



Research Paper

The Role of the British Occupation of Borno and Socio-Political Transformation

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ABSTRACT

The occupation of Borno by the British was concluded in March 1902. It was an occupation rather than a conquest as no actual fighting or resistance took place by the time of the arrival of the British force. The study examines Rabbi Fad-Allah's reign and comprehensively outlined his encounters with the British which significantly captured his Rise and Fall. The British administrative policies which include judiciary, taxation and transportation were thoroughly analyzed. This research study explicitly shows how Lugard arrived from Leave in England to the news of the defeat and destructions of Fad-Allah by the French in British territory. Lugard was enraged by the French disregard for British territorial claims and wasted no time in conveying his disgust to the colonial office. Lugard set out the lower Borno expedition under the command of colonel T.N.L Moreland to occupy Borno. Secondary source were drawn from textbooks, archival materials and other relevant document to this study. This research brings to limelight how the British occupation took place and the subsequent socio-political transformation that came into being.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The British established their first Base in Nigeria by the conquest of the small state of Lagos in 1851. The conquest was at the time weakened by a succession dispute. It was justified as a blow against the slave trade, which was certainly weakened as a result. Some scholars such as modern historians tend to see the British conquest of Lagos as an act of economic imperialism.¹ Twice in the nineteenth century, Borno came under the rule of a ruler of foreign origin. Rabih had no original connection with Borno at all, but his whole career illustrates the close links which bind the Lake Chad area with the central and eastern Sudan Rabih (1840-1900) was born in a village north of Khartoum.²

He served for some years in the Egyptian army, modernized by Muhammad Ali, and then returned to the Sudan. He became a commander in the private Army of a rich slave and ivory trader called Zubeir. Zubeir ruled an area called Bahr El-Ghazal, but was nominally subject to government of Egypt. Rabih then served Zubeir's son, Sulayman, until he in turn was defeated and slain by Egyptian forces in 1870. Rabih succeeded to the leadership of what was left of Sulayman's forces and built them into a powerful army. He set up his own military state in Bahr El-Ghazal, raiding north towards Darfur, and south towards Azande. Gradually, he became convinced that the rising tide of the British and Egyptian authority in the Sudan had made his position there impossible to maintain.³

Therefore Rabih changed his direction, moving further west, he conquered Baghirmi in 1892. Baghirmi appealed to Borno for assistance, but in vain. In 1893 Rabih invaded Borno. The Shehu of the period was weak and irresolute, and Rabih overthrew him without much difficulty. At the eleventh hour, the Borno

¹ Elizabeth Isichei (1977) *History of West Africa Since 1800*. Macmillan Publishers Ltd London and Basingstoke P. 163

² Ibid P 191

³ Ibid 191

nobility chose a more war like member of the royal family, Kiyari, to lead them. Kiyari came near to victory but Rabih's forces rallied, and won the battle. Kiyari and his three brothers refused to flee, and stayed on the battlefield, hurling defiance at the invader, until they died.⁴ Rabih's occupation of Borno heightened intra-European rivalry and complicated matters for the European powers in their race for Lake Chad.⁵

By the 1880s, European imperialism had taken keen interest in the area Rabih occupied.⁶ Rabih destroyed the Borno capital at Kuka and established a new one at Dikwa. His occupation of Borno was done in the name of the Mahdist though Rabih refused to correspond him. However, his soldiers wore the Mahdist uniform and carried the Mahdist flag.⁷ British companies operating in the Niger had under the influence of George Goldie amalgamated to form what became the Royal Niger Company to protect British imperial interest until the British government was ready to take over in 1900. As early as 1883, the French had made establishment in the Chad Basin an important objective of their imperial policy.⁸

After the Berlin West Africa conference, the Germans also began to manifest interest in the race for Lake Chad. After 1890, Borno therefore, became the point of an anxious and obtain acrimonious rivalry between Britain, France and Germany. Occupying an area of great interest and allotted by the three major imperial powers to themselves at Berlin, Baghirmi to the French, metropolitan Borno to the British and Rabih's capital, Dikwa and environs, to the Germans, it became clear to the European powers that unless a peaceful solution by way of an alliance with Rabih was found, at least, one of them would be forced to take the field against him.⁹

Between 1894 and 1896, the French attempts to use Zubair Pasha to gain access to Rabih. They like the British, collected letters of introduction for Clozel in 1894 and for Gentil and Cajemajou in 1896. However, nothing came out of these attempts. By September 1897, Gentil had arrived at Baghirmi and signed a treaty of protection with Gwarange. It was here that Gentil learnt of Rabih's involvement in the murder of Crampels and the fact of his having Crampel weapons. The French had, at this time, abandoned any serious hope of an alliance with Rabih without, however,, abandoning their claim to his territory.¹⁰

The arrival of an advance guard of the Gentil mission under Bretonnet to the Shari valley, in 1898, marked the beginning of the military phase of French occupation of Baghirmi, and of Rabih's end. Rabih who had been taken by surprise by this sudden European appearance on his eastern frontiers, in 1897, now kept a close watch on that corridor. This time he was aware of the arrival of the Bretonnet mission. The movements of this mission in the Shari-Longone area pushed Rabih into action. By July 1899, Bretonnet was convinced Rabih would go on the offensive. The French column of 44 solders commanding three mountain guns, therefore, withdrew to the nearby Niellim hills as they found their position, around Kuno indefensible with such a small force against the might of Rabih.¹¹

The French were supported by numerous Baghirmi solders under their ruler, Abdulrahman Gwaranga. Rabih on the other hand had eleven banners with 2,700 guns and a large army of irregulars armed with spears, bows and arrows. The Rabih forces left Kuno at dawn on 17th July 1899, and reaching the Niellim hills immediately launched a frontal attack. This was soon repulsed by the French who had taken an advantageous position on top of the hills. Rabih re-grouped his forces into three columns: remaining at the centre, he sent Muhammad Nyebe and Faki Ahmed al-kabir to attack the left flank; while Uthman Wad Shakku was detailed to do the same on the right flank.

In shakku's first sortie, capt. Braun was killed and Bretonnet wounded. Lt Martin continued to direct the French attack. Gwaraga, shot in the arm fled with his forces when the battle became too hot. Muhammad Nyebe and Faki Ahmed al-kabir gained the defile killing Lt. Durand – Autier and all men on that flank. Bretonnet received a second bullet and diet. The French were annihilated, but even for the victor it was a costly victory. Rabih lost sixty three senior officers, five hundred soldiers and numerous irregulars.¹²

Kusseri had been a major French military objective because of its strategic location and importance to Rabih's defense system. Therefore on receiving information of the fall of Kusseri and the subsequent defect of Fadl Allah, Rabih hurriedly left Dikwa, placing it under the command of Muhammad Nyebe, who had been wounded at the battle of Niellim, and Faki Ahmed al-kabir. Shortly afterwards Rabih came up against the three

⁴ Ibid P 192

⁵ Kyari Mohammed (2006) *Borno in the Rabih Years, 1893-1901 Borno Sahara and Sudan Series, Studies in the Humanities and Social Science*, University of Maiduguri P 124

⁶ Ibid P 124

⁷ Michael Crowder (1968) *West Africa Under Colonial Rule* Hutchison and co publishers Ltd. London P 138

⁸ Kyari Mohammed opcit p 124

⁹ Ibid P 126

¹⁰ Ibid 126

¹¹ Ibid P 133

¹² Ibid P 134

Chad columns in April 1900. Having access to arms only by way of Egypt, he was hard put to fight the combined columns.¹³ Rabih's army had no idea of how close the enemy was. The French started shelling their positions. Jolland attacked according to plan, but meeting strong opposition on that side was not able to complete his movement as swiftly as envisaged to cut off Rabih's rear.

British Conquest of Borno and Socio-Political Transformation

Lugard arrived from leave in England to the news of the defeat and destruction of Fadl Allah by the French in British territory. Lugard was enraged by the French disregard for British territorial claims and wasted no time in conveying his disgust to the colonial office, urging the British government to take up the matter with its French counterpart. Simultaneously, Lugard sent out the lower Borno expedition under the command of colonel T.N.L Moreland to occupy Borno. The expedition, comprising thirteen officers, five European non-commissioned officers, three medical officers, 515 African soldiers, four maximum guns, and two 75mm guns, left Ibi on February 3rd, 1902. Lugard instructed the mission among others.

- i. To march to Gujba (via Bauchi) and locate a garrison on each of these places and to restore British prestige which must have received a severe blow owing to the reported incursion of the French into the protectorate and their defeat of Fadl Allah after he had been recognized by this government in a friendly manner.
- ii. To take full and exhaustive evidence as regards the raids of French over the British frontier more especially this last one, whether (as it was reported) it was provoked by any raid by Fadl Allah's men over the German frontier.
- iii. To report the action of French in British territory, whether they appointed any remnants of Fadl Allah's force and what can be done with them if in British territory they might perhaps be located near the garrison at Bauchi.
- iv. Proceeding from Bauchi, collect all possible information regarding the best place to locate the garrison and to form the capital of lower Borno province. The primary objective is to be in close touch with the most powerful local chief. If you found yourself compelled to appoint a chief you will do so on the condition of the letter of appointment.
- v. You may find it necessary to break the power of Mallam Jibrilla or you may find that he is a useful man to recognize as a sub-chief or even as principal chief in lower Borno.¹⁴

The occupation of Borno by the British was therefore concluded in early march of the year 1902. It was an occupation rather than conquest as no actual fighting or resistance by the time of the arrival of the British force. After the arrival of colonel Moreland and his force on the eleventh of March and his march through the territory ending on the sixth of April may be regarded as the period of effective occupation. At this period, British were left with a vast territory in an advanced state of devastation. The people were demoralized and largely disorganized. Without much security for life and property.¹⁵ Lugard completely ignored Bukar Garbai, of whose existence as Shehu at Dikwa he was doubtless, in his search for a local chief to recognize. Accordingly, Lugard was either not sure that Garbai in German territory was available for British recognition, or that he was loathe to recognize someone who had received French protection and had, in deed, assisted in their violation of British territory, or both.

Garbai on the other hand, though a way of British flirtation with and predisposition was definitely not aware of Lugard's instructions to the expectation overlooking him and seeking a ruler to recognize in Borno¹⁶. Moreland's forces left the British post at Ibi, on the middle Benue, on 3rd February 1902 and passing through Bauchi reached Gujba in Borno on 11th march. Soon afterwards the expedition, or most of it, moved east to Mafoni a better centre from which to control Borno and near enough to French-controlled territory to deter them from further incursion¹⁷.

Moreland, however, realized while at Bauchi that the Shehu at Dikwa not only regarded himself as the Shehu of Borno, but that the Chief of Gujba was his subordinate and appointee¹⁸. Moreland, arrived Gujba on March 11th, 1902 to a message from Digma Mammadu, the Shehu's envoy that the Shehu was waiting for him at Mafoni. Notwithstanding Lugard's indifference towards Garbai, Moreland, assessing the help but reckon with the Shehu. At Mafoni, Moreland was disappointed in not situation on ground, could not meet Garbai, who had sent a message that Dangeville, the French officer, would not allow him leave without settling the balance of his

¹³ Michael Crowder P 138

¹⁴ Kyari Mohammed opcit P 159

¹⁵ Garba Ibrahim (1994) *A study of the Evolution and Development of Indirect Rule in a Northeastern Nigerian community 1902—1925* (unpublished) Ph.D thesis, University of Maiduguri, P 66

¹⁶ Kyari Mohammed opcit P 159

¹⁷ John Lavers Collection P. 14

¹⁸ Nak, SNP 15/1 Acc. 18, Borno Annual Report, 8 1st May 1902

debt to the French. Moreland sent Capt. McCarthy Morogh to Dikwa to invite Bukar Garbai to meet him at Mafoni.

Once Morrogh arrived, Dangeville, realising that Dikwa was German territory and that even if he succeeded in disallowing Garbai's movement to Mafoni, Garbai would end up serving another power and not the French, allowed him to move. To make sure that Garbai would return to settle account with him, Dangeville made the Shehu leave most of his property behind. Garbai left these under the care of Umar Sanda B. Bukar, better known as Sanda Mandarama¹⁹. Shehu Garbai left for Mafoni accompanied by 300 horsemen and 200 soldiers. The outcome of the meeting between Moreland and Garbai was that Garbai accepted British recognition as Shehu of Borno. He was appointed on April 2nd, 1900²⁰.

Capt. McCarthy Morrogh was sent to Dikwa to bring the remnants of Garbai's property but most of these were confiscated by Dangeville. The French on their part installed Umar Sanda (mandarama) as Shehu of German Borno at Dikwa before leaving. Shehu Garbai, Immediately after receiving British recognition, made his intention to be independent of them known. Thus, even though he anxiously looked forward to Moreland's proposal that Kukawa be rebuilt as his capital, he declined the suggestion that he reside at Mafoni in the interim, where there was a British Resident and a garrison. Instead he chose to stay at Monguno which had neither.

After Moreland officially installed Garbai as Shehu of British Borno and presented him with a letter of appointment similarly to the ones given to the emirs of Yola and Bida, certain conditions were, however, attached to the appointment and Moreland read these out to Garbai "there was to be no more buying and selling of slaves in Borno, no more slave raiding and such punishment as the cutting off of people's Limbs were to be discontinued". The Shehu promised to observe these conditions. Mai Maina now twenty-eight and attached to captian Moses, quartermaster of the Northern Nigeria Regiment, was among the assembly at Mafoni witnessing this ceremony²¹.

Mai Maina was the Grandson of Abbega, who was taken by the Heinrich Barth in 1855 for education in Europe. Abbega and one other were freed slaves who had entered his services. After their education they returned to West Africa fluent speakers of English. Abbega a Marghi man, worked with British traders and missionaries as an interpreter and in other capacities, on the lower Niger, for many years before becoming chief of Lokoja, where he was still leaving in 1910. Mai Maina was employed in the Northern Nigerian government service, chiefly as an interpreter and political agent, in which capacities he served a member of army officers and the Resident himself in Borno over the years 1902-1913. Because of his ability as a linguist, Mai Maina was known to the Kanuri as Maina Turjiman, the prince of interpreters. A role he had dearly learned from his grand father. Later he was to be the chief of Askira, a marghi area of southern Borno, for some forty years²².

Shehu Garbai settled temporarily at Monguno after his installation, while awaiting the rebuilding of his capital at Kukawa, but the British decided to keep a garrison at Maiduguri and built a fort there, captain Morrough accompanied the Shehu to Monguno with an escort and with orders to reMain there and keep an eye on him. The very next day (8th April) Morland left, leaving Captain J.R Cochrane as acting military Resident²³.

The British wanted Shehu Garbai though to rebuild Kukawa and re-establish his capital there, and the Shehu agreed. But he refused the British request to set up temporary headquarters in Mafoni, not wishing to reside in the shadow of British guns and officials. He preferred to live in the large market village of Monguno, about thirty kilometers south of Kukawa, while the later was being rebuilt²⁴. The appointment of a legitimate Shehu and the fact of their being instrumental to the event gave the British the political legitimacy they needed to establish their presence and enforce law and order in Borno. The Shehu and the people saw the British as friendly force whose only interest was that of preventing the harsh and heartless French and Germans from taking over Borno.

Both the Shehu and his people believed initially that the British presence was a temporary affair, and that they would go away as soon as the affairs of Borno were put in order²⁵. As a result of all this, there was general feeling of goodwill towards the British and they were able to go about their business with the full co-operation of the people. Throughout the difficult period of the first few months of colonization, no British patrol was attacked even once by anyone throughout Borno. The feeling that the British were not really interested in ruling Borno was heightened by the fact that captain Cochrane did not do anything to interfere with the Shehu's

¹⁹Kyari Mohammed opcit P 160

²⁰Nak, SNP 15/1 Acc. 18, Borno Annual Report, 8 1st May 1902

²¹ John Lavers Opcit P 16

²² Ibid

²³ Garba Ibrahim Opcit P 70

²⁴ John Lavers P 16

²⁵ L. Brenner (1973): *The Shehus of Kukawa* P 86

attempt to re-constitute his court at Monguno. Every captain Morrough's detachment, sent to keep an eye on the Shehu at Monguno, appears to have been withdrawn not long after colonel Morland's departure²⁶.

Contrary to the believe and felling of the Shehu and his people, the British, established their headquarters in Mafoni²⁷. While in Monguno, Moreland selected the site for as small fort or cantonment to house a British garrison. He chose the highest point in Mafoni, 1160 feet above sea level, close to where Government House now stands and he asked the Shehu to send some of his people to assist with work on the fort. Morland and the back of his force then left for Yola on about 8th April. The route through Yola and down the Benue was at the time the Main one linking Borno with the British headquarters at Lokoja. Captain Mccarthy-Morrough was left in command of the military post and the remaining two companies of troops but he did not stay long in Mafoni, then he too departed for Yola.

Out of the two companies of soldiers, one was sent to Gujba to watch over the western part of Borno and the other remained at Mafoni under Captain J. Cochrane, who was in overall command of the British forces and also served as the military Resident of the new province²⁸. A fort had now to be built on the site chosen by Moreland, but that place was already occupied by the village of Mafoni. No doubt the population was no longer the nine to ten thousand estimated by Barth but it still posed a problem for the British. However, using the services of Mai Maina and the Shehu's personal representative, Kachella Jajwayi, with his two assistants, Grema Ahmadu Shuwa and Grema Muhammadu Kawu, the British causes the people of Mafoni to evacuate the hill and build a new settlement some distance away. A fort was then built on the top of the hill. Mai Maina described it as just a walled enclosure but, two years after it was built, the British explorer, Boyd Alexander, found it an imposing structure. He said that it crown the hill and stood in grand solitude except for a small village of native huts some distance down the northern slop²⁹.

The fort was a small one, constructed in the form of a square with walls six feet high and fifty feet long on each side. A gate was built in the middle of one of the walls and, surrounding the whole structure, was a ditch. Inside the enclosure formed by the walls, two large houses and a guard house were erected. The garrison of the fort was a company of the west African frontier force which was normally commanded by two Europeans, an officer and an N.C.O Captain J. Cochrane was the first officer in charge of the fort. He was succeeded by Captain A.C Ross but by the time of boy Alexzander's visit, late in 1904, the commander was Lieutenant G. Farmer, assisted by sergeant Moon. By that time, there was also a European medical officer in residence, Dr. Parsons. It was not until the introduction of neem tree from India in the 1930s that Maiduguri acquired the shade from which it still benefits. The outline of the fort can to this day be traced on the ground around the building that was erected many years later as the senior district officer's house and is now a guest house of the state government. The fort's magazine its store for arms and ammunition is still standing³⁰.

Early in October, 1902, W.P Hewby arrived at Mafoni as the first civil Resident in Borno, assuming authority from the military resident, Capt. Cochrane. Hewby as was civilian administrator³¹ was a man of great administrative experience, having served as a senior agent with the Royal Niger Company before joining government service in Northern Nigeria. He had spent much time as an official at Ibi on the Benue and so was generally known as Mr. Ibi in Borno. Hewby was accompanied by only two other Europeans; An assistant Resident, G.S Burdelt and an army officer. For the time being there were therefore just two political officers in Borno and one of these, Burdelt, died after only six months in the province. However, reinforcement arrived in due course. Hewby did not remain long at Mafoni on this first visit. Accompanied by Cochrane and a company of soldiers, and probably also Burdeth, he travelled the 110 kilometers to Monguno to reside near the Shehu at the centre of the traditional government. Hewby established his Residency there and soon had a court-house built. Such, in embryo form, was the beginning of indirect Rule in Borno.

Thus Mafoni continued, with Gujba, to be one of the two British military centres in Borno, but it was not yet the headquarters of either the Shehu or the or centres in Borno but it was not yet the headquarters of either the Shehu or the British administration. This remained the position throughout 1903, although in that year the Residency was transferred from Mongonu to Magumeri only fifty kilometers to the north-east of Mafoni.

The Shehu had moved into Kukawa and the Resident had not wished to follow, preferring a more central position from which to deploy his very committed administrative staff more effectively. However, a British official continued to reside near the Shehu, he lined at Gwange, four or five kilometers to the east of

²⁶ Ibid P 86-88

²⁷ Akinjide Osuntokun (1987) *Power Broker: A Biography of Sir Kashim Ibrahim*, Adeyemi press, Ltd Ibebu Ife, P 5

²⁸ Obaro Ikime (1977) *The Fall of Nigeria: The British conquest*, London and Ibadan, Heinemann, p. 181

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ John lavers op. cit.p 18

³¹ Osuntokun op. cit p 5

Kukawa.³² This move was supported by Sir Fredrick Lugard the high commissioner who visited Borno in 1904. While in Borno, Lugard visited Mafoni, Kukawa and Magumeri. He decided while that Mafoni should remain the headquarters of British administration because of its pleasant environment and also because it was located in the economic centre of the kingdom. Furthermore, it was close to the area inhabited by independent tribes such as the Margi and Babur who needed closer British supervision.

Before Lugard arrived, the British administration had set up a home for free slaves in an area of Mafoni later called liberty village which eventually was incorporated into greater Maiduguri i.e Yerwa/Mafoni/Maiduguri. The British headquarters was moved gradually from Magumeri to Mafoni between 1904 and 1906. With the consolidation of Mafoni as their headquarters and with the pacification of Borno completed, the British began to put pressure on the Shehu to move from Kukawa to Mafoni/Maiduguri area. Hewby pointed out to the Shehu that it was inconvenient for the British to deal with him at Kukawa some 130 kilometers away from Mafoni. Kukawa also had the problem of an inadequate water supply. The Shehu was persuaded by Hewby's arguments. In 1907 he moved with his retinue and established his capital on the left bank of the River Alo at Kalwa between Maiduguri village and the British headquarters at Mafoni.³³

The Shehu called the new settlement Yerwa, a word signifying satisfaction. The Shehu ensured that the new settlement was built in the Kanuri fashion with the Shehu's palace dominating it. In front of the palace was a large open area known as Dendal used for parades during important festivities such as the eid-el kabir or the installation of a new Shehu. Over time, Yerwa, the Shehu's town attracted people from far and wide, particularly from Hausaland, Wadai, Sudan the Fezzan. Many itinerant traders and pilgrims also settled and married Kanuri wives, thus increasing further the cosmopolitan character of Yerwa. As Yerwa grew, it absorbed the old village of Maiduguri and the British headquarters of Mafoni and took on the original name of the old village Maiduguri.³⁴

Establishment of Colonial Administration

After the occupation, it is now time for British colonial administration. Whenever the period of British colonial rule in the former Northern provinces comes up for discussion, indirect rule is the main theme. Also known as the Lugardian system, it has been defined as an administrative system not having two sets of rulers—the British and the natives working either separately or in co-operation, but a single government in which the native chiefs have clearly defined duties and an acknowledged status equally with the British official. Certainly, the acknowledged status of the native chief was far below that of the British official. In most studies of indirect rule in the Northern provinces, the impression is usually given that even after the British conquest there were no drastic changes in the emirate set up, that emirs and chiefs continue to wield power and influence as before. Others even have it that the emirs under the British had more powers than their 19th century predecessors. But in actual fact, there were considerable changes in the emirates, changes that eventually transformed the emirs into mere agents of the British.³⁵

The political arrangement between the colonial rulers in the person of the Resident, and the Shehu of Borno was designed to give the British legitimacy in the eyes of the people and also to save costs and dispense, as such as possible, with British personnel. However, the practical implementation of law and order in such a way as to satisfy the sensibilities of the colonial masters required much more than a political settlement. It required the establishment of an administrative machinery. The system of Indirect Rule by the British required that the British should not only rule through traditional authorities, but that they should also administer through traditional institutions. The architects of the system had always argued, however, that the traditional system would be modified to serve the purpose of modern local government as understood by the British. The evolution of the new British colonial rule will be discussed under these headings the Shehu's court, District Administration, the judiciary Taxation, and currency.

The Shehu's Court

From the onset, the office that was recognized as the embodiment of the entire traditional system was the office of the chief. In Northern Nigerian terminology the chief was called an emir in the Fulani emirates, the Shehu in Borno, and the chief in pagan territories. Thus in Borno, the Shehu was immediately recognized as the sole Native Authority with jurisdiction throughout Borno people³⁶. The Native Authority was headed by the Waziri. He ran the affairs of the kingdom as prime minister while the Shehu remained a constitutional monarch

³²Jonhlaers p 19

³³Osuntokun, p.6

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Saad Abubakar, *Northern Provinces under Colonial Rule: 1900-1959* in Obaro Ikimi (1980 ed) *Groundwork of Nigeria History* Ibadan Heineman, p 451.

³⁶Garba Ibrahim op. cit p 93

in the background. The Waziri was aided by other officials such as the Ligari Baba Mainin Kanandi (legal adviser) Talba (chief judge) who presided over the sharia court and who supervised the appointment and promotion of all Native Authority staff, most importantly of whom were the Alkalis. There was also the imam who led the congregation in prayers and supervised the work of other alkalis.³⁷

The earliest administrative functions performed by the Shehu under colonial rule was the appointment of fief holders who had a very brief stay before Districts were created. Initially, the Shehu shared out fiefs in the old manner, mainly rewarding loyal friends, followers, slaves and catering to the royal and noble families. One of the most important functions of the fief holders was the collection of revenue for the Shehu's court. In this system each farmer was to give expected proportion of his farm products to the central government. The expected proportion that went to the central government is known but it was out of the proportion taken from the farmers that the ChimaGana and the Chima Kura also derived their shares. The effectiveness of such revenue collection system Law in the availability of adequate numbers of court officials who would enforce the government is law and Maintained political control.³⁸

In Borno proper, i.e the flat country people by the Kanuri proper, the Kanembu, the Mangas, the Koyam, Mobber, many other classes of Kanuri with same minor distinctions, but all speaking the Kanuri language, there are very few local chiefs or headsmen of any importance: most of these local headmen hold office under the pleasure of, and pay taxes to, big men residing at Kukawa. Some of whom are relatives of the Shehu, some are military commanders, now becoming obsolete, both free-born and slaves³⁹. In the early years of colonial rule in Borno. Therefore, the Shehu's prestige visa-vis his people increased tremendously, in direct proportion to the degree of his co-operation with the Europeans. The more subservient the Native Chief became in his relations to the overlord that is to say that the more obedient and co-operative he was, the more confidence and good will he derived from the relationship and the freer he was in his dealings with his people. In Borno, the Shehu had lost power by losing his sovereignty, but theoretically gained in political and administrative power internally.

The refusal to re-constitute the Majlis in Borno was not only a departure from the traditional system but was also something of a revolution. The entire nobility of the land and all the officials of palace state were ignored. Leaving these many tittle holders and the members of the royal family un provided for was, obviously, a problem for the Shehu. He had to find the means of providing them with an income. Traditionally, this could be done by the creation of more fiefs for distribution. It is significant to note that at this time there was no Waziri. Mr. Hewby did not see the need for one, since he was advising the Shehu, Louis Brenner has drawn attention to the interesting fact that, even though the tittle of Waziri had been popularly use in Borno for a long time, that tile was never conferred on anyone officially during the nineteenth century. It seems that the people simply attached the tittle to anyone who happened, for the time being, to be closest to the Shehu. The Europeans did not find the tittle in operation in Borno, and did not create one immediately. Whoever after 1914, the need to have someone take up the day to day affairs, and so supply the Shehu's perceived deficiencies, led to the creation of office. In the meantime, the Shehu, in consultation with the Resident continued to run the affairs of the land single handedly.⁴⁰

Districts Administration

The Shehu decided to create as many districts as possible as a replacement of fiefs, in this way, he could not only cater to the needs of his numerous retainers, but also have a ready means of rewarding loyalty among his officials. The Shehu's need for such avenues for the Maintenance of the traditional order was heightened by the fact that the colonial administration had no intention of Maintaining the traditional retenuue at government expense. The problem of the number of Districts created was especially important to Shehu Garbai because the Districts were large and did not conform to the boundaries of old fiefs. The old fiefs, often amalgamated were organized into village area units, and it was several of these units that formed a District, thus, instead of each unit going to an Ajia, a single Ajia was supposed to control several of them.

Therefore, the number of settled Kanuri districts (of Borno proper), directly under the Shehu was 27, the Ajjias all being relatives, countiers, or occasionally 'Kachellas' (highly placed slaves of ancient origin), of the Shehu, who is the only man of importance in the country. Development of organisation in the next few years reduced their number by half, supervised by the pick of the native administration on inadequate salaries, while it is not at present considered advisable to too rigorously weed out inefficient. The only important change in the independent pagan belt (occupying most of the south and west frontiers) is the succession of Mai Arri to his

³⁷Osontokum op. cit p 52

³⁸Mohammed N. Alkali 1978 *Kanem-Borno under the Sayfawa: A study of the Origin, Growth, and Colapsed of a Dynasty* Ph.D thesis, p 100

³⁹NAK. SNP. 7 Acc no 48A, Provincial Report no 3, 1903

⁴⁰Garba Ibrahim op. cit p 97-99

father Mai Garga, chief of Babur, who died in June. The units independent of the Shehu, beginning at the North end of the west frontier, are Bedde, Kerikeri, Fika, Tera, Babur (including Bura), and Margi. The poor districts of Nguru and Machina, in the extreme North West are maintained semi-independent-as they had become towards the end of the last century-and they make only a nominal 'Gaisun' to the Shehu.⁴¹

A new cadre of the Lawans was now created below that of the Ajia, but above that of the Bulama. The Bulama was a local man, the Lawan could be posted anywhere, just like Ajia. Some of the Lawan became as important as some Ajia. The graded Lawans were those who had "staves of office". They reported directly to the Shehu and were not under an Ajia. In 1910, when there were twenty seven Districts heads in "Borno proper" the number of graded Lawans was twenty-one. The appointment of the Ajias was the responsibility of the Shehu. This responsibility should be discharged in consultation with Resident. Whatever the case after the appointment the new Ajias were immediately dispatched to reside in their districts. This was another major departure from custom. The appointment of the resident Districts heads presupposed the disestablishment of the Chima system. Accordingly, the Chimas were all abolished. The difference between the Chima and the Ajia are much more than can be seen from a cursory glance. The Ajia was new salaried bureaucrat, with a range of functions beyond the conception of the Chima. The Ajia, being the embodiment of the Native Administration at the district level, was necessarily responsible for virtually all functions of a modern local government in his District. Being the functionaries who were in direct contact with grassroots, the Ajias, and not the Shehu, who often gave the Europeans, a hard time. Thus, they tended to treat revenue under old concept, which regarded all taxes as personal income for rulers.

Because of the attitude of the Ajias who regarded all taxes as personal income for the rulers, the issue of corruption become widespread, especially in the early years, deposition and imprisonment was not usually taken as the first course of the action against the Ajias. Mr. Hewby and his staff at first associated the problem with a lack of understanding, to be expected when a new system was imposed on an old one. Only when an Ajia was found to be hopeless was he deposed or imprisoned. A typical report in the first years will illustrate the situation quite well.⁴²

There were several changes in the Ajias or District Headsmen, during the last year, 1908/9, as per list attached, these been owing partly to deaths and partly to unsuitability: all appointments have been made with the full concurrence, and in some cases at the request, of the Shehu: there is no political significance in these changes nor displacing of terrial chiefs, with accompanying dislocation of succession etc: nearly all of the Ajias were appointed originally from the Shehu's entourage, jointly by the Resident and Shehu, in 1904, and 1905, to residential district offices, that to say they were an experiment, and that those who have proved failures have had to be replaced. An interchange of Ajia is occasionally of particular utility, in bringing to light irregularities, such as the concealment of 'pocket', or tax-free hamlets.⁴³

The Judiciary

In the judicial field, judicial councils were set up under the chairmanship of Districts Heads in the Districts, and of the Shehu of the these center. These were the Native courts. There are 14 native courts in Borno.

TABLE I: JUDICIAL AND THEIR GRADES 1910-11

Name of Court	Grade	Date of Warrant
Shehu judicial council	"A"	1 st January 1910.
Gujba Alkali's court	"B"	8 th December 1910.
Magumeri Juidicial council	"C"	1 st January 1910.
Margi Alkali's court	"C"	1 st January 1910.
Monguno Alkali's court	"C"	1 st January 1910.
Nguru judicial council	"C"	1 st January 1910 .
Mobber judicial council	"C"	1 st January 1910.
Badde judicial council	"C"	1 st January 1910.
Fika judicial council	"C"	1 st January 1910.
Maiduguri judicial council	"D"	1 st January 1910.
Biu judicial council	"C"	26 TH May, 1911.
Nguru judicial council	"C"	11 th September 1911.
Gaidam Alkali's court	"B"	13 th September 1911.
Konduga Alkali's court	"C"	8 th December 1911.

⁴¹NAK SNP 7. Acc no. 1894/1909, "Borno province Annual Report for 1908.

⁴²Garba Ibrahim op. cit p 102-103

⁴³NAK SNP 7 Acc no 1894/1909, "Borno Province Annual Report for 1908

In the main these native courts may be considered fairly efficient and satisfactory. The Imam's court of Shehuri is eminently so and complete confidence is reposed in it by the people in general. This is no doubt due to the strong personal influence exercised by the imam himself, a strictly impartial judge and held to be incorruptible. The Imam also hears appeal from the various lesser districts courts. As a rule further appeals from his courts are not encouraged. The Shuwa Arabs are exception as they, as a rule, refuse to submit to the Native courts of the province⁴⁴.

Native Offence and Penalties

By Shehu in council.

1.	liquor-making, selling and drinking	fine, stocks, and flogging
2.	Gambling	stocks and flogging
3.	Bori	imprisonment and flogging
4.	Premature grass and bush firing	fine, imprisonment and flogging
5.	Hiding leppers from segregation	fine,
6.	Destruction of shade trees	imprisonment and flogging
7.	Evading taxation	fine, usually double tax.
8.	Hiding property from tax	fine, usually Double Tax
9.	Offences against rudimentary	sanitation as taught by medical Officer fine and stocks. ⁴⁵

The Native courts take by far the great majority of cases. Summonses are always obeyed except in some of the more remote pagan district. Arrests are not so easy where criminal step across into foreign territory. Cases have however occurred where criminals have expelled as undesirables by the representatives of foreign Governments acting on their own initiative, and have thus been brought to justice. This has perhaps acted as a deterrent on criminals.⁴⁶

The Shehu's judicial council has worked much better since the Waziri Kolo became the head of it in place of the Liman. It is observable that when the Shehu is away and his brother Sanda Kura presides, the sentences are a good deal more severe, and an excellent effect has been produced by several sentences for which Sanda Kura was responsible. The Alkali's work is excellent. Several of the Alkali leave a good deal to be desired, and a much higher standard of learning is wanted. The Alkali following on a case in which a non-native living in Maiduguri was concerned) agreed for the future to allow native Christians to swear before him in matrimonial cases on an Arabic translation of the Bible' where swearing is required under Muslim law. However, there are very few Muslim Kadis who would be broad minded enough to do this⁴⁷.

On the whole, all fines inflicted by these courts are now paid into Government Revenue, and the courts are encouraged to make use of the stock" common throughout the province instead of inflicting fines for minor offences. The Head Liman and Alkali are on fixed salaries of 120 and #80 per annum respectively and the scribes of all the district councils on E24 per annum. These are the only courts-numbers requiring consideration in the province, as the presidents are all the Districts executive heads, and the real duties of the other members are light, honourable, and should be honorary a system was instituted, on the initiative of Major Mcclintock, in consultation with the Shehu, the Liman, and Alkali, and dealing with the "Warta" or death duties and the Administration of estate. Rules were framed upon combined Kuranic tenets and native law and custom, which were circulated in the District, with the object of concentrating the administration of estate in the hands only of the Imam at the Maiduguri court of appeal⁴⁸.

Taxation

As regards taxation, Lugurd had made it clear that British sovereignty in the province involved not only the right to appoint Shehus and all officers of state, but also ultimate right to all lands, the right of legislation and of taxation. Before the conquest there were a variety of taxes in Borno. These included kharaji; (land tax) by Muslims, and Jizyan (poll tax) paid by Non-Muslim communities under Aman (trust). There were also tributes paid to the Shehu of Borno by vassal, and occupational taxes and tolls on trade. However, during the early years of colonial rule, the Shehus of Borno were allowed to collect and retain all the customary taxes and tribute. This was to compensate the Shehus for their other losses resulting from the abolition of slavery. But this only lasted for a few years. The British colonial administration was increasingly in need of revenue to pay the salaries of British officers, African soldiers and police and to undertake public works such as the construction of offices and residences for the officials at the headquarters and in the provinces.

The subsidies from the British government and subventions from the southern protectorate were far too short

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵See Garba Ibrahim p 129

⁴⁶Borno province annual report for 1911. by J.C Sciortino, Acting Resident

⁴⁷Borno Province: Resident: H.R. Palmer: Report NO. 64 for year 1919

⁴⁸Annual Report, for the year 1908 BY W.P. Hewby, Resident.

of the needs and so the northern protectorate government had to seek ways of raising revenue internally. Unlike in the southern protectorate where revenue was realized from customs duties only on liquor, at the ports, the North had no seaboard and the border of the protectorate was as extensive that it was impossible to establish effective customs posts. Moreover, with the prohibition of liquor import into the province even if it were possible to collect custom duties effectively, the revenue would still have been inadequate for the government, so, there was no alternative other than to take over the right of taxation from the Shehus and introduce changes for more efficient collection of taxes. In 1904, the land ordinance came into being. The different taxes in Borno were abolished and tax was levied on land, each district in the province being assigned the amount to pay.

The collection of these new taxes was vested in District and village Heads. The taxes collected had to be paid into the treasuries to be budgeted. The Shehus and their officials became employees of the Native Authorities and were all placed on fixed salaries⁴⁹. The taxes of Maiduguri (headquarter), Division collected and paid in without trouble or friction, each village paying the amount against it in the register, during the months of April and may, the government share making in all E8660 (including Jangali), paid in sterling. This is a fair specimen of how the present machinery is working in the settled districts of Borno proper, where taxation is being well accepted, the peasantry in most cases paying in months before hand for the Payment of the binemram, which is the best-managed villages, is apportioned to householders in sums they quite understand. The taxes of the Geidam and Monguno divisions were also promptly paid in cash. There has been some delay in the pagan districts of the Gujba, Nguru and Margi divisions, consequent chiefly upon shortage of British staff: this amount of about E350 only has not been collected because an officer has not been available for the duty in this difficult hill country. The seasons aimed at for payment of those taxes are, pagan districts November to January, when harvests are gleaned. Maiduguri districts, April and may; Geidam and Gujba Mohamedan districts June and July. These season allow for all Ajas of settled Districts to attend the Sallah at Maiduguri and for the best distribution of the limited amount of specific circulating in the province.⁵⁰

The system of tax administration placed the District Head at the most crucial point. Under him were the Lawans and Bulamas who were responsible to him. Above him was the Shehu, and also the supervisory presence of the European political officer. It was in the area of taxation that the District Head had direct contact with the Europeans. The collection was done by the Bulamas, who passed the taxes collected on to the Lawans, and then on to the Ajas. From there it went to the Shehus offices where it was shared out. The coming of the Beit-ete-mal also brought in the practice of estimates and controlled expenditure, and the votes were initially controlled by the Resident⁵¹. There was no major case of financial impropriety in the Borno Beit-el-mal. The treasurer, Mallam Mukhtar (later Shettima Mukhtar) was responsible for this state of affairs in 1920, Palmer wrote of him that:

“Mallam Mukhtar certainly earns his pay. He is most efficient, and is in fact worth more than he gets. The amount have been well kept, and though numerous surprise visits have been made, the cash on every occasion was absolutely accurate.⁵²

Road Transport

It has become mandatory for the colonial government to develop the transport section. The concern of the government with transport and communication was demonstrated when in 1904 the British constructed the road from Maiduguri to Kukawa and to and westward from Kukawa via Geidam to Katagum and Hadeja as the Main trade route. In 1911, the road linking

Maiduguri with Mangonu and to, was constructed⁵³. During the year 1918 sections of cumbered road on the Biu-Nafada route have been completed between Biu and Garabola 18 miles: the Fika-Gujba boundary and Ngala 11 miles. 13 miles of road running through Gujba district have been laid out and five miles of it completed. A further section Garabola to the Biu-Gujba boundary is being undertaken.

Introduction of Western Education in Borno

Western education was viewed in the north as an agent of converting the Muslim to the Christian faith. This view was held by the Borno community and indeed other emirates of northern Nigeria is in fact justified in that, it became apparent that the missionary program of educating the natives was consequently restricted initially to the limited objective of producing marginally limited Nigerians, preferably, literate only in their own modern tongue. It was envisaged that the products of this education would operate in their familiar social

⁴⁹Sa'ad Abubakar op. cit p 455-457

⁵⁰Borno Province Annual Report SNP 7

⁵¹NAK SNP 10 Acct NO. 626(1913, Borno Province Report for 1913

⁵²See Garba Ibrahim p 138.

⁵³Mohammed Sani Imam (2004) "Trade and Economic Development in the Lake Chad Basin, the case of the Fishing Industry C. 1900-1999 (unpublished) Ph.D thesis, Bayero University

milieus and world, therefore, be able to transmit the new message of salvation to their own people. The Main, if not exclusive, concern of mission school was to produce school masters who were to graduate to catechists, deacons and then priests. White girls' schools were established mainly for the wives and fiancées of their male workers.⁵⁴

In the event missionary achievement in the nineteenth century in the area of formal education was very modest indeed. The missionary policy on education however, received a check in the north because of the dominance of the Islamic religion. Lugard signed agreement with the emirs of northern Nigeria to the effect that the missions would not be allowed to conduct their activities among the Muslims. They were however allowed to set up cantonment mission stations for the purpose of attending to the spiritual and educational needs of those who came from the south either as government official or traders. It was in view of this fact that the first Christian church in Borno was built in 1936.⁵⁵ This building was located at a place in Maiduguri along the site of the present Borno State secretariat. The few Christians in Maiduguri at that time were mainly immigrant traders and artisans from the south. Those immigrants were various artisans who were employed by the government for various occupations in the provincial offices. Many artisans were for example recruited for the construction of the provincial offices for Borno in 1938. The small community of Christian formed themselves into a sort of union known as 'Borno Christian Band' through which they requested for land for the building of a church from the Resident of the Borno province. With the help of the Resident they acquired the land outside the town. Alongside their religion activities, the Borno Christian band also made some efforts at providing education for their children. The land changed its name to 'Foreigners Welfare Union' the union started a primary school for the children of its members. This primary school developed and later became Maiduguri Holy Trinity Primary School.⁵⁶

Prior to 1938 however, Maiduguri witnessed the establishment of the first western type school in 1915.⁵⁷ This school was known as Borno provincial school. It was basically a vocational school and mainly an auxiliary to the colonial administrative system in northern Nigeria. The school began by enrolling the sons of the chiefs in order to give an example to the general public. By and large, the children of the aristocracy, their servants and palace workers were taken to the school. The Borno provincial school was a boarding school. The provincial school offered the following subjects; English, Arithmetic, Religion (Arabic and Islamic knowledge), Physical Education, Vernaculars (Hausa and Kanuri), Hygiene and Arts and Crafts. The provincial school was later renamed and became Borno Primary School. New government primary schools were built in and outside Maiduguri in the early 1920s and 1924, for example, new elementary schools were opened in Monguno, Damboa, Biu and Dikwa. Enrollment to these schools at this early stage was still done forcefully. Children were recruited compulsorily because the refusal to send ones children to school was considered a disobedience to the authority. There are reports of parents who left Maiduguri as a result of this recruitment of pupils then which is a direct responsibility of the chief officer of the district.

In 1930s, the Borno primary school was combined with the vocational training school to form the Maiduguri Middle School. An Industrial school was opened in 1916 and offered vocational training in Agriculture, Carpentry, Masonry, etc. The former Borno Primary school then became known as the Yerwa Elementary school. The Elementary School offered four years of junior primary course. The pupil proceeded to the middle school to continue senior primary course. There was one middle school in each province of the northern region. The government helped the local administration to staff and finance their middle schools. The middle schools provided most of the staff of the Borno Native Administration. Since the middle school drew a large number of its pupils from outside Maiduguri, it necessarily provided boarding facilities. The middle school continued up to 1951 when the system was reorganized to bring about a comparable standard in the southern and northern schools. The Maiduguri middle school henceforth became known as Yerwa Senior Primary School. As there were no post primary schools in Maiduguri at that time, the successful graduates of the Yerwa senior primary schools used to go to colleges in the major towns in the region. Some of these students attended the Kaduna College, Katsina Teachers Training College and the Clerical Training Centre Zaria.

The first post primary school that was opened in Borno was in 1958. This was as a result of the implementation of the reorganization of the former middle school system. It was in respect of the reorganization that the old Maiduguri middle school became the Borno provincial secondary school in 1958. It was the first secondary school established in Borno and was located in Maiduguri. The Borno provincial secondary school was the only secondary school that was opened in the province during the colonial regime. The other post

⁵⁴Ayandele E.A.(1986). *The Missionary impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914": A Political and Social Analysis*, London, p 286.

⁵⁵Raymond O.S. (1978). *Heralds of Christ to Borno* Aqchan London, p 29.

⁵⁶Kaka Malum, *Kitabu Kaninbe*, Garkida press, p79.

⁵⁷Akinjide Osuntokun (1987): *Power Broker: A Biography of Sir Kashim Ibrahim*. Adeyomi Press, Ltd. Ijebu. Pp 10-11.

primary schools were built after independence in 1960. Another pre independence educational development was the opening of the government craft school in Maiduguri in 1958. The craft school catered mainly for pre vocational needs of the pupils in woodwork, building, metal work and technical drawing.

Towards the end of the colonial regime, there was a mounting pressure by the Northern provinces to catch up with the educationally advanced southern Nigeria. Both the regional and provincial governments were seriously committed to these objectives and had invested a lot of financial and human resources for that purpose.⁵⁸

By 1960, there were ten (10) primary schools and two (2) post primary schools in Borno. The two (2) post primary schools were the Borno Provincial Secondary School and the Government Craft School. The provincial secondary school later became known as the government secondary school when it was taken over by the government of northeastern state of Nigeria.⁵⁹

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