THE 1906-07 HUNTERS' REVOLT IN ILORIN EMIRATE: A RE-EXAMINATION OF AN EPISODE IN RESISTANCE TO BRITISH COLONIAL RULE

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Abstract

From the 1850s onward, the elite in Ilorin, north-central Nigeria, contended with attempts by agents of European imperialism to penetrate the emirate. The Balogun or senior war chiefs in particular vehemently resisted efforts by Christian missionaries, Royal Niger Company, and the British colonial government in Lagos to establish or promote European cultural and commercial incursions, presence and political interference in Ilorin's external affairs. Their stand against British imperialism eventually culminated in the Company's invasion of Ilorin in 1897, which paved the way for the imposition of British colonialism by 1900. During the early colonial period, resistance to British rule in the emirate continued albeit covertly. A major overt episode of such resistance was the 1906-07 hunters' uprising. Although the first overt violent anti-colonial uprising in Ilorin, the revolt has not received adequate attention of scholars. This paper, therefore, interrogates the causes, the elite's roles in, and issues that arose from, the revolt. The study adopts the historical research methodology, involving critical examination of primary and secondary sources, and interpretive approach. It argues that, while local hunters from the rural districts of the emirate played active role in the rural and urban phases of the revolt, members of the urban elite covertly plotted and supported the uprising as part of their response to British colonial rule. The paper submits that, while the imposition of license fees on local hunters was the possible immediate cause, the growing grievances of the chiefs accused of masterminding the riots were also central to its outbreak.

Keywords: Elite; Intrigues; Resistance; Hunters; Anti-Colonial Struggle.

Introduction

Resistance to European imperialism and colonialism in Africa varied across time and space. Thus, from the onset of European imperialist penetration into the Nigerian area during the 19th century, indigenous rulers and their peoples resisted different agents of imperialism.[1] In spite of the collapse of armed and other forms of resistance, and the inevitable establishment of colonial rule, resentment and opposition to foreign rule continued and became widespread in various parts of what became known as Nigeria. Though passive in some cases, and armed or violent in others, the resistance targeted various aspects of colonial rule and lasted well into the colonial era. Described as manifestations of opposition to colonial reforms, instances of violent resistances to British rule included the Satiru revolt of 1906, the Ilorin hunters' rebellion of 1906-7, the Montol and Iseyin-Oke-Iho uprising of 1916, the 1927-8 anti-tax riots in Warri, and the 1929/30 Aba Women riots, among others.[2] Although the Ilorin elite had resisted European imperialism from the 1880s, and had fought against and lost to the Royal Niger Company (hereafter RNC) in 1897, overt and covert resistance continued until the early 1900s. However, while the 1906-7 hunters' uprising was the first major overt violent anti-colonial uprising in Ilorin, the revolt has not been adequately analysed by scholars. Apart from its mention in some works, and brief discussion in others, not much has been done to interrogate the revolt. Then, few scholars who have commented on it do not agree on its causes and the involvement of members of the Ilorin elite accused of masterminding its outbreak. This paper, therefore, interrogates such aspects of the revolt as the causes, the roles of the Ilorin elite, and the main issues that arose from various submissions on the riots.

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[1]Ayandele, E. A. "External Relations with Europeans in the Nineteenth Century: Explorers, Missionaries and Traders," in Ikime, O. (ed.), *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, (Ibadan: Heinemann Edu. Books (Nigeria) Plc., 1980), 367-389.

[2]Sa'ad A., "The Northern Provinces Under Colonial Rule: 1900-1959," Ikime, (ed.), *Groundwork*, 447-481;Asiwaju, A. I. "The Western Provinces Under Colonial Rule," in Ikime, (ed.), *Groundwork*, 429-445.

Ilorin Emirate: A Brief Historical Background up to 1906

The Ilorin Emirate was established in the early 19th century as part of the aftermath of the Sokoto *Jihad*. Its headquarters, Ilorin city in the north-central geo-political zone of Nigeria, is situated on latitude 8^0 24'North and 8^0 36' North and longitude 4^0 10'East and 4^0 36^0 East.[3] Although very little is known about the early history of Ilorin until it came into limelight in the early 1800s, the history of its transformation into the seat of an emirate by the mid-1820s is well known.[4] The emirate was administered by a traditional ruling class headed by the Emir and assisted by a council whose members included four senior military chiefs or Balogun (including two Yoruba, Ajikobi and Alanamu; one Fulani, and one Hausa); the Chief Imam (head of the *'ulamā* or religious scholars), and the Chief Alkali (head of the Islamic judiciary). The Emir's Council directed emirate affairs until the colonial period.[5] Other titleholders within the elite category included the Magajin Gari, Magaji Oju-Ekun, Magaji Aare and Baba Isale (the latter two being admitted into the Council in 1913), all being described as "principal Magaji."[6]

Of all these and other titleholders, the senior war chiefs, led by the Balogun Agba (the most senior by date of appointment), were the most dominant and influential in the politics and administration of the emirate before British conquest. This was due to their multiple roles as military commanders, kingmakers, councillors/advisors, political and administrative heads of their wards, overlords over

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[3] Oyegun, R. O. *Water Resources Development in Kwara State* (Ilorin: Matanmi Press, 1985), 3-5.

[4] See for instance: Balogun, S. A. "Gwandu Emirates in the Nineteenth Century with Particular Reference to Political Relations, 1817-1903" (PhD thesis, University of Ibadan, 1970), 130-139, 143-4, 152-5, 211-2; Danmole, H. O. "The Frontier Emirate: A History of Islam in Ilorin," (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham, 1980), 31-57, 62; Jimoh, L. A. K., *Ilorin: The Journey So Far* (Revised Edition; Ilorin: Kwara State University Press and Publishing, 2022) 28-30, 33-36, 39-40, 50-67, 75-84.

[5] Danmole, "Frontier," 81, 97; Balogun, "Gwandu," 265, 268; Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 397, 400-401.

[6] Jimba, S., *Iwe Itan Ilorin* (Ilorin: Jimba Books Production, 1990),46-49; Danmole, "Frontier," 82, 86; Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 433-451.

conquered and tributary settlements, and *de facto* judges in their spheres of influence within and outside the capital.[7] The dominant influence of the Balogun in precolonial Ilorin was reflected in the fact that they often determined the path that Ilorin took during the second half of the 19th century.

From the 1850s, the war chiefs were the arrow-heads of the opposition to the presence and activities of Christian missionaries in the city; they had vehemently opposed the involvement of the British government at Lagos in ending Ilorin's protracted war with Ibadan overOffa, a conquered town blamed for causing the drowning of Ilorin soldiers during the Jalumi war in 1878.[8] The division between Emir Momoloso (1891-1895) and the Balogun on the Offa conflict, the emir's unilateral pacifist attitude towards Ibadan, and involvement of Governor Carter of Lagos in resolving it, culminated in the violent overthrow of the former in 1895.[9]

To ensure their control of Ilorin's external affairs sequel to Emir Momoloso's overthrow, the Balogun Agba Ali Inakoju Alanamu presided over the selection of his successor and made sure that prince Suleiman, described as 'a man without influence,' "patient

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[7] Jimba, *Iwe*, 30, 38; Balogun, "Gwandu," 268; Danmole, "Frontier," 78, 98-9.

[8] On the Ibadan-Ilorin struggle and the attitude of the Ilorin war chiefs to various interventions, see Danmole, H. O. and Falola, T., "Ibadan-Ilorin Relations in the Nineteenth Century: A Study in Imperial Struggles in Yorubaland," *Transafrican Journal of History* 14 (1985), 21-35; Danmole, H. O., "The Abortive Peace Missions: Intervention of Lagos Muslims in Anglo-Ilorin Boundary Dispute, 1894-1896," *Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria* xiii, nos. 1 and 2 (1985/1986), 67-82; Apata, Z. O. "Ilorin-Lagos Relations in the Nineteenth Century: A Study of British Imperial Struggle in Yorubaland," *Transafrican Journal of History* 20 (1991), 145-160.

[9] Ikokoro, A. A. *Ta'lif Akhbar al-Qurun min 'Umara Bilad Iluri* (unpublished manuscript, 1912), chapter six; Government Printer, *Nigeria Gazette Extraordinary*: An Examination of the Claims for a Revision, (Lagos, 1952), 989-1000, and Appendix III, 1002-3; Johnson, S., *History of the Yorubas from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of British Protectorate* (Lagos: C.S.S. Bookshop, Reprint, 1976), 648-9; Adeleye,R. A. *Power and Diplomacy in Northern Nigeria, 1804-1906: The Sokoto Caliphate and its Enemies* (London: Longman, 1977), 143-4; Hogben, S. J. and Kirk-Greene, A. H. M., *The Emirates of Northern Nigeria: A Preliminary Survey of their Historical Traditions* (Oxford University Press, 1966),299.

in all affairs, gentle in speech and action"[10] was elected new Emir. Alanamu then assumed the status of the *de facto* ruler of Ilorinand the arrow-head of her opposition to British imperialism for the next seven years. Between 1895 and 1897, the Balogun changed Momoloso's policy towards the British imperialists, especially Lagos; they renounced the boundary settlement that Governor Carter had facilitated in 1894 and opposed his efforts to solve the boundary dispute. In April 1896, they attacked the British garrison at Odo-Otin.[11]In mid-February 1897,the Balogun insisted on a military resistance to an impending RNC attack on Ilorin, which the Emir wanted to avert by accepting an offer of a negotiated peaceful submission made by Taubman Goldie, the company's Governor. The eventual defeat of Ilorin troops by the RNC and the signing of a new treaty brought the emirate under the RNC and Her Majesty's Government on 16th February, 1897.[12]In spite of the defeat, effective British colonial rule did not begin until January 1900 when David Carnegie was appointed the first British Resident.[13]

Early British Colonial Rule: Background to the Ilorin Hunters' Revolt

The early years of colonial rule in Ilorin witnessed efforts by the British to establish and consolidate their control of the emirate. Given the prevalent situation,[14] the immediate concerns of the

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[10] Hermon-Hodge, H. B. *Gazetteer of Ilorin Province* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1929), 73-4; Ikokoro, *Ta'lif*, chapter seven.

[11] Apata, "Ilorin-Lagos," 149-150; National Archives Ibadan (hereafter N.A.I.) CSO 1/1 Carter to Chamberlain, 1896; N.A.I. CSO 1/3 Denton to Chamberlain, 1/4/1896; N.A.I. CSO 1/3 Denton to Chamberlain, 4/1/1896. For examination of these developments, see Gbadamosi, T. G. O. "Key issues in Anglo-Yoruba Muslim Relations 1884-1914," *African Notes*ix, no. 2, 1983, 9-22; Danmole, "Abortive Peace."

[12]Vandeleur, S. *Campaigning on the Upper Nile and Niger*. London: Methuen & Co., 1898), 270, 276-9, 283, 290-2; Adeleye, *Power*, 186.

[13] Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 76-77.

[14] N.A.K. SNP15 Acc. 11, Reports for July, 1900, by P. M. Dwyer, Assistant Resident; Lugard, F. *Colonial Reports—Annual no. 346: Northern Nigeria*, for *the Period from 1st Jan. 1900, to 31st Mar. 1901* (London: Darling and Son Ltd., 1902), 32; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 77; Elphinstone, K. V., *Gazetteer of*

British colonialists included how to restore law and order, and create a new orderin which the chiefs and the people adhered to colonial authorities' and Emir's orders. This meant the introduction of certain changes that would 'break the power of the chiefs' and help restore and boost the Emir's authority and powers, thereby transforming him to a sole Native Authority. These themes have already been examined in various studies.[15] To achieve the immediate goals, the colonial administration considered the use of force through the stationing and use of a strong detachment of West African Frontier Force (W.A.F.F.) in Ilorin and the arrest and deportation of trouble makers among the chiefs.[16]

Although Frederick Lugard, the pioneer High Commissioner for the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, strongly approved the implementation of the policies and use of force to boost the Emir's power and authority,[17] the British took cognizance of the prevalent anti-colonial mood in the town. This was with a view to avoiding outbreak of open hostility or armed resistance to the colonial regime.[18] Thus, in order to win the loyalty and cooperation of those elements opposed to the imposition of British rule, caution was adopted. Regular meetings were held with the Emir and his councillors, and decisions were jointly taken on some of the early proposals for reforms.[19] However, as it was between 1891 and

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Ilorin Province (London: Waterlow & Sons, 1921),20; Adeleye, *Power*, 199, 222-5.

[15] See for instance, Olaoye, R. A., "The Ilorin Emirate and British Ascendancy, 1897-1918: An Overview of the Early Phase of Ilorin Provincial Administration" (M. A. dissertation, University of Ilorin, 1984); Danmole, "Frontier," 199-206; Danmole, H. O. "Colonial Reforms in Ilorin Emirate, 1900-1919," *ODU* (1984), 84-107;Omoiya, Y. S., *The Origin and British Colonial Impact on the Cosmopolitan Community of Ilorin in the 20th Century* (Lincom Europa, 2009),113-148.

[16] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 11, Report for July, 1900, by P. M. Dwyer, Assistant Resident.

[17] N.A.K. SNP/SI /1/11, Unnumbered Series, Correspondence from H. C. F. Lugard to Assistant Resident, Ilorin, 3/9/1900. Olaoye, "Ilorin," 78.

[18] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 11, Ilorin Province Reports, Lugard's Memos to the Resident, Ilorin, 18/7/1900 and 31/8/1900.

[19] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 11, Ilorin Province Reports for July by Assistant Resident, P. M. Dwyer; N.A.K. Ilorprof SNP 15/1, Ilorin Province Reports 1900 by P. M. Dwyer, to the High Commissioner, dated 19/10/1900 and 22/10/1900.

1895, there were noticeable differences in the attitude of the Emir and the Balogun to the imposition of British rule, which was respectively characterized by complete loyalty and hostility.[20]

In 1902, Balogun Agba Ali Alanamu, described variously as "virtually the King of the country for the past six years" or as having "ruled Ilorin for nearly 25 years," was deposed and exiled.[21]Thereafter, the British introduced more reforms and use of threats, reward, punishment, and reprimand in their dealing with the Emir and chiefs based on their respective attitude to the colonialists.[22] By 1903, the reforms implemented had made the Emir to be politically and financially independent of the Balogun; more strengthened and insulated from the constraints they had imposed on the exercise of his powers and freed from the constant fear of arson and sudden death.[23] Backed by the British colonialists, therefore, Emir Suleiman began to assert his powers and 'to act up to his position,' including issuing warnings to the chiefs regarding the repercussion of their anti-colonial attitude and activity.[24]

For fear of suffering the fate of their deposed senior colleague, the Balogun and other chiefs still committed to opposing British colonialism had to conceal their disapproval of the new political order.[25]Thus, prior to the 1906-07 hunters' revolt, there had been no similar anti-colonial revolt or riots within Ilorin. Archival records show that the chiefs had resorted to covert and symbolic acts of resistance to British rule and the resultant loss of their

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[20]His Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO), *Colonial Reports—Annual, No. 409: Northern Nigeria, 1902* (London: Darling and Son Ltd., 1903), 49.

[21] N.A.K. SNP/15/11, P. M. Dwyer to High Commissioner, Monthly Report, Aug. 1900; N.A.K. SNP 17 30846, Ilorin Province, Annual Report 1938, by F. de. F. Daniel, v; Elphinstone, *Gazetteer*, 20; *Colonial Reports*, *1904*, 66; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 77.

[22] N.A.K. SNP 15 ACC. 119, Annual Report 1905, by P. M. Dwyer, para. 2.

[23] N.A.K. Ilorprof 6/1903, Report No. 1 for January: General Condition of the Province, by the Resident; N.A.K. Ilorprof 6/1903, Report Nos. 5 and 6, May and June, 1903, para. 20; N.A.K. Ilorprof 166/1907, History of Ilorin, Extracts from Resident Dwyer's Report; *Colonial Reports*, *1902*, 49; *Colonial Reports1904*, 66.

[24] Elphinstone, *Gazetteer*,20;N.A.K. Ilorprof 6/1903, General Condition; Hogben and Kirk-Greene, *Emirates*, 301.

[25] Adeleye, *Power*, 223-4.

power and influence. In April 1903, an anonymous letter was dropped outside the palace; it contained threats of death, arson and assault, and warning to the Emir to stop communication with the Resident through his messenger, an ex-slave.[26] The Resident suspected the Balogun's complicity in this development, noting that the threats were against his own authority and warned that the chiefs and their supporters would be held responsible for any disturbances in Ilorin and for complicity in any offence against the Emir.[27]

In spite of the warnings, passive, covert and symbolic acts of opposition and resentment to British rule continued. In 1905, some minor chiefs under the Balogun reportedly adopted the use of drumming at night to express resentment to their loss of power and influence, and to intimate the Emir that he would soon be sent to Zungeru.[28] Though the beating of drums was considered by the British as "comparatively harmless," the message it conveyed suggests that there was an underground plot to get the Emir deposed and exiled to the protectorate's headquarters. It is against this background of developments associated with the establishment of colonial rule, including reforms considered detrimental to the interests of members of the Ilorin elite by 1905, that the hunters' revolt of 1906-07 is being reexamined in this paper.

The Hunters' Revolt: Colonial Narrative and Review of Extant Literature

The 1906-7 Ilorin hunters' uprising was the first major overt violent reaction to the imposition of colonial rule and some of its early reforms. The revolt started in the rural parts of the emirate in late December 1906. There and then, it was characterised by several night attacks on farm villages, robberies, flagrant disregard of the Emir and Resident's orders, and issuance of death threats to their messengers to prevent them from reporting the clandestine plot and activities against the administration. The first major

[26] N.A.K. Ilorprof 6/1903, Reports for Mar. and Apr. 1903, para. 16.

[27] N.A.K. Ilorprof 6/1903, Report no.1 for Jan. General Condition, para. 7; Report for March and April 1903, paras. 19-21; Report Nos. 5 and 6, May and June, 1903, paras. 22-23.

[28] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 119, Annual Report, 1905, para. 12.

incidence and victims of the uprising were recorded at Olofunganga, a village near Lanwa, and at Bode Saadu where some hunters terrorised the villages and killed more than twenty persons between 31st December, 1906 and 2nd January, 1907. As the riots continued, the 3rd and 7th of January witnessed the arrest of four suspects and gathering of evidence while there was blackout on information on developments in the rural areas from 4th to 6th January.[29]On January 8, 1907, Ajia Ajayi Ogidiolu reportedly gave gunpowder to the rioting hunters at Olofunganga, urging them to do whatever they liked and allegedly got share from their loot. The Emir's messengers were prevented from delivering his messages or reporting information about underground intrigues to Ilorin while the village head of Fata who was summoned by the Resident to appear in Ilorin regarding the disturbances in his village declined the order based on the influence of Balogun Ajikobi, Magajin Gari, and Ajia Ogidiolu.[30]

The urban phase of the revolt took place between 9th and 16th January, 1907. It began with the cutting of all communications with the Resident and the summoning of a large number of hunters from the rural areas to the city. Its timing was during a period when there were no colonial troops in the Residency or weapons in the barracks. It was, therefore, reported to have been intended to make the hunters to 'see the Resident's lack of power.' Numbering six hundred at first, the hunters arrived Ilorin on the night of 9th January, received supplies of gunpowder and shot. They took their next major action on 10th January when they assembled at the Emir's market, 'shouting and cursing the Emir and Resident.' Having been reportedly informed of the vulnerability of the Resident, allegedly encouraged by Balogun Ajikobi, Magajin Gari, and Ajia Ogidiolu, the hunters planned to attack the Residency,

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[29] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Report from the Resident, Ilorin, to the High Commissioner (HC), dated 4th Feb. 1907, paras. 5, 6 and 7.

[30] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial: Provincial Court, Ilorin, Record no. 2, dated 31-1-1907; Report from the Resident, to the H. C., dated 4th Feb. 1907, paras. 4, 8-9; Elphinstone, *Gazetteer*, 21; Hogben, *Mohammedan*, 163; O'Hear, A. *Power Relations in Nigeria: Ilorin Slaves and their Successors (*Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 1997), 84; Omoiya, S. Y. "The Power Play in African Political System: A Study of British Collaborators in Ilorin, 1900-1959," *ALORE*, *Ilorin Journal of the Humanities*, 15 (2005), 95-105.

'drive the Resident out of Ilorin, catch other white men in the bush, and then drive out the Emir.'[31]

The planned attack on the Residency was frustrated by efforts of the Emir and Balogun Fulani, the mounting of a maxim gun, and stationing of thirteen police men there. These necessitated the chiefs mobilising more hunters from the districts, Borgu, and the southern parts of the province, and the eventual splitting of the assembled hunters into two on the 11th of January. A group of some 600 hunters camped outside the Oloje gate to the north of the town while the other group was stationed in the southern part. While tension mounted, the period from 12th to 15th January witnessed no serious incidents apart from the three chiefs and a big crowd reportedly 'swaggering about the markets stating that [they] did not care if soldiers came' and threatening that if the Resident 'came to the town to make trouble he would get as much as he wanted.' On January 16, 1907, the arrival of colonial troops under Lieutenant Dillon brought the situation under control until the three chiefs were arrested on January 22.[32]

To the colonial administration in Ilorin, the uprising constituted "a seditious enterprise" involving a covert intrigue against the Emir and an overt hostility to him. Although the colonial authorities were convinced that the three chiefs, already suspected of intrigues against the colonial government and the Emir, instigated the revolt, different reasons were given. K. V. Elphinstone and H. B. Hermon-Hodge observed that it was "not easy to understand the reason" for the uprising but that it was surely organized to discredit the Emir and 'was partly due to the old struggle between the Yoruba and Fulani stage-managed from outside.'[33]Later, it was submitted that the Balogun's aim was to forcefully re-assert their power and reduce the Emir's.[34]Therefore, the three chiefs believed

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[31] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Report from the Resident, Ilorin, dated 4th Feb. 1907, para. 8; *Colonial Reports 1906-7*, 22;HMSO, *Colonial Reports—Annual. No. 594. Northern Nigeria, 1907-8* (London: Darling and Son Ltd. 1909), 52; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 78.

[32] Report from the Resident, Ilorin, dated 4th Feb. 1907, paras. 9-10.

[33] Elphinstone, *Gazetteer*, 21; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 79.

[34]*Colonial Reports 1907-8*, 52; *Nigeria Gazette*, 998.

to have masterminded the riots within and many hunters already arrested were tried for sedition and murder respectively. Three hunters were eventually convicted for murder and sentenced to death while the accused chiefs were sentenced to deportation on 31 January 1907.[35] Being convinced of outside influences, three external sources, namely Lagos, Bida, and Sokoto, were identified to have possibly influenced the revolt.[36]

There are divergent scholarly opinions on the causes of the riots and the colonial narrative on the accused chiefs' involvement. Sa'ad Abubakar[37] mentions the revolt as one of the instances of resistance to British rule in Northern Nigeria, and describes it as more of a revolt of the three chiefs against the Emir and the other Balogun. Sa'ad aligns himself with colonial accounts on the chiefs' involvement but submits that "the rebellion may have been because the emir, under the control of Balogun Alanamu, was merely a British puppet."By 1907, however, the Emir was no longer under the influence of Alanamu, who had been deposed five years earlier, or any other Balogun. Rather, being backed by the British, Emir Suleiman had begun to assert his powers and authority, thereby attracting the chiefs' resentment. Adeyinka Banwo, another scholar who commented on the uprising, sees the accused chiefs as the organizers of the hunters, and the riot as "a fight" in reaction to the erosion of the Balogun's powers.[38] Although Banwo aligns himself with the British in blaming the Balogun for the outbreak of the revolt, he does not analyse the issues involved, and the rationale for the accused chiefs' involvement.

Other scholars who subscribe to the submissions of the colonial authorities include Ann O'Hear and C. S. Whitaker. Some of the latter's submissions are, however, quite erroneous. Not only does Whitaker refers to the three chiefs as "Yoruba" but also mixes up

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[35] *Colonial Reports*, *1907-8*, *52;* Elphinstone, *Gazetteer*, 21; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 78-9; Hogben and Kirk-Greene, *The Emirates*, 302.

[36] NAK SNP 15 Acc. 154, Report from the Resident dated 4th Feb. 1907, paras. 9 and 12 (a and b); Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 79.

[37] Sa'ad, "Northern Provinces," 470.

[38] Banwo, A., "The Colonial State and Ilorin Emirate Economy, 1900-1960" (PhD thesis, Department of History, University of Ilorin, 1999), 115-116.

Elphinstone's account of the 1913 anti-tax riots with the 1907 hunters' riots. This is evident in his identification of the Balogun Ajikobi involved in the latter riots as an "ex-Balogun" at the time of the uprising.[39] In O'Hear's opinion, the accused chiefs were involved in the revolt because British rule had 'impinged on the freedom of their activities.'[40] In her "Elite Slaves in Ilorin," O'Hear gives further elucidation on Ajayi Ogidiolu as an elite slave whose power, influence, and activities had been severely curtailed by British rule, and why he was involved in the 1906-7 hunters' disturbances.[41] Her analysis, however, does not account for the involvement of Balogun Ajikobi and Magajin Gari in the revolt.

In his "Frontier Emirate,"[42] Danmole briefly refers to the 1907 phase of the revolt as one of the cases of the "opposition to the British policy of increasing the power of the Emir" by Ilorin hunters. Therefore, Danmole, who sees Ajikobi's antagonism to British colonialism as appearing to be milder (when compared to the deposed Alanamu's), considers his deposition and exile in 1907 as part of the British policy of 'systematic removal of the Emir's opponents from office.' In his "Colonial Reforms,"[43] Danmole further argues that the alleged involvement of Ajikobi and the two other chiefs was an imagination of the colonial administration and that their alleged connection with the murders could not be ascertained but only intended to discredit them due to their opposition to the Emir. He submits that the inclusion of the Magajin Gari, a Fulani chieftain, among the alleged masterminds of the revolt was enough indication that the uproar could not have been 'a rekindling of the old struggle between the Yoruba and Fulani' as claimed by colonial authorities.

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[39] See Whitaker, C. S., *The Politics of Tradition, Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970), 133.

[40] O'Hear, A., "Elite Slaves in Ilorin in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 39: 2 (2006), 247-273; O'Hear, *Power*, 84.

[41] O'Hear, A., "Elite Slaves," 260-262.

[42] Danmole, "Frontier," 206.

[43] Danmole, "Reforms," *ODU* (1984), 84-107.

Furthermore, Danmole outlines and dismisses the three reasons for the revolt given by the colonial administration. Although he submits that the "root cause of the uproar lay in the reduction of the influence and power of the Balogun vis-a-vis the Emir," Danmole argues that the hunters were not instigated by the accused chiefs but were reacting to colonial reform that directly affected them, namely, the policy that hunters, brewers, hawkers, and sellers of native liquor must obtain licences before engaging in their activities. It should be pointed out that, one of the reasons identified by Danmole, namely 'the fear that the emirate would be handed over to the Alaafin as soon as the railway line reached Ilorin in 1907' belonged to late 1907, that is after the hunters' revolt rather than before it. As captured in colonial accounts,[44] such fear was not present in Ilorin as at January 1907 and could not have been given for the revolt.

In his discussions, Omoiya[45] focuses more on the riots at Olofunganga where he claims that a messenger of the Emir was killed by the rioting hunters. Omoiya makes no reference to the Ilorin episode of the revolt and, like Danmole, sees the uprising as the hunters' reaction to a special levy for arms and other hunting implements imposed by the British. Omoiya, however, submits that the riots were closely associated with the influence of Balogun Ajikobi who was in control of the villages where the uprising started, and that his deposition was because of 'the high casualty recorded in the revolt.' His latter submission is not, however, reported in the colonial records or corroborated in other accounts on the riots.

In his "Agitation and Protest against British Colonial Policies in Ilorin,"[46] Bashir Ibrahim agrees with Danmole and Omoiya in identifying the main cause of the uprising as the license fees imposed on hunters and others. His brief discussion of the protest, however, excludes the 1906 rural phase, and further suggests that it

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[44] See Elphinstone, *Gazetteer*, 21; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 79.

[45] Omoiya, "British Collaborators"; Omoiya, S. Y. , "The Survival of Emirate System in a Multicultural Society: A Study of the Ilorin Emirate in the 20th Century," in Edeko, S. E. (ed.), *Law and Contemporary Issues*, 107-117.

[46] Ibrahim, B. O., "Agitation and Protest Against the British Colonial Policies in Ilorin 1823-1936," *Alore: Journal of the Humanities* 13, no. 10 (2003), 142-154.

was within Ilorin that the twenty victims recorded were killed by the riotous hunters. This is contrary to archival and other records, which the author does not consult, that associate the murders with the rural phase. Although the author notes that the accused chiefs were among "suspects" tried and dealt with, he provides no explanation to link them with the revolt or to exonerate them from their alleged complicity.

Furthermore, while discussing 'political tremors' during the reign of Emir Suleiman (1895-1915), Jimoh[47] describes the hunters' revolt as "widespread civil disturbances" that took place across the emirate in 1906. Jmoh's discussion excludes the 1907 phase of the revolt but link Ajikobi's deposition to his 'uncompromising stance against British imperialism.' Jimoh also differs with other scholars when he submits that the revolt was also connected to the creation of districts, another early colonial reform. According to Jimoh, the rioters condemned the reform and that Emir Suleiman 'tactfully aligned himself with their slogans,' which reflected his 'dislike for the creation of districts.' These submissions are not neither mentioned in archival records on the riots available to the present author nor supported by other reports. Jimoh's biographical information on Balogun Ajikobi Biala, however, shows that, like Ajayi Ogidiolu, he was actively involved in the coup that toppled Emir Momoloso in 1895, among those who criticised the 1897 treaty that Emir Suleiman signed with RNC, and had been opposed to British imperialism.[48]

Interrogation of Key Issues and Personalities involved in the Revolt

From the review of literature above, some salient issues germane to the hunters' revolt are noticeable. These include the relationship between the introduction of license fees for hunters and others and the outbreak of the revolt; the the accused chiefs' involvement and the possible rationale for their roles; the involvement of external influence, and whether the uprising was a continuation of the contest for Ilorin between the Yoruba and Fulani. First, game licenses were being fully enforced in Ilorin Province by 1906, and

[47] Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 261.
[48] Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 413-4.

are noted to be very unpopular in the Offa district where they had led to protest by some hunters in January 1906.[49]

The extent to which the imposition of the licenses was the primary rationale for the 1906-07 hunters' disturbances, especially within Ilorin, is difficult to assess from records available to the present writer. However, the report that by January 1907, the chiefs made efforts to recruit and bring in more hunters from Offa, Borgu, and southern parts of the province suggests the prevalence of hunters grievances in Ilorin Province. It is, therefore, apparent that those chiefs who had passively resisted British colonial rule, or had allegedly constituted obstacles to the success of the colonial administration, and had expressed dissatisfaction with the Emir and the British Resident on the eve of the disturbances,[50] had decided to exploit hunters' grievances against license fees.

The involvement of Balogun Biala and the two other chiefs in the 1906-7 uprising, therefore, can be explained as deriving from reaction to their loss of power and influence consequent upon the establishment of the British colonial rule in Ilorin emirate. As some developments between 1900 and 1906 indicate, the chiefs had reasons why they were involved in the riots and why they had probably decided to exploit the hunters' grievances to attempt to get rid of the Resident and the Emir. By the end of 1906, the chiefs had lost some of the traditional roles, influence and prestige associated with their respective titles/offices. First, British colonialism had put a stop to warfare, which had been a major avenue for the wealth, prestige, and influence of the Balogun. Secondly, some precolonial sources and processes of surplus extraction and wealth accumulation by the war chiefs were being treated by the British colonialists as amounting to "extortions," "brigandage," and "oppression," and being considered as obstacles

[49]HMSO, *Colonial Reports—Annual No. 616. Northern Nigeria, 1905-6* (London: Darling and Son Ltd., 1907), 51; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 78; N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 119, Ilorin Province, Report no. 33 for Apr.-June, 1906, by P. M. Dwyer, para. 19.

[50] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Report from the Resident, Ilorin, to the HC, 4th Feb., 1907, para. 4.

to the restoration of law and order, they became crimes punishable under the colonial regime.[51]

Furthermore, the early years of colonial rule had witnessed a disregard for the position, status and traditional privileges of the Balogun Agba in the precolonial political structure. The British colonialists also seem not to have recognized the fact that the deposed Balogun Alanamu derived much of the power and influence he had exercised during the last decade of the 19th century from his combined position as Balogun Alanamu and the most senior Balogun. Thus, while dealing with initial opposition to colonial rule, the roles and privileges of the Balogun Agba were eroded by early colonial reforms aimed at boosting the Emir's position and powers and rewarding his loyalty and cooperation. As the next most senior Balogun after Alanamu's deposition in 1902, Balogun Ajikobi Biala was not privileged to assume the title, exercise the powers or enjoy the traditional privileges associated with the Balogun Agba's position. In other words, from 1902 to 1906, Balogun Ajikobi never enjoyed the recognition, status and privileges of the Balogun Agba after Alanamu's deposition.

Furthermore, the treatment that Balogun Biala Ajikobi received from the implementation of British policy of reward and reprimand was not palatable. In addition to not being formally recognised as Balogun Agba,[52] Ajikobi was fined £10 in 1905 for allegedly accepting a bribe to liberate a prisoner who had been tried and sentenced by the Native Court.[53] Also in 1905, his colleague, Balogun Gambari Janmurogo, was fined £5 for sending one of his followers to a village as his representative, and warned "to desist from exerting a power he had no right to."[54] These and other possible experiences must have made Balogun Ajikobi, though unrecognized as the most senior Balogun, to consider it his

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[51] *Colonial Report1902*, 22.

[52] In 1938, Balogun Alanamu contested the succession of Ajikobi to the position of Balogun Agba by arguing that "no Balogun Ajikobi had been recognised as Senior Balogun." His submission was confirmed to be "correct, but [that] it appears to be due to accident only, not to any tradition of precedence." Conf. memo no. 69/154, Balogun Alanamu and Owode district, dated 27th May, 1938, from the Resident, Ilorin, to the Secretary, Northern Provinces, Kaduna, para. 1.

[53] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 119 Annual Report, 1905, para. 15.

[54] N.A.K. Ilorprof SNP 15/1/119, Ilorin Province Annual Report 1906.

responsibility to protect the vested interests of the war chiefs, lead the efforts to resent the erosion of their power, and to re-assert the traditional privileges and influence of the Balogun Agba. There is little or not doubt that the alleged intrigues with Lagos and Bida to get rid of the Resident and Emir revolved around Balogun Biala acting as the traditional leader of the Balogun.

Like Balogun Ajikobi, the possible involvement of Magajin Gari Suleiman in the uprising can be explained within the context of the adverse effects of colonial reforms on the traditional roles associated with his office. In the precolonial period, Magajin Gari played some political and administrative roles. These included serving as the intermediary between Ilorin and Gwandu (handling correspondence and payment of tributes), being in charge of the administration of the city or at least the Emir's Ward, and of communication between the Emir and the Balogun.[55] With the establishment of colonial rule, the Emir's correspondence with the Resident, as the representative of the new overlords, was handled by his slave messenger(s) rather than the Magajin Gari or the Balogun Agba. The grievance associated with this is alluded to in the warning given to Emir Suleiman (contained in the anonymous letter deposited at the palace in April 1903) to stop sending his slave messenger to the Resident.[56] Also in 1903, a letter from Sokoto, directing the Emir to instigate some troubles to divert the attention of the British away from the caliphate headquarters, was first received by the Magajin Gari.[57] This fact made the British to suspect that the Magaji must have received similar instructions from Sokoto to instigate the hunters' revolt in 1907.[58]

The involvement of Ajayi Ogidiolu in the riots was also connected with changes in his fortunes occasioned by early colonial reforms. Although a court slave, Ogidiolu had been very powerful and influential during the decade preceding the establishment of colonial rule in Ilorin. In the 1895 palace coup, he was reported to

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[55]Jimoh, *Ilorin*, 433-4.

[56] NAK Ilorprof 6/1903 Report for March and April 1903, by the Resident, para. 16.

[57] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial Ilorin 1907, Record No. 2, Provincial Court Ilorin, dated 31-1-1907, para. 12(c).

[58] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial Ilorin 1907, Record No. 2, para. 12(c).

have been 'mixed-up' in the violent death of Emir Momoloso; from 1895 to 1905, he had continuously used the circumstances of the emir's death to threaten or blackmail his successor, who, according to O'Hear, he had 'chosen to control and openly to resist.'[59] In other words, being among those that played active role in the coup, Ogidiolu had kept the facts about Momoloso's death green in his successor's memory, and therefore, contributed to making him not only a puppet in the Balogun's hands but also continuously afraid of sudden death or having his palace burnt down.[60]

Furthermore, like the Balogun, Ajia Ogidiolu's power and influence had increased after Emir Momoloso's death. Reportedly "famous for his *Manufuki*" (or intrigues), and with a following reportedly "much more than any of the Balogun," Ogidiolu had become "a go between the Emir and every chief in the town," and was the fief holder of Offa and Ajase-Ipo.[61] He had, therefore, become a force to reckon with in local politics and intrigues in Ilorin up to early 1900s. By 1906, he was described as a "new office holder," perhaps as one of the pioneer District Heads appointed in that year, and had accompanied the Resident to Offa to erect camps to welcome the Governor of Lagos on his way to Zungeru.[62] All this implies that Ogidiolu exercised some influence both within and outside Ilorin town, and, as O'Hear notes, "had long manipulated his position to his own advantage."[63]

In spite of his position and influence, the Ajia was among some "chiefs" who were reportedly "mixed-up" with widespread robberies within Ilorin and in the outlying districts since around 1900. He was particularly identified as "the chief protector of the thieves" and one of those "chiefs" who received a percentage from

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[59] NAK SNP 15/1 Acc. 119, Ilorin Province, Report for January-March 1906; O'Hear, "Elite Slaves," 259.

[60] N.A.K.SNP 15/1 Acc. 119, Report for Quarter Ending 31st Mar. 1906, para. 5; N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Report by P. M. Dwyer, to the High Commissioner, dated 4th Feb. 1907; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 77.

[61] N.A.K. SNP 15/1 Acc. 119, Report for Quarter Ending 31st March 1906, paras. 5 and 6.

[62] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 119, Province of Ilorin, Report July-September 1906, para. 16.

[63] O'Hear, "Elite slaves," 261.

the proceeds of their criminal activities.[64] In early 1906, the police and secret service engaged to trail Ogidiolu had confirmed allegation of his being 'hand in glove with robbers' although an offer of a reward of £5 for anyone who would provide evidence to convict him proved ineffective as no one was willing to come forth with such evidence against him.[65]In the same year, however, the Ajia was sanctioned for violating some aspects of the colonial reform. First, he was found to have heard cases meant to be tried by the Native Court at Offa, and to have placed an Ajele in the town. The Ajele was arrested and tried while Ogidiolu was fined £10 and £25 for the two violations respectively.[66]

Thus, the British had undoubtedly considered the initial activities and attitudes of those chiefs that were at variance with British standards of law, order and good government as part of their passive resistance to colonial rule and obstructions to implementation of colonial orders. The situation had also made it imperative for the colonial authorities to try, albeit abortively, to win the chiefs over to support the administration prior to 1906.[67] Despite the failure of attempts to win them to government's side, the anti-colonial postures of the recalcitrant chiefs were not initially treated as overt acts of disloyalty due to lack of concrete evidence. This was variously blamed on Ogidiolu's "great cunning," the refusal of the common people to report the chiefs to relevant authorities, or to give evidence against them or on crimes being allegedly committed either by them or by others on their behalf.[68]

Before late 1906, therefore, the three chiefs had been on the watch list of the British colonial authorities in Ilorin; spies had been engaged to trail their alleged intrigues and subversive activities.

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[64] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 119, Report no. 32, January-March 1906, para. 5; Report no. 33, April-June, 1906, para. 5.

[65] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 119, Ilorin Province, Report no. 32, January-March, 1906, para. 5.

[66] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 119, Report for April-June 1906, para. 5.

[67] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Report by P. M. Dwyer, to the HC, 4th February 1907; Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 78-79.

[68] *Colonial Reports 1900-01*, 32; N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 119, Ilorin Province, Report for January-March, 1906, para. 5; N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Report from P. M. Dwyer to the HC, dated 4th February 1907, paras. 1, 3, & 4.

Indeed, the Resident once admitted that he had heard reports of their intrigues against the government and the Emir a couple of times but "did not put much credence in them."[69] Archival records suggest that the plot against the Resident and Emir Suleiman, which resulted in the hunters' revolt, was schemed to exploit attempts to curb the prevalent insecurity in parts of the emirate. The situation, which the police had been unable to check, had been characterised by widespread robberies within Ilorin and night attacks and murders in the districts. By the first quarter of 1906, the insecurity had become so worrisome that the Resident, sequel to concerns expressed by the Emir, had to warn the Balogun and other chiefs to either end the incidents or accept responsibility for failure to check the crimes. He also threatened to call for W.A.F.F. contingents at the chiefs' expense.[70]

Given the prevalent inadequacy and inability of the police to patrol the town and at the same time check attacks by armed bandits in the villages, the Emir suggested the invitation of 50 hunters to patrol Ilorin. This was approved by the Resident but with warning that the Emir would be responsible for any crime that the hunters might commit during their patrol.[71] The implementation of the Emir's proposal led to an initial cessation of crimes within Ilorin. It was at this juncture that the three chiefs had apparently plotted to exploit the situation to instigate over 600 hunters to foment the troubles in the outlying villages in December 1906 and to extend the chaos to Ilorin by January, 1907.

For the urban Ilorin phase of the riots,the three accused chiefs allegedly invited the hunters to Ilorin and gave them some orders in the Emir's name. The Emir and other senior chiefs who gave evidence at the trial of the chiefs, claimed that the three accused chiefs were in the habits of giving orders in the Emir's name, and that they had brought the hunters to the town to attack the Residency for the dual purpose of driving away the white men and

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[69] Report from P. M. Dwyer to the HC, dated 4th February 1907, para. 4.
[70] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 119, Report no. 32 for Jan.-Mar., 1906, paras. 2 & 4.
[71] HMSO, *Colonial Reports—Annual*. *No. 551*. *Northern Nigeria, 1906-7* (London: Darling and Son Ltd., 1907), 22.

removing the Emir.[72] To the Resident, the plot constituted the "great *manufuki*" that Balogun Biala and the two other chiefs were reported by the secret service agent to be making on the eve of the revolts although he had previously had no concrete evidence to hold on to.[73]

The interpretation of the uprising as an extension of the 'old struggle between the Yoruba and Fulani' seems to have arisen from precolonial antecedents and the immediate interpretation of the dimension of the crisis by the British colonialists. First, the internal struggle for the control of Ilorin's external relations on the eve of colonial conquest had been between the Fulani Emir and the war chiefs led by the Yoruba Balogun Alanamu who orchestrated the overthrow of an Emir in 1895. With Alanamu's deposition in 1902, another Yoruba Balogun, Biala Ajikobi, by tradition, automatically became the Balogun Agba although not formally acknowledged as such. Balogun Biala assumed the leadership of the war chiefs and of their struggle against British ascendancy in Ilorin and the pro-Emir policies of the nascent colonial regime. By virtue of Emir Suleiman's cooperation with the new regime, the struggle pitched the Yoruba Balogun against the Fulani Emir, whose position and power had received some boost at the expense of the senior chiefs.

In their initial attribution of external origin for the hunters' riots, the British authorities alleged the involvement of Lagos. This was initially based on the fact that a delegation from Lagos was in Ilorin to demand the release of the accused chiefs after their arrest.[74] An additional justification on which the British rested the allegation was their suspicionthat Balogun Ajikobi and others had connived with "someone in Lagos to get rid of the Fulani Emir and to run Illorin (sic) in the same manner as Ogbomoso i.e. not having a Resident."[75] This attitude is neither surprising nor an isolated

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[72] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial Ilorin, 1907, Record No. 2, dated 31-1-1907.

[73] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Report from the Resident, Ilorin, to the H. C., 4th Feb. 1907. paras. 3, 4 and 5.

[74] Hermon-Hodge, *Gazetteer*, 79.

[75] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial Ilorin, report dated 4th February 1907, para. 12(a).

case. Before the hunters' revolt, there had been incidents of anti-colonial or anti-Emir activities in the emirate, which had been attributed to the 'trowsered Lagosians' (sic) or the "Lagos gentry." In mid-1906, for example, the British had alleged the involvement of the "Lagos gentry" in suspected anti-Ilorin attitude of the Oloffa of Offa, and had dismissed "the educated Lagosian" as "nothing less than a bane to the country."[76]

Apart from Lagos, two other external sources identified for the uprising were Nupe and Sokoto. With regards to the former, Balogun Ajikobi was alleged to have been in league with traditional authorities in Bida against the British Resident in Ilorin. The background to this can be found in the precolonial alliance between Ilorin and Nupe emirates including Bida, and in some of the anti-colonial activities of the war chiefs between 1900 and 1905. Prior to the British colonial conquest, there had been a history of alliance and cooperation between the rulers of Ilorin and Bida, with the former playing significant roles, including military and moral, in the establishment and survival of the Nupe emirates throughout the 19th century and the latter being invited to support Ilorin emirate in her wars especially the crucial c.1835 Woru Kura or Eleduwe War.[77] During the early colonial period, instances of such cooperation in their anti-colonial struggle included the willingness of the Balogun, despite the Emir's opposition, to support the Nupe in their struggle against the British colonialists in 1900.[78] There was also Balogun Alanamu's attempt to join the rulers of Kontagora and Bida to attack Jebba in order to drive out the remaining British officials from the region. This was when British troops were on a mission in Ashanti. Then, Alanamu had,

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[76] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 119, Report no. 33 for April-June, 1906, para. 12.

[77] On various instances of the demonstration of 'an unwritten pact between Ilorin and Nupe emirates' and the 'strong bond of cooperation that existed' between them during the 19th century, see Idrees, A. Aliyu, "Ilorin Factor in the 19th-Century Nupe Politics: A Study in the Inter-Emirate Relations within Sokoto Caliphate, Nigeria", *Transafrican Journal of History*, vol. 20 (1991), pp. 191-189; Jimoh, L.A.K., *Ilorin: The Journey So Far* (Revised Edition; Ilorin: Kwara State University Press, 2022), pp. 169-193.

[78] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 11, Ilorin Province Reports by Assistant Resident, P. M. Dwyer, 1900; NAK SNP 15/1, Ilorin Resident's Reports, 1900, Dwyer's report dated 5/8/1900.

among others, allegedly spread rumours that the British had been defeated or killed in Ashanti and threatened that Emir Suleiman, who was increasingly loyal to the British and opposing his own anti-colonial efforts, would suffer the same fate as his predecessor.[79]

Furthermore, shortly before the outbreak of the hunters' riots, Balogun Ajikobi reportedly received some messengers and a letter from Bida, and had kept its contents as top secret. Then, a successful prosecution of Ilorin uprising was expected to be followed by a similar uprising in Bida with the same outcome, namely expulsion of the Resident.[80] Earlier in September 1900, there had been a report of an unsuccessful plot by Balogun Alanamu and Ajikobi to drive the Resident and ten civil police out of Ilorin.[81] Thus, in late 1906, the Resident had suspected that something sinister was being plotted by the chiefs again. Due to the paucity of information from the Emir's messengers, he had employed a secret agent to investigate his suspicions of possible intrigue within Ilorin. The secret agent had reported, albeit with no details, that a 'great *manufuki*'[82] (i.e. intrigue) was being planned by Ajikobi and others.[83]

In view of records of their passive anti-colonial activities since 1900, the intelligence report on their intrigues and activities both on the eve of, and during the, revolt, the colonial authorities were convinced that the three chiefs, already considered as 'a stumbling

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[79] HMSO, *Colonial Reports—Annual*. *No. 476: Northern Nigeria*, *Report for 1904* (London: Darling and Son Ltd., 1905), 66-7; N.A.K. SNP 10 168p/1913, Report No. 65 for 1912, by H. R. Palmer, para. 4; N.A.K. SNP 10 168p/1913, Report No. 65 for 1913, para. 4; Hogben and Kirk-Greene, *Emirates*, 301.

[80] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial Ilorin, report dated 4th February 1907, paras. 9 and 12(b).

[81] N.A.K. SNP 10 168p/1913, Report No. 65 for the Year 1913, para. 4; Adeleye, *Power*, 224.

[82] "*Manufuki*" is a rendering of "*munafiki*," the Yoruba corruption of the Arabic *Munafiq* (meaning a "hypocrite"), which is derived from "*nifaq*" ("hypocrisy"). *Nifaq* and its different derivations are used to cover such acts or behaviours as "secret disaffection," covert or secret opposition to someone, and "prosecuting hostility by treachery." Hughes, T. P. *A Dictionary of Islam* (London: Forgotten Books & Co. Ltd. 1885, Reprint 2013), 187.

[83] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial Ilorin, 1907, Record No. 2, 31-1-1907, paras. 3, 4, and 9.

block' to the progress of colonial rule in Ilorin, were the masterminds of the hunters' revolt. Thus, the pieces of information already gathered prior to their arrest, and the oral evidence given by the Emir and the three other Balogun (Alanamu, Gambari and Fulani), were considered sufficient to convict them of their involvement in "a seditious enterprise."[84] Although the accused chiefs pleaded not guilty at the trial, and described the testimonies of the other chiefs as "all lies," they did little to contest the evidence presented against them. These included requesting Balogun Alanamu to swear on the Qur'an, and finally submitting that "God knows about the whole affair."[85]

It is important to observe that, unlike during the 1890s when the Balogun Agba Alanamu had used a combination of threats, intimidation, propaganda, and his influence with the religious scholars to whip up anti-British sentiment and to mobilise the masses against British imperialism and pro-Lagos Emir Momoloso,[86] Ajikobi seems not to have been so successful in carrying the people along with him. Thus, the people were not actively involved in the rural and urban phases of the hunters' revolt, which was confined to the three chiefs, their followers, and the hunters. In the districts, where the disturbances began, innocent people were at the receiving end of the violence, while within the city, the targets of their attempted attacks was primarily the Residency and, secondarily, the Emir/his palace.

Also, the disobedience allegedly encouraged by the accused chiefs was mainly confined to the chief of Fata. Indeed, the Resident was convinced that, generally, the townspeople were not trouble makers and that the highest they could attempt to do would be "a petty riot that would be easily quashed."[87] Thus, it was only the accused chiefs' followers who constituted a 'large crowd' that 'hustled and hooted' at the Emir and the other Balogun at different

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[84] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial, Provincial Court, Ilorin, Record No. 2, 31-1-1907; Report from the Resident, Ilorin, to the H. C., 4th February 1907, paras. 8 and 11.

[85] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial, Provincial Court, Ilorin, Record no. 2, 31-1-1907.

[86] Adeleye, *Power*, 199, 222-5; Danmole, "Frontier," 166.

[87] Report from the Resident, Ilorin, to the H. C., 4th February 1907, para. 5.

times such as when the chiefs were being arrested and led to the Residency, on return of the Emir and other chiefs to the town, and outside the Emir's palace in the evening of 22 January, 1907.[88]

A major outcome of the hunters' revolt was the intensification of the use of threats, sanctions and reprimand by the British authorities in Ilorin. First, based on their conviction that the Emir's personal weakness or "weak policy" had enabled the chiefs to engage in fomenting the disturbances, Emir Suleiman was threatened with deposition and replacement by a "stronger man" if he did not change.[89] Secondly, in the immediate aftermath of the revolt, various members of the elite came under sanctions or reprimand. These included the District Heads (DHs) for Oke Moro and Paiye who were deposed in 1908 for alleged excesses;[90] a son of Balogun Gambari (the incumbent Balogun Agba) was brought under trial in 1909 for "sending a fire sign to another man";[91] the new Magajin Gari was "severely censured" in 1909 for sending a messenger to a village to ask for a sheep in the process of which some people were hurt;[92] Isiaku, "one of the most powerful and intriguing sons of the Emir," was tried in 1912 and found guilty of interfering with the work of the Native Court and given ten lashes in the public market,[93] while Muhammadu Woru, the Emir's eldest son and "a man who naturally holds an important position in the town," was deposed in 1913 for a case of bribery and for allegedly receiving "professional thieves" in his house.[94]

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[88] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial, from Res., Ilorin, to the H. C., 4th February 1907; report on the disturbances, dated 4th February 1907.

[89] N.A.K. SNP 15 Acc. 154, Judicial, Record No. 2, 31-1-1907, para. 10.

[90] Annual Report, 1908, in P. M. Dwyer's Extracts from Reports, 1902-1908, RH Mss. Afr. S. 958.

[91] N.A.K. SNP 7 Ilorprof 3590/1909, Ilorin Province Report for June Quarter, 1909, para. 12; N.A.K. SNP 7, Ilorin Province, Report for September Quarter, 1909, para. 5.

[92] N.A.K. SNP 7, Report for Oct.-Dec. 1909, by P. M. Dwyer, para. 8.

[93] N.A.K. Ilorprof 900/1912, Ilorin Town Assessment-Progress Report, by Mr. G. J. Lethem, 1912, para. 53; N.A.K. Ilorprof 139/1913, Ilorin Provincial Annual Report, 1912, para. 16.

[94] N.A.K. Ilorprof 289/1913 Report for April-June, 1913, by E. C. Duff, para. 7; N.A.K. Ilorprof 308/1915 Annual Report, 1913, para. 5.

Conclusion

This paper has reexamined and shed light on a major episode in local resistance to colonial rule in Ilorin during the opening years of British colonialism. It underscores the importance of interrogating, analysing and incorporating archival materials in researches into and reconstruction of local developments during the colonial period. The discussion of the revolt within the prevalent socio-political context of Ilorin and motivations of members of the elite accused and indicted for fomenting the crisis reveals that the Ilorin hunters' uprising was both anti-colonial and anti-Emir, and largely an elite affair. The paper demonstrates that, while hunters' grievance against the imposition of license fees has been widely identified as the main cause, the accumulated grievances of the three chiefs accused of plotting the riots against the colonial regime were central to the outbreak of the revolt. Thus, the role of elite self-interests was significant in the conspiracy that led to the revolt.

In spite of being primarily an elite affair, the attitudes of the Emir and his other senior chiefs to the revolt and the accused chiefs revealed an aspect of the reactions of the Ilorin elite to the establishment of British colonial rule. This was the lack of unanimity in the anti-colonial struggle, which had also been demonstrated between 1891 and 1895. It would seem that early reactions of the Ilorin elite to British colonialism between 1900 and 1906 were dictated by personal consideration of the extent to which the establishment of British rule and colonial reforms had affected individual chiefs' position, power, privileges, and fortune. While the accused chiefs do not seem to have carried other chiefs along in the intrigues that led to the outbreak of the hunters' revolt, the other Balogun do not seem to have seen their colleagues alleged to have instigated the disturbances as fighting for the collective interests of all, a feeling that must have been reinforced by the realisation that, like the colonial Resident, Emir Suleiman was also a target of the uprising.

Furthermore, a contributory factor for the demonstration of loyalty to the colonial authorities by the Emir and the other Balogun, and their lack of support for the revolt was also informed by warnings and threats given by the Resident to them to refrain from

associating with the accused chiefs during the course of the revolt.[95] As one of the pieces of evidence given at the trial suggests, the Emir and the other Balogun were willing to collaborate with the colonial authority to establish the guilt of the accused chiefs. Thus, contrary to the information that the decision to resist the RNC invasion of Ilorin a decade earlier was made by all the Balogun led by Balogun Alanamu, at the trial in 1907, only Balogun Ajikobi Biala was alleged to have insisted on Ilorin fighting the company in 1897.[96]

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