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Title: "Historical and cultural conditions of political corruption among the Hausa."

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Source: *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 6 (2): 164-194.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONDITIONS OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION AMONG THE HAUSA

If we regard corruption as the use of public office or authority for private advantage and gain, then corruption is always latent in centralized politics; but even when manifest, it is not always easy to isolate from other conditions of its context for formal analysis. The Hausa of Northern Nigeria, whose history is fairly well known, and who have long traditions of political centralisation, provide data well worth study from this point of view. The Hausa language contains several terms denoting political conditions and practices of interest in this connection. *Zalunci* refers to oppression, *tilas* to compulsion, *zamba* to oppression and swindling, *rikice* to fraud and confusion alike, *ha'inci* to bribery, *cin hanci* to taking bribes, *yi gaisuwa* to making greetings or gifts, *tara* to fines, *cin tara* to taking (keeping?) fines, *wasau* to forcible confiscation of property, *munafunci* to treachery and breaking of political agreements, *hamiya* to political rivalry, *kunjiya* to a faction or group of supporters, *barantaka* to clientage, *chapka* to allegiance, loyalty, *fadanci* to courtiership, *jekadanci* to political agency, *kinjibibi* and *kutukutu* to differing types of intrigue, character assassination, and so on. Clearly if an extensive vocabulary describing cows indicates a people's preoccupation with cattle, this Hausa vocabulary indicates parallel preoccupation with political organisation; but to my knowledge, Hausa lacks a term for the concept of political corruption outlined above. The terms just listed, with others in common use, cluster around foci of Hausa interest — relations of political solidarity and rivalry, and relations between rulers and ruled. For Hausa, corruption in government is generally a mode of oppression, its product, condition or correlate. To analyse such practices, we must therefore examine Hausa government in its historical and cultural contexts, paying special attention to its normative structure and change. Even a brief review of Hausa political development may contribute to our general understanding of corruption and its relation to other modes of political misbehaviour. Such a review avoids errors which may arise from prejudging these contextual relationships.

The Hausa are a large Islamized people, settled mainly between 10 and 13½ degrees North, 4 and 10 degrees East, in Northern Nigeria and neighbouring Niger. Numbering over nine millions, they are organized in several large chiefdoms, some of which, such as Kano, Katsina, Zaria, Daura and Gobir,

claim a long history. Of this large population, about one-third are Fulani, the remainder being described as Habe or Hausa, the last term also including both groups. Since 1810 the great majority of Hausa have been ruled by Muslim Fulani who conquered the old Hausa (Habe) chiefdoms in a *jihad* launched by Shehu Othman dan Fodio in 1804 for the defence and expansion of Islam. Though initially directed only to the Hausa states, the impetus of conquest carried the Fulani further afield to Nupe and Ilorin, Bauchi and even to Adamawa in the Northern Cameroons, where a new state was founded, and to Bornu, for long the dominant Muslim power of this area, the capital of which was twice sacked before the Fulani were driven back. During this struggle, several defeated Habe chiefs withdrew to establish successor states from which they continued the conflict. Throughout the last century, with minor interludes, these Habe fought to recover their old dominions, but without marked success. By 1826 the Fulani had come to an understanding with Bornu in which common frontiers were delimited, and thereafter the boundaries of their empire changed little until the arrival of the British.

Between 1900 and 1903, British forces under Sir Frederick (later Lord) Lugard overran this area and included it in the new Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. Between 1914 and 1918, Lugard amalgamated this territory with others due south to form Nigeria. Indirect Rule, under which indigenous peoples were administered through their traditional institutions and rulers, prevailed throughout the country. In 1934 Sir Donald Cameron modified this policy somewhat to allow progressive modernisation of the Muslim emirates and other Northern communities. In December 1951, the principle of elective representation was first introduced to the North. Through a hierarchy of electoral colleges which ranged from villages upward to Districts, and so to Emirates and Provinces, delegates were selected for the new Regional House of Representatives. Three years later Nigeria became a Federation of three Regions, each with its own internally autonomous government. In 1959 the Northern Region acquired full internal autonomy within this Federation, and in the following year Nigeria became independent. These briefly are the broad outlines of recent political developments affecting Fulani and Hausa. To appreciate their relation to political corruption, we need more knowledge of Hausa political history, and especially its character under the Fulani and British.

I

The peoples of these Hausa states share a common history and habitat, occupy a common territory, and have a common culture and language, the latter giving its name to them all. Within this area, the greatest differences hold between Muslim and pagan Hausa, the latter being now small in number,

scattered, and subject to the Muslims. Among Muslim communities, significant differences persist between those ruled by Fulani and others. Within chiefdoms, the basic differences are between Fulani and Habe, nobles and commoners, urban and rural folk, and men and women. The political history of this amalgam is essential for the understanding of Hausa government, its conditions and characteristics.

Certain traditions point to an early migration from Libya which may have introduced matrilineal chieftainship to Hausaland.¹ This was followed by waves of mounted immigrants during the ninth to tenth centuries A.D., who came mainly from the east, bringing patrilineal succession, superior weapons and well-digging techniques. By 1350 the peoples of this area were organised in a number of petty chiefdoms, some of which survived to become important city-states, markets and stage-posts or termini of the Sudanic and Saharan caravan trade. At this time also, Islam reached Katsina and Kano from the western Mandinka empire of Mali, then in decline. In Kano, the rulers received and the people rejected the Faith. In Katsina the reverse was the case.² Underlying these differing responses to Muslim penetration was a deep division between rulers and ruled which has persisted, despite changes of identity, until to-day. This structural contraposition combined with normative and organisational differences between Islam and local paganism to provide an internal source of political change.

Islam spread slowly among the Hausa, reaching Zaria, 100 miles south of Kano, a hundred years later.³ By 1400 the power of Mali had greatly diminished. The Muslim state of Kanem-Bornu, then east of Chad, was struggling for survival, and temporarily lost control of Kanem when the capital was shifted westward, near the margins of Hausaland. Shortly afterwards, Bornu made Kano pay tribute, thus opening the Sudanic trade-routes from Chad to Timbuktu and beyond.⁴ For some years the control of Hausa was at stake, first Songhay and then its rebellious vassal, Kebbi, dominating the western chiefdoms, but for the most part Kano, Daura, Biram and Katsina remained under Bornu rule, perhaps Zaria also.⁵ From a number of sources, including current practices, contemporary accounts, local chronicles and traditions, we can discern the main outlines of political growth during this period.

The petty chiefdoms which had emerged before 1350 had little trade, a variety of pagan cults, and simple stratification. Each consisted of a central

¹ H. Richmond Palmer, *Sudanese Memoirs*, Vol. 3, Lagos, 1926.

² F. de F. Daniel, *A History of Katsina* (unpublished ms, n.d.), p. 5 and H. R. Palmer, "The Kano Chronicle", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 38 (1908), pp. 58-98, esp. pp. 70-71.

³ E. J. Arnett, "A Hausa Chronicle", *Journal of the Royal African Society*, Vol. 9 (1909), pp. 161-67.

⁴ H. R. Palmer, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

⁵ M. G. Smith, "The Beginnings of Hausa Society, 1000-1500 A.D.", paper presented to the 4th International African Institute Seminar, Dakar, 1961.

stockaded town with nearby hamlets and tributary villages. The population was organised in exogamous local patrilineages, characterised by totemism, lineage markings and spirit worship. There was no market institution and little slavery, although some occupational specialisation had emerged. In most chiefdoms the rulers claimed descent from recent immigrants, and sought to displace the indigenous cults by their own. The early history of Kano consists mainly of this strife between rulers and ruled. Tribute in kind and labour was demanded, but was often collected only by force.⁶ Of these petty chiefdoms, some were old, others upstart, and all were more or less actively engaged in fighting their neighbours, since independent survival and expansion by conquest were virtually the same. In these struggles, the ruling group of a village, together with its dependents and supporters probably formed the offensive force, leaders fighting on horseback, and the bulk of the people probably turning out in strength only when their homes were attacked, and then often too late. Certain chiefdoms gradually emerged during the 13th and 14th centuries as dominant units in various parts of Hausa country. As a chiefdom grew, so did the chiefly power, with its claim to privilege and resulting status differences. The capitals of these expanding chiefdoms grew likewise in size, numbers and strength, and in their fortifications. By 1350 the main chiefdoms were beginning to meet at their borders, and also to fight. When Islam arrived from the more advanced Mali empire, it was at once pressed into their service by the rulers of Kano, and in Katsina adopted by the populace to oppose the chiefly power. The advent of Islam was followed by the first recorded slave razzia of Hausa history, a raid by Yaji of Kano which yielded four thousand slaves.⁷

Yaji employed his Mandinka visitors in his struggles with the people of Kano, and in attacks on the chiefdom of Rano, due south. His successor, Kanajeji, being defeated in his first attack on Zaria, reverted to paganism and secured the popular allegiance. By 1410 the rulers of Kano were using chain-mail, iron helmets and quilted cotton armour in their battles. Eunuchs from Zaria and muskets from Bornu were introduced by 1440, camels within the following decade. At this time a deposed Bornu ruler settled in Kano, introduced reading and writing, and established the first recorded market, thereby bringing Kano into the Sudanic trade network. By 1450 Bornu had established suzerainty and was demanding tribute in slaves. Abdullahi Burja (1438-52), the first tributary ruler of Kano, organised raids which yielded one thousand slaves per month, and also built twenty-one settlements of throne slaves (*ibdabu*), each containing a thousand. When the Tuareg caravans began visiting Kano, slaves were readily available for export. The kingship had changed and the new rulers were committed to Islam.⁸

⁶ H. R. Palmer, "The Kano Chronicle" (see n. 2), p. 67.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 75-76.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 66-77.

Mohammed Rumfa (1465-99), relying on Bornu guidance and support, on new weapons and administrative techniques, and on the rising prosperity and population of Kano, remodelled the kingship on the lines of Bornu, establishing a large new palace (which still stands), and adopting insignia and ceremonial devices from Bornu. He placed eunuchs in state offices, in control of the harem, treasury and palace services. He claimed all first-born virgins from the settlements of throne slaves as concubines, and introduced *kame*, the power to requisition labour or appropriate the property of subjects at will. On the Bornu model, he established the Kano Council of Nine, which still functions as a traditional council of state.⁹ At the same time, Rumfa commissioned the Muslim writer, El Maghili, to write a short treatise for his guidance on the "Obligations of Princes."¹⁰ Thus political centralisation, tributary links with Bornu, commercial development and the adoption of Islam by the rulers, went hand in hand. Simultaneously the chiefs became kings, free of traditional norms and political restraints. When Bornu extended its dominion from Kano to the other Hausa kingdoms, winning control from Songhay and Kebbi, other Hausa chiefs adopted patterns of kingship from Kano, with local variations. Under Bornu dominion, with its steady demand for tribute in slaves, and under the influence of Islam and long-distance trade with Tuareg, Arab, Nupe and others, Hausa society took its traditional shape, the large centralised chiefdom having a fortified capital where the ruler maintained an elaborate court and the major external trade routes were concentrated. Round about were a number of walled satellite towns, each with its own market, mosque and local chief, subject to the king and rendering tax or tribute through some titled fiefholder who remained at the ruler's court. Islam was the official religion of these states, although in such areas as Daura and Zaria, even among the rulers its impact was uncertain. Trimmingham has pointed out how the Islamic impetus spent itself during the 14th to 18th centuries in the Western Sudan and became accommodated to native culture, while promoting its change.¹¹ Under and alongside Muslim forms, many old practices persisted. Nonetheless, Hausa owe the development of large cities, centralised states, long-distance trade using currency and credit, large-scale slavery, technological progress, traditions of learning, and increasingly sharp stratification, directly or indirectly to the impact of Islam.

We need not follow local history in too much detail. Bornu was often beset by external enemies and internal conflict; and despite their common allegiance, Hausa states fought one another for trade, territory, slaves and dominion. War between Katsina and Kano, the two leading states, lasted nearly a hundred years, the prize at stake being monopoly of the major trade

⁹ M. G. Smith, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ T. H. Baldwin (transl.), *The Obligations of Princes, An Essay on Moslem Kingship, by Sheikh Mohammed Al-Maghili of Tlemsen* (Beyrouth, 1932), pp. 3-4.

¹¹ J. S. Trimmingham, *A History of Islam in West Africa* (Oxford, 1962), pp. 141-154.

routes. With Zamfara and Gobir, Katsina overthrew Kebbi in the early 18th century, then found itself forced on the defensive after Gobir conquered Zamfara in 1764 and became dominant under Bawa Jan Gwarzo, 1776-94. Zaria had its heyday in the 16th century, but was later overrun, along with Kano, by the pagan Jukun (Kwararafa), based on the Benue. There was, in short, a long period of internecine conflict following on the establishment of effective royal absolutism before the *jihad* of 1804-10.

During this time, successive rulers of Kano each sought to add some new item to the forms, techniques or bases of royal power and prerogative. Thus, *kame* extended to include seizure of women as well as property, *corvée* increased, and ceremonial self-abasement was imposed on all subjects.¹² Mohammed Sharifa, 1703-31, extended royal levies and seizures to the Kano City markets on such a scale that "the Arabs left the town and went to Katsina, and most of the poorer people fled to the country."¹⁴ As these methods of rule were entrenched and extended, differences between rulers and ruled increased, stratification deepened, and an elaborate social etiquette developed. Commoners learnt their place as part of their culture. Eunuchs and slaves provided rulers with an independent basis of power which freed them substantially from the need to cultivate their subjects' allegiance. In the 17th and 18th centuries, a Hausa ruler concentrated his attention on rival chiefdoms and on his senior kinsmen or free officials. The ruler took such steps as he could to deprive lineage rivals of power and to reduce powerful officials, but although relying increasingly on eunuchs and slaves, he could not administer his chiefdom without free assistants, vassals, clients and hereditary office-holders. Moreover, control of the succession always eluded rulers, this being decided after their death by the alignments prevailing among senior officials.

States varied in their constitution, but all for which I have details were oligarchic in character and contained various devices by which the king's absolutism was at least in theory limited, and the power to decide policy was dispersed collegially. Probably the king was only checked on issues of immediate importance to his senior officials, namely their appointments and tenure of office, their powers, decisions of war and peace, successions to the throne, certain judicial issues, and changes in the state religion. No evidence suggests that king and officials ever came in conflict about the treatment of commoners. Landeroin in 1906 described the independent Hausa states of Gobir, Maradi and Tasawa as consisting essentially of rulers and a subject class, the former monopolising military and political functions and giving overt allegiance to Islam, the latter tied to their farms as serf or peasant, and

¹² S. J. Hogben, *The Mohammadan Emirates of Nigeria* (Oxford, 1930), pp. 56-61 and *passim*.

¹³ H. R. Palmer, "The Kano Chronicle", pp. 66-94.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

having limited interests or rights in their government.¹⁵ My own work in Maradi on the history of Katsina suggests that Landeroin's account may be quite as appropriate to these 18th-century Hausa chiefdoms as to those he visited.

Various sources indicate close linkages between the success of a chiefdom in war, its prosperity, degree of centralisation, royal absolutism and tendency to oppression. Kebbi under Kanta and his successors, Zaria under Amina, and Gobir under Bawa Jan Gwarzo all give this picture. Military success increased the ruler's independence by augmenting his forces, especially with horses, muskets, armour, and slaves taken in the struggle; but military success was generally short-lived. It tended to provoke allegiance designed to redress the balance of power — as for example the alliance of Gobir, Katsina and Zamfara against Kebbi — or it encouraged rulers to over-extend themselves, as in the case of Gobir, the resulting defeats being followed by sharp increase in the demands made on subjects, falling prosperity, and a spiral of oppression.

II

The translation of a short pamphlet by Shehu Othman dan Fodio, recently published, lists a number of contemporary features of Hausa government which he regarded as unjust and alien to Islam, and against which he specifically directed the *jihad*.¹⁶ A much longer manuscript by the Shehu, the *Bayan Wujub al Hijra alal Ibad*, which I have paraphrased, sets out the binding obligations of the *jihad* on Muslims, and discusses "pagan" and Muslim government in detail.¹⁷ Together, these texts give as clear and authoritative a statement of the political aims of the leader of the *jihad* as could be asked for. Curiously enough, within a century another conqueror, Sir Frederick (later Lord) Lugard, was to present an equally systematic statement of his policy, its grounds and objectives. Neither of these critical statements reached the Hausa commoners clearly or at the appropriate time.

Hiskett, who translated the *Kitāb al-farq*, discusses the following Habe practices denounced by Shehu in some detail: cattle taxes payable in local currency, tax on townspeople, tax levied at the Muslim festivals, *gaisuwa*, a

¹⁵ Landeroin, *Documents Scientifiques de la Mission Tilho* (1906-09), Vol. II, p. 519: "Les habitants des tribus habitant les régions comprises entre le Niger et le lac Tchad peuvent être divisés en deux grandes classes ou castes: 1. les conquérants du sol, qui constituent la noblesse et sont apparentés de façon plus ou moins éloignée aux sultans . . . 2. les roturiers, qui forment la population autochtone soumise par les premiers; ils sont désignés sous le nom de *talakka* (plur. *talakkaoua*)."

¹⁶ 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*, Vol. XXIII, part. 3, London, 1960.

¹⁷ M. G. Smith and Mallam Muntaka Kumasi, *Bayan Wujub al Hijra alal ibad*, by Shehu dan Fodio, a paraphrase of Sections 1-57, unpublished ms, 1959.

'douccur' or bribe, *tawasa* (*tausa*?) or levies on meat in markets, *aqama* or all other market levies, *kamuwa* or illegal appropriation of property, *gargadi* or compulsory military service commutable for cash, and the use of inflated titles; but the pamphlet also denounces Habe laws against Islamic observances such as male use of turbans and veiling of women, "the giving of a gift to one who conducts them before the ruler",¹⁸ bribery of judges and legal assessors, illegal taxes on merchants and travellers, confiscation of commoners' beasts which strayed among the ruler's, refusal of just compensation for damages by the ruler's cattle, adjudication by customary rather than Muslim law and procedures, and confiscation of property belonging to travellers who die in these states.

There can be no doubt about the powerful passions which moved the Shehu in this eloquent indictment of traditional Habe rule, nor, also, about the immediate practical purpose of his writing. The first section of this pamphlet, his indictment of Habe government, concludes, "Therefore do not follow their way in their government, and do not imitate them, not even in the titles of their king, such as *Kukinnu* and *Galadima* and *Ubandawaki* and *Dhagi* and *Bargha* and *Sarkin Yari*. Address your Emir as 'Commander of the Believers' and the emir of each Province as 'Emir of Such-and-such a Province' and the emir of each place as 'Emir of Such-and-such a place' and the emir of each village as 'Emir of Such-and-such a Village', and him who has charge of God's statutory punishments as 'Emir of the Statutory Punishments'."¹⁹ The remaining three sections "in explanation of the ways of the Muslims in their government," set out the essential religious and political reforms, the rules governing revenue and territorial administration, and recommend study of the Abbasid Caliphate as the best model. For further instruction, Shehu refers his audience to the longer text, written in 1806 AD (1221 AH) — the Book of the Explanation of the Hijra for Believers (*Bayan Wujub al Hijra*).

Hiskett checks on the Shehu's allegations, and corroborates them by the observations of Clapperton in 1829 and Barth in 1857, as well as from the writings of other leaders of the *jihad* such as Shehu's brother and Vizier, the Waziri Abdullahi, first Emir of Gwandu, and by Shehu's son and successor as Amir-al-Mu'minin (Commander of the Faithful or Sultan of Sokoto — in Hausa, *Sarkin Musulmi*).²⁰ Barth, in 1851, had observed use of illegal fines at Tasawa, east of Maradi.²¹ In 1958 the ex-Wazir of Daura, Mallam Alhassan ibn Musa, who dictated a Hausa translation of the *Kitāb al-Farq* to me at Daura, commented that all the practices inveighed against by Shehu there were current in the Habe Daura of his youth. Only after he had finally acquired and studied this book of Shehu's, said Mallam Alhassan, did he

¹⁸ Hiskett, *op. cit.*, p. 569.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 572-3.

²¹ H. Barth, *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa*, Vol. II (London, 1857), pp. 16-17.

begin to understand the real basis of the *jihād* launched by Shehu against his ancestors. As we shall see, many practices arraigned and forbidden by Shehu flourished during the latter 19th century and as late as 1950, though also forbidden by the British.

J. S. Trimingham has recently summarised the elements which entered into the recrudescence of Islam in the Western Sudan during the early 19th century, and their effects. Among these background factors, the contribution of Moorish clerical tribes, and the spread of maraboutism from Mauretania through Tukulor eastward, are important. So are the development of religious orders, such as the Qadiriya and Tijaniya, which demanded a purer pursuit of Islam.²² Following the collapse of the Songhay empire in 1592, there had been a general increase of disorder and oppressive rule in the Western Sudan, including Futa Toro, from which area the Shehu's family came. Undoubtedly, however, his major motivations arose from the circumstances of the society in which he lived. The *Kitāb* and the *Bayan Wujub* both contrast the evils and oppression of Habe government with the justice and rectitude of a government ruled by God's statutory punishments and laws.

Trimingham has recently compared the *jihād* of Shehu Othman dan Fodio with that of Hamadu at Masina, 1810-15. Hamadu's conquests extended from Timbuktu on the Niger to Jenne, and from Bagana to Hombori, an area about 350 miles wide by 370 across. Trimingham observes that "Hamadu, unlike Uthman dan Fodio, proved capable of controlling his Fulbe, and showed exceptional administrative abilities. Once his rule was established, he organised the state on theocratic lines, appointing an *amir* and a *qadi* to each province, establishing a system of taxation, a *beit el mal*, and a form of military service."²³ It can be shown that the Shehu also did likewise, but the area conquered by Othman's followers was 1100 miles East to West by about 400 miles North to South. Hamadu's circumstances enabled him to build a central capital, Hamdallahi, which strengthened his control by reducing problems of communications. Othman's *jihād* succeeded more swiftly in other parts of Hausaland than in Gobir, where the struggle began, and when Bello founded the new capital at Sokoto, eastern Hausa had already been overrun and brought under Fulani administration. Sokoto, sited between Gobir and Kebbi, stood near the western limits of Shehu's conquests; problems of communication and control from the imperial centre were thus very much increased. Later, Lugard was to choose a western site for his first headquarters, but this was soon moved into a more central position at Kaduna, primarily to improve communications and centralise control.

From 1804, when the Habe king of Gobir launched his first assault on Shehu, fighting continued bitterly until 1808, when the Gobir capital, Alkalawa, was sacked, by which time the successes of Shehu's lieutenants in

Daura, Zaria, Katsina and elsewhere had assured the establishment of a large Muslim state.²⁴ From the start of fighting, Shehu placed military and administrative control in the hands of his brother Abdullahi, his son Bello, and the general Aliyu Jedu, while devoting his main efforts to teaching, praying, organising his followers, writing, and preparing manuals for their instruction and guidance. Thus, his long text summarising the rules governing *jihād* was completed in 1809, when it was most urgently needed to guide his lieutenants. The *Kitāb al Farq* seems to have been written in 1811-12, possibly as a manifesto outlining administrative reforms. Shortly after the fall of Alkalawa, Shehu divided the administration of his empire between Abdullahi, who ruled the west from Gwandu, and Bello, who ruled the more populous east from Sokoto. At this time, Hamadu was conquering Masina, having taken a flag of allegiance from the Shehu.²⁵ It is certainly possible that Shehu expected the conquests of Abdullahi and Hamadu to link up and extend the new Muslim empire west beyond Jenne. However, on establishing control, Hamadu seems to have cut his ties with Shehu.

Following this division, Shehu devoted himself to teaching and the preparation of treatises on government and Islam for the new rulers. Abdullahi, an excellent poet, general and scholar, followed the Shehu's example and prepared such texts as the *Diya'ul Hukkam* and *Diya'ul Siyasa*, and others on relevant matters. Mohammed Bello, Sultan of Sokoto, 1817-37, also preoccupied himself with writing historical and administrative texts, of which much that is valuable has survived, for example his correspondence with the subordinate Emir of Bauchi, Yakubu.²⁶ The significance of this literary effort by the Shehu, his brother and his son is not to be measured simply in terms of its practical effect. By this concentrated programme of writing, they sought to solve the problems of communication which the sheer extent of conquest had created. Copies were prepared at Sokoto for distribution to the provincial emirs, on the assumption that these men would apply the Shehu's doctrine and orders. The great mass of the conquered people were illiterate and knew no Arabic, the language in which Shehu, Adullahi and Bello wrote. In consequence, these texts were not addressed to them but to their rulers, no other course being open. Together, the Shehu's books express his conception of Islamic government and his programme of reform in detail fully comparable with that of Lugard's Memoranda, but in either case the conqueror's written doctrine and instructions failed to reach the people. For the historian of Hausa, such works provide objective standards against which subsequent developments can be assessed. The Shehu's failure to enforce and administer Islam is partly a function of his military success and of the

²⁴ E. J. Arnett, *The Rise of the Sokoto Fulani* (Lagos, 1922), esp. "The History of Sokoto", pp. 19-29.

²⁵ J. S. Trimingham, *op cit.*, p. 179. But see Arnett, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

²⁶ W. E. N. Kensdale, *A Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts preserved in the University Library*. Ibadan, Nigeria, 1955-58.

²² Cf. Baldwin, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

²³ J. S. Trimingham, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-60.

problems of communication this created. Even Zaria, one of the Sokoto provinces, was almost as large as Masina under Hamadu. Moreover, throughout the following years, the Fulani of Sokoto and Gwandu were engaged in continuous struggle against Habe from Gobir, Abuja, Daura, Maradi and Kebbi, as well as rebellious movements at Hadejia, Zamfara and other places. Their achievements in retaining their territorial control and formal commitment to Islamic theocracy, given these circumstances, remains impressive. Nonetheless, deviations from Islamic models and from the Shehu's instructions developed rapidly and grew apace.

The first two rulers of Zaria, Musa and Yamusa, Umaru Dallaji who was given Katsina, and Mallam Ishaku who took Daura, Yakubu of Bauchi and Suleimanu who was placed in charge of Kano, all owed their position, like Abdullahi and Bello themselves, to their pre-eminence as scholars and lovers of Islam. None of these men were crowned, and all ruled as mallams (clerics and Islamic scholars) rather than kings, administering war, justice, religion and civil affairs equally. Taxation was light for Muslims, heavier for heathen, but under Bello, Sokoto refused to accept tribute, ruling that each should be content with his own. In each state, the main organ of policy discussion and decision was initially the Muslim *jema'a* or assembly of learned and senior males, the Shehu's *jema'a* again providing the model. Excepting the Shehu himself, leaders were thus first among equals and entitled to no special rights on personal grounds.²⁷

But this simple government of learned men based on the consensus of the *jema'a* could not continue indefinitely. Even during the *jihud*, disputes and rivalry between Fulani leaders were frequent, bitter, and fraught with change. For some months the leaders selected by Shehu to conquer in concert disputed seniority and refused to co-operate, finally sending an emissary to Shehu asking that he appoint one of them in full charge. Shehu's response, which was typical, was to ask for the most learned and devout Muslim in Kano and to put him in control, although hitherto not included among the leaders of the *jihud*. In Katsina, there were also bitter disputes among the leaders and these proved soluble only by effective subdivision of the former state between them, each leader having identical status. Zaria, overrun by four Fulani lineages, developed as many competing dynasties. The Fulani conquest of these Habe states was carried out by bands of lineage kin and other groups, each under its captain, who sought power for himself and his faction. Even before victory, disagreements among these lieutenants were common, over pre-eminence and policy alike.²⁸

Uncertainties regarding succession multiplied these tensions and created crises. When the Shehu died in 1817, his brother Abdullahi clearly expected to succeed, and so perhaps did some other senior associates of Shehu from

²⁷ M. G. Smith, field notes 1958-59.

²⁸ S. J. Hogben, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-7, 82-3, 94-5; and M. G. Smith, 1958-59 field notes.

other kin groups. Abdullahi found himself outmanoeuvred by Mohammed Bello, who thus became Sultan. Almost immediately, Bello faced a revolt led by Abdusallami of Kwarre, a leading disciple of dan Fodio. In Kano, Sulcimanu died in 1819 and his successor, Dabo, was chosen from another lineage. Like Bello, Dabo faced local revolts led by rival Fulani. For three years he campaigned throughout Kano before his rule was secure. Dabo's praise-name, *Cigari* (conqueror) aptly summarises the basis of his rule. To secure the support of non-Fulani subjects, Dabo wrote Mamman Bello asking permission to employ the old Habe titles and offices of Kano as machinery for its administration, together with essential insignia and procedures of Habe rule. In Zaria Mallam Musa may have already begun to reintroduce certain traditional Habe forms. In Katsina and Zaria similar problems of succession gave rise to different types of solution, all in some sense temporary, uncertain and divisive.

The Shehu's leadership had been unchallenged and disinterested. He could therefore resolve all political disputes which arose between his followers: but Bello lacked Shehu's charisma, seniority, and political independence. During a series of succession crises under Bello, competing interests within the new Fulani ruling groups encouraged the progressive adoption of Habe political forms and official structures for territorial and city administration, palace organisation, taxation, levies, war, market administration and the like. By no means was this reinstatement of Habe governmental forms complete or exact. Many innovations designed to establish Islam and its practices were introduced; in other cases, old Habe forms were adapted to new rules and functions, and much of the Habe machinery may have been lost, erased by the conditions of conquest, by the composition and needs of the new ruling group, and by changes in other elements of the system.²⁹ However, whatever the bases or intentions of these developments, they were all in direct disobedience to the Shehu's instructions cited above.³⁰ Even today Fulani recognise this. They minimise criticism by limiting the distribution of these political tracts by Shehu. They also seek to evade criticism by observing the letter of Shehu's commands as best they may. Thus the holders of common Habe titles such as Ciroma, Galadima, Madaki or Wombai may be designated in Arabic or Fulani as Amirs of particular districts or fiefs. Hajji Sa'id's account of the Sokoto Empire from 1817 to 1849 illustrates the use of these Arabic designations.³¹ Thus the traditional Habe offices filled by Fulani nobles have esoteric and exoteric designations, the former used mainly to demonstrate fidelity to Shehu's Muslim models, while the latter have general administrative use.

This parallelism breaks down when administrative practices are examined

²⁹ M. G. Smith, *Government in Zazzau 1800-1950* (Oxford, 1960), pp. 141-8.

³⁰ M. Hiskett, *op. cit.*, p. 569.

³¹ C. E. J. Whitting (transl.), *A History of Sokoto*, by El Haj Sa'id. Ife-Olu Printing Works, Kano, N. Nigeria, P.O. Box 237, n.d.

in detail. In the *Kitāb al Farq*, Shehu explicitly describes and prohibits certain traditional Habe forms; in the *Bayan Wujub*, sections 6 to 11, he sets out the detailed positive political obligations of Muslims and the institutions proper to Muslim government, Section 10 for instance being devoted to the various types of legally recognised chieftainships. Sections 52 to 57 likewise detail political practices prohibited by Islam, many of which were current in Hausa before the *jihād*. Section 52 deals with the stopping of oppression and intrigue, and 53 describes other practices forbidden in government. There is no room for misunderstanding Shehu's message, nor for the equivocations of verbal parallelism.

Nonetheless, Fulani rulers who adopted Hausa titles, offices, and modes of political organisation in order to stabilise relations among themselves and with their subjects, also adopted the Habe political and administrative practices forbidden by their leader and law alike. Clapperton mentions the sale of offices as current among Fulani in 1827;³² Barth records in detail the bribes and gifts he had to make to secure rights of movement or audience with chiefs,³³ and Mohammed Bello himself failed to enforce the legal subdivision of booty on the Sokoto forces.³⁴ Levies continued to be made on markets for grain and other supplies, in Katsina and in Fulani Daura for meat at Sallah, when taxes were also collected; and *kamuwa* gradually developed into *wasau*, the forcible seizure of property belonging to a political offender, official or other. Judicial administration remained ambiguous, some states, as well as some rulers, being superior in this respect. Several injunctions of Muslim law besides those relating to booty were poorly applied, among them the laws of divorce, inheritance, land tenure and women's status. Practices expressly forbidden by Shehu as anti-Islamic, such as self-abasement by throwing dirt on one's head, illegal use of cash compensation for certain offences, and compulsory military service, all flourished once more. *Gaisuwa*, the term for greeting, is synonymous with the giving of presents, including *toshi* or bribes. Unauthorised fines (*tara*) are often hardly distinguishable from levies or blackmail. *Toshi*, *tara* and *gaisuwa* of various sorts were all widespread until at least 1950. *Jizya*, the poll-tax due from non-Muslim subjects, was irregular in incidence and collection, the vassals administering these populations submitting their tribute in goods, especially slaves.³⁵

Adherence to the instructions of Shehu and Abdullahi varied by time and place. In the large Hausa cities, Islamic religious observance was enjoined and a full complement of priests, Muslim judges and clerical officers were appointed, sometimes a special official being charged with supervision of pastoral Fulani and protection of their grazing rights. Capitals contained,

besides the court of the *qadi* (H. *alkali*, pl. *alkalai*), another in charge of markets and commerce, and the ruler's court to which issues involving officials, land, pagans and prominent strangers were brought. Properly trained and formally appointed *alkalai* were also found in some rural towns, but by far the greater part of the territory and population remained subject to the informal jurisdiction of territorial chiefs and their agents, as had been the case under the Habe. The ruler sent administrative instructions to fiefholders through eunuchs or throne slaves. Fiefholders relayed these to the village chiefs through their *jekadu*. Vassals and throne demesnes were dealt with separately. Slave settlements received differing treatment according to their holder's rank and status. By 1850 the Sultan Aliyu Babba (1842-59) had organised a system of imperial tribute which involved systematic occupational taxation in the provinces. In consequence, imperial revenues increased sharply, together with demands on subjects and opportunities for official abuse of power at all levels of tax collection.

Hajji Sa'id, who was a Koranic reader at the court of Sultans Bello, Atiku and Aliyu, from 1817 to 1849, has left us a most valuable and intimate account of developments there. To Sa'id, the Vizier of Sokoto confessed his speculation and responsibility for Buhari's appointment, deposition, and revolt in Hadejia.³⁶ In Sa'id's account we can follow the rivalry of brothers for high office, court intrigues, and betrayals in battle, and so understand how power and wealth were linked, and how the development of dynastic divisions promoted progressive deviation from the Shehu's instructions. My own studies of the political history and development of Sokoto, Kano, Daura, Katsina and Zaria fully support Sa'id's observations.

Even in Habe times, these states had varied in their constitution. Such differences persisted through the phase of consolidation, and new ones developed. These differences entailed certain variations in the approximation to Shehu's governmental ideals. Relevant details for the various states are too many and intricate to be catalogued here, and would perhaps be misleading, torn from their context. But, except for the Sultan and occasional pious rulers, the general trend throughout the last century was one of cumulative deviation from Shehu's ordinances.

Some historical data may be cited to illustrate this. Thus, an upright judge at Katsina was abruptly dismissed and his property confiscated for challenging royal decisions; at Kano under Abdullahi (c. 1860) the chief judge lost his life. In Hadejia, Kano, Katsina and Zaria, powerful princes seized the throne by force. At the end of the century, the bandit Emirs of Kontagora were enslaving Muslims of Zaria. In Daura the Fulani rulers resorted regularly to levies. Throughout the Empire, administrative supervision became increasingly lax. As taxation increased in scale and diversity, so did tax-gatherers in number and wealth. The evident risks in questioning

³² H. Clapperton, *Journal of a Second Expedition into the Interior of Africa* (London, 1829), p. 215.

³³ H. Barth, *op. cit.*, Vols. II and III, *passim*.

³⁴ C. E. J. Whitting, *Haj Sa'id*, pp. 3-4.

³⁵ M. G. Smith, 1958-9 field notes.

³⁶ C. E. J. Whitting, *Haj Sa'id* (see n. 31), p. 28.

the authority of these men or their agents constrained commoners to quiescence. But revolts were frequent in Zamfara and other parts of Sokoto, in southern Kano after 1850, and in Katsina City under the Emir of Abubakar, 1887-1905, whose staff-bearing slaves, the notorious *batakulki*, so troubled the market that its members rebelled and on three occasions drove back the royal slave cavalry. Nonetheless, imperial unity and control did persist as the most important condition of political life throughout the area.

It is not easy to decide whether these and similar practices are conclusively at odds with Islamic governmental principles. Muslim law allows for the adoption of local custom (*'ada* or *'urf*) where appropriate, and it also allocates considerable discretionary power (*siyasa*) to the ruler as Imam or Amir.³⁷ It does not explicitly enjoin the appointment of special officers, such as the Vizier, Quadi, Muhtasib or Ma'aji (H. treasurer) on any fixed scale; nor could it. Creation and allocation of these offices rests in the ruler's discretionary power. However, since responsibilities for the administration of the various provinces were allocated during the *jihād* to local Amirs, the Sultans lost direct control of these provincial administrations. Yet even in Sokoto itself, the distribution of judgeships was inadequate for the maintenance of the proper Muslim standards.

In considering the offices of Muslim government, Shehu had written, "deputies fall into several classes. First, those put in charge of cities or over any function or its subdivision . . . Their supervision should remain within the allotted limits (but) the person placed in charge of all is head of all affairs in the cities concerned."³⁸ This transfers responsibility for provincial administration to the Emirs.

Shehu laid special emphasis on the Nāzīr al-Mazālim, the Reviewer of Wrongs. He writes, "the office responsible for preventing oppression of various kinds is of Arab origin, but has been taken over by other rulers, since human frailty is the cause of all cases in which justice fails, and only someone of superior power can then settle the affair correctly; for example, in a dispute between two poor persons the judge may favour one, or if the dispute involves an important man and a weaker one, or two important men, or one who holds office, for instance, cases of oppression by chiefs and village heads; these are some of the issues for which the Caliphs appointed special men."³⁹ At Sokoto, Shehu himself appointed the Nāzīr al-Mazālim, an office known as Alkalīn Garka — that is, the Qadi who sits in the Palace. At Zaria, Yamusa (1821-34) introduced the new office of Wali (*maganin azzalūmai*, the medicine for oppressors) with precisely these functions, appointing his eldest son, and simultaneously abolishing the local Viziership.⁴⁰ In neither

³⁷ Reuben Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam* (Cambridge University Press, 1957), pp. 248 ff.

³⁸ M. G. Smith and Muntaka Kumasi, *op. cit.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ M. G. Smith, *Government in Zazzau*, pp. 148-150.

case did the Fulani Nāzīr al-Mazālim succeed in checking, much less repressing, the growth of oppression and wrongdoing. At Zaria Yamusa, to secure his power, entrenched his lineage in office, thereby fomenting antagonism among his dismissed rivals, with the result that he himself had to retain the power to decide issues involving his officials. A ruler who transferred power to his subordinate in such conditions in effect placed himself in a position of political dependence, and thus lacked the means to check malpractices or oppression. The presumptions which underlie effective control by the Nāzīr al-Mazālim are two: either this office expresses the consensus of the Muslim *jema'a*, or it operates freely with assured support from a secure and powerful ruler. Given the ineffectiveness of the Fulani Nāzīr al-Mazālim, the conditions of primary significance for official appointment or dismissal changed progressively from devotion to Islam to political loyalty and effectiveness. Loyal, effective rulers and chiefs retained office, irrespective of administrative deviance. Loyal rulers who were ineffective would be dismissed if necessary, as happened with Sambo in Zazzau.⁴¹ Disloyal or suspect persons were quickly nullified or removed. Administration was saturated by political relationships, and the moral and religious interests of the Shehu were replaced by political principles in local administration.

Some rulers sought to establish an autocratic power which would make them independent of support from their Fulani aristocracy. Such attempts were ultimately dependent on continuity in the succession. At Katsina, Ibrahim (1870-82) and Abubakar developed machines of this sort. Abdullahi (1855-83) ruled Kano likewise. In all cases, the ruler relied on throne eunuchs and slaves, the former having charge of communications and Palace departments, while the latter served equally well as police, prison warders, executioners, messengers, soldiers or guards, sometimes as minor administrators. A ruler who controlled this throne staff effectively could gradually appropriate such functions as tax-collection and fief administration, until decisive power was concentrated at the throne, and its dependence on the approval of traditional senior officials (*rukuni*) disappeared. However, the prerequisite for an effective royal absolutism was royal control of Palace slaves. One leading member of the dispossessed Katsina dynasty, in the presence of very old throne slaves, declared spontaneously, "These were the rulers, the Fulani had the power in name only. The king was in the hands of his slaves." This was neither entirely nor usually the case, but was always in some measure latent. To commoners, the identification of throne and slaves was such that royal slaves were treated with a deference born of fear. Able despots such as Abdullahi and Abubakar controlled these slave and eunuch staffs by periodically redistributing offices and roles among them, so as to create internal rivalry and distrust. They also transferred critical functions to free favourites or kin when advisable, and on occasion cowed

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 178-88.

the royal slaves by summary executions of their senior members. Even so, relations between ruler and slaves were less divisive than those between free men equally eligible by birth for office.

Apart from the internal divisions of the conquering Fulani groups, relations with the conquered populations were decisive in influencing political development. The circumstances of their *jihad* had led Fulani to categorise Habe as *kahirai* (heathens), and accordingly beyond the limits of Muslim law, though liable to *jizya* at twice the rates due from Muslims, to obligatory tithe, and other demands. Of the Habe, Bello says, "in truth, their authority was not in accordance with the Law. So far as the Law is concerned, they held to it in the measure of their washings and the fashion of their clothes: they said prayers and fasted and paid *zakka* (grain tithe) and made the profession of faith. But in all this, they knew not the Law thoroughly."⁴² And in his correspondence with El Kanemi of Bornu, the Hausa are all simply treated as heathens. Now the urban Hausa at whom this *jihad* was launched regarded themselves as Muslims, and accordingly resisted the Fulani appeals as well as attacks. While Habe observance of Islam before the *jihad* left much room for reform, there is such evident continuity under the Fulani that those who justify the *jihad* may well regard it as a substantial failure, while those who justify its results imply that the *jihad* was an error of judgment. Moreover, while Fulani regularised Islamic religious observance within the cities, they paid far less attention to rural areas. In administration, Islamic ideals were fitfully enforced, partly because the ruler was weakened by his political situation in a context of dynastic conflict, but also because the great majority of his subjects were denied the status of Muslims, and were therefore denied access to strict Muslim law. This position may have been unavoidable. Had the conquerors recognised Habe as Muslims and sought to rule purely by Muslim law, they might then have found it difficult to justify the *jihad*. That this argument is not purely academic is shown by the dispute in 1805 between the Habe Mallams of 'Yandoto and the party of Shehu and Bello. The 'Yandoto mallams rejected the call to *jihad* as unnecessary, and were overrun, fifty towns being destroyed.⁴³

This distinction is basic to our understanding of Fulani rule and the growth of corruption within it. The Fulani identify themselves as Muslims, as rulers and conquerors, and as Fulani. Their major internal division is between the settled urban group and the nomadic pastoralists, many of whom had joined the *jihad* for booty, while practising paganism. Settled Muslim Fulani, the new Hausa aristocracy, defined Islam elastically to include some pastoralists.⁴⁴ By the same technique, they asserted the heathenism of all Hausa, against historical data and their own observations.⁴⁵ Mamman Bello's history of this

⁴² E. J. Arnett, 1922, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 107-119.

jihad provides a clear account of the conditions in which these social dichotomies developed, and of the forces which fashioned them. Contraposed with the Muslim ruling Fulani were the Habe heathens, subject to Fulani and members of their empire but, as heathens, neither entitled nor amenable to a pure Muslim government, in Fulani eyes.

History preserves one revealing exception to this simple dichotomy. At Kano, certain dissident Habe had played an important part in bringing the city under Fulani control. The leaders of these dissidents were duly rewarded with titles and fiefs, and helped to guide Dabo's adoption of old Kano political forms. With their supporters, they were and still are distinguished as Hausawa (Hausa) by the Fulani, to whom the other Hausa remain 'Habe', resentful of Fulani rule. In other chiefdoms also, the Fulani category was extended to include prominent individuals who had assimilated themselves to the ruling group. It is thus probably not unfair to say that the proper forms of Muslim law and administration were reserved by Fulani for themselves, for such other groups as Tuareg and Arabs, and for privileged members of the subject population.

The fundamental ambiguities of Fulani rule turned on this central dichotomy. Subject Habe who regarded themselves as Muslim resented their classification as heathens by Fulani, and frequently rebelled — thereby demonstrating their heathenism to the Fulani. To these Muslim Hausa, however, such conditions demonstrated the illegitimate character of Fulani rule, with its hypocritical claims to represent Islam and its oppressive treatment of native Muslims. Yet for Fulani to admit that the Hausa were Muslims before the *jihad* implied the illegitimacy of their conquest and dominion. Islamic history provided appropriate models of compromise and accommodation.⁴⁶ By adopting these, Fulani could claim Muslim Hausa of the cities and rural towns as their converts and adherents, evidence alike of the need for the *jihad* and of its beneficial effects. Such folk were assimilated to the rulers through clientship, and occupied themselves as traders, minor functionaries, mallams and craftsmen.

It is no simple matter to decide when an individual or people is Muslim, if we choose to extend the range of criteria beyond the five universal requisites, the daily prayers, the annual fast, almsgiving, pilgrimage and participation in the Holy War; yet even these are not always adequate, especially the last two criteria. Bello, discussing the Gobir Hausa, asserted, "Much of their judgments were contrary to the Book so far as we are acquainted with them. And much of their speech and their actions were those of heathens only."⁴⁷ In his dispute with Sheikh Muhammad El-Kanemi, Bello describes the people of Bornu as heathen, and his Fulani followers as Muslim, while El-Kanemi asserts the

⁴⁶ R. Levy, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-63.

⁴⁷ E. J. Arnett, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

opposite.⁴⁸ There are a wide range of criteria which may be used for these distinctions and classifications; in consequence of varying emphases or combinations of criteria, there will also be divergent classifications, but even when agreement obtains, there may be considerable differences among accepted Muslims in their observances and beliefs, as well as their attitudes to Islam.

The permissive classification of actions at Muslim law as obligatory, recommended, indifferent, disapproved and forbidden merely extends the indeterminacy into that area, the Law, which Bello stressed above all other criteria. Clearly, if Islam is identified with its *shari'a* (law), and this provides as well for the incorporation of local custom as for the ruler to decide on its applicability and enforcement, even a learned Muslim jurist may find difficulty in establishing a single acceptable list of essential Muslim features, outside the famous five pillars of Islam.⁴⁹ But this negative conclusion merely isolates the conflict of norms on which the *jihād* and subsequent Hausa charges of Fulani corruption and abuse of power were equally based, and suggests that this normative conflict is inherently ambiguous, and perhaps irresolvable. History shows that the Shehu and those closest to him were deeply moved by desires to reform local government and Islamic practices, especially perhaps to educate the people, Fulani and Hausa, in the true nature of Islam; but history also shows that much of the support on which the success of the *jihād* rested came from men whose private secular interests were dominant and whose Islamic convictions were secondary at best. Such a mixture may be far more common in movements of this sort than its two main alternatives.

We are on safer ground in describing the general tenour and drift of Fulani administration from 1817 to 1903 and on till 1950 as a progressive departure from the prescriptions of Shehu dan Fodio, whose personal career and authority all these Fulani still acknowledge as the basic fact which legitimates their rule. On the other hand, Mamman Bello, who was perhaps the most effective leader during the *jihād*, and on whom the administrative responsibility fell, himself succeeded the Shehu in a situation of conflict, and authorised the initial departure from Shehu's laws, namely, adoption of traditional Habe political institutions.

Around 1845, Aliyu's institution of occupational taxation provided some opportunities for Habe participation in local government, but did so on purely secular criteria of occupation, which left the religious dichotomy and ambiguity unresolved. All important male crafts were thereafter liable to tax, collected by official headmen whom the local emir appointed from the crafts concerned. These craft-officials, imitating the administrative arrangements of senior offices of state, each appointed a titled subordinate staff who were severally given responsibility for tax-collection and craft administration in

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-3, 114-16.

⁴⁹ J. S. Trimingham, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-8 and *passim*.

allotted areas. At the village level, the local chief appointed a parallel corps of craft-heads who were empowered to deal directly with their counterparts from the capital, and also to appoint local assistants from their crafts, the village chief keeping some check on these transactions, but rarely interfering, since he could bring important issues to the ruler's notice through his fief-holder at court. In Katsina, these occupational taxes were most onerous, their collection being mainly allocated to palace slaves as part of the process by which Ibrahim and Abubakar concentrated power at the throne. The ways in which these and other taxes were collected, and the inadequate supervision and indifference to legal or religious norms of this process, ensured high incidences of evasion, embezzlement, overtaxation, illegal levies and fines. Perhaps the prevailing rates for different taxes meant very little.

Similar patterns were found in village administration under demands from the lord's *jekadu* which village chiefs queried at their own risk, since written authority was replaced by oral commands. As Hajji Sa'id's account and other data show, the most senior imperial officers, the Waziri (vizier), Galadima and Magaji of Sokoto, each of whom was responsible for supervision of particular provinces, reaped substantial amounts legitimately and otherwise, in private levies and *gaisuwa* from candidates for their favour, gifts to ensure compliance (*toshin baki*), fines and the like.⁵⁰ In these conditions, rivalry and clientage flourished together. Power provided the eligible with the surest access to wealth, and wealth provided favourable conditions for the pursuit of power by the eligible. The upshot was a cumulative drift from the substantially theocratic rule based on consensus of the Muslim *jema'a* under its charismatic head towards a government through titled officials recruited by descent, clientage and slavery, in which the exigencies of rivalry and faction as a condition of political survival increasingly transformed the substance of Islam into clientage and patrimonial institutions.

Misrule in this system became defined as disloyalty or ineffectiveness. *Kahirci* (heathenism) included all military opposition. History provides certain revealing situations. Hajji Sa'id attributes Buhari's appointment to the throne of Hadejia and his subsequent dismissal alike (1848-51) to the avarice of the Wazirin Sokoto who supervised this chiefdom. "All this arose from the Waziri's love of wealth, for the people of Kano gave him a bribe to war against Al-Bukhari." The Waziri himself "used to take me into his confidence and say to me, 'All this is my doing'."⁵¹ Buhari defeated the armies sent against him, and ruled and died an apostate (*kahiri*), the Sultan's nominee being powerless to assert his claim.⁵² Later, in 1893, a succession war broke out in Kano when one dynastic faction rejected the ruler appointed by the Sultan. The Sultan's emir was defeated and killed, his rival seizing the throne.

⁵⁰ C. E. J. Whitting, *Haj Sa'id, passim*.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵² S. J. Hogben, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-3

The Sultan then sent his vizier to install the usurper. Kano was much too important to be lost to the Empire on those grounds of apostasy which had applied to Hadejia. The new king of Kano for his part quickly established cordial relations with Sokoto, and although pursuing his own interests, regularly brought forces to assist the Sultan in the latter's wars.

Perhaps, before turning to developments in this century, I should point out that, on the data I collected at Daura and Maradi, and on other accounts by Landeroin and Barth, the government of independent Hausa chiefdoms during this period was certainly no less oppressive and corrupt than that of the Fulani.

III

When Lugard sought to establish British rule in Northern Nigeria, the Sultan Attahiru replied that between the Muslims and infidels there could be nothing but war.⁵³ By 1903, Lugard's forces had overrun the North and its future administrative pattern had been established. The Protectorate was governed through Provinces, each under a Resident responsible to Lugard, and the provinces were subdivided into Divisions under officers responsible to the Resident. These provincial staff reported in detail their observations on local government and conditions to the Protectorate headquarters, where Lugard sifted and analysed these data to develop a common Northern policy. Circulars from Lugard to his field staff outlined the procedures and aims of this policy as it took shape, and these Political Memoranda were later printed in book form, and revised.⁵⁴ Like the earlier writings of Shehu, Lugard's memoranda provide a fixed standard against which later developments can be evaluated; and perhaps Hausaland is unique among African territories in having such detailed and authoritative policy statements by its successive conquerors.

Lugard's first task was to impose his authority on rulers and their subjects alike. For this purpose, payment of tax was especially useful. Payment implicitly recognised the British authority to levy tax, and Lugard arranged for part of the amount collected by each emir to be handed over to the Protectorate administration for regional services. In tax-collection and other administrative functions, he relied on the native rulers and their official staffs, receiving from his Residents lists of all taxes currently collected, and in 1906 replacing these with a single standard tax, assessed as a lump sum due from

⁵³ H. F. Blackwell, *The Occupation of Hausaland* (Lagos, 1927).

⁵⁴ Sir F. D. Lugard, *Instructions to Political and Other Officers on Subjects chiefly Political and Administrative*. (Confidential but available to Officers in the Colonial Service.) Lagos, 1906.

———, *Political Memoranda*. Lagos, 1918.

each village head.⁵⁵ Besides *jangali* or cattletax, Lugard found the Muslim *kharaj* (*haraji*), the *zakka* or grain tithe, special occupational and farm taxes, caravan tolls, market fees, death duties and court fees, and *kurdin sarauta* or payments on appointment to office, banned by the Shehu long ago.⁵⁶ Also contrary to the Shehu's edicts, "it was the custom for all men visiting their superiors to bring a *gaisuwa* or present."⁵⁷ Pagans were taxed irregularly, "according to the degree of their subjection,"⁵⁸ some by tribute in slaves, others by capitation, others by armed levies.

Lugard decided to leave the customary *gaisuwa* unregulated;⁵⁹ but, discovering the absentee administration of fiefs through *jekadu* and the multiplicity of taxes and collectors, he organised the territorial administration in compact Districts with resident Heads, and reduced all taxes to two, the *haraji* due from sedentary folk, and *jangali*, payable in cash, from the cattle nomads. Death duties, court fees, and other payments sanctioned by the *shari'a* remained. Lugard undertook to preserve Islam in this area, and restricted Christian Mission activities. In 1906 a Madhist revolt against both the Fulani and the British was destroyed at Satiru near Sokoto town.⁶⁰ Indirect rule as applied under Lugard involved an informal concord between the British and the ruling Fulani. As a rule, British officers conducted all their dealings with the subject people through the Emir's representatives and officials. This had the effect of placing the Fulani administration squarely between the British and the people. While the British required that the Emirs should observe their rules and adopt reformist policies, they guaranteed the security and hereditary positions of this stratum.

The multiplication of Native Courts whose members were appointed by the Emir with the Resident's approval was another decisive step. In Muslim areas the Courts met under *alkalai* who administered Muslim law and Hausa custom, subject to reviews by the Provincial staff; cases involving homicide, pagan administration, boundaries, succession and political offences went before the Emir's court, although capital sentences required the Governor's approval. Later, provision was made for appeals from the District Courts to that of the Chief Alkali at the Emirate capital. As revenue permitted, the number of these courts increased, until by 1930 most rural Districts had one each.⁶¹ Lugard prohibited the use of *jekadu* in administration. He forbade slave-raiding and trading, and put them down. His famous Slavery Proclamation of 1900 freed all born thereafter in Northern Nigeria, and permitted

⁵⁵ Sir F. D. Lugard, *Memorandum on Taxation of Natives in Northern Nigeria*, in *Annual Reports, Northern Nigeria, 1900-11*, pp. 790-852 (1911).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Margery Perham, *Native Administration in Nigeria* (Oxford, 1937), p. 51.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁵⁹ Sir F. D. Lugard, 1911 *op. cit.*, pp. 798-9, and M. Perham, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

⁶⁰ M. Perham, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-7.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 337-343.

those slaves wishing to become free to redeem themselves by registration at a recognised Native Court.⁶² Emirs or subordinate officials who ignored these proclamations were duly deposed; many others lost office on charges of embezzling public funds, especially when the new system of Native Treasuries had been introduced to plan and administer the budgets of these emirates. Unofficial levies were forbidden and *zakka* ceased to form part of the official revenue. After 1911 the Emir and officials of his Native Administration were placed on salaries and required to refrain from extortion or embezzlement, although permitted to accept 'customary gifts'. Schools teaching Roman script, arithmetic and the like were instituted to train young members of the ruling stratum in the skills necessary for native administration under Indirect Rule. Native prisons and police were reorganised to provide greater uniformity and efficiency. Administration by paper and rule replaced the oral, personal administration of earlier days. Minutes, orders, accounts, regulations, population registers and Western bureaucratic forms were introduced together, but these were poorly understood, even by the native officials.⁶³ Very little information was passed on to the public about the aims, methods, rules and tasks of the various administrative agencies. Lugard's Memoranda were confidential to his Provincial staff until published;⁶⁴ his rules regulating communications between British administrators and the subjects protected the native officials by minimising opportunities for complaint.

Under North Nigerian laws, each Emir was sole Native Authority for his chiefdom, and responsible for its good order and discipline through the Provincial Resident to the Northern Governor.⁶⁵ Despite many changes introduced by the British, including reorganisation of trade and communications through the building of railways and motor roads, stimulation of cash crops for export, immigration from Southern Nigeria and the displacement of the Sultan by Lugard and his successors as the immediate suzerain of the Emirs, such was the disparity in force between Fulani and British that these changes met with little open resistance from the Emirs. Relations between Fulani and British remained cordial, with little thought of increasing popular participation in local government.⁶⁶ Few British administrators thought to ask in what ways the Fulani administration deviated from Muslim norms.

Under Sir Donald Cameron, the principles of Indirect Rule were re-stated with modifications emphasising the need for preliminary modernisation. At this time, also, new technical departments were greatly expanded within the

⁶² A. Burns, *A History of Nigeria*, 4th ed. (London, 1948), p. 187.

⁶³ M. Perham, 1937 *op. cit.*, *passim.*; W. R. Crocker, *Nigeria: A Critique of British Colonial Administration* (London, 1936), *passim.*; C. R. Niven, *How Nigeria is Governed* (London, 1958), *passim.*

⁶⁴ Sir F. D. Lugard, 1906 *op. cit.*, 1918 *op. cit.* (see n. 54).

⁶⁵ Government of Nigeria, *Ordinance to Prescribe the Powers and Duties of Native Authorities*, No. 40 (1933); also *Ordinance for Administration of Justice and the Constitution of Native Courts*, No. 44 (1933).

⁶⁶ M. Perham, 1937 *op. cit.*, pp. 344-63; W.R. Crocker, *op. cit.*

emirate administrations to deal with such interests as education, sanitation, health, public works, agriculture, veterinary work, forestry and the like. Staff was recruited from graduates of the new schools. These departments greatly extended the scope and complexity of the emirate administrations. However, 1933-37 were years of intense economic depression throughout this Region, and this period was followed by the War. By 1945 a new mood had grown in Europe, and under their Labour Government the British set about dismantling their Empire. Nigeria received new Constitutions, and in December 1951 the North elected its first popular Legislature.

IV

I first visited North Nigeria in 1949-50 to carry out a survey of social and economic change in Zaria Emirate. There were evident continuities in social stratification, kinship and local organisation, in crafts and farming, Islam and traditional rites, but there were striking changes in the character and direction of trade. Political forms and practice showed a much subtler mixture of old and new. I observed numerous cases of conduct prohibited by the British, and heard about many more. It seemed necessary to investigate some of these situations, to determine their incidence, nature, variety and significance. I presented much of these data in a chapter of my Ph. D. thesis appropriately called *The Economic Aspects of Political Activity*, and cannot recite these details here.⁶⁷ Instead, I shall merely mention some of the situations studied, and refer interested readers to that text.

In some cases, there seemed to be sufficient regularity in these deviations for experiments to be feasible. Thus, in 1949-50 and again in 1950-51, I carried out experimental sales of raw cotton in the gazetted markets of Zaria, using different local agents who were required to swear to the accuracy of their reports on the Koran.⁶⁸ The first experiment yielded a mean rate of underpayment for cotton sold at ten widely scattered Zaria markets of 21 per cent. The second yielded a rate of 33 per cent. In the first test, my agents were permitted to offer bribes to secure prompt entry to the market and high grades from the Hausa 'cotton mallams' in charge; all cotton sold in the experiment that year received the highest grade. In the second test, bribes were forbidden, no cotton received top grade, and access proved difficult and slow. If we generalised these results, it would seem that primary producers selling cotton in these Zaria markets in 1949-50 and 1950-51 may have lost, through underpayment, some £50,000 and £73,000 respec-

⁶⁷ M. G. Smith, *Social and Economic Change among Selected Native Communities in Northern Nigeria* (Ph. D. thesis in Social Anthropology submitted to the University of London, 1951), pp. 283-319.

⁶⁸ M. G. Smith, 1951 *op. cit.*, pp. 311-319.

tively. Also, it would seem that the 'cotton mallams' at the 20 provincial markets may have together received a total of approximately £4,000 during 1949-50 as 'gifts' from vendors wishing to have their cotton graded. These cotton mallams, who represented the Native Administration and were appointed by it, had an average salary per annum of about £60 each.

In a rural District peopled mainly by pagans but having a Hausa District Head, I witnessed my first collection of levies of grain, these being requisitioned on a village basis. The villagers later complained to me about their situation. Ignoring all individual transactions, grain levies from this village had a local value rather more than 25% of their annual tax. The District Head was also commissioned by the Native Administration (N.A.) to purchase certain amounts of grain at low but fixed prices after harvest, for use by the N.A. in its schools, prisons, hospitals, etc. During the year under review, the District Head underpaid for this grain and over-collected heavily. This pattern was repeated later that year when seed rice was sent by the N.A. for free distribution to the villagers, but was converted into a forced sale by the District Head. The N.A. purchases of unthreshed rice after harvest were again exceeded and underpaid. At prevailing rates, these transactions alone yielded a value of nearly 40% of the total tax paid by the village. Generalised to the District as a whole, such simple village transactions would produce over £800 per annum, excluding tax. The District Head's official salary was then about £320 per annum.⁶⁹

In 1949-50, few Village Heads in Zaria Emirate received more than £12 per annum for their varied and important services. Under Lugard's reorganisation, this group had lost a wide range of traditional perquisites and facilities, including the right to summon corvée to work their farms. In practice, corvée was used by the N.A. and Regional government for such necessary work as road repair, sleeping-sickness bush clearance, building of new towns, and the like. Token payments were made to the workers, through the District and Village Chiefs, who were responsible for recruiting the labour. Many Village Heads may also have quietly remunerated themselves by under-reporting the village population or number of taxpayers while retaining tax collected from those not listed. The various alternatives open to Village Heads here all depend on lack of supervision in compiling population returns and individual tax assessments. In these returns, each household group is listed separately, its resident taxpayers being enumerated by name, and their dependants being classified by age and sex. Thus taxable males may be reported as too old, young or infirm; or they may not be reported at all. A Village Head may or may not collect from these unreported persons at the prevailing tax rate; but since, under Lugard's lump assessment method, individual assessments rested with him and were made privately, there was no general standard to serve as a check.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 284-92.

In one village selected for study, only 102 out of 173 compounds were reported, and it seemed that apart from the 198 registered taxpayers, there were another 93 taxable males in the village, some being entered as too young, some as too old, some not at all. Several of these unregistered men had paid tax to the Village Head for that year, but — like those who were registered — had received no receipt therefor.⁷⁰ To what degree this pattern was generally representative, we can determine by comparing the officially reported population of Zaria Emirate in 1950-51, namely 538,000 people, with the number revealed by the Nigerian Census of 1952, namely 750,000.⁷¹ Clearly, underpayment of the Village Heads was linked with this general pattern of tax collection; but so too was the general ignorance among subjects of the rules governing their administration, and the traditional fear of native officials.

This village provided instances of as many administrative malpractices as could be wished. I found cases in which the Village Head and native departmental officials together exacted (unauthorised) fines (*tara*) or bribes (*toshi*) from individuals alleged to have certain diseases, themselves or in their households; or in lieu of treatment for such diseases; or to permit certain transactions, such as sale of cotton, hides or skins; together with both forms of levy (*agama* and *tausa*) on the local market. N.A. funds sent to pay men who had worked on the sleeping sickness clearance had not been disbursed.⁷² The Village Head maintained a personal staff of 19 agents, *jekadu* and other youths. The District concerned, like others, was also administered through *jekadu*.

In another District an eyewitness recorded the irregular receipts of his District Head, intermittently over eight months. The witness was a man of privileged status, a Koranic scholar with deep religious convictions, and was perfectly trustworthy, having no personal claims or interests in any local office. His notebook shows that this District Head received gifts from all Village Heads under him to repair their meeting-house, when he had a motor accident, when the Village Heads brought in tax, when the District Head went to the capital on official business, and when a British Officer visited the District. An informal collection from the pastoral Fulani in lieu of tax was also rewarding, and so were gifts received by the District Head when he appointed a prison warder, a ward-head, a Chief Praise-singer, and when he considered appointments to a Village Headship. An Ibo immigrant wishing to occupy a house-plot paid his respects, and when the District Head visited their market, some butchers quickly collected a useful sum to greet him. A Village Head who had committed some offence, and a villager seen talking alone with a visiting British Officer both produced their gifts. When the District Head formally installed a new Village Head, the villagers collected

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 301-311.

⁷¹ M. G. Smith, 1960 *op. cit.*, p. 282.

⁷² M. G. Smith, 1951 *op. cit.*, pp. 295-301.

an amount to express their loyalty, an act shortly afterwards repeated when their new Village Chief had a son. This District Head also had access to loans from the Native Authority for cattle fattening and similar schemes, and continued to use unpaid labour on his farm, which adjoined my quarters. At the harvest he considerably over-purchased grain for the N.A., but paid the official price, and sold some at a profit to merchants in a nearby Emirate. The District Head's unofficial receipts from litigants in five cases brought to the District Court totalled £54.⁷³ It will be seen that almost every practice prohibited by Shehu was to be found in Zaria during 1949-50, together with many innovations by which modern administrative duties and opportunities were reinterpreted to fit traditional patterns.

It would perhaps be misleading to assume that these malpractices were limited to subordinate officials in the unsupervised rural areas. During 1950 the Provincial staff discovered that some £20,000 was missing from the Zaria N.A. Reserve Fund of £44,000, and had disappeared over a period of several years.⁷⁴ Two Ibo clerks in the Public Works Department were duly accused, and later tried and sentenced. From other data, it seems clear that senior members of the Zaria Native Authority in the capital were very likely to have been involved. One or two of the less important were sent to jail. My conclusion from such material is that in 1950 the Fulani government of Zaria formed a ruling bureaucracy ineffectively supervised by the British.

Since the Emir as sole Native Authority appointed his senior officials, and presided over the senior Muslim Court which heard political and administrative cases, he could protect as well as promote his loyal subordinates, and was expected to do so. He could equally dismiss, suspend or transfer Native Administration staff at pleasure, being bound by no staff regulations that I could discover, other than those conditions of political structure which had persisted from the 19th century. Thus, of 588 salaried members of the Zaria N.A. in 1945, 343 were Fulani, 59 were Southern Nigerians, and 186 were other Northerners, mainly Habe. Of the Fulani, 120 belonged to the ruler's dynasty and 84 to its two leading rivals. These patterns were repeated among the native judiciary, where 13 of the 55 Northern staff belonged to the lineage of the Chief Judge, and 43 were Fulani. Of the 529 Northern employees of the Zaria N.A. at that date, 162 had been to the Native Administration schools, and of these, 83 were teaching in them.⁷⁵

The composition and distribution of this staff reveals the main principles which regulated the delegation of authority at Zaria during these years. There is also considerable evidence that Zaria was by no means unique among Northern Emirates at that time, either in its British or Fulani organisation, or in its combination of new and old practices.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 292-295.

⁷⁴ M. G. Smith, 1960 *op. cit.*, pp. 289-90; see also *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, no. 48 of 13th September 1950, p. 1.

⁷⁵ M. G. Smith, 1960 *op. cit.*, pp. 272-6.

V

In 1958-9 I revisited North Nigeria, including selected areas of Zaria which I had studied previously. Among other things, I wished to see how the advance to representative government and independence had affected the character of native administration. In March 1959 the Northern Region obtained internal autonomy.

I found striking changes at the District level. Unpaid forced labour had ceased. In my presence, one District Head lectured senior subordinates for practices which he himself had abandoned —“as though (the subordinate) thought these were still the old days!” How far these reforms extended, I cannot say; the judiciary in central Zaria certainly had a very poor reputation at this time; but given this discovery, it seemed useful to seek out the bases of change in the structure of the new situation.

I learned that in 1951 the annual purchases of grain by the N.A. through its officials had ceased, after public criticism by the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), a radical Northern party. In 1953 forced labour on the District Head's farms had ceased, and thereafter road work was rewarded at 2/8d per day, well above previous rates. In 1957, underpayment at the cotton markets had ceased when a European officer discovered its incidence. Between 1953 and 1955 the use of *jekadu* at both the village and district levels had ceased. Since then, medical attention had been given free, and unauthorised fines had become rare. These data were collected some months before the Nigerian Federal elections of December 1959, and were certainly influenced by the electoral situation. Since 1951 Northern Zaria had been actively canvassed by NEPU, which had levelled a radical criticism at the Emirate administration; and during these months, the Zaria N.A. was effectively harrassing its critics by a series of arrests for illegal meetings or behaviour under Section 37 of the N.A. law for the Control of Assembly.

One factor partly responsible for these administrative changes was the appointment of a new Resident in Zaria whose actions had so frightened native officials in the capital that a specially powerful Muslim cleric was imported from Egypt to neutralise or remove him through prayer and other religious manipulations. On Northern independence, this Resident resigned and returned to Britain.

More important, perhaps, was the growth of Party politics and organisation during the Northern advance to independence. Even though Zaria Native Administration as yet had no 'Outer Council' or popular elements, representative government based on political parties had proved effective at the local level. Under representative constitutions, the Provincial and Regional Administrations alike had lost their immunity from native and foreign criticism. The radical party had made official malpractice a political issue,

and had organised procedures for reporting and publicising its occurrence. British Provincial officers in Zaria to whom these reports were directed from Provincial Party headquarters accordingly took care in investigating them. Previously, attempts to report malpractice to the Provincial staff had been a risky business; until 1950, native officials maintained an effective communications network which ensured that they would rapidly learn of attempts at complaint, while these were being delayed. The British were then in any case likely to report those complaints which did reach them to the Emir for his investigation and action; but the Emir's position obliged him to protect his senior staff and maintain them in office, provided they remained loyal. Thus in Zaria in 1950 the last stage of a complainant was often worse than the first.

By 1959 this seemed to have changed. Most peasants in Northern Zaria publicly asserted their NEPU affiliation and rejected illegal demands. Many native officials were privately enrolled in the NEPU as well as the NPC (Northern People's Congress), thereby reflecting uneasiness about the outcome of the approaching election. Peasants who had suffered, or thought they had suffered some wrong, arranged for a letter giving the details and appealing for protection to be sent to the Provincial Party headquarters at the Emirate capital. There Party officers either investigated the allegation before proceeding, or sent on a report to the Divisional Office requesting immediate investigation. In this way the Northern Elements Progressive Union may have provided a channel for effective communication of complaints with the minimum of personal exposure by peasants to Provincial authorities, and the maximum incentive to action. I am reliably informed that Provincial administrations ceased to handle complaints directly through NEPU channels after 1957, at least in Kano, Katsina and Adamawa; but in Zaria during 1958-9, peasants enjoyed a political holiday as an indirect and unforeseen consequence of representative government. In other Provinces where NEPU lacked sufficient strength, the traditional patterns may quite well have continued. It follows that the elimination or neutralisation of a radical Northern party may permit reversion to the old practices; and thus that these objectives should rank high among the political priorities of the traditional ruling stratum.

However, in 1959 the Provincial Government, through its adult education staff at Zaria, published an English language booklet which set out with admirable clarity the detailed obligations and rights of citizens vis-à-vis their Native Authorities, Police, Village and District Heads, magistrates, *alkalai*, civil servants, legislators, elected representatives, etc. — to my knowledge, the first systematic attempt to inform Hausa subjects of their legal position and relationships to their rulers.⁷⁶ It is unfortunate that this booklet was

⁷⁶ Regional Adult Education Field Headquarters, Zaria, *You and Your Country*. Zaria, 1959.

published in English, but presumably a Hausa translation is already distributed.

Shehu dan Fodio and Lord Lugard both addressed their instructions to their officers; the Shehu to his Emirs and Judges, Lugard to his Residents and Provincial staff. In both cases, the overwhelming majority of the people, and even of the subordinate officials, remained so poorly informed of the rules of government that they neither could define their rights nor assert them vis-à-vis the rulers. However, since 1959 it should prove possible for determined Hausa to learn the nature of their obligations and rights as citizens, and through the NEPU or some alternative party, to ensure their protection.

VI

These data illustrate the real complexity of norms and structure which underlie political development and administration among the Hausa. In this, they may also demonstrate the importance of a combined historical and structural approach in the analysis of political corruption.

From its beginnings with the first Eastern immigration, Hausa society was heterogeneous in its norms and ethnic composition. When it arrived, Islam increased this complexity, instead of reducing it. Rulers advanced their power by Islamic doctrines and techniques, but deviated from Islam as political considerations enjoined. As centralisation increased, so did the complexity and divergence of local status and norms. An oligarchic autocracy combined professions of Islam with oppressive political practices. The *jihad* reasserted Islamic norms vigorously, but failed to displace oligarchic traditionalism. The new oligarchs were heirs of the *jihad*, and for the maintenance of the regime he had founded, Sultan Bello himself found it necessary to authorise the basic deviation from Shehu's instructions, namely the adoption of Habe political institutions and practice. Thus maintenance of their regime attained priority among the Fulani conquerors over the application of Islam. In consequence their administration exhibited a bewildering mixture of political pragmatism, Islamic norms and traditional Habe practice. With the British, yet another normative system, relativistic and empirical, was introduced. In 1903-6 the British found that they could not administer the area directly themselves; but Indirect Rule presumed that Fulani maintained control of the subject people; and Fulani could therefore argue on pragmatic political grounds that various practices which the British condemned were essential for the maintenance of the Anglo-Fulani regime. With the recent transfer of power to Northerners, this diversity of norms has found expression in party conflict; both the Sardauna of Sokoto, the Northern Premier, and Mallam Aminu Kano, the leader of NEPU, seek to justify their objectives and means by simultaneous reference to the absolute norms of Islam and to technical Western values. Both men also appeal to tradition and in some sense represent

it personally, the Sardauna emphasising its continuity and stability, while Mallam Aminu emphasises the need to restore the reformist ethic of Shehu dan Fodio.

Our data show that oppression and corruption tended to increase among Hausa with political centralisation and the increase of governmental tasks. As part of this process, status differentiations also deepened, and each significant status division was governed by its own set of norms. This is perhaps clearest in distinctions between British, Fulani Muslims, and others, but it also applies to the differences between rulers, nobles, clerics, commoners, throne slaves and eunuchs. Such diversity of status groups and their normative correlates greatly obstructed the flow of communication by prescribing status limits for communications of different types. In consequence of this structured communication, behaviour acquired different meanings and values to people of different status, whose normative systems differed accordingly. What Britons saw as corrupt and Hausa as oppressive, Fulani might regard as both necessary and traditional. Thus, if we decide to avoid an absolutist approach in the study of political corruption, we must take full account of the historical and structural factors which define these behaviours and their contexts.

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