and disciples) remained safe, until the appearance of the British who destroyed the *Khilafa* (Sokoto Caliphate in today’s Northern-Nigeria) and burnt many of his books for fear that they will inspire his people to rise against the oppressors.

The *Shaykh* ‘Uthman bin Foduye explained that the main purpose of his monograph is to make easier for the readers and students to know the destructive evils of arrogance. The book is very important in terms of reviving the heart of the Muslims to be nourished with piety, sincerity, and humility. It is understood that arrogance was the major factor among the destructive evils that is why we chose to discuss it as a result of what is happening in our societies today.

In order to continue undertaking research on this topic, it is suggested that Muslim scholars should continue working hard to enlighten the Muslims as regard to the dangers of arrogance and its influences. This would only be achieved when *Imams* discuss it in their Friday sermons (*khutbah*), and in other public lectures.

For the purpose of further research, the following suggestions are very important: How can our Muslim scholars avoid arrogance and in what capacity can man know arrogance despite the knowledge of his origin? Why do lecturers, students hold contempt to one another? Why most of the Nigerian lecturers are not humble to their students? Why don’t they follow the teachings of ‘Uthman bin Foduye?¹¹

¹¹**Statement:** Herewith, we declare that this paper is our own work; it is not product of plagiarism and not yet also be reviewed as well as be published by other scholarly journals.

¹⁰It is the battle that took place in the blessed month of *Ramadan* in the 2nd year after the *Hijrah*. The battle of *Badr* has been referred to in the *Al-Qur’an* as the “Day of *Furqan*”. *Furqan* in Arabic means to separate and to distinguish truth from falsehood. On that Day, He (Allah) gave the believers a sound victory and vanquished the hopes and aspirations of the disbelievers who were attempting to bring an end to the growing Islamic movement. See, for example, Abdul Basit Khan (2014).

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