Part 4:  
Case Studies:  Nov. 3-8: “Sokoto Caliphate”

Nov. 5 ‘British Rule, Colonialism and Slavery’
British Colonial Rule
Geographical 'boundaries' of Caliphate spilled into French AOF and German Kamerun:
Sokoto Caliphate 1897-1903

British drawn into Nigeria in wake of ‘Scramble for Africa’:
- what became ‘Protectorate of Nigeria’ threatened by French interests (through Borgu) and German (Kamerun)
- Lord Lugard (Royal Niger Company, in southern regions) charged with creating political protectorate
- objective: conquer the entire region
- obtain recognition of protectorate by indigenous rulers - especially Emirs of Sokoto Caliphate
- militarily subdued local resistance when ‘diplomacy’ failed
- neighbouring Borno capitulated
- 1903 Royal West African Frontier Force (indigenous Hausa soldiers) attacked Kano and Sokoto
Lord Lugard and Indirect Rule

Lugard ‘author’ of Indirect Rule:

[see also references in Zanzibar case study]

- Caliphate made up of federation ‘emirates’ (small states, former Hausa states), most had Fulani Emirs by end 19th century
- ruled effectively in terms of commerce, farming and taxation
- ‘Indirect Rule’ left Emirs who co-operated with and agreed to ‘rule on behalf of’ the British in place, complete with royal palaces
- had to agree to end Slave Trade and in principle, Royal Slavery in interests of ‘modernizing’ state administration
- many of the lesser title holders were eliminated, reducing Emirs’ patronage network

-otherwise, ruled as ‘salaried employees’ of British
Lord Lugard and Indirect Rule

Ultimately: emirs defeated, deposed or agreed to collaborate – by February – March 1903 (fall Kano and Sokoto) conquest complete

Legitimacy:
- problematic, especially in situation of mixed loyalty
- while in principle a few colonial high commissioners had unlimited executive and legislative powers, most exercised this authority carefully and ‘discretely’
- all ‘orders’ transmitted through Emirs – effort to preserve ‘façade’

Law:
- dual system of law functioned: *sharia* and Colonial
- Islamic courts dealt with matters affecting personal status of Muslims (eg. land disputes, divorce, debt, slave emancipation).
Impression:
- little really changed in the North
- British could (and did) replace non-cooperative Emirs, but this was rare
- taxation and administrative systems of former Caliphate continued
- slavery: efforts to end Royal Slavery slow to have effect
  
  [eg. see Stillwell’s ‘Oral History of Royal Slavery’, Resources – based on interview with Royal slave who occupied position throughout colonial era; Mack’s Story of Hajiya Ma’daki]
- abolition in general mixed impact: on level of household, minimal
  
  [eg. see ‘Baba of Karo’, Add’l Rdgs]
Title of Book
Summarizes Situation Colonial Abolition in Northern Nigeria

Slow death for slavery
The course of abolition in Northern Nigeria, 1897–1936
Paul E. Lovejoy and Jan S. Hogendorn
“As a consequence of Indirect Rule, Hausa-Fulani domination – ‘Legacy of the Sokoto Caliphate’ was confirmed, in some instances imposed, on diverse ethnic groups, some of them non-Muslim, in the so-called middle belt.”

Video Excerpt:

Basil Davidson ‘Africa’
Pt 6: Magnificent African Cake
Contemporary Sultan of Sokoto during Festival
Resistance to Colonial Rule: Mahdist Revolt 1905-6
[see Lovejoy & Hogendorn, ‘Revolutionary Mahdism and Resistance to Colonial Rule’, Add’l Rdgs]

- shows the other side of ‘colonial conquest’: movement into Northern Nigeria triggered ‘Mahdism’
- was in fact network of resistance into French territories as well
- culminated in ‘Revolt of 1905-6’
- composition ‘resistance’ reflects ‘legacies’ of Sokoto Caliphate: class based, rather than ‘ethnic’
- both article about ‘revolt’ and revolt itself raise important questions about nature of Muslim society under Fulani, then British rule
Argument: role of ‘class’ shaping followers means that notion of Mahdism as ‘revolutionary’ not appropriate here:

“Mahdism has not always been revolutionary. Adherents have advocated a range of political positions from:

- (i) tolerance of established authority, despite a belief that the Mahdi would eventually appear, through
- (2) severe criticism of existing Islamic regimes which was often expressed through emigration (hijra) in expectation of meeting the Mahdi, to
- (3) the replacement of incumbent Muslim officials by Mahdist critics, often through violent means, and finally to
- (4) revolutionary action with the intention of destroying the Muslim state and the class structure on which it was based.

[discussion and article also relevant for ‘Case Study: Sudan’]
Mahdist Revolt 1905-6

“All these forms of Mahdism were in evidence in the years immediately before and after the conquest of the Sokoto Caliphate. Our purpose is to identify carefully 'revolutionary Mahdism' within the larger context of the colonial conquest and to show how the 'revolutionary' character of the uprising of 1905-6 differed from other forms of Mahdism.”
Important:
- article looks at impact of attraction of ‘Mahdi’ (who would arrive in the East) on mid-nineteenth century Sokoto – reference to ‘Mahdi’ leading anti-colonial resistance in Sudan
  [see ‘Case Study: Sudan’, Nov. 15-17]
- many made *hijra* into Eastern Regions (some as far as Sudan, others to Bornu – latter expelled)
- revolt is seen as ‘internal’ *hijra* (withdrawal to eastern regions of caliphate)
- Sokoto remained ‘loyal’, evidence important emirates Kano and Katsina considering joining *hijra*
Mahdist Revolt 1905-6

Importance:
- article shows class cross-cut ethnic groups (Hausa, Fulani, Tuareg and others):

“The revolutionary Mahdists sought the overthrow of all established authority, including the colonial regimes and local officials who collaborated with the Europeans. The uprising of 1905-6 revealed strong divisions on the basis of class…. This movement received virtually no support from the Fulbe aristocracy of the Caliphate. Instead it attracted radical clerics, disgruntled peasants and fugitive slaves. The absence of aristocratic involvement distinguishes revolutionary Mahdism from all other forms of contemporary Mahdism.”

[my emphasis]
Mahdist Revolt 1905-6

Importance:

- means those who felt Sokoto Caliphate had wrongly criticized ‘their’ Islam (by replacing it with a formal ‘proper’ *umma* and education)
- means those who felt Sokoto Caliphate had undermined sources of wealth and power (including those removed from Emiral positions, merchants, landowners)
- means those who felt ‘yoke’ of slavery (that was NOT Royal Slavery) and believed in promises of ‘Abolition’ form the British FOUND OUTLET in revolt.
In this way revolt reveals much of class differentiation, dissatisfaction with Sokoto Caliphate: hence argument that it was not revolutionary terms religious ideology

BUT: also provided moment for British (and neighbouring French) to identify their truly ‘loyal’ agents – and reward them

SO: revolt reveals new variation on Mahdism
- revolt reveals underlying dissatisfaction with Sokoto Caliphate (Political, Social and Economic)
- revolt reveals who British (and French) need to reward and who needs to be ‘punished’

‘Unseen’ [in terms of analysis] shaper of both British Colonial Rule and Muslim Society in Northern Nigeria
Baba of Karo

‘Baba’ recounted her life story to anthropologist 1950s.

- Hausa woman, wife of mallam
- barren, given slave child to raise as her own
- active in ‘affairs of women’

[see McDougall, “Hidden in the Household”]
Baba of Karo

Provides unique perspective: female and from within the household

On ‘coming of the Europeans’:
- technology (trains, cars)
- fear
- peace

“They would stop wars, they would repair the world, they would stop oppression and lawlessness, we should live at peace with them. We used to go and sit quietly and listen to the prophecies [of the mallems]. They would come, fine handsome people, they would not kill anyone, they would not oppress anyone, they would bring all their strange things.”

- note: it was the mallems whose ‘prophesies’ prepared people for European rule
Face of European Conquest:
- one European ‘on his horse’
- several ‘black men’, ‘two on horses, four on foot’
Reference to use African soldiers both in conquest and ‘pacification’,
rarity of European military or administrators
Baba of Karo

Reactions reveal extent to which Hausa not ‘absorbed’ into Fulani society:

- ‘King’ of Karo, Yusufu ‘did not want the Europeans to come, would not initially sign their treaty’
- only did so when forced (probably reference to fall of Sokoto)

“We Habe (Hausa) wanted them to come, it was the Fulani (ruling class of Sokoto) who did not like it.”
Baba of Karo

What did Baba see as ‘important’ about British Rule?

Paid labour (underscoring exploitation Sokoto Caliphate)
  - initial projects involved building infrastructure (roads, bridges) and housing/administration offices for colonial administrators
  - people were ‘called out’ but were paid in goods

Concubinage (forced – see Stillwell, ‘Ideology of Royal Slavery, role of Royal slaves’)

“In the old days if the chief liked the look of your daughter he would take her and put her in his house; you could do nothing about it. Now they don’t do that.”
Baba of Karo

Slavery:
- we were told there were ‘no more slaves’
- former slaves were to become ‘brothers’ (younger, elder)
- if ‘someone said SLAVE, you could complain to the qadi
- master would be punished

“When slavery was stopped, nothing much happened at our rinji (slave quarters) except that some slaves whom we had bought in the market ran away. Our own father went to his farm and worked, he and his son took up their large hoes; they loaned out their spare farms. Tsoho our father and Kadiri my brother with whom I live now and Balambo worked, they worked guinea corn and millet and ground nuts and everything; before this they had supervised the slave’s work—now they did their own...”
Colonial Northern Nigeria

Remains largely Muslim:
- Hausa-Fulani ‘dominate’
- differences between them – ‘legacies Sokoto Caliphate’ – should not be underestimated
- ‘Islamic Slavery’ largely continued within Royal households (several titles abolished but functioned similarly; harem continued)
- household level (eg Baba) ‘slave’ relations transitioned into ‘kinship’
- work on farms and plantations largest change: ‘we used to supervise slaves – now we do our own work’ (and hired wage labour)
- Islamic law was what most people experienced: even abolition of slavery imposed by local qadi
Northern Nigeria