



**SHAYKH ADAM
ABDULLAHI AL-ILORY**

in the

Tableau *of* Immortality

Volume II

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GOOD GOVERNANCE IN THE WORKS OF SHAYKH ADAM AL-ILORY: A LESSON FOR DEMOCRATIC DISPENSATION IN NIGERIA

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Introduction

We have tried in this country the parliamentary system of government which has been living with the British people for over a century and we have failed. We have also tried the presidential system of government which remained in practice with the American people for over a century, we have failed. This was as a result of irreligious attitude in the people. We have produced men and women who are qualified in the various fields of knowledge but yet failed to serve well the society because they have refused to take along the tenets of their religion and put it into practice.¹

The above statement of a distinguished late Professor of Islam, M.O.A. Abdul could not be imagine at the time he made it than now that the country is struggling to survive in the midst of numerous socio-political and economic challenges facing it. The crux of the matter is that as religious as the country is, the spirit of secularism has blindfolded her that she has reduced religion to mere cosmetic that only surfaces at national programmes such as swearing-in ceremony of government functionaries, holidays during religious festivals and the like. The attempts of the nation to apply secular solutions to numerous socio-political problems facing it, to us, are not appropriate. This is because Nigeria is a multi-religious society, which will definitely cherish religious solutions to her problems. Religion becomes an instrument of negativity when it is not allowed to be used by the government positively. The indispensability of religion as an important organic pillar in the effectiveness of a state is stressed by Al-Ghazali who was quoted to have said: "The state and religion are inseparable pillars of an orderly society. Religion is the foundation and the ruler representing the state is its promulgator and protector; if either pillar is weak, society will crumble."²

It is an undisputable fact that Islam is a comprehensive way of life, which covers every aspect of human endeavour. The religion, which touches such minute aspects of life as mode of dressing, greeting, toilet habits and etiquette of eating among others, could not have kept quiet on the affairs of the state. To prove this, Shaykh Adam, in some of his works, delved into

exploring the stand of Islam on good governance and its practice by the Prophet which was religiously followed and adopted by his companions who ruled the *Ummah* after him successfully. Apart from the fact that the Shaykh demonstrated his erudition in virtually all aspects of Islamic knowledge, his discussions on good governance show that Nigeria will learn a lot in the political thought of Islam as explicated by the Shaykh. While we are aware that the Shaykh's view on good governance spread all over some of his works, we are limiting ourselves to only two of his publications on this theme, namely *Al-Islam Din Wa dawlah* and the *Durus ath-Thaqafat al-Islamiyyah*.

A Critique of the existing types of government by Shaykh Al-Ilory

In his *Al-Islam Din wa dawlah*, Shaykh al-Ilory identifies different types of government distinct from the Islamic system of government, namely: theocratic, dictatorial, democratic, aristocratic, oligarchic and hereditary systems of government.³ The Shaykh defines theocracy thus:

Theocratic government is a religious government in which the authority is left in the hand of a person who exercises exclusive spiritual authority and has power to legislate law as he wishes, just like the Pope who enjoys spiritual authority over the Christians, forgives whomsoever he wishes and denies forgiveness and pleasure to whomsoever he wishes.⁴

While critiquing this system of government, he sees it as a negation of Islamic mode of governance which draws its legislation from Allah. Such legislations were then explicated by Prophet Muhammad who came to put them into practice. As against theocracy which leaves its authority in the hand of a single individual, Islam allows and recognises independent reasoning which comes from jurists and scholars and not from a particular individual⁵. In other words, *Ijma'* and *Qiyas* are only secondary sources of Islamic law.

In addition to the above, the Shaykh opposes the stand of the Pope who attributed to themselves the authority to give divine legislation and attributing such to God. He quotes the verse: "Woe to those who write the book with their own hands and then say "This is from God" to purchase with it a little price! Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for that they earn (thereby)" (Q 2: 79).

While giving the definition of dictatorial government, he writes:

Dictatorial government is a government of force which is imposed by a single individual who

does whatever he likes and is not answerable to anyone. He rules with iron hand as practised by some monarchs and military governments which do not seek any opinion from the citizens.⁶

To Shaykh al-Ilory, this type of government imprisons the citizens without trial at courts and offers no protection to lives and property as in the case of Hitler and the government of Mussolini.⁷ Dictatorial government is a government by force, a government which takes decisions without any consultation. This creates a serious contradiction to the Islamic system of government which enjoins due consultation, mutual love between the ruled and the ruler, as well as acceptance of the leader by the community⁸. This explains why consultation is the pivot of the political system of Islam based on the Qur'anic recommendation thus:

It was by the mercy of Allah that you were lenient with them (O Muhammad), for if you had been stern and fierce of heart, they could have dispersed from round about you. So pardon them upon the conduct of affairs (Qur'an 3:159).

Shaykh Adam sees aristocratic governance as an opposite of oligarchy. While he defines aristocracy as a government of the social class, nobles and wealthy people who control the affairs of the state among themselves, oligarchy is a form of government which is being controlled by a small group of people who hold on to power and legislate only what is beneficial to them. He then likens what operated in Nigeria before the advent of the colonial masters to fall within the range of aristocratic form of government. He further draws a line of demarcation between aristocracy and hereditary succession which he sees as a form of government where the fathers give the baton of government to their sons or brothers by virtue of belonging to a royal family or a republic or aristocratic family. To him, aristocracy as a system of government involves restriction of authority to a particular social class whereby the succeeding generations inherit it from their predecessors. This system of government, though practiced by the Umayyads, does not tally with the Islamic system of government, as it was not practiced by the Prophet and neither was it practiced by the Rightly Guided Caliphs.⁹

Shaykh Al-Ilory defines democracy like the popular Abraham Lincoln's definition as the "government of the people, by the people and for the people." An expansion of this definition was made by Schumpeter, in Avosetinyen, who sees democracy as institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire power to decide by means of

a competitive struggle for people's votes.¹⁰ In the same vein, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* defines it as "a form of government in which the right to make decisions is exercised by the citizens directly or indirectly usually with a framework of constitutional restraints designed to guarantee all citizens the enjoyment of certain individual or collective rights, such as freedom of speech and religion..."¹¹ Furthermore, the Shaykh gives some characteristics of democracy which include the age of the eligible voters which he puts at twenty for those to vote and those to be voted for; formation of parliament among the elected people for the purpose of making laws based on the wish of the majority.¹²

While critiquing democracy as a system of government, Shaykh Al-Ilory likens it to a demagogical government, which is a government where a leader makes use of popular prejudices and false claims to promises in order to gain power. With particular reference to Nigeria, Shaykh Al-Ilory sees nothing admirable in democracy as being practiced in Nigeria where power was being hijacked by the financial giants and political demagogues, and candidates were imposed on the people through rigging of elections and other forms of electoral corruption being perpetrated political thugs who carried arms and other weapons to threaten their opponents.¹³ He sees those who voted people as not having enough experience to know the appropriate candidates to vote for. He also considers most of those in the helms of affairs as not having enough experience to carry the responsibility of the state. He wonders why most of the politicians who could not manage the affairs of their immediate family are asking for state responsibility. This, to him, is a misplacement of trust which is a sign of the Last Day, in line with the saying of the Prophet thus:

"When trust is lost, then expect the Hour (the Last Day)." "How shall it be lost, O the Messenger of Allah?" He replied saying: "When matters are entrusted to those who are not qualified for it, then you should expect the Hour."¹⁴

The explanation of Quadri on the above quoted *hadith* is in line with the view of Shaykh Al-Ilory when he writes:

If we look around us these days it is not difficult to discover that many people do not know the importance of trust; hence they treat it with levity, promising what they will never do. When people are appointed into high offices, for example, they take oath of office, promising to discharge their responsibilities creditably,

faithfully and conscientiously. More often than not, they forget this oath, perform woefully and betray the confidence reposed in them. In some cases the fault does not lie much with the appointees but with those who appoint them because they knew that they were unqualified, unsuitable and incompetent for the offices, but due to some negative factors heavy responsibility of trust is placed on untrustworthy people. on the other hand, those appointing them do corrupt them and contribute to their dismal failure.¹⁵

Another shortcoming of democracy identified by Shaykh Al-Ilory is the nature of the legislative aspect of the system. He opines that at times, the parliament legislates such un-Islamic practices like fornication, gambling and taking of alcoholic drinks. Based on the shortcomings of the above systems of government, Shaykh Al-Ilory gives the option of Islamic government as the only viable system of government.

The Concept of Good Governance according to Shaykh Al-Ilory

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) describes "Good Governance" as the "striving for rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, participation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability, and strategic vision in the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority." The above summarises the components of good governance which in our own view, except for the omission of piety, agrees with the principles of Islam on good governance.¹⁶

To start with, Shaykh Al-Ilory deals extensively with the concept of good governance by delving into the meaning of good governance and the necessary qualities of a good government. To him, a good government is an independent organization that adds value to the living standard of the individuals in the community and protects them against all odds and evils. By extension, he believes that an average individual in the society is prone to commit evil, and so a government becomes good when it enforces law and order in the community. He therefore cites 'Uthman to have said in this respect that: "Allah eradicates through the authority what he does not eradicate through the Qur'an."¹⁷ This submission of Al-Ilory is in consonance with the view of Mawdudi who was quoted by Zafaran to have said:

If people are free to commit adultery, no amount of sermons will stop them. But if governments forbid adultery, people will find it easier to give

up this evil practice. Similarly, is it not enough to preach sermons against drinking, gambling, usury, bribery, pornography and morally corrupting education, if the overall environment of the surrounding society encourages or at least condones these things. Power, however, can do much to eradicate them.¹⁸

However, Shaykh Al-Ilory opines that good government might be very difficult to attain if the majority of the particular community upon which the government is formed is not good. In other words, those in authority are mostly a replica of the citizens of the community. If they are good, the government would be good. He buttresses this by a Prophetic saying that: "you will be led by your type." Furthermore, the Shaykh identifies some qualities that are sine qua non for the attainment of good governance. These are maintenance of justice between the high and the low; equality between the individuals in the application of rights and duties; consultation; and goodness to the *Dhimmis* in the state, to mention but a few. To drive home these points, some verses and sayings of the Prophet are referred to by the Shaykh.¹⁹

Other aspects of governance discussed by the Shaykh are the appointment of a leader, appointment of his assistants, duties of a leader, the machinery for removing or impeaching a leader, and the responsibility of the judiciary and the legislative arms of the government. Stressing the imperative for appointing a leader in any community, he cites an *hadith* of the Prophet that enjoined the choice of a leader among three people who are on a journey. He considers the choice of a leader an exclusive responsibility of virtuous and upright people in the community. The basis of his argument is the methodology used by Caliph Umar who, in his bid to appoint his successor, nominated six people from the leading companions of the Prophet and called them with the responsibility of choosing a caliph to succeed him.²⁰

We want to quickly add here that this method suggested by the Shaykh is against the spirit of democratic equality which enjoins among others "one man one vote". In this wise, there is no discrimination between the vote of an upright and God-fearing individual and that of a hoodlum, a thief, an ex-convict and a prostitute. This explains why the political atmosphere in most countries and particularly in Nigeria is characterised by rampant tension, disruption of public peace and hooliganism, all in the name of getting their candidates into power by all means. This implies that such leaders came into power through the activities of hoodlums and thugs. As such, they only represented the interest of those who voted them or rather forced them to power. That notwithstanding, the Shaykh while recommending the choice of respectable morally upright, experienced and

men of proven integrity to nominate or elect a leader, does not explain how those people who would do the nomination would be selected in the first instance. He does not also discuss those factors that could influence the choice of the candidate or leader by the selected people. Such include favouritism in form of tribal or religious affiliation and pressures from political godfathers and traditional rulers. The issue of federal character which can warrant rotation of power amongst the existing cultures and tribes is also a strong issue that the people would contest with. One understands that Islamic equality gives no room for discrimination by rank, position, economic power, race or social status, yet production of leadership from a particular tribe in the presence of other tribes leaves much to explain on the extent of justice done to other tribes who may suffer such fate for not having much representation in the selection team.

Good Governance cum Duties of a Leader

Rather than discussing this topic, Shaykh Al-Ilory, digresses into the qualities of a leader, though he mentions some duties of a leader elsewhere under his discussion on Islamic government.²¹ Here, he identifies some qualities of a leader such as kindness, leniency and spirit of forgiveness. He then cites the content of a letter written by the fourth Caliph, 'Ali to his governor in Basra on how he should comport himself as a head there and the nature of quality he should demonstrate. He was said to have written him thus: "Listen! Verily, for every people being led is a leader they follow and from the light of his knowledge they derive illumination. Behold! Your leader ('Ali) is contented with two rags in his life and with two morsels of food. Behold! You may not be able to emulate in this way, but assist me with contentment, courage, decency and appropriateness." It should be noted that the Companions of the Prophet meant what they said, and they put into practice what they wanted their subjects to do. A practical example could be drawn from Sayyidna Umar who was visited by Utbah ibn Abi Farqad. At dinner, the visitor could not swallow the type of bread presented by his host. He thus remarked: "Why don't you use fine flour for your bread?" Umar retorted, "Can every Muslim afford fine flour for his bread? Alas! You wish me to exhaust all my pleasures while I am in the world."²² The sense of simplicity of Umar was so distinguished that unlike the Roman Emperor who lived in gorgeous, isolated and beautifully decorated palaces and mansions built of marbles and ornamented with inlaid stone of various colours, he was so unostentatious that the Christians of Jerusalem could not recognise him when he visited them. Also, when the envoy of the Roman Emperor visited this uncrowned monarch of Muslim nation, he could not believe his eyes when a person who was lying on the bare floor of the mosque was introduced to him as Caliph 'Umar.²³ This is a great lesson for the contemporary

political leaders in Nigeria who see the opportunity of their appointment as a quick means of enriching themselves through various means. The fleet of flashy cars in their entourage with highly disturbing sirens that accompany their arrivals at occasions should be revisited in view of the agony and inconveniences suffered by their subjects.

Furthermore, the Shaykh identifies some functions of a leader which include enjoining what is good, listening to their advice, supervising the affairs and activities of the governors and other functionaries under him and attending to the complaints of his subjects.²⁴ In our own view, these could be achieved only when the leaders make themselves accessible to their subjects. On the basis of this, the Prophet warned leaders not to keep themselves afar from their subjects in the following *hadith* thus:

If God puts anyone in the position of authority over the affairs of the Muslims, and he secludes himself (from them), not fulfilling their needs, wants and poverty, God will keep himself away from him, not fulfilling his need, want and poverty.²⁵

In view of the fact that it is extremely difficult for a leader to attend to all needs of his subjects, it becomes imperative for him to choose his assistants in form ministers, governors, judges, registrars, the commander in chief of the armed forces and chief police officer who would assist him in the administration of the country. To each of these offices, are responsibilities assigned to it. The ministers are the deputy to the leader in all the affairs of the state. The Qadi is in charge of administration of justice and a form of nowadays Minister of Justice. The Commander of the armed forces is equivalent to Minister of defence, while the Chief Police officer could be referred to, in the present dispensation, as Minister of Internal Affairs. The governor is the appointed ruler by the leader to manage the affairs of the provinces, and he serves as an intermediary between the head of government and the people.²⁶ Shaykh Al-Ilory stresses the importance of these assistants in line with some Qur'anic and traditions of the Prophet. Drawing a clue from the Qur'an, he refers to the request of Prophet Musa that Allah should strengthen him by appointing his brother Harun as his Wazir, as an indication of the imperativeness of having deputies by a leader of a nation. To him, both Abu Bakr and Umar served as Wazir to the Prophet during his mission.²⁷ However, the leader should ensure that he appoints men of impeccable character who would not tarnish the image of the administration. A vivid condition of appointing such officers was given by Caliph 'Ali ibn Abi Talib who instructed his newly appointed governor of Egypt on the modality of appointment of public officers that would work with him thus:

.....Then come officers of your state.... They must be appointed after a careful scrutiny of their capabilities and characters. These appointments must be made on probation without any kind of favouritism being shown or influence being accepted.... While selecting your officers, take care to select experienced and honourable persons.... They are not greedy and cannot be easily corrupted.... Keep them also well paid, so that they may not be tempted to lower their standards of morality and may not misappropriate the cash of the state which they hold in their trust.²⁸

From the above, it could be understood that good governance requires participation of credible people. For effective governance, the participants must be people of unquestionable character, just and energetic and must possess qualities of head and heart. Caliph Ali gave the qualities of participants in administration to include refinement, experience, alertness, power of comprehending problems, confidentiality, and freedom from greed and lust. Where a political actor lacks any of these qualities, the society will bear the brunt. Shaykh Uthman Dan Fodiyo maintains this same position in his *Kitab al-Farq*. Similarly, al-Mawardi (d. 450 AH) wrote a compendium entitled *al-Ahkam Sultaniyah wal-Wilayat ad-Diniyah* where he enumerated the expected qualities of a leader. It is also expected that freedom to participate in governance should be available to the citizens. Exclusion of critical segments of the society should be avoided if good governance is to be enthroned.²⁹

Shaykh Al-Ilory further delves into the judicial system of Islam. He considers the judiciary as the office which settles dispute and fights injustice among people. In addition, it claims the rights and returns such to their owners.³⁰ He observes that the Prophet personally held this office during his life and that it was during the caliphate of Abu Bakr that he instituted this office and appointed 'Umar into the office. He observes that no major case of dispute and injustice was recorded then due to the high sense of justice of 'Umar.³¹ He further spells out some of the conditions to be fulfilled by someone who is to occupy the office. These include Islam, sanity and physical fitness. The condition that a judge should be a Muslim could be understood from the perspective that the Shaykh has an ideal Islamic state in mind. He does not also support the candidature of a blind or deaf judge, possibly because such candidate would not be able to peep into previous records for inference and may not be able to use his other senses optimally. The Shaykh however remains silent as regard whether a woman can be

appointed a judge or not. He only observes the controversy among scholars on it. That notwithstanding, we see nothing wrong in a woman occupying such a position in view of the fact that it is a position that cannot be attained overnight. If a woman can therefore rise to this rank in the course of her career, she should not be denied for gender reason. It needs to be mentioned here that the Shaykh adopts that only a male candidate should be appointed as a leader based on an *hadith* that a nation that is led by a woman would never prosper.³²

It needs to be mentioned here that the *hadith* cited above has been exposed to criticisms by scholars. Some believed that the *hadith* is weak because the narrator had once been found guilty of slander and was flogged eighty lashes by Umar ibn al-Khattab. However, some scholars like Ibn Kathir and Shaykh Muhammad Al-Ghazali confirmed the authenticity of the *hadith*. Whatever the case may be, Shaykh Adam upholds that a woman should not be appointed a leader, but could participate in government in some other capacities like Aisha, the wife of the Prophet did during the time of the Prophet.³³

Obedience to a ruler

By way of introduction, Shaykh Adam identifies some approved ways through which one could become a leader. Firstly, through appointment by an incumbent leader, so far his appointee does not come from his immediate family, just like the Prophet appointed Abu Bakr to lead people in prayer during his sickness that consequently led to his death. In the same vein, Abu Bakr appointed 'Umar to succeed him before his death. Secondly, it could be through consultation of people of proven integrity who met to appoint a candidate as a leader. The appointment of 'Uthman, the third caliph came through this means. The third means is through the firmness of members of *shura* committee to enforce allegiance to an appointed ruler, like how Talha and Zubair were compelled to accept allegiance to 'Ali after the assassination of 'Uthman.³⁴ Through whatever means a leader emerged, it becomes expedient that Muslims should obey the leaders in line with the Qur'anic verse that says: "Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those charged with authority among you ..." (Q 4: 59),³⁵ and the saying of the Prophet which says: "You should listen to and obey your ruler even if he was a black slave (Ethiopian) whose head looks like raisin."³⁶

For a Muslim to obey a leader, such a leader must fulfil the condition of being obedient to Allah and His Prophet. He alludes to this in respect of the inaugural speech of Sayyidina Abu Bakr when he was appointed the caliph. He said:

I have been chose as your leader and I am not the best of you. If I do good, assist me, and if I

derail, correct me. Obey me as much as I obey Allah and His Messenger, but if I disobey Him, your obedience to me is not binding.³⁷

The above saying of Abu Bakr is imperative, in view of the fact that some leaders, being intoxicated with power, do transgress in coming up with laws that are opposed to divine laws. In such a case, people are not bound to obey such a leader all in the name of following Allah's injunction which enjoins them obey their leaders. An *hadith* in the Sahih Bukhari and Muslim was cited by the Shaykh to support this. It reads:

The Messenger of God dispatched a military force and appointed one of the Ansar as its leader. He ordered them (the soldiers) to heed and obey him. The leader became annoyed with the troops on account of something and said, "Gather firewood for me", and they gathered it. Then he said, "Kindle the fire", and they kindled the fire. Then he said, "Has the Messenger of God not enjoined you to obey me?" They replied, "Of course." The leader said, "Then enter it." The troops started looking at each other (as per whether or not they should enter it). They then said, "We have fled to the Messenger of God for the sake of saving ourselves from the fire (by embracing Islam). They continued to procrastinate until the fire went out and the leader's anger subsided. When they eventually returned and reported the episode to the Prophet, he said, "If they had entered it, they would have never come out of it (until the Day of Resurrection). Obedience is only in that which is right."³⁸

In conclusion, the Shaykh discussed how a leader could be impeached and what could lead to that. When a leader becomes unpopular or fails to recognise the sovereignty of Allah, his subjects could revolt against him in form of disobeying his order. In such a case, the leader should not enforce himself on them, and if he does, his functions would not be accepted. The Shaykh then cited an *hadith* which says: "The Prayer of whoever leads a people by force will not go beyond his collar-bone."³⁹

Lessons for the Nigeria Political Leaders

From all indications, there are lessons for the Nigerian political figures to learn from the Islamic concept of good governance as discussed by Shaykh Al-Ilory. Good governance requires fair legal framework that are enforced sincerely and impartially. This implies that both rulers and the ruled are under the law of the state. The issue of immunity clause in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria appears to violate this principle. Heads of Islamic States appeared in courts and judgments given against them under the Islamic caliphate.

In addition, Nigerian leaders should make transparency their watchword. Transparency requires openness and making information freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by decisions and their enforcement. The principle of transparency assists the government to win the pleasure of the electorate as they are carried along in the administration of the state. Where this is lacking, uprisings, hullabaloo and crises become the order of the day. Transparency also involves declaration of assets by public office holders. The example of Umar ibn Abdul-Aziz (a renowned Muslim ruler) is relevant here. On assumption of office, he declared his assets and returned the ill-gotten wealth inherited from his predecessor to the public treasury.

Closely related to the above is that Islam realises that leaders are representatives of their subjects and so they are not only accountable to God, but also to those who voted them in. As such, they should respond to the needs of the electorates. A leader should not only respond to the needs of his people, but listen to their advice and complaints. It is on record that a companion al-Hubbab ibn al-Mundhir advised the Prophet to shift the Muslim camp at the battle of Badr because the place earlier chosen by the Prophet would have given the enemies upper hand over the Muslim army. In a demonstration of responsiveness, the Prophet adopted the advice of an ordinary follower (who was not even known to be among the closest companions to the Prophet). He therefore moved the Muslim camp to a place suggested. This move was one of the reasons which made the Muslim army to be victorious at Badr. The battle of Khadaq is another example of instances of the Prophet's responsiveness to his companions. The fact that the Prophet was the last person to leave Makkah during the immigration is an indication of his responsiveness and selflessness to his followers.

In addition to the above, Islam cherishes consensus orientation and so encourages it to be imbibed by the Nigerian leaders. This implies the need for the government to mediate on different interests in the society to reach a broad consensus on what is the best interest of the community. In fact, the lawmakers are in the best position to do this. It is in the interest of the

legislature to defend itself against any unwarranted criticism through logical and coherent presentations.

Furthermore, Islam enjoins equity in its entire ramification. This explains why it takes care of the religious freedom of non-Muslims in an Islamic state. This implies that all segments of the society are taken care of equitably. This will no doubt promote sense of belonging among them. We need to reiterate here that non-consideration of the provision of Islam and laws made by the lawmakers is one-sided. It is equitable that issues arising from marriages contracted on Islamic law, be adjudicated upon in accordance with Islamic law. It is pertinent to commend to the nation's legislature the Qur'anic verse which states: "O ye who believe, stand out firmly for God, as witness for fair dealing, and not let the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just; that is, next to piety, and fear God for God is acquainted with all that you do" (Q5: 90).

Good governance requires that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. It also requires prudence in the management of the resources of the populace for sustainable of human development. This spirit should be developed by our political leaders for them to harness the natural and human resources which Allah has endowed the country to better the lots of the Nigerian citizens. The 2010 UNDP Human Development Report which indicates that 64% of Nigerians are poor and that there is no increase in our education index is a clear indication that Nigerian leaders have hard nuts to crack on the issue of making the available resources meaningfully instead of using them dubiously for their personal benefits or on worthless projects that have no direct benefit to the populace.

The nation has failed to boast of good governance due to lack of sincerity by those in authority. Sincerity in this wise is of two fold; sincerity to God and sincerity to mankind. An individual who is sincere to God will undoubtedly be sincere to his fellow human beings. A person who deliberately violates God's injunction will not care to abide by the rules of law in any given society. Whoever is sincere to God will not only be sincere to himself, but to the people in the society. One doubts the sincerity of a leader who enriches himself with public funds. Corruption and other vices are mere products of lack of sincerity, lack of commitment and indeed lack of principles. Lack of sincerity on the part of the leaders makes them deviate from the approved annual budget and other laudable policies. Policies therefore become mere paper work, whereas policy summersaults based on whims and caprices leads to taking one step forward and many backwards.

Finally, leadership is seen in Islam as a trust which would be accounted for later or sooner. Accountability in this sense is of two fold, accountability to the community and accountability to God. If no one doubts

the fact that those in political offices are representatives of the electorates, then the former should know that they are accountable to the latter. They are also accountable to God. Allah commands the electorate to grant trust to the best suited. An electorate that compromises shares the blame of poor governance. In Islam, abuse of trust is a sin and crime yet it is not theft since the choice to choose must have been abused in granting trust to a dishonourable person.

Conclusion

So far, this paper has been able to highlight one of the contemporary issues discussed by Shaykh Adam Al-Ilory, namely good governance from the perspective of Islam. Going through his discussion on it, it is understood that the political philosophy of the Shaykh relied heavily on the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the primary sources of Islamic law. In addition to this, it is inferred that Shaykh Adam remained one of the foremost African Muslim reformers whose philosophy could be adopted for the betterment of Nigeria political atmosphere.

On this basis, it is crystal clear that Shaykh Al-Ilory's thought on contemporary issues should be taught along other Muslim reformers like Al-Afghani, Abduh, Sayyid Qutb, Muhammad Iqbal, Uthman Danfodiyo and others. It is our candid belief that Nigeria political leaders have a lot to learn from his views and on this note, we wish to recommend that various Departments of Arabic and Islamic Studies should embark on mass translation of his works into English so that his messages could reach the grassroots. They should also look for means of reaching political office holders in Nigeria in form of organising seminars and conferences for them to have access to the political views of some Nigerian Muslim scholars particularly Shaykh Adam Al-Ilory.

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