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## Opponent's review of dissertation thesis

YAKUBU, Suleiman, *The Impact of British Colonial Administration on Nigeria: The Auchi Kingdom Experience, 1904–1960*, PhD Thesis, University of Pardubice, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, Institute of Historical Sciences, Pardubice 2024, 243 p. (incl. 15 p. of images).

The present dissertation by Suleiman Yakubu focuses an analysis of the history of the Auchi Kingdom and its relations with the British colonial administration over a period of 1904–1960, from the arrival of British colonial administrators in the Auchi Kingdom in 1904, after the collapse of the Nupe Empire a few years earlier, until Nigeria's independence in October 1960. Right at the outset, it should be emphasized that the thesis represents not only an interesting but also a useful study in the Czech academic circles in terms of its scope and focus, since this narrow topic, or African history in general, is not often reflected in our country. In my opinion, Suleiman Yakubu has presented a good work.

Given the fact that Suleiman Yakubu is presenting a reworked version of his previous dissertation from 2023 [YAKUBU, Suleiman, *The Auchi Kingdom and her relations with two external powers, the Nupe and British: 1800 – 1960*, PhD Thesis, University of Pardubice, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, Institute of Historical Sciences, Pardubice 2023, 200 p. (incl. 23 p. of images)], I will not only focus on the new analysis of the text, but also compare the extent to which the shortcomings of the previous version of the text have been corrected.

Suleiman Yakubu's dissertation is clearly divided into six main chapters and a number of subchapters. The structure of the thesis is not happily chosen, as it is at times overly structured, and it is therefore not exceptional that some subchapters are one page or several paragraphs long. This shortcoming is recurring and has not been resolved from the previous version.



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In the introduction, numbered as the first chapter, the author analyses the methodological procedures used, especially the oral history method, the work with sources and literature, which he used in the preparation of his work. He also analyses his average archival research conducted in The National Archives, London-Kew in the United Kingdom, The National Archives Nigeria in Ibadan, The National Archive Kaduna in Nigeria, and consultations at the University of Warsaw in Poland and *Institut des mondes africains* (IMAF) in France.

The second chapter focuses on a comprehensive introduction to the location and geography of the Auchi Kingdom, socio-cultural institutions and traditions including kinship, kingship, chieftaincy titles, religion, wedding and funeral ceremonies and other rituals including taboo topics, totems and the age group system. The third chapter thus means a continuation of the introductory comprehensive section for the reader, and dedicates and deals with indigenous rule and administration in the Auchi Kingdom before the arrival of the British, its origins and political, social, administrative structure prior to the period of influence of the Nupe Kingdom, the importance of slavery and slave trades in the structure of the region, and British activities in the Nigerian region a year before until 1904. The introduction of the reader to the issue thus constitutes approximately half of the dissertation text.

It is not until page 116 that chapter four begins, which, along with chapter five, forms the core of the thesis. In the fourth chapter, namely the impact and influence of the British colonial administration on the development of the Auchi Kingdom and the Nigerian region in general, the author chronologically deals with the British colonial and economical activities and interests. He briefly discusses the British Courts of equity and judicial system, activities of the Royal Niger Company, the aspects of the indirect rule system, the establishment of Kukuruku Division, the Auchi Kingdom during the First World War and the Second World War, and the post-war Nigerian emancipation process leading to an independent Nigeria.



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The fifth chapter focuses on the Auchu Kingdom during the era of British colonial administration, with special reference to the Otaru system of administration. First, the author gives a very brief overview of the Otaru system of administration prior to the arrival of the British and then chronologically analyses the various rulers and their relations with British rule. But the fact is that sometimes the author mentions superfluous details at the expense of defining the topic of the dissertation. In terms of content, this is an expanded new chapter compared to the previous version.

Chapter six is the conclusion of the dissertation thesis where the author concludes at a logical assessment of the events that took place over the long period of ca. 60 years in the Auchu Kingdom under the British colonial rule. The conclusions correspond to the already known sub-conclusions contained in each chapter.

The stylistic and linguistic aspects of dissertation thesis by Suleiman Yakubu are at a decent level. The author has managed to avoid major formal and content errors and corrected the alleged shortcomings of the previous version.

At the same time, another shortcoming related to the chronological delineation and thematic delimitation of the dissertation was eliminated. The period purely associated with British colonial administration in relation to the Auchu Kingdom is thus also more appropriate from sources and literatures in general. This choice of the chronological delineation and thematic delimitation should also correspond to the content, and therefore a comprehensive introduction of the reader to the issue thus constitutes should ideally not exceed one fifth of the text. In this dissertation, however, it is approximately one half of the text. Thus, it can be concluded that the shortcoming from the previous version of the dissertation is repeated.



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On the issue of secondary sources, the author respected my recommendation and added the missing ones. Archival research (The National Archives, London-Kew in the United Kingdom, The National Archives Nigeria in Ibadan, and The National Archive Kaduna in Nigeria) has also been supplemented and deepened, including the formalization of references to relevant archival collections. The Colonial Office collections in particular are essential to the theme. Improving archival research is clearly to the benefit of the quality of the dissertation. Still, I am of the opinion that if the archival research had been even more in-depth, it would have been more appropriate. In any case, it is a significant advance on the previous version. From an overall point of view, better clarity, ordering and recording of the list of sources used is also an improvement.

Suleiman Yakubu has based his dissertation on a respectable number of interviews and an average range in the field of archival research. In my humble opinion, the archival research could have been even more thorough given the scope and range of the topic. As the submitted dissertation meets all the requirements for this type of qualifying work, I do recommend it for defence.

Prague, 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2024

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