

The Lessons from the British Rule in Northern-Cameroons, Boundary Demarcation and Spheres of Influence.

Garba Ibrahim

Director, University of Maiduguri Archives, Borno State Nigeria.

Adamu Sani Buba

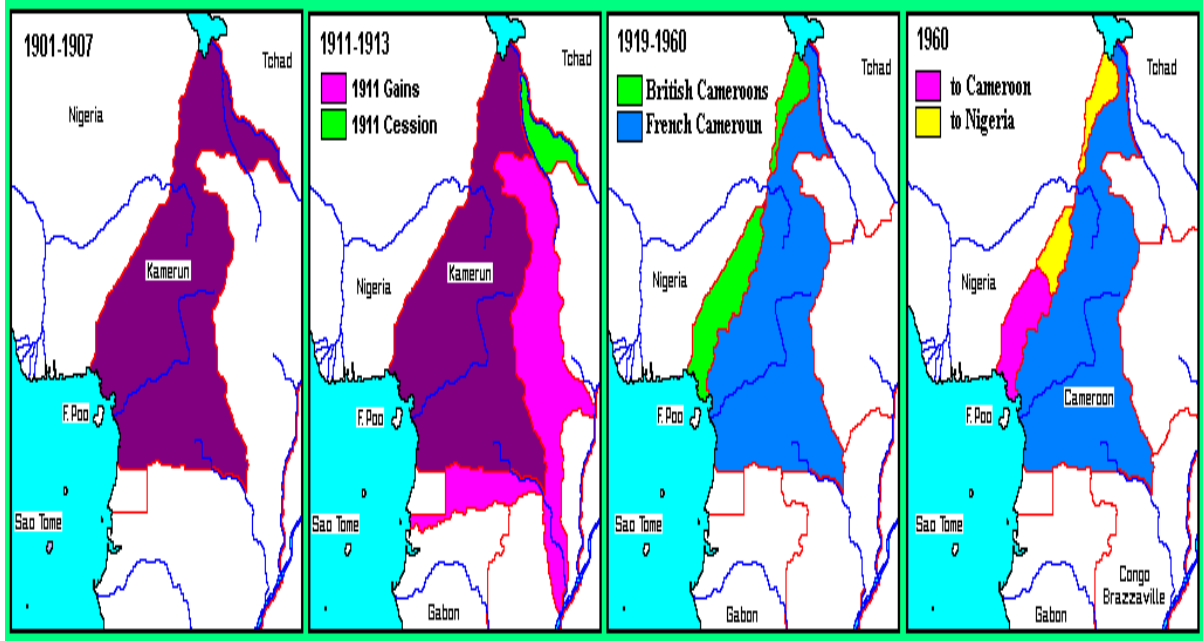
Department of History, University of Maiduguri, Borno Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

This article is against the background of the British rule, that led to the demarcation of their various spheres of influence after Germany was defeated from the first World War, and the lessons involved. However, instead of rehearsing on the theories, the study has concentrated on its main purpose, that of a detailed examination of the character of the British administration and lessons involved. This part of territory, was once a catalog of slaves for the Fulani rulers of the trust territory, perhaps, with the exception of the Kanuri of Dikwa emirate. Similarly, it was a German Protectorate; later transformed into a League of Nations mandate; furthermore, metamorphosed, turned out to be a United Nations Trust territory, before formally unified with the Federation of Nigeria in 1961. Realizing the space of an article permits neither extensive listing or detailed discussing of the unification, (see, Buba, 2021), rather, the way and manner this region was administered by both British and France. Finally it was British and France, not Germany, who eventually shared the vast territory and developed considerable economic stakes in the region after Germany was ousted out of the region during the first World War. We have availed ourselves of the works of other scholars both published and unpublished. The works have been of considerable assistance. There is perhaps, no better indication and acknowledgement of the authors of these works than our bibliography and notes. We may infer that no part of Nigeria has experienced such a significant historical feel.

Key Words: British rule, Northern Nigeria, Demarcation of Spheres of Influence.

Map showing Nigeria and the British-Northern Cameroons



Source: Historical Atlas. 2012

Introduction

During the scramble for Africa, this territory was neither a political, nor cultural unity before the Germans appeared. However, in the coastal areas political units would be assumed to be very small and the religion practiced animistic. And further north the Muslims Sultanate of Sokoto, with its centre in Northern Nigeria, extended into Cameroon (Adamawa province). Its dominant ethnic extractions were the Muslim Fulbe (Fulani); Islam was the state religion, they ruled over many animistic peoples.

Nigeria is a country which was under the possession of full British colonialism for early one hundred years, which culminated in 1960. As for the Cameroons, since, they almost share the same historical background, with a different colonial henealogy, it was a at first German colony, later transformed into Trust Territory by the league of Nations Mandate, before finally unified with Nigeria in 1961.

It was under the United Nations that the trust territory was finally unified with the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 1961. This territory as earlier indicated comprised of Cameroon's under British mandate and trusteeship, the region is predominantly mountainous lay on the eastern part of the Nigerians stretching inland for some 700 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Chad with an average of about 50 width miles, terminating in the North, by a gap of about 45 miles which contained the valley of the River Benue and in which the territory of Nigeria and Cameroons formerly under French trusteeship met.

The British Demarcation of its Sphere of Influence

The British of that era, in their typical callous nature of sharing lands they never owned, began frontiering this region which starts from the meeting point of the three old British French and German frontiers situated in Lake Chad in latitude 13⁰05' N and approximately longitude 14⁰05'E of Greenwich. Thence, the frontier was determined as follows:

A straight line to the mouth of the Ebeji; Thence the course of the River Ebeji, which upstream is named the Lewejil, Labejed, Ngalarem, Albeit and Ngada respectively, to the confluence of the Rivers Kalia and Lebait; the course of the River Kalia, or Ame, to its confluence with the River Dorma, or Kutelaha; Thence the course of the latter, which upstream is named the Amjumba, the village of Woma and its outskirts remaining to France from the point where the River Amjumba loses itself in a swamp, the boundary will follow the medium line of the swamp which re-joins the watercourse, that appears to be the continuation of the Amjumba and which upstream is named Serahadja, Golnwa and Mudukwa respectively, the village of Uagisa remained to Great Britain.¹

¹ NAK, "Partition of Cameroon", 1919-1930, No. 5.

Then the watercourse to its confluence with the River Gatagule; a line south-westwards to the watershed between the basin of the Yedseram on the west and the basins of the Mudukwa and the Benue on the east; watershed to Mount Mulikia; Then a line to the source of the Tsikakiri fixing on the ground to leave the village of Dumo to France; the course of the Tsikakiri to its confluence with the Mao Tiel near the group of villages of Luga.² The course of the Mao Tiel to its confluence with the River Benue, then the course of the Benue upstream to its confluence with the Faro River to the course of the Faro to the mouth of its arm, the Mao-Hesso, situated about 4 kilometres South of Chikito; from the course of the Mao Hesso to the boundary on the old British-German frontier a straight line to the old boundary and straight line to the south-westwards reaching the watershed between the Benue on the north-west and the Faro on the south-east, which follows to a point on the Hossere (mountain) Banglang, about 1 kilometre south of the source of the Mao Kordo; and then to the confluence of the Mao Ngonga and the Mao Deo leave to France. The village of Laro as well as the road from Bare to Fort Lamy of the Mao Deo to its confluence with the Tiba; from the Tiba, which is named upstream Tibsat and Tussa respectively, to its confluence, with a watercourse flowing from the west and situated about 12km South-west to Kontscha.³

There was a line running generally south-west to the Dutschi-Djombi; connecting the watershed between the basins of the Taraba on the west and the Mao Deo on the east to a point on the Tchape Hills, about 2km North-west of the Tchape to the Gorulde Hills, leaving the road from Bare to the Fort. Lamy to the east and the watershed between the Gamgam and the Jim, the main watershed between the basins of the Benue and the Sanaga, and the watershed between the Kokumbahun and the Ardo (Ntuli) to Hossere Jadji. the River Mafu to River Mafu to its

² L. T. Victor, *Cameroun: from Mandate to Independence*, California: University of California Press, 1964, p. 145.

confluence with the River Mabe and River Mabe, or Nsang, upstream to its junction with the ethnic boundary between Bansso and Bamum.³

From the confluence of the Rivers Mpand and Nun to the country of Bansso to Great Britain and that of Bamum to France, the River Nun to its confluence with the River Tantom the River Tantom and its affluent, which is fed by the River Sefu. the River Sefu to its source south-westwards, crossing the Kupti, to reach near its source to the east " unnamed watercourse" which flows into the Northern Mifi below Bali-Bagam, watercourse to its confluence with the Northern Mifi, leaving to France the village of Gascho, belonging to the small country of Bamenjam to the Northern of Mifi upstream to its confluence with the River Mogo, or Dosi, River Mogo to its source to south-westwards to the crest of the Bambuto Mountains and watershed between the basins of the Cross River and Mungo on the west and the Sanaga and Wuri on the east to Mount Kupe, to the source of the River Bubu.⁴

However, River Bubu, which appears from the German map to lose itself and reappear as the Ediminjo, the frontier confluence with the Mungo, the course of the Mungo to the point in its mouth where it meets the parallel of latitude 4⁰2'30" north and parallel of latitude westwards to reach the coast South of Tauben, a line following the coast, passing south of Reihner I., to Mokola Creek, thus leaving Mowe Lake to Great Britain a line following the eastern banks of the Mokola, Mbakwele, Njubanan-Jau, and Matumal Creeks, and cutting the mouths of the Mbossa-Bombe, Mikanje, Tende, Victoria and other unnamed creeks to the junction of the Matumal and Victoria Creeks to the south, to the Atlantic Ocean.⁵

³ "The American Society of International Law West Africa", *British Weekly Journal*, July 1953, pp. 142-145.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.112.

⁵*Ibid.*

Apparently, no indication was made on delimitation on the natural features of the frontier, villages from their agricultural lands, waterway, and the median line of the waterway was the boundary. It was considered that if the inhabitants living near the frontier express the intention to settle in the regions placed under French authority, or, inversely, in the regions placed under British authority, no obstacle will be placed in the way of their so doing, and they shall be granted the necessary time to gather in standing crops, and generally to remove all the property of which they are the legitimate owners.⁶ We may assume that with this frontiering, settled areas of influence between the British and France. Sadly, no ruler or their institution was consulted while sharing their fatherland.

French Mandate for the Cameroons

The Council of the League of Nations: Whereas, by Article 119 of the treaty of peace with Germany signed at Versailles on June 28, 1919, Germany renounced in favor of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers all her rights over her overseas possessions, including therein the Cameroons; and whereas the Principal Allied and Associated Powers agreed that the Governments of France and Great Britain should make a joint recommendation to the League of Nations as to the future of the said territory. And Whereas the Governments of France and Great Britain have made a joint recommendation to the Council of the League of Nations that a mandate to administer, following Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, that

⁶Report on the Administration of the Trust Territory under Mandate 1922", The Mandate Committee Report, 1922-1946.

part of the Cameroons lying to the east of the line agreed upon in the declaration of July 10, 1919, was conferred upon the French Republic; and Whereas the Governments of France and Great Britain have proposed that the mandate should be formulated in the following terms; and whereas the French Republic has agreed to accept the mandate in respect of the said territory, and has undertaken to exercise it on behalf of the League of Nations; confirming the said mandate, defines its terms as follows:

The territory for which a mandate is conferred upon France comprises that part of the Cameroons which lies to the east of the line laid down in the declaration signed on July 10, 1911, This line may, however, be slightly modified by mutual agreement between His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Government of the League of Nations Official The frontier will start from the meeting point of the three old British, French and German frontiers situated in Lake Chad in latitude 130 05' N. and approximately longitude 14⁰05'E of Greenwich⁷

However, the frontier to the mouth of the Ebeji River Ebeji, which upstream is named the Lewejil, Labejed, Ngalarem, Albeit and Ngada respectively, to the confluence of the Rivers Kalia and Lebaiit; and River Kalia, or Ame, to its confluence with the River Dorma, or Kutelaha, the latter, which upstream is named the Amjumba, the village of Woma and its outskirts remaining to France; From the point where the River Amjumba loses itself in a swamp, the boundary will follow the medium line of this swamp to rejoin the watercourse, which appears to be the continuation of the Amjumba and which upstream is named Serahadja, Golnwa and Mudukwa respectively, the village of Nagisa remaining to Great Britain; watercourse and its confluence with the River Gatagule⁸.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

To the south-westwards to the watershed between the basin of the Yedseram on the west and the basins of the Mudukwa and the Benue on the east watershed to Mount Mulikia; the source of the Tsikakiri to the village of Dumo to France; and the course of the Tsikakiri to its confluence with the Mao Tiel near the group of villages of Luga; linking the Mao Tiel to its confluence with the River Benue, the Benue upstream to its confluence with the Faro. Thence the course of the Faro to the mouth of its arm, the Mao Hesso, situated about 4 kilometres south of Chikito; the course of the Mao Hesso to the boundary on the old British-German frontier; north-westwards reaching the watershed between the Benue on the north-west and the Faro River on the south-east, which it follows to a point on the mountain Banglang, about 1 kilometre. South of the source of the Mao Kordo into the confluence of the Mao Ngonga and the Mao.

Deo, to be fixed on the ground, to leave to France the village of Laro as well as the road from Bare to Fort Lamy; The course of the Mao Deo to its confluence with the Tiba; Thence the course of the Tiba, which is named upstream Tibet and Tussa respectively, to its confluence, with a watercourse flowing from the west and situated about 12km South-west to Kontscha. Thence a line running generally south-west to reach the summit of the Dutschi-Djombi watershed between the basins of the Taraba on the west and the Mao Deo on the east to a point on the Tchape Hills, about 2km North-west of the Tchape, to the Gorulde Hills, linking the road from Bare to Fort Lamy about 2km to the east; Thence successively the watershed between the Gamgam and the Jim, the main watershed between the basins of the Benue and the Sanaga, and the watershed between the Kokumbahun and the Ardo (Ntuli) to Hossere Jadji

Thence a line to reach the source of the River Mafu Thence the River Mafu to its confluence with the River Mabe Thence the River Mabe, or Nsang, upstream to its junction with the tribal boundary between Bansso and Bamum.

Thence a line to the confluence of the Rivers Mpand and Nun, to be fixed on the ground, to leave the country of Bansso to Great Britain and that of Bamum to France Thence the River Nun to its confluence with the River Tantom Thence the River Tantom and its affluent, which is fed by the River Sefu; Thence the River Sefu to its source south of Tauben with the coast, passing south of Rehire to Mokola Creek, thus leaving Mowe Lake to Great Britain.⁹

The Administration Systems of Britain, France, and Germany

In the former trust territory, there was intense competition between the three European powers, Britain, France, and Germany. The resultant of this ended in the division of the territory between the British and Germany, the German raped about 2/3% of the territory, and the remaining part went to the British including the capital of the trust territory, Yola.

However, the European powers, Britain, France, and Germany, in their natural and typical fashion of “scramble for Africa” each trying to acquire as much as possible territory of the

⁹ NAK, “Borno Province Annual Report 1906”, No. 2444/1, p. 9.

Borno Empire to the north of the territory. The resultant of this also led to a series of the agreement, between 1889 and 1899, this subjected the whole part of Dikwa emirate into the hands of the Germans'. In the meantime, just like Germany-Adamawa, Dikwa became part of German Cameroon. In yet another development, in the Anglos/German agreement of 1893, obsessed by the desire to block the French from gaining access to any part of the territory, the British horridly granted to the German access to almost all part of the territory including the Niger Benue region. Apart from the effort by the British to frustrate France, it allowed the German raped "where they never saw" by giving access to German "Lands they never set foot on" such as part of Lake Chad both Northern and Eastern part of the territory, including Mubi, Michika, Moda, Madagali, Marwa, Mendif, Bago, Bibemi, Binder, Rai-Buba, etc. This development undoubtedly illustrates the callousness of imperialism and the insensitivity of the nineteenth century, and the racial superiority harbored by the Europeans of that era.¹⁰

However, as history will have it, the territory did not remain under the control of German rule for long. In the First World War, Germany was defeated and ousted out of the territory, and Cameroons were conquered by the British and French Armies. After the war, it became a mandate territory of the League of Nations and was divided between British and France sphere of influence.

This by Article 119 of the Versailles treaty, Northern-Cameroons was placed under British by extension Nigeria since Northern Cameroons was administered from Nigeria. But there was no meaningful development during German rule in the territory, German rule was short-lived from (1901-1914), which is rather difficult to point out any significant development by the Germans,

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 7.

and as discussed above they only got almost all the territory on a “plate of Gold”.¹¹ Notwithstanding, perhaps, for financial and Military constrain, the Germans did not attempt the ruling of the territory directly, it was instead ruled by their institutions, through their emirs and Chief, in this case through the Fulani and Kanuri rulers. The ultimate of this rule by the Fulani and Kanuri warlords, was the promotion of these rules to be responsible or as desirable to the Germans, thereby making the Dikwa emirate authority under the Shehu (Emir) and Adamawa province under the Lamido (Emir) the outcome of this elevation was a provision to the rulers’ guns and ammunition to reinforce servitude and obedience within their domain. Thus strengthened the powers of the ruling class certainly, German corruption of this territory brought no significant change structurally during the pre-colonial era.¹²

However, with the territory now became mandated to the league of Nations, and divided between the British and France, antifamily, under Article 2 of the mandatory Charter, the British became “responsible for the peace, order, and good governance of the territory and moral wellbeing and social progress of its inhabitants¹³. In the proceeding article, the mandate was “to suppress slave trade and slavery, to ensure freedom of conscience and religion”. But the mandate was silent on self-government or independence, in fact, no close in the Article that promotes such a goal shortly.

By Article 3 to this Charter, the British were allowed to establish within the territory any military or Naval base, and any organized native military force for the defense of the territory. Mandatory Article 4 also states the elimination of all forms of the slave trade and other forms

¹¹ Ibid., p. 5.
¹² Ibid., p. 19.
¹³ Ibid., p. 21.

of domestic. Except for social conditions. Under this Article, all forms of forced or compulsory labor had been forbidden, and also protect the Natives from unnecessary abuse. The last item of the Article, British shall exercise a strict control in arms and ammunition and sale of Spirituous Liquors. In Article 9, the British had the right to administer the territory as an integral part of Nigeria and in Nigeria, also to constitute the territory into glorious forms of Union with the Nigeria protectorate.¹⁴

Britain having acquired this territory used it to extend the Nigerian boundary, and it proceeded, through the order in council of 26th June 1923, making it more permanent the temporary arrangement under which the territory was administered in Nigeria. Thus, the various territory now, put under the Lieutenant-Governor of Northern Nigeria, under the Lieutenant-Governor was the residents of the Northern province of Adamawa and Borno. The Borno resident was responsible for areas formally under Adamawa emirate.¹⁵

However, the Benue Valley River divided this area into two sections each with its administrator who was answerable to the resident. It should be noted, that under the administrative organization of Northern Nigeria, and Cameroon, Dikwa emirate continued to constitute a division of Borno province. In 1926, the remaining parts of the territory, except Baisa, which was unified into the Benue-Plateau province, were merged with Adamawa province. This was followed by the British recognition of the Lamido of Adamawa (emir).¹⁶ Certainly, it is a development that made unequivocally clear Britain's acceptance and reinforcement of the 19th century British, political structure.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁵ H. P. S. Vereker, "Report on the administration of Mandate Districts of Adamawa Province", 28 February 1925, pp. 23-31.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Undoubtedly, this action of British about reorganization and administrative setup that perhaps, seen as British move to the unify Nigeria and Cameroon. This action of the British was criticized by some minority groups in the territory also the members of the permanent mandate commission. According to them, the British had already taken a position to merge Nigeria with British Northern-Camerouns. In a swift reaction by the British, who responded contrary to the mandate members' criticism, the British, replied that the administrative reorganization was just a routine work and did not employ “neither fusion nor unification with Nigeria.”¹⁷

Now, contrary to the above argument by the British, in one of its reports to the League of Nations on the state of affairs of the territory, it made mention that it had acquired a portion of Camerouns to unify the states of Adamawa and Borno with various tribes which the Anglo/German had earlier divided.¹⁸ It should be noted that a similar allegation was also put forward by French South Cameroon after the 1959 and 1961 Plebiscites.

Now under Article 9 of the Trustee agreement, the British were given the right to administer the territory and constitute various kinds of unions into an administrative union with the adjacent territories, under United Kingdom Sovereignty or control.¹⁹ Perhaps, this could only mean the province of Nigeria. Having decided to administer as part of Nigeria as stipulated by the Charter or Article, the British extended similar administrative principles, and policies a treaty developed to the British and Northern-Camerouns. By 1922, the British secretary of state

¹⁷ Saad Abubakar Lanibe Fombina, *A History of Adawama Emirate, 1809-2008*, pp, 42-45.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Garba Ibrahim, *A Study of the Evolution and Development of Indirect Rule in a North Eastern Nigerian Community, 1902-1925*, PhD Thesis, University of Maiduguri, 1994, p. 36.

for the colony reaffirmed a policy of indirect rule system for the territory.²⁰ Since Northern Cameroons was, part of Adamawa and Borno emirates in Nigeria, Britain's feeling, was that the indirect rule system was working well in the Northern region, therefore, same policy was introduced in the territory.

Northern Territory (Borno Empire)

The northern territory refers to, is the Borno emirate stretching up to Bama and Gwoza, which was part of the former Northern Cameroons. However, by the policy, the indigenous people were to be governed by the British through their Emirs. Similarly, Hewby, between 1902-1913 tried to implement the interventionist system in Borno under the Shehu Garbai but it ended impossible. When Mr. Hewby was deported in 1913, he was replaced by Mr. Palmer, after Captain E.H. Ruxton an immediate successor of Hewby, discredited Hewby on the interventionist method. Unfortunately, he was only one year, in office and replaced by Palmer, Mr. Palmer like Ruxton was an arch of non-interventionist, in 1920, he wrote a memorandum to Kaduna the head of a quarter of Northern Nigeria at that time defending indirect rule system.²¹ Perhaps, it is from here that the British thought it wise to adopt it in the trust territory. Now, in Dikwa the British left Umar Kabir the Shehu during German rule in Dikwa as the Shehu of mandated Borno.²² Under the Shehu (Emir) were the district heads and Village heads respectively.

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Ibid.

²² F. H. Ruxton and H. R. Palmer 1915 and 1917 *Annual Reports*, pp.4-7

The village heads were responsible for collecting taxes in their respective village and the maintenance of law and order. The British usually appointed district head from chieftaincy institutions, who were already occupying chieftaincy positions. They were the Priest-holders who resided with the Shehu in Dikwa. They were Kanuri-Muslims and Shuwa Arab ancestry. Certainly, the British indirect rule system was the maintenance of the same status-quo Gardiner puts:

'Seizure of estates and Lands, numerous petty exactions on every possible event in human life and worse of all adored of absentee title-holders lining on the proceeds of exactions of their extortionate agents'.²³

The British had been careful in appointing district heads, they must have been guided by the fact that the area of Dikwa was and still Muslim domination. In some areas like Gwoza where it used to be non-Muslim in the majority, and the British were aware of the exploitation of these non-Muslims by the Muslim rulers, and of the resentment of the latter by the former. The British were very careful in appointing Muslims in those areas as district heads, where the concentration of the population were non-Muslims. Examples of such area were the hill-top of Gwoza area near Dikwa emirate, the British introduced an indirect rule under its administration with the hope that shortly, it would be composed of village councils, with the non-Muslims as the leading role, but not sooner than late the British realized that: *These people have not yet reached a point at which local administration can be trusted to the Pagan Chiefs themselves and still need a strong hand to guide and assist them.*²⁴

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ D.E. Gardina, *The British Cameroons: in Britain and Germany in Africa, Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule*, London: University Press London, 1969, pp. 26-29.

The above now became a reason to continue with the old order of exploitation. In the end, the Shehu was given back his council.²⁵ However, with this the Shehu became responsible to the resident and was the effective ruler over his people. The Shehu and his advisers were in charge of the judicial courts with full powers.²⁶ As a final native court of appeal in the emirate, only the resident could review his decisions, this was how the emirate, district, and province in the Northern part of the territory, functioned under British rule.

Souther Territory (Adamawa Emirate)

The Southern part of the territory, means Adamawa which is situated on the southern part of Borno and was the former headquarters of the former united trust territory. had a complicated political set up which was very difficult for the British to decide which form of government was best suited to the people. This is because most of the states in this area lived under politically independent kingdoms, with a minimum allegiance to the Lamido (Emir) each ruler was ruling independently there was no central administrative system; but a variety of semi-independent kingdoms. It is this political situation that seemed to have been approved by the Germans who promoted several Emirs who hither to paid allegiance to the capital Yola.²⁷ For example, when Lamido was given a flag by Othman Dan Fodio to wage Jihad in his dominie, many independent Fulani Rulers ignored him until Sokoto Caliphate intervened. This is the typical nature of the political setting of the Fulani. Another, unlike the situation in Dikwa where

²⁵Abubakar Saad, *The Emirate of Fombina: The Attempt of a Politically Segmented People to Establish and Maintain A Central Form Of Government*, Ph.D. Thesis ABU Zaria, Nigeria, 1973.

²⁶ Garba Ibrahim, *A Study of the Evolution and Development of Indirect Rule in a North Eastern Nigerian Community, 1902-1925*, PhD Thesis, University of Maiduguri, 1994, p. 36.

²⁷ Ibid.

the majority of the population were Muslims. In fact, at the time Fulani was in minority, they had chosen to represent the fragmented majority.²⁵

Again, the Pagans were so fragmented that the British indirect rule system seemed inconceivable. On the final note, the situation was so complicated considering the scarcity of the population approximately over 20,000 people inhabitant of an area of about 12,170sqmiles) with natural barriers to easy transportation and communication system, especially in the South Benue River.²⁸ On carefully studying this situation, the German chose to rule through the interactive rule system, by simply provided guns and ammunition to the Fulani rulers to be used against recalcitrant pagans. This now led to maximum exploitation of the pagans.²² In 1920, the British Resident officially visited the area and comments that:

*Slave dealing and slave raiding are rampant here. Chief of minor importance was given rifles with which they were escaped to attack the wretched pagans (who were) hiding like frightened monkeys on inaccessible hills.*²⁹

The British responded, that their administration was to train the pagans on how to manage their district and village heads, at the same time reduce Fulani excess, headed by the Emir in Yola.³⁰ Whatever the claim of the British, certainly it was the maintenance of status-quo of the ante of the pre-colonial era. In 1923, the British recognized the Lamido as the rightful or ruler of the region.³¹ In the meantime, the Chamba area refused to pay allegiance to the Fulani ruler, until 1928. Thus, the British now were able to establish an administrative structure in their region, with Lamido as the ruler. However, in 1935, according to the census of that year, about 142,650, against 65,662 minority Muslims. This balance of census figure by far was due to the

²⁸ Ibid., p. 203.

²⁹ M. Zakari Njema, *The Rise and fall of Fulani in Adamawa*, PhD Thesis, University of London, 1969, p. 98.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Kyari Tijjani, "Political and Administration Development in Pre-Colonial Borno", PhD Thesis, Abu Zaria University, 1980, p. 102.

outbreak of the Sokoto Jihad, in the nineteenth century, when most rulers were embracing Islam and attempted to spread their new faith.³²This undoubtedly must have been the reason for the over and above balance of this figure. Apart from this, there was also a conflict between the Fulani and the Mandara on the “game of throne” in the region. Before the Fulani migration to the region, Mandara was said to been in the region even before the advent of the European powers. And happened to be the most powerful kingdom in the region.³³ The Fulani moved into the region as a result of the outbreak of Sokoto jihad in Borno, which caused them to move. Perhaps, they did not want to participate in the Jihad, they had to move into the Benue region. Conflict now began to develop as to who “controls the power and who gets what”. This ended in a serious problem between the Fulani and the Mandara. Eventually, the Mandara were defeated and most of their kings accepted Islam and they started to spread their new faith. As a result, it became obvious that in 1935, Census came (sic)to be a reverse, assisted by fourteen Districts Heads, out of the fourteen total number of the district heads eleven of them were Muslim and Fulani, while three non-Fulani but Muslims only one was a Pagan.³⁴

The British knowing fully well the kind of exploitation been carried out by the District heads, tried to protect them (the Pagans) to a certain extent disposing of about four Districts Heads in 1927, Gardina reports that:

As it was evident that they would not carry out fairly the orders of the government toward the primitive Pagans.³⁵

³² Ibid.

³³ N. M. Alkali, “Kanem-Borno under the Sayfama: A Study of the Origin, Growth and Collapse of a Dynasty”, PhD Thesis, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 1978, p. 321.

³⁴ David E. Gardiner, “The British Cameroons”, in P. Gifford (et.al.) (eds.), *In British and Germany in Africa: Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule*, London: Yale University Press, 1969, p. 98.

³⁵Ibid., p. 103.

Certainly, the British Policy was nothing to write home about. Accordingly, the District Heads going by the dictate of the 19th century, Jihad, which according to the Fulani and Kanuri rulers that all the Pagans must be under the rule and protection of the other rulers, others were of the view that they should not be placed under the administration of the Muslims; as a result of this, travelers complaint to the mandate commission that it would have been better for the Pagans to be under the Administrative of the British. These proved not. This will certainly be an interventionist kind which was tried in Borno during Mr. Hewby but failed.

As part of the administrative structure of the British, slave trade and slavery were abolished, but this had not changed the situation since the legal emancipation of slaves was not accompanied by any change in ownership of land, the former slaves remained economically dependent on their former masters who still control the vast land.³⁶ For confiscation of land, the slave had to give part of their crops to their masters, not only that the master demanded their labor in their farmlands.³⁷

Undoubtedly, the abolishing of the slave trade, legally, but the values remained. On the whole, the legal abolishing of the slave trade remained unchecked throughout the period. It should be noted that the main objective of the colonial powers was trade, which they linked from the Benue River down to the coast into the hinterland to Britain, in this case, those who owned vast lands and cultivated in tonnes were on the advantages. Certainly, it was the same slaves that worked on the lands and in the name of compensation after work? Certainly not. As a result of this, the land value rose at an alarming rate, while the traditional land tenure system remains unchanged throughout the colonial era. Generally, the traditional rulers of the territory become

³⁶ T. V. Levina, *The Cameroons: From Mandate to Independence*, p. 17.

³⁷ NAK, Col. Moorl, *Borno Annual Report*, 1st May 1902, SNP 15 ACC 18.

the major producers of cotton and groundnuts.³⁸ As we are made to understand that the “chief of Gashaka become the major groundnut producer in his kingdom” and that Madagali produced several tons of cotton. On the final note, the administrative structure of the British left much to be desired in the territory. There were no major changes either economically, socially, or politically.

The region remained poor throughout the mandate, exploitation of the minority pagans continued throughout the indirect rule system. There was too much British respect to maintain the status quo and at the expense of the minority pagans. Now, the second socially and economically remained backward. The decision of the British to disallow Missionary activities led grossly inadequate educational system in the area which perhaps, could have led to the modeling of the Northern-Cameroon societies and better political development. The territory was left with several districts all over the place. But this could be worse still if the Northern-Cameroon had joined Southern Cameroon.

Now, one fundamental difference between the Southern and Northern parts of the territory was that while the former, was centralized, the later pastoralists who are Fulani as a social and political segmented people lived in small units each independent in certain fundamental issues. Each under their leader is known as the Ardo (leader) determining their feature and actions within that particular area. They occasionally meet other leadership groups, not as subjects or dependent, but as equals. With this system, the British found it rather difficult to administer the people through the indirect rule system. Instead, they resorted to arming the rulers with guns

³⁷. U. Ardo

and ammunition to be used against the Pagans for maximum exploitation by the British as the system of indirect rule was aimed at Maximum exploitation by the colonial powers.

British Occupation

The occupation of the vast territory was concluded in 1902, by the British, it was done by occupation rather than conquest as no actual fighting took place. As discussed early, by 1922, April, the British Secretary of State for the colonies reaffirmed a policy of indirect rule for the territory. Since the Northern Cameroons were essentially part of Adamawa and Borno emirates in Nigeria, the British felt that indirect rule would work well in Nigeria considering the Nature and traditional setup of the people. In this way, the British left all the traditional setup unchanged. Colonel Moorland and his forces arrived and Moved through the territory which ended between the period of sixth of April may be considered as the effective occupation of the territory. At the end of it, all the British were left with a vast divested land, the people were demoralized and largely unorganized. The security of life and property was at stake, economic activities remained precocious, as the British first task was to establish political control.

Generally, the political arrangement to be put in place had already been outlined and decided by Lord Lugard. The indirect rule was to be based on the Borno and Adamawa emirate system, that is the local chiefs were considered and constituted into a sole native authority system through which the territory would be governed or administered. In this regard, it was the traditional institution that would be recognized by the people and this provides for the British a legitimate way for the new dispensation.

Apart from the traditional institutions, some advisers and controllers served behind the scene for maximum exploitation. Thus in Dikwa in Borno, the British left Umar Kabir, the Shehu who

served under Germans as the Shehu of the mandated Borno, the Shehu was also assisted by his various District and village Heads. While in Adamawa which was more complicated, as they did not have a central political set-up like that of the Kanuri in Borno, the British merely recognized the Lamido. The reason for the indirect rule was in the first place, the British could not afford the cost and second, they did not have enough manpower for such a vast territory, and third, the Germans and the French were just across the frontiers should there be an advantage for them to exploit. Which would seem not only embarrassing to the British but also to make some territorial gains? In this connection, the British had no option but to explore all necessary avenues they could find to man the territory.

As a result of this development, when colonel Moorland appeared in 1902, he sent captain McCarthy Morrough to Dikwa to have a ward with Shehu Garbai with the hope to bring him back to Borno capital as the Shehu (ruler) as the issue of recognizing Fadl-Allah the son of Rabe as the new Shehu by Lugard was impractical. Lugard had to consider others. One of the options, Dr Garba, tells us Lugard considered out of him, which was the directed to Moorland was: *You may find it necessary, to put an end to the constant warfare which I understand has for years been going on in the neighborhood of Gombe, to break the power of Mallam Jibrilla or you may find that he is a useful man to recognize as a sub-chief or even the principal chief in Lower Borno.*³⁹

Now, to begin Mallam Jibrilla was a Fulani man and a Jihadist who waged his Jihad on the border of Gombe. And if Lugard had succeeded, he might have succeeded where Jihad had failed in the Nineteenth century. However, in the process, Mallam Jibrilla was said to have been captured, but available sources tend to suggest that he was not installed as the Shehu. Mallam

³⁹ Ibrahim Garba, The Evolution and Development of Indirect Rule in a North-Eastern Nigerian Community 1902-1925, p. 119.

Jibrillah would have made history if he had ruled Borno. But unfortunately, he missed the opportunity because he had fought against the rule of the Europeans, so naturally, he became their enemy. On the part of the Fadl- Allah, it would not have been likely to secure the loyalty of the Kunari if Fadl-Allah had been Shehu too considering the situation of Borno at the time when Borno was served from Rabe rule by the French army and was paying for the well-done job. In any case, Mallam Jibrilla was found by Moorland as a person of special qualities Garba reports.

An old man over 70 years of age; his personality is striking and he gives one the impression of being a strong and able man. He wears his hair and bore long in his removed role of MAHDI.⁴⁰

The appealing personality and age of Mallam Jibrilla to the British did not help the matter. As the last word “Mahdi” was enough to put him off the British choice. Because if there was anything the European feared at that time was the Mahdi uprising. Another option put forward by the British was the restoration of the former Sayfawa Dynasty. But this too seemed far away from the truth. What the British needed then was a legitimate person to restore peace in the territory. The last option left for the British was to consider Shehu Garbai, even though Moorland regarded Garbai a weak ruler, Garba again says: *‘the fact that he is a rightful king and a direct descendant of the great Sheikh el-kanemi the founder of the Dynasty, is sufficient to ensure his being preferred by the people to anyone’*.⁴¹

⁴⁰ NAK, *Borno Province of Nigeria Annual Report 1947*, ACC No. 2455, p.15.

⁴¹ Ibrahim Garba, “Borno Under Colonial Rule”, PhD Thesis, University of Maiduguri, 1984

At the time British forces stormed Borno when Shehu Garbai was a prisoner at Dikwa for failing to pay the French army the balance of what he owed for defeating Rabe. It would be noted that it was agreed that when French Army defeated Rabe the Shehu was to pay about eighty thousand Dollars which the French had demanded from the Borno ruler in the process, the balance of about six thousand five hundred Maria Theresa Dollars hanged, so he was imprisoned. The French captain Dolgeville was to ensure compliance. But this became uncertain.

On the part of Shehu Garbai, he was willing to accept the British offer to come back home. In the first place, Borno lay on the sphere of the British and they desperately needed to clear that situation. The other, the British had assured the Shehu that there was no more collection of Lavy to the French and that he would be freed with no condition attached. As indicated earlier, Dikwa was German territory by treaty, though they were yet to establish effective control. Perhaps; it was this that Morland used to render Dodgeville incapable of preventing the Shehu from Garbai from departure. For the Shehu, it was not easy to squeeze what the French demanded from Borno and the Shehu had been forced to use his forces to collect taxes from his people. The removal of this Borden on the Shehu by the British was a welcome development not only to the Shehu but for Borno. Yet another, the offer allowed rebuilding the destroyed palace by Rabe at Kukawa and restore its lost glory. The first assignment of the Shehu on arrival was clearing the palace, as seen by Morland, Garba, again says that:

I found on arrival at Kukawa that Shehu had already sent men to begin the task of rebuilding his palace: there is a great feeling through Borno in favor of rebuilding KUKA and nothing: I suggested gave (SIC) greater pleasure to Shehu himself.⁴²

⁴² Ibrahim Garba, "Borno Under Colonial Rule", Thesis, University of Maiduguri, 1984, p. 89.

However, McCarthy Morrough on reaching the Shehu at Dikwa, saw willing acceptance on the face of the Shehu to become the Shehu of “British-Borno” thus “Shehu Garbai arrival Maiduguri the state capital to meet with Colonel Moorland. The Shehu was accompanied by about three hundred horsemen and two-hundred-foot soldiers”.

The Shehu was confirmed as the “British Shehu” of Borno on the terms of the British.⁴³ His offer of appointment as the Shehu was handed over to him from the High commissioner on 7th April 1902, and his formal installation ceremony followed the same day. The Shehu now following the installation settled family at Monguno while awaiting the rebuilding of his palace at kukawa which was destroyed by the rabe forces. The British decided to build a garrison at Maiduguri, and a fort at Monguno. Captain Morough became in charge of the fort at Monguno to keep an eye on the Shehu. In April 1902, Morland left, and captain J.R Cochrane took over as acting military resident. Now, the appointment of a legitimate Shehu, and since the British were instrumental to his appointment gave the British the political will or perhaps, a level playground to accomplish this mission. In this way, the British took it upon themselves to maintain law and order in region. This gave the people of the territory the feeling that the British were friendly, and therefore served them from the rule of Rabe and also of the French and the Germans.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 76.

The Shehu and his people also thought that the presence of the British was a temporary affair and that they would go as soon as the affairs of Borno were put in place.⁴⁴ There was a general feeling that the British goodwill towards the people, as people conducted their normal businesses without any fear throughout the difficult trying period of colonialism no British official was harassed. The general feeling that the British were not interested in ruling Borno territory, was perhaps because Captain Cochrane gave the Shehu free hand to reconstitute his court at Monguno, in fact available evidence tends to suggest that there was no attempt to interfere. Even Captain Morrourgh's detachment which was sent to keep an eye on the Shehu at Monguno appeared to have been withdrawn not long after Colonel Moorland's departure.⁴⁵ The Shehu accordingly appointed traditional officials and fief holders, he also "proceeded with the task of collecting taxes, even though it was not an easy task this was since the British had not started to face the matter, also the activities of some of the Shehu's tax collectors had the effect of causing trouble, thereby caused friction between the military resident and the Shehu".

In essence seem two parallel governments existed, while the Shehu considered it a matter of priority the rebuilding his palace and putting in place administrative institutions, and to do this the Shehu needed funds. And, so, the only way to raise money was to collect taxes unpleasantly from an impoverished populace. For the British under Captain Cochrane was more concerned with the restoration of law and order the only option for the captain was to secure at least a temporary settlement of the German frontiers and probably to bring an end to marauding activities within the territory, some of the "Marauding bands were the Shehu's tax collectors". Again the British considered it necessary to displace military presence all over the place, considering the presence of their two great colonial rivals, the French and the German, also to

⁴⁴ NAK, Hewby, "Report on Borno Province February 1903", SNP 15 Acc. No 48, p. 8.

⁴⁵ Ibrahim Garba, "Borno Under Colonial Rule", PhD Thesis, University of Maiduguri, 1984, p. 89.

45. Ibid.

restore the lost glory of the British was so paramount to Lugard for the proper implementation of the planned indirect rule system. For this reason, Garba was of the view that *'Borno was the most garrisoned province of Northern Nigeria, because of its size, with military resident and detachment in several places⁴⁵'*

Conclusion

This article has examined the historical transformation of this territory, which had continued under the British and French control when it was formally unified with the federation of Nigeria, in 1961. Now under Article 9 of the Trustee agreement, the British were given the right to administer the territory and constitute various kinds of unions into an administrative union with the adjacent territories, under United Kingdom Sovereignty or control. Now having decided to administer as part of Nigeria as stipulated by the Charter or Article, the British extended similar administrative principles, and policies a treaty developed to the British and Northern Cameroons. The British secretary of state for colonial reaffirmed a policy of indirect rule system for the Trust Territory. Since Northern Cameroons was, part of Adamawa and Borno emirate in Nigeria, Britain's feeling, was that the indirect rule system was working well in the Northern region, the same policy was introduced in the territory.

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