

EJIMEL

Electronic Journal of Islamic
and Middle Eastern Law



Vol. 1 (2013)

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**University of
Zurich** ^{UZH}

EJIMEL § Electronic Journal of Islamic
and Middle Eastern Law

Vol. 1 (2013)

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EJIMEL Vol. 1 (2013)

Published by

The Center for Islamic and Middle Eastern
Legal Studies (CIMELS), University of Zurich,
Zurich, Switzerland

Suggested citation style

Electronic Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law
(EJIMEL), Vol. 1 (2013), pages, <http://www.ejmel.uzh.ch>

ISSN 1664-5707

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The Application of Islamic Law and the Legacies of Good Governance in the Sokoto Caliphate, Nigeria (1804-1903): Lessons for the Contemporary Period

by Mukhtar Umar Bunza*

Abstract

One of the key jargons of contemporary democracy is good governance, which entails social justice, effective, responsible, and transparent administrative machinery. In the same way, social and political maladies such as corruption, nepotism, favoritism, ethnicity, and flagrant abuse of power were ostracized in the system.

Those terms, are usually echoed in Nigeria by politicians and their cohorts rhetorically in the media, with almost nothing to show in practice. Consequently, the faith of Nigerians is being eroded in the successive Nigerian governments as all promises to improve their lots and living standards remain a mirage.

However, a little reflection and appreciation of the polity that was attained on the Nigerian soil in the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century (i.e., the Sokoto Caliphate) represents encouraging historical evidence and legacy of good governance, that will help Nigeria in the current derive for nation building and sustainable development.

It is the submission of this paper that, some of the mechanism devised and employed by the Sokoto Caliphate in uniting its diversified citizens through equity, social justice, transparency and accountability for one-hundred years, if studied and utilized will help the Nigerian state, as well as other developing nations in the Muslim World and beyond to address their present political quandary.

This also shows that the Shari'ah –Islamic Law, as demonstrated by the Sokoto Caliphate in the 19th century entails laudable developmental programs, innovative initiatives for welfare packages, and assured rights and freedom for the citizens.

I. Background

The Sokoto Caliphate was the upshot of the reform movement that started in Hausaland as early as 1776 under the leadership of a scholar and reformer known as Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo, 1754-1817. He was supported principally by the masses in the region due to the social dimension of the movement, later scholars and a few middle and upper class citizens in the area joined his group called, the *Jama'a*. By 1804-1809 the movement had captured power in almost all the ancient prosperous Hausa

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states that flourished for over five centuries before his reform drive. Within a short period of time, they succeeded in changing the political landscape of the entire Hausaland and to certain proportion most parts of the West African sub-region, ranging from Cameroon to Timbuktu in Mali. The Caliphate brought landmark transformations in the political, social, economic, and religious spheres of the people of West Africa.

One of the major milestones and legacies of the new Caliphate was political transformation. A complete shift from oppressive administrative machinery based on whims and caprices of those on power, to a sanitized system with all checks and balances. The issue of good governance and ensuring equity and justice regardless of one's economic, social, religious, or political status was top-most in the blueprint of the Sokoto Caliphate.

It was due to the sophisticated administrative mechanism established in the Caliphate that made it easy for the European colonialists to adopt an indirect rule system in the areas of the Caliphate after 1903. The Nigerian colonial state also benefited a lot from the superstructures left behind by the very Caliphate they fought against initially and overthrew. In the same vein, the post-colonial Nigeria also, does have a number of lessons to learn and legacies to adopt from the theory and practice of governance of the Sokoto Caliphate, which for over one hundred years continued to shine its beacons in spite of the trouble and tribulations caused by the British invading forces.

The postcolonial Nigeria is yet to actualize some of the legacies of the Caliphate in terms of federalism, rule of law, management of pluralism, accountability, peace and security, toleration of opposition and equality, which are some of the major components for survival and prosperity of any nation. These are indeed the secrets for the century survival of the Sokoto Caliphate and its sustained relevance in the Nigerian setting for generations to come.

II. THE FOUNDATION OF THE SOKOTO CALIPHATE

A historical reflection over the circumstances and situation that necessitated the Sokoto *Ulama'* to champion the needs and yearnings of the people in 19th century Hausaland would suffice understanding the basis of the grassroot and popular support, which the Jihad movement received among the masses.¹ Monarchical system of government gave way to elected leaders of satisfactory credentials to lead, not based on any ethnic, or blood connection, but under the support and free allegiance of the people who accepted them to lead their public affairs. That spirit, from the onset, served as the basis for the strength and consolidation of the Sokoto Caliphate as a democratic polity uncommon in Sub-Saharan Africa. Some of the founding pillars of the Caliphate include:

1. Resisting Tyrannical and Corrupt Leadership

The Sokoto *Ulama'* were forced by circumstances even against their main pre-occupation of learning, research and teaching to start addressing political issues. At the initial stage of the movement, Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo, the leader of the reform movement, adopted diplomacy, and avoided confronta-

¹ See some of the pioneer works on the history of the Sokoto Caliphate which include, D. M. LAST, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, Longman: London, 1967, S. J. HOGBEN and A. H. M KIRK-GREENE, *The Emirates of Northern Nigeria: A Preliminary Survey of their Historical Traditions*, Oxford University Press: London, 1966, Y. B. USMAN, *Studies in the History of the Sokoto Caliphate: The Sokoto Seminar paper*, Lagos, 1979, and IBRAHIM SULAIMAN, *The Islamic State and the Challenge of History: Ideals, Policies and Operations of the Sokoto Caliphate*, Mansell Publishing Company: London & New York, 1987.

tion. The unbearable hardship experienced by the people and high level of insensibility of the administration compelled him to strongly appeal to the rulers in Hausaland to be responsible to their duties as rulers. However, their malign disregard of this request further necessitated the Shehu and his supporters to take a drastic approach. The point of departure was marked by publishing and distributing his *Kitab al-Farq* in Hausaland, which categorically outlines the charges of misgovernance, corruption, confiscation of people's belonging, misappropriation of public funds and neglect of people's welfare and standards of living by the leaders. In *Kitab al-Farq*, Shehu categorically criticised the existing leadership of abusing public funds, imposing of levies beyond the resources of their subjects, over affluence on the side of the rulers and their immediate families to the detriment of their subjects, collecting of gratifications through their public offices, bribery among the judges (making courts a place where highest bidder takes all). In addition, the sharp practices in the corridors of power in Hausland can be glaring, as lying, treachery, and pride became the ways of their government.²

These were some of the issues, which according to Shehu made it obligatory for them to confront the political structure of the region with a view to changing it for a more humane, transparent and responsible system. That was according to Shehu one of the main causes of the rebellion against the existing polity.

2. Establishing Government Based on Consultation and Respect for Public Opinion

The system of government in pre-jihad Hausa states was monarchical, against the one favoured by the Shari'a-government of consultation (*shura*), where officers are elected into office due to their qualities and qualifications. In *Kitab al-Farq* Shehu categorically stresses this in the following:

One of the ways of their government (in Hausaland) is succession to the emirate by hereditary right (monarchy) and by force (military take-over) to the exclusion of consultation. And one of the ways of their government is the building of their sovereignty upon three things: the people's person, their honor, and their possessions; and whomsoever they wish to kill or exile or violate his honor or devour his wealth they do so in pursuit of their lusts, without any right in the law- Shari'a.³

Shehu thus rejected any form of government not based on consultation, one not based on *shura* or consultative assembly guided by Islamic political philosophy. The practice of consultation and allowing people to participate in the act of administration as it relates to their rights and privileges were some of the salient achievements and legacies of the Caliphate for the contemporary Nigerian politics.⁴ Professor John N. Paden in his recent studies of the Sokoto Caliphate's relevance to the Nigerian State on issues relating to rule of law and associated matters identified the system and polity of the Caliphate as such that continued to influence the state affairs in contemporary Nigeria. In his opinion, even the British colonial government for political expediency had to adopt some of the legal frame of the Caliphate up to 1959 when the penal code came to be operational.⁵

² See SHEHU USMANU DANFODIYO, *Kitab al-farq*, edited and translated, Mervyn Hiskett, 1962, 7-11.

³ SHEHU USMANU DANFODIYO supra, n. 2, 7.

⁴ See SAMBO WALI JUNAIDU, 'The Concept of Leadership and its Application in the Sokoto Caliphate', in Abubakar Aliyu Gwandu, et al., eds, *The Sokoto Caliphate: A Legacy of Scholarship and Good Governance*, Center for Islamic studies, UDUS, 2006, 67.

⁵ See details discussion on the issue in J. N. PADEN, 'Contemporary Relevance of the Sokoto Caliphate: Rule of Law, Federalism and Conflict Resolution', in Hamid Boboyi and Alhaji Mahmud Yakubu, *The Sokoto Caliphate: History and Legacies, 1804-2004*, Vol. II, Arewa House: Kaduna, 2006, 242-250.

3. Combating Indiscipline and Social Ills in the Society

Having realised that a viable political structure requires a strong foundation from youths and younger generations who are, focused, disciplined, and mobilized, the Shehu strove for a society with a sound moral fabric. Indiscipline is one of the major causes of failure at an individual level, or running of public institutions. The Jihad leaders targeted the problems of nudity, fornication, adultery, and alcoholism for eradication as the cornerstone of the agenda in the 19th century Jihad movement. In order to sanitise the society from crimes and criminal activities and ensure a promising crop of citizens through a responsive younger generation, the Jihad leaders vehemently fought against all forms of social vices. These issues were addressed in various places in the writings of the jihadists.

The Shehu further directed that:

Every governor of a province should strive to fortify strongholds... set up a military station on every frontier, and combat every cause of corruption which occurs in his country, and forbid every disapproved thing.⁶

Of equal consequences was also the corruption and manipulation of religion by the so-called custodians of the religion- the *Ulama'*. The category of such *Ulama'* was described by Shehu as representative and helper of the Satan, who chose worldly gains and influence from the people in authority, than the mercy and pleasure of God. Such *Ulama'* legalized the corrupt practices of the leaders and were not resisting the exploitation and oppression against the weak by the powerful. Shehu branded such scholars as, 'more dangerous than the devil, and their position in the society was no better than a rock in the sea, which neither drinks water nor allows anybody to drink'. Removing their influence in governance and the society entirely was, in the opinion of the Shehu, a catalyst to a viable political system.⁷ Thus, the jihadists transformed the outlook and functions of the scholars after the establishment of the Caliphal system.

4. Mobilization and Liberation of Women

The indispensable position of women in building a vibrant and productive society is indubitable. It was in recognition of this fundamental fact that as early as 1786 women were allowed to participate in teaching and enlightenment campaigns embarked upon by the Shehu and his supporters. It was indeed, the first challenge, which the Shehu received in the cause of his *Da'wa*. Mustafa Goni wrote, criticizing the Shehu for allowing women to attend the sessions in the same ground with men to receive lectures and learn the religion. The letter reads:

To you, from us, blessed greetings, which caused those who meet us to smell musk and perfume. O son of Fudi, rise and warn the ignorant, that perchance they may understand religion and things of this world. Forbid women to visit your preaching, for mixing of men and women is sufficient a disgrace. Do not do what contributes towards disgrace, for God has not ordered vice, which would

⁶ SHEHU USMANU DANFODIYO, *supra*, n. 2, 12.

⁷ See ABBA YUSUF, 'The 1804 Jihad in Hausaland as a Revolution', in Usman Yusuf Bala (ed), *Studies in the History of the Sokoto Caliphate*, published by the Department of History ABU, 1979, 20-33, the chapter is generally good for understanding the point.

cause us harm. The verses of al-Mustafa thirteen complete them, in the year twelve hundred, plus a number, which will suffice us.⁸

In the instructions of the Shehu, his brother Abdullahi responded in the most eloquent and academic tune to the letter of Mustafa Goni. He denied any act of committing of sins by the Shehu and his *Jama'a* in the cause of teaching their followers male and female. However, he accepted going by a lesser evil if it were, of allowing women to come out to learn instead of leaving them in ignorance, which is inseparable with unbelief. Abdullahi's response reads:

O you who have come to guide us aright, we have heard what you have said. Listen to what we say. You gave advice to the best of your ability, but would you have freed us from blame! And you spoke- Glory be to God, this was calumny! Indeed devils, if they come to our gathering, spread evil speech, exceeding all bounds! We have not had promiscuous intercourse with women, how could that be... But I do not agree that their being left to go free in ignorance is good, for the committing of the lesser evil has been made obligatory. Ignorance pardons, even though it was disobedience. We found the people of this country drowning in ignorance; shall we prevent them from understanding?... Their number is ten. And the date is twelve hundred and one (i.e. 1201AH /1786 AD)⁹.

In order to attain the egalitarian reform, which the Shehu and his companions envisaged for their people, the women folk must be fully educated and mobilized to be responsible members of the society. Professor Ismail Balogun observes that, 'he (Shehu) condemned those who shut their women folk in without affording them the opportunity to learn extensively' (the affairs of their religion and the world). His own example with the education of his wives and daughters was very glaring.¹⁰

Unequivocally, Shehu declared in his *Nur al- Albab* and *Wathiqat al-Ikhwana*, that the domestic services rendered by women in terms of cooking, provision of firewood, grinding, fetching of water, and labor in the farm were not sanctioned upon them by the Shari'a. Shehu tirelessly fought for the economic and social emancipation of women, through ensuring their rights to ownership of property, inheriting of estates of deceased relatives and husbands, and opening of educational opportunities.¹¹

In response to the seriousness of the problem, the Shehu adopted some radical measures to match with the gravity of the problem. He started by describing the situation of women in the pre-jihad societies in the following:

One of the habits of men, scholars of the Sudan is that they leave their wives, daughters and slaves neglected like a grazing livestock without teaching them what Allah made obligatory on them of their articles of Faith, regulations governing their purity, fasting and their like, i.e. buying and selling. They consider them like a container, which they use; when it breaks, they throw it in dung and rubbish places. It is the duty of every Muslim to start with himself and guards it by

⁸ ABDULLAHI FODIYO, *Tazyin al-Waraqat*, Hikett, Mervyn., (ed &trans), Ibadan University Press, 1963, 86-87.

⁹ ABDULLAHI FODIYO, supra, n. 8, 87.

¹⁰ ISMAIL BALOGUN, "Shaikh Uthman Danfodiyo: The Founder of the Sokoto Legacy", in Ahmad Muhammad Kani and Kabiru Ahmad Gandhi (eds), *State and Society in the Sokoto Caliphate*, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Press, 1990, 216.

¹¹ See detail discussions on this issue in JAFAR MAKAU KAURA, "Emancipation of Women in the Sokoto Caliphate", in Ahmad Muhammad Kani and Kabiru Ahmad Gandhi, supra, n. 10, 75-99.

performing his duty properly also, to abandon unlawful things, thereafter, he should teach his family and relations.¹²

Finally, Shehu unreservedly called the women folk in the strongest terms saying:

O, Muslim women, do not listen to the speech of the misguided (group) who misguide others and deceive you by making you to obey your husbands without ordering you to obey Allah and His messenger (peace be upon him). They claim that the happiness of the women is in obeying their husbands. They do this in order to get their selfish desire out of you. They also ask you to do what Allah and His prophet did not stipulate at all, like cooking and washing of cloth and the like. At the same time, they do not ask you about what Allah and His messenger has ordained to you of obedience. Yes, it is incumbent upon the wife to obey her husband according to the consensus of scholar-jurist in secret and in open even when the husband is very poor or a slave. It is not permissible for her to disobey him at all, according to the consensus unless he orders her to disobey Allah, in which case she should not obey him.¹³

Through this onerous effort by the Sokoto jihadists, women in the Caliphate were emancipated and appropriately placed as equal partners in progress in the realization of the ideals upon which the Sokoto Caliphate was founded. One would be left in no doubt of this fact, if one views the mobilization of women program chaired by Nana Asma'ū 1793-1864 (the daughter of the Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo) under the *Yantaru*¹⁴ system. The study conducted by Jean Boyd and Beverly Mack on Nana Asma'ū and the Yantaru confirmed that, the movement was a mass movement involving almost all women in the Caliphate and not in any way restricted to few women in the aristocracy. The women network provided a platform for social service, and addressing special problems related to women in the Caliphate. In the opinion of Boyd and Mack:

The network of teachers established a conduit for all women to be apprised of current events and news of political concerns during a period of rapid socio-political change. Women in these networks acted deliberately. They undertook responsibilities, organized food for the army, brought up orphans, distributed goods to the poor, gave religious instruction, sorted out problems and related well to everyone willing to respond, regardless of their background or status. They were by no means isolated in seclusion as has often been suggested by contemporary scholars, but constituted a sisterhood.¹⁵

From the scholarly comments and contributions by Nana Asma'ū and other women, the Caliphate did not only create opportunities for women in juristic and spiritual spheres, but also on some administrative ethos such as military expeditions and other related issues in the governance of the soci-

¹² Cited in AHMAD MUHAMMAD KANI, *The Intellectual Origin of Sokoto Jihad*, Iman Publications; Ibadan, Nigeria, (1405AH)1985, 69.

¹³ Cited in AHMAD MUHAMMAD KANI, *supra*, n. 12, 69-70.

¹⁴ That was an association of the women folk, founded by Nana Asma'ū, daughter of the Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo for the advancement of the course of the Sokoto Jihad movement principally targeting the women folk, teaching, re-orienting and enlightening them.

¹⁵ See JEAN BOYD and BEVERLY MACK, *The Collected Works of Nana Asma'ū, Daughter of Shehu Usman Danfodiyo (1793-1864)*, Ibadan: Sam Bookman, 1999, 9.

ety. The gender balance and equality achieved in this regard by the jihadists were some of the secrets of their long lasting success and the indelible impact of their ideology in the society, which had its roots from the family and then to the wider society. The annual general convention of the Yantau is until today celebrated in the two major cities of the Caliphate (Sokoto and Gwandu) attracting participants from all over West Africa. Women in their thousands converge to perform rituals, conduct pilgrimage, and undertake some educational sessions; similar to what was practiced during the days of Nana Asma'u, the founder of the movement some two hundred years ago.

5. Provision of Education and Mass Literacy

Unlike other reform movements in the 19th century Africa, the Sokoto reformers were perfectly scholars and teachers more than politicians or warriors. The foundation of the whole movement was knowledge, education, and scientific discoveries. The Sokoto Caliphate was established on a sound academic and intellectual foundation. Those who pioneered the establishment of the Caliphate, viz: Shehu Danfodiyo, Abdullahi and Muhammad Bello, presented themselves as scholars and teachers more than political leaders or military commanders. Until today, the Jihad leaders are remembered as scholars and *Ulama'* that left behind hundreds of books to their credit.

Their writings were, mainly intended to address the need of their contemporary situation. It was the belief of the Shehu that the works of the contemporary scholars at any given moment were more relevant to their people as they addressed the specific needs of the situation. The intellectual outputs of these scholars were tailored such that each established a kind of specialty and a specific target audience to avoid duplication of efforts. Shehu himself acknowledged this where he advised in his book *Najm al-Ikhwan* that:

Take to reading the works of my brother Abdullah for he is, on the whole, concerned with the letter of the *Shari'ah*. Take to reading the works of my son Muhammad Bello for he is overall concerned with the preservation of the political science of the Muslim community with regards to persons, aims, time, place, and prevailing conditions. Take to reading of my works too for I am concerned with the preservation of both.¹⁶

Abdullah's works are mainly on the high academic issues, and the target audiences were scholars and advanced level learners; that was why he was the only one among the Sokoto scholars of the 19th century who wrote the *Tafsir* (exegesis) of the holy Qur'an known as *Kifayat al-Dua'fa' al-Sudan* and *Diya' al- Ta'weel fi ma'ani al-Tanzeel*. He also wrote on the most technical aspects of religious sciences like *Tajweed* (Science of reciting the holy Qur'an) and *Mastalah al-hadeeth* (Study of the authenticity of Hadith). In addition, Abdullah authored a number of works in Arabic language such as *Balagah* (rhetoric), *Nahwu* (grammar) as well as syntax and phonology which are studied not only in Nigeria but as far as Egypt and other countries in the Middle East. In order to address similar technical issues he produced a series of *Diya'ats* books namely: *Diya' al Ummah*, *Diya' ahl-Ihtisab*, *Diya' al-Sultan*, *Diya' Al-faraid*, *Diya' al-Umara'*, *Diya' al- Hukkam*, *Diya' ul al- amr wa al-Mujahideen* and *Diya'al-Ulum al-Deen*. Each of those volumes of *Diya'* was intended to illuminate on a certain juristic question or another; thus his choice of the title *Diya'* which means 'an illuminating light'.

¹⁶ See SHEHU USMAN DANFODIYO, *Najm al-Ikhwan yahtaduna bihi bi izn Allah fi umur al- Zaaman*, printed in a collection of titled *Wasiyat Shaikh Usman Bin Fodiyo* by Alhaji Dan Ige Sokoto, (nd), 69. The translation of the statement used in the text could be found in ABDALLAH ISMAIL, "Some Reflections on the Literature of the Jihad and the Caliphate", in Usman Yusuf Bala (ed), supra, n. 7, 170.

The Shehu on the other hand enthusiastically was concerned with *aqeedah* (creed), rejuvenating the people's faith, avoidance of the innovations (*bid'a*) and strict adherence to the Sunnah of the prophet. Thus, his titles of the works reflect in form of *nasihah*, *wathiqah*, like *nasihat ahl-al- Sudan* and *wathiqat al-Ikhwān* respectively. Similarly, he authored book series like *Najm al-ikhwan*, *Siraj al-Ikhwān*, *Hidayat al- Tullab*, *Ihya' al-Sunnah*, etc.

While Bello concentrated on administrative issues like land, labor, urbanization, settlements, defense and security, social justice as well as social welfare, and issues like medicine, community health, personal hygiene, and diplomacy.¹⁷ Nana Asma'u extensively addressed issues related to mobilization and sensitization of the women folk in education and other state matters. It was the first time in the history of Islam in Hausaland where women exercised a degree of freedom as such that they organized their own programs among themselves. In order for knowledge to be widespread and not in the monopoly of a clique, Shehu directs in his book *Ihya al-Sunnah wa Ikhtad al-Bid'a* that:

There should be, in every mosque and quarter in the town, a learned person teaching the people. So also is it, in every village, obligatory on every learned person who has completed his fully compulsory duty (*fard ain*) and has devoted himself to the partially compulsory one (*fard kifayah*, such as science and medicine), that he should go out to the neighboring on his town in order to teach them their obligatory part of the Sharia'h.¹⁸

In this light therefore, the Sokoto scholars established knowledge as supreme and great lever and up-lifter of the individuals and groups in the society. The question of racial supremacy of one ethnic group over another, caste, or class as far as the Sokoto *Ulama'* were concerned had no place in the scheme of things. Whoever excels in knowledge and science and tamed his physical environment for the service of God is superior regardless of his family or social background. Yusuf Abba argued that some writers portrayed the Fulani tribe as symbol of power and influence in the Caliphate due to their race as a mere fallacy and superstition.¹⁹ He buttressed his point with the statement where Sultan Muhammad Bello says:

The people of Hausa corrupt our children when they tell them that their family is a family of saints and turn them from the path of learning. This is but a lie, an illusion, an error and a fallacy; for sciences can only be preserved by learning and *Mallams* (scholars) are nearer to science than anyone else.²⁰

The concept of *Mallams* (scholars) expressed here by Muhammad Bello was the type of Ibn Sina (Avecina), Ibn Khaldoon, al-Jabarti, al-Razes and host of others who were stars and icons of science not only for the Muslim world but the foundation layers of modern science and technology. In the

¹⁷ See for instance Professor Murray Last study on the Social Policies of Sultan Muhammad Bello, who was the Sultan of Sokoto 1817-1837, "Aspects of Muhammad Bello's Social Policy", *Kano Studies* No. 2 (1966).

¹⁸ Cited in ISMAIL BALOGUN, *supra*, n. 10, 216-217.

¹⁹ That was also part of the colonial campaigns; Lugard asserts that the Fulani conquered the Hausa due to their racial supremacy.

²⁰ YUSUF ABBA, *supra*, n. 7, 25.

field of medicine, Muhammad Bello himself authored over fourteen books on various fields such as pharmacology, ophthalmology, community and general medicine.²¹

In the opinion of this paper, the educational policies of the Sokoto Caliphate, which made them to realise such an enormous intellectual acumen, was not the current *almajiri* system practiced by some Muslims in this part of the country. We have not seen, as far as historical evidences within our reach could provide, where any of the triumvirates, sanctioned children to be in dirt, neglected and abandoned with bowls begging for food, as a means of acquiring education.

III. SOME ASPECTS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN THE SOKOTO CALIPHATE

According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, (UNESCAP), 'the concept of "governance" is not new. It is as old as human civilization. Therefore, governance in this regard denotes, 'the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)'. Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance, and local governance. Since governance is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented, an analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal actors involved in decision-making and implementing the decisions made and the formal and informal structures that have been set in place to arrive at and implement the decision.²²

Good governance, as contained in the UNESCAP, has eight major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.²³

From the above discussion on the foundation of the Sokoto Caliphate, it becomes clear that participatory government was established in place of a dictatorial polity that characterised the pre-Caliphal period in Hausaland. A new political setting was established. This paper would want to highlight some of its legacies in this sector for the use by the Nigerian democratic government in order to address some of its critical issues that threatened the corporate survival of Nigeria as a nation.

The aptitude of the Sokoto Caliphate to hold together hundreds of tribes and ethnic groups with utmost solidarity and sense of respect and commitment between them for over a century is a great lesson that the modern Nigeria should copy. The democratic Nigeria has enormous legacies to emulate in the history and politics of the Nigerian areas, which the Sokoto Caliphate was central for. It was observed that:

²¹ See detail discussion in MUKHTAR UMAR BUNZA, "The Contribution of Sultan Muhammad Bello to the Development of Medical Sciences in the Nineteenth century Hausaland", M.A. History, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, 1995.

²² UNESCAP, 'What is Good Governance?', article available at www.unescap.org/ppd. Visited on October 12 2011.

²³ UNESCAP, *supra*, n. 22.

The collective memory of our people attests to a very long period of various types of interaction between the peoples of the Nigerian area... This is especially the case here in the north where, by the time of British conquest, factors such as population movements, trade, exchange of cultural practices, the creation and expansion of powerful polities like the Kwararafa, Borno and Hausa States and more recently the Sokoto Caliphate, were all acting to bring the people of the area into an inter-related, if not single socio-economic and political matrix.²⁴

Therefore, the democratic Nigerian state has a lot to copy from our history and political settings. Disregard and neglect of this historical reality, paved ways for some derogatory, contemptuous, and uncivilized terms such as 'settler', 'alien', 'minority', 'migrant' or 'marginalized', which were not known in the early history of the Nigerian areas. That was why the cities of Kano, Katsina and Sokoto were settlements not only for the Hausa and Fulani, but all other peoples and tribes of the West African sub-region and even beyond.²⁵

1. Management of Pluralism

The establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate in the nineteenth century further consolidated and strengthened the bond of cooperation among the people of different geographical locations. Integration between regions and peoples of various ethnic and tribal groups in the Nigerian areas were further enhanced. As early as 1806, and specifically in the 1850s, a number of Yoruba merchants established strong commercial and trading relations with Kano and were well established right in the city of Kano and were credited for the establishment of the Ayagi ward in Kano²⁶. So also Muslims of other tribal and ethnic entities, especially Hausa, Kanuri and Nupe settled and absorbed as single community in most parts of Yoruba land such as Badagry, Ikoyi, Ijaye, Igboho, Iseyin, Shaki, Abeokuta, Ede, Ibadan and host of others. This is an indicator of the existence of cordial relationship based on mutual benefit, away from acrimony and conflicts.²⁷

The ideology of the Sokoto Caliphate was neither ethnic nor tribal or regional affiliates; but sound Islamic creed and professionalism, which cemented peoples together. Any ethnic, tribal or regional attachments were discouraged. The Shehu warns leaders, especially of Nigerian type that:

One of the swiftest ways of destroying a (country/state) kingdom is to give preference to a particular tribe over another, or to show favor to one group of people rather than another and draw near those who should be kept away and keep away those who should be drawn near.²⁸

²⁴ LIMAN CHIROMA, "National Unity and the Responsibility of leadership", *ECPER Journal*, Vol. II, No. I, 1994, 20, see also IYOCHIYA AYU, 'Nigeria : A Case Study in Federalism' *ECPER Journal*, n. 24, 42-45.

²⁵ See MUKHTAR UMAR BUNZA, "Prospects of Nigerian Federalism", a paper presented at the 2nd national conference on Nigerian federalism issues and problems, organized by the school of arts and social science federal college of education Kontagora, Niger State, 30th August-2nd September, 2005, 4-6.

²⁶ ZAKARIYA SAMBO, 'Consolidating the Pre-Colonial Diaspora: The Ara Ilorin in Kano', in in Alahji Mahmud Yakubu, Jumare Ibrahim Muhammad, and Asma'u Garba Saed, (eds), *Northern Nigeria: Years of Transformation, 1903-2003*. Arewa House: Kaduna, 2004, 480-81.

²⁷ See for details GHAZALI KALLI, *The Kanuri in Diaspora; The Contribution of Kanem Borno Ulama' to Islamic Education in Nupe and Yoruba land*. Nigeria: CSS Bookshops, 2005, 173-265.

²⁸ SHEHU USMANU DANFODIYO, *Kitab Wujub al-Hijrah ala-Al-ibad*, F.H. El-Masri (tran), Sudan: Khartoum University Press, 1978, 142.

What a great lesson for contemporary polities in the world at large, where the preferential treatments against one national, racial, or regional people against another is the order of the day. The transformation of most societies from the level of simple lineage, clan, or tribal organizations to that of centralized emirates system, the Hausa states, Nupe and part of Yoruba states were consolidated into a single Caliphate. This involved an unprecedented diversification of the political communities refocusing of loyalties from supra-clan and supra-tribal institutions to a wider Caliphal and universal worldview that the Caliphate represented.²⁹

As result of the territorial expansion by the Caliphate over two hundred and fifty tribes were found in the Caliphate, most of them constituted the tribes in northern Nigeria, parts of Cameroon, Niger Republic and other modern countries in West Africa. Those tribes and cultural entities were united under one state in progress and development. The relevance of the mechanism and method of management of pluralism to contemporary Nigeria attracted the comment of Ashafa in the following:

Now that there is a vocal demand for restructuring Nigeria's federalism, where diversity exists in unity, Sokoto's administrative model in pre-modern era with a political and social order based on the *Shari'a* would provide the mechanism for harmony...³⁰

2. Respect for Opposition and the Rule of Law³¹

One of the historic features of the Sokoto Caliphate was its tolerations of opposition and accommodating differences from within and without the government structures. The leaders, from the embryonic stage of the Caliphate considered themselves as representatives of the people in the execution of the will of Allah on earth. Therefore, the wide gulf that exists today between the rulers and the ruled was minimized in the Caliphate. The same President (the Caliph or Sultan) and his governors (emirs) were teachers, judges and spiritual leaders who were in constant contact with their subjects and responded promptly to their needs and requests. They tolerated their individual difference at the administrative level. Abdullahi (the Prime Minister) used to differ in many cases with his brother, Shehu Usman, the President-general, and commander-in-Chief of the Caliphate. Issues such as administrative titles, using gorgeous attire for judges and political officers etc. were some points of disagreement between them. The level of discontent with the Caliphate, which Abdullahi freely expressed, made him to attempt to leave the Caliphate, if not for the intervention of Shehu himself.³²

The case of Malam Abd al-Salam, one of the students of Shehu Usman Danfodiyo who was critical of the government especially during the consolidation period was very glaring. After the establishment of the Caliphate the territories of Kware (few kilometers from Sokoto town) were given to Abd al-Salam due to his enormous support and contribution to the success of the Jihad. The Abd al-Salami's opposition however, continued and even took a military dimension, but was handled perfectly by Sultan Muhammad Bello with diplomacy. The series of petition and counter petitions between the

²⁹ MAHMUD HAMMAN, "Inter-ethnic relations and Inter-ethnic Conflicts", in Yaubu Alhaji Mahmud, Jumare Muhammad Ibrahim, and Asma'u Garba Saeed, (eds), supra, n. 26, 453.

³⁰ ABDULLAHI MUSA ASHAFA, "The Management of Pluralism in the Sokoto Caliphate: A Lesson for Contemporary Nigeria", *DEGEL; Journal FAIS*, Vol. VI, 2003, 70.

³¹ See on this aspect J. N. PADEN, 'Contemporary Relevance of the Sokoto Caliphate: Rule of Law, Federalism and Conflict Resolution', in Hamid Boboyi and Alhaji Mahmud Yakubu, supra, n. 5, 242-250.

³² See ABDULLAHI FODIYO supra, n. 6 & 7.

opposition and the Caliph were compiled into a book titled, *Sard al-Kalam fi ma jara bainana wa baina Abd al-Salam*. In spite of the fact that, total control of the army and other security operatives of the Caliphate were under Muhammad Bello Abd al-Salam held an opposing position with the government of the day; until when he took up arms and declared war against the Caliphate, state machineries were directed against, protecting the life of innocent citizens. Indeed, Abdullahi Fodiyo appointed the son Abd al-Salam called Buhari as the Sarkin Kebbi of Jega in 1821. That was to show that the fault of the father cannot in any way affect his innocent children.³³

From the external side we can see the opposition of Borno to the Sokoto Caliphate. The way and manner through which the dialogue was conducted between the two leaderships of Sokoto under Muhammad Bello and Borno under al-Kanemi, is still eluding even the so-called civilized nations who use military sophistication and superiority in international relations to intimidate and subdue other nations. The Borno –Sokoto debate was intellectually and harmoniously resolved after years of academic and diplomatic disputes.³⁴ Even before the coming of al-Kanemi into the affairs of Borno and his disputations and dialogue with Sultan Muhammad Bello, Malam Mustafa Goni was already a critic of Shehu and the level of respect and tolerance to criticism for the betterment of the system and community was exhibited between them. That may well be the foundation of the slogan of some early Nigerian politicians- *Siyasa ba da gaba ba*, meaning, ‘politics without bitterness’.

Adopting the Sokoto example by the Nigerian state could go along way in curbing the prevalent political assassinations against opposition leaders in order to eliminate their rivals, which is almost pushing the country to anarchy. The use of thugs and hooligans in maiming and manhandling of people from opposition parties, critics of government policies, or even colleagues who may threaten their continuity in office, can be addressed through imitation of the Sokoto example.

The essence of the rule of law and justice is to ensure that no person no matter how highly placed, such as president, governor, or other political leaders should enjoy any concession or special treatment, or immunity before justice. The example of the Sokoto Caliphate in this direction can illuminate the way forward for Nigeria, where some political office holders are (above the law) exempted from facing justice in case of committing crime while in office under the ‘Immunity’ provision in the Constitution. A serving president in the Caliphate, Caliph of Sokoto Aliyu Babba (1808 to 1859) was tried by the leading jurists in Sokoto for some allegations labeled against him. He reigned as the Sultan of Sokoto from 1842-1859, was the son of Sultan Muhammad Bello and grandson of the Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo, however, was invited to trial at the famous Shehu mosque in Sokoto town for five charges against him.

Some of these charges included, failure to lead and command the army himself in some expedition for territorial defense of the Caliphate as required of his office and tradition of his predecessors. He was also accused of failure to repair and keep the maintenance of mosques as required of him by law, and failed to disburse funds from the treasury to cater for the need of the poor in the Caliphate. The implication of this was that it may have led to his removal from office if found guilty. Immediately, the Caliph appeared in person, defended himself against all the charges, and was acquitted by

³³ See MUHAMMAD BELLO, *Infaqul Maisur fi Tarikh Bilad al-Tekrur*, Annett John (trans), 1922, 71-72.

³⁴ See detail discussion on this in MUKHTAR UMAR BUNZA, “Intellectual Factor in African Diplomatic History: Sokoto and Borno Sultanates, 1786-1817” submitted for publication to the *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, September, 2012.

the jurists. According to Kyari Tijjani, Caliph Aliyu Babba improved his general conduct in office consequent upon that he escaped impeachment from office.³⁵

3. Appointment of Political Officers

One of the main reasons for the state failure in contemporary Nigeria, and developing countries generally is the appointment of incompetent, unqualified officers to shoulder the responsibility of the state. Some of the appointments were mainly due to other considerations, without recourse to professionalism, skills, and competence. Some occupy an office because their parents or masters contributed to a political party to establish government, or were sons and daughters of influential persons in the society without the necessary qualification and capability to lead. It is in very rare circumstances that you find appointment in public office purely based on merit, qualification, and competence of the candidates. The guidance of the Sokoto Caliphate on this matter could be seen in theory and practice as legacy for contemporary polities in the country. Sultan Muhammad Bello warns governments in the following:

Know also that most of the evil that befalls the state comes from the appointment of officers who are anxious to have the appointment, because none would be keen on such but a thief in the garb of hermit and a fox in the guise of a pious worshipper. Someone who is keen in the collection of money, sacrificing for such his religion and integrity, all his endeavors are for the fruits of this world, not portraying zeal and honesty, and that is the sign of treachery...³⁶

In the same vein, Abdullahi Fodiyo commands that any officer to be appointed must be learned, honest and pious. He warned against nepotism and appointment of unqualified people to any public office. Similarly, Abdullahi emphasised that, 'the Head of State (Governor) must not fold his arms after appointing his officials, he must consistently monitor their activities and remove those found wanting. Both he and his officials should see themselves as God's trustees over their people. They must treat them gently and work for their welfare. They are shepherds over their subjects and are expected to cater for their interest. On the day of judgment, they would be called upon to account for the way they treated them'.³⁷

It was in this respect that Abdullahi refused to appoint his son Muhammad, as the emir of Gwandu initially after the fall of Birnin Kebbi to the forces of the Caliphate in April 1805, but entrusted it to the Magajin Gari, although he was one of the commanders that led the expedition which subsequently subdued the town.³⁸

In addition, Shehu further commands leaders in *Kitab al-Farq*, to create relevant offices, units and ministries that will expedite the dispensation of justice as well as ensure efficient service delivery in the state. The president must ensure appointment of deputies who oversee affairs in different aspects of government, Chief Judge to review judgment of lower judges who shall be appointed by him(the

³⁵ KYARI TIJJANI, "The Force of Religion in the conduct of political affairs and inter-personal relations in Borno and Sokoto", in Usman Yusuf Bala (ed), supra, n. 7, and 16, 269-271.

³⁶ See *al-Ghays al-Shubub* of Sultan Muhammad Bello, the translation adopted here could be seen in IBRAHIM SULAIMAN, supra, n. 1, 36.

³⁷ See details of Abdullahi's call in A.A. GWANDU, 'The Vision and Mission of Abdullahi Fodio', Hamid Boboyi and Alhaji Mahmud Yakubu, supra, n. 5, 32.

³⁸ See MUKHTAR UMAR BUNZA, "Gwandu Emirate 1805 to Present", *mimeo*, 2009.

Chief Judge), Chief of Police who shall obtain justice for the weak, sound treasury to be presided by an honest accountant.³⁹

That was the prevailing situation in the general affairs of the Caliphal administration. In spite of the fact that sons of the emirs inherited their fathers in most cases, normal election processes had to be followed, and the king makers screen and elect the appropriate candidate among the contestants. The succession dispute that led to the Kano civil war otherwise known as Kano Basasa that occurred from 1893 to 1895 primarily for succession to the emirship of Kano. The two major contenders Muhammad Tukur and Aliyu led the war, which was referred to as the Basasa.⁴⁰ There were some reports of resistance in case the popular candidate was not endorsed by the electoral college. On the whole, Hogben and Kirk-Greene, call attention to the fact that presence of some corrupt rulers or princes who wanted to take power by any means should not delude us away from the good and impressive records in the Caliphate. According to them:

Nevertheless, we must not let stories about the corruption of some, with their concubines and eunuchs, their embezzlement and extortion, their nepotism and indolence, blind us to the virtues of those other distinguished Fulani rulers who defied corruption.⁴¹

4. Religious Tolerance

It is worthy of note that, Shehu and his other triumvirate were not in any way extremists in their religious attitudes and beliefs; the same way that they were not reactionary and traditionalists. They never, voluntarily, over-stepped beyond the limits of the Shari'a for any sentiments, in religious affairs and tenets. That was the genesis of Shehu's writing of a book to address the issue of *ifrat* and *tafrit* (extremism and compromise) what made them moderates in their dealings among themselves and with others who belonged to other religions. The question of religious tolerance in the Sokoto Caliphate has been fairly treated elsewhere to require our in depth presentation here.⁴²

In order to ensure equity among the followers of other religions they promulgated laws to address such issues. The Caliphal leadership directed all governors to take a good care of properties of diseased travelers in their territories and the non-Muslims. Their properties must be identified and should be sent to his guardian no matter the distance. He further says: 'know that a deposit left with us by a non-Muslim person who has been granted an *amana* (guarantee of protection by the state) should be sent to him wherever he may be, even if he had fought against the Muslims (his property must be protected and sent to him).⁴³

Professor Ismail Balogun attested that it was the Shehu's strict observance of the middle course and following of the Shari'a that:

³⁹ SHEHU USMAN DANFODIYO, *supra*, n. 2, 6 and 13.

⁴⁰ See details on this episode in ADAMU MUHAMMAD FIKA, *The Kano Civil War and British Over Rule 1882-1940*, Ibadan; Oxford University Press, 1978, and SAID HALIL, 'Revolution and Reaction: The Fulani Jihad in Kano and its Aftermath, 1807-1919', PhD Thesis, University of Michigan, USA, 1978.

⁴¹ SIDNEY HOGBEN and ANTHONY KIRK-GREENE, *supra*, n. 1, 122.

⁴² See MUKHTAR UMAR BUNZA, "Religious Tolerance in the Sokoto Caliphate: Lessons for the Nigerian State", in Boboyi Hamid and Alhaji Mahmud. Yakubu, eds., *supra*, n.32, 251-269.

⁴³ See translation of Abdullahi's statement in IBRAHIM SULAIMAN, *supra*, n. 31, 59.

Accounted for his leniency and tolerance where others were unacceptably strict, bordering on seeming harshness. It must be stated that it was his middle of the way attitude to life and to all around him that won him the hearts of millions of his adherents. That, indeed was the greatest heritage that Uthman Danfodiyo had bequeathed to the world.⁴⁴

Therefore, the example of Sokoto shows that equity and justice should be the bedrock of any polity if it all wants to survive.

5. Justice, Prudence, and Accountability

Problems associated with lack of prudence and accountability in public offices have been the major cog on the wheels of development of Nigeria as nation. The responsible agencies for checking the excesses of public servants should be strengthened for good governance and development. In the Sokoto Caliphate, Abdullahi Fodiyo (who was in charge of the western flank of the Caliphate) directed to all governors and officers as contained in *Diya' al-Hukkam*, 'that all public officers must declare their assets and interests before they assume public responsibility and do the same when they leave office. Whoever is found to have wealth above what he earns from his work, the ruler (president) shall confiscate and restore it to the treasury'.⁴⁵ Further, Abdullahi Fodiyo stresses that, the leader does not have the right to revert to acquiring power and wealth from people. Nor is he, let alone his lieutenants, permitted to either receive gifts or use his office/position to acquire wealth in excess of his lawful entitlements.⁴⁶ The practical application of this rule and guiding principle in the Caliphate that resulted in the fact that the early caliphs up to recently the Premier of the Northern Region late Sardauna of Sokoto did not leave behind estates and wealth, unlike the crazy show and display of wealth seen today from political leaders.

The key word of the Sokoto Caliphate was 'justice' in theory and practice. One finds the following as the opening statements in the books of the Sokoto jihad leaders: 'A kingdom (country) can endure with unbelief but not with injustice', 'victory is gained through justice and defeat comes through injustice', 'justice and mercy safeguard the kingdom (country). The basis for the well-being of the world is justice'.⁴⁷ That explained why the Caliphate prospered during its early days, and brought a vast area under its domains, but when the leaders turned against the principle of justice they fell into decay and internal disorder, and were finally overwhelmed, and gave way to British subjugation.

6. Provision of Welfare to General Public

Taking a good care of the wellbeing of the masses is the fundamental role of a leader/ government in any given society. In *Usul al-Siyasat*, Sultan Muhammad Bello states:

For this purpose, he (ruler, governor/president) shall foster the artisans, and be concerned with tradesmen who are indispensable to the people. They include farmers, smiths, tailors, dyers, physicians, grocers, butchers, carpenters, and all sort of trade, contribute to (stabilize) the proper order of the world. The ruler must set up these tradesmen in every village and locality. He should urge his

⁴⁴ ISMAIL BALOGUN, *supra*, n. 10, 221.

⁴⁵ ABDULLAHI FODIYO, *Diya' al-Hukkam fima lahum wa alaihim min al-Ahkam*, the quotation used in the text was copied from IBRAHIM SULAIMAN, *supra*, n. 31, 36-37.

⁴⁶ See IBRAHIM SULAIMAN, *supra*, n. 1, 31, 36, and 38, 37.

⁴⁷ See SHEHU USMANU DANFODIYO, *supra*, n. 24.

subjects to produce foodstuff and store it for future use. He must keep villages and countryside peopled, construct fortresses, bridges, maintain markets, roads, and realize for them all what are of public interest so that the proper order of this world may be maintained.⁴⁸

Payment of allowances to destitutes, orphans, elderly and unemployed in order to restrain them from crimes and unlawful acts should be well established. Abdullahi directed that: 'the leader shall pay the indigents (poor) their allowances until he covers all of them, male and female, minors and adults, on the basis of the amount they need, and the nature of their needs... if the money is more than enough, the surplus shall be kept in the treasury for what may possibly occur in form of calamity, or for building mosques, or freeing of captives, or settling debts, or assisting bachelors to get married, or helping the pilgrims, or for any other purpose which may possibly arise.⁴⁹ That was exactly what was attained in the Sokoto Caliphate. To the extent that peace was enshrined in the whole Caliphate due to social justice, that a woman can carry a casket of gold from one end of the Caliphate to the other without fear.

Hugh Clapperton attests to this during his visit to Sokoto in 1824 and reported in his journal of expedition:

The laws of the Qur'an were in his (Bellos) time so strictly put enforce... that the whole country when not in a state of war, was so well-regulated that it is a common saying that a woman might travel with a casket of gold upon her head from one end of the Fellata dominion to the other (without fear).⁵⁰

7. Industrialization and Craft

Any government that does not venture into technological inventions and scientific discoveries to address the needs of the people in relation to their physical environment, has at least the risk of being a slave of others who take lead in that direction. It was in recognition of that fact, that Sultan Muhammad Bello made agricultural revolution a catalyst to technological and industrial developments. Agricultural revolution inspired and indeed made the industrial revolution possible. Since most industries in the Caliphate were agro-allied or processing industries, agriculture was the mainstay for development. The government ensured massive agricultural produce, which left surpluses for exportation and vast income in the hand of the people out of the sales of their produce. New crops were introduced and extended farms were established by the government and also new techniques in agriculture and irrigation methods using fulcrum and bucket-shaduf in order to maximise production and allow farming in the dry season.⁵¹

The use of slaves especially for domestic purposes cannot be denied in the Caliphate, however slave raiding and generation of income from sales of slaves were not in any way encouraged or supported. The practice of slavery that the colonial government observed in the Caliphate was such that even

⁴⁸ MUHAMMAD BELLO, *Usul al- Siyasat*, Shehu Yamusa, tran, 17.

⁴⁹ ABDULLAHI FODIYO, *Diya' al-Hukkam*, translation used here see IBRAHIM SULAIMAN, supra, n. 31, 53.

⁵⁰ HUGH CLAPPERTON, *Journal of a Second Expedition into the Interior of Africa*. London: 1829, 206.

⁵¹ See HUSSAIN USMAN MALAMI, *Economic Principles and Practices of the Sokoto Caliphate*, The Institute of Islamic Sciences, Sokoto, 1998, 51.

the colonial administration was reluctant to abolish it completely. In his study of Northern Nigeria, Robert Shenton reported a resident officer lamenting:

I am very much afraid that if slavery disappears and with it the wealthy class we will find in some ten to twenty years' time that the Fulani administrative machinery has disappeared and that we have nothing to replace it with. The only solution I can think of ... is that domestic slavery in some modified form be legalized, it would be a temporary measure and help to bridge the next twenty years at the end of which one hopes that the revenue of the country will have increased so much that it will be possible to provide adequate remuneration for native administrators.⁵²

Thus, in Lugard's eyes the Sokoto Caliphate and the rest of Northern Nigeria was to be transformed into a version of post-manumission British West Indies, in which slaves, while freed, were compelled to remain on the plantation. Slaves were not to be permitted to 'desert', and the Caliphate aristocracy was to become a wage-paying landlord class.⁵³

Industries that followed immediately were leather industries, supplying all sorts and styles of leather materials, which were exported as far as Europe, from Morocco via the Sahara. There were also dyeing and chemical as well as sugar refining industries established in various centers in the Caliphate.⁵⁴ The next major industries were the textile industry, glass industry, iron smelting which the Nupe and the Zoramawa in the Caliphate mostly dominated.⁵⁵

The democratic Nigerian state can by following the legacies of the Caliphate in this sector, alleviate poverty from its citizens, encourage development and self-reliance as against the consumer syndrome that characterised the Nigerian state and majority of its population without any vocational training and trade acquisition for subsistence. A society can only be self-reliant if it controls what it requires for its survival as an entity.

IV. Conclusion

The paper attempted to draw from the wealth of historical treasure that the Sokoto Caliphate left behind as a lesson for the Nigerian state, and other nations as well. Indeed, most of that may be required for good governance in Nigeria such as accountability and probity, transparency and equity, management of pluralism and resolution of conflicts, social security and welfare, and development oriented programs are abound in the history of the Sokoto Caliphate under the ambit of the Shari'a.

⁵² See ROBERT SHENTON, *The Development of Capitalism in Northern Nigeria*, University of Toronto Press: Toronto & Buffalo, 1986, 28.

⁵³ ROBERT SHENTON, *supra*, n. 52, 29.

⁵⁴ See detail discussion on this subject in ALIYU CHIKA UMAR, 'An Analytical Study of the views of Abdullahi Danfodiyo Economic Development' Ph. D, Economics UDU, Sokoto, 2000 and A.S.M. BAYERO, 'Production Policy of the Sokoto Caliphate', in *Degel Journal of FAIS*, Vol. VI, August, 2003, 123-134.

⁵⁵ See detail discussion in MUKHTAR UMAR BUNZA and SANUSI USMAN JUNaidu, "Sourcing Indigenous Materials for Science and Technical Education for the Year 2010: Lessons from the Pre-colonial Northern Nigeria" *Technical Education and Vision 2010, Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Technical Education and Vision 2010*, Published by Federal College of Education Technical Gusau, 1997, 202-210.

The strength and viability of the democratic Nigeria relies in its efforts to make the resource of the people reach the very citizens they were meant for, and not by circulating the wealth in the hands of the few who continue to manipulate and hold the nation and the people at ransom. The Sokoto Caliphate, as well as its leadership left indelible imprints for good governance, selflessness and patriotism. It suffices in this regards to end our discussion with the warning of Shehu Usman Danfodiyo, 1754-1817, the President General of the Caliphate in following:

One of the swiftest ways of destroying a nation/kingdom is to give preference to a particular tribe over another, or to show favor to one group of people(ethnic or political party supporters) rather than another and draw near those who should be kept away and keep away those who should be drawn near.

The message serves as the foundation and viable pillar for good governance and sustainable development, as well as averting political crisis, inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts that characterized the plural Nigerian state due to injustices, inequality and corruption.