

**TRANSFORMATION IN
ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES
IN NIGERIA**

**STUDIES IN MEMORY OF
MUSA 'ALI AJETUNMOBI**

**Editors:
AMIDU O. SANNI
MURTADA A. MUHIBBU-DIN**



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MUSA^C ALI AJETUNMOBI
(AN ICON FROM THE POWER HOUSE)
1949 – 2008**

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PREFACE

In The Name of Allah, the Beneficent The Merciful. May the choicest blessings of Allah be on the noble Messenger Muhammad bin 'Abd Allah.

This book is titled: *Studies in Arabic and Islamic Studies in Memory of Musa 'Ali Ajetunmobi (An Icon from the Power House) 1949 - 2008*. Nigeria Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies (NATAIS) published the book not only to immortalize the name of late Professor Ajetunmobi (a former National President), but also to celebrate an icon from Ilorin. A Christian missionary in the mid 19th Century, J. F. Ade Ajayi and R. Smith described Ilorin, which became an Islamic emirate in 1823CE as a "beacon of Yorubaland and a Muhammedan power house of the 19th Century" as a testimony to the city emerging intellectual status.

After the Kebbi 2007 (1428 A.H.) National Conference, the first National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting chaired by Professor J.M. Kaura was held in Ilorin. The NEC set up a four- man Book Project Committee on late Professor Musa 'Ali Ajetunmobi. It consisted of Professor M. A. Muhibbu-Din (Chairman), Dr L.F. Oladimeji (Secretary), Dr. Abdus Sami'i Imam Arikewuyo and Dr Moshood .M. Jimba. There was a call for papers on the twin disciplines of Arabic and Islamic Studies nation wide. Over sixty (60) research articles were received and thoroughly assessed by a team of seasoned scholars appointed for three days to undertake the job at the Kwara State College of Arabic and Islamic Legal Studies, Ilorin. Forty (40) articles were adjudged publishable - Twenty-One in English media and nineteen in Arabic. The editorial work was thorough with the result that some titles were retouched and referencing styles harmonized. Two professors were commissioned to write Profile on the late eminent Professor Musa 'Ali Ajetunmobi.

Chapters 1-5 dwell on miscellaneous topics and relate them to Islam with a view to analyzing its teachings on them. Their subject matter includes Proverbs, Peace and Conflict Resolution, Effective Control of Child Abuse, Resource Control and Intergroup relations and Poverty alleviation.

Chapters 6 - 9 are on Islamic theology. Chapter 6 contextualizes the miraculous feats of infant Sherifdeen, while Chapter 7 appreciates the concept of *at-Tawhid* as fluorescence of creation and natural philosophy; chapter 8 calls for the islamization

of the practice of *jalb* (spiritual consultancy) as a vocation of traditional Muslim scholars. Chapter 9 takes a second look at the exaggerated influence of Christianity on Islamic Mysticism, Philosophy and theology.

Chapters 10 - 13 dwell on Islamic Law. Chapter 10 studies *Shirkah* and *Mudarabah* and explains how the two institutions can be used for poverty alleviations. Chapter 11 traces the practice of *Sharfah* in Nigeria to pre colonial days, documents the crises that have trailed the practice of *Sharfah* with the factors responsible and offers suggested solutions to *Sharfah* crises in Nigeria.

Chapter 12 examines the occurrence of abrogation of *Ahadith* on *al-wasiyyah*, *al jam'u bayna salatayn* and *al-haydah*. It concludes that the provisions of some Traditions have been annulled but some schools of thought continue to uphold them. Temporary marriage, for example, it observed, is contained in annulled provision. Chapter 13 gives an analysis of *Sharfah* practice in Nigeria and re-examines its appellate jurisdiction. It offers a number of suggestions, for example, that the jurisdiction of *Sharfah* Court of Appeal (SCA) must be amended and effectively expanded.

Chapters 14 - 19 discuss Islamic Education. Chapter 14 analyses the strategies for meeting the Islamic Education needs at the Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. It concludes by calling on Muslims to reposition themselves to meet the Education needs of their children. Chapter 15 traces the emergence and development of Islamic Universities in Nigeria. Chapter 16 examines the rivalry between English and Arabic as medium of instruction. It calls for a re-organization of the curriculum. Chapter 17 elucidates on the process of Islamization of knowledge and considers it a *Jihad* for the contemporary Muslim intellectuals. Chapter 18 revisits the relationship between Moral Instruction and Religious Education. It concludes that should the true essence of religion be captured and utilized, the adherents will not exhibit any unruly behavioural patterns that need be corrected through the instrumentality of moral instruction curriculum. Chapter 19 discusses causes of religious violence in Nigeria and elucidates on how it can be controlled through education among Muslims.

Chapters 20 - 40 are research articles written on Arabic, in both English and Arabic media. Chapters 20 - 25 dwell on miscellaneous topics such as: Survey of Islamic

orientation of the Arabic Literature in Nigeria, An appraisal of *Al-Islam al-yawm wa ghadanfi Nayjiriya* written by Shaykh Adam al-Ilory, Fundamental Human Rights under *Sharfah* and the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Scholarly Opinions on Timing for Canonical Prayers and the location of *Qiblah*, Moral Teachings in Islam on Arrogance and Humility and Sabians in the Noble Qur'an.

Chapters 26 - 32 are on Arabic Literature. Chapter 26 studies the artistic prose of Jahiz in his work titled: *al-Bukhala'u*. It gives a literary appraisal of the work and its author. Chapter 27 is an exposition on the semantics in *Maqamat al-Hariri* while Chapter 28 studies a selected elegiac poems of Ahmad Shawqi (The Prince of Poets) on the philosophy of life and death. Chapter 29 attempts a critical study of Proverb and other related technical terms among the Arab. It concludes that Proverb and other related terms are demonstrated figures of speech in practice. Chapter 30 examines the use of compound simile in the *diwan "al-Riyad"*, composed by one of the prominent poets in Nigeria - Iyasa Alabi Abubakar. Chapter 31 studies excerpts on the mystical poetry by Shaykh Nuruddin al-Hakim and Chapter 32 examines the position of knowledge and status of scholars in *Sorf al-'anan*, a poem composed by a famous 17th Century Nigerian Arabic Scholars, Shaykh Mudi Al-Kashinawy.

Chapters 33- 36 dwell on Arabic Language and Linguistics. Chapter 33 examines the place of Lexicons in Arabic Language, while chapter 34 studies the rhetorics of prepositions that are considered phrase - nouns in Arabic grammar. Chapter 35 is an exposition on the impact of Arabic language on the translated New Testament (al-Injil) into Nupe. Chapter 35 gives an account of how Arabic language fared between annihilation of its attackers and colonization of its protectors in Africa and Chapter 37 sheds light on The Role of Homonyms and Structure in determining the target meaning in Arabic Language.

Chapters 38 - 40 examine Arabic Education. While chapter 38 discusses Women and teaching of Arabic in Yorubaland, chapter 39 identifies new challenges facing the teaching of Arabic in primary schools and proffers solutions to them. Chapter 40 is the last but in no way the least, traces the history of Arabic learning and its influence on the people of Lagos State.

Contributors are responsible for their opinions, views or comments expressed in this book.

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3rd September 2009.

CHAPTER 11

SHARĪ'AH ISSUE IN THE CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA, 1979 TO 2003.

BY

KAZEEM ADEKUNLE, ADEGOKE

Introduction

Religion from time immemorial has formed an integral part of human societal needs no society could easily thrive without a particular religious faith peculiar to it. Emile Durkheim, as quoted by Dzurgba¹, was right to have seen religion as a vital instrument for society integration when he diagnosed the socio-cultural function of religion in human society². The reverse has been the case, in Nigerian society, religion has not been allowed to positively perform its social function due to various religious conflicts, which are usually rooted in ethnicity, politics, cultural identification and social stratification. It should be rightly pointed out at this juncture that Nigeria is far from being referred to as a secular nation as always claimed by certain people. She is a multi-religious nation with more than one hundred traditional and indigenous beliefs, apart from "imported religions" out of which Islam and Christianity have become the most popular³. These two "imported religions" had been polarized among the peoples of the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. It is on this line that Sir Ahmadu Bello, the then Premier of the Northern region (1959-1966) expressed his mind to the then Nigeria President, Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe (1959-1966) when the latter paid a courtesy visit to the Northern Region and persuaded him to forget their socio-cultural and religious differences so as to move the nation forward saying;

No, let us understand our differences. I am a Muslim and a Northerner, you are a Christian and an Easterner. By understanding our differences we can build unity in our Country.⁴

Sharī'ah legal system has been existing in Nigerian society since the pre-colonial days and it did not pose threats to the peace and harmony of the country until the contemporary Nigeria when the *Sharī'ah* issues became a fuel for religious crisis. The *Sharī'ah* issues in Nigeria generated a lot of controversies and arguments that the country was nearly torn-apart. It led to communal clashes and discord among several ethnic groups in Nigeria. It should be noted that *Sharī'ah* legal system has been in operation in some Arabian nations from the inception of Islam

and there has been no time when it has led to religious crisis in those countries even though harbour both Muslims and non-Muslims who are mostly foreigners residing in some of their cities. For instance Riyādh and Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, Baghdad in Iraq and some cities in Iran.

Sharī'ah crisis in the contemporary period in Nigeria has reached its zenith since the official announcement of Zamfara State to codify the *Sharī'ah* legal system and extend it to cover criminal matters in 1999. This development generated a lot of controversies among Nigerians. It is on this line that this paper aims at examining the *Sharī'ah* crisis in Nigeria in the contemporary period. The paper is introduced by the clarification of the misconception that Nigeria is a secular nation whereas she is a multi-religious nation where several religious beliefs co-exist. The paper gives working definitions of some of the key words featuring in it and goes further to discuss *Sharī'ah* legal system in Nigeria from the historical perspective. The paper then examines the *Sharī'ah* crisis in the present Nigeria and its side-effects on Nigerians. It also casts a critical look at some factors responsible for the *sharī'ah* crisis in Nigeria and how to curb them.

Definition of Keywords

For more clarification, some keywords and terms that appear in the paper are contextually defined. According to Masood⁵, *Sharī'ah* is an Arabic word that literally means the way to a watering place. Technically, it means the path ordained by Allah, through His last Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) and to be followed by mankind. *Sharī'ah*, in the legal context is defined by Masood⁶ as "the detailed code of conduct or the canons regarding the ways and modes of worship and the rules to judge between right and wrong in every field of life". The term, crisis, according to Hornby⁷, means a time of great danger, difficulty and uncertainty when problems must be solved or something belonging to the present time.⁸ while 'contemporary' means something recent or modern.

***Sharī'ah* Legal System in Nigeria: Historical Analysis**

Sharī'ah legal system took effect in Nigeria towards the end of eleventh century of Christian era as soon as Islam was brought to Kanem Borno Empire in 1084 C.E. during the reign of eighth ruler of Sayfawa dynasty called Mai Humme Hilmi who reigned between 1075 and 1086 C.E.⁹ Mai Humme Hilmi did not only accept Islam as his personal religion but as well as the only recognized state religion with *Sharī'ah* as an official legal system. He went ahead to formulate *Sharī'ah* ideological framework of governance and legal code known as *Mune*¹⁰. From Kanem-Borno Empire, Islam spread to nooks and crannies of the various cities and towns in the Northern Nigeria and various rulers began to operate *Sharī'ah* as the official legal system. The learned Muslim Scholars ('*Ulamā*') were appointed as judge (*Alkali*) and political advisers and administrators

(Waziri). During this period, Government policies in the Northern Nigeria were formulated through *Shari'ah* which is based, not only on political life of the people but as well as on their economic, social and religious aspects of life¹¹. It was in continuation of the effective operation of *Shari'ah* in the Northern Nigeria that led to the *Jihad* reformation of Usman Dan Fodio in 1804 C.E. which finally brought about the Sokoto Caliphate in the nineteenth century of Christian era¹². Application of *Shari'ah* was still in progress in the Northern Nigeria during the colonial period with the slight amendment on the punishment of adultery (*Zina*) and armed robbery. (*hirabah*), as they were subjected to the colonial resident approval. In the Southern Nigeria, *Shari'ah* was practised in some Yoruba towns such as Ede during the reign of King Habib Olagunju in 1856, Iwo during the reign of King Muhammad Lamuye in 1859, Ikirun during the reign of King Aliyu Oyewole in the late nineteenth century until it was stopped by the British Colonial Government in 1920¹³. Okunola¹⁴ observed that some Yoruba towns such as Eko (Lagos) and Epe demanded for the establishment of *Shari'ah* courts for the Muslims from the then colonial Governor of Lagos in 1894 but he refused.

Prior to Nigeria's independence in 1960, the colonial Government in the 1957 London Constitutional Conference adopted *Shari'ah* as penal code and Criminal procedure code in place of its previous status as a criminal code and Islamic criminal law. *Shari'ah* as penal code and criminal procedure code came into force concurrently on 1st October, 1960 and this served as an abrupt end of application of Islamic law of crime¹⁵. In 1963, there was a provision for *Shari'ah* court on personal status which was only meant for and applicable to Northern Nigeria Muslim. In 1972, it was resolved in the item 17 of the All Nigeria Judges (ANJ) conference held in Lagos that Federal *Shari'ah* Court of Appeal should be established as the final court of Appeal with respect to Islamic law-cases. It was on the basis of this resolution that the Military Government of Murtala R. Muhammed/Olusegun Obasanjo directed in 1975/76 that both Federal Court of Appeal and Federal *Shari'ah* Court of Appeal be established at Federal level. This was later left for debate at the Constituent Assembly where the draft of the Nigeria Constitution was to be considered. The Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) submitted its report to the then Military Head of State, in person of General Olusegun Obasanjo in 14th September, 1976. This report gave a room for the establishment of Federal *Shari'ah* Court of Appeal and State *Shari'ah* Court of Appeal which shall consist of Grand Mufti, Deputy grand-Mufti and not less than three *Qadi* as may be prescribed by or under legislative arm of the Government (Jamiu, 2001:27)¹⁶. As a result of this, *Shari'ah* was given a column in the 1979 Nigeria Constitution as a penal code only. This column got itself repeated in the 1989 and 1999 Nigeria Constitution respectively. Recent development on the *Shari'ah* issues in Nigeria was when Zamfara State, one of Northern States in Nigeria took the initiative to establish a State *Shari'ah* Court

in replacement of the State Area Court on 27th October, 1999. The initiative of the Zamfara State served as a wake-up for members of the other states in Northern Nigeria, as they started supporting and embarking upon the same decision one after the others¹⁷.

***Sharī'ah* Crisis in the Present Nigeria between 1999 and 2003**

The clamour for the inclusion of *Sharī'ah* legal system in various Nigeria Constitutions has been going on in the Northern part of Nigeria since the Independence period and this development did not pose threat to the sovereignty of the nation until 1978 when the then military government under General Olusegun Obasanjo set up the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) to draft the would-be constitution for the country. Despite the fact that *Sharī'ah* legal system had featured in the previous constitutions of Nigeria as a penal code, the issue of *Sharī'ah* generated so much argument among the non-Muslim members of the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) on its merits and demerits in the Nigerian constitution. The Muslim members of the Committee reacted bitterly against argument put forward by the non-Muslim members of the Committee to flush out the *Sharī'ah* legal system out of Nigeria constitution. This event nearly broke Nigeria into two religio-political zone of Muslims and Christians as it led to religious crises in which several lives and properties were destroyed in some Northern States of Nigeria. In order to avert more religious crisis, the then military government established *Sharī'ah* Court of Appeal in some Northern States which preferred the system. The wise step taken by the then Military Government served as a cessation of the *Sharī'ah* crisis for the next two decades.¹⁸

The *Sharī'ah* crisis re-surfaced again in October 1999 when the then Zamfara state Governor Alhaj Ahmad Sani Yerima announced the decision of his government to operate *Sharī'ah* as a recognized legal system and thereby extended it to cover criminal code rather than only penal code which *Sharī'ah* legal system previously covered. That generated a lot of controversies among legal luminaries in the country of whether the giant step taken by the Zamfara State Governor was constitutionally right or not. Some Northern State Governors, who witnessed and those who were not present during the inauguration of *Sharī'ah* legal system in Zamfara State in 27th October, 1999 also promised to do the same in their various States the following year. In February, 2000, Kaduna State witnessed her own *Sharī'ah* crisis as Christians led a violent protest against the intention to introduce *Sharī'ah* legal system in the State. Many lives were lost and multi-million naira worth of property were destroyed¹⁹. A great deal of Muslims in Kaduna State reacted to the development by deciding to mount a reprisal attack in March and May, 2000, February, 2001, November and December, 2002. In those series of attacks many lives were lost and

unquantifiable value of properties was destroyed. The crisis in which several hotels, churches and mosques were burnt to ashes, spread to Zaria, Kachia, Tudun-Wada and various towns in Kaduna State. The *Sharī'ah* crisis in Kaduna State led to reprisal attacks in the south Eastern geo-political zone of Nigeria against the Hausa-Fulani communities in Aba, Uyo, Umuahia and Owerri in 2000²⁰.

A similar incident occurred in Kano State when some Muslims in the State urged the governor to introduce *Sharī'ah* legal system as the operating legal system in the State. Having noticed that, the then State Governor, Alhaji Musa Rabiu Kwankwaso was reluctant to announce the introduction of *Sharī'ah* legal system in the state. Some Muslims went on rampage and started razing down hotels and recreational centres in metropolitan Kano in April, 2001. In that process, lives were lost and property destroyed. Also, in the month of May 2004, another crisis which claimed several lives and properties occurred between the Christian and Muslims in Kano City. This led to state of emergency declared in Kano State by the Federal Government of Nigeria.

Sokoto State witnessed her own *Sharī'ah* crisis in the year 2000 when the then State Governor, Alhaji Attahiru Bafarawa introduced *Sharī'ah* legal system to the state. Some Christians in the State vehemently opposed the step and several lives and property were lost in the process. The same occurred in Katsina State in September 2003. One person gave up the ghost in the process of the controversy generated by the operation of *Sharī'ah* legal system in the State. It could be rightly said, at this juncture, that various States in Northern Nigeria, one way or the other, have witnessed *Sharī'ah* crisis between 2000 and the present time.

Factors Responsible for the *Sharī'ah* Crisis in Nigeria

There are some factors that were responsible for the *Sharī'ah* crisis in Nigeria. Some of these factors are going to be examined in this paper as follows:

Religious Intolerance of Some Non-Muslims

Religious intolerance is an act of disallowing other religious adherents from holding and practising the traditions and social institution of their religions in a multi-religious community. Non-Muslims in Nigeria fail to accommodate *Sharī'ah* legal system out of unnecessary fear that application of this legal system would eventually pave way to the Islamization of the country. They even argue that accommodation of *Sharī'ah* legal system in Nigeria would serve as an act of giving preferential treatment to Nigerian Muslims. It should be pointed out that *Sharī'ah* is part and parcel of Islam: wherever Islam goes, *Sharī'ah* follows. *Sharī'ah* is a comprehensive way of Muslim life; therefore, taking *Sharī'ah* out of Muslim life is like taking fish out of water. Several religious conflicts have occurred between Muslims and non-Muslims in Nigeria as a result of

unnecessary condemnation of *Sharī'ah* or making ridicule of *Sharī'ah* by non-Muslims. It could be rightly said here that accommodation of *Sharī'ah* is not a preferential treatment for Muslims since Christians could also make a request for their Ecclesiastical or Canon law in the country. In addition, *Sharī'ah* legal system can never lead to Islamization of the country. Egypt, Uganda and Tanzania have given a column to *Sharī'ah* legal system in their constitutions still the ways of life of the people of those nations have not been Islamized.

Ignorance of some Non-Muslims about *Sharī'ah*

Lack of knowledge of some non-Muslims of what *Sharī'ah* is all about always lead to religious crisis in Nigeria. Some non-Muslims think that the application of *Sharī'ah* legal system will make Nigeria an Islamic State and this legal system will be imposed on them. This argument stems out of ignorance of non-Muslims about the operation of *Sharī'ah* legal system in an independent nation as Nigeria. It has to be blankly pointed out that operation of *Sharī'ah* legal system does not change a nation into an Islamic State. It could be noticed that *Sharī'ah* legal system has been continued in some parts of Nigeria during the colonial period, yet their policy and management have not been Islamised and Nigeria has not ceased to be a multi-religious nation²¹. However, *Sharī'ah* legal system can never be imposed on non-Muslims, since it is meant for Muslims only and this is explicitly stated in the Nigeria constitution.

Unnecessary Suspicion of Non-Muslims on *Sharī'ah*

Some non-Muslims in Nigeria suspected *Sharī'ah* legal system as a tool of oppression and injustice against the non-Muslims in the country. This suspicion of non-Muslims is unnecessary and unwarranted since the use or misuse of any legal system, independence of judiciary is given adequate recognition and it is placed on utmost requirement for the effective operation of *Sharī'ah* in a multi-religious community. This is easily identified in some parts of Northern Nigeria where *Sharī'ah* is being effectively practised for more than ten centuries despite the fact that pre-and post-independent Nigeria is never an Islamic State. It could be rightly said here that non-independence of judiciary in any operative system could be used as an instrument of oppression and injustice by the authorities or operators of such a system.²²

Blasphemy against *Sharī'ah* by Non-Muslims

Blasphemous statements against the *Sharī'ah* legal system by the Nigeria non-Muslims also fuel the crisis in Nigeria. Some Non-Muslims refer to *Sharī'ah* legal system as archaic, barbaric and brutal. Some of them even refer to it as the eleventh commandment or the local old Arabian Law which has nothing to do with contemporary Nigeria community. *Sharī'ah* a valuable social institution and

cultural value in Islam, deserves high respect and dignity in the Muslims sight of Non-Muslims' failure to respect and dignify this social institution by slandering or blaspheming it could always lead to crisis in the country. Some non-Muslims do not know anything about *Sharī'ah* rather than hand amputation "and" stoning to death of the violator of *Sharī'ah* as if this is what *Sharī'ah* is all about.

Calumny against *Sharī'ah* by some Nigerian Media Organizations

Schramm²³ observed that the main objectives of communication are four which the journalists or press men must take into consideration. The communication objectives are as follows:

- i. 'to inform the public about the new happening or event';
- ii. 'to teach the public about the new happening or event';
- iii. 'to propose or persuade the public on how to go about the new happening or event;'
- iv. 'to please the public by carrying the unbiased, unprejudiced and true information about the new happening and events'.

All these four objectives must be taken into consideration by the media professionals before sending out any information in order to secure the desired outcome and to secure the community's safety and welfare as well as the rights of the individual²⁴. In Nigeria, the reverse has been the case by some Nigerian media organizations that carry biased and outrageous information on *Sharī'ah* issues by publishing negative information about operation and feasibility of *Sharī'ah* in the country. Some pieces of information carried by some Nigerian media were neither carefully verified nor thoroughly scrutinized. Consequently, the public were mis-informed about *Sharī'ah*. This has invariably made non-Muslims develop negative attitude to *Sharī'ah* in Nigeria. This development does not go down well with some Nigerian Muslims who would want to react to this calumny. These are headlines of some Nigerian magazines and daily newspapers on *Sharī'ah* issues in Nigeria.

"Our Fear by Zamfara Christian"²⁵.

"*Sharī'ah*: Zamfara Tickle to Boil"²⁶

"Keg of Gunpowder: *Sharī'ah* comes into effect at last in Zamfara State amidst fears by Nigerians"²⁷

Sometimes, some of these magazines and dailies carried outrageous cartoons or editorial comments to make mockery of adjudication of *Sharī'ah* in some parts of the country or by tagging the advocates of *Sharī'ah* some slanderous names such as terrorists, fanatics, Islamaphobia, Al-Qaedah, Osama, et-cetera.

Religious Fanaticism of Some Muslims

Religious fanaticism, in this context, is an exhibition of extreme over-

zealousness and excessive enthusiasm of some Muslims in Northern Nigeria in handling *Shari'ah* issues in the country. Due to their short-sightedness about *Shari'ah* operation, they leave no stone unturned to impose it on the people irrespective of their religious beliefs. They don't mind attacking anyone who raises an eyebrow against their selfish interest. Consequently, this development would lead to religious crisis as other religious adherents would want to react to the religious discrimination against their people.

Suggested Solution to the *Shari'ah* Crisis in Nigeria

For the eradication of the *Shari'ah* crisis in Nigeria, the following suggestions are recommended:

- i. Non-Muslim religious leaders should keep themselves away from religious bigotry, unnecessary propaganda, slanderous verbal attack and abusive slogans against the feasibility and operation of *Shari'ah* in Nigeria.
- ii. All adherents of religions in Nigeria should be given thorough awareness on the psychological and particularistic of all religions claim which postulate that every religion can solve the problem of its adherents and can also lead them to eternal bliss in the life beyond.
- iii. Nigerian Government should organize inter-religious dialogue and set up ecumenical bodies where the leader of all religious persuasions should meet for mutual deliberation on their common interest.
- iv. Nigeria Government should not turn down the request of non-Muslims if they also make the request for the inclusion of their religious Canon law into the Nigeria constitution and establishment of Ecclesiastical courts, where Canon Law could be operated.
- v. The media should be urged by the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) not to be partisan in reporting any religious related issues.
- vi. Unnecessary and unwanted suspicion of non-Muslims should be discouraged by their religious leaders so as not to see the achievement of one religion in the country as their own failure or opponent triumph over them.
- vii. All religious adherents should be encouraged by their religious leaders to follow the basic teachings of their religions which are love, brotherhood and salvation. These three religious teachings give recognition to the sacredness of human blood and property which should not be destroyed for the sake of religious differences.
- viii. All religious leaders in Nigeria should be cautioned not to be used by some unscrupulous and treacherous politicians to fan the flame of their selfish political agenda or to gain cheap popularity among the people of their faith

- ix. Nigerian Government should ensure that any persons who instigate or cause religious crisis in Nigeria, no matter their public status, should not be allowed to go scot-free. They should be made to face the music of their action in the court of law so as to serve as a deterrent to others.
- x. Muslims, most especially in the Northern Nigeria, should shun religious fanaticism and religious discrimination against non-Muslims in the country. Every Nigerian should be allowed to uphold the tenets of his or her religion without intimidation.

Conclusion

The paper started by presenting Nigeria as a multi-religious society where several faiths and beliefs are inconveniently co-existing together especially Islam and Christianity. The paper went on to the critical examination of *Sharī'ah* crisis in Nigeria and how it has deepened religious intolerance between the Muslim and Christians. It also gave an academic touch to the cause of these crises and how it could be amicably solved in Nigeria. From the foregoing discussion, the paper observed that the *Sharī'ah* crisis emanated from some Muslims and non-Muslims who do not know what *Sharī'ah* legal system was all about and whom it was meant for. The paper now recommends that all religious adherents in Nigeria should tolerate one another and be their brother's keepers. All religious leaders and people in government should realize that any religious issue is a highly sensitive matter which needs wisdom and maturity to handle so as to avoid unnecessary loss of lives and destruction of properties that could have been utilized for the development of the country.

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