

THE PATH TO UMMAHOOD IN NIGERIA



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First published, 2010

Published by
SADAQATU TAYYIBATUN FOUNDATION
Post Office Box 2630,
Minna, Nigeria.

www.sadtayyfoundation.org

INTRODUCTION

This book is a simple collection of papers initially written as contributions at different forums.

The first material was written in 1995 and delivered at the Kaduna State Polytechnic, Zaria under the auspices of Gamji Club. I remain grateful to Nuhu Musa Mohammed who persuaded me to participate.

This is followed by the second, which was delivered at Educational Resource Centre, Minna under the auspices of ABU-TURAB ISLAMIC CENTRE. I am grateful to Umar Larat for his insistence that I make a contribution.

The third was gingered by the considerate invitation that came to me through Sheikh Siraj Abdulkareem of Islamic Trust of Nigeria on his way back to Sudan. I was therefore only able to scribble it and send to the organisers of the Ummah convention '96 (National Islamic Centre, Zaria). I pray that it was made available to the audience and that it made sense, at the venue of Hajj Camp, Kaduna.

My gratitude goes to Dr. Aliyu Mamman who committed me to make the fourth contribution.

The fifth was a contribution at Abuja Muslim Forum.

Postscript one is included because of the central status of sincerity in Islam. I am grateful to Yabagi Alfa who accepted to deliver it at a Muslim Students Society convention in my absence, at Kontagora, after it was first written.

Postscript two is a rewinding emphasis and clarification on what defines the path of Allah and what believers can expect from Allah, as we do our best if we truly believe.

I have been tempted to put these together to satisfy an indication by Brother Muhammad Turi who read through the seven books of my Foundation and expressed the wish that a material focusing on Muslim community was equally attempted.

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**DISCIPLINE AS THE EXPLANATORY SOLUTION TO ALL
EXPLANATORY SOLUTIONS THAT HAVE FAILED IN
CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA**

BY

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Being the text of a contribution to a symposium
organised by
GAMJI CLUB, Kaduna State Polytechnic Chapter, Zaria
on Saturday 10th June, 1995.

INTRODUCTION

First, I submit that any contribution to this symposium needs to take cognizance of the fact that it is in remembrance of Late Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto. It is this man whose physical and total orientation that an artist found so definite, strong and remarkable, that he compared him to the tree, GAMJI. And it is the man's outstanding record that has served as an impetus or a basis for forming a whole club in his memory.

For any contribution on the platform of this club to be relevant, it must relate itself to what Sardauna stood for in considering our contemporary history. Any deviation from this will amount to a naught. This is because the essence of forming this memorial club is to suggest that the thing(s) that Sardauna stood for remain relevant to our finding solutions to our problems. This will be as far as ideological orientation is concerned. In practical terms, it will be expected that the club pursues a total identification with late Sardauna, to give people the hope for all the good things associated with Sardauna.

With the stand of Sardauna as the basis or background, whatever analytical framework may be employed in explaining our problems or finding solutions, we can safely arrive at an understanding of the effectiveness or weakness of what Sardauna stood for. In this way alone, can we improve our knowledge and understanding or make a critique of the Sardauna stand, the activities of Late Sardauna himself, those who use his name to deceive our people in order to cheat or appreciate genuine efforts by some of our people, in order to come to grasp with why they fail.

Any departure from this will amount to intellectual indiscipline, because it will be essentially inconsistent with the umbrella under which and for which we have all gathered here. It will be as serious as mistaking former Kodiano Hotel for Kaduna State Polytechnic or the Rector's office for students' toilet. Either of these will be worse than being merely opportunistic.

My contribution to this symposium is intended to be a very simple one. I will attempt to explain the failure of all explanatory solutions by the lack of a single explanatory solution that is required to cut across all forms and levels of explanatory solutions.

An explanatory solution is any standard or rules, model, framework, outlook or paradigm that is employed in explaining or solving a problem or both. This explanatory solution may be requirements for admission into this polytechnic. It may be Islam or Christianity. It may be mixed Economy. It may be Democracy. It may be Socialism. It can be in respect of an issue, like the form and content of a project you write, as a partial requirement to qualify for the award of an academic certificate e.g. National Diploma, Higher National Diploma, Degree etc. It can be in respect of an institution or organisation like this polytechnic. It can be TOTAL and PERVASIVE like in the case of religion or ideology.

I will attempt to show that except an explanatory solution cuts across all aspects of our livelihood, we can only have sparks of satisfaction but never a flow. In other words, our overcoming of a problem or problems will be ad-hoc, temporary, arising from disjointedness, disagreement or variation in the numerous explanatory solutions to be

employed for different problems. We must have a TOTAL coverage of all forms and levels of human endeavour in order to secure solutions to our problems, from the explanations we give them.

I will try to do this by defining the explanatory solution as DISCIPLINE and showing how, from admission into this Polytechnic, it is abused. How the results of this failure is worsened in the context of the standard identity of Zaria i.e. Islam or Muslims and how this is applicable nation-wide. I will show how this is sustained through the ad-hoc discipline of mixed Economy, which is why it is a failure in satisfying the needs of our society. It will also show how politics, the master art, is characterized by hypocrisy or insufficient discipline. The result of the combination of all is regrettably what we have as Nigeria - as a state and as a polity.

I have not set out to outline how an exemplary explanatory solution cuts across and solves all the problems. But I will close up by drawing from the words that we cannot deny late Sardauna who lived and has continued to be assessed to have fairly succeeded. He tried to be a Muslim all round.

THE EXPLANATION

I wish to submit that the singular explanatory solution which defines the life wire of our total livelihood is inescapably and indisputably DISCIPLINE. In other words the failures of our explanatory solutions when they are applied, is informed by the lack or deviation from DISCIPLINE.

The phenomenon of discipline is characterized by six related attributes. These include CONSISTENCY, SUFFICIENT/REASONABLE SCOPE, FITNESS, ACCEPTANCE arising from RECOGNITION and SATISFACTION. It therefore connotes a standard.

Thus in our livelihood, any act or a chain of actions and idea(s) or opinions that are informed by a system, an order or standard with the effect of generating the above characteristics is disciplined. From this we can make deductions or derivations:

- i. Anyone who is in compliance is describable as disciplined.
- ii. Anyone who is a follower of a master of the standard is a disciple.
- iii. The standard, in the form of a body of ideas or behaviour, like in the case of a subject of study or regimental service, is a discipline.

One can therefore accordingly talk of a political scientist, a politician and political science respectively.

The essence and relevance of discipline is that it enables us to assess the actor or action as correct, right or otherwise. The elements that therefore together warrant our definition of an activity as disciplined must be known, shared and give satisfaction. It is these that justify our compelling other(s) to comply or face sanction. And for those who regularly comply, they are rewarded, safe and inspire others. Thus a research or write up in political science can be identified and assessed as belonging or not. A politician, who occupies himself with the struggle and possession of power for use cannot be mistaken. And the discipline of political science cannot be denied to exist and that it is in fact

developing. The rewards and satisfactions take the forms of university degrees, elections to public office, military take over etc. If we are to take religion, there is the religion of Islam or Christianity. The follower is the Muslim or Christian. The study is different from these two. The faithful and the unbeliever have only the tenants of either of the religions as the standard for assessing the adherent. Thus, when it comes to Islam, the Muslim, the Christian and unbeliever all accept Allah as one and that Muhammad is His Messenger. The rewards for Islam is for instance, good in this world and in the hereafter.

I therefore intend to show that our livelihood lacks a TOTAL DISCIPLINE and that it is the root and basis for all our failures in spite of all efforts we have been putting in and may continue to put in.

THE PROBLEM

I wish to suggest that our livelihood is characterized by the distortion of discipline. The result or the state is therefore definable as either hypocritical or indiscipline, as irresponsible. This is because it is enmeshed in INCONSISTENCY, AD-HOCNESS and TEMPORARY or IMMEDIATE CONVENIENCE. Sociologists will say it serves sub-cultures.

Thus, our activities, when situated, we cannot hold out to claim them to be correct, except from one side. Indeed we do not see or assess the sanctioning of such as wrong. However, what makes it complicated is that we don't fail to get the ordinary sympathy of some private beneficiaries from such deeds. And worse still, if we escape the hand of law, we can be rewarded by a good number, through admiration. Thus, just like people will possess a qualifying certificate for a given study and may not be able to justify such possession, the same with holding an office, material status or religious leadership, like the military and the civilians interchange in politics, so is the mixed economy we operate and the difficulty in separating between believers and unbelievers.

The problem is not to deny the place for the dialectics of history, for progress or retrogression. That, movement comes about through mutual opposition of related factors or forces are not disputed, unwarranted or unexpected. The point being made is that such movement is always responsibly based upon an orderliness that is consistent and in such a large scope that its variation from the existing standard is what gives it its identity. There is no hiding place or shame in the identity of the opposing side. Thus for example, in the field or study or practice of politics, my suggestion is not to deny democrats or democracy a place; Islam or Muslims a place. Indeed even within democracy, there is permission for variation.

ADMISSION INTO THIS POLYTECHNIC

In order to appreciate DISCIPLINE as the explanatory solution that applies to the issue of admission into this Polytechnic, the standards that define admissibility inevitably include:

- i. Application by interested candidates
- ii. Declaration of candidates' qualifications to claim consideration.
- iii. Vacancies that can be accommodated or managed by the polytechnic.

- iv. Certification or verification of the qualifications claimed by applicants.
- v. Registration of candidates who comparatively fair better or best.
- vi. Quota representation of all local government councils and the nation provided no candidate is admitted with less than the minimum pre-requisite qualifications.

By these standards, those who put in their applications after the declared closing date will not be considered. They would have only contributed to the revenue of the polytechnic. Those who rightly declare their insufficient qualifications will not be invited or given any offer. From among qualified candidates only the top-most number will be offered places in the polytechnic. Thus, if one thousand people apply and seven hundred and eighty one are found to qualify, only the top-most (for the number of vacancies) will be offered admission. From among these, only those whose claims of qualifications and credentials are certified by the polytechnic will be registered at all. If there are fall outs, the next best group will be offered places. This is how batches of admissions will come about. And for quota, it will be the best from every group. These will be from each local government council in Kaduna State and from the spaces for no indigenes.

The probability is that, if this is what operates in this polytechnic, passes will always be largely of high quality. The credibility and respect for students, teachers and management will be high. This polytechnic will almost instil positive fear in prospective members. This will be the result of consistent compliance - DISCIPLINE.

But, if money is allowed to play a role that is inconsistent with the set up, it will distort the end results. For instance, if those giving out the form can withhold the forms before the closing date and release it on payment of additional money, the end result will be different. If, by use of money, a candidate can still secure an application form after the closing date, it will result in some distortion. If, instead of money, a superior officer or officer will compel the release of form after the closing date or if either money or office will be employed to compel receipt of the form(s) after the closing date, the results will be wrong. If the giver or receiver will consider the candidate's or his representative's religion, tribe or place of origin against others, it will distort the end result. If the giver or receiver or their agents will go into sexual relation as an influential factor to vary the standard, the end result will be different. These will all affect what would have been properly, eligible applicants to be considered.

If the same factors are allowed to determine or influence the standard of selection from among the more than the vacancies that have to be considered, the result of the quality of selection will not be meritorious. And if the factors that will make the standard inconsistent powerfully proceed to get to the level of who is registered, who becomes a student of this polytechnic, the costs and implications can only be imagined.

The immediate costs in terms of money and time for any measure of indiscipline that is allowed will be revealed in not getting optimum results. This is because the set of students are wrong for the right lecturers because the management, the candidates or their representatives have abused, by collaboration, for immediate convenience, the

standards for compliance by all. This is because while some candidates simply put up their applications and their credentials on time, some had added sleeping or money or religious identity or tribal identity, or the identity of place or origin or the position of one's representative, to the credentials forwarded in the application.

This in my candid opinion explains eventual withdrawal of some students in the course of their studies. This will be their fate, after their money or privacy has been enjoyed. Those who will be so affected are usually, the most disgraceful or abusive of the standards. Others will make up through re-sits that would have been unnecessary. Others will have to change their course altogether. Still, the majority will pass only lowly. And this is on the assumption that the factors of INDISCIPLINE will completely cease to operate after the registration of students. However, if money, office, religion and tribe along with bottom power still continue to contribute in the processing of the raw materials that are admitted into this polytechnic, the results will be wonders. The products will in terms of quality be at times disgraceful. They will be empty, unhelpful and useless. But they will have the certificate. There will then be instances where a student can sleep her way to graduating or paying through or the constant misuse of office like that of friendly teachers appealing to one another for the passing of one another's woman. It will not be different, in the case of a daughter, a sister or wife of a fellow teacher or some big administrator. It will be INDISCIPLINE.

I am therefore not impressed by resources wasteful solutions to cover up such INDISCIPLINE. This takes the form of remedial programme that serves as an avenue for recruiting purely unqualified people for retraining. It is in my opinion a boom, a market for indiscipline, for abuse of standards. I can imagine unserious candidates having to pay or sleep to get into remedial programme and paying or sleeping through to the programmes for which this polytechnic is established. Another boom is the devise of developing and running ordinary diploma courses that are not accredited by the National Board for Technical Education or a recognized university. Indeed, the certificates are not recognised outside Kaduna State. In other words this polytechnic established with standards can be reduced to a mockery, a disgrace, a market place, for majority of its records. And where the abuse becomes the rule, my position is that the abuses should be eliminated. And the simple way of doing this is to declare the details of the standard(s) and stick to it.

I imagine that it will be interesting to take records of a decade in this polytechnic to see how the standards have failed from the applications received, the quality of the candidates, those taken, the passes, re-sits, withdrawals and the proportion of girls etc.

IN RELATION TO THE STANDARDS OF ZARIA MUSLIM SOCIETY

If there is indiscipline in this Polytechnic to the extent that the abuses are greater than the conformities, one will expect that, with time the foundations from this Polytechnic will have far reaching effects on the discipline or standards of Zaria Society. And where some elements of indiscipline already exist or thrive in Zaria Society, when it meets up with those of this Polytechnic the mess will stink.

Indeed, I want to suggest that, it is the very situation. And this can be appreciated in consideration of the fact that this polytechnic largely admits youths, who are to become leaders and parents of tomorrow. They will take over the making of our society with time. And the standard of marriage and family up-bringing will give a little insight.

With the ladies that become undisciplined or corrupted, they stand the risk of not getting hooked up easily for marriage because they have participated in the sexual looseness that this polytechnic has allowed in contradiction to its standards. The more they grow, the higher their certificates and the more responsible positions they are entrusted with, the lesser the chance they stand to get suitable partners. Indeed they will also dream of getting ready-made partners. And because the freedom of strangers (non Zarians who have different standards) in Zaria environment goes to enlarge such indiscipline Polytechnic may constantly have a pool of such people.

But, their male partners will reject them for marriage. Both males and the very few females who escape such involvement jointly condemn those who got involved in indiscipline. They will all be crying for virgins. Everybody knows that contraceptive devices have been popularised. Part-time prostitution is in vogue. Drug shops are making money for prevention or cure of venereal diseases. Sexual stimulants, cosmetics and abortion make the indiscipline colourful. Whatever a man can do, a woman can do better. The state of hypocrisy is revealed in the fact that you rarely find members of this Polytechnic getting married to one another. This is because we all know what we are and know what we want, to be different. It is not common to find people in this Polytechnic who do not have the means to marry fasting, if they are Muslims. How many members of this Polytechnic who have not been married have not made love? Is it not common place to find cases of nominal conversions in religion for marriage convenience? And the Zaria larger society fuels this State by enlarging the pool through expensive marriage processes for the young men or wrong and forced marriage matching. Marriages therefore breakdown or the courts aid the breakage. The consequence of all of these includes single women, single parenthood, pregnancy by mistake, sex before marriage, prostitution, adultery. The mothers of tomorrow forming a party of looseness everywhere. Some eventually transform into leaders of women or business women. They become models that their admirers in the context of the discipline of Zaria Society, will not wish for their sisters or wives or parents. It is therefore not surprising to have the unnecessary need for Hajj Tribunals to curb irresponsible people or orphanage homes in a society where brotherhood is central to its declared identity.

Thus, the combination or meeting together of this polytechnic and Zaria Society as entities with defined identities or standards is in reality for the worse. At best, we can only say that it was not the intention of either. Zaria that is not Islamic and Polytechnic that is not polytechnic gives you Zaria today.

THE LARGER INDISCIPLINE

Taking up Nigeria as a whole, what old city is an exemption from this kind of picture of

indiscipline? Is it Borno/Maiduguri? Yola? Bauchi? Kano? Katsina? Sokoto? Bida? Ibadan? Benin? Nsukka? Ilorin? Further, which of the polytechnics in this country does not suffer from such indiscipline? Are colleges of Education or Universities excluded? Indeed are working places exceptions? And what does a combination of all give? But, what future families, parents, children and society do we in consequence expect to get, from this kind of set up? Some time one is tempted to partly record even post-primary institutions in contributing to this revolution of indiscipline.

THE MEANS OF SUSTENANCE

With this problem of indiscipline in hand, the question that will arise is what and how is the indiscipline sustained or how are the standards of this polytechnic, those of this Zaria Society and Nigeria at large continuously abused or worsened and maintained?

In the first place, it will be appreciated that the young and adults of this country, the majority of which are like the one's produced by this polytechnic, hold the responsibility of keeping the entire society going by caring for themselves, the children and the old in addition to reproducing the society through births. In other words, the majority depend upon the minority. The argument that the working class is being over burdened and that this can be checked through family planning is too simplistic. This is because numbers in themselves do not carry constant values. Agriculture for instance can be practiced manually or mechanically. Rather, where the problem lies is that the working force lacks the discipline to maintain the nonworking classes. And avoiding the responsibility is no solution.

Secondly, it is worth appreciating that this dependence responsibility on the working force is to provide FOOD, DRINK, CLOTHING, HOUSING, HEALTH and EDUCATION for everybody, including itself.

Thirdly, the means for getting any of these is by transforming abstract capacities (labour) into values through a relationship to the natural gift of nature. In this way values either of USE, like food, drink, clothe, housing, health or education is produced. It may be of USEFUL value, like maize, alcohol, gowns, tent, drug or Islam. And it may be of EXCHANGE value, like Naira and Kobo. This is how every good and service is produced including human beings - through exertion of physical and mental energy in sexual relation that attains the release of sperm for reception and fertilization.

Fourthly, the acquisition of these values of use cannot be outside INHERITANCE, GIFT or WORK. It is by deliberate provision. And any that is inherited or given must have been earlier worked out or worked for. Thus, work is the central means of acquiring any of the use values or needs or wants or fancies.

Now, in Nigeria, we are told that mixed economy is the discipline or standard by which these are to be obtained or by which they are being obtained. That, this is essentially defined as a set up where the commanding heights of the economy are owned and controlled by the state, while the rest are allowed for the private sector is not enough.

What is vital is that reaching the use values is through WORK for PAY to make a LIVING. And this is irrespective of whether it is with the state or not or both.

Thus, we are variously employed in the civil service, public service, security services e.g. Police, Army, Customs, Immigration, Prison, NNPC, Central Bank, Federal Mortgage Bank, the Private Sector like commercial banks, factories, self employment/business enterprise or both like with multi-nationals in the form of oil companies etc. The meeting point for all is that, we are paid for our work, which we exchange for other needs.

And if we are to relate our earnings to our needs, it will appear to me that we shall be faced with a double and dubious distinction. In other words, if we are to take on average terms that each head of a family has some five people to cater for, to make for six, in addition to himself, we cannot explain our existence and the absence of satisfaction in our livelihood will be revealed. For example, for everybody that earns a salary or wage, how many earn up to six thousand naira a month? And is a thousand naira per head sufficient for sound living today? In fact don't we spend more than we actually earn? Is the best among us not already spending his pay in the next one year? And now that loans and overdrafts are not forthcoming, what will be the resort? The structural adjustments that are available include, sending your wards to bad schools, making them to go for hawking. Very soon the secondary school certificate examination will become unreachable. In other words, the earnings are not really enough and the needs are expanding. It is enough today to have a member of a family with measles or typhoid fever, have a new born or a member admitted into university, to have a taste of crises.

Money has become such a godly instrument that, even the imbalance between goods and services; the balance or ratio between needs, wants and fancies has been lost sight of as important. We only go around checking it through ad-hoc means like monetary policies of FOREX or MOPPING. If you take FOOD and DRINKS, the scope of participation in the forms of producing soft drinks, alcoholic drinks, beer parlours/off license centres, breweries, social joints and ceremonies outweighs food production that is allowed the society. This is because it pays more and fast. For instance, the amount of grains that our breweries consume will be enough to force prices down, at the cost of NO DRINKING; NO EMPLOYMENT IN DRINKING or anything relating to DRINKING that will be at the detriment of food/drink provision for the larger society. If you take housing, the majority of people are living in rented property. And those who live on this include landlords, estate valuers, banks, rent tribunals etc. In the area of health and education, these are wholly services.

In order to live, with our mixed economy the dialectical factors that we inevitably live with are therefore, investigations against crimes. Our society is full of codes of conduct, accountability talks, auditing or probes against new forms of crimes. This as a whole defines the means of sustenance that we operate. It is not only inconsistent but we consistently fail to control it for the benefit of the majority of us. In consequence, the only thing we continue to do is to sharpen and expand our indiscipline.

Regardless of the consistence we are able to identify, the scope is less than what will

give us the identity that we accept and will satisfy us continuously. This is precisely why all the positive results or reports like profits and promotions at individual, corporate or state level have not made any meaningful impact on our real livelihood. This savings from fuel increase stands at best to be enjoyed through bought up grains for hoarding by the government and later disposal at subsidised prices. This is what I call bad economics - a form of investment that does not regenerate value nor expand the benefits it creates. A typical example is the banking system that steals from people in the pretext of a contract and service while it does not take any risks but shares in benefits. And it pays out the stolen wealth by sharing, between share holders, the workers and the management. The money market is the palace of the god of our mixed economy. The priests are the managers and Directors; the worshippers are the customers, the disciples are the share holders and the witnesses are the bank workers.

MASTER PROOF OF INDISCIPLINE

In my opinion the source of finding out the master problem or solution of a society is in its politics. Where the master is a failure, the servants cannot get anywhere. Even the leadership of a flock of sheep has a definite meaning and objective for the sheep, the shepherd and non-members of the group. This does not apply to our politics. Thus, in the struggle for power and when it is possessed and the use to which it will be put is not known clearly even to the possessor, less the giver of the power. In campaigns, reasons of tribe, place of origin, religion and knowledge of the people's universal needs are therefore always admixed. The use of thuggery, money, magic and calling upon the Creator of the world are not left out. Thus, on coming to power, consistency is impossible. It is now tribe, at another time or place; it is religion, then coercion, then good speech or diplomacy. Assessment is therefore impossible. Indeed, the result is a general failure, because suspicion is the foundation. In political science, you will say, the concept of representation cannot be given any consistent meaning in the practice of Nigerian politics. The coat of secularism is a good example. It means no state religion for a people that are religious and who must together behave religiously responsible.

Thus, in practical history, we continue to enjoy civilian and military regimes. We have praised all and condemned all. There is no master consistency in the area of the master art. If you take Murtala/Obasanjo that was scared and gave power to Shagari, it can now be said that it made more than a mistake because of what constituted Shagari years. The relief that Buhari brought proved the crimes of Shagari years. And Babangida was the messiah from the clutches of Buhari that we later prayed ought to have been allowed, with regret. Then Shonekan was the slow acceptance of our prayer to be saved from Babangida. We couldn't settle for Abiola and Abiola couldn't agree with himself. We are now with Abacha. What strikes me is that, under Babangida all shades of technocrats/experts/professionals were opportune to save us, we all failed. And under Abacha, a strong majority of those who indicated ability to save us were given small areas of this country, and the situation has not significantly improved. If we were consistent, we would either reject the ministerial appointments or we would have succeeded. Today neither industrialisation, agriculture, roads and housing communication

nor information is better.

MENTAL INDISCIPLINE

At this point, I think it is worth admitting that, our thinking and belief that every isolated or particular problem requires an isolated, particular and temporary solution is more wrong than right. For instance, if we are to stamp out indiscipline in this polytechnic and do not temper with the one(s) in Zaria society, that across the country, the one(s) at the level or in the form of economics and economy or in politics, we would not have done the minimum.

This goes to suggest or imply that for disciplines, there is the need for a master discipline that dictates the form that other disciplines must take. This master discipline must be capable of giving one a summary or total identity in all spheres of life. This is contrary to what now obtains. We will have to cease from upholding a master discipline and another ad-hoc discipline that are in disagreement alongside one another and expect any overall satisfaction from it. The point is that if for instance you choose Islam, as a Muslim, you cannot be other than an Islamic banker or an Islamic political critique. You will have no reasonable justification in dropping Islam when you come to administer this polytechnic or this State or this country. When you canvass for votes, you will simply outline as a Muslim what you will want to do. For breweries, you will tax them to close them. If you are a Christian, I cannot see you differing. Then, we can predict you. We can weigh the risk of voting for you or against you. And the starting point will be that you must be a Muslim or a Christian and not just bearing the identity. If you claim to be just a democrat or a liberal, I would not be able to predict what you will do with pilgrimage for Muslims, what you will do with the education of women, with hoarding, with any right to be ruled by Shari' a for civil and criminal matters. It will be most confusing if I find you carrying out a policy in consonance with Islam and another against it. It will not be funny to allow gambling for revenue and to appoint an *Amirul-Hajj* for me. If that is democracy, it is most unfortunate.

I am therefore of the candid opinion that until we are bold enough, cease to be ashamed of our identity, for which we will live and die or be praised or killed, we cannot begin to become a disciplined people. And as long as we remain so, we cannot be sure of the future, the future will not be bright, we will not take control of our destiny and we will most certainly regret, at the end of the day. This is the wisdom that informed late Sardauna's response to the proposition that differences be forgotten, to which he said, they should be understood. Difference is the only basis of identity.

In conclusion therefore, I wish to submit that until we accept a master discipline for our identity and live by it, we will continue to be inconsistent, temporary, unsatisfied. This is why it will be fool-hardy to accept or condemn late Sardauna in isolation of his identity as a Muslim. The rats who today eagerly want to be associated with him and limit their Islamic identity to donations for mosques or sending people on pilgrimage better know better. And the groupings of politics that are composed or initiated by Muslims but make Islam secondary cannot be the hope of Muslims or Christians. Who will look up to a

Muslim president who will be cheated or lose an election and will not accept the result as the will of Allah? Who will prefer a Muslim politician who will go to war with a Muslim military leader? Where does the Islam lie? Where has the Islam gone?

Listen to late Sardauna, for his identity, discipline and wish:

"I would very much like not only the federation of Nigeria but the whole world, to become Muslim. I will continue, both in my private and public capacities, to mix religion with politics. To me, the two are inseparable".

Today, although we may not count him to be a saint, we cannot deny him his submission in life as fairly consistent with his livelihood, when he said:

"There are two reasons behind what people call my generosity. Firstly, I'm a Muslim, and generosity is enjoyed on all believers by Islam. Secondly, I'm also a realist. I happen to know that hoarding earthly wealth is meaningless in so far as a millionaire will not, when he dies, be buried with his millions."

Because the TOTAL DISCIPLINE known as ISLAM defined the identity of late Sardauna, it was his spectacle for the concept of leadership.

"The only qualities that a would-be leader of a people need are hard work, credible integrity, selflessness, honesty, firmness of purpose, wisdom, accessibility and fear of God".

Sardauna therefore vision badly when he said there are lots of people in the then Northern Region, to step into his shoes. He never could have imagined that an aspiring leader will call upon, identify with or be ruled by God at sometimes and not others, in some matters and not others.

THE ISLAMIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE UNITY OF MUSLIMS

(Towards an understanding of Islamic Consciousness)

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Being the text of a contribution to a National Seminar on
THE PLIGHT OF MUSLIMS TODAY
organised by
ABU-TURAB ISLAMIC CENTRE, Minna
From 10th to 12th November, 1995.

In the name of Allah, the First, the Responsive.

Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, the Lord, the Master. Peace be upon His blessed Messenger, and his family. Peace be upon you all, fellow faithfuls.

Introduction

I wish to confess that after accepting to come and try to share with you all, on the original topic UNITY, THE GLOBAL NEED FOR THE MUSLIMS, I indicated the probability to recast the topic. And in the end, I actually committed the transformation. This is why the topic is now varied from what was initially given to me.

I also did ask for the theme of the seminar. I was told that, it is THE PLIGHT OF MUSLIMS TODAY. And a consideration of the two together, actually informed my new casting of the problem. I will therefore begin by attempting to explain how or the basis that led to the change. This will enable all of us appreciate my problem and my modest attempt to attend to the issue. It is important this is properly understood because my background is not that of an Islamic scholar. I am simply a Muslim, a learner.

The Plight of Muslims Today

The first thing that is evident from this casting is that, Muslims are currently faced with some form(s) or kind(s) of crises. From this, I reasoned that, to open the whole chapter, one will want to accept if the distress(es) of this Muslims today is Islamic. If this happens to be so, the options are the need for improvement or abandonment. In other words, Islam is insufficient. In that case, the focus of the seminar will be on the predicaments that Muslims want or need to run away from or deal with. This is because it must have been certified or concluded that the stresses and predicaments encircling Muslims today are rooted in Islam. Islam is the source of the plight or at least incapable to attend to them.

If this is the position, I will definitely want to know the plight content. BUT I am absolutely satisfied that I cannot contribute anything, in the direction of updating or improving Islam - the world - outlook, the way of life, the everything of Muslims.

However, one gap between me and the theme is that the casting may be using Muslims of today, as the standard of measure for Islam. In other words, Muslims of today are the models of Islam. At my level, I am able to differentiate between the two. And the resulting temptation is that there are no Muslims today, we are not the Muslims of Islam or we are at least the wrong representatives. I am personally alarmed by these temptations. But, at least, I am safe; I am not required to join in this. The scholar to make the opening remarks will be the one to be bothered with this responsibility. If there is anything, it will be, the way in which my topic submits to this theme. And I am decided on not submitting - I will change the topic or formally inform the organisers of my regrets to decline.

I simply held that, my reasoning, my interpretation was wrong. It must have missed the intention of the theme. I am satisfied that Muhammad (S.A.W.) was a perfect model and

the rich history that he and his companions made and lived by Allah's guidance has not been outlived.

Unity, the Global need for the Muslims?

At least, this appears easier. The organisers already appreciate that I may not understand what Muslims need of the Globe. This is especially because Muslims are equally members of this globe. Thus, the answer, my concern, should focus on unity. But here again, unity of who? Global unity, meaning what? Since Muslims are part of the globe, does it mean unity of Muslims across the globe? For what? Or, does it mean the unity of non-Muslims who are equally members of the globe, for the benefit of Muslim? Since, the theme is on the plight of Muslims, what Muslims will be required to unite for, in favour of the non-Muslim members of the globe is out. The other interpretation is Muslims across the globe for themselves. And I can't think of any other interpretation. If I recast the topic for: MUSLIMS' NEED FOR GLOBAL UNITY, the unity of the globe will rest on steps to be taken by Muslims - the spoilers.

To begin with, the globe or the world is not TOTAL. Even in Nigeria, it was not too long when Sardauna province was "discovered." If the globe is therefore to be understood, it will amount to international or multi-national unity. And if the bankruptcy is in the attribute of unity, what immediately comes to mind is that collections like UNITED NATIONS, UNESCO, UNDP, WHO, FAO, BIRD/WB, IMF, UNCTAD, COMMONWEALTH, EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY, OAU, ECOWAS are steps in the right direction, in favour of Muslims. At best, it will be for the benefit of human beings, Muslims (a particular group) inclusive. The standards can therefore not be Islamic. And it will be mischievous of any agent of these to claim to be in love with Muslims or favour Islam in a manner that will respect the identity of Muslims or Islam. Any Muslim who expects or believes this is the best fool on the surface of the earth. If you are in any of these organizations, you are simply serving humanity, but not on the platform of Islam. What these can therefore offer to Muslims or any other member of the globe, include MODERNIZATION, DEMOCRACY.

But, I am satisfied that, modernization and Democracy do not define the need of Muslims. This is because; the globe takes its identity from independent, sovereign nations. These nations are of people. Each or some of these may be and actually identify itself with a particular or group of races, tribes, religions, ideologies, etc. The take off point is therefore that of national boundaries.

Thus, the parameter for the unity of nations will have to play down on differences, including religion, Islam. With worship, there is freedom, with food, it will be any how and where you can get nutrients.

The other alternative interpretation with only a different colour is in reference to the WORLD MUSLIM LEAGUE or the ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE. But, each member retains its separate national identity. This is especially so, because membership or observer status is dependent upon the size of Muslims in a given country. Indeed, it is worth noting that, even though there are Muslims in the United States of

America, in Britain, France, Germany, they are not members of any kind. This is the much that the freedom in modernism and democracy will allow religious association, for a united nations. It is therefore my opinion that the unity of Muslims, when tied to even the LEAGUE or the CONFERENCE, is a misplacement - lesser only in degree, to the others cited above.

And yet, another interpretation, will be through some form of representation at national levels globe-wide or then across the globe. This is particularly attractive, an interpretation, of the topic. This is because; the ingredients will be unity between Muslims for the benefit of Muslims in the widest scope. I will illustrate with the case of Nigeria. The reference will be, for giving some unity between the Sunni, Shi'ites and Ahmadis? Between the Qadiriyya and Tijjaniya? Between Jama'atu Nasril Islam, Islamic Education Trust and Islamic Forum? Between Muslim Students' Society, Muslim Medical Students, Muslim Social Scientists? Between Ansarudeen, Nuru-deen and Anwarudeen? Between Izala and Tariqa? Between Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria, Muslim Converts Association and Muslim Corpers Association of Nigeria? The essence of each of these groupings is that it holds onto a particular identity which makes it stand out as different. In other words, their "Islamism" is secondary. Once you enter into the world of Islam, each is a Kingdom. Their unity can therefore only be based upon what they accept, as not abusing their respective difference. You can appreciate, if you are to invite the leaders of these and say, drop your names and remain and organise under the Jama'atu. The meeting will adjourn. Jama'atu will smile. If they accept and you proceed to say that the leadership of Jama'atu will have to be subjected to a newly generally accepted befitting leadership, you will be shocked at what is better imagined as the likely response.

In the end therefore, I reasoned that the assignment or the objective is too ambitious, mischievous or misplaced. Personally, I don't wish to be a party to these forms of engagements or projects.

Are you now not at a loss? So was I. Where then, do we head for? If thought that, if I can understand the Globe, the others are familiar - Muslims and unity, including Islam, that is necessarily assumed.

The Globe, in Islam:

He (Allah) created the heavens,
Without any pillars that ye
Can see; He set
On the earth mountains
Standing firm, lest it
Should shake with you;
And He scattered through it
Beasts of all kinds.
We send down rain
From the sky, and produce
On the earth every kind

Of noble creature, in pairs.
Qur'an 31:10

O My servants who believe!
Truly, spacious is My Earth:
Therefore serve ye Me
(And Me alone)!
Qur'an 29:56

The entire structure and the content therefore, is the creation of Allah and belong to Him. Any claim is therefore, from the point of view of the Quran superficial, strange, artificial and a mere claim, resting on brute force. Common sense informs that we all came and found it here. And for the organisation of men into groups, communities or nations, which is the definition that is stirring at us, the Quran clarifies the confusion.

Mankind was one single nation,
And Allah sent Messengers
With glad tidings and warnings;
And with them He sent
The Book in Truth,
To judge between people
In matters wherein
They differed.
Qur'an 2:213

Mankind was but one nation,
But differed (later).
Qur'an 10:19

Thus, the differences of nations, race, tribe or language are necessarily to our advantage because they opportune simple identification. We can therefore by these means know each other. But, they must not be taken or understood as the primary identity of man. In other words, for Islam and if Muslims care, national or racial or language identity cannot be superior to faith. They cannot even be equal. They cannot be competitors for those who submit to Allah, for Muslims, in Islam.

This goes to resolve one fundamental problem. Wherever or whenever and however we notice Muslims identifying themselves as other than Muslims FIRST, it is a problem created by them or for them. And when it grows into an idol like Secularism or Democracy, it will require a lot of effort to cleanse. They will place their faith and trust in drug instead of Allah, for cure. The Sufis will consider such to be a lesser degree of shirk.

In the end therefore, I refused to confuse myself with the business of GLOBE at national, international or multi-national level. Simply put, that is not where to start from. At least, this is my understanding. And I stand to be corrected. I always wonder at Muslims who were warned to only fairly relate with unbelievers but not trust them (by Mohammed

S.A.W.) expecting that the United Nations will pursue Islamic interest. In fact, some even disgracefully appeal to United States to enforce peace in the interest of Islam or Muslims. They woefully fail the test of discriminatory ability, to differentiate between their friends and enemies. Their *TAUHID* IS UNIVERSAL NEUTRALITY.

This is how I arrived at the new topic THE ISLAMIC FRAMEWORK FOR THE UNITY OF MUSLIMS as the cure for these failings that is often lost sight of. My attempt will be a very brief one. I therefore wish to crave your indulgence to follow me closely. I am not going to say a new thing. It is simply going to be a reminder. I will therefore very much welcome corrections.

Islam, Unity and Muslims

Muslims are the signs of Islam. Islam is submission to Allah and His Messenger. Allah is the goal; His Messenger is the guide, the captain, the model, for those who voluntarily submit. All therefore lead to Allah. He alone. The Independent. He shares no identity. His identity is not shared. No reality other than Him. Unity is therefore, for Muslims, meeting Allah (by compliance) through Islam. Thus, the reminders:

I have only created
Jinns and men, that
They may serve Me.

Qur'an 51:56

And serve thy Lord
Until there come unto thee
The Hour that is certain.

Qur'an 15:99

Allah forgiveth not
That partners should be set up
With Him: but He forgiveth
Anything else, to whom
He pleaseth; to set up
Partners with Allah
Is to devise a sin
Most heinous indeed.

Qur'an 4:48

In order not to mix up the status of His Messenger, He clarifies:

Muhammad is not
The father of any
Of your men, but (he is)
The Apostle of Allah,
And the Seal of the Prophets.

Qur'an 33:40

He who obeys
The Messenger, obeys Allah.
Qur'an 4:80

Thus, at the spiritual level, when every Muslim opens *salat* he declares his faith as witness to the unity of Allah and the Apostleship of Muhammad (S.A.W.). We all recast this by acknowledging He is Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, Lord of all creations, Master of the ultimate Day of fate and that we serve Him alone and look up to Him alone for help. Our state of mind is required to be most humble as revealed in Umar's report on Jibril's attendance to the Prophet. We are to worship Allah as if we are seeing Him - THOSE WHO HUMBLE THEMSELVES IN THEIR PRAYERS (Qur'an 23:2). Other indicators include the following:

From whencesoever
Thou startest forth, turn
Thy face in the direction
Of the Sacred mosque;
That is indeed the truth
From thy Lord.
Qur'an 2:149

So from whencesoever
Thou startest forth, turn
Thy face in the direction
Of the Sacred Mosque;
And wheresoever ye are,
Turn your face thither.
Qur'an 2:150

Ramadan is the (month)
In which was sent down
The Qur'an, as a guide
To mankind, also clear (signs)
For guidance and judgement
(Between right and wrong) So
everyone of you
Who is present (at his home)
During that month
Should spend it in fasting
Qur'an 2:185

Pilgrimage thereto (to Mecca) is a duty
Men owe to Allah, -
Those who can afford
The journey.
Qur'an 3:97

It can therefore be appreciated that, for anyone who voluntarily submits and then commits apostasy, he shall need to be executed. The unity of Allah and the submission required of Muslims is that serious.

Further, in Islam, the rule of Allah, for righteousness, all aspects of life are cared for. A believer starts off everything in the name of Allah. He does not breathe into his drinking water. He begins by the right leg, when stepping into his abode. He greets first or responds with a better one. The realm of Allah is not different and that of his choice another. The submission is totally to Allah. Thus, whatever will stand on this way, is to be discouraged and fought against, for the unity of Muslims. Thus, all actions are to be for Allah's sake. I will attempt to highlight a few aspects of our livelihood to show, how this unity with Allah, through compliance is not a matter of choice or Any other business. This is, whether you will follow the path or not. Islam is not the property of anyone. There is no room for believing in some part and not in others.

Thus, in relation to once parents, nothing shall cross the command of Allah that is, upholding His unity, as a Muslim:

We have enjoined on man
Kindness to parents; but if
They (either of them) strive
(To force) thee to join
With Me (in worship)
Anything of which thou hast
No knowledge, obey them not.
Qur'an 29:8

Serve Allah, and join not
Any partners with Him:
And do good-
To parents, kinsfolk,
Orphans, those in need,
Neighbours who are near,
Neighbours who are strangers,
The companion by your side,
They way-farer (ye meet),
And what your right hands
possess.
Qur'an 4:36

Thus, there is no basis whatsoever for satisfying ANYBODY if the means or the result contradicts the command of Allah. Blood is not thicker than water when it comes to submission to Allah. And submission is always FIRST. The question we should therefore be asking is if Muslims are being good enough to parents as commanded in the unity of

Allah. For neighbours, if we are as good as Muhammad (S.A.W.) was commanded, short of only inheriting us - both believers, people of the book and unbelievers, at home, at work and abroad. It will appear to me that we are not. And this is revealed in the terrible mode of making families among Muslims. In the choice of spouses, we ignore priorities. For instance, we don't give priority to believing women (by men). Indeed, in addition to weak faithful men marrying non-Muslim women, daughters of Muslim venture into marrying non-Muslims. After a wrong or weak choice, contracting the marriage will soon attract establishing a marriage contract bank to advance loans to prospective bridegrooms. We have completely played down that the best woman is she whose gift is not difficult to provide and one who is religious. Today, if a man should announce an invitation to his marriage feast and add that brothers and sisters should come with what to eat, our people will express pity for him. They will not first of all refer the matter to Allah and His Apostle. They are ignorant and will take "firm" stands. In many cases, the two parties will have to "jump" the hurdles of their relations' shortcomings. This is because, Muslims transfer parents' faults to children and the other way round. In fact, even the fault of a sister or brother may be used against the other. The sense of reasonable individual responsibility is thrown to dogs. Muslim ignore that Asiya of Pharaoh was a believer, the son of Nuh (A.S.), the wife of Lot (A.S.), the father of Ibrahim (A.S.) and an uncle of Muhammad (S.A.W.) were not of Allah in spite of their familial relation with Allah's messengers. Even the naming of a child is often only accidentally good. This is because it is often not constantly done or informed by knowledge. A child could be named after some reasonably unknown ancestor or some worldly head, whose background is either totally unknown or seriously in dispute. This is the kind of parental background enmeshed in ignorance that produces children only to contact them out to "competing" Islamic schools who largely don't even pay their teachers well. You cannot even recognize Muslim women. They are ashamed of using the veil. They consider the use of henna outdated. They will prefer the use of cosmetics, ingredients of which they are ignorant of, even though, they are sourced from unbelievers and enemies of Islam. In the end, marriage is now a PROJECT for the male and the female expects evidence of READINESS. But no party is waiting in decency. This is one area of disunity socially, because it is "rich" in abuse of the specific commands of Allah and the traditions of Muhammad (S.A.W.). We have placed a burden on our way to unity with Allah. At home. This explains why parents will steal to feed, clothe and shelter the family with *haram* knowingly and pleasantly. The children will do so and the parents will openhandedly receive them. Indeed the community will frown or ignore those who do not make ends meet. ANYHOW. If you are free from some of these, the in-laws will make it up.

In essence, in Islam, for Muslims, the focal point must not be our desires, but what is Allah's or Muhammad's (S.A.W.) enjoined. Any other thing will depend upon its fitting into these and if we can afford it. When we begin to turn it into a rule or value, we are engaging in disunity. And this disunity can be measured by the amount and rate of divorce, fornication, adultery in so called Muslim societies, Sokoto, Kano, Borno, Zaria, Katsina, Bida, Ilorin, Bauchi, Misau, Yola, etc. The Muslims' schools are less in number, of embarrassing quality and without the reach of most Muslim parents. Muslims want

unity in or by disunity. Instead of turning to Allah, they are turning to themselves, for some small price or prize of wealth, name, influence and whatever. If Muslims are to live for Allah's sake, they will have to take and committed to Muhammad's (S.A.W.) advice: "Act abstemiously with regard to this world and Allah will love you; act abstemiously with regard to what people possess and the people will love you."

In the realm of earning a living, Muslims are required to join with Allah. And His standards are unambiguous. Muslims are to work hard, always:

Therefore, when thou art
Free (from thine immediate task),
Still labour hard.

Qur'an 94:7

Muhammad (S.A.W.) enjoined in other words, that, a Muslim is to work for the good of this world as if he will never die and be engaged in spiritual commitment as if it will be his last act. Thus, it is only by disunity or against the compliance with Allah and His Apostle that a Muslim will go into making a living through gamble, duping others, transfer of monies, etc.

O ye who believe! Give of the
good things
Which ye have (honourably)
earned.

Qur'an 2:267

Dubious wealth or people with easy, questionable wealth are not in unity with Allah. Muslims don't need them for unity. This is because; Muslims are only Muslims, as they remain with Allah. Thus, when the honourably acquired wealth is to be expanded, it need be good and for Allah's sake. A tradition casts it in the metaphor of the right hand giving without the left hand seeing it.

Ye give (freely) of that
Which ye love.

Qur'an 3:92

Those who spend their wealth
For increase in self-purification,
And have in their minds
No favour from anyone
For which a reward
Is expected in return
But only the desire
To seek for the countenance
Of their Lord Most High.

Qur'an 92: 18-20

Right here at home, the story of Minna central mosque is enough to appreciate the level of Muslims' disunity with Allah. The investments in disunity are more, better patronized and more regularly. This explains why and how it took the time, only to EVENTUALLY commission it. Thus, if the organisers of this seminar are to take a cross-sectional sample of Muslims here in Minna or Muslim settlements and conduct a survey on their specific sources of income, whom they work for, what they work with, what they earn, what they do with it and their standing in society, one will have to re-check the accuracy of one in a thousand, if it points at striving in the path of Allah. We are not doing our least at all. It is therefore, to Allah that we must turn, if indeed we believe.

When it therefore comes to the settlement of disputes between us or between Muslims and non Muslims, we don't submit to Allah and His Apostle. For instance, in this country, Muslims have continued to impress upon non- Muslims that permitting Shari'ah for Muslims, is a favour to Muslims. This disunity is displayed by impressing on non-Muslims as if Shari'ah is an affair of a building alone - a court room restricted to civil and criminal matters. But Shari'ah is another name for Islam in action. It is a totality:

O ye who believe! Stand out firmly
For justice, as witnesses
To Allah, even as against
Yourselves, or your parents,
Or your kin, and whether
It be (against) rich or poor:
For Allah can best protect both.
Qur'an 4:135

And this (He commands):
Judge thou between them
By what Allah hath revealed.
Qur'an 5:49

They (Muslims) can have
No (real) Faith,
Until they make thee judge
In all disputes between them,
And find in their souls
No resistance against
Thy decisions, but accept
Them with the fullest conviction.
Qur'an 4:65

Now, if we may ask ourselves, how much of the law do we know? How much are we making efforts to know? How many of us submit to it? Don't Muslims patronise common law courts? But is sharia a thing of compromise in Islam? Is that less important to Muslims than establishing a Ministry of religious affairs? Is our unity with Allah through sharia a matter of opinion? Is it for debate? Is there anything in dispute here? Is this a matter for the *Ulama*?

In the realm of leadership or politics, unity with Allah is informed by knowledge, not ignorance. Not in arrogance.

O ye who believe!
Obey Allah, and obey the Apostle,
And those charged
With authority among you.
If ye differ in anything
Among yourselves, refer it
To Allah and His Apostle,
If ye do believe in Allah
And the last Day.

Qur'an 4:59

Those who hearken
To their Lord, and establish
Regular prayer; who (conduct)
Their affairs by mutual
consultation.

Qur'an 42:38

Muhammad (S.A.W.) specifically guided that the struggle or seeker to lead is the most unfit for leadership. But Muslims today find comfort in democratic representation - by election or gamble or selection that is not based on the knowledge that can be found in a society. Thus, for instance, contestants from Muslim societies in this country are rarely close to the best materials in terms of fear of Allah, in their community. In fact, they are rarely invited or even compelled. The very base of the Ummat that will do that is either non-existent or inactive or neutral. What we experience is that like non-Muslims, we indicate strong interest even if cunningly, canvass for support and fiercely compete by display of credentials and even discrediting of the other party. In the end, those that Muslims entrust their religion, economy, society, education and politics to, end up to be of questionable credentials – Islamically. This is because righteousness, piety, leadership, knowledge, are not informed by whose son one is or how one has fared in the struggle for leadership. This informs why the symbols of the relics of Sokoto caliphate leadership can sometimes be a disgrace to the Muslim Ummat. This informs the varieties of experiences that we have. We can have a fellow Muslim, an ignorant, who inherits power or rulership. Muslims will have a leader of a religious project like a mosque or Quranic recitation, whose credentials are distant from the community's acknowledgement of his piety. Nigeria will have many Muslim leaders who will each claim sufficiency, but will together fail to deliver this country - a misfortune for Muslims and a bad record for non Muslims. This can be appreciated in the case of the former Muslim presidential aspirants who took ministerial appointments under Abacha. A Muslim political competitor will be asked to accept defeat as the will of Allah. But the same leader of an Islamic Organisation will refuse. He will go to common law court or impose himself. A Muslim will, on the ground that he is not a bastard, insist that he must be the one to lead. Thus, a

Muslim as a head of an organisation is today, no guarantee for goodness, for both Muslims and non-Muslims.

If I may ask, do you see your Head of Department who is a Muslim, as a Muslim FIRST? Does he see himself as a Muslim FIRST? Is his scale of operation, knowledge of Allah and following the footsteps of Muhammad (S.A.W.)? Thus, instead of leadership informed by knowledge, what we engage in and practice is informed by IGNORANCE and WARLORDSHIP. It is characterized by competition, opportunism, wits and might. We are a flock of sheep led by lions, leopards, jackals and hyenas.

The above levels or forms of disunity between Muslims and Allah (S.W.T.) is further reflected or displayed in the disorganisation of the Muslim Ummat. Internationally, a Muslim will be deported from Mecca or Medina, even though they belong to all Muslims and are only in custody of some fellow Muslims. Nationally, the intra-religious conflicts that we have disgracefully failed to manage are familiar. In Nigeria, Zaria is a hot spot for a potentiality. Inter-religious conflicts have been receiving a lot of prayers for Allah's intervention. At the international level, the Iran-Iraq case and Iraq's trespass into Kuwait are enough lessons. In the case of intra-religious conflicts, one will be tempted to ask if we really believe Allah:

Your (real) friends are
(No less than) Allah,
His Apostle, And the (Fellowship
Of) Believers - those who
Establish regular prayers
And regular charity,
And they bow
Down humbly (in worship).
Qur'an 5:55

The Believers, men
And women, are protectors,
One of another: they enjoin
What is just, and forbid
What is evil: they observe
Regular prayers, practise
Regular charity, and obey
Allah and His Apostle.
Qur'an 9:71

If two parties among
The Believers fall into
A quarrel, make ye peace
Between them: but if
One of them transgresses
Beyond bounds against the other,
Then fight ye (all) against

The one that transgresses
Until it complies with
The command of Allah:
But if it complies, then
Make peace between them
With justice, and be fair.
Qur'an 49:9

Now that it will appear that we have failed grossly in uniting ourselves with Allah, by the proper and effective practice of Islam, How can we build on the unity as a brotherhood? It will appear to me to be impossible or hopeless. Thus, when Allah commands:

O ye who believe!
Persevere in patience
And constancy; vie
In such perseverance;
Strengthen each other:
And fear Allah
That ye may prosper.
Qur'an 3:200

And verily this Brotherhood
Of yours is a single Brotherhood,
And I am your Lord
And Cherisher: therefore
Fear Me (and no other).
Qur'an 23:52

It will be difficult to escape the earlier summary question if there are Muslims today? If we are the ones? If we represent them? Although, it is frightening to doubt these, the truth is that we should be ashamed and re-ignite our Faith. It is only the Muslims whose unity, by Islam, is submission to Allah and His Apostle that are relevant. Those of us, who have turned ourselves into other than Islam, will do better to brace up. Only then can we comply with:

And hold fast,
All together, by the Rope
Which Allah (stretches out
For you), and be not divided
Among yourselves.
Qur'an 3:103

Thus, if we hold onto what Muhammad (S.A.W.) bequeathed for us, the Qur'an and his Sunnah, we will be united. But if we take onto ourselves things not commanded, we cannot claim that our state of distress or predicament is rooted in Islam. Muhammad (S.A.W.) said; Islam is Advice, Allah's (Qur'an), His Messenger's (Sunnah) etc. for those who truly submit.

**THE MUSLIM UMMAH:
OVERCOMING THE INERTIA AND FACING THE CHALLENGES OF
TODAY**

**A CLOSER LOOK AND AN INVITATION TO THE *ULAMA* FOR
SINCERITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

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BEING A CONTRIBUTORY COMMENTARY ON THE ABOVE THEME
FOR
UMMAH CONVENTION '96
ORGANISED BY
NATIONAL ISLAMIC CENTRE, ZARIA
ON WEDNESDAY 25TH DECEMBER, 1996 AT KADUNA.

THE MUSLIM *UMMAH*?

Muslims are individuals who voluntarily declare and submit to the absolute truth of the Oneness of Allah, the Messengership of Muhammad (S.A.W) and keep it as their only spectacle and compass for EVERYTHING, EVERY TIME and EVERYWHERE. This is their understanding and the dictate of their actions. Those who stabilise in this, are of this and by this identity are the ones with the license: TO DO WHATEVER THEY WILL NOT BE ASHAMED OF. Licensed drivers will not refuse to/use the mirror nor will they make the abuse of traffic regulations their style. Other road users normally feel safe in sharing the road. The best drivers assume every other user of the road to be a lunatic, and take all precautions.

A simple and ordinary or arithmetical collection of this kind of identity do not make for the MUSLIM *UMMAH*. Neither white, jollof nor fried rice is *tuwo*. With the Muslim *Ummah*, the difference is even more. Unlike the different forms of rice which, like *tuwo* are effective in postponement of hunger it is doubtful if a Muslim (a social being) can be safe and advance in this nearness to Allah through righteousness outside social trappings as a rule for livelihood. There is no *Ummah* where Tens, Hundreds, Thousands) Millions of Muslims are believers only in their individual right. Where a whole country, a continent or the world has this type of Muslims' identity (as a whole or along with others who are not Muslims) there is no *Ummah*.

An *Ummah* is a deliberately operative collection where beyond the individual there is submission to the collective, to the degree that the collective could rightly sacrifice the individual in its submission to Allah. There can be no *Ummah* where there is NO SHARI'AH or there is only a LIMITED SHARI'AH. The *Ummah* is the collection that takes whatever Allah and His Messenger give and deny itself what have been prohibited. They do this by:

- Making these their only point of reference for guide and resolution of differences.
- Patient perseverance in and with whatever has been decided accordingly.
- Whatever is not specifically so decided is of tertiary status and not the basis of identity.

This is HOW and WHY the *Ummah* is a collection of believers who submit to Allah as exemplified by His Messenger and as long as the Leaders follow the same path.

There are No Two *UMMAHs* in Islam.

From the settlement of man on earth, the message, the guidance has been TO BELIEVE AND OBEY ONE ALLAH. And we will not find any change in HIS WAY. The *Ummah* is the single family of those who believe in Allah and follow Him as the messengers and believing leaders.

Groupings of Muslims along language, geography, colour, trade, time (generation) or profession is not an identity of *Ummah*. And there are no levels of *Ummah*-local, state, national, international or world. Neither the individual Muslim nor the *Ummah* lives

justifiably and differently, for God and Caesar; for personal self and the *Ummah*. For each and for both, it is for Allah, who created *Jinns* and Mankind for worship. The submission and identity of the *Ummah* is One – directly and indirectly, as expressed or implied – NOT TO BE CONTRADICTED, thus in all spheres of life. No member of the *Ummah* and no Shari’ah will make stepping out of toilet with the right foot first to be wrong; adjusting or amending the number of *salat* or its form of performance to be right; differing in the commencement of Ramadan Fast or breaking it; differing in when and who to perform Hajj, differing in belief and following the footsteps of Muhammad (S.A.W.) and the four rightly guided *khalifs*; differing in the seal of prophet hood. There is no *Ummah* where a pregnant daughter’s marriage will be contracted and another, a virgin. There is no *Ummahood* in excommunicating a Muslim in order to achieve a parochial objective that is not fundamental to the *Ummah* or accommodating the reference or treatment of any Muslim as a jumper or new entrant into Islam.

Neither the individual Muslim nor the *Ummah* lives justifiably and differently, for God and Caesar; for personal self and the *Ummah*. For each and for both, it is for Allah, who created *Jinns* and Mankind for worship. The submission and identity of the *Ummah* is One - directly and indirectly, as expressed or implied - NOT TO BE CONTRADICTED, thus in all spheres of life. No member of the *Ummah* and no Shari’ah will make stepping out of toilet with the right foot first to be wrong; adjusting or amending the number of *salat* or its form of performance to be right; differing in the commencement of Ramadan Fast or breaking it; differing in when and how to perform hajj; differing in belief and following the footsteps of Muhammad (S.A. W) and the four rightly guided *khalifs*; differing in the seal of prophet hood. There is no *Ummah* where a pregnant daughter's marriage will be contracted and another a virgin. There is no *Ummahood* in excommunicating a Muslim in order to achieve a parochial objective that is not fundamentals. The blessing in differing among the *Ummah* is in the scope of Allah’s favours. Thus, some turn to east, some to west, some to the north, some to the south in order to face the ka’abah. Not even a consensus to hold hajj in the Plateau region of Nigeria is a blessing. There is no blessing in the practice of *Mut’a* today. Or is it the waiting of *Istibra’i* a blessing for going for?

Is there any part of the Muslim *Ummah* in Nigeria? I don’t deny that there can be isolated members in Nigeria but for the size as a collective portion I am ignorant.

But there is a MUSLIM *ULAMA*. There can be no *Ummah* without *Ulama*. But there can be *Ulama* without *Ummah*.

The *Ulama* are the torch bearers by the grace of Allah. They embody the word of Allah and the traditions of the model. They may vary but not in the fundamentals. Muhammad (S.A. W) is reported to have said they are his heirs. Their knowledge is not separable from their practice nor is their livelihood outside what they know and understand. And most importantly, they are humble. They don’t claim to be perfect. They are always ready to be corrected. This is because, the affair is not theirs BUT that of Allah. They do not divide Muslims or colour them. They are Muslims, believers and members of the *Ummah* isolated. They do not dress Islam or Muslims with their names or NON-FUNDAMENTAL beliefs or practices. They don’t establish movements or clubs or associations. And they don’t do it for others.

They are afraid of leadership and are scared of being called first. They understand that Muhammad (S.A.W.) will go into paradise only by the mercy of Allah. They accept that the great messengers: Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa and Isa will in the hereafter express their own failings. They remember that the *khalifas* fell in material or physical status when leadership was placed on them. Even Umar became poor and soft hearted. They fear that heavens and earth failed to accept the trust of Allah, which they have accepted. Thus, HOW, WHY, WHEN and WHERE will they give to others what they dislike? Islam is *NASIHA*.

In Zaria, there was late Mallam Zakari of Kofar Kuyanbana. There was late Sheikh Abdulqadir whose humble son Mallam Sani has taught me. There was Innan Diko. In Kano, there was Sheikh Salga. The mallams and sheikhs. If this identification is correct, are they ONE? Did they and others identify THEM AS ONE? Don't other identity(ies) take over that of Muslims? Is the position not this serious? We are Muslims with no Ummah and a frightening *Ulama*. A divided direction for scattered Muslims with a constitution of UNITY. Or don't movements, mosques, leadership, names and references make any differences?

The mildest interpretation or differentiation between them will be that the Zakaris impart knowledge while the sheikhs acculturate. The sheikhs take direct responsibility by deliberate design for followers. The one light with yellow. The other with blue. I don't know who is right or wrong except from the other's point. But we need white light.

And where there is no *Ummah*, HOW can it be inactive? Hausa people will say, only living things can move. Dead or non-living things don't, can't and need not. Sparks don't amount to fire. And my simple understanding is that, it is a reflection of the state of the *Ulama* - the torch bearers, the learned, the scholars. The truth is that among the signs of the nearness of the end are that the heirs of the messenger will be taken away to be succeeded by the ignorant, politicians, hypocrites and rascals. Then there will be no *Ummah* but there will be Muslims - in their individual rights - Muslims in SECULARISM or DEMOCRACY. It is not arguments that will establish the existence of a part of the *Ummah*. It is a behavioural pattern, collective direction fed by individual submissions - IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL.

My invitation is therefore that, the focus should be on the *Ulama* that can prop up a collectivity, to join the *Ummah*. THE MUSLIM *ULAMA* and not THE MUSLIM *UMMAH*.

THE CHALLENGES

For the *Ulama*, it is to expand the followership of Muhammad (S.A.W); those who voluntarily submit; those who command the doing of good and prohibit the doing of evil) men and women. These are Muslims and their collectivity that are SINCERE and PURE in all of the things they do and enjoy to be RIGHTEOUS as required by Allah and our Model. These include the work we do, our earnings, our food, drink, shelter, clothing, transport, education, our struggles. War against *HARAM* and then *BID'A*. It is on this foundation that the greater Jihad against SELF (*NAFS*) can be built. It's at the second level that we can differ according to our strength. It is the *Ummah* that can protect the individuals. Only the wider and strong BASE can support varied designs of

superstructure.

This is the objective, the goal and target for the *Ulama* - building or contributing to the *Ummah*. This objective is FINAL and the only ONE. It cannot change or be added to. Thus, what can really be of concern will be all and everything that constitutes itself into a BLOCK, RESTRAINT, CONSTRAINT between Muslims and *Ummahood*. I am therefore inviting that it is not an outline of DOS and DONTs in Islam that should be the focus, in discussing the challenges. Yes, we should UNITE, PRAY, WORK, FAST, BE CHARITABLE. But, is the system that makes these difficult, impossible or worthless that need be attended to. THE CHALLENGES or better still, THE OBSTACLES TO *UMMAHOOD*.

TODAY?

This must not suggest any additions to the single objective of *UMMAHOOD*. It must not suggest Islam made easy or modern Islam. It can relate to the obstacles that have either resurfaced or appear to be particular, peculiar or current. It may relate to the problem of a poor or weak level or quality in the livelihood of the *UMMAH* that is already in place. Both interpretations rest on time. But it can also have a locational scope. It can be local, national, international, regional, continental, racial or global where there is an existent *Ummah*. In more specific terms, it may relate to INTRA obstacles within the *Ummah* or INTER, between an existent *Ummah* and others. And it may be a combination of the two in a given locational scope. It can be all of the above. Thus, although TODAY can be modestly construed to refer to Nigeria, it is fairer to emphasise it, be explicit. We should solve home problems before getting out of the trapping of state boundary. Thus, IN NIGERIA before simply TODAY.

THE INERTIA?

No please. If there is an *Ummah*, then yes. And the *Ulama* cannot justifiably enjoy being associated with any form of inertia. They are the factors or forces of stimuli for forming and sustaining the *Ummah* by worthy direction. The *Ulama* is a motor in an automobile. If it ever exists, it can't be stagnant insensitive or lack direction. In Islam, it's either there is the *Ulama* or not. There is no auxiliary teacher as in the teaching profession. There is no doing what I say and not what I do. This reminds of a *Hadith* collector who withdrew from learning any *Hadith* from a referred scholar whom he saw lured a sheep with a container in order to arrest it. The collector saw that the scholar could be deceitful by transferring that attribute in relation to the sheep, to his transmission of knowledge. There was the master who forgave and freed his offending slave on being urged to forgive as commended, when he is right and in a position not to forgive. The wife of a governor under Umar I performed *naflat* prayer in thankfulness for guiding her husband in refusing to accept thousands of *dirhams* as *Zakkat* collected for him from the treasury of believers. No actual or honorary award automatically makes one identifiable with the *Ulama*. It is not a society or association or club of registered members, of financial members, of quota spread, of democracy.

INVITATION

My small mind is tempted to suggest the recasting of the problem for: THE *ULAMA*: FACING THE OBSTACLES TO *UMMAHOOD* IN NIGERIA. And my justification is that, those of us who do not know the answer can still know the problems we want to get out of.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OBSTACLES BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND *UMMAHOOD* IN NIGERIA TODAY

In our eking out livelihood there is our relationship with the money markets-the banks. For those of us that are not self employed we are largely exposed to enjoying loans in monetary or material forms with INTEREST. Once in our relationship of creating wealth the parties don't share the risks and benefits, it is out of Shari'ah. This problem is vital, because it undercuts the purity of our material beingness. WHAT SOLUTION(S) WILL THE *ULAMA* PROVIDE TO CLEANSE OUR MATERIAL FOUNDATIONS FOR SPIRITUAL PRACTICES?

WHAT IS THE MONEY MARKET?

1. A building that is fanciful.
2. Lots of money is taken there by different individuals and bodies.
3. Every record of the monies is kept.
4. Total incentive of giving interests to those who keep savings or Deposit accounts. This is to attract keeping of money and allowing it to remain for some time.
5. Total policy of charging those who keep their money and decide to keep it in use i.e. to only keep it safe but not long enough to enable the bank engage it in any services.
6. Total policy of not accepting to lose. Thus those who will take loan from banks will require a form of security to guarantee that no risk in terms of value is taken by the bank. In addition, the proposed venture need be capable of making the beneficiary return more money than is granted as loan.
7. Sharing the booty between shareholders, the Managers and the Management. And the Management corners as much of the booty as the shareholders will accept to be for the combined team of workers and managers.
8. Using this economic resource or power to build any individual or group or project that is not purely an economic activity. Those people can be made rich overnight based on trust or goodwill. The collapse of an enterprise can also be helped and saved.

CONSIDERABLE ADJUSTMENTS

1. No individual or group or family need be allowed to own, control or operate a bank or such similar financial house like Bureau de change etc.
2. Ownership and control will be the responsibility of those elders who have very little time for the fun of material good or leisure, but are given to intelligent organisation for the benefit of mankind from the perspective of Islam.
3. Contributions by need by all volunteers in the form of *sadaqat* by all who desire and at all times of the year; and statutory contributions by those who are blessed with surpluses as they fall due for declaration according to the command of Allah.
4. Managers shall not live only on the service to the market.
5. Only spiritual leaders shall certify the eligibility of beneficiaries.
6. Benefits shall include the form of loans with certified and shared project financing.

LEADERSHIP

In respect of leadership in today's society of Muslims in Nigeria, there are the abundant and immediately benefiting alternatives that are 'legal' in this country. In the resolution of conflicts even in civil matters, we can opt for the common laws and justice instead of Shari'ah. HOW CAN MUSLIMS BE PROTECTED AGAINST THE ALTERNATIVE? When a Muslim is the Head of an organisation, the feasible Islamic principles that can be applied are not even tried. For instance, you can find the Muslim to be a liar, a hypocrite, a thief, a rascal and even a disgrace to Islam. When a Muslim contests for an office, because of his inconsistent identity he is neither predictable by Muslims nor by secularism. HOW CAN MUSLIMS BE POSSIBLY COMPELLED TO COMPLY AT THIS FUNDAMENTAL LEVEL OR FORM?

LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT TODAY

The present standard or means is defined by acquisition of formal certificates. These are credentials in the form of qualifications and experience on the background of humanity service. Thus leading is by appointment resulting from the process or stages of application, interview and selection. The other is appointment by recognition, representation and competence. Every individual is therefore his own sponsor or in the alternative, a combination of records and immediate examination results along with references. And to represent by vote is based on qualification and self presentation for sponsorship or recognition and identification for agreement to be invited. The best are therefore those with ICAN, MNSE, mni. Ph.D., etc.

In the structure, a combination of Rights, Duties and Privileges are assumed to guarantee FAIRNESS or JUSTICE defined by consistency, firmness, knowledge, example and equality or equity. However, the very contrary is what we experience more.

THE ABUSE

We have refused or failed to heed the guide that: He who asks to lead is the most unfit. Instead of making fellow men the referees for recognition and fitness of any member for leadership and therefore a check on the leadership, we have substituted this with certificates. The other alternatives are the knowledge and understanding that is by the information, education and entertainment of the press that is neutral and secular. Thus, faceless people are the witnesses used by Muslims for their decisions. The power of skills has replaced the power of faith in the righteousness of our generation. Such is our kind of godliness.

In respect of our ordinary relationship, there is the fire - burning indecency, insincerity, cover ups among youths and the adults; among men and women; within families and outside; between Muslims and in relation to non-Muslims. In summary, HOW WILL SHARI'AH BE ROOTED?

THE PRESENT SOCIAL ORIENTATION

The totality of rules and regulations, laws, norms that present themselves in the forms of DOS and DONTs are bridged with thresh holds of controversies. The security values include a combination of freedom rights, maturity, experience and knowledge, where all men and women are equal. The truth or what is correct is therefore always subject to being sought. It is constantly changing. All truths, including the declaration: There is no god except Allah. In brief, no truth is final, absolute, and sacred. The tradition or norm of marrying early is therefore subjected to a revisit to establish its value or justification; the subject of sex before marriage or virginity is turned into a debate; pregnancy by mistake is an index of social advancement; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

The costs have included breakdowns, necessity for repairs, adjustments, amendments and replacements. Technically speaking our orientation is that of practicing Islam characterized by *QABLIS* and *BA'ADIS* like the waiting period of *Istibra'i*.

THE ABANDONED ORIENTATION

We have abandoned the foundation of truth, thus we don't build. Our leaders, elders, models, the examples, the past, the laid path of Muhammad (S. A. W) have ceased to be the bearing. And as long as our marriage and family life, our counselling, our knowledge and our practices are not based on fundamentals that are unshakable, the totality of the Muslim society will continue to shake, to search for what is already with us. Our faith will be growingly built on doubt, on distance from the faithfuls as defined in the Qur'an.

RESPONSIBILITIES

My simple mind is tempted to suggest that the *Ulama* will have to deliberately take steps to define and guide THE JIHAD.

The understanding that I have, which is related to this precarious state of the *Ulama* and Muslim in this country is defined by the following:

1. We cannot afford to take our religion for play.
2. Since Allah makes good out of evil and evil out of good, how should we volunteer or submit, for the necessary struggle?
3. Unlike the generations that had no messenger sent to them and may be forgiven by Allah, we have a perfected message, as time unfolds, things are not going to get better – the closer the Day of total return.
4. All of the above conditions taken together do not excuse any believer and all believers in any time for adjusting the way of Allah and His Messenger.

Thus, although an individual may queerly be part of the *Ummah*, as earlier defined, friends can be, a family can be, a group can be, a community can be. And what make them are total practices tied to the same reference point(s) and not registration or some funny name or offices or branches or officials. Their identity is in their righteousness scholars must therefore start with themselves, in their conditions to attract those in the lower strata-those who have embraced the world or have been given the hand of the world in trust or marriage. Those who given boys and girls; and then those with material resources; and then those in leadership.

There is no room for aloofness or waiting or watching by anyone. Each one, each believer, each member, each brother, each sister, each family, each stratum, is obliged to commence immediately. This is the only security for believers to commence immediately. This is the only security for believers in every age and circumstance – to risk everything for Allah.

O Allah guide your friends from among us and guide us to them, the meet your guidance. Amen!

But this role and responsibility of the *Ulama* is not to be restricted to the mouth, to pronouncements. Just like it is not enough to believe and pronounce the same or even turn to the *Qibla*. It is not important that one's life one's body, one's possessions and total beingness is committed to the cause of Allah and His Messenger.

This reveals the fundamental status of political, economic and social conditions in the society, operated by Muslims. Thus, for example, it is not enough to claim to be a Muslim, for those opportune to be in leadership positions. It is not even enough to carry banners of Islam like leading or joining in prayers with one's followers or juniors, it is not enough to join fellow staff to condole a bereaved brother and sister; support those who opt for marriage; or build of mosque in the premises. It is most important that the totality of the leader's individually, orientation and manners of leadership consistently make it inevitable for both Muslims and non-Muslims to be sure of their protection and prosperity on the simple ground that the leader's behaviour is predictable. He is not now a Muslim and then a non-Muslim and then a religious and then irreligious. For those who have been entrusted with the wealth of Allah, it is enough to give out *Zakat* and be

generous. They are not Muslims by doing 'favours' to Islamic projects through donations. Their entire business mode and content of operation must need be Islamic. They and the trusts are to be seen to belong to Allah. Thus, adultery, fornication, gambling, alcoholism, begging, unemployment, ignorance, poverty must not be seen in the settlements of Muslims with some claiming to be Muslims, who are clearly capable of dealing with those enemies of believers – the vehicles of Satan.

This is what informs the tradition that a believing brother or sister is like one limb among the many, of a man. Thus, the rich, the wealthy and the society and leaders must submit to the scholars. No amount of preaching will build an *Ummah*. No amount of efforts, foreign to a collective political, economic and social protection, will enable a people to be largely able to practice Islam on the minimum standards. No individual needs to live in the deceit that it is easy to go it ordinarily alone. You may not be able to live in righteousness at home, in the family, in the town except you run into the bush in isolation as a *sufi*.

**MUSLIMS IN THE POLITICS OF TODAY
(An Introduction to the Perplexed)**

BY

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Being the text of a paper presented at a Ramadan Symposium on
THE STATE OF THE *UMMAH* AND THE WAY FORWARD

Organised by
ISLAMIC LEARNING CENTRE, Kaduna
SATURDAY, 23rd OCTOBER, 2004

In the Name of Allah, The All-Knowing, The All-Aware, The Witness.

My invitation to participate in this Ramadan programme indicates that the theme is "The State of the *Ummah* and the Way Forward." I must confess that it served as the beginning of the problem. This is because it assumes there is already in existence an *Ummah*. May be there is one even if a caricature. I am not suggesting that we have not been using the concept or that we have no right to use it. However, I am of the opinion that, for once, we should take a close rather than a loose look at it. I am suggesting that we should give the concept some meaning, some understanding, in relation to history.

To be sure, a collection of Muslims does not necessarily make for an *Ummah*. And the rendering of *Ummah* as community is acceptable but not sufficient. Sparks do not make for a flame. All believers make up a BODY. And this is in disregard of any form or kind of qualifications like race, nation, language etc. To talk of the world *Ummah* or Nigerian *Ummah* is therefore a misrepresentation. It can only be condoned because of the breakage in the *Ummah*. But even in its pieces the concept of *Ummah* refers to the active collection of instructive Muslims that generate goodness through model individual and collective leadership among mankind.

We cannot be talking of: The State of the *Ummah* and The Way Forward if or when it does not positively exist. When we talk of cars, reference is to road worthy ones. When we talk of men, reference is to those who are living. It is neither to deny carcasses nor corpses. And in history, it is the in-between that defines reality. In other words, it is not mere existence that matters, it is survival or the struggle to continue to post-exist actively that is the question.

The *Ummah* is a historical phenomenon. It is tangible and measurable. Its meaning is objective and material. The declaration of *Kalimatu Shahada* has its spiritual value but its material identity is in actual compliance and living standards of Allah by the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. Thus, *salat* generates concentration or focus. And the constant or regular communication with Allah is given effect in avoidance of evil. It is therefore materially or historically hopeless of a praying Muslim who does not shed wrongdoing. It is inconsequential of a fasting Muslim who fails to restrain himself from exceeding permissible limits. It is useless of a charity giving Muslim who cannot be pleased with sharing, like the spirit and art or act of patriotism. And it is most unbecoming of a Muslim pilgrim who is not reassured of the RIGHTNESS of his faith and practice for improved commitment. It is this material significance that rested on the consciousness that enabled the participation and execution of *Badr*, *Hudaybiyya* or the total reception and hospitality by the ANSAR. When Allah provides in the Qur'an that those who deny the guidance and truth of the Qur'an should first try and sees if they fail, it is in relation to results.

May be we can therefore rather consider. The State of Muslims and the WAY to UMMAHOOD as more relevant to our history in Nigeria.

MUSLIM IN THE POLITICS OF NIGERIA TODAY

Now that it is clearly questionable to assume that there is an *Ummah* in Nigeria, we can consciously and safely focus on Muslims in our pieces or loose collection(s). At this point, let me make another clarification. I was given the topic: Muslims in the Politics of Today. And I was further encouraged to consider treating the topic in specific parts and in the scopes of local and international levels. I told the coordinator that I will like to remain at the local level. I believe that after coming to grasp with the palaver with us, we can then begin to burse the ambition of reaching out. This is the real basis for my attempting to deal with the subject restrictively. I therefore accept the suggested parts by which the subject is to be attended to, differing only in the scope.

Finally, in my attending to this subject, I will not use statistics as the tool for verifying my submissions. But it is not to dispute the relevance of statistics. My reason is that even though statistics is not absolutely irrelevant, it will be most MISLEADING in understanding Muslims and or in politics in Nigeria. For example, the commonly flaunted big percentage of the size of Muslims in relation to the population of Nigeria has no meaningful effect. If you are many or large and are dead, of what use is that to you or to others? And more fundamentally is the fact that Nigeria is a federation. Straight numbers of percentage of Muslims may therefore not be consistently effective. Moreover, it is not illegal to fool around with the flag of Islam pretending to serve Islam.

The point is that Muslims are in number many. But the many is severally and thickly criss-crossed by people of the Book, Misbelievers like traditionalists, different forms of seeming fraternities and Disbelievers or Unbelievers who are largely academics with truncated world outlook. And the constitution of this country prohibits the imposition of any particular religion by way of adoption on the citizens. This mix up is what led to the foolhardiness of many proponents of Shari'ah and the ignorant of Shari'ah on the permissibility of Shari'ah in Zamfara. But today, we are wiser. Shari'ah in Zamfara does not legally deny the existence and survival of non-Muslims in the state. Thus, even Kaduna, Niger, Katsina, Kano and Yobe can claim to be Shari'ah 'states'. But none of them is an Islamic state. That is what practical federation is. In the same vein, it is not illegal to form an Islamic, Muslim or Christian or Labour or Women or Youths or Liberal or Democratic or Socialist or whatever political party. It will be legal to have back drawing associations or assemblies or groupings based on myopic identities like the accident of tribe or geographical region. In each of these, you will find Muslims and non-Muslims. Thus, if you want to set up an Islamic party in Nigeria, you cannot by law deny non-Muslims to be members and even compete to lead it. If that is your standard, you are not likely to have the spread that is constitutionally required and you will not get registered.

It is therefore educative to have this clarity in order not to mislead with deductions arising from simple statistics of Muslims' population in Nigeria. Thus, today and in Nigeria, Muslims do not ordinarily guarantee getting the right things done and our federation with non-Muslims is not an excuse for doing the wrong things. Indeed a cluster of Muslims is not the necessary form of *Ummah* that will guarantee goodness in Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

What I will attempt to do is to provide an understanding of the subject of discussion. The framework should provide us with a basis for positioning the state of Muslims in relation to Ummahood in Nigeria.

WHO ARE THE MUSLIMS IN NIGERIA TODAY?

We principally can be identified or characterised by one or more of the following:

1. Those who bear formal non-Christian names. Even though Christians at times bear Muslim names, you rarely find Muslims bearing Christian or biblical names. While you can find Muslim bearing Mary. I don't deny exceptions like one Victoria in Kano born to a late teacher of mine – Late Justice Umaru.
2. Those who are born to Muslim parents and are Muslims by birth. This is not to deny that you will find Muslims in Christian families or Christians in Muslims families. This is not uncommon with mixed parentage.
3. Those who convert to the religion of Islam on a permanent basis. This class of Muslims are distinct from those who live as Muslims in one part of the country and non-Muslims in another. These are Christians in their background or at least non-Muslims and decide to convert to Islam.
4. Those who live in largely Muslim communities. One can therefore conveniently refer to an action by Muslims simply because it is located within the walls of Zaria City.
5. Those who frequent mosques since these are centres of Muslim worship.
6. Those who invest in pilgrimage(s) either by self-participation or by sponsorship of others.
7. Those who belong to Islamic groups.
8. Those who often generate visible forms of the pillars of Islam that is immediate.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND NIGERIA AS A POLITY

The Nigerian polity consists of Muslims, People of the Book, Misbelievers and Unbelievers from the perspective of Islam.

WHAT IS NIGERIA?

The reference will be to our geographical expression defined by latitudinal and longitudinal limitations with overwhelming jurisdictional influence by either two or three tiers of government. In other words, you will find a recognized local or state and the federal government having legal superiority on enforcing law and order in the area.

WHAT IS TODAY?

To be sure, the time frame definitely goes beyond twenty-four hours. After all, I wrote this paper before this day. It therefore refers to all time that Muslims remain with the same characteristics in the polity of Nigeria until there is a change. If there is no improvement in the next ten years, it will remain definable as Today or current. And a fundamental, a principal change will make the present status recede into yesterday or the past. The point therefore is that today is the basis for the future, for tomorrow.

THE CONCEPT AND REALITY OF POLITICS

Now that we have settled the reference of MUSLIMS, our consistent status as one of several members of the POLITY in NIGERIA or the NIGERIAN POLITY, the significance of TODAY logically lies in POLITICS. In other words, since today is not static but dynamic and what makes the difference is CHANGE, it is POLITICS that is the relevant approach for our discussion. Thus, the meaning of Muslims in Nigerian Polity today is invited for understanding through the concept and reality of politics or through the theory and practice of politics.

In theory, the concept of POLITICS relates to the STRUGGLE, POSSESSION and USE OF POWER. This is why it is a universal practice. The difference is always in the HOW it is practiced. But it is always existent in every locus of human relations. The Family, the School, the Office, the Party, the Society, the Club, the Association etc. are all avenues of political practice.

In Islam, the advisory tradition is that the aspect of struggle will not manifestly include the prospective trustee for the power or authority. Indeed, the rejecter should be compelled or burdened with the trust. In essence, what is PERSPECTIVE is that, it is the credentials of an individual that attract fellow Muslims to identify one of them for the candidate. The question of nominating, identifying or recognizing someone you do not know and someone that has not been so recommended by a creditable person(s) is completely out. Rascals are not accepted as good witnesses in Islam for identifying leaders or trustees.

In practice therefore, the concept does not predetermine the content of politics. In other words, the USE of which POWER is employed is OPEN. And in the case of Muslims, it is expected that our universal attributes will make us acceptable to humanity regardless of belief. This is because non-Muslims will not only feel safe but will be happy with Muslim leadership. It will be Islamic, where Muslims prop up the person that will lead without shame to himself, to the Muslims and the non-Muslims. The Muslim or the Muslims or the universal man will necessarily fit into what will satisfy the general and specific NEEDS, WANTS and FANCIES of the MUSLIMS, the PEOPLE OF THE BOOK, the MISBELIEVER5S, and the UNBELIEVERS In Nigeria. Anything less, is not qualified to be Islamic or the role of Muslim(s). And the basis for this is that there is no compulsion in religion.

The point therefore, is that politics in Nigeria by Muslims is not and cannot effectively be the role of Muslims minus non-Muslims. It cannot also be Muslims by canonical rites which is restricted to us and in disregard or even abuse of the social, political and

economic standards of living. For example, it is unislamic and inconsistent for any Muslim or group of Muslims to be prompt and regular in praying and be found to abuse their office or trust to their employers or whoever they relate with. Masters of *KABA'IRA* cannot be models of Islam or for Muslims no matter their regular prayers, *Hajj*, *Sadaqat* or fasting.

Thus, if any Muslim(s) combine stealing of public funds, promotion of prejudices like tribe, religion, geographical origin, family or participate in rigging or thuggery with regular performance of the five pillars of Islam, the person(s) is not out of Islam BUT is not qualified to bear the flag of Islam and is not qualified to be associated with Islam FOR MUSLIMS and NON-MUSLIMS alike. With the above conceptual framework of MUSLIM IN THE POLITICS OF NIGERIA TODAY, we can now proceed to comment on:

1. The structure and mechanics of contemporary politics.
2. Position of Muslims in contemporary politics in Nigeria.
3. A pathway to political re-assertion of Muslims in Nigeria.

THE STRUCTURE AND MECHANICS OF CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

In modern politics a political system is essentially made up of an environment defined by a polity within a defined geographical expression. Within this environment, there is the supremacy of Legislature, Judicial and Executive operations by a set or combined machinery collectively known as government. The government within the polity is given its life by political structures like political parties and pressure groups. In Nigeria at the level of Legislature we have the National Assembly consisting of the Honourable Houses of Senate and Representatives. At the State Level there are State Houses of Assembly. In respect of the judiciary, we have the array of customary, Area, Shari'ah, Courts of Appeal from State to Federal level terminating at the Supreme Court. For the Executive, the President and his cluster of Ministers and Advisers including their agents operate at the federal level; the Governors and Minister of Federal Capital along with their Commissioners/Secretaries/Directors define it at the State level. At the Local Government level, there are Chairmen and their Councillors. These are together responsible for the operation of the various executive machineries like Ministries, Parastatals, Companies, Commissions, Institutes etc.

The political system is supported by pressure groups like the Labour, Voluntary Organisations and especially the Press. The understanding is that the dynamic operational relationship between all of these and by each is a sure way of diagnosing and treating our individual and collective social, political and economic problems for our historical beingness.

The principal value of these arrangements rests on the POLITICAL, its generation of a lead or its leaders for the system. And the principle for understanding this is known as REPRESENTATION. By the means of representation, modern political system justifies what it produces.

This is essentially why those who are asking for a National Conference are irrational even if they are sensible. The simple logical question is: Doesn't the NATIONAL

ASSEMBLY REPRESENT US? Do we have reservations about our creation? After the National Conference, do the proponents expect to come up with a non-representative structure? But, for those who object to the National Conference, are they satisfied with the performance of the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY? Because the problem is not mathematical, the solution cannot be. But, representation is the only option.

And for the purpose of clarity, REPRESENTATION does not mean any of the following in its absolute sense:

1. That the representatives have been wholly chosen or elected by those they are representing. Even where candidates come up UNOPPOSED it is not sufficient. This is because the role of representation goes far beyond the physical results or arithmetic of the political process.
2. That the representatives pronounce or even chart a course in accordance with what is in every specific case collated from those being represented. The principle and practice of consultation and even consensus that is encouraged in democracy applies only to the scope of those who are opportune and actively participate.

Thus, in Nigeria, representation of some human bodies like Honourable members being human beings like me and you is not enough. And they cannot possibly consult to always effectively and particularly cover me and you.

Thus, the looks, the appearance and beautiful presentation of democracy are really a constant swing between what is INSUFFICIENT and what is IMPOSSIBLE. Therefore, the value of democracy cannot be in its looks. This is why in spite of the edifice of the National Assembly; people have strongly expressed reservations about some happenings there. All the forms of material, tangible or measurable representations combined with disjointed ideas or opinions do not and cannot serve as the primary, the fundamental basis of democracy or politics. Regardless of the resources and time committed to these attributes of democracy, they will only produce sparks but not the flame to light the way or cook with.

THE POSITION OF MUSLIMS IN NIGERIA'S CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

To begin with, the politics in Nigeria is not like a pigeon box with Muslims occupying or entitled to a fixed position by others or whoever. It is not even a position describable as achieved or attained to because there is hardly any Islamic struggle by Muslims that has relevant bearing on national politics.

In my opinion, Muslims have largely been drafted, engulfed or swallowed by the practice of politics at its peripheral level, at the level of its looks. You will therefore find, like other poverty stricken political animals in Nigeria. Muslims remain at the level of locality, geography, ethnic or tribal group. In these ways they are commonly identified and recognized and indeed identify themselves as such. While this is not criminal, because it is permissible, it is definitely inadequate for non-believers and an embarrassment for Muslims. This is because the fundamental, the principal and only basis for politics that is sufficiently and possibly relevant in history is a WORLD OUTLOOK. In Islam, it is the

Qur'an and *Sunnah* by knowledge and practice. It is not by selection of some aspects and leaving others out. And because the provisions and standards are universal for admission of Muslims, non-believers alike, Muslims cannot fail to attract political submission and support for representative purposes IF our world outlook is the premise upon which we are seen to live and then top it up with those things that are insufficient but good looking. To do the contrary is to give prominence or priority to FANCIES over NEEDS; COMMENDABLE things over COMPULSORY things; RECURRENT over CAPITAL development. This form and basis of political practice of the feet over the head is primarily responsible for our upside down political, economic and social experiences. It is at best characterized by admixture of satisfaction with reservations, temporary satisfaction or satisfaction vulnerable to shock. These are possible and actual experiences that Nigeria polity goes through with Muslims playing no fewer roles. It is therefore not inconsistent to find Muslims struggling to represent the North and even misrepresenting late Sardauna as a symbol of the North. But, Sardauna was simply, actually and, really not accepted by the North because as an effortful Muslim both Muslims and non-Muslims found safety in his stands. THAT IS THE POINT. And he has personally conscious of this. For example, he explained that he is often described as an open-handed or generous person. However, this is an off shoot of his belief as a Muslim that Allah is the inheritor of all things, it is therefore only proper for temporary trustees to comply with the injunctions of the primary owner. No Muslim should therefore misbelieve that it is the amount of money sharing, post sharing, clubbing, intrigues, blackmail, violence, deceit, prayer for political domination, rituals and indeed the combination of evil and good that is the identity of the political Muslims or that will make Muslims attain political relevance consistent with Islam.

If we are to therefore admit, the position of Muslims in the politics of contemporary Nigeria and in particular most of those who wear the Islamic garbs for NATIONAL POLITICS is akin to HYPOCRITES. When they give you their word they will take it back. They eat their words to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. When and if they keep their word it is not for the sake of Allah and His Messenger. Thus, if you entrust them, they betray you – by their person, by their office, to Muslims and non-Muslims. And their promises are empty. They constitute a risk to me and you and to non-Muslims. No matter what they claim or appear to be, they do not really believe in the UNSEEN, they do not believe in the HEREAFTER. They are greedy of the world. They want to live a thousand years like the unbelievers. They cannot support and give way to the younger generation. This is because TRUTH rests only with them. They are the direct opposites of Sardauna who believed and stated that there are hundreds of his like that can take his place. They contradicted Aminu Kano who cautioned that the Peoples Redemption Party is to be built as a party of the future. The majority of the followers were not for orientation but for posts, for access to public resources, for fame. Aminu Kano had no *Zakkat* to give. These ones don't have the fear or love to give *Zakkat* because they are sitting or amassed RIBA. But Allah does not take what even we will reject. How can these or we become flag bearers of Islam in these ways? That is WHY we are failing to ourselves and to non-Muslims.

A PATHWAY TO POLITICAL RE-ASSERTION OF MUSLIMS IN NIGERIA

Let me begin by stating that from the foregoing, the problem is not essentially resting on the type or form of structures and processes of the political machinery. But, Muslims are

battling with it just as Nigerians (with Muslims inclusive) are battling with democracy. It must therefore be clear in our minds that:

1. It is not the formation of political party with Muslim or Islamic name that is the solution. Nigeria belongs to all of us including non-Muslims. And even if such a party is registered it will necessarily be because it can or will allow membership beyond Muslims.
2. It is not manning of the political machinery or managing the processes by Muslims that will in itself guarantee the assertion of Muslims in the politics of Nigeria today. Muslims were and are active participants in what have come to pass and in what we are experiencing now.
3. It is not the discarding of our Islamic outlook as they primary basis for understanding our problems and defining the solutions for another outlook that is the way out. The outlooks of ETHNICITY and GEOGRAPHY have no doubt bubbled as a polity. And the superiority of our outlook is in the taste of its holistic practice informed by the timeless guidance of the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. The remnants of the Sokoto caliphate reflected in the impact Sardauna or Aminu Kano made in history should serve as encouragement for us.

The path therefore for the ASSERTION of our political rights in Nigeria as Nigerians rest in the mutual reflection of *HAQ/QA* and *SHARI'AH* in our livelihood informed by Luqman's advice to his son and the example of Muhammad (S.A.W.).

As a primary step, we shall need to be remorseful about our failings resulting from our own doings. This will need to be actualized through declaring individual and collective war against all forms of *KABAAIR* and then *HARAM* in general. Following this will be keeping the *WAJIBS* and they the *SUNNAH* etc.

Islam is AN ADVICE of Allah and Messenger. And the only way of knowing this is through the acquisition of knowledge as opposed to ignorance. We are really not too bankrupt in this as I often hear – suggesting some level of justification for misbehaviour by our brothers and sisters.

Islam is AN ADVICE of the Imam. It is therefore not sufficient to just know especially on your own. In practice we need leadership. And this is the phase in which we are very wanting. The majority of us have no Imam, no Sheikh. And if you have no leader, then Satan is your GUIDE. Of importance is that the path of Satan does not commence necessarily with those things that are prohibited. The transition could be through indulgence in those things that are DOUBTFUL. Thus, we will be claiming to be in the fold of Islam while we JUMP in and out of *HUDUDULLAHI*. Carefree Islam is not the middle or straight path enjoined on us by Allah.

Islam is AN ADVICE of him or her who calls or invites to success. This covers the widest scope of relationship built on the tradition that every one of us is a MASTER and will be questioned about his wards. This brings in Parents and Children; Leaders and Followers; Teachers and Students; Elders and the Younger generation etc. It is in this

historical set up that we can assume and be identified as a community of those enjoining good and discarding evil and as a model among mankind.

And we shall not need an angel or the return of Muhammad (S.A.W) to certify our RIGHTEOUSNESS. We will ourselves generate and establish or spread the SEVENTY branches of IMAN and light the history of mankind with as many ATTRIBUTES of Allah as He permits.

Let me therefore finally caution that it is not for any Muslim or in Islam for ANYONE to deceive oneself or be deceived by the misbelievers that NIGERIA cannot do without them. As believers, they should not be akin to unbelievers who asked: when shall be the Day of Judgement or How can they be raised after death? They are reminded that they were NOT then they were made to BECOME and they will RETURN. If this is theoretical, they should consider the death of SARDAUNA, BALEWA, IRONSI, MURTALA, and ABACHA; the change from SHAGARI to BUHARI; the living and explanatory BABANGIDA and June 12; the arrest of ABIOLA, YAR'ADUA, and deposition of DASUKI; and the transaction of OBASANJO from jail to presidency.

Wa lil Lahil hamdu.

WHO IS A DEMOCRATIC LEADER?

**An attempt to unveil the realities of:
Our empty Political struggles, our destructive social beingness, our
wretched investments.**

BY

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Being the text of a paper presented at
ABUJA MUSLIM FORUM
On Saturday 18th September, 1999.

In the name of Allah, The All-knowing, The Wise.

INTRODUCTION

In my contribution, I will attempt to respond to the question as a problem. To be sure, I will not assume that I am from the moon and that I have come here to TEACH you what democracy is. There is therefore no room, no basis and no justification for the ambitious condonement of qualified forms like Democratic Socialism, Totalitarian Democracy, Liberal Democracy, Islamic Democracy etc.

My take off point is from what we are familiar. In Nigeria we enthroned Democracy and we are now living it. In the United States of America there is a model. I am also not going to strive to make a breakthrough in conceptualizing democracy through the history of the name or label. What I am going to do will be simpler, more homely, less pretentious and more meaningful because it is going to be realistic. I am going to discuss the problem as a Muslim and in the context of our experience(s).

APPROACH

The problem is WHO IS A DEMOCRATIC LEADER?

Please forgive me for not choosing to respond by giving you a name or his name, to put the matter to rest. If I do that, we will suffer the misfortune of agreeing on assumptions of understanding that I am not prepared for or comfortable with. But, because my response has to relate to a person, I will prefer and have indeed chosen to have in view, attributes of the WHO.

The attributes logically need to be relevant to what constitutes DEMOCRACY. The totality of these is what gives effect and meaning definable as a democrat for a person. Democracy is therefore central to the identity of the person. If we understand democracy, the agent or apostle is the democrat.

And leadership in democracy easily flows as a matter of status.

I am therefore going to focus my discussion on what consist of Democracy, from our experiences and the relationship of these to the IDENTITY (Who?) of men or person and LEADERSHIP in this affair. Like in the case of the name (who) of a democratic leader, I am not going to concern myself with the title(s).

OBJECTIVE

My contribution will be on course if at the end of this presentation the following become understood:

- i) What democracy is
- ii) Who is a democrat?
- iii) Our identity in the context of democracy
- iv) Our responsibility in the context of our democracy
- v) The cost(s) of our identity and role in our democracy.

At the end of the day, I pray to have aided in our re-establishing the security of our IMAN in both forms of beliefs and commitments. This may require our holding tight to the rope of democracy; adjusting the manner in which we hold on to it; leaving it alone or fighting it. In other words, depending upon our respective status and role(s) in our democracy, this understanding should enable us to be conscious of our identity as Muslims.

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

What I understand with democracy is that, it is A WAY OF LIFE. In terms of parts, it is a system that is mutually related for survival and development. This system is characterised by structures, institutions and processes that are of principal relevance.

Governance is conducted by three arms, namely the Legislative Assemblies; the Judiciary; and the Executive. The National Assembly and the States' Assemblies define the structures of the Legislative arm. The courts, whether Customary, Shari'ah, Magistrate, High, Federal, Appeal, Supreme or Armed Robbery, Rent, code of conduct tribunals, all fall under the Judiciary. The ministries, parastatals and companies all form part of the executive arm. In simple language, the legislative arm makes the laws, the executive implements while the judiciary interprets and adjudicates in the differences. This is informed by the principle of the separation of powers. This arrangement is rationally instituted in order to protect the citizenry from the corruption of absolute power, if concentrated in one arm.

These principal structures that are seen in the form of different buildings, different nomenclatures, different working tools etc. do not in themselves suggest or deny that their purpose(s) are not necessarily satisfied in those societies that are differently constituted or arranged.

What are most critical about producing whatever laws are the arrangements that are burdened with implementation of the laws and the interpretation or arbitration between any disagreeing parties? These may be between citizens as individuals, between the legislature and the executive, between an ordinary citizen and a member of any of the arms in his official capacity.

In essence, it is a system where MEN make or originate laws for themselves; amend them, for their own GENERAL GOOD. This is because, once they are made, whoever it is meant for is not only obliged to obey but can be compelled to submit. Indeed, those who fail or refuse are liable to sanctions, with ignorance of the law not serving as an excuse.

Thus, the objective of this arrangement is Governance/Control and Good life to provide security of lives and property for the entire members of the society, including members of the three arms of government.

These objectives are pursued and achieved through the operation of these structures/institutions (the physical-cum-human operators) based on the FAITH in men's

knowledge of what is right and familiarity with themselves as men.

With this faith, both the operators and the general society are largely RECOGNISED as living a satisfactory way of life and are satisfied with it. Thus, the Clinton Lewinsky affair was private, partisan, moral and whatever, but is insignificant, inconsequential for leading the world's model of democracy. And central to the understanding is that oral-genital intimacy though inappropriate, is not carnal knowledge or intercourse and is therefore not SEX. And economic performance combined with heightened international police role of the United States must not lose their credit for flimsy natural weakness that is harmless to society.

In the event of dissatisfaction, if Clinton were to go for a second term, after failing to impeach him, he can fail to get elected. This is the check in democracy. The checks and balances are affected through the separation of powers and tenure appointment.

But, the story of the separation of powers between the arms of government is not .the beauty of democracy. It is in the POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS that the secret of PARTICIPATION lies. The distinct identity of these institutions is that they are allowed and actually engage in influencing especially the legislature and the executive arms. Thus laws, policies, acts, motions e. t. c. are constantly open to influence. These institutions include especially political parties and pressure groups. While parties seek to capture power for use, pressure groups keep the elected on their toes.

This participatory interaction between political institutions and the arms of government take the forms of DEBATES, VOTING, CAMPAIGNS, PROTESTS, STRIKES, etc.

And the gap between the political institutions and what government really, actually or eventually does (to make the laws enforceable) is bridged by the PRESS. The media serves as the feedback machinery for the society by its roles of Reporting, Educating, and Entertaining.

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

Given the article of faith that men are familiar and know what is right, the justification of taking up the responsibility of making laws is satisfied through REPRESENTATION.

To be sure, the representation is of men by men. And the means is through election, which reveals the men with superior votes or numerical support. And in this case, universal suffrage or the principle of an adult defined by eighteen years and above as capable, fit and desirable in deciding the men to represent others, is employed. Thus, whether or not one belongs to a recognized political institution, he has an opportunity to participate in determining who goes to the relevant legislative assembly or contests and wins election into a political office. This opportunity is rated as the highest honour by us for ourselves.

THE QUESTION AND THE RESERVATION

Now, it is easy to pin down the number of physical bodies and the geographical areas of people being represented. However, is the vital aspect of our identity our physical form? Is the combination of this to where we come from, most vital? In other words, is every other thing secondary?

If the responses to all of these questions are in the affirmative, Democracy will qualify for a value IN ITSELF as GOOD.

Since it is NOT, and makes it vulnerable to negative effect and quality, the pressure groups actions become handy for checking mistakes 'unavoidably' made.

Thus, in democratic experience, the representative may not reflect more than the physical and geographical identities of a people. This may be informed by either some malpractice or a political behaviour of some members or even the incapability, unfitness and undesirability of some number of the members' action that has influenced the determination of representation.

The reservation against democracy at this level is that in a homogeneous society it is TOLERABLE. This is because age is critical in making input into WHO is to be burdened with LAWS for all ages. However, physical and mental age do not always go together for the majority of people because our exposures relevant for this practice are skewed in this country. And the justification for this is that VALUES are superior to our forms. It is values that give us or enable us to understand, accept, tolerate or accommodate whatever.

Thus, in a heterogeneous society like ours, the quality of our democratic meaning is reduced by cancelling out what we may claim to value. Number is more relevant and effective. This arises out of the combination of share ignorance, destructive innocence and manipulative intrigue by those who should protect us.

This inconsistency is responsible for the inability of the people to even elect their TRUE REPRESENTATIVES and the latter's drawback in acting to promote the values of the electorate.

In Nigeria therefore, laws that will advance our values receive very strong responses - positively and negatively at the same time. The case of SHARIA is a typical example. Both within and outside the arms of government, the matter will not be treated to a level of satisfaction. This is in spite of the fact that all the structures and institutions of democracy are in action.

THE CRISES OF IDENTITY

In the democracy of Nigeria, it is logical to find a Muslim who will not limit his campaign promises and strategies to what will be permissible by Qur'an and Hadith. In the democracy of Nigeria it is logical to find a Muslim who loses an election not taking the

advice of leaving the matter to Allah - whether the opponent is a Muslim or not. In our democracy, you will find a Muslim identifying himself with consciences to break a professional responsibility. In our case, a professional though a non-Muslim will protect a Muslim. This was the interesting case of Gani Fawehimi declining to defend Al-Mustapha as against Rotimi Williams defending Buhari. In this country, it was in support of a fellow Muslim (late Abiola) that a Muslim professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Benin adjudged that Ibrahim Babangida should be excommunicated. It was a Muslim Ibrahim who allegedly annulled the victory of Mashood. If we take the experiences of Nigerians under Muslim political leaders, you will rarely find them identifying with Islam as Muslims or their being identified by non-Muslims as Muslim.

We are therefore floating with democratic structures, institutions and processes as MEN first. Whatever works, we stick to it.

FRUITS OF DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA

Given the identity crisis as the basis for our politics it is inevitable to find Muslims in ethnic or geographical struggles, even as champions.

Indeed, this base is not enough. The struggle is in opposition to similar composition(s) with Muslims as members. We therefore find Muslims in the cross-fire politics of North-South or Yoruba-Hausa-Ibo. The consequence of this is that the value of being a Muslim has dropped below secondary level. In another Vein, Unions and professional bodies serve as safe avenues for such struggles.

And in response Muslim members feel a sense of achievement when they form theirs, made up of Muslim members. This is aesthetic isn't it?

In the realization of our society, Muslims can now be massively produced outside wedlock, because democratic instruments protect the tradition by not being illegal. Muslim women can be joined in marriage while in a state of pregnancy. A Muslim can get popular democratic support even when it is known that his source of wealth is questionable. It does not make any difference if he is an ignoramus. Indeed, a Muslim who is known to have gone beyond the bounds of Allah and His Messenger like marrying more than four wives, swimming in usury, engaging in prohibitive business ventures will be given community honours in. Women get their share of highest rate of divorce, with the courts busy in milking the 'opportunities' for money, fun and power. This is more applicable to the lower stratum of the society. The 'middle class and above enjoy less exposure. They record less attendance of such courts. Criminally, Muslims do not even have the opportunity to be treated in accordance with Shari'ah. Nigeria is a secular state. That is democracy.

Economically, between independence to date, how many or how much of Islamic banking can we boast of? What is our level of economic education as Muslims? Are businesses more humane in areas with concentration of Muslims?

In our democracy therefore, donations are a good and common form of assistance. Launching is yet another. The old people's homes and orphanages are a curious development in our democracy. That is the character of Muslims livelihood in Nigeria's democracy. We are now in a stage where we have to live with book keeping as the proof of honesty and accountability. Being a Muslim is not a guarantee of being an honest or sincere person. And the witness of a Muslim becomes credible on the strength of a sworn affidavit rather than his identity as one who fears Allah.

WHO IS A DEMOCRATIC LEADER?

A democratic leader is more than an ordinary faithful participant in this arrangement of structures, institutions and processes. He is definitely a democrat. In Nigeria, the person may be a Muslim and may not be. Whoever the person is, his qualification as a leader makes him **FIRST AMONG EQUALS**. He is a star or a pillar or a champion in the direction of democratic actions and yields as explained above. Thus, when compared to ordinary political animals or members in the society, he is before someone or many – by name, by rank, by role and by responsibility. He may be a legislator, a councillor, a commissioner, an adviser, a governor, a minister, party executive, union leader etc.

Thus, in Nigeria's context, a democratic leader does not promise anything as a Muslim. This is not to suggest that he cannot initiate something as a Muslim or that he may not even succeed. The point is that, his Muslim identity is not primary to him nor is it of him, in his understanding and expectation by others.

THE DIVIDING LINE

In Nigeria's democracy, a democrat and especially a leader, is committed to the faith in man's knowledge and ability to make ALL laws for his own good as a human being. The equality of men is in their form and not in the belief and fear of Allah. For a Muslim:

Allah forgiveth not
That partners should be set up
With Him... to set up
Partners with Allah
Is to devise a sin
Most heinous indeed.
Qur'an 4:48

He who obeys
The messenger, obeys Allah
Qur'an 4:80

O ye who believe!
Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger,
And those charged
With authority among you.
If ye differ in anything

Among yourselves. Refer it
To Allah and His Messenger,
If ye do believe in Allah
And the last Day:
That is best and most suitable
For final determination.
Qur'an 4:59

CAUTION

The process of consultation in democracy is not comparable with that enjoined on Muslims. In Islam, belief is the foundation and compliance is the first step. Both followers and leaders obey Allah and His Messenger. It is beyond this that men come in and make laws THAT MUST NOT CONTRADICT obedience to Allah and His Messenger.

Those who avoid the greater
Crimes and shameful deeds,
And, when they are angry
Even then forgive.

Those who hearken
To their Lord, and establish
Regular prayer; who (conduct)
Their affairs by mutual
Consultation.

Qur'an 42:37 – 38

OBJECTIONS AND CONCLUSION

I hope that from the discussion of the problem, I have provided only some understandings, relevant for a Muslim, in Nigeria's democratic setting.

I hope that, I have not told you what a Muslim can do, should do to make him an Islamic political leader. I didn't set out to do that. Hope I have not suggested the setting up of a Muslim or Islamic Political Party. The object of the paper is not to achieve these. I have not considered the disadvantage or advantage for non-Muslims in the context of Islamic leadership. This was not the assignment. I have not set out to provide the answer, for a Muslim.

My contribution is not meant to advise or guide on using democracy as a yardstick and subjecting Islam to it; in order to produce an Islamic democrat. This is not the same as a Muslim or Muslims submitting themselves to democracy. I do not know what Islamic democracy is and cannot teach it.

What I have attempted and hope to have succeeded in contributing is that there is democracy in Nigeria and we are living it in its way. In consequence, we have the leaders who are foremost in the arrangement. The status of Muslims in it does not

suggest that it does not exist or that it is not working. After all, Muslims are participants, opportunists and leaders in it.

Are you a democrat? Do you aspire to be a leader? If you are not either, are you ignored by democracy?

POSTSCRIPT ONE

SINCERITY THE KEY TO SUCCESS: THE CASE OF ISLAM

Without assuming the correctness or appropriateness of Islam as an outlook, as a religion, as a way of life, it may be asked, and rightly too, the justification for accepting and submitting as a Muslim. This will be right, for everyone and especially for one not born into Islam. It will not be out of place for one who is born into Islam, to further convince and satisfy oneself. Islam does not expect and does not admire followership by men simply blindly, as a flock of sheep. And the question may be rooted in not being justified for Islam presenting itself or merely claiming to be right, appropriate, fitting. And the standard for testing this and whatever is not complex, difficult. It must be tied to sincerity.

While this test is universally applicable to every enterprise, any call, any activity in history, for success; and while not only one can be claimed, the case of Islam is one. Art can claim sincerity for its success. Science can claim sincerity for its success. Fashion can claim sincerity for its success. Politics and Law can make equal claims. Indeed magic can claim sincerity. But the objective is not to dispute, compete or struggle with others directly. The objective here is to state or present the case of Islam.

The invitation is therefore to visit the case of Islam in order to be doubly sure, for those who have already made up their minds and to share with those who may come to or still have some doubt, about the case of Islam.

YOU CAN'T BE JUST SINCERE

It must therefore be made clear and emphasized that you CAN'T BE JUST SINCERE. This is because sincerity in-itself has no meaning, has no relevance, is of no use. Sincerity is like and beyond understanding. This is because you can't just understand anything. And beyond this, sincerity involves belonging to, beyond the head and frame of mind or impression. Therefore sincerity defines orderly belongingness to a definite, a specific, a particular totality. If science is total, then one can have a sincere scientist. If Democracy is total, one can expect to have an insincere democrat. If secularism is total, then one can talk of a sincere secularist. And the totality must be primary.

Sincerity means, to one's best, informed by knowledge, in practical submission or the basis for required practical submission. Thus, with the attribute of sincerity, the backup idea for a given practice deserves consideration for expected positive or beneficial result or outcome. In other words a sincere behaviour expects a definite positive response to follow it. Two parties must therefore be involved. And even if it is just an individual, the effect of his bodily activity must be positive or expected to be positive on his spirit or mind or psych. A yogi is therefore sincere in his practice of yoga. A Muslim whose prayer does not have the effect of curbing him from the doing of evils and his spiritual upliftment is engaged in a valueless devotion. Thus in the event of mistake(s), the failure to attain or achieve the objective result, it can be tolerated - because there

has been a mistake. It can be overlooked, because it does not mean that the back-up idea and the practice is not capable of being instrumental to the objective. Thus, the popularity of adultery or the high level of avoidable divorce cases attended to by civil courts in largely Muslim settlements are not sufficient to dismiss the sincerity of Islam. The essence of sincerity is that it is and can be found or discovered to be right in itself. It does not require any fighting, struggle, competition, comparison, defence against another whatever, to be right, to be capable of enabling the practitioner attain the positive and definite result. It is also capable of being shared by another person just as it can be practised by another person. It cannot therefore be separated from positive and definite result(s) informed by an idea, words of submission, confession, declaration, information or knowledge. It cannot be separated but must be part of a totality.

But, sincerity does not have to be the effect of a truth or set of this that is all and all or absolute. The truth that is momentary can produce or give effect to sincerity. Thus, in the development of scientific knowledge, at a stage it was undisputed that the world or earth is flat only to be later discovered to be round. As with knowledge, it can be in respect of an experience, an event or a person, that is observed or sensed.

The only test for sincerity is CONSISTENCY, FREEDOM FROM DELIBERATE CARE, GUARD, PROTECTION or CAUTION in order to conceal and still achieve the claimed positive results. And most critical is that, sincerity is not the attribute of an idea or practice but of the person, being or beingness that voluntarily or otherwise is affected by an idea (consciously or unconsciously) and is practically involved.

Consequently, the dangerous implication of sincerity is that, IT MAY NOT IN-ITSELF BE ENOUGH. In other words, a sincere person can be rightly jailed or punished. The rightness or consistency of sincerity does not amount to correctness in terms of value or acceptability. It is therefore too bad to be insincere and bad enough to be sincere for what is unacceptable. This is precisely the basis and justification by efforts to establish sincerity by testing the elements that are believed or understood or expected to define the consistency or rightness of the related ideas and actions against those that contradict it. This is what lawyers specialise in doing by cross examination, while the courts rule on the basis of the evidence before them. If you are sincere it therefore does not guarantee safety or correctness in itself. An accused who therefore easily confesses is liable to be punished.

In the case of Islam, what define its sincerity include the following.

1. There is no compulsion in the affair of the message of warning and good news for those who all are free to volunteer a choice.

Let there be no compulsion
In religion: Truth stands out
Clear from Error: whoever
Rejects Evil and believes

In Allah hath grasped
The most trustworthy
Hand-hold, that never breaks
And Allah heareth
And knoweth all things.

Qur'an 2:256

2. In addition to the exclusion of LURING as a method of inviting men into its fold, it must be free of charge i.e. without any FEE.

Or is it that thou
Asketh them for some
Recompense? But the recompense
Of thy Lord is best:
He is the best of those
Who give sustenance.

Qur'an 23:72

And these were the standards set for and lived by the model practitioner of Islam. Muhammad (S.A.W). Physical war was not commenced without the specific commandment of Allah. As a rule or standard, Muslims are only justified to fight, to protect or defend themselves, and by implication, their faith. This was dramatically revealed in the displeasure of Muhammad (S.A.W) on being informed that one of his companions executed an unbeliever suspected to have submitted, only to save his life. Muhammad (S.A.W) confronted the companion with the loaded question, if the faith belongs to him or to Allah? Thus, non-Muslims can safely live under the dominion of Islam. And today, we experience Islam's absolute sincerity, because we all do what we like the way we like, with or without lip service to the standards of Islam. The proof is that, we are largely ignorant and careless of our religion. We are divided, not aiding one another in the doing of good, competing in the doing of good, in inviting others to the doing of good. We have nothing to dissuade us from these. And we abundantly have unbelievers and misbelievers 'aiding' us to make us 'better' Muslims. We therefore follow their ways and dress it with the name of Islam. Haven't you heard of Islamic Democracy? Islamic Socialism? We are taught that they are secular and then we give it the label. Allah is great!

But, you can't be just sincere. It is not enough to claim sincerity. Whether your consistency leads to correctness or not that is only one element, for the decision of acceptability does not in itself just matter. It must be constituted of TRUTHFULNESS, whether complete, absolute or momentary. The facts that are in reference are distinct from those that are value laden, the cults of facts. They must be undisputable, sure, certain, cannot be excluded, ignored, omitted; undeniable and can be shared, not particular or peculiar to the person submitting. It must be universal, transferable/shareable, as far as getting the message or impression is concerned. It basically has nothing to do with interpretation or opinion is secondary.

The test for truthfulness is CONFIRMATION by the actor or the participant. And the confirmation must not be limited to one or a particular person; it must be capable of being shared. Thus, for Islam that claims universal relevance, it must not be restricted to any scope of any people over others. Whatever it claims must be applicable, for results, to all men across the globe, irrespective of race, nationality, language, level of civilisation or barbarism - once they decide to join. In the case of Islam, we will need to confirm

Move not thy tongue
Concerning the (Qur'an)
To make haste therewith
It is for Us to collect it
And to promulgate it.

Qur'an 75:16 – 17

It was not (possible)
For any apostle
To bring a Sign except
By the leave of Allah

Qur'an 40:78

It is not
For us to bring you
An authority except as Allah
Permits.

Qur'an 14:11

3. If he was strangely sent – He was in the company of previous known and recorded apostles like Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa and Isa.

We have sent thee
Inspiration, as We sent it
To Noah and the Messengers
After him: We sent
Inspiration to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob
And the Tribes, to Jesus,
Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon,
And to David We gave
The Psalms.

Qur'an 4:163

4. If we can confirm, share and understand the Quran: - We were not living, we have come to live and will irresistibly die before arising alive again. We largely come to life through the processes of sperm, blood clot, flesh and formation. All that is within space and time is transitory or must change and actually changes. Water is instrumental for life - for men, animals and vegetation. Pharaoh, *Safa*, *Marwa*, *Ka'aba*, *Badr*, etc. are not untrue.

And We have indeed
Made the Qur'an easy
To understand and remember
Then is there any that
Will receive admonition?
Qur'an 4:17

Man We did create
From a quintessence (of clay)
Qur'an 23:12

After that (life), at length
Ye will die.
Qur'an 23:15

Again, on the Day
Of judgement, will ye be
Raised up.
Qur'an 23:16

Then We made the sperm
Into a clot of congealed blood
Then of that clot
We made a (foetus) lump, then
We Made out of that lump
Bones and clothed the bones
With flesh; then We developed
Out of it another creature,
So blessed be Allah,
The best to create!
Qur'an 23:14

Set forth to them
The similitude of the life
Of this world: it is like
The rain which We send
Down from the skies;
The earth's vegetation absorbs it,
But soon it becomes
Dry stubble which the winds
Do scatter: it is (only) Allah
Who prevails over all things.
Qur'an 18:45

It is He Who has
Created man from water:
Qur'an 25:54

It is He who sendeth down
Rain from the skies
With it We produce
Vegetation of all kinds:
Qur'an 6:99

And cattle He has created
For you (men)
And ye have a sense
Of pride and beauty in them
As ye drive them home
In the evening, as ye
Lead them forth to pasture
In the morning.

Qur'an 16:6

5. If Allah (S.W.T) is true and that all affairs are His: - His Lord is the same Lord of previous apostles. The same Lord spoke to Musa directly. The same Lord blessed Sulaiman with the convenient command of men, *jinn*s and wind. By the will of the same Lord, Isa healed the sick and raised the dead. He neither ate nor shook hands with nor was related to Allah. He was a servant. The forgiveness or punishment of believers and unbelievers is not his business.

Then leave me alone
With such as reject
This message: by degrees
Shall We punish them
From directions they perceive not.
Qur'an 68:44

Whether We shall show thee
(Within thy life-time)
Part of what
We promised them
Or take to Ourselves thy soul
(Before it is all accomplished).
Thy duty is to make
(The message) reach them:
It is Our part
To call them to account
Qur'an 13:40

But for sincerity, the consistency or agreeability of the facts, the evidence or truth(s) are not sufficient for relevance to men. This is especially so in respect of a mode of life that recommends itself or is recommended for membership or following. The truth in this respect will require that the caller is found or seen to be faithful to it. Sincerity completely negates the principle of DO AS I SAY AND NOT AS I DO. Imperialism is

therefore completely in negation of sincerity as a basis of relationship.

Faithfulness involves giving up to, totally, completely, free of prejudice, without association, colouration, modification, amendment, adjustment or reform. The submission or commitment must be definable as pure and simple. Without reservation. Without addition. Just as informed by the truth(s). Innocently. Abidingly. Anything short of this, the person, the personality, the personification, the model, the truth(s) and the consistency will all become questionable or at best accept our scepticism. Thus, for sincerity, we must be capable of understanding the truth(s) and we must be able to share the consistency in this and in the submission or commitment of the example or locus of display. Faithfulness is therefore the proper or empirical test for the truth(s) of livelihood which we must be able to appreciate to be able to accept the rightness of sincerity as correct - whether momentary or permanent.

For Islam that claims universal relevance as a body of truth(s) and the model being Muhammad (S.A. W), we will need to establish not only the universality of the truth, the understandability of this, the consistency in these but the faithfulness of Muhammad (S.A.W).

In the case of Islam, the truth(s) boil down to the declaration, witness to and submission to the absolute and consistent unity of Allah and the apostleship of Muhammad (S.A.W) who is or as the model. We can certify the faithfulness of Muhammad (S.A.W) by just taking the following as compelling pointers.

1. He was taught, he declared as a definition and as the specific response to those who reject - thus, in principle and the history he made. This is what we find in the chapters of unity and unbelievers respectively.

Say: He is Allah,
The One and Only;
Allah, the Eternal, Absolute;
He begetteth not,
Nor is He begotten;
And there is none
Like unto Him.

Qur'an 112

Say: O ye
That reject faith!
I worship not that
Which ye worship,
Nor will ye worship
That which I worship
And I will not worship
That which ye have been
Wont to worship,
Nor will ye worship

That which I worship
To you be your Way,
And to me mine.

Qur'an 109

2. He turned towards Jerusalem as previous apostles of Allah and immediately changed towards Ka'aba as directed by Allah, in disregard of what unbelievers might say and actually said. Allah made this compliance a form of trial for those who declared their faith.

And We appointed the Qibla
To which thou wast used,
Only to test those who followed
The Apostle from those
Who would turn on their heels
(From the faith).

Qur'an 2:143

The Fools among the people
Will say: "What hath turned
Them from the Qibla to which
They were used?" Say:
To Allah belong both East and
West

Qur'an 2:142

3. He was taught and believers are to follow the same step of asking for only Allah's protection as Muhammad (S.A.W) himself actually did when he fell sick. This is what we find in the chapters of mankind and Dawn.

Say: I seek refuge
With the Lord

And Cherisher of Mankind,
The king (or Ruler)
Of mankind,

The God (or Judge)
Of mankind,

From the mischief
Of the Whisperer
(Of Evil), who withdraws (After
his whisper),

(The same) who whispers
Into the hearts of mankind

Among Jinns
And among Men

Qur'an 144

I seek refuge
With the Lord of the Dawn,

From the mischief
Of created things;

From the mischief
Of darkness as it overspreads;

From the mischief
Of those who practice
Secret Arts,

And from the mischief
Of the envious one
As he practices envy.

Qur'an 113

4. He suspended taking honey, unaware that the remark on the 'odour' of his mouth was informed by selfish and destructive jealousy. But Allah commanded him and he returned to what Allah had made legal, whether it will offend his consorts or not. It is Allah that matters.

O Prophet! Why
Holdest thou to be forbidden
That which Allah has
Made lawful to thee?
Thou seekest to please
Thy consorts. But Allah
Is Oft-forgiving, most merciful.

Qur'an 66:1

5. He continued to encourage his freed slave to accommodate his cousin in marriage even after they found themselves incompatible. He was afraid of what will become of the faith from the impressions that men may get. But Allah guided the affair, because it is His and Muhammad (S.A.W) submitted. The husband formally divorced the wife and Muhammad (S.A.W) got married to her. Honour belongs to Allah, to submission to His commandments.

Behold! Thou didst say
To one who had received
The grace of Allah
And thy favour: "Retain thou

(In wedlock) thy wife,
And fear Allah. "But thou
Didst hide in thy heart
That which Allah was about
To make manifest: thou didst
Fear the people, but it is
More fitting that thou shouldst
Fear Allah. Then when Zaid
Had dissolved (his marriage)
With her, with the necessary
(Formality), We joined her
In marriage to thee.
In order that (in future)
There may be no difficulty
To the Believers in (the matter of)
marriage with the wives
Of their adopted sons, when
The latter have dissolved
With the necessary (formality)
(Their marriage) with them.
And Allah's command must be fulfilled.
Qur'an 33:37

We can therefore bear witness to the effect that Muhammad (S.A.W) conveyed the truth and was himself faithful to the truth. This confirms his sincerity. In other words he is trust-worthy. This is because honesty is an orientation informed by truthfulness and faithfulness. His sincerity is the effect, result and reflection of these attributes.

That sincerity leads to or effects success is only logical. It means that sincerity enables one on his own, in relation to others and necessarily in the recognition of oneself and others to achieve, to attain, to reach a goal that is consciously set out for. It therefore enables a court to comfortably pass a judgement, to pass a verdict – whether correct in the judgement or assessment of the plaintiff and the accused or not. In other words, it may be and it may not. The point is that it provides the basis and guts, the morale and justification and understanding of the ultimate act of the court. It enables lawyers to proceed on the belief that they will certainly arrive at an acceptability once the parties in dispute and witnesses are placed on the agreement that they will submit all the truth, nothing but the truth in the course of their being cross-examined.

The test for the relationship between sincerity and success is participant trial. If you therefore try democracy you will get results. If you try military rule, it will give you results. If you try colonialism, it will give you results. If you try monarchy, it will give you results. If you try magic, it will give you results. If you try imperialism, it will give you results. If you try press license it will give you results. If you try unionism it will give you results. If you try secularism, it will give you results. In the same vein, mechanized agriculture, subsistence agriculture, monetary economy, free enterprise will all give you results.

In the case of Islam, was it successful? Is it succeeding? Will it succeed?

1. Muhammad (S.A.W) as an individual succeeded and tremendously too. He lived, struggled and died a fulfilling life. History has not recorded any individual comparable with him.
2. As a system, Islam was instrumental in overthrowing *Jahiliyya* system and extensive expansion beyond the immediate home country of Muhammad (S.A.W).
3. The system is still inspiring men and nations across the globe after over one thousand and four hundred years.
4. Unlike socialism, it does not have basis for its crumbling.
5. It is not being sustained by wars\sanctions like in the case of democracy.
6. In spite of the corrupt practice of Islam by Muslims all over the world for centuries now, it is the real threat to and fear of increasingly violent democracy.
7. It sourced systematic development of science, arts, education etc.

And the distinctive relation between the sincerity of Islam and success is its status of completion, perfection, totality and finality of truth(s). It requires not and cannot be improved upon. It is therefore an outlook and a mode that is not evolving or to be developed.

This justifies its basis or confirmation of the principle that no man, no believer, no Muslim can be sincere in the perspective of Islam and at the same time be sincere in any perspective other than Islam.

The implication of this is that any admixture of the Islamic standard with another type or form of sincerity will place the practitioner on the continuum of distance or variation from the goal of success. And the end of the continuum is defined by apostasy.

This also implies that before apostasy, the practitioner may not be said to be totally out of Islam, but will certainly not be said to define Islam nor its pure goal of success. And the inevitable consequence of any admixture is that the practitioner(s) will be faced with unjustified, unnecessary, avoidable crises on the path to success.

For example, a Muslim cannot be sincere and at the same time be secular. Such admixture makes the Muslim unpredictable not knowing when he will be a Muslim and when he will be secular. The result or effect of such is that the success (if that is what it will be called) will neither be nor be of either. For, what can you say of a hearing person that decides to take rest on the approach of gunshots, or a deaf man who keeps a collection of audio instructional materials strictly for his own use, or a blind man that spends a lot of his time and resources on watching slides.

Allah has not made for
Any man two hearts
In his (one) body:

Qur'an 33:4

This explains the crises of a Muslim or Muslims who are of some sincerity associated or joined to Islamic sincerity. Thus, a Muslim who is also a secular democrat will bribe and rig elections. He will declare himself a winner even before he is declared. When he is invited to accept loss as the will of Allah, he will be shocked and will invite the enemies of Allah as his witnesses. He will in fact ask them to help him. And a Muslim scholar will call for the social ex-communication of a fellow Muslim, to establish democracy that is secular. Such a Muslim-cum-secularist will pay or evade state tax, not care about *sadaqat* and *Zakkat* and will make kick-backs, deals, over invoicing as his means of economic livelihood. He will take loans for a purpose and not use it for the declared purpose.

In Islam sincerity, the key to success must be based or built on knowledge and experience that does not deviate from submission to the unity of Allah consistently. It is not a hobby. It is not an affair of special or excessive intellectualism.

POSTSCRIPT TWO

TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING

The understanding of every affair of involvement is the fundamental definition of consciousness as knowledge; consciousness as appreciation; commitment as livelihood; and contentment with a given belief.

The best and highest status lies in the understanding across all things.

The luckiest and most opportunist circumstance will be in the firm and consistent believe along with close compliance with the person that understands by the person who frees himself from the trouble of understanding.

Understanding is therefore a responsibility. And it must be bore by an individual, a group or even a community every time, every place, every circumstance, through life. It is not a matter of week to week, day to day, month to month, year to year, decade to decade, century to century, 99' from or for every epoch.

This is because an understanding, every understanding, all understanding must not be temporary, must not be restricted to appearance and must not be limited in relevance or applicability to any scope of men that is not universal. It must not be for a tribe, a race, a climate, a land e. t. c. It must not be accidental.

With our inevitability to live within the framework of TIME, I believe that understanding is of two classes. The one is conceptionally informed by the reality of beyond or outside TIME. This is granted only to Allah, the creator of TIME by those who believe. For Allah if we are to understand, the PAST is definable by BEFORE CREATION; the PRESENT is definable by SINCE CREATION; and the FUTURE is definable by ETERNITY from RESURRECTION.

It is therefore a misunderstanding, to pin down or locate the past, the present and the future in the context of our time frame, if we are to consider meaningful reality or truth.

For a Muslim, understanding is for men, while knowledge is of Allah. And Allah has tied the future to what is made of the present. Within the present, He has provided the standard and model for building the future. And this is within His responsibility for everything - by provision or permission. Thus, good or evil is both in His knowledge and by His pleasure and desire.

It is therefore not correct, when the livelihood of Muhammad is made or cited as a reference, that it is to the past, to the outdated, to the outlived. The ignorance of electrical, mechanical, chemical, biological or physical facilities; the realisation or consciousness, discovery (not origination from nothing) of these and improvement on them by accidents and designs DOES NOT change our TIME FRAME from being THE PRESENT. The moment we do that, we are out of BELIEF.

Thus, the drawing close of the end of the PRESENT and the worsening of the scope and quality in the prescribed standard of livelihood in the present is not to justify principled adjustment to the perfection and completed religion of Islam.

It is not a basis for hopelessness, because the lights of the set example were not easily built without difficulties.

But there is every justification for fear, in the PRESENT. And it is rooted in the factual reality that our reality is limited to our time frame. Thus when Allah guarantees that every believer's prayer is accepted, except we understand, we can get hopeless.

When there is a pit and we require crossing, we are required to simply pray and make effort to cross. With Allah, He may cover the pit for us before our arrival, on our arrival, suddenly or gradually, by we being the direct means or by others doing it; or miraculously, by our crossing in negation of the rules of physics. Where any of these forms defines His desire and pleasure, that gives us pleasure, we don't complain. We however easily forget that, the acceptance of the prayer does not abuse the reality that we can only reach Allah or that He reaches us only from behind a veil. This is the shortfall with immediate agreement.

But Allah could suspend it with minor or serious consequence. The crossing could be after falling into the pit with the result of sustained injuries or even getting handicapped before crossing. None of these is without the knowledge or acceptance of neither a believer's prayer, nor the desire and pleasure of Allah permitting it. These forms are what establish the truth that our belief does not make Allah our servant; and that our belief, unbelief, our pleasure or displeasure is inconsequential to Him. And more seriously, that good or misfortune is a trial, with believers enjoined to simply submit in compliance consistently.

Failure or misfortune is therefore not an indication of being disowned or not being cared for. And success or fortune is not a sign of salvation. This is because Allah's promise of supporting believers is tied only to the FUTURE of ETERNAL LIFE after death and not our future in this PRESENT.

The basis for fear is therefore that, Allah cannot be conditioned to PLEASE us by prayer or arrangement, within our timeframe or the PRESENT. No amount of calling or form of calling influences or adjusts what is His pleasure or desire. If it coincides with our wish, FINE. If not, HARDLUCK. But, as a believer, this should not affect our faith and trust and compliance.

The hope is however hinged on Allah's grace or allowance that is open until the time of death; that a believer will not be burdened with more than what he can bear; and the promise that through our SATISFACTION or HARDLUCK a believer will gain the pleasure of Allah ultimately - in the FUTURE.

And of all the allowances for hope, the most subtle is WHAT IS NOT BEYOND OUR CAPACITY TO BEAR. This is where our efforts is squarely' located. It can be pitiful or disgusting because our best may be distant from the minimum good that our capacity

can realise. And the explanation for this is rooted in disjointedness in leadership, economic structure or social arrangement that we live with or in, if and when we choose to be neutral.

This means that association of anything with Allah; usury and homosexuality cannot be tolerated or accommodated in any form. In a circumstance where any of these are allowed to grow, cover and penetrate into our livelihood, our false concept of changes in time within THE PRESENT is not excusable. The individual, the group and the community must therefore take responsibility. It is therefore important to note the facets of political, economic and social trappings in our PRESENT life. They are so central that it will be fool hardy to practice the five pillars without giving them serious attention and direction.

It is the problematic state that constantly provides the opportunity for struggles, for a war between what Allah has enjoined against what unbelievers prefer. This is the base for flying to a top height like martyrdom, when the warrior dies in the process of fighting, and if he succeeds, it is a merit from this life. The absence of problem is therefore not the best circumstance or facility for spiritual development, for closeness to Allah, for a better FUTURE.

And reflecting on the models, the great four, to be approached, were not in comfort. Prophet Nuh lived a long, difficult and provocative life; Prophet Ibrahim was thrown into fire and then went into exile, only to leave his family in the custody of Allah. Remember, the trying circumstances for the blessings of *Zamzam* and sacrifice. Prophet Musa, who spoke to Allah Himself narrowly escaped into exile, became a shepherd only to face Pharaoh. Prophet Isa never had a house or family of his own. And Prophet Muhammad was struggling all through and all rounds. He died in the identity of the poor. After him, Abubakar, the truthful and beloved of Allah attained that status by abandoning everything except Allah and Muhammad for himself and his family. It is true that Prophets Dawuda, Sulayman and Yusuf struggled, but they were Kings. Thus, there is superiority in being faced with problems if we stand to fight evil believingly. And the security is that if we win, we are winners and if we die in the process (without hypocritically enjoying it) we return to Allah in peace.

THE PRINCIPLES OF ALLAH'S INTERFERENCE

1. All action is by His permit.
2. If He chooses He could interfere.
3. When He interferes, it does not change His responsibility. If re-confirms action only by His permit.
4. When He chooses not to interfere, it does not deny Him the responsibility. For, if He had, the course will change.
5. When men therefore act, it is by His permit.
6. When men refuse or are unable to act, it is by His permit.
7. The ability of men is by His grant.
8. Men's commission or omission does not free them from His rule.
9. He does not need men.
10. Men need Him.

11. If men believe, they must pray and act.
12. That is the limit for men.
13. If they go by His conditions it may be easier.
14. If they ignore His conditions it may be difficult.
15. No condition is a guarantee, but His desire.
16. If men pray and act, He may permit.
17. If men do not pray but act, He may permit.
18. If men do not pray and do not act, He may permit.
19. If men pray and act, He may delay, suspend or refuse to permit, but will keep a reward with Him.
20. If men do not pray but act, He may delay or refuse to permit, but will not keep any reward with Him.
21. If men do not pray and do not act, He may delay or refuse
22. He is always in the know and fully aware.
23. He is always able and decisive on all matters.

THE PRINCIPLE OF MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. Man is created with capacities.
He can smell, see, hear, taste, grasp, step on, feel, know, understand, share etc.
2. Man is endowed with energy to be exerted, channelled or directed towards expressing different kinds of capacities.
3. Man may by exertion be able to realise an objective or may fall short or may even fail.
4. Man's ability made possible by his given capacities that are given meaning through the exertion of energies is propelled by desire, wish, prayer, hope, expectation, dream etc.
5. Man's limitation lies in the immediate appearance that when he exerts energy by some capacity, he will be able to reach his desire or dream.
6. This appearance is partly true because by it man often arrives and without it man often does not arrive.
7. The total truth is that Allah can still choose to interfere to change the course or choose not to interfere and allow the design of men to take the forms they are endowed to make possible according to the specific efforts they put in then.
8. Thus, if Allah desires and wills, He could make all of men's' desires fulfilling, by permitting them either without checking the extremities or by sealing all negative outlets and permitting (by inevitability) only the good, like in the case of angels.
9. Fortune or misfortune is therefore ultimately, what Allah pleases, for men who choose to act or not to act.
10. The difference therefore lies in belief and love of Allah's oneness and His total attributes along with compliance.
11. Without Allah's intervention, the desires of men will be pursued to an admixture of good, evil, shock, neutrality with the ultimate meaning of arriving at a destination only by chance, irrespective of how one takes off.
12. But with faith and struggle, ending in good is guaranteed in the ultimate regardless of the immediate form of seeming conclusion. And the proof is in success in the present life (if Allah so desires, pleases or permit) and an assured reward in the life after death, that will be eternal.

13. Man's responsibility is therefore in the conscious act based on understanding.
14. This is how men are responsible for whatever they make of themselves in this life and what becomes of them in the life to come after death.
15. This is how Allah is responsible for everything. When He reaches out, man cannot escape and when He withholds, man cannot reach. His seeming neutrality only permits man to reach his design. But He is really not neutral because His denial of permit would have changed the ability of man. Allah is always active.
16. Men cannot therefore be effectively neutral.
17. When they act, they make an effect. When they appear not to act, they expose themselves to other's action the effect of which they cannot be free from. Man cannot have his way. It is only an appearance, temporary and not ultimate.

THE PRINCIPLE OF ALLAH'S NEARNESS TO MEN

1. Allah was before the past, before our creation.
2. Allah then created creations including man.
3. Before creation and from creation both belong to Allah. So will be the extinction of creation and from resurrection.
4. Allah is therefore not part of before man's creation, from creation and cannot be a party to extinction or to be resurrected.
5. No creation(s) can reach Allah except as He permits.
6. As a rule for all creations, before extinction, Allah can only be reached and He reaches us from behind a veil.
7. He sent an angel, He makes one of us His messenger, He permits empiricism and scientific logic, He intervenes when, where, how and to whosoever as He pleases, He inspires, enables or denies us achieving our set targets through our relationship with one another, between men, between men and animals, between animals, between men and things, between things, between animals and things; by what appears to us to be accidental, by what appears to us to be a design; as we may understand it; as we may change our understanding; as we may not understand; as we cannot understand; and across all creations.
8. This is how we willingly and unwillingly submit to Him.
9. This is why those who believe and struggle will ultimately succeed, if they keep to His defined path.
10. This is why and how those who do not keep to His path may not fail in the present, in this life.
11. This instructs that believers must not sit, watching, expecting, without acting out to the best of their abilities and on His path.
12. He is therefore closer than the jugular vein in our neck.
13. But He is not at our service like a slave is obliged.
14. We can definitely and always meet Him.
15. But from behind a veil - His defined PATH.

THE PRINCIPLE OF ALLAH'S INDEPENDENCE

1. The end of everything and all things fall within His permit, as He desires, as pleases Him, according to His will.

2. All creations and circumstances are in submission to Him willingly or unwillingly.
3. He has no obligation to anyone, anything or any collection.
4. Everyone, everything and all collections have obligations to Him.

5. No compliance benefits Him and no dissent hurts Him.
6. His pleasure pleases and His anger hurts any creation or circumstance(s). He chooses.
7. No one and nothing is consequential to Him. He is consequential to each and everything.
8. No one has any right before Him or over Him except what He permits, offers or grants.
9. He has every right over everyone, everybody and every circumstance.
10. He does not require justice nor does He do justice defined by an obligatory standard to be agreed upon by other than Him.
11. He is justice and WHATEVER He decides is JUST.
12. After He has defined a path to be followed, whoever follows it and meets with His pleasure is successful, for his own good.
13. Whoever diverts from the path and meets with His anger has failed himself to his own loss.

THE PRINCIPLE OF MAN'S RESPONSIBLE FREEDOM

1. He believes in Allah and His Messenger.
2. He denies himself whatever Allah and His Messenger prohibits.
3. He commits himself to whatever Allah and His Messenger enjoin.
4. He does not ignore whatever is not specifically enjoined but is recommended by the tradition of the Messenger.
5. He is cautious by avoidance of what is doubtful in its status.
6. He keeps to these scopes of limitations.
7. He is contented with the consequences of these.