

Colonialism within Colonialism: The Hausa-Caliphate Imaginary and the British Colonial Administration of the Nigerian Middle Belt

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Introduction

This paper explores three interrelated issues; the origins and development of a Hausa-Caliphate imaginary in the intertwinements of caliphate and British discourses and its subtle entry into official British colonial policy in northern Nigeria; how the search for administrative coherence prompted British colonialists to craft an administrative policy envisioned to normalize and spread this Hausa-Caliphate socio-cultural and political model to the Middle Belt; and the on-ground unfolding and implementation of this policy in the non-Hausa speaking part of the Middle Belt.¹

This colonial administrative project of politico-cultural uniformity sought to make the Middle Belt more like the Caliphate sector, which was deemed more suitable for the British administrative policy of Indirect Rule.² It was not aimed at achieving cultural sameness for its own sake but as a vehicle for ultimately strengthening Indirect Rule in all of northern Nigeria. This was largely a pragmatic administrative project, although pre-existing British and Caliphate narratives about the sociology and politics of northern Nigeria contributed to its formulation as an ideology of colonial rule. But the accentuation of ethno-cultural difference was indispensable to Indirect Rule. How then did difference and homogeneity co-exist in British colonial administrative practice? To tease out the paradox in the British creation of both ethnic difference and functional cultural homogeneity is not to suggest that the British consciously thought about or crafted these ideas in those terms; that would concede more coherent intent and intellectual deliberateness to British colonialists than they actually exhibited in their encounter with Africans. The argument here is that the two fundamental prerequisites of Indirect Rule—ethnic difference and a pre-existing, centralized system of rule—necessitated the creation, witting or unwitting, of both difference and politico-cultural sameness across northern Nigeria, using the colonially-approved Hausa-caliphate model as a reference. The most notable site of this colonial policy was the Middle Belt, which, while possessing the desired ethnic difference, lacked the

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centralized political and cultural institutions and symbols of the emirate system, deemed crucial to Indirect Rule.

To illustrate this British colonial phenomenon of using a Sokoto caliphate idiom to “civilize” those considered not civilized enough for Indirect Rule, I will focus the empirical discussion and examples of this paper on the Tiv-Idoma (Benue) axis of the Middle Belt. The choice is informed by the fact that this was a part of the Middle Belt where Hausa was not spoken or understood to any significant degree and where Caliphate culture had not penetrated as much as was the case in other parts of the Middle Belt. As a result of these interpellations, this colonial policy of engineering administrative sameness was more contested here, and its outcome a lot messier than was the case in the Hausa-speaking parts of the Middle Belt.

The literature on colonial political constructions of ethnicity in Africa has focused largely on the emergence of politically charged ethnic categories as a function of colonial practices and ideologies of ethnic differentiation for the purpose of Indirect Rule. Ethnic and cultural difference was central to Indirect Rule because of the centrality of tradition and customs to its working. The standard argument identifies a key site of struggles over ethnicity and culture: the bureaucratization of “created” or reified ethnic difference, the witting and unwitting imputation of privilege and marginality into these categories of ethnic difference, and the colonial and postcolonial appropriation of difference as a claim-making device by Africans. It is argued that European colonialisms, for a variety of reasons, were obsessed with ethnic and cultural difference among their African subject populations; that they proceeded to make cultural difference the centerpiece of colonial administrative policy; and that the legacies of colonial ethnic differentiation have been tragic for postcolonial Africa, inspiring ethnic hatred, civil war, fierce political competition, and even genocide.³

For Nigeria, James Coleman argued as early as 1958 that the divide-and-rule ethos of Indirect Rule compartmentalized the “diverse elements” of the Nigerian area and subsequently made national unity difficult.⁴ Emmy Irobi asserts that Indirect Rule “reinforced ethnic divisions.”⁵ Echoing the same thesis, Davis and Kalu-Nwiyu remind us that “the structure of British colonial administration” and the drawing of arbitrary boundaries delineating “[ethnic] territor[ies] restricted development of a national consciousness within the broad expanse of Nigeria’s borders.”⁶ Indirect Rule is analyzed as a catalyst for ethnic differentiation and the postcolonial problems of national unity that are rooted in it.

This argument correctly identifies colonial administrative and anthropological practices of ethnic and cultural differentiation as sites from which much of contemporary African ethnic politics and conflicts emanate. However, the creation and bureaucratization of ethnic and cultural difference was not the only preoccupation of colonial powers in Africa—or, for our purpose here, northern Nigeria. Integral to the British colonial project of cheap, convenient, indirect administration was a utilitarian and ideological preoccupation with the simultaneous creation of ethnic difference and cultural homogeneity. Ethnic and cultural difference was not always a colonial administrative asset. It was not in post-conquest northern Nigeria. Although Indirect Rule was founded on amplified ethnic and cultural difference, its implementation, as this paper will demonstrate, ran into problems in the Middle Belt area precisely because of an *actually existing* ethno-cultural difference, a difference that the British deemed unsuited, if not injurious, to the goal of convenient, cheap, and coherent administration. Subsequently, both

cultural difference – which was indispensable to Indirect Rule – and the engineering of homogeneity, considered necessary for a uniform implementation of Indirect Rule in the region, came to simultaneously and contradictorily sit at the heart of British colonial administrative policy in northern Nigeria.

This contradictory British commitment to a functional cultural homogeneity was a catalyst for administrative crises, ethnic suspicion and conflict in the Middle Belt. This paper argues that the pursuit of an instrumental, albeit illusive, politico-cultural homogeneity through the ironical enlistment of an Indirect Rule system underwritten by a supposed hierarchy of ethnic and cultural difference was fraught with serious problems and that it had serious consequences for both colonial power relations and inter-ethnic group relations.

Unlike historians of Africa and northern Nigeria, scholars of British colonialism in South Asia have long recognized the existence of British-supervised indigenous colonialisms or sub-colonialisms. The princely states of British India were political contraptions that exemplified this arrangement. In several of these states, the British recruited or recognized pre-existing martial and princely races, Muslims in many cases, and gave them significant administrative sway over Hindu peasants.⁷ Although this divide-and-rule administrative mechanism was founded on pre-existing configurations of power, it recognized, for the purpose of British rule, a British-approved power structure rather than the indigenous socio-political norms of the Hindu peasantry. Official adoption of Hindu political institutions and traditions would have conformed better to Indirect Rule in its pure form. But its implementation as an administrative policy would have been expensive, inconvenient, and messy. Hausa-Caliphate sub-colonialism in the Nigerian Middle Belt was thus not unique or without precedent in British colonialism. In fact, the expedient policy of instrumental homogenization in northern Nigeria appeared to have been transferred from British India. In 1931, when Donald Cameron, who had recently assumed the governorship of Nigeria, embarked on an extensive administrative reform to dismantle the emirate-modeled administrative policy and restore autonomy to the Middle Belt ethnicities, he accused his predecessors of having formulated a flawed “policy....of thinking of the [northern Nigerian] Muslim emirates in terms of the Indian States.”⁸ What made the fallouts of sub-colonialism more dramatic in northern Nigeria than in India was the newness of the arrangement in the former – the previous absence of an established, uncontested Hausa-Caliphate suzerainty and influence over the Middle Belt.

I begin with a mapping of the convoluted historical processes through which Hausa-Fulani identity and its associative connotations emerged. This discussion will pay prominent attention to the emergence of the Sokoto Islamic Caliphate and the ways in which it transformed Hausa identity and conflated it with a notion of imperial citizenship and privilege. I will then discuss the ways in which Sokoto Caliphate Imperial imaginations of itself and the Middle Belt – articulated in Caliphate writings – and the narratives of European travelers and explorers meshed to produce a British colonial knowledge system that privileged the notion of a paradigmatic Hausa-Caliphate politico-cultural sophistication and its supposed Other – the backward Middle Belt. Finally, I analyze the implementation of a colonial policy founded on the Caliphate-Hausa imaginary and on the necessity for Middle Belt conformity to it; the on-ground manifestation of this administrative policy in Tiv and Idoma Divisions; and the crisis and contests that it triggered.

Hausa: More Than a Language

Hausa is not just a language; it is a category that has become synonymous, and now correlates, rightly or wrongly, with certain ways of acting, expressing oneself, making a living, and worshipping God. Hausa now carries with it a constellation of cultural, economic, and political connotations. As a language of trade and social contact in West Africa, and as the language of an ethnic group known as Hausa, it approaches what Ali Mazrui calls a cosmopolitan language.⁹ The presence throughout much of West Africa of people who speak Hausa as a second language, and the role of the Hausa language as a lingua franca in much of northern Nigeria, speaks to the utilitarian importance of a language whose intertwinement with trade and itinerant Islamic practices dates back to a remote Nigerian antiquity.¹⁰

The Hausa inhabited the savannah grasslands of West Africa, hemmed between the Songhai and Bornu Empires. A receptacle of influences from both empires since perhaps the 15th century, Hausaland, then politically constituted into several Hausa city-states, remained largely defined by the linguistic primacy of various dialects of the Hausa language. After the Fulani Jihad of 1804-08, the variegated existence of the Hausa people was subsumed by the Sokoto Islamic caliphate, which was largely constituted by the territories of the old Hausa city states.

The terms "Hausa," "Hausawa," and "Kasar Hausa," denoting the language, people, and land of the Hausa respectively are actually fairly recent coinages; their modern usage probably originated from the writings of Othman bin Fodio, leader of the Fulani Jihad who, before and during the Jihad, homogenized the Hausa-speaking but autonomous peoples of the different Hausa states in what he defined as an undifferentiated collective of bad Muslims.¹¹ The peoples of these states, and ordinary Fulani migrants who lived in them were more likely to refer to the Hausa States' citizens by their state of origin, e.g "Katsinawa," for those from Katsina; "Kanawa" for those from Kano; "Gobirawa" for those from Gobir, etc. Following Dan Fodio, his brother, Mohammed Bello, discursively formalized "Hausa" as a term of reference for the inhabitants of the former Hausa states.¹²

The Fulani Islamic reform jihad of 1804-08 superimposed a central political and religious authority on the fragmented Hausa states of present-day Northwestern Nigeria and, through conquest and discourse, disciplined them into one politico-linguistic unit. More importantly, the Jihad inscribed Islamic piety as one of the most important markers of Hausa identity. Thus, as John Philips argues, to be Hausa gradually came to mean that one was a Muslim, even though not all Muslims in the Caliphate were Hausa and not all Hausa were Muslims.¹³ What the Jihad did was to initiate the process of homogenization and the construction of a politically useful narrative of Hausa identity, a narrative which was underwritten by religious and cultural associations.

The religious content of the Hausaization process was coterminous with the new fortune of Islam as the defining ideal of citizenship within the Sokoto Caliphate, whose core was Hausaland. The new Fulani rulers and their minions adopted the language and culture of their Hausa subjects as well as the administrative infrastructure of the conquered Hausa (Habe) kings. By this process, most of the urbanized Fulani *became* Hausa in linguistic and cultural terms, although a quiet co-mingling of the two peoples had been taking place before the Jihad.¹⁴ Thus, despite the protest of many Hausa people today about the use of the term "Hausa-Fulani"

to describe the Hausa speaking peoples of today's northern Nigeria, it is a historically valid terminology, and it seems that their protest rejects the recent appropriations of the term by Southern Nigerian intellectuals rather than its historicity. For the purpose of this paper, however, I will use the term "Hausa" to denote this compound ethnic category.

The Islamization of Hausa identity is perhaps best underscored by the fact that post-Jihad Hausa identity became synonymous with assimilation into an Islamic consciousness that was packaged, consecrated, and policed by the Jihad leaders and the inheritors of their authority. Thus, the *Maguzawa*, Hausa traditionalists who either managed to escape the Islamizing influence of the Jihad or became *dhimis* who traded *Jizya* tribute for Caliphal protection under Islamic law, were excluded from the post-Jihad narrative of Hausa identity.¹⁵ Although *maguzawa* has an etymology rooted in the Islamic distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims, and in a Hausaized rendering of this distinction, and although its use to distinguish between Muslim and non-Muslim Hausa, and between urban and rural Hausa, was fairly current in the precolonial period, it acquired additional valence in the post-Jihad period as Islam and its shifting interpretations and consensus became more central to the definition of Hausa identity.¹⁶ The cosmopolitan nature of Islam in West Africa meant that *being* Hausa became more and more about Islamic piety and an ability to speak the language than about any originary affinity with *Kasar Hausa* or Hausa ethnic ancestry.

By expanding the frontiers of a cosmopolitan Islamic tradition, the Sokoto caliphate enhanced the cosmopolitan and incorporative character of Hausa, enabling non-Hausa members of the Caliphal Islamic community to become Hausa in geographical contexts that lacked Hausa ethnic heritage. Indeed, because of the socio-political importance that the jihad invested Hausa with, it became, at least within the Sokoto Caliphate, a political identity denoting belonging, acceptance, privilege, and access. Being Hausa in the Caliphal context cost little. Islamic piety, an acceptance of the religious orthodoxy of the Caliphate founders, and an ability to speak Hausa even as a second language granted one entry into Hausahood. It thus became an appealing identity from a purely pragmatic perspective. Geographic proximity (but not necessarily contiguity) to the Hausa heartland in today's Northwestern Nigeria as well as Islamic piety facilitated social and political access to an increasingly coveted Hausa identity.

A plethora of cultural, attitudinal, and performative indicators sprung up to reinforce the linguistic and religious indicators of Hausa identity. It is this constellation of cultural, religious, economic, and political indices and significations that I call a Hausa-Caliphate imaginary. Steven Pierce argues that this amplification of Hausa identity as a total worldview and way of life is underwritten by the belief among the inheritors of the Sokoto Caliphate Islamic tradition that "Hausa identity...also encompassed particular ways of making a living...notably Hausa people's fame as traders...and a particular approach to agriculture: certain technologies, certain modes of labor mobilization."¹⁷ As a result of these associative reification of Hausa, *being* Hausa or *becoming* Hausa gradually came to denote being or becoming many functional things; Islamic conversion or reaffirmation was only the beginning point, as well as the fundamental action, on the path to *becoming* Hausa.

The cumulative outcome of the transformation and elaboration of Hausa as a category of identification was that Hausa became even more fluid and context-determined than it had been prior to the Jihad. This fluidity and indeterminacy that came to characterize Hausa identity was

crucial because it reinforced the power of the Hausa language and Islam as the supreme indicators of belonging, relegating autochthony to the background. The spread of Hausa linguistic and religious influence made Hausa a category of power, since anyone whose claim to Hausa identity was consecrated by the invocation of these attributes could potentially enjoy the privileges and status that came with being regarded as Hausa in “non-Hausa” contexts like the Middle Belt. Because the Caliphate was marked out by Islam and its local lingua franca, Hausa, the acquisition of these attributes rightly or wrong associated one with the might, attributes, and privileges of the Caliphate. In the Middle Belt, these attributes functioned as a metaphor for the Sokoto Caliphate and its emirate or Fulani system of political administration, as Alvin Magid has called it.¹⁸

This was the situation that the British met in 1900, when Frederick Lugard declared the Protectorate of northern Nigeria. The associational attributes of Hausa had been fairly settled in and out of the Caliphate. In the Caliphate it functioned as an idiom of unity for a multi-lingual religious community. Outside the Caliphate in the Middle Belt, the Hausa language was welcomed and adopted by many for its communicative utility and for the commercial access that it facilitated into a vast trans-regional world of exchange. The religious associations of Hausa identity were however widely rejected in the Middle Belt.

The Hausa-Caliphate Imaginary In Precolonial Middle Belt

The British came to northern Nigeria desirous of identifying and collaborating with a group of rulers representing a cultural and political entity that they deemed “civilized” and sophisticated enough to be partners in the colonial project. The Hausa-Caliphate worldview and those who best represented it—the Hausa-Fulani emirs and the Caliphate aristocracy—were recruited into this role. In this British thinking, little thought was devoted to the perception of the Hausa-Caliphate worldview in the Middle Belt.

The British had, through the writings of explorers, missionaries, and other European adventurers, acquainted themselves with the political, economic, and administrative technologies of the Caliphate as well as with what being Hausa-Fulani connoted within the Caliphate. What they seemed either not to know or not to have paid attention to are the precolonial struggles that occurred on the Caliphate’s non-Muslim frontiers (the frontier Middle Belt communities) over conversion to Islam and/or submission to the control of the Caliphate. These struggles helped establish the reputation of the Hausa-Caliphate socio-religious and political system in the Middle Belt.

As ambitious agents seeking to extend the sway of the caliphate to the non-Muslim areas of northern Nigeria attacked the sovereignty of states in the Middle Belt, the category of Hausa came to simultaneously assume the position of a feared and awe-inspiring political presence. The various peoples of the Middle Belt devised numerous strategies to either keep Hausa-Fulani Caliphate slave raiders and state-builders at bay or to selectively bow to their sway in the interest of peace. For instance, as Michael Fardon explains in regard to the Chamba engagement with the Fulani encroachment on their domain, these inhabitants of the Middle Benue hills and plains managed to co-exist, albeit uneasily, with militant Fulani settlers and proto-states through the careful alternation of the strategies of calculated and half-hearted submission and

quiet self-assertion.¹² The Tiv kept Hausa-Fulani Caliphate agents in check by carefully monitoring their activities on the frontiers of Tivland, by attacking their isolated outposts and trade caravans, by strategically interacting with them, and by building a feared warring infrastructure founded on the infamous Tiv poisoned arrow.²⁰ The Doma, a branch of the Agatu Idoma had to adopt an ambivalent survival strategy against the raids of Hausa-Fulani Caliphate agents from Keffi.²¹ They, like the Chamba, had to succumb to some measure of Hausa-Fulani influence as a gesture of political self-preservation.

What obtained in the precolonial period, then, in terms of the Middle Belt's engagement with Caliphate expansion, was a series of complex stalemates, fluid accommodations, and tense, frequently violated treaties of co-existence that Nengel calls the *Amana* system.²² These stalemates and negotiated tribute-payments in exchange for peace were not only desired by the Middle Belt polities but also by the raiding emirates. Wars were difficult and expensive to execute; armies were difficult to recruit and maintain; repeated raids resulted in diminished booty; and endless war detracted from other matters of statecraft.²³ So, the emirates, especially those on the Caliphate frontiers, had a vested interest in some form of negotiated co-existence that ensured the supply of slaves and economic goods to them as tribute. Of course, self-assertion and rebellion on the part of a Middle Belt subordinate was often met with fierce military retribution. These precolonial relational tensions created ambivalences of resentment and fear-inspired accommodations among Middle Belt peoples. Kukah sums it up this way: "Around the Middle Belt, the [Hausa-Fulani] Jihadists seemed more preoccupied with slavery, economic and political expansionism than the spread of the [Islam]. As a result, all forms of alliances came into being, but economic considerations were paramount."²⁴

Although, as Kukah argues, the winning of converts to Islam in the Middle Belt gradually took a backseat, the spread of Islamic and Hausa-Fulani cultural influence did not. And although this was truer for the frontier non-Muslim communities of the Southern Kaduna and Bauchi corridors than it was for the Benue Valley, the fate of Doma and Bagaji in the southernmost part of the Middle Belt shows that Jihadist aggression and Caliphate influence spread to all of the Middle Belt. In fact, Doma and Bagaji, two Agatu Idoma states, would become satellite vassals of Zazzau in the mid-19th century by a combination of military defeats and strategic self-preservation through the acceptance of Caliphate influence and quasi-control.²⁵ Caliphate slave raiding and the spread and policing of Caliphate culture was assured in the Middle Belt because of the influence and military might of the southern Fulani sub-emirates of Keffi, Suleja, Lapai, Nassarawa, and others, and because of the presence of numerous other enclaves of garrisoned Hausa-Fulani settlements in the Middle Belt.²⁶

It is this pre-existing, rather complicated, status of the Hausa-caliphate worldview, with all its cultural and religious corollaries, that the British encountered in the Middle Belt at the turn of the twentieth century. It is not clear if the British understood the troubled precolonial status and semiotic resonances of Hausa as a socio-political category in the non-Muslim sector of northern Nigeria. If they did, it didn't stop them from crafting a colonial policy that privileged the emirate system of administration and social organization and sought to spread it to the Middle Belt, where several ethnic groups had either resisted it or were suspicious of it.

It should be acknowledged that the Hausa-Caliphate imaginary was not the only ethno-symbolic system that the British admired in northern Nigeria. There was for a time what one

could call a Jukun imaginary in the colonial officialdom. It was founded on the ancient Jukun (Kwararafa) kingdom which, in its heyday, conquered territory as far as Kano and much of the Middle Benue region. The British fascination with the Jukun imperial system lasted into the 1930s and spawned many quasi-ethnological and historical writings by British colonial officials and their underlings, the most notable of which is *A Sudanese Kingdom* by C.K Meek, the official anthropologist of colonial northern Nigeria.²⁷ However, as Margery Perham, herself a major actor in the northern Nigerian colonial scene, noted, the attitude of the British was largely one of “mournful fascination in studying this relic of an empire.”²⁸ Although the northern Nigerian colonial bureaucracy had at one time toyed with the idea of reviving the “imperial technique” of the Jukun, “the hope was not fulfilled” because the Jukun system did not offer an administrative model “except that of decay.”²⁹

Hausa was not selected for a functional role in British colonialism a priori; nor was there a dearth of other candidates for the role. However, an Hausa political imaginary was, as far as the British were concerned, the only viable candidate, and, as a matter of historical fact, the Hausa model was the only one that made it into the administrative toolkit of the British, all other fascinating indigenous cultural and imperial systems having been discarded or discredited by the fact that their military and political power had been subsumed by the Sokoto Caliphate or had collapsed before the caliphate’s emergence.

The British embrace of the Hausa-Caliphate system was the product of a convenient confluence of administrative expediency and prior understandings of the sociopolitical system of the Caliphate. The British veneration of the Hausa-Caliphate model of social, political, and economic organization was consistent with a British colonial fixation on the administrative utility of so-called martial races and their assumed ability to act on behalf of the British as agents of socio-cultural tutelage and as proxy colonial administrators. This ideological component of British colonialism in northern Nigeria originated, as earlier noted, largely from India, where the system of identifying and using “martial races” had been in operation in the British Raj for more than a century.³⁰

Caliphal and British Origins of the Hausa Imaginary

As indicated earlier, the British pioneers of the colonial enterprise in northern Nigeria were interpreting the protectorate through the lens of earlier experiences which bestowed a utilitarian political importance on the idea of a ruling class, a higher race, and other similar categories. This ethnological taxonomy was inspired by similar British classifications in India.³¹ However, there were two important factors that reinforced the British functional preoccupation with sociological and anthropological categories in the northern Nigerian area. The first factor was Caliphate imperial discourses which represented the Caliphate-Hausa formation as a benign hegemon and the Middle Belt as its subordinate Other. The second was the elaboration of these discourses by British travelers and, subsequently, colonial ethnographers, a process which was not teleological but is nonetheless discernible.

The first major effort to discursively delineate the Sokoto Caliphate as an exclusive religious and political community and to define its Other was the *Infakul Maisuri* of Mohammed Bello. That important piece of Caliphate writing is best known for its exposition of what one

may call the Caliphate mind; its explanation of the theological and political vision of the Caliphate; its detailed narration of the course of the Jihad; and its discussion of the epistolary efforts to place the Caliphate above Bornu in the hierarchy of state Islamic piety. Much less known is the fact that Mohammed Bello's *Infakul Maisuri* was the first treatise to articulate a Sokoto imperial hegemony over some areas of the Middle Belt. In the section dealing with states, kingdoms, and peoples, Mohammed Bello brings within Caliphate administrative jurisdiction several areas of the Middle Belt. For instance he defines the emirate of Zauzau as encompassing "many places inhabited by barbarians" —barbarians being a derogatory euphemism for the non-Muslim peoples of the Middle Belt located on Zauzau's frontier.³² He projects Zauzau's sway all the way to the entire Gbagyi country, the Bassa plains in the lower Benue, and as far south as Attagara (Idah) in Igala country.³³ The oral traditions of the Bassa and the Igala do not attest to these claims, nor do any written non-Caliphate sources.³⁴ Mohammed Bello imagined his imperial sway to include the Niger-Benue confluence zone of the Middle Belt, telling Clapperton: "I will give the King of England a place on the coast to build a town....God has given me all the land of the Infidels."³⁵

This semi-imperial vision may not have been an accidental occurrence. There appears to be a contradictory assertion of the Caliphate's benign hegemony over the Middle Belt and an affirmation of the Middle Belt's alterity in the *Infakul Maisuri*. The travel journal of Hugh Clapperton, the first British traveler to visit the Caliph in Sokoto, corroborates Mohammed Bello's imperial vision.³⁶ It also shows that this may not have been an idle imperial fantasy but a part of a strategic, if misleading, cartographic and discursive exercise by Clapperton's aristocratic Caliphate informants. Clapperton journeyed through the Sokoto Caliphate in the 1820s, reaching Sokoto in 1825 and befriending Sultan Bello, son of Usman dan Fodio, who had succeeded to the throne at the latter's death in 1817. It was Clapperton who brought excerpts from the *Infakul Maisuri* back to England in 1825.³⁷ Mohammed Bello was Clapperton's biggest source in his discussion of the non-Caliphate world of the Middle Belt.³⁸ More importantly, Clapperton's maps of the Caliphate and its Niger-Benue frontier, the first to be published in Britain, were drawn for him by Mohammed Bello, given to him from Mohammed Bello's collection by a member of his household, and drawn by Clapperton or others on the instructions of Mohammed Bello himself.³⁹

The maps and their accompanying narratives reveal a strategic inclusion of the Niger-Benue zone in the sphere of influence and jurisdiction of the Sokoto Caliphate, and a simultaneous Othering of the human communities of that zone. The Kwara River, for instance, is presented as the "largest river in all of the territories of the Houssa[Hausa]."⁴⁰ Beyond the equation of the Caliphate with Hausa, this discourse, and the cartographic imagination that it may have sought to concretize, amounted to the discursive annexation of vast territories in the Niger-Benue confluence and Kwara non-Caliphate areas into the Sokoto Caliphate realm. How much of this cartographic and discursive annexation comes from Clapperton and how much came from Mohammed Bello and his other caliphate informants is not clear.

However, the trajectory of knowledge production and transfer from the Caliphate to the British in the early 19th century seems fairly clear thus far: the Caliphate's representation of itself and its values and of the peoples on and outside its frontiers made it into the canonical knowledge base of Britain regarding northern Nigeria. It is unlikely that British views on the

people of the Middle Belt were shaped solely by Mohammed Bello's characterization of the Middle Belt as a land of barbarians since the British had their own distinctions between the centralized Islamic Caliphate and its non-Muslim, politically fragmented others—views which were largely formed on account of the narratives of European travelers. What is clear is that there was a coincidental—and instrumental—convergence of Mohammed Bello's and British travelers' characterizations of the Caliphate/Middle Belt dichotomy. The two narratives reinforced each other and sustained British and Caliphal imperial imaginings of the Middle Belt and its peoples.

Much of Clapperton's materials made it to London after Clapperton's death in 1827 through Richard and John Lander, the next British travelers who journeyed to Sokoto and met the Caliph. Clapperton had left instructions before his death that Richard Lander, who was his servant, take possession of all his materials and deliver them to the Colonial Office, which sponsored the Sokoto expedition. The Lander brothers would later depend on Clapperton's connections to the Caliphate leadership for sustenance, logistical help, information, and investigative and cartographic guidance.⁴¹

As mentioned earlier, Clapperton drew the first known British map of the Sokoto Caliphate based on information provided to him by Mohammed Bello, and thus initiated the tradition of equating the Sokoto Caliphate and its frontiers with "Houssa [Hausa] Territory," as he called it.⁴² This cartographic and descriptive convention seems to have stuck in subsequent British travel writing on the Caliphate as subsequent British travelers relied on the pioneering work of Clapperton and the Lander brothers. The British were subtly investing the Caliphate and its fringes in the Middle Belt with a Hausa-emirate imaginary. This reification of a growing notion of precolonial Hausa-Caliphate hegemony was important for the subsequent veneration of Hausa as veritable socio-linguistic category of colonial rule in northern Nigeria.

Subsequent British travelers relied on earlier depictions and accounts of the Sokoto Caliphate's symbolic and physical relationships with the Middle Belt to reinforce impressions of Hausa-Caliphate primacy. An accumulated body of British-produced knowledge emerged from a succession of European explorers who traversed the Benue Valley, the Plateau, the hills of Southern Kaduna, and the Adamawa hinterland. The pronouncements and claims of these explorer-travelers underwrote initial British insights into the sociological makeup of northern Nigeria. The travelers either submitted their findings to the Colonial Office, published them in Britain, or both. The most famous of these explorers was Dr. Baikie, whose observations about the people of the Middle Belt often bordered on social Darwinist contempt. For instance, in 1854, he described the Tiv ethnic group who, along with the Idoma, Bassa, Junkun, Igala, and other groups, occupied the lower Benue valley as an: "unfortunate tribe [whose] being against everyone, and everyone against it, has rendered it extremely suspicious of any visitors, their crude minds being unable to comprehend anything beyond war and raping...the Mitsis as far as we could judge, are wilder and less intelligent than any of the African races with whom we had intercourse except Baibai and Djukuns."⁴³

Baikie's words above represent the articulation, however crudely, of a certain negative perception of the Tiv in particular, and the peoples of the Benue Valley and Niger-Benue confluence area in general. The evolutionary insinuations in Baikie's description of the Tiv, the Middle Belt's largest ethnic group, and the largest non-Hausa ethnic group in northern Nigeria,

is symptomatic of a larger strategic perception in which the people on the margins of the Caliphate and 'outside' the Hausa zone emerged as definitive Others. Baikie's representational universe, and his allusions, must be understood as part, and a culmination, of a subtle, stealthy process of inscribing the Sokoto Caliphate's geographical and sociological space as the administrative core of northern Nigeria. This characterization could only emerge convincingly through the simultaneous and contrapuntal characterization of its periphery—the Middle Belt.

Baikie's use of the derogatory Hausa epithet *Mitshis* to describe and demarcate the Tiv as a people is instructive. It is possible that in the mid 19th century, when most ethnic groups were named by their more powerful neighbors or by regional hegemony, Baikie was using *Mitshis* as a purely descriptive term. It is therefore possible that his use of the term is not implicated in the demeaning associations inherent in the Hausa term *Munchi*, which he corrupted into *Mitshis*. Baikie's affirmatory amplification of the meanings associated with the Hausa/Fulani name for the Tiv, however, reads like a conscious effort to flesh out and give evidentiary and observatory credence to what essentially was a nomenclature connoting the supposed aggression, cattle-snatching, and xenophobia of the agriculturally-inclined Tiv.⁴⁴ Baikie's detailed description of the Tiv as a "wild," uncivilized, and unintelligent people belies the possibility that he was a neutral repeater of an existing cliché. The uncanny congruence between his descriptions and the anecdotal associations surrounding the Hausa word *Munchi* is too carefully constructed to be a mere rhetorical coincidence.

As specific as Dr. Baikie's rendition of the Tiv personality was, its preoccupation with comparison and deviation must inform any critical understanding of his and other British explorers' thinking. This cultural narrative, which served to erect a hierarchy of evolutionary maturity (or lack thereof), operated on two levels; it utilized both absence and presence. First, by casting the Tiv as the wildest and least intelligent of the peoples of northern Nigeria, Baikie's observations indict the entire non-caliphate sector of the region for a supposed racial and cultural inferiority. That he positioned the Tiv in particular at the lowest rung of this ladder of evolutionary backwardness does little to diminish the larger indictment handed to the Middle Belt. Second, Dr. Baikie's absent referent and comparative framework in this elaborate collage of cultural backwardness is clearly the Sokoto caliphate, described by most 19th century British explorers as the core of northern Nigeria.

The caliphate, both in its geographical, ethno-linguistic, and religious connotations, represented the unspoken paradigmatic cultural formation in the evolutionary hierarchy that was slowly emerging through British discourses about the northern Nigerian area. These narratives presented civilization, as far as its possibility in Nigeria was concerned, as being synonymous with Hausa acculturation. The Sokoto Caliphate occupied the upper perch of an emerging socio-political evolutionary ladder, with the Tiv and others like them at the bottom.

Indeed, Baikie's observations about the Tiv, Idoma, and other peoples on the lower Benue and Niger confluence regions fit into a continuum of cultural hierarchy that European travelers to northern Nigeria in the 19th century erected and used to make sense of their observations. There is no evidence that there was an ideological or programmatic conspiracy on the part of the 19th century European explorers of northern Nigeria with the expressed purpose of subordinating the Middle Belt to the Caliphate. However, since explorers often organized their materials and their subjects in light of the earlier observations of other European travelers, who

were sometimes compatriots, Baikie's ethnic and cultural categories, and the ways in which they foreground a pre-existing European perception of northern Nigerian historical sociology, is a significant subject for interrogation.

Before Baikie, Hugh Clapperton and Hienrich Barth both traversed the Sokoto caliphate in the early and mid-19th century respectively. The former visited both Kano and Sokoto, the headquarters of the Caliphate.⁴⁵ The latter was in Borno, Kano, Zaria, Katsina, and parts of Bauchi.⁴⁶ Richard Lander and his brother, John Lander, also undertook a quest for the 'mouth of the Niger River' in 1828-29, a mission designed to fulfill the dreams of Richard Lander's mentor, Hugh Clapperton, who died near Sokoto in 1827 on his way to "discover" the source of the Niger.⁴⁷ Other European explorers and sponsored adventurers traversed the Sokoto Caliphate in the early to mid-19th century. The journals of these European travelers are insightful as much for what they do not reveal as for what they do. The marginal presence of, and, in some cases, the erasure of the non-caliphate world of *dar-al-harb* (the abode of war), from the narrative of these travelers constitute the genealogical foundation of the discourses of Baikie and other explorers of the precolonial Middle Belt region. In these narratives the "pagans," as the vast humanity of the Middle Belt are often represented, make occasional appearances as abodes of slave raiding by powerful, relatively civilized, Muslim emirates presiding over the *dar-al-Islam* (abode of Islam).

A notion of the Middle Belt's peoples' inferiority to the peoples of the Caliphate began to take shape under the weight of these representations, which were very influential in Britain as anthropological references on the Middle Belt. As E.P.T Grampton puts it, "there was a general belief [in colonial circles] that pagans [Middle Belters] were of inferior stock."⁴⁸ Such is the subordination of the Middle Belt to the Hausa-Fulani Caliphate cultural zone in colonial discourse that some scholars believe that British colonialism and Indirect Rule helped "institutionalize" what they see as a structural inferiority of non-Muslim peoples of the Middle Belt.⁴⁹

The British administrative valorization of the Caliphate Islamic political tradition emerged even before the conquest of northern Nigeria was completed, a clear indication that the narratives of British explorers, which were heavily dependent on Caliphal representations of Fulani power, influenced later colonial administrative policy that privileged the Caliphate model. In 1902, before the conquest of Sokoto, Frederick Lugard, commander of the British conquering force and the future Governor of northern Nigeria and Governor-General of Nigeria, signaled that the British regarded the Hausa-Fulani Islamic political institutions of the Caliphate as the administrative model for all of northern Nigeria:

The future of.... this Protectorate lies largely in the regeneration of the Fulani. Their ceremonial, their coloured skins, their mode of life, and habits of thought appeal more to the native population than the prosaic business-like habits of the Anglo-Saxon can ever do...nor have we the means at present to administer so vast a country. This then is the policy to which in my view the administration of northern Nigeria should give effect: viz to regenerate this capable race.....so that.....they become worthy instruments of rule.⁵⁰

Lugard was repeating and enunciating the dual British justification of the British adoption of the Hausa-Caliphate model of colonial administration: one was racio-evolutionary; the other was logistical expediency and pragmatism. Lugard's wife, Flora Shaw, a major contributor to

early colonial policy, saw the Fulani as an “aristocratic,” race. They were “European in form,” had Arab blood, which “penetrated as far as climate could allow” and were of “races... higher than the negroid type.” Most importantly, they were a conquering and ruling race that occupied their present location in the Central Sudan by “driv[ing the original inhabitants] Southwards” into areas that the “higher type could not live.”⁵¹ This fundamental misunderstanding of precolonial political realities in the northern Nigerian area—the early assumption that Fulani migrants and conquerors, either as nomads, adventurers, or Jihadists, had conquered or defeated the peoples of the Middle Belt and had established a recognized, undisputed regional political hegemony—inflected future British administrative policies and choices in northern Nigeria. These policies, understandably, treated the Middle Belt—even areas of it that had not physically encountered the Hausa-Fulani operatives of the Caliphate, not to speak of being conquered by them—as precolonial vassalages of the Caliphate. In fact, Lady Lugard believed that the Fulani were destined to rule over the peoples of the Middle Belt: “The ruling classes [of the Fulani] are deserving in every way of the name of cultivated Gentlemen, We seem to be in the presence of one of the fundamental facts of history, that there are races which are born to conquer and others to persist under conquest.”⁵²

Once the narrative of Fulani-Caliphate political primacy was established, the formulation of colonial policies and discourses that subordinated the Middle Belt to that administrative paradigm followed. The Middle Belt’s status as a periphery had to be discursively formulated, so that “civilizing” and preparing its peoples for Indirect Rule through the infusion of Caliphate-emirate symbols and agents would be possible and appear legitimate.

Civilizing the Periphery

The conflation of Hausa identity with a host of cultural and political practices and attributes had a profound effect on colonial administration in the non-Hausa speaking parts of the Middle Belt. Its manifestation resulted in a de facto bifurcated colonial administration: the Caliphate administration and what the British called “pagan” administration.⁵³

The concept of “pagan” administration had a special valence in British administrative policy in the Middle Belt. At conquest, the British had the option of utilizing the existing chieftaincy systems, which ranged from fairly formed chieftaincies in the Igala and Kabba areas, and the rather fragmented, weak chieftaincies, and elders’ councils of the Tiv, Idoma, Adamawa, Plateau, and Southern Kaduna corridors.⁵⁴ But these systems hardly showed any promise of being amenable to the demands of Indirect Rule as envisioned by colonial British officers eager to collect taxes, maintain order, and establish the frameworks of colonial governmentality. The British opted for a hybrid which combined these institutions with a superstructure of the emirate system of administration. This was a unique contraction in that what was being embraced was a system with two, instead of one, African intermediate set of institutions and personnel. The British planned to supervise the emirate layer of this arrangement.

A crucial element of this colonial arrangement was the notion of tutelage and remediation. If the so-called pagan administration was a compromise birthed by expedience, the task of integrating the “pagan” areas into the northern Nigerian political mainstream—the emirate

system of the Caliphate areas—was its ultimate goal. The notion of preparing “pagans” to be more like the Hausa subjects of the defunct Sokoto Caliphate, and to thus be ready for Indirect Rule in its supposedly pure form, was germane to this system of administration. Such preparation and tutelage could only come from contact with the Muslim Hausa subjects of the defunct caliphate. The idea was to import these “Hausa” colonial subjects into Middle Belt as a full-fledged sub-stratum of the colonial administration, and to bestow on this cadre of colonial middlemen the task of civilizing and preparing the “pagans” for Indirect Rule. This strong commitment to Indirect Rule thus sought to create a unique administrative arrangement in which there was a civilizing mission within the civilizing mission, and in which there were two sets of colonials—the British and the Hausa.

This was not unique to northern Nigeria. In fact the British fondness for identifying and utilizing a “ruling race” was a defining principle of British colonialism in other parts of Africa. Lloyd Fallers’ example of how the British imported Western educated Buganda chiefs into the territories of the Busoga and the Bunyoro (in present-day Uganda), who were seen as lacking in centralized political institutions, is similar to the northern Nigerian situation. The Buganda chiefs were “mandated to remodel the political systems of the neighboring Busoga territories along Ganda lines” in order to achieve political sameness and uniformity in colonial administration.⁵⁵ Roberts’ more specific exploration of Buganda “sub-imperialism” in colonial Uganda provides further analytical proof of the prevalence of the phenomenon of British enlistment of “alien” African agents of imperial tutelage.⁵⁶ What was unique about the northern Nigerian case was that the Hausa colonials who were imported into the so-called pagan regions were, as we shall see shortly, not just chiefs; they included a whole coterie of specialists—interpreters, traders, Muslim scholars, clerks, messengers, policemen, bodyguards, and “political agents.” Each group of specialists was expected to contribute its expertise to this minor civilizing mission within the larger civilizing mission. This was an army of “foreign” administrative personnel, an imported sub-colonial infrastructure, which had a similar mandate as the Buganda chiefs, but which, unlike the latter, constituted a whole new layer of the British administrative contingent in the Middle Belt. More importantly, the importation of a new strata of Hausa specialists who were mandated to effect the social, economic, and political transformation of the people of the Middle Belt amounted in practice, and in its subsequent rhetorical elaboration, to a program of cultural and political make-over.

Hausa Interpreters in the Benue Valley

The adoption of the Hausa language as a colonial lingua franca in northern Nigeria was regarded in the British officialdom as a pragmatic, cheap, and expedient administrative decision.⁵⁷ It also necessitated a British reliance on Hausa-speaking intermediaries and interpreters who also knew the local languages of the Middle Belt. For this reason and others, Hausa generated ambivalence in British officialdom; it was both celebrated and lamented. Its manifestation in the quotidian relational realities of the colonial situation was what one British official described as: “an unsatisfactory position [of] the European official having to commune with the Idoma through an [Hausa] interpreter.”⁵⁸ He went further to record the assertion of one of his Idoma messengers, Itodu: “During his 17 years with Europeans he had not yet

worked with an admin officer who knew the language, A couple could say ‘come,’ ‘go,’ ‘bring,’ etc, etc., but no one has been here yet who could understand a complaint or follow a conversation in Idoma.”⁵⁹

This linguistic conundrum made the Hausa colonial interpreters an indispensable part of the colonial enterprise, furthering the friction between the British and the Idoma on the one hand and between the Idoma and the Hausa colonials on the other. The fact that most Idoma people didn’t speak Hausa and the Hausa interpreters didn’t speak Idoma very well made colonial interpretation a particularly charged arena of colonial misunderstanding.⁶⁰

In Tiv Division, the situation was hardly different. Hausa interpreters were part and parcel of British colonial activities in Tiv country from the time of the conquest in 1906. For that reason they emerged early as the visible and vulnerable face of British colonialism in Tivland. The destruction of the trading station of the Royal Niger Company (RNC) at Abinsi in Tivland in 1906 is generally regarded as the trigger or alibi for the British conquest of the Tiv.⁶¹ The events that led to the attack on the station are as interesting for our purpose as the British reaction. The Tiv and the Jukun combatants attacked the station not as a British-owned enterprise, and not necessarily to dislodge the British from their staked-out territory. They attacked it to uproot the hundreds of Hausa traders, merchants, and auxiliaries that had been imported to the station and had formed, through their association with the British chartered company, a visible underclass of colonials. The Tiv perceived the Hausa traders, workers, and interpreters at Abinsi as opportunists who were taking advantage of the well-armed RNC to exert concessions from the Tiv communities around Abinsi.⁶² Given the tense precolonial encounters between Hausa-Fulani traders and herders and the Tiv, this perception served as a Tiv rallying point against the Hausa interpreters and the British merchants who were their protectors and benefactors.⁶³ About seventy-six Hausa colonial auxiliaries were killed and about 113 were taken captive in the attack. Apart from the destruction of the physical structures of the trading station, which was populated largely by the Hausa, there is no record of the targeting of British traders.

The attack on the Hausa allies and underlings of the British drew the latter into the fray. The subsequent military expedition against the Tiv was devastating, but of more significance was the fact that the declarations and activities designed to restore order and establish the rudiments of a colonial administration were supervised and mediated by Muslim Hausa interpreters, the victims of the earlier Tiv-Jukun raid who came back to Tiv territory with the British military as powerful agents of British colonialism, and with vengeance on their minds.

Makar notes that the “interpreters were Hausa, Nupe, and Yoruba.”⁶⁴ But it is clear that interpreters who were of Yoruba and Nupe ancestry would have had to become sufficiently Hausa through their Islamic faith and proficiency in Hausa and through their familiarity with emirate administration for them to have been taken on as interpreters by the British. The declaration of victory by the British, and the plea for calm and order made to the Tiv after the end of the military action, was written and read in Hausa. It was then translated into Tiv by two Hausa interpreters, Mohammed and Maradu, Hausa Muslims who spoke Tiv. These were symbolic politics acts with probable implications for colonial power relations in Tiv Division.⁶⁵

Symbolic incidents like these suggest that the Hausa colonial presence in the non-Hausa speaking Middle Belt was more profound and more widespread than the narrow role of

linguistic interpreters might suggest, and that the British placed a significant degree of importance on the idea of tutelage-by-residence, an idea which was responsible for the direct importation of Hausa specialists, as well as the encouragement of their migration, to the so-called backward Divisions of northern Nigeria. In the next section, I look at the extent of the Hausa colonial presence in Idoma and Tiv Divisions.

The Hausa Colonials in Idoma and Tiv Divisions

The Hausa presence in early colonial Idoma and Tiv Divisions was a complex assemblage of personnel. It included traders, chiefs, interpreters, messengers, clerks, policemen (*Dogarai*), cooks, sanitary inspectors, and other colonial auxiliaries. The groups which had the most transformatory, and thus the most volatile, impact on these Divisions, were the traders and chiefs.

As stated earlier, the activities of Hausa traders affiliated to the British Royal Niger Company was the catalyst for the confrontations which led to the conquest of the Tiv area. In Idoma Division, Hausa traders were also at the center of early confrontations between the British and the Idoma. Hundreds of Hausa came to both Tiv and Idoma lands with the British, most of them traders. Mahdi Adamu has shown that in Tiv country, the British actively encouraged the Hausa—ethnic or assimilated—to settle in Katsina Ala, a town close to the frontier between the Tiv and Jukun.⁶⁶ This active recruitment of the Hausa into Tiv country rested on assumptions inherent in the British Hausa-Caliphate imaginary: the presence of the more economically rational and politically sophisticated inheritors of the Caliphate traditions would have a civilizing influence on the “primitive” Tiv.

In Idoma Division, a more profound version of this logic was at work. Hausa traders came in hundreds along with the British. This caused an immediate economic disquiet, quite unlike the reception granted the small number of Hausa elephant tusk buyers who used to visit the Idoma heartland in the precolonial period.⁶⁷ Unlike the precolonial Hausa traders who came in insignificant trickles, the Hausa who came to Idomaland in the first two decades of the 20th century were what one colonial official described as “peddlers and rubber dealers.”⁶⁸ The “opening up” of Idoma Division by the colonial conquest meant that even forests could now be penetrated to extract rubber and other economic products. These “peddlers” were visible bearers of the economic logics associated with the Hausa worldview. They carried the burden of propagating this worldview: that of instilling in the Idoma the virtues of economic rationality while banishing subsistence production and helping to create a monetized and market-oriented economy. They were envisioned by their British allies as economic proselytizers, much as other Hausa specialists were expected to propagate their specific skills and attributes.

The British belief that the Idoma, like other non-Hausa Middle Belt peoples, required a cultural and political make-over was elevated to an orthodoxy within British colonial officialdom. This orthodoxy stemmed, in part, from what was cast as a corpus of empirical observations made by British colonial officers who served in the Middle Belt and who were always willing to testify to the region’s backwardness. The sentiments of Robert Crocker, an Assistant District Officer, capture the prevailing British thinking regarding the Idoma economy. Crocker argued that Idoma modes of exchange were grossly underdeveloped, were not based

on money but barter, and thus lagged behind the protocols of economic exchange in the Caliphate areas.⁶⁹

The standard leitmotif in the British characterization of the Idoma world has as its referent the Caliphate/emirate model of social and economic organization. Thereafter, the British sought to create an emirate-type economy in Idoma Division—an economy dominated by cash crops, geared towards monetized exchange instead of barter, and driven by trade. This was an economic vision which the Hausa traders were expected to promote through their acts of buying and selling. In theory, this system of utilizing Hausa colonials to do the work of civilizing the Idoma, made up for the massive personnel requirement that the British plan of a wholesale make-over entailed. And since the Hausa traders were not paid a salary but thrived on their profits, it seemed to be a reasonable, cheap way of fulfilling the British desire to make the Idoma amenable to British colonial economics. In practice, it was convoluted, and its consequences were serious for both Idoma-British and Idoma-Hausa relations.

For the British, the presence of the Hausa colonial auxiliaries and their activities were pedagogical and symbolic acts that contributed to the civilization of the Idoma and prepared them for Indirect Rule and other aspects of British colonial governmentality. The British monitored the Hausa auxiliaries but not strictly. Consequently, the Hausa traders engaged in trade practices that, by all accounts, bordered on economic insensitivity. Along with *Sojan Gona* (unauthorized taxation and exactions), the practices of the Hausa traders, even by accounts of colonial anthropologists and administrators, took away much of the colonial currency that managed to get into Idoma Division, causing an inability to pay colonial taxes and to replenish the instruments of production. This made the Hausa traders the objects of Idoma resentment.⁷⁰

As in the Tiv area, the opposition to the Hausa sub-colonial presence triggered the formal British conquest of Idomaland. The destruction of the village of Odugbeho in 1899, an incident which inaugurated the British conquest, was causally connected to the murder of a Hausa trader by the Agatu villagers of Odugbeho. As A.P Anyebe has argued, the Idoma had a pre-existing historical grievance against the Hausa, stemming from the failed attempt of adventurous Caliphate flag bearers to capture Idomaland during the 1804 Fulani Jihad, an effort which resulted in the “loss” of the two Idoma states of Doma and Bagaji.⁷¹ Thus the incident at Odugbeho stemmed at once from residual resentment and new realities; realities that probably merely reinforced old suspicions. The new reality was the perceived impoverishing economic partnership of the British and the Hausa traders. The Idoma, Anyebe argues, “regarded the Hausa as their old foes returning with a more powerful ally, the British.” The present crisis reminded the Idoma of their earlier confrontations with the Hausa-Fulani: “when the Idoma saw the Hausa they remembered with nostalgia (sic) the Fulani Jihad of the nineteenth century.”⁷² But the newness of this crisis is also underscored by the fact that the Idoma were, “angry particularly at the Hausa aliens that came with the British,” and by the fact that many of the Hausa traders who came with the British were not Hausa by ethnicity but were Muslim and Hausa speaking and were thus adjudged to be socially and economically superior to the Idoma.⁷³

There is no evidence that the Hausa traders were the targets of Idoma angst for merely *being* Hausa. On that point, Anyebe may be exaggerating the longevity of precolonial grievance. What is implicated in these incidents of hostility towards the Hausa traders is a new regime of

partnership between Hausa auxiliaries and British officials. This formed the backdrop of the alleged economic exploitation of the Idoma hinterland by the Hausa traders, produce buyers, and currency dealers. What fueled the suspicions was a new Idoma perception of the intertwinement of Hausa trading and British colonialism in Idomaland.

There is also no evidence that Hausaized Nupe, Yoruba, and Gbagyi attracted special suspicion. The fluidity of Hausa identity, which started with the spread of the Hausa trade and religious diaspora in West Africa, was accentuated by the adoption of Hausa as a regional lingua franca by the British. Thus many Muslim northern Nigerians originating in the non-Hausa caliphate areas, who were Nupe, Ilorin Yoruba, or Gbagyi, insinuated themselves to the colonial administration by *performing* their Hausaness. That Hausa-speaking persons who were not ethnically Hausa were able to pass themselves off as Hausa and were officially regarded as such underscores the British obsession with Hausa as marker of socio-political distinction. It didn't necessarily exacerbate or mitigate the perception that "Hausa" traders were conspiring with the British to take out currency and products from Idoma Division and leaving peasants unable to pay taxes or fulfill other colonial obligations. What it shows is that, as Kukah argues, the Hausa language and its associative attributes was one of instruments of a subtle Hausa-Fulani hegemony.⁷⁴ In the British administration's pursuit of this hegemony, the Hausaized Gbagyi, Nupe, and Yoruba who served as British colonial agents in Idomaland were as much victims as they were agents of this "Anglo-Fulani hegemony."⁷⁵

Once the Hausa claims of these colonial Hausa persons received colonial blessings, they assimilated, at least officially, into the colonial functionality of Hausa identity (joining ethnic Hausas recruited by the British). The British regarded them as individuals who embodied a certain socio-economic imaginary that only exposure to the Caliphate's traditions and to Islam bestowed on a person.⁷⁶ Within the colonial system therefore, the Idoma saw these assimilated Hausa as *Abakpa*—the Idoma name for Hausa people—and treated them as such. As Anyebe notes, "As far as the Idoma were concerned any black man who came with the British and spoke to the white man in any language which was Hausa.... straight away became Hausa."⁷⁷

The Idoma resentment of the Hausa colonial presence was profound. Because the British neither acknowledged the problem nor took steps to assuage the suspicions and resentment of the Idoma, the attacks on Hausa traders continued. In 1906 another Hausa trader was killed at Aku, a village close to Odugbeho. A British reprisal expedition was quickly assembled. It marched on both Odugbeho and Aku, destroying them both.⁷⁸ The following year, eight Hausa traders collecting rubber from trees in Adoka territory were murdered. As a reprisal in defense of their Hausa allies, the British attacked Adoka, killing more than twenty people, razing twenty three Adoka villages, and confiscating the Adoka people's livestock and food to support to expedition.

These confrontations were frequent and rife throughout Idomaland; the Idoma targeted the Hausa colonial auxiliaries, drawing reprisals from the British, leading to the destruction of more Idoma villages and more vengeful targeting of the Hausa auxiliaries in a destructive cycle of violence. In 1912, the people of Onyangede were severely punished by the British for an attack on British-backed Hausa traders and colonial scribes in Onyangede. The attack resulted in the burning down of the houses of Hausa residents of the town.⁷⁹ The British Resident had arranged

a quick evacuation of the Hausa traders and interpreters to prepare for the British assault on Oyangede so as to remove them from the danger of further Idoma attacks.

In 1914, the Ugboju people, led by Ameh Oyi Ija, the deputy to the chief of the district, attacked the residents of the Hausa traders at Ombi, an attack which resulted in the death of “a large number” of Hausa. Four years earlier in 1910, one of the most violent rebellions against the British and their Hausa allies was put down at Ugboju. A British expedition sent to pacify the Oyangede and Ugboju people was ambushed by several Ugboju warriors led by Amanyi, the deputy Chief of Ugboju. The ambush was crushed, and the Ugboju combatants defeated. Amanyi was captured and deported to Keffi in 1912, but was restored to his position later that year.⁸⁰ Amanyi is an interesting case study in the pitfalls of the administrative implementation of the Hausa-Caliphate imaginary, for he was a chief appointed by the British after passing through a period of tutelage under a Hausa chief appointed by the British. The story of Amanyi is also a good point of transition to the phenomenon of Hausa chiefs in Idoma and Tiv Divisions.

Colonial Hausa Chieftaincy

The second most important plank of the British implementation of the program of cultural and political makeover in the Middle Belt was the cultivation of a chieftaincy sensibility through the establishment of chieftaincy institutions deemed amenable to the demands of Indirect Rule. The aim was to integrate the Middle Belt into what was considered the political mainstream of northern Nigeria: the centralized chieftaincy system represented by the emirate tradition.

In 1933, Robert Crocker, a District Officer in Idoma Division remarked that, “in a Hausa emirate” one of the Idoma chiefs he encountered and had the “misfortune” of working with “would not be given the job of a headman on a roadwork let alone a District Headship.”⁸¹ He went on to describe the native court system (modeled after that of the emirate areas) as a charade and a poor, incomplete copy of the emirate/Caliphate prototype. For him, these quasi-colonial institutions in Idoma Division were undermined by an endemic problem of weak chieftaincy, and an innate Idoma disregard for order, legality, and leadership.⁸² Another Idoma chief who worked with Crocker was “a dreadful person” who did nothing but “yawn[ed] like an animal and scratche[d] himself.”⁸³ Another Idoma Chief was so ineffective as a chief that he was caught “in a much tattered cloth” being beaten by a subject of his. One Idoma chief chased down a man “with his staff of office” illustrating the “ways and doings of the Idoma nobility.”⁸⁴ The subtext to all these characterizations was a lamentation about the absence of an emirate-type system of political and social organization, and the resultant difficulty in forging Indirect Rule. The unspoken empirical referent in these lamentations was the emirate/Caliphate chieftaincy system.

As stated earlier, the Tiv were similarly characterized as a chiefless people, lacking order, social cohesion, and political leadership. Makar has described the British attitude as a product of a preconception that was removed from *actual* encounters with the Tiv. This perception, which cast the Tiv as the civilizational antithesis of the Hausa emirates as well as the initial difficulty of “pacifying” the Tiv “frustrated [the British] into neglecting the study of the people’s

political institutions.”⁸⁵ At work was the deployment of a notion of Tiv political backwardness, which was constructed against the backdrop of an established notion of Hausa-Caliphate political superiority.

If Idoma and Tiv Divisions were seen as epitomes of deviation from the preferred caliphate political typology, which was regarded as the political raw material for Indirect Rule, there was a concomitant belief in the possibility of redeeming these Divisions from their backward political histories, and in the ability of Hausa political tutelage to correct this political deficiency. Thus in both Idoma and Tiv, Hausa chiefs were foisted on the people, saddled with a finite mandate of inculcating in their Idoma and Tiv subjects the virtues of political order symbolized by a central chiefly authority.

In 1914, Audu Dan Afoda, a Nupe, Hausa-speaking Muslim who had served as an interpreter and political agent for a succession of British District officers was appointed the Sarkin Makurdi (Chief of Makurdi). The appointment of a Hausaized Nupe to govern the Tiv of the Makurdi area underlined the British commitment to the idiom of Hausa as a principle of Indirect Rule in the Middle Belt. It validates Mahdi Adamu’s assertion that “the Hausa ethnic unit...is an assimilating ethnic entity and the Hausa language a colonizing one.”⁸⁶ Makurdi was a burgeoning colonial town on the River Benue, in Tiv territory. Many Tiv from the adjoining Tiv communities and towns migrated to Makurdi in the late 19th century and early 20th and gave it a Tiv urban character. It also became a locus of an emerging sense of urban Tiv political imagination. Between 1914 and 1926, the British government systematically brought the surrounding Tiv districts under Dan Afoda’s leadership, approving the appointment of his Hausa messenger, Garuba, as the Village Head of the strategic Tiv border town of Taraku in 1924.⁸⁷

In appointing Dan Afoda to the supreme position of ruler of the Tiv, the British hoped that his chieftaincy would tutor the Tiv in the ways of centralized emirate-type leadership. In 1926, the Resident of Benue Province reaffirmed the necessity of this sub-colonial tutelage, stating that Audu Dan Afoda’s chieftaincy was “still useful,” since the hope that it “would exert an educational influence [on the Tiv] is being fulfilled.”⁸⁸ In fact in 1937, when there was a growing agitation for an appointment of a “chief of Tiv,” the Resident at the time echoed a similarly pedagogical view of the presence of Audu as a symbol and instrument of political tutelage. He believed that Dan Afoda’s mandate of politically civilizing the Tiv was not yet accomplished, since “Central Administration was yet at its infancy” in Tivland, although he also believed that “gradually as a higher education marches with a growing feeling of nationality, a real central administration may be evolved” as a culmination of this evolution toward political centralization.⁸⁹ Subsequently, Dan Afoda was accorded further preeminence by leading the Tiv delegations to the periodic northern Nigerian chiefs meeting in Kaduna, the regional colonial headquarters.

Audu Dan Afoda died in 1945, setting off a firestorm of agitation by the Tiv for a Tiv to succeed him as the supreme chief of the Tiv. The initial attempt by the British to appoint a relation of the dead chief, another “Hausa,” and the belief among the Tiv that the Hausa had too much influence in colonial Tivland contributed to the outbreak of street riots in Makurdi in 1947. The riots quickly degenerated into open street clashes between the Hausa and Tiv populations of Makurdi. The riots were the deadly culmination of a long period of Tiv

resentment of the imposition of Hausa chiefs and a perceived colonial preference for governing Makurdi with the active participation and consultative input of Hausa auxiliaries. The Tiv, Makar posits, “[R]esented the Hausa influence in Makurdi Town although they did not object to their presence. The Tiv resented the Hausa control of the courts, political power and landed property...scarcely could the Tiv secure plots of land or find accommodation in Makurdi when they were in transit.”⁹⁰

The Makurdi clashes were put down by the British, and the nascent Tiv uprising was crushed. Subsequently, the British decided not to appoint a replacement for Dan Afoda, and to move away from the Hausa system of centralized leadership in Tivland in the interest of peace. Makurdi remains without a Chief until today, although the Tiv now have a central Chief, the Tor Tiv, who is based in Gboko.

In Idoma Division, the appointment of Hausa chiefs did not result in such dramatic backlashes, but they were equally contentious. In 1907, a Hausa-speaking Muslim Yoruba trader from the Caliphate town of Ilorin, Alabi, who had become Hausaized and had adopted the Muslim name Abubakar, was appointed by the British as the District Head of Ugboju.⁹¹ The difference between this and the Makurdi case in Tivland was that an Idoma, Amanyi, was installed as Abubakar’s political apprentice. This was a clear expression of British commitment to the civilizing influence of Hausa/emirate chieftaincy and their commitment to an administrative philosophy governed by the Hausa-Caliphate imaginary.

The Hausa Auxiliaries

Seated lower in the hierarchy of Hausa colonial specialists in Idoma Division, but almost as influential in the colonial power relations were the messengers, clerks, scribes, and policemen. Like the Hausa traders and chiefs, they were often Muslim men of emirate origin who were either ethnic Hausa or had ‘become Hausa’ in name and in self-portrayal. They were responsible for the everyday details and nitty-gritty of the colonial administration, collecting taxes, taking censuses, touring villages to compile agricultural statistics, and carrying out other duties delegated to them by their British employers and guardians.⁹²

As the administrative buffer between the British and the Idoma, these groups of Hausa colonials exerted enormous influence on colonial power relations, and, in many districts, they were put in charge of tax collection, the most volatile colonial task in much of colonial northern Nigeria. By the late 1920s, most of the Hausa chieftaincies in Idoma Division had given way to the ascension of trusted and apprenticed Idoma chiefs and headmen. The Hausa clerks, messengers, and scribes, however, remained the bedrock of colonial administration in Idoma Division until the economic depression of the 1930s, when the imperative of cost-cutting led to their replacement by cheaper Idoma colonial auxiliaries.⁹³

The involvement of the Hausa clerks in the task of tax collection sat uneasily with their already tense presence and with the peculiar difficulties that the Idoma experienced with British taxation—a difficulty caused mainly by their need-based system of commercial agricultural production and their cultivation of food crops that were much less marketable than the cash crops cultivated in the emirate sector of northern Nigeria.⁹⁴

The Hausa clerks did not disrupt the economic lives of the Idoma, but their role in British taxation was a dreaded one. As a result they, too, attracted a measure of hostility from the Idoma. Another source of friction was that, like the Hausa traders, the scribes and clerks led lives that were physically, attitudinally, and materially removed from their host milieus. The British set them up in separate, relatively elegant residential quarters funded by Idoma tax payer money and built by Idoma labor. Anyebe claims that they also exhibited an air of superiority that was coextensive with the declared and codified superiority of the British. Anyebe's description of the situation in the Igedde area is telling:

There was another strange element—the messengers, scribes or clerks who manned the courts and the administration. They were not even Igedde but 'Hausa' and Muslim. Like the white colonialist these black imperialists would not live amongst and mix with the people. They stayed on their own. They had their own quarters just as the Whiteman had his own Government Reservation Area.....In Oju I was shown the former abode of these colonial agents near the site of Ihyo market. It is now fully overgrown with trees and grass. The Igedde hated this "Hausa" class most. They looked upon them as collaborators with the British.⁹⁵

Anyebe overstates the Hausa agency in the de facto residential and social segregation that resulted from the British reliance on the Hausa colonials. He also ignores the fact that, in many ways, the Hausa auxiliaries too were victims of a colonial administrative policy shaped by the racist notion of the more civilized natives helping to civilize the less civilized ones. But the hostility that he describes is real. It prompted the Igedde to take up arms against both the British and their Hausa allies in 1926. The rebellion was led by Ogbuloko Inawo, a young man reputed to possess magical powers. Ogbuloko had briefly been deputized for a Hausa colonial tax collector, a job which exposed him to the novel resentments that British taxation generated among the Idoma. Subsequently he became an anti-tax agitator, relinquishing his employment with the British to begin plotting an uprising against the British and their Hausa administrative allies. The Ogbuloko uprising of 1926-29 was the bloody outcome of built-up anti-British grievances of which the Hausa colonials were the visible and vulnerable symbols and reminders.⁹⁶ The uprising was so popular that it took a massive military operation by the British to crush.

Conclusion

This paper has examined one aspect of a very complex historical problem; the ideological origins and colonial administrative motivations for the political and economically consequential presence of Muslim, Hausa-Fulani colonial auxiliaries in Nigeria's Middle Belt. While the presence of Hausa and Hausaized Muslims in the two Divisions focused on predated British colonialism, it was reified and elevated by British colonial administrative practices into a quasi-colonial community. I argued that through a long process of articulation, elaboration, and implementation, a novel corpus of significations founded on real and constructed socio-economic and political attributes of Hausa sociolinguistics was foisted on the non-Hausa speaking, non-Muslim peoples of the Middle Benue area of the Middle Belt. These impositions provoked violent backlashes in many cases. But more importantly, they complicated Idoma and Tiv engagements with British colonialism, victimizing both the Idoma and Tiv, and the Hausa

auxiliaries—who were perceived and treated by the Idoma and Tiv as the visible and vulnerable embodiment of British colonialism.

This analysis complicates an important paradigm of African colonial studies: the consensus that colonialism was an ideology founded starkly on divide and rule, and that colonial powers created and reified ethnic boundaries and differences to suit colonial bureaucratic, documentary, and administrative aims. This important and correct observation has been well documented.⁹⁷ However, this study shows that British colonialism sometimes prioritized a unitary and totalizing doctrine of rule, and that the British sometimes pursued cultural, economic, and political uniformity and sameness with as much vigor as they reified and accentuated the difference between African peoples in order to rule them. In the area under consideration, the British did not so much seek to formalize and codify difference as to use difference (between the Hausa-Caliphate model of social, political and economic organization and the material and symbolic universe of the Middle Belt) to achieve a measure of sameness and uniformity and in colonial administration. The aim of this project, I argue, was not to inscribe a new administrative system onto northern Nigeria but to prepare those perceived as being to “backward” for integration into the Indirect Rule system.

The aim of the British in seeking to engineer cultural and economic sameness by socializing the Idoma and Tiv into the administrative mainstream in northern Nigeria was the achievement of the highest possible degree of Indirect Rule. The aim of the more analyzed British magnification and codification of ethnic and cultural difference was the same: to establish a firm foundation for Indirect Rule. Indirect Rule was the overarching colonial obsession in both approaches. For it was precisely the thinking that the worldview and practices of the Idoma and Tiv were incompatible with Indirect Rule which birthed the idea of tutoring them into the readiness for the administrative system through the use of Hausa auxiliaries.

In this particular case, the desire to save money and personnel (which a different system of administration for the Middle Belt would have required), and a British belief in the potential of ‘native’ civilizing ‘native’ through British supervision authorized and sustained the British commitment to the Hausa-Caliphate imaginary.

Notes

1. The Hausa-Caliphate imaginary is actually a Hausa-Fulani caliphate imaginary. Starting from the late 18th century when commingling and intermarriages between the Hausa and the Fulani increased, a new ethnic category emerged. This category is linguistically Hausa but it is a hybrid of Fulani and Hausa culture. After the Othman bin Fodio Islamic Jihad, the mutual assimilation of the Hausa and Fulani accelerated. Presently, apart from small pockets of ethnic Fulani in the Adamawa area, smaller pockets of transhumant Fulani all over northern Nigeria, and the Maguzawa non-Muslim Hausa in the Northwestern states of modern Nigeria, much of the population of the pre-Jihad territory of Hausaland is made up of people who can be called Hausa-Fulani. Indeed, this is the term in use in contemporary Nigerian political and ethnic taxonomies and discussions.

Several competing definitions of the Middle Belt abound, especially since the Middle Belt is a geographically fluid existence. In general it is agreed that a conservative territorial estimation of the Middle Belt (as opposed to the idea of a Greater Middle Belt, which is a largely political construct appropriating all non-Hausa-Fulani and Kanuri peoples of northern Nigeria) comprises of Benue, Plateau, Kwara, Kogi, Southern Kaduna, FCT, parts of Niger, Adamawa, and Taraba states. Even this territorial definition is imperfect, since in all these states, there are significant numbers of Muslim non-Hausa as well Muslim Hausa peoples, who may or may not be captured by specific delineations of the Middle Belt. Similarly, “Muslim Hausa” states like Kebbi, Gombe, Bauchi, Borno, and even Katsina and Kano contain pockets of non-Hausa, non-Muslim populations that may qualify as Middle Belters in the political sense of the word, since Middle Belt identity is often politically constructed against Hausa-Fulani, Sokoto Caliphate Muslim identity. There were and still are non-Hausa, non Muslim peoples in the Jos Plateau, parts of Bauchi, Taraba, Adamawa, and Southern Borno who historically spoke Hausa as second or third languages, and these non-Caliphate people who did/do not share in Hausa ethnicity either by inheritance or assimilation were also subjected to the British policy of cultural erasure and assimilation. The non-Hausa speaking, non-Muslim sector of northern Nigeria, on the other hand, is a narrower descriptive category which consists of districts in the former Benue, Ilorin, and Kabba Provinces, whose populations, for the most part, didn’t speak Hausa at all.

2. By assimilation I do not imply that the British wanted to convert, by fiat or process, one ethnic group into another, or that it entailed losing one’s ethnic consciousness—that would contradict the principles of indirect rule. Rather, I use the term to describe the process of making a people acquire the socio-economic and political attributes of another people for purely functional (in this case, colonial administrative) purposes.
3. See Mamdani, 2002.
4. Coleman, 1958, 194
5. Irobi, 2005.
6. Davis and Kalu-Nwiiwu, 2001.
7. See Leonard, 2003.
8. Cameron to Passfield, 10th December 1931, Colonial Office Papers, London, CO 583/173/842. Cited in *Chunun Logams*, 1985, 124.
9. Mazrui and Mazrui, 1998.
10. For the scope of Hausa as a linguistic category, and for a discussion of its origins and spread in West Africa and in northern Nigeria, see Philips, *Spurious Arabic*, 2000. For a history of the Hausa ethnic group and of the spread of Hausa identity and influence in Nigeria and West Africa, see Mahdi Adamu, 1978.
11. See for instance, M. Hiskett, *Kitab Al-Farq ‘A work on the Habe Kingdoms Attributed to Uthman dan Fodio’*, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 23:3 (1960), 558-579.; see also Bivar, “The Wathiqat Ahl Al-Sudan: A Manifesto of the Fulani Jihad,” *The Journal of African History* 2:2 (1961), 235-243. This document, a chancery letter written by Othman bin Fodio himself to the Fulani Flagbearer of the Jihad in the Daura area, uses

- 'Sudan' and 'Hausa States' interchangeably to refer to the geographical area we now call Hausaland.
12. Arnett, *The Rise of the Sokoto Fulani: Being a Paraphrase and in Some Parts a Translation of the Infaku'l Maisuri of Sultan Mohammed Bello* (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1922), hereafter *Infakul Maisuri*; see also Hugh Clapperton, *Into the Interior of Africa: Record of the Second Expedition 1925-1927*, edited by Jamie Bruce Lockhart and Paul Lovejoy (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill N.V, 2005), which contains Mohammed Bello's cartographic and discursive efforts to delineate a Hausa-Islamic political and geographic entity and its frontiers and Others.
 13. Philips, 2000, p.v.
 14. See for instance the *Infakul Maisuri* of Mohammed Bello. His own testimonies and the many earlier texts that he quotes and consults attest to this history of ethnic Hausa-Fulani intermingling in the Western Sudan.
 15. The *Maguzawa* can still be found in small communities in Kano, Jigawa, and Katsina States of Northwestern Nigeria. Their unique, non-Islamic culture has come under sustained assault from the governments of these states; they are a constant target of Islamization campaigns, which have converted many of them to Islam, especially many of their young ones, who see Islamization as an access to urban life. This author has observed these Islamization campaigns. Islamization has also eroded many aspects of their culture. The adoption of the Sharia criminal legal code in many northern Nigerian states in the last seven years has had a devastating effect on their way of life as several aspects of their culture, including the brewing of grain beer, were deemed un-Islamic and banned.
 16. *Maguzawa* was used to denote non-Muslim Hausa people who submitted to the authority of the Sokoto Caliphate and paid tribute in exchange for being allowed to keep their identity and culture. The word itself is a Hausa version of "Majus" or a "Magian", one of the peoples of the book that, according to the ethics of Jihad in Islamic doctrine, could be accorded protection in an Islamic state in exchange for loyalty and the *Jizya*. See Murray Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate* (London: Longman, 1967), 67 fn. 18. The term "Majus" was also used by the Jihad leaders to refer to the Zamfarawa (the people of Zamfara), before the Jihad because they were seen as mostly non-Muslims as opposed to the people of other Hausa states who were constructed as nominal Muslims. See Mohammed Tukur b. Muhammad, *Qira al-ahibba* (1908), cited in Last, *The Sokoto Caliphate*, 67.
 17. Pierce, 2005, p.27.
 18. Magid, 1976, p.45.
 19. Fardon, 1988, p.147.
 20. Ikime, 1977.
 21. Arnette, *Infaku'l Maisuri*. Mohammed Bello's narrative on the expeditions on the frontiers of Idomaland (Doma) is a rather triumphalist rendering of the encounters between the Agatu Idoma and the Fulani raiders in that it masks the stalemated outcome of the wars. The wars produced uneasy stalemates and fluid triumphs for Keffi, the Zazzau-controlled raiding sub-emirate in the area. The stalemates nonetheless

resulted in the partial adoption of Islam and Hausa-Fulani culture as a strategy of survival and accommodation.

22. This is a Hausa term denoting trust but which, according to John Nengel, was enunciated into a political doctrine that allowed expanding Muslim polities and migrants from different parts of the Sokoto Caliphate to coexist peacefully with the non-Muslim peoples of the Central Nigerian Highlands. The terms of *amana* included stipulated tributes paid to the neighboring Muslim polities of Bauchi and Zazzau by the non-Muslim, non-Hausa Fulani states and mini-states on the Southern frontiers of the Caliphate as well as the reciprocal offer of protection from the emirates and sub-emirates. See Nengel, 1999. Although the works of Professor James Ibrahim cast some doubt on the extent to which the *amana* system was the normative relational model on the non-Muslim Southern frontier of the Caliphate, there is evidence to suggest that *amana* did hold informally in some areas and over certain periods.
23. I owe this point to Professor Murray Last who drew my attention to it in a personal conversation. Also see Professor Last's essay: "The Idea of 'Frontier' in the Nigerian Context," 1982.
24. Kukah, 1993, p.2.
25. James, 1997, p.17.
26. Ibid.
27. Meek, 1931. C.K Meek was the Anthropological Officer of the northern Nigerian Colonial Administration in the late 1920s and wrote for the British much of the ethnological notes on the ethnic groups of northern Nigeria. By 1931, he had risen to the position of Anthropological Officer, Administrative Service, Nigeria. One of Meek's assistant, Bitemya Sambo Garbosa II, wrote a history of the Chamba of the Benue based on research he conducted in Donga in 1927. It was published in two volumes as *Labarun Chambawa da Al' Amurransa* and *Salsalar Sarakunen Donga*. The two were published privately at about 1960 and were microfilmed by the University of Ibadan. For more bibliographic information on this, see Fardon, 1988, p.78 and p.345.
28. Perham, 1962, p.147.
29. Ibid., p.145.
30. See Streets, 2004; Barua, 1995; Leopold, 1974.
31. Streets, 2004.
32. Arnette, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, p.12.
33. Ibid.
34. Far from being controlled formally or informally by the caliphate zone, the Idah court was in fact building and consolidating its control over Nsukka Igbo and other peoples within its vicinity. In fact, as Shelton argues, the Igala were, like the Sokoto Caliphate, an imperial power in their own right. See Shelton, 1971.
35. E.W Bovil, 1968, p.132-134.
36. Clapperton, 2005.
37. Arnette, *Infaku'l Maisuri*, introduction (i)
38. See Clapperton, 2005, Appendix v-vi, pp. 485-486; p.493. Much information came from Mohammed Bello himself or members of his household. The map of the Caliphate's

Hausa core given to Clapperton and published in his journal, for instance, came from one Musa, a member of Mohammed Bello's household.

39. Ibid., appendix v, p.485; p.491; p.493.
40. Ibid., p.515. See p.488-511, for the maps used by Clapperton to represent the Sokoto Caliphate, its many emirates, trade routes, and Borno.
41. Ibid., p.397; p.486.
42. Ibid., "Appendix 5: Contemporary maps."
43. Baikie, 1854, p.106.
44. The word Munchi or Munci means "We have eaten[the cattle]," a Hausa expression which the Tiv allegedly used to explain to the Hausa-speaking Fulani pastoralists that their cattle had been taken. That the Tiv used Hausa to communicate with the Tiv pastoralists that they encountered is evidence of the fact that Hausa was a linguistic idiom which mediated relations between Hausa-speaking peoples and the non-Hausa speaking peoples of the Benue Valley in the precolonial period. The etymology of the 'munci' label is a poignant metaphor for the troubled and tense encounters which the Hausa-Fulani presence in the Tiv area produced.
45. For a full account of Clapperton's two phase travels in the Sokoto Caliphate, see his published journal, *Journal of a Second Expedition into the Interior of Africa from the Bight of Benin to Soccatoo* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Carey, 1829). Clapperton made his first journey to the Hausa States, the core of the Sokoto Caliphate, in 1822-1825. He met with the Shehu with whom he exchanged gifts and signed 'a treaty of trade and friendship.' He died on his second expedition, which he described as a quest to discover the mouth of the Niger River. His death occurred near Sokoto on April 13, 1827 before he could accomplish this mission.
46. See Barth, 1890; Ochon, 2001.
47. For a full account of the Lander brothers' travels, see their published journal titled *Journal of an Expedition to Explore the Course and Termination of the Niger, with a Narrative of a Voyage Down that River to its Termination*, 2 vols. (New York: J & J Harper, 1832-37).
48. Grampton, 1975, p.53.
49. Kukah, 1993, p.3.
50. Margery Perham, 1960, p.148-149.
51. Flora Shaw, 1905, pp. 83-84; p. 454.
52. Ibid.
53. Tseayo, 1975.
54. For the Idoma and Tiv examples of leadership patterns and political organization, see Magid, 1976: p.35-39 and Makar, 1994 p.23-30.
55. See Fallers, 1965, pp.145-6.
56. Roberts, 1962.
57. See Philips, 2000.
58. W.R Crocker, journal, Rhodes House Mss. Afr. S. 1073, 1. (hereafter 'Crocker's Journal') 19/11/1933.
59. Ibid.

60. Most of the Hausa interpreters were not ethnic Hausa but Hausaized Nupe, Gbagyi, and Ilorin Yoruba, but they were all Muslims and were chosen because of their understanding of, and/or prior participation in, Caliphate administrative practices, and because they had lived or traded in the Benue valley and had interacted with the Idoma.
61. The Royal Niger Company (RNC) was reconstituted from the National African Company in 1886 as a conglomerate uniting the major British trading firms on the Niger. The company grew through the brinkmanship of its first head, George Goldie, who oversaw the formation of the company's army, the RNC constabulary, signed most of the treaties that gave the British a foothold on the Niger, eliminated French and German trade rivals, and engaged in informal imperial practices such as expeditions and interference in African political affairs. All this was possible because the company had a royal charter. The charter was withdrawn by the British government in 1899, leading to the taking over by the inchoate British colonial authority in northern Nigeria of the assets of the company and the compensation of its shareholders. George Goldie was succeeded by Frederick Lugard, who presided over the company's liquidation and its transformation into a colonial administrative and quasi-military entity. Lugard also oversaw the formal annexation and routinization of the territories that the RNC had established informal colonial administrative control over.
62. Makar, 1994, p.99.
63. These encounters involved alleged Tiv theft of Hausa-Fulani cattle and Tiv raid of Hausa merchandize along the Abinsi trade corridor. See Ikime, 1977, p.169-177.
64. Makar, 1994, p.119.
65. Ibid., p.103.
66. Adamu, 1978, p.43.
67. See Adamu, 1978, for a discussion of the Elephant tusk trade pioneered by the Hausa in the Niger-Benue area.
68. Crocker's Journal 11/11/1933.
69. Crocker, 1971, p.31.
70. See NAK/OTUDIST ACC26 'Eastern District of Okwoga' by N.J Brooke.
71. Anyebe, 2002, p.66.
72. Ibid.
73. Ibid.
74. Kukah, 1993, p.11.
75. Ibid., p.3.
76. See Adamu, 1978.
77. Anyebe, 2002, p.64
78. Ibid., Okwu, 1976.
79. Anyebe, 2002, p.65.
80. Ibid., p.66.
81. Crocker's Journal, 18/11/1933.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid. 10/11/1933.
84. Ibid. 14/11/1933.

85. Makar, 1994, p.89.
86. Adamu, 1978, p.2.
87. Tseyayo, 1975, p.40.
88. NAI, E.S Pemberton, 1929, CSO 26/12874, vol. viii, quoted in Tseyayo p.41.
89. H.H Wilkinson, 1937: NAI CSO 26/12874 vol. XI.
90. Makar,1994, p.175.
91. Anyebe, 2002, p.63.
92. For more detail on the day-to-day administrative activities of the Hausa auxiliaries, see the journals of Hugh Elliot (Journal of H. P Elliot, Assistant District Officer, Rhodes House Mss. Afr. S. 1336), and that of W.R Crocker (Rhodes House Mss. Afr. S. 1073, 1,). In these journals the Hausa *dogarai* (policemen), "*mallams*" (scribes and tax collectors), and messengers feature prominently in the daily records of administrative proceedings in Idoma Division. The malleability of Hausa as category is underscored by the fact that some of these auxiliary colonial actors were identified as Muslim Nupe, who were "Hausa" enough for the task of administering Idoma Division by virtue of their descent from the Caliphate tradition.
93. Ochonu, 2004, chapter 5.
94. Ibid.
95. Anyebe, 2002, p. 81.
96. Anyebe, 2002.
97. See for instance, Mahmood Mamdani, 2002, and 1996. In both works, he discusses the ways in which colonialism created little ethno-cultural autocracies and bureaucratized them as an essential element of the colonial system. In the former work, he argues that the Belgian colonial creation of Hutu and Tutsi ethnicities, and their bureaucratization and politicization was one of the remote causes of the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

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