Reforms in Katsina and the Kano Government Crisis of 1908

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ABSTRACT:
This paper examines the success of colonial government reforms in the Katsina division in 1908, and the failure of the reforms in the neighbouring division of Kano within the same province. These developments, the study explores within the context of indigenous cooperation to colonial rule involving the concept of clientage and its attribute of pretended cooperation, taqiyya.

The crisis of local government in Kano during 1908 derived from colonial consolidation such as reforms in territorial organization and tax administration, which met with resistance from indigenous rulers, contrary to the success of the reforms in Katsina. There, colonial reforms developed with capable and responsive indigenous clients, and astute management of relations between the colonial patron and clients. The reforms in Kano experienced some cooperation but passive resistance from the ruling emir. Efforts to control the emir’s opposition led to a crisis in administration and slackening of the reform movement.

The Kano crisis and the contemporary reforms in Katsina epitomize the relationship of cooperation and opposition between colonizer and the colonized in the determination and implementation of colonial policies. Considering the inter-dependent nature of colonial rule, the attitudes and values of colonial clients would influence colonial ideology and practice.¹

Résumé

Cet article examine le succès des réformes du gouvernement colonial dans la circonscription de Katsina de la province Kano en 1908, et l'échec des réformes dans les zones voisines. L'étude explore ces développements dans le cadre de la coopération autochtone dans la domination coloniale impliquant la notion de clientélisme et de sa caractéristique prétendue de coopération, la taqiyya. La crise de l'administration locale à Kano au cours de l'année 1908 provient de la consolidation coloniale telle que les réformes dans l'organisation territoriale et l'administration fiscale, qui a fait face à la résistance des dirigeants autochtones, contrairement à la réussite des réformes de Katsina. Là, les réformes coloniales

¹ I wish to thank the anonymous referee for the useful comments on an earlier version of this paper.
ont été développé avec des clients autochtones compétents, et avec une gestion avisée des relations entre le patron colonial et les clients. Les réformes de Kano ont connu une certaine coopération mais aussi la résistance passive de l’émir au pouvoir. Les efforts visant à réduire à néant l'opposition de l’émir ont conduit à une crise dans l'administration et le relâchement du mouvement de réforme. La crise de Kano et les réformes contemporaines de Katsina incarnent la relation d'attraction et de répulsion entre le colonisateur et le colonisé dans la détermination et la mise en œuvre des politiques coloniales. Compte tenu de la nature interdépendante de la colonisation, les attitudes et les valeurs des clients coloniales pouvaient influencer l'idéologie coloniale et sa pratique.

Introduction

Indigenous cooperation was necessary to European expansion and colonial rule in many parts of the non-European world during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Robinson, 1972). In northern Nigeria, as elsewhere, the lack of financial resources and communication apparatus, as well as inadequate expatriate staff and insufficient knowledge of local conditions, forced the British to adopt indigenous ruling hierarchies and service assistants without whose co-operation colonial rule could not have survived (Orr, 1965: 221; Afeadie, 2008: 20). For instance, High Commissioner F.D. Lugard had a civil staff of only 104 at the inauguration of the protectorate government. Of these officials only nine were political officers. The number of political officers increased to forty in 1903 and 75 in 1905-6; but by 1921 their total was still only 159.2

As such, local government was modelled on the emirate system of administration prevailing in the protectorate, and it evolved over the years. Essentially, local government was composed of the emir, his councillors, and district heads who administrated the various districts. Below them were village heads who administered villages in the districts. Traditional courts existed at the various levels of government. There, traditional law and customs were administered and government proclamations

2 In 1921 less than 100 political officers were on duty on any one day (Nicolson, 1969: 231; Bull, 1963: 47).
enforced. A provincial court existed at the capital of each province; it was headed by the resident and handled cases outside traditional jurisdiction.

In Kano, during the colonial conquest and consolidation, the colonial officials introduced some reform in local government including territorial reorganization and effective tax administration. The colonial officials sought responsive leadership, and they happened to work with Muhammedu Allah-bar-Sarki who was dan rimi (a slave official of the emir) in service as an intermediary between the palace of Kano and the British residency. In 1908 Resident F. Cargill promoted the dan rimi to the royal post of waziri, the second most powerful office, next only to emir; at the same time the incumbent Addo Bayero, who was the emir's son, was demoted to a less powerful position whose occupant, another son of the emir, was dismissed (Lovejoy et.al., 1993: 21-23; Ubah, 1985: 55-56). All these were done without the consultation of Emir Muhammedu Abbas, nor was his approval sought. Naturally, Abbas was displeased and chose to protest in suspending his duties of governance. This led to a crisis in the Kano provincial administration and some insecurity in the colonial overrule (Fika, 1978: 122-142; Bull, 1963: 76-77). In response, the colonial authorities demoted Waziri Allah-bar-Sarki to dan rimi, with Resident Cargill dismissed. And peace ensued in the colonial administration.

Allah-bar-Sarki’s role in the colonial administration was synonymous with that of a political agent. And agents, as indigenous officials, were crucial in the colonial administration as only they, of all the colonial personnel, could effectively mediate communication between the colonial authorities and the indigenous people, owing to their knowledge of the local cultures and languages as well as some English. As such, they were equipped to assist government diplomacy with the traditional rulers, as well as gather intelligence for policy making, and perform administrative duties. Allah-bar-Sarki’s role as a political agent paralleled that of the sarkin fada, the chief of protocol at the court of Muri in 1905 (National Archives, Kaduna (NAK)/SNP 7/6 1146/1905 Approved Permanent Native Staff, Political Department, Muri Province, 1905). Allah-bar-Sarki was probably not literate in English, but Resident Kano, F. Cargill, with whom Allah-bar-Sarki worked, was competent in Hausa and could communicate effectively with the agent (Annual Reports, Northern Nigeria, 1900-12, 215-6).
The Cargill reforms and Allah-bar-Sarki's elevation from *dan rimi* to *waziri* have attracted several explanations from scholars (Paden, 1970: 183; Fika, 1978: 114-130; Ubah, 1985: 50-63; Lovejoy et al., 1993: 13-21). Those interpretations exclude important contemporary developments in neighbouring Katsina division, where cooperation between colonial officials and traditional authorities ensured satisfactory reforms in territorial organization and tax administration. In essence, colonial officials contracted suitable indigenous leadership led by emir and *waziri* (chief minister), and dismantled the palace slave organization considered detrimental to political change. Also, the colonial authorities launched district reorganization involving resident district heads and elimination of intermediaries between the district heads and emirate leadership. Embedded in the Katsina developments, an indigenous ruling official was to be elevated to high office in the subordinate administration and enlisted in the inauguration of the *beit-el-mal* (community native treasury), which provided a crucial support for the colonial administration in northern Nigeria and elsewhere in British Africa. Surely, Resident Cargill was informed accordingly, and the Katsina precedents should illuminate the reforms in Kano.4 As with their counterparts in Katsina, Emir Abbas and Allah-bar-Sarki were colonial clients, and as such, the dynamics of the relationship between them and the colonial authorities are much revealing within the conceptual framework of clientage.

4 Regarding the colonial demand for the establishment of resident district heads and effective tax collection, for instance, “one is naturally inclined to give some credence to the idea that the Headmen will if sent out, set up on their own account and disintegrate. That was Gero’s constant argument at Katsina – and Cargill I know in Kano was not sure how far the argument was a good one and he said that the only way we could tell was by experience – Experience has shown in Katsina (where there was more probability of it happening than in Kano) that the argument is to put it mildly a very poor one, and that we have the power at any moment to restore the palace if the headman kicks over the traces” (SNP 15/3 Acc.377 A11 Palmer to Festing, Tettarawa, 5 September 1907, Kano Tax Assessment).
Colonial Clientage

British imperial administration in Africa and Asia has originally been characterized as ‘indirect rule.’ Essentially, indirect rule involved the adoption of the basic hierarchical structure of government prevailing in the dependent states. In the process, the indigenous administrations operated largely in colonial interests, under a new hierarchy of over-rule by British officials. Among the imperial authorities, political officers were particularly important, as they served as envoys, agents, and advisers to the local chieftains; and, indeed, supervised the subordinate administration. For the local rulers, loss of sovereignty was reciprocated by colonial support for executive prerogatives such as status, dynastic succession, tax collection, police duties as well as judicial authority. The concept of indirect rule has been faulted, over the years, for several shortcomings especially its inadequate explanation of relations between the numerically limited European officials and the predominant indigenous personnel.

In recent historiography of colonial governance, clientage has emerged as a convenient framework for exploring the political processes of colonial overrule. Clientage involves a mutually beneficial relationship and solidarity between individuals or groups of unequal status and influence in society (Smith, 1960: 8; Nadel, 1969: 122-123; Lemarchand, 1977: 100). This system of cultivating relations of personal loyalty developed as a principle of political behaviour in many social formations. Characteristically, the political structure and organization of many indigenous societies in Africa and Asia reflected simultaneous clientage relations in which “an influential official enjoys the allegiance of less influential persons below him and owes allegiance to a more influential person above.” (Whitaker, 1970: 374)

A crucial element in clientage operation is brokerage. As a medium for political

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5 Indigenous rulers were accorded subordinate sovereignty, limited to their territorial jurisdiction.

6 Relations between the indigenous hierarchies and governing officials in imperial administration were rather interdependent in nature, based on clientage, the pre-existing principle of political behaviour.
interaction, clientage in indigenous hierarchies embodied agency and linkage between ruling elites and subjects (Lemarchand, 1977: 103-105). Accordingly, clientage involved political mediation, which required brokerage or intermediary service. Similarly, clientage in the colonial context essentially involved interaction between hierarchies of imperial rulers and those of the subordinate indigenous government, and the common people. Obviously, political intermediaries or brokers were important personnel in clientage relations. Their role would be enhanced in the structure of pyramiding client-patron ties in which they would serve simultaneously as clients and patrons. As clients or patrons, political intermediaries would experience the inherent transformation in their roles, as their obligations extend from one field of activity to another (Newbury, 2003: 9; Lemarchand, 1977: 106-107). And change could involve reversal of status in which a patron would become subject to his clients who had amassed resources and great influence.

Of the political intermediaries in imperial government, three groups were essential; they included European political officers or residents, indigenous rulers or chiefs, and service assistants to the political officers (Coen, 1971: 14, 56; Fisher, 1984: 401; Osborn, 2003: 31-34). Political officers worked as brokers for their superiors in the metropolis, and managed imperial authority and clientage relations with the indigenous rulers. As the ruling elites in indigenous hierarchies, chiefs served as brokers between the imperial rulers and their subjects; they conducted the exchange of clientage reciprocities including government orders such as taxation for community protection and economic development. Service assistants including political agents were essential to imperial administration. In the hierarchy of imperial rulers, service assistants ranked as clients to political officers. In function, however, political agents operated as major brokers between the political officers and chiefs, as they mediated interaction between the two hierarchies by their knowledge of local conditions including linguistic abilities and court etiquette.

The activities of Emir Abbas and Allah-bar-Sarki would intersect at the point of colonial clientage, in which Allah-bar-Sarki would initially serve as a client to Abbas in
brokering relations between the emir and the colonial authorities. Promoted by the colonial officials, Allah-bar-Sarki’s status would later develop to the level of patron, and threatening, to Emir Abbas. But the emir would crystallize his ideology of *taqiyya* to disrupt his patrons.

**Taqiyya Factor**

Of Muslim response to colonial rule, *taqiyya*, (simulation of cooperation), was a pragmatic option considering the coercive colonial apparatus which precluded effective *jihad* and *hijra* – flight from ‘land of war’ (Robinson, 1999: 411-413). Also, *taqiyya* was encouraged by the retention of the *sharia* (religious law) in some form. This doctrine of "prudent consciousness" or "counseled peace" provided Muslims with the discretion to adopt deception with an otherwise irresistible colonial order (Naniya, 1990: 164-165; Temple, 1968: 84-85; Tahir, 1975: 326).

Right on the inauguration of the protectorate administration in 1900, the colonial government faced dissension in the traditional rulers, including Emir Aliyu Babba of Kano who headed the most populous emirate in the prevailing Sokoto Caliphate. Aliyu's resistance posed a serious challenge to the colonial policy of establishing effective authority in Kano and elsewhere in the protectorate. Essentially, Aliyu's opposition threatened colonial policy, with the potential to promote "a state of unrest and apprehension which paralyses commerce and prevents the opening of the great

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7 In northern Nigeria, Lugard had to assure the Muslim polities of non-interference in their religion: “My views are these: I hold that it would be a misuse of the power and authority of the Government if that power were used to compel natives of the country to accept a mission which they resented, and which they would not accept unless compelled by a superior force. To use such compulsion would seem to me not only repugnant to a natural sense of justice, and to the pledges I have given to the Mohammedan chiefs of non-interference in their religion, but inadmissible under the Oath which I took as High Commissioner. I have therefore always held the view that before a Mission established itself in any district the chiefs should be invited to say whether or not they desired it" (CMS Papers, G3A9/01 1903 (37) Lugard to Baylis, received, October 30 1903).
KANO market to British trade." The stakes rose in May 1902 with some enabling circumstances for the colonial authorities. As Lugard reckoned:

This is beyond doubt the moment to open up the KANO market and to establish the trade from that emporium to the Niger, while the Tripoli caravan route is temporarily closed while the troubles in WADAI and KANEM have dislocated the N.E. routes, and the French, owing to their wars with the natives, have not yet been able to capture or deflect the northern trade. Moreover it is in contemplation that the Anglo-French frontier shall be delimited this year from the Niger to Zinder and this alone will make it wholly inavoidable [sic] but that we should have access to that frontier through the Emirates of SOKOTO, KANO, and KATSENA.  

To that effect, Lugard ostensibly sought effective diplomacy with Emir Aliyu and Sultan Abdurrahman. In reality, Lugard's diplomacy was half-hearted and merely afforded the time and preparation for the military campaign and colonial conquest of Kano and the other emirates (Muffett, 1964; Johnston, 1967: 274-286; Carland, 1985: 60-66). Meanwhile, Aliyu remained dauntless in opposition, as well as Sultan Abdurrahman and his successor, Ahmadu Attahiru I. Soon, colonial forces were ready for the conquest of Kano and dethronement of Emir Aliyu. They accomplished their task between January and February 1903 with little difficulty, in the absence of Aliyu who had fled but was captured and exiled far from home, in Lokoja.

For peace and order of the infant administration, Lugard sought a new emir in Wombai Muhammadu Abbas of the ruling aristocracy and a younger brother to Aliyu. Wombai Abbas acquiesced with the succession especially in his personal and religious interest of taqiyya, involving pretended cooperation. Conveniently, Abbas assumed the

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8 Public Record Office (PRO), CO 446/29 (23041) p.358, Lugard to Chamberlain (conf. despatch), 29 May 1902, Herr Krause.
9 CO 446/29 (23041) p.358-9, Lugard to Chamberlain (conf. despatch), 29 May 1902, Herr Krause; see also CO 446/25 p.519, Lugard to Secretary of State, 11 October 1902.
10 SNP 17/2 no.16976 From the Resident of Kano Province (G.F. Abadie) to His Excellency the High Commissioner (no. Kano 1/1903), Kano, 12 February 1903, Historical Document on the Capture of Kano.
11 In his choice to cooperate with the colonial regime, Abbas was also hedging the ruling faction against the loss of the throne, with his brother Emir Aliyu already gone over to rebellion.
chieftaincy on probation in February 1903; he was confirmed and installed two months later as emir of Kano, on the capture and exile of Aliyu. At the same time Lugard appointed Dr. Featherstone Cargill as Resident Kano.

In the early days of his reign Abbas cooperated with the protectorate administration. The emir is known to have acceded to government demands for labour and provisions for the construction of barracks, as well as human transport for various projects in the emirate (Ubah, 1985: 46, 52). Also, Emir Abbas played a major role in the suppression of Sultan Attahiru’s uprising against the protectorate in mid-1903 (Fika, 1978: 111-114, 132-133; Ubah, 1985: 45-47). In fact, Abbas is known to have duly alerted Resident Cargill to the dangers of the uprising. Then, the emir distributed circular letters dissuading and threatening people against leaving their farms and joining Attahiru’s movement. More forcefully, Emir Abbas and his son Chiroma Bayero assisted the colonial officials in constructing barricades and deploying mounted patrols at the eastern borders of the emirate to prevent people from deserting the region in support of the fugitive sultan. And Abbas managed to convince his colleagues, the emirs of Hadejia and Katagum of dissociating from the uprising. Besides, Emir Abbas presumably acquiesced in the British suppression of peasant uprising and tax revolts in late 1903.\(^\text{12}\)

Cooperation with the colonial patron afforded Emir Abbas the opportunity to strengthen his authority in Kano, by being able to dismiss his critics in government and replacing them with favourites. In 1904, for instance, Abbas secured Lugard’s approval to depose the waziri and alkali of Kano.\(^\text{13}\)

\(^{12}\) Evidently, there was great strife and rebellion in the emirate as the Habe (Hausa) of Kano sought the overthrowal of the Fulani aristocracy, with some slaves deserting their masters, and peasants attacking tax collectors. These elements of discontent were however met with punitive military expeditions by the colonial officials.

\(^{13}\) These officials were initially chosen by Emir Abbas who “had to give appointments to others than his own entourage to get a following at all” (SNP 15/3 Acc.377 A.11 Assistant Resident Kano, H.R. Palmer, to Acting Resident Kano, Major Arthur Festing, Tettarawa, Thursday, 5 September.1907, enclosed in Kano Tax Assessment).
Suleiman Sarki was succeeded as Waziri by the emir’s eldest son, Abdullahi Bayero, who was succeeded in the title of Chiroma by a younger brother, Abdulkadir. Ma’aji Usman was replaced by Sadiq, an Arab merchant who had participated in negotiations with Lugard for Abbas’ appointment to the chieftaincy (Paden, 1970: 185).

As the colonial government sought effective administration particularly in direct taxation and revenue collection in Kano, Abbas’ cooperation, however, began to dissipate. Throughout the protectorate administration, effective taxation necessitated territorial reorganization with district heads assuming the principal authority over the unit of colonial administration. The office of district head was essentially a colonial creation, involving a reorganization of the role of the traditional fief-holders.\(^\text{14}\) The duties of fief-holders in the traditional system included tax collection for the paramount chief, the emir. However, the fief-holders tended, over time, to reside in the capital cities of the various emirates, and delegated tax collection to messengers (jakadu). The creation of district head sought primarily to streamline tax collection by returning fief-holders to their various districts, and the supervision of tax collection (Lugard, 1970: 182-183; Orr, 1965: 163-167; Tibenderana, 1989: 75-76).

In 1905 Resident Cargill launched the territorial reorganization in Kano, supposedly with allocation of fiefs to recognized emirate officials, excluding those of slave descent; also, the reorganization would involve elimination of the system of royal messengers and clients who had been identified with extortion and misappropriation of tax proceeds (Fika, 1978: 114-127). The reforms obviously necessitated some decentralization of emirate authority, and this met with the disapproval of Emir Abbas.\(^\text{15}\) Unable to stop the reforms Abbas, however, managed to secure a fair share of the reorganized fief-districts for his family. In addition, the emir persuaded the colonial officials to reserve fief-

\(^{14}\) The district head was regarded as a chief who ranked within the third to the fifth grades, below the superior grades of emir and sultan.

\(^{15}\) SNP 15/3 Acc.377 A11 Palmer to Festing, Tettarawa, 5 September 1907, Kano Tax Assessment.
districts to his prominent slave officials including *dan rimi, salama,* and *shamaki.* Apparently, Cargill compromised his initial reforms in recognition of Abbas’ hitherto cooperation with the protectorate administration. However, it became evident that the resident as well as colonial officials elsewhere in the protectorate had their own designs.

[They] had established the new form of territorial organization with a larger number of districts than was needed for efficient administration in order to reduce the resistance of emirs and traditional officials to the system. The greater the number of district headships at an emir’s disposal the smaller the number of high-ranking personnel who would fail to receive a district. But, as these initial appointments were terminated by dismissal or death, the British sought to reduce the number of the original districts while increasing their size by amalgamating them with other units, with or without subdivision. In this way they first instituted the new system of district administration and then increased the average size of the districts to increase their economy and efficiency. (Smith, 1978: 322)

In 1906, however, the colonial government promulgated the Native Revenue Proclamation by which the government sought the legalization of all indigenous taxes and their amalgamation into a single General Tribute Tax; the proclamation also entrusted the colonial officials with the supervision of tax collection; and the colonial government reserved the authority to claim fifty percent of all taxable revenues. In a determined effort to enforce the proclamation and realize their tax objectives the colonial officials, in 1907, drove all the district heads from the capital into their territories, and held them responsible for tax collection and reckoning to the emir and the resident. The results were satisfactory to the protectorate administration, but the colonial exertion again displeased Emir Abbas who feared a potential loss of prestige among his officials and subjects opposed to the scheme.

Until the colonial government launched its territorial reorganization and tax reforms, Abbas cooperated with the protectorate administration, and responded to developments so as would boost his resources and bolster his position as emir. Prior to his accession to the chieftaincy, it is noteworthy that Abbas as *wombai* traditionally presided over the slave officials, amongst his duties (Hunwick, 1985: 353-354). Presumably, Abbas commanded good knowledge of the palace slave organization. With such invaluable
resource, Abbas proceeded to set up his own hierarchy of slave officials, on accession to the throne (Ubah, 1985:45). In 1904, as already noted, Abbas reshuffled his cabinet, dismissing his opponents in governments and replacing them with relatives and clients, with the approval of the colonial government. Even with the territorial reorganization and tax reforms very distasteful to the emir, he secured a compromise favourable to his family and trusted slaves. Naturally, Abbas consolidated his authority and emerged as a powerful figure in the administration of Kano, secured in taqiyya.

A different set of adjustments would obtain in the dynamics of colonial clientage in the neighbouring Katsina division of Kano province.

**Reform in Katsina**

In Katsina, territorial reorganization and tax reforms were proceeding rather well. In November 1906 the incumbent Emir Yero of Katsina was deposed and replaced by Durbi Mohamman Dikko who had been serving as district head in Mani plains (Smith, 1978: 309; Hogben, 1967: 93; Usman, 1981: 182, 185). Dikko was installed emir from the choice of Assistant Resident H.R. Palmer for his ability and cooperation with the colonial regime (Perham, 1961: 472; Hogben, 1967: 93). “Although he came of an important family”, as Margery Perham notes, “it was not one of those from which Emirs were customarily selected; he was therefore exceptionally dependent upon British support” (1962: 71).

By September 1907 colonial officials had set up a system for effective tax assessment and revenue collection in Katsina.16 As with the redistribution scheme elsewhere, Katsina was divided into fief-districts but, unlike Kano, was apportioned to various

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16 On 5 September 1907 Assistant Resident Palmer wrote to Acting Resident Kano, Arthur Festing, stating satisfactory developments in territorial reorganization and tax reforms in Katsina relative to the troubling situation in Kano [SNP 15/3 Acc.377 A11 Palmer to Festing, Tettarawa; also Palmer to Festing, Damerghu (received, 4 September 1907), enclosed in Kano Tax Assessment].
district heads completely excluding officials of slave descent.\textsuperscript{17} Besides, the district head in Katsina, unlike his counterpart in Kano, assumed responsibility for supervising tax collection without any influence or interference from the emir.\textsuperscript{18} Like their counterparts in Kano, the district heads in Katsina with the consent of Emir Yero initially demurred at leaving the capital city and residing in their fief-districts, but they later acquiesced with the demands of the colonial authorities. And they had open contacts with the colonial officials in the course of supervising tax collection, a condition that would be undesirable to Emir Abbas, and virtually non-existent in Kano.\textsuperscript{19} Then, also, there was the remarkable elimination of the system of royal messengers in Katsina.\textsuperscript{20} By July 1907 the progress of the tax reforms in Katsina was so satisfactory to the colonial officials that it earned praise for the leadership of the new emir, Mohamman Dikko, who was described as “in every way suitable” and “unqualified success.”\textsuperscript{21}

Similarly, the colonial officials sought compliant leadership and satisfactory tax administration in contemporary Daura emirate of Katsina division. By March 1906 territorial reorganization and tax reforms had been launched in Daura, with the emirate divided into 18 districts and the institution of resident district heads underway.\textsuperscript{22} Nevertheless, the old system of taxation prevailed with tax collection being arbitrary in some districts, excessive in others, and generally ineffective.\textsuperscript{23} In this dispensation,

\textsuperscript{17} SNP 6/3 96/1907 (no.28/07), p.3. Acting Resident Kano, Arthur Festing, to H.E. The High Commissioner, Kumia, Kano Province, 8 July 1907, proposed the installation of Malam Musa as Emir.
\textsuperscript{18} SNP 15/3 Acc.377 A11 Palmer to Festing, Tettarawa, 5 Sept. 1907, Kano Tax Assessment.
\textsuperscript{19} SNP 15/3 Acc.377 A11 Palmer to Festing, Damerghu, (received, 4 September 1907), Kano Tax Assessment.
\textsuperscript{20} As Resident Palmer observed, “if the Haikimi are sent out (in Kano) all the jekada element will drift towards them as they did in Katsina” (SNP 15/3 Acc.377 A11 Palmer to Festing, Tettarawa, 5 September 1907, Kano Tax Assessment).
\textsuperscript{21} SNP 6/3 96/1907, p.4. Festing to High Commissioner, Kumia, 8 July 1907, proposed the installation of Mallam Musa as Emir.
\textsuperscript{22} Danyawa district, which lay west of Daura, for instance, had been created with Dan Barau Musa as the district head.
\textsuperscript{23} SNP 6/4 11/1908 W.P. Hewby, 2 December 1908, enclosed in Confidential Report.
Emir Mai Gurdo died, and his son Sogiji usurped the throne with the help of clients including influential slave officials. In contest of Sogiji’s accession, a rival claimant to the throne secured support from the colonial authorities, who proceeded to depose Sogiji, and broke up the palace slave organization.24 Also, the colonial officials found it suitable to reduce the number of districts in Daura from 18 to 7, essentially through amalgamation and re-division; besides, they realized their policy of eliminating slave officials in district administration.25 Furthermore, district heads in Daura, less than their counterparts in Katsina but much more than others in Kano, commanded some access to colonial officials.26

As with Mohamman Dikko in Katsina, colonial officials in Daura would introduce many more reforms with a responsive leadership. About September 1906 ex-Emir Gurdo’s brother, Murnai, who had succeeded Sogiji on the throne four months earlier, was forced to resign for incapacity and incompetence in administration.27 With the dethronement of Murnai colonial officials, again, faced the problem of finding a successor, and realizing the corresponding opportunity of choosing a capable but compliant candidate. In the absence of such a client, the colonial authorities had to make “the best of a bad bargain or go outside Daura probably to Kano or Katsena to find a ruler.”28 They would choose the latter and meet an attractive client as well as a

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24 SNP 6/3 96/1907, pp.2-3. Festing to High Commissioner, Kumia, 8 July 1907, Proposed Installation of Mallam Musa as Emir; Smith, Affairs of Daura, 300-2.
25 SNP 6/3 96/1907, pp.3 and 5. Festing to High Commissioner, Kumia, 8 July 1907, Proposed Installation of Mallam Musa as Emir. By the end of 1906 colonial officials, indeed, retained only one slave headman, Dan Kanyo, in the entire emirate. But Dan Kanyo had great influence with the people, as he commanded a large following, particularly in the north of Daura.
26 It is evident that many native officials in Daura communicated easily with the residency in Katsina, independently of their various emirs.
27 SNP 6/3 96/1907, p.3. Festing to High Commissioner, Kumia, 8 July 1907, Proposed Installation of Mallam Musa as Emir; SNP 6/3 170/1907 Acting Resident Kano, Arthur Festing, to His Excellency the High Commissioner, Kano (en route to Hadejia by river), 15 September 1907. On his resignation, colonial officials appointed Murnai as district head and sent him to reside in his district. Other resident district heads included Bunturawa Yakubu in Rijiyar Tsamiya district, and Haska Daquya responsible for Tsukanawa district.
28 SNP 6/3 96/1907, p.3. Festing to High Commissioner, Kumia, 8 July 1907, Proposed Installation of
broker in Mallam Musa who had been administering Zango, a northern territory of Daura.

Mallam Musa first met the attention of the colonial officials in 1904 when he sought refuge in Zango with a large following, having fled an impending French annexation north of the Anglo-French frontier. On the condition of British protection and support, Musa was charged with the responsibility of building up the outpost of Zango, and ensuring its agricultural development. And he rose to the occasion. In recognizing Musa’s capability Resident Festing observed in July 1907:

Mallam Musa has proved himself in every way worthy of support. In three years the ‘Zongo’ has become the closely packed well-built and thriving town, which bears that name. The district is well cultivated and a considerable trade in corn is done. Later Captain Phillips put the other Habe [Hausa] settlement of Baure under Mallam Musa thus forming one thickly populated Habe Province of about 60 miles in length but unfortunately now only 10 miles in breadth along what will be the Anglo-French Frontier.\(^29\)

In colonial reckoning Musa’s organization in Zango, with barely any colonial consolidation and tax assessment, was more progressive than the leadership in the neighbouring territories of Daura and Kazaure. Obviously, Musa met the colonial requirements for the chieftaincy. He was installed early September 1907 as emir of reconstituted Daura including Zango and Baure.\(^30\)

Right on his installation, Emir Musa adopted the counsel of the colonial patrons by

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\(^{29}\) SNP 6/3 96/1907, pp.1-2. Festing to High Commissioner, Kumia, 8 July 1907, Proposed Installation of Mallam Musa as Emir.

\(^{30}\) SNP 6/3 170/1907 Festing to High Commissioner, Kano, 15 September 1907, Mallam Musa; SNP 6/4 11/1908 Hewby, 2 December 1908, enclosed in Confidential Report; SNP 6/3 96/1907, p.10. Festing to High Commissioner, Kumia, 8 July 1907. Musa’s installation took place at Dutse in northeastern Katsina, well within the protectorate. This was designed by the British authorities to obviate any possible French accusation of the British officials decoying people from the Anglo-French border zone.
seeking their cooperation in handling political rivalry and disloyalty to his administration. The political intrigue of Kaura Salihu is illustrative. Salihu who held office in Zango sought to control and maintain influence over Baure, without deference to Emir Musa. Meanwhile, Salihu administered his fief-districts with insubordination and independent authority. And he proceeded to install a village head without the permission of the emir. For these reasons, Emir Musa dismissed Kaura Salihu from office. Musa, however, forgave Salihu and reinstated him on the advice of Resident Arthur Festing. Soon, Musa learnt of other misconducts of Salihu with slave dealing, in particular. Conveniently, Musa relayed the information to Assistant Resident Palmer for consideration and advice. Salihu was found guilty and Musa had the opportunity to remove him from office and sent him away from Zango (Smith, 1978: 310-311, 319).

As with managing political disaffection and corruption in his administration, Emir Musa also worked closely with the colonial authorities in territorial reorganization. By 1910, Musa and the colonial officials had permanently reorganized Daura’s seven divisions through amalgamation and re-division (Smith, 1978: 322-323).

Tax reforms proceeded with territorial reorganization, and experienced some development as well. Prior to 1907 taxation in Daura was irregular and arbitrary in application. Taxes were many including kurdin kasa, shuka, karofi, zakah, and a tax of 5000 cowries per farm; all of them being levies on the use of agricultural land. Then, there was jangali, being tax on the use of land for pasture. By 1908, however, uniform taxation had been adopted throughout Daura, with a levy of five shillings per farm and a fixed rate of one shilling on each other separate plantation or garden. Jangali was also reckoned at a flat rate of eighteen pence. Assessment lists were being compiled with a

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31 Among his obligations for winning the chieftaincy Mallam Musa, like Mohamman Dikko in Katsina, was advised by the colonial patron to be tolerant of his political opponents, and ensure peace and stability on the Anglo-French border. An entirely different situation obtained with Abbas, as “Ser. Kano has banished all his rivals, much less are there any of them running districts.” (SNP 15/3 Acc.377 A11 Palmer to Festing, Tettarawa, 5 September 1907, Kano Tax Assessment; SNP 6/3 170/1907 Festing to High Commissioner, Kano, 15 September 1907, Mallam Musa.
scribe from Katsina working in cooperation with Emir Musa’s messengers. And district heads had assumed the duty of tax collection.

At Daura and elsewhere in the protectorate colonial consolidation and effective administration not only necessitated the creation of district heads at the basis of the subordinate administration, it also sought transformation in the ruling council as well. And the institution of waziri was crucial in the reorganization. In colonial objectives, the waziri would assume the responsibility of “general business man” for the emir in all the emirates of the protectorate (Smith, 1978: 324; Paden, 1970: 183). This policy, apparently, derived from the colonial experience in India where a capable ruler, backed by a progressive and efficient chief minister, was deemed suitable for effective administration including tax collection (Coen, 1971: 76-77; Jeffrey, 1975: 269; Fisher, 1991: 157). Of his duties, the waziri would serve as the emir’s counsellor; he would supervise central and territorial administration in the emirate, and handle correspondence with the colonial officials. In this role, the waziri would act similarly to Secretary and head of a British administration.33 Besides, the waziri would perform the duty of sole intermediary between the emir and district heads as well as the colonial administration.34 In the absence of community native treasury, the waziri would also work as treasurer and performed related functions including managing population returns and public records, the police, and government projects. Like other aspects of administrative reorganization, the new and expansive role of the waziri would be gradually established.

In 1906 the institution of waziri was introduced to Daura and a slave official, Dan Kanyo, took the position on the approval of Emir Murnai. As waziri, Dan Kanyo commanded authority as executive head of the emirate; he assumed control over the treasury as well as district administration. With his authority and influence, Waziri Dan

34 The waziri would represent “the Gate, as a substitute for the former numerous channels which had been found to be the curse of the native administration” (SNP 6/4 11/1908 Acting Resident Hewby, Kano, 3 October 1908, The Position of the Wazirin Kano, enclosed in Confidential Report).
Kanyo progressively undermined the leadership of Emir Murmai, and eventually secured his deposition by the colonial authorities in September 1906. (Smith, 1978: 302-305) Dan Kanyo succeeded Murmai as acting emir for a brief period only, as his administration met with popular disapproval. Meanwhile, the position of waziri became vacant until another slave official Muhamman Na’inkali, was appointed by Emir Musa in 1907.

The relationship between Emir Musa and Waziri Na’inkali was not pleasant, as Na’inkali, like Dan Kanyo, exploited the office for the subversion of the incumbent administration. With his authority and influence the waziri built up a clientage of thugs, who resorted to abuses and brigandage including appropriation and theft of property belonging to private individuals as well as those of the throne. Naturally, a power struggle ensued between the emir and the waziri, more bitter than the enmity between Murmai and Dan Kanyo. In one instance, Emir Musa had to comply with Resident Palmer’s demands and dismissed as many as 22 of his loyal officials in order to conciliate Waziri Na’inkali (Smith, 1978: 326-327). On yet another occasion, the emir had to acquiesce with the colonial authorities and dispensed with five of his court musicians for supposedly mocking the waziri. Eventually Nankali’s misconduct, including theft of Musa’s property, became known to the colonial officials. He was sent to jail for 14 years, and replaced by another slave official, Kwanyami. Unlike his predecessors, Waziri Kwanyami is not known for any dissension or power struggle with Emir Musa, but in 1910 Kwanyami chose to flee into exile in French territory with his disaffected brother, Turaki Mahdi. With this development Musa appointed his son, Abdurrahman as waziri.

Obviously, the office of waziri in the colonial administration commanded great influence and authority, which was open to abuse by its occupants. In Daura, the relationship between emir and waziri had not been satisfactory during the early years of colonial administration. However, the colonial officials had apparently not found the ambitious waziris of Daura to be in dereliction of the duties assigned them. Even with their power struggle and subversion of the incumbent governments, cooperation
between the British residents and Emir Musa, for instance, ensured tolerance as well as peace and stability in administration of Daura between 1907 and 1910.

Corresponding to the colonial policy of ensuring effective taxation with responsive district head and *waziri* in Daura and elsewhere in the protectorate, cooperation between traditional authorities and colonial officials in Katsina informed the origins of community native treasury which would develop as a model of fiscal responsibility in local government throughout the British territories in Africa. As part of territorial reorganization, tax assessment and collection as well as sharing tax proceeds with the subordinate administration, colonial policy envisaged a system of monitoring tax income allocated to the traditional authorities. In principle, the colonial authorities would supervise the finances of the indigenous administration, especially “to control the way in which the native rulers spent incomes (tax proceeds) which were regarded as peculiarly their own and which were collected in their names as the kurdin sarki (moneys of the chief)” (Perham, 1962: 70). On this principle, the institution of native treasury originated, and it entailed a major reform in provincial administration.

Basically, the reform aimed at paying the tax proceeds of the subordinate administration into an official treasury, and allocating fixed salaries to the emir and his subordinates, and separate funds earmarked for social services such as education and public works. In seeking regular salaries for indigenous ruling officials, the reform would enhance the process of decentralizing emirate authority and ensuring accountability and transparency in government, as it would release native officials from “dependence upon the sporadic generosity of the Emirs or less reputable sources of profit” (Perham, 1962: 71; Nadel, 1969: 163). Naturally, the reform could hardly appeal to the traditional authorities, and this underlay its inauguration in Katsina in particular. There, in 1908, Resident Palmer had a responsive emir in Mohamman Dikko. “Together they worked out an allocation of the emir’s revenue, which, after putting aside about £3,000 out of £14,000 for his personal income, divided the rest into fixed salaries attached to the various posts, leaving a residue for public purposes” (Perham, 1962: 71).
Presumably, the *ma’aji* (treasurer) in Katsina assumed great responsibility with the development of his office. Among his duties, the *ma’aji* provided accounts for the emir’s personal income; he prepared the annual budget of the indigenous administration, in consultation with the emir; he received funds and payments to the treasury, including income from all native courts and other sources. The *ma’aji* also managed the payment of salaries to the emir and officials of the indigenous administration; he advised the emir on spending the contingency and miscellaneous funds such as pertaining to stationery and establishing mosques, and he exercised authority to write off losses of provisions and small sums of money. Besides, the *ma’aji* provided the resident with regular accounts of cash balances in the native treasury.  

By January 1909 the essential features of the native treasury had been established and successfully developed in Katsina, ready to be replicated elsewhere in the protectorate. In Daura, the introduction of the treasury occurred with a new office of *mutawalli*, which assumed responsibilities distinct from the palace storekeeper. Of his role, the *mutawalli* administered the state’s finances including court fees and fines. By 1910 the treasury had developed in Daura, with the *mutawalli* reckoning state revenue with a distinction between tax receipts, court fees and fines, and income from other sources. Native officials were placed on monthly salaries, as well as the emir who also drew allowance for the upkeep of his office. Out of this income the *waziri* was paid as the emir’s businessman. All this development had been accomplished, as in Katsina, through the tradition of friendship and cooperation, essentially “of Musa’s integrity and confidence in Palmer’s good faith and Palmer’s outstanding energy and concern” (Smith, 1978: 331). These developments provided precedents for comprehensive reforms and territorial organization in Kano.

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Experiment and Crisis in Kano

As the colonial officials secured significant progress in administrative and tax reforms in Daura and Katsina, resentment prevailed with Emir Abbas in Kano. By September 1907 the emir had discouraged direct contact between district officials in territorial administration and the ruling council in Kano; the district officials had to work with intermediaries loyal to emirate leadership. More strikingly, Emir Abbas intensified measures at controlling information and communication between the colonial officials and the general populace, as people were harassed and intimidated against reporting complaints to the colonial authorities (Tahir, 1975: 327). Accordingly, the emir developed an effective intelligence system, with informants in the colonial army and among other service assistants, as well as spies in the indigenous administration. With this apparatus, dissenting parties such as native officials faced dismissal from office, and plunder of their homes, while ordinary people encountered appropriation of their goods. Abbas is also known to have often declined government directives and routine instructions emanating from the residency (Ubah, 1985: 53; Lovejoy et.al., 1993: 12-13). Besides, the colonial officials surmised that the emir and his leadership had been understating tax lists and tax returns. Resident Festing aptly expressed the essence of Abbas’ hostility to the reforms and the frustration of the colonial administration, when he observed:

Although I have been able to state generally that some progress has been made during the past 12 months I must admit that personally I have been greatly disappointed more especially as regards the little headway we seem to have made in Kano Province proper. 2. I was disappointed from the first to realize how antagonistic the Emir is to our rule and how bitterly he resents anything that

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36 SNP 15 Acc.378 A12 Alder Burdon, Acting Secretary to the Administration to Resident Kano, Zungeru, 3 October 1907, Kano Native Administration; SNP 15/3 Acc.377 A11 Palmer to Festing, Damergu, (received 4 September 1907); Palmer to Festing, Tettarawa, 5 September 1907, enclosed in Kano Tax Assessment.

37 Among his resources, Emir Abbas is known to have occasionally “disguised himself as a Toareg and travelled the city at night with a confidant, a means of obtaining first hand intelligence and the apprehension of felons.” (Ibid)

we do that tends from his point of view to lessen his power. It seems quite impossible to get him to grasp the fact that were he to honestly throw in his lot with the administration as other Fulani rulers have done he must in the end be a gainer. His only attitude to myself during the last year has been one of passive resistance. It has only been by the constant changings of the Dan Rimi’s underlings, our interpreters, and even my own personal servants that I have been able to at all keep in touch with the headmen and the people. At times one’s position has been little short of untenable.³⁹

Naturally, the colonial officials soon realized the need to enforce reforms in Kano over Abbas’ resistance. This was surely necessitated by the advances in administrative reorganization in Katsina and Daura, as well as ensuring fairness to other emirs who had embraced the reform process. In addition, the colonial officials were encouraged by the increase in tax proceeds upon driving the district headmen into their territories, and holding them responsible for tax collection.

In late 1907 Resident Cargill introduced measures for enforcing reforms and comprehensive restructuring of the subordinate administration in Kano. As with Katsina and Daura, Cargill’s measures sought transformation at the district level and the ruling council. District reorganization involved the abolition of the districts allocated to Abbas’ slave officials, including dan rimi, salama, and shamaki. Then, there was the creation of a Home District involving amalgamation of ten smaller districts neighbouring Kano city. And similar regrouping and subdivision of districts occurred elsewhere in the emirate, resulting in the reduction of the former 34 fief-districts into 14 new districts, excluding Kano city (Fika, 1978: 122-123; Ubah, 1985: 55-57). With this arrangement, district headquarters were chosen wherein district heads were forced to reside, including traditional fief-holders. As to officials who lost districts in the process, they were reappointed as sub-district heads. In the realm of tax assessment, Cargill sought improvement in government review of the native assessment, and enforcing amalgamation of existing taxes.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Apparently, this conformed with colonial policy as expressed by the Secretary to the
Reorganization at the ruling council involved the suspension of the emir’s judicial council, and the removal of the waziri, ma’aji, alkali, and imam from territorial administration, and their assumption of new duties. Of the waziri’s role, it was similar to the establishment in Daura; essentially, he would collect the colonial government’s share of tax revenue, and serve as the emir’s principal counsellor as well as the go-between for the emir in his relations with to district heads and the colonial administration. Accordingly, district heads were enjoined to cooperate with the waziri, or face dismissal from office in the event of dissent. (Ubah, 1985: 56)

Like his counterparts in Katsina and Daura, the Wazirin Kano would draw a salary from the public allowance of the emir. For his role, the ma’aji assumed the sole responsibility of financial administration, involving the expenditure and accounting of the emir’s share of tax proceeds as well as public funds derived from native courts and other sources. The alkali assumed charge of the final court of appeal in the subordinate administration, upon the abolition of the emir’s judicial court. The Alkali of Kano also took on the role of executive head over district courts and their various alkalai, which were established to assist district heads in administration of justice.

Of the personnel in the reformed administration, Cargill introduced some changes as well. He promoted the dan rimi, Allah-bar-Sarki, to the office of waziri; the incumbent Addo Bayero who was the emir’s son, Cargill had demoted to chiroma, and assigned jurisdiction over the new Home District. Abdulkadir, the sitting chiroma and another son of the emir, Cargill rather dismissed and advised to enrol in

Administration. He noted, “I viewed with some concern the fact that almost alone of all provinces, Kano had not found it possible to check or review the native assessment, and that, consequently, native statements of the amount of the Land Revenue were being accepted. By ‘Resident Assessment’, a term I have frequently employed, I do not mean to convey the idea of re-assessment, but of review of native systems where such existed, as a primary step to more scientific methods, the application of which would necessarily be a matter of considerable time, probably several years. The necessity for some such action would appear clearly desirable in Kano” (SNP 15 Acc.378 A12 Burdon to Resident Kano, Zungeru, 3 October 1907, Kano Native Administration).

41 The amount was £500 (SNP 6/4 11/1908 Hewby, Kano, 3 October 1908, The Position of the Wazirin Kano, enclosed in Confidential Report).

school. Similarly, Cargill had dismissed and exiled Ma’aji Sadiq, and approved his replacement with Muhammadu Auta.\textsuperscript{43} Also, Cargill may have directly appointed some district heads to office, as evident in the rather exaggerated report that “the Resident summoned all the headmen and guided by his personal knowledge and official reports about them, he redistributed the emirate among them” (Ubah, 1985: 55).

Response to Cargill’s measures was one of popular resentment culminating in a crisis. For Waziri Allah-bar-Sarki, he commanded great political influence and identified himself openly with the colonial government as his new patron, to the neglect of his allegiance to Emir Abbas. Accordingly, the \textit{waziri} adopted the colonial practice of ignoring the emir and dealing directly with district heads. Like his counterparts Dan Kanyo and Muhamman Na’inkali in Daura, Waziri Allah-bar-Sarki cultivated a large following of clients, which rivalled that of the emir. The followings of the emir and the \textit{waziri} are known to have often exchanged insults and abuses in the streets of Kano, as characteristic of traditional clientage factions. Even physical confrontations occurred between the supporters of the \textit{waziri} and those of Chiroma Abdullahi Bayero (Lovejoy et.al., 1993: 90). Among the general populace, Waziri Allah-bar-Sarki inspired great fear as “he wielded more powers than the emir: many sang his praise and flattered his pride in order to get favours, even though they still regarded him as a man unworthy of his position” (Ubah, 1985: 57).

For Emir Abbas, the promotion of Allah-bar-Sarki to \textit{waziri} was infuriating. “Of several drastic changes made in the native administrative organization”, as Acting Resident Hewby observed, “none is so unpalatable as this to the Emir, who has become (I think naturally) extremely jealous of the unique power thus placed in the hands of his old slave”.

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\textsuperscript{43} Arewa House Archives, Kaduna (AHAK), Acting Resident Arnett, Kano, Annual Report on Chiefs, Kano, 1911.
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\textsuperscript{44} SNP 6/4 11/1908 Hewby, Kano, 3 October 1908, The Position of the Wazirin Kano, enclosed in Confidential Report.
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‘businessman’, noting that “the simultaneous messages of himself and the Waziri caused confusion in the districts; that he would never summon a District Hakimi except with the Resident’s consent, and that he accepted the situation of having no defined intermediaries.” In Allah-bar-Sarki’s ascendancy, Emir Abbas realized diminution of his power and, indeed, anticipated and feared deposition and exile from Kano (Fika, 1978: 122, 125). In despair Abbas, however, remained undaunted, and opposed government review of tax assessment and the corresponding amalgamation of the existing taxes. As well, the abolition of the emir’s judicial court and the strengthening of the alkali’s authority were distasteful to Abbas. In these developments, the emir felt alienated and declined to perform his duties of governance; essentially, the emir “lost interest in whatever was left to him, saying that he had no powers to do anything or to order anybody” (Ubah, 1985: 58-59). Obviously, circumstances were ripe for political strife.

Conditions deteriorated into crisis when the inhabitants of rural Kano refused to pay the amalgamated tax, and rose up in arms against the tax collectors (Fika, 1978: 140-141; Ubah, 1985: 57-58; Lovejoy et.al., 1993: 15). The amalgamated tax had to be withdrawn and the colonial army deployed to restore peace and order in the countryside. Also, the colonial authorities chose to remove Resident Cargill from office. He was invalided early June 1908, and replaced a month later by Resident Hewby who had been serving in Borno province. Hewby was charged with investigating political conditions in Kano and the efficacy of Cargill’s measures. He submitted his findings in October 1908, upon which a new resident, C.L. Temple, was chosen to supervise administration in Kano province. 46

Temple arrived in Kano in January 1909 and served up to January 1910, during which time he undertook measures to restore stability and development in

46 Ubah, Administration of Kano Emirate, 60-63.
administration (Fika, 1978: 127-130). Among Temple’s undertakings, he prohibited native officials from dealing directly with the colonial authorities. And he demoted Waziri Allah-bar-Sarki to his former position of dan rimi. A new waziri, Gidado, was chosen with the approval of Emir Abbas. Temple also restored the emir’s judicial court, and appointed Magatarkarda Abdulkadir to fill the vacancy of Alkalin Kano, which had been created with Gidado’s promotion to waziri. Then, Temple introduced the native treasury to Kano. The resident also enlarged the emir’s judicial council, with the inclusion of the ma’aji, alkali, and chief imam together with the waziri, their role being principal aides and counsellors in administrative and judicial affairs. With Temple, the waziri rather than Alkalin Kano became the administrative supervisor of the central and district judicial courts. Temple’s arrangements and choice of personnel were satisfactory to Emir Abbas, who provided his support and, by December 1908, was noted as having given up “the habit of acting on the advice of irresponsible counsellors such as head slaves and other members of the royal household” (Fika, 1978: 128). By the time of Temple’s departure from Kano, peace and order had returned to provincial administration. How do we interpret developments in Kano?

Perspectives

Apparently, the objective of Resident Cargill’s measures, like Temple’s, was colonial consolidation with peace and stability in Kano administration. Accordingly, Cargill’s measures were informed by the colonial practice in Katsina and Daura, as well as the need to nullify the disruptive influence of Emir Abbas. Such was the motive for the abolition of the emir’s judicial court. In Cargill’s estimation, Abbas was assuming autocratic power over the emir’s court and misusing it in settling old scores and overriding the decisions of the alkali’s court, although colonial legal policy itself, seeking authority for the position of emirs, had recognized and tolerated native courts as executive arms of the subordinate administration (Ubah, 1985: 58-59; Fika, 1978: 123; Paden, 1970; 168).
The dismissal and exile of Ma’aji Sadiq also sought diminution of Abbas’ influence in administration. Sadiq was a well-known client of Abbas, who worked with the emir on several schemes unpleasant to the colonial officials. About September 1907, for instance, Sadiq and Abbas worked unsuccessfully to disrupt the commercial ventures of Political Agent Adamu Jakada who had incurred the enmity of the emir for associating too closely with the colonial government (Afeadie, 1994: 193; Fika, 1978: 138). Soon, Sadiq lost his position, supposedly for “exercising a baneful influence on the Emir”, including leading Abbas into drunken habits (Lovejoy et.al., 1993: 13). In a related dimension, two other government functionaries were convicted of “political offence” and deported to Lokoja; Mairumfa, who had participated in Lugard’s delegation offering the chieftaincy to Abbas on the battlefields of Kotorkwashi-Malikawa, later turned double agent, spying for Abbas on “all those who [would] approach the Residency”; Momadu Bida (Babangaya) was a government interpreter who together with Mairumfa allegedly became “a source of annoyance to both the administration and the decent native and are overbearing and given to extortion etc.”47 For Abdullahi Bayero, Emir Abbas’ eldest and favourite son who was demoted from waziri to chiroma, “it would seem that Cargill had been particularly upset by Abdullahi Bayero’s over-bearing manner in dealings not only with other Fulani officials but also with the more junior British staff” (Fika, 1978: 122).

The most disputed of Cargill’s reforms was the promotion of Allah-bar-Sarki from dan rimi to waziri. Indeed, scholars are agreed that Allah-bar-Sarki’s elevation constitutes a primary factor in the Kano crisis of 1908. Paul E. Lovejoy, Abdullahi Mahadi, and Mansur Ibrahimi Mukhtar located the promotion of Allah-bar-Sarki at the centre of the crisis (1993: 14-16). C.N. Ubah questioned Resident Cargill’s authority in determining the personnel and function of offices in the subordinate administration (Ubah 1985: 56). For these scholars, Allah-bar-Sarki’s appointment to waziri lacked

47 SNP 7/8 4245 (no.859/1907) Major Arthur Festing, Acting Resident Kano to the Secretary to the Administration in Zungeru, 11 October 1907, Expulsion of Mairumfa from Kano.
precedence in Kano history. “It should perhaps be emphasized that the office of Waziri, though it had had a chequered career in Fulani Kano, was not customarily a slave office”, Adamu Fika asserted (1978: 122). According to Ubah, “the waziranci so far as it existed in Kano was a royal title. It had never been held by a talakawa [ordinary person], much less by an individual of slave status”, and the appointment of Allah-bar-Sarki “was a departure from customary practice, and the Resident admitted being quite aware of this fact” (Ubah, 1985: 56; Lovejoy et.al., 1993: 10).

These arguments sound somewhat convincing. However, legitimacy to precolonial tradition was hardly a serious issue in determining the personnel for the new dispensation of colonial rule. Indeed, “legitimacy was a false issue. The British [conquerors] could and should put in any chief they chose”, Robert Heussler aptly observed (Heussler 1968: 35). And colonial authorities did so, as evident in the appointment of Mohamman Dikko and Mallam Musa in Katsina and Daura respectively. 48 As M.G. Smith noted of such developments,

It is important to recognize the profoundly unsettling character of these events, particularly the abolition of the chiefdoms of Zinder and Fulani Daura, but also the replacement of the Fulani dynasty in Katsina by the appointment of an emir whose lineage did not even have exclusive hereditary rights to the office of Durbi, from which he ascended to the throne. (Smith, 1978: 308)

In Zinder the French also appointed personnel of their own choosing. “Alhassan’s appointment, which took place at about the same time of Dikko’s accession in Katsina”, Smith persuasively argued “seemed to demonstrate that under the French and British rulers alike, any talented official with sufficient political skill and support could become

48 P.K. Tibenderana also observed that in Sokoto province, Assistant Resident Gwandu, F.H. Ruxton and his successor, O. Goldsmith, worked against the traditional rule of succession for the appointment of their favourite, Haliru, as emir of Gwandu in 1906. On Haliru’s death in 1915, the colonial officials persisted in ignoring the dangaladima, the traditional heir to the throne. Instead, they installed Haliru’s son, Muhammad Bashiru, amidst protest from many of the Gwandu nobility. In 1918 the colonial authorities, indeed, abolished the office of dangaladima in Gwandu and Argungu respectively. (1987: 238-241).
chief, whatever his personal status and descent” (Smith, 1978: 312). Indeed, Allah-bar-Sarki’s promotion to chieftain paralleled the 1903 appointment of Yusufu, formerly a jakada, as chief of Turaki Karimi district (Zaria), for his ‘useful work’ to Resident Abadie and the colonial government;49 similarly, Awudu would be elevated from the position of political agent to Sarkin Ningi in 1914 (Temple, 1965: 423). Remarkably, such leaders as Emirs Dikko and Mallam Musa proved to be progressive and instrumental in British colonial consolidation and development of colonial administration. Herein lay a successful experiment to be tried elsewhere.

It is important to distinguish the reason for Resident Cargill’s promotion of Allah-bar-Sarki to waziri, the rationale behind the appointment of the slave, Allah-bar-Sarki, to the royal office of waziri, as well as the designation of a new role to Waziri Allah-bar-Sarki. Why Resident Cargill promoted Allah-bar-Sarki to waziri, is evident. Apparently, the candidate possessed great ability. As Lovejoy, Mahadi and Mukhtar noted of Allah-bar-Sarki,

From 1903 through 1908, he was responsible for recruiting political agents and messengers for the Resident. Furthermore, Allah-bar-Sarki, as the Dan Rimi, conveyed the British portion of tax revenues from the emir to the Resident, which probably meant that he decided what amount was the “half” share due the British. He also supervised requests for labour supplies, and any ‘extraordinary’ requirements of the struggling colonial regime. Through his efficient discharge of these duties, Allah-bar-Sarki earned the considerable respect of Cargill. His promotion to Waziri not only rewarded him for services rendered but also recognized his de facto position as an essential agent in the consolidation of British rule. (Lovejoy et.al., 1993: 18)

As to why the slave, Allah-bar-Sarki, was appointed to the royal office of waziri, Resident Cargill argued that the emir’s son, incumbent waziri would be incapable of exercising sufficient influence with his father, and while the emir “would be jealous of any other member of his family being raised to that position, he would not however feel any jealousy of a trusted slave” (Fika, 1978: 125). Considering Cargill’s frustration

49 AHAK Acting Resident Porch, 5 February 1913, Annual Reports on Chiefs for the Year 1912, Zaria Province.
with Emir Abbas’ “covert opposition to the District Headman policy and the constant intrigues of the palace slaves to nullify it”, 50 the role of Waziri Allah-bar-Sarki as the emir’s principal counsellor and sole intermediary in dealing with the colonial officials, and with district heads obviously sought the elimination of the influential palace clique as well as Abbas’ undue interference with district heads. This arrangement, as practised in Katsina and Daura, was conversant with colonial methods and requirements. It is not surprising that upon the crisis Resident Hewby would endorse Cargill’s measures, except restraining the emir from direct contact with district heads. 51 Also, the policies of Resident Temple sought no drastic change in colonial methods of territorial reorganization and tax reforms. Rather, Temple chose to approve the emir’s favourites and clients for key positions in the subordinate administration. Thus, the emir was mollified and his cooperation enlisted in the reform movement.

Obviously, Abbas’ opposition to Cargill’s measures provided the backdrop to the failure of the reform experiment in Kano. Among other factors, Resident Temple noted Waziri Allah-bar-Sarki as lacking the strength of character to endure the influence and responsibilities of his office. “He identified himself with the European administration in a manner that gave colour to the general belief that the Government had found the Emir impossible and was about to depose him”, Temple observed. 52 Actually, the very nature of the waziri’s duties encouraged the office holder’s identification with the colonial government. Accordingly, the waziri’s influence with the people was commensurate with the enormous responsibilities of his office, as also evident in Daura. Resident Temple was rather convincing in regarding Allah-bar-Sarki as “a good man lost and rendered useless by circumstances”, 53 of which Abbas’ influence and resistance were paramount. (Afeadie, 2008: 113) Indeed, Resident Cargill did not expect the emir to be

51 Ibid.
52 KanoProf c.111/1908 C.L. Temple, Confidential Preliminary Report, Kano Province, March 1909.
53 As with the status of appointive official in the pre-colonial administration, Dan Rimi Allah-bar-Sarki in colonial clientage system was elevated and readily deposed at the pleasure of the patron colonial authorities.
jealous of his slave right from the outset. That rather happened, as Abbas was not clearly informed of the waziri’s responsibilities, and he chose to decline Allah-bar-Sarki’s role, particularly as principal counsellor.  

The palace slave organization was instrumental in the failure of the reform experiment. Unlike Katsina and Daura where the palace clique was broken up, such clients in Kano remained in business and provided crucial support to Emir Abbas in his resistance to Cargill’s measures. These royal slaves served their patron in varying capacities including tax collection, spying on the indigenous ruling elites who would consort with the colonial officials, and intimidating those who incurred the enmity of the emir. Their continued existence was an asset to Abbas, in the absence of trusted allies.

Another advantage to Emir Abbas lay in the state of anarchy and rebellion in Kano in 1907-8. And this emanated partly from Cargill’s attempt to enforce the amalgamation of taxes in rural Kano. The attempt led to increase in taxes and met with rebellion. As the colonial authorities remarked on Cargill’s efforts, “he authorized an assessment on part of the Kano province on an absurdly high basis, and the attempt to enforce it led to bloodshed.” (Lovejoy et.al., 1993: 17) The state of unrest also stemmed from Abbas’ own displeasure with the reform movement. The colonial officials rightly believed Emir Abbas could control the disquieting conditions, as he had done during Sultan Attahiru’s hijra. On the contrary, Abbas was encouraging the rebellion and strife in Kano.

Resident Hewby noted that much:

> The condition of Kano town, to take a ready instance is a disgrace to the Protectorate, and it needs at present continual attention from the Resident, and the enforcement of some curfew, to keep down the anarchy and outrage that was rampant when I arrived at Kano, but which, largely from my being able to give

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54 Presumably, Abbas knew about the power struggle between the waziris and emirs in neighbouring Daura.

55 It is noteworthy that prior to 1907 Resident Cargill even suggested to the high commissioner that a lesser amount of tax be collected than scheduled, as sticking to the original amount would weigh heavily on Emir Abbas and others in the province (CO 446/46 pp.297-298 Northern Nigeria Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, 1905-1906).
some time to the matter, had largely vanished when I left there. It is undeniable that the Emir, if desirous of working with the Resident, could put a stop to this item, at any rate.\footnote{SNP 6/4 11/1908 Hewby, Kano, 3 October 1908, ‘The Position of the Wazirin Kano’, enclosed in Confidential Report.}

Instead, the emir was simultaneously pursuing another scheme such as fomenting religious uprising reminiscent of the Satiru rebellion of 1906. “What seems certain is that he and loyalist members of the ruling class contrived the wider dissemination of Mahdist and other religious resistance ideology and confronted the colonial power with the atmosphere of perpetual imminence of a crisis.” (Tahir, 1975; 328) That Emir Abbas could readily encourage rebellion among his people was due not merely to the emir’s influence and resources, but also to the popular discontent with the prevailing economic and social conditions in Kano. Of these circumstances, Resident Festing vividly observed,

I do not think we can claim to have done anything very much to prove the advantages of our rule and nothing as regards the education of the rising generation. Today in Kano we can only be associated with constant demands for labour from the Telekawa [ordinary people] and reduction of power and wealth so far as the ruling classes are concerned.\footnote{SNP 15/3 Acc.377 Resident Arthur Festing, Kano, 29 December 1907, Kano Report no.35, enclosed in Kano Tax Assessment.}

In this context, Abbas’ taqiyya would flourish.

**Summary**

Colonial governing circumstances including the lack of adequate expatriate staff and insufficient knowledge of local conditions required indigenous clients and brokers in colonial administration. One such broker and slave official, Dan Rimi Allah-bar-Sarki worked in consolidation of colonial rule in Kano. He provided the colonial
administration with effective service, in contrast to another broker and ruling emir, Mohammadu Abbas who rather adopted passive resistance. In reward and encouragement of the dan rimi’s contributions, the resident promoted him from the slave office to the royal post of waziri. The dan rimi’s promotion was informed by developments in neighbouring Katsina and Daura, where such exalted officials had been engaged in cooperative work with the colonial authorities, resulting in significant developments in territorial reorganization and tax reforms. In Kano, however, the emir’s protracted resistance to the administrative reorganization somewhat overwhelmed the resident and turned the elevation of Allah-bar-Sarki and the reform experiment into a political crisis.

These developments demonstrate the significance of different personalities of colonial clients and brokers with differing ideologies of participation in European colonial administration, and how the articulation of their values would accordingly and critically affect colonial policy and practice. In Katsina, Emir Dikko and Emir Musa were associated with the development of the community native treasury and territorial reorganization, arising from their effective cooperation with the colonial officials. At Kano, within the same province, effective cooperation in Allah-bar-Sarki and colonial patrons met with opposition in Emir Abbas who rather adopted pretended cooperation with the colonial officials, and managed to secure his position, and affected the timing and practice of colonial reforms. Indeed, the colonized struggled with the colonizer in terms of cooperation or subtle resistance in determining the way of life in Africa under European rule.
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